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Learning from Defeat.
The French Occupation of Germany after two World Wars

By
Julia Johanna Wambach

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in
History
in the
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of the
University of California, Berkeley

Committee in charge:

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Learning from Defeat.
The French Occupation of Germany after two World Wars

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by Julia Johanna Wambach

Abstract

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Doctor of Philosophy in History

University of California, Berkeley

Professor Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann, Chair

In 1945, at the end of more than thirty years of violent conflict and occupation in Western Europe, France and Germany were on the verge of a new occupation. This time, France returned to south-west Germany, but this would prove to be the last occupation between the two countries. In 1955, at the occupation's end, the foundations were laid for a united Europe anchored in the economic collaboration of the member states of the European Coal and Steel Community, with France and West Germany at its heart.

Why did the long history of violent conflict between the two countries end with this last occupation? Historians searching for reasons to explain the end of this cycle of violence have pointed to the French policies in occupied Germany, to common institutions, and to the efforts of French intellectuals acting as mediators between France and Germany. Most of the studies on Europeanization or Western integration, with France and Germany at the center, begin in 1945 and tell a teleological story of reconciliation. The occupation is seen as a first step towards the institutionalized French and German state friendship, culminating in the Elysée Treaty.

My dissertation offers a new explanation for the end of the cycle of violence between France and Germany, arguing that the dual defeat of France and Germany in 1945 was necessary to end the long history of conflict. In other words, the rapprochement of the post-1945 era can only be explained by the entangled histories of French and German occupations since 1914. Only at the moment when France *and* Germany were vanquished did they begin to reflect on the causes of this catastrophic defeat.

The legacy of this dark pre-history hovered over the French occupation of Germany. The first chapter addresses the presence of former Vichy administrators in high positions of the French occupation administration. Morally tainted by their allegiance to Pétain's state, they could not remain in their positions in France, but they had the experience to govern a country and they had already collaborated with the Germans. These administrators were thus dispatched to the French occupation zone to build up and control a freshly defeated Germany, working in an amalgam with seasoned resisters. The presence of tainted Vichy administrators in the French administration led to a more lenient denazification strategy in occupied Germany.

In the second chapter, I show how past experiences with violent conflict fed into expectations about continued violence during the upcoming occupation of Germany. The French army and administration expected a German resistance similar to their own resistance against the German

occupation during World War II. This chapter illustrates that experiences with former occupations could be misleading – with serious consequences: harsh reprisals for incidents perceived as German resistance were reminiscent of a wartime, rather than a peacetime, occupation and thus prolonged the war well into the period after May 8, 1945. The French experience with resistance thus actually hindered a reconciliation between France and Germany. What would become the last occupation between the two countries was therefore not just the beginning of a peaceful period of reconciliation, but rather the last violent episode in a longer history of mutual wars and occupations since at least 1914. This chapter also demonstrates how members of the occupying forces used the expectation of German resistance for their own ends: to prolong their stay in a peaceful Germany.

Postwar Germans also viewed French rule after 1945 in the light of previous occupations, as the third chapter demonstrates. While there was no active resistance against the allied troops, three groups of Germans feared persecution due to their “collaboration” with the French occupying forces: German administrators helping to implement French orders, German women having relationships with French soldiers, and so-called “neo-separatists” trying to revive the separatist movement of the interwar period. The post-1945 occupation also aimed at correcting past mistakes. The French army and administration therefore sought to avoid a nationalist backlash against them, as had happened in the interwar period when the occupation army had supported the separatists. After 1945, the French army and administration were therefore reluctant to support those “neo-separatists” and tacitly accepted a revived German nationalism in opposition to the separatist movement.

Finally, the French army and administration tried to avoid the impression that they subjected postwar Germans to colonial rule. Chapter four argues that in 1945, the French army and administration did not revert to colonial ruling strategies or the employment of colonial troops precisely because of their experience in the 1920s. The French army thus purged their ranks of colonial soldiers twice, in 1944 of sub-Saharan troops and in 1946/47 of the remaining colonial soldiers from North Africa. The French administration also sought to eliminate “colonial” behavior by the members of the French occupying forces in Germany. Allies and Germans alike referenced alleged colonial rule within Europe in an attempt to criticize and delegitimize French rule in Germany. Instead of drawing references to the French colonial empire, the orientation of French rule in Germany after 1945 was exclusively European, and in particular Franco-German. The long history of mutual French and German conflicts thus remained the frame of reference for historical learning, not the colonial empire.

My dissertation contributes to the historiography of postwar Europe by studying transfers of experience from one occupation to the next. It puts the history of the emergence of European integration in a *longue durée* perspective and helps us to understand the importance of learning from the past for political decision making in the present.

To my grandfathers
Hanns Wessel (1922-2014)
Peter Wambach (1906-1986)

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Berkeley, December 2017.

Introduction

Asked in 1998 to recall his impressions at the end of World War II, General Jean Compagnon, who participated in the battle of Germany in the ranks of the French Second Armored Division, responded:

There was a feeling of...of dispossession [dépouillement] with regard to the what we have lived through after six years. Of course, a great satisfaction, but one that did not manifest itself, it seems to me, boisterously. No. First of all, during those six years, we had lost many people, we had seen tragedies. [...] How was the peace going to be? For the people of my generation, we have seen the previous [occupation]. Twenty years. A failure. [...] So, we must try not to fail. However, we realized very well that the circumstances were not easy. With regard to domestic affairs, in France, we have seen [...] that the people were not united. So, there was a certain joy tempered by a certain anxiety about what we would be capable of doing. How to accomplish this victory, this peace, which wasn't a peace, a victory of France alone, so we had to build up France. [...] [T]he end of the war came quite violently.¹

In 1945, at the end of more than thirty years of violent conflict and occupations at the heart of Europe, France and Germany were on the verge of a new occupation. This time, France returned to south-west Germany. But it would be the last occupation between the two countries. In 1955, at the occupation's end, the foundations were laid for a united Europe anchored in the economic collaboration of the member states of the European Coal and Steel Community, and with France and West Germany at its heart.

Why did the long history of violent conflict between the two countries end with this last occupation? In the oral history interview above, General Compagnon mentioned two important factors that came into play at the beginning of this occupation and which reflect the argument of this dissertation:

First, Jean Compagnon spoke of the impact of the defeat in 1945, which was, in fact, a dual defeat: not only did Germany lose the Second World War, but neither was France the war's shining victor, contrary to the idea the new Gaullist government tried to establish. France had lost the war in 1940 against a seemingly omnipotent German Wehrmacht and had endured four years of collaboration, which resulted in civil war between resisters and collaborators. As General Compagnon asserted, France was indeed not united in 1945 and still struggled with the impact of war, defeat, and the Vichy state collaboration. The weak positions of both France and Germany at the end of the war are thus an important reason why the conflict between the two countries ebbed after two centuries of rivalry.

¹ Oral history interview with the French Ministry of Defense, see SHD Archives orales, 3 K 11, Compagnon. Entretien numéro 1, page 6: "Il y avait une sensation de... de dépouillement par rapport à ce qu'on vient de vivre après six ans. Bien sur une grande satisfaction, mais qui se manifestait pas il me semble, bruyamment. Non. D'abord pendant six ans, on a perdu beaucoup de gens, on a vu des drames. Bon. [...] Que va être la paix? Pour les gens de ma génération, nous avons eu la précédente. Vingt ans. Ratée. [...] Alors, il faut essayer de ne pas rater. Or on se rend bien compte que les circonstances ne sont pas faciles. Ni intérieurement, en France, on l'a vu [...], les gens ne sont pas très unis. Alors, on a une certaine joie, tempérée par une certaine anxiété de ce qu'on sera capable de faire. Comment réaliser cette victoire, cette paix, qui n'est pas une paix, une victoire de la France seule, alors, il faudra refaire la France. [...] cette fin de guerre arrive assez brutalement."

The second explanation was the experience with and the learning from past occupations. General Compagnon recalled the close timing and proximity of French and German occupations in the 20th century. General Compagnon reminded of the close timing and proximity of French and German occupations in the 20th century. An entire generation of French and Germans had experienced almost consecutive occupations since 1914. The Rhineland occupation as well as the German occupation of France in particular produced a range of overwhelmingly negative experiences with different regimes of occupation, which would not be repeated in 1945. Avoiding the failures of past occupations was thus a main reason why French and Germans could break the cycle of violence after two world wars.

The title of this dissertation, "Learning from Defeat," takes up those two points and argues that the moment of dual defeat in 1945 of France and Germany triggered a learning process to make sure the violent history between the two countries would not recur. Precisely because of the long history of mutual wars and occupations at the particular moment of defeat, the French occupation of Germany after 1945 would become the last one between the two countries.

How to make peace after war

The antagonism between France and Germany stems from the Napoleonic wars, which were at the same time the birth of German nationalism. From this moment onwards, European history up to 1945 was shaped by a series of wars and occupations between France and Germany, the Franco-Prussian War, World War I and World War II. The second half of the 20th century then saw the rise of the European Union with a united France and Germany at its core.

This curious success story from hereditary enemies to the vanguards of European integration has sparked an interest in research on the French occupation after 1945 in particular during the late 1980s and 1990s. This research moved away from an earlier, darker view of the French zone as a site for unorganized vengeful exploitation.² The newer historiography asserted that the French government had a political vision for their occupation of Germany, which set the basis for reconciliation.³ With the opening of the archives of the French occupation of Germany in 1986, a large number of studies were published that threw light on various aspects of French policies in occupied Germany, which were considered paramount in explaining the end of the circle of violence. The most important set of studies deal with the French cultural imports to Germany. Those studies claim that cultural policies were a particular French contribution to democratizing Germany.⁴ Other studies examine the economic policies of the French zone to

² See for instance Theodor Eschenburg, *Jahre der Besatzung: 1945-1949* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1983).

³ Frank Roy Willis, who published in 1962 still the only overview on the French occupation of Germany after 1945, already assessed the French efforts in Germany more positively. He had however not yet access to most of the archives of the occupation. See Frank Roy Willis, *The French in Germany, 1945-49* (Stanford University Press, 1962). F. Roy Willis work remains the core reference for the subject.

⁴ See for example Corine Defrance, *La politique culturelle de la France sur la rive gauche du Rhin, 1945-1955* (Strasbourg: Presses Universitaires de Strasbourg, 1994); Corine Defrance, *Les alliés occidentaux et les universités allemandes, 1945-1949* (Paris: CNRS Editions, 2000); Jacqueline Plum, *Französische Kulturpolitik in Deutschland 1945-1955. Jugendpolitik und internationale Begegnungen als Impulse für Demokratisierung und Verständigung* (Wiesbaden: Deutscher Universitäts-Verlag, 2007); Stefanie Woite-Wehle, *Zwischen Kontrolle und Demokratisierung. Die Sportpolitik der französischen Besatzungsmacht in Südwestdeutschland 1945-1950* (Schorndorf: Hofmann, 2001).

unpack the long-standing myth that it was an unsystematic endeavor.⁵ These researchers underline the constraints imposed upon the occupation administration by the French domestic policy as one of the main reasons for contradictory French policies in the zone.⁶ More recent literature has also put particular emphasis on the set-up of the occupation administration, in particular the competing and overlapping areas of responsibility of the army and the civilian administration in Baden-Baden, the capital of the zone, which further contributed to the chaotic nature of the French zone.⁷ While a certain preoccupation with high politics had been the focus of attention in the 1990s, the interest has shifted in recent years to actors in the civil society to explain the remarkable shift from war to peace. According to this research, public intellectuals like Alfred Grosser and Joseph Rovin built networks and the early infrastructure of exchange in the 1940s and 1950s that prepared the grounds for the formalized state friendship of the 1960s and beyond.⁸

Historically, the above-mentioned studies coincided with the apogee of Europeanization after the end of the Cold War, which had a fully developed, institutionalized French and German state friendship at its core. In this period of increased interest in a “European identity,” which also coincided with the departure of the last French troops from Germany in the 1990s, scholars tended to narrate the French occupation of Germany after World War II as a prehistory of this institutionalized friendship, neglecting the rockier elements of the occupation. These studies therefore usually begin in 1945 and use the preceding years of war and occupation merely as negative foil upon which the history of French and German friendship could develop, not as a source of experience or even inspiration for future conduct. However, this approach falls short of taking the contingency of the immediate post-war era into account, when the French had no consistent master plan to bring about a reconciliation process. For example, this teleological approach neglects the background of a number of French occupation officials in the Vichy regime and contends that young Frenchmen, untainted by collaboration, or members of the resistance brought about reconciliation. My dissertation thus tells a darker story, which takes into account the continuities and learning processes of preceding, less glorious episodes of Franco-German encounter, for example the presence of former Vichy administrators and their role for the settlement of the conflict between France and Germany.⁹

Without denying the ultimate transition to an era of peace between the two countries, the dissertation provides a new explanation for this process that goes beyond teleological narratives of reconciliation. I argue instead that peace-building by reconciliation was not a priority for the French administration in Germany, but that peace came about in a complex and incremental way that derived from three overlapping developments: first, inner-French problems in the postwar

⁵ The most recent of these studies is Martial Libera, *Un rêve de puissance: La France et le contrôle de l'économie allemande (1942-1949)* (Bruxelles: Peter Lang, 2012).

⁶ See Dietmar Hüser, *Frankreichs "doppelte Deutschlandpolitik": Dynamik aus der Defensive - Planen, Entscheiden, Umsetzen in Gesellschaftlichen und wirtschaftlichen, innen- und außenpolitischen Krisenzeiten: 1944-1950*, (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1996).

⁷ See for instance Alain Lattard, 'Zielkonflikte französischer Besatzungspolitik in Deutschland. Der Streit Laffon-Koenig 1945-1947', *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* (1991): 2-35.

⁸ See Corine Defrance, Michael Kissener, and Pia Nordblom, eds., *Wege der Verständigung zwischen Deutschen und Franzosen nach 1945: zivilgesellschaftliche Annäherungen* (Tübingen: Narr, 2010); Martin Strickmann, *L'Allemagne Nouvelle Contre l'Allemagne Éternelle - Die Französischen Intellektuellen und die Deutsch-Französische Verständigung. Diskurse, Initiativen, Biografien* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2004).

⁹ See on the earlier attempts of Europeanization during the Nazi rule: Dieter Gosewinkel, ed., *Anti-Liberal Europe: A Neglected Story of Europeanization* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2015).

era, second, the interests and agency of the French administration personnel, and third, and most importantly, the experience of past occupations between the two countries.

Concerning the first point, I argue that French occupation administrators were still highly concerned with solving domestic problems that emerged from a quasi-civil war within France that had opposed Vichy supporters and members of the resistance. By the end of the war, this opposition between Vichystes and resisters had diluted the dualism between France and Germany. Consequently, the occupation zone became a laboratory, not for the reconciliation between French and Germans, but for the reconciliation between Vichystes and resisters. That this inner-French reconciliation proved successful is one explanation, as I will show, for the positive development of Franco-German relations. This leads me to my second argument, which claims that an analysis of the French policy in the occupation zone has to start from the French administrators on the ground who took decisions that were in their own interest and not necessarily always guided by a master plan designed in Paris. The interests of the civil and military occupation personnel in Germany are at least equally important for understanding the relatively peaceful occupation. They were rarely following an ideal of reconciliation, but endorsed it, because it served their own interests. For example, former Vichy administrators employed in the occupation zone tried to hide their own involvement with fascism. After all, they had also been defeated in the war and were officially not winners but vanquished. Their employment in the occupation zone helped to prove their allegiance to the new Fourth Republic.

Instead of the research on reconciliation, which oftentimes takes the peace in 1945 for granted, this dissertation takes up the concept of “*sorties de guerre*” (exits of war) developed by French historians to study the slow process of demobilization and the coming to terms with war after 1918.¹⁰ The idea posits that a war does not suddenly stop with the signing of an armistice but lingers on through its aftermath. This concept makes in particular sense for the aftermaths of the long and violent wars of the 20th century, which have turned societies into propagandistically charged war economies. It took time to demobilize those wartime societies and to transition to peacetime. In recent years, historians have applied the concept to the aftermath of World War II as well.¹¹ The concept of *sorties de guerre* thus further broke up the idea of a “zero hour” in 1945 by considering the 1940s as a continuum, in particular between France and Germany.¹² Most recently, the edited volume “Seeking Peace in the Wake of War” sought to establish this

¹⁰ See notably the work of Bruno Cabanes for the aftermath of World War I: Bruno Cabanes, *La victoire endeuillée. La sortie de guerre des soldats français 1918-1920* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 2004) as well as the edited volumes he edited and opened the field of research on *sorties de guerre*: Bruno Cabanes and Guillaume Piketty, eds., *Retour à l'intime au sortir de la guerre* (Paris: Tallandier, 2009).

¹¹ For the aftermath of World War II, see Stefan Martens, Corine Defrance, and Jörg Echternkamp, eds., *Sociétés allemandes en sortie de guerre 1944/45–1949*, *Revue d'Allemagne* 40, 2008. While the introduction of this journal takes up the idea of *sorties de guerre* and draws comparisons with the aftermath of World War I, most of the articles address rather classical questions, such as denazification, the German youth, the “German question,” or the population movement in East Germany, not necessarily the occupations. The focus is on Germany only.

¹² For an overview on the *Stunde Null* debate, see: Christoph Kleßmann, “1945 – welthistorische Zäsur und ‘Stunde Null,’” Version: 1.0, in: *Docupedia-Zeitgeschichte*, last modified October 15, 2010, DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.14765/zzf.dok.2.315.v1>

On the French and German case, see: Patricia Oster and Hans-Jürgen Lüsebrink, eds., *Am Wendepunkt. Deutschland und Frankreich um 1945 – Zur Dynamik eines “Transnationalen” kulturellen Feldes* (Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag, 2008). The latter have initiated the idea of a “transnational cultural field” around 1945 reflecting on the importance of the violence in the years 1940-45 for the aftermath of the war and the reconciliations in the years to come. The articles in the edited volume remain however often in the reconciliation narrative of the previous research.

new chronology of the many endings of the Second World War on the European continent.¹³ My dissertation seeks to contribute to this field of research and argues that not only did it take time to exit the war, but also to exit a cycle of violent occupations. One can thus speak of a “sortie d’occupations.”

The concept of “sortie d’occupations” is the third and most important argument of my dissertation. It reveals the prominent role the experience of the previous occupations played in shaping the new occupation. While the members of the occupation personnel did not act according to a master plan of reconciliation, they constantly referred to and sought inspiration in past occupations. Their experience with the previous occupations, especially the “failed” French occupation of the Rhineland, generated expectations about the very nature of the new occupation to come. However, they also used it strategically, invoked the former occupations if it served their interests to legitimize their actions in the present. For example, the supposed presence of a German resistance after 1945 justified an elevated number of French soldiers on the German soil who on their turn did not want to give up their peaceful stay in occupied Germany.

Nevertheless, learning from the past was a process that did not automatically lead to a reconciled France and Germany and had no predetermined purpose. This dissertation will reveal the different manifestations of the past experience in the moment of occupation in the mid-1940s and 1950s, when the protagonists paved the way for the last occupation between the two countries, an outcome unknown to them.

The French and German dualism existed for a long time but the occupations of the 20th century had shaped French and Germans in 1945 in particular. Jean Compagnon was only one of many who noted that it was not only the six years of war that influenced the French occupation of Germany, but also the previous presence of French troops in Germany: the Rhineland occupation of the interwar period.¹⁴ While the Rhineland occupation was, next to the experience of the German occupation in France during World War II the main point of reference, it was also obvious for the protagonists of the post-45 occupation that the French and German history of conflicts was much longer. On various occasions, they went back to the 19th century to look for the origins of the rivalry between France and Germany. Given this strong consciousness that modern European history was a dialectic history of a French-German rivalry, which materialized in a series of mutual occupations, it is hardly surprising that German historian Thomas

¹³ Stefan-Ludwig Hoffmann et al., eds., *Seeking Peace in the Wake of War: Europe, 1943-1947* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2015).

¹⁴ For a general overview of the French and German history in the interwar period, see Nicolas Beaupré, *Das Trauma des großen Krieges 1918-1932/33* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2009). There is no overview on the French occupation of the Rhineland, but a number of studies notably on different localities or on the episode of the occupation of the Ruhr and the propaganda campaign against French colonial troops. See for example Gerd Krumeich and Joachim Schröder, ed., *Der Schatten des Weltkrieges. Die Ruhrbesetzung 1923* (Essen: Klartext Verlag, 2004); Gertrude Cepl-Kaufmann and Dieter Breuer, ed., “*Deutscher Rhein fremder Rosse Tränke?*” *Symbolische Kämpfe um das Rheinland nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg* (Essen: Klartext Verlag, 2005); Gerd Krumeich and Jost Dülffer, ed., *Der verlorene Frieden. Politik und Kriegskultur nach 1918* (Essen: Klartext Verlag, 2002). Christian Koller, “*Von Wilden aller Rassen niedergemetzelt.*” *Die Diskussion um die Verwendung von Kolonialtruppen in Europa zwischen Rassismus, Kolonial- und Militärpolitik (1914-1930)* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag 1998); Sandra Maß, *Weißer Helden – schwarze Krieger. Zur Geschichte kolonialer Männlichkeit in Deutschland 1918-1964* (Köln: Böhlau Verlag, 2006); Iris Wigger, *Die ‘Schwarze Schmach am Rhein.’ Rassistische Diskriminierung zwischen Geschlecht, Klasse, Nation und Rasse* (Münster: Westfälisches Dampfboot, 2007). Martin Süß, *Rheinessen unter französischer Besatzung: Vom Waffenstillstand im November 1918 bis zum Ende der Separatistenunruhen im Februar 1924* (Stuttgart: F. Steiner Verlag Wiesbaden, 1988).

Nipperdey famously introduced his German History of the 19th century with the words: “At the beginning was Napoleon.”¹⁵

While the French and German antagonism dates back to the Napoleonic wars, the experiences of the immediately preceding and intersecting occupations since 1914 were more important in order to understand the situation in 1944/1945. In the first half of the 20th century, wars and mutual occupations succeeded one another in a much faster and increasingly violent way, so that contemporaries already spoke of a new Thirty Years’ War between 1914 and 1945.¹⁶ The vision of a whole generation of veterans shaped and marked by their wartime experience was created in the writings of Henri Massis and Gabriel de Tarde in the late 1930s¹⁷ and taken up already from 1940 onwards by Charles de Gaulle.¹⁸ The idea of a continuous struggle against a German threat since 1914 was used to rally the French in a renewed “union sacrée” to legitimate the Resistance and later to excuse the collaborators as well as, with regard to the international level, to underline the French position as a victorious power in 1945.¹⁹

In the 20th century, the degree of violence used in occupations had changed as well. The occupations of the 19th century had been relatively peaceful and organized. It is true that the Paris Commune was put down violently after the Franco-Prussian War during which the question of Franc-tireurs, a major point of contention in World War I, was already a much-debated issue. However, the heads of the French army in 1918 still looked back on the German occupation of Eastern France between 1871 and 1873 as a positive model.²⁰ The relatively peaceful and organized image of occupations changed dramatically after World War I, in particular because of the propagandistic fights during the Rhineland occupation and with the exploitative occupation by Nazi Germany during World War II.

The almost uninterrupted continuity of occupations between France and Germany in the first half of the 20th century shaped generational experiences in both countries. Compagnon, who uses the term “generation” himself, is only one example of an entire generation who, in 1945, was on the verge of experiencing their fourth occupation since 1914. Among this

¹⁵ Thomas Nipperdey, *Deutsche Geschichte 1800-1866: Bürgerwelt und Starker Staat* (München: C.H. Beck, 1983), 11: “Am Anfang war Napoleon.” For the long history of French and German enmity, see: Michael Jeismann, *Das Vaterland der Feinde: Studien zum nationalen Feindbegriff und Selbstverständnis in Deutschland und Frankreich, 1792-1918* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1992).

¹⁶ Historians have taken up the concept of the Thirty Years’ War between 1914 and 1945 as analytical category, see: Jan Patočka, “Les guerres du XXe siècle et le XXe siècle en tant que guerre”, in *Essais hérétiques sur la philosophie de l’histoire* (Lagrasse: Verdier, 1981) and George Mosse, *Fallen Soldiers: Reshaping the Memory of the World Wars*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990) as the precursors of the concept. The French research in particular has picked up this concept, see for instance: Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau, Annette Becker, Christian Ingrao, and Henry Rousso, *La Violence de guerre 1914-1945. Approches comparées des deux conflits mondiaux* (Paris: Editions Complexe, 2002).

¹⁷ Notably Agathon [i.e. Alfred de Tarde / Henri Massis], *Les jeunes gens d’aujourd’hui*. (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1995) and Henri Massis, *La guerre de trente ans. Destin d’un Age 1909-1939* (Paris: Plon, 1940). See Matthias Waechter’s argumentation in “De Gaulles 30jähriger Krieg. Die Résistance und die Erinnerung an 1918“, in: *Der verlorene Frieden. Politik und Kriegskultur nach 1918*, ed. Jost Dülffer and Gerd Krumeich (Essen: Klartext Verlag, 2002), 51-60.

¹⁸ Matthias Waechter, “De Gaulles 30jähriger Krieg. Die Résistance und die Erinnerung an 1918“, in: *Der verlorene Frieden. Politik und Kriegskultur nach 1918*, ed. Jost Dülffer and Gerd Krumeich (Essen: Klartext Verlag, 2002), 52.

¹⁹ Matthias Waechter, “De Gaulles 30jähriger Krieg. Die Résistance und die Erinnerung an 1918“, in: *Der verlorene Frieden. Politik und Kriegskultur nach 1918*, ed. Jost Dülffer and Gerd Krumeich (Essen: Klartext Verlag, 2002), 58-59.

²⁰ See SHD 16 N 1558.

generation were men such as Charles de Gaulle (b. 1890), who had fought in World War I, and who was stationed in Trier during the Rhineland occupation, before becoming the leader of the Free French in World War II and finally president of the Provisional Government in 1944. On the German side, the most famous member of the “occupation generation” was Konrad Adenauer (b. 1876), who had been mayor of Cologne during the interwar occupation and became German chancellor in 1949. Thus, the same generation who concluded the Elysée Treaty had lived through an era of wars and occupations that had shaped their political and personal experience. Following the concept of *histoire croisée*, or entangled history, this accumulated experience with multiple occupations on both German and French side, that is four occupations since the beginning of World War I, are considered here as intertwined, entangled occupations, or “occupations croisées.”²¹ In order to understand the post-1945 era, this dissertation contends, we need to take into account the intertwined experiences with German and French occupations of this generation since 1914.

Conversely, I argue that this period of mutual wars and occupations did not end overnight in 1945. The Thirty Years’ War between 1914 and 1945 was followed by a slow process of coming to terms with war.²² There was a new occupation underway, the French occupation of southwest Germany. Even if this occupation turned out to be the last one between the two countries in retrospect, this was not clear from the beginning: experiences generate expectations, and a violent history of occupations thus created an expectation of more violence to come, not necessarily the end to all violence.²³ The experience with their own resistance in occupied France, for instance, led the French army to expect a German resistance in the wake of the war.

Occupation experiences

While the long history of French and German conflict did not end on May 8, 1945, something did change in 1945. In fact, occupations had developed such a bad reputation in the first half of the twentieth century that the Allies, in the aftermath of World War II, chose to label themselves liberators rather than occupiers, aware of the negative repercussions of the term.²⁴ My argument is that the violent experiences of the previous occupations in the moment of defeat started a learning process that would end the conflict between the two countries. The generation of French and Germans who had lived through two wars and three mutual occupations had accumulated an entire set of experiences. Following the approach of the research cluster “Kriegserfahrungen in der Neuzeit” (war experiences in Modern History) at the University of Tübingen, as well as the conceptual reflections on occupation experiences by Nicolas Beaupré, Benoît Majerus, and Anne Dumenil, the dissertation on hand aims at capturing the experiences with occupation at the beginning of this last occupation between France and Germany in 1945.²⁵

²¹ For the approach of *histoire croisée*, see Bénédicte Zimmermann and Werner, “Beyond Comparison. *Histoire Croisée* and the Challenge of Reflexivity,” *History and Theory* Michael 45 (2006): 30–50. For the specific case of occupations and *histoire croisée* see Nicolas Beaupré, Anne Duménil, and Benoît Majerus, “Pour une *histoire croisée* des expériences d’occupation européennes (1914-1949),” *Histoire & Sociétés, Revue européenne d’histoire sociale* 17 (2006): 6–7.

²² See for instance: Keith Lowe, *Savage Continent: Europe in the Aftermath of World War II* (New York: Picador, 2013).

²³ See Reinhart Koselleck, “‘Space of Experience’ and ‘Horizon of Expectation:’ Two Historical Categories,” in *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time* (New York, Columbia University Press 2004): 267-88.

²⁴ Peter M. R. Stirk, *The Politics of Military Occupation* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), 3.

²⁵ See DFG Sonderforschungsbereich 473 at University of Tübingen and in particular Nikolaus Buschmann and Horst Carl, eds., *Die Erfahrung des Krieges: Erfahrungsgeschichtliche Perspektiven von der Französischen Revolution bis zum zweiten Weltkrieg* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2001). Nicolas Beaupré, Benoît Majerus, and Anne

To experience (*erfahren*) is, unlike to simply live through an event (*erleben*), an act of conscious endowment of meaning, an interpretation of this event.²⁶ Experiencing occupations thus always entails a learning process, which generates instructions for future behavior.

What kind of experiences had French and Germans in 1945? The research on the German occupation in Europe during World War II has shown how the occupation influenced all aspects of the society and penetrated deep into the daily life and the intimacy of relationships.²⁷ From the Rhineland occupation, the French retained the fierce German resistance against their occupation, in particular the passive resistance against their Ruhr occupation and the heavy propaganda campaign against their soldiers. Some members of the French occupation administration in 1945 had already been stationed in Germany in the interwar period and had picked up the language there. The Germans had experienced the attacks on the separatist movement in the early to mid 1920s or after the departure of the French troops in 1930 when shops and apartments of alleged *Franzosenfreunde* (friends of the French) were ravaged. The Nazis had further persecuted the collaborators of the French occupation administration, the children born from unions between German women and French colonial soldiers (pejoratively called *Rheinlandbastarde*) were among the first victims of the Nazi euthanasia program.²⁸ From the German occupation of France, the French state collaboration loomed large over the French occupation of Germany in the post-war. Some members of the occupying troops had resisted against the Nazi regime and had rejected to obey the Vichy state whereas others had, in fact, been administrators of that very same Vichy regime. Some German soldiers came back home after the war with good memories of their time in France, which had given them access to some French sumptuous *joie de vivre*. Or again French civilians had experienced the brutality of German repression of resistance during the war or had suffered from hunger, forced work or the deportation and death of loved ones. Furthermore, the defeat of the Vichy regime resulted in the destitution and persecution of collaborators in France at the end of the war, while the resisters were catapulted into the high levels of command.

All those experiences fed into expectations on how the new occupation should look like in 1945, produced guidelines for future action and thus influenced the behavior of French and Germans as well as the decision-making process, be it in the hotels of Baden-Baden, where the French occupation administration established their headquarters, or in the last village of the Eifel mountains.

Moreover, not only do experiences generate expectations but they also produce knowledge about the past, create narratives and construct continuities, or identify wrong turns. In the opening quotation, Jean Compagnon mentioned that his generation had lived through the

Dumenil, "Pour une histoire croisée des expériences d'occupations européennes (1914-1949), *Histoire & Sociétés, Revue européenne d'histoire sociale* 17 (2006): 6–7. A larger study on occupation experiences is missing so far, the publication of the proceedings of a conference in Berlin in 2004 on "Experiences with occupation in Europe 1914-1945", with a narrower focus, were never published. The proceedings of another conference aiming at a longer and comparative study of occupations or occupation experiences will be published in the coming months: James Connolly, Emmanuel Debruyne, Élise Julien, and Matthias Meirlaen, ed., *En territoire ennemi. Expériences d'occupation, transferts, héritages (1914-1949)* (Villeneuve-d'Ascq, Presses Universitaires du Septentrion, 2017).

²⁶ See Klaus Latzel, "Vom Kriegserlebnis zur Kriegserfahrung. Theoretische und methodische Überlegungen zur erfahrungsgeschichtlichen Untersuchung von Feldpostbriefen," *Militärgeschichtliche Mitteilungen* 56 (1997): 1–30.

²⁷ Robert Gildea, Olivier Wieviorka, and Annette Warring, ed., *Surviving Hitler and Mussolini. Daily Life in Occupied Europe* (Oxford, New York: Berg, 2006).

²⁸ For the fate of the *Rhineland Bastarde* in Nazi Germany and after, see notably part 1 of Tina Campt, *Other Germans: Black Germans and the Politics of Race, Gender, and Memory in the Third Reich* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005).

previous French occupation of Germany in the interwar period, which had ended actually only fifteen before the renewed French occupation of Germany in 1945.²⁹ The experience with this occupation led him to consider it a failure. This was an assessment Compagnon shared with many of his countrymen who had wanted to prevent a renewed German aggression after World War I, which they had hoped would be the war to end all wars (*La Der des Ders, la dernière des guerres*). But after the Rhineland occupation came another war and a German occupation. Thus, World War II should be the last German aggression towards France and this outcome hinged on the French occupation of Germany after 1945. In fact, the idea of learning from the failures of past occupations was an important theme of postwar planning and debate during World War II. Political theorists like German émigré Ernst Fraenkel considered the Rhineland occupation a mistake that should be corrected in the upcoming occupation of Germany: “In our efforts to prevent a disarmed Germany from once again endangering the security and peace of the world, after another twenty years, we shall do well to view the Rhineland occupation as a symptomatic link in the chain that connects the two great catastrophes in our period,” warned Fraenkel in his study of the Rhineland occupation, published in 1944.³⁰

Learning from the defeat might look like a slight variant of the success story of French and German reconciliation after 1945. However, learning processes are, like all experiences, contradictory and expectations could be deceived by realities. The French occupation authorities expected, for example, a German resistance after 1945. Notably at the moment when those expectations did not materialize in occupied Germany, new experiences were made which then corrected past experiences. In the case of the German resistance, which did not occur, the French army thus learned to put trust in the Germans.

In recent years, learning processes, in particular between France and Germany, were the subject of historiographical debate. Daniel Schönplflug and Martin Aust, for example, claim that not despite but *because of* the conflictual relationship could these two nation-states exchange and learn from experience of the 19th and 20th centuries.³¹ The learning processes between French and German occupations, or at the end of World War II, were however not a topic treated in any of the articles in the volume. Rainer Hudemann, who has extensively written on the French occupation in Germany after World War II, referred on several occasions to the connections between the interwar Rhineland occupation and the French occupation after the Second World War. However, even if one of his articles is titled “Lessons from the war,” he did not explicitly spell out concrete learning processes, and highlighted the importance of a change in French policies in their occupation zone for the reconciliation between France and Germany after 1945.³²

²⁹ Not twenty years, as Compagnon claimed in his oral history interview.

³⁰ Ernst Fraenkel, *Military occupation and the rule of law: occupation government in the Rhineland, 1918 – 1923* (London: Oxford University Press, 1944), 3.

³¹ Martin Aust and Daniel Schönplflug, ed., *Vom Gegner lernen. Feindschaften und Kulturtransfers im Europa des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts* (Frankfurt: Campus, 2007).

³² Hudemann is most known for his study on social policies in French occupied Germany: Rainer Hudemann, *Sozialpolitik Im deutschen Südwesten zwischen Tradition und Neuordnung, 1945-1953: Sozialversicherung und Kriegsopferversorgung im Rahmen französischer Besatzungspolitik*, (Mainz: v. Hase & Koehler, 1988). For the learning processes, notably between the Rhineland occupation and the French occupation after 1945, see: Rainer Hudemann, “Frankreichs Besatzungspolitik nach dem 1. und 2. Weltkrieg,” in *In Europas Mitte. Deutschland und seine Nachbarn*, ed. Heinz Durchhardt (Bonn: Europa Union Verlag, 1988), 144–151. Rainer Hudemann, “Französische Besatzungsmacht und deutsche Bevölkerung nach zwei Weltkriegen.” *Politischer Wandel, organisierte Gewalt und nationale Sicherheit* 50. Schriftenreihe des Militärgeschichtlichen Forschungsamtes (1995): 427–445. Rainer Hudemann, “Lehren aus dem Krieg. Anfänge neuer Dimensionen in den deutsch-französischen

My dissertation aims at analyzing the influences of the long history of French and German mutual occupations at the watershed moment of 1945, at the end of another World War, which made both countries fall. France lost the war in 1940, which brought about the collaborationist Vichy regime. The latter then again collapsed at the end of the war together with Nazi Germany.³³ 1945 seems thus to be a hinge-point in the history of the two countries, a moment in which both countries had to reinvent themselves and find their role in the European concert, which itself was in full reconstitution.

Unlike the majority of studies that have underlined the importance of the Cold War for the reconstitution and realignment of the European continent, I argue that past experiences were at least equally important for the end of long-standing violent conflict between France and Germany.³⁴ The unity among the Allies, a relationship that had hinged on the common war effort against Nazi Germany, broke up fairly soon after the end of the war. The new allegiances of the European nation states either in support or against the American or the Soviet superpowers were undeniably important for the development of European integration in the West. However, as Camilo Erlichman and Christopher Knowles have recently pointed out, the focus on the Cold War oftentimes rather clouds the view than helps to analyze the dynamics in the respective occupation zones.³⁵ Because of its relative autonomy from decisions taken at the Allied Control Council in Berlin, this is in particular true for the French occupation zone, which had among contemporaries the reputation of being a *terra incognita*. In 1947, for example, a British observer noted that there was an aura of secrecy in the French zone.³⁶ German historian Edgar Wolfrum similarly called it the “forgotten zone,” mainly because of the relative neglect of the French zone as the smallest and allegedly least important occupation zone in post-war Germany.³⁷

Yet this lack of interest in the French zone is surprising given the fact that western European integration did not emerge from the British or the American zones, but precisely from the specific historic constellation between French and Germans. In the past years, the apogee of transnational and comparative studies in Europe (approaches which are often rooted in the study of France and Germany) have sparked a new interest in the study of occupations in a comparative light.³⁸ Thus, the French zone has become, in the past ten years, the subject of study

Beziehungen 1945,” in *Europa und die Europäer. Quellen und Essays zur modernen europäischen Geschichte*, ed. Rüdiger Hohls, Iris Schröder, and Hannes Siegrist (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2005), 428–435. Rainer Hudemann, “Interkulturelle Felder unter Besatzungsbedingungen? Zu französisch-deutschen Kommunikations- und Konzeptionsstrukturen nach 1918 und 1945,” in: *Deutschland und Frankreich um 1945 – zur Dynamik eines ‘transnationalen’ kulturellen Feldes*, ed. Patricia Oster and Hans-Jürgen Lüsebrink (Bielefeld: Transcript, 2008), 169-188.

³³ The scars of the Nazi occupation and the French collaboration took a long time to heal, they dragged on until at least the late 1990s. See Olivier Wieviorka, *Divided Memory: French Recollections of World War II from the Liberation to the Present* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2012).

³⁴ See for instance Nicholas Piers Ludlow, ed., *European Integration and the Cold War: Ostpolitik-Westpolitik, 1965 – 1973* (London: Routledge, 2007).

³⁵ Camilo Erlichman and Christopher Knowles, “Introduction: Revisiting the Occupation Period,” *The Allied Occupation of Germany Revisited New Research on the Western Zones of Occupation, 1945-1949*, London, German Historical Institute, September 29-30, 2016.

³⁶ “The French Zone of Germany. Drawbacks of a Profitable Policy,” *The Manchester Guardian*, December 22, 1947.

³⁷ Edgar Wolfrum, *Französische Besatzungspolitik und deutsche Sozialdemokratie: Politische Neuansätze in der ‘vergessenen Zone’ bis zur Bildung des Südweststaates 1945-1952* (Düsseldorf: Droste-Verlag, 1991).

³⁸ See for the method of historical comparisons: Hartmut Kaelble, *Der historische Vergleich. Eine Einführung zum 19. und 20. Jahrhundert* (Frankfurt: Campus, 1999). And for the concept of “histoire croisée” or entangled history”

for a number of young historians, particularly from the Anglophone world. The focus of this most recent historiography is on aspects of everyday life and gender, but also, on the connection between colonialism and its repercussions on the European continent in the context of this occupation.³⁹ While those studies shed light on hitherto overlooked aspects of the French rule in Germany after 1945, they do not necessarily question the narrative of reconciliation starting in 1945. Except for the studies on the colonial influence on the occupation in the aftermath of the war, which go back in time to explain the origins of French policy in Germany by the colonial experience of its members, the recent studies do not (or only implicitly) refer to the importance of past experiences for the analysis of French rule in Germany after 1945.

Source base

This dissertation is based on extensive research in French and German archives. To capture the French military government's view, I consulted the archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MAE) in La Courneuve, just outside of Paris, where the extensive collection of sources from the civilian administration of the French zone is assembled (since it moved to Paris from Colmar in 2010). I focused on the files of the northern zone, which had been occupied by French troops during the Rhineland occupation. I did not systematically use the files on the Saarland, which could be a stand-alone study due to its peculiar status as French protectorate between 1920-1935 and 1947-1957.⁴⁰ The most important find in those archives were the uncatalogued personnel files, which were previously not accessible to researchers. Furthermore, the oral history interviews at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, rarely used in the existing research, turned out to be a valuable source. This is equally true for the oral history interviews that the Ministry of Defense (*Service Historique de la Défense*, SHD) conducted beginning in the 1970s. Initially intended to capture the French army's experience of the Algerian War, many interviewees had started their careers in occupied Germany. At the archives of the Ministry of Defense in Vincennes, I furthermore looked through the files of the occupying troops stationed in the French zone, the personal archives of the members of the army, and the files of the military police (gendarmerie) in occupied Germany. The archives of Sciences Po Paris contained the private archives of two administrators at the top of the occupation regime, Maurice Grimaud and Pierre Bolotte, who, next to their own personal documents, had collected important files of Emile Laffon, head of the civilian government in Baden-Baden. Moreover, the *Bibliothèque de Documentation Internationale Contemporaine* (BDIC) holds an important collection of printed and archival documents on the World Wars. Their collection contributed to the source base as

Bénédicte Zimmermann and Michael Werner, "Beyond Comparison. Histoire Croisée and the Challenge of Reflexivity," *History and Theory* 45 (2006): 30–50.

³⁹ On the gender and everyday life aspect, see the PhD in preparation by Ann-Kristin Glöckner of Universität Magdeburg as well as the social and cultural history of the French occupation of Germany after World War II Karen Adler of Nottingham University is currently writing. On the colonial dimension of the French occupation in Germany, see Riccarda Torriani's unpublished dissertation "Nazis into Germans: Re-Education and Democratisation in the British and French Occupation Zones, 1945-1949" (PhD diss., University of Cambridge, 2005) as well as her article Riccarda Torriani, "'Des Bédouins particulièrement intelligents'? La pensée coloniale et les occupations française et britannique de l'Allemagne (1945- 1949)," *Histoire & Sociétés, Revue européenne d'histoire sociale* 17 (2006): 56–66. Drew Flanagan completed a dissertation "Radiance on the Rhine: The French in Occupied Germany 1945-1955" at Brandeis University in August 2017 in which the influence of French colonialism plays a major role.

⁴⁰ See Rainer Hudemann, Burkhard Jellonnek, and Bernd Rauls, eds., *Grenz-Fall: Das Saarland zwischen Frankreich und Deutschland 1945-1960* (St. Ingbert: Röhrig, 1997); Armin Heinen, *Saarjahre: Politik und Wirtschaft im Saarland 1945 - 1955* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1996) and Bronson Long, *No Easy Occupation: French Control of the German Saar, 1944-1957*, German History in Context (Rochester, New York: Camden House, 2015).

well as the collection of the National Archives, in particular the files of the administrative purges at the Libération. In Germany, the diary archive in Emmendingen, *Deutsches Tagebucharchiv*, was a treasure trove of sources that capture the personal experience of local Germans at the end of the war and the beginning of the French occupation. In the local archives of two occupied cities, Mainz and Trier, located in the northern part of the zone, I found only a few sources for the immediate aftermath of the Second World War. With most of the infrastructure destroyed and only limited authority over daily affairs, the archives of the district of Trier, for instance, contained many more documents than the municipal archives of Trier. The local archives of Mainz and Trier were however helpful to establish the explanatory background for the French and German experience in 1945, that is the Rheinland occupation, whose extraordinary richness of sources in the local archives of the zone has not yet been sufficiently exploited by historians.⁴¹ Finally, I researched a number of published accounts of journeys to the French occupation zone in book form or as newspaper or magazine articles mostly at the National Library in Paris.

Outline

This dissertation is composed of four thematic chapters, which each address a different aspect of historical learning from the occupations that preceded French rule of Germany after 1945. **Chapter I** analyzes the composition of the French occupation personnel. Who were the men (there were hardly any women in the higher ranks of the administration or army) that administered the occupation of Germany in 1945? Because of a lack of access to the files of the personnel, the question of the biographies of the occupation personnel has been largely neglected by the historical research. Only the backgrounds of the most well-known representatives or certain mediators in the civil society, that is French public intellectuals or Germanists, who researchers have identified as vanguards of a French and German reconciliation have been known so far. Mostly, researchers have underlined the latter's experience in the French resistance or their German language skills – many were German speakers, for example the Germanist Robert Minder, or had a family background in Alsace, for example the head of the director of cultural affairs in the French zone, Raymond Schmittlein. But, as my archival research revealed, the French officials who governed the French occupation zone in Germany after 1945 were drawn as much from the former Vichy regime as they were from the French resistance. At the end of the war, one group emerged as political and moral victors, the other as compromised Nazi collaborators. The latter, once Vichy administrators, could not stay in liberated France because of the positions they had held during the war, and yet, they had the administrative experience that many of the young resisters lacked. In the resulting amalgam of forces, the French occupation administration had to negotiate their policies in Germany. The experience with the purges in France and the presence of former Vichy officials in their own ranks led to a more lenient denazification policy than in the other Allied zones of occupation.

Chapter II addresses the question of German resistance. How did the French army and administration tackle a potential resistance, a struggle they had just waged back home in France during the German occupation – be it on the side of the resisters, or on the side of the Vichy administration or the Vichy army? Because of the experience with their own resistance, the French army and gendarmerie as well as the security service within the civilian administration expected an armed German resistance similar to and modeled upon their own. The other Allies

⁴¹ Two books on the Rheinland occupation are currently prepared: Karin Triloff's dissertation at Humboldt University Berlin on the Allied court cases in occupied Rheinland and James Connolly of Manchester University works on the encounter of Allies and Germans in the Interallied Rheinland occupation.

initially shared this expectation and thus buttressed the French fear of a widespread German resistance. In contrast to the Allies who abandoned their belief in a German resistance quite fast, the French occupiers continued to await German resistance formations until late in the 1940s, and even in the 1950s. Anticipating a resistance meant seeing it even if it was not present and punishing harshly incidents that the French army and gendarmerie, in particular, considered acts of resistance. Moreover, the alleged presence of a widespread resistance justified the presence of large numbers of French troops and occupation personnel on German territory. Ironically, staying in Germany was in the interest of many Frenchmen because the relative peace and quietness in Germany, as well as the elevated standard of living for the troops as well as for their families relative to war struck France (or – even worse – in the emerging colonial wars of Southeast-Asia). The imagined German resistance thus served as an excuse to remain stationed in Germany.

Chapter III explores the counterpart of resistance, collaboration. In the interwar period as well as during the German occupation in France during World War II, violence against those who “collaborated” with the occupier was a frequent symptom of the social divide caused by the occupation. Incidents such as blacklisting or the shaving of women who had relationships with the occupying troops or verbal or physical attempts at intimidation, as well as revenge crimes at the departure of the troops, had occurred in both preceding occupations. How did French and Germans navigate the question of collaboration in the French occupation in the aftermath of World War II? While it is assumed that there was neither a German resistance, nor a collaboration after 1945 because the new regime brought about by the occupation was a democratic one, the transition between Nazism and the Allied occupation brought about similar tensions to the previous occupations. During the Rhineland occupation, three groups in particular had been the preferred target of German nationalists: the administrators carrying out the orders of the French occupiers, women who struck up relationships with members of the occupying forces, and finally the supporters of the Rhenish separatist movement. Because of their past experience with nationalist violence against them, the same group of people feared reprisals in the wake of World War II. The case of the Rhenish separatists is particularly interesting because it illustrates the learning process from the interwar occupation. The French occupation administration and the army had, in the interwar, supported the separatist movement aiming at weakening the power of the Weimar Republic and at strengthening a local independence movement closely associated with France or to even incorporated into France. The French administration in the wake of World War II was however very reluctant to support a renewed effort of the separatists because the latter’s failure in the interwar occupation had discredited French rule in Germany and had caused a nationalist uproar. Without the support of the French administration, the separatists fell the prey to an awakening German nationalism again in the late 1940s. Considered “traitors of the fatherland” since the interwar period, the separatists were refused compensation as “victims of fascism” in the early 1950s.

Finally, **chapter IV** addresses the influence of French colonialism on the occupation in Germany. France was still, like Great Britain, in possession of a powerful empire during their occupation of Germany. The experience of ruling their colonies, some historians have claimed, influenced their ruling strategies in Germany. The biographical background of many administrators in the French colonies or the influence of the French civilizing mission on the cultural and educational policies in occupied Germany were proof enough that the occupiers used colonial strategies to rule and democratize Germany after twelve years of Nazi rule. But this was not the first time French members of the occupying forces, who had a colonial background,

were present in Germany. The head of the Interallied Rhineland occupation in the 1920s was Paul Tirard, who had previously helped to set up Lyautey's Protectorate of Morocco. Moreover, the propaganda campaign against the black colonial troops the French army employed in occupied Rhineland had sparked massive protest not only in Germany, but, as Christian Koller has shown, across the European continent and in the United States.⁴² The so-called black shame campaign thus remains the most famous episode of that occupation. Did the French army learn from their experience with colonialism in occupied Rhineland? In this chapter, I argue that in 1945 the French army and administration did not revert to colonial ruling strategies or the employment of colonial troops precisely because of their experience in the 1920s. The French army thus purged their ranks of colonial soldiers twice - before they reached German soil they sent sub-Saharan troops home, and then most of the remaining colonial soldiers in 1946/47. The French administration also sought to eliminate "colonial" behavior by the members of the French occupying forces in Germany. While some members of the French personnel were trained in the French colonies, a colonial style ruling of the Germans was not acceptable neither for their French superiors nor for the Germans they occupied. The experience with the past occupations therefore caused a learning process which assured that the long violent history between the two countries would not repeat itself.

⁴² See Christian Koller, "Von Wilden aller Rassen niedergemetzelt." *Die Diskussion um die Verwendung von Kolonialtruppen in Europa zwischen Rassismus, Kolonial- und Militärpolitik (1914-1930)* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2001), 284-313.

I. Vichy in Baden-Baden

“The French administration in Germany is full of survivors of Vichy,” ran the headline of the French communist newspaper *Ce Soir* on November 16, 1945.⁴³ Part of a longer reportage entitled “The failure of Baden-Baden,” this article was far from the only one that discovered the peculiar situation of the personnel in the capital of the French occupation zone in Germany in the fall of 1945. Indeed, all major left-wing newspapers in France were outraged by the surprisingly large number of former Vichy officials employed in French-occupied Germany in a veritable press campaign: *Combat*, *Le Monde*, *Front National*, *Temps Présent*, *Nouvelles de France*, *Ordre*, and *Résistance* all wrote about it over the course of the first three weeks of November 1945.⁴⁴ Most of the articles were travelogues by journalists who had visited the occupation zone and informed their readers back home about the similarities between the two spa towns: Vichy, the capital of Marshal Pétain’s collaborationist French State, and Baden-Baden, the capital of the French zone of occupation in Germany.⁴⁵ The journalists picked up nicknames for the capital of the French zone circulating in the city itself and shared them with their readers in France. Hushed whispers called the city *Vichy-Vichy* or *little Vichy*, *Baderne-Baderne* (*baderne* meaning “geezer”), or *Naphtalingrad* (*naphtaline* meaning “mothballs”).⁴⁶

A journalist from *Front National*⁴⁷ pushed the similarities between Vichy and Baden-Baden even further, stating: “All spa towns resemble each other. All provisional capitals too. Therefore, there is nothing more normal than to run across the same influential personages in the same very high positions.”⁴⁸ The sarcasm many of the journalists used does not however diminish their sharp criticism of the presence of former Vichy officials in the French occupation zone: “The biggest scandal of the French administration,” wrote *Front National*, “is the recruitment of a vast majority of *Vichysois*, collaborationists, incapable and also useless people.”⁴⁹

The articles unveiled a number of names of former Vichy government officials now employed in the French occupation administration in Germany. The journalist and member of the *Résistance* Jacques Francis Rolland, for instance, wrote in the communist newspaper *Ce Soir*:

⁴³ Jacques-Francis Rolland, “La faillite de Baden-Baden. L’administration française en Allemagne est peuplée de rescapés de Vichy,” *Ce Soir*. November 16, 1945.

⁴⁴ A collection of those newspaper articles is stored at the MAE, AC 852/10 Allemagne, guerre. 1944-46.

⁴⁵ Roger Stéphane, “A Baden, Les Français divisent l’Allemagne et ignorent les Allemands,” *Combat*, November 19, 1947.

⁴⁶ See Jacques-Francis Rolland, “La faillite de Baden-Baden. L’administration française en Allemagne est peuplée de rescapés de Vichy,” *Ce Soir*. November 17, 1945; Paul Bodin, “7.000 fonctionnaires auxquels on a donné uniformes et galons n’ont su ni épurer notre zone d’occupation ni y faire respecter la France,” *Combat*, November 13, 1945; Albert Palle, “Loin de Baden-Baden...,” *Combat*. January 5, 1946; Alexandre Astruc, “L’Allemagne vue de la zone d’occupation française: Une façade qui s’ouvre sur le néant,” *Combat*. June 27, 1946.

⁴⁷ A newspaper published by the communist Resistance group *Front national de lutte pour la libération et l’indépendance de la France*, not to be confused with the right wing party founded by Jean-Marie Le Pen.

⁴⁸ “Pourquoi nous perdons la bataille de l’occupation. Le “Tout-Vichy” à Baden-Baden où un protégé de Darnand applique la justice,” *Front National*, November 15, 1945: “Toutes les villes d’eau se ressemblent. Les capitales provisoires aussi. Alors quoi de plus normal que d’y rencontrer les mêmes personnages influents aux mêmes postes les plus importants.”

⁴⁹ “Pourquoi nous perdons la bataille de l’occupation,” *Front National*: “Ainsi, le plus gros scandale de l’administration française réside dans le recrutement d’une grosse majorité de Vichysois, de personnes collaborationnistes, d’incapables et d’inutiles aussi.”

Next to the administrator general, the courageous Resister Monsieur Laffon, it is surprising to find men whose attachment to the democratic cause seems questionable. The director general of the administrative affairs and second in the hierarchy is Monsieur Sabatier. Monsieur Sabatier was the regional prefect of Bordeaux. I think it is pointless to explain to the French people what a regional prefect under Vichy was!

The assistant general director is Monsieur Périer de Féral. Monsieur Périer de Féral was secretary general of the Seine department. His attitude during the occupation caused him suspension and three months of prison after the Liberation.

Monsieur Filippi, the director of the economy and finance department, organized the finances of Vichy together with Monsieur Bouthillier.⁵⁰ His inspector general is lieutenant colonel Desjardins, former director of the S.T.O.⁵¹

The director of the personnel is Monsieur Lacombe,⁵² one of the most dynamic prefects of Vichy.⁵³

Like Jacques Francis Rolland, many journalists pointed out that men who had served the Vichy state occupied high-level positions in the French civilian government in Baden-Baden. They also stressed the sheer numbers of those *Vichyssois* in all other levels of the administration. As Rolland noted:

I would need pages to continue this enumeration. [...] The French administration in Germany is the refuge of high government officials compromised under the Vichy regime, former prefects, survivors of the purge commissions, in which they were more or less whitewashed out of weakness or complicity.⁵⁴

The French should have sent their most dedicated republicans and best resistance leaders to Germany, the journalists complained, because the French administration in occupied Germany would be responsible for the general orientation of the French policy toward the vanquished country. The administrative tasks included securing “the fruits of our victory,” and to denazify and democratize the Germans.⁵⁵ Only “courageous resisters” like Laffon could fulfill those

⁵⁰ Minister of Finance under Vichy and supporter of Pétain’s conservative revolution.

⁵¹ Compulsory Work Service in France during the German occupation.

⁵² Interestingly, many journalists misspell the names of the *Vichystes*, which is a sign for the orally transmitted information they picked up in Germany.

⁵³ Jacques-Francis Rolland, “La faillite de Baden-Baden. L’administration française en Allemagne est peuplée de rescapés de Vichy,” *Ce Soir*. November 17, 1945: “A côté de l’administrateur general, M. Laffon, résistant courageux, il est surprenant de rencontrer des hommes dont l’attachement à la cause démocratique paraît contestable. Le Directeur général des Affaires administratives, second dans la hierarchie, est M. Sabatier. M. Sabatier était préfet régional de Bordeaux. Je pense qu’il est inutile d’expliquer au Français ce qu’était un préfet régional sous Vichy!

Le directeur général adjoint est M. Périer de Féral. M. Périer de Féral était secrétaire général de la Seine. [...] M. Filippi, directeur de l’Economie et des Finances, organisait les Finances de Vichy avec M. Bouthillier. Il a pour inspecteur general le lieutenant-colonel Desjardins, ex-directeur du S.T.O. Le directeur du personnel, M. Lacombe [e] était un des préfets le plus dynamiques de Vichy.”

⁵⁴ Jacques-Francis Rolland, “La faillite de Baden-Baden. L’administration française en Allemagne est peuplée de rescapés de Vichy,” *Ce Soir*. November 17, 1945: “Il faudrait des pages pour continuer une telle énumération. [...] L’administration française en Allemagne est le refuge des hauts fonctionnaires compromis sous le régime de Vichy, anciens préfets rescapés des commission d’épuration plus ou moins blanchis par faiblesse ou par complicité.” Jacques-Francis Rolland, “La faillite de Baden-Baden. L’administration française en Allemagne est peuplée de rescapés de Vichy,” *Ce Soir*. November 17, 1945: “les fruits de notre victoire.”

tasks. The journalists were thus deeply skeptical that former Vichy officials would be able to successfully govern the Germans.⁵⁶ Their “attachment to the democratic cause seems questionable,” wrote Jean-François Rolland.⁵⁷ Instead of focusing on changing the Germans from Nazis into peaceful democrats, the former Vichy officials found refuge and a comfortable lifestyle in the French zone “recreat[ing] the parties, the happy life, the splendors of Vichy,” Rolland observed bitterly. They could hardly be expected to and so they would certainly not regret their Vichy past.⁵⁸

This chapter analyzes a much overlooked episode of European history at the pivotal moment of change from the German occupation of France to the French occupation of Germany in the years 1944-1945: the Vichy background of the personnel employed in the French occupation forces of Germany after World War II. It will address the ways in which the French wartime collaboration influenced the subsequent French occupation of Germany after the war, explore how Vichy administrators employed in Germany navigated this transition, and demonstrate how the government and the public in post-war France confronted this legacy and its attendant ethical problems. In tracing the career paths of these French occupiers in Germany to their Vichy roots, I will show the interconnectedness of the history of these two countries through their shared implication with Nazism and their struggle to rid themselves of this past.

“The old battle horse of the purge has crossed the Rhine as well,” wrote *Le Monde* in an article about the *Vichyssois* in the French zone of occupation on November, 13 1945.⁵⁹ The image used in this citation sums up nicely the argument developed here. The civil war between collaborators and resisters in liberated France over what was considered appropriate conduct during the German occupation of France between 1940 and 1944 continued in the aftermath of the war, and throughout the French occupation of Germany between 1945 and 1955. I show that many of Pétain’s officials were sent to Germany in what Martial Libera has called a *politique d’éloignement* (policy of removal) where they could hide from persecution or degradation in France, and where they pursued their careers.⁶⁰ Their presence in occupied Germany illustrates how these tainted bureaucrats bridged their professional gap between Vichy France and their careers in the French Fourth Republic by offering their expert knowledge in matters of administration to serve the new post-war regime – making up for their “misconduct” in Vichy France. For the former Vichy officials, serving in Germany was thus a moral cleansing process, a purgatory they had to endure before they were allowed back into metropolitan France. In occupied Germany, French resisters and collaborators were forced to work together for the new France. Occupied Germany thus serves as case study of the mechanisms for the settlement of the conflict between resisters and collaborators. Key to understanding this settlement are the notions of expertise and merit as well as the role of the inherited French social order untouched by the collaboration. Furthermore, the French experience with their own purges and the presence of the former Vichy administrators in their own ranks led to a similar approach to (and failure of)

⁵⁶ Jacques-François Rolland, “La faillite de Baden-Baden. L’administration française en Allemagne est peuplée de rescapés de Vichy,” *Ce Soir*. November 17, 1945: “résistant courageux.”

⁵⁷ Jacques-François Rolland, “La faillite de Baden-Baden. L’administration française en Allemagne est peuplée de rescapés de Vichy,” *Ce Soir*. November 17, 1945: “l’attachement à la cause démocratique paraît contestable.”

⁵⁸ Jacques-François Rolland, “La faillite de Baden-Baden. L’administration française en Allemagne est peuplée de rescapés de Vichy,” *Ce Soir*. November 17, 1945: “ils ont su recréer les fêtes, la vie heureuse, les fastes de Vichy.”

⁵⁹ “La vie à Baden-Baden,” *Le Monde*, November 13, 1945.

⁶⁰ See Martial Libera, *Un rêve de puissance: la France et le contrôle de l’économie allemande (1942-1949)* (Bruxelles: Peter Lang, 2012), 312.

denazifying the Germans. The intimate bonds between the two countries that had formed during the German occupation of France thus provided the basis for French and German reconciliation in the years to come.

The German occupation of France and the French administration

The victory of Nazi Germany against France in June 1940 divided the French into two camps: a minority who wanted to continue to fight the Germans and thus mainly went into exile and those who accepted the defeat and used the moment to rebuild the state. The latter group considered the Third Republic terminally ill through its endless parliamentary debates and divisions at least since the failure of the Popular Front in the late 1930s, and consequently called for a conservative national revolution. The armistice, signed in the very same railway car in which the Germans had signed the armistice ending the First World War on November 11, 1918,⁶¹ resulted in a division of the country in two zones. The larger Northern zone, which included all major economic centers of France, was directly occupied by Nazi Germany, while the smaller Southern zone, roughly two-fifths of the territory, remained unoccupied until another November 11 – that of 1942 – when the Germans brought the remaining part of France under their direct control. Following the vote on July 10, 1940, the National Assembly gave the 84-year-old Marshal Philippe Pétain, the hero of the battle of Verdun in World War I, full executive, legislative and constituent powers to form a new government. The authority of this new so-called Vichy regime, named after its capital – a sleepy spa-town just like Baden-Baden – applied to France as a whole but depended upon the approval of the German military commander in the occupied zone. The Vichy state apparatus was a heterogeneous entity, but consisted mainly of conservatives united in their mistrust of the Third Republic and their belief in an authoritarian regime led by the fatherly Marshal Pétain. “Work, Family, Fatherland” replaced the revolutionary trinity of “Liberty, Equality, Fraternity.” The Vichy-regime, a semi-independent state that worked together with the Nazi occupiers, but had its own political agenda, was unique in occupied Europe. It is oftentimes called *state collaboration*.⁶²

Those who worked for this Vichy state, complied with its ideas, or who actively sought out contact with the German occupiers between 1940 and 1944, later became suspected of “collaboration” after the Liberation – especially in the eyes of those who “resisted” the Germans and doubted the legitimacy of the Vichy government.⁶³ The administrative apparatus was both the heart and arm of the Vichy state and its personnel were thus very visible to all French

⁶¹ Jean-Yves Bonnard, *Rethondes, le jour où l'Histoire s'est arrêtée (11 novembre 1918 - 21 juin 1940)* (Cuis-la-Motte: Éd. du Trotteur ailé, 2008).

⁶² The literature on occupied France is overwhelming. For a short overview see Fabian Lemmes, “Collaboration in wartime France, 1940–1944,” *European Review of History—Revue européenne d'histoire* 15, no. 2 (2008): 157-177. For a more detailed overview see: Julian Jackson, *France: The dark years, 1940-1944* (OUP Oxford, 2001); Philippe Burrin, *La France à l'heure allemande (1940-1944)* (Paris: Seuil, 2015) and Robert Gildea, *Marianne in Chains* (London: Pan Macmillan, 2011).

⁶³ The recent literature on the German occupation of France has softened the sharp separation between the “good” Résisters and the “bad” collaborators and underlined the grey area between the two extremes. See Robert Gildea, *Marianne in Chains* (Pan Macmillan, 2011); Shannon Fogg, *The Politics of Daily Life in Vichy France: Foreigners, Undesirables and Strangers* (Cambridge University Press, 2008) Richard Vinen, *The Unfree French. Life under Occupation* (London: Penguin, 2006) or Philippe Burrin, *La France à l'heure allemande (1940-1944)* (Paris: Seuil, 2015) who replaced the highly emotionally charged expressions by the term “accommodation.”

While the “collaborators” were not a homogenous group, the Resistance was also diverse spectrum of people and groups, with different backgrounds and political beliefs. On the French Resistance, see for instance Olivier Wieviorka, *Histoire de la Résistance: 1940-1945* (Paris: Perrin, 2013).

citizens. It is for that reason that postwar newspapers focused their anger on those *Vichyssois* in Germany who had been in the most prestigious administrations of the Vichy state, notably Vichy prefects or members of Vichy's ministries in occupied France. Among them were Maurice Sabatier, Guy Périet de Féral, Jean Filippi and Jean Lacombe.

At the Liberation, all Vichy prefects were immediately suspended. The Ministry of the Interior, where Emile Laffon (the later head of the civilian government in French occupied Germany) became head of department in 1944, convened a purge commission following the decree of June 27, 1944 concerning the administrative purge on the territory of metropolitan France.⁶⁴ The new Minister of the Interior, Adrien Tixier, clarified in an ordinance of September 27, 1944 that the target of the purge commission were "civil servants or agents that belong to the central administration of the Ministry of the Interior and were reinstated, continued employment or were appointed by the 'self-styled government of the French State.'"⁶⁵ The purge commission of the Ministry of the Interior had 16 members and was divided into two sub-commissions with eight members each. Of those eight members, four originated from the Ministry of the Interior (chosen among those civil servants who were members of the Resistance) and four members were chosen by the National Council of the Resistance. One of the sub-commissions examined the cases of regional, departmental and communal administration, while the other focused on purging the police. Between October 17, 1944 and April 18, 1945, those two commissions examined 10,707 files (1,111 for the administration and 9,596 files for the police in 135 meetings).⁶⁶ The commission collected information about those agents or government officials, who could also explain or defend themselves in written form and in person during a session in front of the purge commission, which met at 3 rue Cambacérès in Paris, the Ministry of the Interior. The files of the purge commission contain letters written by the local resistance committee with evaluations of the civil servant's or agent's behavior during the occupation, information that the local resistance committees themselves had collected. The files also occasionally include letters from individuals addressed directly to Aimé Jeanjean, the head of the sub-committee for the administration. Those letters were either denunciatory or spoke in favor of the accused civil servant. In the latter case, they oftentimes came from notables that guaranteed the patriotic behavior or the morally-immaculate nature of their protégés.

The purge committee then had to weigh the frequently contradictory statements and come to a decision. The committee's files contain a handwritten roster with a number of categories, for instance: attack on republican institutions, forced labor service (S.T.O), relationship with the Germans, important positions, and honors or sanctions by Vichy, or the Resistance. Those categories were attributed certain types of behavior and accordingly assigned a system of points the accused person could gain or lose. For instance, if a prefect were revoked by Vichy before

⁶⁴ AN F1bI 932. Commission d'Épuration du Ministère de l'Intérieur Documentation. Letter from the president of the purge commission to the Minister of the Interior about the history of the purge commission, February 15, 1946. Also, see Marc Olivier Baruch, "L'épuration du corps préfectoral," in *Une poignée de misérables. L'épuration de la société française après la Seconde Guerre Mondiale*, ed. Marc Olivier Baruch (Paris: Fayard, 2003), 139-172.

⁶⁵ AN F1bI 932. Commission d'Épuration du Ministère de l'Intérieur Documentation. Arrêté portant constitution au Ministère de l'Intérieur d'Une Commission Consultative pour application de l'Ordonnance du 27 Juin 1944 relative à l'épuration administrative sur le territoire de la France Métropolitaine, Adrien Tixier, September 27, 1944: "fonctionnaires ou agents dépendant de l'Administration Centrale du Ministère de l'Intérieur, réintégrés, maintenus en fonctions ou nommés par le 'prétendu Gouvernement de l'Etat Français.'"

⁶⁶ AN F1bI 932. Commission d'Épuration du Ministère de l'Intérieur Documentation. Letter from the president of the purge commission to the Minister of the Interior about the history of the purge commission, February 15, 1946.

November 1942 (the German occupation of the Free Zone), that prefect would gain 3 points. If a government official were nominated by Vichy after the landing of the Allies, this person would lose 2 points. High positions in the Resistance were worth up to 10 points whereas a pro-German attitude or a recommendation by the Germans would result in a subtraction of 5 points.⁶⁷ By doing the math, the purge commission would determine whether a civil servant was guilty or not guilty of “collaboration,” a judgment that decided the civil servant’s career in liberated France.

Once the purge commission reached a judgment, its members had several options to deal with their civil servants or agents, among which were: dismissal, reinstatement, reduction in rank, or retirement. Another option was to reinstate the official without restoring his post – a sort of waiting position, which was sometimes coupled with cutting the official’s salary in half or altogether.⁶⁸

What happened to the prefects that had worked in the Vichy administration and after the war in occupied Germany? Those prefects that were chosen by the Resistance as prefects of the Liberation (that is for the new government in postwar France) did not have to go through the purge commission, but none of the prefects that went to Germany after the war avoided the purge commission altogether: they all had to appear at 3 rue Cambacérès in Paris’ eighth *arrondissement*.⁶⁹

Who were those prefects?

The personnel files of the Ministry of the Interior contain information about the careers of six prefects: Maurice Sabatier, Guy Périer de Féral, Francis Thiallet, Jean Lacombe, Emile Marchais, and Jean Cabouat. It is striking that those six prefects were very close in age: Sabatier and Périer de Féral were born in 1897, Thiallet and Cabouat in 1898, Marchais in 1899 and Lacombe in 1905. They also came from similar educational backgrounds; all of them earned a degree in law, Sabatier and Périer de Féral in Muslim law and Algerian legislation, Marchais in public law and international public law. Thiallet and Périer de Féral earned doctorates in law. Many had also a degree in political science, language, literature, classics or history – a good educational background was the backbone of these elite administrators. And almost all of the prefects had a family background in the prefectural administration. A further similarity among the six prefects is that except for Thiallet, who became prefect under Vichy and entered the Ministry of the Interior as late as 1942, all had enjoyed a long career in the service of the Ministry of the Interior, taking one step after another on the prefectural ladder. Their longtime attachment to serving the French state thus helped to protect them in the purge commission.

Maurice Sabatier started his career at the *Préfecture* of Algiers as attaché of the prefect’s cabinet in 1914. He spoke Arabic, Spanish, German and English, participated in World War I, received numerous decorations (Iron Cross, Legion of Honor and several colonial decorations) became sub-prefect in 1926 in Bressuire (Deux-Sèvres) and subsequently in other small towns, working his way up to become the prefect of the Gers department in 1935 and of the Sarthe in 1938. In 1939, he was appointed Director of Control, Accounting and Algerian

⁶⁷ AN F1bI 933. Section Divers, see also Marc Olivier Baruch, “L’épuration du corps préfectoral,” in *Une poignée de misérables. L’épuration de la société française après la Seconde Guerre Mondiale*, ed. Marc Olivier Baruch (Paris: Fayard, 2003), 164-169.

⁶⁸ AN F1bI 932. Commission d’Epuración du Ministère de l’Intérieur Documentation. Letter from the president of the purge commission to the Minister of the Interior about the history of the purge commission, February 15, 1946. And AN F1bI 930. Epuration 1944-46.

⁶⁹ AN F1bI 930. Epuration 1944-46. This file contains the minutes of the purges at the Ministry of the Interior by *département*.

Affairs at the Ministry of the Interior. During the *phony war* of 1939-1940, he represented the Ministry of the Interior at the military censorship in Paris. From August 26, 1940 to April 1942, he was Director of Departmental and Communal Affairs of Vichy France before being appointed regional prefect of the Gironde in Bordeaux. In 1941, Maurice Papon became Sabatier's subordinate and protégé. Papon followed Sabatier to Bordeaux, where Papon was named secretary general of the Gironde and thus became Sabatier's immediate collaborator. The famous Papon affair in the 1980s and 1990s that exposed Papon's role in French complicity in the Holocaust, was a long way off in 1944: the purge commission confirmed Papon's position within the prefectural staff, underlining his "favorable attitude regarding the Resistance" and noting that his new superior wanted him to stay in the position.⁷⁰ It was Sabatier's position in Bordeaux that the newspaper attacked in articles in the fall of 1945. Sabatier was suspended on August 22, 1944 and appeared in front of the purge commission on December 5, 1944. He told one member of the purge commission that he declined to give testimony, which however did not help his case:⁷¹ The commission had received opinions about Sabatier's behavior in Bordeaux from the departmental Liberation committee and the regional commissioner of the Republic in Bordeaux. Based on those reports the members of the purge commission decided that Sabatier was a loyal civil servant to the Vichy government and took advantage of the Vichy government when appointed at the Ministry of the Interior in 1940, but had applied Vichy's circulars less rigorously.⁷² The commission furthermore concluded that he had carried out his job in a purely technical way and that he did not seem to have done anything wrong (*il ne paraît pas avoir démerité*) during the German occupation of France. On the other hand, the commission did not consider him appropriate to hold a political position in the postwar government, deciding to reinstate him in a technical position devoid of any political power with the possibility of later appointment to the council of state.⁷³

Guy Périer de Féral had a similarly long career in the prefectural administration before his career in the Vichy administration. He entered the prefectural service as head of the cabinet of the prefect of Constantine in Algeria in 1919, went to Syria between 1925-1926 as vice-director of the French High Commissioner in Syria's cabinet and was then in charge of the Syrian Ministry of the Interior in the interim.⁷⁴ Périer de Féral continued to hold several positions in France and North Africa, such as prefect of the Aube department and Assistant Director of National Security in 1935, and general inspector of the administration in Algeria in 1936, before being appointed secretary general of the Seine department (the department of Paris and its immediate suburbs before the territorial reform of 1964) in July 1941. It was his fast advancement from prefect second to first class and his position as secretary general of the Seine that made him suspicious in the eyes of the Resistance fighters. The former prefect of the Seine testified to the purge commission that Périer de Féral was "a convinced and active supporter of

⁷⁰ AN F1bI 932. Commission d'Épuration du Ministère de l'Intérieur, Séance du 6/12/1944, dossier Papon.

⁷¹ AN F1bI 932. Commission d'Épuration du Ministère de l'Intérieur, Séance du 5/12/1944, dossier Sabatier.

⁷² AN F1bI 1114. Sabatier, Maurice. Divers. The sub-commission of placement considered Sabatier's nomination to Director of Departmental and Communal Affairs in 1940 and his position as prefect hors-cadre in 1942 abusive and suggests its annulment to the Minister of the Interior on February 27, 1945.

⁷³ AN F1bI 932. Commission d'Épuration du Ministère de l'Intérieur, Documentation, Séance du 2/12/1944, Commission du 5.12.1944.

⁷⁴ AN F/7/15519. Dossier Nr. 7824, Périer de Féral, Guy. Service de Documentation du Conseil d'Etat: Périer de Féral Baron Guy de Schwarz, Conseiller d'Etat.

the new order that he strongly and with all his energy wished for.”⁷⁵ In his files at the Ministry of the Interior, there is a letter that mentions that Marshall Pétain inquired about the possibility to liberate Périer de Féral, prisoner of war in German hands in 1940, and calls him “his friend.”⁷⁶ Périer de Féral also received the “francisque gallique” in February 1942, a Vichy decoration awarded to loyal supporters of Pétain and the “national revolution” (also awarded to Thiallet and Sabatier).⁷⁷ Périer de Féral’s two godfathers for the *francisque* were Magny, the prefect of the Seine department, Périer de Féral’s immediate superior, and Dr. Ménétrel, Pétain’s personal physician and secretary.⁷⁸ According to one newspaper, Périer de Féral was arrested at the Parisian city hall and put in prison during the liberation of Paris. What we know for sure is that he was suspended on August 19, 1944 and this suspension was confirmed on November 3, 1944.⁷⁹ The Parisian committee of Liberation refused for a long time to send an opinion about Périer de Féral’s behavior during the German occupation of France to the purge commission. Very late, its president finally sent a letter to the commission on April 4, 1945 in which he stated that “he does not possess any precise information concerning this state official,” that Périer de Féral had been arrested by the Parisian Liberation Committee and that there was a juridical inquiry.⁸⁰ This inquiry, however, did not charge him with any misconduct at the Seine prefecture and instead painted a more favorable portrait of the man: “on the contrary, numerous attestations by eminent figures and active members of the Résistance proved that Périer de Féral had fought for the Résistance, forwarded information to the Résistance, as well as to the Military Security Service he was moreover a member of.”⁸¹ The purge commission thus decided to simply reintegrate Périer de Féral into the prefectural staff. On top of that, Périer de Féral received a Resistance medal out of the hands of Charles de Gaulle himself in October 1945.⁸²

Emile Marchais participated in the French occupation of Danzig and Silesia and of the Rhineland between 1919 and 1921.⁸³ He started his career in the prefectural administration in 1926 as head of the cabinet to the prefect of the Ardennes department.⁸⁴ He worked his way up the ladder and became sub-prefect of Langres (Haute-Marne) in 1939, where he got into a conflict with the arriving German occupying army and was then sent to Montluçon in the Allier department on November 15, 1940 as sub-prefect. From there, he was appointed *Intendant de*

⁷⁵ AN F1BI 932. Commission d’E.puration du Ministère de l’Intérieur, Documentation, Séance du 5/12/1944, 11: “partisan convaincu et agissant de l’Ordre Nouveau qu’il appelait de tous ses vœux et de toute son énergie.”

⁷⁶ AN F1bi 1105. Périer de Féral, Guy. Dossier de Recommendations. Letter from Président Fédéral of “Les Fils des Tués” Fédération Nationale des Fils des Morts pour la France to an unknown addressee probably at the Ministry of the Interior, October 25, 1940: “mon ami.”

⁷⁷ AN F1bi 933. Commission d’E.puration du Ministère de l’Intérieur (é.puration par corps), Décorés de la “Francisque.” The document has a handwritten “imposé” behind Sabatier’s name.

⁷⁸ AN F/7/15519. Dossier Nr. 7824, Périer de Féral, Guy. Biographie Périer de Féral.

⁷⁹ AN F1bi 1105. Périer de Féral, Dossier 1.7.41 Nommé secrétaire général de la Seine, 20.10.44 suspendu de ses fonctions: Arrêtés des 19-20-23 Octobre 1944, J.O. du 3 Novembre 1944.

⁸⁰ AN F1bi 1105. Périer de Féral. Commission de Reclassement. Monsieur Périer de Féral, November 21, 1945: “il n’avait aucun renseignement précis concernant ce fonctionnaire.”

⁸¹ AN F1bi 1105. Périer de Féral. Commission de Reclassement. Monsieur Périer de Féral, November 21, 1945: “au contraire de nombreuses attestations émanant de personnalités et de Membres actifs de la Résistance, ont prouvé que M. PERIER de FERAL militait lui-même dans la Résistance, à laquelle il fournissait de précieux renseignements, ainsi qu’au service de Sécurité Militaire dont il faisait d’ailleurs partie.”

⁸² AN F1bi 1105. Périer de Féral. Notices Personnelles. Extrait du J.O. Officiel de la République Française du 20 Octobre 1945 Pages 6742 et suivantes. He even had a nickname in the Résistance: “St Germain,” AN F1bi 1105. Périer de Féral. Notices Personnelles, Notification on homologisation des grades F.F.I., June 29, 1945.

⁸³ MAE 1 PL 2956. Marchais, Emile. Notice Individuelle, November 11, 1945.

⁸⁴ For Marchais’ career steps see AN F1bi 1096. Marchais, Emile and AN 1Fbi 806. Marchais, Emile.

Police of Lyon,⁸⁵ a city generally associated with the Gestapo torturer Klaus Barbie and the death of Jean Moulin, an event that took place during his tenure there. In 1945, Marchais would declare that he had been appointed to the position in Lyon against his wishes despite the fact that like the other prefects, he had signed a loyalty oath to Pétain and the Vichy state in 1942 signature.⁸⁶ In September 1943, Marchais again fell afoul of the authorities, with Lyon's prefect, Angeli, and was dispatched to Carcassonne as prefect of the Aude department.⁸⁷ In evaluating his file, the purge commission had to work through a large pile of evaluations. Most of them were positive: The Germans had not liked him, and had forced him to leave Langres in 1940, and had refused him the prefecture of Finistère in 1944.⁸⁸ One of the new sub-prefects of the Liberation backed his anti-German attitude and even quoted a conversation in which Marchais had affirmed that he waited for the day on which the two of them would go occupy the other side of the Rhine River.⁸⁹ The files also contain numerous letters from his time in Montluçon and Lyon that raised no grievances against Marchais "from the national or political point of view."⁹⁰ The only complaint came from Carcassonne, where he was accused of a passive attitude in regards to the Resistance, excepting the fact that he had attempted to join at the last minute, eight days before Liberation, when the Resistance was no longer recruiting.⁹¹ The purge commission concluded that "the only grievances that could be held against Monsieur Marchais, are that he had accepted the appointment as Intendant de Police and then Prefect by the factual government of Vichy, and to had not shown a strongly positive activity in favor of the Resistance."⁹² In the end, Aimé Jeanjean, the president of the commission, signed Marchais' purge report allowing him to stay in the prefectural administration, but in a non-political position.⁹³

Unlike the others, **Francis Thiallet** was not a long-time member of the prefectural staff, a fact that eventually cost him his position in the purge commission. Nevertheless, he had held many different positions. Having marched into Germany at the end of World War I as a soldier

⁸⁵ Intendant de police under Vichy: prefects responsible for the preservation of order and the possibly the policing of the unpopular *Service de Travail Obligatoire* for Germany.

⁸⁶ AN F1bI 1096. Marchais, Emile. Professionnel, Notice individuelle, April 5, 1945. AN F1bI 806 Marchais, Emile. Personnel, Etat Français, Préfecture Régionale de Clermont-Ferrand, Prestation de Serment de Fidélité, June 5, 1942.

⁸⁷ AN F1bI 1096. Marchais, Emile. Elements à décharge, Letter from Le Commissaire du Pouvoir Sarraz-Bournst to Monsieur le Chef du Gouvernement on Conflit entre le Préfet régional de Lyon et l'Intendant de Police, Vichy June 1, 1943.

⁸⁸ AN F1bI 1096. Marchais, Emile. Propositions de la Commission d'Epuration (séance du 4 Avril 1945), M. Jeanjean, Commission d'Epuration du Ministère de l'Intérieur (Sous-Commission de l'Administration Centrale et Préfectorale) and AN F1bI 1096 Marchais, Emile. Elements à décharge, Letter from Préfet de l'Ariège à Ministre Secrétaire d'Etat à l'Intérieur, March 5 1941.

⁸⁹ AN F1bI 1096. Marchais, Emile. Elements à décharge, Sous-Préfecture de Montluçon (Allier), Attestation from the sub-prefect of Montluçon Paul CLEIRENS, November 9, 1944.

⁹⁰ AN F1bI 806. Marchais, Emile. Promotions, Mutations, Note relative au remplacement de M. Marchais, Secrétaire Général du Wurtemberg: "au point de vue national ou politique."

⁹¹ AN F1bI 1096. Marchais, Emile. Elements à décharge, Letter from Directeur du Personnel to Monsieur le Préfet de l'Aude on Enquête sur l'attitude politique et nationale de M. Marchais, ancien préfet de l'Aude, January 16, 1946.

⁹² AN F1bI 1096. Marchais, Emile. Propositions de la Commission d'Epuration (séance du 4 Avril 1945), M. Jeanjean, Commission d'Epuration du Ministère de l'Intérieur (Sous-Commission de l'Administration Centrale et Préfectorale): "les seuls griefs qui peuvent être retenus contre M. Marchais sont d'avoir accepté d'être nommé Intendant de Police, puis Préfet par le Gouvernement de fait de Vichy."

⁹³ AN F1bI 1096. Marchais, Emile. Propositions de la Commission d'Epuration (séance du 4 Avril 1945), M. Jeanjean, Commission d'Epuration du Ministère de l'Intérieur (Sous-Commission de l'Administration Centrale et Préfectorale).

of the French army, he decided to stay and occupy the country as a member of the Interallied Rhineland Commission in Coblenz until the staff reduction in the context of the Locarno Treaty forced him to go back to France in 1925. He then became a banker and supervisor of the *Credit Foncier d'Algérie et de Tunisie* in Northern Africa. In the 1930s, he kept his links with the army and worked in the army's intelligence service in Southern France at the Italian front at the outbreak of World War II and beyond. On December 31, 1942, the Vichy Ministry of the Interior appointed him *Intendant de Police* of Rennes in Brittany, promoted by his friend from the interwar Rhineland occupation, Jean Rivalland, secretary general of the police under Vichy. The Vichy decoration, *francisque gallique*, followed on August 10, 1943. Thiallet advanced rapidly through the different salary levels. Within a little over a year of service in Rennes, the Vichy government awarded to Thiallet the rank of a prefect third class in January 1944. During his time in Rennes, the Ministry of the Interior even called him to Vichy for a month or two to help reorganize the department of Jewish Affairs.⁹⁴ A 1945 evaluation of Thiallet's behavior during the German occupation furthermore mentions an interview Thiallet gave to the pro-German newspaper "La Bretagne" in which he claimed that he had left his civilian profession in order to "better serve the Marshal [Pétain]".⁹⁵ The evaluation also stated that Thiallet had given orders to hang a portrait of Pétain in every police station in Brittany and that he had surrounded himself with Pétain supporters in Rennes. The German occupiers appreciated Thiallet as a "man of duty," especially because of the excellent German language skills Thiallet had acquired during his stay in the occupied Rhineland in the interwar period. Thiallet himself claimed he had accepted the position in Rennes only in order to continue the fight against the Germans and that he had resigned in the spring of 1944 because he had opposed the new Vichy head of police, Darnand. The purge commission considered Thiallet an intruder in the ranks of the Ministry of the Interior and therefore repealed his appointment as *Intendant de Police 3e classe* and other "diverse appointments Monsieur Thiallet benefitted from" on January 16, 1945.⁹⁶ Thiallet was thus dismissed and – because he asked for it – sent back to the French army.⁹⁷

Jean Cabouat was in all regards an "old fighter." Severely injured in the last months of World War I, which he had entered in 1916 as a volunteer, he received a Legion of Honor decoration and an Iron Cross in 1920 – to compensate for his 60% invalidity. Cabouat became sub-prefect of Bar-sur-Seine in the Aube department in 1926, then in Montbéliard, Soissons, and Meaux before being appointed prefect of the Lot department in 1937. The new Vichy government appointed him prefect of the Creuse department in central France on September 4, 1940 and of the Aude department on the Spanish border on June 21, 1942. In August 1942, the Ministry of the Interior recruited Cabouat as special adviser of the General Directorate of Economic Control – apparently because he disapproved the presence of the *Service d'Ordre*

⁹⁴ AN F1bI 853. Thiallet, Francis. Intendant de Police Région de Rennes, Letter from Le Chef du Gouvernement Ministre Secrétaire d'Etat à l'Intérieur to Monsieur le Préfet de Seine et Oise, Versailles and Note from Bureau du Personnel Ministère de l'Intérieur June 13, 1942.

⁹⁵ AN F1bI 1119. Thiallet, Francis. Intendant de la Police de la Région Rennes, Epuration. Note de renseignement concernant M. Thiallet, ex-intendant de Police de Rennes, Orléans, February 3, 1945: "mieux servir le Maréchal [Pétain]."

⁹⁶ AN F1bI 1119. Thiallet, Francis. Intendant de la Police de la Région Rennes, Reclassement. La Sous-Commission de Reclassement des fonctionnaires de l'Administration Centrale et Préfectorale, no date: "diverses nominations dont a bénéficié M. Thiallet." See also AN F1bI 932 Commission d'Epuration du Ministère de l'Intérieur, Documentation, Séance du 16/1/1945.

⁹⁷ AN F1bI 1119. Thiallet, Francis. Intendant de la Police de la Région Rennes, Epuration. La Sous-Commission de Reclassement des fonctionnaires de l'Administration Centrale et Préfectorale, no date. And Francis Thiallet, *Au soir d'une longue vie* (Antibes: Collection du Centre de l'Autoédition, 1989), 46.

Légionnaire (SOL), a precursor of the collaborationist *Milice*, in his department.⁹⁸ The local Liberation committee of Creuse and Aude would later say that Cabouat had “servilely executed the orders of Vichy” and “removed numerous civil servants from their offices and interned militant patriots.”⁹⁹ However, Cabouat, whose rather authoritarian behavior his superiors often underlined in his yearly evaluations, sought to prove that the accusations were wrong.¹⁰⁰ If he had removed people from their offices, he argued, their removal had purely professional and not political reasons.¹⁰¹ Cabouat was furthermore married to a Jewish woman - herself daughter of a prefect - and his son was member of the Resistance.¹⁰² In April 1944, three Resistance members, Michel Debré, Alexandre Parodi, and Emile Laffon, the later head of the military government in French occupied Germany, approached Cabouat and offered him the position of Liberation prefect of the Pas-de-Calais department. Cabouat accepted and made his way to Northern France where he lived in secrecy from May 8 to September 1, 1944 to prepare the administration of this key department for the post-war.¹⁰³ In September 1944, he became one of the first prefects of the Liberation. But as soon as the news about his appointment spread, the Liberation committees from Aude and Creuse where he had been prefect under Vichy started to complain: “We affirm that at the time when the wind blew from Vichy, he was the brutal auxiliary of the government that employed him,” stated the Aude department’s Liberation committee.¹⁰⁴ And the *Creusois* affirmed: “The population of Creuse does not like Monsieur Cabouat and he left such an impression here that even today the people still fear him.”¹⁰⁵ The people from the Aude department suggested arresting Cabouat whereas the *Creusois* merely opposed that a Vichy prefect was now gainfully employed in the Pas-de-Calais.¹⁰⁶ The population of Pas-de-Calais also started to wonder about the Vichy background of their new prefect. A socialist member of the local commission of the Liberation wrote to the Ministry of the Interior in November 1944

⁹⁸ AN F1bI 1127. Cabouat, Jean. CDL de la Creuse, Préfet de l’Hérault, Mémoire de l’intéressé. Letter from Préfet Aude to Commissaire République Montpellier, October 17, 1944. And AN F1bI 1127 Cabouat, Jean. CDL de la Creuse, Préfet de l’Hérault, Mémoire de l’intéressé. Letter from Cabouat to Monsieur le Ministre de l’Intérieur, Directeur du Personnel, November 20, 1944.

For more information about the SOL see Jean-Paul Cointet, *La légion française des combattants: la tentation du fascisme 1940-1944* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1995).

⁹⁹ AN F1bI 736. Cabouat, Jean. Disposition du Secrétaire Général pour les Affaires Allemandes et Autrichiennes, Monsieur Cabouat, November 28, 1945: “exécuté servilement les ordres de Vichy,” “avoir relevé de nombreux fonctionnaires de leurs fonctions et fait interner des militants patriotes.”

¹⁰⁰ AN F1bI 1127. Cabouat, Jean. Notes. Etat Français, Ministère de l’Intérieur, Renseignements sur Cabouat Jean, Michel, Adrien, Préfet de l’Aude, June 15, 1942: “sait se faire obéir en se faisant craindre 1942.”

¹⁰¹ AN F1bI 736. Cabouat, Jean. Disposition du Secrétaire Général pour les Affaires Allemandes et Autrichiennes, Monsieur Cabouat, November 28, 1945.

¹⁰² AN F1bI 736. Cabouat, Jean. Personnel, D Notes Annuelles. Déclaration en vue de l’application de la Loi du 3 Octobre 1940 sur le statut des juifs, December 28, 1940.

¹⁰³ AN F1bI 1127. Cabouat, Jean. CDL de la Creuse, Préfet de l’Hérault, Mémoire de l’intéressé. Letter from Cabouat to Monsieur le Ministre de l’Intérieur, Directeur du Personnel, November 20, 1944.

¹⁰⁴ AN F1bI 1127. Cabouat, Jean. Epuration, Pièces à charge. Letter from J.P. Biscay, Secrétaire de l’Inspection Académique à Montpellier to Monsieur le Ministre de l’Intérieur, March 10, 1945: “à l’époque où le vent soufflait de Vichy, il était l’auxiliaire brutal du gouvernement qu’il employait.”

¹⁰⁵ AN F1bI 1127. Cabouat, Jean. Epuration, Pièces à charge. Letter from Le Commissaire Spécial – Chef du Service des R.G. de la Creuse à Guéret to Monsieur le Préfet de la Creuse à Guéret, December 9, 1944: “Le sieur Cabouat n’est pas aimé de la population creusoise. Il a laissé une telle impression que les gens le craignent aujourd’hui encore.”

¹⁰⁶ AN F1bI 1127. Cabouat, Jean. Epuration, Pièces à charge. Prefecture de la Creuse, Comité de Libération, PROTESTATION adopté à l’unanimité à la séance du 20 Septembre 1944.

and requested a prefect with stronger roots in the Resistance against Nazi Germany.¹⁰⁷ The rumors resulted in Cabouat's case being discussed by the purge commission, some of whose members were prefects appointed shortly after Liberation like had had been.¹⁰⁸ The committee needed two meetings to discuss his case and to weigh incriminating and exonerating statements and eventually decided on his "maintenance without observation" in the ranks of the Ministry of the Interior on February 9, 1945.¹⁰⁹

Finally, **Jean Lacombe** entered the administration in 1931. His father was director of the financial services and the personnel of the Ministry of Education and formerly prefect of the Corrèze department, as well as sub-prefect of Montmorillon and Lunéville. The son emulated his father and became sub-prefect himself in 1936 and head of the cabinet of the secretary general of the Algerian general government in 1937 before the new Vichy government appointed him first secretary general of the Seine-et-Oise department in October 1940, and then delegate prefect of Marseille in November 1941. The German *Sicherheitsdienst* (SD – Safety Service, the Nazi civilian foreign intelligence agency and a branch of the SS) wrote a note about Lacombe's time in Marseille, which stated that he was "pre-eminently known for his anti-Semitic attitude, which is why he repeatedly got into difficulties with his superiors at the Ministry of the Interior. He is also considered supporter of the Franco-German rapprochement."¹¹⁰ Unfortunately – or fortunately for Lacombe – the French found this incriminating document only in 1947 at the Hotel Majestic, the German headquarters of occupied Paris, by which time Lacombe had been made the successful paymaster general of the French occupation zone in Germany. No action seems to have been taken against him then – even if the French Ministry of the Interior knew those accusations and the Ministry of Justice suggested a sanction.¹¹¹

In February 1942, the Ministry of the Interior entrusted Lacombe with the Interministerial Protection Service Against War Events (SIPEG) where he was responsible for protecting the French civilians from Allied bombings and for coordinating civilian evacuations from war zones, especially after the landing of the Allies.¹¹² He stayed in this position until his suspension on August 19, 1944. In March 1945, the purge commission to which his case was transferred noted that the Vichy government had not promoted him particularly rapidly. And although Lacombe had not been a member of the Résistance, the commission recognized that he had performed "in a certain sense a purely technical function" as head of the SIPEG.¹¹³ The purge commission therefore decided to delay Lacombe's reinstatement into the prefectural administration for up to

¹⁰⁷ AN F1bI 1127. Cabouat, Jean. Divers. Note for the Ministre de l'Intérieur on Affaire Cabouat, November 4, 1944.

¹⁰⁸ AN F1bI 1127. Cabouat, Jean. Divers. Note from Laffon to the Ministre de l'Intérieur, Cas de Monsieur Cabois [sic], November 4, 1944.

