

Mnemosyne and Mars

Mnemosyne and Mars:
Artistic and Cultural Representations
of Twentieth-century Europe at War

Edited by

Peter Tame, Dominique Jeannerod
and Manuel Bragança

CAMBRIDGE
SCHOLARS

P U B L I S H I N G

Mnemosyne and Mars:
Artistic and Cultural Representations of Twentieth-century Europe at War,
Edited by Peter Tame, Dominique Jeannerod and Manuel Bragança

This book first published 2013

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

12 Back Chapman Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2XX, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Copyright © 2013 by Peter Tame, Dominique Jeannerod, Manuel Bragança and contributors

All rights for this book reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the copyright owner.

ISBN (10): 1-4438-5158-2, ISBN (13): 978-1-4438-5158-9

This volume is dedicated to the memory of Pierre, Louis and André Rozé, François-Joseph Muckensturm, Marie-Louise Kayser, Roman Boncza-Bartoszewski, and Marion Wierzbicki.

Knowledge is the memory of being. That is why Mnemosyne is the mother of the Muses. [*Das Wissen ist das Gedächtnis des Seins. Darum ist Μνημοσύνη die Mutter der Musen.*]

—Martin Heidegger, *Holzwege*.¹

Calliope, begin! Ye sacred Nine [...],
Inspire your poet in his high design [...]
To sing [...] the vast circuit of the fatal war
For you in singing martial facts excel
You best remember, and alone can tell.

—From John Dryden's translation of Virgil's *Aeneid*.²

¹ Martin Heidegger, *Holzwege* (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 2007), 322.

² P. Vergilius Maro (Virgil), *The Aeneid*, Book IX, ll. 525-529.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Illustrations	xi
Acknowledgements	xii
Foreword	xiii
Jay Winter, <i>Language and Memory</i>	
Introduction	1
Peter Tame, Dominique Jeannerod and Manuel Bragança	
Part I: Commitments	
Chapter One.....	10
A Writer at the Front Line: Armand Petitjean, Witness to War, 1939-1940 Martyn Cornick	
Chapter Two	26
Living in Delirium: Marin Preda and Romanian Remembrance of the Second World War Gavin Bowd	
Chapter Three	41
Remembering <i>Lacombe Lucien</i> —Becoming Lucien Lacombe: Mirror Image or Broken Mirror? William Kidd	
Chapter Four	59
“ <i>Résistantialisme</i> ”, “ <i>Résistancialisme</i> ”: Resistance and the Politics of Memory Margaret Attack	

Part II: Heroes and Heroines

Chapter Five	76
Goodbye to All That? Critiquing the (Masculine) Nation in Post-First-World-War Britain	
T. G. Ashplant	
Chapter Six	99
Manly Heroes and Innocent Victims: Italian Representations of Warfare after Defeat (1945-1961)	
Marco Mondini	
Chapter Seven.....	120
The Fate of Icarus: Masculinity, National Identity, Memory and the Image of the Second World War Royal Air Force Fighter Pilot	
Jonathan Black	
Chapter Eight.....	145
Model Martyrs? Remembering First-World-War Resistance Heroines in Belgium and France	
Alison Fell and Emmanuel Debruyne	

Part III: Picturing the War—The Ekphrasis of Memory

Chapter Nine.....	166
Confronting History: Jean Dubuffet's <i>Tableaux et Dessins</i> Exhibition (October-November 1944)	
Caroline Perret	
Chapter Ten	183
Creativity Against All the Odds: Art and Internment during World War II	
Monica Bohm-Duchen	
Chapter Eleven	202
Nationalism, Sin and Redemption in Vicente Blasco Ibáñez's <i>The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse</i> and its American Film Adaptations	
Nancy Sloan Goldberg	
Chapter Twelve	219
World War II and the Greek Civil War in Cinema	
Elli Lemonidou	

Part IV: Memoriographies of War / Writing the Memory of War

Chapter Thirteen	240
The Representations of the 11 th of November Armistice and Armistice Day in Interwar French Fiction and Theater	
Christina Theodosiou	
Chapter Fourteen	258
From Mars to Mnemosyne: The Idea of Culture in André Malraux's <i>Antimémoires</i> (1967)	
Peter Tame	
Chapter Fifteen	276
Charlotte Delbo and Marie Chaix: Variance of World-War-II French Memories	
Nicole Thatcher	
Chapter Sixteen	292
<i>Coincidentia Oppositorum</i> , or Music as a Key to Memory:	
The <i>Meetingpoint Music Messiaen</i> as a Site of War Memory in Europe	
Joanna Lusek	

Part V: Dislocating Isotopias—The Ekstasis of Memory

Chapter Seventeen	312
Identity and Modern War in <i>Salt of the Earth</i> (1936) by Joseph Wittlin	
Hanna Trubicka	
Chapter Eighteen	327
Reimagining the Great War in Grand-Historical Narratives:	
A Transnational Perspective on European History in the Twentieth Century	
Marzena Sokołowska-Paryż	
Chapter Nineteen	343
The Jew as St Christopher: The Holocaust and the Participation of Soviet Jews in Russia's Great Patriotic War Effort in the <i>Œuvre</i> of Andreï Makine	
Helena Duffy	

