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Algeria in France: War and Defeat in Republican Culture

by

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A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Department of History

September 2011



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Abstract

Algeria in France: War and Defeat in Republican Culture

The contention of this thesis is that the Algerian war of 1954-62 and Algeria's subsequent independence have had a significant and lasting impact on the nature of French republicanism, and to a much greater extent than the historiography currently recognises. The Algerian war essentially altered the notion of French citizenship in a way which undermined the republican ideals of universalism and assimilation. By reconsidering the war and its aftermath within the broad context of French history since 1789, I argue that the founding of the Fifth Republic was not simply the culmination of French political history; it did not mark the end of the Revolution. Instead, it was itself a revolution and presented a fundamental challenge to republicanism's original ideals of universalism and assimilation.

This thesis is a cultural history in the sense that its source material is derived primarily from novels and films, but its conclusions are socio-political. I identify an idiom of republican culture and trace the trends of republican historic and artistic representations of war and defeat. The basis of this study is longitudinal in the sense that it considers themes that have been present through modern French history. The three grandest themes are covered by the three chapters: citizenship, republicanism and the *guerre franco-française*. By considering these themes in relation to republican cultural representations of the Algerian war, this thesis identifies how the revolution in republicanism has been concealed and the history of the Franco-Algerian relationship has been rejected. This rejection has subsequently allowed the extreme right to control the race and immigration agenda because to challenge it requires a recognition of the revolution which occurred between 1959-1962.

Acknowledgements

In writing these acknowledgements it has become strikingly apparent that my range of adjectives is shamefully poor. I have thus opted for sincerity over style and, indeed, conviction over convention. This thesis has neither been a lonely occupation nor a sole effort thus, whilst I am wholly responsible for its failings, it would never have reached this point without the help and humour of many others. The history postgraduate community at the University of Sheffield has provided me with both of these in abundance. They are, without exception, a fantastically witty and intelligent group of people and I am fiercely proud of having been one of them for the past five years. Without them, this thesis would not have survived the last winter.

Thanks must of course go to Tim Baycroft. His insatiable enthusiasm sparked my interest in French history as an undergraduate and his continued encouragement has been unabated even in the face of my own periods of cynicism and self-doubt. Both the thesis and my experience of it are richer for his input.

The Arts and Humanities Research Council made this thesis possible in the vitally practical sense, for which I extend my grateful thanks. The Bibliothèque nationale de France, the British Library and Western Bank Library at the University of Sheffield, particularly the inter-library loan staff who doggedly tracked down my most awkward requests, provided the vital ingredients for this final concoction, and the space with which to explore them.

Many staff in the history department are in need of special mention for having made this project an easier, richer or more rewarding task. James Pearson, Beky Hasnip and Lynda Hodge-Mannion have provided invaluable help; I am very grateful for their expertise in all areas technical, administrative and financial which have made everything else possible. Mark Greengrass and Ian Phimister have graciously and generously provided support and encouragement over the years. Holger Nehring and Bob Moore have shared ideas and helped to refine my thinking.

Gary Rivet is one of the most intellectually munificent individuals I have had the fortune to meet. He is also a great friend and has been a stalwart of the postgraduate community to

which I am so heavily indebted. As too are Jack Rhoden, George Newberry, Sarah Rawlins, Lars Huening, Laura King, Matt Carnell, Rory Pilosof, Jen Farrar, David Coast, Paul Ashmore, Aldwin Roes, Felicity Stout and Claire McCallum. I have been overwhelmed by their generosity and kindness in the academic sphere and much beyond. Working with Laura and Jack for two years to set up and run the Modern European History Group was an enormously enriching experience. Their commitment and enthusiasm to what I found to be an inclusive and stimulating community of academics is what made it such a success. Thank you to all those who took part.

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A special thank you to Simon Fitton for sharing his expertise in the latter of these as well as for putting up with my foibles and dragging me away from the books at crucial moments. Equal thanks to Jill Edmondson, Sarah Lowi Jones, Jen Rickard, Marieanna Norendal, Pamneeta Basi and Emily Rockett for their support and patience. They're just ruddy marvellous people. Jack Rhoden, Craig Pearce, Jonathan Bright and Simon Jenkins helped make several weekends in a holiday camp in Somerset highlights of the past few years. The music, the gin windows and the cream teas would not have been quite so enjoyable without their company.