¹⁰⁹ AN F1bI 1127. Cabouat, Jean. Professionnel, Postes occupés, documents 1942-1947. La Sous-Commission de Reclassement des Fonctionnaires de l'administration centrale et préfectorale, Séance du 9 Février 1945: "Maintien sans observation."

¹¹⁰ AN F1bI 1088. Lacombe, Jean. Divers, Letter from Der Beauftragte des Chefs der Sicherheitspolizei und des SD für den Bereich des Militärbefehlshaber Frankreich to Militärbefehlshaber in Frankreich, Verwaltungsstab, May 13, 1942: "vor allem durch seine anti-semitische Einstellung bekannt geworden, weshalb er wieder holt [sic] Schwierigkeiten mit seinen Vorgesetzten im Innenministerium hatte."

¹¹¹ AN F1bI 1088. Lacombe, Jean. Divers, Letter from Le Garde des Sceaux, Ministre de la Justice to Ministre de l'Intérieur, August 11, 1947.

¹¹² See also Julia Torrie, *For Their Own Good: Civilian Evacuations in Germany and France* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2010), 91.

¹¹³ AN F1bI 1088. Lacombe Jean. Commission d'Épuration du Ministère de l'Intérieur, March 14, 1945: "dans une certaine mesure un caractère purement technique."

three years while it “did not see any objection” to appoint Lacombe at a technical service or to the Ministry of Reconstruction.¹¹⁴

In the early summer of 1945 all of the six Vichy civil servants had been purged. One of them, Guy Périet de Féral, became a decorated *Résistant*, whereas Cabouat initially came out of the occupation relatively unscathed, but subsequently failed as Liberation prefect of Pas-de-Calais, due to his activities in the Vichy administration. Lacombe, Sabatier and Marchais were reinstated but the purge commission downgraded them to a purely technical position, and finally Francis Thiallet, the Vichy parvenu, was banned from the Ministry of the Interior altogether. All of them were looking for a new position.

To Germany

How could those former Vichy officials end up in the French zone of Germany after World War II? And why did the French administration choose those tainted administrators to democratize the Germans?

First of all, while all these Vichy administrators were tainted to varying degrees by their administrative involvement with the collaborationist regime, they were not among top-tier Vichy administrators. After the war, the highest-level Vichy ministers, many of whom had found refuge between September 1944 and April 1945 in another idyllic German town, Sigmaringen, only 90 miles southeast of Baden-Baden, had been tried and sent to prison. In the case of the ministers of the interior, they had even received death penalties.¹¹⁵ The Vichy administrators who went to occupied Germany after the war were either second or third row technocrats in the ministries, or had held positions in municipalities rather than in the main control centers of decision making.

The purge commission did not send them to prison but instead whitewashed their backgrounds. Admittedly, the purge commission did not have an easy job establishing “the truth” about the life and behavior of the Vichy officials on the basis of contradictory testimonies – and especially the insufficient documentation: Lacombe’s anti-Semitism and pro-German attitude, for example, remained undiscovered until 1947 and the purge commission could not take this information into account. Or in the case of Sabatier, the commission failed to inquire about his role in the deportation of Jews, a question only raised much later. “It seemed as if he did not

¹¹⁴ AN F1bI 1088. Lacombe Jean. Commission d’Epuraton du Ministère de l’Intérieur, March 14, 1945: “ne formule aucune objection.”

¹¹⁵ For literature on purges in France, see the classic Peter Novick, *The Resistance versus Vichy: The Purge of Collaborators in Liberated France* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1968) and a more recent work: Jean-Paul Cointet, *Expier Vichy: l’épuration en France (1943-1958)* (Paris: Perrin, 2008) as well as a study focused on the purges of the French administration: François Rouquet, *Une épuration ordinaire (1944-1949): Petits et grands collaborateurs de l’administration française* (Paris: CNRS éditions, 2011). The context of those legal purges constitutes the ‘wild purges.’ Fabrice Virgili, *Shorn Women: Gender and punishment in Liberation France* (London: Berg Publishers, 2002) and Philippe Bourdrel, *L’Epuraton sauvage (1944–1945)* (Paris: Perrin, 1991). The research on the purges in France does often not focus on the period between the purges and the reappearance and reintegration of the purged in the society.

For the literature on the Vichy government’s last refuge in Sigmaringen, see: Henry Rousso, *Un château en Allemagne: Sigmaringen, 1944-1945* (Paris: Pluriel, 2012) (first published as *Un château en Allemagne: La France de Pétain en exil, Sigmaringen 1944-1945* (Paris: Ramsay, 1980); Jean-Paul Cointet, *Sigmaringen. Une France En Allemagne (Septembre 1944-Avril 1945)* (Paris: Perrin, 2003). Also, see for a literary account of the Vichy government in Sigmaringen, Louis-Ferdinand Celine’s famous *Castle to Castle* (New York City: Delacorte, 1968) (Louis-Ferdinand Céline, *D’un château l’autre* (Paris: Gallimard, 1958).

have French blood in France on his hands,” recalled one of his future colleagues in Baden-Baden.¹¹⁶

The substantial experience most of the administrators had acquired in various prefectures or ministries, governments and task forces made them experienced organizers and technicians of a variety of functions within an administration. This was important for their appointment in Germany. One of the reports about the former Vichy prefects in the French zone of occupation for example explicitly underlined this fact, stressing that he was “is not an improvised civil servant of the Vichy government, but belonging well to the permanent cadre of the Ministry of the Interior.”¹¹⁷

Though not at the very highest rung, having obtained the rank of prefect ranked them among the most prestigious civil servants of the French state – all in all there were only around 250 prefects in France. Throughout their careers, they all had received excellent yearly reviews, which certified in great detail the prefect’s or sub-prefect’s expertise. The reports commented on their education, their family background, their education, their marital status (including the quality of their wives’ hostessing skills and their housekeeping), their moral and professional value, the languages they spoke, their religion, and more.

As experienced as they were, the fact remained that these six administrators were a visible and uncomfortable reminder of the Vichy regime. As the case of Jean Cabouat in Pas-de-Calais proves, the former Vichy officials could not be employed in the same high positions of the administration within France after the Liberation. The French at the Liberation needed “a prefect who resisted a little more” as one representative from Pas-de-Calais put it.¹¹⁸ And even a decorated *Résistant* like Guy Périer de Féral was not appointed to a new position in prefecture. Adrien Tixier, the new French Minister of the Interior, commented on Cabouat’s case and stated that it “stays controversial and debatable and his nomination at a position on the territory [of metropolitan France] is inopportune.”¹¹⁹ In this quotation, Adrien Tixier alludes to a solution the Ministry of the Interior practiced quite often: the former Vichy administrators were sent outside of the metropole – invisible to the French population’s eyes – as a way to avoid trouble. Two of the above cited newspaper articles published in the fall of 1945 highlight Tixier’s solution to park men with troublesome backgrounds in Germany. One of them even quotes Tixier verbatim: “I send to Germany all those who bother me in Paris...”¹²⁰

An important figure involved in selecting personnel for the French occupation in Germany was General Louis Koeltz. Charles de Gaulle appointed him head of the Military Mission for German Affairs (MMAA) in November 1944. Born in 1884, and like Grandval of Alsatian descent, Koeltz had already served as an expert in German affairs from 1917 onwards

¹¹⁶ SHD, Archives orales, 3 K 49, Bolotte. Entretien 2, page 12: “Il n’avait pas de sang français en France sur les mains semblait-il.” Bolotte did this interview in 1997 when Papon was finally put to trial.

¹¹⁷ MAE 1 PL 2459 A 2460. Lacombe, Jean. Intelligence note on Jean Lacombe: “Ce n’est donc pas un fonctionnaire improvisé par le Gouvernement de Vichy, mais appartenant bien au Cadre permanent du Ministère de l’Intérieur.”

¹¹⁸ AN F1bI 1127. Cabouat, Jean. André Blumel to Minister of the Interior, Affair Cabouat, November 4, 1944: “il faut [...] un préfet plus résistant.”

¹¹⁹ AN F1bI 1127. Cabouat, Jean. Note from Minister of the Interior Tixier to M. Morin, Situation of M. Cabouat, former prefect of the Somme department, July 22, 1945: “demeure discuté et discutable, et sa désignation à un poste territorial est inopportune à l’heure actuelle.”

¹²⁰ “Pourquoi nous perdons la bataille de l’occupation,” *Front National*: “J’envoie en Allemagne tous ceux qui m’embarrassent à Paris...” See also: Jacques-Francis Rolland, “La Faillite De Baden-Baden. L’Administration française en Allemagne est peuplée de Rescapés de Vichy,” *Ce Soir*. November 17, 1945.

when he joined the German section of the French intelligence service and translated German texts. After World War I, Koeltz was a member of the French occupation of the bridgehead of Kehl, close to Strasbourg, before spending several months as military attaché in Berlin in 1930. He returned to the army staff as head of the intelligence service. After the French defeat in 1940 – and this is what the journalists in the fall of 1945 pointed to – he continued to serve in leading positions in the French Vichy army. He was member of the Armistice Commission in Wiesbaden and subsequently fought in the Middle East and North Africa – on the Vichy side, *nota bene*. *Front National* wrote that he “distinguished himself in Syria, then in North Africa, where he gave orders to the French troops to open fire on the landing American troops.”¹²¹ Because of this order, the Americans briefly imprisoned Koeltz in Algiers.¹²² In the postwar period, Koeltz became permanent representative of France at the Allied Commission in Berlin. And it was he who appointed many former Vichy officials to their positions in the French zone. As one article put it, “[t]hose who were too “burnt” [during the Vichy regime] were pushed through with the help of General Koeltz, organizer of the executives in Germany [...]”¹²³

To take one example, Francis Thiallet, the only relative newcomer in the Vichy administration, who had been dismissed by the purge commission from the staff of the Ministry of the Interior, contacted General Koeltz in the winter of 1944/45. As Thiallet recalls in his autobiography, he knew that Koeltz was looking for officers for a training facility that prepared administrators for the new French occupation of German territory.¹²⁴ This training facility was run by a sub-organization of Koeltz’s MMAA called AMFA (*Administration militaire française en Allemagne*).¹²⁵ It offered several cycles of training courses in the winter and spring of 1944/45 to prepare future administrators for their task in Germany. Freshly purged Francis Thiallet, the former police intendant in German-occupied Rennes, saw himself as qualified for “rendering appreciable services” in “analogue circumstances” because of the position he had held in the administration during the Rhineland occupation after World War I and because of the experience he had gained in the field of administration.¹²⁶ General Koeltz must have felt the same way, because Thiallet not only took part in those courses but was hired by Koeltz as an instructor. The guidelines for the recruitment of officers for the MMAA spoke for Thiallet’s employment: “The recruitment of the personnel should be immediately urged a) amongst those officers who studied German studies; b) among those officers and non-commissioned officers who perfectly speak the German language; c) among those state officials of the different departments, especially for certain important technical positions.”¹²⁷ The AMFA classes took four weeks and covered a wide

¹²¹ J.-P. Penez, “Le ‘tout-Vichy’ à Baden-Baden où un protégé de Darnand applique la justice,” *Front National*, November 15, 1945: “s’illustra d’ailleurs en Syrie, puis en Afrique du Nord où il donna l’ordres aux troupes françaises d’ouvrir le feu sur les troupes américaines qui débarquaient.”

¹²² Jacques-Francis Rolland, “La faillite de Baden-Baden. L’Administration française en Allemagne est peuplée de rescapés de Vichy,” *Ce Soir*. November 17, 1945.

¹²³ Jacques-Francis Rolland, “La faillite de Baden-Baden. L’administration française en Allemagne est peuplée de rescapés de Vichy,” *Ce Soir*. November 17, 1945: “Ceux qui étaient par trop ‘brûlés’ ont été repêchés par les soins du général Koeltz, organisateur des cadres en Allemagne.”

¹²⁴ Francis Thiallet, *Au soir d’une longue vie* (Antibes: Collection du Centre de l’Autoédition, 1989), 46.

¹²⁵ The French love abbreviations and it is sometimes very difficult to decipher in retrospect how the administration of the occupied zone worked.

¹²⁶ Francis Thiallet, *Au soir d’une longue vie* (Antibes: Collection du Centre de l’Autoédition, 1989), 46.

¹²⁷ SHD 4 Q 12. Etat-Major de la Défense Nationale 1944-1949. Proposition concerning the organization of a French Military Mission to govern the German occupied territories, Etat-Major de la Défense Nationale, 1ère Section, no date: “Le recrutement du personnel serait à pousser d’urgence: a) parmi les Officiers ayant suivi les cours des Hautes Etudes Germaniques, b) parmi les officiers et sous-officiers connaissant parfaitement la langue

range of topics: besides attending German and also English language classes, the trainees attended talks of high-ranked specialists on Germany. Ambassador Noel, for example, spoke about the French occupation of Germany in the interwar period, while André Siegfried, member of the Académie Française, gave an introduction to German civilization. A law professor discussed the laws of occupation and high-ranked army officers from France as well as from Great Britain and the United States introduced the trainees to the organization of the administration on the ground in Germany.¹²⁸ It was also during those training courses that the distribution of positions took place, recalled Francis Thiallet in his memoirs.¹²⁹ Thiallet himself was appointed one of the first heads of the military government and administered the civilians of the city and the county of Speyer in the Palatinate from March 31, 1945 onwards.¹³⁰

Not all administrators had to go through this preparatory training,¹³¹ but some of the Vichy officials did, for example the future head of the economy of the French zone of occupation, Jean Filippi, or Marcel Chapron, responsible for the personnel and general administration. Since the organization of French occupied Germany resembled the territorial organization in metropolitan France – with three regions Rhineland-Palatinate, Baden, and Württemberg subdivided into *Kreise* or *cercles* – the task should have been manageable for the experienced administrators. Therefore, many future occupiers did not attend the training program.¹³²

The recruitment of personnel under Koeltz' MMAA was slow to get started. In March 1945, when the French army had already crossed the Rhine river, only 300 French officers had been recruited to govern the occupied territory.¹³³ Personnel was not easy to find because the ministries in Paris wanted to save their best administrators for the monumental task of rebuilding of metropolitan France, not for the occupation of the defeated former occupier.¹³⁴ Recruitment took place hastily, and some members of the occupying administration were therefore employed without a thorough background check.¹³⁵ Emile Laffon, head of the civilian government of the

allemande, c) parmi les fonctionnaires des différents départements notamment pour certains postes techniques importants.”

¹²⁸ BDIC Nanterre, F delta 1346. Fonds Jacque Delarue: Cours organisés par l'Administration militaire française en Allemagne et destinés aux fonctionnaires français partant en Allemagne pour créer des services de sûreté en zone française d'occupation, 1945.

¹²⁹ Francis Thiallet, *Au soir d'une longue vie* (Antibes: Collection du Centre de l'Autoédition, 1989), 47.

¹³⁰ Francis Thiallet, *Au soir d'une longue vie* (Antibes: Collection du Centre de l'Autoédition, 1989), 47.

¹³¹ Rehtal, “Avons-nous une politique allemande?” *La Réforme*, November 3, 1945.

¹³² Archives Sciences Po Paris, Fonds Bolotte. Dossier 1, Allemagne 1945-1946, Divers documents. Zone Française d'occupation: “[Ces districts] correspondant à peu près aux départements français et des délégués de cercle (Kreis) équivalent de l'arrondissement.”

¹³³ Dietmar Hüser, *Frankreichs “doppelte Deutschlandpolitik:” Dynamik aus der Defensive - Planen, Entscheiden, Umsetzen in Gesellschaftlichen und Wirtschaftlichen, Innen- und Aussenpolitischen Krisenzeiten: 1944-1950* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1996), 117.

¹³⁴ Archives Sciences Po Paris. Fonds Grimaud. GRI 4. Dossier 1. Occupation en Allemagne 1945-1947. 2ème dossier: Problèmes et polémiques. Documents administratifs 1945-1947. Rapport de l'Administrateur Général Adjoint pour le Gouvernement Militaire de la Zone Française d'Occupation to Monsieur le Général de Corps d'Armée Commandant en Chef Français en Allemagne, Baden-Baden, September 17, 1945, 2. See for France's focus on the reconstruction of France and domestic policies in the aftermath of the war: Dietmar Hüser, *Frankreichs “doppelte Deutschlandpolitik:” Dynamik aus der Defensive - Planen, Entscheiden, Umsetzen in Gesellschaftlichen und Wirtschaftlichen, Innen- und Aussenpolitischen Krisenzeiten: 1944-1950* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1996).

¹³⁵ There were, for instance, secretaries who could not do shorthand, Laffon complained. Or drivers unable to drive. While this article focuses on the high government officials that had been employed in the Vichy regime and in occupied Germany and could stay because of their expertise in matters of administration, it is important to note that this was just the tip of the iceberg of tainted French employees in occupied Germany. Laffon stated that he had sent

French zone (confusingly called *gouvernement militaire*, military government) complained in a secret personal report to General Koenig, French commander-in-chief in Germany, in September 1945 about the MMAA's recruitment policies, highlighting the "hurried... choices without a serious control."¹³⁶ Laffon also criticized the MMAA's decision to organize recruitment from the bottom up, leaving the choice of the members of the occupation administration for the heads of departments in the zone, which then had to decide at the very last minute about the personnel for the most critically important administrative positions.¹³⁷

The many institutions in Paris and Baden-Baden involved with the occupation added to the complexity of decision making, leaving room for loopholes and internal selection of the personnel for Germany.¹³⁸ The MMAA, as well as its successor organization, the Interministerial Committee for German and Austrian Affairs (CIAAA founded in July 1945), had difficulties asserting itself as a control center and mediator between the different ministries in Paris (each of which had their own department of German Affairs – and interests) and the nascent French occupation administration in Germany. The latter had its own conflicts, notably the quarrel about administrative responsibilities in the zone between its two main bodies – the military under General Koenig, and the civilian government headed by Emile Laffon.¹³⁹ This furthered this chaotic recruitment method and thus some administrators obtained their positions through informal networks in Paris and Baden-Baden. The Minister of the Interior, Tixier, thus took

around forty officers who were "incompetent or whose performance had been considered inadmissible." See Archives Sciences Po Paris. Fonds Grimaud. GRI 4. Dossier 1. Occupation en Allemagne 1945-1947. 2ème dossier: Problèmes et polémiques. Documents administratifs 1945-1947. Rapport de l'Administrateur Général Adjoint pour le Gouvernement Militaire de la Zone Française d'Occupation to Monsieur le Général de Corps d'Armée Commandant en Chef Français en Allemagne, Baden-Baden, September 17, 1945, 2-3.

¹³⁶ Archives Sciences Po Paris. Fonds Grimaud. GRI 4. Dossier 1. Occupation en Allemagne 1945-1947. 2ème dossier: Problèmes et polémiques. Documents administratifs 1945-1947. Rapport de l'Administrateur Général Adjoint pour le Gouvernement Militaire de la Zone Française d'Occupation to Monsieur le Général de Corps d'Armée Commandant en Chef Français en Allemagne, Baden-Baden, September 17, 1945, 2: "choix... hatifs sans un sérieux contrôle."

¹³⁷ Archives Sciences Po Paris. Fonds Grimaud. GRI 4. Dossier 1. Occupation en Allemagne 1945-1947. 2ème dossier: Problèmes et polémiques. Documents administratifs 1945-1947. Rapport de l'Administrateur Général Adjoint pour le Gouvernement Militaire de la Zone Française d'Occupation to Monsieur le Général de Corps d'Armée Commandant en Chef Français en Allemagne, Baden-Baden, September 17, 1945, 2.

¹³⁸ The historiography on the French occupation in Germany has underlined that the veritable patchwork of the French administration also had positive effects. See Alain Lattard, "Zielkonflikte französischer Besatzungspolitik in Deutschland. Der Streit Laffon-Koenig 1945-1947," *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* (1991): 4. The administrative patchwork left room for initiatives with regard to the French social policies, the culture or the creation of unions. See for instance Rainer Hudemann, *Sozialpolitik im Deutschen Südwesten zwischen Tradition und Neuordnung, 1945-1953: Sozialversicherung und Kriegsopfersversorgung im Rahmen Französischer Besatzungspolitik* (Mainz: v. Hase & Koehler, 1988), Defrance, Corine, *La Politique Culturelle de la France sur la rive gauche du Rhin, 1945-1955* (Strasbourg: Presses Universitaires de Strasbourg, 1994), Alain Lattard, *Gewerkschaften und Arbeitgeber in Rheinland-Pfalz unter französischer Besatzung 1945 - 1949*, Veröffentlichungen der Kommission des Landtages für die Geschichte des Landes Rheinland-Pfalz 11 (Mainz: v. Hase u. Koehler, 1988), and Dietmar Hüser, *Frankreichs "doppelte Deutschlandpolitik": Dynamik aus der Defensive - Planen, Entscheiden, Umsetzen in Gesellschaftlichen und Wirtschaftlichen, Innen- und Aussenpolitischen Krisenzeiten: 1944-1950* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1996).

¹³⁹ For the notorious conflict between General Koenig and Emile Laffon, see for instance Alain Lattard, "Zielkonflikte französischer Besatzungspolitik in Deutschland. Der Streit Laffon-Koenig 1945-1947," *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* (1991): 1-35. The literature suggests that Koenig was more conservative in his views of Germany, while Laffon was portrayed as almost a socialist, who had progressive but realistic ideas and opted for a more radical change of Germany.

advantage of the existing chaos to accomplish his goal of exiling to Germany those who bothered him in Paris.¹⁴⁰

Even members of the *Résistance* hired former Vichy-administrators. The future head of the civilian administration of the French zone in Germany, Emile Laffon, himself a civilian, was a trained mining engineer, had joined the *Résistance* in 1942, and had become a member of the Department of the Interior of the French provisional government in London. He was appointed General Director of the Ministry of the Interior in 1944. In this position, Laffon came to know all of the former prefects and could pick and choose his collaborators for occupying Germany.¹⁴¹ While he gathered a group of younger administrators from the *Résistance* around him, he also selected former Vichy prefects because of their administrative experience.

The case of Emile Lacombe illustrates this practice: Lacombe's file includes a paper about his situation in the summer of 1945. It states that his experience at the SIPEC where he was able to show his talents as "excellent organizer" encouraged the Ministry of the Interior to give him a technical position in Algeria – because Lacombe "knew the problems of Northern Africa very well."¹⁴² But since no position was available for Lacombe in Algeria, the Ministry decided – at Emile Laffon's request via Maurice Sabatier (another former Vichy official, who was then already General Administrator of the French zone in Germany) – to send Lacombe to Germany.¹⁴³ The Ministry of the Interior's reasoning refers to Lacombe's great expertise in matters of administration: "Monsieur Lacombe is indeed one of the civil servants of the prefectural staff with the best qualities as administrator. It is probably he who can [...] set up and organize a service."¹⁴⁴

Likewise, Laffon mentioned in a defense of Jean Cabouat, the fallen Liberation prefect of Pas-de-Calais that Cabouat possessed "sound qualities, courage, bravery and intelligence" and was "one of our best prefects" (as he doubly underlined).¹⁴⁵ Laffon added: "We are much too low on men to risk losing a civil servant of this quality."¹⁴⁶ Expediency made it possible to look the other way: the lack of staff already in metropolitan France was even more desperate in the administration of French-occupied Germany was an important reason for the taking on of the Vichy officials.

In the case of Lacombe and Cabouat, it was Laffon who chose them for Germany. Jean Cabouat recalled his hiring process in a later letter to Laffon in 1946: Laffon had called Cabouat in in mid-July 1945 to offer him "without any preliminaries" the opportunity to accompany him

¹⁴⁰ See footnote 120.

¹⁴¹ Laffon had been responsible for the recruitment of the French prefects after the Liberation together with Michel Debré. See Archives Sciences Po Paris. Fonds Grimaud I, dossier 3, éléments biographiques, essai de C.V., 19.

¹⁴² AN F1bI 1088. Lacombe, Jean. Situation de M. Lacombe July 25, 1945: "excellent organisateur;" "connaissait très bien les problèmes de l'AFRIQUE DU NORD."

¹⁴³ AN F1bI 1088. Lacombe, Jean. Situation de M. Lacombe July 25, 1945.

¹⁴⁴ AN F1bI 1088. Lacombe, Jean. Situation de M. Lacombe July 25, 1945: "M. LACOMBE est en effet l'un des fonctionnaires du Corps Préfectoral qui a les plus grandes qualités d'administrateur. C'est probablement celui qui peut [...] monter et organiser un service."

¹⁴⁵ AN F1bI 1127. Cabouat, Jean. Confidential note to the Minister, case of Monsieur Cabois [sic], Paris November 5, 1944: "des qualités certaines, du courage, de l'audace, de l'intelligence. Je le considère comme un de nos meilleurs préfets."

¹⁴⁶ AN F1bI 1127. Cabouat, Jean. Confidential note to the Minister, case of Monsieur Cabois [sic], Paris November 5, 1944: "Nous sommes beaucoup trop pauvres en hommes pour risquer de perdre un fonctionnaire de cette qualité."

to Baden-Baden.¹⁴⁷ Cabouat also remembered that Laffon tested him and asked him to suggest names for the position of head of security in the zone before putting forward that there was only one suitable candidate for the position, Cabouat himself. And Cabouat, “seduced by [Laffon’s] zeal for work, by [his] charm, and the work that awaited us [in Germany]” accepted Laffon’s offer.¹⁴⁸

This personal selection of staff was common custom. Emile Marchais, the former police intendant of Lyon, was chosen to be part of the French military government in Germany by Gilbert Grandval.¹⁴⁹ Originally Gilbert Hirsch-Ollendorf, born in 1904 of Alsatian descent, Grandval took his war name in 1943. A hero of the Résistance leading the French Forces of the Interior in eight departments of Eastern France, Grandval liberated the city of Nancy in Lorraine in late 1944. Grandval became known as longtime governor of the Saar region, an important mining and steel industry stronghold in occupied Germany.

By mid-September 1945, the French civilian administration, with Baden-Baden as capital, was in place. As mentioned above, Francis Thiallet was among the first to obtain a position in Germany, even before the war officially ended. Most of the other administrators took up their new positions in July 1945: Maurice Sabatier became head of administrative affairs, Guy Périer de Féral was assistant director of administrative affairs, Jean Filippi directed the department of economy and finance, Jean Cabouat became head of security, and Jean Lacombe director of the personnel of the zone. In addition, the assistant directors of security and personnel both had Vichy experience. Emile Marchais, Edouard Kuntz, Landron and Francis Thiallet were secretary-generals in the military government of the provinces Württemberg, Saar, Palatinate, and Rhineland respectively.¹⁵⁰ The attached diagram shows the organization of the French military government of occupied Germany. The red circles indicate in which departments former Vichy officials found new employment. The diagram also shows that the former Vichy officials took over the highest positions in the French military government, many in the central control center in Baden-Baden.

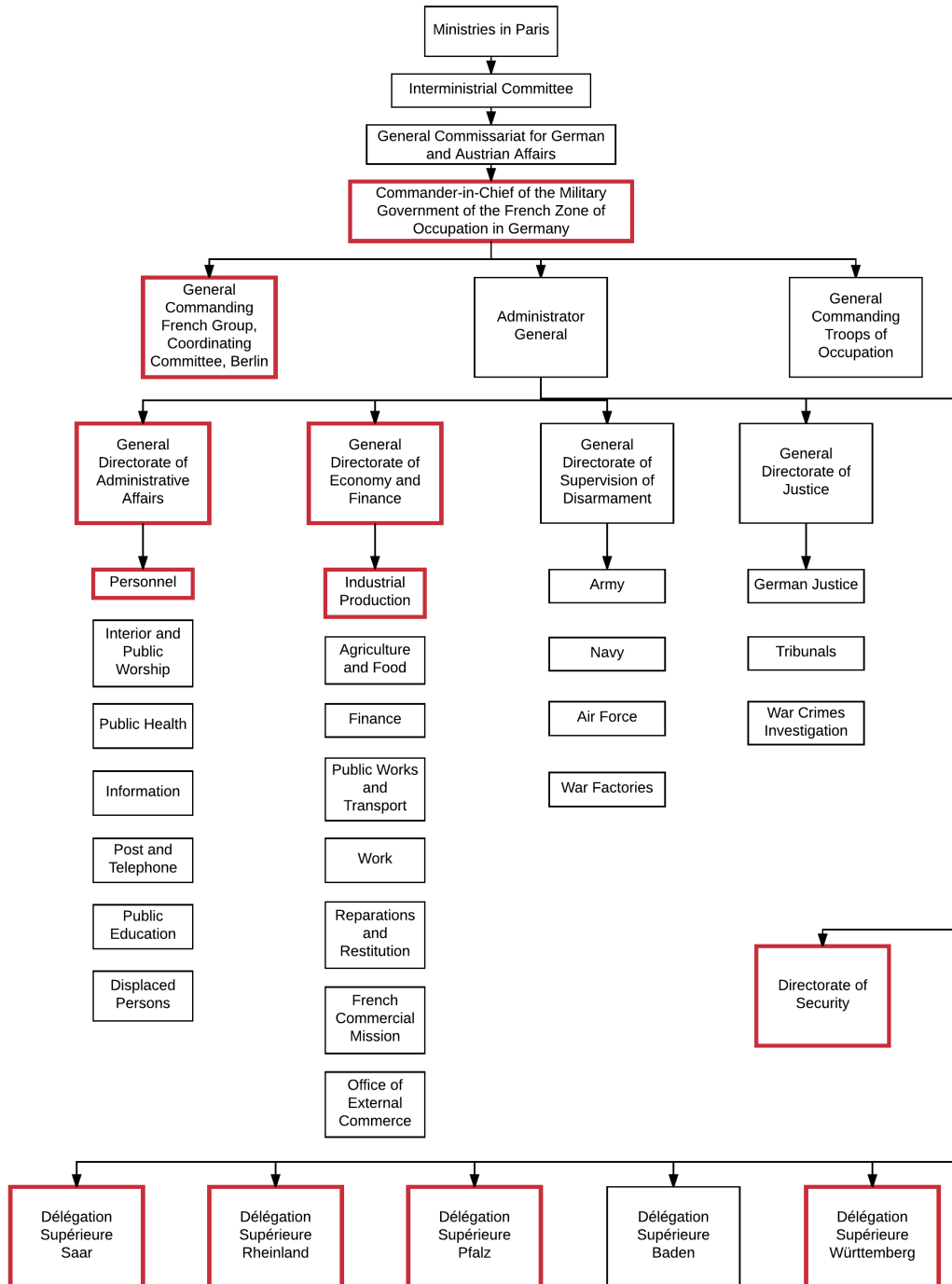
¹⁴⁷ MAE 1 PL 727. Cabouat, Jean-Marcel [This document written by Jean Cabouat was mistakenly filed into his son’s dossier who served for a short time in occupied Germany as well]. Letter from Jean Cabouat to Emile Laffon, June 21, 1946: “sans autre préambule.”

¹⁴⁸ MAE 1 PL 727. Cabouat, Jean-Marcel. Letter from Jean Cabouat to Emile Laffon, June 21, 1946: “séduit par [l’]ardeur au travail [de Laffon], par le charme de [sa] personne et par le labeur qui [les] attendait [en Allemagne].”

¹⁴⁹ MAE 1 PL 2956. Marchais, Emile. Intelligence note on Emile Marchais, no date.

¹⁵⁰ AN C//15893. Commission d’Enquête et d’Information sur les zones d’occupation française d’Allemagne et d’Autriche, Rapport Général, April 9, 1946, 11.

Organization of the Military Government of the French Zone of Occupation (January 1946)
 Presence of former Vichy administrators



based on F. Roy Willis, *The French in Germany 1945-1949* (Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1962), 81.

The discovery of the “German Vichy” and the parliamentary “purge” commission

Left-wing journalists were the first to scandalize the public by revealing the presence of Vichy officials in the French zone of occupation, but they were not the first to notice their presence in Baden-Baden. Instead, this was first noted by the colleagues of these *Vichyssois* in the French capital of Germany, young officials who came of age during the German occupation and had been true supporters of de Gaulle. Pierre Bolotte, born 1921, was one of them. He entered the prefectural service in 1944 and became Emile Laffon’s chief of staff in Baden-Baden in September 1945 – by then, he was 23 years old. Bolotte very quickly started criticizing the French administration of occupied Germany, for their lack of a clear goal of direction in their politics towards the Germans, for the numerous soldiers and civilians who lingered around Baden-Baden because of the better food supply than in France, for taking advantage of a favorable mark/franc exchange rate, and for enjoying the calm of a beautiful spa town similar to Vichy while political unrest prevailed in France.¹⁵¹ In a private letter dated on September 14, 1945, when Bolotte had been barely three weeks in Baden-Baden, he shared his surprise about his new co-workers:

I have [...] the curious feeling that Baden-Baden has become the last refuge, like Vichy, and the quantity of suspended, revoked people, etc. ... that I meet adds to the relativism that naturally left its mark on me. [...] Thus, I can [...] greet - in the halls of the hotel where the offices of the general government are set up and that bear a striking similarity with the “hôtel du Parc” [seat of the Vichy government] - in the prefectural corps, of which I will not say that I “have the honor to belong to” !, Monsieur Sabatier, former regional prefect of Bordeaux plus a collection of 10 to 12 dismissed prefects that are hardly one bit better.... and, I do not speak of the sub-prefects, because then I would need a directory of 1943.¹⁵²

It did not take long for the rumors about Vichy officials haunting the hallways of Baden-Baden’s expensive hotels to reach the French capital. In the late fall of 1945, the above-mentioned newspapers mercilessly spread the news that officials at the Ministries of the Interior and of Foreign Affairs had tried to keep quiet: These officials in Paris had so far ignored men like Bolotte, who had gone to Germany “to serve France and the cause of peace,” found out about the Vichy officials, and then had “knocked on the doors of the ministries and administrations without being heard,” as *Combat* wrote.¹⁵³

¹⁵¹ Archives Science Po Paris. Fonds Bolotte: PB 2, Dossier 1, Note à l’attention de Monsieur Grimaud, September 12, 1945.

¹⁵² Archives Sciences Po Paris. Fonds Bolotte, Letter to H. Richard, September 14, 1945: “J’ai d’ailleurs la curieuse sensation que Baden-Baden est devenue le dernier endroit, à la manière de Vichy, et la quantité de gens suspendus, révoqués, etc. ... que je rencontre ajoute au relativisme dont je suis naturellement pétri [...]. C’est ainsi encore que dans le Corps préfectoral, auquel je ne dirai pas “j’ai l’honneur d’appartenir!” je puis saluer au tournant des couloirs d’hôtel où sont installés les bureaux du Gouvernement Général et qui ressemble à s’y méprendre à l’hôtel du Parc, M. SABATIER, ex Préfet régional de Bordeaux plus une collection de 10 à 12 Préfets révoqués et ne valent guère mieux.... et, je ne parle pas des Sous-Préfets parce qu’il me faudrait un annuaire de 1943.”

¹⁵³ “Civile ou militaire...” *Combat*, November 8, 1945: “servir la France et la cause de la paix,” “frappent aux portes des ministères et administrations intéressés sans être étendus.”

In December 1945, the complaints and rumors found their way into the French Constituent National Assembly. On December 21, 1945 Pierre Bourdan¹⁵⁴ from the non-Communist left-wing Resistance party UDSR (*Union démocratique et socialiste de la Résistance*) brought forward a proposition in the name of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to send out a commission of inquiry to the French zones of occupation in Germany and Austria. It was an emergency procedure, but Bourdan very quickly tried to minimize its “sensational character,” stressing that a “fast and efficient action” in occupied Germany was necessary.¹⁵⁵ The commission of inquiry, Bourdan tried to underline, was not simply a response to the publicly expressed critiques and accusations. The presence of Vichy officials was well-known to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he asserted, but some of the criticism was sufficiently justified to nominate a commission of inquiry.¹⁵⁶ The commission of inquiry would be charged with collecting information, identifying weaknesses and remedying the manifold problems in the French zone. These were the problems that Pierre Bolotte had already mentioned in his private letter: the chaotic administration without clear directives, the presence of far too many French occupiers, who lived a luxurious life in the French zone while the French in France were short of food, gas and other resources – and the most important point: “[...] the nature of the French personnel employed in France and Austria.”¹⁵⁷ Bourdan further explained this point: “We do not always feel – and this is a euphemism – that the personnel is always in conformity, in terms of their [political] leaning, with the democratic aspirations of the new France.”¹⁵⁸ For this statement, he earned spontaneous applause from the members of the Constituent Assembly. Bourdan and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs feared the loss of the French standing, both in regard to their fellow allies and in the eyes of the Germans, and thus wanted to emphasize that France in 1945 was a democratic country and worthy to occupy Germany. Therefore, the presence of Vichy administrators in the French zone of occupation was considered dangerous. Bourdan emphasized this point in his speech in front of the assembled deputies:

While our country has opened a breach outside of its borders for the first time in six years, it would not be desirable to risk watching a part of the heritage we wanted to get rid of in France disappears through this breach in the territories where our action will be judged.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁴ French journalist at *Radio Londres* from 1940-1944 and war correspondent accompanying the French army into Germany.

¹⁵⁵ France. *Journal Officiel de la République française, Débats de l'Assemblée Constituante*, Nr. 16, December 21, 1945, 291. http://4e.republique.jo-an.fr/page/1945_p291ac.pdf.

¹⁵⁶ France. *Journal Officiel de la République française, Débats de l'Assemblée Constituante*, Nr. 16, December 21, 1945, 291. http://4e.republique.jo-an.fr/page/1945_p291ac.pdf: “[...] à certaines de ces critiques, une justification suffisante pour la designation d’une commission d’enquête.”

¹⁵⁷ France. *Journal Officiel de la République française, Débats de l'Assemblée Constituante*, Nr. 16, December 21, 1945, 291. http://4e.republique.jo-an.fr/page/1945_p291ac.pdf: “[...] la nature du personnel français employé en Allemagne et en Autriche. Also, see MAE 1RP 2976/2. Notes classes secretes (1945-1947). 3e Division d’Infanterie Algérienne Etat-Major 4e Bureau, Note de Service, November 17, 1945.

¹⁵⁸ France. *Journal Officiel de la République française, Débats de l'Assemblée Constituante*, Nr. 16, December 21, 1945, 291. http://4e.republique.jo-an.fr/page/1945_p291ac.pdf: “Nous n’avons pas toujours le sentiment – et c’est un euphemism – que ce personnel soit toujours conforme, dans ces tendances, aux aspirations démocratiques de la France nouvelle. (Applaudissements).”

¹⁵⁹ France. *Journal Officiel de la République française, Débats de l'Assemblée Constituante*, Nr. 16, December 21, 1945, 292. http://4e.republique.jo-an.fr/page/1945_p292ac.pdf: “Alors que, pour la première fois depuis six ans, notre pays a ouvert une brèche à l’extérieur de ses frontières, il ne serait pas souhaitable que nous risquons de voir

The French minister of Foreign Affairs, Georges Bidault, agreed with Bourdan and underlined that France had nothing to hide. However, he immediately cautioned the Assembly to not judge too harshly the situation in the French zone in Germany given the general situation in the aftermath of World War II:

I do not know in advance, you will tell me when you return [from Germany], if everything is perfect in our zone of occupation. It would be expecting too much if there were in 1945 a place on this planet that is perfect; after all we have been through, that would be really surprising.¹⁶⁰

The Constituent National Assembly voted on December 21, 1945 to send out a commission composed of 36 members. Due to the parliamentary crisis of January 1946 during which Charles de Gaulle resigned as head of the government, the commission only traveled to Germany and Austria on January 31, 1946. Of the 36 members, 24 travelled to Germany,¹⁶¹ touring the French zone of occupation for three short weeks, until February 22, 1946 – too short, as Salomon Grumbach, the head of the commission of inquiry reported at his return.¹⁶²

Meanwhile the French administrators in the zone busily prepared for the arrival of the commission. Orders were given out by local leaders to make sure the parliamentary commission was modestly received to avoid giving the impression that the occupying French were living off the fat of the land, while the French mainland suffered from food shortages.¹⁶³ Even if the commission of inquiry's task was to examine the situation in the French zone as a whole, it became instantly known in Baden-Baden as the "purge commission," on the hunt for former Vichy officials in the French zone.¹⁶⁴ The former Vichy officials were all concerned because they all had to compile a file for the commission of inquiry providing information about their past in the Vichy administration. Guy Périet de Féral was "worried, even very worried."¹⁶⁵ Maurice Sabatier sent out a courier to the civil cabinet of the French administration to ask if –

en quelque sorte se déverser par cette brèche sur des territoires où notre action sera jugée, une partie de cet héritage que nous avons voulu liquider chez nous (Applaudissements)."

¹⁶⁰ France. *Journal Officiel de la République française, Débats de l'Assemblée Constituante*, Nr. 16, December 21, 1945, 292. http://4e.republique.jo-an.fr/page/1945_p292ac.pdf: "Je ne sais pas d'avance [...] si tout est parfait dans notre zone d'occupation. Ce serait trop beau s'il y avait en 1945 un point de la planète qui fût parfait; après ce que nous avons subi, ce serait vraiment étonnant."

¹⁶¹ 18 from the Commission of Foreign Affairs, 3 from the Commission of Justice and General legislation, 3 from the Commission of National Defense, 3 from the Commission of National Supplies and Production, 2 from the Commission of National Education, Arts, Youth, Sports and Leisure, 3 from the Commission of Press, Radio and Cinema and finally 3 members from the Commission of Agriculture and food supplies. AN C//15893. *Assemblée Nationale, Zone d'Occupation Française d'Allemagne et d'Autriche, Rapports. Assemblée Nationale Constituante Année 1946*, Nr. 959. Annexe au procès-verbal de la 3e séance du 9 avril 1946. Rapport Général fait au nom de la commission parlementaire chargée d'enquêter dans les zones d'occupation françaises d'Allemagne et d'Autriche, par M. Salomon Grumbach, Député, 2.

¹⁶² AN C//15893. *Assemblée Nationale, Zone d'Occupation Française d'Allemagne et d'Autriche, Rapports. Assemblée Nationale Constituante Année 1946*, Nr. 959. Rapport Général, 2.

¹⁶³ MAE 1 RP 2976/2. Notes classées secrètes (1945-1947). Note de service from Chevillon (3e Division d'Infanterie Algérienne, Etat-Major 4e Bureau) on Repas offerts aux autorités, November 17, 1945.

¹⁶⁴ Archives Sciences Po Paris. Fonds Bolotte, Dossier 1, Allemagne 1945-1946, Divers documents. Note for Laffon or Bolotte, Baden-Baden, March 18, 1946: "Commission d'Épuration."

¹⁶⁵ Archives Sciences Po Paris. Fonds Bolotte, Dossier 1, Allemagne 1945-1946, Divers documents. Note for Laffon or Bolotte, Baden-Baden, March 18, 1946: "Périal est inquiet, très inquiet même."

given his important position in the French administration of Germany – he could not accompany his file with a letter, in which he would insist on keeping his position in Germany.¹⁶⁶ Périer de Féral, Sabatier, and the other former Vichy administrators had every reason to fear being sent back to France by the head of the commission of inquiry: Salomon Grumbach. Grumbach was an “old militant socialist of Jewish and German origin” and quite a character, who did not tolerate “those people” in the French zone.¹⁶⁷ Grumbach explicitly told Emile Laffon to fire Sabatier and Périer de Féral.¹⁶⁸

It took several weeks for the commission of inquiry to compile their impressions of the French zone of occupation, discuss their findings and to come up with a resolution. But the issue of the Vichy administrators was so pressing that Grumbach sent out a note to René Mayer, High-Commissioner of German and Austrian Affairs on February 28, 1946, only days after the return of the commission. The note concerned the composition of the personnel of the civilian administration of Germany and underlined the impossibility of employing “state officials of authority who had served in a relatively continuous way in the de-facto government, called Vichy,” in the administration of the French zone.¹⁶⁹ The commission of inquiry felt the need to emphasize that this decision was not a verdict on their professional or technical skills. In so doing, it directly addressed the justification for employing the tainted but experienced former Vichy officials given by the Ministries in Paris or by administrators within the zone. The commission of inquiry was also careful enough to address the fact that the purge commission within France had previously found those tainted administrators not guilty, but underlined that the purge commission had decided to employing them *inside* France, not abroad. It concluded that any state officials who had held important positions in the Vichy state should not have been employed in Germany. Any state officials who had important positions in the Vichy state should thus not have been employed in Germany.¹⁷⁰ France’s prestige in Germany and the success of the French occupation required that the leading positions in the French administration of Germany were given to “men whose vigilant patriotism was never called into question, and whose general attitude (acts and statements) bespeak no anti-democratic senti`ment that could encourage the Nazis.”¹⁷¹ The incentive for the removal of the Vichy officials was therefore twofold. On the one hand, it was aimed at the French, to avoid the possibility that the former Vichy officials would

¹⁶⁶ MAE Bonn 16. CCFA Cabinet Civil, Rapports du CCFA avec le Parlement Commission Parlementaire d’Enquête 1944-1948, Monsieur Sabatier, Note pour le Général Navarre, no date.

¹⁶⁷ SHD Archives orales, 3 K 49, Bolotte. Entretien 2, page 12: “vieux militant socialiste d’origine juive et allemande” Born in German Alsace in 1884, Grumbach was member of the German social-democratic party (SPD) before the First World War and became French citizen only in 1918 where he adhered the SFIO, the French equivalent of the SPD. Grumbach joined the French *Maquis* during the German wartime occupation and became head of the Commission of Foreign Affairs within the Constituent Assembly, a commission he was already a member of in the interwar period. Bolotte, Vincennes, on Grumbach: “quand il tombait sur des gens comme ça: [hits the fist on the table].”

¹⁶⁸ SHD Archives orales, 3 K 49, Bolotte. Entretien 2, page 12: “il faut que ces deux types sautent, c’est pas possible”

¹⁶⁹ AN C//15893. Assemblée Nationale, Zone d’Occupation Française d’Allemagne et d’Autriche, Rapports, 10. Note 1 concernant la composition du personnel de l’Administration civile (“Gouvernement militaire”): “tout fonctionnaire d’autorité ayant servi d’une manière relativement continue le gouvernement de fait, dit de Vichy.”

¹⁷⁰ AN C//15893. Assemblée Nationale, Zone d’Occupation Française d’Allemagne et d’Autriche, Rapports. Note 4, Salomon Grumbach, April 3, 1946.

¹⁷¹ AN C//15893. Assemblée Nationale, Zone d’Occupation Française d’Allemagne et d’Autriche, Rapports, 10. Note 1 concernant la composition du personnel de l’Administration civile (“Gouvernement militaire”): “hommes dont le patriotisme vigilant ne s’est jamais démenti et don’t l’attitude générale (actes et paroles) ne témoigne d’aucun sentiment anti-démocratique de nature à encourager les nazis.”

discourage and demoralize the *real* Résistance fighters in the French occupation zone. On the other hand, it was aimed at the Germans, underlining the *Vichysois* could hardly be considered qualified to democratize and denazify the Germans. The commission of inquiry's note ended with a non-exhaustive list of thirteen former Vichy officials in the service of the French administration in Germany whose dismissal the commission recommended. The six prefects—Maurice Sabatier ((now General Director of Administrative Affairs), Guy Périer de Féral (now Deputy General of Administrative Affairs), Jean Cabouat (now Director of Security), Jean Lacombe (now Director of Personnel), Emile Marchais (now Secretary General of Württemberg) and Francis Thiallet (now Secretary General of the Palatinate)—all made the list. The remaining six undesirables were Jean Filippi (General Director of Economy and Finance), Philippe Coste (Director of Industrial Production), Edouard Kuntz (Assistant to the Governor of the Sarre), Marcel Chapron (Deputy Director of Personnel), Pierre Ordonneau (Deputy Director to General Koenig), and Pierre Landron (Secretary General of the Rhineland).¹⁷²

The French National Assembly subsequently adopted on April 24, 1946 a unanimous resolution on the French occupation of Germany, proposed by the commission of inquiry and based on the latter's reports of their investigation in French occupied Germany in February 1946. The resolution included an instruction about the presence of former Vichy officials in the French zone of occupation:

To proceed without delay to the elimination of people, on all levels of the civilian administration and of the army, that were compromised under the regime called 'The French State' [...] and to sanction all members of the French civilian administration or the army guilty of keeping up friendly relationships with Nazis.¹⁷³

How did the administrators in the French zone respond to the directives from Paris? While General Koenig, the military head of the French occupation in Germany, admitted that some "rare [...] undesirables" were on the list the commission of inquiry had drafted, he was outraged to see the names of "authentic *Résistants* who risked seeing their reputation tainted by such a lack of privacy."¹⁷⁴ Perhaps Koenig's incentive to protest against the list stemmed from Maurice Sabatier, who considered Koenig the sole savior of his position in Germany.¹⁷⁵ In any case Koenig's protest represented one way that occupying administrators handled the directives

¹⁷² AN C//15893. Assemblée Nationale, Zone d'Occupation Française d'Allemagne et d'Autriche, Rapports, 10. Note 1 concernant la composition du personnel de l'Administration civile ("Gouvernement militaire"), Liste de fonctionnaires dont le maintien à leurs postes paraît inopportun à la Commission parlementaire d'enquête.

¹⁷³ France. *Journal Officiel de la République française, Débats de l'Assemblée Constituante*, Nr. 55, April 24, 1946, http://4e.republique.jo-an.fr/page/1946_p2208ac.pdf, 2208-09: "De procéder sans retard à l'élimination, à tous les échelons de l'administration civile et de l'armée d'occupation, des éléments compromis sous le régime dit de l'Etat français" et de prévoir des sanctions contre tout membre de l'administration civile française ou de l'armée d'occupation qui se rendrait coupable d'entretenir des relations amicales avec des éléments Nazis."

¹⁷⁴ MAE Bonn 16. CCFA Cabinet Civil, Rapports du CCFA avec le Parlement Commission Parlementaire d'Enquête 1944-1948, Commission Parlementaire d'Enquête Rapport Général (1946), Letter from General Koenig to Monsieur le Commissaire Général aux Affaires Allemandes et Autrichiennes, April 20, 1946: "quelques rares [...] indésirables;" "ceux de résistants authentiques qui risquent de voir leur réputation ternie par une telle promiscuité."

¹⁷⁵ MAE Bonn 16. CCFA Cabinet Civil, Rapports du CCFA avec le Parlement Commission Parlementaire d'Enquête 1944-1948, Commission Parlementaire d'Enquête, Monsieur Sabatier, Note pour le Général Navarre, no date.

from Paris: by admitting that there had indeed been problems but claiming that these had since been satisfactorily resolved. It is true that by the spring of 1946, the situation had improved over that of 1945, when ideological collaborators of the Nazis (members of the LVF [*Legion of French Volunteers Against Bolshevism*, a collaborationist French militia], former Gestapo translators...) had retreated with the German army, trying to hide during the tumultuous collapse of the Third Reich and hoping to find employment in the French administration of the occupation.¹⁷⁶ And it is also true that by spring 1946, some former Vichy officials had been sent back to France.

This is the case for example of Edouard Kuntz, one of the thirteen former Vichy officials listed in the commission of inquiry's report. Koenig mentioned Kuntz in his defense as one of those former Vichy administrators who had been expelled from the French zone with "infamous reasons given for the judgment" by the time his name appeared on the commission's list in February 1946.¹⁷⁷ Edouard Kuntz was yet another prefect and very similar in background to the other six. Born in 1897 in Nancy, he participated in World War I, traveled to Germany many times in the 1920s and 30s, earned a law degree in administrative law and a German language certificate, and climbed the ladder in the prefectural career step by step. In 1935, Kuntz became sub-prefect of Forbach, right on the border with the Saarland, which had just become part of Germany again. Kuntz was responsible for the establishment of that border. In 1942, Kuntz was promoted to prefect of the Tarn department in the Pyrénées.¹⁷⁸ At the Liberation, the local Committee of Liberation initially gave him a negative review, claiming that he had denounced the *maquis* in his department to the Germans. But it turned out that this accusation was not justified and that Kuntz had neither received an unusual advancement from the Vichy government, nor had he followed all orders that came from Vichy. The Gestapo had even arrested Kuntz in 1944. The purge commission of the Ministry of the Interior opted therefore to maintaining Kuntz in the Ministry of the Interior at the same rank but in a non-political position.¹⁷⁹ As in the case of Lacombe, Sabatier and Marchais, the non-political position did not refrain them from applying to General Koeltz's AMFA training sessions. After checking back with the Ministry of the Interior to see whether Kuntz had gone through the purge commission, Koeltz admitted Kuntz to the fifth AMFA training session.¹⁸⁰ On June 1, Edouard Kuntz was named assistant to the delegate general Gilbert Grandval in the Saar, a region he knew perfectly from the interwar period.

Just days after the departure of the commission of inquiry, on February 28, 1946, Kuntz's mission in Germany ended and he was summarily sent back to France. His file at the Ministry of

¹⁷⁶ AN C//15893. Assemblée Nationale, Zone d'Occupation Française d'Allemagne et d'Autriche, Rapports. Audiences, M. Laffon, Administrateur Général de la Zone, July 9, 1947, 4. See also MAE RP 1869 Délégation du District de Trèves: rapports mensuels de la Délégation (1945), Aout 1945, Kreis Wadern. A German secretary who had been previously interpreter of the Gestapo in Paris accompanied three officers who did not speak any German in this locality.

¹⁷⁷ MAE Bonn 16. CCFA Cabinet Civil, Rapports du CCFA avec le Parlement Commission Parlementaire d'Enquête 1944-1948, Commission Parlementaire d'Enquête Rapport Général (1946), Letter from General Koenig to Monsieur le Commissaire Général aux Affaires Allemandes et Autrichiennes, April 20, 1946: "attendus infamants."

¹⁷⁸ MAE 1 PL 2434. Kuntz, Edouard. MMAA Dépôt Central des Personnes et Matériels pour les Territoires Occupés, Notice Individuelle.

¹⁷⁹ MAE 1 PL 2434 Kuntz, Edouard. Renseignements relevés au Ministère de l'Intérieur concernant Monsieur Kuntz, Edouard.

¹⁸⁰ MAE 1 PL 2434. Kuntz, Edouard. Letter from Minister of the Interior to Koeltz, May 24, 1945. And Letter from Koeltz to Minister of the Interior, June 12, 1945.

Foreign Affairs does not entirely explain why Kuntz was forced out, but does make clear that he was a singularly unsavory character. One cryptic clue can be found in a December 31, 1945 letter Emile Laffon addressed to Grandval, in which he mentioned new rules for the French occupation personnel in Germany and concluded that “it does not seem possible for Kuntz to remain in his position.”¹⁸¹ Kuntz appeared to be involved in a flourishing blackmarket trafficking business, particularly in fabrics.¹⁸² A later note named Kuntz as the perpetrator of a rape at the end of 1945 or early 1946. The victim was a woman called Hélène Gross, who lived in Saarbrücken.¹⁸³ Whatever the precise cause of his dismissal, Kuntz had left the zone and his name was removed from the list published in the proceedings of the commission of inquiry in April 1946, leaving twelve Vichy administrators in Baden-Baden.

While there is therefore some truth to Pierre Koenig’s assertion that some *Vichysois* had already left the French zone, more surprising discoveries regarding the true nature of the occupying personnel in the French zone came to light. In February 1946, with the commission of inquiry still traveling the zone, a new scandal exploded like a bombshell in Baden-Baden: the news of a false Résistance fighter employed as assistant director of the security in the French zone, headed by Jean Cabouat, one of the former Vichy prefects and fallen Liberation prefect. The false *Résistant* was Philippe de Conninck, a young adventurer in his very early 20s, who had convinced Resistance members in the French zone and in Paris of his qualities as administrator and Résistance hero, laying bare the s shady methods of staff recruitment in the zone. As assistant to the head of security in the French zone, de Conninck was responsible for the intelligence service, criminal investigation department and the general safety of the territory – and all this in freshly defeated Nazi Germany in the fall of 1945. When the story was communicated to the media in late February 1946, Jean Cabouat, his superior, was held responsible. In a private note, Pierre Bolotte, chief of staff to Emile Laffon, the head of the military government in Baden-Baden, advised Laffon to let Cabouat go. Bolotte judged that Cabouat’s

[fault] discredits him in the eyes of his collaborators, and more generally in those of the civil servants of the occupation in Germany, it diminishes him vis-à-vis Paris and notably the General Direction of the National Security, and finally it puts you at stake in terms of head of the military government. Under those conditions, you cannot give your complete trust to your head of the security anymore and given the position that he holds he can not continue to hold it.¹⁸⁴

Even though the General Commissioner to the German and Austrian Affairs declared that the commission of inquiry had unjustly targeted Cabouat, the latter lost the trust of Emile Laffon,

¹⁸¹ MAE 1 PL 2434. Kuntz, Edouard. Letter from Laffon to Governor of the Saar, December 31, 1945: il ne paraît pas possible que M. KUNTZ reste en fonction.”

¹⁸² Archives Sciences Po Paris. Fonds Grimaud. GRI 4. Baden 1945-1947, Notes personnelles et divers. Letter from Conseil de la République to Salomon Grumbach, Paris, November 22, 1947.

¹⁸³ MAE 1 PL 2434. Kuntz, Edouard. Letter Monsieur le Commandant Chef du Bureau des Affaires Judiciaires du C.C.F.A. to General Koenig: Viol commis en 1945 ou 1946 par un fonctionnaire du G.M.

¹⁸⁴ Archives Sciences Po Paris, Fonds Bolotte, Dossier 1 Allemagne 1945-1946, Divers documents. Note pour l’administrateur général written by Bolotte, no date: “Elle le discrédite aux yeux de ses collaborateurs et d’une manière générale des fonctionnaires de l’occupation en Allemagne, elle le diminue vis-à-vis de Paris et notamment de la Direction Générale de la Sûreté Nationale, enfin, elle vous engage, dans la mesure où vous êtes le Chef du Gouvernement Militaire. Dans ces conditions, votre confiance complète ne peut plus être accordée à votre Directeur de la Sûreté et étant donné les fonctions qu’il remplit, il ne peut plus continuer à les assumer.”

his superior, because of the de Conninck affair.¹⁸⁵ Laffon withdrew his support and from that moment onwards altogether refused to write Cabouat any letter of recommendation when he was asked to do so even a year after the de Conninck affair.¹⁸⁶ However, General Koenig retained Cabouat, who did not immediately have to leave Germany.

Emile Laffon, the civilian counterpart of General Pierre Koenig, took the commission of inquiry's concerns more seriously and tried to meet the commission's demands: Laffon did indeed send former Vichy officials home. But the circumstances of their dismissal seem arbitrary, as the case of Guy Périer de Féral, the former secretary general of the Seine department, proves: A veritable bargaining began when the purge commission had left, notably for Périer de Féral and Sabatier. Pierre Bolotte, Laffon's young chief of staff in Baden-Baden, recalls in an oral history interview with the Ministry of Defense that he saw Grumbach, the head of the commission of inquiry leaving Laffon's office and then Laffon himself. Laffon told Bolotte that they would all meet that night after the dinner in honor of Grumbach and the commission of inquiry at the private residence of Laffon, the Jesuitenschlösschen, to decide on the fate of Guy Périer de Féral and Maurice Sabatier. Grumbach had told Laffon to fire both, the former secretary general of Paris and the regional prefect of Bordeaux. But Laffon decided, in the words of Bolotte, "Ah, not the two of them, we give one of them the chop."¹⁸⁷ So Laffon, Bolotte, and Maurice Grimaud, director of Laffon's cabinet in Baden, decided which of the two to dismiss that night. Bolotte said that he did not like Sabatier, because he had spent so much time in Vichy, whereas Périer de Féral according to Bolotte "was in Paris, but had a position there, he worked, the other one [Sabatier] was in Vichy, you know? [Sabatier] was Laval's immediate collaborator [...] and above all immediate collaborator of Darlan."¹⁸⁸ At the end of the night, the axe fell on Périer Féral, the decorated Résistance member, not to Sabatier, who had been decorated with the Vichy *francisque*. "Périer de Féral exits, Sabatier stays," Bolotte commented dryly.¹⁸⁹ The decision was influenced by the relative degree of power Sabatier still held in Baden-Baden in comparison to Guy Périer de Féral: Bolotte explained that "keeping the other [Périer de Féral], would have meant diminishing [Sabatier], in a certain way."¹⁹⁰ And it seems that this was simply not possible. Périer de Féral therefore quit his position in the French occupation zone on June 30, 1946, officially declared as "budgetary measure."¹⁹¹

The dismissal of Périer de Féral was, however, only for the sake of appearances. Emile Laffon wanted to keep the Vichy administrators in the French occupation zone, regardless of the scandal that their presence caused in the French public and in direct violation of the Constituent Assembly's resolution to send at least twelve former Vichy officials back to France. The French communist newspaper *L'Humanité* published an article in the summer of 1946 about Maurice Sabatier's 1941 wedding celebration, which had been allegedly attended by German

¹⁸⁵ AN F1b1 1127. Cabouat, Jean. Divers. Letter from the Commissaire Général aux Affaires Allemandes et Autrichiennes to Minister of the Interior, Cabinet, April 17, 1946.

¹⁸⁶ AN F1b1 1127. Cabouat, Jean. Notes. Excerpt of a letter by Laffon, June 17, 1947.

¹⁸⁷ SHD Archives orales, 3 K 49, Bolotte. Entretien 2, page 12: "non, pas les deux, on scie un."

¹⁸⁸ SHD Archives orales, 3 K 49, Bolotte. Entretien 2, page 12: "était à Paris mais il était à Paris en poste, il travaillait, l'autre [Sabatier] était à Vichy quoi. Il était le collaborateur direct de Laval, [...] surtout le collaborateur direct de Darlan [...]. Darlan was Prime Minister of Vichy France from 1941-1942, Laval hold the same position from 1942-1944.

¹⁸⁹ SHD Archives orales, 3 K 49, Bolotte. Entretien 2, page 12, "Exit Périer de Féral, reste Sabatier."

¹⁹⁰ SHD Archives orales, 3 K 49, Bolotte. Entretien 2, page 12: "[...] garder l'autre ce serait [...] lui diminuer, d'une certaine manière."

¹⁹¹ AN F1b1 1105. Périer de Féral, Guy. Pièces diverses: "mesure budgétaire."

Wehrmacht soldiers. The same article pointed out that the Constituent Assembly's claim to remove the twelve or thirteen Vichy officials was by no means met.¹⁹² Emile Laffon declared in July 1947 at an audience at the National Assembly that of the thirteen Vichy officials "eight or nine [...] have been removed from office. In Baden only three or four remain."¹⁹³ But the files at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs reveal that almost the opposite was true: seven *Vichyssois* remained in office and merely six officials had been forced to leave the zone. Among those six who had to leave the zone were Kuntz, who had already been sent back to France in early 1946 because of a rape committed at the end of 1945 and Cabouat, whose assistant director had turned out to be a fake resister, a revelation uncovered while the commission of inquiry had hardly left Germany. The three other Vichy administrators that left the zone by 1947 were Emile **Marchais**, the former *intendant de police* of Lyon and prefect of the Aude department; Phillippe **Coste**, a mining engineer and administrator at the French Ministry of Industrial Production during the war who presided the department of Industrial Production of the French occupation zone until October 1946; and Pierre **Ordonneau**. During the war, Ordonneau was auditor at the Council of State and worked at the administrative section of the general secretary of the head of the Vichy government, a key section of the Vichy administration, dealing with a large set of tasks that concerned state officials, Jews, Freemasons, foreigners, the Justice and Corrections Department and the Churches.¹⁹⁴ After the war, Ordonneau received a Résistance decoration.¹⁹⁵ In Germany, Ordonneau became deputy director for General Koenig, the head of the French occupation army. He left Baden-Baden on April 1, 1946.

It is not clear whether Marchais, Coste, and Ordonneau's departure stemmed from the commission of inquiry's findings and their Vichy past. Pierre Ordonneau had already received an offer to join the President of the French council of supplies in Washington in the fall of 1945,¹⁹⁶ so it is possible that he had merely received another position. His file at the administration of the personnel contains no further information, except the date he left his position: April 1, 1946. Philippe Coste's file indicates a voluntary, not a forced retreat into the private sector, and that as late as October 1946. He had been even appointed Director of Industrial Production in the summer of 1946.¹⁹⁷ Emile Marchais' file gives more information about the circumstances of his retirement on March 26, 1946. As secretary general of the Württemberg region, his superior was Guillaume Widmer, *résistant* since 1941 and leader of the military resistance in the Marseille region. The unlikely pair of a leading resistant and a former Vichy head of police and prefect did not fit. Widmer used the committee of inquiry's list of undesirables as an opportunity to mention

¹⁹² A. Biscarlait, "En zone d'occupation française ce sont toujours les Vichyssois qui commandent," *L'Humanité*, September 26, 1946.

¹⁹³ AN C//15893. Assemblée Nationale, Zone d'Occupation Française d'Allemagne et d'Autriche, Rapports. Audiences, M. Laffon, Administrateur Général de la Zone, July 9, 1947, 4: 8 à 9 de ces personnalités ont été relevées de leurs fonctions. Il en reste, à Baden, 3 ou 4."

¹⁹⁴ Marc Olivier Baruch, *Servir l'Etat Français: L'administration en France de 1940 à 1944*. Pour une histoire du XXe siècle (Paris: Fayard, 1997), 338.

¹⁹⁵ MAE Bonn 16. CCFA Cabinet Civil, Rapports du CCFA avec le Parlement Commission Parlementaire d'Enquête 1944-1948, Commission Parlementaire d'Enquête (1944-1946), Remises de médailles à Pierre ORDONNEAU, Decree March 26, 1945 awarding the Résistance medal to Pierre Ordonneau.

¹⁹⁶ MAE 1 PL 3433. Ordonneau, Pierre. Letter from the war minister to General Koeltz, August 31, 1945. The Council of supplies in Washington was the French purchasing service in the United States. For more information see Gérard Bossuat, *Les aides américaines économiques et militaires à la France, 1938-1960* (Paris: Comité pour l'Histoire Economique et Financière de la France, 2001), 49.

¹⁹⁷ MAE 1 PL 1049. Coste, Philippe. Order issued by General Koenig to appoint Coste to Director of Industrial Production of the French occupation zone, July 27, 1946.

that Marchais' services were no longer needed and that Marchais could be sent back to the Ministry of the Interior in France in the context of general personnel cuts in the French zone. In a letter to Laffon, Widmer notably underlined the restricted services of Marchais fixed by the purge commission, which had determined that Marchais might only hold a non-political position. Marchais had dealt with internal affairs in Württemberg, notably with questions of personnel. Therefore, Widmer concluded, Marchais was "no longer indispensable at the Superior Delegation [of Württemberg]."¹⁹⁸ Laffon took up Widmer's report in a letter to the Ministry of the Interior dated March 8, 1946, agreeing with Widmer:

The Purge Commission of the Ministry [of Interior] declared Monsieur Marchais available for a new position but specified that he must not hold a political position. This decision renders him impossible to take care of general political questions. Under those circumstances, besides just like Monsieur Widmer describes, Monsieur Marchais cannot render the services to the Superior Delegation that we could rightfully expect from him due to his experience and his long habit doing this business.¹⁹⁹

Laffon added that unverifiable rumors of other grievances that the purge commission had not been privy to had reached him about Emile Marchais.²⁰⁰ Therefore Laffon asked the Minister of the Interior to take Marchais back – while avoiding raising suspicion or overtly critiquing Marchais who, despite his relatively restrained functions, had rendered "very appreciable services."²⁰¹ Notified of his dismissal, an upset Marchais very much interpreted his dismissal as a sanction "that does not justify my attitude during the occupation nor the services that I believe I have rendered at the Superior Delegation of Württemberg since September 1945 [...]."²⁰² It appeared even more so a sanction in context of the commission of inquiry's list of undesirables in the French zone. In a letter to Laffon dated April 1, 1946, Marchais complained about his dismissal – attaching several letters written in support of his praiseworthy behavior during the war. But this attempt remained unsuccessful and the Ministry of the Interior retired Marchais with effect from July 1, 1946.²⁰³

The most striking fact is that except for Perier de Féral, who was fired on the request of the commission of inquiry, and to an extent Emile Marchais, there is no evidence that the six Vichysois prefects were sent back to France on account of their Vichy past. The five other

¹⁹⁸ MAE 1 PL 2956. Marchais, Emile. Letter from Widmer to Laffon, March 4, 1946: "n'est plus indispensable à la Délégation Supérieure [du Württemberg]."

¹⁹⁹ MAE 1 PL 2956. Marchais, Emile. Letter from Laffon to Commissaire Général aux Affaires Allemandes et Autrichiennes and Minister of the Interior, March 8 1946: "La décision prise à l'égard de M. MARCHAIS par la Commission d'Épuration du Ministère [de l'Intérieur] qui l'a mis en disponibilité en précisant qu'il ne devait occuper aucun poste politique, le met dans l'impossibilité de s'occuper, aux côtés du Gouverneur, des questions de politique générale. Dans ces conditions, ainsi d'ailleurs que l'écrit M. WIDMER, M. MARCHAIS ne peut rendre à la Délégation Supérieure les services qu'on serait en droit d'attendre de lui en raison de son expérience et de sa grande habitude des affaires."

²⁰⁰ MAE 1 PL 2956. Marchais, Emile. Letter from Laffon to Commissaire Général aux Affaires Allemandes et Autrichiennes and Minister of the Interior, March 8 1946.

²⁰¹ MAE 1 PL 2956. Marchais, Emile. Letter from Laffon to Commissaire Général aux Affaires Allemandes et Autrichiennes and Minister of the Interior, March 8 1946: "de très appréciables services."

²⁰² MAE 1 PL 2956. Marchais, Emile. Letter from Marchais to Laffon, April 1, 1946: "que ne paraissent justifier mon attitude pendant l'occupation ni les services que je crois avoir rendus à la Délégation Supérieure du Württemberg depuis septembre 1945 [...]."

²⁰³ MAE 1 PL 2956. Marchais, Emile. Extrait du Journal Officiel Nr 73, March 27, 1946.

Vichy officials were fired for unrelated reasons: because they misbehaved in their positions (Kuntz), were held responsible for mistakes in the administration (Cabouat) or were incapable in fulfilling them (Marchais), or because they had found another position in France (presumably Ordonneau and Coste).

Moreover, Emile Laffon, explicitly refused a second wave of purges in the spring of 1946, adopting the following rule: “Pas d’épuration sur une autre épuration” – “No purge on top of another purge”.²⁰⁴ Laffon further explained his motto: he kept all state officials in Germany that had been “whitewashed” by the French “metropolitan” purge commission of 1944-1945 or those who were only sanctioned with a minor punishment.²⁰⁵ Thus, in spite of the commission of inquiry’s list of undesirables, in spite of the resolution passed by the Constituent Assembly, and in spite of the fury French public opinion, the former Vichy administrators remained in Germany. Emile Marchais’ case discussed above exemplifies Laffon’s attitude vis-à-vis the purge commission: Marchais’ position in Germany was only in jeopardy when new evidence about his Vichy past appeared – “grievances that were unknown at the time to the purge commission of the Ministry of the Interior.”²⁰⁶ And more consequential for his dismissal was the fact that his superior, Widmer, evaluated his experience as no better than “solid.”²⁰⁷

The schism between the French public and the French administration about the validity of the purge commission’s decisions remained visible until the mid 1950s. For the second time after their initial employment in the summer of 1945 the Vichy past of the French administrators in Germany did not matter – as long as they went through a purge commission. More important to the French government was the expertise they had gained during their careers and how they applied their knowledge ensure a successful occupation of Germany. In other words, their *merit* in the French zone was the final deciding reason for their remaining in Germany beyond the spring of 1946 – a consideration that superceded their Vichy past and even the orders of the French parliamentary assembly.

Experience, merit, and inherited hierarchies

Taking a closer look at the seven Vichy officials who stayed in Germany beyond 1946 shows that their perceived merit for the successful occupation of Germany was crucial for their careers in Germany, not their implication with the Vichy state.

Merit in the yearly evaluations

The personnel files of the French occupation in Germany, just like those of the Ministry of the Interior during the war, tracked the French administrators’ conduct in occupied Germany. At the end of every year –as well as on other occasions such as the nomination for a legion of honor – a superior evaluated the employees’ performance with a letter grade (on the basis of the French school grade range from 0 to 20, with 20 points the nearly unattainable best possible grade) and a short written assessment. It is striking that administrators who had served the Vichy state and remained in Germany throughout 1946 all received their superiors’ highest praise: Jean

²⁰⁴ AN C//15893. Assemblée Nationale, Zone d’Occupation Française d’Allemagne et d’Autriche, Rapports. Audiences, M. Laffon, Administrateur Général de la Zone, July 9, 1947, 5.

²⁰⁵ AN C//15893. Assemblée Nationale, Zone d’Occupation Française d’Allemagne et d’Autriche, Rapports. Audiences, M. Laffon, Administrateur Général de la Zone, July 9, 1947, 5.

²⁰⁶ MAE 1 PL 2956. Marchais, Emile. Letter from Laffon to Commissaire Général aux Affaires Allemandes et Autrichiennes and Minister of the Interior, March 8 1946:”des griefs qui n’auraient pas été connus en leur temps de la Commission d’E.puration de l’Intérieur.”

²⁰⁷ MAE 1 PL 2956. Marchais, Emile. Fiche de reclassement, March 7, 1946: “solide.”

Lacombe, the anti-Semitic delegate prefect of Marseille and head of the Interministerial Protection Service Against War Events (SIPEG, which sheltered French civilians from Allied bombing) until after the Liberation, received, for instance, an average of 19.8 points when evaluated in 1947 as head of the Department of Personnel, Supply and Budget of the French zone. He obtained full credit for his technical skills, assiduity, and speed in accomplishing his tasks, his initiative, moral qualities, character/command and intellectual skills – Lacombe merely flagged in terms of his “physical resistance” where he received only 8 out of 10 possible points...²⁰⁸ In the same evaluation, Emile Laffon called him “one of my best Directors.”²⁰⁹ As early as 1946 Laffon had praised Lacombe’s achievements as head of the Department of Personnel, Supply and Budget that he had been charged with organizing since the beginning of the occupation. In this position, Lacombe had organized the requisition of material for the French occupiers, drew up a budget for the French zone (which was much criticized back home in France) and was also responsible for the status and remuneration of the personnel. Laffon notably underlined “his high intellectual qualities, administrative knowledge, his facilities of organizing and enthusiasm for work [puissance de travail]” and concluded that Lacombe “rendered outstanding services to the French government in the occupied territory which he served with an undeniable national fervor.”²¹⁰ In 1947, Jean Lacombe took over the position of paymaster general of the French zone, and received a Chevalier of the Legion of Honor decoration, the highest decoration in France, in 1949. On this occasion, his past as Vichy administrator was reviewed again, but even if his anti-Semitic behavior was known at that point, the rapporteur concluded: “[...] it results from the inquiry that Monsieur Jean Lacombe’s morality and his behavior during the occupation allow for his admission to the National Order of the Legion of Honor.”²¹¹ Once more, the positive verdict of the original purge commission of the Ministry of the Interior provided the arguments for this favorable decision.²¹²

A second example that illustrates the positive evaluation of the former Vichy administrators who had figured on the commission of inquiry’s list of undesirables is **Pierre Landron**. Born in 1908, Landron became *Ingénieur des Arts et Manufactures* in 1930 and received a higher degree in political economy and public law in 1933. He entered the Ministry of Justice as Master at the prestigious Council of State in 1933 and was promoted Master of requests in September 1942, a position he held until October 1943. From there, he moved to the Ministry of Labor as General Director of the general guarantee fund of the Insurances and stayed in this position until December 1944 – long after the Liberation. On December 20, 1944 Landron was appointed again Master of requests at the Council of State before heading to Germany in August 1945. In occupied Germany, he very successfully held the position of Secretary General of the Rhineland province after December 1945, and later the state Rhineland-Palatinate until 1950.²¹³ Already before his arrival in Rhineland-Palatinate, he was called an “excellent agent” in

²⁰⁸ MAE 1 PL 2459. Lacombe, Jean. Notes pour l’année 1947: “Résistance physique.”

²⁰⁹ MAE 1 PL 2459. Lacombe, Jean. Notes pour l’année 1947: “un de mes meilleurs Directeurs.”

²¹⁰ MAE 1 PL 2459. Lacombe, Jean. Letter from Laffon to the Minister of Finance: “ses hautes qualités d’intelligence, de connaissances administratives, de faculté d’organisation et de puissance de travail;” “ainsi a-t-il bien mérité du Gouvernement Français dans les Territoires Occupés qu’il a servi avec un sens national indiscutable.”

²¹¹ MAE 1 PL 2459. Lacombe, Jean, no title, February 19, 1949: “[...] il résulte de l’enquête que la moralité de Monsieur LACOMBE Jean et son comportement au cours de l’occupation permettent son admission dans l’ordre National de la Légion d’Honneur.”

²¹² MAE 1 PL 2459. Lacombe, Jean. Renseignements relevés au Ministère de l’Intérieur concernant Monsieur LACOMBE Jean.

²¹³ MAE 1 PL 2510. Landron, Pierre. Fiche de Renseignement, August 1, 1952.

a letter from Laffon to Koenig.²¹⁴ And even his immediate superior, Claude Hettier de Boislambert, the governor of Rhineland-Palatine, a high-ranked *Résistant* and *Compagnon de la Libération*, did not stop praising his secretary general for his excellent work both in terms of the grades he received between 1945 and 1950 and his written reports: Landron received 18 points in 1946, already a very high score in French terms, and increased his score to 19 the following year, which he maintained throughout the late 1940s (while always receiving full credit for his technical skills).²¹⁵ As secretary general, Landron reorganized the districts of the Rhineland province, a particularly “arduous” task according to Hettier de Boislambert due to the “agents recruited in all range of people.”²¹⁶ While Hettier de Boislambert did not specify what he meant by this odd phrasing, it might refer in this context to either French or German supporters of the National socialists or of Vichy France in Germany. Considering Landron’s own Vichy background, his role in reorganizing the German administration seems even more dubious. His superior was, however, very pleased with Landron’s working method: Hettier de Boislambert wrote about Landron on October 23, 1946 – roughly six months after the publication of the commission of inquiry’s list of undesirables: “Remarkable civil servant, deeply devoted to his task displaying at every occasion a consciousness and care for the French interest that justify entirely the trust put in him.”²¹⁷ In both examples the emphasis on the employees’ service for the cause of France, the French and the French government in Germany is noteworthy. Their service in Germany was thus a means for them to make up for having chosen the wrong side in Vichy France.

Similar demands and fields of activity

The former Vichyssois were perceived successful in occupying Germany precisely because of their experience in administrative matters. They had learned their administrative skills in the French Third Republic and applied them in Vichy France. In Germany, most of them were employed in similar positions to those they had fulfilled during Vichy or in earlier employments. For instance, Jean Lacombe, in Germany head of the department of Personnel, Supply and Budget, drew upon the knowledge gained when he was in charge of the Supply Service of the Ministry of the Interior from 1942-43 and his coordination of a war-struck population at the SIPEG. Or another example of this practice is Francis **Thiallet**. Thiallet, a veteran of the interwar Rhineland occupation, was sent to Speyer in the spring of 1945 precisely because he knew the Palatinate so well from his stay there in the 1920s. Thiallet, who had been police intendant of Rennes from 1942 to 1944, however got in conflict with Hettier de Boislambert in late 1946 due to two reasons. The first was Thiallet’s benevolent relationship with the German clergy, notably the bishop of Speyer, which led him to consent to the reopening of the confessional schools in the fall of 1945 – a *lèse-laïcité* for Boislambert, as Thiallet put it, a violation of the separation of state and church.²¹⁸ The second source of conflict between Hettier de Boislambert and Thiallet

²¹⁴ MAE 1 PL 2510. Landron, Pierre. Letter from Laffon to General Koenig, December 4, 1945: “Excellent élément.”

²¹⁵ in French: “connaissances techniques de l’emploi.” See MAE 1 PL 2510. Landron, Pierre.

²¹⁶ MAE 1 PL 2510. Landron, Pierre. Governor Hettier de Boislambert on Landron’s promotion to Officier of the Legion of Honor, June 24, 1949: “agents recruté dans tous les milieux.”

²¹⁷ MAE 1 PL 2510. Landron, Pierre. Notes pour l’Année 1946, Hettier de Boislambert on Landron October 23, 1946: “Remarquable fonctionnaire, profondément dévoué à sa tâche, fait preuve en toutes circonstances d’une conscience et d’un souci de l’intérêt français qui justifient complètement la confiance qui lui ait faite.”

²¹⁸ Francis Thiallet, *Au soir d’une longue vie* (Antibes: Collection du Centre de l’Autoédition, 1989), 55.

was their different political background: the former was *Compagnon de la Libération*, the latter had served in the Vichy administration.

The conflict led to Thiallet's departure from his position in Neustadt as secretary general of the Palatinate and he decided to go to Baden-Baden to call on his superior Emile Laffon. During their conversation, Thiallet gave Laffon a summary of his career and notably defended his attitude during the German occupation of France. He explained that he did not bother to obtain an official certificate of resistance issued by organizations that distributed those membership attestations "unjustly and to everyone."²¹⁹ Laffon was pragmatic with those cases and he provided Thiallet with a new position in the administration, again in view of his past experiences. After his departure from occupied Rhineland in the interwar period, Thiallet had become inspector at the *Crédit Foncier d'Algerie et de Tunisie*. Given his experience as a state accountant in North Africa, Laffon thus entrusted Thiallet with a mission to audit the finances of the German big industrial businesses under French sequestration from December 1, 1946.²²⁰ Thiallet could stay with his family in his beloved villa in Neustadt and travelled around the French occupation zone, to Bosch in Württemberg, to Berlin, to Austria and most often to the Saar region where he inspected the coalmines and the steel industry.²²¹

Mutual support among former Vichy administrators

But not only their evaluations and their past experience was important for the Vichysois's success in occupied Germany. Taking a closer look at the signatures on the bottom of the yearly evaluation forms, one finds the signature of *true Résistants* like Laffon, Hettier de Boislambert or General Koenig, but it is striking that it is also the *Vichysois* themselves who signed each other's yearly evaluation forms. Especially in the first year of the occupation, between 1945 and 1946 – that is before the results of the commission of inquiry became known – former Vichy administrators assessed four of the *Vichysois* that would then remain in Germany: Sabatier evaluated Landron²²² and Chapron²²³; Chapron was additionally assessed by Lacombe; and Jean Cabouat evaluated a certain Raymond Viguié.

Raymond **Viguié** born 1910, earned a degree in letters and sciences and entered the prefectural career in 1930. At the outbreak of the Second World War, he was sub-prefect and director of the cabinet of the prefect of the department Bas-Rhin in Strasbourg. After the Germans took over Alsace-Lorraine, he became secretary general of the Aude prefecture in November 1940. In February 1944, the Vichy Ministry of the Interior trusted him with the sub-prefecture in Narbonne. Arrested by the Gestapo in June 1944, he was transferred to a camp in Compiègne in Northern France where he was liberated by the advancing American army.²²⁴ After his liberation, the new Ministry of the Interior kept him in office in the Aube department, and the purge commission decided to maintain him in the prefectural administration. When Viguié was – as he himself declared²²⁵ – on the verge of being appointed secretary general of the Rhône, it was Jean Cabouat who appointed Viguié his assistant at the security service of the

²¹⁹ Francis Thiallet, *Au soir d'une longue vie* (Antibes: Collection du Centre de l'Autoédition, 1989), 56.

²²⁰ MAE 1 PL 4390. Thiallet, Francis. Telegram from Laffon to Savary September 3, 1946.

²²¹ Francis Thiallet, *Au soir d'une longue vie* (Antibes: Collection du Centre de l'Autoédition, 1989), 57-58.

²²² MAE 1 PL 2510. Landron, Pierre. Notes pour l'Année 1946. Evaluation of Landron by Maurice Sabatier, November 10, 1945.

²²³ MAE 1 PL 862. Chapron, Marcel. Fiche de Renseignement signed by Maurice Sabatier, March 9, 1946.

²²⁴ Stalag = short of *Stammlager*, was a Nazi term for prisoner-of-war camps.

²²⁵ MAE 1 PL 4591. Viguié, Raymond. Activité depuis le 18 Juin 1940 à ce jour.

French occupation zone— next to the fake *Résistant* de Conninck.²²⁶ When taking a closer look at Cabouat's and Viguié's CVs, it is apparent that they had already worked together during the Vichy regime in the Aude department between 1941 and 1942: Cabouat was prefect and Viguié his secretary general, that is his first collaborator and deputy.

Cabouat and Viguié both appeared on the commission of inquiry's list of undesirables in the spring of 1946, but before Cabouat's removal, he was able to provide Viguié with top grades in his evaluation. Cabouat wrote a very positive review of Viguié's work at the security service of the French occupation zone on March 6, 1946, in the midst of the critical second wave of purges and the uncovering of Cabouat's fake *Résistant*: "Excellent and valuable collaborator who participated intimately in creating the Direction of the Security in the midst of innumerable difficulties."²²⁷ Viguié continued to receive excellent grades in 1946 from the new head of the security, Andrieu.²²⁸ Andrieu himself was not entirely free of Vichy charges, as he was police intendant of Marseille until 1942. In his 1946 evaluation, Andrieu gave Viguié 19 out of 20 points.²²⁹ This verdict was backed by Emile Laffon who had agreed to maintain Viguié in Germany even beyond his initial contract end date in the summer of 1946.²³⁰ Viguié left the zone at the end of 1946 at his own request, taking over the vice-presidency of the administrative tribunal of Alsace and Lorraine on January 1, 1947. In doing so, Viguié returned to his prewar work location.²³¹

Marcel **Chapron** is yet another example of the way Vichy administrators supported each other professionally. Born in 1907 in Algiers, Chapron majored in Letters and Sciences and entered the prefectural career in 1929. In 1938, he became sub-prefect of Redon and was promoted secretary general of the Manche department in Normandy in November 1940. He remained in this position through almost all of the German occupation until April 1944, when the Vichy administration sent him to Southern France as secretary general of the Hérault department. In his position in the Manche, Chapron had been the head of the departmental service of German requisitions. He had been responsible for the purchase of furniture for the lodging and billeting of the German troops - a particularly serious and heavy task, as the French Minister of Finance asserted at the end of the war.²³² The purge commission decided to downgrade him in January 1945 to a sub-prefect because of his rapid promotion from sub-prefect of third to first class in 1940 and his devotion to the Vichy government. The decision was taken after the local Liberation committee in the Hérault department had accused Chapron of being a *Vichyssois* and a *collaborateur* of the Germans.²³³ Rumors persisted that the purge commission had entirely

²²⁶ MAE 1 PL 4591. Viguié, Raymond. Telegram from Viguié to Cabouat, August 23, 1945.

²²⁷ MAE 1 PL 4591. Viguié, Raymond. Fiche de Reclassement signed by Jean Cabouat March 6, 1946: "Excellent et précieux collaborateur ayant participé intimement à la création, au milieu de difficultés sans nombre, de la Direction de la Sureté." This sentence is a great example of the French using German typewriters, which did not have the French accents.

²²⁸ MAE ADM Laffon. GMZFO/Cabinet Civil 1946-1947, 54/8. Affaire Andrieu, September – November 1946.

²²⁹ MAE 1 PL 4591. Viguié, Raymond. Notes pour l'Année 1946.

²³⁰ MAE 1 PL 4591. Viguié, Raymond. Fiche pour M. Savary, August 16, 1946. 5330

²³¹ MAE 1 PL 4591. Viguié, Raymond. Letter from Commissaire Général aux Affaires Allemandes et Autrichiennes to Direction du Personnel, Matériel et Budget, Baden-Baden. Situation de M. Viguié Raymond, February 11, 1947.

²³² MAE 1 PL 862. Chapron, Marcel. Letter from the Minister of Finance to the Minister of the Interior, May 3, 1945.

²³³ MAE 1 PL 862. Chapron, Marcel. Renseignements relevés au Ministère de l'Intérieur concernant Monsieur Chapron, Marcel.

refused his reinstatement in the ranks of the Ministry of the Interior, but that the new Minister of the Interior, Adrien Tixier, decided to him to Germany.²³⁴

Chapron became assistant to the director of department of Personnel, Supply and Budget (PSB) in the French occupation zone in Germany on August 1, 1945. Three months later, he was appointed deputy director of the same department – the similarity of his task during Vichy and in Germany is striking. It was Jean Lacombe, Chapron’s immediate superior as director of the department of personnel, supply and budget (during the war anti-Semitic delegate prefect of Marseille and head of the Interministerial Protection Service Against War Events), who wrote Chapron’s evaluation on March 8, 1946. This was a decisive time for the former Vichy administrators who appeared both on the recently published commission of inquiry’s list of undesirables. Lacombe wrote on Chapron: “Experienced civil servant of the prefectural career, Monsieur Chapron very efficiently established the PSB Direction and leads it with a great authority due to his large administrative experiences the delicate sub-department on the personnel.”²³⁵ Interestingly, it was Sabatier who signed off Chapron’s evaluation just below Lacombe’s appraisal and signature. Sabatier also wrote Landron’s evaluation in November 1945, praising his capacities of “dealing fast and perfectly with all tasks displaying his finest qualities” and recommending Landron for a job in one of the provinces. This evaluation paved the way for his successful career in the Rhineland-Palatinate in the next five years.²³⁶

Those examples illustrate that the evaluation of *Vichyssois* by *Vichyssois* in the first months of the French occupation in Germany was frequent and that old institutional sympathies among prefectural senior executives remained strong after the Liberation. Those sympathies also provided the basis for the future success of those well-rated administrators – which meant that they could stay Germany even when called out by the commission of inquiry and the parliamentary resolution. Emile Laffon relied on those evaluations in his later assessments, as did General Koenig especially after Laffon quit his position in November 1947.

Forward escape

Jean Filippi is a good example of Emile Laffon’s crucial role in evaluating excellent work in Germany to efface an administrator’s Vichy antecedents. He also embodied the political flexibility of technocrats in the 1940s, who were ready to put their expertise into the service of their government – whichever government they served. Born in 1905 in Geneva to a French diplomat, Jean Filippi did not belong to the prefectural staff like most of the other twelve undesirables on the commission of inquiry’s list. While the prefects were under the Ministry of the Interior’s wing, Jean Filippi was a finance inspector employed by the Inspectorate General of Finances since 1930, an interdepartmental auditing and supervisory institution notably responsible for the management of public finances. After becoming secretary of the national railroad, SNCF, Jean Filippi was called to lead the Minister of Finance’s cabinet in March 1940. He continued to hold this position beyond the advent of the Vichy regime until July 1941, when he became secretary general of economic affairs. Between April 1942 and September 1944, he was again secretary general of the SNCF. The purge commission of the Ministry of Transports

²³⁴ MAE 1 PL 862. Chapron, Marcel. Renseignements relevés au Ministère de l’Intérieur concernant Monsieur Chapron, Marcel.

²³⁵ MAE 1 PL 862. Chapron, Marcel. Fiche de Reclassement, Lacombe on Chapron: “Fonctionnaire confirmé du cache préfectoral, M. Chapron après avoir aide très efficacement à la mise en place de la Direction du P.M.B. dirige avec une autorité qui s’affirme en de grandes qualités professionnelles la délicate sous-direction du Personnel.”

²³⁶ MAE 1 PL 2510. Landron, Pierre. Notes pour l’Année 1946. Evaluation of Landron by Maurice Sabatier, November 10, 1945: “traitant rapidement et parfaitement toutes questions faisant preuve des plus belles qualités.”

considered Filippi's choice to remain head of the cabinet in 1940 unfortunate – Filippi was immediate collaborator of the Minister of Finance, Yves Bouthillier, who promulgated a French and German economic collaboration as well as an economic reform under the auspices of Vichy's "national revolution." But since Filippi had proven that he had helped the Resistance as secretary general of the SNCF, the purge commission decided that Filippi was sufficiently sanctioned by his dismissal from the SNCF and his reinstatement into the Ministry of Finance, his home Ministry.²³⁷ Filippi held a diploma from the renowned Sciences Po as well as a doctorate in law on the stabilization of prices (1928), and had years of experience with an economy under occupation. This know-how was too valuable for the French occupation in Germany to forego. Already in December 1944 the Military Mission for German Affairs (MMAA) led by General Koeltz hired Jean Filippi.²³⁸ Filippi attended the very first AMFA course and was sent to Germany as one of the first 100 French occupiers, with the pass number 93 on July 1, 1945.²³⁹

In Germany, Filippi was named head of the Directorate of Finance and Economic Affairs – again a similar task as the one he had exercised during the war. His immediate collaborators knew about his Vichy past and were particularly skeptical about his collaboration with Bouthillier. Maurice Grimaud and the previously-mentioned Pierre Bolotte, both immediate colleagues of Emile Laffon, both young and energetic and from the Resistance milieu, alluded to Filippi's wartime activity in oral history interviews. Grimaud even affirmed that Filippi came to Germany *because* of his wartime experience in the Vichy regime.²⁴⁰ It is also Grimaud who pointed to the fact that Jean Filippi chose to disclose his occupation during to his new coworkers in Germany. In Grimaud's eyes, Filippi's "justifications were very valid."²⁴¹ Those justifications, however, do not seem to be more valid than those of Filippi's colleagues of the Vichy administration: Filippi affirmed that he had only held a technical position, taking care of the public finance in the face of the heavy German occupation costs.²⁴² What might have made a difference is the fact that Filippi openly handed over his report to Emile Laffon instead of hiding his activities during the German occupation like others did. However, the decisive factor for Filippi's continued stay in the French zone was his supposedly excellent character and work experience during the German occupation of France. In an oral history interview with the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Grimaud stated:

[Filippi] was a very honest man, but he was above all a very competent man, very skillful, who knew his business very well and he remarkably organized his General Division of Financial and Economic Affairs, with [...] ... the farsightedness of a man who had participated in a government even if that government was [laughing] the wrong government, nonetheless [laughing] the problems remain the same [...] So, he had

²³⁷ MAE 1 PL 1610. Filippi, Jean. Ministère des Finances, Jury d'Honneur. Avis concernant M. FILIPPI Jean, no date.

²³⁸ MAE 1 PL 1610. Filippi, Jean. Letter Ministre des Armées to Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, October 20, 1964.

²³⁹ MAE 1 PL 1610. Filippi, Jean. M.M.A.A. Fiche à remplir par MM. les Officiers.

²⁴⁰ MAE AOR 14. Grimaud, Maurice.

²⁴¹ MAE AOR 14. Grimaud, Maurice: "ses justifications étaient très valables, je crois que j'ai remis dans les papiers ça."

²⁴² Archives Sciences Po Paris. Fonds Grimaud GRI 4. Gouvernement Militaire de la zone française d'occupation en Allemagne (1945-1947), Correspondance Laffon, October 1944.

worked on the level of a Minister, helped him with his work, he knew how to get a very big machine to work.²⁴³

Pierre Bolotte agreed with Grimaud's assessment of Filippi's excellence, underlining that Filippi was an "extremely brilliant finance inspector," "a man of immense talent, immense talent."²⁴⁴ Bolotte also emphasized Filippi's skills and experiences:

This was perfect for the discussions, for the construction of things, for the administrative technique, [...] the intelligence, the personal approbation, because he had all the talent, the seduction [...] and Laffon liked him a lot and Maurice Grimaud and I we were obliged to like him very much too, that we had a lot of respect for him [...].²⁴⁵

Emile Laffon's role in the whitewashing process of former Vichy administrators cannot be underestimated. Maurice Grimaud underlined how much Emile Laffon supported Jean Filippi: "And Monsieur Laffon had always great confidence in him, and this [...] proved very valid. [Filippi] was a very good, one of the very good people of our affairs, of our team."²⁴⁶ Laffon himself characterized Filippi as "certainly the most remarkable high-official of the Military Government," highlighting again that this "administrator and organizer of an exceptional quality [...] has proven his extreme intelligence, his determined mind and his perfect knowledge of economic problems" in Germany.²⁴⁷ Laffon thus attributed 20 out of 20 points to Filippi in his 1947 evaluation.