Conclusion	361
Contributors.....	368
Index.....	374

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

- Fig. 7-1: William Rothenstein, *Flying Officer C. S. P. Russell*, 1940.
- Fig. 7-2: Cecil Beaton, *Icarus, Stirling Bomber Crew Member*, 1941.
- Fig. 8-1: Monument to Louise de Bettignies.
- Fig. 8-2: Atrocity propaganda revealing the similarities between images of Edith Cavell and other atrocity imagery.
- Fig. 8-3: Meeting of the Association des ex-prisonnières de Siegburg, 1966 (private collection of the family Crabbé).
- Fig. 8-4: Drawing of the Siegburg prison by a captive, 1917 (private collection of the family Crabbé).
- Fig. 9-1: Jean Dubuffet, *Paysage aux Tracés Crayeux*, 1944, Indian ink on paper, 21.5 x 25 cm., Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris.
- Fig. 10-1: Peter Edel, *Self-Portrait*, 1944, pencil on paper, 12 x 8 in./30.5 x 20.3 cm., Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, Oświęcim.
- Fig. 10-2: Adolphe Feder, *The Reader (Jew with Yellow Star)*, Drancy, 1943, charcoal and pastel, 49 x 37.6 cm., Beit Lohamei Haghetatot (Ghetto Fighters' House Museum), Israel.
- Fig. 10-3: Austen Deans, *POW with Mandolin*, Stalag XX-A, Poland, 1943, Archives New Zealand, Wellington (AAAC 898, NCWA Q604).
- Fig. 10-4: Tadeusz Myszkowski, *Birthday Card, Auschwitz*, 1944, ink and watercolour on photo paper, 13 x 18 cm., Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, Oświęcim (caption reads: "The greatest pleasure in the world is riding a horse").
- Fig. 10-5: Maja Berezowska, *Distribution of Soup in Ravensbrück*, 1944, pen and ink drawing on paper, 23.4 x 35.5 cm., Muzeum Niepodleglosci (Museum of Independence), Warsaw.
- Fig. 10-6: Charlotte Burešová, *Dormitory, Terezin*, n. d., pen and ink wash, graphite and Chinese white, 31.3 x 23.3 cm., Yad Vashem Art Museum, Jerusalem.
- Fig. 10-7: Waldemar Nowakowski: *Nazi and Child*, Auschwitz, 1943, pencil, 5 x 4 ins, Coll. Ewa Huczowska, Krakow.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This volume is an edited collection of chapters on the theme of war and memory in twentieth-century Europe. The editors would like to thank members of the War and Memory Research Group at Queen's University Belfast for their contribution to this volume. In particular, we would like to thank Drs Roberta Quance and Marko Pajević for reading and commenting on certain chapters. Other consultants to whom we should like to express our warmest gratitude include Mr Richard Lewis and Dr Guy Cuthbertson.

The original inspiration for this volume was a major international conference on "War and Memory: artistic and cultural representations of individual, collective and national memories in twentieth-century Europe at war", which took place in Warsaw in September 2012. The conference was jointly organised by the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the Polish Academy of Sciences (IFiS PAN) and Queen's University Belfast. We would like to thank Professor Józef Niznik for his genial hosting and organisation of the conference. Also, thanks are due to the IFiS Foundation in Warsaw for the organisation of this event as well as the volunteers from the Graduate School for Social Research at IFiS PAN for their help. We should also like to express our thanks to the editorial team at Cambridge Scholars Press, in particular to Carol Koulikourdi, Amanda Millar, and Sophie Edminson for their help with the manuscript. We should finally like to thank Queen's University Belfast for substantial funding for the expenses of the guest-speaker at the conference, Professor Jay Winter, who has kindly contributed a Foreword to this volume.

FOREWORD

LANGUAGE AND MEMORY

Language frames memory, especially memories of war. This is true in a linguistic sense, since English, French, German and so on, have different lexicons both of memory and of war. It is also true in a formal sense, in that prose, poetry, theatre, painting, sculpture, film, and music—the media to which the authors of the essays in this book refer—have different conventions and rules. Memory is always mediated by the medium in which it is expressed. It is in this sense that these forms of expression frame memories. They both make it communicable, and limit or constrain how we convey or perform them.

Memories of war, understood as representations by those or of those who live through armed conflict, are a special case of the general phenomenon of the mediation of memory. War is simply too frightful, too chaotic, too arbitrary, too bizarre, too uncanny a set of events and images for us to grasp directly. We need blinkers, spectacles, shades to glimpse war even indirectly. Without filters, we are blinded by its searing light.

The volatile sets of traces war has left on our minds and our memories are never pure; memory (like history) is not the event itself but a trace of it, usually association with affect. At times the emotions linked to memories of war are overwhelming. In a sense, war is too terrifying for individuals to remember without passing through a kind of decompression chamber; language itself is such a device. All soldiers who try to go back to their battlefields know that what they see and what they say are transformed in the telling. Their memories are processed and organised in a host of socially-determined ways.