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Jack Rhoden has been central to so many aspects of the past three years that the whole experience is quite impossible to comprehend without him. He is the most delightful of human beings; patient, kind, witty and astute but most of all a great deal of fun. I think he's bloody brilliant.

My family have been a infinite source of support, inspiration and humour. Thank you most of all to my mum for a whole host of remarkable wonderfulness, to Leon for being precisely who he is, to Francesca for much the same and to my father for the initial intellectual spark many years ago.

I dedicate this thesis to my grandparents.

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Abbreviations and Figures

Abbreviations

| | |
|------|--|
| CRS | <i>Compagnies Républicaines de Sécurité</i> |
| FLN | <i>Front de Libération Nationale</i> |
| FMA | <i>Français Musulmans d'Algérie</i> |
| GPRA | <i>Gouvernement Provisoire de la République Algérienne</i> |
| MNA | <i>Mouvement Nationaliste Algérien</i> |
| MTLD | <i>Mouvement pour le Triomphe des Libertés Démocratiques</i> , later the MNA |
| OAS | <i>Organisation de l'Armée Secrète</i> |
| PCF | <i>Parti Communiste Français</i> |

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Translations

Translations are given in the footnotes for French quotations in the main text. These will be in square brackets after the citation. Where possible, a published translation has been used and this will be indicated in the first instance. Otherwise the translations provided are by the author and Timothy Baycroft.

Introduction

The Algerian War and French Republicanism

I am not a prisoner of history.

I should not seek there for the meaning of my destiny.

- Franz Fanon

The contention of this thesis is that the Algerian war of 1954-62 and Algeria's subsequent independence have had a significant and lasting impact on the nature of French republicanism, and to a much greater extent than the historiography currently recognises. The Algerian war essentially altered the notion of French citizenship in a way which undermined the republican ideals of universalism and assimilation. Yet the period is consistently placed in the shadow of the Vichy era in terms of its importance in shaping modern France. By reconsidering the war and its aftermath within the broad context of French history since 1789, I argue that the founding of the Fifth Republic was not simply the culmination of French political history; it did not mark the end of the Revolution. Instead, it was itself a revolution and presented a fundamental challenge to republicanism and its original ideals.

The timing of this thesis is not without significance. The election of Marine Le Pen to the leadership of the Front National and the ban on covering the face in public places, aimed specifically at the *hijab* and the *niqab*, in the spring of 2011 only serve to illustrate the continuing concerns of race, immigration and assimilation that have troubled France, particularly since 1962. Stefan Berger's assertion that '[i]t was simply impossible to write any history with the contemporary politics left out', in relation to writing national histories in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is no less true today and I do not deny the influence of the present on this thesis's formulation.¹ Within the academic sphere, the thesis has taken much inspiration from Todd Shepard's historical-legal study *The Invention of*

¹ Stefan Berger, Mark Donovan and Kevin Passmore, 'Apologias for the Nation-State in Western Europe since 1800', Stefan Berger, Mark Donovan, and Kevin Passmore (eds), *Writing National Histories: Western Europe since 1800* (London, 1999) p. 6.

Decolonization as well as the culturally-based work of Benjamin Stora.² I also write in reaction to much of the scholarship that has stemmed from Henry Rousso's *The Vichy Syndrome*, which has attempted to apply the methodology of amnesia and obsession in relation to the French reaction to the Algerian war.³

Through a study of legal documents pertaining to Algeria and French citizenship from colonisation in 1830 until the present day, Shepard contends that:

[w]hat I will term, 'the invention of decolonization' was a stage in the forward march of history, of the Hegelian 'linear history with a capital H.' This allowed the French to forget that Algeria had been an integral part of France since the 1830s and to escape many of the larger implications of that shared past. Through this forgetting, there emerged novel definitions of French identity and new institutions of the French state. The French political system was radically transformed. In most ways, what resulted in France resembles a counterrevolution, one that curtailed both the protection of liberties and the possibilities for securing equality and fraternity that earlier generations of revolutionaries had struggled to expand.⁴

By studying the legal status of Algerians and Algeria in relation to France, Shepard has shown how Algeria as an historical part of France was rejected by the Fifth Republic in order to avoid the challenges such a recognition would force in terms of citizenship and equality. By inventing a narrative of decolonisation, in which Algeria simply reached a stage in its History that allowed it its independence, France was effectively able to ignore the many issues which the war itself had brought to the fore and reject any claims to French citizenship made by Algerians.⁵ The intention of this thesis is to take Shepard's conclusions further. I will argue that the Fifth Republic, under the guise of the decolonisation of Algeria, altered the very fabric of republicanism. Such a change was not limited to the legal