What, in fact, did Filippi do to impress his coworkers in Germany? Leading all economic affairs of the French occupation zone, Filippi organized the reconstruction of the German economy in the immediate postwar period and was also responsible for the extraction of German goods for the French economy to repair the damage caused by the war and the German occupation. Filippi's "preparation and [...] establishment of economic and financial control of the French occupation zone" was very successful in the eyes of the French because he managed to "assure substantial advantages" to the benefit of France without causing an economic collapse of the French zone under "extremely difficult conditions."²⁴⁸ Emile Laffon's appraisal to support

²⁴³ MAE AOR 14. Grimaud, Maurice: "[Filippi] c'était un homme un très honnête homme, mais c'était surtout un homme d'une grande compétence, très habile, connaissant très bien son affaire, et il a remarquablement organisé sa direction générale des affaires économiques et financières, avec [...] la hauteur de vue d'un homme qui avait participé au gouvernement même si c'était [rigolant] le mauvais gouvernement, quand même [rigolant] les problèmes sont les mêmes [...]. Donc, il était au niveau d'un ministre, le secondant, il savait comment on fait marcher une très grande machine."

²⁴⁴ MAE AOR 13. Bolotte, Pierre: "inspecteur des finances extrêmement brillant;" "l'homme d'un immense talent, immense talent."

²⁴⁵ SHD Archives orales, 3 K 49, Bolotte. Entretien 2, page 12: "C'était parfait, pour les discussions, pour la construction des choses, pour la technique administrative, [...] pour l'intelligence, et l'agrément personnel, car il avait tous les talents, les séductions [...] et donc, Laffon l'aimait beaucoup, et nous étions obligés Maurice Grimaud et moi que nous l'aimions beaucoup aussi que nous l'ayons eu beaucoup de respect pour lui [...]."

²⁴⁶ MAE AOR 14. Grimaud, Maurice: "Et Monsieur Laffon l'a toujours fait une grande confiance et ça [...] s'est révélé très valable. [Filippi] a été un très bon, un des très bon éléments de la de notre affaire, de notre équipe."

²⁴⁷ MAE 1 PL 1610. Filippi, Jean. Fiche de Renseignements August 1947, Laffon on Filippi: "Certainement, le haut-fonctionnaire le plus remarquable du Gouvernement Militaire." "Administrateur et organisateur d'une classe exceptionnelle [...] a fait preuve [...] de son extrême intelligence, de son esprit sûr, de sa connaissance parfaite des problèmes économiques."

²⁴⁸ MAE 1 PL 1610. Filippi, Jean. Renseignements demandés par la Grande Chancellerie à l'appui de toute proposition pour la Légion d'Honneur faite par le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, no date: "préparation et [...]"

Filippi's nomination for Chevalier of the Legion of Honor in 1947 underlines Filippi's extraordinary contribution to the success of the French occupation of Germany:

From [Filippi] stems an essential part of the merit of what we can call today a success, that means an occupation that – without having been costly for the French Treasury – placed important wealth at the metropolitan economy's disposal while maintaining an essential economic balance within the zone without which no durable politics could have been possible.²⁴⁹

Emile Laffon states further in his evaluation that Filippi defended and asserted the French interests in the negotiations with the other Allies.

This decoration was hard-earned, given that Filippi did not have an easy task in occupied Germany. As head of the economy and finance department, the equivalent of a minister of finance in France, he was responsible for setting the contradictory and ill-defined economic policy for the French zone – extracting reparations for the French economy while democratizing and keeping the German industries alive – all without investing French funds into German recovery or feeding the zone, which would have been impossible to justify to the French public as well as government. With a ravaged country at home, helping the Germans recover was certainly not in the French general interest; on the contrary, the French public expected notably security and reparations.²⁵⁰ Filippi did not fail to put forward his views and warned about the lack of a clear-defined economic strategy and the mere satisfaction of short-term interests in Germany.²⁵¹ Despite his position and expertise, he sometimes failed to impose his expert opinion on the government in Paris or in the zone due to competing French political priorities. For instance, Filippi suggested centralizing the German economy of the zone, but given the preoccupation with decentralizing German institutions as much as possible, his suggestions were dropped by General Koenig's camarilla.²⁵² Martial Libera seems to suggest that Filippi was more moderate in his criticism than some of his co-workers in Baden-Baden.²⁵³ Filippi's reserve could

mise en place de l'organisation économique et financière en Zone Française d'Occupation;” “avantages substantiels;” “des conditions extrêmement difficiles.”

²⁴⁹ MAE 1 PL 1610. Filippi, Jean. Dossier de préparation à la Légion d'Honneur. Laffon on Filippi: “C'est à [Filippi] que revient pour une part essentielle, le mérite de ce que l'on peut aujourd'hui appeler une réussite, c'est-à-dire une occupation qui, sans avoir été onéreuse pour le trésor français, a mis à la disposition de l'économie métropolitaine d'importantes richesses tout en maintenant en Zone l'équilibre économique essentiel sans lequel aucune politique durable n'aurait été possible.”

²⁵⁰ Those goals are similar to the French policies towards Germany in aftermath of World War I, see: Anna Lauter, *Sicherheit und Reparationen. Die französische Öffentlichkeit, der Rhein und die Ruhr 1918-1923* (Essen: Klartext Verlag, 2006). Some French politicians dreamed of a quasi-imperial take-over of the German economy to forge into the lead as continental European economic power in the aftermath of World War II, which Libera has called “a dream of power.” See Martial Libera, *Un rêve de puissance: la France et le contrôle de l'économie allemande (1942-1949)* (Bruxelles: Peter Lang, 2012).

²⁵¹ See Martial Libera, *Un rêve de puissance: la France et le contrôle de l'économie allemande (1942-1949)* (Bruxelles: Peter Lang, 2012), 230, 592.

²⁵² This is yet another example of how the conflict between the Koenig and the Laffon influenced the French politics in the zone.

²⁵³ See Martial Libera, *Un rêve de puissance: la France et le contrôle de l'économie allemande (1942-1949)* (Bruxelles: Peter Lang, 2012), 195. In a review of Martial Libera's book, the economic historian Marcel Boldorf noticed that Libera did not address the Vichy administrators' role and influence on the French policies in Germany. See Marcel Boldorf, review of *Un rêve de puissance: la France et le contrôle de l'économie allemande (1942-1949)*, by Martial Libera, *Francia-Recensio*, 2013-4, 19./20. Jahrhundert - Histoire contemporaine.

possibly be due to his status as tainted Vichy administrator, but he was indeed dependent upon the instructions from the government – just as he had been dependent upon the Vichy government and the German occupiers during the war. In Germany, he had to navigate the power dynamics between General Koenig, Laffon, and the various Parisian ministries involved in governing the zone. The decoration publicly demonstrated his ability to not only use his expertise, but also use the German economy, to serve the new France: his departure from the position in 1948 marked the shift from a tight French control of the zone to a gradual handing over of economic affairs to the Germans.²⁵⁴

As for the above-cited Lacombe and Landron, it is Filippi's extraordinary service *to France* that impressed not only the coworkers within the French zone but also the administration back home in France. In March 1947, only a year after the publication of the commission of inquiry's list of undesirables, Jean Filippi, who was among those undesirables, received a decoration from the French Ministry of Agriculture. The decoration, *Mérite Agricole*, is awarded for outstanding service to agriculture and constitutes the second most important decoration of the French state after the Legion of Honor. Filippi received this decoration for his work in Germany having "severely defended the interests of the agricultural cause" and "asserted the justice of the French point of view and thus having rendered exceptional service to [France]."²⁵⁵ Filippi was so precious to the French administration of the zone that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs asked to send him to Paris in order to establish a report on the future of the German economy and the reparations when Filippi planned on leaving the zone in 1947.²⁵⁶

Jean Filippi is an excellent example for how a former *Vichyssois* took the offensive and continued their work in Germany proving their value for the new French government. His patriotism provided him with legitimacy. He did not remain passive but took a more active role. In addition to his above-mentioned effort in organizing the economy of the zone, he intervened in the denazification measures of the French zone to better prevent Nazis from getting off lightly. He suggested to Laffon that denazification should be coordinated centrally in Baden-Baden, to remedy the uneven implementation of Laffon's denazification instructions in the different regions of the zone.²⁵⁷ Indeed, when governor General Schwartz of Württemberg suggested in October 1945 to employ administrators that had been purged in the American zone for the reinforcement of the administration in Freiburg, it was Filippi who intervened.²⁵⁸ Filippi also showed initiative and did not shy away from demanding training courses for new, untainted, qualified employees. He thus tried to better the situation in France and possibly make up for the position he had found himself in as a former Vichy administrator.²⁵⁹ While the former

<https://www.recensio.net/rezensionen/zeitschriften/francia-recensio/2013-4/19-20-jahrhundert-histoire-contemporaine/un-reve-de-puissance>.

²⁵⁴ Martial Libera, *Un rêve de puissance: la France et le contrôle de l'économie allemande (1942-1949)* (Bruxelles: Peter Lang, 2012), 595.

²⁵⁵ MAE 1 PL 1610. Filippi, Jean. Decoration de la Mérite Agricole, March 25, 1947: "défendre avec apreté les intérêts de la cause agricole;" "justice des points de vue française;" "services exceptionnelles."

²⁵⁶ MAE 1 PL 1610. Filippi, Jean. Letter of the Sous-Secrétaire d'Etat aux Affaires Etrangères to Laffon, January 21, 1947.

²⁵⁷ Reinhard Grohnert, *Die Entnazifizierung in Baden, 1945-1949: Konzeptionen und Praxis der "Euration" am Beispiel eines Landes der französischen Besatzungszone* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1991), 69-70.

²⁵⁸ Reinhard Grohnert, *Die Entnazifizierung in Baden, 1945-1949: Konzeptionen und Praxis der "Euration" am Beispiel eines Landes der französischen Besatzungszone* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1991), 73.

²⁵⁹ Reinhard Grohnert, *Die Entnazifizierung in Baden, 1945-1949: Konzeptionen und Praxis der "Euration" am Beispiel eines Landes der französischen Besatzungszone* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1991), 75.

Vichyssois thus continued to put their expertise into the service of whatever regime was willing to employ them, they had also learned from a Vichy experience that left them chastened.

Ducking down

Not all Vichy administrators were able to reinvent themselves as brilliantly and actively as Filippi. Some, such as Maurice Sabatier, withdrew instead of moving forward. Maurice Sabatier, Vichy's Director of Departmental and Communal Affairs and from 1942 regional prefect of Bordeaux, he had been an active proponent of the new Vichy government. He supported Marshal Pétain's reform of the prefecture (and the instauration of the regional prefects under the immediate leadership of the head of state) in a talk in front of the new regional prefects in 1942.²⁶⁰ Vichy's General Secretariat of Information and Propaganda subsequently published this talk entitled "Authority and Decentralization" in a brochure. In Germany, Maurice Sabatier tried to erase his wartime history by claiming that he had been a member of a Resistance network called "Daniel"²⁶¹ or "Scorpion"²⁶² – which did not exist. This is at least what Maurice Grimaud claims in his memoir and speaks of a "providential certificate of good conduct provided by a mysterious resistance network."²⁶³ Grimaud also mentions that Emile Laffon had never heard of this Resistance network.²⁶⁴ Grimaud furthermore describes in his memoir as well as in an oral history interview the way Sabatier worked in the French occupation zone. In contrast to Filippi who took the things in hand, Maurice Sabatier was passive:

Since he got his fingers burned [by the purge commission], he employed such a bureaucratic caution that our young team got used to ignore him and to deal straight with his more dynamic departmental heads: Raymond Schmittlein of the Public Education, Jean Moreau of the Youth or Jean Arnaud of the Information department, who were themselves happy to escape from a sterile tutelage.²⁶⁵

Sabatier thus retreated into safe administrative processes, "he never took the slightest initiative," remarked Grimaud, "he did only paperwork, controlled paperwork."²⁶⁶ But Grimaud also noted that Sabatier and other former Vichy administrators had the flexibility to adapt to a

²⁶⁰ Maurice Sabatier, *Autorité et décentralisation*, conférence à l'École nationale des cadres civiques (Vichy: Secrétariat général à l'information et à la propagande, 1942).

²⁶¹ According to his personnel file at the Ministère des Affaires Etrangères: MAE 1 PL 4062. Sabatier, Maurice. Note sur l'attitude de M. SABATIER au Ministère de l'Intérieur de l'armistice de Juin 1940 à Mai 1942.

²⁶² According to a file in Grimaud's private archive at Sciences Politiques Paris. Fonds Grimaud, GRI 4. Baden 1945-47 Notices personnelles et divers. M. Sabatier. Letter from Scorpion Association Amicale du Réseau de Résistance France Combattante, Ceux de la Libération to Monsieur Sabatier, March 26, 1946.

²⁶³ Archives Sciences Po Paris. Fonds Grimaud, GRI 1. Dossier 3, éléments biographique, Essai de C.V., August 15, 1996, 21: "providentiel certificat de bonne conduite d'un mystérieux réseaux de Résistance."

²⁶⁴ Archives Sciences Po Paris. Fonds Grimaud, GRI 4. Baden 1945-47 Notices personnelles et divers.

²⁶⁵ Archives Sciences Po Paris. Fonds Grimaud, GRI 1, Dossier 3, éléments biographique, Essai de C.V., August 15, 1996, 21: "Echaudé par cette expérience, il apportait à sa fonction une telle prudence bureaucratique que notre jeune équipe prit vite l'habitude de l'ignorer et de traiter directement avec ses plus dynamiques chefs de service: Raymond Schmittlein à l'Education Publique, Jean Moreau à la Jeunesse ou Jean Arnaud à l'Information, eux-mêmes heureux d'échapper à une tutelle stérilisante."

²⁶⁶ MAE AOR 14. Grimaud, Maurice: "il avait jamais pris l'ombre d'une initiative, c'est du papier, du papier contrôlé." This supports F. Roy Willis thesis who doubted that the former Vichy administrators had any major influence on the policy of the French zone while he also suggests that those who had served the Vichy state had a desire for revenge the occupiers coming from the *Résistance* did not have. See Frank Roy Willis, *The French in Germany, 1945-49* (Stanford Univ Press, 1962), 149.

new governmental situation inherited from their long career in the administration, which allowed them to hold onto their positions and stay in Germany, whereas many young and unconventional administrators of the Laffon circle left Germany as fast as they could.²⁶⁷

Despite his less impressive performance, Sabatier still achieved solid grades in his postwar evaluations. He received slightly weaker grades in regards to his initiative (only 8 out of 10 points in 1949), but his written assessment remained excellent.²⁶⁸ Laffon's evaluation of 1947 downright contradicts Grimaud's testimony, when he wrote that Sabatier "leads his service with a lot of authority and competence," that he was a "hard worker who perfectly knows the problems and methods of the administration" and he had played a "leading role in the organization and working of the Military Government". "Excellent General Director" Laffon concluded.²⁶⁹ And the head of the army, General Koenig, underlined Sabatier's value for the French zone as well because he had organized not only the military government but also the governments of the newly founded German states; Sabatier was thus "[one] of the principal craftsmen of the success" of the French.²⁷⁰

While the latter assessment was part of an application to the Chevalier of the *Légion d'Honneur* and thus necessarily complimentary, it however also reveals Maurice Sabatier's activity in the French zone that contradicts Grimaud's assessment of Sabatier's work in Germany. When looking through the files of the "Affaires Politiques" one can thus regularly find Maurice Sabatier's signature underneath major orders. For instance, he signed post-censure orders, which were perceived to be rather restrictive in comparison to the other Western occupation zones. As late as 1948, Sabatier's orders forbade German newspapers in the French occupation zone if they contained articles critical to the French occupying power.²⁷¹ In 1949, with the founding of the German Federal Republic (and contrary to the purge commission's order), Maurice Sabatier was given an even less technical position as administrative counselor of Legal Affairs and head of the Justice Department of the French occupation in Germany.²⁷² In this position, Sabatier headed commissions that acted as courts of last instance and decided to accept or reject German demands for a remission inflicted by denazification commissions.²⁷³ In those amnesty commissions, Sabatier, himself subject to a purge commission in France after the Liberation, decided about the fate of Germans, who were former members of the NSDAP. Those Germans had been for instance subject to occupational bans just like Sabatier himself. The French purge commission had allowed Sabatier to hold technical position without any political power only. This is however not exactly what he did in Germany – at least not in the later years of the French occupation.

²⁶⁷ Archives Sciences Po Paris. Fonds Grimaud, GRI 4. Alain CANCES Dans quelles conditions décidez-vous de partir pour l'Allemagne en août 1945?, no date, 6b. Bolotte left Germany for instance in the spring of 1946, having found employment at the secretary of state in Paris.

²⁶⁸ MAE 1 PL 4062. Sabatier, Maurice. Notes pour l'Année 1949.

²⁶⁹ MAE 1 PL 4062. Sabatier, Maurice. Notes pour l'Année 1946: "dirige ses services avec beaucoup d'autorité et de compétence," "un rôle de premier plan dans l'organisation et le fonctionnement du G.M.;" "Excellent directeur Général."

²⁷⁰ MAE 1 PL 4062. Sabatier, Maurice. Renseignements demandés par la Grande Chancellerie à l'appui de toute proposition pour la Légion d'Honneur faite par le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, no date: "a été [un] des principaux artisans des succès."

²⁷¹ MAE AP 149. Attaques de presse 1947-1949. Procès verbal sur la question des attaques de presse allemande de zones alliées contre la France, December 16, 1947. And MAE AP 150 Sanctions contre la presse 1946-1948.

²⁷² MAE 1 PL 4062. Sabatier, Maurice. Fiche de renseignement, no date.

²⁷³ MAE AP 64. Affaires Preiss Wilhelm, Paape Fritz, Wabnitz Willi.

Independent of whether or not Maurice Sabatier acted passively in the French occupation zone, there is another factor that helped him and other high-ranking Vichy officials to assert their authority in occupied Germany: their acquired rank in the administrative hierarchy regardless of the political composition of the government they served for. The twelve undesirables had all worked their way up the state system already in the Third Republic and had not only an experience in administration that many of the younger occupiers from the Résistance lacked. More importantly, their titles remained valid after the war and during the French occupation of Germany. A prefect remained a prefect by name and was called “*Monsieur le préfet*” even if his position was head of security or administrative affairs in the French military government of Germany. Their title or function – even during the Vichy regime – went with a respect showed to the Vichy administrators. Pierre Bolotte, Laffon’s chief of staff very well explains this relationship between those old administrators and the young in Baden-Baden:

I wasn’t anything important in the prefectural corps, because I was 23 years old, I couldn’t be designated sub-prefect, because one had to be 25 years old and I hold the rank of head of a prefect’s cabinet, I had not taken an entrance examination [*concours*] [...] it was a great chance [for me to work there]. But we still had a hierarchical grouping, that means that, well, I was head of a prefect’s cabinet, and Sabatier or Péral were prefects of a much higher level, they were no longer prefect but they remained prefect. They had [...] a very long and complete experience and usually the expression of respect towards those prefects was inevitable [...] it facilitated the existence.²⁷⁴

The former Vichy administrators who stayed in Germany against the odds of the commission of inquiry, the constituent assembly and the French public were those who contributed to the success of the French occupation of Germany. Their experience in matters of administration, regardless of the form of government they did their work for, and their expertise in dealing with a defeated country counted. Thus, their affiliation with the Vichy regime was not a reason for them to leave the zone in 1946. As Marc Olivier Baruch showed in his essay “*Qui sont les préfets de Vichy?*”, the Vichy regime focused their choice of prefects on technical expertise as well, which is why many of those administrators could so easily slip from one system into another.²⁷⁵

Notably Emile Laffon, the head of the French military government, respected the purge commission’s decision and did not want a second wave of purges in the spring of 1946 as long as his subordinates worked to the benefit of France. A number of facts contributed to the *Vichyssois*’ success in Germany: a) Laffon installed the former *Vichyssois* in positions often similar to those they had held in former times and they used experience they had gained under Vichy. b) The *Vichyssois* knew each other from their collaboration in wartime France and especially in 1945/46 at the beginning of the occupation even wrote each other’s yearly evaluations – smoothing the transition from one regime to the next c) the hierarchies of the

²⁷⁴ MAE AOR 13. Bolotte, Pierre: “Moi, j’étais pas grand chose dans le corps préfectoral parce que j’avais 23 ans, je pouvais pas être nommé sous-préfet, parce qu’il fallait avoir 25 et j’étais chef du cabinet de préfet de grade, n’avait pas passé de concours avant [...] c’était une grande chance. [...] Nous avons tout de même une formation de type hiérarchique, c’est-à-dire que bon j’étais chef de cabinet de préfet eh, Sabatier ou Péral étaient préfet de plus haute niveau, ils étaient plus préfet mais ils restaient préfet. Ils [...] avaient une expérience très ancienne et très complète et normalement l’expression de respect de ces préfets était inévitable [...] ça facilitait l’existence.”

²⁷⁵ Marc Olivier Baruch, “*Qui sont les préfets de Vichy?*” Accessed February 17, 2016. http://www.ihpt.cnrs.fr/prefets/qui_sont_prefets_baruch.html

administration and the merit gained by the Vichy administrators, in particular of the prefects, advisers at the ministries or at the council of state as the elite of the French administration outlived the political change at the Liberation and continued during the occupation of Germany – at least outside of metropolitan France.

The Vichy administrators, Germans, and Allies

The average Germans in the occupation zone could hardly be aware of the presence of the former Vichy administrators in the French zone. Their presence went largely unnoticed because the central administration in Baden-Baden, where the majority of the thirteen Vichy administrators worked, was rather detached from the German population.²⁷⁶ The little German administrations that existed on the local level were entirely subordinated to the French military government and was furthermore preoccupied with more urgent matters of food supply and reconstruction in the immediate aftermath of the war. Even if the Germans had noticed the presence of Vichy administrators, they had few means through which to protest since, up to 1948, all publications and the press in the French zone were censored before or after the publication.²⁷⁷ Moreover, the French occupiers also censored their own newspapers in the zone if they were too critical of French rule in Germany.²⁷⁸

For those Germans who were tainted as National Socialists themselves, the presence of the former Vichy administrators in the French zone had without doubt more advantages than inconveniences. They and the Vichysois shared a common history of involvement with Nazism that both hoped would be forgotten as quickly as possible. Therefore, they had little interest in denouncing the Vichy administrators, and even less interest as they were constantly under threat to be “purged” themselves.

The French denazification policy was modelled on the purges in France. While the French politics in occupied Germany were in principle rather dirigistecontrolling of the German administration and economy and reluctant to give the Germans any power over their fate – it is surprising that this was not the case in matters of denazification. The French policy relied on the purge of Germans *by Germans*, similar to and inspired by the purges in France where resisters passed judgment on the collaborators.²⁷⁹ This concept of ‘self-purges’ (*auto-épuration*), elaborated by Emile Laffon, assessed individual guilt case by case depending on the personal implication with the Nazi regime. Laffon had originally planned only to purge convinced Nazis

²⁷⁶ MAE AOR I. Humbert, Roger: “On les voyait pas [les Allemands].”

²⁷⁷ See MAE AP 150. Sanctions contre la presse 1946-1948 and MAE AP 150/4 Regime de censure (1945-1948).

²⁷⁸ “Interdit en Allemagne à cause des révélations de notre envoyé spécial Jacques Morel. France d’Abord continuera de démasquer ceux qui complotent contre la République,” *France d’Abord*, June 12, 1947.

²⁷⁹ The historiography on the denazification in the French zone underlines the influence of the purges the French themselves had experienced in France at the end of the war on the French purges of the Nazis, but without going into further detail, and without making the connection between the negligence practiced in France and the way the French carried out the purges in Germany. See for example Klaus-Dietmar Henke, *Politische Säuberung unter französischer Besatzung: die Entnazifizierung in Württemberg-Hohenzollern* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1981), 25. And Rainer Möhler, “Politische Säuberung im Südwesten unter Französischer Besatzung,” in *Kriegsende und Neubeginn. Westdeutschland und Luxemburg zwischen 1944 und 1947*, ed. Kurt Düwell and Michael Matheus (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1997), 175–92. As well as Reinhard Grohnert, *Die Entnazifizierung in Baden, 1945-1949: Konzeptionen und Praxis der “Eputation” am Beispiel eines Landes der französischen Besatzungszone* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1991), 59. See also Dietmut Majer, Review of *Entnazifizierung in Rheinland-Pfalz und im Saarland unter französischer Besatzung von 1945 bis 1952 (Veröffentlichungen der Kommission des Landtags für die Geschichte des Landes Rheinland-Pfalz, Bd. 17)* by Rainer Möhler, *Politische Vierteljahresschrift* 37, 1 (March 1996), 161-162.

in the upper levels of the administration and to identify those who were willing to work with the French to build a democratic regime – again similar to his attitude vis-à-vis the former Vichy administrators.²⁸⁰ The French administration had also tried to win over Nazi-tainted Germans to form a pro-French separatist movement in the land of Baden by offering them a lenient denazification process if they collaborated.²⁸¹ This was also similar to the Vichy administrators who were “on probation” in Germany where they worked with and for the new democratic French Republic.

Unlike the American occupiers who punished the Germans based on their membership in the Nazi party, the French idea was that the local community of a suspected Nazi could best evaluate his or her behaviour during the twelve years of Nazi rule.²⁸² Indeed, the Germans themselves highly praised the French system; one report from Baden and Württemberg in February on the German perception of the French denazification stated:

The Germans pay homage to the French methods of purges and to the common sense the administrators demonstrate in this matter. The French, so they say, distinguish themselves from the Americans in that they are capable of a certain perceptiveness, enter in the conscience of the people they have to judge (they are capable of *Einfühlung* [empathy]), and endeavour to treat every case individually in that they take into account the circumstances. Their method does not have the schematic and oftentimes odious nature that the allied powers unfortunately use. Their denazification is rigorous and it has to be like that. But it is at the same time just and nuanced.²⁸³

However, while the French system was admired and even copied by the Americans, in practice, it turned out not to be as efficient in purging the Nazis in Germany for similar reasons the French purges themselves were unsuccessful.²⁸⁴ The failure of the denazification had nothing to do with the decisions the German purge committees took, but rather with the deficient

²⁸⁰ Reinhard Grohnert, “Die ‘auto-épuration’–Der französische Sonderweg in der Entnazifizierung,” in *Krisenjahre und Aufbruchszeit: Alltag und Politik im französisch besetzten Baden, 1945-1949*, ed. Edgar Wolfrum, Peter Fässler, and Reinhard Grohnert (Munich: Oldenbourg Verlag, 1996), 167.

²⁸¹ Klaus-Dietmar Henke, *Politische Säuberung unter französischer Besatzung: die Entnazifizierung in Württemberg-Hohenzollern* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1981), 43.

²⁸² On the self purges see Reinhard Grohnert, “Die ‘auto-épuration’–Der französische Sonderweg in der Entnazifizierung,” in *Krisenjahre und Aufbruchszeit: Alltag und Politik im französisch besetzten Baden, 1945-1949*, ed. Edgar Wolfrum, Peter Fässler, and Reinhard Grohnert (Munich: Oldenbourg Verlag, 1996), 165-185 as well as the chapters on auto-épuration in Reinhard Grohnert, *Die Entnazifizierung in Baden, 1945-1949: Konzeptionen und Praxis der “Eparation” am Beispiel eines Landes der französischen Besatzungszone* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1991), 67-181.

²⁸³ Archives Sciences Po Paris. Bolotte, Pierre. Dossier 1, Allemagne 1945-1946. Divers documents. Observations faites au cours d’un voyage en BADE et WÜRTEMBERG par le Capitaine R. de NAUROIS entre le 1^{er} février et le 12 février 1946: “Les Allemands rendent hommage aux méthodes françaises en matière d’épuration et au bon sens dont font preuve, en cette matière, les administrateurs. Les Français, disent-ils se distinguent en ceci des Américains qu’ils sont capables d’esprit de finesse, entrent dans la conscience des gens qu’ils ont à juger (ils sont capables d’*Einfühlung*) et s’efforcent de traiter chaque cas particulier en tenant compte des circonstances. Leur méthode n’a donc pas ce caractère schématique et souvent odieux qu’emploient, malheureusement, leurs puissants alliés. Leur épuration est rigoureuse et il faut qu’elle le soit. Mais elle est en même temps juste et nuancée.”

²⁸⁴ The Americans took over the French two-chamber system. See Klaus-Dietmar Henke, *Politische Säuberung unter französischer Besatzung: die Entnazifizierung in Württemberg-Hohenzollern* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1981), 8 and Reinhard Grohnert, *Die Entnazifizierung in Baden, 1945-1949: Konzeptionen und Praxis der “Eparation” am Beispiel eines Landes der französischen Besatzungszone* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1991), 63.

implementation of their decisions: some of the French military governments in the provinces and the German heads of the administrations formed a coalition and simply ignored the decisions of the purge commissions.²⁸⁵ A well-known example of this practice was in the case of forestry; here, the French interest in the economic resources of Germany was more important than a complete denazification. Therefore, tainted but experienced forestry officials remained in place.²⁸⁶ Emile Laffon himself had ordered to slow down the dismissal of specialists in the German administrations in the first year of the occupation.²⁸⁷ And his chief of staff, Pierre Bolotte, underlined that denazification had not been priority at all in the French zone during the first six months of the occupation.²⁸⁸ The French government in Paris was not interested in the denazification of the French zone as a whole even for the first two years of the occupation, because of their interest in extracting reparations for France and thus requiring a functioning administration and economy first and foremost.²⁸⁹ It is therefore no surprise that the commission of inquiry sent to Germany in the spring of 1946 noticed that, “[i]n too many localities . . . authentic Nazis have been put back into office because of their supposedly technical qualities.”²⁹⁰ This fact constitutes a clear parallel to the continued presence of Vichy officials in the French zone: the latter were also chosen to serve in Germany because of their technical skills in matters of administration. Similar to the purges in France, where passing through a purge commission became more of a mere symbolic procedure, the purges in French occupied Germany lost their importance quickly.²⁹¹ Because of the neglect of Laffon’s initial directive to focus the purges on convinced Nazi ideologues at the top of the administration, the sheer numbers of denazification files, and the pressure to complete the purges, turned denazification from a political process into a mere technical practice.²⁹² The French administration and the

²⁸⁵ Reinhard Grohnert, “Die ‘auto-épuration’–Der französische Sonderweg in der Entnazifizierung,” in *Krisenjahre und Aufbruchzeit: Alltag und Politik im französisch besetzten Baden, 1945-1949*, ed. Edgar Wolfrum, Peter Fässler, and Reinhard Grohnert (Munich: Oldenbourg Verlag, 1996), 172.

²⁸⁶ See on the case of the forestry for instance Reinhard Grohnert, *Die Entnazifizierung in Baden, 1945-1949: Konzeptionen und Praxis der “Eparation” am Beispiel eines Landes der französischen Besatzungszone* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1991), 95-99.

²⁸⁷ Reinhard Grohnert, “Die ‘auto-épuration’–Der französische Sonderweg in der Entnazifizierung,” in *Krisenjahre und Aufbruchzeit: Alltag und Politik im französisch besetzten Baden, 1945-1949*, ed. Edgar Wolfrum, Peter Fässler, and Reinhard Grohnert (Munich: Oldenbourg Verlag, 1996), 173.

²⁸⁸ When asked about his implication with the denazification, Bolotte replied: “Du tout, du tout, du tout. Jamais. Non. D’ailleurs, c’était pas l’ordre du jour dans les premiers six mois, vous comprenez? C’était pas l’ordre du jour. [...] [Ç]a ne remonte pas jusqu’à nous, ça reste vraiment au niveau des . . . très largement décentralisé.” SHD Archives orales, 3 K 49, Bolotte. Entretien 2, page 17.

²⁸⁹ See Angela Borgstedt, “Dénazification – épuration dans l’Allemagne d’après-guerre,” *Revue d’Allemagne et des Pays de langue allemande* 40.2 (2008): 243. Again, Paris did not even bother to send the personnel required for the denazification in sufficient quantities to Germany, see Reinhard Grohnert, *Die Entnazifizierung in Baden, 1945-1949: Konzeptionen und Praxis der “Eparation” am Beispiel eines Landes der französischen Besatzungszone* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1991), 164.

²⁹⁰ AN C//15893. Assemblée Nationale, Zone d’Occupation Française d’Allemagne et d’Autriche, Rapports. Rapport présenté par M. Henri WALLON au nom de la 1ère Section de la Commission parlementaire d’enquête chargée des questions administratives, 5: “[d]ans trop de localités, . . . en raison de leur soi-disant capacités techniques, d’authentiques nazis avaient été remis en place.”

²⁹¹ See for the symbolic meaning of the purges in France for example François Rouquet, *L’épuration dans l’administration française: agents de l’Etat et collaboration ordinaire* (Paris: CNRS éditions, 1993), 233.

²⁹² The shift to a mere nominal denazification happened at the latest since the turn of the year 1946/1947, when the French zone took over of the static American denazification proceedings, the *Spruchkammerverfahren*, see Reinhard Grohnert, “Die ‘auto-épuration’–Der französische Sonderweg in der Entnazifizierung,” in *Krisenjahre und*

German public tried to end the purges as soon as possible to return to “normal” and to rebuild the country.²⁹³ The purges in the two countries therefore were both incomplete and full of loopholes.

Whether or not former Vichy administrators favoured the former Nazis or mingled with them, as newspaper articles in 1945 feared, needs further research. However, former Vichy administrators were implicated in the denazification process. Edgar Morin claimed in his 1947 book on the French zone that former Vichy magistrates took over positions in the directorate of justice.²⁹⁴ Maurice Sabatier – who himself had to go through a purge commission in 1944 in France – presided over German amnesty commissions in the late 1940s. Francis Thiallet, who had been *intendant de police* of Rennes (Brittany) in occupied France during the war, sent out instructions on the denazification of German administrations to the French commissioners as well as to the heads of German administrations in the district of Hesse-Palatinate, where Thiallet took care of the internal administrative affairs in 1946.²⁹⁵ Edouard Kuntz, during the war Vichy prefect of the Tarn *département* and, after the war, assistant to the delegate general Gilbert Grandval in the Saar, was accused of protecting or at least tolerating Nazis in an article of the newspaper *Ce Soir* in November 1945.²⁹⁶ Those accusations were also taken up in a ‘Field report on the French zone in Germany’ by the Washington D.C.-based *Foundation of Foreign Affairs*, who found that the presence of former Vichy administrators obstructed the denazification in the French zone, suggesting persisting bonds of solidarity between former Nazi and former Vichy administrators:

[T]he actions of the rightist elements, some of them formerly pro-Vichy, who are now important in the administration of the French zone, has frequently hindered a more complete ‘denazification,’ and, indeed, has resulted in the installation of rightist elements in the main command posts of the German administration.²⁹⁷

This close association of former Vichy administrators and former Nazis in occupied Germany led to a “detestable reputation” of the French zone among the Allies, Edgar Morin noted. He reported that the Allies, especially the Americans considered it a “hideout for Nazis

Aufbruchszeit: Alltag und Politik im französisch besetzten Baden, 1945-1949, ed. Edgar Wolfrum, Peter Fässler, and Reinhard Grohnert (Munich: Oldenbourg Verlag, 1996), 182.

²⁹³ Angela Borgstedt noted that in comparison to the American zone, the purges in the French zone were accomplished much faster. Angela Borgstedt, “Dénazification – épuration dans l’Allemagne d’après-guerre,” *Revue d’Allemagne et des Pays de langue allemande* 40.2 (2008): 247.

²⁹⁴ Edgar Morin, *Allemagne notre souci* (Paris: Hier et aujourd’hui, 1947), 65.

²⁹⁵ See SHD 3 U 251. Commandement en Chef des Forces Françaises en Allemagne, Cmt de la Zone d’Occupation Nord. Notes de la Délégation supérieure de Hesse-Palatinat. Note cd. la Dénazification des administrations 1945. Gouvernement Militaire de la Zone Française d’Occupation, Délégation Supérieure pour le Hesse-Palatinat, Affaires Administratives Intérieur. Confidentiel. Le Général BOULEY, Délégué Supérieur pour le Gouvernement de Hesse-Palatinat to Messieurs les Délégués du Gouvernement Militaire. Objet: Dénazification des administrations, Neustadt, October 14, 1945. And Gouvernement Militaire de la Zone Française d’Occupation, Délégation Supérieure pour le Hesse-Palatinat, Affaires Administratives Intérieur. Confidentiel. Le Général BOULEY, Délégué Supérieur pour le Gouvernement de Hesse-Palatinat to Monsieur l’Oberregierungspräsident à Neustadt. Objet: Dénazification des administrations, Neustadt, October 10, 1945.

²⁹⁶ Jacques-Francis Rolland, “La faillite de Baden-Baden. Sous l’égide de M. Kuntz les Nazis sarrois sont en place,” *Ce Soir*, November 20, 1945.

²⁹⁷ Foundation for Foreign Affairs, Washington D.C., *Field report on the French zone in Germany*, 1946, 19. <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015049412052>.

that had been purged in the other zones.”²⁹⁸ Two newspaper articles had informed their readers about this issue: the *New York Times* noted that the French had employed twenty-seven tax officials and elementary school teachers that had previously worked in the American zone, mostly in Karlsruhe.²⁹⁹ A French investigation found that the accusations were only partly true and immediately dismissed the concerned German officials. Another accusation by the *New York Herald Tribune* was found untenable, Emile Laffon reported to General Koenig.³⁰⁰ While this accusation did not prove justified, it shows that the French administration was concerned with the issue and feared rumours about a failed denazification in their zone. And indeed, the French zone was struggling with denazification scandals – similar to their own “little Vichy” - scandal in Baden-Baden: Edgar Morin wrote of the French purges in Germany: “Every city is the theatre of a series of big and small purge scandals that outrage and then discourage the anti-Nazis, stun the rest of the population, and amuse the Nazis.”³⁰¹ In the context of these purge scandals, Morin in particular looked to the example of the city of Baden-Baden – both the capital of the French zone and the residence and workplace of the majority of former Vichy administrations. In this context, Emile Laffon’s flexibility with regard to the former Vichy administrators in Germany needs to be again underlined. It is not surprising that the head of the military government himself supported a former Wehrmacht official: Laffon unofficially financially helped the destitute wife and children of General von Choltitz who resided in Baden-Baden. The reason for this financial support was that von Choltitz had saved Laffon’s life in Paris in 1944 when von Choltitz was commander of Nazi occupied Paris.³⁰²

Recent research literature on French denazification (which is mostly from the early 1990s) has disputed the widespread opinion that the French zone was an “Eldorado of tolerance.”³⁰³ The presence of the Vichy administrators in the French administration, that is in

²⁹⁸ Edgar Morin, *L’an zéro de l’Allemagne* (Paris: Cité Universelle, 1946), 212: “détestable réputation” and “le repaire des nazies épurés des autres zones.”

²⁹⁹ See “French use Nazis from U.S. District: American officer declares that men ousted by us have regained positions 27 office holders cited French shrug off protests,” *New York Times*, October 21, 1945. See also Reinhard Grohnert, *Die Entnazifizierung in Baden, 1945-1949: Konzeptionen und Praxis der “Eparation” am Beispiel eines Landes der französischen Besatzungszone* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1991), 74.

³⁰⁰ Reinhard Grohnert suspected that the American press campaign against the French denazification measures merely distracted from their own denazification scandals and noted that the Americans employed at least three officials that had been formerly purged in the French zone. See Reinhard Grohnert, *Die Entnazifizierung in Baden, 1945-1949: Konzeptionen und Praxis der “Eparation” am Beispiel eines Landes der französischen Besatzungszone* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1991), 75.

³⁰¹ Edgar Morin, *L’an zéro de l’Allemagne* (Paris: Cité Universelle, 1946), 213: “Chaque localité est le théâtre d’une série de petits et gros scandales épuratifs, qui indignent, puis découragent les antinazis, ahurissent le reste de la population et amusent les Nazis.”

³⁰² See MAE AOR 13. Bolotte, Pierre and Archives Sciences Po Paris. Fonds Grimaud, GRI 6, Dossier 5 Correspondance en vue d’entretiens à propos d’Emile Laffon, Le général Von Choltitz et Emile Laffon, Paris July 6, 1995.

³⁰³ Klaus-Dietmar Henke’s study is representative of the “Eldorado der Duldsamkeit”-interpretation of the French denazification policy. The newer studies tried to put forward the various circumstances that led to the failure of the French denazification instead of condemning too easily the French policy as such. Those fatal circumstances were the Parisian interest in a functioning administration and economy to extract reparations, the lack of organization and guidelines, the German critique of punishing the small fishes instead the big ones, and the time pressure the purge commissions were in. See Volker Dotterweich, review of *Die Entnazifizierung in Baden 1945-1949. Konzeptionen und Praxis der “Eparation” am Beispiel eines Landes der französischen Besatzungszone* by Reinhard Grohnert, *Historische Zeitschrift*, 260,1 (Feb.1995): 283-284. The newer studies include Möhler and Grohnert, see footnote

their own ranks, however, influenced the German purges – be it in an active way via their implication in the denazification procedures or in a passive way through a normalizing effect the on-going presence of Vichy administrators had on the employment of Nazi-tainted Germans. The intimate knowledge of their shared Nazi and Vichy past distinguishes the relationship between French and Germans from the relationship between Germans and the other Allies, as the French approach and handling of the *auto-épuration* testifies. General Koenig claimed, in November 1945, that broadly: “The French administration in Germany is certainly one who understands the Germans best because the French are those of the four occupying powers who have been most in contact with the Germans.”³⁰⁴ It is this intimate contact that served as a basis for the French and German reconciliation in the 1950s and 1960s.³⁰⁵ The American *Foundation for Foreign Affairs* ended the ‘field report on the French zone’ by quoting a German Francophile who bemoaned the lack of collaboration on an equal basis between French and Germans in the zone. When the American investigator reminded him of the unflattering “collaboration” during the German occupation of France, the German replied: “the entire recent history of the two countries is only a series of muffed chances at a ‘true’ collaboration.”³⁰⁶ This was yet to come.

Aside from a more or less pronounced critique of the denazification in the French zone, the other Allies did not seem to have further intervened in either the French recruitment of personnel nor the denazification of Germans. Maybe this was due to their less than glorious success to purge the Nazis in their own occupation zones.³⁰⁷ Or perhaps, it was due to the relative neglect the Allies displayed towards the somewhat small and rural zone in Germany’s southwest. The French zone had the reputation of being a *terra incognita*. In 1947, a British observer noted that there was an aura of secrecy in the French zone, such that nobody even knew how many French occupiers in total actually lived on German soil – let alone former Vichy administrators.³⁰⁸ It is therefore no surprise that in the midst of the scandal over Vichy administrators created by the Parisian newspapers in the fall of 1945, the London *Times* acknowledged this critique of the French occupation of Germany, but also stoically praised the qualities of the French occupiers: ‘The military government has been recruited from some of the best of the Republic’s servants, and one is impressed not only by the earnestness and enthusiasm but also by the sense of mission which inspires these men and women.’³⁰⁹

279. There is no study on the denazification of the French zone as a whole, only regional studies on the Saarland, Württemberg-Baden, and the Palatinate.

³⁰⁴ “Le Général de Gaulle refute les allégations mensongères sur l’administration de notre zone d’occupation.” *Nouvelles De France*, November 16, 1945: “L’administration française en Allemagne est certainement une de celles qui comprend le mieux les Allemands et cela parce que les Français sont, des quatre puissances occupantes, ceux qui ont été le plus en contact avec les Allemands.” See also: MAE, AC 852/10. Allemagne, guerre. 1944-46.

³⁰⁵ See for the literature on French and German reconciliation for example Joseph Jurt, ed., *Von der Besatzungszeit zur deutsch-französischen Kooperation* (Freiburg i. Br.: Rombach, 1993); Stefan Martens ed., *Vom “Erbfeind” zum “Erneuerer”: Aspekte und Motive der französischen Deutschlandpolitik nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg* (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, 1993); and Corine Defrance, Michael Kissener, and Pia Nordblom, eds., *Wege der Verständigung zwischen Deutschen und Franzosen nach 1945: zivilgesellschaftliche Annäherungen* (Tübingen: Narr, 2010).

³⁰⁶ Foundation for Foreign Affairs, Washington D.C., *Field report on the French zone in Germany*, 1946, 26. <https://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015049412052>.

³⁰⁷ See for example the classic study on the denazification in the American zone, Lutz Niethammer, *Die Mitläuferfabrik: Die Entnazifizierung am Beispiel Bayerns* (Berlin: Dietz, 1982).

³⁰⁸ “The French Zone of Germany. Drawbacks of a Profitable Policy.” *The Manchester Guardian*, December 22, 1947.

³⁰⁹ “In the French Zone.” *Times London*, November 30, 1945.

The French occupation zone – hideout or career booster?

It is true that the presence of the administrators of the *Résistance* checked some of the force of the old Vichy-guard. The presence of strong personalities from the *Résistance* in other key positions of the zone made sure the former Vichy administrators were not left alone in their decision making in Germany: For example, there was Emile Laffon at the head of the military government, General Koenig at the head of the military, and the governors of the Palatinate (Boislambert), the Saar (Grandval), and Baden (Pène). Furthermore, there were many Gaullists in the younger members of the military government, like Pierre Bolotte and Maurice Grimaud in the entourage of Laffon. Many non-commissioned officers and Gaullists activists saw their mission in Germany as one very much in line with their activism during *Résistance*, making them suspicious of the administrators from the old-guard.³¹⁰ The sheer presence of those Gaullists helped to contain and align the former Vichy administrators. Klaus-Dietmar Henke mentioned a similar practice in the French denazification of the Germans: government officials with a Nazi past were installed in a position where they were dependent upon an official with anti-Nazi convictions.³¹¹

For most of the *Vichysois* their stay in Germany was in fact rather a hideout than a career booster, a mere hibernation until the French at home forgot who they were during Vichy. For four of the *Vichysois*, the position in French occupied Germany was their last one in the French administration. Two had to retire and two retreated into the private sector. Three received government positions in rather remote French departments or a technical ministry.

But to work in occupied Germany was also a chance to prove one's expertise and patriotic alignment to the new regime and to start a career in the international sphere (for three former Vichy administrators) or to return to a prestigious new position as a high-ranking government employee (for two former Vichy employees). I will analyze these different options here in detail.

The end of a career

Emile **Marchais**, the former Vichy intendant of police of Lyon and in Germany an unsuccessful secretary general of Württemberg was retired shortly after the commission of inquiry had left Germany in March 1946.³¹² Officially, the Ministry of the Interior charged to take care of its former prefect of the Aude department declared that due to the large number of former Vichy prefects they were not able to give him another position as prefect, insisting that his retirement was not a sanction.³¹³ Marchais who felt he was “brutally retired” bitterly complained that the purge commission had opted for him remaining in service and that he had worked hard in Germany.³¹⁴ Therefore, he argued, nothing spoke against his continuous employment in Germany, “where [...] it is teeming with people, retired servicemen, and where I could without a doubt – and I apologize for saying this – contribute some administrative

³¹⁰ See Emmanuel Droit, “Le RPF dans les Zones Françaises d’Occupation en Allemagne (1947-1958),” in *Gaullisme et Gaullistes dans la France de l’Est sous la IV^e République*, ed. François Audigier and Frédéric Schwindt (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2009), 187-201.

³¹¹ Klaus-Dietmar Henke, *Politische Säuberung unter französischer Besatzung: die Entnazifizierung in Württemberg-Hohenzollern* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1981), 49.

³¹² AN 1FbI 1096. Marchais, Emile. Professionnel, Decret du Mars 26, 1946.

³¹³ AN 1FbI 1096. Marchais, Emile. Note pour Monsieur le Directeur Adjoint du Cabinet du Ministère, no date.

³¹⁴ AN 1FbI 1096. Marchais, Emile. Letter from Marchais to Directeur de cabinet de l’Intérieur, Tübingen, July 29, 1946: “été mis brutalement à la retraite.”

knowledge that certain members of the military government seem to lack.”³¹⁵ But Marchais indeed left the prefectural administration and became director of a hospital complex first in Lille from 1952, and later in Angers. He died in 1958.³¹⁶

Jean **Cabouat**'s long prefectural career ended in Germany as well. After Emile Laffon dropped Laffon in the context of the de Conninck affair, General Koenig, the head of the occupation army and later after Laffon's departure in 1947 the head of the entire administration of the French zone, still supported Cabouat – maybe because of a sentiment of allegiance among service men (Cabouat, war-disabled in World War I, had received both a decoration as Chevalier (1920) and as Officer (1930) of the Legion of Honor):³¹⁷ Koenig underlined in his 1946 evaluation Cabouat's past as “remarkable soldier” and his “unquestionable qualities as prefect of the Résistance.”³¹⁸ Koenig thus sent him on a mission to Berlin. This mission was short and rather unpleasant: Koenig charged Cabouat to establish a list of members of the French government of Greater Berlin to be dismissed from their positions – in a mere winding-up.³¹⁹ At the same time, Cabouat tried to find a new position in a new administration – at the United Nations. In July 1946, Cabouat applied at the Ministry of Foreign affairs to become administrative director to the United Nations.³²⁰ Alexandre Parodi, *Résistant* and French representative at the Security Council of the United Nations, and General Koenig both personally intervened in support of his application.³²¹ But even with those positive recommendations Cabouat did not manage to get into the United Nations. The Ministry of the Interior did not have a position for him either, so Cabouat demanded his retirement in August 1947 at age 49. In October 1955, the prefect of the Aude department sent a letter to the Ministry of the Interior in order to receive some confidential information about Jean Cabouat because he was looking for a mediator for labor disputes and was interested in such a young pensioner in his department. Cabouat however lived in total isolation in a couple of rooms on a little farm, “without his wife and children and without any servants.”³²² Rumor in the Aude department had it that Cabouat had chosen to live a secluded life because he had a reason for it – notably his ambiguous situation at the Liberation. The prefect of Aude enumerated positions Cabouat had supposedly held during his career (including false reports about Cabouat's appointment at the Seine prefecture) underlining that he would of course not consider Cabouat for the position of a mediator had he been “in any ways sanctioned or was in trouble.”³²³ Jean Tomasi, who was responsible for personnel of the Ministry of the Interior in Paris, replied and informed him about

³¹⁵ AN 1FbI 1096. Marchais, Emile. Letter from Marchais to Directeur de cabinet de l'Intérieur, Tübingen, July 29, 1946: “où [...] pullulent les Militaire[s] retraités, et où je pourrais sans doute apporter – je m'excuse de le dire – quelques connaissances administratives qui paraissent faire défaut à certains membres du Gouvernement Militaire.”

³¹⁶ AN 1FbI 1096. Marchais, Emile. Resignements concernant la carrière de Monsieur Emile MARCHAIS, no date.

³¹⁷ AN 1FbI 1127. Cabouat, Jean. Divers, General Koenig to CGAA. April 13, 1946.

³¹⁸ AN 1FbI 1127. Cabouat, Jean. Notes, Notice Annuelle 1946: “soldat remarquable;” “sa qualité incontestée de Préfet de la Résistance.”

³¹⁹ MAE 1 PL 727. Cabouat, Jean. General Koenig Ordre de Mission, no date.

³²⁰ MAE 1 PL 727. Cabouat, Jean. Letter from Cabouat to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Baden-Baden, July 18, 1946.

³²¹ AN 1FbI 1127. Cabouat, Jean. Divers, Letter from Minister of Foreign Affairs to Minister of the Interior on Cabouat's application, January 25, 1947.

³²² AN 1FbI 1127. Cabouat, Jean. Divers, Letter from Pierre-Marcel Wiltzer (Prefect of the Aude department) to Jean Tomasi (Director of the Personnel), Troyes October 16, 1955: “sans sa femme et sans ses enfants, et sans le moindre domestique.”

³²³ AN 1FbI 1127. Cabouat, Jean. Divers, Letter from Pierre-Marcel Wiltzer (Prefect of the Aude department) to Jean Tomasi (Director of the Personnel), Troyes, October 16, 1955: “sous une forme quelconque, sanctionné ou inquiété.”

Cabouat's past emphasizing his qualities as "excellent prefect" mentioning that the accusations about his attitude during the occupation were unjustified.³²⁴ There is no trace of a further employment in Cabouat's file –the new prefect of the Aude department seems to have shrunk away from Cabouat's troubled career.

Retreat to the private sector

Apart from those *Vichyssois* whose careers ended in Germany, there are those who returned to a career in the private sector after their stay in occupied Germany. This was the case for Philippe Coste and Francis Thiallet. Philippe **Coste**, mining engineer and administrator at the French Ministry of Industrial Production during the war became head of the department of Industrial Production of the French occupation zone until October 1946. Having been for a short time at the very end of the war general director of Saint Gobain chemical products, he returned to the private sector.³²⁵ However, before his departure, the military government as well as General Koenig insisted on promoting Coste, who already possessed a Chevalier of the Legion of Honor decoration for his services at the Ministry of public works in 1937, to Officer of the Legion of Honor. General Koenig described the distinction as "compensation that [Coste] deserves" for his achievements in preparing a plan for German war reparations and a recovery of the German economy.³²⁶ Coste returned to the chemical industry and established a factory, Comurhex, that started to produce uranium in Pierrelatte, the site of the nuclear power plant Tricastin in the southern Rhône valley. He died of a heart attack in Nairobi in 1974 on his way to one of his last missions for Comurhex in South Africa.³²⁷

While Emile Coste returned very early to France, Francis **Thiallet** stayed much longer in occupied Germany: The former Vichy police intendant of Rennes became secretary general of the Palatinate and after his break with the Resistant Governor Hettier de Boislambert worked on a mission to control the finances of the German big industrial companies under French sequestration. Laffon had provided him with this position. In 1948, even after Laffon's departure, Thiallet still stayed in Germany and became assistant General Director of the French administration of B.A.S.F., one of three branches of the German chemical firm I.G. Farben under French control.³²⁸ At this point, the newspaper *France d'abord* of the communist Résistance published an article about Thiallet's Vichy past entitled "Who will supervise I.G. Farben's fate in Ludwigsburg?" worrying about the future German war potential if a *Vichyssois* controlled the company most famous for the production of *Zyklon B* during World War II.³²⁹ Thiallet's main task at the B.A.S.F. was to extract raw material for the French economy and to bind the French and the German industry closer together.³³⁰ This was a task tailored to Thiallet, whose experience in both countries and his mastery of both languages helped him immensely. He welcomed French sales representatives and brought them together with the German CEOs of

³²⁴ AN F1b1 1127. Cabouat, Jean. Divers, Letter from Jean Tomasi to Pierre-Marcel, Paris, October 22, 1955: "excellent Préfet."

³²⁵ MAE 1PL 1049. Coste, Philippe. Dossier de proposition au titre de la Légion d'Honneur, November 28, 1946.

³²⁶ MAE 1PL 1049. Coste, Philippe. Dossier de proposition au titre de la Légion d'Honneur, Avis du Général d'Armée Koenig: "une récompense qu'il mérite." And MAE 1PL 1049. Coste, Philippe. Dossier de proposition au titre de la Légion d'Honneur. Distinctions honorifiques obtenues, September 7, 1946.

³²⁷ "Philippe Charles André COSTE (1904-1974)." Philippe Charles André COSTE (1904-1974). Accessed February 29, 2016. <http://www.annales.org/archives/x/pcoste.html>.

³²⁸ Francis Thiallet, *Au soir d'une longue vie* (Antibes: Collection du Centre de l'Autoédition, 1989), 59.

³²⁹ MAE 1 PL 4390. Thiallet, Francis. "Qui va présider aux destinées de l'I.G. Farben de Ludwigshafen?" *France D'Abord*, September 30, 1948.

³³⁰ Francis Thiallet, *Au soir d'une longue vie* (Antibes: Collection du Centre de l'Autoédition, 1989), 63-64.

B.A.S.F.; he organized internships for French students at the German factory in Ludwigshafen and paired them with German students. But binding the German economy to the French meant also convincing the B.A.S.F. to no longer purchase their raw material in the United States but in French controlled North Africa (Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia) from distributors favored by the French occupiers.³³¹ When the control of B.A.S.F. was handed over to the Germans, Thiallet participated in training for high-ranking officials and servicemen at the *Institut des Hautes Etudes de Défense Nationale* in 1951-52. The goal of the training was to prepare the participants to hold positions in administrations that prepared for war. Thiallet was assigned the chair for “*le problème allemand*.”³³² After a short interlude as inspector of two commercial firms in Senegal and Ivory Coast,³³³ Thiallet asked Laffon, his superior in Germany, for help to find an employment at the European Coal and Steel Community. Laffon, who had taken care of Thiallet in the past, strongly supported Thiallet’s application and Thiallet was indeed invited for an interview in Luxemburg, but in the end Thiallet did not get a job offer.³³⁴ Thiallet therefore embarked in another direction and joined, like Coste, the nuclear sector. Still with Emile Laffon’s help, who continued to care for his protégés of the occupation in Germany, Thiallet got a position at the C.M.F.U. (*Compagnie Française des Minerais d’Uranium*) that he held for a year until Laffon’s sudden death in 1957.³³⁵ Afterwards, Thiallet continued to work as adviser of the *Auxiatome* society that built nuclear power plants until its dissolution in 1975.³³⁶

The shift to the nuclear energy sector might have been for Coste and Thiallet a means to continue to serve the French state, which owned the major power plants and promoted the research on nuclear energy as one of its prestigious projects from the 1950s onwards.³³⁷

Interlude to a minor civil service in France

For three other former *Vichyssois*, the stay in Germany was a shorter or longer interlude and they returned to a civil service in France – although not to their wartime position or rank. Raymond **Viguié**, secretary general of the Aude prefecture in 1940 and sub-prefect of Narbonne in 1944, was on the verge of being nominated secretary general of the Rhône department when he was called to assist Jean Cabouat to watch over the security of the French zone in Germany in 1945. His stay in Germany ended relatively fast when he was appointed vice president of the administrative court of Alsace and Lorraine on January 1, 1947.³³⁸

Marcel **Chapron** stayed in Germany for quite a long time as well. After the Liberation, he was harshly criticized and downgraded for his German-friendly attitude, notably because of the promotion he had received during Vichy and his position at the service of German requisitions of the Manche department. Therefore, the Minister of the Interior agreed to send him to Germany after the war – not wanting his reinstatement into the prefectural staff. In Germany, Chapron became deputy director of the department of Personnel, Supply and Budget and direct subordinate of Jean Lacombe. Chapron feared the commission of inquiry in the spring of 1946

³³¹ Francis Thiallet, *Au soir d’une longue vie* (Antibes: Collection du Centre de l’Autoédition, 1989), 64.

³³² Francis Thiallet, *Au soir d’une longue vie* (Antibes: Collection du Centre de l’Autoédition, 1989), 66-67.

³³³ Francis Thiallet, *Au soir d’une longue vie* (Antibes: Collection du Centre de l’Autoédition, 1989), 69-70.

³³⁴ Francis Thiallet, *Au soir d’une longue vie* (Antibes: Collection du Centre de l’Autoédition, 1989), 71.

³³⁵ Francis Thiallet, *Au soir d’une longue vie* (Antibes: Collection du Centre de l’Autoédition, 1989), 77.

³³⁶ Francis Thiallet, *Au soir d’une longue vie* (Antibes: Collection du Centre de l’Autoédition, 1989), 77-78.

³³⁷ See Gabrielle Hecht, *The radiance of France: Nuclear power and national identity after World War II* (MIT press, 2009).

³³⁸ MAE 1 PL 4591. Viguié, Raymond, Letter from Commissaire Général aux Affaires Allemandes et Autrichiennes to Direction du Personnel, du Matériel et du Budget, February 11, 1947.

and gathered letters of support for his patriotic behavior during the German occupation. In his files we can find a curious attestation of an monk who was member of an resistance organization for civil servants (OFR) in occupied Germany to testify to Chapron's "understanding" of titles and merits of members of the Résistance – while at the same time the abbot admitted that he did not know anything about Chapron's Vichy past.³³⁹ One year later, Chapron even more intriguingly received two decorations: the medal of French recognition for "acts of resistance" and the war cross with a silver star. The official reason: he had transmitted information on a German column in his department of Hérault so that the French Forces of the Interior could arrest them – on August 17, 1944, that is eight days before the Liberation of Paris.³⁴⁰ Chapron, however, did not have an easy position in occupied Germany, at least not after the departure of Laffon, when he feared dismissal and tried to obtain a position at the Secretary of State in Paris, or to stay in Germany.³⁴¹ As a matter of fact, there was some tension in the air. In September 1948, General Koenig refused to sign a letter of recommendation intended for Chapron's Legion of Honor decoration because Koenig perceived it as too complimentary.³⁴² Chapron's reinstatement into the Ministry of the Interior turned out to be rather difficult too – Jules Moch, the Minister of the Interior, did not have a position for him.³⁴³ Finally, Chapron received his Legion of Honor in 1950 and a position at the Ministry of Reconstruction and City Planning from August 1, 1949. This position was well in line with his employment in war-struck Germany at the Directorate of Personnel, Supply and Budget.³⁴⁴

Jean **Lacombe**, whose anti-Semitic attitude and his support of the French and German collaboration during the German occupation the French authorities only found out about in August 1947, seemed to have been protected from persecution in Germany. In continuity with his wartime occupation, Jean Lacombe directed the department of Personnel, Supply and Budget from summer 1945 until March 1947 when General Koenig supported his nomination as paymaster of the French zone of occupation.³⁴⁵ In 1948, General Koenig emphasized Lacombe's merits in Germany in a letter to the Minister of Finance and requested his reinstatement into the French paymaster general staff. At the same time, he tried to convince the Ministry of the big advantage Lacombe's continued employment in Germany had for them: it would not deprive them of a position in the metropole – a good reason for the ministries in Paris desperate to deal with the returning officials and the new ones from the Resistance.³⁴⁶ Lacombe was consequently appointed general paymaster of the Haute Savoie and Belfort departments but remained in his

³³⁹ MAE 1 PL 862. Chapron, Marcel. Organisation des fonctionnaires résistants, section des territoires occupés. attestation, Baden-Baden, May 9, 1946.

³⁴⁰ MAE 1 PL 862. Chapron, Marcel. Croix de guerre avec étoile d'argent decoration, October 16, 1947. Medaille de la Reconnaissance Française May 17, 1947.

³⁴¹ MAE 1 PL 862. Chapron, Marcel. Letter by Chapron, April 24, 1948.

³⁴² MAE 1 PL 862. Chapron, Marcel. Draft letter from General Koenig to Minister of Foreign Affairs, Promotion au titre de la Légion d'Honneur concernant M. Chapron, Marcel, no date.

³⁴³ MAE 1 PL 862. Chapron, Marcel. Letter from Minister of the Interior to Minister of Foreign Affairs. Situation of M. Chapron, August 2, 1948.

³⁴⁴ MAE 1 PL 862. Chapron, Marcel. Extrait du Journal Officiel du 3 Mars 1950. Ministère des Affaires Etrangères. Decret portant nomination dans l'Ordre National de la Légion d'Honneur. MAE 1PL 862. Chapron, Marcel. Journal Officiel de la République Française du 26 Août 1950. Ministère de l'Intérieur Détachement de sous-préfets.

³⁴⁵ MAE 1 PL 2459. Lacombe, Jean. Letter from Ministre des Finances to Monsieur le Sous-Secrétaire d'Etat aux Affaires Allemandes et Autrichiennes (Services Affaires Fiancières), December 26, 1948.

³⁴⁶ MAE 1PL 2459. Lacombe, Jean. Letter from Général Koenig to Monsieur le Ministre des Finances, April 19, 1948.

old position in Germany until 1951.³⁴⁷ The French government vested Lacombe in April 1949 with the Chevalier of the Legion of Honor decoration – ignoring the incriminating findings of the Hôtel Majestix of 1947 that confirmed his anti-Semitism during Vichy, and on the contrary confirming his “morality” during the Vichy regime.³⁴⁸ Lacombe left Germany after seven years of service in 1951 to become paymaster general of the Finistère department in Brittany.

For Lacombe, Chapron and Vigié, their stay in Germany was a smooth landing after their position in Vichy, a place to hide, wait and make a fresh start back home in. The careers of those three administrators never picked up high speed, but they turned out to receive decent positions well in line with their professional skills.

The beginning of an international career

For three administrators who appeared on the commission of inquiry’s list of undesirables their stay in the French occupied part of Germany was a starting point for an international career. This is the case notably for Pierre **Ordonneau** who remained only very briefly in Germany after the war. Ordonneau pursued an international career and became Counselor to the French delegation at the United Nations. In this position he was René Cassin’s representative in the United Nations meetings where he was a member of the drafting committee of the commission of human rights and helped preparing the UN Genocide Convention.³⁴⁹ In the 1950s Ordonneau was head of the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine (UNCCP).³⁵⁰ Ordonneau’s name also appeared again in 1977 when he became the first president of the French Competition Authority (*Commission de la Concurrence*) in the context of the oil crisis.³⁵¹

Pierre **Landron**, Master of requests at the prestigious Council of State during the war, received excellent reviews for his position as longtime secretary general of the Rhineland-Palatinate from 1945 to late 1950. In 1947, however, Landron had to appear in front of a purge commission of his home ministry, the Ministry of Justice. The Ministry had found out that Marshal Pétain had honored Landron’s services to the Vichy state with the *francisque gallique* decoration.³⁵² The Ministry of Justice inflicted a reprimand upon Landron, which had – as although it coincided with the unveiling of Lacombe’s anti-Semitic past – no further consequences for Landron’s career. The reason for the juridical inaction was the first French amnesty laws for “all mild sanctions inflicted by the purge commissions” passed on August 16, 1947.³⁵³ Consequently all of Landron’s actions were amnestied and did no longer appear in his personnel file – “as if Monsieur Landron had never been punished,” commented the Ministry of

³⁴⁷ MAE 1PL 2459. Lacombe, Jean. Dossier Administratif.

³⁴⁸ MAE 1PL 2459. Lacombe, Jean. Renseignements demandés par la Grande Chancellerie à l’appui de toute proposition pour la Légion d’Honneur faite par le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, February 10, 1949: “moralité.”

³⁴⁹ See William A. Schabas, ed., *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights: The Travaux Préparatoires*. (Cambridge University Press, 2013).

Alfred William Brian Simpson, *Human rights and the end of empire: Britain and the genesis of the European Convention* (Oxford University Press, 2004), 364-365. – Although Simpson described Ordonneau as “active member of the Resistance.”

³⁵⁰ Michael R. Fischbach, *Records of dispossession: Palestinian refugee property and the Arab-Israeli conflict* (Columbia University Press, 2012), 231.

³⁵¹ Décret du 9 Décembre 1977 plaçant M. Pierre ORDONNEAU dans la position de détachement de longue durée pour exercer les fonctions de président de la commission de la concurrence. Accessed February 29, 2016. <http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000000338560>.

³⁵² MAE 1 PL 2510. Landron, Pierre. Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Note sur M. Landron, October 14, 1947.

³⁵³ MAE 1 PL 2510. Landron, Pierre. Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Note sur M. Landron, October 14, 1947: “toutes les sanctions légères au titre de l’Eputation.”

Justice.³⁵⁴ Since Landron had received a war decoration for his service in the French First Army on the way to Germany in 1945 and his service in Rhineland-Palatinate, he received several decorations in 1949 and 1950: the Cross of voluntary military services (*Croix des services militaires volontaires* of the Order of Military Merit at the Ministry of Defense's suggestion for services of reservists in peacetime) in October 1949, *Officier des palmes académiques* (Order of Academic Palms, a decoration of the Ministry of Education for distinguished persons in the field of culture and education) in December 1949, and a Legion of Honor decoration in January 1950.³⁵⁵ It is remarkable that Landron could collect such a high number of decorations despite his Vichy past, and indeed as a means to make up for this Vichy past. For Landron's successful application as Chevalier of the Legion of Honor, General Koenig described him as high government official who had "participated in the Résistance against the invader"³⁵⁶ – even if he had received a Vichy decoration and even if the Resistance activities he declared to have rendered "have not been recognized as valid" in 1952.³⁵⁷ At that point Pierre Landron had continued his successful international career in Hamburg where he was French observer to the British for the French Directorate of Political Affairs from 1950.³⁵⁸ Later in his career, Pierre Landron returned to France and presided the administrative court of Paris from 1968-1972. He retired in September 1978.³⁵⁹

While Pierre Landron continued his international career only in Germany, Guy **Périer de Féral**, who had to leave due to the pressure of the commission of inquiry and the nightly bargaining at the Jesuitenschlösschen in the French occupation zone in the spring of 1946, found new employment in post-fascist Italy. In 1948, he became the French representative at the French-Italian Conciliation Commission. This commission was instituted in the context of the peace treaty with Italy concluded a year earlier and was convened to settle the details of that peace.³⁶⁰ In 1952, Périer de Féral was appointed Councilor of State and the Minister of Justice Léon Martinaud-Déplat called Périer de Féral into his cabinet. At this point, the communist newspaper *L'Humanité* published several articles asking Martinaud-Déplat to justify his choice of head of cabinet. *L'Humanité* reproduced two documents from the time of the Vichy government – one administrative guide of 1943 that testified Guy Périer de Féral's presence at

³⁵⁴ MAE 1 PL 2510 Landron, Pierre. Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Note sur M. Landron, October 14, 1947: "considérer que M. LANDRON n'avait subi aucune sanction."

³⁵⁵ MAE 1 PL 2510. Landron, Pierre. Fiche de renseignements, August 1, 1952.

³⁵⁶ MAE 1 PL 2510. Landron, Pierre. Renseignements demandés par la Grande Chancellerie à l'appui de toute proposition pour la Légion d'Honneur faite par le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, no date: "participé à la Résistance contre l'envahisseur."

³⁵⁷ MAE 1 PL 2510. Landron, Pierre. Dossier Résistance. Titres de Résistance "n'ont pas été reconnus valables." (He claimed to have transported documents for the Résistance.

³⁵⁸ MAE 1 PL 2510. Landron, Pierre. Haut-Commissariat de la République Française en Allemagne. Notes pour l'Année 1952, no date.

³⁵⁹ Décret du 11 Octobre 1968 M. Pierre LANDRON est maintenu en position de détachement de longue durée pour exercer les fonctions de président du tribunal administratif de Paris.. Accessed February 29, 2016.

<http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000000337997>.

Décret du 20 Janvier 1972 mettant fin au détachement de M. Pierre LANDRON et le plaçant dans la position de disponibilité pour une durée maximale de 3 ans à compter du 13 juillet 1971. Accessed February 29, 2016.

<http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000000697511>.

³⁶⁰ Guy Périer de Féral, *Les Charges de la guerre de 1870* (Laval: Impr. Barnéoud; Paris: Marcel Giard 1928/1929). AN F1b1 Périer de Féral, Guy. Service de Documentation du Conseil d'Etat: Périer de Féral Baron Guy de Schwarz, Conseiller d'Etat.

the Seine prefecture³⁶¹ and one poster that condemned the attacks against the German occupation soldiers in 1941 signed by Périet de Féral.³⁶² The latter was entitled “Périet de Féral [...] denounced the Résistance.”³⁶³ One of the authors wondered about the peculiar relationship between the Minister and Périet de Féral that moved Martinaud-Déplat to give such a high position to a former high official of Pétain “tarnished by the crimes of the occupier that he had served.”³⁶⁴ In the spring of 1952, the communists faced arrests in the context of their anti-Vietnam war activism and particularly feared to see the French justice headed by a former “collabo” who delivered verdicts on former Résistants.³⁶⁵ In the second half of 1952, several statewide and local newspapers picked those accusations up and underlined that Périet de Féral had been arrested at the Liberation of Paris (*Ce Soir* and *La République de Lyon*)³⁶⁶ and that Pétain had decorated him with the *francisque gallique* (*Ouest Matin*).³⁶⁷ Those accusations however had again no consequences for Périet de Féral’s further career. Thus, like in 1945/46, there was a gap between the administration that accepted the purge commission’s verdict and the public opinion outraged about the continuity of *Vichysois* in the French administration. Périet de Féral thus continued to lead Martinaud-Déplat’s cabinet when the latter became Minister of the Interior in 1953. A year later, he became an honorary prefect, and two years later president of the Commission for French Compensation for War Damages Abroad. In 1956, Périet de Féral then turned to the United Nations and became, like Ordonneau, a member of the French delegation to the United Nations. In this position, he was notably an adviser to the French Togoland autonomy referendum (1956), and responsible for questions on electoral law in Haiti (1957) and Costa-Rica (1960). In the 1960s, Périet de Féral returned to purely French matters as head of several commissions on military issues (marine 1962, arming 1963, integration of officers into the state administration 1964). Périet de Féral died on a mission in Rome in 1967.³⁶⁸

Continuing a career in the administrative French Grands Corps de l’Etat and the Senate

Just like Périet de Féral, Maurice **Sabatier**, the Vichy regional prefect of Bordeaux, was appointed to the Council of State, one of the *Grands Corps* of the French state, whose members are among the most prestigious administrators in France. Sabatier entered this respected institution by appointment, not by *concours* (entrance examination) – which Pierre Bolotte

³⁶¹ AN F/7/15519. Dossier Nr. 7824, Périet de Féral, Guy. “Est-ce que parce que M. Périet De Féral avait la confiance de Laval que Martinaud-Déplat en a fait son principal collaborateur?” *L’Humanité*, August 12, 1952.

³⁶² AN F/7/15519. Dossier Nr. 7824, Périet de Féral, Guy. “En décembre 1941 Périet De Féral qui dirige aujourd’hui aux côtés de MARTINAUD-DEPLAT la répression contre les patriotes dénonçait la Résistance.” August 14, 1952.

³⁶³ AN F/7/15519. Dossier Nr. 7824, Périet de Féral, Guy. “En décembre 1941 Périet De Féral qui dirige aujourd’hui aux côtés de MARTINAUD-DEPLAT la répression contre les patriotes dénonçait la Résistance.” August 14, 1952.

³⁶⁴ AN F/7/15519. Dossier Nr. 7824, Périet de Féral, Guy. “Martinaud-Déplat répondra-t-il?” *L’Humanité*, August 11, 1952: “éclaboussé par les crimes de l’occupant qu’il a servi.”

³⁶⁵ AN F/7/15519. Dossier Nr. 7824, Périet de Féral, Guy. “Martinaud-Déplat Répondra-t-il?” *L’Humanité*, August 11, 1952. See for instance *Pierre Milza*, “La Guerre froide a Paris: ‘Ridgway la peste,’” *L’Histoire*, no. 25 (1980): 38-47.

³⁶⁶ AN F/7/15519. Dossier Nr. 7824, Périet de Féral, Guy. “Août 1944, journées historiques de la Libération. Il y a 8 ans, le C.P.L (Comité Parisien De Libération) donnait l’ordre d’arrêter Périet De Féral.” *La République de Lyon*, August 23, 1952. “Le directeur du cabinet du garde des sceaux n’aurait-il pas été lui-même (au lendemain de la Libération) détenu dans cette même prison?” *Ce Soir*, December 8, 1952.

³⁶⁷ AN F/7/15519. Dossier Nr. 7824, Périet de Féral, Guy. “Directeur du cabinet de M. Martinaud-Desplat [sic] actuel ministre de la justice M. Périet de Féral était titulaire de la francisque.” *Ouest-Matin*, August 26, 1952.

³⁶⁸ AN F/7/15519. Dossier Nr. 7824, Périet de Féral, Guy. Service de Documentation du Conseil d’Etat: Périet de Féral Baron Guy de Schwarz, Conseiller d’Etat.

commented on in his oral history interview at the Ministry of Defense: “This is funny. Sabatier, Périer de Féral, both Councilors of State. Voilà, those are careers!”³⁶⁹

Sabatier, who had won the bargaining at the Jesuitenschlösschen, had stayed in Germany much longer – until 1950 when he was sent back to the Ministry of the Interior. For his “mission” in Germany, he was decorated with the Chevalier of the Legion of Honor decoration – although with some hesitation or constraint: the correspondence in the administration reveals that he was initially not on the list of those designated for the decoration.³⁷⁰ When he was finally considered for the award, General Koenig added a handwritten note to Sabatier’s evaluation for the Legion of Honor, in which he admitted that Sabatier: “must be promoted due to the promises made.”³⁷¹ But Sabatier himself was actively involved in the process and presented as evidence for his patriotic behavior. He provided the jury with no less than twenty-four letters and proofs of patriotic behavior concerning the Vichy period. On account of those “promises made” he received the decoration on August 27, 1948.³⁷² Once again, the extensive support network of this longtime high-ranked administrator illustrated his high standing among influential circles in France. Once Sabatier was back in France and served as Counsellor ordinary at the Council of State, he was further promoted *Commandeur* of the Legion of Honor in 1955 (at the suggestion of the German Affairs department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs).³⁷³ He even became *Grand Officier* of the Legion on Honor, the highest French decoration and the highest level of the Legion of Honor in 1967.³⁷⁴ In the same year, Sabatier retired while being appointed honorary Counsellor of State.³⁷⁵

Jean **Filippi**, the expert of the French occupation zone’s economy, was the only *Vichyssois* who could return to the position he had held during the Vichy regime: he returned to the Ministry of Finance. He had apparently managed to prove his value for the French state by claiming that he successfully rebuilt the German economy to the benefit of warstruck France during his service in French occupied Germany. In 1948, he was promoted director of the foreign economic relations at the Ministry of Finance and became Finance Minister Maurice Petsche’s director of cabinet in 1949. From its foundation in 1948 until 1951 Filippi was president of the trade committee at the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC), the forerunner of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, OECD. Later, he became one of the directors of the National Center for External Trade. Filippi also worked in the private sector as manager director of the Société Louis Dreyfus between 1951 and 1955, while he

³⁶⁹ SHD Archives orales, 3 K 49, Bolotte. Entretien 2, page 12: “C’est drôle. Sabatier, Périer de Féral, tous les deux conseiller d’état. Voilà, c’est des carrières ça!”

³⁷⁰ MAE 1 PL 4062. Sabatier, Maurice. Renseignements demandés par la Grande Chancellerie à l’appui de toute proposition pour la Légion d’Honneur faite par le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, no date: “doit absolument être promu en raison des promesses faites.”

³⁷¹ MAE 1 PL 4062. Sabatier, Maurice. Renseignements demandés par la Grande Chancellerie à l’appui de toute proposition pour la Légion d’Honneur faite par le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, no date: “doit absolument être promu en raison des promesses faites.”

³⁷² MAE 1 PL 4062. Sabatier, Maurice. Note sur l’attitude de M. SABATIER au Ministère de l’Intérieur de l’armistice de Juin 1940 à Mai 1942 Annexes Pièces 1-24. MAE 1PL 4062 Sabatier, Maurice. Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Décrets du 5 Janvier 1955 portant promotions et nominations dans l’Ordre national de la Légion d’honneur.

³⁷³ AN F1bI 1114. Sabatier, Maurice. Letter from Président du Conseil, le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères to Monsieur le Ministre de l’Intérieur Direction du Personnel et des Affaires Politiques, January 15, 1955. Promotion au grade de Commandeur dans l’Ordre National de la Légion d’Honneur de Maurice SABATIER, Préfet hors classe et Conseiller d’Etat.

³⁷⁴ AN F1bI 1114. Sabatier, Maurice. Journal Officiel, December 31, 1967.

³⁷⁵ AN F1bI 1114. Sabatier, Maurice. Fonctions successivement remplis, no date.

presided over the Louis-Dreyfus between 1953 and 1971. He returned to the government from 1956 to 1957 as secretary of state under Guy Mollet and was responsible for the finances. Filippi was senator for Corsica and remained in the French Senate from 1955 until his retirement in 1980. In the Senate, he was mostly occupied with his specialty: economic questions. Jean Filippi died in 1993 at the age of 87.³⁷⁶

Conclusion

France was in a peculiar position in the wake of World War II. It was the only country among the four Allies occupying Germany in 1945 that had not only been completely occupied by Nazi Germany during the war, but whose government and administration actively collaborated with the Nazis. At the time of Liberation, the new French state could not afford to let its tainted elite administrators go. They were experienced experts in matters of administration, had benefited from long years of training and careers in the Third French Republic, and additionally had the prestige that went along with their high positions in the administration of the state. Charles de Gaulle stated, as early as 25 July 1944, in a speech in front of the provisional consultative assembly in Paris: ‘The government has no intention to suddenly make a clean sweep of the big majority of civil servants who for the most part have tried above all to serve as best as they could the state during the terrible years of the occupation and usurpation,’ Charles de Gaulle stated as early as 25 July 1944, in a speech in front of the provisional consultative assembly in Paris.³⁷⁷ Thus, those civil servants were sent to occupied Germany, where they were out of the sight of the French public – and where the Germans were either too caught up with the immediate consequences of their defeat to resist their employment, or were not resistant but even eager to collaborate with them. In the direct aftermath of the war, French society was still caught up in the fever of civil war between resisters and collaborators – a civil war that de Gaulle tried to end. In Germany, the expertise of these officials was urgently needed. When the French public discovered the presence of those *Vichyssois* in the fall of 1945, the scene of this Franco-French civil turned to French-occupied Germany, where denazification was also underway. However, the heads of the French administration composed of *résistants* like Laffon held onto those administrators, not wanting to put their own purge commissions – and the Fourth Republic’s legitimacy – into question.

This conflict between resisters and former Vichy administrators faded in the face of their communal work in Germany for the new French state, as well as in the face of the *Vichyssois*’ experience, flexibility, and inherited prestige in their prefectural careers. Occupied Germany thus constituted the ground where the post-war settlement was worked out. Edgar Morin speaks of a reconciliation or coalition between *résistants* and former Vichy officials in Germany in what Libera named a “society of occupants.”³⁷⁸ One article commented on this odd coalition: “You must get along marvellously among French and live just like a big family...Because, of course,

³⁷⁶ “FILIPPI Jean.” Anciens Sénateurs IVème République: FILIPPI Jean. Accessed February 29, 2016. http://www.senat.fr/senateur-4eme-republique/filippi_jean000135.html.

³⁷⁷ Charles de Gaulle, *Discours et Messages. Pendant La Guerre, Juin 1940-Janvier 1946* (Paris: Plon, 1970), 432: “[Le gouvernement] n’a aucunement l’intention de faire tout à coup table rase de la grande majorité des serviteurs de l’Etat dont la plupart, pendant les années terribles de l’occupation et de l’usurpation, ont avant tout cherché à servir de leur mieux la chose publique.”

³⁷⁸ Edgar Morin, *Allemagne notre souci* (Paris: Hier et aujourd’hui, 1947), 35. See Martial Libera, *Un Rêve de Puissance: La France et Le Contrôle de L’économie Allemande (1942-1949)* (Bruxelles: Peter Lang, 2012), 315: “société des occupants.”

everyone knows that the French are only divided within the borders of their country, and once they are abroad, they stop eating each other's throats."³⁷⁹ The French zone thus served as a magnifying glass for the settlement of the Franco-French civil war, but also highlighted the incomplete purges in both post-war France and in occupied Germany. In the fall of 1945, one of the newspaper articles furiously criticized the presence of the Vichy administrators in French occupied Germany, but then its author resigned and asked: "But who would think that in order to administer Germany we would make an effort that we had been incapable of even at home in France."³⁸⁰

The former Vichy administrators remained in Germany until they found new employment in either the private sector or another (often minor) administration in the late 1940s or early 1950s. The stay in occupied Germany was, for most of the former Vichy administrators, thus a mere temporary hideout as well as a kind probation period. However, administrators in the higher positions in particular were also able to advance their careers in the prestigious international circles of the United Nations (Périer de Féral) or the French high administration in the council of state (for Sabatier) and the senate (for Filippi). These men continued to influence French post-war politics well beyond World War II.

The Vichy past of those administrators was dug up periodically during the late 1940s and early 1950s by left-wing newspapers whose editors remembered the faces of the former Vichy administrators – but with practically no impact on personnel decisions. The French repressed the memory of the Franco-French civil war from the 1950s, as Henry Rousso described in his ground-breaking study *Vichy syndrome*.³⁸¹ This post-war settlement lasted until the early 1980s. Up to then, none of these thirteen *Vichyssois* sent to Germany after the war had thus far been tried for their complicity with the Vichy state and the crimes that this state committed under the auspices and request of the German occupiers. In the 1980s and 1990s, however, a new French generation who had not experienced the *Occupation* led a proxy trial, the famous Papon trial.³⁸² Maurice Papon, secretary general of Bordeaux from 1942 to 1944, was accused along with his mentor and immediate superior Maurice Sabatier, who is central to this article and who was regional prefect of the Gironde and long-time head of the general directorate of administrative affairs in French occupied Germany. In 1981, Maurice Papon was budget minister when the French satirical weekly newspaper *Le Canard Enchaîné* published an article about Papon's implication in the deportation of over 16,000 Jews from Bordeaux to the Nazi death camps. However, this article did not fizzle out like the ones cited at the beginning of this article. Instead, the article in *Le Canard Enchaîné* cracked the post-war compromise and triggered one of the

³⁷⁹ SHD 4 Q 22. "En Allemagne occupée... Baden-Baden le dernier salon où l'on danse...", *L'Alsace*, September 21, 1945: "Vous devez vous entendre à merveille entre Français et vivre comme une grande famille... Car, n'est-ce pas, tout chacun sait que les Français ne sont divisés que dans leur pays et qu'une fois à l'étranger, ils cessent de se manger le nez entre eux."

³⁸⁰ "Civile ou militaire..." *Combat*, November 8, 1945: "Mais comment imaginer que l'on fera pour administrer l'Allemagne l'effort dont on a été incapable en France même?"

³⁸¹ Henry Rousso, *The Vichy syndrome: History and memory in France since 1944* (Harvard University Press, 1994).

³⁸² See Richard Joseph Golsan, *The Papon affair: memory and justice on trial* (London: Routledge, 2000). For the generational change in the memory of the German occupation and the Holocaust see for example: István Deák, "Introduction," in *The politics of retribution in Europe: World War II and its aftermath*, ed. István Deák, Jan T. Gross, and Tony Judt (Princeton University Press, 2009), 12, and Annette Wieviorka, *The era of the witness* (Cornell University Press, 2006).

longest trials in French history: in 1998 Maurice Papon was convicted of ‘crimes against humanity,’ more than fifteen years after the initial charge, and was sentenced to ten years of imprisonment. It was, however, Maurice Sabatier’s spectre that hung over this entire trial.

In 1981, when the “Papon affair” started, the by then eighty-four-year-old honorary counsellor of state, Maurice Sabatier rushed to his protégé’s defence. Sabatier declared to take on ‘the full responsibility for the anti-Jewish repression in the jurisdiction of his prefecture.’³⁸³ Their close relationship throughout the Vichy period thus seemed to have led Maurice Sabatier to cover for Maurice Papon in 1981. Consequently, the examining magistrate had to accuse Maurice Sabatier as well. But Maurice Sabatier died in 1989 before the trial began.

Maurice Sabatier was the “big absentee” in the Papon trial; Sabatier’s ‘non-inculpation remains the original sin’ of the Papon file, commented Eric Conan, journalist and co-author of one of the most ground-breaking works on the Vichy memory, *Vichy: An Ever-Present Past*, in an article from 1997, when the trial finally started. It was Maurice Sabatier who should have been put on trial, and Papon was merely his replacement, Conan argued. Maurice Sabatier’s spectre haunted the assize court to the extent that its president, Castagnède, mistakenly addressed Maurice Papon as Maurice Sabatier in a memorable Freudian slip: “Could you please answer the question, Monsieur Sabatier?”³⁸⁴

More than thirty-five years after the end of World War II, Maurice Sabatier thus almost became the first and only of the thirteen *Vichyssois* in occupied Germany who might have been tried for his implication with the crimes committed during the Vichy regime. However, this trial never occurred. The Papon trial replaced what should have been the Sabatier trial but it destroyed the post-war settlement and laid bare the struggle over French identity after the German occupation that had started in France during the war, continued in French occupied Germany, and finally returned to France, where it was at last brought to trial.

³⁸³ Quoted from Eric Conan, “Le Grand Absent,” *L’Express*, November 20, 1997. Accessed February 11, 2016, http://www.lexpress.fr/actualite/politique/le-grand-absent_494911.html: “l’entière responsabilité de la répression antijuive dans le ressort de sa préfecture.”

³⁸⁴ Quoted from Eric Conan, “Le Grand Absent,” *L’Express*, November 20, 1997. Accessed February 11, 2016, http://www.lexpress.fr/actualite/politique/le-grand-absent_494911.html: “Pouvez-vous répondre à la question, Maurice Sabatier?”

II. In search of the German Résistance

On November 29, 1952, two young French soldiers found their way from their barracks in Saarburg to a nearby pub in the village of Ockfen. By the end of the night, one of the two soldiers, the twenty-two-year-old Ernest Dubois, had bled to death outside of the pub. Investigators came to the conclusion that a forty-two-year-old Ockfen native, Martin Bensmüller, had stabbed Dubois in the neck. The incident created quite a stir in the French and German media. The newspapers in France immediately took on the subject, André Brozen-Favereau, the French governor of Rhineland-Palatinate, piped up with a statement condemning the deed, and the French high commissioner André François-Ponçet issued a communiqué condemning the murder as “a murder under detestable circumstances.”³⁸⁵ The incident happened only one day before parliamentary elections in the adjacent Saarland, and just months before the pronouncement of the judgement of the Oradour trial in February 1953. Furthermore, in the context of the German rearmament, the incident provoked fears in the French parliament and press of a reawakened aggressive nationalism. From almost all accounts, the act was portrayed as an act of sabotage.³⁸⁶

The alleged political impetus of the deed was further fueled by rumours that spread in the days following the murder: the locals had sung National-Socialist German songs when the soldiers entered the pub, provoking the French soldiers. Given the rich treasury of battle songs both French and Germans had accumulated in their long history of open or latent military conflicts, the singing of patriotic songs was not an innocent matter.³⁸⁷ The songs the locals had sung were only German folk songs, Ockfeners claimed. The songs they had sung, however, had obvious political overtones, such as “das Mosellied” or “Deutsch ist die Saar.” Some of the other visitors in the pub openly admitted later on to have sung these songs but said that they were non-political in nature. The French authorities saw those songs more critically. Heibel, the Delegate to the Governor of Rhineland-Palatinate in Neustadt wrote in a letter referring to Ockfen that the “habit to play and sing Nazi songs seems to assert itself more and more.”³⁸⁸ Following a quarrel, the two French soldiers had left the pub, followed out onto the street by Bensmüller and others. News spread in German and French media that Bensmüller had killed Dubois with a butcher’s knife after having shouted “Kill the Frenchmen!”³⁸⁹ and that the German mayor of

³⁸⁵ MAE 1 RP 0246/1. Incident d’Ockfen (1952-1953). Schifferstadter Tageblatt, Ein französischer Soldat erstochen, December 1, 1952: “Mord unter verabscheuenswerten Umständen.”

³⁸⁶ MAE 1 RP 0246/1. Incident d’Ockfen (1952-1953). Commissaire pour le Land Rhénanie-Palatinat – Mayence, to Monsieur le Délégué por la Palatinat – Neustadt, December 2, 1952.

³⁸⁷ On the contrary, it had often provoked fistcuffs between German occupied and French occupiers in the interwar years. One of the favorite trigger song was the singing of “Siegreich wollen wir Frankreich schlagen,” a song originating from the Franco-Prussian War 1870/71. Furthermore, the French Resistance used songs to spread messages and create a feeling of belonging, the most famous of which is probably *Le chant des partisans* (The partisans’ song. See Karin Trieloff, Die Nationalhymne als Protest? Das Deutschlandlied im besetzten Rheinland nach dem Ersten Weltkrieg,” in *Lied und populäre Kultur/Song and Popular Culture. Jahrbuch des Zentrums für Populäre Kultur und Musik* 60/6, ed. Knut Holsträter and Michael Fischer (Münster/New York: Waxmann, 2015/2016), 313-332.

³⁸⁸ MAE 1 RP 0246/1. Incident d’Ockfen (1952-1953). Letter from Le Délégué du Commissaire pour le Land Rhénanie-Palatinat dans la Province du Palatinat to Monsieur le Gouverneur Commissaire pour le Land Rhénanie-Palatinat à Mayence, December 2, 1952: “l’habitude de jouer et de chanter des chants nazis semble s’affirmer de plus en plus.”

³⁸⁹ MAE 1 RP 0246/1. Incident d’Ockfen (1952-1953). Die Rheinpfalz January 15, 1953, Ockfener Bluttat vor dem Französischen Tribunal: “Schlagt den Franzosen tot!”

Ockfen as well as the locals in the pub had refused to call an ambulance for the dying French soldier on the streets of their village.³⁹⁰ The French gendarmerie arrested eighteen to twenty-two Ockfeners following the incident – a huge number for the tiny village of 500 inhabitants – viewing it as an act of resistance.

This chapter deals with the French reactions to an imagined German resistance in the aftermath of the Second World War. Many members of the French occupying forces had themselves resisted against the German occupation of France during the war, and still others had experienced the German resistance against the occupation of the left bank of the Rhine in the interwar period. Because of this history, the French army and administration – supported by the other Allies – expected a resistance against the French occupation in Germany after the end of the war in 1945. In this chapter, I show that the French army actively searched for signs of a German resistance against the French occupation even if this resistance never materialized in the form of a coordinated resistance against the occupier. The French obsession with resistance can be either traced back to the French resistance against the Nazi occupation or to the German passive resistance during the interwar occupation of the Rhineland both of which were still in the minds of French soldiers and civilians. The constant fear of a German resistance resulted in a perceived prolongation of the war long into the period of a peacetime occupation. The mostly quiet situation in the aftermath of the war seemed to the French administration and army a mere calm before the storm and they feared that a resistance against them might break out anytime in the near future. Collective punishments for activities perceived as resistance occurred several times a month throughout the French zone, especially in the first year of the occupation. Even though they were not the official French policy in Germany, those punishments suggested wartime rather than peace. The members of the French gendarmerie in particular even had to be reminded by their superiors that they were not the Gestapo. Since the French resistance had not begun until two years after the German occupation of France, the French also expected the German resistance to appear with some delay after the crushing defeat of 1945. Therefore, the French took much longer than the other Allied forces to accept that the Germans would not use the slightest chance to resist the French occupation. The example of the tiny Saar village of Ockfen illustrates this best: the death of a French occupation soldier in 1952 caused an outcry in the French press and a major diplomatic crisis between the two countries. At the same time, the preoccupation with the German resistance legitimized the presence of a large number of occupiers in Germany who would otherwise be sent back to France and to other theaters of war – a situation far more uncomfortable than their stay in Germany.

The idea of a German resistance in the French occupation zone was born because both French and Germans had considerable experience with resistance movements amidst a series of occupations on each other's territories during the interwar era and the German occupation of France: On the one hand, the French had resisted against the German occupation of France during World War II that had just come to an end a few months before the beginning of the French occupation of Germany. The French resistance had begun to form shortly after the beginning of the occupation in July 1940. The first resistance groups published underground newspapers, cut telephone lines or tires of German cars and trucks, and vandalized official posters. It was backed by Radio London from which De Gaulle and his supporters broadcasted

³⁹⁰ MAE 1 RP 0246/1. Incident d'Ockfen (1952-1953). Vorderpfälzer Tageblatt, Wirtshausstreit ohne politischen Anlaß, December 2, 1952.

messages encouraging the resistance. The French railway employees, furthermore, helped soldiers to escape to southern France or Spain, and served as distributors for a clandestine press. In 1941, when the Soviet Union was attacked by Nazi Germany, the French communists joined the resistance which became more organized and violent from that point onwards: the resistance derailed trains, sabotaged factories that worked for the profit of the occupiers, planted bombs, and assassinated members of the German occupying forces. From 1943, the establishment of the forced labor service (STO) that sent young Frenchmen to work for the Germans further increased the number of Résistants who organized themselves into small groups and lived in the *maquis* (the bush, inaccessible territory in southern France) leading a guerilla war against the occupier. The Germans took severe measures to fight this resistance: collective punishments, hostage taking and shooting, torture of captured resistance fighters, and deportation. Probably the most famous example of German retaliations for (presumed) resistance activities was Oradour-sur-Glane, close to Limoges. On June 10, 1944, SS troops massacred 642 villagers of Oradour by packing them in the local church and setting it on fire.³⁹¹ On the other hand, the French had also experienced a massive wave of resistance against their occupation of the left bank of the Rhine in the interwar period and especially when the German government called for passive resistance during the occupation of the Ruhr valley from 1923-1924. Sabotage of trains and factories, and assassination attempts were the order of the day. The most famous resister of the interwar period was probably Albert Leo Schlageter whom the French occupying forces sentenced to death for sabotage and espionage. He became one of the heroes of the Nazis as the first martyr of the National socialist movement.