On the individual level, such memories have to fit in with the stories we tell ourselves and others about who we are. When memories are so terrifying or compromising to these personal narratives, when a sense of what happened in war can't fit in to such stories of self, men and women face essentially three options. They change the narrative; they repress the experience; or they face a kind of collapse, when an individual's identity fractures. In some cases all three happen, and happen again. Linking Mars and Mnemosyne, the aim of this book, is to enter into an unstable, volatile world, one with dangers both to the storyteller and to his or her audience.

In a sense all representations of war touch on the instabilities it introduces in the lives and identities of the people caught up in it. This book is about these fragmentations and reactions to them in the creative work of people who used their wit and their art to try to make sense of the violent world in which they lived.

As the essays in this collection show, fragmentations came in all shapes and sizes. Starting in 1914 and continuing throughout the century, there is the grand sweep of collapsing empires. There is the unraveling of the four empires that collapsed during the First World War—the Russian, the German, the Austro-Hungarian, and the Ottoman. There is the fragmentation of multi-national empires that survived the war; the Irish revolt of 1916 is a case in point. There is the dangerous weakening of the capitalist world order, from its peak of globalisation in 1913 to the world of economic crisis of 1929-31. Not only did the Russian revolution point to another way to organise economic life, but the war effectively ended the period of economic liberalism, based on the free movement of capital, labour and goods. By 1931, all three of these factors of production had vanished, belated though real casualties of the Great War.

State legitimisation of organised violence in the Great War set in motion a wave of bloodshed the world had never seen before. The Armistice of 1918 could stem that wave, but could not stop it. The war after the war was in some respects more dangerous, because it was uncontrolled. The killings in the Russian civil war created a regime that soon made war on its own population. Russian society did not demobilise in 1918; it stayed on a war footing until 1945 at least. The massacres that took place in the conflict between Greeks and Turks after the war were as terrifying as those that happened during and because of it. The Irish civil war was no different, nor was the outbreak of anti-colonial violence in 1919 in Egypt, India, Korea, and China. Fragmentation is the right word for both the causes and the effects of such a paroxysm of violence.

Some see the Spanish Civil War and the Second World War as a continuation of the first; others see them as representing an even worse episode of the breakdown of the international order, following the failed peace of 1919. Most of those who engaged in creative artistic work in or immediately after the 1939-45 conflict had either experienced directly or known about the earlier war in their childhood or adolescence. Most of the leaders of the Second World War had served in the First. Some were unlucky enough, like the German painter Otto Dix, to serve in both conflicts as infantrymen, rather than staff officers. And the wartime fragmentation of the world they knew included genocidal and nuclear

violence, both hallmarks of the degeneration of twentieth-century warfare into industrial killing on an unprecedented scale.

The essays in this volume register a wide-ranging search for framing devices, for modes of expression which can convey the disorder in which individuals, societies, nations, empires—effectively everyone—faced in the age of total war. There is no one story here, no one interpretive line, or narrative structure. What is most impressive about this body of scholarship is its heterogeneous character, its refusal to adopt grand narratives or reaffirm the nobility of man, or at least of European man run riot. This is a chastening set of essays, one with a deep sensitivity to the relentless courage of men and women writers, artists, composers, and others, faced with the impossible task of giving those of us who were fortunate enough not to know war directly, a sense of its horror and what it meant to be in the crucible of armed conflict. As such, these essays are important contributions to the growing trans-national project of writing the cultural history of war.

Jay Winter
9 May 2013
Paris.

INTRODUCTION

This edited volume explores the dialogue between the arts and artistic genres in representations of war in European cultures. It assesses the role of artistic and cultural media in defining a specific memorial space that informs both the historical and aesthetic discourse on war and conflict. Furthermore, it analyses the interrelationships between image and text on war in twentieth-century Europe, highlighting how these interrelationships create a hybrid, intermedial and intergeneric “archive”, or “imaginary museum”, to use André Malraux’s well-known term that posits the concept of a universal, virtual storehouse of artistic creation. The book’s approach combines a historiographical representation of war with the depiction of this phenomenon in dynamic literary and artistic exchanges, drawing upon the expertise of leading specialists in the global, interdisciplinary field of war and memory.

Cultural history and cultural studies emphasise the notions of representation and affects. The artistic creations studied in this volume are inscribed in rich and complex overlays that have accumulated, literally been “cultivated” or “grown”, over a period of time. The novels, plays, poetry, painting, sculpture, and films presented here are signs of memory and statements on war. They expand on, and interrelate with, personal and collective memories, testimonies, archives and monuments commemorating war. Their existence and circulation are linked with more prosaic and mundane products, such as political and commercial agreements, legal texts, and, of course, objects and relics from periods of conflict and imprisonment. All are dependent upon the dimensions of time and place. Historical and geographical perspectives are, therefore, applied here since they are vitally relevant to the study of culture, war, and how war is remembered and represented.