² Todd Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization: The Algerian War and the Remaking of France* (London, 2006); Benjamin Stora, *La Gangrène et l'oubli: la mémoire de la guerre d'Algérie* (Paris, 1991); Benjamin Stora, *Imaginaires de guerre: Algérie - Viêtnam, en France et aux Etats-Unis* (Paris, 1997); Benjamin Stora and Mohammed Harbi, *La guerre d'Algérie : 1954-2004, la fin de l'amnésie* (Paris, 2004).

³ Henry Rousso, *The Vichy Syndrome: History and Memory in France since 1944*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (London, 1991) [1987].

⁴ Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization*, p. 2.

⁵ In relation to citizenship, this work owes much to Patrick Weil's study. Patrick Weil, *Qu'est-ce qu'un Français ? Histoire de la nationalité française depuis la Révolution* (Paris, 2002).

minutiae of the political regime but has been present and perpetuated in culture, thus becoming part of the public imagination. Ideas of citizenship, assimilation, universalism and revolution were and are altered to excuse the attack on republican values which the Fifth Republic oversaw.

The Vichy period holds a prominent position in French political, public and historic imaginations, and it dominates the landscape of the twentieth century. Nicholas Atkin claims that the 'Nazi occupation of 1940-44 remains the most traumatic episode in contemporary French history', whilst Timothy Baycroft compares it to the Revolution of 1789 in terms of its place in the popular imagination, 'central in the invented history of the French nation.'⁶ Many of those who have written about the Algerian war and France, particularly those working in the field of memory studies, have drawn parallels with the Second World War and, particularly, the syndromic metaphor of Rousso's in relation to the Vichy era.⁷ This comparative plotting is not politically innocent as it undermines the importance and impact of the Algerian war.⁸ I hope to redress this imbalance through a longitudinal approach which illustrates the impact the Algerian war had on French republicanism both as a political and a socio-cultural idea. Vichy's prominence in the public sphere has concealed the revolution of 1958-62.

This thesis will use cultural sources – cinematic films, novels and paintings – initially to understand how republican artistic culture helps to draw and bolster a republican narrative of history in relation to turning points in modern French history. From there and through the same mediums, I consider how republican artistic representations of the Algerian war conform to and deviate from this contextual base in such a way that suggests both a revolution in republicanism and a concealment of that revolution. Republican artistic culture is understood, for the purpose of this thesis, as an artistic artefact whose narrative

⁶ Nicholas Atkin, 'Renewal, Repression and Resistance: France under Nazi Occupation, 1940-44', Martin S. Alexander (ed.) *French History Since Napoleon* (London, 1999) p. 244; Timothy Baycroft, *France: Inventing the Nation* (London, 2008) p. 2.

⁷ Anne Donadey, 'Une Certaine idée de la France: The Algerian Syndrome and Struggles over French Identity', Steven Ungar and Tom Conley (eds), *Identity Papers: Contested Nationhood in Twentieth-Century France* (Minneapolis, 1996); Martin Evans, 'From Colonialism to Post-Colonialism: The French Empire since Napoleon', Martin S. Alexander (ed.) *French History Since Napoleon* (London, 1999) p. 412; Elizabeth Ezra, *The Colonial Unconscious: Race and Culture in Interwar France* (London, 2000) p. xii; Neil MacMaster, 'The Torture Controversy (1998-2002): Towards a 'New History' of the Algerian War?', *Modern and Contemporary France* 10 (2002) p. 450; Alison Murray, 'Women, Nostalgia, Memory: *Chocolat*, *Outremer* and *Indochine*', *Research in African Literatures* 33 (2002) p. 235; David Prochaska, 'That was Then, This is Now: The *Battle of Algiers* and After', *Radical History Review* (2003) p. 133.

⁸ This idea is developed in Chapter 3.

supports the dominant republican narrative of French history.⁹ This introduction now divides into four parts. An historical overview of the Franco-Algerian relationship since colonisation provides the necessary background. This is then followed by two sections on methodology: the first focuses on approaches including the notion of republican culture, the second expands upon the source base and how it is utilised. The final section provides synopses of the chapters.