Most historians have asserted that a German underground resistance, the so-called *Werwolf*, was outlined by the Nazis but never materialized after the end of the war. Only Perry Biddiscombe, a Canadian historian, asserted that the *Werwolf* existed in postwar Germany and attacked the Allies. To prove his point, Biddiscombe used intelligence reports, mostly from the American or British zones, and to a lesser extent from the French zone. However, he took the resistance report at face value and did not read the sources as a mere projection of Allied fears and, in particular, French experiences with their own resistance or the German passive resistance of the interwar period as I do in this chapter. I thus side with those historians who do not think that the German resistance was able to organize after the end of the war. The fear and expectation of resistance in the postwar occupation led to perceived prolongation of the war in the postwar period. It thus highlights how the long thirty-years-war from 1914 did not end overnight in 1945. The “*sortie d’occupations*” thus took several years and the French army and administration did not immediately understand that a German resistance would, in fact, never materialize and that the end of World War II indeed marked the termination of a long period of conflict and the beginning of a durable peace. Instead of the beginning of a French and German reconciliation, this chapter shows that the immediate postwar period was not marked by immediate reconciliation, but rather by a climate that bore the characteristics of a war-time occupation.

³⁹¹ See Jean-Jacques Fouché, *Massacre at Oradour, France, 1944: Coming to Grips with Terror* (Dekalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2005) and Sarah Bennett Farmer, *Martyred village: Commemorating the 1944 massacre at Oradour-sur-Glane* (Univ of California Press, 1999). On the German handling of partisan resistance, see Peter Lieb, *Konventioneller Krieg oder NS-Weltanschauungskrieg? Kriegführung und Partisanenbekämpfung in Frankreich 1943/44*. (München: Oldenbourg, 2007).

During the war, the Nazis had studied the French partisan tactics during World War II and sought to apply them against the advancing Allied troops. Otto Abetz, the German ambassador to Paris between 1940 and 1944 was asked, for instance, to train a resistance group in the southwest of the country.³⁹² *Werwolf* training facilities set up in the last months of the war worried the French authorities, notably those in or near the future French occupation zone (Esslingen, Hausen am Tann, and Tiefenthal near Wiesbaden). The *Werwolf* recruited people close to S.A., instructors of the Hitler Youth and the *Volkssturm*. The recruits were trained in shooting arms, to prepare explosives for sabotage purposes, to construct shelters, and to kill individual guards without drawing much attention. After this training, the participants were then divided up into “Kommandos,” small groups of *Werwolf* resistance fighters.³⁹³ Those commandos had, according to the French army sources, also French members. One document mentioned 15 Breton independence fighters in a group with two Germans and under the guidance of an SS-*Untersturmführer*. Other sabotage schools even trained exclusively French collaborators of the Nazis, notably from the Militia or members of the anti-Semitic French Popular Party (P.P.F). The instructors came also from the Militia or the P.P.F. – or belonged to the German intelligence service in occupied France or Belgium. After receiving a training in espionage and sabotage, those French *Kommandos* were supposed to be parachuted over France to fight behind the Allied lines for the Axis cause in a *white maquis*.³⁹⁴ The French army listed meticulously those compatriots trained in the *Werwolf* sabotage camps.³⁹⁵

While no serious resistance against the Allied occupation emerged after the armistice, the French army and civilian administration, blinded by their experience with their own resistance in France as well as by their experience with the German passive resistance of the 1920s, projected their fear of an emerging German resistance modeled upon the French resistance on the peaceful situation in the French zone. To tackle the risk of a potential German resistance against the Allied occupation similar to and with the methods of the French resistance against the Nazi occupiers, the experience in the French resistance was an important weapon for all Allied troops. Consequently, the Allies, including the Americans, interviewed, next to Polish and Czech resisters, and in particular members of the French resistance to learn about their tactics as well as about the German repression of the resistance.³⁹⁶ The French occupiers themselves also used the experience gained in the French resistance against the Nazis to fight the German resistance in the postwar. In May and June 1947, the French intelligence service detected a series of incidents and accidents allegedly caused by German railway workers in the south of Baden, in Offenburg and Kehl. The French secret service contended that “without a doubt [...] a resistance movement

³⁹² See Alexander Perry Biddiscombe, *Werwolf!: The History of the National Socialist Guerrilla Movement, 1944-1946* (University of Toronto Press, 1998), 171 and Otto Abetz, *Das offene Problem. Ein Rückblick auf zwei Jahrzehnte deutscher Frankreichpolitik* (Köln: Greven Verlag, 1951), 300.

³⁹³ SHD GR 28 P 7 241. Note de renseignements sur les Ecoles de Sabotage en Allemagne et les Kommandos, October 27, 1945.

³⁹⁴ SHD GR 28 P 7 241. Note de renseignements sur les Ecoles de Sabotage en Allemagne et les Kommandos, October 27, 1945. See Biddiscombe, Perry. "The Last White Terror: The Maquis Blanc and Its Impact in Liberated France, 1944-1945." *The Journal of Modern History* 73, no. 4 (2001): 811-861.

³⁹⁵ SHD GR 28 P 7 241. Note de renseignements sur les Ecoles de Sabotage en Allemagne et les Kommandos, October 27, 1945.

³⁹⁶ Alexander Perry Biddiscombe, *Werwolf!: The History of the National Socialist Guerrilla Movement, 1944-1946* (University of Toronto Press, 1998), 257.

within the personnel of the German railroad service exists.”³⁹⁷ A railway workers’ resistance seemed somewhat natural to the French because “the battle of the railroads in France, during the occupation, shows that patriotism is above all other considerations.”³⁹⁸ And since patriotism was deemed important for railway workers in Germany too, their disposition to resist the occupier seemed particularly strong. Consequently, the French brigade for counter-resistance suggested to the local French railroad control office in Germany “to remind them this historical reference [...] and [...] to charge with the control of the German railway workers those who had participated in the French railroad resistance.”³⁹⁹

Not only were French resisters employed to confront resistance groups within the railroad, but the French also used their experience in the French *maquis* to examine the possibility of a German *maquis*. Thus, the intelligence bureau of the French First Army undertook in June 1945 a “geographical study of the regions prone to the establishment of a German maquis.”⁴⁰⁰ The French zone of occupation did – to French regret - not incorporate important cities. But it did have substantial areas of woodlands such as the Black Forest and the Swabian Jura. In the 1945 geographical study, the French First Army examined the potential of the occupation zone’s forests for resistance activity convinced that they could benefit from their “sad experiences with the Wehrmacht in Europe in the last couple of years.”⁴⁰¹ From those experiences, the army derived “some elements that one can consider the fundamental laws that condition the emergence and organization of zones of resistance or *maquis*.”⁴⁰² Those fundamental laws were threefold: First, the areas prone to resistance were isolated, in regions that “lack a dense communication network (for instance the *Vercors* in France).”⁴⁰³ But the frequent passage of troops in those isolated regions could favor sabotage or harassment. Second, the soil of the area needed to feed the *maquisards*. And third, the region required the existence of natural shelters. Wooded, mountainous areas “lend themselves in particular to the formation of centers of resistance – as it was the case in Savoie, the *Vercors*, the Pyrenees, and the

³⁹⁷ SHD GR 28 P 7 231. Résistance allemande “nazie” (anti-alliée) 1945-47 Renseignement Allemagne – ZOF – Mouvement de résistance, June 19, 1947: “hors de doute [...] un mouvement de résistance existe dans le personnel des chemins de fer allemand.”

³⁹⁸ SHD GR 28 P 7 231. Résistance allemande “nazie” (anti-alliée) 1945-47. Le secrétaire général pour la police, Contrôleur de la Sûreté pour le Pays de Bade, Contre-Résistance à Monsieur le Directeur de la Sûreté, Baden-Baden, May 29, 1947: “La bataille du rail en France, pendant l’occupation, démontre que le patriotisme prime toutes les autres considérations.”

³⁹⁹ SHD GR 28 P 7 231. Résistance allemande “nazie” (anti-alliée) 1945-47. Le secrétaire général pour la police, Contrôleur de la Sûreté pour le Pays de Bade, Contre-Résistance à Monsieur le Directeur de la Sûreté, Baden-Baden, May 29, 1947: “rappeler ce point d’histoire [...] et [...] charger ceux de leurs membres qui ont participé à la Résistance Fer en France, du contrôle des Cheminots Allemands.”

⁴⁰⁰ SHD 10 P 314. Annexe Nr 10 du Bulletin Hebdomadaire du 2 Juin 1945. Etude géographique des regions propice à l’établissement d’un maquis allemande.

⁴⁰¹ SHD 10 P 314. Annexe Nr 10 du Bulletin Hebdomadaire du 2 Juin 1945. Etude géographique des regions propice à l’établissement d’un maquis allemand: “expériences malheureuses de la Wehrmacht en Europe au cours de ces dernières années.”

⁴⁰² SHD 10 P 314. Annexe Nr 10 du Bulletin Hebdomadaire du 2 Juin 1945. Etude géographique des regions propice à l’établissement d’un maquis allemand: “quelques éléments qu’on peut considérer comme les lois fondamentales conditionnant la naissance et l’organisation des zones de résistance ou maquis.”

⁴⁰³ SHD 10 P 314. Annexe Nr 10 du Bulletin Hebdomadaire du 2 Juin 1945. Etude géographique des regions propice à l’établissement d’un maquis allemand: “pas recouvertes d’un réseau dense de voies de communication (exemple en France, du *Vercors*).”

Auvergne.”⁴⁰⁴ The French army thus applied those “fundamental laws” of the *maquis* generated from the experience of the French *maquis* to the geography of the French occupation zone. They concluded that “analogue possibilities” existed in several regions in Germany’s southwest and consequently offered “favorable conditions for the organization of zones of armed resistance.”⁴⁰⁵ While this geographical study notably examined the above-named Black Forest and the Swabian Jura, others assessed the geographical possibilities or impossibilities for a *maquis* in other regions of French zone: for instance, one document mentioned the presence of members of the SS and Hitler Youth in the valley of the Ahr and the forests of the Eifel region, whereas another study on the Saar region precluded the possibility of a resistance organization in the Saar region because “the geographical conditions are [...] not that suited to a ‘maquis.’”⁴⁰⁶ According to a report by an Austrian informant passed on to the French Intelligence Bureau in the summer of 1945 on the German *maquis*, the latter disposed of a relatively extensive network of communications and constituted a vast organization that “will become very dangerous.”⁴⁰⁷ Therefore, the report suggested the establishment of a service specialized in the “fight against the German *maquis*” composed of, and led by “persons that have acquired experiences in the French resistance.”⁴⁰⁸ Around the same time, in mid-June 1945, the French army established a counter-sabotage and anti-terrorist section to explicitly coordinate the fight against the German resistance and sabotage, to find resistance and *maquis* networks, and to prepare lawsuits against the *maquisards*.⁴⁰⁹ Those sections of counter-resistance also used methods the German occupiers had employed during the war in France. They planned to establish files of “individuals that, because of an earlier or present activity, are liable to a sanction according to common law or a measure of coercion” and to use “at least temporarily [those] non-voluntary people” for the French intelligence service – which meant forced collaboration with the occupier.⁴¹⁰

The Allies furthermore recruited members of the German intelligence service in France during the war to fight against German resistance movements in the French occupation zone. Under the code word “Danube,” for instance, the American 7th Army employed a former member of the German intelligence service *Abwehr* in France who had worked in the non-occupied zone undercover as a journalist. In occupied Germany, the Allies employed him in July 1945 to infiltrate a resistance network called ELSA composed of 122 men and 40 women that collected information on the Allies, notably with the help of the women of the group. Allegedly,

⁴⁰⁴ SHD 10 P 314. Annexe Nr 10 du Bulletin Hebdomadaire du 2 Juin 1945. Etude géographique des régions propice à l’établissement d’un maquis allemand: “se prêtent tout particulièrement à la formation de centres de résistance, comme ce fut le cas en France pour la Savoie, le Vercors, les Pyrénées, l’Auvergne.”

⁴⁰⁵ SHD 10 P 314. Annexe Nr 10 du Bulletin Hebdomadaire du 2 Juin 1945. Etude géographique des régions propice à l’établissement d’un maquis allemand: “possibilités analogues” “conditions favorable à l’organisation de zones de résistance armée.”

⁴⁰⁶ SHD 11 P 19. 1ère D.I. E.M. 2e Bureau, Bulletins de renseignements périodiques Mai 1945 – Mars 1946, Bulletin de renseignement no 10, La Sarre, July 17, 1945: “[I]es conditions géographiques se présenteraient [...] peu à un ‘Maquis.’”

⁴⁰⁷ SHD GR 28 P 7 232. Werwolf généralités. 1ère Armée Française, Subdivision Militaire du Haut-Rhin, 2e Bureau, Maquis Allemand, June 25, 1945: “deviendra très dangereuse.”

⁴⁰⁸ SHD GR 28 P 7 232. Werwolf généralités. 1ère Armée Française, Subdivision Militaire du Haut-Rhin, 2e Bureau, Maquis Allemand, June 25, 1945: “des personnes ayant acquis des expériences dans la résistance française.”

⁴⁰⁹ SHD GR 28 P 7 239. Instructions sur le CE en Allemagne. Sécurité Militaire, Direction des Services de Documentation Allemagne, Note, June 18, 1945.

⁴¹⁰ SHD GR 28 P 7 239. Instructions sur le CE en Allemagne. Sécurité Militaire, Direction des Services de Documentation Allemagne, Note, June 8, 1945: “les individus qu’une activité antérieure ou présente rend passible de sanctions de droit commun ou de mesures de coercition” and “au moins temporairement des éléments non bénévoles.”

his network hoped for a war between the Allies and Russians, and prepared acts of sabotage.⁴¹¹ Additionally, the French army hired, in the fall of 1945, members of the *maquis allemand* that decided to put their experience in the service of the French occupiers. 23-year-old Jakob Becker from Frankenthal/Palatinate, for example, was member of a German *Werwolf* group headed by Adolf Höfner, alias Pitt, and received 500 *Reichsmark* for intelligence work within the group. One of Becker's missions was to travel to Nuremberg and to make contact with an organization that smuggled arms into French occupied Palatinate. Because of his "anti-Nazi sentiments" he desired to "put himself to our service and to work against the German maquis."⁴¹² The French army hired Becker since "given the contacts he had had, he can give us useful indications about the Werwolf."⁴¹³

The French army undertook extensive searches of wooded areas to find the German maquis – but without success. The members of the French army merely projected their experiences with their own resistance on the occupation of Germany after 1945. Instead of concluding that there was no resistance in Germany, they were, however, convinced that it had to be found elsewhere. In September 1945, for example, a wooded area in the Saarland was combed by 300 soldiers of the First Division of Infanterie of the 2nd Army Corps Nord. The soldiers surrounded the area and tirailleurs advanced in the forest at dawn, while officers searched some houses in the forest and checked on their inhabitants "before they wake up." They did not find any trace of resistance although they had prepared the search well and had only alerted the participating soldiers the night before the operation. The woods they searched were not a resistance nest, the concluding report stated, because 1) the woods were not suited to a maquis and 2) because the resistance was probably elsewhere – in the factories of the Saarland.⁴¹⁴ The possibility that there was no German resistance at all was not an option for this division.

Timeline of perceived resistance activity

The phantasm of German resistance was prominent throughout the entire period, although there were nuances: the belief in German resistance was particularly strong in 1945 and then gradually lost momentum, until a more differentiated view dominated the end of the occupation in 1955.

While the military security had convinced itself as early as July 1945 that the *Werwolf* "in his first form does no longer exist" and that "it had ceased to exist with the military operations," other formations of resistance remained worrisome to them.⁴¹⁵ According to a note from the British counter intelligence war-room translated into French and preserved in the French army archives, the absence of *Werwolf* groups was due to the Nazi belief that defeat was unthinkable, thereby preventing any planning for guerilla warfare once defeat actually came.⁴¹⁶ Later manifestations of resistance were technically no longer acts of the *Werwolf* in a strict sense, the

⁴¹¹ SHD GR 28 P 7 235. Headquarters Seventh Army, Memorandum, L'Affaire du Danube, July 17, 1945.

⁴¹² SHD GR 28 P 7 232. Werwolf généralités, Renseignements, November 3, 1945: "sentiments anti-nazis" "se mettre à notre disposition pour travailler contre le maquis allemand."

⁴¹³ SHD GR 28 P 7 232. Werwolf généralités, Renseignements, November 3, 1945: "étant donné les contacts qu'il a eus, il peut nous donner d'utiles indications sur le Werwolf."

⁴¹⁴ SHD 11 P 19. Bulletins de Renseignements périodiques Mai 1945-Mars 1946, 2e C.A. Nord, 1 Division d'Infanterie Etat-Major 2e Bureau, Rapport Hebdomadaire Nr. 16 du 6-16 Septembre 1945, Annexe I, Activité contre Résistance, Opération de Ratissage, no date.

⁴¹⁵ SHD GR 28 P 7 232. Sécurité Militaire, Note sur la formation du Werwolf, July 6, 1945: "dans sa forme première n'existe plus, il a pris fin avec les opérations militaires."

⁴¹⁶ SHD GR 28 P 7 232. Werwolf Généralités. Secret Counter Intelligence War Room London, War Room Publication, Mouvements de Résistance en Allemagne, July 27, 1945, 2.

French intelligence services claimed. However, not only the Germans or the Allied press spoke of the *Werwolf* organization, but the French occupiers themselves continued to refer frequently to it throughout the French occupation of Germany after the armistice of May 8, 1945. The result was that “every act of sabotage, every even minor manifestation of German resistance directed against the occupying authorities are presented as a proof for the Werwolf’s existence.”⁴¹⁷

While some concluded the *Werwolf* did not survive the war, the possibility of and the belief in follow-up organizations remained strong among all Allied forces in the postwar period but the French Army held onto this belief the longest. The French military archives contain a number of folders about Werwolf follow-up organizations such as *ELSA* and *Bundschuh*, and the *Edelweisspiraten* also closely monitored by the British and American occupiers in their respective zones, but also more obscure organizations called *Schlittschuh* or *NN* (Nach Niederlage), *chiffon rouge*, and *Polentöter*.⁴¹⁸ Another group was supposed to rally under the name of *Schlagetertruppe* referring to the Nazi martyr Albert Leo Schlageter who had been sentenced to death by the French during the interwar occupation. The group composed of young former Nazis equipped with stolen Wehrmacht weapons were said to spread false rumors. One of those rumors had it that the French would require the handing over of all gold dentures to them – a measure recalling the victims of the Nazi concentration camps.⁴¹⁹ According to French sources, the model for those groups were *Freikorps* active in the French interwar occupation of the Ruhr.

The majority of the French army and civilian occupiers were convinced that the German resistance would organize at some point, the crucial question was when exactly it would manifest itself. The calm after the cessation of hostilities seemed suspicious to the French. The first personal and secret instructions for the generals of the army in August 1945 therefore started with the following sentence:

The calm that prevails at present in the French occupation zone and the apparent conquered attitude of a population still under the effect of a recent defeat must not lead the occupation troops to settle into a false peace.⁴²⁰

The experience with their defeat in 1940 and the slow development of the resistance against the Nazi occupiers could have played a role in this suspicion. The “influence of the defeat” allegedly paralyzing all German resistance instincts is a topos that appears several times in the documents of the French army throughout the summer of 1945.⁴²¹ The Germans played a waiting game, they contended, using the French term *attentisme* closely associated with the

⁴¹⁷ SHD GR 28 P 7 232. Sécurité Militaire, Note sur la formation du Werwolf, July 6, 1945: “tout acte de sabotage, toute manifestation même minime de résistance allemande sont présentés comme une preuve de l’existence du WERWOLF.”

⁴¹⁸ See SHD GR 28 P 7 231 to 241.

⁴¹⁹ SHD GR 28 P 7 231. Gouvernement Militaire de la Zone Française d’Occupation, Direction de la Sûreté, Surveillance du Territoire en Sarre, Note d’Information, Origine: Surveillance du territoire Baden-Baden, Renseignements concernant mouvements clandestins allemands, May 20, 1946.

⁴²⁰ SHD 3 U 154. Commandement en Chef des Forces Françaises en Allemagne. 3e Bureau. Rapports sur le moral 1945-1948. Rapports sur le moral des T.O.A. du 3DB 1945-1955. Commandement Supérieur des Troupes d’Occupation, Etat-Major, 3e Bureau. August, 18, 1945: “Le calme qui règne actuellement en zone d’occupation française et l’attitude apparemment soumise d’une population encore sous l’effet d’une défaite récente ne doivent pas conduire les Troupes d’Occupation à s’établir dans une fausse quiétude.”

⁴²¹ See for instance: SHD 10 P 314. 2e Corps d’Armée, 2e Bureau. Rapports Hebdomadaires de l’Allemagne 1944-1945. Commandement Supérieur des Troupes d’Occupation, Etat-Major, 3e Bureau. Rapport hebdomadaire June 23, 1945: “l’influence de la défaite.”

behavior of the majority of the French population during the German occupation of France in World War II.⁴²² The belief that the German resistance will not fight openly against the Allied occupiers immediately but will wait for the right moment to organize and to attack was supported and fueled by France's allies, particularly the US army. In a note entitled "Nazi underground activities and centers in the French zone," the American army related the following rumor picked up on July 4, 1945 in the Freiburg area, with one of the alleged *maquis* regions, the Black Forest: "Word has been passed around in the underground to lie low for six months. Pamphlets and propaganda are being prepared for the French occupied zone."⁴²³ With the same ideas about a "sleeping *maquis*" on the American side, it is thus not surprising that the French army continued to believe in a mere "truce" with the Nazis too. On June 23, 1945, the First French Army observed:

The calm persists [...] in the entire zone of the C.A. One must not forget, however, that one of the orders of the Werwolf is precisely to refrain for the time being from every action of a certain importance, in order to avoid that the Allies exterminate the organization before it is able to consolidate itself.⁴²⁴

The intelligence service of the army therefore prepared for a German resistance in the near or far future, as one document from the summer of 1945 suggested by anticipating a "future resistance" in occupied Germany.⁴²⁵

But here again, the French army made an effort to learn from the German occupation methods in France. The head of the gendarmerie in the French occupation zone, Général Taillardat, wrote that the gendarmerie decided in April 1946 – almost a year into the French occupation of the country – to wait for the resistance to fully develop in order to not only arrest individual perpetrators but also the heads of the resistance organizations. He explained:

It is useful, at this point, to recall the methods the Germans employed in France. Over a long period of time, they followed the resistance networks, gave them the possibility to develop and to organize. They only proceeded with arrests when they were certain that a vast network fell into their trap, from its heads to the simple executant.⁴²⁶

⁴²² SHD 11 P 165. 10e Division d'Infanterie, Etat-Major, 2e Bureau. Compte Rendu Hebdomadaire de Renseignements No 17. November 17, 1945: "D'une façon générale, les Allemands font de "l'attentisme." For the concept of "attentisme" see Henri Rouso, "Collaborer" *L'Histoire* 80 (juillet 1985): 48-61.

⁴²³ SHD GR 28 P 7 232. Werwolf généralités. Nazi underground activities and centers in the French zone. Secret. June 20, 1945.

⁴²⁴ SHD 10 P 314. 2e Corps d'Armée, 2e Bureau. Rapports Hebdomadaires de l'Allemagne 1944-1945. Commandement Supérieur des Troupes d'Occupation, Etat-Major, 3e Bureau. Rapport hebdomadaire, June 23, 1945: "Le calme persiste [...] dans l'ensemble de la zone du C.A. Il ne faut pas oublier cependant qu'une des consignes du Werwolf est précisément de s'abstenir pour le moment de toute action d'une certaine importance, afin d'éviter que les Alliés n'exterminent l'organisation avant qu'elle ait pu s'affermir."

⁴²⁵ SHD 11 P 165. 10e Division d'Infanterie 2e Bureau. Rapports Quotidiens, Comptes-Rendus, Messages. Janvier 1945 – Février 1946. Bulletin de Renseignements Juillet-Décembre 1945. Compte Rendu Hebdomadaire de Renseignement No. 7, September 8, 1945: "la future résistance allemande."

⁴²⁶ SHD Gendarmerie 2007 ZM 1 / 208 000 00001 FFA 7.4.1946 – 31.3.1947. Le Général Taillardat, Note de Service, April 25, 1946: "Il est utile, à cet endroit, de rappeler les méthodes employées en France par les [A]llemands. Sur une longue période, ils suivaient les réseaux de résistance, leur laissaient la possibilité de se développer et s'organiser. Ils ne procédaient à l'arrestation que lorsqu'ils possédaient la certitude d'opérer un vaste "coup de filet", des chefs aux simples exécutants."

The French army suspiciously waited for the German resistance to organize convinced that its appearance was just a matter of time – just like in France during the war.

The French military security thus meticulously collected information on Nazi groups of guerilla fighters “behind enemy lines” to monitor the resistance activity in their zone. It was by no means clear that everything they noted was indeed a resistance act. In fact, they were merely projecting their experiences with their own resistance in France or with the German passive resistance of the interwar period on the situation in postwar Germany, where a serious German resistance never emerged after the war ended. Nevertheless, it fed into the idea of an omnipresent German resistance.⁴²⁷ The situation reports of the military security always contained a section on “resistance,” until the late 1940s. Those reports noted all incidents in the French zone from cut telephone lines, vandalizing posters, theft, arguments between German civilians and French soldiers, explosions of munition, to fires in buildings used by, or important to the French army, possession of arms, disobedience towards the occupiers, etc.⁴²⁸ Given that no significant German resistance movement emerged, the numbers of those incidents seem rather high in retrospect, and it is doubtful whether all incidents marked as resistance indicated in those reports were indeed acts of resistance. The doubts remain because the reports included oftentimes mere assumptions and incidents were often marked as “ongoing investigation.”⁴²⁹ The long, monthly lists of incidents were followed by a map of the zone depicting those incidents spatially. The map was meant to enable the observer to identify certain pockets of resistance. Mostly, however, the incidents were scattered over the map contributing to the idea that acts of resistance could occur anywhere and anytime. Based on the maps and the ever-present possibility of resistance, the French emphasized that resistance was always possible. A synthesis of the German resistance activities in May 1947 read:

If the resistance has still not manifested itself this month in an active manner, it is however not advisable to neglect the few instances of Nazi organizations and meetings, which prove that certain hostile people among the occupied Germans still consider the idea of a later action.⁴³⁰

When the French assessed the resistance activities of the year 1947 at the beginning of 1948, the tone was similar:

If the number of hostile incidents was minimal in the last month, their very nature shows that the most active and sensitive people of the country do not disarm. We must still carefully measure the degree of confidence that we grant the German population.⁴³¹

⁴²⁷ SHD GR 28 P 7 232. Sécurité militaire, Direction des Services de Documentation Allemagne. Note sur la formation du WERWOLF, July 6, 1945: “derrière les lignes ennemies.”

⁴²⁸ See for example SHD GR 28 P 7 239. Etat-Major de l’Armée de Terre, Service de sécurité militaire, Allemagne. Activités Allemandes en Z.O.F. Bilan du mois d’août 1946, September 7, 1946.

⁴²⁹ See for example, SHD GR 28 P 7 239. Synthèse de la Résistance allemande au cours du mois de mai 1947, no date: “enquête en cours.”

⁴³⁰ SHD GR 28 P 7 239. Synthèse de Résistance allemande au cours du mois de mai 1947: “Si ce mois-ci encore la résistance ne s’est toujours pas manifesté d’une façon active, il ne convient pas cependant de négliger les quelques indices de regroupement et d’organisation qui prouvent que l’idée d’une action ultérieure n’est pas négligée par certains éléments hostiles de nos occupés.”

⁴³¹ SHD 3 U 116. Commandement Supérieur des Troupes d’Occupation. Etat-Major, 2e Bureau. Bulletin d’Information No 1 (Mois de Décembre 1947), January 26, 1948: “Si le nombre de manifestations d’hostilité

In place of a veritable and broad resistance movement in the French zone, the French occupiers rather detected a mere “spirit of resistance” in the French zone starting in the fall of 1945. One weekly information report claimed that

it seems as if we are heading for a crystallization of a ‘spirit of resistance’ of two categories of Germans: members of the administration and the youth. But we cannot really speak of a resistance organization.⁴³²

The fear of a German resistance also continued in the first couple of years after the war because the Allies thought the misery and the difficulties of food supply in the wake of the war would play into the hands of the German resistance. In July 1945, the Counter Intelligence War Room London’s secret report on the German resistance movements, for instance, denied the existence of a German resistance after the war, but stressed that

an economic discontent leads to the birth and development of resistance movements directed against the occupying powers and that those uprisings, in search of a historical ancestry, claim to represent Nazism [...].⁴³³

The French army concluded their observations around the same time, in June 1945, stressing the same idea linking the economic difficulties during the Allied occupation to the emergence of a broader resistance movement in the future. One weekly report of the army stated:

It is possible that the terrorist activity waits to fully manifest itself until the economic misery provokes discontent within the population. At this moment, the latter will support the Werwolf or at least will not betray them.⁴³⁴

The firm belief in a German resistance thus determined the way the French occupiers perceived the occupied territory and the Germans that lived on it. The French army and administration felt not as if they were occupying a defeated country but that there was a permanent threat of a resistance in the making that could attack the French troops at any

caractérisée a été faible au cours du mois, leur nature même montre que les éléments les plus actifs et les plus sensibles du pays ne désarment pas. Le degré de confiance à accorder à la population allemande doit toujours être étroitement mesuré.”

⁴³² SHD 11 P 165. 10e Division d’Infanterie, Etat-Major, 2e Bureau. Compte-Rendu Hebdomadaire de Renseignements No 14, October, 27, 1945: “[...] il semble que nous allons vers une cristallisation d’un certain ‘esprit de résistance’ chez deux catégories d’[A]llemands: membres de l’administration et jeunesse. Mais on ne peut vraiment pas parler d’organisation de résistance.” See also SHD 3 U 126. Commandant en Chef des Forces Françaises en Allemagne, 2e Bureau. Bulletin de Renseignement No 24, October 9, 1945: “cristallisation d’un ‘esprit de résistance’”

⁴³³ SHD GR 28 P 7 232. Werwolf Généralités. Secret Counter Intelligence War Room London. War Room Publication. Mouvement de Résistance en Allemagne. July 27, 1945: “un mécontentement économique conduise à la naissance et au développement de mouvements de résistance dirigés contre les puissances occupantes et que ces soulèvements, en quête d’ascendance historique, se réclament du Nazisme [...]”

⁴³⁴ SHD 10 P 314. 2e Corps d’Armée, 2e Bureau. Rapports Hebdomadaires de l’Allemagne 1944-1945. Commandement Supérieur des Troupes d’Occupation, Etat-Major, Rapport Hebdomadaire No 7. June 23, 1945: “Il est possible que l’activité terroriste attende pour se manifester avec ampleur que la misère économique suscite un mécontentement dans le peuple qui à ce moment soutiendra le Werwolf ou tout au moins ne le trahira pas.”

moment. This belief had far-reaching implications for the behavior of the French occupiers in Germany.

Who was suspicious to the French occupiers?

Certain groups of German stood out to the French occupiers as particularly suspicious. These were prisoners of war, former Nazis, the clergy, and the youth.

Prisoners of war had received a military training, which made them suspicious in the eyes of the French army and a potential hive of resistance. They were also employed on German soil as cheap labor to make sure much-needed reparations arrived in France.⁴³⁵ Prisoners of war were soldiers, and their military skills rendered them a potential threat to the occupying power - even more so because during the Nazi occupation of France, French prisoners of war had escaped and consequently joined the resistance.⁴³⁶ But the risks of employing German POWs on German soil, notably in the first fall and winter of the occupation, did not outway the benefits: for the French, their employment in Germany and by their fellow countrymen was convenient because they did not have to feed them – unlike the German prisoners of war on French soil.⁴³⁷ Moreover, the lack of men in occupied Germany also meant that farmland remained unexploited – a disadvantage for both Germans and French.

The case of the district of Saarburg, south of Trier, close to the Luxembourgish and French border, is a good example to highlight the ambivalent relationship towards the German prisoners of war. The Germans in the region south of Trier, for instance, needed helping hands to build up their businesses – for example the local wineries. For the French occupiers, it was also advantageous to employ the German prisoners of war in the forests where they helped the forester to cut down trees destined to be sent to France as reparations. 500 German prisoners of war were expected to arrive in the district of Saarburg at the end of August 1945. The locals needed to pay 0.75 Reichmarks per day to the prisoner of war and additionally three Reichmarks per day to the French Military Government.⁴³⁸

The escape of the German POWs was a main concern to the French civilian administration of Saarburg and the army who tried hard to prevent their flight using means such as specific identification tags, the threat of taking family members as hostages, and the deportation to the French colonies. Capt. Lackmann, the head of the French Military Government of Saarburg, also ordered that the prisoners of war wore “as special badge a red square on their left sleeve. This red square must be 5cm long and sewed on the garment 2 cm underneath the shoulder.”⁴³⁹ This sort of squared badge bears striking similarities to the way the Germans

⁴³⁵ The fear of escaped POWs extended also to liberated prisoners of war that returned to their homes in the French occupation zone. Those had to immediately report to the local representative of the Military Government when they arrived in their home towns. See: Kreisarchiv Trier-Saarburg, Amt Saarburg Land 1-3. Der Amtsbürgermeister Freudenburg to den Herrn Ortsbürgermeister im Bezirk. October 9, 1945.

⁴³⁶ For the history of the French prisoners of war, see the classic work Yves Durand, *La Captivité, Histoire de prisonniers de guerre français 1939-1945* (Paris: Editions FNCPG, 1980).

⁴³⁷ For the German prisoners of war in France, see: Fabien Théofilakis, *Les prisonniers de guerre allemands: France, 1944-1949* (Paris: Fayard, 2014).

⁴³⁸ See Kreisarchiv Trier-Saarburg, Amt Saarburg-Ost. 616 Arbeitseinsatz deutscher Kriegsgefangener im Amt 1945-1947. Militärregierung Dienstanweisung S/677, September 24, 1945 and Anordnung from Capitaine Lackmann to Landrat, August 16, 1945.

⁴³⁹ Kreisarchiv Trier-Saarburg, Amt Saarburg-Ost. 616 Arbeitseinsatz deutscher Kriegsgefangener im Amt 1945-1947. Anordnung from Capitaine Lackmann to Landrat, August 16, 1945: “als besonderes Kennzeichen ein rotes

marked prisoners of war but also inmates of concentration camps. It is even more unusual because the German prisoners in France only wore patches that said POW (PG in French) on their back and on the legs.⁴⁴⁰

In order to prevent collusion between the locals and the prisoners of war, which could lead to a resistance movement against the occupiers, the French occupation administration chose prisoners of war whose home regions were far away from south-west Germany, that is from Berlin or Pomerania, for example. They most likely assumed that the locals of the catholic regions would not mingle with the Prussian Protestants. But the POWs nevertheless escaped in large quantities. In the first month of employing German POWs the German mayor who held the responsibility for overseeing those POWs working in his village had to verify the presence of the POWs only once a week.⁴⁴¹ However, the POWs escaped the villages so frequently in September 1945 that Capt. Lackmann asked mayors to “lock up the prisoners every evening” and reminded them that “they are prohibited from wearing civilian clothes.”⁴⁴² A later note loosened the regulations concerning the internment and only mandated that “all prisoners of war must report every night at a specific time to the mayor of the locality.”⁴⁴³ Yet, the French army had already in August 1945 given out the order to

proceed to the immediate arrest of a family member of the escapee and his or her transfer to the closest prisoner of war detention center [cage P.G.] [...] in which the family member will be kept until the person concerned comes forward as a prisoner. If the POW does not turn himself within a month, the family hostage will be transported to France.⁴⁴⁴

This method of hostage taking resembles in way as well the common practice used by the Germans during their occupation of France. The French did not go so far as shooting the hostages, but the method is striking and reflects the French experience in the war and during the German occupation.

The order of taking relatives as hostages finally reached the district of Saarburg a month later. The communication between the center in Baden-Baden and the periphery was still very difficult in the summer and early fall months of 1945 - and the word was spread by Captain Lackmann of the Military Government.⁴⁴⁵ The army had indicated that it is “preferable to

Viereck auf dem linken Ärmel tragen. Dieses rote Viereck muss 5cm lang sein und 2cm unterhalb der Schulter angenäht sein.”

⁴⁴⁰ Fabien Théofilakis, Email message to author, August 3, 2016.

⁴⁴¹ Kreisarchiv Trier-Saarburg, Amt Saarburg-Ost. 616 Arbeitseinsatz deutscher Kriegsgefangener im Amt 1945-1947. Anordnung from Capitaine Lackmann to Landrat, August 16, 1945.

⁴⁴² Kreisarchiv Trier-Saarburg, Amt Saarburg-Ost. 616 Arbeitseinsatz deutscher Kriegsgefangener im Amt 1945-1947. Capitaine Lackmann to Landrat, Dienstanweisung, October 10, 1945: “die Gefangenen jeden Abend eingesperrt werden müssen” and “es ihnen untersagt ist, Zivil zu tragen.”

⁴⁴³ Kreisarchiv Trier-Saarburg, Amt Saarburg-Ost. 616 Arbeitseinsatz deutscher Kriegsgefangener im Amt 1945-1947. Landrat Hüpper to die Herren Amtsbürgermeister des Kreises Saarburg, on In der Land- und Forstwirtschaft eingesetzte Kriegsgefangene, October 13, 1945: “alle Kriegsgefangenen sich jeden Abend zu einer bestimmten Stunde bei der Ortsbürgermeisterei zu melden haben.”

⁴⁴⁴ MAE 1 RP 120. Commandement en Chef Français en Allemagne Commandement Supérieur des Troupes d’Occupation, Etat-Major 2e Bureau, Direction des P.G., August 1, 1945: “procéder à l’arrestation immédiate d’un membre de la famille de l’évadé et à son transfert à la cage P.G du C.S.T.O. la plus proche où il sera maintenu jusqu’à ce que l’intéressé vienne lui-même se constituer prisonnier. Si au bout d’un mois le P.G. n’est pas venu se constituer prisonnier, l’otage familial est acheminé sur la France.”

⁴⁴⁵ Kreisarchiv Trier-Saarburg, Amt Saarburg-Ost. 616 Arbeitseinsatz deutscher Kriegsgefangener im Amt 1945-1947. Capitaine Lackmann to Landrat, Dienstanordnung S/591, September 15, 1945.

employ POWs whose residence is in the French zone in order to assure to be able to take action against the family.”⁴⁴⁶ As stated before, this was not the case in Saarburg, where the escapees came from the Soviet zone of occupation. Therefore, it is difficult to say whether the French really proceeded to arrest family members of escaped prisoners of war, but the method used by the French occupiers shows the particularly harsh measures the French were willing to employ against the Germans. This method was abandoned on November 3, 1945.⁴⁴⁷

After canceling the arrest of family members, the French occupiers seemed to have adopted another means to punish escaped and captured POWs: In March 1946, the mayor of Saarburg sent a note to the local mayors that concerned POWs captured by French gendarmes. The note stated that those POWs would soon be sent to POW camps in North Africa.⁴⁴⁸ Whether or not this directive of deportation to the colonies was enforced is again not apparent from the sources, but it shows the range of means – and threats – the French occupiers drew upon to prevent POWs from escaping.

Instead of those punishments that targeted the fate of an individual and his loved ones, the French civilian government tried to prevent the escape of POWs by putting pressure on the local community that often helped the POW to escape. The problem of escaped POWs remained urgent: of the 90 POWs (not 500 as initially planned) employed in the district of Saarburg, 21 had fled by February 1946.⁴⁴⁹ According to the contracts made with the occupying forces, the municipality had to pay collective fines for escaped prisoners of war. Those fines amounted to 1000 Reichsmarks for the first escaped POW, for the second 5000 Reichsmarks, and for the third escaped prisoner of war, the municipality had to pay 10.000 Reichsmarks.⁴⁵⁰ There is evidence in the German documents proving that the German municipalities indeed had to pay those fines.⁴⁵¹ In most cases the fines did not prevent the POWs from escaping. The municipalities found these heavy fines onerous and complained that they could not prevent the flights: the POWs “want to go home at all costs.”⁴⁵² However, their German employers were not entirely innocent. In order to use the POWs they had to pay the POWs and even more so the Military Government.

⁴⁴⁶ MAE 1 RP 120. Commandement en Chef Français en Allemagne Commandement Supérieur des Troupes d’Occupation, Etat-Major 2e Bureau, Direction des P.G., August 1, 1945: “préférable d’employer des P.G. dont la résidence est située en Zone Française afin d’avoir une action certaine sur la famille.”

⁴⁴⁷ SHD 11 P 19. 1ère Division d’Infanterie 1945-1946. Traduction d’un télégramme chiffré de Hirondelle, November 3, 1945.

⁴⁴⁸ Kreisarchiv Trier-Saarburg, Amt Saarburg-Ost. 616 Arbeitseinsatz deutscher Kriegsgefangener im Amt 1945-1947. Der Landrat Dr. Geimer to die Herren Amtsbürgermeister des Kreises, Saarburg, March 19, 194 [6].

⁴⁴⁹ Kreisarchiv Trier-Saarburg, Amt Saarburg-Ost. 616 Arbeitseinsatz deutscher Kriegsgefangener im Amt 1945-1947. Der Amtsbürgermeister des Amtes Saarburg Ost to den Herrn Landrat in Saarburg, betrifft: Geldstrafen für flüchtige deutsche Kriegsgefangene, February 19, 1946.

⁴⁵⁰ Kreisarchiv Trier-Saarburg, Amt Saarburg-Ost. 616 Arbeitseinsatz deutscher Kriegsgefangener im Amt 1945-1947. Der Amtsbürgermeister des Amtes Saarburg Ost to den Herrn Landrat in Saarburg, betrifft: Geldstrafen für flüchtige deutsche Kriegsgefangene, February 19, 1946.

⁴⁵¹ Kreisarchiv Trier-Saarburg, Amt Saarburg-Ost. 616 Arbeitseinsatz deutscher Kriegsgefangener im Amt 1945-1947. Der Amtsbürgermeister des Amtes Saarburg Ost to den Herrn Landrat in Saarburg, betrifft: Geldstrafen für flüchtige deutsche Kriegsgefangene, February 19, 1946: “Am 16.2.1946 mussten 5.000,- RM Geldstrafen für die ersten geflüchteten Gefangenen gezahlt werden, und zwar von der Gemeinde Zerf = 3000,- RM, Irsch = 1000, Greimerath = 1000,-.”

⁴⁵² Kreisarchiv Trier-Saarburg, Amt Saarburg-Ost. 616 Arbeitseinsatz deutscher Kriegsgefangener im Amt 1945-1947. Der Amtsbürgermeister des Amtes Saarburg Ost to den Herrn Landrat in Saarburg, betrifft: Geldstrafen für flüchtige deutsche Kriegsgefangene, February 19, 1946: “wollen unter allen Umständen nach Hause.”

Furthermore, they complained that the POWs were often in such a bad shape when they arrived in the municipalities that the peasants had needed to

feed up [the POW] first and [they] could not work at all for days. Even now, the latter are because of their lack of knowledge hardly able to noticeably help the businesses. The employment of prisoners therefore means for the individual businesses, which have already been severely damaged by the war, an unbearable burden.⁴⁵³

Thus, the locals often helped their German compatriots to escape. In the district of Saarburg, a woman was sentenced to one month of prison and a fine of 500 Reichsmarks for helping a POW escape in April 1946.⁴⁵⁴ Many locals did not report the escape of a prisoner of war until the next day or even for longer and thus prevented the prisoner of war from being caught and sent to Africa. When two POWs escaped from the famous winery Egon Müller/Scharzhof in Wiltingen, the mayor of Saarburg as late as July 1946 complained that he had not received any official report by Wiltingen's local mayor. The same letter reveals that the rules of collective punishment for the localities had changed again in that immunity was guaranteed to those localities that reported the escape of a POW within the first three hours.⁴⁵⁵ But those slight modifications only marginally improved the relationship between the locals and the Military Government. The fines were still very harsh and in 1947, they became even more severe, increasing to a fine of 2000 Reichsmarks per escaped POW. But they were no longer a collective fine to the village community, but a fine that had to be paid by the individual employer.⁴⁵⁶ There was also little room for complaints because the Military Government considered refusal to obey orders sabotage, which was severely punished.⁴⁵⁷

But German prisoners of war were not the only ones whose presence the occupying authorities meticulously documented. **Ideologically-committed members of the Nazi party** were a natural target group for potential resistance against the French administration. Former *Wehrmacht* officers and members of the paramilitary and military organization of the Nazis were closely monitored and had to report to the French Military Government every every three months – even after the founding of the West-German state in 1949. From 1950, they still had to notify the occupying authorities in case they moved from one city to another.⁴⁵⁸

⁴⁵³ Kreisarchiv Trier-Saarburg, Amt Saarburg-Ost. 616 Arbeitseinsatz deutscher Kriegsgefangener im Amt 1945-1947. Gemeindebürgermeister Greimerath to den Herrn Amtsbürgermeister in Saarburg-Ost, Betrifft: Einsatz von Kriegsgefangenen. November 3, 1945: “[die Kriegsgefangenen] zuerst einmal herausgefüttert werden mussten und tagelang überhaupt keine Arbeit verrichten konnten. Auch jetzt sind dieselben infolge Mangel an Kenntnissen kaum in der Lage, fühlbare Hilfe in den Betrieben zu leisten. Der Einsatz der Gefangenen bedeutet daher für die einzelnen Betriebe, welche schon an für sich durch den Krieg bedeutende Schäden erlitten haben, eine untragbare Belastung.”

⁴⁵⁴ MAE 1 RP 2032. Registre du tribunal sommaire de Saarburg du 22.2.46 au 30.7.1946.

⁴⁵⁵ Kreisarchiv Trier-Saarburg, Amt Saarburg-Ost. 616 Arbeitseinsatz deutscher Kriegsgefangener im Amt 1945-1947. Der Amtsbürgermeister des Amtes Saarburg-Ost to den Herrn Gemeindebürgermeister in Wiltingen. July 13, 1946.

⁴⁵⁶ Kreisarchiv Trier-Saarburg, Amt Saarburg-Ost. 616 Arbeitseinsatz deutscher Kriegsgefangener im Amt 1945-1947. M. Reg. Saar 646/7 DAA/ IC Verfügung No.6 betr. Strafe bei Flucht von Kriegsgefangenen. January 29, 1947.

⁴⁵⁷ Kreisarchiv Trier-Saarburg, Amt Saarburg-Ost. 616 Arbeitseinsatz deutscher Kriegsgefangener im Amt 1945-1947. Der Landrat to den Herrn Amtsbürgermeister von Saarburg-Ost. February 12, 1946.

⁴⁵⁸ Kreisarchiv Trier-Saarburg, Amt Saarburg Land 1-3. 64 Kontrollmaßnahmen für Mitglieder der ehemaligen deutschen Streitkräfte und Paramilitärs Erfassung der Offiziere der Streitkräfte und militärähnlichen Verbände, entlassene Kriegsgefangene, Statistik der natürlichen Bevölkerungsbewegung (1949), 1947 – 1952.

Given their allegiance to the defeated authority, die-hard Nazis were the first to be subjected to punishment by the French authorities in case of acts of resistance. For example, in the city of Trier in March 1946, eight “notorious Nazis” were held liable for the repeated appearance of a swastika flag on the ruins of a house overnight. They were incarcerated for eight days.⁴⁵⁹ When the French administration needed to requisition goods from the Germans or needed housing for their troops, the Nazis were the first to be asked to abandon their houses and household items.

The strategy *Nazis first* was often accompanied by conflict: As late as 1948, in the small town of Hetzerath, just north of Trier, a man called Rück resisted against the requisitioning of his furniture for the occupying troops. The population of the town had unanimously declared that “Rück was one of the most fanatic national-socialists of Hetzerath.”⁴⁶⁰ Rück had even tried to incite the peasants of the locality to resist against the deliveries to the occupying forces and he himself had refused to submit to the French authorities his ration of potatoes altogether. The other peasants therefore had to cover the missing pounds while Rück bought himself a bedroom suite with the money he made from selling his potatoes on the black-market.⁴⁶¹ Such insolent behavior understandably worried the occupiers who were scared of the old allegiances of the Nazis.

The French intelligence service suspected right from the beginning that former Nazis were forming “societies of mutual support” to remain in powerful positions during the French occupation.⁴⁶² Those powerful positions were oftentimes in the German administration and since the purges of those administrators were often neglected because of their technical skills (see chapter on Vichy in Baden-Baden), they remained where they were. Weekly reports document that, for example, the Nazis were in control of the German employment office in the French zone in late November 1945 and would often disrupt the resumption of work. One report reads:

Numerous reports point out unemployment and a lack of workforce at the same time. The military and civilian authorities attribute it to the bad functioning of the German ‘Arbeitsamt’ that are still heavily nazified and capable of sabotage.⁴⁶³

Other reports claim that “strong Nazi cells” still existed in the board of directors of the German National Railway office in Mainz, the railway personnel between Alzey and Bingen, or in the tax and revenue office in Germersheim.⁴⁶⁴ In the same report, the Rhineland was designated one of

⁴⁵⁹ SHD 10 P 314. 2e Corps d’Armée, 2er Bureau, Rapports Hebdomadaires de l’Allemagne (mai 1945-avril 1946). Rapport Hebdomadaire secret, April 10, 1946: “nazis notoires.”

⁴⁶⁰ SHD GR 28 P 7 239. Attentats, Propaganda. Renseignement sur l’activité actuelle d’un Nazi, October 5, 1948: “Rück a été un élément national-socialiste des plus fanatiques à Hetzerath.”

⁴⁶¹ SHD GR 28 P 7 239. Attentats, Propaganda. Renseignement sur l’activité actuelle d’un Nazi, October 5, 1948.

⁴⁶² SHD 3 U 251. Commandement en Chef des Forces Françaises en Allemagne. 1947-1955. Commandement du Zone Ouest Du Palatinat, Rapport Hebdomadaire, December 1, 1945: “sociétés d’entraide.”

⁴⁶³ SHD 11 P 165. 10e Division d’Infanterie, Etat-Major, 2e Bureau. Compte-Rendu Hebdomadaire de Renseignement No 19 November 30, 1945: “De nombreux rapports signalent à la fois du chômage et un manque de main d’oeuvre. Les autorités militaires et civiles locales l’attribuent au mauvais fonctionnement des ‘Arbeitsamt’ allemands qui sont encore fortement nazifiés et capable de faire du sabotage.”

⁴⁶⁴ SHD 10 P 314. 10e Division d’Infanterie, Etat-Major, 2e Bureau. Compte-Rendu Hebdomadaire de Renseignement No 10, August 4, 1946: “fortes cellules nazies.”

the most “nazified” regions of the French zone – more so than the Baden region where most of the troops were stationed first.⁴⁶⁵

Mistrust of **women** was particularly strong, and not only among the French occupiers. Also, the Americans warned of German Nazi women. In the report on “Nazi underground activities and centers in the French zone,” the American intelligence service shared the French fear of an infiltration of the administration with Nazis and furthermore warned that “nurses are reported to be fanatical helpers for the Nazis” in two localities in the Black Forest.⁴⁶⁶ A French tract entitled “Beware, the enemy spies on us” warns in particular of Nazi under-cover agents paid for four years in advance to work under false civil status in the French occupation administration. These were notably the “too numerous typists and secretaries of German nationality that one finds in certain French services” and who had “duped the mistrust of their superiors [and] are sitting in the offices of the officers, overhear the conversations [...]”⁴⁶⁷

On the one hand, the fear of Nazi women was part of a was a product of the occupier’s gendered biases, as they were mostly men who assumed they could be seduced by those women or in case of the nurses treated by them and then literally stabbed in the back.⁴⁶⁸ On the other hand, there was, at least in the French case, the veritable problem of the need for typists and translators from immediately after the collapse of the Reich onwards. Those typists or translators were mostly women and they needed to speak and write French, if not French and German. But the pool of French and German speaking typists or interpreters had at least to some part already been exploited by the German occupiers of France during the war. These women, be they of French or German nationality, had retreated with the German army in the winter of 1944 and were looking for a new job when the French occupation started. And their language skills qualified them for their new jobs – as well as their experience in administrative work during an occupation. When the French civilian administrator of the district of Trier arrived at his office in August 1945, one of his first actions was an “energetic intervention” in the local district of Wadern, because “three officers that do not speak German were flanked by a German interpreter who had served two years with the Gestapo in Paris.”⁴⁶⁹ This was not an isolated case and those revelations were not restricted to the immediate postwar period in 1945.⁴⁷⁰ In one case, a French member of the staff service in Koblenz was quietly sent back to France as late as 1948 because of her career during the German occupation of France.⁴⁷¹

⁴⁶⁵ SHD 10 P 314. 10e Division d’Infanterie, Etat-Major, 2e Bureau. Compte-Rendu Hebdomadaire de Renseignement No 10, August 4, 1946: “l’une des [régions les] plus nazies d’Allemagne.”

⁴⁶⁶ SHD GR 28 P 7 232. Werwolf généralités. Nazi underground activities and centers in the French zone. Secret. June 20, 1945.

⁴⁶⁷ SHD 11 P 60. 2e Bureau Renseignements 1944-1946. 3ème DIA, 2ème Bureau: Renseignements de la Sécurité Militaire sur l’Allemagne et l’Autriche, April-September 1945. EM 2e Bureau. Méfions-nous, l’ennemi nous épie, no date: “ces trop nombreuses dactylos et secrétaires de nationalité allemande que l’on trouve dans certaines services françaises,” “endormir la méfiance de leurs chefs [and] elles sont installées dans les bureau des officiers, elles entendent les conversations [...]”

⁴⁶⁸ While the bigger towns certainly had French medical staff, the French soldiers in smaller localities had to seek treatment with German doctors and nurses. Pierre Bolotte underlined in an oral history interview his positive experience with a German doctor, see SHD Archives orales, 3 K 49, Bolotte. Entretien 2, page 17.

⁴⁶⁹ MAE 1 RP 1869. Gouvernement Militaire Regierungsbezirk de Trèves, Rapport, August 15, 1945: “intervention énergique” and “trois Officiers ne parlant pas l’allemand étaient fl[anqués] d’une interprète allemande ayant servi deux années dans la Gestapo à Paris.”

⁴⁷⁰ See MAE 1 RP 136 for a complete dossier about personnel in Rhineland-Palatinate that was fired for various reasons, many because they had a professional career in occupied France.

⁴⁷¹ MAE 1 RP 136. L’Officier de la Sécurité Militaire de l’Etat Rhéno-Palatin Coblence to Monsieur le Gouverneur Militaire de l’Etat Rhéno-Palatin, February 19, 1948.

The employment of former Gestapo members was not specific to the French zone, but it often had to do with specific French language skills. For example, a German secret agent that worked for the Allies informed the latter about a German woman who had previously worked in the office of the Gestapo in Lyons as an interpreter. In July 1945, she was practicing the same profession at the American Military Government of Mannheim – close to the border with the French occupation zone. The Americans highly appreciated her French and German skills.⁴⁷²

The French feared that those who had worked for the Nazis in the past could still be working for the Nazi underground. A report on the “secret activities” in Baden in September 1945 stated, for instance, that a “Fräulein Stark” who had worked for over a year at the Gestapo in Paris, was now at the food office of Baden in the city of Freiburg – a powerful position amidst such scarcity of food in the aftermath of the war. She was also supposed to have attended secret meetings of Nazis that were disguised as family reunions.⁴⁷³

The **clergy** constituted a danger for the French occupiers’ authority since the interwar occupation, because they escaped their direct control more than other civilians. Moreover, the clergy was an authority Germans could turn to express their anti-French sentiments. The German catholic clergy was very powerful and had a big influence on the mostly catholic population there. In the interwar period, the bishop of Trier, Franz Rudolf Bornewasser, had already shaken up the relations between the French occupiers and the occupied Germans. Appointed bishop of Trier in 1922, Bornewasser was responsible for the Catholics in the nearby Saar region that was detached from the *Rheinprovinz* through the Treaty of Versailles in 1920. Bornewasser fiercely fought against an independent Saar bishopric which the French administration had tried to establish. He even was temporarily denied access to French occupied Saarland and public advocacy for the Saar remaining German in the 1935 plebiscite convinced many Catholics to vote remain in the plebiscite. The French were certainly not happy that Bornewasser was still bishop of Trier when they took over again in 1945. Bornewasser again fought for “his” Catholics in the Saar region when the French made another attempt to remove the Saar from Bornewasser’s influence and to create an independent Saarland.⁴⁷⁴ From the beginning of the French occupation after 1945, the French army and civilian administrators therefore closely observed the bishop and his clergy. Although they made an effort to respect the bishop’s authority, the Saar question took a toll, notably with a pastoral letter Bornewasser wrote in 1947 entitled “Vaterlandsliebe,” “Patriotism,” calling out those as traitors who did not stand with the

⁴⁷² SHD GR 28 P 7 235. Secret. 307th Counter Intelligence Corps Detachment, Seventh Army headquarters, July 28, 1945.

⁴⁷³ SHD GR 28 P 7 232. Renseignement Allemagne Politique, Activité clandestine en Bade October 20, 1945.

⁴⁷⁴ On Bishop Bornewasser, see: Michael Müller, "Zum Verhältnis von Kirche und Besatzung. Erzbischof Bornewasser von Trier und die Franzosen nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg", in *Franzosen und Deutsche am Rhein. 1789 - 1918 - 1945*, ed. Peter Hüttenberger and Hansgeorg Molitor (Essen: Klartext, 1989), 297-308, 304.

German bishop of Trier.⁴⁷⁵ The French General Navarre in Baden-Baden, General Koenig's deputy, called this the first official act of resistance by the German authorities.⁴⁷⁶

The case of Adolf Heuser of Trier exemplifies the French idea of a National Socialist resistance plot among the clergy. In April 1948, at the height of the conflict between Bornewasser and the French occupation administration, the French military security discovered a postcard and several books while searching the room of 25-year-old Adolf Heuser. Heuser, the son of a railroad employee, had been member of the Hitler youth and had served in the war. But it was because of his activity in the circles of the Catholic youth in Trier that he had caught the French occupiers' suspicion. Among the books the French security forces found in his bedroom was a book on the French occupation of Trier between 1918 and 1930 and several volumes on World War I (for instance Bruno Schwietzes' *Starben in Flandern* of 1938) and the Prussian army. But what interested the French security service the most were two postcards that displayed quotes of Leo Albert Schlageter. One of them even hung framed on the wall. Schlageter was a German Freikorps member who had led a group of nationalists who sabotaged and managed to derail several trains in the Ruhr valley in 1923. The sabotage occurred during that period of the French occupation when Germany had failed to make reparation payments to the Allies. The French caught Schlageter, tried him, and condemned him to death. Schlageter was executed on May 26, 1923 and became one of the main heroes of the Nazi regime.⁴⁷⁷ The postcards said: "Be who you are, but have the courage to entirely be who you are."⁴⁷⁸ Young Heuser admitted to knowing who Schlageter was, but claimed to have liked only the saying, not Schlageter's anti-French attitude.⁴⁷⁹ However, he claimed that he had purchased the two postcards at the episcopal general vicariate directed by the general vicar Heinrich von Meurers, Bornewasser's right-hand man. Meurers had since long been a thorn in the French occupiers' side: "The anti-French attitude [of von Meurers] is known to us for a long time, his duplicity is once again proven."⁴⁸⁰ The postcards had been "without a doubt" printed in Cologne and their editor was out of reach,

⁴⁷⁵ Hirtenwort von Erzbischof Dr. Bornewasser von Trier an die Diözesanen des Saarlandes vom 15. März 1947, in *Quellen zur Geschichte von Rheinland-Pfalz während der französischen Besatzung März 1945 – August 1949*, ed. Peter Brommer (Kommission des Landtages für die Geschichte des Landes Rheinland-Pfalz: Mainz, 1985), 402-404. See also Michael Müller, "Zum Verhältnis von Kirche und Besatzung. Erzbischof Bornewasser von Trier und die Franzosen nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg," in *Franzosen und Deutsche am Rhein. 1789 - 1918 - 1945*, ed. Peter Hüttenberger and Hansgeorg Molitor, 304 (Essen: Klartext, 1989).

⁴⁷⁶ Michael Müller, "Zum Verhältnis von Kirche und Besatzung. Erzbischof Bornewasser von Trier und die Franzosen nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg," in *Franzosen und Deutsche am Rhein. 1789 - 1918 - 1945*, ed. Peter Hüttenberger and Hansgeorg Molitor, 306 (Essen: Klartext, 1989).

⁴⁷⁷ Hitler mentioned Schlageter already in "Mein Kampf," numerous Nazi garrisons and squads bore his name. Monuments of Schlageter mushroomed and were only removed by the occupying armies. See on the removal of a Schlageter monument SHD 3 U 251. Commandement en Chef des Forces Françaises en Allemagne. Rapport Hebdomadaire December 17, 1945. On Schlageter see for example: Stefan Zwicker, "Nationale Märtyrer:" Albert Leo Schlageter und Julius Fucik: Heldenkult, Propaganda und Erinnerungskultur (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2006).

⁴⁷⁸ MAE 1 RP 125/3. Cabinet Militaire, District de Trèves 1946-1948. L'Administrateur de Vassoigne, Délégué pour le Gouvernement Militaire du District de Trèves to Monsieur le Gouverneur, Délégué Général pour le Gouvernement Militaire de l'Etat Rhéno-Palatin, April 13, 1948.

⁴⁷⁹ MAE 1 RP 125/3. Cabinet Militaire, District de Trèves 1946-1948. Procès-Verbal Détention de matériel de propagande nazie, April 12, 1948.

⁴⁸⁰ MAE 1 RP 125/3. Cabinet Militaire, District de Trèves 1946-1948. L'Administrateur de Vassoigne, Délégué pour le Gouvernement Militaire du District de Trèves to Monsieur le Gouverneur, Délégué Général pour le Gouvernement Militaire de l'Etat Rhéno-Palatin, April 13, 1948: "L'attitude anti-française [de Monseigneur Von MEURERS] nous est connue de longue date, sa duplicité est une fois de plus prouvée."

according to de Vassoigne, representative of the French military government, in informing his superior, the Governor of the Rhine-Palatine state.⁴⁸¹

Faced with the Heuser case, the French military government wondered what use the affair could have for the French occupiers. De Vassoigne proposed three ways of proceeding: arresting the young Heuser for possession of Nazi propaganda material, contacting bishop Bornewasser, and putting pressure on him, or arresting general vicar von Meurers for distributing Nazi propaganda. Ultimately, de Vassoigne passed on the decision to his superior, underlining the convenient opportunity to “provoke the departure” of von Meurers.⁴⁸² Although there is no trace of consequences of the Schlageter affair in the documents, the reason for the ebbing of the conflict can be attributed to four factors: First, the power of the Catholic Church was such that not even the French occupiers could break it. Bornewasser and von Meurers were very powerful men, and de Vassoigne feared “serious difficulties regarding the church administration” if the occupiers intervened in personnel matters of the Church.⁴⁸³ Second, the conflict about the Saar diocese was resolved by the highest authority of the Catholic church, Pope Pius XII., in favor of Bornewasser: there is no separate Saar diocese up to this day.⁴⁸⁴ Thirdly, the more local reasons for the truce were third, the accidental death of de Vassoigne at the end of the year 1948. The Treveri presented their sincere condolences, and bishop Bornewasser ended up saying the mass at Vassoigne’s funeral service.⁴⁸⁵ Fourth, Bornewasser’s and von Meurers’ age (Bornewasser was in his 80s, Meurer in his 60s) and their death in 1951 and 1953 respectively calmed the French occupiers.

The Schlageter affair shows that the French administration saw a continuity of conduct between the interwar occupation and the French occupation of Germany after World War II. Moreover, the French considered the Catholic Church after the fall of the Nazi Reich a Trojan Horse and a type of cell for Nazi resistance that threatened their authority but was hard to combat because it was rooted in a spiritual power beyond their control. For instance, in June 1946, north of Trier, the French suspected the local priest to be an influential member of a resistance organization.⁴⁸⁶ De Vassoigne complained about “aggressive” priests in Trier, who, again in 1948, lectured, among other churches in the cathedral of Trier in front of 3000 people. In their sermons, those priests had criticized the immorality that had arisen since the beginning of the occupation. They deplored the misery of a German nation “looted, raided, and subjected to the

⁴⁸¹ MAE 1 RP 125/3. Cabinet Militaire, District de Trèves 1946-1948. L’Administrateur de Vassoigne, Délégué pour le Gouvernement Militaire du District de Trèves to Monsieur le Gouverneur, Délégué Général pour le Gouvernement Militaire de l’Etat Rhéno-Palatin, April 13, 1948: “sans doute.”

⁴⁸² MAE 1 RP 125/3. Cabinet Militaire, District de Trèves 1946-1948. L’Administrateur de Vassoigne, Délégué pour le Gouvernement Militaire du District de Trèves to Monsieur le Gouverneur, Délégué Général pour le Gouvernement Militaire de l’Etat Rhéno-Palatin, April 13, 1948: “provoquer le départ.”

⁴⁸³ MAE 1 RP 125/3. Cabinet Militaire, District de Trèves 1946-1948. L’Administrateur de Vassoigne, Délégué pour le Gouvernement Militaire du District de Trèves to Monsieur le Gouverneur, Délégué Général pour le Gouvernement Militaire de l’Etat Rhéno-Palatin, April 13, 1948: “de sérieuses difficultés sur le plan ecclésiastique.”

⁴⁸⁴ For the conflict around the Saar diocese see Michael Müller, “Zum Verhältnis von Kirche und Besatzung. Erzbischof Bornewasser von Trier und die Franzosen nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg,” in *Franzosen und Deutsche am Rhein. 1789 - 1918 - 1945*, ed. Peter Hüttenberger and Hansgeorg Molitor, 297-308 (Essen: Klartext, 1989), but also Christophe Baginski, *La Politique religieuse de la France en Allemagne occupée (1945-1949)*, (Presses Univ. Septentrion, 1997), and Bronson Long, *No Easy Occupation: French Control of the German Saar, 1944-1957* (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2015), 118-123.

⁴⁸⁵ For more information about the life and death of Elie de Vassoigne, see his personnel file: MAE 1 PL 4534.

⁴⁸⁶ SHD GR 29 P 7 236. Commandement des Forces de Gendarmerie d’Occupation. Fiche de Renseignement. June 26, 1946.

arbitrariness of foreign powers.”⁴⁸⁷ De Vassoigne interpreted this sermon as an outright attack against the French occupation and immediately called the Governor of Rhineland-Palatinate’s office to report the incident. De Vassoigne furthermore filed a written report and claimed sanctions against two priests in Trier: “My personal point of view is that those kinds of words could justify the instantaneous expulsion of those two preachers.”⁴⁸⁸ Like the Schlageter affair, de Vassoigne’s outcry did not have the desired consequences, again, because of the Churches’ sovereignty in matters of personnel.

A final group that was deeply suspicious to the French security services was the **German youth**. The French civilian and military representatives feared that German teenagers who grew up during Nazism and had only ever experienced the Nazi system were prone to resistance against the occupier.⁴⁸⁹ The 10th Infantry Division saw the German youth in the town of Simmern “snapping their heels and lifting slightly their right hand starting to make the gesture of the Hitler salute” when the young Germans met each other.⁴⁹⁰ They observed that the German youth kept up “a state of hostile spirit” with regard to the French occupiers, threw stones at their cars, sang military songs, and made fun of the alleged French weakness.⁴⁹¹ For example, in January 1946, the French gendarmerie arrested a group of 27 former Hitler youth members between ages 15 and 21 from Neunkirchen in the Saar for building up an arms depot and planning a resistance movement against the French, while the boys declared: “Arms are not even necessary to chase the French [...], sticks are sufficient, they are weak and fearful soldiers.”⁴⁹² The French observed a year and a half into their occupation of the country an “awakening of national sentiments of the German youth”, for whom the occupiers were “enemy number one and source of all evil.”⁴⁹³ At the time, the French observer stated that this could be a mere “natural phenomenon of the youth trying to find their path,” but he seemed to be one of the few to

⁴⁸⁷ MAE 1 RP 125/3. Cabinet Militaire, District de Trèves 1946-1948. L’Administrateur de Vassoigne, Délégué pour le Gouvernement Militaire du District de Trèves to Monsieur le Gouverneur, Délégué Général pour le Gouvernement Militaire de l’Etat Rhéno-Palatin, March 2, 1946: “pillé, est dévalisée, et soumise à l’arbitraire de puissances étrangères.”

⁴⁸⁸ MAE 1 RP 125/3. Cabinet Militaire, District de Trèves 1946-1948. L’Administrateur de Vassoigne, Délégué pour le Gouvernement Militaire du District de Trèves to Monsieur le Gouverneur, Délégué Général pour le Gouvernement Militaire de l’Etat Rhéno-Palatin, March 2, 1946: “Mon point de vue personnel est que de telles paroles auraient pu justifier l’expulsion immédiate de deux prédicateurs.” The mesure recalls the expulsion to the left bank of the Rhine of government officials, notably of railway and municipal employees during the passive resistance and the Ruhr occupation in 1923-1924.

⁴⁸⁹ SHD GR 28 P 7 231. Résistance allemande nazie (anti-alliée) 1945-47. Fiche de Renseignement, Résistance. October 2, 1946.

⁴⁹⁰ SHD 11 P 165. 10e Division d’Infanterie 2e Bureau. 1945-1946. Bulletin hebdomadaire de Renseignements, juillet-décembre 1945. 10e Division d’Infanterie, Etat-Major, 2e Bureau. Compte rendu hebdomadaire de renseignement nr. 16, November 10, 1945, 5: “claquer les talons et de lever légèrement la main droite, ébauchant le salut nazi.”

⁴⁹¹ SHD 11 P 165. 10e Division d’Infanterie 2e Bureau. 1945-1946. Bulletin hebdomadaire de Renseignements, juillet-décembre 1945. 10e Division d’Infanterie, Etat-Major, 2e Bureau. Compte rendu hebdomadaire de renseignement nr. 13, October 20, 1945: “état d’esprit hostile”

⁴⁹² SHD 11 P 19. 1ère D.I. E.M. 2e Bureau Bulletin de renseignements périodiques mai 1945-mars 1946. C.S.T.O.A. 2e Bureau Sécurité Militaire, Renseignements. January 17, 1946: “Il n’est même pas besoin d’armes pour chasser les Français [...] des batons suffisent, ce sont des soldats faibles et peureux.”

⁴⁹³ SHD GR 28 P 7 239. Attentats, propagande. Fiche d’Information, November 3, 1946: “réveil des sentiments nationaux chez les jeunes allemands” and “l’ennemi No. 1 et la source de tous les maux.”

downplay the danger emanating from the German youth.⁴⁹⁴ The majority of the French army and civilian occupiers feared that the German youth would rally in a resistance movement against the occupier because they thought the German youth in particular would be prone to secret Nazi propaganda and eventually join the *Werwolf*.⁴⁹⁵ Rumors spread that Martin Bormann, the head of Hitler's chancellery, was alive and headed a resistance movement composed of former leading members of the Hitler youth and the League of German Girls, called *Edelweiss Piraten* (E.W.P.) – ironically the youth resistance group against the Nazis during the war, – and with contacts to Franco's Spain.⁴⁹⁶ The French intelligence also heard from their British counterparts that the *Werwolf* lured young Germans in the French zone with food and English money.⁴⁹⁷

All across the French occupation zone as well as in the French sector of Berlin the French army discovered and arrested groups of young Germans that had previously been members of the Hitler youth who held clandestine meetings. The files note many clandestine meetings while it remains unclear whether those meetings were in fact those of a resistance organization.⁴⁹⁸ On 26 and 27 March 1946, for example, in the southern districts of Württemberg alone, 428 young Germans were arrested for an “attempted reunion of the Hitler youth.”⁴⁹⁹ Most of the arrested were between 16 and 23 years old and were said to have talked in their meetings about sabotaging the cars of the occupation army as well as of collecting abandoned weapons to “drive [the occupier] out of the country.”⁵⁰⁰ The discovery of those youth groups allegedly preparing for an open resistance against the occupier created an atmosphere of suspicion towards the German youth in general. It seemed plausible for an “occasional and reliable” informant reporting to the French security in Koblenz in July 1947 that a resistance organization mainly composed of young Germans, equipped with stolen weapons and munition, would block the border from Germany to Luxembourg in order to prevent the French soldiers from reaching France in the case of a war with one of the Allies.⁵⁰¹ The French would thus be trapped by this resistance organization – a deeply unsettling situation for the occupiers.

Since the French army awaited an underground resistance movement, even little hints were interpreted as signs of resistance and resulted occasionally in strange observations. For instance, one informant in the city of Speyer noted that ten to fifteen local teenagers met every night at 10pm in the house of a doctor, and when a French officer went by, a number of girls located in the house opposite to the doctor's house started singing.⁵⁰² Another intelligence note

⁴⁹⁴ SHD GR 28 P 7 239. Attentats, propagande. Fiche d'Information, November 3, 1946: “phénomène naturel chez des jeunes.”

⁴⁹⁵ SHD GR 28 P 7 232. Werwolf = loup garou, Généralités. Renseignements. Possibilité d'un mouvement de résistance, October 2, 1945.

⁴⁹⁶ SHD GR 28 P 7 239. Gouvernement Militaire Française du Grand-Berlin. Service Central de la Sécurité Publique. Rapport sur la Résistance Allemande à Berlin. September 18, 1946.

⁴⁹⁷ SHD GR 28 P 7 232. Werwolf = loup garou, Généralités. Compte Rendu sur les activités clandestines diverses depuis le 15 juillet jusqu'au 31 août 1945.

⁴⁹⁸ SHD GR 28 P 7 239. Bilan des incidents, attentats, sabotages et manifestations de résistance signalés dans la zone française d'occupation durant le mois de juillet 1946.

⁴⁹⁹ SHD GR 28 P 7 236. Commandement en Chef Français en Allemagne. Commandement Supérieur des Troupes d'Occupation. Etat-Major, Service de Sécurité Militaire to Sécurité Militaire Berlin on Mouvement de Résistance dans le Württemberg, April 26, 1946: “tentative de regroupement de la Jeunesse Hitlérienne.”

⁵⁰⁰ SHD GR 28 P 7 236. Commandement en Chef Français en Allemagne. Commandement Supérieur des Troupes d'Occupation. Etat-Major, Service de Sécurité Militaire to Sécurité Militaire Berlin on Mouvement de Résistance dans le Württemberg, April 26, 1946: “chasser [les occupants] du pays.”

⁵⁰¹ SHD GR 28 P 7 231. Résistance allemande “nazie” (anti-alliée) 1945-47. Renseignement July 22, 1947: “occasionnel et sérieux.”

⁵⁰² SHD GR 28 P 7 239. Activités Allemandes en Z.F.O. Bilan du Mois d'Août 1946, 11.

stated that a “safe source” reported that the Nazis recognized each other on the street by sophisticated greeting signs. They supposedly “put the thumb of the right hand under the lapel of the collar of the jacket and then presented the palm of the open hand (the fingers are vertically stretched out).”⁵⁰³ Other resistance groups were said to carry in their purse “a game of three dices or some marbles” for the purpose of identifying one another, the same report mentioned.⁵⁰⁴ In Riegelsberg, in the vicinity of Saarbrücken, the head of a clandestine youth organization confessed that the organization used outside of their meetings an altered Nazi salute: instead of “Heil Hitler,” they allegedly raised their right arm to “Drei Liter,” three liters.⁵⁰⁵

The French were particularly suspicious because they identified similar patterns among the Germans than in Nazi occupied France, where the young French had also been overly represented in the resistance movement.⁵⁰⁶ Furthermore, the French experience with the occupation of the Rhineland in the interwar period played into their wariness with regard to the youth. In Freiburg in September 1945, for instance, a French informant suspected the formation of a national-socialist group composed of forestry students and former Wehrmacht officers. The informant contended that they had displayed a pronounced hostility towards the occupier, and the recruitment of former officers of the Wehrmacht in the group of forestry students in particular reminded him of the “method [...] used after the war of 1914-18 when the officers and the nationalists successfully infiltrated the forester profession to pursue their politics.”⁵⁰⁷

The security services of the French army searched for signs to recognize those potential adolescent resistance groups in a way that resembled the Nazi persecution of resistance groups. Unlike the Résistance back home in France, who did not wear any exterior signs of recognition because of the danger of being caught by the Germans, the youth in Germany did seem to use external markers that identified them as member of a group of resistance – at least in the eyes of the French military security. The latter were obsessed with colored pins many adolescents across the French zone wore on their lapels, and mentioned them as an accessory that immediately rendered a person suspicious. The intelligence reports of the French zone in the first three years of the occupation are full of lists associating gatherings of youth with resistance activities while registering the names, dates of birth, and profession of young Germans, usually under 25 years old, as well as the number, color, and arrangement of the pins that they wore on their lapels.⁵⁰⁸ The reason why the French occupiers saw the colored pins as a sign for an organized gang of youth also dates back to the interwar and wartime period when *Edelweisspiraten* and other *bündische Jugend* groups used colored pins as insignia. In a paper, the Nazi justice department published in early 1944, those colored pins or *Edelweiss*-pins are mentioned as a self-identifying tactic of the *Edelweisspiraten*, the best-known opposition group in West Germany. “They meet

⁵⁰³ SHD GR 28 P 7 236. Copie d’un renseignement, July 26, 1946: “Passant la pouce de la main droite sous le revers du col de la veste et en présentant la paume de la main ouverte (les doigts allongés verticalement).”

⁵⁰⁴ SHD GR 28 P 7 236. Copie d’un renseignement, July 26, 1946: “un jeu de 3 dés ou quelques billes.”

⁵⁰⁵ SHD GR 28 P 7 231. Résistance allemande “nazie” (anti-alliée) 1945-47. Commandant en Chef Français en Allemagne, Commandement des Forces de Gendarmerie d’Occupation, Etat-Major, 2ème Bureau, Fiche de Renseignements, June 12, 1946.

⁵⁰⁶ Olivier Wieviorka, “La Résistance, une affaire des jeunes?”, in *Etre jeune en France (1939-1945)*, ed. Jean-William Dereymez (Paris: L’Harmattan, 2001), 241-253.

⁵⁰⁷ SHD GR 28 P 7 232. Renseignements s/s forestiers de la région de Fribourg October 11, 1945: “méthode [...] utilisée après la guerre de 1914-18, où les officiers et les nationalistes s’infiltraient avec succès dans le métier de forestier pour poursuivre leur politique.”

⁵⁰⁸ SHD GR 28 P 7 231. Commandement en Chef Français en Allemagne, Commandement des Forces de Gendarmerie d’Occupation, Etat-Major 2ème Bureau. Suite à fiche de renseignements No 5572/G/2 6250 du 19 Juin 1946, June 26, 1946. Annexe.

almost daily in the dark, at intersections, gateways, or in parks,” noted the justice department, and went on to classify their leaders as mostly emanating from “former youth associations [Bünden] or [...] political parties.”⁵⁰⁹ Their uniform appearance suggested the existence of an “umbrella organization [...] [which is directed] against the authority.”⁵¹⁰ The resemblance between the Nazi persecution of juvenile delinquency and the French occupiers’ fear of an organized resistance movement composed of the very same group of young Germans is remarkable.

Taking care of the youth was considered a military necessity for the safety of the French army. One of the achievements historians have often attributed to the French occupation of Germany after World War II is the French preoccupation with educating the German youth in schools and universities, fostering exchanges with France, and promoting sports in the zone.⁵¹¹ However, taking care of the *nazified* youth also had very practical reasons: preventing the youth from drifting back to the Nazi ideology and causing a serious threat to the security of the French occupying forces. “Give us more to eat, or otherwise we cannot forget Hitler,” one pamphlet in the French zone read.⁵¹² The misery of the food situation fueled resistance, the French noticed and added: “The idle German youth is bored: without any directives, without any activity, with a regret of the past, this will be a favorable atmosphere for resistance if we cannot manage to satisfy this latent need for employment/activity.”⁵¹³

Besides the well-known measures the French took to keep the German youth busy, French occupiers also came up with a measure that reminded more of wartime than of peaceful occupation: compulsory labor. An undated project developed by the French army to fight the “incidents, attacks, or sabotages” against them, included preventing public gatherings and meetings in cafés and cinemas, as well as further restrictions on the right to move.⁵¹⁴ The paper then stated that the best measure to prevent resistance was to occupy the youth: “[C]ompulsory

⁵⁰⁹ Bundesarchiv Koblenz R 22/1177, Bl. 441-451, Bericht des Reichsjustizministeriums über das Auftreten und die Bekämpfung „jugendlicher Cliques und Banden“ (Anfang 1944), in *Deutsche Jugend 1933-1945. Eine Dokumentation*, ed. Karl Heinz Jahnke and Michael Buddrus (Hamburg: VSA Verlag, 1989), 463-68. <http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/deu/German77.pdf>: “Meist täglich treffen sie sich in der Dunkelheit an Straßenecken, in Torwegen oder in Parks.” and “früheren Bünden oder [...] aus politischen Parteien.”

⁵¹⁰ Bundesarchiv Koblenz R 22/1177, Bl. 441-451, Bericht des Reichsjustizministeriums über das Auftreten und die Bekämpfung „jugendlicher Cliques und Banden“ (Anfang 1944), in *Deutsche Jugend 1933-1945. Eine Dokumentation*, ed. Karl Heinz Jahnke and Michael Buddrus (Hamburg: VSA Verlag, 1989), 463-68. <http://germanhistorydocs.ghi-dc.org/pdf/deu/German77.pdf>: “eine Dachorganisation [...] [die sich] gegen die Gemeinschaftsordnung [stellt].”

⁵¹¹ Corine Defrance, *La politique culturelle de la France sur la rive gauche du Rhin, 1945-1955* (Strasbourg: Presses Universitaires de Strasbourg, 1994). Jacqueline Plum, *Französische Kulturpolitik in Deutschland 1945-1955. Jugendpolitik und internationale Begegnungen als Impulse für Demokratisierung und Verständigung* (Wiesbaden: GWV, 2007). Stefanie Woite-Wehle, *Zwischen Kontrolle und Demokratisierung. Die Sportpolitik der französischen Besatzungsmacht in Südwestdeutschland 1945-1950* (Schorndorf: Hofman, 2001).

⁵¹² SHD 11 P 165. 10e Division d’Infanterie, 1945-1946. Bulletin de Renseignements 10e D.I. E.M. 2e Bureau. *Compte-Rendu Hebdomadaire* No. 19 November 30, 1945, 6: “Gebt uns mehr zu fressen, sonst können wir Hitler nicht vergessen.”

⁵¹³ SHD 11 P 165. 10e Division d’Infanterie, 1945-1946. Bulletin de Renseignements. 10e D.I. E.M. 2e Bureau. *Compte-Rendu Hebdomadaire de Renseignements* No. 14, October 27, 1945: “La jeunesse allemande désœuvrée s’ennui: sans directives, sans activité, avec le regret du passé, ce sera un milieu propice pour la résistance, si l’on ne peut arriver à satisfaire ce besoin latent d’activité.”

⁵¹⁴ SHD 11 P 19. 1ère Division d’Infanterie 2ème Bureau, 1945-1946. 2ème C.A. Nord 1e Division d’Infanterie, Etat-Major 2ème Bureau. *Projet, Note de Service*, no date, 1: “[d]es incidents, des attentats, ou des sabotages.” 0808

labor [le travail obligatoire] of the youth on Sundays (work useful for the occupying troops) is recommended, because this measure has proven to be efficient.”⁵¹⁵

The fact that the French seemed to have been using this method quite frequently (“has proven to be efficient”) is surprising, not only because the French army applied it in the supposedly peaceful occupation post-1945. It is even more surprising that they employed it considering that the compulsory work service (Service du Travail Obligatoire, S.T.O.), established by the Germans in occupied France during World War II, was one of the main reasons so many young Frenchmen joined the resistance movement.⁵¹⁶ One would assume the French would refrain from this measure considering this history. But, when a group of adolescents, former members of the Hitler youth, slapped the wife of a French officer in November 1945 in the Saarland town of Eppelborn “right in the middle of the street,” the French reacted with strong measures. The army prolonged the curfew for the Germans and “convoked the youth on Sundays and to let them execute work.”⁵¹⁷ Even if the French army did not use compulsory work as systematically as the Germans did during the war, the use of forced labor in postwar occupied Germany to discipline the German youth is proof of the continuity of forced labor beyond the caesura of 1945.

What constituted resistance against the occupier?

The report of resistance activities in the French zone in May 1947 still noted three assassination attempts against the French occupiers, twenty-eight acts of deterioration of material (sabotage of telephone lines, trains or rails, and automobiles), thirteen explosions, eleven arsons, twenty-eight cases of possession of weapons, twelve cases of possession of munition, twenty-one cases of possession of army equipment, twenty-one cases of passive resistance (members of resistance groups and meetings as well as purposely delaying the carrying of an order or refusal to work), thirty-four thefts, four scuffles, eight “incidents against France and her army,” and twenty-two “various” acts of resistance.⁵¹⁸ The most frequent resistance acts deserve a closer look because of their resemblance to French and German resistance activities in the past. They included passive resistance, underground radio broadcast, and sabotage.

The most significant experience of the past that influenced French occupation policy in Germany was the **passive resistance** of the interwar period. The government of the Weimar Republic had called for passive resistance in the interwar period to fight the reparation payments they considered excessive and unjust, and to fight the occupation of the Ruhr valley. The passive resistance of the interwar period had caused a severe crisis of the French authority as the occupying power at the time.⁵¹⁹ To tackle the passive resistance, the French occupation administration had ordered the expulsion of hundreds of German administrators and railroad

⁵¹⁵ SHD 11 P 19. 1ère Division d’Infanterie 2ème Bureau, 1945-1946. 2ème C.A. Nord 1e Division d’Infanterie, Etat-Major 2ème Bureau. Projet, Note de Service, no date, 2: “Toutefois, le travail obligatoire des jeunes le Dimanche (Travaux utiles aux Troupes d’Occupation) sera préconisé, cette mesure s’étant montrée efficace.”

⁵¹⁶ See for example Raphaël Spina, *La France et les Français devant le service du travail obligatoire (1942-1945)* (PhD diss., ENS Cachan, 2012), accessed October 31, 2016, <https://tel.archives-ouvertes.fr/tel-00749560>.

⁵¹⁷ SHD 3 U 126. Commandement en Chef des Forces Françaises en Allemagne. 2ème Bureau Bulletin de renseignements 1945-1946. Bulletin de renseignements No. 31, November 28, 1945, 6: “en pleine rue” and “rassembler les jeunes gens le dimanche et de leur faire exécuter des travaux.”

⁵¹⁸ SHD GR 28 P 7 239. Attentats Propagande. Synthèse de la Résistance Allemande au cours du mois de Mai 1947. Feuillet A: “incidents à l’encontre de la France et son armée” and “divers.”

⁵¹⁹ Gerd Krüger, “‘Aktiver’ und ‘passiver’ Widerstand im Ruhrkampf 1923,” in *Besatzung. Funktion und Gestalt militärischer Fremdherrschaft von der Antike bis zum 20. Jahrhundert*, ed. Günther Kronenbitter, Markus Pöhlmann, Dierk Walter (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2006), 119–30.

personnel to the right bank of the Rhine. The expulsion was a measure to get rid of the Prussian influence in the occupied zone and to assume the occupier's authority, but it had only fueled the German propaganda, and had destabilized the French even further. The strategy of passive resistance, combined with international pressure, ultimately forced the French to stop their policy of exploitation and even led them to evacuate the Ruhr and restructure the German war debt.⁵²⁰

In the wake of World War II, the French thus immediately associated deviant behavior on the part of the Germans as a form of passive resistance and labeled it a particularly German form of resistance. From late summer 1945 onwards, the French army noticed that that a “passive resistance’ is developing” all over the French occupation zone.⁵²¹ The document further explains that ‘passive resistance’ describes the appearance of tracts, inscriptions, “hostile or ironic attitudes”, ill will or delays when executing an order.⁵²² Other documents also speak of a passive resistance of the farmers, above all in the fertile agriculture of Baden. Already in October 1945, the French intelligence office of the army observed that the Baden farmer tended to produce only for themselves if at all because of the severe requisitions of food by the French.⁵²³ Half a year later, in February 1946, they observed that the “passive resistance” had become a new variant of German resistance of all levels of society: “officials execute the orders given to them with delays, workers and artisans hide behind a thousand motives plausible on the surface to not have to carry out work, merchants delay the distribution of food and hold us responsible.”⁵²⁴ Later in the occupation in May 1947, the French army still expected a rise in the passive resistance of the German administration and public services because of further food shortages and material fatigue.⁵²⁵ While the French occupiers did not see the appearance of an active resistance against them, or still waited for the resistance to become active, they observed closely acts they considered passive resistance. An intelligence report from Mainz for the district Hessen-Palatinate in March 1946 stated:

One can still not speak of a resistance like the one we have known in France. [...] The resistance will manifest one day perhaps, especially in the civil administration in form of excessive slothfulness or sabotage of French instructions, that is [...] as passive resistance.⁵²⁶

⁵²⁰ Gerd Krumeich, Joachim Schröder eds., *Der Schatten des Weltkriegs: Die Ruhrbesetzung 1923* (Essen: Klartext, 2004).

⁵²¹ SHD 3 U 126. Commandement en Chef des Forces Françaises en Allemagne, 2e Bureau, Bulletins de Renseignements 1945-1946. Bulletin de Renseignement No 21, September 18, 1945: “la “résistance passive” se développe.” The inverted commas in this sentence possibly refer to the fact that the concept of passive resistance from the interwar occupation is transferred here to the new occupation past 1945.

⁵²² SHD 3 U 126. Commandement en Chef des Forces Françaises en Allemagne, 2e Bureau, Bulletins de Renseignements 1945-1946. Bulletin de Renseignement No 21, September 18, 1945: “d’attitudes hostiles ou ironiques.”

⁵²³ SHD GR 28 P 7 239. Dossier 3. Renseignements, Résistance passive, October 2, 1945.

⁵²⁴ SHD GR 28 P 7 239. Dossier 3. Manifestations de résistance au cours du mois, February 1946.

⁵²⁵ SHD GR 28 P 7 239. Synthèses de la résistance allemande au cours du mois de mai 1947.

⁵²⁶ MAE 1 RP 1780. C 4478 Paquet 1 District de Hesse-Rhénane Mayence. Délégation du District de Hesse-Rhénane. Chapitre 2 Renseignements Généraux Mayence-Gonsenheim, March 25, 1946: “On ne peut parler encore de résistance, telle que nous l’avons connue en France. [...] La résistance [s]e manifesterait peut-être un jour, surtout dans l’administration civile sous forme de lenteurs abusives ou de sabotages des instru[c]tions françaises, c’est-à-dire [...] de résistance passive.”

While the idea of a passive resistance certainly derived from the interwar occupation of Germany, the experience with the French resistance during the Second World War was a much fresher experience. Therefore, the French expected and were particularly attentive to certain kinds of resistance they had known themselves during the German occupation of France during World War II. Those included sabotage (notably of telephone lines and rails), clandestine radio emmissions, as well as anti-french Pamphlets and leaflets and graffiti.

Based on their own experience with the BBC in London, the French intelligence service of the army expected **clandestine radio broadcasts** that would provoke a German resistance movement. One of the most famous episodes in French resistance against the German occupier was Charles de Gaulle's famous Appeal of June 18, 1940 on the BBC calling the French to resist against the German occupier: "Whatever happens, the flame of French resistance must not and shall not die."⁵²⁷ The French occupation force in Germany after the Second World War expected a similar call from the Nazi underground and therefore duly monitored underground radio activities in their zone. After all, Goebbels himself had launched a radio called *Werwolf* on April 1, 1945, possibly inspired from the broadcasting success of the French resistance in London.⁵²⁸ Indeed, the French came across a number of clandestine radio programs in their zone. In November 1945, the northern region of the French zone (region around Koblenz) alone registered 45 clandestine radio programs that spread anti-French propaganda since July 1945.⁵²⁹

The French were particularly attentive to the anti-French content of the programs that they perceived threatening to their authority. For example, in November 1945, the French observed that Radio Koblenz broadcasted a radio program that evoked "the eternal German Rhine."⁵³⁰ Dating back to the long history of French and German antagonism since at least Louis XIV's expedition in the 1600s, the Rhine was one of the most emotionally charged symbols for the Franco-German rivalry.⁵³¹ Numerous paintings, poems, and songs on both sides of the Rhine were produced, especially in the 19th century around the Rhine crisis of 1840 when the French claimed the region. One of the most famous on the German side was probably Max Schneckenburger's *Watch on the Rhine*.⁵³² In the Weimar Republic and during the Allied, and notably French occupation of the left bank of the Rhine between 1918 and 1930, the question of whether or not the French would use their occupation of the left bank of the Rhine to prepare an annexation of this territory to France was one of the most debated points of contention in the

⁵²⁷ Charles de Gaulle, "18 June 1940 - Speech on BBC radio," accessed November 2, 2016, <http://www.charles-de-gaulle.com/l-homme-du-verbe/speeches/18-june-1940-speech-on-bbc-radio.html>.

⁵²⁸ Cord Arendes, "Schrecken aus dem Untergrund: Endphaseverbrechen des 'Werwolf,'" in *Terror nach innen: Verbrechen am Ende des Zweiten Weltkrieges*, ed. Cord Arendes, Edgar Wolfrum, and Jörg Zedler (Wallstein, Göttingen 2006), 150.

⁵²⁹ SHD GR 28 P 7 233. Note à tous postes. Annexe 4, Caractéristiques des vivres de campagne distribué au Bundschuh, October 19, 1945.

⁵³⁰ SHD 11 P 165. 10e Division d'Infanterie. Bulletin Hebdomadaires de Renseignements Juillet-December 1945. 10e Division d'Infanterie, Etat-Major, 2e Bureau. No. 1278. Compte Rendu Hebdomadaire de Renseignements No 15, November 3, 1945, 6: "Rhin éternellement allemand."

⁵³¹ See one of the classics on the subject, the founder of the Annales School, Lucien Febvre: Lucien Febvre, *Le Rhin: Problèmes d'histoire et d'économie* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1935).

⁵³² Walter Moßmann and Peter Schleuning, "Die Wacht am Rhein," in *Alte und neue politische Lieder. Entstehung und Gebrauch, Texte und Noten*, ed. Walter Moßmann and Peter Schleuning (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1978), 17–80.

interwar period.⁵³³ The “eternal German Rhine” was a trope the Germans appealed to unremittingly after the First World War, finally triumphant with the departure of the French troops in 1930.⁵³⁴ The trope of the German Rhine had also influenced the naming of the last Nazi offensive against the Allied troops in 1944, the Ardennes counteroffensive, nicknamed *Watch on the Rhine*.⁵³⁵ The appeal to this “eternal German Rhine” in the radio broadcasts must have been a red flag for the French occupiers reminding them of the long struggle over the river in French and German history – and their own failure to establish the border between the two countries on the Rhine river.⁵³⁶

In the radio broadcasts, the French secret service searched for the directing figure of the German resistance comparable to a Charles de Gaulle situated outside of the occupied territory. This leader could be either Hitler himself or again Martin Bormann. As late as April 1947, a French source in Gengenbach/Württemberg, for example, reported that a “Bormann station” broadcasted from Spain or Argentina at midnight or 1 am in the morning. It allegedly appealed to the German people: “German people, be strong, hold on, don’t let yourself be humiliated! Our hour will strike soon!”⁵³⁷ The same informant mentioned that he had heard from a “certain source” that “Hitler would be in Argentina and had in Spain 2.5 million SS ready to go at the first signal. His partisans hope he will return soon to Germany.”⁵³⁸ Another French intelligence report mentioned a rumor in the Saar region according to which Bormann spoke to the German people every night on a Nazi radio program at around 2 a.m. complaining about the Nuremberg trials.⁵³⁹ Sometimes, women’s voices were heard on the radio transmitting messages and criticizing the French occupiers. In one case in May 1947, a female voice criticized the French military government for their bad administration and food supply in Germany.

The Germans themselves reported clandestine radio stations, thus confirming the French assumption about resistance organizations broadcasting messages to the German population. In Freiburg in mid-September 1946, radio listeners notified the French authorities again about a “Sender Bormann” while German inhabitants of the small town of Undenheim close to Mainz said to have heard a radio broadcast from one of the most famous Nazi Luftwaffe generals, Adolf Galland.⁵⁴⁰ The search for de Gaulle-like figures allegedly inciting a German resistance movement with the help of radio programs is again visible in these two cases of supposed Nazi broadcasts. The resistance through radio broadcasts so numerous observed by French and

⁵³³ Peter Schöttler and Chris Turner, “The Rhine as an Object of Historical Controversy in the Inter-War Years. Towards a History of Frontier Mentalities,” *History Workshop Journal*, no. 39 (1995): 1-21. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4289349>.