This volume has its origins in the major international conference on “War and memory: artistic and cultural representations of individual, collective and national memories in twentieth-century Europe at war”, held at the Polish Academy of Science in Warsaw on the 7th-9th September 2012. The conference attracted a large number of participants, most of whom gave papers of great interest to researchers in the disciplines of history, literature, film studies, drama studies, sociology, and politics. The conference also hosted exhibitions of art, photographs, propaganda, and posters on the subject of war in the twentieth century in Europe. The

conference programme included a visit to the Warsaw Uprising Museum and an excursion to the Kampinoska Forest (Palmiry), a war-memory site just outside Warsaw. The aim of the conference was to attract a wide range of specialists from all over the world who work in relevant fields in the various global centres of learning and research, and to invite them to participate in, and contribute to, the on-going discussion and analysis of artistic, cultural and memorial representations of twentieth-century warfare in Europe. The editors of this volume believe that a multidisciplinary dialogue of this kind, as it emerged and was developed from the transcultural and transdisciplinary perspectives of the conference, is an exceptionally effective way to focus on, confront and analyse the phenomenon of the memory of war in the twentieth century.

Part I, "Commitments", begins with a contribution by Martyn Cornick on a little-known French writer and journalist of the interwar era, Armand Petitjean. Cornick's specialist interest in one of the most influential journals of the 1930s and 1940s, the *Nouvelle Revue Française*, allows him to identify Petitjean as one of the review's moving spirits. Correspondence between Petitjean and Jean Paulhan, a major French intellectual figure of the time, reveals new insights into the way in which the Second World War affected writers, as well as the role of the *NRF* as an important site of memory in terms of reflection on, and intellectual engagement in, the French experience of the war. Gavin Bowd explores the events depicted in the Romanian novel by Marin Preda, *Delirul* (1975), and its controversial reception in Communist Romania, whose remembrance of the Second World War emerges as a deadly national "delirium". The ideological commitment of Preda himself, his protagonist, and indeed of Romania as a nation in the Second World War are shown to be highly problematic. In France, the "*mode rétro*" that caused such a revisionist stir in the 1970s is the subject of William Kidd's sensitive analysis of Louis Malle's controversial film *Lacombe Lucien* about a young farmer's boy who, rather than following a positive, ideological commitment to a cause, falls mindlessly into the trap of collaborationism in the last year of the Occupation and World War Two. Kidd concludes on the film's illustration of the impossibility of a collective memory of those "dark years" owing to a fragmentation of national identity that is conveyed by a wealth of cinematographic and, more generally cultural, "fractured images". Also in post-World-War-II France, the re-emergence of old myths and the forging of new myths mark much of the literary production concerned with memory of the war. Margaret Atack reassesses *Résistantialisme* (the use and abuse of Resistance credentials in post-1945 France) and *Résistancialisme* (a term forged later by Henry Rousso to identify the

Gaullist “myth” of Resistance), particularly as illustrated in two examples taken from a more extensive corpus of French post-war narratives, namely *Résistantialisme* (Georges Bonnamy) and *Les Crimes masqués du résistantialisme* (L’abbé Desgranges). The conclusion of her analysis is that Resistance memories, as mirrored in fiction, are “relentlessly political”.

In Part II, “Heroes and Heroines”, one of the key issues is that of gender, masculinity and femininity in wartime. Drawing on his previous work on the politics of war memory (Ashplant, Dawson & Roper, 2000), and on the fracturing of socio-political identities under the impact of war (Ashplant, 2007), T. G. Ashplant uses Robert Graves’ satirical *Goodbye to All That* (1929) as a prime example of those Great War memoirs by which writers and intellectuals attempted to remake the self and its relationship with the nation, shaping post-1918 British war memories in the light of their experiences in the war. In analysing Italian literature, film and media concerning World War II, Marco Mondini scans the period from 1915 to 1960 in order to demonstrate the complexities and contradictions that shaped the construction of the remembrance of the war in Italian contemporary culture. In so doing, he raises topical issues such as the warrior’s masculinity, traditional gender roles in wartime, along with archetypes in ideological narratives. Jonathan Black features the iconography of British war artists whose visual representations of the Second World War, and in particular of fighter-pilots, demonstrate clear associations with other aspects of British culture. This analysis of British masculinity reveals how such icons, portraits and illustrations shaped popular memory of the Second World War fighter ace, a winged Mars, to the present day, and offers intriguing insights into preconceptions concerning national identity at a time of crisis. In contrast, Alison Fell and Emmanuel Debruyne focus on women’s resistance activities in occupied France and Belgium during the First World War. A number of case-studies of female heroism in the Great War, including the most famous of these martyr-heroines, Edith Cavell, are presented here. In some cases, their memory persisted after the Armistice, and played a role in the post-war construction of national identities. It emerges, moreover, from this analysis that the figures of these women became iconic symbols for diverging memories, ranging from those exploited by right-wing nationalists to those who figured largely as heroines for the Flemish and Francophone communities during the interwar era.