I.I Historical overview: France and Algeria, 1830-1962

Whilst each chapter of this thesis begins with a historiographic overview, these are themed accounts in relation to citizenship, republican universalism and the *guerre franco-française*. To ground the source material and argument historically, it is worth providing a roughly chronological account of the Franco-Algerian relationship. Algeria was invaded by France in 1830 under Charles X in a futile attempt to maintain power. He was deposed the same year and the July Monarchy under Louis-Philippe established Algeria as a colony. The army was instrumental in the control and running of the territory, with almost a free hand, for the next forty years. Early on, it was considered ripe for cultivation and quickly became a settler colony. From 1834 it became part of the national territory and its population became French subjects.¹⁰ It took seventeen years of brutal repression to snuff out the resistance led by Abd-el-Kadar.¹¹

In 1848, 'as a sign of its commitment to the values of 1789', the Second Republic declared Algeria to be an extension of France.¹² Its three new *départements* sent deputies to the Chamber in Paris. This move, legitimated as being about republican universalism by a government whose rallying cry was universal male suffrage, was primarily a security concern as many of the burgeoning settler population were not French in origin, but Spanish and Italian. The change in status in 1848 was to secure their loyalty to the French state. This mass naturalisation and enfranchisement did not apply to the non-European population who remained subjects; Algeria was France, Algerians were not French. Napoleon III, whilst not undoing the incorporation of Algeria into France, did consider it a

⁹ This is expanded upon later in the introduction.

¹⁰ Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization*, p. 20.

¹¹ Robert Aldrich, *A History of French Overseas Expansion* (Basingstoke, 1996) pp. 27-28; Pierre Goubert, *The Course of French History* (London, 1988) p. 244; Evans, 'From Colonialism to Post-Colonialism', p. 394.

¹² Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization*, p. 20.

different territory: an Arab Kingdom of which he was head, an understanding which did little to endear him to the settlers.¹³

The situation of the settlers themselves is worth a little further consideration given that Philip Dine does not exaggerate when stating that '[w]ithout the *pieds-noirs* there would have been no Algerian war.'¹⁴ Despite Napoleon III's 1863 law which confirmed Algerians' rights to land, by the end of the decade around a third of their property had been appropriated by the French state and much was redistributed to the settlers. Algerians themselves were forcibly moved to reservations. By the end of the Third Republic, settlers had taken over around forty percent of land previously possessed by Algerians.¹⁵ The settlers themselves began predominantly as farmers, cultivating vineyards or the more traditional produce of figs or olives. Whilst many had Spanish and Italian origins, some settlers had emigrated for political reasons; participants in the June Days in 1848 were 'exiled' to Algeria and many Alsatians relocated there in order to remain French following German annexation in 1871. The latter benefited from 100,000 hectares of land being confiscated on their behalf by the Third Republic.¹⁶ By 1954 there were roughly one million settlers in Algeria, '[s]ome of them were wealthy and arrogant *colons*, but many of them were lower-middle-class people, very ordinary people.'¹⁷ By the mid-twentieth century, most of these ordinary people had sold off their farms to the *colons* and lived in the coastal cities of Algiers, Oran and Philippeville.¹⁸ Despite this urbanisation, hastened by the

¹³ Aldrich, *A History of French Overseas Expansion*, pp. 93-94.

¹⁴ Philip Dine, *Images of the Algerian War: French Fiction and Film, 1954-1992* (Oxford, 1994) p. 146. *Pied-noir* is a colloquial term for a European settler in Algeria.

¹⁵ Aldrich, *A History of French Overseas Expansion* p. 218.

¹⁶ By 1914, 12-15,000 Alsatians had moved to Algeria; between 1882 and 1908 45 percent of the Foreign Legion, based in Oran, were Alsatian. Karine Varley, *Under the Shadow of Defeat: The War of 1870-71 in French Memory* (Basingstoke, 2008) pp. 102-103.

¹⁷ Antoine Prost, 'The Algerian War in French collective memory', *War and Remembrance in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, 1999) p. 162. Stora cites figures which suggest the majority of the settlers lived in cities even by 1872. Benjamin Stora, *Algeria, 1830-2000: A Short History*, trans. Jane Marie Todd (Ithaca, 2001) p. 22.