⁵³⁴ A number of commemorative coins and reliefs, for instance, celebrating the departure of the French occupiers in 1930 were engraved with the slogan “Deutsch ist der Rhein.”

⁵³⁵ See Peter Caddick-Adams, *Snow and Steel: The Battle of the Bulge, 1944-45* (Oxford University Press, 2014).

⁵³⁶ For the French and German enmity since the 19th century see: Michael Jeismann, *Das Vaterland der Feinde: Studien zum nationalen Feindbegriff und Selbstverständnis in Deutschland und Frankreich 1792-1918* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1992).

⁵³⁷ SHD GR 28 P 7 237. Notes réunies à Gengenbach May 6, 1947: “Peuple allemand, sois fort, tiens bon, ne te laisse pas humilier! Notre heure sonnera bientôt.”

⁵³⁸ SHD GR 28 P 7 237. Notes réunies à Gengenbach May 6, 1947: “Source certaine: HITLER serait en Argentine et il aurait, en Espagne, 2 millions ½ de SS prêts à marcher au premier signal. Ses partisans espèrent sa réapparition prochaine en Allemagne.”

⁵³⁹ SHD GR 28 P 7 237. Renseignements, October 25 1946.

⁵⁴⁰ SHD Gr 28 P 7 237. Note de renseignement March 4, 1947. And SHD Gr 28 P 7 237. Notes de Renseignements Objet: a/s émission clandestine Septeber 17, 1946.

Germans however never materialized in the form of a resistance movement comparable to the one in France during the war.

Next to the subversive content, the French expected tactics in the technical execution of the broadcasting that resembled the French strategies developed during the war. The experience with the French resistance against the German occupier informed the French occupiers' approach to German underground radio communication. In December 1945, a secret intelligence report stated that the Germans in Bavaria, Baden, and Württemberg used high voltage lines to communicate among each other "by walkie-talkie" [par téléphone haute fréquence]. The informant concluded that "the possibility to communicate [téléphoner] by using high voltage lines is known and also used in France."⁵⁴¹

Members of resistance movements, either the Werwolf or its successor organizations, notably the *Edelweisspiraten* were particularly prone to broadcasting messages in order to incite German resistance, contended the French gendarmerie, because those resistance commandos might have members specializing in radio systems who knew how to communicate and keep up a resistance network over a longer period of time.⁵⁴²

Sabotage was a recurrent theme in the acts of resistance the French army paid the most attention to at the end of World War II because sabotage of trains, rails, vehicles of the occupiers, and factories producing for the Germans had been a key instrument of the resistance in metropolitan France. At the same time, the saboteur had already been the emblematic figure of the German resistance against the French occupation in the interwar period, notably during the Ruhr crisis in 1923/24.⁵⁴³ During the Ruhr crisis, the railway workers' allegiance to the German state which paid them caused strikes and delays of the reparation goods sent to France and Belgium. The French occupiers had no choice but to take over the railroad service themselves using their own trains and personnel. Those trains were subject to attacks by German "patriots:" in the region of Trier, trains were attacked with stones and the rails were sabotaged.⁵⁴⁴ In Mainz, the German city administration had to pay a fine to compensate an act of sabotage against the electrical workshop of the French railroad service in October 1923.⁵⁴⁵ Whoever travelled on those "Franzosenzüge" (French trains) or even agreed to work for them was subject to harassment by their German compatriots. The local archives of the city of Mainz contain multiple leaflets in which German "patriots" threatened their countrymen to prevent them from travelling with the French trains. Those leaflets oftentimes also underlined the accidents that befell French trains in the Rhineland. The German "patriots" traced these accidents back to the incapacity of the French railway workers as well as their German helpers:

⁵⁴¹ SHD GR 28 P 7 237. Note de renseignement. December 21, 1945: "La possibilité de téléphoner en utilisant les lignes à haute fréquence est connue et également employée en France."

⁵⁴² SHD 28 P 7 236. Commandement en Chef Français en Allemagne, Commandement des Forces de Gendarmerie d'Occupation, Etat-Major 2ème Bureau. Fiche de renseignement. No 05444. Suite à fiche de renseignements du 14 Juin 1946, June 13, 1946 [sic].

⁵⁴³ See Sébastian Albertelli, *Histoire du Sabotage* (Paris: Perrin, 2016).

⁵⁴⁴ See Stadtarchiv Trier, Tb 32/102. Der Delegierte der Irko im Stadtkreis Trier to Herrn Polizei-Inspektor Goldbeck in Trier, May 5, 1923 and der I. Beigeordnete des Bezirks beauftragt mit den Angelegenheiten des Stadtkreises Trier to den Herrn Oberbürgermeister February 27, 1923.

⁵⁴⁵ Stadtarchiv Mainz 71/180. Sabotageakt auf die elektrischen Werkstätten in Mainz-Kastel am 22./23.10.1923 Zahlung einer Entschädigung an die französische Eisenbahnregie durch die Stadt Mainz.

The one who trusts the French trains that drive recklessly without signal and line service risks his/her life and stabs the German railway workers in the back who firmly and loyally stand in unshakable defense!⁵⁴⁶

“Who takes a French train has one foot in jail as traitor and the other one in the grave,”⁵⁴⁷ concluded another leaflet from 1923.

Given this experience with the German sabotages in the interwar period, the French army prepared to face massive sabotage action in defeated Germany: In March 1945, the French secret services issued a memo entitled “Note about the German sabotage plans.”⁵⁴⁸ Based on the reports of a German double agent who worked for the British intelligence service, the French were convinced that the Nazis had established 800-900 depots of English weapons and munition destined to sabotage the French industry and to cause turmoil already in the French hexagone. The German purpose was supposedly to “sabotage railroads, central streets, harbor facilities, aerodromes, and in general any military or industrial object situated in the enemy’s rear.”⁵⁴⁹ Similar acts of sabotage were expected in occupied Germany:

sabotage of public transportation, blowing up bridges, mining railroads, provoking the derauling of trains without the use of explosives, mining of streets, provoking car accidents, arson, notably setting gas and munition depots on fire.⁵⁵⁰

With those expectations in mind, the French army perceived sabotage of trains and rails on multiple occasions during their occupation of Germany. One of the reports about sabotage from January 1946, for example, mentions an act of sabotage on a provisional railway bridge south of Saarbrücken. A French sentry had observed two men in what he thought were American uniforms climbing the bridge, shot at them, they shot back, the sentinel then hid and waited for the men’s return. Upon the men’s return, they knocked the sentinel out and disappeared. The report concluded that because of the bridges important role (“classified as sensitive point of the 1st urgency”) in linking Germany and France as well as the circumstances of the event, the case

⁵⁴⁶ Stadtarchiv Mainz, 71/333. Ankleben von Flugblättern, Plakate und Flugblätter; einzelne Polizeimeldungen über das Auffinden von Flugblättern, no date: “Wer sich den französischen Zügen anvertraut, die wild ohne Signal- und Streckendienst fahren riskiert sein Leben und fällt dem deutschen Eisenbahner in den Rücken, der fest u. treu in unerschütterlicher Abwehr steht!”

⁵⁴⁷ Stadtarchiv Mainz, 71/333. Ankleben von Flugblättern, Plakate und Flugblätter; einzelne Polizeimeldungen über das Auffinden von Flugblättern, April 11, 1923: “Wer mit einem Franzosen-Zug fährt, steht als Verräter mit einem Fuß im Zuchthaus, mit dem andern im Grab!”

⁵⁴⁸ SHD GR 28 P 7 239. Direction Générale des Etudes et Recherches. Note sur les plans allemands de sabotage. March 3, 1945.

⁵⁴⁹ SHD GR 28 P 7 239. Direction Générale des Etudes et Recherches. Note sur les plans allemands de sabotage. March 3, 1945: “sabotage des voies ferrées, centrales, installations portuaires, aérodromes et en général de tous objectifs militaires ou industriels situé dans le dos de l’ennemi.” These plans should be carried out by collaborationist groups, such as the LVF, the Milice or the P.P.F. while putting the blame for the sabotage on the communists.

⁵⁵⁰ SHD GR 28 P 7 232. Gouvernement Provisoire de la République Française Direction Générale des Etudes et Recherches. Renseignements Allemagne Organisation du Wehrwolf [sic], August 2, 1945: “sabotage des transports publics, faire sauter des ponts, miner les voies ferrées, provoquer des déraillements sans utilisation d’explosifs, miner les routes, provoquer des accidents d’automobiles, provoquer des incendies, notamment de dépôts de carburant et de munitions.”

was deemed an act of sabotage.⁵⁵¹ While there were other means of transportation targeted by saboteurs – or alleged saboteurs – like a sabotage on airplanes in the town of Mayen, or the presumption that a “generalized order to sabotage was given out in the garages of the entire occupation zone,” the main concern was the railway.⁵⁵² In the interwar occupation, especially during the occupation of the Ruhr and the passive resistance, photos of derailed trains carrying German goods destined for reparation payment to the French haunted the German and international newspapers.⁵⁵³ In the aftermath of World War II, the French army was worried that the Germans would seek to prevent reparation goods from reaching France. In January 1947, an army intelligence report mentioned that there were difficulties with the delivery of wood from the Black Forest for the French industry for some months. “Competent milieus declare that the deficiency [of the wood delivery] are caused by the systematic sabotage committed by German railway workers,” the French intelligence reported. The German railway workers presumably destroyed the carriages.⁵⁵⁴

The French expectations of massive railroad sabotage were further fueled by a rumor coming from neighboring occupied Austria. According to information obtained by the French army, a train carrying French army engineers to Germany had derailed in the vicinity of Innsbruck because of sabotage of the rails over a ravine. Forty men were killed and the survivors had shot the local notables of the neighboring village, the informant reported.⁵⁵⁵ But, in truth, this incident never happened and it is not mentioned in any other source available.

Whether accidents of this kind had really occurred or if they were only rumors that spread in French occupied Germany such as they had in German occupied France, or any other war-like situation with restricted communication systems or a censorship by the occupier, is not important for the impact it had on the French occupier.⁵⁵⁶ Such rumors created a situation of imminent threat in an environment hostile to the French troops. The alleged shooting of village notables also recalls Nazi hostage taking and executions during the war. It indicates if not the range of means of punishment for German resistance, then at least the realm of imagination of possible ways to punish this resistance.⁵⁵⁷

While some members of the French army recognized the disrepair in which the railroads stood from 1946 onwards as one reason for accidents with trains, others insisted on resistance as

⁵⁵¹ SHD 11 P 19. 1ère Division d’Infanterie Bulletins de renseignements. Rapports hebdomadaires 1945-1946. 1ère Division d’Infanterie Etat-Major 2ème Bureau, S.M. Sarre. Bulletin de renseignements, January 6, 1946: “classé point sensible de 1ère urgence.”

⁵⁵² SHD GR 28 P 7 239. Dossier 3. Note pour C.S.T.C.A 2ème Bureau (Section Sécurité Militaire), January 23, 1946 and SHD GR 28 P 7 239. Dossier 3. Renseignement, July 11, 1946: “semble qu’un mot d’ordre de sabotage soit donné actuellement dans les garages conventionnées pour toute la zone d’occupation”

⁵⁵³ On Gallica, the French online database of the National Library, there is a spectacular image of the of a derailed train caused by an act of sabotage in February 1923 in Trier during the Ruhr occupation and the passive resistance. The photo was distributed by the press agency Rol.

<http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b53098331k/f1.item.langDE?>, accessed February 16, 2017.

⁵⁵⁴ SHD GR 28 P 7 239. Dossier 3. Commissariat aux renseignements généraux de Forbach, January 17, 1947: “on déclare dans les milieux compétents que cette carence serait due à un sabotage systématique accompli par les cheminots allemands.”

⁵⁵⁵ SHD GR 28 P 7 293. Attentats, Propagande. Renseignement, Sabotage sur la ligne de chemin de fer près d’Innsbruck, October 15, 1946.

⁵⁵⁶ See Marc Bloch, “Réflexions d’un historien sur les fausses nouvelles de la guerre,” *Revue de synthèse historique* 33 (1921).

⁵⁵⁷ For the Nazi reprisals see for example Geraldien von Frijtag Drabbe Künzel, “Resistance, Reprisals, Reactions,” in *Surviving Hitler and Mussolini: Daily Life in Occupied Europe* ed. Robert Gildea, Olivier Wieviorka, and Anette Warring (Oxford, New York: Berg, 2006), 177-205.

the main reason for irregularities with trains and tracks. On the one hand, when the breaks of wagons were stolen in the Saarbrücken train station in August 1946, the French army was already used to those kinds of thefts and tersely remarked that the thieves use the rubber to make shoe soles.⁵⁵⁸ On the other hand, when in the harsh winter of 1946-1947 many locomotives remained in the depots, a French colonel acknowledged the severe weather conditions but found it also suspicious that “[i]n a country in which people are usually conscientious, it is surprising that no timely measure has been taken in the depots to prevent deterioration [of the locomotives].”⁵⁵⁹ The colonel assumed that the resulting delays and slower work by railway employees were rather “a modest act of passive resistance” chosen at a strategic moment when the winter masked the resistance against the occupier.⁵⁶⁰

One of the French army’s major concerns was that the Germans simply copied the maneuvers of the French resistance against the occupier, especially with regard to railway sabotage. The movie theaters of the French zone sometimes showed films about the French resistance. In October 1946, a report of the gendarmerie of Bad-Ems noted that those films should not have German spectators, because such films might spur them to resist against the French occupiers. The report stated: “[I]t is indeed pointless to give the Germans ideas about the means or processes that could harm us or disrupt our action in the French occupation zone.”⁵⁶¹

The French army claimed to have found out that the German resistance movement used the same means the French railroad resistance had employed against Nazi Germany. In a secret news bulletin by the French army’s intelligence office circulated in October 1947, when the material fatigue of the trains or acts of sabotage peaked in the French zone, the French army notified their troops of an anonymous letter sent to a French head of a train station mentioning the film “Battle of the Rails,” a 1946 French movie awarded at the Cannes film festival that same year. The movie shows the courageous resistance of the French railway workers against the German occupiers, and the sabotage of the trains and rails in particular. The anonymous letter “equated the sabotages currently carried out by the German railway workers with the resistance acts of the French railway workers.”⁵⁶² Those resistance acts were: girders on the rails between Trier and Saarbrücken, two derailings of trains carrying wood for France, and the presence of water and sand in the axle boxes in wagons that were headed to France.⁵⁶³

⁵⁵⁸ SHD GR 28 P 7 239. Dossier 2. Activités Allemandes en Z.F.O. Bilan du Mois d’Août 1946, September 7, 1946, 14.

⁵⁵⁹ SHD GR 28 P 7 239. Dossier 3. Le Colonel de la Breteache Chef de la U.F.L auprès U.S.F.K.T. to Monsieur le Général d’Armée Commandant en Chef Français en Allemagne Service des Liaisons Baden-Baden, January 24, 1947: “[d]ans un pays où l’homme est en général consciencieux, il est surprenant qu’aucune mesure n’ait été prise à temps dans les dépôts pour éviter des détériorations [des locomotives].”

⁵⁶⁰ SHD GR 28 P 7 239. Dossier 3. Le Colonel de la Breteache Chef de la U.F.L auprès U.S.F.K.T. to Monsieur le Général d’Armée Commandant en Chef Français en Allemagne Service des Liaisons Baden-Baden, January 24, 1947: “un modeste essai de résistance passive.”

⁵⁶¹ MAE 1 RP 109. Gendarmerie Française Légion d’Occupation Compagnie de Bad Ems. Rapport de synthèse du mois d’octobre 1946, November 25, 1946: “[I]l est en effet inutile de donner aux [A]llemands des idées sur les moyens ou procédés susceptibles de nous nuire ou de gêner notre action en Zone française d’occupation.”

⁵⁶² SHD 3 U 116. Commandement en Chef des Forces Françaises en Allemagne 2ème Bureau. Bulletins d’information 1945-1948. No 9, October 6, 1947, 5: “assimile les sabotages actuellement effectués par les cheminots allemands aux actes de résistance des cheminots français.”

⁵⁶³ SHD 3 U 116. Commandement en Chef des Forces Françaises en Allemagne 2ème Bureau. Bulletins d’information 1945-1948. No 9, October 6, 1947, 5.

Monitoring all those incidents and interpreting them as acts of resistance against the occupation led to the belief that the French occupying soldiers lived in a threatening environment in which resistance could manifest itself at any moment. This mood had consequences for how resistance activities were punished.

Punishments

The French occupiers who had just experienced four years of German occupation with harsh reprisals by the German occupiers had difficulties switching from wartime to peacetime in the first months of the occupation. In order to fight what they considered acts of resistance by the German population, they used some reprisals well known to them from the German occupation in France. Those reprisals included hostage-taking and collective fines along with forcing the German population to guard telephone lines. Especially the French gendarmerie employed means that reminded the French occupiers themselves of the Gestapo's interrogatory methods. Fearing that the Germans would be even more encouraged to resist against them because of the French repressions - this is what had happened in France during the war – the French gave out orders that prevented collective fines and excessive punishments. However, in contrast to German occupied France, and also in contrast to the interwar occupation of Germany, death penalties for acts of resistance were almost never pronounced, and the French authorities had a real interest in avoiding the German policy in occupied France. While there certainly was a French incentive, in particular in the lower ranks of the army and gendarmerie, to pay back some of the humiliating treatment they had been subject to during the German occupation of France, the French did not commit the same level of atrocities. At the same time, the French army and administration had to prove their moral superiority vis-à-vis the Nazis, especially after the French implication with Nazi crimes during the German occupation of France.

Some punishments the French army used to retaliate acts of resistance clearly resembled some measures the German occupiers of wartime France had taken in the first two years of their occupation of France. In the summer and early fall of 1945, the measures taken by the French occupiers to punish the cutting of telephone lines involved prolonging the curfew, guarding telephone lines for several days, collective punishments in the form of collective fines, and the taking of hostages. The French army noted in their reports cut telephone lines as one of the most frequent acts of resistance after 1945, just like in the early years of the German occupation of France during the war.⁵⁶⁴ In occupied Germany as well, collective punishments for towns and villages for sabotage on telephone lines were frequent. From mid-July to the end of August 1945 in the Saar region alone, the French registered seventeen cut telephone lines. The most common punishment was to extend the curfew and to force the German inhabitants to guard the telephone lines of the community for periods of twenty-four hours, forty-eight, seventy-two hours, or even longer.⁵⁶⁵ This had also been practice in occupied France as well as during the Ruhrkampf in the interwar period, where local German government officials had to guard telephone lines.⁵⁶⁶ In a case of a cut telephone line in Neuwied in December 1945 that had linked the local commander

⁵⁶⁴ Gaël Eismann, *Hôtel Majestic: ordre et sécurité en France occupée (1940-1944)* (Paris: Tallandier, 2013), 214.

⁵⁶⁵ SHD 11 P 19 1ère Division d'Infanterie. Bulletins de renseignements périodiques Mai 1945 – March 1946. Rapport Hebdomadaire No 9, July 27, 1945. And Rapport Hebdomadaire No 14, August 30, 1945, Annexe II.

⁵⁶⁶ Olivier Wieviorka, *The French Resistance* (Harvard University Press 2016), 415. For the interwar period, see for example: Reichstagsprotokolle 1920, 24,35: Einführung eines Geiselsystems durch die Franzosen zur Verhinderung von Sabotageakten an den Verkehrsmitteln, Protestnote der Deutschen Regierung vom 19. März 1923, accessed November 18, 2017, http://www.reichstagsprotokolle.de/Blatt2_w1_bsb00000062_00045.html.

of the French troops to the army central control center, the German population had to guard the telephone line every night from 7pm to 8am the next morning for five days with a person guarding the line every fifty meters. Moreover, the curfew was extended to 9pm to 6am during five days.

In some cases, the French civilian administration tried to refrain from collective punishments and only penalized former members of the Nazi party with the guarding of telephone lines. For instance, in Pirmasens in September 1946, a telephone line of the army was cut in three different places. The French delegate to the Pirmasens district ordered the mayor of Pirmasens to choose twenty men “preferably among the former members of the NSDAP or the Hitler Youth” to guard the telephone line for six nights.⁵⁶⁷ Those men were placed in intervals of 150 meters and were not allowed to leave their position “under any circumstances.”⁵⁶⁸ The French security sent the men word that they would be personally responsible for any damage done to the telephone line and in case of a sabotage court-martialed.⁵⁶⁹ German police wore the cachet of the French military police and had to make frequent rounds to verify the presence of the guarding men – a reminiscence of the indirect rule the German occupiers employed in France during World War II when French police had to carry out German orders.⁵⁷⁰

It is odd that, of all people, the Nazis were chosen to guard telephone lines, because who else but the Nazis would have a greater interest in destroying them. The French army certainly chose them in order to outlaw them from the village community, but this tactic only proved effective if the Nazis, in fact, did not pose an imminent, but rather a potential threat. The French army thus might have assumed the German defeat to have been crushing enough to have discredited Nazism. As we will see later, the self-interest of the army in legitimizing their presence in Germany might have played a role in the case of the Nazi guarding of telephone lines.

Besides the guarding of telephone lines, collective punishments for cut lines included fines imposed upon the concerned localities, a punishment that had also been employed by the Germans in occupied France.⁵⁷¹ In the small town of Sinzig, south of Bonn, a telephone line was sabotaged on October 3, 1945. The French occupiers threatened the town with a fine of 10,000 Marks if the culprit was not found. At the same time, they offered a bounty of 500 Marks to the person who was willing to share information that would lead to the arrest of the culprit. This was a large sum of money at a time when the average income was around 150 Marks a month in 1946.⁵⁷² And indeed, the culprit was found and arrested “thanks to an active German police

⁵⁶⁷ MAE 1 RP 2980/1 Résistance; renseignements généraux, résidences surveillées (1945-1947). Le Commandant Kleinmann. Délégué du Cercle de Pirmasens to Monsieur l’Oberbürgermeister de Pirmasens, September 24, 1946: “de préférence parmi les anciens membres du NSDAP et de la H.J.”

⁵⁶⁸ MAE 1 RP 2980/1 Résistance; renseignements généraux, résidences surveillées (1945-1947). Le Commandant Kleinmann. Délégué du Cercle de Pirmasens to Monsieur l’Oberbürgermeister de Pirmasens, September 24, 1946: “en aucun cas.”

⁵⁶⁹ MAE 1 RP 2980/1 Résistance; renseignements généraux, résidences surveillées (1945-1947). Le Commandant Kleinmann. Délégué du Cercle de Pirmasens to Monsieur l’Oberbürgermeister de Pirmasens, September 24, 1946.

⁵⁷⁰ See Gaël Eismann, *Hôtel Majestic: ordre et sécurité en France occupée (1940-1944)* (Paris: Tallandier, 2013), 215.

⁵⁷¹ Gaël Eismann, *Hôtel Majestic: ordre et sécurité en France occupée (1940-1944)* (Paris: Tallandier, 2013), 215.

⁵⁷² Statistisches Bundesamt, Durchschnittliche Bruttomonatsverdienste, 1913/14-2016, accessed November 17, 2017.

<https://www.destatis.de/DE/ZahlenFakten/GesamtwirtschaftUmwelt/VerdiensteArbeitskosten/VerdiensteVerdienstunterschiede/Tabellen/Bruttomonatsverdienste.html>.

officer” as well as to the impending collective fine.⁵⁷³ This, however, was a rare case. Most of the times, the towns or villages had to pay the fine and no culprit was found. In the case of one cut telephone line in October 1945 connecting two villages in the district of St. Goar, the village had to pay the fine and the mayor of the town was arrested – he was probably not even in office for much longer than six months and had been installed by the Allies or even by the French occupiers themselves.⁵⁷⁴

The taking of hostages was a practice that had reached its height during World War II during the Nazi occupations in the East and West, but it also was a regular practice in French occupied Germany. In mid-September 1945 in Buchholz in the same district of Sankt-Goar on the Rhine river close to the famous Lorelei, fifteen hostages were taken because of an act of sabotage on a telephone line in their town.⁵⁷⁵ The taking of hostages might come to a surprise because the practice of hostage taking during the war, notably the shooting of hostages in Nantes and Bordeaux in 1941, had provoked a huge outcry not only all over France but also among experts of international law.⁵⁷⁶ An article in the American Journal of International Law deeply criticized the wartime hostage taking and shooting practiced by the Nazis in their occupied territories in Eastern and Western Europe, but the article did not endorse banning the use of hostages completely:

Though the unilateral practice of hostage-taking has assumed so illegal and inhumane a character through contemporary German abuse, this is insufficient to warrant its abandonment as a legal instrument of war. The fact that hostages may be taken, and, if need be, killed, strengthens the position of a law-abiding administrator of occupied territory.⁵⁷⁷

The Allies in occupied Germany therefore continued to take hostages after World War II, but not to the same degree as the Nazis – the systematic shooting of hostages never happened in occupied Germany. However, still in 1948, the American Military Tribunal, for example, in the so-called *hostages trial* decided that the taking and even shooting of hostages under certain conditions was in conformity with customary laws of war.⁵⁷⁸ Only with the Geneva convention (IV) of 1949 was hostage-taking finally prohibited following public outcry over the US hostages trial.⁵⁷⁹

⁵⁷³ SHD 11 P 165. Bulletins Hebdomadaires de Renseignements Juillet-Décembre 1945. 10e Division d’Infanterie Etat Major, 2e Bureau. Compte-Rendu Hebdomadaire de Renseignements No 13, October 20, 1945, 6: “grâce à l’activité du policier allemand.”

⁵⁷⁴ SHD 11 P 165. Bulletins Hebdomadaires de Renseignements Juillet-Décembre 1945. 10e Division d’Infanterie Etat Major, 2e Bureau. Compte-Rendu Hebdomadaire de Renseignements No 12, October 13, 1945, 5.

⁵⁷⁵ SHD 11 P 165. Bulletins Hebdomadaires de Renseignements Juillet-Décembre 1945. 10e Division d’Infanterie Etat Major, 2e Bureau. Compte-Rendu Hebdomadaire de Renseignements No 8, September 12, 1945, 2.

⁵⁷⁶ See Robert Gildea, *Marianne in Chains: Daily Life in the Heart of France during the German Occupation*. New York: Picador, 2002, chapter 8 and 386-390. See also Christopher Neumaier, “The Escalation of German Reprisal Policy in Occupied France, 1941-42,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 41, no. 1 (2006): 113-131.

⁵⁷⁷ Ellen Hammer and Marina Salvin, “The Taking of Hostages in Theory and Practice,” *The American Journal of International Law* 38, 1 (1944): 33. Accessed: November 16, 2016. Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2192529>

⁵⁷⁸ Yoram Dinstejn, *The international law of belligerent occupation* (Cambridge University Press, 2009), 152.

⁵⁷⁹ Yoram Dinstejn, *The international law of belligerent occupation* (Cambridge University Press, 2009), 152 and The Geneva Conventions of August 12, 1949, International Committee of the Red Cross, Geneva, 153-221.

In the French zone, the taking of hostages was a regular practice just like in the other zones and the French did not hide this as a preferred means of reprisal. On the contrary, in 1946, an abundantly illustrated magazine called “Images et vérités sur l’occupation” from Baden-Baden to Berlin was published that, right on its first pages, showed a picture of German notables aligned in front of the French headquarters in Speyer. As the caption reads, these notables had to stand for an entire day with their hats lying in front of each of them on the street as a reprisal for an act of sabotage.⁵⁸⁰ In another case, General Noiret, head of the 10th Division of Infantry, explicitly praised the action taken by one of his battalion commanders in a district in which weapons and munitions had been found, local youth had held secret meetings, the registers and lists of refugees at the city hall were not well kept, and finally four shots had been fired at French soldiers. The battalion commanders action consisted of a large search for “dangerous persons” that appeared on lists established by the local public safety officer. The police were ordered to arrest them, to check the identity of the people living in the district as well as to look for arms in the district. The action took place in late October 1945 and involved taking the mayor and “at least four notables” hostage for the remainder of the search.⁵⁸¹ As with the guarding of telephone lines, the French administration tried to punish only the former members of the Nazi party for acts of resistance. In Bad-Neuenahr Ahrweiler, for example, in the night of December 31, 1946 to January 1, 1947, two French flags were ripped off in front of the houses of two members of the French administration. The French delegate of the district extended the curfew and held twenty former members of the Nazi party hostage.⁵⁸²

The lack of instructions about possible means to deal with the German resistance led to sanctions being imposed on the German civilian population which were reminiscent of some of the tactics the Germans had used in occupied France during the war. Especially in the first months of the occupation, the situation was unclear and the French army lacked directives about how to combat a German resistance movement that they thought was in formation and beginning to attack. In a case of an attack against a French soldier in August 1945 in Waldshut close to the Swiss border, the French army had arrested the Germans inhabitants living in the vicinity of the crime scene. In a letter to the military government, the head of the committee of inquiry then asked to decide what sanction to inflict on the arrested Germans in view of the gravity of the attack and the frequent attacks on French soldiers in the area – seemingly not knowing how to further deal with the arrested individuals.⁵⁸³ Around the same time, also in August 1945, the commander of the 10th Infantry Division stationed in the northern part of the French zone, General Billotte, had received notes from the officers on the ground about what kind of reprisals to use against the German population in case of attempts on French soldiers’ lives. In his answer to the army under his control, he felt compelled to clarify that there “does not exist a

⁵⁸⁰ *Images et Vérités sur l’occupation. De Baden-Baden à Berlin* (Paris: Documents illustrés contemporains, 1946), 2.

⁵⁸¹ SHD 11 P 165. 10e Division d’Infanterie, 2ème Bureau, Incidents juillet –novembre 1945. Note de Service. Sanctions à prendre contre la population civile. November 24, 1945: “quatre notables au moins.”

⁵⁸² MAE 1 RP 109/5. 3e Légion de Gendarmerie 1946-1947. Rapport de l’Adjudant-Chef Laloy, Commandant provisoirement la Section de Coblenze sur un acte de résistance (outrage au drapeau Français), January 4, 1947. For the same act, a German civilian had been shot two years earlier, as mentioned in the opening paragraph. This example shows that there was a slow process of de-escalation and a commitment to less blood-shed at work, while hostage taking seemed still a legitimate punishment for such an act of resistance.

⁵⁸³ SHD GR 28 P 7 239. Attentats, Propagande. Le Chef du Bureau de Documentation de Waldshut to Monsieur le Capitaine, Chef du Gouvernement Militaire de Waldshut, August 11, 1945.

proclamation or a memo issued by the Division ordering that for the assassination of a French soldier ten Germans should be executed.”⁵⁸⁴ There is no hint of a mass assassination of Germans in the summer of 1945 as reprisal for acts of resistance. But the fact that this harsh sanction recalling German methods in France was taken into consideration is telling for the atmosphere in the first months of the occupation but also further into the occupation when a German resistance seemed more than plausible to members of the French army.

But just one year after the war had ended, the French attitude changed and they refrained from Nazi methods such as torture or overly aggressive behavior by French occupation personnel. The reason for this change of behavior was the realization by the superior levels of the French administration and army that the members of the occupying troops had to prove their moral superiority vis-à-vis Nazi crimes to not discredit themselves in the eyes of the Germans and their fellow Allies and to prove themselves worthy to occupy the country after their own complicity with Nazi crimes during the war.

The civilian administration as well as the gendarmerie, noticed the resemblance between methods used during the German occupation of France to combat resistance and those employed by the French in occupied Germany, and tried to halt them. In the small town of Saarburg, south of Trier, as late as 1947, for example, the commander of the district, Lackmann, reminded his staff members that German visitors should be welcomed with respect. He explained that especially the Germans who asked for *laissez passers* at the security department “had been welcomed according to methods that were in use in the past at the Gestapo.”⁵⁸⁵ Lackmann denounced this behavior as “unacceptable and extremely harmful to our policy.”⁵⁸⁶ Notably the French gendarmerie, the military police of the French zone, was found guilty of “unacceptable” behavior towards the occupied German. In a report to General Koenig dated June 1, 1946 – a year into the occupation – the head of the French gendarmerie in Germany, General Taillardat, acknowledged that the gendarmerie had committed, at the beginning of the occupation, acts of violence against the German population “in order to let them admit certain facts in the interest of the French security.”⁵⁸⁷ This meant, in fact, that the French gendarmes had used torture to gain information about alleged Nazi resistance.

Just like the military government (see chapter 1 on the Vichy personnel), the gendarmerie was an amalgam composed of men who had served under Vichy rule and many young gendarmes with little experience.⁵⁸⁸ The old Vichy officers of the gendarmerie were subject to discrimination by their peers or even subordinates. The sanctions inflicted upon the Vichy gendarmes had mostly set back their promotions, which is why they sought to act in Germany in

⁵⁸⁴ SHD 11 P 165. 10e Division d’Infanterie, 2ème Bureau, Incidents juillet –novembre 1945. Le Général Bilotte, Cdt. la Zone Française de Rhénanie et de Hesse-Nassau to M. le Général Cdt. le 2ème C.A. (Etat-Major - 2e Bureau), August 11, 1945: “il n’existe pas à la Division de proclamation ou de note de service prescrivant que pour un Français tué 10 Allemands seraient exécutés.”

⁵⁸⁵ MAE 1 RP 2033/1. L’Administrateur Lackmann Délégué du cercle de Sarrebourg, Note de Service, May 5, 1947: avaient été reçues suivant les méthodes en usage autrefois auprès de la Gestapo.”

⁵⁸⁶ MAE 1 RP 2033/1. L’Administrateur Lackmann Délégué du cercle de Sarrebourg, Note de Service, May 5, 1947: “inadmissibles et font le plus grand tort à notre politique.”

⁵⁸⁷ SHD 2007 ZM 1 / 208 000 00001. Rapport du Général Taillardat, Commandant les Forces de Gendarmerie d’Occupation to Général Commandant en Chef Français en Allemagne, June 1, 1946: “en vue de leur faire avouer certains faits intéressant la sécurité française.”

⁵⁸⁸ SHD 2007 ZM 1 / 209 369. FFA Section Mayence, Registre No 4, September 28, 1945 – June 17, 1946. Rapport du Capitaine COURAUX Commandant la Section de Gendarmerie de Mayence sur l’état d’esprit du personnel de la Section, October 27, 1945. And Rapport du Capitaine COURAUX, Commandant la Section de Gendarmerie de Mayence sur l’état d’esprit du personnel de la Section, March 16, 1946.

a way that prevented a renewed degradation. It is possible that taking drastic action against perceived German resisters would allow them to prove their allegiance to the new order. The inexperience of the younger gendarmes who grew up in Nazi occupied France might have reinforced the harsh treatment of Germans. The poor equipment of the gendarmerie (food and clothing) – even compared to the local Germans – and the boredom due to few social contacts with the German population, especially in the first winter of the occupation, further contributed to the malaise of the gendarmerie.⁵⁸⁹ This frustration was channeled in the form of severe reprisals that reminded the contemporaries of the methods of the Gestapo in occupied France.

The head of the gendarmerie tried hard to halt those methods out of concern for the moral standing of the French troops as well as the legitimacy of their presence after four years of complicity with Nazi rule: “I gave the necessary orders so that the methods of inquiry employed by certain gendarmes cannot be compared to those of the Militia or the Gestapo.”⁵⁹⁰ However, Taillardat alluded to one particular case of torture in the town of Ravensburg in this report to the head of the French occupation army and mentioned that he had planned to send the perpetrators back to France. After consultation with the head of the civilian administration of the province of Württemberg, Governor Louis Widmer (himself a former resistance hero), Taillardat refrained from any action, so as “to not create ourselves the first German martyr of the resistance.”⁵⁹¹ The fear of fueling the resistance movement – especially one that evoked cases such as Schlageter in the interwar occupation of Germany or as Jean Moulin during the German occupation of France, both of whom were killed by the occupying forces and consequently turned into martyrs of the resistance – prevented the French from publicly denouncing the perpetrators. It seems as if the case fizzled out and was not further pursued. Instead, Taillardat drafted a memo for the gendarmes a month later to denounce “certain gendarmes [who] thought they could behave in front of the German population like representatives of the French Gestapo or SS.”⁵⁹² He went on: “The Gendarmerie does not stand out by terror or acts of violence of all kind that recall the words of Gestapo and SS, but by firmness and honesty it is known for.”⁵⁹³ The documents are very vague say very little about the methods of inquiry that so reminded the French gendarmerie of what had just happened in France. However, a few examples do appear in the archives that illustrate the policy. In one case, during an inspection near the small town of Wallhalben in southwest Palatinate, the French head of the battalion of the occupying forces found out that French soldiers had arrested four Germans under the pretext that they possessed weapons and incarcerated them in a mill for four days, all without an arrest warrant. The Germans had been

⁵⁸⁹ The fact that the gendarmes could not easily bring their families to Germany in the first year of the occupation is often given as a reason for their unduly behavior. SHD 2007 ZM 1 / 209 369. FFA Section Mayence, Registre No 4, September 28, 1945 – June 17, 1946. Rapport du Capitaine COURAUX, Commandant la Section de Gendarmerie de Mayence sur l'état d'esprit du personnel de la Section, October 27, 1945.

⁵⁹⁰ SHD 2007 ZM 1/ 208 000 00001. Rapport du Général Taillardat, Commandant les Forces de Gendarmerie d'Occupation to Général Commandant en Chef Français en Allemagne, June 1, 1946: “[J]’ai donné les ordres nécessaires pour que les méthodes d’interrogation employées par certains gendarmes ne puissent être comparées à celles de la Milice ou de la Gestapo.”

⁵⁹¹ SHD 2007 ZM 1/ 208 000 00001. Rapport du Général Taillardat, Commandant les Forces de Gendarmerie d'Occupation to Général Commandant en Chef Français en Allemagne, June 1, 1946: “afin de ne pas créer nous-même, le 1er martyr allemand de la Résistance.”

⁵⁹² SHD 2007 ZM 1/ 208 000 00001. Note de Service, August 5, 1946: “certains gendarmes [qui] croient devoir se présenter auprès des populations allemandes comme étant des représentants de la Gestapo ou des S.S. français.”

⁵⁹³ SHD 2007 ZM 1/ 208 000 00001. Note de Service, August 5, 1946: “La Gendarmerie ne s’imposera pas par la terreur et les exactions de tous ordres que rappellent les mots de Gestapo et de S.S. mais par la fermeté et l’honnêteté qui la caractérisent.”

“violently beaten” and during the search for weapons, the French soldiers had “indulged [...] in pillages.”⁵⁹⁴ The head of the battalion recommended the soldiers be brought before a military court. In another case of excessive violence employed by a French gendarme in occupied Germany, the decision of the military court found its way into the archives of the gendarmerie in occupied Germany. The warrant officer Berthou was sentenced to ten days of arrest in August 1946 because he had not paid close attention to the way the gendarmes of his locality interrogated several Germans that were suspect of being members of a resistance organization. “H had allowed that the interrogating gendarmes forced a woman to undress in front of them.” The warrant officer had only intervened late to “stop the scandal.”⁵⁹⁵ Since this was Berthou’s second punishment for a major offense, he was sent home to France. These examples show that the French army was concerned about their reputations and publicly condemned misbehavior of their lower ranks.

The heads of the French army and administration had to intervene in order to prevent a move that seemed natural to the French gendarmes, now that the tables had turned and political considerations took precedence over policing. While notably the collective punishments and other harsh sanctions were used rather incoherently and without a formal instruction especially in the first months of the occupation, the French government in Baden-Baden tried to curb the excesses and to give concrete instructions to the occupying forces about the sanctions to take against German acts of resistance. Those instructions were colored by their own experience of resistance against the Nazi occupation. General Koenig, head of the French army, for example, issued on December 8, 1945 – one half a year into the official beginning of the occupation – an instruction about the repression of acts of resistance in French occupied Germany. The instruction stated that in the past months, the French occupiers had employed collective punishments against the population of the town closest to where the act of resistance was committed. However, Koenig went on, “[t]his method applied by the Germans in France had only reinforced the Resistance.”⁵⁹⁶ It was “contrary to the French esprit,” did not look for the perpetrator of the deed, was “unjust, maladroit, and seems to be a confession of powerlessness,” Koenig continued.⁵⁹⁷ While he pleaded for the punishment of individuals rather than collective punishments, he still allowed those collective punishments “under exceptional circumstances.”⁵⁹⁸ The officers of the French army seconded Koenig’s instructions. In a note to the head of the second army corps, the head of the first French infantry mentioned that the traditional ways to combat resistance (surround the locality, register the identity of the people, conduct a general search, and take stock of the vehicles as well as punish individuals or the collective if no perpetrator was found) was costly and not appropriate for the little resistance the French

⁵⁹⁴ MAE 1 RP 2976/2. Notes classées secrètes (1945-1947). Monsieur le Général Délégué Supérieur pour le Gouvernement Militaire de Hesse-Palatinat, Neustadt, November 18, 1945: “frappés violemment” and “s’est livrés [...] à des actes de pillages.”

⁵⁹⁵ SHD 2007 ZM 1/ 208 000 00001. Fait renvoi à Monsieur le Ministre des Armées, Direction de la Gendarmerie in Paris, November 6, 1946: “faire cesser le scandale.”

⁵⁹⁶ SHD GR 28 P 7 232. Commandement en Chef Français en Allemagne, Cabinet. Instruction sur la repression des actes de résistance, December 8, 1945: “Cette méthode appliquée par les Allemands en France n’a fait que renforcer la Résistance.”

⁵⁹⁷ SHD GR 28 P 7 232. Commandement en Chef Français en Allemagne, Cabinet. Instruction sur la repression des actes de résistance, December 8, 1945: “contraire à l’esprit français” and “injuste, maladroite et semble être un aveu d’impuissance.”

⁵⁹⁸ SHD GR 28 P 7 232. Commandement en Chef Français en Allemagne, Cabinet. Instruction sur la repression des actes de résistance, December 8, 1945: “dans des circonstances exceptionnelles.”

occupiers actually met in occupied Germany.⁵⁹⁹ But he still suggested the guarding of telephone lines, extending hours of curfew, prohibiting meetings, closing cafés and movie theaters as well as forcing the young people to work on Sundays for the benefit of the occupying forces.⁶⁰⁰ What could be seen as a consequence of Koenig's instructions was a shift from collective punishment to the search for an individual perpetrator of the act of resistance in order to prevent the German population from joining the saboteurs and forming a veritable resistance.⁶⁰¹ The French army should thus refrain from *arbitrary* arrests and hostage taking. General Noiret, head of the 10e Division of Infantry, pleaded in a secret memo for choosing the hostages wisely in order to prevent arbitrariness that could turn the Germans against the French occupiers. When searches were made following an act of resistance – such as the clandestine posting of tracts – he advised, the French troops should always arrest someone in order to prove the success of the occupying forces. If no perpetrator was found during a search, Noiret told his troops to arrest

people that were carefully chosen ahead of time among the suspects or the most notorious Nazis [...]. The German population must have the impression that those operations are the consequences of a police action or of earlier intelligence activity and that those hostages were not chosen by chance.⁶⁰²

The search for individual perpetrators did however not mean that the punishments for acts of resistance were less harsh. In July 1946, for example, the condemnation of forty-four Germans for possession of weapons caused considerable irritation among the German population who had hoped for more lenient punishments. Only one of the forty-four accused was released whereas twenty-eight were sentenced to two to ten years of prison and fines of 1,000 to 3,000 Marks, and eleven of the accused were passed on to the central court of the French zone in Rastatt to await even harsher sentences.⁶⁰³

While the French occupiers punished acts they considered German resistance quite harshly, it is remarkable how few death sentences for acts of resistance are documented in the French military archives in Vincennes.⁶⁰⁴ The death penalty initially existed for acts of resistance even after May 8, 1945 – for example for possession of weapons and pillages. And some

⁵⁹⁹ SHD 11 P 19. 1ère Division d'Infanterie Bulletin de renseignements périodiques mai 1945 – mars 1946. Le Général Galliés, Commandant de la 1ère D.I.M. to Monsieur le Général Commandant le 2e C.A., Etat Major 2ème Bureau. December 29, 1945.

⁶⁰⁰ SHD 11 P 19. 1ère Division d'Infanterie Bulletin de renseignements périodiques mai 1945 – mars 1946. Le Général Galliés, Commandant de la 1ère D.I.M. to Monsieur le Général Commandant le 2e C.A., Etat Major 2ème Bureau. December 29, 1945.

⁶⁰¹ SHD 11 P 165. 10e Division d'Infanterie 2e Bureau Incidents. Note de Service du Général Noiret, Très Secret, November 5, 1945.

⁶⁰² SHD 11 P 165. 10e Division d'Infanterie 2e Bureau Incidents. Note de Service du Général Noiret, Très Secret, November 5, 1945: “des gens soigneusement choisis à l'avance parmi les suspects ou les Nazis les plus notoires [...]. Il faut que la population allemande ait l'impression que ces arrestations sont la conséquence de l'opération de police ou de renseignements antérieurs et qu'il ne s'agit pas là d'otages choisis au hasard.”

⁶⁰³ SHD GR 28 P 7 239. Commandant en Chef Français en Allemagne Commandement des Forces de Gendarmerie d'occupation Etat Major 2ème Bureau. Fiche de renseignements, July 3, 1946.

⁶⁰⁴ This observation is based on the sources on German resistance available at the French military archives in Vincennes. My judgment might be proven wrong by the archives of the military justice stored in Le Blanc only accessible by name of the culprit and thus difficult to systematically search.

incidents attest to a remarkably brutal repression of seemingly minor incidents.⁶⁰⁵ In a September night in 1945, for example, more than three months after the end of World War II, a *Tricolore*, the French national flag, was removed from the flagpole of a French summer vacation camp on Titisee in the Black Forest, and soiled. This incident was a clear act of resistance in the eyes of the French occupation army and as an immediate reprisal, the local Germans were forced to attend the French flag ceremony for a month. When the perpetrators of the deed were found, the French sentenced the main culprit to death whereas his three helpers received prison sentences of three months each because they had broken the curfew.⁶⁰⁶ The archives do not reveal if the culprit was indeed executed.⁶⁰⁷

In a second serious incident, the French army imposed the death penalty, but the German perpetrator got off more lightly. In November 1945, a French second lieutenant, Desauw, whose car broke down in Berschweiler, a small village in the Palatinate close to Birkenfeld, knocked on the door of a local, Peter Schnorr. Schnorr's wife insulted the French second lieutenant as "French pig."⁶⁰⁸ Shortly afterwards, Desauw dragged Schnorr's by the shoulder to show him the car, when his wife started strangling Desauw and scratching his face. Schnorr, his wife, and daughters, dragged the Frenchman into their home, where they began hitting Desauw violently, in a beating that eventually attracted the attention and participation of their German neighbors as well. Indeed, the beating escalated to such a point that Schnoor demanded a knife to "finish the job" but was halted by the other Germans.⁶⁰⁹ Because of this incident, Schnoor was sentenced to death, but was later pardoned and instead condemned to forced labor in perpetuity.⁶¹⁰

Apparently, the French army tried to abide by the order number 1 of the inter allied control council, article 2, paragraph 4, which prescribed "the application of all punishments, with exception of the death penalty, to suppress 'hostiles or disrespectful behavior towards the Allied troops [...].'"⁶¹¹ This directive seems to have been the reason why Schnoor was pardoned –one possible example of how the French learned from their own experience of occupation under the horror of Nazi rule.

It was the memory of the French resistance the occupiers had experienced back home in France that led to the sporadic harshness of the punishments inflicted upon the German population; it was the same memory that precluded a coordinated policy of harsh reprisals. The fear of a German resistance made the French actions unpredictable and the reprisals for the German population arbitrary. That led to several killings of Germans taken for resisters. In

⁶⁰⁵ SHD 3 U 126. Commandement en Chef Français en Allemagne, Commandement Supérieur des Troupes d'Occupation, Etat Major, 2ème Bureau. Bulletin de renseignements 1945-1946. Bulletin de Renseignement No 22, September 25, 1945.

⁶⁰⁶ SHD 3 U 126. Commandement en Chef Français en Allemagne, Commandement Supérieur des Troupes d'Occupation, Etat Major, 2ème Bureau. Bulletin de renseignements 1945-1946. Bulletin de Renseignement No 22, September 25, 1945.

⁶⁰⁷ See footnote 604.

⁶⁰⁸ SHD 11 P 19. 1ère Division d'Infanterie CR d'incidents civils et militaires 1945-1946. Rapport relatif à l'agression dont a été victime le s/Lieutenant Desauw du 601 G.T. November 11, 1945: "cochon de Français."

⁶⁰⁹ SHD 11 P 19. 1ère Division d'Infanterie CR d'incidents civils et militaires 1945-1946. Rapport relatif à l'agression dont a été victime le s/Lieutenant Desauw du 601 G.T. November 11, 1945: "pour en finir."

⁶¹⁰ SHD 11 P 19. 1ère Division d'Infanterie CR d'incidents civils et militaires 1945-1946. Le Général Galliès, Commandant de la 1ère D.I.M. to Monsieur le Général Commandant le 2e C.A., Etat Major 2ème Bureau, February 5, 1946.

⁶¹¹ SHD 3 U 251. Commandant en Chef des Forces Françaises en Allemagne, Rapports de place, place de Kreuznach du 25.10.1945 au 5.4.1946, Rapport de la Place du 13 Septembre 1947 No.116: "l'application de toutes peines, à l'exception de la peine de mort, pour réprimer les 'agissements hostiles ou irrespectueux à l'égard des Troupes alliées [...]"

September 1945, for example, a French sentinel controlled the traffic in the Hunsrück town of Morbach when a young girl on a bicycle passed by. The sentinel told the girl to stop, but she did not follow his orders. Considering the disobedience an act of resistance, the sentinel shot her and she died on the spot.⁶¹²

The German population and the resistance

No organized resistance movement emerged in occupied Germany despite the harsh punishments and even torture inflicted on the German population by the French gendarmerie. It did not feed the resistance of the Germans as the French army feared. One reason for the absence of such a movement was that the Germans did not have the means to organize a centralized movement. Unlike in France or in Poland during the war, and unlike the situation after World War I, there was not any continuity with any previous government outside of the territory of occupied Germany that could organize and coordinate a resistance. In November 1946, the head of the gendarmerie of Bad-Ems, for instance, noted in his monthly report: “The Germans know very well that they cannot organize a “Resistance” without support from outside. This is why this resistance hasn’t manifested itself openly yet.”⁶¹³ A second reason for the absence of resistance was that the German population did not support a resistance movement after a war that lasted almost six years. The heavy Nazi retaliations against “defeatists” in the spring of 1945 took a toll on the German population and their allegiance to the Nazi system.⁶¹⁴

German diary writers in 1945 barely mentioned the *Werwolf* or any other resistance movements in the immediate postwar period. Thea Noll-Rittershausen exemplifies the war weariness as well as the desperate situation of the Germans in 1945. When she saw a Werwolf inscription in her hometown, Freiburg, in the April before the end of the war, she noted in her diary: “The Werwolf is here! [...] Will there be fights in our city? Does that make any sense?”⁶¹⁵ And Jean Brecheisen, an Alsatian, wrote about the time of the armistice that “one talks a lot these days about a resistance organization wanting to deny the armistice and set up by apparently still pugnacious Nazis that are lying in wait in the Alps and are called “Werwolf”.”⁶¹⁶ While he admitted that he was scared of the “Swabian” (*Schwowe*, Alsatian term for the Germans) fanaticism, he concluded that the German *Werwolf* had “only haunted the newspapers and the radio.”⁶¹⁷

In the files of the French military security that carefully monitored the reaction of the Germans towards their punishment for acts of resistance, the German population was mostly

⁶¹² SHD 11 P 165. Bulletins Hebdomadaires de Renseignements Juillet-Décembre 1945. 10e Division d’Infanterie Commandant de la Zone Française de Rhénanie et de Hesse Rhénane Etat Major 2ème Bureau. Compte rendu hebdomadaire de renseignement no 7, September 8, 1945, 3.

⁶¹³ MAE 1RP 109/5. 3e Légion de Gendarmerie 1946-1947. Gouvernement Provisoire de la République Française, Gendarmerie Française, 3ème Légion d’Occupation, Compagnie de Bad-Ems, Rapport du mois de novembre 1946, Bad-Ems, December 25, 1946: “Les [A]llemands savent très bien qu’ils ne peuvent organiser une “Résistance” sans appuis extérieurs. C’est la raison pour laquelle cette résistance ne s’est pas encore révélée ouvertement.” 3263

⁶¹⁴ Richard Bessel, “The War to End All Wars: The Shock of Violence in 1945 and its Aftermath in Germany,” *No man’s land of violence. Extreme Wars in the 20th century*, ed. Alf Lüdke and Bernd Weisbrod (Göttingen: Wallstein Verlag, 2006), 75-76.

⁶¹⁵ Deutsches Tagebucharchiv Emmendingen, 1573. Thea Noll-Rittershausen, Tagebuch 1944/45 Freiburg, April 20, 1945: “Der Werwolf ist da! [...] Wird nun in unserer Stadt gekämpft? Hat es Sinn?”

⁶¹⁶ Deutsches Tagebucharchiv Emmendingen, 1222. Jean Brecheisen, “Zum Auerhahn,” 13.63: “Es wird dieser Tage viel von einer durch scheinbar noch kampflustigen Nazis aufgestellten, in den Alpen lauernden und “Werwolf“ genannten Widerstandsbewegung, die den Waffenstillstand leugnen möchte, gesprochen.“

⁶¹⁷ Deutsches Tagebucharchiv Emmendingen, 1222. Jean Brecheisen, “Zum Auerhahn,” 13.63: “Schwowe.”

described as docile. In the case of the youth group of Eppelborn who had slapped the wife of a French non-commissioned officer in November 1945, an intelligence report of the stated that the boys' punishment, compulsory work, was "received without recrimination by the population."⁶¹⁸ The catholic priest paid a visit to the French occupation army and presented his excuses in the name of the catholic community to the French commander.⁶¹⁹

Instead of provoking an armed resistance against the occupier, the punishments only led the occupied Germans to imagine severe reprisals and made them fear the French retaliation. In September 1945, Thea Noll-Rittershausen noted in her diary how she had heard about the case of a German boy threatened with death because the French army suspected him of an attack against a French soldier:

Allegedly, a mine was planted that ripped off both legs of a French soldier. Now hostages have been taken, among them a 16-year-old boy from Zähringen, known to Miss Hall. He was walking unsuspectingly from the Mosswald where the nursery Zimter has a plot of land and where he works. Now [the French army] suspects him and a couple of other people [to have planted the mine]. He was interrogated during the night a couple of times and when he said, he didn't know anything [of the mine], he was beaten with a whip for dogs. In the morning, he came home crying, and was mentally broken. He is now under close guard, and if the French soldier dies, he'll get shot. [...] What happened to us poor Germans?⁶²⁰

Even as late as 1949, in the district town of Pirmasens, rumor had it that three young girls aged eighteen, nineteen and twenty from the small town of Rodalben had been "completely undressed by some twenty French soldiers and tied to trees" just off the road to Pirmasens.⁶²¹ The French had started an inquiry about the case and had found that the rumor was unfounded and "harm[ed] the good reputation of the occupation troops and to provoke a certain hostility against the latter."⁶²² The head of the security forces of Pirmasens thus ordered the head of the German police to investigate the authors of the rumor instead. The example of Rodalben shows that such an act of violence committed by the French troops was still, even as late as December 1949, when the Federal Republic of Germany already existed, a live possibility in the imaginary of

⁶¹⁸ SHD 3 U 126. Commandement en Chef des Forces Françaises en Allemagne. 2ème Bureau Bulletin de renseignements 1945-1946. Bulletin de renseignements No. 31, November 28, 1945, 6: "accueillie sans récrimination par la population."

⁶¹⁹ SHD 3 U 126. Commandement en Chef des Forces Françaises en Allemagne. 2ème Bureau Bulletin de renseignements 1945-1946. Bulletin de renseignements No. 31, November 28, 1945, 6.

⁶²⁰ Deutsches Tagebucharchiv Emmendingen, 1573. Thea Noll-Rittershausen, Tagebuch 1944/45 Freiburg, September 2, 1945: "Es soll eine Mine gelegt worden sein, die einem Franzosen beide Beine abgerissen hat. Nun hat man Geisel[n] festgenommen, darunter auch einen 16-jährigen Jungen aus Zähringen, den Frl. Hall kennt. Er kam ahnungslos vom Mosswald, wo die Gärtnerei Zimter ein Baumstück hat u. er arbeitet. Nun hat man ihn und einige andere Leute verdächtigt. Er wurde in der Nacht ein paar Mal verhört und als er sagte, er wüsste nichts davon, mit der Hundepeitsche geschlagen. Morgens kam er weinend nach Hause, seelisch gebrochen. Nun wird er unter Bewachung gestellt u. wenn der Franzose stirbt, erschossen. [...] Was ist aus uns armen Deutschen geworden?" 3020

⁶²¹ MAE 1 RP 2975. Le Secrétaire Principal O.P.J. Chef de l'Antenne de Pirmasens to Monsieur le Chef de la Police allemande de Rodalben, December 19, 1949: "complètement déshabillées par une vingtaine de militaires français et attachées à des arbres."

⁶²² MAE 1 RP 2975. Le Secrétaire Principal O.P.J. Chef de l'Antenne de Pirmasens to Monsieur le Chef de la Police allemande de Rodalben, December 19, 1949: "de nature à porter préjudice au bon renom des troupes d'occupation et de provoquer une certaine hostilité contre des dernières."

everyday Germans. Indeed, similar reprisals had happened before.⁶²³ The German fear of French reprisals was also felt in an example from Adenau in 1947: when in January of that year drunken English soldiers tore down public notices in Adenau, close to the border to the British zone, the local German population was anxious about the French reprisals – because the French assumed that Germans had committed this vandalism as an act of resistance to protest the French occupation.⁶²⁴ The first initiative of the French gendarmerie was to force the German mayor to replace the public notice. When the local Germans found out that British soldiers had committed the deed, they were overwhelmingly relieved but also slightly amused that the authors of the public notice’s wrench were actually fellow Allies, and not Germans.

The German population did not believe in the Werwolf and was indeed frequently amused about the French phobia concerning a significant German resistance similar to the one the French had experienced in German occupied France. The French army overestimated diverse resistance groups, notably the *Edelweisspiraten*, which did not exist at all or so sporadically that they could not mount a serious resistance against the occupier. The French army started arresting alleged members of the *Edelweisspiraten* in great numbers, and their obsession with the assumed omnipresence of the group led Germans to mock the French paranoia. The French author of an intelligence report of May 1946 reported that the Germans in his region asked themselves with a twinkle in their eyes: “So are you too a member of the *Edelweisspiraten*?”⁶²⁵

Doubts about a German resistance

There was not a uniform French directive to combat the German resistance. Members of the army saw resistance everywhere, and notably the lower ranks of the army punished acts they perceived as German resistance quite excessively, prolonging the war well into the postwar period. More realistic assessments of German resistance activities were equally present, mostly coming from the higher levels of the French administration, but their directives took some time to leak down to the local level.

A year into the occupation, the head of the gendarmerie, General Taillardat, became skeptical of the obsession with the German resistance. In September 1946 – a couple of months after Taillardat had decided to stop and punish those gendarmes whose actions in Germany had been compared to the behavior of SS and Militia troops during the German occupation of France – the situation was still not resolved. Taillardat thus wrote to the head of the gendarmerie of the ministry of defense in Paris pleading for the replacement of all officers of the gendarmerie that had been in Germany since the beginning of the occupation in 1945 in order to stop the “numerous and various criticism” those officers were charged with.⁶²⁶ The problem of many French officers was the switch from a wartime to a peacetime situation thus repeating in a certain way mechanisms of the Germans in France despite the relatively peaceful situation in occupied

⁶²³ It also recalls the feminine violence or fear of sexual violence against German women already present in the interwar occupation, see: Sandra Maß, *Weisse Helden, schwarze Krieger: zur Geschichte kolonialer Männlichkeit in Deutschland 1918-1964* (Köln, Weimar: Böhlau Verlag, 2006).

⁶²⁴ MAE 1 RP 109/5. 3e région de gendarmerie 1946-1947. Commandement Français en Allemagne 3ème Légion de Gendarmerie d’Occupation Compagnie de Bad Ems Section de Coblenz, Rapport de l’Adjudant-Chef Laloy, Commandant prvt la Section sur une lacération d’affiches officielles à Adenau, January 17, 1947.

⁶²⁵ SHD GR 28 P 7 231. Résistance allemande “nazie” (anti-alliée) 1945-1947. Note de renseignement May 9, 1946: “Fais-tu, toi aussi, partie des Edelweiss-Pirates?”

⁶²⁶ SHD 2007 ZM 1/ 208 000 00001. Le Général Taillardat, Commandant les Forces de Gendarmerie d’Occupation to Minsieur le Ministre des Armées Direction de la Gendarmerie, Cabinet in Paris par l’intermédiaire de Monsieur le Général d’Armée Commandant en Chef Français en Allemagne in Baden-Baden, September 9, 1946: “critiques nombreuses et variées.”

Germany. Taillardat expressed this issue in his letter: “Certain officers [...] tend to refuse to understand that the war is over. They persist in behaving as if they were in a conquered country.”⁶²⁷

Other French officials also began questioning the existence of German resistance groups, and notably criticized the French intelligence’s practice to interpret every incident in the zone as act of resistance as “occupational obsession.” There were signs that at least some of those alleged acts of sabotage were in fact accidents or coincidences. In November 1945, for example, a telephone line was found cut. French investigators found out that the incident was not a willful act of sabotage, but that three children had cut the line in order to use the cable to build a swing.⁶²⁸ In addition, the situation of the equipment of machines, trains, and rails in the French zone, which had already been difficult at the end of the long war, further worsened. This was due to the fact that German economy had not yet recovered while at the same time, the reparations for the French economy had priority over German needs. Slowly, the French began to understand that there were natural reasons for the material shortages, which could not necessarily be attributed to resistance and sabotage of material. In 1947, for example, the French army noted in a “synthesis about the German resistance” of the zone that the “destructions or cutting of telephone lines can be attributed half to sabotage and the rest to recover the wire.”⁶²⁹ It became apparent that the French officers lacked objectivity with regards to the German resistance.

The debate revolving around clandestine radio stations illustrates the fact that the French realities were often determined by the past occupations and not by current facts. In the years following the war, the French spent a lot of effort on finding clandestine radio stations run by the German resistance network. The search proved unsuccessful, and, finally, the administration was forced to admit that they might have been chasing shadows of the war. A note from a French security officer, Lasson, in April 1947, highlighted this lack of objectivity: if the French occupiers did not find clandestine radio broadcasts, the reason for this was not that they had not tried hard enough to find them, Officer Lasson realized, but because there were no clandestine radio broadcasts. Lasson called the excessive search for German resistance “occupational obsession” of the French police and intelligence service in occupied Germany, and claimed that he had seen “a mass of fanciful intelligence reports” since the summer of 1946.⁶³⁰ To give an example of this “occupational obsession,” Lasson cited a case in the Konstanz area, where two different intelligence services had been searching for clandestine radio broadcasts for three weeks with the following result: “the only clandestine broadcasts that could be found were those

⁶²⁷ SHD 2007 ZM 1/ 208 000 00001. Le Général Taillardat, Commandant les Forces de Gendarmerie d’Occupation to Minsieur le Ministre des Armées Direction de la Gendarmerie, Cabinet in Paris par l’intermédiaire de Monsieur le Général d’Armée Commandant en Chef Français en Allemagne in Baden-Baden, September 9, 1946: “Certains Officiers [...] ont tendance à se refuser à comprendre que la guerre est terminée. Ils persistent à se conduire comme en pays conquis.”

⁶²⁸ SHD 11 P 165. 10e Division d’Infanterie Etat-Major, 2e Bureau 1945-1946. Compte Rendu Hebdomadaire de Renseignements No. 16 November 10, 1945, 5.

⁶²⁹ SHD GR 28 P 7 239. Synthèse de la résistance allemande au cours du mois de mai 1947, no date: “Les destructions ou coupures de lignes téléphoniques peuvent être attribuées pour moitié au sabotage et le reste à la récupération de fil.”

⁶³⁰ SHD 28 P 7 237. L’administrateur de 4e Classe Lasson, Chef de l’antenne 28.001 to Monsieur le Colonel Gaudefroy Chef du Service 2, April 23, 1947: “déformation professionnelle.”

that came out of the mouths of the French gendarmes and civil servants of the region.”⁶³¹ In every French canteen the intelligence officers ate, they heard stories about the notorious German clandestine movement that has become a “local dread.”⁶³² Lasson and his colleagues of the French intelligence service did not believe in the existence of a *Werwolf* movement. Lasson cited a colleague who had said that the *Werwolf* was nothing but a German propaganda “without any serious foundation” at the end of the war when the Nazi regime was in dire straits.⁶³³

Conclusion

Where did this “occupational obsession” of the French occupiers come from? On the one hand, I have shown in this chapter that experience shaped the views and expectations of the occupiers. Past occupations in France and occupied Rhineland led them to expect similar patterns in Germany after the war. The assumption that a resistance movement or network must exist gained widespread currency among the occupiers.

On the other hand, their obsession can be explained by the interests of the French occupation personnel and its wish to maintain certain privileges that an employment in Germany entailed. Most of the occupiers in Germany had achieved a significantly higher standard of living in Germany than they would have in similar positions back home. Yet, in the beginning of 1946, Paris started to severely cut its staff in Germany. Troops and administrators were either sent back to France, where the circumstances were far less attractive than in Germany, or they were sent to more urgent theaters of wars, notably to the emerging colonial wars in Indochina. To avoid this loss of privileges, and to justify their continued presence in the German occupation zone, they had to uphold the chimera of a permanent threat posed by the German resistance network. In February 1947, for instance, the head of the military government of the Palatinate sent a note to all delegates of the province concerning a number of gendarmes who tried in myriad ways to stay in Germany and preferred to resign from their position than to be sent back to France.⁶³⁴ To believe in the threat of a “Résistance,” to assume the existence of *Werwolf* or its follow-up organizations, and to spread the rumors about clandestine radio stations and sabotage, legitimized their continued presence in a German occupation zone that was less dangerous and more comfortable than an employment in France or its colonies.

The incident laid out in the opening paragraph of this chapter, when a French soldier died as a result of what was presumably an act of German resistance in the small wine village of Ockfen, seven years after the end of the war demonstrates how long it took to cure the spirits of the idea that there was an organized resistance movement against the French occupation army in Germany. Only criminal investigation disproved the rumors of an organized act of resistance.

⁶³¹ SHD 28 P 7 237. L’administrateur de 4e Classe Lasson, Chef de l’antenne 28.001 to Monsieur le Colonel Gaudefroy Chef du Service 2, April 23, 1947: “il n’a pu déceler d’autres émissions clandestines que celles sortant de la bouche des gendarmes et fonctionnaires français de la région.”

⁶³² SHD 28 P 7 237. L’administrateur de 4e Classe Lasson, Chef de l’antenne 28.001 to Monsieur le Colonel Gaudefroy Chef du Service 2, April 23, 1947: “une hantise locale.”

⁶³³ SHD 28 P 7 237. L’administrateur de 4e Classe Lasson, Chef de l’antenne 28.001 to Monsieur le Colonel Gaudefroy Chef du Service 2, April 23, 1947: “sans fondement sérieux.”

⁶³⁴ MAE 1 RP 1685. Cercle Simmern, Services Centraux 1, Notes confidentielles (1) 1945-1949. Le Gouverneur Hettier de Boislabert Délégué Général pour le Gouvernement Militaire de l’Etat Rhéno-Palatin to Messieurs les Délégués de District, Messieurs les Délégués de Cercle, Koblenz February 18, 1947.

The inquiry, conducted by French military police, revealed that the mayor had slept during the murder, and was notified only the next morning of the incident in his village.⁶³⁵ The other French soldier, Laurenz, and an Ockfen local, Klaus, had actually called the German police, but could not initially reach an ambulance because of a troubled telephone connection. The judge praised Klaus during the later trial for his courageously trying to help the French soldier.⁶³⁶ Curiously, the criminal police of Trier declared the real culprit, Bensmüller, an “Anti-fascist,” but they also described Bensmüller as “thug,” and alcoholic.⁶³⁷

The incident strained the diplomatic relations between Bonn and Paris: the French gendarmerie took over the investigation – instead of the German police. The French high commissioner in Bonn, the governor of the Palatinate, the French press, and members of the French parliament in Paris stuck to their interpretation of the event as a political incident provoked by a general anti-French sentiment propagated by German politicians and the press. They argued that the French soldier could have been saved if the Germans had helped him.⁶³⁸ The Germans – from the local German population of Ockfen to chancellor Adenauer – condemned the deed.⁶³⁹ Representatives from the German Ministry of Interior, the state government, and the mayor of Ockfen, next to high French officials and officers, attended Dubois’ funeral service in nearby Trier. One of the wreaths placed on the tomb read: “With sincerest condolences – the municipality of Ockfen.”⁶⁴⁰

At the same time, the parliament in Mainz and the press in South West Germany fought against the French assessment that the incident was politically motivated, and underlined the achievements of the French and German rapprochement since the end of the war. German politicians rejected the French reproach that the people of Ockfen had shown any “violation of any sense of decency and humanity” when Dubois was killed.⁶⁴¹ A German informant told the French delegate of Pirmasens, three days after the Ockfen incident, about the German opinion in the region: “One does not hear a word of regret, on the contrary, the people [in Ockfen] have an interest in a harsh punishment [of the German perpetrator]. However, in general, people regret the fact that there are attempts to link the incident with politics.”⁶⁴² The Germans of Neustadt underlined the good relationship between occupiers and occupied in Germany and tried to smooth over the rough edges the Ockfen incident had created:

⁶³⁵ MAE 1 RP 0246/1. Incident d’Ockfen (1952-1953). Französisches Landeskommissariat Service de l’Information Mainz. Der Landeskommissar teilt mit... December 8, 1952.

⁶³⁶ MAE 1 RP 0246/1. Incident d’Ockfen (1952-1953). Die Rheinpfalz, Ockfener Bluttat vor dem Französischen Tribunal, January 15, 1953.

⁶³⁷ MAE 1 RP 0246/1. Incident d’Ockfen (1952-1953). Vorderpfälzer Tageblatt, Wirtshausstreit ohne politischen Anlaß, December 2, 1952. And MAE 1 RP 0246/1. Incident d’Ockfen (1952-1953). Die Rheinpfalz, Adenauer bedauert Fall Ockfen, December 12, 1952: “Antifaschist” and “Raufbold.” See also Die Rheinpfalz, Ockfener Bluttat vor dem Französischen Tribunal, January 15, 1953.

⁶³⁸ MAE 1 RP 0246/1. Incident d’Ockfen (1952-1953). Die Freiheit, Französische Zeitungen stellen richtig, December 20, 1952.

⁶³⁹ MAE 1 RP 0246/1. Incident d’Ockfen (1952-1953). Die Rheinpfalz, Adenauer bedauert Fall Ockfen, December 12, 1952.

⁶⁴⁰ MAE 1 RP 0246/1. Incident d’Ockfen (1952-1953). Vorderpfälzer Tageblatt, Trauergeleit für Ockfener Opfer, December 4, 1952: “In aufrichtigster Anteilnahme – die Gemeinde Ockfen.”

⁶⁴¹ MAE 1 RP 0246/1. Incident d’Ockfen (1952-1953). Landstuhler Zeitung, Noch fehlt der versöhnende Schritt, December 13, 1952: “Verletzung jedes Anstandes und der Menschlichkeit.”

⁶⁴² MAE 1 RP 0246/1. Incident d’Ockfen (1952-1953). Cercle de Pirmasens, Rapport d’informateur allemand, Der Ockfener Fall, December 2, 1952: “Man hört kein Wort des Bedauerns, ja ma[n] [die Bewohner Ockfens] betont sogar das Interesse an einer harten Strafe [des Täters]. Was man aber allgemein bedauert, ist die Tatsache, dass versucht wird, die Angelegenheit ins politische Fahrwasser zu ziehen.”

The actually for years untroubled relationship between occupying troops and population needs to be taken into account too when assessing the incident of Ockfen, claim German circles. It is on the one hand a proof that the German people as a whole is interested in a reconciliation and a friendship with her neighbors. On the other hand, it shows that the German people condemn political excesses as much as it is the case on the other side of the border. The entire population has a strong interest in clearing up the regrettable incident.⁶⁴³

The Ockfen incident interfered with the efforts of a reconciliation between France and Germany, the social-democratic newspaper “Die Freiheit” of Mainz complained, and criticized the French for the allegedly one-sided termination of this friendship:

it is under no circumstances tenable that all honest efforts to create a better relationship between our peoples are troubled when an act of violence committed under the influence of alcohol becomes, in a one-sided exaggeration, the starting point of a general political accusation of the German people.⁶⁴⁴

The German commentators considered the incident a “classic bar fight.”⁶⁴⁵ “A young man became a victim of a brawl and it does not matter whether the victim was a French or a German citizen,”⁶⁴⁶ reads the comment of the SPD member Markscheffel in *Die Freiheit*: The young soldiers had been asking for women. This was how most fights between German locals and French occupying soldiers, which were frequent not only in the region of Ockfen, broke out. Markscheffel stated: “If one had judged all of those [minor] incidents political, the exchange of notes between the French and the German government would have never ended.”⁶⁴⁷

In mid-December 1952, the French newspaper *Le Monde*, whose advocacy for a French and German reconciliation was well known in Germany, sent a journalist to Ockfen to improve and humanize the public image the Ockfeners in an article calling the circumstances of the

⁶⁴³ MAE 1 RP 0246/1. Incident d’Ockfen (1952-1953). Cercle de Pirmasens, Rapport d’informateur allemand, Der Ockfener Fall, December 2, 1952: “Das tatsächlich seit Jahren ungetrübte Verhältnis zwischen Besatzungstruppe und Bevölkerung dürfte nach Ansicht deutscher Kreise bei Bewertung des Ockfener Zwischenfalls mit zu bewerten sein und als Beweis dafür angesehen werden, dass das deutsche Volk in seiner Gesamtheit an einer Versöhnung und an einer Freundschaft mit seinen Nachbarn interessiert ist und andererseits politische Exzesse genau so verurteilt, wie dies jenseits der Grenze der Fall ist. Die gesamte Bevölkerung ist an einer Aufklärung des bedauerlichen Zwischenfalls auf das stärkste interessiert.”

⁶⁴⁴ MAE 1 RP 0246/1. Incident d’Ockfen (1952-1953). Die Freiheit, SPD-Landtagsfraktion zum Fall Ockfen, December 3, 1952: “Es ist keinesfalls vertretbar, daß all die ehrlichen Bemühungen um die Schaffung eines besseren Verhältnisses zwischen unseren beiden Völkern überaus belastet werden, indem man eine unter Alkoholeinfluß begangene Gewalttat in einseitiger politischer Aufbauschung zum Ausgangspunkt einer allgemeinen politischen Beschuldigung des deutschen Volkes macht.”

⁶⁴⁵ MAE 1 RP 0246/1. Incident d’Ockfen (1952-1953). G. Markscheffel: Der Tod des Soldaten Jean Dubois, Die Freiheit, December 3, 1952: “klassische Wirtshausschlägerei.”

⁶⁴⁶ MAE 1 RP 0246/1. Incident d’Ockfen (1952-1953). G. Markscheffel: Der Tod des Soldaten Jean Dubois, Die Freiheit, December 3, 1952: “Ein junger Mensch ist das Opfer einer Schlägerei geworden, und es spielt hierbei gar keine Rolle, ob es sich dabei um einen Franzosen oder einen Deutschen handelt.”

⁶⁴⁷ MAE 1 RP 0246/1. Incident d’Ockfen (1952-1953). G. Markscheffel: Der Tod des Soldaten Jean Dubois, Die Freiheit, December 3, 1952: “Wenn man diese [harmlosen] Vorfälle politisch gewertet hätte, wäre man aus einem Notenwechsel zwischen der deutschen und französischen Regierung überhaupt nicht mehr herausgekommen.”

murder a “trivial matter.”⁶⁴⁸ More information leaked out in the course of the investigation, several other newspapers became more cautious about their judgment, and the high commissioner of Rhineland-Palatinate even published a correction – taken up in several French newspapers: it was wrong to have accused the inhabitants of Ockfen of refusing help to the dying French soldier.⁶⁴⁹ The tide seemed to have changed. News from nearby Saarburg about a French soldier who had been saved from drowning in the Saar River by a group of young German men just days after the murder in Ockfen further calmed the situation. It reassured the French commissioner in the Palatinate that the Germans of the region were sincerely willing to support the French presence there.⁶⁵⁰

In January 1953, Bensmüller and three accomplices were taken to the French court of the High Commission in Rastatt. At the end of the trial, the French attorney general demanded nothing less than the death penalty for Bensmüller arguing that he had intended to kill the French soldier on the basis of the law number 14 of the Allied High Commission, article 1, paragraph 5, which called for the death penalty in the case of the murder of an Allied soldier.⁶⁵¹ The proposed penalty reminded many of the shootings for acts of resistance which had occurred at the very early stage of the French occupation in 1945.

As it happened, the French court sentenced Bensmüller to life in prison instead, itself a controversial ruling. The German newspaper *Die Rheinpfalz* reported that the inhabitants of Ockfen “who usually go to bed early, waited [...] to the last news on the radio to hear the verdict that they would later discuss until the middle of the night.”⁶⁵² They considered the decision of the court too harsh and the sentence too long.⁶⁵³ Bensmüller’s lawyers even contested the verdict. In the meantime, the French security service still looked out for signs of a political conspiracy during the subsequent appellate trial. They claimed to have information that members of the German communist party (KPD) were petitioning for a pardon for Bensmüller. This episode proves that, in the context of the Cold War, the enemies seemed to come as much from the communists as from the old Nazis.

The appeal court judge lowered the initial lifelong prison sentence to an internment for fifteen years. For the Rheno-Palatinate state government as well as for the German press, it was even more important that the French judge underlined, in his pronouncement of the judgment,

⁶⁴⁸ MAE 1 RP 0246/1. Incident d’Ockfen (1952-1953). Landstuhler Zeitung, Noch fehlt der versöhnende Schritt, December 13, 1952: “banalen Affäre.”

⁶⁴⁹ MAE 1 RP 0246/1. Incident d’Ockfen (1952-1953), *Die Freiheit*, Französische Zeitungen stellen richtig, December 20, 1952. The article named in particular the following newspapers: *Berry Républicain*, *France Soir*, *Franc Tireur*, and *Le Monde*.

⁶⁵⁰ See for example MAE 1 RP 0246/1. Incident d’Ockfen (1952-1953). *Die Rheinpfalz*, Deutsche retten französischen Soldaten, December 4, 1952. On the French commissioner see: MAE 1 RP 0246/1. Incident d’Ockfen (1952-1953). *Französisches Landeskommissariat Service de l’Information Mainz*. Der Landeskommissar teilt mit... December 8, 1952.

⁶⁵¹ MAE 1 RP 0246/1. Incident d’Ockfen (1952-1953), *Vorderpfälzer Tageblatt*, Eine Todesstrafe beantragt, January 15, 1953. And MAE 1 RP 0246/1. Incident d’Ockfen (1952-1953). *Die Rheinpfalz*, Zur Lage: Das Urteil von Rastatt, January 16, 1953.

⁶⁵² MAE 1 RP 0246/1. Incident d’Ockfen (1952-1953). *Die Rheinpfalz*, Ockfener von Rastatter Urteil enttäuscht, January 16, 1953: “die gewöhnlich früh schlafen gehen, warteten [...] bis zur letzten Nachrichtensendung, um das Urteil zu hören, das sie später noch bis tief in die Nacht hinein diskutierten.”

⁶⁵³ MAE 1 RP 0246/1. Incident d’Ockfen (1952-1953). *Die Rheinpfalz*, Ockfener von Rastatter Urteil enttäuscht, January 16, 1953: “zu ’hart und zu hoch.”

that the murder was not politically motivated, and thus not an act of resistance against the French occupiers' policy.⁶⁵⁴

The example of Ockfen shows that even in the 1950s, the French press, the French parliament, and the French commissioners in Bonn and Mainz believed that Germans were capable of staging a resistance against French control at a moment when the French felt they were losing their grip on politics in Germany. The Ockfen murder crystallized their fears of a German resistance that, seven years after the end of the war, finally had manifested itself in the southwest border region of Germany, close to French controlled Saarland. After the initial outcry on the French side and the German indignation over the perceived termination of reconciliation between the two countries, the results of the investigation and the trial helped to appease the upheaval. However, skepticism toward German power remained in French society until the 1990s. Jacques Blot, the head of the Europe department of the French Foreign Office, commented a few days after the fall of the Berlin Wall that Germany “is too powerful to not become dominant, and had been hurt for too long to not have the need for rehabilitation, in fact for revenge.”⁶⁵⁵ The *fear of the Germans* – as one article in the French newspapers was titled in 1989 – was backed by voices like Henry Kissinger, who prophesied that France would be the main victim of the fall of the wall.⁶⁵⁶ France thus pleaded for thorough integration of Germany into the European union, and notably pushed forward the monetary union installed in 2001.

⁶⁵⁴ MAE 1 RP 0246/1. Incident d'Ockfen (1952-1953). Vorderpfälzer Tageblatt, Ockfen-Zwischenfall war unpolitisch, March 18, 1953.

⁶⁵⁵ Cited from Ulrich Lappenküper, “Dem Elysée tut alles weh? Paris und die Wiedervereinigung,” *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, December 20, 2011, accessed February 9, 2017, <http://www.faz.net/-gpf-6vqr7>: “zu mächtig ist, um nicht dominant zu werden, und zu lange verletzt, um nicht das Bedürfnis nach Rehabilitation, ja nach Revanche zu haben.”

⁶⁵⁶ See Wolf Lepenies, “Frankreichs Furcht vor dem Fünften Reich,” *Die Welt*, November 11, 2014, accessed February 9, 2017, <https://www.welt.de/kultur/article134200796/Frankreichs-Furcht-vor-dem-Fuenften-Reich.html>

III. Collaborating with the Allies – collaborating with the enemy?

The previous chapter challenged the assumption of a peaceful French occupation of Germany after 1945 that paved the way for reconciliation of French and German peoples. It explained how the French experience of resistance against occupation contributed to an aggressive stance by the French army against German activity perceived as acts of resistance. Along similar lines, this chapter turns to the German civilians and shows how they navigated the relationship with the French occupier. It explains why German men and women feared persecution from other Germans for “collaboration” with the French occupiers, a fear that they inherited in particular from the interwar occupation. This approach sheds new light on German society under French occupation in the wake of military defeat: it demonstrates that there were indeed struggles between those who supported French occupiers and were willing to cooperate and those who opposed this “collaboration,” even if to a lesser degree than in France during the German occupation or in Germany during the interwar occupation.

At the war’s end, an abrupt regime change saw power shift from National Socialist dominance to Allied occupation. Anticipating signs of disintegration in the last months of combat, the National Socialist regime had demanded unquestioning obedience from the population – more so than ever. As a deterrent and a warning for disloyal Germans, so-called “defeatists” were publicly hung, the penal death toll rose to unprecedented numbers in early 1945.⁶⁵⁷ With the arrival of the French army, occupation introduced a new system of rules into Germany in the spring of 1945, requiring an immediate transferred obedience from the local Germans to their former enemy. Within a couple of hours, loyal National Socialists became subject to punishment under the new order whereas “defeatists” and opponents of the Nazis transformed from subjects of persecution to confidants of the new administration. This abrupt turn of tide took a long time for Germans to absorb because many were not willing or able to leave the National Socialist world order behind. Conflicts that arose from this discrepancy between the new and persistent allegiances shaped the postwar era. These conflicts developed in the shadow of bitter historical memory, mediated by remembrance of the interwar occupation.

In the first months of the French occupation of Germany, the loyalties – or at least obedience – of the Germans was put to a test that evoked the civil wars that emerged among occupied societies during and after the German wartime occupations.⁶⁵⁸ In general, occupations divide societies into those who support the occupiers, those who oppose them, and those who passively waited for better times and hoped to be spared the ordeal. The French occupation of Germany was no exception, but the haunting presence of previous occupations added a dimension to the postwar situation that made relations peculiar. I show in this chapter how

⁶⁵⁷ See Michael Geyer, “Endkampf 1918 and 1945: German nationalism, annihilation, and self-destruction,” in *No Man’s Land of Violence: Extreme Wars in the 20th Century*, ed. Alf Lüdke and Bernd Weisbrod (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2006), 37-67, Richard Bessel, “The War to End All Wars: The Shock of Violence in 1945 and its Aftermath in Germany,” in *No Man’s Land of Violence: Extreme Wars in the 20th Century*, ed. Alf Lüdke and Bernd Weisbrod (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2006), 71-99, Richard Bessel, *Germany 1945. From War to Peace* (New York: Harper, 2009), and Sven Keller, *Volksgemeinschaft am Ende: Gesellschaft und Gewalt 1944/45* (München: Oldenbourg Verlag, 2013).

⁶⁵⁸ For the French case see for instance the first special issue of the French journal *Vingtième Siècle* on the Franco-French civil wars, notably Henry Rousso’s article Henry Rousso, “Vichy, Le Grand Fossé,” *Vingtième Siècle. Revue d’histoire*, no. 5 (1985): 55-79. doi:10.2307/3769304. as well as the introduction Jean-Pierre Azéma, Jean-Pierre Rioux, and Henry Rousso, “Les Guerres Franco-Françaises,” *Vingtième Siècle. Revue d’histoire*, no. 5 (1985): 3-5. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3769300>.

experiences with former occupations shaped expectations of political violence against collaborators among French administrators and German civilians alike, while also serving as a blueprint for the punishments of those collaborators by their compatriots. Public shaming techniques deployed in occupations before 1945 such as the blacklisting of collaborators, head shavings of women accused of collaboration and other forms of social exclusion of collaborators reappeared. Germans who blamed collaborators for treason chose as their victims in particular those who worked in the occupiers' administration, women who went out with French soldiers, and separatists, who had high hopes to finally see the Rhineland and Palatinate detached from Germany and closely associated with France – a aspirational claim inherited from the interwar period. The first part of this chapter addresses the question of “collaboration” of German women and administrators with the French occupying forces while the second part concerns the case of the separatists. The separatists developed into the main target of anti-collaborationist rhetoric and became strawmen for the hostile expression of enduring German nationalism in the French occupation zone. The French occupiers sought to avoid reproducing what they perceived as their biggest mistake from the interwar period: supporting a separatist movement without the backing of the majority of Germans. Even if French administrators sympathized with their old German allies from the interwar period, they prevented a pro-French separatist movement from developing in their zone. In so doing, they enabled a continued German denunciation of separatists as collaborators and traitors of the fatherland that had started in the interwar period, continued during the Third Reich, and stretched into the early Federal Republic in the early 1950s when the German courts refused to recognize separatists as “victims of fascism” and grant them compensation. This discrimination against the separatists in the late 1940s and early 1950s shows how the German nation, fractured in 1945, rebuilt and reorganized a West-German federal state around a common enemy: those who advocated for a further dismemberment of Germany, the Rheno-Palatine separatists.

Denunciations

Germans denouncing other Germans to the new power posed the first sign of conflicts arising from the regime change. Immediately after the French army took power in the spring of 1945, local Germans began denouncing former Nazis to the new authorities, laying bare deep divides in German society that the draconic punishments of the Nazi regime had hitherto suppressed.⁶⁵⁹ Those known to have supported the Nazi system before French occupation castigated these denunciations. Twenty-two-year-old Liselore Schmid experienced the end of the war in Karlsruhe inside the house of her father, who was director of the finance ministry of Baden and a member of the Nazi party. On May 26, 1945, six weeks after the arrival of French troops, she noted in her diary that her father had received a letter from a German mayor calling him an “old, nasty Nazi.”⁶⁶⁰ Liselore Schmid commented on this letter: “Denunciation is blooming. Hate and envy are much bigger among the Germans than a sense of community. After six weeks [of French presence], no trace of the education effort of the last twelve years [of the

⁶⁵⁹ In France during the war, similar denunciations had occurred. Indeed, the German army was surprised of the extent to which French civilians were willing to betray their fellow countrymen. See Ian Ousby, *Occupation: the ordeal of France, 1940-1944* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000), 148. Ousby also mentions that in September 1940, two months into the German occupation, the poet Robert Desnos published an article titled *J'irai le dire à la Kommandantur* [I will go and tell it to the Kommandantur] in the underground newspaper *Aujourd'hui* in which he appealed to his fellow citizens to stop the practice of denouncing each other to the Germans. (Ousby, 218).

⁶⁶⁰ Deutsches Tagebucharchiv Emmendingen, 1499. Liselore Schmid, *Tagebuch 1945*, 69: “alter, gehässiger Nazi.”

Third Reich] is left.”⁶⁶¹ Dr. Adolf Sauter, who would become head of Freiburg’s Chamber of Industry and Commerce, also lamented in his diary the denunciations that he witnessed even before the official end of the war: “Sadly, the tragedy begins, in which Germans report their fellow countrymen to the French out of vindictiveness.”⁶⁶² Or out of opportunism and a range of other motives, personal and political, one might add.

The regime change brought those in a morally superior situation who had been oppressed by the Nazis. A French POW named Vincent, for example, was employed in the small town of Junkerath in the Eifel woods during the war where he had a child with a young German woman. Relationships between German women and prisoners of war of so-called enemy countries were disapproved of by German society and punished as violation of Nazi policy.⁶⁶³ Thus, the local population hated Monsieur Vincent’s girlfriend, who was “known for her anti-Nazi sentiments,” and her family had disowned her.⁶⁶⁴ In 1945, the tables had turned. Vincent took over the position of head of security of the French civilian government in nearby Kyllburg where the grandparents of his girlfriend (whom he was given permission to marry in 1947) lived. Wanting to stay close to her and their daughter, he became the sole person responsible for securing the local French occupation administration from attacks by former Nazis after July 1945.⁶⁶⁵ Within a couple of weeks, the Vincent family passed from being persecuted in Nazi Germany into a position of power governing French occupied Germany. Administrators such as Vincent, however, were not able to quickly change the attitude of local populations who continued to argue in terms of Nazi law and ideology.

Just as the future Madame Vincent was despised by a number of her fellow countrymen because she had chosen to sleep with the “enemy” during the war, local Germans continued to scorn others who followed her example with the advancing French troops. Philomena Schmidt, the daughter of a Nazi farmer in the Black Forest, recalled in her memoirs how she and her family witnessed the arrival of French tanks and soldiers from their house. From a safe spot, they observed a young German woman they knew walking on the street who was caught up by the advancing troops. They were scared that the “enemies” would kill the young woman, but they heard voices and laughter, and allegedly observed how the woman and the young soldiers walked into a field and had sex. Philomena Schmidt and her family were horrified. What they had seen did not qualify as rape in their eyes, with rape being the only acceptable explanation

⁶⁶¹ Deutsches Tagebucharchiv Emmendingen, 1499. Liselore Schmid, Tagebuch 1945, 69: “Die Denunziation treibt üppige Blüten. Haß und Neid sind unter den Deutschen viel größer als ein Gemeinschaftsgefühl. Nach 6 Wochen ist keine Spur mehr da von der Erziehungsarbeit dieser 12 Jahre!”

⁶⁶² Deutsches Tagebucharchiv Emmendingen, 848,1. Dr. Adolf Sauter, Tagebuch 1945-1953, April 30, 1945: “Das Trauerspiel, daß Deutsche die eigenen Landsleute aus kleinlicher Rachsucht bei den Franzosen anzeigen, setzt leider ein!”

⁶⁶³ See Patrice Arnaud, “Die deutsch-französischen Liebesbeziehungen der französischen Zwangsarbeiter und beurlaubten Kriegsgefangenen im “Dritten Reich:“ Vom Mythos des verführerischen Franzosen zur Umkehrung der Geschlechterrolle,” in: Nationalsozialismus und Geschlecht: Zur Politisierung und Ästhetisierung von Körper, “Rasse” und Sexualität im “Dritten Reich” und nach 1945 ed. Elke Frietsch and Christina Herkommer (Bielefeld: transcript, 2009), 180-196. Also see Ulrich Herbert, *Fremdarbeiter. Politik und Praxis des “Ausländer-Einsatzes” in der Kriegswirtschaft des Dritten Reiches* (Bonn: Dietz, 1985), 327-340.

⁶⁶⁴ MAE 1 RP 108 1 Nr. 8. Cercle de Bitburg, Inspection de M. Saury les 2 & 3 Octobre 1947, October 8, 1947: “connu pour ses sentiments anti-Nazi.”

⁶⁶⁵ MAE 1 RP 108 1 Nr. 8. Cercle de Bitburg, Inspection de M. Saury les 2 & 3 Octobre 1947, October 8, 1947.

offered by the Nazi ideology for a sexual act between a German girl and an “enemy” soldier.⁶⁶⁶ The young woman had “offered herself to the enemy without turning a hair like a female dog in heat,” Schmidt wrote in her memoir, a situation that left the family “speechless.”⁶⁶⁷ When a dead newborn was found the next spring after the snow had melted, the neighbors were convinced it was the young woman’s child. They claimed she had killed it because the baby was “for sure in her way when dealing with men of all nations.”⁶⁶⁸ Although the war was over, Philomena Schmidt’s memoir reveals the difficulty she and her family felt in adapting to the array of new power dynamics and social relations that accompanied the advancing French troops. It also illustrates how the Nazi worldview remained deeply inscribed in the minds of ordinary people.

Forms of collaboration

There was a fine line between “collaborating” with the enemy, considered immoral and treasonous to the fatherland by many former Nazis or nationalist Germans, and the practice of opportunistic accommodation with the occupiers.⁶⁶⁹ What conduct constituted treacherous collaboration was negotiable depending on the locality, the deed, and the timing. While the newly installed mayor of Aachen was assassinated by SS members in March 1944 for treason and collaboration with the advancing American troops, mayors and other local German administrators were no longer assassinated for collaboration after the establishment of the French military and civilian administration. However, Germans, especially administrators, women, and separatists, were not far from free of persecution by their compatriots. They endured verbal attacks and professional discrimination throughout the French presence. There was a gray area of accommodation with the occupier that put those who collaborated at risk – particularly following the departure of the French troops.

The same Philomena Schmidt who was so shocked by sexual relations between French soldiers and German women described in her memoir how she and her family profited from the presence of French Algerian soldiers on their farm who not only supplied them with goods such as chocolate and shoes, but also protected the farm from pillage by other French soldiers or displaced persons.⁶⁷⁰ This form of collaboration, recruiting one soldier or group as **protection** against the potential violence of others, was very common, especially at the beginning of the occupation. Liselore Schmid of Karlsruhe also used a French officer’s favor for her to protect her and her family’s belongings: “[I] put on a show anyways, because of fear, in self-defense. Otherwise I would not speak a word with the colonel in front of the staring soldiers. But this is simply a protection from being plundered.”⁶⁷¹ **Economic collaboration**, that is doing business

⁶⁶⁶ Philomena Schmidt, *Das vergeht bis Du heiratest...! Die Lebensgeschichte von Philomena Schmidt geb. Wild* (Offenburg: Verlag Jasmin Eichner, 1992), 132: “von Vergewaltigung konnte man auch nicht sprechen.”

⁶⁶⁷ Philomena Schmidt, *Das vergeht bis Du heiratest...! Die Lebensgeschichte von Philomena Schmidt geb. Wild* (Offenburg: Verlag Jasmin Eichner, 1992), 132: “ohne die Miene zu verziehen, dem Feind hingibt, wie eine läufige Hündin;” “sprachlos.” 3818

⁶⁶⁸ Philomena Schmidt, *Das vergeht bis Du heiratest...! Die Lebensgeschichte von Philomena Schmidt geb. Wild* (Offenburg: Verlag Jasmin Eichner, 1992), 152.

⁶⁶⁹ For the discussion between collaboration and accommodation in German occupied France during World War II and the types of *accommodation* see Philippe Burrin, *France under the Germans. Collaboration and Compromise* (New York: The New Press, 1996), 1 and 459-466.