Part III, “Picturing the war: the ekphrasis of memory”, focuses on the visual aspect of remembering and representing war. Caroline Perret examines artist Jean Dubuffet’s exhibition *Tableaux et dessins* (1944) as the expression of the horrors of World War II and, more broadly, as an

invitation to exercise one's imagination in order to reflect on art's universal, humanist values and its role in triggering a "memory shift", optimistically ushering in a new era of reconstruction in post-Liberation France. Monica Bohm-Duchen compares art works produced by prisoners interned on both sides (Allies and Axis) during the Second World War, often in the most primitive conditions. She demonstrates, with illustrations, that the problematic insights they provide into the relationship between trauma and creativity, and between work of art and historical document, remain of crucial importance. Nancy Goldberg examines two American film versions of Spanish author Vicente Blasco Ibáñez's best-selling novel, *Los cuatro jinetes del apocalipsis* (1916), that abandon the author's denunciation of German racial theories of Aryan superiority in the context of the First World War, principally in order to enhance the films' box-office appeal. The net result appears to be a "rewrite" of history that amounts to a dangerous eradication of the role and accountability of nations, their governments and policies in the legacy and memory of war. Part III also includes an examination of representations of World War II in film and their ideological appropriation as exemplified by Greek cinema and presented by Elli Lemonidou. Such representations are found to serve both collective and "prosthetic" memory.¹

Part IV, "Memoriographies of war: Writing the memory of war", begins with a chapter on literary and theatrical representations of the end of the First World War. Christina Theodosiou demonstrates the ways in which both the 11th November 1918 and its national annual celebration have been represented in French literature and popular theatre during the interwar period. In the context of discursive modes of memory, while paying special attention to the relationship between narrative, identity and traumatic memory, she questions the influence of the historical and social context on the writing of the end of the war and its collective remembrance. Examining the social phenomenon of memory-building, she examines the ways in which the cultural representation of armistice contributes to the emergence of the war's metanarratives which structured collective identities in connection with the other discursive modes of memory, commemoration and co-reminiscences. Myth and the role of myth, in its broadest sense, in European culture and in the memory and representation of war are the subject of Peter Tame's examination of

¹ According to Geoffrey Cubitt, "prosthetic memory" develops in people who "have no direct personal experience" of a particular past but have access to it via the media and mass culture that enable them to relate "these images empathetically to their own life experience." (Geoffrey Cubitt, *History and Memory*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007, 248.)

André Malraux's *Antimémoires* (1967), a work that was clearly written under the aegis of Mnemosyne and Mars. In terms of post-war reflections on World War II, Nicole Thatcher analyses the variance of World War II French memories and postmemories in the work of Charlotte Delbo and Marie Chaix, two women whose representations of World War II might be regarded as oppositional. While Delbo conveys the trauma of her deportation to Auschwitz, the younger Chaix writes in an attempt to understand her collaborationist father, opening the way to subsequent works by children of collaborators. Both kinds of memories (personal and postmemory) continue to be the subject of controversial debate today, and offer richly diverging representations of war. Such writings therefore testify to the diversity and multiplicity of literary representations of the experience of war. In turn, readers react as special types of witnesses themselves and, thereby, as participants in that experience. In terms of a very different kind of writing, the musical composition of Olivier Messiaen focuses the attention of Joanna Lusek and Albrecht Goetze, researchers based at the Central Museum of Prisoners of War in Łambinowice. They argue for music, and in particular the music of Messiaen, as a key to memory. Messiaen was a prisoner of war in Stalag VIIIa in Görlitz where he premiered his celebrated *Quartet for the End of Time* in 1941. The area has been transformed into a "European Centre for Culture and Education at Zgorzelec-Görlitz Meetingpoint Music Messiaen" as a bi-national project hosted by Poland and Germany. The authors examine the combined influence of Messiaen's work and this wartime "memory-landscape" on twentieth-century music and, more broadly, on modern-day pedagogic and artistic concepts.

War involves displacement, and World War II saw some of the greatest and most widespread mass-movements of populations, civilians and refugees that any war has incurred. Displacement, dislocation, diaspora and regrouping form the central themes of the final part of this volume. Part V, "Dislocating isotopias: the *ekstasis* of memory", introduces the concept of the imaginary space or homeland (isotopia), reinforced by the Heideggerian notion of *ekstasis* as a form of chronological and spatial alienation in a time of turbulence and conflict. In her study of Joseph Wittlin's *Salt of the Earth* (1936), one of Poland's greatest novels, Hanna Trubicka shows how Europe becomes a theatre of war, a space in flux, during the First World War. Trubicka analyses the novel's main character as both the victim and the accomplice of modern mechanised warfare in the Great War that is mythologised as the summum of the institutionalised eruption of violence against the cultural backdrop of European humanism. Wittlin shows how the myth of war helps the