¹⁸ The terms *grand colon* and *petit blanc* are often used in the literature, but seemingly also by settlers themselves, to distinguish between an extremely wealthy group who owned very big commercial farms, and Prost's 'ordinary people' who held much smaller farms or made their living in the cities having sold off their land. It seems to be a common theme in the sources which I have studied that the *petit blancs* see the *grands colons* as the prime cause of the war because of their appropriation of land and their derogatory treatment of the landless Algerians who worked it. Whilst there may be a little truth in this, it conveniently avoids the fact that the land sold to the *grands colons* had first been seized by the *petit blancs* and suggests that racism was only a fault of the rich landowners, which does not hold true. Regardless, by the beginning of the war, just 6,385 Europeans owned 87 percent of land in Algeria. Irwin M. Wall, *France, the United States, and the Algerian War* (London, 2001) p. 10.

economic crisis of the interwar period, the connection to land remained central to the settlers' ideology and culture.¹⁹

As well as the influx of refugees from the lost provinces, the Third Republic also marked a new beginning for Algeria's Jewish population who were granted, *en masse*, French citizenship by the Crémieux Decree of 1871. The rhetoric used to legitimate the position of Algeria reverted back to the Second Republic's *mission civilisatrice* and the Crémieux Decree became an example of assimilation, rather than something that could suggest that republican France considered a non-national group of people as a distinct collective. Whilst support for colonialism was somewhat sporadic in the early Third Republic, and was strongly criticised on the right of the Chamber for diverting effort away from recovering Alsace and Lorraine, the empire, particularly Algeria, became vital for prestige and military manpower.²⁰ For the supporters of empire like Léon Gambetta and most notably Jules Ferry, it became 'a crucial part of an emerging national-republican message'; rather than a business enterprise akin to the British Empire, the French were spreading supposedly universal republican values through a humanitarian and civilising project.²¹

With the re-appropriation of Alsace and Lorraine following the Treaty of Versailles, and the legacy of the colonial soldiers' efforts on the Allied side, the Third Republic became much more overt in its celebration of the empire.²² By the time of the Colonial Exhibition of 1931, the empire was known as Greater France and had become much more prevalent in popular culture.²³ For the settlers in Algeria, the Third Republic was considered the

¹⁹ Azzedine Haddour, *Colonial Myths: History and Narrative* (Manchester, 2000) p. 14. This connection is very evident in my sources, particularly in books by Jean Pélégri and Jules Roy, both former settlers.

²⁰ Anthony Clayton, *The War of French Decolonization* (London, 1994) p. 3.

²¹ Edward Berenson, 'Unifying the Nation: Savorgnan de Brazza and the Third Republic', Barbara L. Kelly (ed.) *French Music, Culture and National Identity* (Woodbridge, 2008) p. 18; Alice L. Conklin, *A Mission to Civilize: The Republican Idea of Empire in France and West Africa, 1895-1930* (Stanford, 1997).

²² Patrick Weil has argued that until the return of Alsace and Lorraine, 'la germanophobie avait « chloroformé » l'approche racialiste de la politique de l'immigration ou de la nationalité... [parce que] puisque c'est au nom de la race et de l'ethnie que l'Empire allemand avait annexé l'Alsace-Lorraine, le combat pour récupérer les provinces perdues rendait délicate la défense de l'identité nationale au nom de la race française.' Weil, *Qu'est-ce qu'un Français ?*, p. 81.

On the impact of colonial soldiers see: Joe Lunn, 'Les Race Guerrières: Racial Perceptions in the French Military about West African Soldiers during the First World War', *Journal of Contemporary History* 122 (1999); Keith L. Nelson, 'The "Black Horror on the Rhine": Race as a Factor in Post-World War One Diplomacy', *Journal of Modern History* 42 (1970).

²³ Martin Evans, 'Culture and Empire, 1830-1962', Martin Evans (ed.) *Empire and Culture: The French Experience* (Basingstoke, 2004) p. 10. On the empire in popular culture see: Raymond Bachollet, ed., *Négripub. L'Images des Noirs dans la publicité depuis un siècle* (Paris, 1992); Catherine Hodeir and Pierre Michel, *L'Exposition Coloniale: 1931* (Paris, 1991); Pascal Blanchard and Armelle Chaterlier, eds, *Images et colonies: Nature, discours et influence de l'iconographie colonial liée à la propagande colonial et à la représentation des Africains et de l'Afrique en France, de 1920 aux*

golden age.²⁴ The Second World War brought the empire into the political limelight, and also lent suggestion to the idea that the Third Republic, and the French public, did not consider Algeria to be an 'integral part of France' akin to Corsica or Brittany after all. With the Nazi advance forcing Paul Reynaud's government to Bordeaux in June of 1940, a debate was held on whether to continue the fight from North Africa. As Julian Jackson has assessed, by this time such a solution was technically unfeasible; the debate itself was political, a stand-off between Reynaud's republic and the honour of General Maxime Weygand's army.²⁵ Moving the government to Algiers was clearly not analogous to moving to Bordeaux (or next, to Vichy). Whilst hardly the first time there had been a stand-off between the Third Republic and the professional army, this time the army won the toss. France, including North Africa under the administration of General Charles Noguès, capitulated.