⁶⁷⁰ Philomena Schmidt, *Das vergeht bis Du heiratest...! Die Lebensgeschichte von Philomena Schmidt geb. Wild* (Offenburg: Verlag Jasmin Eichner, 1992), 137.

⁶⁷¹ Deutsches Tagebucharchiv Emmendingen, 1499. Liselore Schmid, Tagebuch 1945, 31: “[Ich] spiele ja ohnehin Theater, aus Angst, aus Notwehr. Sonst würde ich nie vor den glotzenden Soldaten mit dem Colonel ein Wort sprechen. Aber das ist eben ein Schutz gegen das Geplündertwerden.”

with the French occupiers, was another form of opportunistic engagement the Germans seemed to accept rather quickly – if one did not go beyond the pure exchange of goods.⁶⁷² Other forms of collaboration, like “*horizontal collaboration*” or the above-mentioned denunciations of fellow German citizens were met with disapproval as voluntary, unnecessary “collaboration.” The French intelligence service, for instance, noted in a report in February 1946 that villagers “consider very badly” and threatened a woman who had given information on the flight of three German prisoners of war from France to the French third infantry division in Graach on the Mosel.⁶⁷³ “Horizontal collaboration,” as intimate relationships between German soldiers and French women were called in occupied France during the war, was probably the most frequent form of collaboration condemned by the majority of the German population. Its female participants were frequently subject to reprisals by their compatriots. The separatists from the interwar French occupation experienced continuous hostility and, until the 1950s, accusations of undermining Germanness in the occupation zone and selling out their homeland to France.

Individuals and discernable groups such as administrators, women, and separatists were marked as collaborators and faced animosity because of their alleged **access to privileges through collaboration**. A main point of contention was the better access to food available to those Germans who worked in the French administration or had relationships with French soldiers. The food supply was particularly limited in the French occupation zone, as the French did not want to and could not feed their zone with the same resources that American troops provided.⁶⁷⁴ Moreover, especially in the first months of the occupation, the French zone had the reputation among French soldiers and within France itself of a land of milk and honey where goods were available to occupying soldiers that the latter had not seen for years, such as butter that remained rationed in France until 1948. Word of the feasts of General de Lattre (nicknamed *le roi Jean*) and others did not fail to reach the envious Germans as well as the French Ministry of Defense and the Foreign Office, which tried to halt the practice of splendid banquets in the French zone.⁶⁷⁵

Germans in contact with French authorities were accused of betraying the bulk of Germans who did not have enough to eat. In February 1946 – during the first of several winters the Germans called *Hungerwinter* – a monthly report French intelligence remarked upon the hostility of the mass of the German population against “collaborators.” Officials recognized that “The civilians employed in our services have difficulties to honor the additional food ration cards distributed to them.”⁶⁷⁶

Former Nazis and their families not only lacked privileged access to food from the French army, but they were also the first to be asked to submit food or goods for the French army or administration. For example, Philomena Schmidt’s family had the status of “Nazis” in the village, which resulted in the fact that their household was targeted when it came to requisitions of food and goods for the French army. Her frustration with what she considered unfair treatment led her to blame those who collaborated with the French army and administration on the

⁶⁷² SHD 11 P 165. 10e Division d’Infanterie, Etat-Major 2e Bureau, Compte-rendu hebdomadaire de renseignements No 14, October 27, 1945, 4.

⁶⁷³ SHD 3 U 126. Commandement en Chef Français en Allemagne, Commandement supérieur des troupes d’occupation. Etat-major, 2e Bureau. Bulletin de renseignements, February 13, 1945, 3: “très mal considérée.”

⁶⁷⁴ See Frank Roy Willis, *The French in Germany, 1945-1949* (Stanford University Press, 1962), 132-133.

⁶⁷⁵ See Frank Roy Willis, *The French in Germany, 1945-1949* (Stanford University Press, 1962), 73-77.

⁶⁷⁶ SHD GR 28 P 7 239. Dossier 3. Mois de février 1946, Manifestations de résistance au cours du mois, 1: “Les civils employés dans nos services éprouvent [...] des difficultés, de la part des commerçants, à faire honorer les cartes supplémentaires de ravitaillement qui leurs sont remises.”

collection of goods. When two of the German collaborators arrived at the farm and claimed two large farm animals from the *Hitlerkinder*, Philomena Schmidt complained in her memoir using anti-Semitic stereotypes: “The men were worse and crueler than the Jews. As cattle dealer, who have inconsiderately enjoyed their life as sponger to the French, they brutally removed the cattle from the barn without adequate payment.”⁶⁷⁷ In a similar spirit, Schmidt recalled her family’s helplessness when their tenant, whom her family accused of collaboration with the local French soldiers, stole strawberries from their field. Because the tenant was protected by her French relationships and because the Schmidt family had obviously supported the Nazis, they had little chances of redress for the supposed theft. To compensate for the loss of formal judicative power, the German population developed collective strategies of ostracism. This kind of social exclusion was inspired by Nazi methods of stigmatization of the “Other”.

Social exclusion of collaborators

Suspect women were primary targets of Germans whose dissatisfaction with the new order under French occupation turned to action. Those who were known for their contacts with French soldiers endured a number of punishments ranging from routine exclusion from the social fabric of local communities to incidents of corporal punishment. Exclusion was frequent, occurred on a daily basis during the opportunities afforded by patterns of social intercourse. In Schweich, for instance, a former Wehrmacht captain gave dancing lessons but did not tolerate young women in his classes who kept up relationships with French soldiers.⁶⁷⁸ Assaults on women or their French companions and vandalism of the houses in which they lived were commonplace. On December 30, 1945, Lotte Schwarz of Weiler, a village in the Eifel, complained to the French about an offensive inscription on her door “because of her relationship with Frenchmen.”⁶⁷⁹ The French army arrested six young men, former members of the Nazi party or sympathizers. In July 1946, in another case in Kehl, on the border to France, a group of Germans broke the windows of a house in which Germans who worked for the French army as well as some French soldiers lived.⁶⁸⁰

Those who fought against the so-called horizontal collaboration received powerful support from the churches. Many priests disdained what they considered as loose morals exhibited by German women during and after World War II, and they condemned women who had relationships with French soldiers. From their pulpits, priests led a veritable campaign against women who had relationships with members of the occupying forces, as the French military intelligence noted in their weekly bulletin of October 9, 1945.⁶⁸¹ Priests were also reluctant to baptize children whose alleged fathers had been lost in the war for years, a practice

⁶⁷⁷ Philomena Schmidt, *Das vergeht bis Du heiratest...! Die Lebensgeschichte von Philomena Schmidt geb. Wild* (Offenburg: Verlag Jasmin Eichner. 1992), 153: “Die Männer waren schlimmer und grausamer als die Juden. Als Viehhändler, die ihr Schmarotzerleben bei den Franzosen rücksichtslos genossen haben, holten sie, als deren Helfershelfer, das Vieh mit Gewalt und miserabler Bezahlung aus dem Stall.”

⁶⁷⁸ SHD 3 U 126. Commandement en Chef Français en Allemagne, Commandement supérieur des troupes d’occupation. Etat-major, 2e Bureau. Bulletin de renseignements, February 13, 1946, 3.

⁶⁷⁹ SHD GR 28 P 7 239. Commandement Supérieur des troupes d’occupation en Allemagne, 1er Corps d’Armée, 5e Division Blindée, Etat-major, 2e Bureau. Incidents signalés dans la zone de la 5e DB, période du 10.1. au 17.1.1946, January 26, 1946: “en raison de ses relations avec des Français.”

⁶⁸⁰ SHD GR 28 P 7 239. Bilan des incidents, attentats, sabotages et manifestations de résistance signalés dans la zone française d’occupation durant le mois de juillet 1946, 2.

⁶⁸¹ SHD 3 U 126. Commandement en Chef Français en Allemagne, Commandement supérieur des troupes d’occupation. Etat-major, 2e Bureau. Bulletin de renseignements, October 9, 1945, 2. 8027

that Philomena Schmidt noted in her memoirs.⁶⁸² In the deeply religious and rural environment of most of the French zone, an extra-marital and unbaptized child entailed a lasting stigma and the social exclusion of mother and child.⁶⁸³

Assuming that an organized resistance movement was at work, the French administration expected attacks on these so-called “collaborators.” They were surprised by the openness with which some women welcomed them. Their overt interest contrasted with the majority of the population that “remains still reserved.”⁶⁸⁴ In their reports, French authorities noted every incident among Germans, as officials assumed that the *Werwolf* or its successor organizations lurked behind assaults and harassment of “collaborators.”⁶⁸⁵ In October 1946, the intelligence service of the French army in Tuttlingen intercepted letters of a resistance group called “Committee against the occupation troops.” The letters threatened addressees with reprisals because of their “collaborationist attitude” with regard to the French army.⁶⁸⁶ Another intelligence report mentioned that a resistance organization called “Wandervogel” watched out for those Germans who collaborated with the allies.⁶⁸⁷

The French army expected that the developing German resistance would attack the population who “collaborates” with their occupation first and then only in a second step the aggression would turn towards the occupiers themselves:

[T]his resistance that has not yet gained a concrete shape will aim at the enemy from within first, that is to say against all those Germans who collaborate one way or the other with the French, and only later against the enemy from the outside.⁶⁸⁸

Thus, for reasons that ultimately implicated their own safety in Germany, the French army paid special attention to early signs of a civil war between resisters and collaborators similar to the one that had transpired in France during the war. The French authorities also tried to intervene because their soldiers were indeed, in a few cases, victims of attacks by young

⁶⁸² Philomena Schmidt, *Das vergeht bis Du heiratest...! Die Lebensgeschichte von Philomena Schmidt geb. Wild* (Offenburg: Verlag Jasmin Eichner, 1992), 154.

⁶⁸³ Because of the strict non-fraternization rules, Franco-German couples were not able to legalize their union and thus their children. Marriages between French soldiers and Germans remained prohibited, civilian employees could marry German women but had to resign from their positions until 1947.

⁶⁸⁴ SHD 11 P 165. 10e Division d’Infanterie. Bulletins Hebdomadaires de Renseignements Juillet-Décembre 1945. Commandement de la Zone Française en Rhénanie et Hesse Nassau. Etat-Major, 2e Bureau. Secret. Compte Rendu de Renseignement, P.C. October 6, 1945: “La population reste toujours réservée.”

⁶⁸⁵ SHD 4 Q 22. Dossier 5. Notes et études diverses sur l’Allemagne 1945-1947. Institut d’Etudes européennes de Strasbourg. Direction. Remarques sur l’Allemagne d’aujourd’hui, May 4, 1945, 3.

⁶⁸⁶ SHD GR 28 P 7 231. Résistance allemande “nazie” (anti-alliée) 1945-1947. Note de renseignements, October 25, 1946: “attitude collaborationnaliste.”

⁶⁸⁷ SHD GR 28 P 7 231. Résistance allemande “nazie” (anti-alliée) 1945-1947. Le Chef de la Brigade Régionale de Contre-Résistance à Messieurs les Commissaires des BRG Fribourg, Constance, Lörrach, Messieurs les Commissaires de Sûreté Fribourg, Bühl, Renchen, Constance, Lahr, Säckingen, Singen, Lörrach, Stockach, Donaueschingen, Müllheim, Überlingen, Emmendingen, Neustadt, Villingen, Offenbach, Waldshut, Wolfach. Objet: Wandervogel. Une organisation clandestine: Le Wandervogel, April 14, 1947.

⁶⁸⁸ SHD GR 28 P 7 232. Renseignements. Possibilités d’un mouvement de résistance, October 2, 1945: “[C]ette résistance qui n’a pas encore acquis de forme concrète se dirigera d’abord contre l’ennemi intérieur, c’est à dire contre tous les [A]llemands qui d’une forme ou d’une autre collaborent avec les Français, et ensuite seulement contre l’ennemi extérieur.”

Germans upon leaving the house of a German woman.⁶⁸⁹ Such vigilante attacks were understood in political and military terms as acts of resistance. Women, however, were the preferred targets of this German “resistance.”

Women who “horizontally collaborated” with the enemy encountered two specific types of reprisal measures. Both practices, which will be laid out in the following sections, aimed at publicly shaming those women and were well known to Germans and French from earlier occupations. First, self-fashioned anti-“collaboration” police published the names of the suspected women on a public place in form of black lists. Second, women believed to have had relationships with French soldiers were accosted and their heads shaved to physically mark them. After publication or shaving, it was left to the community to shun and harass the women.

Blacklisting

On December 11, 1945, a French informant reported to the French intelligence service about a former Wehrmacht officer by the name of Strassberg. The informant had heard that Strassberg tried to win over a young German woman for a resistance organization named “Opferbund” in Offenburg. When the woman refused because she preferred to work as a translator for the French army, Strassberg called this job “unworthy for a German woman.”⁶⁹⁰ He also told her that there would be another reversal of the rule in Germany and that “she would be then on the black list.”⁶⁹¹

The blacklisting of collaborators was an established practice that had flourished during the interwar occupation. Blacklists of women and men who had contacts with occupying troops appeared early in 1919 in Trier (then still under American occupation).⁶⁹² Later, notably during the passive resistance of the Ruhr occupation, lists of “informers, and spies, and traitors of the fatherland” circulated the occupied territory.⁶⁹³ The authors of a list published in Trier called for “German brothers” to hang those “collaborators” from a nearby lamppost since “a bullet or a German knife are too good for those scoundrels.”⁶⁹⁴ The placard was signed “The German revenge.”⁶⁹⁵ During and shortly after the end of the Ruhr occupation, men and women who did not participate in the passive resistance – for example by using French trains while German railroad officials struck – were pilloried in the local press or leaflets. German newspapers had

⁶⁸⁹ For example, in mid-August 1946, a French soldier was beaten up by a group of ten young Germans when he left the house of a young German woman in Saulgau: SHD GR 28 P 7 239. *Activités allemandes en Z.O.F. Bilan du mois d’Août 1946.*

⁶⁹⁰ SHD GR 28 P 7 231. *Résistance allemande “nazie” (anti-alliée) 1945-1947. Renseignement d’archives* December 13, 1945: “indigne d’une [A]llemande.”

⁶⁹¹ SHD GR 28 P 7 231. *Résistance allemande “nazie” (anti-alliée) 1945-1947. Renseignement d’archives* December 13, 1945: “alors elle serait sur la liste noire.”

⁶⁹² See Stadtarchiv Trier, Tb 32/133. *Amerikanische Besatzungsangelegenheiten, Kirchliche Prozessionen, Waffentragen-Verbot, Beschlagnahme anstößiger Ansichtskarten, Verbot deutsche Häuser zu betreten für USA-Truppen. 1918-1919.*

⁶⁹³ Stadtarchiv Trier, Tb 32/103. *Passiver Widerstand, Plakate, Ankleben von Plakaten d. französ. Soldaten, Schreiben d. Herrn Reg.Präs. an den Bezirksdelegierten, Namentliche Bekanntmachung von Spitzeln und Spione, 1923: “Spitzel und Spione und Vaterlandsverräter.”*

⁶⁹⁴ Stadtarchiv Trier, Tb 32/103. *Passiver Widerstand, Plakate, Ankleben von Plakaten d. französ. Soldaten, Schreiben d. Herrn Reg.Präs. an den Bezirksdelegierten, Namentliche Bekanntmachung von Spitzeln und Spione, 1923: “Deutsche Brüder;” “eine Kugel oder ein deutsches Messer ist für diese Halunken zu schade.”*

⁶⁹⁵ Stadtarchiv Trier, Tb 32/103. *Passiver Widerstand, Plakate, Ankleben von Plakaten d. französ. Soldaten, Schreiben d. Herrn Reg.Präs. an den Bezirksdelegierten, Namentliche Bekanntmachung von Spitzeln und Spione, 1923: “Die Deutsche Rache.”*

special rubrics such as *Am Pranger* (“at the pillory”) or *Am Schandpfahl* (“on the whipping post”) where the names and addresses of those “collaborators” were published.⁶⁹⁶

After World War II, lists of women who had relationships with French members of the occupying forces started to appear in late summer 1945. They reminded the French consul in Basel of the interwar period: in a memo to his colleague in Bern, he recalled that those lists had led to “a series of acts of sabotage and the Schlageter affair” in the 1920s.⁶⁹⁷ This memo, deemed important, was forwarded to Paris. Lists were even drawn up by local German government officials: on August 1, 1945, the administrative head of the district of Rockenhausen in the Palatinate, for example, addressed a letter to his mayors ordering that they send him the names of those women and girls who “keep up friendly relationships with [French] officers and soldiers [...], i.e. participate in meals or parties and thus harm the community.”⁶⁹⁸

Ironically, the same lists of women and girls “harming the German community” should also be forwarded to the local French commander: the latter were in particular interested in knowing the names of those women “who seek to strike up fleeting relationships, with one man one day, with another one the next day [...] to maintain the health of the troops.”⁶⁹⁹ Thus, they sought to single out women who they thought would spread venereal diseases. The Germans in return used the same rhetoric of contagion and disease for German women who had contacts with the French troops: in January 1946, the French army found a flyer in the village of Gūchenbach, close to Saarbrücken, demanding to have young women who had relationships with members of the occupying forces placed under quarantine.⁷⁰⁰ Both French and German male authorities thus made the image of women into vessels for their fears about the strength or weakness of occupation. In doing so, these men were, in fact, mirrors of each other.

As in the interwar period, collaborator lists circulated secretly but were also publicly posted for deliberate effect. In their status report of February 1946, the French army mentioned a rumor according to which the local Nazis of Argenthal, a village in the Hunsrück, had set up “the list of ‘collaborators’ for a future reckoning.”⁷⁰¹ In the same month, handwritten posters appeared on some walls in the town of Riegelsberg, close to Saarbrücken. They read:

List of the biggest w... of Riegelsberg,

⁶⁹⁶ See Gerd Krüger, “Straffreie Selbstjustiz. Öffentliche Denunzierungen im Ruhrgebiet, 1923–1926,” *Sozialwissenschaftliche Informationen* 27, 2 (1998): 119-25.

⁶⁹⁷ MAE Bonn 290. Conseiller Politique. G L’Allemagne: Affaires Intérieures Allemandes, I. Questions Politiques 7) Mouvements de résistance, nationalism (1946-1947). Le Consul Général de France à Bâle to Son Excellence Monsieur Henri Hoppenot, Ambassadeur de la République Française à Berne, Objet: Opposition souterraine en Allemagne, March 18, 1946, 2: “series d’actes de sabotage et à l’affaire Schlageter.”

⁶⁹⁸ SHD 10 P 314. 2e Corps d’Armée, Etat-Major, 2e Bureau. Rapports hebdomadaires, 1944-1945. Commandement en Chef Français en Allemagne, Commandement Supérieur des Troupes d’Occupation, 2e Corps d’Armée, Etat-Major, 2e Bureau. Bulletin Hebdomaire No. 13. Annexe du Bulletin Hebdomadaire No. 13, August 19, 1945: “entretiennent de relations amicales avec les Officiers et les soldats des troupes d’occupation, i.e. prennent part à des repas ou des soirées et ainsi font tort à la communauté.”

⁶⁹⁹ SHD 10 P 314. 2e Corps d’Armée, Etat-Major, 2e Bureau. Rapports hebdomadaires, 1944-1945. Commandement en Chef Français en Allemagne, Commandement Supérieur des Troupes d’Occupation, 2e Corps d’Armée, Etat-Major, 2e Bureau. Bulletin Hebdomaire No. 13. Annexe du Bulletin Hebdomadaire No. 13, August 19, 1945: “qui cherchent à nouer des relations passagères, avec un homme un jour, avec un autre le lendemain [...] pour le maintien de la santé de la troupe.” Miriam Gebhardt, *Als die Soldaten kamen: die Vergewaltigung deutscher Frauen am Ende des Zweiten Weltkriegs* (München: DVA, 2015), 191-198.

⁷⁰⁰ SHD GR 28 P 7 239. Dossier 3. Manifestations de résistance au cours du mois, February 1946, 5.

⁷⁰¹ SHD GR 28 P 7 239. Dossier 3. Manifestations de résistance au cours du mois, February 1946, 5: “liste des ‘collaborateurs’ en vue d’un future règlement des comptes.”

who paraded around with French [soldiers]
Beware of making contact with those w...
The vengeful of the German honor⁷⁰²

This introduction followed a list of the names of seventeen local young women. In mid-February 1946 in Dudenhofen close to Speyer, an unknown person had attached a poem to the bulletin board addressed to the returning German soldiers on the relationships between German women and Allied soldiers:

They needed five years to defeat the German soldier,
A German woman they can conquer in five minutes.⁷⁰³

Poems like this one known as “tracts against the German woman” appeared all over Germany at the end of 1945 and in early 1946.⁷⁰⁴ Probably written by former members of the Hitler Youth, the tracts instructed German women that their behavior *soiled* the *honor* of the German nation and announced consequences of their conduct.⁷⁰⁵ They also redeployed stereotypes about black soldiers already present from the interwar period as well as the fear of rapes committed by Red Army soldiers on their march to Berlin in 1945, which infused Nazi propaganda.⁷⁰⁶

But just wait and see, the times will come
when even the negroes will not give a damn about you
Finally, we wish you continuous pleasure
And that the Russians will get their hands on you
From that moment onwards, you will be repentant
And no man will ever desire you in your entire life.⁷⁰⁷

⁷⁰² SHD 3 U 126. Commandement en Chef Français en Allemagne, Commandement supérieur des troupes d’occupation. Etat-major, 2e Bureau. Bulletin de renseignements No 8(1), February 20, 1946, 3:

“Liste des plus grandes p... de Riegelsberg,
qui se sont affichées avec des Français
Se méfier de prendre contact avec ces p...
Les vengeurs de l’honneur allemande”

⁷⁰³ SHD GR 28 P 7 232. Ministère des Armées. Sécurité Air. Sécurité Air des Territoires Occupés. Note pour C.S.T. Section Sécurité Militaire. Achtung! Achtung! An alle, die sich betroffen fühlen, March 16, 1946:

“5 Jahre brauchten sie, den deutschen Soldaten zu besiegen,
Eine Deutsche können sie in fünf Minuten kriegen.”

⁷⁰⁴ See also SHD GR 28 P 7 239. Gouvernement Militaire Français de Berlin, Service Central de la Sécurité Publique. Rapport sur la Résistance Allemande à Berlin, no date, 3. And SHD GR 28 P 7 239. 5e Division Blindée, Etat-Major, 2e Bureau. Incidents signalés dans la zone de la 5e D.B. du 8 au 18 janvier 1946, January 19, 1946.

⁷⁰⁵ See SHD GR 28 P 7 239. Gouvernement Militaire Français de Berlin, Service Central de la Sécurité Publique. Rapport sur la Résistance Allemande à Berlin, no date, 3.

⁷⁰⁶ See Sandra Maß, *Weisse Helden, schwarze Krieger: zur Geschichte kolonialer Männlichkeit in Deutschland 1918-1964* (Köln, Weimar: Böhlau Verlag, 2006), 105-120. Miriam Gebhardt, *Als die Soldaten kamen: die Vergewaltigung deutscher Frauen am Ende des Zweiten Weltkriegs* (München: DVA, 2015), 47-48.

⁷⁰⁷ SHD GR 28 P 7 232. Ministère des Armées. Sécurité Air. Sécurité Air des Territoires Occupés. Note pour C.S.T. Section Sécurité Militaire. Achtung! Achtung! An alle, die sich betroffen fühlen, March 16, 1946:

“Aber wartet nur, es kommen noch die Zeiten,
Wo Euch sogar die Neger was pfeifen
Zum Schluss wünschen wir Euch weiter ein frohes Vergnügen
Und, dass Euch bald die Russen kriegen.
Dann seid Ihr von dieser Zeit an belehrt

This tract and others of the like appealed only to German women and did not accuse French soldiers of seducing German women. On the contrary, some tracts explicitly warned German men against venting their hatred on the French soldiers. Such materials mentioned the serious consequences that an attack on the occupier could have for the community, alluding to the collective punishments for acts of resistance that the French might employ: “A mistake committed by one of us, can have serious consequences for the entire population”⁷⁰⁸ Instead, the authors of those tracts urged patience and suggested a later revenge would be taken on the German women, presumably at the departure of the troops: “be assured that the moment will come when we can avenge all those infamous things. Until then, look down on those whores.”⁷⁰⁹

The authors of those tracts were hard to find, which is also the reason for their ability to operate with impunity. The French army only occasionally succeeded in arresting and sentencing German men and women for the distribution of the hostile leaflets or posters. One of these rare catches included five men and five women working at the Maybach factory of Friedrichshafen. The French military police arrested the ten Germans in late November 1945; they received a prison sentence of one month – a rather short sentence given the usual harshness of French punishments for acts of resistance (see chapter 2).⁷¹⁰ The light sentence could have been part of a calibrated French strategy to avoid provoking further resistance by harsh punishments of incidents among Germans themselves.

Shaving and other physical violence against female collaborators

In some locales, the efforts to shame German women crossed over from the verbal and textual measures to bodily attack. In January 1946 in Allmendingen, close to Ulm, German men between fifteen and forty-five hit young women with sticks who had relationships with French soldiers. The army arrested a German who was identified as one of the attackers.⁷¹¹ The French army often noted in their status reports occasions when Germans were victims of attacks or subject to menacing by their – often but not exclusively young and male – compatriots. In Berlin, an undated French intelligence report, presumably from 1946, noted that German women who danced with French soldiers were increasingly often the victim of insults. One woman was spat on by one of her female friends. The social policing of anti-occupation mores in German women was thus undertaken both across and among gender groups.⁷¹²

Und im Leben von keine[m] Mann mehr begehrt.”

⁷⁰⁸ SHD 3 U 126. Commandement en Chef Français en Allemagne, Commandement supérieur des troupes d’occupation. Etat-major, 2e Bureau. Bulletin de renseignements, No 5, January 30, 1946, 5. Traduction d’un tract trouvé dans la zone de la 5e D.B. à Weiler: “Une erreur d’un d’entre nous, peut avoir des suites graves pour l’ensemble de la population.”

⁷⁰⁹ SHD 3 U 126. Commandement en Chef Français en Allemagne, Commandement supérieur des troupes d’occupation. Etat-major, 2e Bureau. Bulletin de renseignements, No 5, January 30, 1946, 6. Traduction d’un tract trouvé dans la zone de la 5e D.B. à Weiler “Vous pouvez être sûrs que le moment viendra où nous pourrons venger toutes ces choses infamantes. Jusque-là, méprisons ces putains.”

⁷¹⁰ See SHD GR 28 P 7 239. Attentats, Propagande. 5e Division Blindée, Etat-Major, 2e Bureau. Incidents signalés dans la zone de la 5e D.B., December 2, 1945. And SHD 3 U 126. Commandement en Chef Français en Allemagne, Commandement supérieur des troupes d’occupation. Etat-major, 2e Bureau. Bulletin de renseignements, January 9, 1946.

⁷¹¹ SHD GR 28 P 7 239. 5e Division Blindée, Etat-Major, 2e Bureau. Incidents signalés dans la zone de la 5e D.B. du 8 au 18 janvier 1946, January 19, 1946.

⁷¹² SHD GR 28 P 7 239. Gouvernement Militaire Français de Berlin, Service Central de la Sécurité Publique. Rapport sur la Résistance Allemande à Berlin, no date, 4.

Germans who attacked collaborators often did not consider their actions to be criminal in the least. Philomena Schmidt of the farm in the Black Forest, for example, recalled a conflict around their tenant who was unpopular among her greater family because of her “shady relationship with the French.”⁷¹³ Her cousin and a couple of his friends had in a drunken state sexually assaulted the tenant and called her “French whore.” This was a minor incident for Philomena Schmidt who considered it a “stupidity” committed by boys who had too much to drink.⁷¹⁴ The French tribunal however sentenced two of three accused, among them Philomena’s uncle, who was held responsible for his son’s assault, to one year of prison for bodily harm and slander.

Murders of “horizontal collaborators” were uncommon. But the French military archives refer to one case in which a woman was killed by fellow Germans in response to her relationship with French soldiers. In June 1945, the intelligence service issued one of their early reports on resistance in the French zone: it explained an assassination of a woman in Lörrach because she “kept up a relationship with a French non-commissioned officer.”⁷¹⁵

The coerced head shaving of those who maintained relationships with foreign occupiers was a common method for publicly denouncing and durably humiliating a woman – ostensibly to restore the honor of the nation and certainly to deter other women from transgression. Threatening women with shavings was well known during and especially after occupations throughout the 20th century. Occupied Germany after World War II was no exception. To punish intimate relationships with the occupier, shavings (*tontes*) had become a familiar practice in France in the last year of the occupation and following the departure of German troops in 1944.⁷¹⁶ For the French army and civilian administration, the sight of shaved German women during occupation must have been not surprising. Among their very own administration, there were women with strikingly short hair – a trace from the *tontes* in France: for example, a document of the French intelligence service noted of an employee of the French justice department of Bad-Ems: “[She] is said to have been shaved [aurait été “rondue”] and, at this time, one can indeed observe the “little length” of her hair.”⁷¹⁷

In the interwar occupation as well, particularly in 1919 and during and shortly after the Ruhr occupation, German women who had relationships with occupying soldiers were menaced with shaving. In some instances, their German compatriots indeed carried out this action. For example, a poster published in Trier in 1923 enumerated women who had relationships with French soldiers and threatened a retributive hair shearing.⁷¹⁸ Lieutenant-Colonel Victor-Henri Schweisguth described the first years of the French occupation in the interwar period in an article

⁷¹³ Philomena Schmidt, *Das vergeht bis Du heiratest...! Die Lebensgeschichte von Philomena Schmidt geb. Wild* (Offenburg: Verlag Jasmin Eichner. 1992), 150: “undurchsichtigen Umgang mit den Franzosen.”

⁷¹⁴ Philomena Schmidt, *Das vergeht bis Du heiratest...! Die Lebensgeschichte von Philomena Schmidt geb. Wild* (Offenburg: Verlag Jasmin Eichner. 1992), 150: “Dummheit.”

⁷¹⁵ SHD GR 28 P 7 232. 1ere Armée Française, Subdivision Militaire du Haut-Rhin, 2e Bureau, June 25, 1945, 7.

⁷¹⁶ See Fabrice Virgili, *Shorn Women: Gender and punishment in liberation France*. (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 2002).

⁷¹⁷ See MAE 1 RP 136/2. Service Sécurité du Gouvernement militaire. Gouvernement Militaire de la Zone Française d’Occupation, Délégation Général de l’Etat Rhéno-Palatin, Commissariat de la Sûreté de la ville de Bad-Ems, Le Commissaire de la Sûreté de la ville de Bad-Ems to Monsieur le Contrôleur de la Sûreté de l’Etat Rhéno-Palatin in Koblenz, March 6, 1947: “[Elle] aurait été “rondue” et actuellement on Remarque en effet, le “peu de longueur” de ses cheveux.”

⁷¹⁸ Stadtarchiv Trier Tb 32/103. Passiver Widerstand, Plakate, Ankleben von Plakaten d. französ. Soldaten, Schreiben d. Herrn Reg.Präs. an den Bezirksdelegierten, Namentliche Bekanntmachung von Spitzel und Spione, 1923.

published in the September 1924 *Revue des Deux Mondes*. He mentioned that as early as in the summer of 1919, young German boys formed gangs and

because they did not dare to attack the French troopers, [they] blamed the young women who have been seen going for a walk with them. They thought of cutting their hair, sometimes of undressing them and to smear their bodies with shoe polish or of posting up their names in the streets with slanderous comments.⁷¹⁹

In most cases, Schweisguth explained, the perpetrators were never accounted for their deeds. Therefore, the head of the army felt compelled to punish the mayors of the towns in which actions against local women had transpired for negligence of duty. Schweisguth added that the hair of the shorn women was subsequently sold to local hairdressers, leading the officer to conclude: “In Germany, the most impassioned patriotism reconciles perfectly with a commercial interest.”⁷²⁰

After the end of passive resistance and despite the amnesty granted in the London agreement, *Franzosenliebchen* (sweetheart of the French) of the Ruhr in particular were punished by young German men.⁷²¹ There is evidence of a so-called “scissors clubs,” groups of boys carrying a small pair of scissors in the pockets of their trousers, to punish those “who should after all become the wives of German men!”⁷²² A memorandum published in 1926 that listed the names of collaborators mentioned several cases of shaved women:

The scissors club has committed a praiseworthy action on Auguste Schneider. Schneider who liked so much to sit on her French officer’s lap will wait for a long time for her braids to grow again.⁷²³

In Vohwinkel, near Wuppertal, vigilantes shaved all women known to be *Franzosenliebchen*.⁷²⁴ While it was more frequent that young women were beaten or socially marginalized (for example, they were no longer considered marriageable), their hair – as a gendered and sexualized

⁷¹⁹ Lieutenant Colonel Schweisguth, “L’administration militaire des pays rhénans sous le régime de l’Armistice,” *Revue des Deux Mondes* v.23 (1924): 95- 116, 109: “n’osant attaquer les troupiers français, [ils] s’en prirent aux jeunes filles qui avaient été vues se promenant avec eux. Ils imaginèrent de leur couper les cheveux, parfois de les déshabiller et de leur barbouiller le corps de cirage, ou bien d’afficher leurs noms dans les rues avec des commentaires calomnieux.

⁷²⁰ Lieutenant Colonel Schweisguth, “L’administration militaire des pays rhénans sous le régime de l’Armistice,” *Revue des Deux Mondes* v.23 (1924): 95- 116, 109: “[C]hez l’Allemand, le patriotisme le plus exalté se concilie parfaitement avec l’instinct commercial.”

⁷²¹ Gerd Krüger, “Straffreie Selbstjustiz: Öffentliche Denunzierungen im Ruhrgebiet 1923-1926,” *SoWi Sozialwissenschaftliche Informationen* 27 2 (1998): 119-125, 122.

⁷²² Willi Reith, *Stacheldraht im Ruhrgebiet!: Von Ruhrkampf, Haft, und Freiheitsdrang! Erlebnisse mit Franzosen und Westfalen im Ruhrkampf 1923 in Dortmund und Castrop* (Lorch: Rohm, 1934), 19: “Scherenklubs” and “die doch einmal die Frauen deutscher Männer werden sollten!” See also Gerd Krüger, “Straffreie Selbstjustiz: Öffentliche Denunzierungen im Ruhrgebiet 1923-1926,” *SoWi Sozialwissenschaftliche Informationen* 27 2 (1998): 119-125, 121.

⁷²³ *Spione, Spitzel, Verräter: Freunde und Freundinnen der französisch-belgischen Besatzung; aus der Leidenschronik der Rhein- und Ruhrbevölkerung* (Essen: Volksverlag, 1926), 22: “Der Scherenklub hat an Auguste Schneider ein löbliches Werk getan. Die Schneider, die so gern auf dem Schoß ihres französischen Offiziers saß, kann lange warten, bis ihr die Zöpfe wieder wachsen.”

⁷²⁴ *Spione, Spitzel, Verräter: Freunde und Freundinnen der französisch-belgischen Besatzung; aus der Leidenschronik der Rhein- und Ruhrbevölkerung* (Essen: Volksverlag, 1926), 2-3.

extension of the the body - remained a particular target for a punishment for collaboration with the enemy.

The social punishment of collaborators, especially women, would emerge again after World War II. Ernst Fraenkel warned in his book on the Rhineland occupation that it would be essential to protect “responsible collaborators” in the occupation of Germany after 1945.⁷²⁵ The shaving of German women reappeared during the French occupation of Germany after World War II, though on a small scale than in France at the end of the war or in occupied Rhineland during the interwar period.⁷²⁶ Between the fall of 1945 and early spring 1946, women were threatened with hair shearing if they entertained relationships with members of the French army. In French-occupied Berlin-Wedding, girls accompanied by a French soldier were spat on by gangs of boys, insulted and were threatened that “one day, they will cut their hair.”⁷²⁷ In September 1945, the civilian administration of Freiburg reported that women faced threats of punitive hair burning.⁷²⁸ One month later, in October 1945, a soldier overheard a conversation at a hairdresser’s shop in Kaiserslautern: a group of Germans were putting their heads together to discuss whether a woman who had fraternized “a bit too much” should be shaved.⁷²⁹

Cross-allegiance sex dominated the narratives that explained this form of social punishment. Eventually, in Lantershofen, a small village in the county of Ahrweiler, a woman was shaved on January 31, 1946. The French army’s intelligence service reported in its monthly bulletin under the category “attacks” that “a German woman of loose morals who worked for the French was attacked by several civilians and shaved.”⁷³⁰ Another report on the same incident recounted that “three or four civilians attacked, hit, and shaved” a woman described as someone “who offered her services to the French soldiers.”⁷³¹ In another case, a number of young women were shaved after the departure of French troops from the small town of Meßstetten in the Swabian Alps in November 1945. Again, it was “young people” who were said to have organized a demonstration after the departure of the 19th Infantry Division and shaved the young women who “paraded around” with the soldiers of that division.⁷³²

⁷²⁵ Fraenkel mentioned the shavings of women as the major issue of collaboration/collaborationism in the interwar period together with the question of separatists that will be addressed later in this chapter. See Ernst Fraenkel, *Military occupation and the rule of law: occupation government in the Rhineland, 1918-1923* (Oxford University Press, 1944), 142-148.

⁷²⁶ The historiography barely mentions those shavings. For example, Miriam Gebhardt mentions it in passing: Miriam Gebhardt, *Als die Soldaten kamen: die Vergewaltigung deutscher Frauen am Ende des Zweiten Weltkriegs* (München: DVA, 2015), 178.

⁷²⁷ SHD GR 28 P 7 236. L’Inspecteur Calmon, Robert, Officier de Sécurité à Monsieur le Directeur des Services de la Sécurité Publique du G.M.F.B. Objet: Manifestation Nazie, Organisation d’un mouvement de résistance, no date, 10: “un jour, on leur coupera les cheveux.”

⁷²⁸ SHD 3 U 126. Commandement en Chef Français en Allemagne, Commandement supérieur des troupes d’occupation. Etat-major, 2e Bureau. Bulletin de renseignements No 22, September 25, 1945, 4.

⁷²⁹ SHD 3 U 251. Commandement Zone Ouest du Palatinat, Rapport Hebdomadaire Semaine du 7 au 13 Octobre 1945, Kaiserslautern, October 17, 1945, 3.

⁷³⁰ SHD 3 U 126. Commandement en Chef Français en Allemagne, Commandement supérieur des troupes d’occupation. Etat-major, 2e Bureau. Bulletin de renseignements No 9, February 27, 1946: “Une Allemande de mœurs légères qui travaillait pour des Français a été attaquée et tondue.”

⁷³¹ SHD GR 28 P 7 239. Dossier 3. Mois de Février 1946. Manifestations de Résistance au cours du mois, 2: “assaillie, frappée et tondue psr 3 ou 4 civils” and “une [A]llemande qui offrait ses services à des soldats français.”

⁷³² SHD 3 U 126. Commandement en Chef Français en Allemagne, Commandement supérieur des troupes d’occupation. Etat-major, 2e Bureau. Bulletin de renseignements No 31, November 28, 1945, 6: “s’étaient affichées.”

The shavings in French occupied Germany were rather isolated cases in comparison to the interwar period and the rash of head shavings of French women at the end of the German occupation of France. However, they indicated tensions present in German society in the immediate aftermath of the war, when new alignments and hierarchies under occupation were still being negotiated among former Nazis and those who gravitated toward the occupier.

Revenge at the departure of the occupiers in the 1920s and in the 1940s

Of course, it was possible that “collaborating” with the Allies would put their German supporters in danger of nationalist persecution once the occupation ended. The Germans who “collaborated” with the French military or civilian administration therefore feared the moment of French departure from their region. In the case of the above-mentioned Meßstetten, the French left only for a short time – a moving around of divisions. The small timeframe between the departure of one division and the arrival of the next sufficed to enable retaliations for “collaboration” – the shaving of the young women. In February 1946, an intelligence report for the southern part of the French zone noted that in conversations with informants, many Germans had expressed “fear that the Nazis will commit reprisals” once the French troops would leave.⁷³³ Advance warnings of reprisals to follow the anticipated departure of the French troops were not rare: in the unclear situation in the wake of the war, when national and occupation zones borders had already changed and remained in limbo, a departure of the French troops seemed certainly reasonable to expect.⁷³⁴ Therefore rumors of French withdraw spread easily. Example of such circulation include Kaiserslautern at the end of November 1945 or several other places in the Palatinate in January 1946 – around the same time as the incidents of the shaving of women.⁷³⁵

Civil servants and young women feared most for their lives. Some did not even dare to leave the house at night, as was the case of a number of Germans who served in a French officer’s household in the region of Würzburg.⁷³⁶ This fear of reprisals also led some women to refrain from contacts with the occupier altogether, a phenomenon observed as late as 1948 according to an intelligence report for the French zone in February of that year.⁷³⁷

Their fears grew from past experiences with the violence during the interwar occupation and, in particular, events after the departure of the French occupiers less than twenty years earlier. The interwar occupation was a blueprint of what French and Germans thought would unfold in post-World War II occupied Germany. Some German administrators received

⁷³³ SHD 10 P 314. 2e Corps d’Armée, Etat-Major, 2e Bureau. Bulletins de renseignements 1945 (incomplets), Janv, Février, Mars 1946. Commandement en Chef Français en Allemagne, Commandement Supérieur des Troupes d’Occupation, 2e Corps d’Armée, Etat-Major, 2e Bureau. Bulletin de renseignements du 16.1 au 15.2.1946, Strasbourg, February 15, 1946, 2: “crainte que les éléments Nazis ne se livrent à des représailles.”

⁷³⁴ MAE 1 RP 140/1. Commandement en Chef Français en Allemagne, Secrétariat Général, Bureau Information. Le Général de Corps d’Armée Koenig, Commandant en Chef Français en Allemagne to M. l’Administrateur Général Adjoint pour le Gouvernement Militaire de la Zone Française d’Occupation (Cabinet), Baden-Baden, March 26, 1946.

⁷³⁵ SHD 10 P 314. 2e Corps d’Armée, Etat-Major, 2e Bureau. Bulletins de renseignements 1945 (incomplets), Janv, Février, Mars 1946. Commandement en Chef Français en Allemagne, Commandement Supérieur des Troupes d’Occupation, 2e Corps d’Armée, Etat-Major, 2e Bureau. Rapport Hebdomadaire No 32, January 5, 1946. And SHD 3 U 251. Commandement Zone Ouest du Palatinat, Rapport Hebdomadaire Semaine du 19 au 26 Novembre 1945, Kaiserslautern, November 29, 1945.

⁷³⁶ SHD 3 U 126. Commandement en Chef Français en Allemagne, Commandement supérieur des troupes d’occupation. Etat-major, 2e Bureau. Bulletin de renseignements, February 13, 1946, 2.

⁷³⁷ SHD 3 U 116. Commandement en Chef Français en Allemagne, Commandement supérieur des troupes d’occupation. Etat-major, 2e Bureau. Bulletin d’information No 11, November 24, 1947, 4.

anonymous letters containing death threats, reported the French consul in Frankfurt to his ambassador in Berlin in June 1947. Those reminded them of the politically motivated murders of *Erfüllungspolitiker* in the early 1920s, like Matthias Erzberger, who signed the armistice in 1918, and foreign minister Walther Rathenau.⁷³⁸ Both politicians had incurred the hatred of German right wing nationalists and had been labeled as traitors and collaborators of the victorious countries, notably of France.

In particular, German administrators in the Palatinate, who had to work with the French army and civilian administration in the wake of World War II on a daily basis, feared a repetition of the violence against separatists during the interwar occupation. Therefore, they sought to avoid to be regarded as “collaborators” in the eyes of their compatriots. In December 1945, a situation report on the morale of the German population issued by the French civilian administration in the Palatinate captured the German administration’s perspective on this question:

Numerous German civil servants are in good faith and wish deep down inside to loyally collaborate with the military government. But when they are charged to execute an imperative order, they go so far as to declare: It is indeed nice to obey, but what if we are hung when you leave.⁷³⁹

The French informant explained that the civil servants’ fear of execution after the army’s departure emerged from their experience with the treatment of separatists and francophiles in the interwar period. “The sad memory of the massacre on the separatists in Speyer and Pirmasens in 1924 is still present in a lot of minds and explains those hesitations,” the report stated.⁷⁴⁰ The separatist movement had emerged amid the unstable political environment of the Weimar Republic and during the Allied, particularly French, occupation of the left bank of the Rhine, a region historically skeptical of a united Germany under Prussian rule. Separatist uprisings notably took place in 1923/1924 in all major cities of occupied Rhineland and the Palatinate seeking degrees of autonomy from Germany.⁷⁴¹ The French army had supported those efforts and were welcomed the prospect of a buffer state closely affiliated with France, as the region had been part of France during Napoleonic times.⁷⁴² In Speyer, Franz Josef Orbis (nicknamed Heinz-

⁷³⁸ MAE Bonn 290. Conseiller Politique G L’Allemagne: Affaires Intérieures Allemandes. I. Questions Politiques 7) Mouvements de Résistance, nationalism (1946-1947). Consulat de France à Francfort s/ le Main, Monsieur André Decamps, Consul de France to Son Excellence M. Tarbé de Saint-Hardouin, Ambassadeur de France, Conseiller Politique à Berlin, Francfort, June 15, 1947.

⁷³⁹ MAE 1 RP 2162/5. Résistance allemande (1945-1949). Délégation Supérieure pour le Gouvernement Militaire du Palatinat, Synthèse Périodique sur le moral et l’état de l’esprit du personnel, Mois de Décembre 1946 ,7: “De nombreux fonctionnaires allemands sont de bonne foi et désirent en leur for intérieur, collaborer loyalement avec le Gouvernement Militaire. Mais lorsqu’ils sont chargés d’exécuter un ordre impératif quelconque, ils vont jusqu’à déclarer: C’est bien joli d’obéir mais si nous sommes pendus quand vous partirez.”

⁷⁴⁰ MAE 1 RP 2162/5. Résistance allemande (1945-1949). Délégation Supérieure pour le Gouvernement Militaire du Palatinat, Synthèse Périodique sur le moral et l’état de l’esprit du personnel, Mois de Décembre 1946 ,7: “Le triste souvenir des massacres de separatists à Spire et à Pirmasens, en 1923 est encore présent dans bien des mémoires et explique bien les hésitations.”

⁷⁴¹ For the different motivations and goals of the separatist movement, see Martin Schlemmer, *Los von Berlin! Die Rheinstaatsbestrebungen Nach Dem Ersten Weltkrieg* (Köln: Böhlau Verlag, 2007).

⁷⁴² See Pierre Jardin, “Tirard, de Metz und die Pfalz,” in *Die Pfalz unter französischer Besetzung (1918/19-1930)*, ed. Wilhelm Kreuz und Karl Scherer (Kaiserslautern: Institut für pfälzische Geschichte und Volkskunde, 1999), 145-168.

Orbis) proclaimed the Palatinate Republic (associated with the Rhenish Republic) on November 12, 1923 recognized by Paul Tirard, head of the Interallied Rhineland Committee. However, the separatist movements caused a violent backlash from German nationalists. Members of German right wing militias killed Orbis and around twenty of his supporters in Speyer on January 9, 1924 by. One month later, on February 12, arsonists set fire to the building of the district authority (*Bezirksamt*) in Pirmasens and *Freikorps* stormed it.⁷⁴³ The structure had been the seat of the local separatist government since November 1923. Sixteen separatists died in the *Bezirksamt*, most by lynching.⁷⁴⁴ The German administrators in the occupation after World War II feared a reiteration of those events.

In 1945, the German administrators did not trust the status quo or the new democratic regime - even if violence was not emerging on the same scale. They thought that the state of Rhineland-Palatinate would collapse, that power would return to a pan-Germanist Berlin, and that all who had not resisted the occupiers would be punished.⁷⁴⁵ The reason for this expectation lay, in addition to the violence against separatists and francophiles of the mid-1920s in the context of the Ruhr occupation, in memories of the renewed outbreak of violence against this group of Germans after the departure of the French troops in 1930. Even though the London Agreement of 1924 had granted amnesty to Germans associated with the separatist movement, those amnesties were honored in the breach, at best. This became apparent when the French troops left the Rhineland on June 30, 1930 and could no longer protect separatists and francophiles. While the liberation festivities on July 1, 1930 seemed to peacefully celebrate the French troop departure, they exhibited an underlying aggression fueled by rising nationalism (and national socialism), and the economic crisis of the late 1920s. This aggression emerged in the multiple spates of violence in the following July nights of 1930.⁷⁴⁶ For instance, groups of young men from the unoccupied territory prone to violence had arrived in Mainz on July 2 and 3 and, together with local Mainzers, systematically attacked apartments and shops of known separatists or francophiles. The systematic nature of the events has suggested the presence of preexisting lists of the victims' names and addresses. In Pirmasens, such a list was put up in the shop window of the local NSDAP branch for "inspiration."⁷⁴⁷ At least in Mainz, there had not

⁷⁴³ Although the citizens of Pirmasens later claimed that they themselves "had got rid off" the separatists, it is more likely that the storming of the *Bezirksamt* had been orchestrated by nationalist *Freikorps* in the context of the *Feme* murders of the early 1920s. See Gerhard Gräber and Matthias Spindler, *Die Pfälzbefreier: Volkes Zorn und Staatsgewalt im bewaffneten Kampf gegen den pfälzischen Separatismus 1923-24* (Ludwigshafen/Rh: Pro Message, 2005), 118-127.

⁷⁴⁴ None of the murders were sentenced because they had helped to save the nation in an acute threat of the nation (*Staatsnothilfegesetz*). The murderers were on the contrary celebrated as saviors of the nation. A plaque commemorating the storming of the *Bezirksamt* and those of the nationalists who dies that day was put up by the National Socialists on the nearby district court. The plaque is still at its place today. Merely the swastika was removed after the war. See Gerhard Gräber and Matthias Spindler, *Die Pfälzbefreier: Volkes Zorn und Staatsgewalt im bewaffneten Kampf gegen den pfälzischen Separatismus 1923-24* (Ludwigshafen/Rh: Pro Message, 2005), 157, 171.

⁷⁴⁵ MAE 1 RP 2162/5. Résistance allemande (1945-1949). Délégation Supérieure pour le Gouvernement Militaire du Palatinat, Synthèse Périodique sur le moral et l'état de l'esprit du personnel, Mois de Décembre 1946, 7.

⁷⁴⁶ A captured aggressor explained the reasons for his destructions: "simply because I am furious about the separatists" - "lediglich weil er eine furchtbare Wut gegen die Separatisten habe." Stadtarchiv Mainz NL Schreiber 107. Zusammenstellung der bei den separatistischen Unruhen am 2./3.7.1930 entstandenen Schäden, Anträge auf Schadenersatz und Zeitungskommentare zu diesen Vorfällen, 1930. Auszug aus der Anklageschrift der Staatsanwaltschaft bei dem Landgericht der Provinz Rheinhessen, July 14, 1930.

⁷⁴⁷ Gerhard Gräber and Matthias Spindler, *Die Pfälzbefreier: Volkes Zorn und Staatsgewalt im bewaffneten Kampf gegen den pfälzischen Separatismus 1923-24* (Ludwigshafen/Rh: Pro Message, 2005), 13.

been documented gendered violence, like the shaving of women; rather, the city saw the destruction of property and the beating of separatists or francophiles if they were present. The violence was political – the attackers completely smashed shop windows and destroyed goods, but took care to prevent the mere looting of the shops.⁷⁴⁸ A couple from Mainz affiliated with the separatist movement tried to commit suicide by taking potassium cyanide in their apartment when the mob sought to gain access to it.⁷⁴⁹ Others asked to be taken into protective custody by the German police in order to obtain safety.⁷⁵⁰ The German police was powerless against the well-coordinated attacks in Mainz – but they were also criticized for their passive behavior towards the aggressors.⁷⁵¹

Either in the aftermath of the separatist uprisings in 1923/24 or when their protectors left the region in the summer of 1930, many francophiles and former separatists fled from persecution to France or to French controlled Saarland. A famous example was Hans Adam Dorten, one of the leaders of the Rhenish separatist movement in 1919 and 1923/34. He emigrated in 1924, settled in Nice, and took French citizenship in 1928.

The return of the separatist émigrés in French uniform

In 1945, the separatists of the interwar period were back. Dorten published his memoirs on the interwar separatist movement in the same year in France, *la tragédie rhénane*, the Rhenish tragedy.⁷⁵² Other separatists came back to Germany in the uniform of the occupier, like Henri Hoche-Bretz. Born Henri (or Heinrich) Bretz in the German town of Worms in 1900, Bretz became the interpreter for the Rhineland Commission in January 1919 as well as a member of the intelligence service of the French army in occupied Rhineland. In the French intelligence service, he had served as the head of the section on separatism. A separatist himself, Hoche-Bretz had supported ideas for a separate Rhineland. In October 1924, after the defeat of the separatist project, he had moved to Luxembourg, later to France. In 1940, Hoche-Bretz had fought in the French army against the Germans and, after the French defeat, had continued to fight in the *maquis*. He had even been head of a *maquis* in the Isère department, and had taken on a nom de guerre, Hoche.⁷⁵³ Incorporated into the First French Army, Hoche-Bretz entered Germany in French uniform and became associate head of the military government in the Hunsrück town of Simmern in July 1945. His superiors valued his German language skills and the French patriotism that he had demonstrated since 1920 as “one of the promoters of the

⁷⁴⁸ In a music store in Mainz, a boy was told to put back a harmonica he wanted to steal by saying: “Nehmt von dem Separatist nichts.” Stadtarchiv Mainz, NL Schreiber 107. Zusammenstellung der bei den separatistischen Unruhen am 2./3.7.1930 entstandenen Schäden, Anträge auf Schadenersatz und Zeitungskommentare zu diesen Vorfällen, 1930. Fall Gianini. Mainz, October 13, 1930.

⁷⁴⁹ Stadtarchiv Mainz. NL Schreiber 117. Verschiedene Artikel aus Mainzer und auswärtigen Zeitungen, 1919-1930. “Die Mainzer Gewalttätigkeiten gegen Separatisten,” *Frankfurter Zeitung*, July 4, 1930. Stadtarchiv Mainz. NL Schreiber 113. “Beruhigung in Mainz. Mainz muss stärkeren Polizeischutz haben,” *Mainzer Anzeiger*, July 4, 1930.

⁷⁵⁰ Stadtarchiv Mainz. NL Schreiber 117. Verschiedene Artikel aus Mainzer und auswärtigen Zeitungen, 1919-1930. “Die Mainzer Gewalttätigkeiten gegen Separatisten,” *Frankfurter Zeitung*, July 4, 1930.

⁷⁵¹ Stadtarchiv Mainz. NL Schreiber 113. *Mainzer Anzeiger*, 1928-1930. “Beruhigung in Mainz. Mainz muss stärkeren Polizeischutz haben,” *Mainzer Anzeiger*, July 4, 1930.

⁷⁵² Jean A. Dorten, *La tragédie rhénane* (Paris: R. Laffont, 1945). The book was only published in German in 1979.

⁷⁵³ Hoche referred to Louis Lazare Hoche (1768-1797), a simple soldier who managed to become general of the French revolutionary Army of the Rhine driving the Austrian army out of Lorraine, Alsace and up to the Rhine. Hoche was also responsible for the civilian administration over occupied Rhineland in 1797. See Georges Girard, *La vie de Lazare Hoche* (Paris: Gallimard, 1926) and Robert Garnier, *Lazare Hoche ou l'honneur des armes*. Paris: Payot, 1986).

Rhenish separatist movement” as well as by his engagement in the French Résistance.⁷⁵⁴ Because of his knowledge of the region and the separatist contacts that he still possessed in 1945, he “would be susceptible for great services for the French politics of active penetration in the Rhineland.”⁷⁵⁵ Hoche-Bretz is just one example of a number of former separatists who found new employment in Germany after their exile in France. The sources do not give more information about whether Hoche-Bretz and other separatists from the interwar period in fact favored the Rhenish separatist movement again after 1945. But Hoche-Bretz himself was convinced that his presence in Simmern was favorable for the French administration because of his knowledge of “the region and the mentality of the people.”⁷⁵⁶

The Rhineland occupation was not forgotten, neither in the French administration nor in the army as the examples of Hoche-Bretz as well as the interest in Dorten’s book proves. Moreover, in the training seminars from late autumn 1944 during which the French army prepared those who would take up positions in the French occupation zone, trainees had to study the interwar occupation thoroughly. Léon Noël, former High Commissioner of the French Republic in occupied Rhineland between 1927 and 1930, gave a lecture on the topic.⁷⁵⁷ Moreover, the soldiers were informed about the separatist movement of the interwar period in historical essays of the weekly bulletins issued by the information and intelligence service of the French army as early as August 1945.⁷⁵⁸

Motivations for collaboration

Despite the potential hazards, some Germans welcomed the French occupation. The return of the French occupiers of 1930 also raised hopes of what francophiles remembered as a benevolent occupation under the same terms as in the 1920s. For instance, some Germans hoped the food rations would increase under the French rule to the level of 1918.⁷⁵⁹ Others felt the need

⁷⁵⁴ MAE 1 PL 2172. Appréciation du Chef de Bataillon Raphene, Commandant de la Prévôté Régionale sur le Capitaine Hoche, Commandant de la Prévôté de l’Ain, March 1, 1945: “un des promoteurs du mouvement séparatiste rhénan,” and MAE 1 PL 2172. Fédération Nationale des Anciens de la Résistance, Grenoble, March 1, 1945.

⁷⁵⁵ MAE 1 PL 2172. Commandant en Chef Français en Allemagne, Délégation Supérieure de Rhénanie, Délégation de Cercle de Simmern. Fiche de Reclassement concernant Hoche-Bretz, Henri, no date, 2: “serait susceptible de grands services dans une politique française de pénétration active en Rhénanie.”

⁷⁵⁶ MAE 1 RP 1685/1. Cercle de Simmern. Services Centraux, Notes Confidentielles 1945-1949. Gouvernement Militaire Détachement du L.Kreis Simmern. Le Lieutenant Hoche-Bretz, adjoint au chef de détachement du Gouvernement Militaire de Simmern to Mr. Le Général de Brigade Billotte, Commandant de la 10e D.I. de la 1ère Armée Française Bad-Ems, August 9, 1945: “la region et la mentalité de la population.” However, as a German in French uniform, he was also accused of “collaboration,” that is protecting German interests, during an incident with a French doctor in the spring of 1946, when Hoche-Bretz prevented a group of soldiers from hunting in the Hochwald. See MAE 1 RP 1685/1. Cercle de Simmern. Le Lieutenant Hoche-Bretz, adjoint au chef de détachement du Gouvernement Militaire de Simmern to Monsieur le Lieutenant-Colonel Commandant le 24e RI à Simmern, April 20, 1946.

⁷⁵⁷ BDIC Nanterre, F delta 1346. Fonds Jacque Delarue: Cours organisés par l’Administration militaire française en Allemagne et destinés aux fonctionnaires français partant en Allemagne pour créer des services de sûreté en zone française d’occupation, 1945.

⁷⁵⁸ See for example SHD 10 P 314. 2e Corps d’Armée, 2e Bureau. Rapports hebdomadaires sur l’Allemagne 21 Juillet – 27 Aout 1945. Annexe No. 1 du Bulletin Hebdomadaire Nr. 13, La Zone d’Occupation du 2e Corps d’Armée, Etude générale, Historique Sommaire, August 19, 1945, 3-4. However, the essay claimed that the Allies had remained neutral letting the financial and moral support of the movement French generals go by the board to mask their own implication in the failure of the separatist movement in Germany in the interwar period. 4799

⁷⁵⁹ SHD 10 P 314. 2e Corps d’Armée, 2e Bureau. Rapports hebdomadaires sur l’Allemagne 21 Juillet – 27 Aout 1945. Annexe No. 11 Point de Vue des Allemands, July 21, 1945, 2.

to apologize for the German occupation and atrocities committed during World War II in France. At the end of July 1945, the city of Triberg in the Black Forest for example sent a check of 100.000 Reichsmarks to the local military government in nearby Villingen-Schwenningen to be forwarded to a French city that had fallen victim to SS-violence during the war. General de Lattre de Tassigny had refused to accept such offers claiming the Germans could not simply buy off their guilt with those voluntary compensations or donations.⁷⁶⁰ In the case of Triberg, however, the Director of Economy and Finance of the French zone had accepted the money and bought shoes from Pirmasens and fabric from Baden. The office sent these materials to the city of Saint-Dié in Eastern France, which had particularly suffered in 1944 during the German retreat when houses were systematically destroyed and civilians deported.⁷⁶¹ When the mayor of Saint-Dié planned an official visit to Triberg to thank the Germans for their donation, Baden-Baden halted the plans, and reaffirmed that the German city should not be notified about the recipient of their donation.⁷⁶² According to Baden-Baden, the time was not ripe for an official reconciliation between the two countries even though local initiatives like the one in Triberg and Saint-Dié show that a settlement between the peoples after years of conflict began shortly after the end of the war.

The French intelligence services remained skeptical of a too eager or easy collaboration by Germans. They reported that the initial reservation of the Germans due to their fears of a particular violent behavior of the French troops had vanished over the summer of 1945. Observing the German civilians' polite and servile stance towards the allied troops in the first weeks and months of the occupation, French intelligence services noted that locals took part in important moments in the lives of the French soldiers. For example, a report of December 1945 remarked that the German population "expressed a sincere sympathy on the occasion of births of French children or deaths of members of the army (in-kind aid, flower crowns, etc.)."⁷⁶³ On the French national holiday, July 14, 1945, the Germans in the Rhineland, Hessen-Nassau, and the Saar region – spontaneously, according to the French intelligence service, - paved the streets with French flags.⁷⁶⁴ In the Saar region, they also decorated the tombs of Frenchmen who had died during their captivity in Germany during the war, and children presented bouquets of flowers to the local garrison commanders. Still, the intelligence service of the French army remained skeptical of the sincerity of such German expressions of sympathy.⁷⁶⁵ Just as in the

⁷⁶⁰ Triberg was not the only city to have offered spontaneous recompensation, the priest of Ehingen close to Ulm offered a vase in the name of his town to a church in France in commemoration and penitence of a mass grave discovered in vicinity of Ehingen. See SHD 11 P 19. 2e Corps d'Armée, 1ère Division d'Infanterie, Etat-Major, 2e Bureau. Bulletin de Renseignements No IX (Période du 11 au 30 Juin 1945), July 2, 1945.

⁷⁶¹ Saint-Dié gained modest fame through its reconstruction by Le Corbusier in the postwar: See Mary McLeod, "Saint-Dié: A Modern Space Conception for Postwar Reconstruction," in *Le Corbusier: An Atlas of Modern Landscapes*, ed. Jean-Louis Cohen (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 2013), 199.

⁷⁶² MAE AP 64/2. Don fait par la ville de Triberg. Gouvernement Militaire de la Zone Française d'Occupation, Direction générale des Affaires administratives, Direction de l'Intérieur et des Cultes. Rapport à Monsieur l'Administrateur Général Adjoint pour le Gouvernement Militaire de la Zone Française d'Occupation, no date.

⁷⁶³ SHD 11 P 165. 10e Division d'Infanterie, Etat-Major, 2e Bureau, Compte-Rendu Hebdomadaire No 22, December 21, 1945: "montre une réelle sympathie à l'occasion de naissances d'enfants français ou de décès de militaires (secours en nature, couronnes de fleurs etc...)"

⁷⁶⁴ SHD 11 P 165. 10e Division d'Infanterie, 2e Bureau, Bulletins Hebdomadaires de Renseignements, Juillet-Décembre 1945. 10e Division d'Infanterie, 2e Bureau, Etat-Major, Compte Rendu de renseignements Hebdomadaires, July 29, 1945, 2.

⁷⁶⁵ SHD Gendarmerie 2007 ZM 1 / 209 369. FFA Section Mayence. Gendarmerie d'occupation, 1ere Légion, Compagnie de Hesse-Palatinat, section de Mayence. Plan de Synthèse, Période du 10 Novembre au 10 Décembre,

case of Triberg, the reconciliation efforts went too far when one local town had organized a wine reception in honor of the French national holiday. The local commander declined the invitation.⁷⁶⁶

Some Rhinelanders thought that the evacuation of the Rhineland in 1930 had been a catastrophe, the intelligence service of the French army in the Rhineland and Hessen-Nassau reported in the summer of 1945.⁷⁶⁷ Local elites who had lived in occupied Rhineland in the interwar period wished the French had never left. A high-ranked citizen of Mainz told a French member of the military government: “[W]hat a pity you did not stay after 1929! Mainz would now be as French as Strasbourg!”⁷⁶⁸ Others recalled the longer history of the close ties of the left bank of the Rhine to France. A letter addressed to the general of the 2nd Infantry Division stationed in the Rhineland in July 1945, shortly after the French troops had taken the region from the Americans, recalled a long French presence on the left bank of the Rhine. The letter writers, who chose to remain anonymous, expressed their wish to see the Palatinate be re-incorporated into France as the *département Mont-Tonnerre*, named after one of four départements on the same territory during the revolutionary period, when the entire left bank of the Rhine had been part of the French Republic. During the 1920s and 30s, German nationalists accused the Palatins of being “half-French” anyway, the group professed. Therefore, in 1945 after the collapse of the Third Reich and the renewed French presence on the Rhine, the time seemed right to annex the Palatinate to France.⁷⁶⁹

Separatism 2.0

It was the former separatists, in particular, who welcomed in 1945 the return of the French authorities because the latter had supported their diverse interwar efforts to gain more autonomy from Prussia and Bavaria. Already in the 1920s, “Separatism” had been an umbrella term incorporating a variety of political goals ranging from a complete separation of the Rhineland and its annexation to France to a mere loose affiliation with Prussia or Bavaria within the German nation state. The former separatists hoped for a renewed backing of their aspirations now that Germany was in a similar – if not more promising – situation for Rhenish and Palatine autonomy than in the 1920s, when non-occupied Germany fiercely fought against them.⁷⁷⁰ Mayor Bechtel of Winden, a small town south of Landau in the Palatinate, who held office between 1923 and 1933 and again from 1945 onwards, had already voiced his support for a

Mainz, December 14, 1945, 2: “Les Allemands feignent d’estimer les Français: il faut s’en méfier plus que jamais et na [sic] pas se leurrer sur cette attitude qui ne peut être sincère en raison du caractère de ce peuple.”

⁷⁶⁶ SHD 10 P 314. 2e Corps d’Armée, Etat-Major, 2e Bureau. Bulletins de renseignements 1945 (incomplets), Janv, Février, Mars 1946. Commandement en Chef Français en Allemagne, Commandement Supérieur des Troupes d’Occupation, 2e Corps d’Armée, Etat-Major, 2e Bureau. Rapport Hebdomadaire No 9, July 21, 1945.

⁷⁶⁷ SHD 11 P 165. 10e Division d’Infanterie, 2e Bureau, Bulletins Hebdomadaires de Renseignements, Juillet-Décembre 1945. 10e Division d’Infanterie, 2e Bureau, Etat-Major, Compte Rendu de renseignements Hebdomadaires, July 29, 1945, 2.

⁷⁶⁸ MAE 1 RP 1804/1. Université de Mayence: historique, organisation intérieure, statuts (1945-1949). Note au sujet de la réouverture de l’Université de Mayence, no date, 2: “[Q]uel dommage qu’après 1929, vous ne soyez pas restés! Mayence serait maintenant aussi français que Strasbourg!”

⁷⁶⁹ SHD 10 P 314. 2e Corps d’Armée, Etat-Major, 2e Bureau. Bulletins de renseignements 1945 (incomplets), Janv, Février, Mars 1946. Commandement en Chef Français en Allemagne, Commandement Supérieur des Troupes d’Occupation, 2e Corps d’Armée, Etat-Major, 2e Bureau. Rapport Hebdomadaire No 9, July 21, 1945, Annexe No 1: Opinion d’un Rhénan: “demi-français.”

⁷⁷⁰ MAE AP 59. Particularisme Palatin: Notes de la Sûreté (1947-1948). Note d’Information, Traduction d’un article de presse publié en zone américaine au sujet des mouvements autonomistes en Rhénanie-Palatinat, November 17, 1946.

French annexation of the Palatinate in the interwar period. Convinced that 70% of his town were willing to become French citizens, he told the local French security officer that he hoped the annexation of the Palatinate would come true this time: “I want to live to see that.”⁷⁷¹

Prominent figures of the interwar separatist movement had high hopes for the renewed French support of their movement. When he returned to Germany after twenty years in exile in 1945, Adolf Bley, who had taken over the government of the autonomous Palatinate after the assassination of Heinz-Orbis in 1924, contacted those members of the occupying forces with whom he had worked during the interwar occupation.⁷⁷² First, he reached out to Francis Thiallet, who had been at the Rhineland Commission in Koblenz during the 1924 separatist uprising in Speyer and had been responsible for monitoring the separatist activities. Then, Bley contacted Lieutenant-Colonel Magniez, stationed in Speyer in the 1920s under General de Metz, one of the supporters of the separatist movements in the ranks of the French army. In 1945, both, Magniez and Thiallet, had returned to the Palatinate, Thiallet as civilian administrator of Neustadt and Magniez as head of the administrative affairs in the same town.⁷⁷³

The sons of separatists took over their fathers’ cause and tried to build new movements to promote various forms of autonomy for the Rhineland and Palatinate. For instance, Oswald Oehmen was the son of Theodor Oehmen, sociologist and wine merchant in Koblenz, who had been a close confidant of Dorten’s and was shortly minister for supply in Dorten’s Rhenish Republic in 1923. In 1945, the junior Oehmen founded the “Rheinische Volksbewegung” (Rhenish people’s movement) to rally the former separatists and to pursue the politics of his father. He was convinced that the downfall of the Third Reich has proven them right. Leaflets distributed by Oehmen articulated clearly the hope to finally achieve the recognition that he, his father, and the Rhenish movement as a whole had fought and been persecuted for by his compatriots:⁷⁷⁴

Those who say that the followers of the “Rhenish movement of 1919/1923” had at the time wanted to sell off the Rhineland to France parrot thoughtlessly the lie invented by the Prussian propaganda. We could not counter this lie until this day because the Rhinelanders did not get the opportunity to express their views. The Rhinelanders were silenced, ostracized, and their livelihood destroyed, well-known Prussian strategies! Only today, we can openly express the truth. [...] the federalists were foresighted men, they assessed the situation correctly. Today, their idea has become common knowledge. [...]

⁷⁷¹ MAE AP 59. Enveloppe réservée. Caisse 228, Carton No 21, Dossier 39. Note d’Information. Opinion d’un maire allemand sur le rattachement éventuel du Palatinat à la France, October 19, 1946: “Ich will das noch erleben.”

⁷⁷² MAE AP 59. Enveloppe réservée. Caisse 228, Carton No 21, Dossier 39. Gouvernement Militaire de la Zone Française d’Occupation, Délégation Supérieure des Provinces de Hesse et Palatinat, Secrétariat Général. Le Général Bouley Gouverneur Militaire de Hesse-Palatinat to Monsieur l’Administrateur Général Adjoint pour le Gouvernement Militaire de la Zone Française d’Occupation, Direction des Affaires Administratives, Direction de l’Intérieur, Baden-Baden, Objet: Renseignements sur Monsieur Bley, Adolf, January 8, 1946.

⁷⁷³ See Hans-Jürgen Wünschel, “Der Separatismus in der Pfalz nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg (1945-1947)” (PhD diss., University of Heidelberg, 1974), 64-66 and Helmut Gembries, *Verwaltung und Politik in der besetzten Pfalz zur Zeit der Weimarer Republik* (Kaiserslautern: Bezirksverband Pfalz Inst. f. pfälz. Geschichte, 1992), 283. See also Timo Leszinski, “Separatismus in der Pfalz nach den beiden Weltkriegen - ein Vergleich” (MA thesis, University of Mainz, 2004). I would like to thank Timo Leszinski for sharing his MA thesis with me.

⁷⁷⁴ MAE 1 RP 1893/3. Délégation du District de Trèves, Service Politique. Le Commissaire de la Sûreté Pohl, Chef du District de Trèves, to Monsieur le Contrôleur Régional de la Sûreté à Coblenz, Objet: Venue prochaine à Trèves du nommé Ohmen, Oswald, organisateur de la “Rheinische Volkspartei,” August 21, 1946.

THEIR IDEA, THE “RHENISH MOVEMENT OF 1919/1923” HAS WON, PRUSSIA AND THE UNITARISTS HAVE SURRENDERED UNCONDITIONALLY.⁷⁷⁵

The separatist movement after 1945 was smaller than the one in the interwar period. Its many organizations gathered relatively few members: The “Union des Amis de la Littérature Française” of Pirmasens gathered 100 members, the Union des Amis de la France had 400 members mostly in the region of Landau and Kaiserslautern, the “Pfälzische Volksbewegung” assembled 3000 members. The many names of separatist associations however disguise the fact that the same few persons led those associations.⁷⁷⁶

French indecision to support a renewed separatist movement

The French army was divided about the capacity of the former separatists to revive regional separatist movements.⁷⁷⁷ Some supported a revival of the interwar idea to detach the Rhineland from Germany. In the summer of 1945, French military security reported that numerous officers of the French army “seemed to be charged to campaign for an independent *Rheinbund*,” or Rhenish confederation, with close ties to France.⁷⁷⁸ At that time, when the new German borders were still under negotiation by the Allies, the French idea of an independent Rhineland or even an annexation of the left bank of the Rhine was on the table for the second time in thirty years.

Even General Koenig was favorable of an independent Rhineland. In a speech as late as 1948, he remembered serving in General Mangin’s regiment in Germany after World War I. According to Koenig, Mangin, a proponent of the Rhenish separatist movement, had instinctively understood the importance of the French presence on the Rhine.⁷⁷⁹ This time, Koenig declared, the French had to help the Rhinelanders to free themselves from Berlin in order to “perpetuate the favorable effects of the French thought and activity in Western Germany.”⁷⁸⁰ The legacy of personal experience with the separatists of the 1920s and the ties with former

⁷⁷⁵ MAE 1 RP 1893/3. Délégation du District de Trèves, Service Politique. Le Commissaire de la Sûreté Pohl, Chef du District de Trèves, to Monsieur le Contrôleur Régional de la Sûreté à Coblenz, Objet: Venue prochaine à Trèves du nommé Ohmen, Oswald, organisateur de la “Rheinische Volkspartei,” August 21, 1946. Annexe: Wer hat gesiegt?: “Jene, die das sagen, die Anhänger der ‘Rheinischen Bewegung von 1919/1923’ hätten damals das Rheinland an Frankreich verschachern wollen, plappern gedankenlos die von der preussischen Propaganda erfundene Lüge nach. Dieser Lüge konnte bis heute nicht entgegengetreten werden, da die Rheinländer keine Gelegenheit mehr hatten, zu Worte zu kommen. Man hatte sie mundtot gemacht, geächtet und ihnen ihre Existenzen zerschlagen, bekannte preussische Methoden! Heute erst kann die Wahrheit erst offen ausgesprochen werden [...] Die Föderalisten waren weitschauende Männer, sie hatten die Lage richtig erkannt. Heute ist ihre Idee Allgemeingut geworden. [...] IHRE IDEE, DIE ‘RHEINISCHE BEWEGUNG VON 1918/1923’ HAT GESIEGT, PREUSSEN UND DIE UNITARISTEN HABEN BEDINGUNGSLOS KAPITULIERT!”

⁷⁷⁶ Timo Leszinski, “Separatismus in der Pfalz nach den beiden Weltkriegen - ein Vergleich” (MA thesis, University of Mainz, 2004), 39-40.

⁷⁷⁷ See Alain Lattard, “Zielkonflikte französischer Besatzungspolitik in Deutschland. Der Streit Laffon-Koenig 1945-1947,” *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* (1991): 14, 20-21.

⁷⁷⁸ SHD 11 P 60. 3e D.I.A., 2e Bureau, Renseignements de la Sécurité Militaire sur l’Allemagne et l’Autriche, Avril-Septembre 1945. Renseignements, Orientation d’esprit des Allemands de la région de Coblenz, August 2, 1945: “paraissent chargés de faire une propagande en faveur d’un RHEINBUND indépendant.” 0044

⁷⁷⁹ For General Mangin’s policy in Germany see Charles Mangin, “Lettres de Rhénanie,” *Revue de Paris* 43/7 (1936): 481-526.

⁷⁸⁰ SHD 3 U 22. Commandement en Chef des Forces Françaises en Allemagne. Revue d’information des troupes françaises en Allemagne 1948-1950. No 33, June 1948, L’inauguration du Général Mangin, 35: “pour perpétuer les heureux effets de la pensée et de l’activité française en Allemagne occidentale.”

collaborators in Germany thus remained strong in the postwar moment. Francis Thiallet, contacted by Bley in 1945, reported in his memoirs an initial conflict with the newly appointed mayor of Speyer. The latter had been an opponent of the separatist movement of the 1920s, whereas Thiallet had protected the separatist movement, the natural ally of the French occupation administration. The fault lines of the past occupation prevailed in the aftermath of World War II, and Thiallet as well as some of his colleagues who had witnessed the separatist movement of the 1920s still felt loyal towards their old allies.

The movement for a separatist Rhineland or Palatinate after World War II was not very strong in Germany, however, as the French military security found out rather quickly. Intelligence reports in some areas even suggested that there was no separatist movement at all.⁷⁸¹ The persecution of separatists in the 1920s, especially after their failed uprisings, had left its mark on the separatists. “[T]hey need some courage to manifest themselves after the experience of 1923,” an intelligence report of the 2nd Army Corps noted in early 1946.⁷⁸² “They wait for an action on our part,” the same report suggested. But here lay the crux of the matter: the lack of support of the French officials in the army and in the civilian administration.

The French security deemed some former separatists too old to restart the movement. Peter Schons, for instance, who was said to have founded the “Rheinische Volkspartei” with Dorten, Smeets, and Orbis immediately after the First World War, had become a local separatist government official in the district of Daun in the Eifel region in 1924. Following the defeat of the movement in 1924, Schons emigrated to Luxembourg. He returned to Germany in 1931 believing that he would be protected by the London accords amnesty provisions. But threatened with arrest by the Nazis, he went into French exile in January 1934, finding work with the help of members of the Allied Rhineland Commission. In 1945, Schons was eager to return to Germany to resume his fight for an independent Rhineland and found a Rhenish separatist party. Living with his sister in Trier, he tried to resume contacts with former separatists or their sympathizers, both in the ranks of the French administration and in German civil society. But Schons was, according to a local French security officer, too old with his 64 years, “deteriorating intelligence, and bad physical appearance” to revive and lead such a campaign.⁷⁸³ The advanced age of the separatists as an excuse for the lack of French support may well have been a pretext. After all, Konrad Adenauer, who had been involved in the first wave of separatist movement in 1919 as mayor of Cologne and was active in German politics post-1945 would become the first West-German chancellor in 1945 at the age of 68.

The main reason for the hesitant support of the renascent separatist movement in 1945 lay in the French learning process from the interwar period. Their experience led them to refrain from interfering with Rhenish domestic policies regarding separatism. The separatist movement had produced a violent outbreak of German nationalism. Moreover, the failure of the separatist

⁷⁸¹ SHD 11 P 165. 10e Division d’Infanterie, 2e Bureau, Bulletins Hebdomadaires de Renseignements, Juillet-Décembre 1945. 10e Division d’Infanterie, 2e Bureau, Etat-Major, Compte Rendu hebdomadaires de renseignements No 9, September 20, 1945.

⁷⁸² SHD 10 P 314. 2e Corps d’Armée, Etat-Major, 2e Bureau. Bulletins de renseignements 1945 (incomplets), Janv, Février, Mars 1946. Commandement en Chef Français en Allemagne, Commandement Supérieur des Troupes d’Occupation, 2e Corps d’Armée, Etat-Major, 2e Bureau. Rapport Hebdomadaire No 35, January 28, 1946, 1: “[I] leur faut du courage pour se manifester apres les expéieces de 1923.”

⁷⁸³ MAE 1 RP 24/4. Notes de Sûreté. Le Commissaire de la Sûreté Pohl, Chef du District de Trèves to Monsieur l’Administrateur Délégué du District de Trèves. Objet: Renseignement sur un nommé SCHONS, Peter, ex-Kreiskommissar séparatiste, séjournant actuellement à Trèves, August 23, 1946: “diminué intellectuellement, présente mal physiquement.” The report also mentions that the influential local separatists of Trier shared this impression and “preferred to do without [Schons].”

movement in 1923 and 1924 had discredited the authority of the occupier, because a number of French generals and members of the Rhineland Commission in Koblenz had openly supported the separatists. The new French administration in Germany in 1945 considered the open support of the separatists by the French occupation administration in the 1920s to have been their biggest mistake. In 1945, Emile Laffon, head of the civilian government in Baden-Baden, sent out a memorandum to his administrators in the provinces to make known the fundamental principles of the French policies and conduct in Germany. The French administration favored a decentralized Germany, the memorandum asserted. But Laffon added:

The failure of the German separatist movement after the Versailles peace treaty shows that it is illusory to wanting to impose policies from outside upon populations who openly manifest their indifference or their hostility towards these policies that serve too exclusively the interest of a foreign power.⁷⁸⁴

Laffon admonished officials to use caution with regard to the separatists:

Therefore, we have to be careful. If particularistic tendencies reappear, we will support them, but we are careful not to openly support figures who certainly rally behind our cause, but a too visible support would risk to discredit us.⁷⁸⁵

And not only would the support of a separatist movement discredit the occupier, Laffon concluded, it would also lead to an “awakening of nationalism and nazism” and “reawaken for sure the flame of pan-Germanism.”⁷⁸⁶ Thus, Laffon feared a repetition of interwar resistance and a nationalist backlash against separatism, and thus he pre-emptively halted the support of natural German allies in 1945, the nascent separatist movement.

Laffon’s memorandum had severe consequences for the handling of separatist movements on the ground, checking its advance. Jacques Tarbé de Saint Hardouin, French ambassador in Baden and advisor of General Koenig, wrote to Laffon in September 1946 that his service had received numerous requests for work by former separatists. It decided that

⁷⁸⁴ MAE AP 135. Service Information, Directives Politiques, 1945/1946. Commandement en Chef Français en Allemagne. Gouvernement Militaire de la Zone Française d’Occupation. L’Administrateur Général Laffon to Messieurs les Directeurs Généraux, Directeurs et Administrateurs de Pays. Objet: Principes de notre action en Allemagne, do date, 4: “L’échec du mouvement séparatiste allemand, après la paix de Versailles montre combien il est illusoire de vouloir imposer du dehors à des populations qui manifestent ouvertement leur indifférence ou leur hostilité à une politique qui sert de façon trop exclusive les intérêts d’une puissance étrangère.”

⁷⁸⁵ MAE AP 135. Service Information, Directives Politiques, 1945/1946. Commandement en Chef Français en Allemagne. Gouvernement Militaire de la Zone Française d’Occupation. L’Administrateur Général Laffon to Messieurs les Directeurs Généraux, Directeurs et Administrateurs de Pays. Objet: Principes de notre action en Allemagne, do date, 4: “Nous devons donc être prudents. Si des tendances particularistes reparaissent, nous les appuyerons, nous nous garderons de patronner ouvertement des personnalités acquises certes à notre cause, mais qu’un soutien trop voyant risquerait de décréditer.” Note the use of the term “particularistes” (sometimes also “autonomistes”) in Laffon’s memorandum. Separatism or being a separatist had become a swear word after 1923/24 and thus the former separatists themselves as well as some French administrators preferred the seemingly more neutral and less violent term of particularist/autonomist.

⁷⁸⁶ MAE AP 135. Service Information, Directives Politiques, 1945/1946. Commandement en Chef Français en Allemagne. Gouvernement Militaire de la Zone Française d’Occupation. L’Administrateur Général Laffon to Messieurs les Directeurs Généraux, Directeurs et Administrateurs de Pays. Objet: Principes de notre action en Allemagne, do date, 4: “réveil du nationalisme et du nazisme;” “réveillera à coup sûr la flamme pangermaniste.”

in the current circumstances, the former separatists must not – when we risk that their nomination will be interpreted as a proof of our partiality – be placed in positions that are too important or particularly in view.⁷⁸⁷

Employing their allies from the interwar period would thus put them at risk with regard to the majority of Germans, which they assumed were against separatism.⁷⁸⁸

The *Mittelrhein-Kurier*, a local newspaper in Bad-Ems published on November 11, 1945 an article by its editor-in-chief entitled “Full confidence in de Gaulle,” which timidly opted for an alignment of the Rhine with the West, in particular France. The *Secrétariat Général pour les Affaires Allemandes et Autrichiennes* of the Foreign Office in Paris wondered whether this article, which they considered the first to advocate Rhenish separatism in the aftermath of World War II, was a “spontaneous manifestation” or whether local French authorities had encouraged it. If the latter was the case, they considered this instigation “rather harmful” since “[m]ore delicate arguments [and] long-term methods seem to be preferable in order to influence a population that is very little prepared.”⁷⁸⁹ One can wonder whether the German population was prepared for anything after twelve years of Nazi rule and six years of war – but certainly not for the loss of its eastern territories and the expulsion of 12 million Germans from those territories.

Some German separatists from the interwar period agreed with the French army, diplomats, and administrators on the view that mistakes from the interwar period should not be repeated. For them, the main errors arose from the indecisiveness of the political leaders of the separatist movement. “[I]n particular Mister Adenauer, mayor of Cologne, missed the extremely favorable opportunity to generate a clean and definitive decision,” declared Dr. Franz Albert Kramer. A member of the “Committee for the autonomy of Rhineland and Westphalia,” Kramer wrote those lines in an essay titled “The problem of an independent Rhineland” passed on to the intelligence service of the First French army at the end of the war or in the first months of the French occupation.⁷⁹⁰ But to seize the opportunity, now that Nazi Germany lay in ashes and no

⁷⁸⁷ MAE Bonn 290. Conseiller Politique G L’Allemagne: Affaires Intérieures Allemandes. I. Questions Politiques 6) Séparatisme, fédéralisme (1945-1947). Monsieur Tarbé de Saint Hardoin, Ambassadeur de France, Conseiller Politique to Monsieur l’Administrateur Général Laffon, Cabinet. A/s des anciens séparatistes allemand, September 18, 1945: “[d]ans les circonstances actuelles les anciens séparatistes ne doivent pas –lorsqu’ on risquerait de voir interpréter leur nomination comme preuve de partialité de notre part – être investis de situations trop importantes ou particulièrement en vue.”

⁷⁸⁸ MAE Bonn 290. Conseiller Politique G L’Allemagne: Affaires Intérieures Allemandes. I. Questions Politiques 6) Séparatisme, fédéralisme (1945-1947). Monsieur Tarbé de Saint Hardoin, Ambassadeur de France, Conseiller Politique to Monsieur l’Administrateur Général Laffon, Cabinet. A/s des anciens séparatistes allemand, September 18, 1945.

⁷⁸⁹ MAE Bonn 290. Conseiller Politique G L’Allemagne: Affaires Intérieures Allemandes. I. Questions Politiques 6) Séparatisme, fédéralisme (1945-1947). Secrétariat Général pour les Affaires Allemandes et Autrichiennes, Centre d’Etudes et de Documentation. Séparatisme rhénan. “Confiance sans réserves en de Gaulle,” December 3, 1945, 2: “plutôt nuisible” and “[d]es arguments plus fins, des méthodes de longue haleine semblent être préférable pour influencer une population très peu préparée.”

⁷⁹⁰ SHD 1 K 287/1. Papiers d’André Albert. Documents conservés par le sous-lieutenant André Albert, ancien déouté des Deux-Sèvres, Etat-Major de la 1ère Armée Française, 2e Bureau, 1944-1945. Dr. Franz Kramer: Le Problème d’une Rhénanie Indépendante, no date, 19: [E]n particulier M. Adenauer, bourgmestre de Cologne, ont laissé passer l’occasion extrêmement favorable de faire naître une décision nette et définitive.“

Kramer, who signed the essay in his capacity as founder of the “Committee for the autonomy of Rhineland and Westphalia,” was a journalist who had been the Paris correspondent of several German newspapers in the 1920s and 30s, and went into Swiss exile during the Second World War. After the war, he settled in French occupied Koblenz where he was able to get a licence for a newspaper, the *Rheinischer Merkur*, named after the newspaper by the famous journalist Joseph Görres published between 1814 and 1816 in the same town. Kramer’s *Rheinischer Merkur*,

unoccupied territory could pull back the unruly Rhineland like in the interwar period, was difficult, because the Rhenish movement lacked French support.

The other mistake that those “neo separatists” hoped not to repeat concerned the composition of the movement, notably those members of the second wave of separatism in 1923/24. Dorten, Smeets, as well as in particular Mattes, and Heinz-Orbis, and their supporters were considered “political adventurers,” who managed to seduce the French administrators and generals. While the true Rhinelanders had already favored closer ties to France in the 1920s and even desired to become French, the second generation of separatists had betrayed this ideal. An anonymous letter addressed to the French third infantry division in July 1945 stated:

[T]hese individuals like Hein[z]-Orbis and others were men who only wanted to obtain a good position, power, money, and influence. They tied up with the rabble and this scum robbed and looted the well-intentioned population. Such a movement could not succeed.⁷⁹¹

These lines were written by the same committee who wanted to restore the French department Mont-Tonnerre in the aftermath of World War II mentioned above. The argument that foreigners or criminals had infiltrated the goodhearted Rhinelanders is a trope that goes back to the anti-separatist propaganda of the 1920s and was also later picked up by the Nazis.

In the aftermath of the defeat of the movement in the 1920s, “separatist” had become a swear word. The “neoseparatists,” as the proponents of a separatist movement were called in the aftermath of World War II, tried to distance themselves from their predecessors of the 1920s by rejecting the moniker of “separatist.” They preferred the term “autonomist” or “particularist.”⁷⁹² The mistrust within the group divided the resurgent separatist movement – similar to what had happened in the interwar period. The overarching movement was thus in a weak position to press for autonomy.

Separatist disappointment

Not wanting to openly support the separatists, the French military government in some cases halted the political activities of the movement altogether. This was the case in the city of Kaiserslautern in August 1945, where the *Union des Amis de la France* (Union of the friends of France), one of the larger associations in the Rhineland promoting closer ties to France, tried to establish themselves as a political party. The French military government told the *Union des Amis de la France* to dissolve.⁷⁹³ Some separatists decided to join other political parties instead to pursue their politics in a political movement not labeled with the doomed word “separatist.”

a weekly newspaper, with an initial 220,000 copies in 1946 (although due to paper shortage, only 160,000 copies were printed) continued to appear until 2010 promoting a liberal conservative Christian view on cultural and ethical questions. Since 2010, its name changed into *Christ und Welt* as a supplement of the weekly newspaper *Die Zeit*.

⁷⁹¹ SHD 10 P 314. 2e Corps d’Armée, Etat-Major, 2e Bureau. Bulletins de renseignements 1945 (incomplets), Janv, Février, Mars 1946. Commandement en Chef Français en Allemagne, Commandement Supérieur des Troupes d’Occupation, 2e Corps d’Armée, Etat-Major, 2e Bureau. Rapport Hebdomadaire No 9, July 21, 1945, Annexe No 1: Opinion d’un Rhénan, 2: “[C]es individus comme HEIN[Z]-ORBIS et d’autres, n’étaient que des hommes qui voulaient obtenir une bonne place, de la puissance, de l’argent, de l’influence. Ils lièrent partie avec la populace et cette racaille détroussa et pillà la population bien intentionné. Un tel mouvement ne devait pas aboutir.”

⁷⁹² MAE AP 59. Particularisme Palatin: Notes de la Sûreté (1947-1948). Renseignements, Objet: Réactions des milieu francophiles palatins à la suite du discours de Mr BÖGLER, au Landtag de Coblenz, November 13, 1947.

⁷⁹³ MAE 1 RP 2169/4. Gouvernements Militaires de Hesse-Palatinats (détachements E et H): rapports mensuels et hebdomadaires (juillet-novembre 1945). Gouvernement de Hesse-Palatinat – rapport du 6 au 12 août 1945, no date.

This was the case in Mainz, for example, where former separatists joined the *Christlich Soziale Union* in January 1946.⁷⁹⁴

The French army and civilian administration were far more concerned with establishing peace and order in their zone than risking investment in separatist ambitions, fearing an outburst of nationalism and Nazism if they supported the group. The lack of support led to increasing disappointment by the separatists. In 1947, members of the *Pfälzischer Heimatbund*, a movement that had brought together separatists from the 1920s like Adolph Bley, declared that neither the French government in Paris nor the French civilian government in Baden-Baden “had wanted to listen to or support the Palatines who wished to align their province with France or just with the Saar, which was economically unified with France.”⁷⁹⁵ The French “did not look for friends in the Palatinate,” they claimed, and therefore “there is no point in unnecessarily wasting our time.”⁷⁹⁶

Similar were the grievances among the separatists who had been employees of the *Reichsbahn* during the interwar period in French-occupied Trier. Those men had agreed to drive the French trains in the period of passive resistance, thus incurring their fellow Germans’ hatred. Consequently, they had lost their jobs under the Nazi regime. In the aftermath of the war, the advancing American troops reinstated them in their positions, while the French administration did not seem to care about their position. In 1947, a French informant of the local occupation administration in Trier noted:

After more than two years of French occupation, those people, who for the most part have demonstrated long-held francophile sentiments, have the impression to be systematically freezed out and to not have our confidence.⁷⁹⁷

The separatists among the railroad workers thus preferred to keep silent. They did not offer to collaborate with the French officials because the latter did not seem to be interested in mutual cooperation.

In Worms, a separatist movement called *Komitee für ein eigenstaatliches Rheinland* (Committee for a sovereign Rhineland) saw its work paralyzed when the French representative for the domestic policy of the military government told them to stop publishing their monthly organ “Wormser Blatt.” The members of the *Komitee* were surprised at the ban of their organ, “which is demanded by hundreds of people in the Rhenish-Palatine state and which would enable us to win our cause, which also the cause of France.”⁷⁹⁸

⁷⁹⁴ 1 RP 1780. C 4478, Paquet 1. Gouvernement Militaire, Délégation du District de Hesse-Rhénane, Section “Sûreté,” Rapport Mensuel “C” Sûreté, January 31, 1946, 7.

⁷⁹⁵ MAE 1 RP 24/4. Notes de la Sûreté. Renseignements, Objet: Echos des milieu autonomistes du Palatinat, August 17, 1948: “n’avaient voulu écouter ou soutenir les Palatins désirant orienter leur province vers la France, ou simplement vers la Sarre, unie économiquement à la France.”

⁷⁹⁶ MAE 1 RP 24/4. Notes de la Sûreté. Renseignements, Objet: Echos des milieu autonomistes du Palatinat, August 17, 1948: “ne rechercherait pas d’amis en Palatinat” and “ce n’était plus la peine de perdre son temps inutilement.”

⁷⁹⁷ MAE 1 RP 1893/3. Délégation du District de Trèves, Service Politique. Note d’Information, Objet: Mécontentement à l’égard des autorités françaises des anciens séparatistes ou ayant collaboré avec les Français lors de la précédente occupation, April 28, 1948: “Après plus de deux ans d’occupation française ces personnes dont la plupart ont fait preuve de longue date de sentiments francophiles ont l’impression d’être systématiquement tenus à l’écart et de ne pas avoir notre confiance.”

⁷⁹⁸ MAE 1 RP 24/4. Notes de la Sûreté. Note d’Information, Objet: le mouvement séparatiste (*Komitee für ein eigenstaatliches Rheinland*) dans le cercle de Worms – son activité – perspectives, April 13, 1948: “qui est réclamé

In April 1946, Erich Opitz, the head of the *Rheinische Volkspartei*, the Rhenish separatist party based in the British zone, met with a representative of the French consulate in Düsseldorf. Opitz declared that he had to abandon his position as head of the party. The members of the *Rheinische Volkspartei* had decided to change tactics due to the lack of active support by the French administration. Therefore, the party headed towards a federalist approach and decided to remove Opitz from its leadership, because the British occupiers considered him too compromised by virtue of his francophilia.⁷⁹⁹ The British equally feared the violent backlash of the majority of the German population if French occupation administration or the army supported the separatists like in the aftermath of World War I. The *Rheinische Volkspartei* participated in the local elections in Nordrhein-Westfalen between 1947 and 1952, but after its initial successes (7-10% of the votes in the Aachen, Euskirchen, Düren area in 1946 and 1948) they lost momentum and disappeared from the political landscape.⁸⁰⁰ Separatism after the Second World War, longed for by its supporters in the beginning of the occupation, seemed to die out.