protagonist, a simple peasant-soldier, to find himself in the seemingly incoherent dislocations of dystopian, embattled Europe. The focus of the subsequent chapter by Marzena Sokołowska-Paryż is the divergent international meanings of the Great War determined by the specific location of the conflict in history and the casting of fictive protagonists in ideologically defined roles as either agents or victims of historical change. Examining five texts, Sokołowska-Paryż finds that the Great War, far from being a clear example of a component in the “grand historical narrative”, may be considered as a powerful factor behind social progress, the founding event of national identity, or a harbinger of the gradual destruction of societies and nations in the decades that followed it.² There are, she concludes, as many Great Wars as there are authors and creative artists. Moving further east into the vaster, isotopic spaces of Russia, Helena Duffy analyses the self-referential novels of the Franco-Russian author, Andreï Makine, in order to evaluate the innovative nature of their treatment of the themes of war and memory. She finds that his novels, while they often combine an investigation of the past with the protagonist’s quest for an identity, cannot be considered as ideology-free, post-modern treatments of historical material since they largely tend to perpetuate the Soviet version of World War II.

The scope of this volume involves academics and researchers from all over Europe and even from further afield. All contribute to an examination and assessment of cultural representations of war in twentieth-century Europe and their place in national historiographies. Literature, film and painting are shown to be of the utmost significance in the construction of national memories, nourishing a historiography that increasingly accepts their importance in this respect. They all participate in the process of “national normalisation”, as Jeffrey Olick calls it, that takes place after a war.³ In this context, Europe being a collection of nations, only an

² The “grand narrative”, or “metanarrative”, implies the proposal of a coherent, totalising narrative explanation of the world and of the course of historical events. Examples of grand narratives are Christianity, Islam and Marxism. The best-known challenger of this historical perspective is Jean-François Lyotard who, in identifying the “grand narrative” as characteristic of modernism, defines the “postmodern” as incredulity towards metanarratives” in *The Postmodern Condition: a report on knowledge* (transl. Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi), Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005, xxiii.

³ Jeffrey Olick’s notion of “national normalization” after a war depends on the concept of a “national historiography”, a concept that gained in popularity at the end of the nineteenth century. (Jeffrey K. Olick, *The Politics of Regret: on collective memory and historical responsibility* (New York/London: Routledge, 2007), 68-78, 112.) See also Heidemarie Uhl, “Culture, Politics, Palimpsest”, in *A*

understanding of other nations' memories can provide a real sense of identity at a transnational or European level. Above all, such approaches allow a more complex and subtle evaluation of the war that, as it recedes in human memory, takes on aesthetic accretions that bring important nuances to the phenomenon of war. As Stefan Berger observes generally of studies on European memory:

[...] the most recent developments can be described in terms of a thorough historicisation, which aims at allowing for less dichotomous and more complex memories of the war years to emerge.⁴

Moreover, these more recent developments to which Berger refers question the relative roles of style, stylistics and poetics in representations of war, including their reliance on myths, metaphors, on symbols and on stereotypes, in painting as in writing and in films. Developing these concerns, the contributions to this volume advance further, querying the instrumentation of mimesis, and considering (ethically, politically and aesthetically) the limits of representation. Around such issues, the international perspective of the volume allows its contributors to probe the extent of the very rich aesthetic and intercultural exchanges that characterise representations of war in Europe.

Peter Tame/ Dominique Jeannerod / Manuel Bragança

War and Memory Research Group, based at Queen's University Belfast.

European Memory? Contested histories and politics of remembrance, eds Małgorzata Pakier and Bo Stráth (New York: Berghahn Books, 2010), 83.

⁴ Stefan Berger, "Remembering the Second World War in Western Europe 1945-2005", in *A European Memory? Contested histories and politics of remembrance*, 133.

PART I:
COMMITMENTS

CHAPTER ONE

A WRITER AT THE FRONT LINE: ARMAND PETITJEAN, WITNESS TO WAR, 1939-1940

MARTYN CORNICK

Introduction

This brief study presents some preliminary but key findings from my researches into the archives of the writer and critic, Armand Petitjean.¹ This research has evolved from the preparation of my edition of the correspondence between Petitjean and Jean Paulhan, director of the *Nouvelle Revue française* from 1925 until 1940 and a major intellectual figure of the interwar era in France.² Petitjean is a neglected figure whose life and actions will be of interest to those working on war and culture for three principal reasons. First, he remains relatively unknown, despite the very high esteem in which he was held by Jean Paulhan during the late 1930s. Because of his self-imposed silence after the war, largely due to his proscription by the CNE (Comité National des Ecrivains) in September 1944, and the inclusion of his name on their blacklist, he fell into obscurity.³ However, following his death in 2003, and the publication of the letters he exchanged with Paulhan, it is possible to appreciate both the depth of their friendship and his contribution to intellectual activity. Later in his life, he took over the management of the family business, Lancôme, and, after his retirement in 1964, he became one of the founders of the trans-European ecology movement, Ecoropa.

¹ I wish to record my thanks to Clara Mure-Petitjean for her generosity in granting me access to the Petitjean Archives.

² Jean Paulhan-Armand Petitjean, *Correspondance 1934-1968*, ed. Martyn Cornick (Paris: Gallimard, 2011). Hereafter *Corr. JP-AP*.