Noguès remained staunchly loyal to Marshal Pétain and the sinking of the French fleet by the British at Mers-el-Kébir in July 1940 sealed the opinion of many against renewing an alliance with Britain. By 1942, Algeria remained under Vichy control whilst much of the rest of the empire had become Gaullist.²⁶ It did not fall into the hands of the allies until invasion by America in November of that year. Charles de Gaulle did not arrive until May 1943, whereupon he set up the *Comité français de libération nationale* which essentially acted as a government in exile, drafting reconstruction plans, controlling an army and even granting women suffrage.²⁷ The importance of Algerian loyalty to the Vichy regime and de Gaulle's hesitation in setting up a government-like organisation until his installation in Algiers does suggest some recognition of Algeria's unique political position. However, both these elements also carried key strategic factors and when Pétain had the opportunity to move his government to Algiers rather than become essentially powerless following the Nazi invasion of the Free Zone, he still chose to remain on the European side of the Mediterranean.²⁸

Indépendances (Paris, 1993); Charles-Robert Ageron, 'L'Exposition coloniale de 1931: Mythe républicain ou mythe national?', Pierre Nora (ed.) *Les Lieux de mémoire: La République* (Paris, 1984).

²⁴ Evans, 'Culture and Empire, 1830-1962', p. 11.

²⁵ Julian Jackson, *France: The Dark Years, 1940-1944* (Oxford, 2001) pp. 121-2.

²⁶ H. R. Kedward, *Occupied France: Collaboration and Resistance 1940-1944* (Oxford, 1985) p. 39.

²⁷ Charles Sowerwine, *France Since 1870: Culture, Politics and Society* (Basingstoke, 2001) pp. 221-222.

²⁸ Jackson, *The Dark Years*, p. 226.

The bulk of de Gaulle's Free French army in the run-up to Liberation was made up of black and North African troops.²⁹ In the autumn of 1944, in an order direct from de Gaulle, General Jean de Lattre's First French Army was ordered to ensure a *blanchissement* of its troops. Myron Echenberg outlines de Gaulle's own reasoning, as set out in his memoirs, for such a policy:

It was essential that young Frenchmen be given a taste of victory, a share in the Allied success in ridding France of its shame and humiliation. Equally important, the Partisans [the internal Resistance movements] were often Communist-led, and de Gaulle hoped that the military discipline of regular army service would serve a dual purpose of controlling these groups and separating them from their political leadership.³⁰

Yet for all his internal security concerns, de Gaulle's reasoning was racial. That is not necessarily to suggest that this was based on de Gaulle's own racism, but on his understanding of the racism of his countrymen for whom Greater France could never be France; the republican ideal of colour-blindness was distinctly rejected in this policy. Those demobilised from de Lattre's army joined the thousands of freed African POWs residing in camps in the south of France awaiting a return trip home. Rather than being issued back-pay and discharged like their white counterparts, they 'languished in camps because shipping space proved difficult to obtain'.³¹ African servicemen were no longer a priority.

The story of decolonisation is often begun with reference to colonial troops' participation in the Second World War, but the story of the Second World War rarely considers the treatment of the colonial soldiers. This is particularly evident in France wherein the Second World War historical narrative is frequently periodised as 1940-1944. As such, the Algerian uprising in Sétif on 8 May 1945, the day the armistice was signed, rarely exists in such histories; it appears neither in Jackson's nor Kedward's histories and is included only in the chapter on the beginnings of the Algerian war (dated from 1954-7) in Charles Sowerwine's study of France from 1870.³² Maurice Agulhon at least mentions it in both periods, a

²⁹ Myron Echenberg, 'Morts pour la France; The African Soldier in France During the Second World War', *The Journal of African History* 26 (1985) p. 364.

³⁰ Ibid. pp. 373-374.