The nationalist backlash

In Rheinland-Pfalz, hatred of the separatists inherited from the 1920s was indeed still present in the aftermath of World War II. This antipathy, expressed as a pattern of official action, was much more coordinated than the violence against fraternizing women or “collaborating” administrators discussed earlier. In November 1946, the French intelligence service of the army noted that four German policemen who had been in office since the beginning of the occupation had been dismissed by the newly elected German mayor of Maikammer near Neustadt, “because of their too big devotion to our cause.”⁸⁰¹ Seven months later, in June 1947, the local French weekly report from Mainz noted that the German administration used the passivity of the French military government to “bully as much as possible” the members of separatist movements.⁸⁰²

The people who collaborated with the French occupiers were opportunists, their opponents claimed. Some asserted that collaborators with the French in the postwar separatist movement were in fact the same people who had entered the Nazi party twenty years earlier. Even the French were skeptical about the reasons why the proponents of an independent Rhineland sought to collaborate with them. In the case of the above-mentioned Dr. Franz Albert Kramer, who had written a long pamphlet in support of the autonomy of the Rhineland in early

par des centaines de personnes dans l’Etat Rhéno-Palatin et qui nous permettrait de faire triompher notre cause qui est celle de la France.”

⁷⁹⁹ MAE Bonn 289. Conseiller Politique G L’Allemagne: Affaires Intérieures Allemandes. I. Questions Politiques 1) Partis politiques h) parti populaire rhénan (1946). Consulat Général de France à Düsseldorf. Le Ministre Plénipotentiaire, Chargé du Consulat Général de France to Son Excellence M. de Saint-Hardouin, Ambassadeur de France, Conseiller Politique auprès du Commandant en Chef, September 11, 1946.

⁸⁰⁰ See “Es gibt gar kein Deutschland mehr, Diesen Quatsch Machen wir nicht mit,” *Der Spiegel*, December 6, 1947, 3. See also Gesetz und Verordnungsblatt für das Land Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf, November 19, 1948: Ergebnisse der Wahlen am 17. Oktober 1948, Accessed June 26, 2017.

<https://www.landtag.nrw.de/portal/WWW/dokumentenarchiv/Dokument/XMMGV475.pdf>

⁸⁰¹ SHD 3 U 126. Commandement en Chef Français en Allemagne, Commandement supérieur des troupes d’occupation. Etat-major, 2e Bureau. Bulletin de renseignements, 1945-1946. C.R. de Renseignements 2e B, cdt les Zones d’occupation française et alliées Berlin Allemagne P.G, Troupes d’Occupation du 21.11.1945 au 10.11.1946 (incomplets). Compte-rendu de renseignements No 46, November 15, 1946, 5: “pour leur trop grand dévouement à notre cause.”

⁸⁰² MAE 1 RP 1783/6. C 4478 Paquet 2. District de Hesse-Rhénane, Mayence, Rapports Mensuels, Juin 1947. Affaires Administratives Intérieur/Cultes, Rapport Mensuel, Section A, 1ère partie: Intérieur/Cultes, Chapitre 1, Examen de la situation générale pendant la période écoulée, June 25, 1947: “brimer autant que possible.”

1945, a French informant suspected him of darker ulterior motives (he thought that the autonomy of the Rhineland was a mere first step towards the *Anschluss* of Austria and thus a new rise of a greater Germany). This suspicion was not baseless: Kramer had been responsible for Nazi propaganda in several newspapers of southwest Germany during the war, and he had only recently fled to Switzerland to declare he had joined the resistance against the Nazis.⁸⁰³ The French assumed that he may be hiding his true intentions and attempting to continue fighting for the Nazi cause – or that he might have been a mere opportunist.

Some of the collaborators were indeed opportunists who sought to use their connections with the French occupiers for their own advantage. Generally, in situations of occupation, collaborating with the occupier meant gaining authority and social standing within the local society. “Collaborators” benefitted from the occupiers’ protection and could exercise a measure of borrowed power. In occupied Germany, the fear of French reprisals prevented Germans from questioning the collaborators’ authority or from attacking them. A few Germans profited from this situation, pretending to have preferential connections with the French authorities, and blackmailed their compatriots. Johann Erdweg, for instance, the founding member of the local branch of the separatist group *Rheinische Union* (Rhenish Union) in Trier, was able to con his German compatriots into giving him large sums of money while boasting about his connections to the powerful French security service.⁸⁰⁴ Working in the lucrative construction industry, Erdwig threatened former members of the Nazi party to inform the French security of their identities if they did not comply with his demands.⁸⁰⁵ Because he was a member of a Rhenish separatist movement, the claimed connection to the French authorities seemed natural to the Germans, given their experience from the interwar period, and they lent him money for construction projects that did not exist. Only in the spring of 1947, when the German police started investigations and the main office of *Rheinische Union* in Kaiserslautern intervened to save the Union’s reputation, did Erdwig’s fraudulent practices come to light.⁸⁰⁶ People like Erdwig damaged the already weakened standing of the separatist movement, corroborating the conviction inherited from the interwar period that all separatists were criminals.

Although the separatist movement was not very strong, local committees and groups still continued to propagate their pro-French views and argue for an incorporation into France or at least the Saar. In 1946/47, the Saar was detached from the French zone to become an independent state. The neighboring communities in the Palatinate and downriver in the vicinity of Trier aimed at joining the Saar while forming closer ties with France. Negotiations over the fusion of the French zone with the British and American zones further fed into the general impression that a major shift in borders was underway. In this context, rumors circulated the region. In Landau, for instance, residents heard that the French borders of 1814 would be reestablished in the Palatinate – thus annexing the left bank of the Rhine to the French

⁸⁰³ SHD 11 P 60. 3e D.I.A., 2e Bureau, Renseignements de la Sécurité Militaire sur l’Allemagne et l’Autriche, Avril-Septembre 1945. Renseignements. Les dangers du néo-fascisme, June 12, 1945, 2.

⁸⁰⁴ MAE 1 RP 1893/3. Délégation du District de Trèves, Service Politique. Mouvements séparatistes rhénan. Statistische Abteilung, Herrn Kpt. Lapoujade, Betr. Rheinische Union, Trier, March 13, 1947.

⁸⁰⁵ MAE 1 RP 1893/3. Délégation du District de Trèves, Service Politique. Mouvements séparatistes rhénan. Abschrift Erdweg to Balkenhol, January 3, 1947.

⁸⁰⁶ MAE 1 RP 1893/3. Délégation du District de Trèves, Service Politique. Mouvements séparatistes rhénan. Statistische Abteilung, Herrn Kpt. Lapoujade, Betr. Rheinische Union, Trier, March 13, 1947.

Republic.⁸⁰⁷ Leaflets of separatist splinter groups propagating an independent Rhineland did not ease the concerns of those trying to prevent a detachment of the Rhineland from Germany.

Opposition to the separatists came from the left as well as from the right. The Social-Democrats feared that the French administration would support the separatist endeavors just as they had done in the interwar period. In November 1947, Maxim Kuraner, secretary of the SPD in Rhineland-Palatinate warned his fellow party members of the likelihood that they might “wake up one of these fine days to learn that a coup d’état has taken place and that the separatists are in power.”⁸⁰⁸ A French intelligence memo noted that Germans were suspicious of General Koenig’s attendance at the festivities of November 11, 1947, celebrating the end of World War I in Landau, because it was the second visit to the Palatine city on a special occasion that year.⁸⁰⁹ The SPD spread the rumor in Landau that the real reason for Koenig’s presence was a French manoeuver in aid of the future incorporation of the Palatinate into France.⁸¹⁰

On November 6, 1947, the state parliament of Rhineland-Palatinate based in Koblenz discussed the matter of separatists in the state for the first and only time. The president of the *Landtag*, Peter Altmeier of the Christian-Democrats (CDU), reminded ministers of their oath to the constitution and denounced separatist endeavors as anti-constitutional and “tainted with treason.”⁸¹¹ He insisted on the fact that Rhineland-Palatinate was a lawful entity within Germany, and that a separatist movement was against German and West-European interests. After the conclusion of Altmeier’s speech, all political parties took a stand against separatism and declared their will to remain German. Franz Bögler, head of the Rhenisch-Palatine SPD took a particularly energetic stand against the separatists. He reproached them as an assembly of former Nazis and old separatists from the last occupation, vowing to “answer back with force the separatists’ coup de forces.”⁸¹² He also urged the French military government to take a clear stand against the separatists in the Palatinate. At the end of the session, all four political parties of the *Landtag* (CDU, SPD, FDP, KPD) issued a statement to “condemn ‘with indignation and disgust’ the plots of the separatist traitors.”⁸¹³ They were confident that the French military government would not support these “policies of adventurers’ that could only damage the rapprochement between the peoples of Germany and France.”⁸¹⁴ This call for French and

⁸⁰⁷ MAE AP 59. Particularisme Palatin: Notes de la Sûreté (1947-1948). Note d’Information, Objet: Visées françaises concernant le Palatinat, December 29, 1947.

⁸⁰⁸ MAE AP 59. Particularisme Palatin: Notes de la Sûreté (1947-1948). Renseignements, objet: Les craintes actuelles de mr. Maxim KURANER et du S.P.D. palatin, November 3, 1947, 2: “nous réveiller un beau matin pour apprendre qu’un coup d’Etat a eu lieu et que les séparatistes ont pris le pouvoir.”

⁸⁰⁹ The first visit had been the French national holiday on July 14. MAE AP 59. Particularisme Palatin: Notes de la Sûreté (1947-1948). Note d’Information, Objet: des fêtes du 11 Novembre à Landau, November 13, 1947.

⁸¹⁰ MAE AP 59. Particularisme Palatin: Notes de la Sûreté (1947-1948). Note d’Information, Objet: des fêtes du 11 Novembre à Landau, November 13, 1947.

⁸¹¹ MAE AP 59. Particularisme Palatin: Notes de la Sûreté (1947-1948). Note d’Information, transmission de la Direction de la Sûreté du 20 Novembre 1947. Les incidents à la séance du Landtag de Coblenz le 6 Novembre et leurs repercussions, November 20, 1947, 1: “entachées de trahison.”

⁸¹² MAE AP 59. Particularisme Palatin: Notes de la Sûreté (1947-1948). Note d’Information, transmission de la Direction de la Sûreté du 20 Novembre 1947. Les incidents à la séance du Landtag de Coblenz le 6 Novembre et leurs repercussions, November 20, 1947, 2: “répondre par la force à des coup de forces des séparatistes.”

⁸¹³ MAE AP 59. Particularisme Palatin: Notes de la Sûreté (1947-1948). Note d’Information, transmission de la Direction de la Sûreté du 20 Novembre 1947. Les incidents à la séance du Landtag de Coblenz le 6 Novembre et leurs repercussions, November 20, 1947, 2: “condemnans ‘avec indignation et dégoût’ les machinations des traîtres séparatistes.”

⁸¹⁴ MAE AP 59. Particularisme Palatin: Notes de la Sûreté (1947-1948). Note d’Information, transmission de la Direction de la Sûreté du 20 Novembre 1947. Les incidents à la séance du Landtag de Coblenz le 6 Novembre et

German unity against the separatists is remarkable, because it seized the rhetoric of the separatists – the friends of France – and turned its typical usage on its head to argue for the defense of the unity of the German nation state.⁸¹⁵

The declaration of the *Landtag* caused a stir among the German population. The French intelligence service meticulously reported the public opinion in their zone and in the Palatinate in particular. The majority of the Germans welcomed the declaration of Koblenz. Shortly before the beginning of the London conference, many Germans were glad that they had voiced their opinion about the separatist movement and had made it heard on the national and international level, the French reported.⁸¹⁶ Several groups bought into the assumption that history would have repeated itself, such that the Koblenz declaration had prevented a coup d'état by separatists “to create a *fait accompli*” potentially supported by the French administration – just like in the interwar period.⁸¹⁷ If the coup succeeded, intellectuals in Neustadt and Landau asserted that as Germans “we are once again in the state of self-defense,” confirming French fears of a German nationalist rebellion in their zone.⁸¹⁸ Other groups also alluded to the violent backlash of nationalism and violence against separatists in the 1920. Municipal employees in Ludwigshafen held the opinion that “[o]ne has to proceed with the separatists exactly the same way as after 1918.”⁸¹⁹ Workers from I.G. Farben of Ludwigshafen added that the separatists were just “a handful of louts from 1920.”⁸²⁰ Young Germans between the age of 18 and 30 – always an important indicator for the future orientation of German opinion according to the French intelligence service – shared this view of the separatists as stick-in-the-mud old men and traitors. They declared: “We did not fight in the war to let our country sell out now...”⁸²¹

Although almost all Germans thought the separatists comprised just a handful of people, they worried about the influence they might have on political decision-making. Railway workers in Ludwigshafen suspected members to be “first and foremost government officials and capitalists” who wanted to sell the rest of the zone to France just like the Saar.⁸²² The idea of

leurs repercussions, November 20, 1947, 2: “‘politique d’aventuriers’ qui ne pourraient que nuire au rapprochement entre les peuple français et allemands.”

⁸¹⁵ Which did not even exist, as one information memo of the French military government mentioned, see: MAE 1 RP 24. Note d’Information, Commentaire fait par un Allemand au sujet de la réaction des milieux séparatistes après la parution de la résolution prise par le Landtag le 9.11.1947, no date, 2.

⁸¹⁶ MAE AP 59. Particularisme Palatin: Notes de la Sûreté (1947-1948). Renseignements Objet: Le Palatin moyen devant la Déclaration Anti-Séparatiste du Landtag de Coblenz, November 26, 1947, 2.

⁸¹⁷ MAE AP 59. Particularisme Palatin: Notes de la Sûreté (1947-1948). Renseignements Objet: Le Palatin moyen devant la Déclaration Anti-Séparatiste du Landtag de Coblenz, November 26, 1947, 3: “pour réaliser un fait accompli.”

⁸¹⁸ MAE AP 59. Particularisme Palatin: Notes de la Sûreté (1947-1948). Renseignements Objet: Le Palatin moyen devant la Déclaration Anti-Séparatiste du Landtag de Coblenz, November 26, 1947, 2: “nous sommes à nouveau en état d’auto-défense.”

⁸¹⁹ MAE AP 59. Particularisme Palatin: Notes de la Sûreté (1947-1948). Renseignements Objet: Le Palatin moyen devant la Déclaration Anti-Séparatiste du Landtag de Coblenz, November 26, 1947, 1: “On devrait procéder vis-à-vis les Séparatistes exactement comme après 1918.”

⁸²⁰ MAE AP 59. Particularisme Palatin: Notes de la Sûreté (1947-1948). Renseignements Objet: Le Palatin moyen devant la Déclaration Anti-Séparatiste du Landtag de Coblenz, November 26, 1947, 1: “une poignée de voyous de 1920.”

⁸²¹ MAE AP 59. Particularisme Palatin: Notes de la Sûreté (1947-1948). Renseignements Objet: Le Palatin moyen devant la Déclaration Anti-Séparatiste du Landtag de Coblenz, November 26, 1947, 3: “Nous n’avons pas fait la guerre pour laisser vendre notre pays maintenant...”

⁸²² MAE AP 59. Particularisme Palatin: Notes de la Sûreté (1947-1948). Renseignements Objet: Le Palatin moyen devant la Déclaration Anti-Séparatiste du Landtag de Coblenz, November 26, 1947, 1: “avant tout des fonctionnaires et des capitalistes.”

separatists as opportunists arose again in the wake of the declaration of the *Landtag*, the French intelligence service informed. For example, high ranking party officials of the SPD in Ludwigshafen asserted that there were two groups of separatists. On the one hand, there were those anti-Nazis and anti-militarists who were scared to be victims of a nationalistic backlash after World War II and had been seduced by the French to support the separatist cause. In 1947, the SPD officials declared that those separatists, by default, realized that they had been wrong to support francophilia and separatism, and should be guided back to patriotism. On the other hand, in this telling, there were those who only pretended to be separatists for the French army and administration because they were looking for their own professional or commercial advantage or because they wanted to disguise a Nazi past.⁸²³ The merchants of Landau similarly castigated the separatists as opportunists as well: “[M]any claim to be separatists for the same reasons they had once joined the Nazi party.”⁸²⁴ They asserted that the separatists were opportunists and would hinder the cooperation among French and Germans because they created expectations of a widespread separatist movement that would never materialize.⁸²⁵ The Christian-Democrats (CDU) were less worried about the separatists than the SPD. They trusted the declaration given by the military government of Neustadt to the head of the Palatine CDU, Dr. Ritterspacher, in the spring of 1947: “[T]he French occupying power rejected all separatism and all annexationism and confirmed that it would not support separatist tendencies.”⁸²⁶

The insecurity of the German population and their political parties, especially the Social Democrats, flowed from the opacity of policies with regards to the separatists. As mentioned above, the French agenda was full of U-turns, though marked by only little sympathy for their “natural allies” inherited from the interwar period.⁸²⁷ That sympathy was distinctive among those members of the French army or administration who had served in occupied Germany in the interwar period, men such as like Thiallet, Magniez, and General Koenig. The official policy – supporting the separatists only if they represented a majority – left open the possibility of a renewed alliance with the separatists if they gained momentum. There were indeed signs of a French wish to be able to eventually support the separatists. An intelligence note about Adolf Bley, the former president of the autonomous Rhineland, for instance, classified the 70-year-old as “usable” for French purposes.⁸²⁸ In addition, the French authorities had enabled the former

⁸²³ MAE AP 59. Particularisme Palatin: Notes de la Sûreté (1947-1948). Renseignements Objet: Le Palatin moyen devant la Déclaration Anti-Séparatiste du Landtag de Coblenz, November 26, 1947, 2-3.

⁸²⁴ MAE AP 59. Particularisme Palatin: Notes de la Sûreté (1947-1948). Renseignements Objet: Le Palatin moyen devant la Déclaration Anti-Séparatiste du Landtag de Coblenz, November 26, 1947, 4: “[B]eaucoup se disent séparatistes pour les mêmes raisons que jadis ils sont entrés au Parti Nazi.”

⁸²⁵ MAE AP 59. Particularisme Palatin: Notes de la Sûreté (1947-1948). Renseignements Objet: Le Palatin moyen devant la Déclaration Anti-Séparatiste du Landtag de Coblenz, November 26, 1947, 4.

⁸²⁶ MAE AP 59. Particularisme Palatin: Notes de la Sûreté (1947-1948). Renseignements, Objet: Réactions du CDU palatin à la Protestation du Landtag de Coblenz contre les menées séparatistes, December 8, 1947, 1: “[L]a puissance d’Occupation française rejetait tout séparatisme et tout annexionisme et qu’elle n’appuyait pas les tendances séparatistes.”

⁸²⁷ MAE AP 59. Particularisme Palatin: Notes de la Sûreté (1947-1948). Renseignements, objet: Les craintes actuelles de mr. Maxim KURANER et du S.P.D. palatin, November 3, 1947, 2.

⁸²⁸ MAE AP 59. Enveloppe réservée. Caisse 228, Carton No 21, Dossier 39. Note d’Information. Préfecture du Bas-Rhin Cabinet, Le Préfet du Bas-Rhin à Monsieur le Délégué Supérieur, Chef de l’administration française pour les territoires occupés, Cabinet, Baden-Baden, December 17, 1945: “utilisable.”

separatists to physically enter Germany. Bley, for instance, was issued a laissez-passer to reach the Palatinate by the local secretariat of German and Austrian Affairs of Strasbourg-Metz.⁸²⁹

As a consequence, German disabled veterans compared the issue of Rhenish-Palatine separatism with the situation in wartime France: during the German wartime occupation, they contended, no French separatist movement emerged, both maquisards, that is resisters, and Vichyssois, that is collaborators, agreed on the sanctity of the French territory. The German occupiers had respected this fact and had not sought to divide the territory (a narrative that ignored the case of Alsace-Lorraine and the division between occupied and non-occupied territory). Therefore, the veterans argued, the French administration in occupied Germany should also accept the absence of a widespread separatist movement; otherwise they would lose the support of the population.⁸³⁰ Merchants and businessmen accused the French of having failed to learn from their experience with German nationalism in the interwar period and of “chasing a ghost.”⁸³¹ They were furthermore convinced that the French aimed to weaken Germany economically in the years to come. According to public opinion in Landau, the French could not offer anything to the inhabitants of the Palatinate if it were incorporated into France, and the Palatinate could not exist by itself as a separate state. Therefore, they regarded the dream of a separatist Palatinate as overromanticized, stupid, and egoistic.⁸³²

The Germans could once again rally around a common hatred of separatists, just as they had done after World War I. Contemporaries noted the differences between the 1920s and the aftermath of World War II, particularly the absence of a German administration outside of the occupied territory to coordinate efforts against separatism. Yet the same common enemy helped to rally the inhabitants of the French zone around their new political entities, that is the state of Rhineland-Palatinate and a federal system that would become the West German state in 1949. In a sense, the separatists were therefore doubly undermined: by domestic German alignment against them and by the French fear of a renewed German nationalism like the one in the interwar period. To save face, the French administration around Laffon was willing to abandon their collaborators in occupied Germany, the separatists. A hunt for the separatists seemed to be imminent. In November 1947, denunciatory lists of names of separatists emerged in the *Rhein-Neckar-Zeitung*, a newspaper published under American auspices in Heidelberg, as well as on several walls of buildings in the French zone. Furthermore, a dossier containing the names of separatists was prepared for the minister-president of Rhineland-Pfalz in the aftermath of the declaration of Koblenz. In those cases, the French intelligence service was merely relieved that these lists did not mention the names of members of the French administration and army who sympathized with the movement.⁸³³ They did not defend nor help the separatists.

⁸²⁹ MAE AP 59. Enveloppe réservée. Caisse 228, Carton No 21, Dossier 39. Note d'Information. Préfecture du Bas-Rhin Cabinet, Le Préfet du Bas-Rhin à Monsieur le Délégué Supérieur, Chef de l'administration française pour les territoires occupés, Cabinet, Baden-Baden, December 17, 1945.

⁸³⁰ MAE AP 59. Particularisme Palatin: Notes de la Sûreté (1947-1948). Renseignements Objet: Le Palatin moyen devant la Déclaration Anti-Séparatiste du Landtag de Coblenz, November 26, 1947, 1.

⁸³¹ MAE AP 59. Particularisme Palatin: Notes de la Sûreté (1947-1948). Renseignements Objet: Le Palatin moyen devant la Déclaration Anti-Séparatiste du Landtag de Coblenz, November 26, 1947, 2: “chasse un fantôme.”

⁸³² MAE AP 59. Particularisme Palatin: Notes de la Sûreté (1947-1948). Renseignements Objet: Le Palatin moyen devant la Déclaration Anti-Séparatiste du Landtag de Coblenz, November 26, 1947, 3.

⁸³³ MAE AP 59. Particularisme Palatin: Notes de la Sûreté (1947-1948). Note d'Information, transmission de la Direction de la Sûreté du 20 Novembre 1947. Les incidents à la séance du Landtag de Coblenz le 6 Novembre et leurs repercussions, November 20, 1947, 2.

The discrimination of the separatists

The separatists feared – once again – for their lives. The declaration of Koblenz meant for them a declaration of war. They reported to the French intelligence that Franz Bögler of the SPD, who had been the most outspoken opponent of separatism, had threatened to “reserve a new Pirmasens” to those he called “neo-separatists.”⁸³⁴ The reference to the killings of separatists in 1924 led the francophiles and separatists to again seek refuge with the occupying French.⁸³⁵ Several supporters of the separatist movement asked the French security services to take them into protective custody – just like in 1930. On November 12, 1947, six days after the declaration of the state parliament, three separatists of Ludwigshafen, two municipal civil servants and a policeman keeping watch on a factory in nearby Mannheim went to see the local French security officer. They demanded to be taken into custody because they were convinced that imminent dismissal and physical harm awaited them after the declarations of Bögler.⁸³⁶ The *Rheinische Volksbewegung* anticipated attacks in the weeks after the Koblenz declaration and sought to prepare. Options for action included asking for official recognition as a political party from the French military government. If this were impossible, they would seek to place their apartments and families under the protection of the military government. Other possible plans included requesting French citizenship or moving to the Saarland.⁸³⁷ While most of those proposals explored means to flee from a hostile environment in Germany, a resort disturbingly similar to the way interwar francophiles and separatists tried to escape persecution, the separatists still maintained their call for action and distributed leaflets in the Palatinate in the wake of the Koblenz declaration. In Koblenz, for instance, the separatist movement distributed a leaflet to its members and sympathizers calling for an independent Rhineland similar to the Saar, Switzerland and Austria, freed from the Prussia rule that had brought nothing but wars and misery to Rhinelanders.⁸³⁸ However, their effort did not result in momentum and success. Instead, with the consolidation of the federalist political system, and the founding of the Federal Republic of Germany in May 1949, Rhenish and Palatine separatism faded away.

Despite their practical irrelevance, the persecution of separatists and collaborators with the French continued in the form of discrimination. In a situation report of August/September 1949, the military government of Rhineland-Palatinate reported that fewer and fewer Germans came in person to see the military government since the founding of the Federal Republic. Rumors spread that Germans made reprisals against those who worked for the French administration and army.⁸³⁹ And indeed, new incidents occurred where Germans were attacked because of their status as “collaborators.” For instance, in January 1950, a 47-year-old employee of the *Besatzungamt* of Montabaur, the occupation office of the German administration

⁸³⁴ MAE AP 59. Particularisme Palatin: Notes de la Sûreté (1947-1948). Renseignements, Objet: Réactions des milieu francophiles palatins à la suite du discours de Mr BÖGLER, au Landtag de Coblenz, November 13, 1947, 1: “réserver un nouveau Pirmasens.”

⁸³⁵ MAE AP 59. Particularisme Palatin: Notes de la Sûreté (1947-1948). Renseignements, Objet: Réactions des milieu francophiles palatins à la suite du discours de Mr BÖGLER, au Landtag de Coblenz, November 13, 1947, 2.

⁸³⁶ MAE AP 59. Particularisme Palatin: Notes de la Sûreté (1947-1948). Note d’Information: Répercussions dans les milieux séparatistes de la séance du 6 Novembre au Landtag, November 12, 1947.

⁸³⁷ MAE AP 59. Particularisme Palatin: Notes de la Sûreté (1947-1948). Note d’Information a/s d’une réunion des séparatistes rhénans le 26.11.1947 chez le maire de Worms Pfiffleim, KÖRBEL, December 15, 1947, 2.

⁸³⁸ MAE AP 59. Enveloppe réservée. Caisse 228, Carton No 21, Dossier 39. Note d’Information. Tracts du mouvement rhénan, February, 6, 1948.

⁸³⁹ MAE 1 RP 108/1. Cabinet Militaire: correspondance SGM 1947-1949. Rapport sur la Protection et la Conservation du Secret. Mois d’Août et Septembre 1949, 2.

responsible for meeting the demands of the French Military Government, was insulted as *dreckiger Franzosenkopf* (dirty Frenchhead), menaced, and finally beaten by a mob of young Germans at a football match. The attackers shouted: “You work for the French occupiers, you take our furniture, how dare you to show up here.”⁸⁴⁰

In Pirmasens, a woman named Alma Bertzel wrote to the French local administration as late as August 1950 to bring a charge against her neighbor. The neighbor had insulted Ms. Bertzel incessantly, presumably because she had had a French corporal as a subletter for a year and a half. This fact sufficed for the neighbor to call her “French whore,” “Morrocan whore,” “international whore,” and to spread rumors about a venereal disease allegedly contracted by Ms Bertzel’s daughter, supposedly from French soldiers. Ms Bertzel could not help herself but appealed to the French authorities that remained in Germany. The French military government transferred her demand to the gendarmerie. It is unclear if the demand had a sequel, but too often the French army’s hands were tied because they only possessed – since the founding of the Federal Republic – legal authority over conflicts between French soldiers and German civilians, not over those among Germans.⁸⁴¹

In comparison to the threats by former Hitler Youth members and the physical attacks on “collaborators” at the beginning of the occupation, new incidents in the late 1940s and early 1950s revealed a new pattern of persecution targeting the professional careers of German employees of the French administration or army where decision-making power shifted back to the Germans. In this hostile atmosphere, many German employees of the French administration or army, as well as those known to be francophiles and separatists, wondered whether they would find another job after the departure of the French occupiers.⁸⁴² Some individuals encountered this loom problem for a second time: for instance, German journalist and historian, Jaeger, had left Germany in 1930 and become a French citizen. When he returned with his family to Vallendar close to Koblenz after the war, he had high hopes to take over a chair at the university of Mainz, just reopened by the French as their flagship project of cultural diplomacy in Germany. Hettier de Bois Lambert, the governor of Rhineland-Palatinate, however, advised against this appointment given Jaeger’s political attitude: Jaeger’s Rhenish origins made him prone to separatist ideas, and it would not be in the French interest (at least not at this time) if he incited young students to organize a separatist movement.⁸⁴³

Others appealed to the local French administration in order to retain positions endangered by anti-separatist Germans. The vice president of 1. FC Kaiserslautern, one of the most successful soccer clubs of the French zone, asked the military government to help him keep this

⁸⁴⁰ MAE 1 RP 108/2. Cabinet Militaire: correspondance SGM 1949-1950. Note d’Information. Objet: Voies de faits sur un fonctionnaire allemand du Besatzungsamt de Montabaur, Janaury 16, 1950: “tu travailles pour les Français, tu enlèves nos meubles et tu oses encore venir ici.”

⁸⁴¹ MAE 1 RP 2975/5. Affaires particulières traitées par le Cabinet du Délégué de cercle (1947-1950). Alma Bertzel, Pirmasens to Militärregierung z.Hd. von Herrn Kommandanten Ludwig, Betr. Anzeige – Beschwerde, August 10, 1950: “Franzosenhure, Marokkanerhure, Internationalehure.”

⁸⁴² MAE 1 RP 108/1. Cabinet Militaire: correspondance SGM 1947-1949. Rapport Bimestriel, Neustadt, Août et Septembre 1949, October 3, 1949, 2. And MAE 1 RP 108/2. Cabinet Militaire: correspondance SGM 1949-1950. Note d’Information. Objet: Voies de faits sur un fonctionnaire allemand du Besatzungsamt de Montabaur, Janaury 16, 1950. The French for their part were anxious that their German employees would share critical information with their fellow Germans in order to protect themselves of those reprisals.

⁸⁴³ MAE 1 RP 125/3. Enveloppe réservée. Letter to Monsieur de Saint-Hardouin, Conseiller Politique de Monsieur le Général Commandant en Chef Français en Allemagne. Objet: a/s de M. Jaeger, September 4 [year not legible].

position.⁸⁴⁴ He declared that he had already suffered persecution after the departure of the French army in 1930. After the Second World War, the resident again met with discrimination due to his support of the separatists. The executive committee declared that they would rather employ a former Nazi than a separatist.⁸⁴⁵ In July 1949, the monthly report by the local French administration on the city of Mainz mentioned similar forms of discrimination against those Germans who had held positions in the French occupation administration. These persons had trouble finding new jobs in the public and private sector, the report stated. It was easier for purged Nazis to secure new employment than for people who had worked for the French.⁸⁴⁶ The conflict between those Germans who had collaborated with the French occupation administration and those who opposed this collaboration had intensified to such a degree after the founding of the German Federal Republic that the French authorities in Mainz spoke of their presence in Germany as a “guarantee against the civil war.”⁸⁴⁷

Timid support of the French administration

In the late 1940s, the tide of French engagement changed slightly. The administration began to timidly support their collaborators, especially separatists whom they had slowed down at the beginning of the occupation. For a number of those who worked for the French occupation administration, circumstances presented the second or third time facing the loss of their jobs. After the defeat of the separatist movement in 1924, and after the departure of the French armies in 1930, this particular form of social exclusion had caused severe economic problems for francophiles. Therefore, in the late 1940s, the justice department of the French occupation administration together with the local military government of Pirmasens, the capital of the separatist uprisings of 1923/24, took stock of the deprivation of the francophiles' basis of life since the 1920s. In 1950, they went to see the former separatists and asked for calculations of their lost earnings or property damage on account of their separatist endeavor or francophile attitude in the 1920s. After more than twenty-five years, this actuarial project was not easy to achieve, as the local head of the military government in Pirmasens recognized. The suspicion of the locals did not help the venture either. Based on a book, *Pirmasens in der Separatistenzeit* (Pirmasens in the time of separatism), French administrator Ludwig finally managed to identify several members of the separatist movement and to establish a file of the financial loss each of them had endured.⁸⁴⁸ Twenty-six files for former separatists or their relatives entered the dossier. All of them had been involved in the separatist uprising in 1923/24, most of them in Pirmasens. The files meticulously named periods of unemployment as a consequence of their identification as separatists, periods of exiles, forced sales of property and companies, numbers of teeth lost during the uprising, items lost during lootings like typewriters, quilts, suits, and bikes.⁸⁴⁹ Some families had lost their head of household. Anna Mostberger's husband Friedrich, a councilor by

⁸⁴⁴ Five of the eleven players of the German national team that bet Hungary in the soccer world cup in 1954 were players from 1. FC Kaiserslautern: Fritz Walter, Ottmar Walter, Werner Liebrich, Horst Eckel, and Werner Kohlmeyer.

⁸⁴⁵ MAE 1 Bonn 146.

⁸⁴⁶ MAE 1 RP 1787/7. District de Hesse-Rhénane Mayence. Rapports Mensuels, Juillet 1949, 1.

⁸⁴⁷ MAE 1 RP 1787/7. District de Hesse-Rhénane Mayence. Rapports Mensuels, Juin 1949, II. Secretariat Politique, I. Généralités: “garantie contre la guerre civile.”

⁸⁴⁸ MAE 1 RP 2980/3. Séparatistes, Palatins spoliés (1949-1950). Administrateur Ludwig Pirmasens to Monsieur le Gouverneur Délégué pour le Gouvernement Militaire de la Province du Palatinat (Service du Contrôle de la Justice), June 24, 1949. The book he referred to was probably: Oskar Schäfer, *Die Pirmasenser Separatistenzeit 1923/1924* (Pirmasens: Adolf Deil, 1936).

⁸⁴⁹ MAE 1 RP 2980/3. Séparatistes, Palatins spoliés (1949-1950).

training, had been murdered in the Pirmasens' district administration in 1924 while vice-commissioner of the Autonomous Palatine Government. The moral persecution of the family continued until the 1950s, their file stated: son Friedrich Mostberg jun. claimed to have had difficulties finding a job as an apprentice butcher in 1927, complained of attacks by "fanatic nationalists" several times at his home, and recorded that he was still called out as the son of a separatist.⁸⁵⁰

This collection of notices of claims in the early 1950s had much to do with a contemporary debate about the compensations of victims of fascism as well as the failure of separatism due to the collective German realignment against the movement. Between 1946 and 1953, the French administration in Germany, the justice department, and the local French administrations and French embassy received petitions by former separatists demanding help from critical economic duress. Job and social insecurity amid the increasingly hostile climate for those who collaborated with the French occupiers, often combined with the advanced age of the separatists, led these petitioners to seek compensation for the injustice they faced. In the late 1940s, the French authorities reconsidered their attitude towards their old collaborators, the separatists and francophiles from the 1920s. In the early years of the occupation, the French authorities had rather pleased opponents of the separatists for the sake of maintaining French authority and credibility; but the docility of the separatist movement as well as the growth of German nationalism in the late 1940s induced the French to support their old allies. In December 1948, a security officer of the Trier region, where many old separatists resided, suggested that the French stand up for the separatists, because they were more loyal than the purged Nazis.⁸⁵¹ The proofs of the separatists' and francophiles' loyalty towards the French indeed found expression in the French records. For instance, when two French *tirailleurs* beat up the son of a francophile Saarlander in March 1950, the father denied the attack in front of the sensation-seeking German media in order to protect the standing of the French troops.⁸⁵²

An additional basis for the belated French support of the separatists was the French guarantee to protect the separatists and francophiles from German persecution in the 1920s through the London accords of 1924. The files of the Pirmasens separatists collected by the French authorities in the aftermath of World War II show that the amnesties granted in the London accords to protect those Germans who had supported the French authorities in the interwar period had been neglected from the beginning. Germans known as collaborators had difficulty pursuing their careers and saw their property destroyed by an angry mob at the departure of French troops in 1930. To support the compensation claims of the separatists in the aftermath of World War II thus also meant setting the French authorities' record straight and keeping a promise to those who chose to collaborate.⁸⁵³

⁸⁵⁰ MAE 1 RP 2980/3. Séparatistes, Palatins spoliés (1949-1950). Cas particuliers. Mostberger, Anna: "nationalistes fanatiques."

⁸⁵¹ MAE 1 RP 24/4. Notes de la Sûreté. Note d'Information. Objet: Doléances des anciens séparatistes rhénans, December 15, 1948, 2: "l'abandon dans lequel nous laissons nos anciens collaborateurs, nous prive souvent du concours de gens dévoués, qui présenteraient plus de garanties que la plupart des nazies repentis."

⁸⁵² MAE 1 RP 136. Note d'Information a/s Incident à GUMBSWEILER pendant les manoeuvres du 7ème RTA, March 8, 1950.

⁸⁵³ MAE 1 RP 24/4. Notes de la Sûreté. Note d'Information. Objet: Doléances des anciens séparatistes rhénans, December 15, 1948, 2: "[...] le fait de ne pas tenir les engagements pris en 1923 par le gouvernement français nous cause un préjudice moral qui est judicieusement exploité par les partisans de la non-collaboration [...]"

German refusal to compensate separatists as victims of fascism

The German authorities of the early 1950s, however, tried to deny the separatists the status of “victims of fascism” and the payments this status entailed.⁸⁵⁴ Ten cases were brought before court. In all cases, the Rheno-Palatin *Landesamt für Wiedergutmachung* (state office for compensation) had refused to grant the plaintiffs compensation as “victim of fascism.” The trial minutes testify to the nationalist rhetoric against the separatists that reemerged in and solidified the young Federal Republic, although it had been common as early as the interwar occupation.

Among those cases was widow Anne May. Her husband, Georg May, had been the head of a separatist militia in the 1920s and commissioner of the autonomous Palatinate in Speyer in 1923/24. Nicknamed *Bären-May*, he defended his convictions and conduct in a book published in 1929.⁸⁵⁵ Unlike many of his comrades-in-arms, May did not emigrate in the 1920s. However, when the Nazis came to power in 1933, he decided to leave his family, fearing persecution under the National Socialist regime. He sought refuge in the Saarland, which remained under French control at the time. In 1936, during a clandestine visit to his family in Schifferstadt, northeast of Speyer, he was arrested by the Gestapo and sent to Dachau concentration camp on January 21, 1937. May died only a few days later on January 30, 1937. In 1951, May’s widow, who was in economic distress, filed a petition for compensation in accordance with the law on compensation for victims of fascism. She claimed a meager widow’s pension of 150 *Deutsche Mark*. The ministry of finance and reconstruction rejected her petition “because Georg May had not been persecuted due to a respectable political attitude, but exclusively in his capacity as separatist.”⁸⁵⁶ Litigation between widow May and the state of Rhineland-Palatinate followed and lasted through several appeals. The court of last instance, the regional court of appeal in Neustadt, finally rejected May’s petition. The court justified its decision in this way:

The behavior, which led to a discrimination, must have arisen out of a respectable fundamental view on the laws and duties of the individual toward the national community and vice versa. Moreover, this behavior must have been expressed outwardly with words and deeds. Furthermore, the behavior [...] must be suited to contribute to an order that is different and more accomplished than the National Socialist one.⁸⁵⁷

⁸⁵⁴ The separatists were not the only group that had trouble to impose their compensation claims at German courts. The German public as well as the courts were (for financial and moral reasons) reluctant even to compensate the Jewish victims of the Holocaust and were still caught in National Socialist categories with regard to the “gypsies” and homosexual men, for example. See Susanne Zur Nieden, *Unwürdige Opfer: Die Aberkennung von NS-Verfolgten in Berlin 1945 bis 1949* (Berlin: Metropol, 2003). Constantin Goschler, *Wiedergutmachung: Westdeutschland und die Verfolgten des Nationalsozialismus (1945 - 1954)* (München: Oldenbourg, 1992), in particular 87-90, 216, 313.

⁸⁵⁵ Georg May, “*Bären-May*” *der pfälzische Separatist oder Das gute Wollen: Eigene Erlebnisse* (Schifferstadt, 1929).

⁸⁵⁶ MAE 1 RP 24/4. Notes de la Sûreté. Haute Commission Alliée en Allemagne. Commissariat pour le Land Rhénanie-Palatinat, Délégation de la pürovince du Palatinat, Section Politique. Le Délégué du Commissaire pour le Land Rhénanie –Palatinat dans la Province du Palatinat to Monsieur le Gouverneur Commissaire pour le Land Rhénanie-Palatinat Mayence, Service des Affaires Politiques, Neustadt, October 8, 1953. Judgement of the case May, Oberlandesgericht Neustadt, September 23, 1953, 2: “weil Georg May nicht wegen einer achtbaren politischen Haltung sondern ausschliesslich als Separatist verfolgt worden ist.”

⁸⁵⁷ MAE 1 RP 24/4. Notes de la Sûreté. Haute Commission Alliée en Allemagne. Commissariat pour le Land Rhénanie-Palatinat, Délégation de la pürovince du Palatinat, Section Politique. Le Délégué du Commissaire pour le Land Rhénanie –Palatinat dans la Province du Palatinat to Monsieur le Gouverneur Commissaire pour le Land Rhénanie-Palatinat Mayence, Service des Affaires Politiques, Neustadt, October 8, 1953. Judgement of the case May, Oberlandesgericht Neustadt, September 23, 1953, 3: “Das Verhalten, das zu einer Benachteiligung geführt hat,

These criteria did not apply to *Separatistenführer* (separatist leader) May, the court ruled, because he “had been arrested as separatist, however not because he had been an opponent of National Socialism.”⁸⁵⁸ Separatism was, in the eyes of the court, a disqualifying political opinion for victimhood. Even the attempt of widow May’s lawyer to prove that May had given up his separatist leaning after the failed uprising in the 1920s did not help to win the cause. The government’s representative argued that he had never abandoned his views.⁸⁵⁹

In a similar case, Arthur Vögeli of Speyer almost lost his suit against the state of Rhineland-Palatinate for compensation. Vögeli had been stripped of the license for his dairy shop in 1936. The Nazis had determined that “Vögeli, as a former separatist, did not have the good reputation required by law to be possessor of a dairy license.”⁸⁶⁰ While Vögeli did receive the status of “victim of fascism” after the war, he had trouble getting back his shop and his dairy license. The compensation court decided that he had not been victim of discrimination by the fascist regime because he had been a separatist and thus had not fulfilled the requirements to hold the dairy license according to the law of 1930 – prior to the advent of National Socialism. The separatist movement, the court explained, was directed against the German Reich, not against the National Socialist regime, and furthermore, the separatist movement had ceased to exist in 1933. While the court recalled the amnesty of 1924, it affirmed that the majority of the Rhenish population as well as the political parties considered the separatists “enemies of the Reich.”⁸⁶¹ So even if the National Socialists persecuted the former separatists, that treatment came not for being political adversaries of the Nazis but as enemies of the German state. The case was finally settled by a compromise, but not without the intervention of the French authorities: the restitution court of Rastatt composed of French and German members ordered the revision of the initial rejection of Vögeli’s case.⁸⁶²

muss aus einer achtbaren während längerer Zeit betätigten Grundauffassung über die Pflichten und Rechte des Einzelnen gegenüber der staatlichen Gemeinschaft und umgekehrt der staatlichen Gemeinschaft gegenüber dem Einzelnen entsprungen sein. Auch muss dieses so beschaffene Verhalten nach aussen hin in Wort und Tat erkennbar in Erscheinung getreten sein. Ferner muss das Verhalten [...] geeignet sein, einen Beitrag dazu zu leisten, dass eine andere, vollkommener Ordnung als die nationalsozialistische verwirklicht werde.”

⁸⁵⁸ MAE 1 RP 24/4. Notes de la Sûreté. Haute Commission Alliée en Allemagne. Commissariat pour le Land Rhénanie-Palatinat, Délégation de la province du Palatinat, Section Politique. Le Délégué du Commissaire pour le Land Rhénanie –Palatinat dans la Province du Palatinat to Monsieur le Gouverneur Commissaire pour le Land Rhénanie-Palatinat Mayence, Service des Affaires Politiques, Neustadt, October 8, 1953. Judgement of the case May, Oberlandesgericht Neustadt, September 23, 1953, 3: “[...] als Separatist festgenommen wurde, nicht aber weil er Gegner des Nationalsozialismus gewesen wäre.”

⁸⁵⁹ MAE 1 RP 24/4. Notes de la Sûreté. “Haben Ex-Separatisten Ansprüche als OdF? Witwe eines im KZ umgekommenen Ex-Separatisten verklagte Rheinland-Pfalz” *Die Freiheit*, March 12, 1952.

⁸⁶⁰ MAE 1 RP 24/4. Notes de la Sûreté. Gouverneur du Palatinat Brozen-Favreau to Monsieur l’Ambassadeur de France Haut Commissaire de la République Française en Allemagne – Direction Générale des Affaires Politiques Bonn Bad Godesberg. Objet: Jugement rendu par la cour d’appel de Neustadt contre un ancien séparatiste rhénan, May 29, 1953, 1: “Vögeli, comme ancien séparatiste, n’avait pas la bonne reputation requise par la loi, pour être détenteur d’une licence de crémier.”

⁸⁶¹ MAE 1 RP 24/4. Notes de la Sûreté. Gouverneur du Palatinat Brozen-Favreau to Monsieur l’Ambassadeur de France Haut Commissaire de la République Française en Allemagne – Direction Générale des Affaires Politiques Bonn Bad Godesberg. Objet: Jugement rendu par la cour d’appel de Neustadt contre un ancien séparatiste rhénan, May 29, 1953, 2: “ennemis du Reich.”

⁸⁶² MAE 1 RP 24/4. Notes de la Sûreté. Gouverneur du Palatinat Brozen-Favreau to Monsieur l’Ambassadeur de France Haut Commissaire de la République Française en Allemagne – Direction Générale des Affaires Politiques Bonn Bad Godesberg. Objet: Jugement rendu par la cour d’appel de Neustadt contre un ancien séparatiste rhénan, May 29, 1953, 2.

Johann Werwie's compensation claims failed as well. He had been forced to close his grocery store in 1939 because of a lack of customers. Werwie, a railroad secretary in the interwar period, had agreed to work for the French railroads in occupied Rhineland during the passive resistance in order to avoid being expelled to the left bank of the Rhine sharing the fate of hundreds of his compatriots. In 1952, the court refused to grant him compensation. While the court acknowledged the disadvantages he had had to endure, it ruled that

[t]hose can however solely be traced back [...] to the fact that the suitor [Werwie] during the time of the passive resistance took up a post with the French railroad service and thus supported more or less the endeavors that have been at the time called "separatist." It may remain an open question whether the suitor had been indeed an active member of the separatist movement or not. By all means, the population had considered the suitor [...] a supporter of the separatist movement already before 1933 and thus had also already before 1933 disapproved of him in that one steered well clear of his business.⁸⁶³

In Werwie's case, it was not even clear that he had been a separatist. People merely thought of him as separatist before 1933, and that attenuated connection sufficed to deny him compensation.

The refusal to compensate the separatists – or alleged separatists – in the early 1950s for persecution suffered during the National Socialist regime shows the continuous discrimination of separatists and francophiles since the 1920s. It reminded contemporaries of the civil war between collaborators and resisters during and after the German occupation of France during World War II. Oddly, the German nationalists compared themselves to the resisters; the separatists were designated the role of collaborators with the foreign power. In 1951, the Wilhelm Kneipp compensation case came before the court. As a separatist, Kneipp had fled to France in 1930 with the departure of the French troops. Upon his return to Germany in 1933, he was arrested and interned at Dachau concentration camp for thirty months. The court in Kaiserslautern rejected Kneipp's petition for compensation because of his attachment to separatism. The court stated in the closing line of the judicial ruling: "One can merely point to the treatment of the 'collaborators' in France who in many cases experienced a much harder treatment than the suitor."⁸⁶⁴ The courts picked up and reinforced the widespread idea that collaboration was morally wrong and, by extension, the Nazis had done well to punish the separatists. Fighting against collaboration by the separatists thus reframed Germans as heroic resisters – not as Nazis.

⁸⁶³ MAE 1 RP 24/4. Notes de la Sûreté. Der Direktor des Landesamtes für Wiedergutmachung und kontrolliertes Vermögen Rheinland-Pfalz als Vertreter des Landesinteresses to Amtsgericht Wiedergutmachungsausschuss Trier In der Wiedergutmachungssache Werwie, Johann / Land Rheinland-Pfalz, Mainz, June 5, 1952, 2: "[d]iese waren aber allein darauf zurückzuführen, [...] dass der Kläger zur Zeit des passiven Widerstandes in die Dienste der französischen Regiebahn trat und damit die Bestrebungen mehr oder weniger unterstützt hat, die als 'separatistische' damals bezeichnet wurden. Es kann dabei dahingestellt bleiben, ob der Kläger aktives Mitglied der Separatistenbewegung war oder nicht. Auf jeden Fall hat die Bevölkerung schon vor 1933 den Kläger [...] für einen Anhänger des Separatismus gehalten und deswegen auch bereits vor 1933 sich ihm gegenüber ablehnend verhalten, indem man einen Einkauf in seinem Geschäft [...] mied."

⁸⁶⁴ MAE 1 RP 24/4. Notes de la Sûreté. Commission Alliée en Allemagne, Commissariat pour le Land Rhénanie-Palatinat, Délégation de la Province du Palatinat, L'Administrateur Digon, Délégué du Commissaire du Land Rhénanie-Palatinat dans les Cercles de Kaiserslautern to Monsieur le Délégué du Commissaire du Land Rhénanie-Palatinat dans la Province du Palatinat Neustadt, Objet: Mesures discriminatoires prises à l'encontre d'ex-séparatistes par l'Office des Réparations, Kaiserslautern, October 17, 1951: "Es sei nur auf die Behandlung der 'Kollaborateure' in Frankreich hingewiesen, die in zahlreichen Fällen eine viel härtere Behandlung wie der Kläger erfahren haben."

Under this logic, separatists should be thankful that they were not punished as harshly as the collaborators in France. As I have shown in this chapter, however, similar patterns of extra-judicial repression of collaboration (shaving of women, professional degradation) were no less present in post-World War II Germany.

French intervention attempts

The French authorities were furious about the German court decisions. The governor of the Palatinate, Favreau, informed the ambassador in Bonn about what he considered an “abusive interpretation” of the law on restitution for victims of fascism.⁸⁶⁵ Especially in the early 1950s, when many former Nazi judges had resumed their old positions, Favreau complained about the similarities between the judgments of the new Federal Republic and those of the Nazis: “certain German judges do not hesitate to abusively interpret the text of a law using, just as the Nazi judges have done, the “healthy mind of the people” (das gesunde Volksempfinden) as an argument, when in reality they pass over the civil rights.”⁸⁶⁶ Some German groups seconded the French authorities in their criticism of the German judges. For example, the association of victims of Nazism, the *Bund für Freiheit und Recht* (Alliance for Freedom and Rights), assumed that the judgments of the *Landesverband für Wiedergutmachung*, so similar to the Nazi verdicts, were partly due to “the military career of its director.”⁸⁶⁷

There was not much the French authorities could do about the German court decisions. In 1953, when the German court refused to grant compensation to Hans Münch, the justice department of French High Commissioner, André François-Ponçet, intervened. Münch, a 52-year-old disabled man met with repeated denials for compensation as victim of fascism. The German court ruled that Münch did not fall under the category of victims of fascism given that he had decided to join the French Foreign Legion in the interwar period – one of the few opportunities the German separatists had to make a living when they were obliged to leave the Rhineland after the failed separatist uprising in 1923/24.⁸⁶⁸ André François-Ponçet’s justice department thus addressed a letter to the minister-president of Rhineland-Palatinate, Christian-Democrat Peter Altmeier, protesting against the court decision. The French authorities argued that the verdict contravened the German fundamental law (art. 3 (3)) – no person shall be disfavored because of political opinions). The justice department furthermore felt authorized to take action because article 3f of the occupation status allowed them to intervene in order to

⁸⁶⁵ MAE 1 RP 24/4. Notes de la Sûreté. Gouverneur du Palatinat Brozen-Favreau to Monsieur l’Ambassadeur de France Haut Commissaire de la République Française en Allemagne – Direction Générale des Affaires Politiques Bonn Bad Godesberg. Objet: Jugement rendu par la cour d’appel de Neustadt contre un ancien séparatiste rhénan, May 29, 1953, 3: “interprétation abusive.”

⁸⁶⁶ MAE 1 RP 24/4. Notes de la Sûreté. Gouverneur du Palatinat Brozen-Favreau to Monsieur l’Ambassadeur de France Haut Commissaire de la République Française en Allemagne – Direction Générale des Affaires Politiques Bonn Bad Godesberg. Objet: Jugement rendu par la cour d’appel de Neustadt contre un ancien séparatiste rhénan, May 29, 1953, 3: “certains juges allemands n’hésitent pas [...] à interpreter abusivement le texte d’une loi arguant, ainsi que l’ont fait les juges nazis, de la “saine opinion publique” (das gesunde Volksempfinden) lorsqu’il s’agit en vérité de passer par-dessus les droits du citoyen.”

⁸⁶⁷ MAE 1 RP 24/3. Was war “Separatismus? Unverständliche Auffassung des Landesamtes für Wiedergutmachung, no date, 2: “militärischer Werdegang seines Leiters.” 8406 However, the Bund was careful to distinguish between “veritable traitors” and those who merely fought a Prussian “domination of foreign influences” on the Rhineland. The latter group, they argued were quite respectable and incorporated men like chancellor Adenauer. See MAE 1 RP 24/3. Was war “Separatismus? Unverständliche Auffassung des Landesamtes für Wiedergutmachung, no date, 1.

⁸⁶⁸ MAE 1 RP 24/4. Notes de la Sûreté. Le Gouverneur Commissaire pour le Land Rhénanie-Palatinat par délégation, H. Chauchoy, Note to be given to Monsieur Altmeier, Objet: Affaire Münch, October 9, 1953, 2.

protect the implementation of the German basic law.⁸⁶⁹ Chauchoy, the French governor-commissioner of Rhineland-Palatinate, the initiator of the French legal action, had hoped to bring the case in front of the tribunal of Rastatt, the high court of the French zone mostly composed of French judges.⁸⁷⁰ Altmeier, however, contradicted the French petition. He claimed that with the establishment of the Federal Constitutional Court in 1951, the Germans could themselves monitor whether a verdict contradicted the basic law, and Münch's case had not reached that highest level of German court ruling yet. The French initiative therefore violated German sovereignty, Altmeier argued. As such, he did not even want to go into the details of explaining that the Münch case did not violate the principle of equality before the law.⁸⁷¹

With the regained autonomy of the German Federal Republic, the French authorities found their hands tied. If they had been able to discipline German nationalist violence against their collaborators (mayors, women, etc.) during the first years of occupation, this was no longer the case. By the early 1950s, with many separatists facing economic distress, the French authorities recognized that they owed the separatists a debt of gratitude and tried to pay back at least some of this obligation from the interwar period. The head of the political section of the province Palatinate, Eschliman, reported to the governor about the case of the widow May: having lost the legal proceedings against the state Rhineland-Palatinate, May was "in a sad pecuniary situation, according to her, she won't have anything left to pay her daily bread!"⁸⁷² Eschliman suggested "if we are incapable to help her on the legal level – to help her at least on the financial level."⁸⁷³ A few thousand *Deutsche Mark* would help her tackle her most pressing financial needs, he proposed. Moreover, "this gesture would prove to her that France does not abandon her."⁸⁷⁴

While the French authorities allocated a financial aid of only a few thousand *Deutsche Mark*, they did decide to modestly support those former separatists and francophiles refused

⁸⁶⁹ MAE 1 RP 24/4. Notes de la Sûreté. Le Gouverneur Commissaire pour le Land Rhénanie-Palatinat par delegation, H. Chauchoy, Note to be given to Monsieur Altmeier, Objet: Affaire Münch, October 9, 1953, 2.

⁸⁷⁰ MAE 1 RP 24/4. Notes de la Sûreté. Le Gouverneur Commissaire pour le Land Rhénanie-Palatinat par delegation, H. Chauchoy, Note to be given to Monsieur Altmeier, Objet: Affaire Münch, October 9, 1953, 2.

⁸⁷¹ MAE 1 RP 24/4. Notes de la Sûreté. Rheinland-Pfalz, Der Ministerpräsident Altmeier to den hohen Kommissar der französischen Republik in Deutschland, Herrn Botschafter François-Ponçet, Bonn. Betrifft: Antrag der Justizabteilung des französischen Hohen Kommissars auf Aufhebung des in der Sache Münch gegen Rheinland-Pfalz ergangenen Urteils des Landgerichtes Frankenthal vom 28.4.1953, Mainz, November 23, 1953, 2.

⁸⁷² MAE 1 RP 24/4. Notes de la Sûreté. Haute Commission Alliée en Allemagne, Commissariat pour le Land Rhénanie-Palatinat, Délégation de la Province du Palatinat, Section Politique. Le Délégué du Commissaire pour le Land Rhénanie Palatinat dans la Province du Palatinat, Eschlimann, Le Chef de la Section Politique to Monsieur le Gouverneur Commissaire pour le Land Rhénanie-Palatinat Mayence, Service des Affaires Politiques. Objet: Traitement des anciens séparatistes: cas May, Neustadt, October 8, 1953, 2: "une triste situation pécuniaire; selon ses dires en fin de mois, elle n'a même pas de quoi payer son pain!"

⁸⁷³ MAE 1 RP 24/4. Notes de la Sûreté. Haute Commission Alliée en Allemagne, Commissariat pour le Land Rhénanie-Palatinat, Délégation de la Province du Palatinat, Section Politique. Le Délégué du Commissaire pour le Land Rhénanie Palatinat dans la Province du Palatinat, Eschlimann, Le Chef de la Section Politique to Monsieur le Gouverneur Commissaire pour le Land Rhénanie-Palatinat Mayence, Service des Affaires Politiques. Objet: Traitement des anciens séparatistes: cas May, Neustadt, October 8, 1953, 2: "si nous sommes impuissant de l'aider sur le plan juridique – de l'aider au moins sur le plan financier."

⁸⁷⁴ MAE 1 RP 24/4. Notes de la Sûreté. Haute Commission Alliée en Allemagne, Commissariat pour le Land Rhénanie-Palatinat, Délégation de la Province du Palatinat, Section Politique. Le Délégué du Commissaire pour le Land Rhénanie Palatinat dans la Province du Palatinat, Eschlimann, Le Chef de la Section Politique to Monsieur le Gouverneur Commissaire pour le Land Rhénanie-Palatinat Mayence, Service des Affaires Politiques. Objet: Traitement des anciens séparatistes: cas May, Neustadt, October 8, 1953, 2: "ce geste lui prouverait que la France bne l'abandonne pas."

recognition as victims of fascism from the German government. In 1954, the French governor-commissioner of the Palatinate distributed money disguised as Easter presents to ten former separatists or their surviving relatives. Widow May was one of them, receiving a meager amount of 500 *Deutsche Mark*. Münch, Werwie, Vögeli, and Schons were also on the list as addressees of the so-called “Easter action 1954.”⁸⁷⁵

The year 1954 was not an innocent date. It marked the thirtieth anniversary of the separatist uprising of the interwar occupation. German newspapers commemorated it by echoing the negative view of separatists espoused by the courts and reproduced the language of condemnation adopted by judges. For example, on February 12, 1954, exactly thirty years after the storming of the district authority building held by the separatists, the *Pirmasenser Zeitung* used its editorial to call attention to purported treason that separatists had committed as collaborators with the French troops in the interwar period: “Separatists have always been mere chief witnesses of their unfaithfulness vis-à-vis their fatherland.”⁸⁷⁶ The editorial further condemned the Pirmasens uprising attacking the French occupation authorities in the 1920s and in the 1950s:

The deed of Pirmasens was the fiasco of the French expansionist policy, which influential circles in France still advocate for today. We did not hear about people in France having learned from the past.⁸⁷⁷

The *Pirmasenser Zeitung* referred in particular to the question of the Saarland, the new target for anti-separatist rhetoric in the mid-1950s, given the pending referendum on the return of the Saar to Germany. The separatists had only ever built bridges to France and never to Germany, the editorial claimed, and they would thus hinder French and German reconciliation instead of promoting it. If the separatists were not there, it reasoned, the reconciliation between France and Germany would have been achieved already.⁸⁷⁸

At the juncture of the reconciliation efforts between France and Germany and the additional French and German collaboration that was deemed necessary for the construction of a common European market, a shift took place in the meaning of collaboration. The separatists remained traitors of the German fatherland, and their collaboration with the French authorities in the interwar period and after World War II was regarded as the perfidious obstruction of a good, peaceful collaboration between France and Germany as independent nation states.

Another article published in the Speyer edition of the newspaper *Rheinpfalz*, the most widely read newspaper in Rhineland-Palatinate, went even further in its re-interpretation of the separatist movement and glorification of those who had killed separatists in the interwar period. Its author was a teacher at the *Gymnasium* (high school) of Speyer and a local amateur historian, named Kurt Baumann.⁸⁷⁹ In context of the commemoration of the destruction of the autonomous

⁸⁷⁵ MAE 1 RP 24/4. Notes de la Sûreté. Action de Paques 1954, Anciens séparatistes, no date.

⁸⁷⁶ MAE 1 RP 24/3. “Vor 30 Jahren!,” *Pirmasenser Zeitung*, February 12, 1954: “Separatisten sind immer nur Kronzeugen ihrer Untreue gegenüber dem Vaterland gewesen.”

⁸⁷⁷ MAE 1 RP 24/3. “Vor 30 Jahren!,” *Pirmasenser Zeitung*, February 12, 1954: “Die Tat von Pirmasens war das Fiasko der französischen Expansionspolitik, die auch heute noch in sehr einflußreichen Kreisen Frankreichs vertreten wird. Wir haben nicht gehört, daß man in Frankreich Lehren aus der Geschichte gezogen hat.”

⁸⁷⁸ MAE 1 RP 24/3. “Vor 30 Jahren!,” *Pirmasenser Zeitung*, February 12, 1954.

⁸⁷⁹ MAE 1 RP 24/3. Haute Commission Alliée en Allemagne, Commissariat pour le Land Rhénanie-Palatinat, Délégation de la Province du Palatinat, Section Politique. Le Délégué du Commissaire pour l’Etat de Rhénanie Palatinat dans la Province du Palatinat to Monsieur le Ministre Plénipotentiaire, Commissaire pour l’Etat de

Palatine Republic in 1924, Baumann portrayed the right-wing nationalists who killed the separatist Heinz-Orbis in Speyer in January 1924 as heroes. Baumann celebrated two of them in particular, Ferdinand Wiesmann and Franz Hellinger, who were killed during the attack, turning them into martyrs who had fought against the separatist tyranny:

A generation like ours, that has gained from the experiences of the recent past a particular understanding for deeds that limit the power of tyrants, must not forget the men of January 9, 1924.⁸⁸⁰

In his article, Baumann thus reworked the past to compare the separatist uprising in 1923/24 with the Nazi regime – representing both systems as tyranny.

Conclusion

Instead of celebrating past collaboration with French authorities as the beginning of Franco-German reconciliation, profound mistrust of collaboration with the French endured in Germany in the aftermath of the war. Be it as an administrator working with the French military government, a woman who merely housed a French soldier or who had a romantic relationship with a member of the occupying army, or separatists seeking recognition for past suffering and a chance to fulfill their dreams of an independent Rhineland under French control – all were suspect and subject to punishment. German women were suspect by men from both sides: among German men because of their “collaboration” or “cohabitation” with the “enemy;” on the French side because they allegedly spread venereal diseases and therefore undermine the health of French troops. Among the range of German condemned for collaboration, separatists were also the indirect victims of French occupiers who focused on avoiding the mistakes of their interwar occupation and thus refrained from closer cooperation. Moreover, the separatists were the target of German nationalists for whom they provided an enemy to rally against – and to thus rally for the integrity of Germany a moment when it was in danger of decomposition by foreign occupation and shifting borders. This alliance against separatism remained anchored in the Palatine public memory until very recently. For instance, after television reportage and a much criticized publication on the negative memory of separatism in the Palatinate, the city of Speyer finally refrained from the annual wreath laying and upkeep of the memorial to the murderers of the separatist leader Heinz-Orbis. This happened in 2002.⁸⁸¹

Rhénanie-Palatinat Mayence, Service des Affaires Politiques, Service Presse-Information, Objet: Séparatisme au Palatinat, Neustadt, January 14, 1954.

⁸⁸⁰ MAE 1 RP 24/3. Kurt Baumann, “Aus dem Buch der Erinnerung. Hellinger-Wiesmann / 1924 horchte die Welt auf,” *Rheinpfalz* (ed. Speyer), January 8, 1954: “Eine Generation wie die unsrige, die aus den Erlebnissen der jüngsten Vergangenheit heraus wieder ein besonderes Verständnis für Taten gewonnen hat, die der Tyrannenmacht eine Grenze setzen, darf die Männer des 9. Januar 1924 nicht vergessen.”

⁸⁸¹ Wolfgang Kauer, “Denkmal erinnert an Attentat. Steinerner Erinnerung an Ermordung des Separatistenführers am 9. Januar 1924,” *Historischer Verein Speyer*, January 25, 2014, accessed June 28, 2017, <http://historischer-verein-speyer.de/?p=1141>.

IV. Colonial experiences in occupied Germany?

With colonial history booming in the past fifteen years, the question of the colonial dimension of conflicts on European territory has come to the center of attention. In *Hitler's Empire*, for instance, Mark Mazower showed how the Nazis brought colonial practices to the European continent.⁸⁸² Did the French army and civilian administrators of France, one of the two major colonial empires in 1945, use their colonial expertise and power to rule Germany in the aftermath of the war? Recent studies on the French and British occupation zones suggest, that the British and French occupiers of Germany used principles of British 'indirect rule' and the idea of a French 'civilizing mission' to govern and re-educate the Germans after Nazism.⁸⁸³ Those studies focus mainly on structural transfers of colonial policies or continuities of the personnel from the colonial context to the Allied occupation of Germany. These works, however, take a very general approach to colonialism, which does not reflect the differences in colonial rule in the respective colonies and, in the case of the French zone, the particular long relationship between Germans and French on the European continent. This chapter analyzes the colonial dimensions of the French occupation of Germany by looking at different *échelles* to refine the bold picture the recent research has painted of colonialism in occupied Germany. I argue that while colonial anxieties and colonial expertise filtered through the French occupation of Germany, the influence of the long history of mutual occupations means that we cannot understand this occupation strictly within a colonial framework.

One can identify two different colonial dimensions in occupied Germany. The first dimension is the anxiety around the presence of French colonial troops in occupied Germany. Colonial troops implied the memories of the "black shame"-campaign, the racist epithet of the French colonial troops stationed in occupied Rhineland in the interwar period. Moreover, the heads of the French army also feared a subversion by colonial troops whom they considered prone to conspire with the Germans against the French colonial motherland.

The second dimension is the treatment of occupied Germans. Rather than asking whether the French occupation of Germany was or was not a colonial enterprise, which tends to produce bold generalizations, this chapter examines concrete examples of the use (or absence) of colonial references by the historical actors themselves, both on the French and on the German side. It is striking that Allies and Germans alike used references to the employment of colonial ruling strategies in the French zone always to underline French weakness and misguidedness of their rule in Germany.

Colonial troops

The German public in particular had condemned the use of colonial soldiers on European territory in conflicts with France since the Franco-Prussian War.⁸⁸⁴ The presence of French

⁸⁸² Mark Mazower, *Hitler's Empire: How the Nazis Ruled Europe* (New York: Penguin Press, 2009).

⁸⁸³ See Riccarda Torriani, "Nazis into Germans: re-education and democratisation in the British and French occupation zones, 1945-1949," PhD diss., University of Cambridge, 2005 and Riccarda Torriani, "'Des Bédouins particulièrement intelligents?' La pensée coloniale et les occupations française et britannique de l' *Allemagne* (1945-1949), *Histoire & Sociétés. Revue européenne d'histoire sociale* 17 (2006): 56-66. See also for the British zone Camilo Erlichman's dissertation "*Strategies of Rule: Cooperation and Conflict in the British Zone of Germany, 1945-1949*," (PhD diss., University of Edinburgh, 2015).

⁸⁸⁴ See Frank Becker, "'Fremde Soldaten in der Armee des Feindes:' Deutsche Darstellungen der Französischen 'Turko'-Truppe im Krieg von 1870/71," in *Vom Sinn der Feindschaft*, ed. Christian Geulen, Anne von der Heiden,

colonial soldiers in the occupied Rhineland of the interwar period sparked an extensive German press and propaganda campaign accusing black African troops of raping German women and girls on a massive scale. Newspapers and magazines outside of the occupied territories were full of racist caricatures. The French colonial soldiers were represented as over-sexualized, brutal “wild hordes” assaulting innocent white women whose men were not able to protect them from those attacks on their own very soil.⁸⁸⁵ Novels such as Guido Kreutzer’s *Die schwarze Schmach, der Roman des geschändeten Deutschland* (Black Shame, the novel of the violated Germany) published in 1921 helped to coin the term *black shame* and brought the fear of the black soldiers to every German living room.⁸⁸⁶

Even though a contemporary investigation in the summer of 1920 proved that the allegations were unfounded, the German propaganda against black soldiers continued until the departure of the French troops in 1930. A report ordered by General Henry Tureman Allen, U.S. Commissioner in the Inter-Allied Rhineland High Commission, concluded in 1921 that the “alleged abductions, followed by rape, mutilation, murder and concealment of the bodies of the victims, are false and intended for political propaganda.”⁸⁸⁷ General Allen’s report also stated that of the 5,200 French troops from sub-Saharan Africa, all but one regiment from Madagascar had left Germany in 1920, at the height of the so-called “black-shame” campaign.⁸⁸⁸ The remaining colonial soldiers were mostly from Northern Africa, notably from Morocco and Algeria – “Arabs,” as the Allen report stated.⁸⁸⁹ The actual absence of black African troops from

and Burkhard Liebsch (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2000), 167–82 and Christian Koller, “*Von Wilden aller Rassen niedergemetzelt.*” *Die Diskussion um die Verwendung von Kolonialtruppen in Europa zwischen Rassismus, Kolonial- und Militärpolitik (1914-1930)* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2001).

⁸⁸⁵ An extensive research literature deals with the black shame propaganda campaign see for instance Christian Koller, “*Von Wilden aller Rassen niedergemetzelt.*” *Die Diskussion um die Verwendung von Kolonialtruppen in Europa zwischen Rassismus, Kolonial- und Militärpolitik (1914-1930)* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2001) and Jean-Yves Le Naour, *La Honte Noire. L’Allemagne et Les Troupes Coloniales Françaises, 1914-1945* (Paris, 2003). For a specific discussion of the gendered dimension of the black shame propaganda, see Christian Koller, “Feind-Bilder. Rassen- und Geschlechterstereotype in der Kolonialtruppensdiskussion Deutschlands,” in: *Heimat-Front. Militär- und Geschlechterverhältnisse im Zeitalter der Weltkriege* ed. Karen Hagemann and Stefanie Schüler-Springorum (Frankfurt/Main: Campus, 2002), 150-167 and Sandra Maß, *Weißer Helden – Schwarze Krieger. Zur Geschichte kolonialer Männlichkeit in Deutschland 1918-1964* (Köln: Böhlau Verlag, 2006). See also Iris Wigger, *Die “Schwarze Schmach Am Rhein.” Rassistische Diskriminierung zwischen Geschlecht, Klasse, Nation und Rasse* (Münster: Westfälisches Dampfboot, 2007).

⁸⁸⁶ Guido Kreutzer, *Die schwarze Schmach, der Roman des geschändeten Deutschland* (Leipzig: Vogel & Vogel, 1921). For an overview of the German propaganda campaign, see: Peter Collar, *The propaganda war in the Rhineland: Weimar Germany, race and occupation after World War I* (London/New York: I.B. Tauris, 2013).

⁸⁸⁷ “Finds Negro Troops Orderly on Rhine, General Allen Reports Charges Are German Propaganda, Especially for America. 66 Actual Crimes Known, French Authorities Tried Offenders, 28 of Whom Were Convicted and Sentenced,” *New York Times*, February 20, 1921, accessed July 26, 2017, <http://query.nytimes.com/mem/archive-free/pdf?res=9506EEDE113FE432A25753C2A9649C946095D6CF>.

Indeed, a closer look into the local archives of Trier for example reveals that actual crimes did not happen there, women merely felt persecuted by French colonial soldiers flustered by the German propaganda. See Stadtarchiv Trier Tb 32/74 Vergewaltigungen, Überfälle, Notzucht u. Belästigungen durch farb. u. französische Besatzung 1919-1928.

⁸⁸⁸ General Allen’s report stated that the average number of 20,000 soldiers from the French African colonies between January 1919 and June 1920. As Bruno Cabanes has shown in *La Victoire Endeuillée. La sortie de guerre des soldats français (1918-1920)* (Paris: Le Seuil, 2014) the French employed colonial troops in Germany to be able to repatriate the white soldiers, oftentimes fathers who had fought in World War I since 1914.

⁸⁸⁹ “Finds Negro Troops Orderly On Rhine, General Allen Reports Charges Are German Propaganda, Especially for America. 66 Actual Crimes Known, French Authorities Tried Offenders, 28 of Whom Were Convicted and

Germany, however, did not halt the German protests and accusations of crimes committed on German women continued, if to lesser degree after the Locarno Treaty in 1924.⁸⁹⁰

Even after the end of the Rhineland occupation, the black shame propaganda haunted the German public. In 1930, for instance, the head of the municipal archives in Trier published a history of the occupation of Trier in which the “rioting of the French occupation troops” played a prominent role, particularly focusing on various cases of women assaulted by “colored” soldiers.⁸⁹¹ Around the same time, Ernst Martin Schreiber, started to collect archival material about the French occupation of Mainz in order to prepare a book to record the sufferance endured by the *Mainzer*. Schreiber was the head of a so-called *Materialsammelstelle für die Besatzungsgeschichte der Stadt Mainz* (Collection point for material on the history of occupation of the city of Mainz) and collected 130 boxes of source material. The resulting book entitled *Kampf um den Rhein: Der Mittelrhein unter französischer Fremdherrschaft* was published in 1940 – right in time for the war and subsequent occupation in France as a reminder of the “dark times” of the Rhineland occupation.⁸⁹²

In June 1940, when the war with France started, the Nazi propaganda employed the memory of the Rhineland occupation and the use of French colonial soldiers to excite disgust and hatred for the “hereditary enemy” in the West.⁸⁹³ For example, the *Nationalblatt*, the local newspaper of the NSDAP in the district of Trier, published an article on June 3, 1940 during the Battle of France, entitled *Nie mehr schwarze Schmach* (Black shame never again).⁸⁹⁴ Reminding readers of the alleged “violation of Europe” in the Rhineland by “peoples of the Congo,” the *Nationalblatt* stirred up the fears of a renewed invasion of Germany with French colonial soldiers.⁸⁹⁵

his France dreams now as then of crushing Germany. Again, the black regiments were ready to cross the Rhine and to penetrate into Germany, and they were told that they had the calling to get rid of the German barbarism. But in those twenty years, a new idea has risen. The old mistaken belief that all men on the earth are equal is vanishing. The respect for the natural diversity of the Creation, which was reborn in German, gains currency. What we had considered as a strength of our enemies twenty-five years ago, the great number of degenerate [*artfremd*] reserve troops, we now recognize as a sign of their weakness. The people of eighty million Germans is superior to those countries whose supply of national troops [*eigenvölkischer Bestand*] is so low that they can defend their

Sentenced,” *New York Times*, February 20, 1921, accessed July 26, 2017, <http://query.nytimes.com/mem/archive-free/pdf?res=9506EEDE113FE432A25753C2A9649C946095D6CF>.

⁸⁹⁰ The accusations were not restricted to French troops, they also concerned black American soldiers stationed in Germany, see Stadtarchiv Trier, Tb 32/41 Belästigungen u. Bedrohungen durch Besatzungsangehörige 1919-1930.

⁸⁹¹ Gottfried Kantenich, *Trier und das Trierer Land in der Besatzungszeit 1919 - 1930: 12 Jahre unter der Geißel der Fremdherrschaft* (Trier: Volksfreund Verlag, 1930), 49: “Farbige.” <http://www.dilibri.de/ubtr/content/titleinfo/301610>.

⁸⁹² Ernst Martin Schreiber, *Kampf um den Rhein: der Mittelrhein unter französischer Fremdherrschaft* (Mainz: Mainzer Verlag-Anstalt u. Druckerei, 1940).

⁸⁹³ The best study on the French and German hereditary enmity remains Michael Jeismann, *Das Vaterland der Feinde: Studien zum nationalen Feindbegriff und Selbstverständnis in Deutschland und Frankreich, 1792-1918* (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1992).

⁸⁹⁴ Stadtarchiv Trier Tb, 08/057. “Nie mehr schwarze Schmach,” *Nationalblatt*, June 3, 1940.

⁸⁹⁵ Stadtarchiv Trier Tb, 08/057. “Nie mehr schwarze Schmach,” *Nationalblatt*, June 3, 1940: “Schändung Europas” and “Völkerschaften des Kongo.”

standing in Europe merely with the help of other parts of the world. The German army, however, is the guarantor for that the black shame on the Rhine will never return.⁸⁹⁶

Especially during the battle of France, a number of similar articles portrayed the German army as the defender of German women and children against the black colonial troops in the French army that were ready to commit the same atrocities they had allegedly done in the 1920s. As Raffael Scheck has shown, this propaganda was a major reason for the Wehrmacht's massacre of 1500 to 3000 West African soldiers of the French army in the aftermath of the French surrender in 1940.⁸⁹⁷

Four and a half years after their defeat, the First French army was indeed on their way to cross the German border – however very few black soldiers entered German territory in the spring of 1945. Of the 230,000 soldiers of the First French army, which had fought in Italy and southern France, more than fifty percent were *soldats indigènes* from the French colonies. Most of them were from Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco, but there were also troops from sub-Saharan Africa, the *tirailleurs sénégalais*. But the latter, between 15,000 and 20,000 soldiers never set foot on German soil. They were sent back to southern France to be directed to Africa. Given the fact that the *tirailleurs sénégalais* were well trained, experienced fighters, and well equipped (by the Americans), their removal from the front in the fall and winter of 1944 might seem surprising. Even more so because they were replaced by ill-equipped and untrained soldiers from the French Resistance of the Interior. In an article, Claire Miot laid down several reasons for the removal of sub-Saharan colonial soldiers:⁸⁹⁸ One set of explanations had to do with the French army's perception of the inability of their sub-Saharan troops to acclimatize with the European weather conditions during their employment in World War I. Thus, the first reason given for the removal of black soldiers in the fall and winter of 1944 was the cold in Eastern France (the only official reason the French army officers gave for their removal) and the more urgent need for them in the war in Indochina where the climate was supposedly more favorable to the African soldiers. The second reason concerned the reliability of black colonial troops, notably when they entered in contact with white women, and their state of exhaustion after a long war. The rape of Italian women by French colonial soldiers had caused a scandal in 1944, so the repetition of these crimes on German women seemed likely in the minds of the French army officials. Furthermore, the lack of furlough granted to the colonial soldiers became a risk for revolt in the

⁸⁹⁶ Stadtarchiv Trier Tb, 08/057. "Nie mehr schwarze Schmach," *Nationalblatt*, June 3, 1940: "Dieses Frankreich träumt heute und wie damals von der Zerschlagung Deutschlands. Wieder standen die schwarzen Regimente bereit, um über den Rhein in deutsches Land vorzudringen, und man hat ihnen gesagt, daß sie berufen seien, die Barberei der Deutschen zu beseitigen. Aber in diesen zwanzig Jahren ist eine neue Idee auferstanden. Der alte Irrglaube von der Gleichheit aller Menschen ist in der Welt im Vergehen: Die Achtung von der naturgewollten Vielfalt der Schöpfung in Deutschland neu geboren, greift um sich. Was wir vor 25 Jahren noch als eine Stärke unserer Feinde ansahen, die große Zahl artfremder Hilfstruppen, erkennen wir jetzt als ein Zeichen ihrer Schwäche. Das Volk von 80 Millionen Deutschen ist jenen Staaten überlegen, deren eigenvölkischer Bestand so gering ist, daß sie ihren Platz in Europa nur mit Hilfe anderer Erdteile verteidigen können. Die deutsche Wehrmacht aber ist der Garant dafür, daß die schwarze Schmach am Rhein niemals mehr wiederkehrt."

⁸⁹⁷ Raffael Scheck, *Hitlers African victims: the German army massacres of Black French soldiers in 1940* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008). The colonial soldiers were also held in Front-Stalags on the French soil and they were not sent to Germany as the other French prisoners of war, see: Armelle Mabon, *Prisonniers de guerre "indigènes": visages oubliés de la France occupée* (Paris: La Découverte, 2010).

⁸⁹⁸ Claire Miot, "Le Retrait des Tirailleurs Sénégalais de la Première Armée Française en 1944. Hérésie Stratégique, Bricolage Politique ou Conservatisme Colonial?," *Vingtième Siècle. Revue d'Histoire* 125, no. 1 (2015): 77–89, doi:10.3917/ving.125.0077.

eyes of the French military command. The third reason was of political nature: the French Provisional Government under General de Gaulle demanded that the fighters of the French Resistance of the Interior be incorporated into the army that liberated the metropole.⁸⁹⁹ Miot's article focuses on metropolitan France and does not mention the repercussions of this *blanchiment* (whitening) of the French troops for their march into Germany and the subsequent occupation. While the impact of the interwar black shame campaign did not find its way into the French army's written record, it might nevertheless have been an important reason for the decision to ban the sub-Saharan soldiers from entering Germany.⁹⁰⁰ Ultimately, only very few French sub-Saharan soldiers crossed the border to Germany: Only 2000 sub-Saharan soldiers, almost all of them in the service units, entered Germany the spring of 1945. During the occupation, probably not more than a few hundred were present on German soil.⁹⁰¹ But 80,000 North African soldiers were part of the French First army that arrived in Germany in 1945.⁹⁰²

The German civilians in the southwest of the country did not know about the removal of the sub-Saharan troops and many bought into the Nazi propaganda that insisted on the violent behavior of the black colonial troops.⁹⁰³ The French officer and journalist James de Coquet, for instance, who, in 1945, published his experiences during the battle of Germany in a book titled "Nous sommes les occupants" [We are the occupier], described how the German reacted when they saw French colonial troops:

When the local village communities saw the Goumiers [Moroccan indigenous soldiers who served in the French army] arrive, they were struck with panic [...] I have seen women gasping for breath out of terror when they saw that a Goumier entered the cave they were in.⁹⁰⁴

Pierre Lyautey noticed in his account the presence of literature on the "black shame" in German households, which iterated the fears of colonial troops. In a "bourgeois house" in Kandel, near

⁸⁹⁹ The American army was notably suspicious of the French colonial soldiers demanding their exclusion from the troops that liberated Paris. However, they were even more suspicious of the French resistance fighters.

⁹⁰⁰ Karen Adler estimated that one reason given for their removal was that the French wanted to protect their sub-Saharan soldiers from German racism, see Karen H Adler, "Indigènes after Indigènes: post-war France and its North African troops," *European Review of History* 20, no. 3 (2013), 466.

⁹⁰¹ See SHD 10 P 217. État récapitulatif des effectifs ravitaillés à la Première Armée française, 24 janvier 1945. I thank Claire Miot for providing me with this information.

⁹⁰² SHD 3 U 39. CCFFA. Protection du moral psychologique, discipline, 1945-1955: Commandant en Chef Français en Allemagne, Commandant Supérieur des Troupes d'Occupation, Etat-Major 1er Bureau. Le Général d'Armée Koenig, Commandant en Chef Français en Allemagne to Monsieur le Général de Corps de l'Armée, Directeur des P.G. de l'Axe Paris, Objet: Situation des Militaires Nord-Africains des T.O.A. affectés aux Unités de Garde des P.G., March 25, 1947.

⁹⁰³ Dr. Adolf Sauter, head of the chamber of commerce in Freiburg and member of the NSDAP, mentioned the influence on the local population of Nazi propaganda about the particularly violent excesses the Allied soldiers would commit upon arrival in Germany. Sauter mentions the violence of "alliierte Besatzungstruppen" but in the context of the marching into Freiburg of French troops. See Deutsches Tagebucharchiv Emmendingen 848, 1. Dr. Adolf Sauter, Tagebuch 1945-1953, April 26, 1945.

⁹⁰⁴ James de Coquet, *Nous sommes les occupants* (Paris: Fayard, 1945), 107: "Quand les populations d'un village conquis voient arriver les goumiers, elles sont saisies de panique [...] J'ai vu dans des caves des femmes suffoquées de terreur en voyant entrer un goumier." See also Christian Koller, "Von Wilden Aller Rassen niedergemetzelt." *Die Diskussion um die Verwendung von Kolonialtruppen in Europa zwischen Rassismus, Kolonial- und Militärpolitik (1914-1930)* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2001), 359.

Karlsruhe, Lyautey was impressed by the “considerable” library, which contained among other things “propaganda editions against England, against Clémenceau and Poincaré” or “well established relations between the fire in the Palatinate [allusion to the fire at the district authority of Pirmasens in 1923 ending the separatist movement in the Palatinate] and the Senegalese in the Rhineland.”⁹⁰⁵ Lyautey commented those books as “tedious and puerile culture.”⁹⁰⁶

In the spring of 1945, when the French troops set foot on German soil, a high number of rapes committed by both French colonial soldiers and soldiers from metropolitan France were reported in Baden and Württemberg. Karen Adler has estimated that members of the French occupied forces committed more than 4000 rapes between 1945 and 1951, more than half of them committed before August 1945.⁹⁰⁷ She further stated that only 1/3 of the claims for recompensation for children born out of these rapes accused a colonial soldier, two thirds consequently were committed by French soldiers from metropolitan France.⁹⁰⁸ Historian Norman Naimark thus compared the extent of the violence of French troops to the rapes committed by Red Army soldiers in the East.⁹⁰⁹ The violence unleashed when the French troops crossed the Rhine in March 1945 did not help to calm German fears. The French officers had difficulties in containing the violence perpetrated by white and colonial soldiers alike. Considering the thirst for revenge pent-up during four years of war and occupation, some officers merely watched the violence unfold in front of their eyes rather than trying to protect the German civilians.⁹¹⁰ When a German novice timidly complained about the rapes to one French commander, who had been a clerk, the latter merely replied nonchalantly:

- Are you a sister?

She replied: - Not yet.

- Good, so at what stage are you in your noviciate?

- I have been doing [the program] for three years.

- Like I did. That’s alright then.⁹¹¹

⁹⁰⁵ Pierre Lyautey, *Carnets D’un Goumier: Allemagne* (Paris: R. Julliard, 1945), 74-75: “considérable,” “éditions de propagande contre l’Angleterre, contre Clemenceau et Poincaré,” and “des filiations bien établies entre l’incendie du Palatinat et les Sénégalais en Rhénanie.”

⁹⁰⁶ Pierre Lyautey, *Carnets D’un Goumier: Allemagne* (Paris: R. Julliard, 1945), 75: “Culture fatigante et puerile.”

⁹⁰⁷ Karen Adler, “‘Everyone knew how many women had been raped.’ French occupiers and German women after 1945,” *H-France Salon*, Vol. 6, Issue 4, #3. Panel Session at 60th Annual Meetings of the Society for French Historical Studies, April 25, 2014. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v2EXj-SO-xw>.

⁹⁰⁸ Karen Adler, “‘Everyone knew how many women had been raped.’ French occupiers and German women after 1945,” *H-France Salon*, Vol. 6, Issue 4, #3. Panel Session at 60th Annual Meetings of the Society for French Historical Studies, April 25, 2014. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v2EXj-SO-xw>.

⁹⁰⁹ Norman M. Naimark, *The Russians in Germany: A History of the Soviet Zone of Occupation, 1945 - 1949* (Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press, 1997), 106.

⁹¹⁰ There are of course also examples of rigorous action of French officers who shot their own soldiers on the spot when they were found to rape German women. For the rapes on German women after World War II, see Miriam Gebhardt, *Als die Soldaten kamen: die Vergewaltigung deutscher Frauen am Ende des Zweiten Weltkriegs*, Erste Auflage (München: Pantheon, 2016). For the French zone, see Karen Adler, “‘Everyone knew how many women had been raped.’ French occupiers and German women after 1945,” *H-France Salon*, Vol. 6, Issue 4, #3. Panel Session at 60th Annual Meetings of the Society for French Historical Studies, April 25, 2014. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v2EXj-SO-xw>.

⁹¹¹ Pierre Lyautey, *Carnets d’un goumier: Allemagne* (Paris: R. Julliard, 1945), 136:

“- Vous êtes sœur?

Elle répond:

- Pas encore.

- Bon, alors où en êtes-vous de votre noviciat?

The commander thus seemed to wash away the novice's complaints by alluding to the fact that she was not a nun yet, so that raping her was acceptable.

The way the civilians in southwest Germany perceived the advancing French colonial soldiers in 1945 was modeled on the way the German propaganda had portrayed them since the end of World War I. Even if no sub-Saharan soldiers were among the French troops in 1945, the Germans considered the North African troops as "black" and recalled the fear of those troops from the interwar period. Of three "African" soldiers guarding the house her family had to leave because of French quartering, 23-year-old Liselore Schmid of Karlsruhe wrote in her diary: "One of them is a real black Negro."⁹¹² The young girl and her family had heard many stories about rapes committed by the soldiers, which is why her parents told her to stay indoors and hide.⁹¹³ She even decided to wear a wedding ring to protect her from aggressions: "It might be after all a protection against those beasts who want to keep up with the Russians."⁹¹⁴ This diary shows the influence of the Nazi propaganda of "wild hoards" arriving from the East and the West, thus creating a hierarchy among the allied occupiers, with the Red Army and the French colonial troops at the bottom end.⁹¹⁵ In the early days of the occupation, the Germans in the southwest were hoping that American troops would take over – even if they were composed of African-American soldiers.⁹¹⁶ Anything seemed better than the French colonial troops.

The French colonial soldiers stood out from the mass of French occupiers through their exotic outward appearance. On April 24, 1945, Thea Noll-Rittershausen noted the arrival in Freiburg of Spahi troops, who had become infamous in the interwar occupation with their long white and red coats and Arab headgear. Noll-Rittershausen hoped that they would not stay to occupy their town but move on to somewhere else.⁹¹⁷ Liselore Schmid noted in her diary how much she was frightened by a "black" wearing a "red fez" that followed her family stealthily.⁹¹⁸ She also described an encounter with "two blacks" on a forest path, which she perceived as an attempted rape.⁹¹⁹ The colonial soldier grabbed her hands and tried to pull her towards him, so she had to "look into his black-glowing eyes."⁹²⁰ Only the screaming of her mother prevented the rape, she asserted. This encounter narrated in a language that incorporated propagandistic images

- J'ai fait trois années

- C'est comme moi. Alors cela va."

⁹¹² Deutsches Tagebucharchiv Emmendingen 1499. Liselore Schmid, Tagebuch 1945, April 13, 1945, 34-35: "Einer ist ein richtiger schwarzer Neger."

⁹¹³ Deutsches Tagebucharchiv Emmendingen 1499. Liselore Schmid, Tagebuch 1945, April 13, 1945, 37.

⁹¹⁴ Deutsches Tagebucharchiv Emmendingen 1499. Liselore Schmid, Tagebuch 1945, April 15, 1945, 41: "Er ist vielleicht doch ein Schutz gegen diese Bestien, die es den Russen gleichmachen wollen."

⁹¹⁵ See for the "wild hoards" of the interwar occupation Christian Koller, "*Von Wilden Aller Rassen niedergemetzelt.*" *Die Diskussion um die Verwendung von Kolonialtruppen in Europa zwischen Rassismus, Kolonial- und Militärpolitik (1914-1930)* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2001).

⁹¹⁶ Deutsches Tagebucharchiv Emmendingen 1499. Liselore Schmid, Tagebuch 1945, April 25-27, 1945, 48. 3121

⁹¹⁷ Deutsches Tagebucharchiv Emmendingen 1573. Thea Noll-Rittershausen, Tagebuch 1944/45 Freiburg, April 24, 1945. 2989 The Spahis were often portrayed in the accounts of the interwar occupation as particularly frightening, see for example Gottfried Kentenich, *Trier und das Trierer Land in der Besatzungszeit 1919 - 1930: 12 Jahre unter der Geißel der Fremdherrschaft* (Trier: Volksfreund Verlag, 1930), 62.

⁹¹⁸ Deutsches Tagebucharchiv Emmendingen 1499. Liselore Schmid, Tagebuch 1945, May 26, 1945, 68: "ein Schwarzer mit rotem Fes" 3141 Liselore Schmid underlined "Schwarzer" in her original diary, see also the following citations.

⁹¹⁹ Deutsches Tagebucharchiv Emmendingen 1499. Liselore Schmid, Tagebuch 1945, April 23, 1945, 47.

⁹²⁰ Deutsches Tagebucharchiv Emmendingen 1499. Liselore Schmid, Tagebuch 1945, April 23, 1945, 47.

of colonial soldiers (the “black-glowing eyes”) reinforced her suspicion of those soldiers, and she continued to hide in the house out of fear for them. Schmid kept up her wariness even if the behavior of the colonial soldiers did not match her stereotypes. She noticed curiously that the colonial soldiers participated in Christian festivities, such as the Feast of Corpus Christi.⁹²¹ When a Moroccan soldier visited the house, and talked “extremely friendly” with her parents, she stayed “always hidden.”⁹²² In another situation, a colonial soldier (“Schwarzer”) offered her father cigarettes, asserting that the Africans and Germans would become good friends after the end of the war. Instead of feeling pleased about that offer of friendship, which was followed by gifts (three American tins with meat and vegetables), the German girl noted: “My God, things must have come to a pretty pass, when a black has to give us food presents.”⁹²³ The inversion of racial stereotypes of the German propaganda, in which the “Arian” dominated the dark-skinned “subhuman” weighed heavily on the Schmid family: “Maybe we will have to beg the blacks for food,” the Schmid daughter worried.⁹²⁴ Being occupied by colonial soldiers was humiliating to the Germans in the aftermath of World War II, just like in the interwar period.⁹²⁵ Liselore Schmid’s father, a senior civil servant, in particular, was outraged when a colonial soldier gave him some sugar. He tirelessly repeated to his family: “I, the senior civil servant, have to accept presents from a black! They gave me sugar as if I were a camel or a monkey at the zoo.”⁹²⁶

While the Germans expected rapes from African soldiers, they were surprised that the white soldiers equally participated in rapes. An official French report from a tour of inspection in Southwest Germany stated:

In Baden and Würt[t]temberg, one will not very soon forget the violence the French troops committed at their arrival and during the first few months of the occupation. [The people] will forgive more easily the Moroccans, or, at least, they want to forget. But they will not release [from their guilt] the white members of the First French Army [...].⁹²⁷

The German civilians judged the behavior of the French troops occupying them in 1945 through the lens of their experience with French colonial soldiers from the interwar period – or in the case of Baden and Württemberg, which had not been occupied by French troops in the 1920s except for a small bridgehead in Kehl – second hand experience through propaganda. The

⁹²¹ Deutsches Tagebucharchiv Emmendingen 1499. Liselore Schmid, Tagebuch 1945, June 3, 1945, 75.

⁹²² Deutsches Tagebucharchiv Emmendingen 1499. Liselore Schmid, Tagebuch 1945, May 6, 1945, 51.

⁹²³ Deutsches Tagebucharchiv Emmendingen 1499. Liselore Schmid, Tagebuch 1945, April 13, 1945, 35: “Mein Gott, so weit ist es, daß uns ein Schwarzer was zum Essen schenken muß.”

⁹²⁴ Deutsches Tagebucharchiv Emmendingen 1499. Liselore Schmid, Tagebuch 1945, April 13, 1945, 37: “Vielleicht müssen wir bei Schwarzen betteln.”

⁹²⁵ See Sandra Maß, *Weißer Helden – Schwarze Krieger. Zur Geschichte Kolonialer Männlichkeit in Deutschland 1918-1964* (Köln: Böhlau Verlag, 2006).