³ The Comité National des Ecrivains was an organised grouping of Resistance writers in France, founded in 1941.

Secondly, it is important to appreciate the strength of his reaction to the threat posed by the *Anschluss* in March 1938.⁴ I have shown elsewhere how this reaction was supported by Paulhan, and by Jean Schlumberger, one of the founders of the *NRF*. Between them they reoriented the *NRF* politically, marking it out as profoundly anti-appeasement, anti-Munich, nationalist even. This has a direct bearing too on Petitjean's own intellectual trajectory. Finally, it is enlightening to consider Petitjean's own role as a historical actor, as an archetype of the intellectual "*en situation*", in the Sartrean sense, the writer-as-soldier. His unit was one of those to endure the most severe combat when the Germans' attack began on 10 May 1940. He never lost the urge to bear witness to war, to the War, to explain what it meant for his fellow soldiers, what war meant for France. His own review, *Le Courrier de Paris et de Province*, was one tangible result of this determination. For the purposes of this introductory study, we shall present this "work in progress" in three parts: Who is Armand Petitjean, and how did he become "a man of genius" for Paulhan? How did Petitjean and the *NRF* react to the *Anschluss* and to Munich in 1938? Finally, how did he bear witness to war, and what was the outcome of his *engagement*?

Who was Armand Petitjean?

I have discussed elsewhere how and why Petitjean came to prominence at the *NRF*.⁵ Suffice it to say here that in 1934, through André Gide's friend Auguste Bréal, Paulhan recruited him, at the same time as Roger Caillois, to rejuvenate the critical effort of the *NRF*.⁶ When they were recruited, Petitjean was still only 20 years old. Before truly embarking on his career at the *NRF*, whilst Caillois took the *agrégation* teaching qualification, Petitjean had to fulfil his military service. In the autumn of 1935 he joined the 8th Regiment of the *Chasseurs à pied*, based at

⁴ The *Anschluss* (which took place on 12 March 1938) was the annexation of Austria by Nazi Germany, an event which signalled Hitler's expansionist ambitions, in the lead up to the Munich crisis on September 1938.

⁵ See Martyn Cornick, "Embracing Modernity: Roger Caillois and Armand Petitjean at the *Nouvelle Revue française*", in *Nottingham Journal of French Studies* 50, no. 3, Autumn 2011, 28-42; Martyn Cornick, "Voies et impasses en littérature: Armand Petitjean à *La NRF* de Jean Paulhan". <http://www.fabula.org/colloques/document1722.php> [accessed 2nd July 2013].

⁶ See Martyn Cornick, "Le renouveau critique à *La NRF*. Roger Caillois et Armand Petitjean", in *La Nouvelle Revue française. Les colloques du centenaire-Paris, Bourges, Caen* (Paris: Gallimard, 2013), 400-415.

Forbach and Toul. This experience, he would insist, was an intensely formative one, one which inspired his thinking on the status and importance of French youth. He found himself with “young people from all over the place, from all walks of life in France; it is with them that for the first time in my adolescence I felt ‘good’.”⁷ For example, he maintained a correspondence with one of his comrades, Raymond Defente, a worker from Lille, and he would draw on these personal, but also political, reflections in his later projects. Military service did not prevent him from pursuing his ambitions as a writer: for his comrades he was “Armand the Scribbler” [*Armand le Scribouillard*]. He corrected the proofs of his first book, *Imagination et Réalisation*, undertook translations, started new essays for some of the major contemporary reviews such as *Mesures*, the *NRF*, *Europe*, and *Esprit*.⁸

Probably the most important essay to emerge from this experience is “Disponibilité de la jeunesse française actuelle”.⁹ When it appeared in the *NRF* in January 1937, it made a considerable impact, resounding like a “manifesto”, according to the philosopher Gaston Bachelard and French Academician Louis Gillet (with Gillet, Petitjean shared a common interest in James Joyce). Petitjean’s aim was to reveal to the French the importance of the country’s youth, a new generation which was only now maturing and assuming its own political, sociological and cultural significance. Here one can detect some of the intellectual bases of the mobilisation of youth which, later, would become so important for Petitjean and others under the Vichy regime. This text, in some measure at least, conferred on Petitjean the status of spokesman for French youth (as many testified: cf. Claude Roy, René Etiemble, Pierre Schaeffer, Raymond Abellio, and Jean-Paul Sartre).¹⁰

When his military service ended in October 1936, Petitjean needed to earn a living. Paulhan engaged him as an editorial assistant to prepare the new “Bulletin de la *NRF*” rubric. Thus was his career launched. As the months went on he occupied more and more space at the review. At the same time, Petitjean’s life in Paris became hyperactive. Among the

⁷ Unpublished autobiographical typescript, Archives Petitjean. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are by the author of this chapter.

⁸ For an extensive bibliography, see <http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/Documents/college-artslaw/french/french/BibliographieArmandPetitjean1.pdf> [accessed 2 July 2013].

⁹ *Corr. JP-AP*, letter 27: 72; letters 28 and 30: 73, 75.

¹⁰ E.g., Jean-Paul Sartre, *Carnets de la drôle de guerre, septembre 1939-mars 1940* (Paris: Gallimard, 1995), 207.

networks he frequented were Gaston Bergery's "frontiste" movement;¹¹ he was present at meetings to develop *Nouveaux Cahiers* (with Auguste Detœuf and Denis de Rougemont);¹² as well as the "Travail et Nation" group, where he met Paul Marion and other colleagues whom he would encounter again after the Fall of France. And from October 1937, he became literary critic for *Vendredi*, the pro-Popular Front weekly, where he befriended André Ulmann, with whom he would work later on his own review. All this led Paulhan to report to Gaston Gallimard, in the summer of 1937: "I wonder whether I've mentioned to you just how much Petitjean is a man of *genius*; that he is perfectly sound and reliable; [...] he could become a great writer (and indeed he should). [...] And I cannot overstate my admiration for him. (At the moment he is revising for the foreign office examinations)".¹³

How did Petitjean and the NRF react to the *Anschluss* and to Munich, in 1938?

As Paulhan remarked, in the summer of 1937 Petitjean hoped to enter the French diplomatic service. The family had contacts through both Armand Petitjean *père* and Auguste Bréal; Jean Giraudoux was a friend of the family. Young Armand evidently nourished a deep admiration for Giraudoux who, at this time, was at the pinnacle of his dual career as a dramatist and as a roving cultural ambassador for France. However, because of his political attitude Petitjean would have to abandon these ambitions after the appearance of his April 1938 text in the *NRF*, "Dictature de la France", which "horrified" his teachers.¹⁴ Why was this?

On the international scene, the reoccupation of the Rhineland had already sounded an alarm for the French, but much worse was the news of the *Anschluss*, Hitler's annexation of Austria in March 1938. It is from this moment on that the *NRF*, which exercised an international political influence of which Paulhan was fully aware, reoriented itself to follow an anti-appeasement line. It was Petitjean's article in April which marked this

¹¹ *Corr. JP-AP*, letter 52: 94. The Parti frontiste was a short-lived grouping founded by Gaston Bergery and Georges Izard in 1936, and formed part of the Popular Front coalition.

¹² Where he published three texts on French "youth"; see *Corr. JP-AP*, letters 54 and 80: 97, 117.

¹³ Jean Paulhan-Gaston Gallimard, *Correspondance, 1919-1968*, ed. Laurence Brisset (Paris: Gallimard, 2011), 146.

¹⁴ *Corr. JP-AP*, letter 169, 5 July 1938, 195.

change.¹⁵ Petitjean issued a warning: “France is under threat as never before in history; we are threatened on three frontiers”.¹⁶ He observed that “no people is as badly represented by their politics, their literature as the French people”, and he expressed his frustration at the government’s inertia: “And so we have just had enough [...] I am one of the several million young French men who are ready for mobilisation”. Calling for the “Dictatorship of France over the French [*Dictature de la France sur les Français*]”, he issued a call to arms:

We don’t wish to die a pointless death, an ill-prepared death. So we turn ourselves to confront the face of darkness, then the energetic and warlike face of our country: towards the great Jacobin tradition which makes war for the Nation, by and with itself in its entirety.

With this essay Petitjean launched a crusade against what he perceived as the nation’s moral apathy and lack of preparation for war. A crusade which saw the *NRF* accused of making a sudden lurch to the right, and Petitjean of being a “nationalist brainwasher” (“*bourreur de crâne tricolore*”), even of fomenting “despair”.¹⁷ But then a few weeks later in September, in advance of the Munich crisis, came the general mobilisation: as a reservist, Petitjean was called back to Toul. This was a revelation for him, as he confessed to Paulhan: “I’m delighted to have been able to immerse myself again on a completely equal basis in the mass of my comrades”.¹⁸ After the Munich Agreement, Petitjean returned home, galvanised by his experience and absolutely determined “to act”. What form would this action take? First of all, he was now convinced that France must surely change:

It is senseless to expect to find Paris in any way in the same state it was in a month ago—considering that a few million men have been plunged into that marvellously popular form of meditating on death that can be engendered by a partial mobilisation.¹⁹

¹⁵ For further details, see the introduction to *Corr. JP-AP*, esp. 20ff.

¹⁶ See Petitjean, “Dictature de la France”, *La NRF*, 1 April 1938, 663-665.

¹⁷ I.e. the objections made by Maurice Heine to Paulhan, the exchange with Robert Aron, in Bergery’s newspaper *La Flèche de Paris* (*Corr. JP-AP*, 188-191); the accusation of “despair” came in a long and interesting letter from Louis Blanchard, the *Esprit* critic, dated 7 April [1938], Archives Petitjean.

¹⁸ *Corr. JP-AP*, letter 185, Sept. 1938, 209.

¹⁹ *Corr. JP-AP*, letter 187, 2 Oct. 1938, 211.