⁹²⁶ Deutsches Tagebucharchiv Emmendingen 1499. Liselore Schmid, Tagebuch 1945, April 13, 1945, 38: “Ich, der Regierungsdirektor, muß mir von einem Schwarzen etwas schenken lassen! Zucker haben sie mir geschenkt wie einem Kamel oder einem Affen im Zoo.”

⁹²⁷ Archives Sciences Po Paris. Bolotte, Pierre. Dossier 1, Allemagne 1945-1946. Divers documents. Observations faites au cours d’un voyage en BADE et WÜRTEMBERG par le Capitaine R. de NAUROIS entre le 1^{er} février et le 12 février 1946: “On n’oublia pas de sitôt en Bade et Würt[t]temberg les violences auxquelles se sont livrées les Troupes françaises à leur arrivée et pendant les premiers mois de l’occupation. [Le peuple] pardonnera plus facilement aux Marocains ou, du moins, on voudra oublier. Mais on ne tiendra quittes les éléments blancs de la Première Armée [...].”

German civilians in Southwest Germany considered the violence after 1945 worse than the one they had experienced or heard of in the interwar period. The same report noted:

Unfortunately, the performance and the conduct of a great number of soldiers and officers – even still today – leave much to be desired. Our German interlocutors do not hide their astonishment to discover when they entered in contact with the occupation troops a “France” that is completely different from the one they had known after 1918 or even in last couple of years. The French of those past times have given the impression of a relatively disciplined France, hardworking in any case, not very religious but imbued with basic moral principles, a minimum of hierarchy and a normal scale of values. Today, a great number of soldiers and officers – especially low-ranking officers – show themselves to be disobedient, disorderly, capable of all sorts of pillages and the worst misappropriations. “So, what has happened?” they ask. Did France go bad in a few months?⁹²⁸

While the French officer in his report tried to explain the effects of four years of occupation and the liberation as causing the violence, the Germans continued to fear French acts of revenge.⁹²⁹ The fear of African soldiers in particular remained strong. When, in February 1946, rumor spread in the Saar region about a replacement of troops, the Saarlanders feared that colonial troops would arrive in their region.⁹³⁰ Similar worries were expressed in nearby Pirmasens in February, when Spahi troops were moved into the city in February 1946.⁹³¹

The US army was well aware of the German fear of the French troops and the colonial soldiers in particular. They played upon those fears while sharing the German assumptions about colonial troops. A weekly report of the 10th Infantry Division of October 27, 1945 reported the

⁹²⁸ Archives Sciences Po Paris. Bolotte, Pierre. Dossier 1, Allemagne 1945-1946. Divers documents. Observations faites au cours d’un voyage en BADE et WÜRTEMBERG par le Capitaine R. de NAUROIS entre le 1^{er} février et le 12 février 1946: “Malheureusement la tenue et la conduite d’un grand nombre de soldats et d’officiers – aujourd’hui encore – laissent par trop à désirer. Nos interlocuteurs allemands ne cachent pas leur étonnement de découvrir, au contact des Troupes d’occupation une « France » toute différente, disent-ils, de celle qu’ils ont connu après 1918 ou même au cours des dernières années. Les Français de ces époques révolues ont donné l’idée d’une France relativement disciplinée, labourieuse [sic] en tout cas, peu religieuse mais pénétrée des principes moraux élémentaires d’un minimum de hiérarchie et d’une échelle normale des valeurs. Aujourd’hui, un trop grand nombre de soldats et d’officiers – officiers subalternes surtout – se montrent désobéissants, désordonnés, capables de tous pillages et des pires détournements. Que s’est-il donc passé? demande-t-on. La France s’est-elle donc pourrie en quelques mois?”

⁹²⁹ SHD 4 Q 63. Etar-Major de la Défense nationale, 3e section, Affaires allemandes et autrichiennes, 1944-1949. Dossier 8: Politiques d’Occupation en Sarre-Rhénanie 1945-1948. Gouvernement militaire de Metz et de 21e Région Le Général de Corps d’Armée DODY Gouverneur Militaire de Metz, Commandant la 21e Région to M. le Général de Corps d’Armée Commandant le 2e Corps d’Armée, Metz, July 7, 1945.

⁹³⁰ SHD 10 P 314 2e C.A. 2e Bureau, Rapports Hebdomadaires sur l’Allemagne (mai 1945-avril 1945 [sic]) Rapport Hebdomadaire No 36, February 8, 1946, 2: “La relève des Troupes continue à faire l’objet des conversations: Les Sarrois craignent une occupation par des troupes indigènes.” The replacement of white troops by indigenous troops was current practice in the interwar period where white metropolitan men were demobilized quickly whereas the colonial soldiers stayed as well as young unexperienced white French men who had missed to fight in the war and wanted to make their mark as particular soldiers. For the demobilization of French soldiers after World War I, see: Bruno Cabanes, *La Victoire Endeillée. La Sortie de Guerre des Soldats Français 1918-1920* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 2004).

⁹³¹ MAE 1 RP 2225/2. Délégation de cercle de Pirmasens: rapports mensuels (jan-mar 1946). Gouvernement Militaire de la Zone Française d’Occupation. Délégation Supérieure pour le Gouvernement Militaire de Hesse-Palatinate, Cercle de Pirmasens, Rapport Mensuel No 2, Pirmasens, February 28, 1946, 2.

mistrust of the population, who feared uncontrolled looting and rapes by French soldiers incited by the US army: “At our arrival in the zone, the population showed itself very cold and reserved, and seemed to fear the worst: the propaganda by our predecessors announcing generalized pillages and rapes was certainly for many [the cause of this fear].”⁹³² When the predicted violence did not materialize, the population calmed down, abandoned their hostility towards the French soldiers, and merely retreated into passivity. In another case, the American senator James O. Eastland claimed in the American congress that 5,000 German girls and women were driven together in a subway station and raped by French colonial soldiers from West-African during the battle of Stuttgart. The French authorities corrected this accusation by stating that no sub-Saharan soldiers were in the ranks of the French army in Germany and that Stuttgart did not have a subway system.⁹³³ Rapes committed by French soldiers – both from the colonies and from metropolitan France – did happen in occupied Germany, notably before the armistice and in the first year of the French occupation.⁹³⁴ However, those examples show that some of the reports about the violence committed by the French soldiers were exaggerated, as in the case of the alleged rapes in Stuttgart. The Americans were skeptical of the French use of colonial troops in occupied Germany and shared the racist assumptions of the German population, or even incited the German fears of violence committed by French colonial troops.

While the Germans, and even the Allies, were wary of the French troops from North Africa, the French used them to showcase their strength as a colonial empire after four years of occupation and collaboration. Films and photos taken by the French army itself often give prominence to their elegant colonial soldiers, showcasing an intact and powerful French Empire to Allies and Germans, but also to the French in metropolitan France and throughout the empire.

In his account on the conquest of Germany, Pierre Lyautey, the nephew of Marshal Hubert Lyautey, military governor of Morocco and famous supporter of the French colonial project, praised the newly found community of the French Empire after the war. Written during the battle for his comrades in arms, the 3e Algerian Infantry Division and the Moroccan Goumiers, and published in 1945, Lyautey underlined the colonial soldiers’ contribution to conquering Germany as well as their commitment to the motherland. He described one of his soldiers this way: “My Moroccan is very proud to be in Germany. He is cleaner than ever before and now he speaks voluntarily French to better fit to our glory.”⁹³⁵ Lyautey also emphasized that

⁹³² SHD 11 P 165-2. 10e Division d’Infanterie. Bulletins Hebdomadaires de Renseignements Juillet-Décembre 1945. Compte-Rendu Hebdomadaire de Renseignements No 14, October 27, 1945: A notre arrivée dans la Zône, la population s’est montrée très froide et réservée et paraissait craindre le pire: la propagande faite par nos prédécesseurs annonçant le pillage et le viol généralisés y était certainement pour beaucoup [la cause de cette crainte].”

⁹³³ See Christian Koller, “Von Wilden Aller Rassen niedergemetzelt.” *Die Diskussion Um Die Verwendung von Kolonialtruppen in Europa Zwischen Rassismus, Kolonial- Und Militärpolitik (1914-1930)* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2001), 359-360.

⁹³⁴ For the rapes in Germany in 1945 and after, see Miriam Gebhardt, *Als die Soldaten kamen: die Vergewaltigung deutscher Frauen am Ende des Zweiten Weltkriegs*, Erste Auflage (München: Pantheon, 2016). For rapes in the French zone, see Karen Adler, “‘Everyone knew how many women had been raped.’ French occupiers and German women after 1945,” *H-France Salon*, Vol. 6, Issue 4, #3 Panel Session at 60th Annual Meetings of the Society for French Historical Studies, 25 April 2014, accessed December 4, 2017, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v2EXj-SO-xw>.

⁹³⁵ Pierre Lyautey, *Carnets d’un goumier: Allemagne* (Paris: R. Julliard 1945), 89: “[Mon Marroccain] est très fier d’être en Allemagne. Il est plus propre que jamais et maintenant parle volontiers en français pour s’incorporer davantage à notre gloire.”

the colonial soldiers' participation in the battle of Germany and the French victory over Germany patched up the prestige of the motherland in the eyes of their colonial subjects. The latter had deeply suffered through the defeat against Germany in 1940 and the subsequent occupation. When Lyautey's company arrived in the completely destroyed town of Ludwigshafen, he described one of his soldier's reaction to it:

The Mokadem [head of a North African brotherhood] who accompanies me opens his eyes: Mleha, Mleha. 'This is perfect, this is perfect.' He has taken part in all of our battles since Marseille. He has seen Gérardmer, La Bresse, the destroyed Alsatian villages. The sight of the German cities razed to the ground meets his tradition. In the old Morocco, the victorious tribe razed the kasbas of the defeated tribe. Finally, for once he thinks with a satisfied pride, France and her allies know how to fight a war.⁹³⁶

Lyautey thought that the presence of the colonial soldiers should also impress the Germans. He recalled the festivities of Marshal de Lattre de Tassigny at Lake Constance in June 1945 on the occasion of the Sultan of Morocco's visit, one of the most famous examples of the appeal to the French colonial empire during the French occupation of Germany:

The second group of Moroccan tabors lit up with flames [embrasait] one night a Bavarian lake and filled the Germanic forest with chants of a thousand Berbers who danced their traditional Aouache [Berber dance]. Finally, in Lindau, beyond the ally of fire formed by two thousand torches carried by the skirmishers, the Lake Constance lit up in flames as well, echoing the noubas carried by illuminated rafts. Those will be the decisive high points to strike the German imagination. They fulfil the idea of the French grandeur.⁹³⁷

However, as mentioned above, neither the Germans nor the Allies were fond of the French colonial troops. Even French high-ranking army officials were skeptical about their employment. While they were used to portray France's imperial power, heads of the army were concerned that the use of colonial soldiers on German territory would discredit them in the eyes of Allies and arouse the hatred and contempt of the Germans. But the French army's tolerance for violence in the first few months of the French occupation was high and so their critique of the employment of the colonial soldiers also developed around the idea that the colonial soldiers lacked patriotism to use violence purposefully – in contrast to their counterparts from the metropole. A 1945 report on the policies of occupation regarding the Rhenish populations by the General Staff of the French National Defense distinguished between "indigenous" (i.e. colonial)

⁹³⁶ Pierre Lyautey, *Carnets d'un goumier: Allemagne* (Paris: R. Julliard 1945), 84-85: "Le mokadem qui m'accompagne écarquille les yeux: Mleha, Mleha. 'C'est parfait, c'est parfait.' Il a pris part à tous nos combats depuis Marseille. Il a vu Gérardmer, La Bresse, les villages d'Alsace détruits. Le spectacle de villes allemandes rasées répond à sa tradition. Dans le vieux Maroc, la tribu victorieuse rasait les kasbas de la tribu défaite. Enfin, pour une fois songe-t-il avec une fierté satisfaite, la France et ses alliés savent faire la guerre."

⁹³⁷ Pierre Lyautey, *Carnets d'un goumier: Allemagne* (Paris: R. Julliard 1945), 154: "[L]e 2^e groupe de Tabors marocains embrasait une nuit un lac de Bavière et emplissait la forêt germaine des chants d'un millier de berbères dansant leurs aouaches traditionnels. Enfin, à Lindau, au delà de l'allée de feu de deux milliers de torches portées par des tirailleurs, le lac de Constance s'embrasait à son tour, recevant les échos des noubas portées par des radeaux illuminés. Telles seront les apothéoses décidées pour frapper l'imagination allemande. Elles répondent à l'idée de la grandeur française."

soldiers and those who were “French in the strict sense of the word.” His report commented on the problematic use of indigenous soldiers:

We know about the inconveniences of their [the indigenous soldiers] use. The worst are the rapes that are extremely numerous. This is a particularly heavy mistake, even more so because the indigenous [soldier], if one might say so, puts no patriotism to it, and it is for him merely about raping a roumia [a non-Muslim European female]. Moreover, if we don't sort this out, Germans, Allies, and neutral will get hold of those incidents in order to play down the German crimes in France.⁹³⁸

The monthly reports of the French army demonstrate that concerns about rape by colonial soldiers was – as in the interwar occupation – one of the most prominent German complaints in the first year of the occupation. In June 1945, for example, the population of Karlsruhe complained about the general attitude of the French troops, pillages and destructions, and about “some rapes by colonial soldiers.”⁹³⁹ The weekly intelligence report of the 10th Infantry Division noted on October 20, 1945: “Women were said to be attacked at nightfall by armed North Africans in the secluded suburbs of Koblenz.”⁹⁴⁰ Two months later, in December 1945, the monthly report of the military police in Mainz noticed: “Almost all inhabitants complain loudly about the North African soldiers who commit quite often aggressions and attempted rapes of German women.”⁹⁴¹ It is not clear from those weekly reports whether those aggressions indeed happened or if the fear of the colonial soldiers inherited from the interwar period shaped the perceptions. However, the French army officials bought into the German fears and primarily held the colonial soldiers responsible for the violence in the zone. In the district of Mainz, the head of district, Louis Kleinmann, a decorated resistance fighter who was very popular among the German population, suggested in his monthly report in April 1946 that the “presence of colonial troops in the most cultivated centers of the zone” – that is old German towns like Mainz and Worms – would contradict the French cultural policies in occupied Germany.⁹⁴² Gonsenheim, a

⁹³⁸ SHD 4 Q 63. Etat-Major de la Défense nationale, 3e Section, Affaires allemandes et autrichiennes, 1944-1949. Politique d'occupation vis à vis des Populations Rhénanes, April 10, 1945, 3: “On connaît les inconvénients de leur emploi. Les plus graves sont les viols, qui sont excessivement nombreux. Or, c'est là une faute particulièrement lourde, d'autant plus que l'indigène, si l'on peut dire, n'y met pas de patriotisme, et qu'il s'agit pour lui de violer une roumia. De plus, si l'on n'y met bon ordre, Allemands, Alliés et neutres auront vite fait de s'emparer de ces incidents, pour essayer de faire oublier les crimes allemands en France.”

⁹³⁹ SHD 11 P 60. 3e Division d'Infanterie Algérienne, 2e Bureau, Renseignements Février 1944 – Janvier 1946, Renseignements Allemagne. Réactions allemandes devant l'occupation, July 19, 1945: “quelques viols par des indigènes.”

⁹⁴⁰ SHD 11 P 165-2. 10e Division d'Infanterie. Bulletins Hebdomadaires de Renseignements Juillet-Décembre 1945. Compte-Rendu Hebdomadaire de Renseignements No 13, October 20, 1945, 6: “Des femmes auraient été attaquées à la tombée de la nuit par des Nord-Africains armés dans les faubourgs retirés de Coblence.”

⁹⁴¹ SHD Gendarmerie 2007 ZM 1 / 209 369.FFA Section Mayence. Registre No 4 du 29 septembre 1945 au 17 juin 1946. Plan de synthèse, période du 10 décembre 1945 au 10 janvier 1946, January 14, 1946: “[L]a presque totalité des habitants récrimine les soldats Nord-Africains qui commettent assez souvent des aggressions et des tentatives de viols sur les femmes allemandes.”

⁹⁴² MAE 1 RP 1781/5 District de Hesse-Rhénane, Mayence, Rapports Mensuels, Avril 1946. GMZFO Délégation Supérieure de Hesse / Palatinat. Délégation du district de Hesse-Palatinat. Rapport Mensuel, Affaires Administratives.6e partie: Information et Propagande, April 30, 1946: “la présence des troupes coloniales dans les centres les plus cultivés de la zone.”

borough of Mainz held at the time the majority of colonial soldiers in Germany.⁹⁴³ Kleinmann thus opted for a removal of the colonial troops because of their presumed incapability with European high culture sharing the belief of the German population who considered colonial soldiers “uncultivated” and violent.

Another reason the members of the French army and military government mistrusted the colonial soldiers and feared that they would not be loyal to France was the pro-Arab propaganda by Nazi Germany during the war.⁹⁴⁴ Before the colonial soldiers entered the German soil, the Nazi propaganda had distributed leaflets in Arabic, which called for an alliance between Germans and Arabs and were addressed to “Arabic soldiers.” One leaflet the French army officials found near the Alsatian village of Seltz, very close to the Rhine river, underlined how well the North African local population had lived under German occupation during the war. There was enough food and nobody was drafted in the army: “The Germans ended the French colonialism and destroyed the Jewish power,” one leaflet read.⁹⁴⁵ Their situation in the French army was worse, the same German leaflet argued; the Allies had deprived them of their basis of life and had drafted them in the army where they would fight the Germans, “the friends of the Arabs.”⁹⁴⁶ Another leaflet suggested: “God created Germany and Islam so that they understand each other and be friends.”⁹⁴⁷ In order to distinguish Germany from other Western powers, the Nazi propaganda underlined that Germany was not a colonial power because she had lost her colonies after World War I. Germany was therefore not able to colonize, one leaflet from the beginning of the war argued smugly:

ENGLAND and FRANCE have snatched the German people through the Dictat [sic] of Versailles her few colonies which they had acquired with difficulty and had slowly built up with hard work. The pretext of that has been shouted out from the rooftops across the world: the German people is not in the position to colonize. That means that the German people is incapable of civilizing the indigenous inhabitants of her colonies, to elevate their beastly existence in which they vegetate to a higher a sphere of the Western civilization, to make them to men, in the sense of the human mind.⁹⁴⁸

⁹⁴³ SHD 3 U 39. C.C.F.F.A., E.M. Cabinet Notes cet la protection du moral psychologique, discipline. 1945-1955. Commandement en Chef Français en Allemagne, Commandement Supérieur des Troupes d’Occupation, Etat-Major, 1er Bureau. Le Général de Corps d’Armée SEVEZ, Adjoint pour le Commandement Supérieur des Troupes d’Occupation to Monsieur le Général d’Armée, Cdt. en Chef Français en Allemagne. Objet: Surveillance des Indigènes Nord-Africains isolés, January 30, 1947, Annexe, Répartition des Militaires Nord-Africains. There were 1,652 colonial soldiers in Gonsenheim in January 1947.

⁹⁴⁴ See David Motadel, *Islam and Nazi Germany’s War* (Cambridge, Mass.; London, England: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2014).

⁹⁴⁵ SHD 3 U 39. C.C.F.F.A., E.M. Cabinet Notes cet la protection du moral psychologique, discipline. 1945-1955. Tracts et article de propagande anti-française faits par les Allemands auprès des Musulmans. 1940-1943?. Traduction d’un tract en langue arabe trouvé près de Seltz, no date: “Les Allemands ont supprimé le colonialism français et détruit la puissance juive.”

⁹⁴⁶ SHD 3 U 39. C.C.F.F.A., E.M. Cabinet Notes cet la protection du moral psychologique, discipline. 1945-1955. Tracts et article de propagande anti-française faits par les Allemands auprès des Musulmans. 1940-1943?. Traduction d’un tract en langue arabe trouvé près de Seltz, no date: “les amis des Arabes.”

⁹⁴⁷ SHD 3 U 39. C.C.F.F.A., E.M. Cabinet Notes cet la protection du moral psychologique, discipline. 1945-1955. Tracts et article de propagande anti-française faits par les Allemands auprès des Musulmans. 1940-1943?. Traduction d’un tract en langue arabe trouvé près de Seltz, no date: “Dieu a créé l’allemagne et l’Islam pour qu’ils se comprennent et soient frères.”

⁹⁴⁸ SHD 3 U 39. C.C.F.F.A., E.M. Cabinet Notes cet la protection du moral psychologique, discipline. 1945-1955. Tracts et article de propagande anti-française faits par les Allemands auprès des Musulmans. 1940-1943?.

Because of this Nazi propaganda, the French army officials were afraid that the colonial soldiers and the local Germans may unite against the occupier from metropolitan France. And indeed, in March 1946, an alliance between local Germans and colonial soldiers was reported in the 4th Regiment of Tirailleurs Tunisiens around the theme: “The Arabs and the Germans are brothers who are equally oppressed by the French.”⁹⁴⁹ In the same month, a German informant alarmed the French military government in Bühl/Baden with reports of Moroccan soldiers who sought conversation around the leitmotif: “Why are you waiting to throw out the French?”⁹⁵⁰

The large number of infractions allegedly committed by North African soldiers – of which a substantial part was trafficking infractions conjointly organized with local Germans – further worried the deputy commander of the French army, Sevez in 1947.⁹⁵¹ In one case in Trier, a North-African soldier, belonging to an Algerian unit, protected three German women who stole potatoes from a field from persecution. The soldier threatened the arriving German farmer with a whip.⁹⁵² One of the woman declared that the soldier was “her boyfriend.”⁹⁵³ Next to the above-mentioned concerns of rapes by colonial soldiers, from relatively early on in the occupation, the French authorities also signaled many relationships between French colonial soldiers and German women – despite the rather strict fraternization ban. In October 1945, the commander of the Western part of the Palatinate, for example, noted that the colonial soldiers had “more and more frequent relationships with German women. Several colonial infantrymen ask to marry German women.”⁹⁵⁴ The prospect of intermarriages between colonial soldiers and

Traduction d’un article paru sur la Revue Allemande “Colonie et Patrie” du 10 Septembre 1940: “L’ANGLETERRE et la FRANCE ont arraché au peuple allemand par le Dicktat [sic] de Versailles ses quelques colonies acquises avec peine et édifiées lentement par un dur labeur. Le prétexte en a été claironné à travers le monde: le peuple allemand n’est pas à même de coloniser. Cela signifie que le peuple allemand est incapable de civiliser les indigènes de ses colonies, de les élever de l’existence bestiale dans laquelle ils végètent, vers une sphere plus haute de civilisation occidentale, d’en faire des hommes, dans le sens de la pensée humaine.”

⁹⁴⁹ SHD GR 28 P7 239. Renseignement, March 20, 1946: “Les Arabes et les Allemands sont des frères également opprimés par les Français.”

⁹⁵⁰ SHD GR 28 P7 239. Fiche de renseignement de source allemande extrêmement sure et recoupée, March 22, 1946: “Qu’attendez vous pour mettre les Français à la [p]orte?”

⁹⁵¹ SHD 3 U 39. C.C.F.F.A., E.M. Cabinet Notes cet la protection du moral psychologique, discipline. 1945-1955. Commandement en Chef Français en Allemagne, Commandement Supérieur des Troupes d’Occupation, Etat-Major, 1er Bureau. Le Général de Corps d’Armée SEVEZ, Adjoint pour le Commandement Supérieur des Troupes d’Occupation to Monsieur le Général d’Armée, Cdt. en Chef Français en Allemagne. Objet: Surveillance des Indigènes Nord-Africains isolés, January 30, 1947.

⁹⁵² MAE RP 1884 bis/3. Cabinet Militaire Cl. 27. Affaires Militaires (Incidents causés par la troupe). Traduction Copie, Trèves, July 21, 1949. It is interesting that the German police report stated the colonial soldier as Moroccan while the French translation speaks of a unit of Algerian fighters.

⁹⁵³ MAE RP 1884 bis/3. Cabinet Militaire Cl. 27. Affaires Militaires (Incidents causés par la troupe). Traduction Copie, Trèves, July 21, 1949: “mon ami.”

⁹⁵⁴ SHD 3 U 251 Commandement en Chef des Forces Françaises en Allemagne, Cmt Militaire de la Zone d’occupation Nord, Rapports hebdomadaires de Renseignements cndt de la Zone Ouest du Palatinat 1945, 1947-1955. Projet de rapport hebdomadaire, consécutif à la Réunion des Commandants de Cercles, Kaiserslautern, October 8, 1945, 3: “Relations de plus en plus fréquentes avec les Allemandes. Plusieurs tirailleurs demandent à épouser des Allemandes.” Also see SHD 3 U 251 Commandement en Chef des Forces Françaises en Allemagne, Cmt Militaire de la Zone d’occupation Nord, Rapports hebdomadaires de Renseignements cndt de la Zone Ouest du Palatinat 1945, 1947-1955. Rapport Hebdomadaire, Semaine du 27 au 3.11.1945. Réunion du 3.11.45, Kaiserslautern, November 6, 1945, 3 and SHD 3 U 39 EM /Cabinet. Notes cet la protection du moral psychologique, Discipline, 1945-1955. Commandement Supérieur des Troupes d’Occupation, Etat-Major 1er Bureau. Fiche pour le Colonel Chef du Cabinet Militaire du C.F.F.A, Objet: Marocains résidant en Z.O.F.A., February 3, 1947. This was also true for white soldiers. From the fall of 1945, a wave of divorces spread among French gendarmes, who all had

Germans also worried General Koenig. He agreed with the French director of the interior affairs of the general secretariat of the protectorate of Morocco that those marriages could have negative, potentially dangerous “consequences.”⁹⁵⁵

Despite the rhetoric of a (re-)united French empire during the fight against Nazi Germany, the heads of the French army began to notice the signs of a beginning decomposition of their empire. Even if they still affirmed the loyalty of the colonial soldiers, as Lyautey did in his above-mentioned account of the battle of Germany, the heads of the army kept close eyes on their North African troops, in particular in the aftermath of the revolt of colonial soldiers and the French crushing of it in Thiaroye in December 1944.⁹⁵⁶ In January 1946, the intelligence office of the French army discovered a small tract titled “The anti-colonial fight,” which had been circulating among all colonial troops in occupied Germany. It called for a communal fight against the French colonizer of all colonized people:

We fight against the racist illusions, against the division the colonialists preach who put up the Berber to the Arab, flatter the West Indian against the North African, the Hova against the Sakhalava, thus use the Malagasy against the Indochinese infantrymen, the Moroccan against the Senegalese infantrymen, the Berber Goumier against their brothers from Northern Africa. Our strength can only be in our union.⁹⁵⁷

In the context of the beginning of the anti-colonial war in French Indochina, the French intelligence service worried about a widespread rebellion of the oppressed –possibly with German support. One report of the military police of Worms, for example, reported a case of alignment between a group of Germans and a colonial soldier against a group of young Frenchmen from metropolitan France. The Algerian soldier insulted the Frenchmen and declared he was more French than them, alluding to his French citizenship and the fighting he had done in the ranks of the French army in contrast to the metropolitan French soldiers who were twenty years old and had not fought in the war.⁹⁵⁸ When the Frenchmen started attacking the North-African soldier, the Germans who accompanied him called in reinforcements and defended the soldier, who had been demobilized in 1946 and had a daughter with a German woman.⁹⁵⁹

relationships with German women. See for instance SHD Gendarmerie 2007 ZM1 / 208 000. FFA Cdt F.G.O. R/2 CAB 7.4.1946 to 31.3.1947. Général Taillardat, Commandant les Forces de Gendarmerie d’Occupation, Note de Service, December 2, 1946.

⁹⁵⁵ SHD 3 U 39 EM /Cabinet. Notes cet la protection du moral psychologique, Discipline, 1945-1955. Commandant en Chef Français en Allemagne, Commandement Supérieur des Troupes d’Occupation, Etat-Major 1er Bureau. Le Général d’Armée Koenig Commandant en Chef Français en Allemagne to Monsieur le Général Commandant Supérieur des Troupes du Maroc, objet: Marocains démobilisés en Allemagne, no date, 2: “conséquences.”

⁹⁵⁶ Julien Fargettas, “La révolte des tirailleurs sénégalais de Thiaroye,” *Vingtième Siècle. Revue d’Histoire* 4 (2006): 117-130.

⁹⁵⁷ SHD GR 28 P 7 239. Renseignement DG 471, La Lutte Anticolonialiste, May 25, 1946, 2: “Nous lutterons contre les illusions raciste[s], contre la division prêchée par les colonialistes qui opposent le Berbère à l’Arabe, flattent l’Antillais contre le Nord-Africain, le Hova contre le Sakhalava, employant ainsi les tirailleurs malgaches contre les tirailleurs indochinois, les tirailleurs marocains contre les sénégalais, les goumiers berbères contre leurs frères d’Afrique du Nord. Notre force, elle, ne peut être que dans notre union.”

⁹⁵⁸ MAE 1 RP 136/1. Gendarmerie Nationale, 3e Légion, Compagnie de Neustadt, Section de Mayence, Brigade de Worms, Procès-Verbal. Arrestation et remise à son corps de Lorette, Henri du 485e G.A.A à Worms, pour scandale et rixe avec des civils allemands, December 15, 1950.

⁹⁵⁹ MAE 1 RP 136/1. Gendarmerie Nationale, 3e Légion, Compagnie de Neustadt, Section de Mayence, Brigade de Worms, Procès-Verbal constatant à l’arrestation de Bengana, Mizzoani, pour situation irrégulière en Zone d’occupation française, December 2, 1950.

Because of those threats to the French imperial authority and the crimes the French authorities presumed they committed, the army believed that the colonial soldiers should be tracked and sent outside of the occupied territory, in the best case, back to North Africa. General de Montsabert, head of the French troops in Germany, wrote to the French Ministry of Defense in July 1946 that colonial soldiers were simply not made for an occupation and should be sent outside of the French zone:

[E]veryone generally admits that the ‘climate’ of the occupation does not suit the colonial soldiers employed in the services. They are too much left on their own. They frequent German women assiduously, and most of them have just one idea in mind: steal foodstuffs to exchange them for marks, alcohol, or wine. [W]e will have to consider as an absolute necessity to replace the indigenous soldiers by Europeans.⁹⁶⁰

Thus, similar to the removal of sub-Saharan soldiers before the French army entered German soil in the spring of 1945, a second wave of “purges” of North African soldiers took place between the fall of 1946 and late spring 1947.⁹⁶¹ And again, the unsuitable climate was given as the reason for the removal of the troops. In the fall of 1946, the heads of the French army took measures to prevent North African soldiers from living in Germany. The French army particularly targeted the colonial soldiers outside of the regular regiments of the army, because they thought they could better supervise and control the regular troops. A relatively small number of Moroccan colonial soldiers, not more than a little over 20, continued to stay in Germany because they had been mistakenly demobilized directly in Germany and had taken up a position in the French military government.⁹⁶² A larger unknown number of North African soldiers were deserters who had either stayed in the French zone or the neighboring American zone in Germany or had had no difficulties crossing the border from France to French occupied Germany. Like the above-mentioned soldier in Worms, many of those colonial soldiers felt at ease in Germany, had found consensual relationships with German women, and did not want to return to their alleged homeland.⁹⁶³ The French army’s measures against the North African

⁹⁶⁰ SHD 3 U 154. Commandement en Chef des Forces Françaises en Allemagne, 3e Bureau, Rapports sur le moral 1945-1958. Général de C.A. de Goillard de Montsabert Commandant Supérieur des Troupes d’Occupation to Monsieur le Ministre des Armées, Paris, July 26, 1946, 2: “tout le monde s’accorde a reconnaître que le ‘climat’ de l’Occupation ne convient pas aux indigenes employes dans les Services. Ils sont trop livres a eux-memes. Ils frequentent assidument la femme allemande et n’ont qu’une idee pour la plupart: dérober des denrees pour les echanger contre des marks, de l’alcool ou du vin. Le rapport sur le moral emanant de l’Intendance signale qu’a breve echeance, il faudra envisager comme une necessite absolue le remplacement des indigenes par des Europeens.”

⁹⁶¹ They speak of “épuration” – ‘purge,’ see: SHD 3 U 39. C.C.F.F.A., E.M. Cabinet Notes cet la protection du moral psychologique, discipline. 1945-1955. Commandement en Chef Français en Allemagne, Commandement Supérieur des Troupes d’Occupation, Etat-Major, 1er Bureau. Le Général de Corps d’Armée SEVEZ, Adjoint pour le Commandement Supérieur des Troupes d’Occupation to Monsieur le Général d’Armée, Cdt. en Chef Français en Allemagne. Objet: Surveillance des Indigènes Nord-Africains isolés, January 30, 1947.

⁹⁶² SHD 3 U 39 EM /Cabinet. Notes cet la protection du moral psychologique, Discipline, 1945-1955. Commandant en Chef Français en Allemagne, Commandement Supérieur des Troupes d’Occupation, Etat-Major 1er Bureau. Le Général d’Armée Koenig Commandant en Chef Français en Allemagne to Monsieur le Général Commandant Supérieur des Troupes du Maroc, objet: Marocains démobilisés en Allemagne, no date.

⁹⁶³ SHD 3 U 154. Commandement en Chef des Forces Françaises en Allemagne, 3e Bureau, Rapports sur le moral 1945-1958. Général de C.A. de Goillard de Montsabert Commandant Supérieur des Troupes d’Occupation to Monsieur le Ministre des Armées, Paris, July 26, 1946, 2. This is similar to the experience of African-American soldiers, who felt welcome in post-Nazi Germany. See Maria Höhn, *GIs and Fräuleins: The German-American Encounter in 1950s West Germany* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002).

soldiers included restrictions on the employment of North Africans in the military government, a tighter “filtering” of North Africans on the French-German border, and a tight control of individual North Africans in Germany by the military police.⁹⁶⁴

The commander of the French army additionally ordered the removal of criminal North African soldiers as quickly as possible from Germany in January 1947. The military courts were instructed to expedite the cases involving colonial soldiers and to expel convicted soldiers from the army. General Sevez further ordered the courts to send even those acquitted outside German territory.⁹⁶⁵ But in fact, almost all colonial soldiers were withdrawn from occupied Germany within the first two years of the occupation. Of the 80,000 North African soldiers who entered Germany in the spring of 1945 in the ranks of the First French army, only 4,651 colonial soldiers remained in the regular army units in Germany in January 1947, and only 2,200 at the end of March 1947.⁹⁶⁶ While the entire French army underwent cuts in troop strength, the massive cuts in the ranks of the colonial soldiers are remarkable. The experience with the interwar occupation, the Nazi propaganda, the constant criticism of the use of colonial soldiers within Europe as well as the potential threat of a combined effort of Germans and colonial troops due to a lack of loyalty of those troops led the French army to abandon their project to rebuild and show off their colonial empire in postwar Germany.

Colonial ruling strategies in Germany

In addition to the presence (or marked absence) of colonial troops in occupied Germany, the treatment of the occupied Germans by the French army and civilian government itself carried elements of colonialism. This section looks at concrete examples of the use (or again absence) of colonial experiences by members of the French occupation administration themselves. I argue that while the colonial background of some members of the French occupiers influenced their behavior in the zone, colonial conduct was never a systematic part of the French ruling strategy in Germany. The latter was guided more by the long experience of mutual occupations between the two countries and the will to avoid the mistakes of their past occupation in the interwar period.

Many French administrators and officers had spent some time in the French colonial empire. For example, Generals Koenig, de Lattre de Tassigny, and Montsabert had participated in the Rif war in Morocco in the 1920s. A number of officers who took over the

⁹⁶⁴ SHD 3 U 39. C.C.F.F.A., E.M. Cabinet Notes cet la protection du moral psychologique, discipline. 1945-1955. Commandement en Chef Français en Allemagne, Commandement Supérieur des Troupes d’Occupation, Etat-Major, 1er Bureau. Le Général de Corps d’Armée SEVEZ, Adjoint pour le Commandement Supérieur des Troupes d’Occupation to Monsieur le Général d’Armée, Cdt. en Chef Français en Allemagne. Objet: Surveillance des Indigènes Nord-Africains isolés, January 30, 1947, 2.

⁹⁶⁵ SHD 3 U 39. CCFFA. Protection du moral psychologique, discipline, 1945-1955. Commandant en Chef Français en Allemagne, Commandant Supérieur des Troupes d’Occupation, Etat-Major 1er Bureau, Note de Service, Objet: Affectation à différentes unités des T.O.A. de Militaires Marocains et Tunisiens en prevention de Tribunal Militaire, September 30, 1946, 2.

⁹⁶⁶ SHD 3 U 39. CCFFA. Protection du moral psychologique, discipline, 1945-1955: Commandant en Chef Français en Allemagne, Commandant Supérieur des Troupes d’Occupation, Etat-Major 1er Bureau. Le Général de Corps d’Armée Sevez, Adjoint pour le Commandement Supérieur des Troupes d’Occupation to Monsieur le Général d’Armée, Cdt en Chef Français en Allemagne, Objet: Surveillance des Indigènes Nord-Africains Isolés, January 30, 1947. And SHD 3 U 39. CCFFA. Protection du moral psychologique, discipline, 1945-1955: Commandant en Chef Français en Allemagne, Commandant Supérieur des Troupes d’Occupation, Etat-Major 1er Bureau. Le Général d’Armée Koenig, Commandant en Chef Français en Allemagne to Monsieur le Général de Corps de l’Armée, Directeur des P.G. de l’Axe Paris, Objet: Situation des Militaires Nord-Africains des T.O.A. affectés aux Unités de Garde des P.G., March 25, 1947.

positions as heads of the German districts had been trained as officers of “native affairs” in the colonies.⁹⁶⁷ It is therefore not surprising to find references in the monthly reports of those delegates or of the French military police to German civilians as “autochtones” or “indigènes” (natives). This terminology was usually used in a colonial context. For instance, the monthly report of the district of Simmern in the Hunsrück of October 25, 1947 described the composition of the German population this way:

The German population of the district of Simmern consists of 60% country persons devoted only to agricultural activities. For this category of *natives* [emphasis added], the dominant preoccupations are of course those linked to the exercise of their profession: tillage, harvest, storage, and the delivery of produce.⁹⁶⁸

Pierre Bolotte asserted in an oral history interview with the Ministry of Defense that the policies very much depended on the individual commanders who were allowed a relatively free hand in their localities:⁹⁶⁹ “[...] [M]any people came from this milieu [native affairs] and had the manners of conduct with not quite the ‘tribes of Baden,’ but something like that, you see?”⁹⁷⁰ The above-mentioned case of the district of Simmern shows some of that attitude. There is a certain distance and contempt for the lives of the “natives” of the Hochwald in the report. Likewise, the head of the military police in the French zone, General Ferdinand Taillardat, previously head of the military police in Algeria and author of a book on Moroccan nationalism, found similarities between his work in Germany and his experience in the colonies. When the Germans complained to the head of the justice department in Baden-Baden, Charles Furby, about the behavior of French gendarmes in September 1946, Taillardat replied to the accusations:

We find in Germany what I have noted over the course of an already long career pegging away in particular in North Africa. There is not a single defendant who does not pretend to be the victim of physical abuse by the gendarmes.⁹⁷¹

⁹⁶⁷ SHD Archives orales, 3 K 49 Bolotte: “C’est un officier français qui y représentait le gouvernement militaire de la Zone française. Et c’était en général des officiers, officiers de la vocation de fusiliers des affaires indigènes qui en sortaient. Manifestement on avait réussi à caser là-dedans beaucoup de gens qui venaient de ce milieu et qui avaient la technique du contact sinon avec les tribus dans le Bade mais quelque chose comme ça, voyez-vous. Toujours cette approximation de jugement des autorités centrales vis-à-vis de la réalité. De sorte que ça dépendait beaucoup de ce qu’était le gars et c’est lui qui animait et s’arrangeait pour faire vivre les administrations quotidiennes sous son autorité avec plus au moins d’habileté, plus ou moins d’autorité, plus ou moins...”

⁹⁶⁸ MAE 1 RP 1685/3. Cercle de Simmern, Rapports mensuels de la délégation. 1947, October 25, 1947, 1: “La population allemande du cercle de Simmern, comprend: 60% de ruraux adonnés a des activités uniquement agricoles. Pour cette catégorie d’autochtones les préoccupations dominantes sont évidemment, celles qui s’attachent a l’exercice de leur profession: travaux de terre, récolte, stockage, et livraison de produits du sol.”

⁹⁶⁹ SHD Archives orales, 3 K 49, Bolotte. Entretien 2, page 16: “De sorte que ça dépendait beaucoup de ce qu’était le gars et c’est lui qui animait et s’arrangeait pour faire vivre les administrations quotidiennes sous son autorité avec plus au moins d’habileté, plus ou moins d’autorité, plus ou moins...”

⁹⁷⁰ SHD Archives orales, 3 K 49, Bolotte. Entretien 2, page 16: “[...] [B]eaucoup de gens qui venaient de ce milieu et qui avaient la technique du contact sinon avec les tribus dans le Bade mais quelque chose comme ça, voyez-vous?”

⁹⁷¹ SHD Gendarmerie 2007 ZM 1/ 208 000. FFA cdt F.G.O. R/2 CAB 7.4.1946 – 31.3.1947. Commandant en Chef Français en Allemagne, Forces de Gendarmerie d’Occupation, Etat-Major. Le Général Taillardat Commandant les Forces de Gendarmerie d’Occupation to Monsieur le Président Furby, Directeur Général de la Justice à Baden-Baden, September 27, 1946: “Nous retrouvons en Allemagne ce que j’ai constaté au cours d’une carrière déjà longue

Some members of the French occupying forces went a step further and treated the occupied Germans as if they were colonial subjects, that is, as inferior subjects. In a circular to the French heads of the regions in the zone, Emile Laffon noted in February 1947:

Too many cases have been reported to me, which indicate that too many Frenchmen in this occupation reveal a veritable ‘colonialist’ or even ‘racist’ spirit. For too many French men and women, the Germans are slaves who do not even have the right to the most basic politeness.⁹⁷²

However, as with the presence of colonial soldiers, the heads of the French occupation administration considered defeated Germany not the place to apply colonial rule. Laffon reminded his deputies that colonial practices were unacceptable in occupied Germany and demanded that they develop strategies to halt this behavior, not only among the soldiers but also their families who accompanied them, since “What is at stake here is too important to compromise it out of lack of concern or shameful indulgences.”⁹⁷³ Laffon’s fear was that colonial behavior on the side of the French occupying forces would discredit them in the eyes of the Germans as well as in the eyes of the Allies.

The Germans interpreted this French behavior within a framework of colonial powers exploiting and extracting colonized land. While Laffon did not include concrete examples of colonialism or racism, some of the German diaries complained about the behavior of the French troops or their family members. Liselore Schmid, for example, reported of a friend of the family who wanted to enter her house after she returned from evacuation and was chased out by a French soldier with a riding whip.⁹⁷⁴ The use of riding whips by French and, in particular, French colonial troops, had already outraged the German civilians in the interwar period (the Spahis’ use of riding whips was infamous), because it reminded them of the treatment of slaves.⁹⁷⁵ Moreover, the French personnel of occupation had to live off the land, in contrast to the American occupiers who could afford to import their own foodstuffs. The French public did not accept the notion that their own scarce provisions should be shared with Hitler’s Germans and

et qui sévit en particulier en Afrique du Nord. Il n’est pas un accusé qui ne prétends avoir été l’objet de sévices de la part des gendarmes.”

⁹⁷² MAE 1 RP 2975/4. Relations entre les troupes d’occupation et la population locale (1947-1950).

L’Administrateur Général Laffon. Adjoint pour le Gouvernement Militaire de la Zone Française d’Occupation to Mrs les Directeurs Généraux et les Directeurs Généraux, Objet: Atténuation aux règles de non-fraternisation, February 1, 1947, 2: “Trop de cas m’ont été rapportés qui dénotent chez trop de Français en occupation l’apparition d’un véritable esprit ‘colonialist’ ou même ‘raciste.’ Pour trop de Français et de Françaises, les Allemands sont des esclaves qui n’ont même pas le droit à la plus élémentaire politesse.”

⁹⁷³ MAE 1 RP 2975/4. Relations entre les troupes d’occupation et la population locale (1947-1950).

L’Administrateur Général Laffon. Adjoint pour le Gouvernement Militaire de la Zone Française d’Occupation to Mrs les Directeurs Généraux et les Directeurs Généraux, Objet: Atténuation aux règles de non-fraternisation, February 1, 1947, 2: “La partie qui est en jeu est trop importante pour que nous la compromettions par insouciance ou par de coupables tolérances.”

⁹⁷⁴ Deutsches Tagebucharchiv Emmendingen 1499. Liselore Schmid, Tagebuch 1945, July 11, 1945, 89.

⁹⁷⁵ See for instance leaflets in Stadtarchiv Mainz, 71/174. Verteilen und Anschlag von Flugblättern und Plakaten, Meldungen der einzelnen Polizeibezirke an den Oberbürgermeister, 1918 – 1930. Or Stadtarchiv Trier, Tb 32/44. Besatzung und Polizei, Mißhandlungen u. Belästigungen der Spahis an Zivilisten, Ruhestörung u. Verunreinigungen der Straßen durch d. Besatzungsangehörigen, Einstellung z. Verzeichnis d. Polizei und Beschwerden derselben, Stärke d. Polizei, Kampf gegen Devisenhändler, Diebstahl v. Zivilisten b. Französ. Familien z. Besatzungsangehörigen, 1922-1930.

wanted an occupation that paid off financially.⁹⁷⁶ On the German side, this lack of provision of food and the requisition of foodstuffs and other goods for the French personnel and their countrymen back home in France incited anger: Dr. Adolf Sauter noted in his diary on December 15, 1946: “The German people and we continue to do bad. The French eat away the country like locusts & drag away a lot of foodstuffs and wine.”⁹⁷⁷ One of the first historical accounts of the French occupation, written by the eminent German jurist and political scientist Theodor Eschenburg (whose Nazi past has spurred a controversy recently) has therefore also called the French zone a “colony of exploitation,” picking up the German complaints of the time.⁹⁷⁸ Sauter also complained about the way in which the French occupiers imposed their perceived superior form of government on postwar Germans:

Hunger, maltreatment, robbery are the methods with the help of which the “victors and liberators” convince us of their special ways of life and their superior political forms of government. This better form of life is called “democracy!” The true motto of the victor is “might is right.”⁹⁷⁹

The lifestyle of some of the French administrators and army members seemed extravagant to the Germans. They lived in requisitioned villas, maintained by German civilians (some of whom were the former owners of the house), who worked as chauffeurs, housekeepers, nannies, cooks, and gardeners. Liselore Schmid mentioned that an officer in her hometown was looking for a German serving maid: “He is only looking for women of highly respectable families, with fine manners and ‘very good-looking.’”⁹⁸⁰ Liselore also mentioned in her diary that French soldiers forced German women to do their household:

Mother [...] was stopped by a soldier and guided to an apartment, where a young French woman led her to a pile of laundry: ‘Iron!’ A little later, they bring in a woman and then 3 girls who have to clean the apartment.⁹⁸¹

But Liselore’s mother and the three others escaped when a French officer appeared in the apartment. They sensed that the officer did not tolerate this attitude with regard to the German

⁹⁷⁶ For the French economic policy towards Germany, see: Martial Libera, *Un rêve de puissance: la France et le contrôle de l'économie allemande (1942-1949)* (Bruxelles: Peter Lang, 2012) and Dietmar Hüser, *Frankreichs “doppelte Deutschlandpolitik.” Dynamik aus der Defensive - Planen, Entscheiden, Umsetzen in Gesellschaftlichen und Wirtschaftlichen, Innen- und Aussenpolitischen Krisenzeiten: 1944-1950* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1996).

⁹⁷⁷ Deutsches Tagebucharchiv Emmendingen 848, 1. Dr. Adolf Sauter, Tagebuch 1945-1953, December 15, 1946: “Dem deutschen Volk und uns geht es weiterhin schlecht. Die Franzosen fressen das Land wie Heuschrecken-Schwärme leer & schleppen viel Lebensmittel und Wein ab.”

⁹⁷⁸ Theodor Eschenburg, *Jahre der Besatzung: 1945-1949* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1983), 96: “Ausbeutungskolonie.”

⁹⁷⁹ Deutsches Tagebucharchiv Emmendingen 848, 1. Dr. Adolf Sauter, Tagebuch 1945-1953, May 25, 1946: “Hunger, Mißhandlung, Beraubung sind die Methoden mit denen die “Sieger u. Befreier” uns von ihren besonderen Lebensformen u. ihrer höheren politischen Regierungsformen überzeugen. “Demokratie” nennt man diesen besseren Lebensstil! “Macht geht vor Recht” heißt in Wahrheit die Devise des Siegers.”

⁹⁸⁰ Deutsches Tagebucharchiv Emmendingen 1499. Liselore Schmid, Tagebuch 1945, May 26, 1945, 67: “Er wünscht nur Damen aus bestem Haus, Manieren und ‘sehr repräsentativem Äußerem.’”

⁹⁸¹ Deutsches Tagebucharchiv Emmendingen 1499. Liselore Schmid, Tagebuch 1945, April 16, 1945, 43: “Mutti [...] wird von einem Soldaten angehalten und in eine Wohnung geführt, wo sie eine junge Französin im Morgenrock vor ihren Stoß Wäsche führt: “Bügeln!” Etwas später bringen sie noch eine Frau und dann 3 Mädels, die die Wohnung sauber machen müssen.”

civilians.⁹⁸² This example supports Emile Laffon's judgment that "colonial" or "racist" behavior of his countrymen and women was a question of authority – or rather the lack of authority of the superiors. The "colonial" or "racist" behavior was not a French ruling strategy, it was rather an unintended consequence of the officials' prior experiences in a colonial setting. Laffon thought that it was up to the superiors to enforce proper dealings with the Germans.⁹⁸³

According to official French policies, occupied Germans were not to be treated like colonial subjects. In one case, when a French administrator thought he could establish a 'colonial rule' in his district, he was sanctioned by the French administration. In an oral history interview, Pierre Bolotte, chief of staff at the military government in Baden-Baden, reported about a case in the Palatinate, in which an administrator had trouble with the population of his district. The local Germans had complained to Emile Laffon, the head of the military government in Baden-Baden. So, Laffon sent Bolotte to the Palatinate, probably to Pirmasens, where the chief of the district was called "the colonial who is in Pirmasens."⁹⁸⁴

So, eh, there was not much to reproach to him, a few small things, let's say no more about that. But, I listened to him, he talked about the way he governed this [locality] and he was really like a colonial administrator. Well, he was a civilian auditor who turned out to be a super sub-prefect and therefore, he considered he was at home [that is in the colonies] and et cetera et cetera. This [behavior] led by the way to certain protests by real German officials at the quadripartite military government [in Berlin].⁹⁸⁵

The administrators who had a colonial background had a hard time in occupied Germany because it was so different from a colony. The example of the administrator of Pirmasens, whose name was Louis Girault, is particularly telling in this context. Girault, born in 1899, had worked in the colonial administration since 1928. He had held several positions in the French colonies, in Dakar (Senegal) for instance, as well as in Sudan and French Guinea, where he had been the *commandant du territoire*. Because of his experiences in the colonies as well as his adaptability, for which his superiors praised him, the colonial inspector Cazaux recommended him for "an important territory," and therefore, he was sent to Germany, dispatched from the colonial ministry.⁹⁸⁶ In Germany, he was entrusted with the administration of a particularly difficult

⁹⁸² Deutsches Tagebucharchiv Emmendingen 1499. Liselore Schmid, Tagebuch 1945, April 16, 1945, 43-44.

⁹⁸³ MAE 1 RP 2975/4. Relations entre les troupes d'occupation et la population locale (1947-1950).

L'Administrateur Général Laffon. Adjoint pour le Gouvernement Militaire de la Zone Française d'Occupation to Mrs les Directeurs Généraux et les Directeurs Généraux, Objet: Atténuation aux règles de non-fraternisation, February 1, 1947, 2.

⁹⁸⁴ Archives Sciences Po Paris. Fonds Bolotte, Dossier 1, Allemagne 1945-1946, Divers documents.

Commandement en Chef Français en Allemagne. Gouvernement Militaire de la Zone Française d'Occupation.

L'Administrateur Général Baden-Baden, March 18, 1946: "le colonial qui est à Pirmasens."

⁹⁸⁵ SHD Archives orales, 3 K 49, Bolotte. Entretien 2, page 16: "Bon alors, je suis allé sur place, j'ai observé, je suis descendu, j'ai regardé, il m'a hébergé. bon bah, il y avait pas beaucoup à rapprocher, des petits affaires passons. Mais je l'ai écouté, il parlait sur la manière dont il gouvernait ça et il était vraiment l'administrateur colonial. Enfin il était contrôleur civil devenu en réalité le super sous-préfet et par conséquent il considérait qu'il était chez lui et que et cetera et cetera. Ce qui avait emmené d'ailleurs à certaines protestations issues de vrai fonctionnaires allemands auprès du gouvernement militaire quadripartite."

⁹⁸⁶ MAE 1 PL 1888, Giraud, Louis. République Française, Colonies, Bulletin individuel de notes, 1945, July 11, 1945: "Intelligent et cultivé, M. GIRAULT possède une grande puissance de travail et de sérieuses facultés d'adaptation. Actif, énergique, compréhensif et bienveillant, M. GIRAULT par l'étendue de ses compétences administratives et juridiques, son expérience, sa classe parmi les fonctionnaires les plus qualifiés pour assurer avec distinction la direction d'un territoire important."

district, Pirmasens, which was known for its important shoe production (one of the few flourishing industries in the French zone), and as a stronghold of former separatists and former Nazis. He just needed to familiarize himself with the situation in Germany, General Bouley his superior in the Palatinate noted in his evaluation form in November 1945.⁹⁸⁷ However, only half a year later, Governor Brozen-Favereau of the Palatinate had to admit that he had made a mistake in employing Girault:

Colonial administrator and law graduate who has a certain habit of questions that are addressed to a district delegate; but who did not justify the conscience that we have placed in him. – Seems to sometimes forget that he represents France in the occupied territories. – Little dignity. – Lack of frankness. – Did not seek to put himself in the picture of the German questions nor to learn the language. – Gives in the accomplishment of his duties the impression of an absence of dignity and moral honesty.⁹⁸⁸

What had gone wrong? The French administration in Baden refrained from a thorough investigation which they feared would further destabilize their authority in the district. However, the personnel files of Girault testify that he had a “dreadful reputation” with both French and Germans in the district. A long list of complaints brought him down: Girault was accused of living with his 18-year-old German mistress while “trying to seek to sleep with the entire feminine staff” of the military government.⁹⁸⁹ For his private household, he requisitioned food on a massive scale with the help of obsequious helpers on both French and German side. The security of his district was accused of torturing and killing a former Nazi. The investigation accused Girault himself of doing private business involving shoes from Pirmasens (a very scarce resource after the war in Germany and France) as well as with German cars, thus feathering his own nest.⁹⁹⁰ Ultimately, Girault decided to return to his original administration, the Ministry of Colonies, forestalling his dismissal. He was replaced by Louis Kleinmann, the popular administrator of Mainz, who had rejected the employment of colonial troops in the “civilized” cities of the French zone.⁹⁹¹

The French administration in Baden bemoaned a similar case in Zweibrücken in the Palatinate, where the head of the district, Adrien Richaud, had also been dispatched from the Ministry of Colonies to Germany, convinced that his experience in the colonies would prepare

⁹⁸⁷ MAE 1 PL 1888, Girault, Louis. Commandement en chef Français en Allemagne, Notice individuelle, November 1945, 4.

⁹⁸⁸ MAE 1 PL 1888, Girault, Louis. Le Gouverneur Brozen-Favereau, Délégué Supérieur pour le Gouvernement de Hesse-Palatinate, Objet: Lt.-Colonel Girault – Proposition pour Légion d’Honneur, June 27, 1946: “Administrateur des Colonies, licencié en droit ayant une habitude certaine des questions qui se posent à un Délégué de Cercle; mais qui n’a pas justifié la conscience qu’on avait placé en lui. – Semble oublier parfois qu’il représente la France en Territoires Occupés. – Peu de dignité. – Manque de franchise. – N’a pas cherché à se mettre au courant des questions allemandes ni à apprendre la langue. – Donne dans l’accomplissement de ses fonctions une impression d’absence de dignité et d’honnêteté morale.”

⁹⁸⁹ MAE 1 PL 1888, Girault, Louis. Note d’Information concernant la delegation de cercle de Pirmasens, no date: “A chercher [sic] à coucher avec tout le personnel féminin.”

⁹⁹⁰ MAE 1 PL 1888, Girault, Louis. Note d’Information concernant la delegation de cercle de Pirmasens, no date.

⁹⁹¹ MAE 1 PL 1888, Girault, Louis. Sous-Direction du Personnel. Le Général d’Armée Koenig, Commandant en Chef Français en Allemagne to Monsieur le Président du Gouvernement Provisoire de la République Française, Commissaire Général aux Affaires Allemandes et Autrichiennes, Service du Personnel – 2ème Bureau. Object: Remise à disposition de son Administration d’Origine de M. Girault, Louis, Administrateur des Colonies, October 9, 1946. And MAE 1 PL 1888, Girault, Louis. Gouvernement Militaire de la Zone Française d’Occupation, Gouvernement Militaire de Hesse-Palatinate, Avis de Mutation, July 12, 1946.

him well for occupied Germany. Richaud had some experience with Germany, having spent two years in occupied Rhineland between 1920 and 1922.⁹⁹² However, as with Girault, his employment in Germany turned out to be a failure. He was caught in a case of trafficking German cars to the south of France where he started a private car business. One of his coworkers called him a “gangster” remarking that he had designated himself that way.⁹⁹³ Moreover, a report noted that Richaud had been too lenient with the German population of his district, because he was “shaped [déformé] by a long past in the colonial administration.”⁹⁹⁴ The report implied that Richaud regarded the Germans as simple constituents, not as former Nazis. Richaud was transferred on disciplinary grounds to a minor district in the Eifel and shortly thereafter sent back to the Ministry of Colonies – again for disciplinary reasons.⁹⁹⁵ The Vichy-tainted deputy director of personnel in Baden-Baden, Marcel Chapron, complained in a note on Richaud about the latter’s lack of training and of moral instructions.⁹⁹⁶ The head of the personnel thus had to admit that against all odds, Richaud’s extensive experience in the colonies did not prepare him well for the occupation in Germany.

While Girault had failed in Pirmasens because he had been too condescending with the Germans, and Richaud failed in Zweibrücken because he had been too lenient with the Germans, in a third case, in the district of Bernkastel, the head of the district, a colonial administrator, was supposedly not used to the intellectual capacities of his subordinates. In a report on an inspection in May 1947, Pierre Saury wrote on the head of district, Jacques Dunyach, who had been an officer of native affairs in Syria before the war:⁹⁹⁷

His intellectual training, his habits of thinking do not enable him to see quickly, with precision and objectivity, the problems as a whole. This inferiority complex appears above all compared with a man as brilliant as the current Landrat [head of a German district].⁹⁹⁸

⁹⁹² MAE 1PL 3903. Richaud, Adrien. Commandement en Chef Français en Allemagne. Gouvernement Militaire de la Zone Française d’Occupation. Direction du Personnel, du Matériel et du Budget, Notice individuelle November 1945.

⁹⁹³ MAE 1PL 3903. Richaud, Adrien. L’Administrateur Heckel to Monsieur l’Administrateur Général Adjoint pour le Gouvernement Militaire de la Zone Française d’Administration S/c de Monsieur le Délégué du Cercle de Frankenthal, Deux-Ponts, May 14, 1947: “M. Richaud est un gangster (je ne puis employer d’autre terme que celui don’t il s’est qualifié lui-même devant plusieurs témoins) [...]”

⁹⁹⁴ MAE 1 PL 3903. Richaud, Adrien. Inspection de M. Sailly, Cercle de Deux-Ponts, February 13, 1947, 1: “déformé par un long passé d’administration coloniale.”

⁹⁹⁵ MAE 1 PL 3903. Richaud, Adrien. Inspection de M. Sailly, Cercle de Deux-Ponts, February 13, 1947 and MAE 1PL 3903. Richaud, Adrien. Sous-Direction du Personnel. Le Général d’Armée Koenig, Commandant en Chef Français en Allemagne to Monsieur le Président du Gouvernement Provisoire de la République Française, Commissaire Général aux Affaires Allemandes et Autrichiennes, Service du Personnel – 2ème Bureau. Object: Radiation de M. Richaud, Adrien, May 15, 1948.

⁹⁹⁶ MAE 1 PL 3903. Richaud, Adrien. Commandement en Chef Français en Allemagne, Gouvernement Militaire de la Zone Française d’Occupation, Inspection Générale des Forces du GMZFO, Baden-Baden, Note pour Monsieur Directeur de l’Administration Générale, Sous-Direction du Personnel, December 2, 1947.

⁹⁹⁷ Pierre Saury, civilian administrator in occupied Germany had been during the war a close friend of René Bousquet, secretary general of the Vichy police. See Pascale Froment, *René Bousquet* (Paris: Fayard, 2001), chapter 8.

⁹⁹⁸ MAE 1RP 138/1. Cercle de Bernkastel, Inspection de M. Saury, May 13-14, 1947, 11: “Sa formation intellectuelle, ses habitudes de penser ne lui permettent pas de voir rapidement, avec précision et objectivité, les problèmes dans leur ensemble. Ce complexe d’infériorité apparaît surtout en face d’un homme aussi brillant que le Landrat actuel.”

In this case, Dunyach's experience in French Syria led to considerable confusion in the district because occupied Germany did not correspond to Dunyach's experience and was indeed quite different from Syria. But because Bernkastel was a rural district in the Eifel, Pierre Saury, the investigator, considered that the situation did not risk to get out of hand: "Very fortunately, Bernkastel is a district without serious affairs and the reactions of Commander Dunyach have sufficed so far to sort out the everyday business in a sound way."⁹⁹⁹

The three examples of Girault, Richaud, and Dunyach show that even though the French administration around Emile Laffon initially thought their experience in ruling the French colonies would help them to govern occupied Germany, those two parts of the world turned out to be quite different and the colonial administrators had difficulties adapting to the situation in Germany, where a "colonial" behavior of any sort was not accepted.

It was the long history of mutual occupations of those two European powers dating from the 19th century that prevented the French from dealing with the Germans as if they were colonial subjects. The Germans had occupied France in 1940 and, five years later, the French were still recovering from this defeat. Upon arriving in Germany, the French army and the civilian administrators often acknowledged the superiority of the Germans. They assumed that they probably would not have been able to liberate themselves of the German occupation without the help of the Allies. This was true for many French soldiers who were impressed with Germany's trade business, their equipment with household items or the existence of bathrooms in comfortable houses or even army barrack during the Allied advance in the spring of 1945.¹⁰⁰⁰ This was a comfort unknown to many French soldiers who had experienced a long occupation that had drained the country not only of foodstuffs but also of shoes, stockings, or other manufacturing goods that were still present in Germany in 1945.¹⁰⁰¹ The French soldiers, who were dressed in US uniforms when they arrived on German soil, noticed "the abundance of furniture, towels, sheets, and china. Certainly three hundred percent more than in an analogue milieu in France."¹⁰⁰² This all resulted in a "complex of inferiority" of the French army rather than in a feeling of superiority by a colonial empire, as General Goislard de Monsabert, Superior Commander of the French troops in Germany reported to the Minister of War in Paris in September 1945.¹⁰⁰³ Still under the impression of their crushing defeat in 1940, the French army tried to get a hand on the Wehrmacht's strategies and equipment that they deemed superior to

⁹⁹⁹ MAE IRP 138/1. Cercle de Bernkastel, Inspection de M. Saury, May 13-14, 1947, 11: "Fort heureusement Bernkastel est un Cercle sans grosses histoires et les réflexes du Commandant DUNYACH ont suffi jusqu'ici à régler sainement les questions courantes."

¹⁰⁰⁰ See Paul Bodin, "'Serons-nous déportés en Russie?' - Telle est la principale préoccupation des Allemands qui, à leur tour, connaissent l'invasion, *Combat*, April 9, 1945.

¹⁰⁰¹ The draining of occupied countries for the German wartime economy to the detriment of those countries was a German strategy and a learning process from the First World War which the Nazis thought had been lost because of the shortage of food for the German population. For the Nazi economic system in occupied territories, see Marcel Boldorf, "European economies under National Socialist rule," in *Economies under Occupation. The hegemony of Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan in World War II*, ed. Marcel Boldorf and Tetsuji Okazaki (London/New York: Routledge, 2015), 7-23.

¹⁰⁰² Pierre Lyautey, *Carnets d'un goumier: Allemagne* (Paris: R.Julliard 1945), 74: "abondance de meubles, de serviettes, de draps, de vaisselle. Certainement trois cents pour cent de plus que dans un milieu analogue français."

¹⁰⁰³ MAE 3 U 154. Commandant en Chef Français en Allemagne, Commandement Supérieur des Troupes d'Occupation, Etat-Major, 2e Bureau. Le Général de C.A. de Goislard de Monsabert, Commandant Supérieur des Troupes d'Occupation to Monsieur le Ministre de la Guerre, E.M.A. - 2e Bureau, s/c de Monsieur le Général de C.A. Koenig, Commandant en Chef Français en Allemagne, Objet: Moral des Troupes d'Occupation, September 1, 1945, 3: "complexe d'infériorité."

their own after the war.¹⁰⁰⁴ Memories of Wehrmacht superiority prevented the French from thinking of postwar Germans as colonial subjects in the aftermath of World War II. The whole issue of racial superiority, which was very important in the colonial context, was entirely missing in French attitudes towards Germans. A rare example of the use of racial language in the context of occupied Germany is found in a report on Baden and Württemberg which noted the similarities of the two people:

The differences of temperaments and customs, the variety of ways of life and societal conventions do not make that our men feel too much out of their natural environment nor that the Germans consider us barbarians. All in all, the combination of the two races seems to be rather easy.¹⁰⁰⁵

The two nations were thus considered to be too similar to subjugate each other within a colonial framework. Even the Nazis, who pursued a colonial-style occupation in Eastern Europe, had not treated the French population in the same way as they did Eastern European “*Untermenschen*.”¹⁰⁰⁶ Under the Nazis, the racial component had been missing in France, with the notable exception of German (and French) anti-Semitism. While the requisition of food stuff and industrial goods, as well as the forced labor service STO had exploited wartime France, this happened to a far lesser degree than in Eastern Europe. Among the French soldiers, quite a few had come to Germany to avenge the regime the Germans had set up in occupied France during the war, but not because it was perceived as a colonial-style rule.¹⁰⁰⁷ The German civilians in south-west Germany instantly knew that the French would seek to pay back in kind the behavior of the German occupiers in France – which they were nevertheless fearful of. They assumed (correctly, as it turned out), that the French occupiers would accord them the same food rations than the Germans had accorded to the French during their occupation between 1940 and

¹⁰⁰⁴ At least thirteen boxes at the archives of the Ministry of Defense in Vincennes contain information collected on the German army between 1940 and 1944, see SHD 3 U 287 – 3 U 300. For the long history of learning from the German military achievements, see Jakob Vogel, “Lernen vom Feind. Das Militär als Träger des deutsch-französischen Kulturtransfers im 19. Jahrhundert in Vom Gegner lernen. Feindschaften und Kulturtransfers im Europa des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts, ed. Martin Aust and Daniel Schönpflug (Frankfurt/New York: Campus Verlag, 2007), 95-113.

¹⁰⁰⁵ Archives Sciences Po Paris. Fonds Bolotte, Dossier 1, Allemagne 1945-1946, Divers documents. Observations faites au cours d’un voyage en Bade et Württemberg par le Capitaine R. de Naurois entre le 1^{er} février et le 12 février 1946: “Les différences de tempéraments et d’usages, la variété des styles de vie et des convenances mondaines, ne font pas que nos hommes se trouvent par trop dépaysés ni que les allemands nous prennent pour des barbares. En somme, la combinaison des deux races semble plutôt facile.”

¹⁰⁰⁶ For the colonial continuities between German colonialism and Nazi rule in the East, see for instance Benjamin Madley, “From Africa to Auschwitz: How German South West Africa Incubated Ideas and Methods Adopted and Developed by the Nazis in Eastern Europe,” *European History Quarterly*, 35, 3 (2005), 429–64; Jürgen Zimmerer, *Von Windhuk nach Auschwitz? Beiträge zum Verhältnis von Kolonialismus und Holocaust*, Periplus Parerga, 15 (Berlin: Lit, 2011); and Patrick Bernhard, “Hitler’s Africa in the East: Italian Colonialism as a Model for German Planning in Eastern Europe,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 51, 1 (March 31, 2015): 61–90, doi:10.1177/0022009414561825.

¹⁰⁰⁷ Eight percent of the French recruits of the class of 1946 came to Germany to seek revenge, thirteen percent to occupy the country, a report on the moral found. SHD 3 U 154. Commandement en Chef des Forces Françaises en Allemagne, 3e Bureau, Rapports sur le moral 1945-1958. Commandement en Chef Français en Allemagne, Commandement Supérieur des Troupes d’Occupation, Etat-Major, 3e Bureau. Synthèse sur le moral des recrues de la classe 46, no date, 3.

1944.¹⁰⁰⁸ In other words, French and Germans saw each other as enemies but not as colonial subjects.

Sometimes, the central French occupation administration in Baden-Baden did use the colonial term *indirect rule* to describe their intended rule of occupied Germany.¹⁰⁰⁹ Emile Laffon, head of the military government in Baden-Baden, for instance, called in a secret memo to General Koenig in September 1945 for an indirect rule of Germany. Interestingly, he did not refer to the colonial context of this ruling strategy, but to the way the Germans had governed France during the war: “That is the way the Germans understood the things between 1940 and 1944 and acted in the guise of and through the French administrative apparatus that was apparently intact and responsible.”¹⁰¹⁰ Again, the reference point for French policies in Germany was not their colonies, but rather the German occupation of France, in this case, French collaboration.

This was, in many ways, a lesson learned from the interwar French occupation of Germany. The occupation of the Rhineland had served as a bad example for the use of colonial rule. For instance, General Henri Mordacq, commander of the *30e Corps d’Armée* in Wiesbaden between 1920 and 1924 and commander of the entire French *Armée du Rhin* in 1925, wrote about his experiences in occupied Rhineland in a book published in 1926 titled: *La mentalité allemande: Cinq ans de Commandement sur le Rhin*.¹⁰¹¹ The book was translated a year later into German and distributed in occupied Rhineland.¹⁰¹² Mordacq had spent almost a decade in French Algeria and Indochina in the formative years of his army career and thus recommended the use of colonial ruling strategies in Germany in his book.¹⁰¹³ The Germans at the time were outraged about the application of colonial rule in the Rhineland and used it as a way to discredit French rule in occupied Germany. The *Trierer Volksfreund*, for example, cited passages of Mordacq’s book in its special issue at the departure of the French troops on July 1, 1930 and wrote full of contempt: “They [the French] prepared themselves to deal with the Rhenish population willfully with the methods they used in their colonies.”¹⁰¹⁴

The arriving French army as well as the occupation administration in Baden-Baden wanted to avoid the same mistakes in 1945. It was the resistance of the Germans against colonial forms of rule that forced the Allied occupation to end prematurely in 1930. Because it coincided

¹⁰⁰⁸ Deutsches Tagebucharchiv Emmendingen 1499. Liselore Schmid, Tagebuch 1945, April 10, 1945, 28.

¹⁰⁰⁹ For a short overview on “indirect rule, see the chapter “Forms and Practice of Government” in Jürgen Osterhammel, *Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview* (Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2005), 51-57.

¹⁰¹⁰ Archives Sciences Po. Fonds Grimaud, GRI 4. Dossier 1, Occupation en Allemagne 1945-1947, 2e dossier Problèmes et Polémiques. Documents Administratifs, 1945-1947. Commandement en Chef Français en Allemagne, Gouvernement Militaire de la Zone Française d’Occupation, L’Administrateur Général, Rapport de l’Administrateur Général, Adjoint pour le Gouvernement Militaire de la Zone Française d’Occupation to Monsieur le Général de Corps d’Armée, Commandant en Chef Français en Allemagne, Baden-Baden, September 27, 1945, 7: “C’est ainsi que de 1940 à 1944 les [A]llemands comprirent les choses en agissant sous le couvert et par l’intermédiaire de l’appareil administratif français, apparemment intact et responsable.”

¹⁰¹¹ Henri Mordacq, *La Mentalité Allemande: Cinq Ans de Commandement sur le Rhin* (Paris: Plon, 1926).

¹⁰¹² The German translation was titled *Die deutsche Mentalität. Fünf Jahre Befehlshaber am Rhein* and published in Wiesbaden in 1927 with *Verlag Hermann Rauch*.

¹⁰¹³ Henri Mordacq, *La Mentalité Allemande: Cinq Ans de Commandement sur le Rhin* (Paris: Plon, 1926), 64-65 and 196-197.

¹⁰¹⁴ “Französischer Geistesdruck in Trier,” *Trierischer Volksfreund*, July 1, 1930: “Sie stellten sich bewußt in der Behandlung der rheinischen Bevölkerung auf die von ihnen in den Kolonien angewandten Methoden ein.” The article cited Mordocq’s book giving page numbers and underlining the terms *Kolonien* and *Kolonialprinzip*.

with the rise of National Socialism and resulted in another war against France, the French public considered their interwar occupation to have been a failure. The above-mentioned Pierre Lyautey, for example, underlined this learning curve from the interwar occupation to 1945: “Everyone [all soldiers of the First French Army] wanted to correct the mistakes of 1918 through their action and their sacrifice.”¹⁰¹⁵ In his account, Lyautey did not refer to colonial rule as a model that he and his troops sought to establish in Germany, but his reference point was strictly European: the victories over the Germans in metropolitan France’s history. Lyautey compared the situation of the First French army to the revolutionary wars against the monarchist alliance: “The spirit of Valmy animates the third division of infantry.”¹⁰¹⁶ He also referred to Napoleon and Turenne, commander of Louis XIV’s army who conquered the Rhineland in the 16th century:

The General de Lattre de Tassigny, commander of the First French Army [...] came to see us. Visibly, he has in his head a whole campaign of Germany and conceived it lightning and Napoleonesque. [...] He cited the words of Turenne on Alsace twice.¹⁰¹⁷

The information on Germany given out to French troops furthermore lacked colonial references and mainly focused on the long history of conflicts between Germany and France. For example, a military government brochure distributed to young vacationers arriving in the French occupation zone titled “Tu viens en Allemagne” (You come to Germany) presented the different regions of the zone, and merely underlined the historical connectedness of “two neighboring countries.”¹⁰¹⁸ For example, it emphasized the intertwined lineage of the aristocracy in Baden, and the Rhenish territory as a part of revolutionary France.¹⁰¹⁹ Highlighting this connectedness was not a preparation for a colonial enterprise but a way to tame the French urge for revenge after four years of occupation, as the introduction stated:

The times are so close when this people that you will see living pretended to make law at our home, when your father, your brothers, your friends [were] prisoners due to the fate of arms or snatched from France by the worst violence [which] called for revenge. [...] You will meet young Germans, boys and girls, of your age, misled by bad leaders, disappointed, bitter. They look for reasons to live. [...] Open your eyes and ears to this

¹⁰¹⁵ Pierre Lyautey, *Carnets d’un goumier: Allemagne* (Paris: R.Julliard 1945), 9: “Tous ont voulu, par leur action et leur sacrifice corriger les erreurs de 1918.”

¹⁰¹⁶ Pierre Lyautey, *Carnets d’un goumier: Allemagne* (Paris: R.Julliard 1945), 39: “La 3^e D.I.A. est animée de l’esprit de Valmy.”

¹⁰¹⁷ Pierre Lyautey, *Carnets d’un goumier: Allemagne* (Paris: R.Julliard 1945), 32-33: “Le général de Lattre de Tassigny, commandant en chef de la 1^{re} armée française [...] vient nous voir. Visiblement il a en tête toute une campagne d’Allemagne et la conçoit foudroyante et napoléonienne. [...] A deux reprises, il cite les mots de Turenne sur l’Alsace.”

¹⁰¹⁸ Gouvernement Militaire de la Zone Française d’Occupation, Direction de l’Education Publique, *Tu Viens En Allemagne* (Offenburg?, 1946): “deux pays voisins.” The French sent their children to Germany in the aftermath of World War II for summer camps so that they could recover from war struck France. See Laura Lee Downs, *Childhood in the Promised Land: Working-Class Movements and the Colonies de Vacances in France, 1880-1960* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002).

¹⁰¹⁹ Gouvernement Militaire de la Zone Française d’Occupation, Direction de l’Education Publique, *Tu Viens En Allemagne* (Offenburg?, 1946).

world. Remember that living examples are the most powerful ones, help us with our task.¹⁰²⁰

Similarly, the classes designed to prepare officials for the administration of the occupation did not talk about establishing a colonial rule in Germany, but merely about the German problem since the 19th century or the Interallied Rhineland occupation between 1918 and 1930.¹⁰²¹

As this chapter has demonstrated, the French occupation administration avoided the use of references to colonial rule because Germans and Allies alike interpreted colonial ruling strategies in occupied Germany as a sign of weakness. When French occupation policies did resemble colonial practices, they were immediately criticized by members of the French military administration. In fact, whoever referred to the French zone of occupied Germany as a colony used it to discredit France. In an article published in the *Manchester Guardian* in November 1948, for instance, the French policy in Germany was described in the following way:

In her occupation policy within her own zone France pursued courses widely different from those of Britain and the United States. [...] She looked on Germany rather as a colonial territory to be exploited (as also did the Russians), while to the British and Americans it was a pauper country which they had at their own expenses to keep alive.¹⁰²²

The French use of colonial rule was seen as “old-fashioned imperialism,” the *Manchester Guardian* asserted in another article, which underlined that the Germans were not a colonial people.¹⁰²³ A Swiss newspaper condemned both colonial empires for their colonial treatment of Germany: “The English and the French are colonizers, they treat the German problem as if it were one of their colonies.”¹⁰²⁴ Even though colonial rule was not officially the policy or vision France had of the occupation, as a colonial power, their rule was interpreted within this framework.

Finally, Germans themselves used the specter of being treated as colonial subjects to criticize occupation policies, for example, reparations. Such is the case of Theodor Eschenburg who famously coined the term *Ausbeutungskolonie* (colony of exploitation) to designate the French economic policy of extracting German goods in reparation for German damage in France during the war.¹⁰²⁵ Many Germans mocked being treated as colonial subjects in particular during

¹⁰²⁰ Gouvernement Militaire de la Zone Française d’Occupation, Direction de l’Education Publique, *Tu Viens En Allemagne* (Offenburg?, 1946): “Les temps sont si proches où ce peuple que tu vas regarder vivre prétendait faire la loi chez nous, où ton père, tes frères, tes amis, prisonniers par le sort des armes ou arrachés à la France par la pire violence [qui] appelait la vengeance. [...] Tu rencontreras des jeunes, garçons et filles, de ton âge, trompés par de mauvais maîtres, déçus, amers. Ils cherchent des raisons de vivre. [...] Ouvre les yeux et les oreilles sur ce monde. Pense que les exemples vivants ont le plus grand pouvoir, aide-nous dans notre tâche.”

¹⁰²¹ BDIC Nanterre, F delta 1346, Fonds Jacque Delarue: Cours organisés par l’Administration militaire française en Allemagne et destinés aux fonctionnaires français partant en Allemagne pour créer des services de sûreté en zone française d’occupation, 1945.

¹⁰²² “Germany,” *The Manchester Guardian*, November 16, 1948, 4.

¹⁰²³ “Germany,” *The Manchester Guardian*, October 17, 1946, 4. And “East and West,” *Manchester Guardian*, May 21, 1946, 4.

¹⁰²⁴ *Tribune de Genève*, July 20, 1946: “Les Anglais et les Français sont des colonisateurs, ils ont traité le problème allemand comme s’il s’était agi d’une de leurs colonies.”

¹⁰²⁵ Theodor Eschenburg, *Jahre der Besatzung: 1945-1949* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1983), 96.

the carnival season in the late 1940s and early 1950s. The most famous example is the carnival song *Wir sind die Eingeborenen von Trizonesien* (We are the natives of Trizonesia) written for the Cologne carnival of 1948 – a song which became so popular that some Belgian soldiers stationed in the British zone thought it was the national anthem of West-Germany and saluted when it was played.¹⁰²⁶ A carriage in the carnival procession in Mainz in 1950 showed a baby carriage in which a half-black and half-white baby looked out. The carriage read: “Come with me to Africa!” This was meant as a warning for German women to get romantically involved with colonial soldiers.¹⁰²⁷ By 1950, the image of French colonial soldiers as rapists had given way to the many consensual relationships between the few remaining colonial soldiers in the new West German state and German women. However, the trope of the danger emanating from African soldiers remained.

Colonial rule within Europe, be it through the presence of colonial soldiers or the use of colonial rule by the occupiers was disdained by Germans and Allies alike. With the experience of the long history of mutual French and German occupations in mind, notably the “failed” interwar occupation, the French sought to avoid colonial references in Germany, be it in their use of sub-Saharan or North-African soldiers in Germany or in their dealings with the German population. While there were some echoes of colonialism in Germany, notably the background of the personnel or the attempt to build up the French colonial prestige after the war through the showcasing of a racially-mixed imperial army, the French sought to avoid the negative repercussions of colonial rule in occupied Germany. By 1945, colonial practices seemed out of place within Europe.

The research on the French zone has since dismissed the term and focused on the situational constraints of French occupation policy. See for example Martial Libera, *Un rêve de puissance: La France et le contrôle de l'économie allemande (1942-1949)* (Bruxelles: P.I.E. Peter Lang, 2012) and Dietmar Hüser, *Frankreichs “doppelte Deutschlandpolitik:” Dynamik aus der Defensive - Planen, Entscheiden, Umsetzen in Gesellschaftlichen und Wirtschaftlichen, Innen- und Aussenpolitischen Krisenzeiten: 1944-1950* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1996).

¹⁰²⁶ See Konrad Adenauer, *Pressekonferenz in Berlin*, April 19, 1950. <https://www.konrad-adenauer.de/dokumente/pressekonferenzen/1950-04-19-pressekonferenz-berlin>: “Ich glaube, es war im vorigen Jahr, da war im Kölner Stadion eine sportliche Veranstaltung gegenüber Belgien. Es war auch manches belgische Militär in Uniform da vertreten, und schließlich wurden die Nationalhymnen angestimmt, und die Musikkapelle, die offenbar einen sehr tüchtigen und geistig gegenwärtigen Kapellmeister gehabt hat, hat ohne besonderen Auftrag, als die deutsche Nationalhymne angestimmt werden sollte, das schöne Karnevalslied “Ich bin ein Einwohner von Trizonesien” angestimmt. Was ich Ihnen jetzt sage, ist vertraulich für Sie, das ist nicht für die Öffentlichkeit bestimmt. Da sind zahlreiche belgische Soldaten aufgestanden und haben salutiert, weil sie glaubten, das wäre die Nationalhymne.”

¹⁰²⁷ SHD Gendarmerie 2007 ZM 1/209370. Gendarmerie Nationale, 3ème Légion de Gendarmerie d’Occupation. Section de Mayence, Compagnie de Neustadt, Tableau de Renseignements relatif à l’état d’esprit et à l’attitude de la population en Z.F.O. Période du 20 Janvier au 20 Février 1950, 4.

Conclusion

In his essay “Transformation of Experience and Methodological Change,” Reinhart Koselleck reflects on the importance of historical experiences in the moment of defeat in war: “If history is made in the short run by the victors, historical gains in knowledge stem in the long run from the vanquished.”¹⁰²⁸ To be vanquished is thus according to Koselleck a specific historical experience: the moment of defeat leaves the contemporaries shattered and thus catalyzes a search for the underlying causes of this defeat, since history has taken another course than the one expected. The moment of defeat thus allows for a particular reflection, and for learning to correct the mistakes of the past.

In order to explain the end of the cycle of violence between France and Germany in 1945, and the emergence of a united Europe with France and Germany at its center, the historiography has focused on the success of French policies in a defeated Germany. In the past thirty years, after the opening of the archives on the French occupation in Germany of the foreign office, historians have extensively researched almost all possible aspects of French policies in Germany:¹⁰²⁹ the denazification, political parties, unions, social policies, economic policies with regard to the inner-French debates, policies toward the press, sports, and most prominently, the import of French culture and education to Germany. Other studies have mainly explained the end of violence between the two countries by the efforts of prominent intellectuals like Edmond Vermeil, Alfred Grosser, Joseph Rovin, and others acting as mediators between France and Germany.¹⁰³⁰ Other historians have pointed to the emergence of the Cold War as the main reason for the end of the violent conflict of the first half of the 20th century on the European continent. Most of the studies on Europeanization or Western integration, with France and Germany at the center, begin in 1945 and tell a teleological story of reconciliation with the occupation as a first step towards the institutionalized French and German state friendship, culminating in the Elysée Treaty.

My dissertation has taken a different approach and argues that the dual defeat of France and Germany in 1945 was necessary to end the cycle of violence between the two countries. In other words, the rapprochement of the post-1945 era can only be explained by the entangled histories of French and German occupations since 1914. Only at the moment when France *and* Germany were vanquished did they begin to reflect on the causes of this catastrophic defeat. The post-1945 occupation aimed at correcting past mistakes in the situation of a renewed subjugation. At the same time, past experiences with violent conflict fed into expectations about continued violence during the upcoming occupation of Germany. What would become the last occupation between the two countries was therefore not just the beginning of a peaceful history of

¹⁰²⁸ Reinhart Koselleck, “Transformations of Experience and Methodological Change: A Historical-Anthropological Essay,” in *The Practice of Conceptual History: Timing History, Spacing Concepts* (Stanford University Press, 2002): 76.

¹⁰²⁹ As Edgar Wolfrum has mentioned in a book review already fifteen years ago: Edgar Wolfrum, review of *Die französische Besatzungspolitik in Berlin von 1945-1949: Déprussianisation und Décentralisation*, by Dorothea Führe, *H-Soz-u-Kult, H-Net Reviews*, May 3, 2002, <http://hsozkult.geschichte.hu-berlin.de/rezensionen/ZG-2002-063>.

¹⁰³⁰ See for example, Martin Strickmann, *L'Allemagne Nouvelle Contre l'Allemagne Éternelle - Die Französischen Intellektuellen und die Deutsch-Französische Verständigung. Diskurse, Initiativen, Biografien* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2004).

reconciliation, but the last violent episode of a period of mutual wars and occupations since at least 1914. Instead of reading history backwards to view the French occupation of Germany as the beginning of the French-German reconciliation in the 1950s and a European union, my dissertation argues that the French occupation of south-west Germany after 1945 has to be understood as the endpoint of a long and violent history. In other words, the shared experiences of defeat and occupation since 1914 turned Germans and French into Europeans.

“Defeat follows war as ashes follow fire,” wrote Wolfgang Schivelbusch in his “The Culture of Defeat,” his study of the experience of defeat and the resulting learning processes in the American South after the end of the civil war, in France after the Franco-Prussian War, and in Germany after 1918.¹⁰³¹ In 1945, in contrast to those earlier defeats in war, and not considered by Schivelbusch, both major opponents on the European continent, Germany *and* France were defeated. Germany had just unconditionally surrendered to the Allied troops. While in 1918, the impact of the defeat was only felt much later and left the feeling among many Germans that they were “undefeated on the battlefield,” the defeat in 1945 was undeniable and omnipresent with Allied soldiers in almost every corner of the German territory.

But France, whose army arrived in Germany in the spring of 1945 equipped with American army materiel and in American uniforms, was equally defeated. The defeat by the German Wehrmacht in the summer of 1940 was crushing and the impact of the subsequent German occupation, which resulted in a collaboration and thus complicity with the Nazi regime at a large scale, cannot be overestimated. The writer Léon Werth wrote on the omnipresence of defeat and resignation surrounding him during the flight of thousands of Frenchmen from Paris to the southern parts of France in 1940:

Since the defeat, it seems to me the French masses contemplate events the way peasants watch hail falling. I’ve seen the face of defeat on soldiers fleeing along the routes; I have not seen it on civilians. And I have lived through only the defeat, not yet those days to come when it seemed as if a people were surrendering itself [...] the resignation itself was repugnant.¹⁰³²

As Koselleck suggested, the crushing defeat led to a search for its causes. Historian Marc Bloch, who, as an officer in the French army, experienced their collapse before Nazi Germany at first hand, wrote “Strange Defeat” to explain this downfall of France, and to search for its long-term reasons. One of the main causes Bloch identified as crucial for the collapse was that the French army was unable to adapt to the situation in 1940. Bloch wondered: “How came it, then, that our leaders of 1940 were incapable of showing the same willingness to learn in the hard school of fact?”¹⁰³³

In 1945, more than ever before, learning from the past experiences seemed necessary for the vanquished, the Germans as well as the French who were reluctantly allowed the Allies to have their own zone of occupation. The French military administration used the long history of conflict between the two countries as reference point for their policies in Germany. At the same

¹⁰³¹ Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *The Culture of Defeat: On National Trauma, Mourning, and Recovery* (New York: Picador, 2004), 5.

¹⁰³² Léon Werth, *33 Days: A Memoir* (Brooklyn, London: Melville House Publishing, 2015), 100.

¹⁰³³ Marc Bloch, *Strange Defeat: A Statement of Evidence Written in 1940* (New York: Norton, 1999), 120.

time, they were grappling with the legacies of their defeat and the resulting civil war between resisters and collaborators in France. The French personnel employed in the occupation administration of the French zone after World War II showcased the split constitution of French society at the end of the war: a large number of the most powerful administrators in the heart of the zone, in the central administration of Baden-Baden, had held positions in the collaborationist Vichy government during the war. Morally tainted by their allegiance to Pétain's state, they could not remain in their positions in France, but they had the experience to govern and to deal with Germans. Therefore, they were dispatched to the French zone in order to build up and control freshly defeated Germany in an amalgam with seasoned resisters. The experience with collaboration and purges in France was in many ways similar to the situation in liberated Germany. The complicity with the Nazi regime and the knowledge that elites in both countries were deeply involved with Nazi crimes, including the Holocaust, led to a more lenient denazification strategy by the French administration in occupied Germany. It was based on the same model the French had used themselves at home, thus passing on the denazification to Germans to let them sort out the degree of culpability among themselves rather than imposing the judgment of the occupier. At the same time, as in France, the expertise of administrators to rebuild the country was more important than their implication in Nazi crimes.

These past experiences of occupation were of paramount importance after 1945. Yet they could also be misleading. Based on their experience with the resistance against the German occupier in wartime France, the French army, and the gendarmerie in particular, expected a similar reaction to the occupation: a widespread German resistance against the Allied forces. The expectation of violent German resistance had severe consequences for the dealing with incidents the French army, gendarmerie or the security service of the administration deemed acts of resistance. Harsh reprisals reminded of a wartime, rather than a peacetime, occupation and thus prolonged the war well into the period after May 8, 1945. This actually hindered the reconciliation between France and Germany. As the example of Ockfen shows, some members of the French administration even preferred to chase what turned out to be an imaginary German resistance until the 1950s. The war experiences haunted the occupation for years, and it determined expectations on both sides, French troops and administrators as well as German civilians.

Reconciliation was not a priority for everyone after 1945, and the past could be hijacked for personal interests. Belief in a German resistance had very practical advantages for the members of the occupying forces: the conviction that a German resistance was imminent justified the presence of a large number of occupation personnel. Since the occupation in Germany held many material advantages to the members of the French occupying forces and their families, they had an interest in staying in Germany rather than returning to France, where the foodstuff and housing situation was far more uncomfortable, or - much worse - to be dispatched to the war in Indochina.

Moreover, postwar Germans viewed French rule after 1945 in the light of previous occupations. While there was no active resistance against the allied troops, three groups of Germans feared persecution due to their "collaboration" with the French occupying forces: German administrators helping to implement French orders, German women having relationships with French soldiers, and so-called "neo-separatists" trying to revive the separatist movement of the interwar period. The experience with reprisals against those groups dating from the interwar occupation led to the fear of new reprisals in the aftermath of World War II. Even though - like in the case of the resistance - a widespread punishment for collaboration with the

French occupiers did not happen, the reminiscences of the interwar occupation are important to understand certain dynamics in the aftermath of World War II. The case of the separatists, for example, showcases both a continuity from the interwar occupation and a learning process: on the German side, the separatists continued to provoke a sharp rejection from most of their countrymen who feared the separatists might sell out their region to the French now that Germany was completely defeated. The French administration and army were afraid of a German nationalist backlash against the separatist movement, similar to the one that had caused so many disputes during their interwar occupation. Therefore, the French administration refrained from supporting the separatists in the aftermath of World War II for the sake of peace in their zone. The separatists thus remained the losers in this trade-off. Without the support of the French administration the separatists had hoped for, their German compatriots refused to compensate them as “victims of fascism” because the separatists had committed “treason to the fatherland” even before 1933.

One lesson from previous experiences was to avoid the impression that the French subjected postwar Germans to colonial rule. Contrary to some claims in the recent historiography, France as an imperial power did not implement colonial policies in Germany after 1945. Even the employment of colonial troops was contested. Again, the previous experience with Germany initiated a learning process: the French army had sufficient experience with the use of colonial troops on the European continent, during the interwar occupation of Germany. In occupied Rhineland, the Germans had fiercely fought against what they perceived a colonial treatment. Therefore, the French army and administration sought to avoid reminiscences of colonial rule after 1945. Notably the presence of colonial soldiers had sparked an outbreak of propaganda against the occupiers, which is why, in the aftermath of World War II, the French army purged their ranks of colonial soldiers twice: once in 1944, when the sub-Saharan troops were sent back to France before they even entered German territory, and again after the first year of the occupation, when most North-African troops were removed from Germany. Racial stereotypes on the side of the Germans as well as the French side saw colonial soldiers as inherently violent and prone to committing rapes, thefts, and in general causing trouble. Moreover, the fear of a “fraternization of the oppressed,” that is, between colonial soldiers and Germans, seemed likely to the French army in the aftermath of a war that had deeply shaken the colonies’ trust in the French motherland. While the French army tried to reestablish their colonial prestige at the beginning of the occupation, this project was abandoned because it was heavily criticized even in the French ranks but also and more importantly by other Allies and the Germans. The latter did not accept colonial rule within Europe and the French administration tried hard to halt colonial behavior of members of their occupying forces. References to colonial rule were already at the time used to criticize and delegitimize French rule in Germany. Instead of drawing references to the French colonial empire, the orientation of the French rule in Germany after 1945 was exclusively European, and in particular Franco-German. The long history of mutual French and German conflicts thus remained the frame of reference for historical learning, not the colonial empire.

“[H]istorical gains in knowledge stem in the long run from the vanquished,” Koselleck writes in his above-mentioned essay.¹⁰³⁴ The starting point of the reflection on Germany’s and France’s shared past, which would eventually lead to a rapprochement in the years to come, was

¹⁰³⁴ Reinhart Koselleck, “Transformations of Experience and Methodological Change: A Historical-Anthropological Essay,” in *The Practice of Conceptual History: Timing History, Spacing Concepts* (Stanford University Press, 2002): 76.

thus the dual defeat in World War II. On December 11, 1870, during the siege of Paris, Victor Hugo noted in “Choses Vues” (Things Seen), a collection of notes, diary entries, and memories published posthumously in two volumes in 1887 and 1900, that a friend and soldier, Rostan, came to see him, with a wounded arm. Rostan told him that a German soldier had attacked him with a bayonet. In fact, both soldiers had inflicted injuries on one-another, rolled into a pit, stayed there for three hours, bleeding, freezing, and had helped each other. “Les voilà bon amis,” concluded Hugo: “There, they became good friends.”¹⁰³⁵ In a way, French and Germans, like those soldiers, had to be both completely defeated in order to be able to learn from the past and to make peace after decades of violent conflict. While the two individual soldiers in Hugo’s story had learned this already in 1870, their respective countries needed two World Wars and many years of mutual occupations to finally embrace peace.

¹⁰³⁵ Victor Hugo, *Choses Vues: Souvenirs, Journaux, Cahiers, 1830-1885*, Quarto (Paris: Gallimard, 2002), 1087. Wolfgang Schivelbusch mentions this story in passing in *The Culture of Defeat: On National Trauma, Mourning, and Recovery* (New York: Picador, 2004), 25.

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