³¹ Ibid. p. 373.

³² Sowerwine, *France since 1870*, p. 286.

sentence a piece.³³ Yet the protests, which actually occurred in many Algerian cities, were as much related to the previous war as they were the coming one. Indeed, banners carried the slogan, 'Down with fascism and colonialism'. Political radicalisation had been growing in Algeria during the Vichy era, and the influx of demobilised soldiers into an already underemployed environment, which was suffering from famine after a poor harvest, ignited the protests.³⁴ In Sétif, the police fired on the demonstrators who retaliated by attacking Europeans. The violence spread to the countryside in Constantinois and the French army retaliated with summary executions and bombs. 103 Europeans were killed. The estimates for Algerian deaths range wildly from 300 to 45,000.³⁵ The FLN cites this date as the beginnings of the liberation struggle; de Gaulle was in power.

France, until 1999, had no official date for the beginning of the Algerian war because it was not recognised as such. 'Les évènements' served as an alternative; to call it a war, rather than an internal dispute, would be to recognise Algeria as a separate state and the FLN as a legitimate force.³⁶ Generally speaking, the war is considered to have run from 1954 to 1962 although in the final year it was primarily a conflict against the extreme-right terrorist organisation, the OAS, as the French government and the FLN were in peace negotiations at Evian. The war began with a series of simultaneous attacks on 1 November 1954, and the release of the newly-formed FLN declaration which read:

Indépendance nationale par : 1. La restauration de l'Etat algérien souverain, démocratique et social dans le cadre des principes islamiques, 2. Le respect de toutes les libertés fondamentales sans distinction de races et de confessions.³⁷

³³ Maurice Agulhon, *The French Republic, 1879-1992*, trans. Antonia Nevill (Oxford, 1993) pp. 337 and 367. Aldrich, too, considers the events as part of the decolonisation narrative, but given that he wrongly cites the massacre as occurring in 1946 it is slightly less surprising that he does not consider it to be part of the Second World War. Aldrich, *A History of French Overseas Expansion*, p. 292.

³⁴ Stora, *Algeria, 1830-2000*, p. 21.

³⁵ These two estimates come from the initial French count and the FLN respectively, suggesting that the actual figure lies somewhere in the gulf between the two. Wall, *France, the United States, and the Algerian War*, p. 11; Stora, *Algeria, 1830-2000*, pp. 21-22. The fact that we are reduced to wild estimations here shows both the indiscriminate scale of the massacre and the lack of concern the state gave to the deaths on the Algerian side.

³⁶ Other metaphorical phrases included *opérations de police*, *actions de maintien de l'ordre*, *opérations de rétablissement de la paix civile* and *entreprises de pacification*. Guy Austin, 'Representing the Algerian War in Algerian cinema: *Le Vent des Aurès*', *French Studies* 61 (2007) p. 183.

³⁷ Quoted in Andre Nouschi, 'The FLN, Islam and Arab identity', Alec G. Hargreaves and Michael J. Heffernan (eds), *French and Algerian Identities from Colonial Times to the Present: A Century of Interaction* (New York, 1993) p. 111.

Whilst the FLN was new, Algerian nationalist movements were not, this was simply the first to have enough support, organisation and determination to harm the French state. Surprise terrorist-style attacks and guerrilla warfare remained central to the FLN's strategy throughout the war, and its main victims were Francophile Algerians rather than settlers, although the latter received much greater publicity. The French republic retaliated by various means, from the 'speeding up' of social policy and infrastructure apparently designed to aid assimilation, to rounding up entire villages and placing men, women and children in internment camps with no freedom of movement.³⁸ A state of emergency was declared in 1955.

There are several incidents which particularly stand out in the war. The first is the Philippeville massacre of August 1955 which Irwin Wall considers to be the war's first turning point.³⁹ It began with the murder of 71 French and 61 Algerians in Philippeville and Constantine by the FLN who incited locals to join in, 'some of these being long-serving and trusted employees, so adding to the horror.'⁴⁰ It was clearly a deliberate attempt to incite heavy reprisals, which were forthcoming by both the army and vigilante groups in their thousands, as indiscriminate as the FLN had been. As a result, the FLN saw a boost to morale and recruitment, no doubt due to both disgust at the retributions and fear of being considered a moderate and thus an FLN target. The Governor-General in Algiers, the Gaullist Jacques Soustelle, moved from a position of attempting to address the inequalities of Algerian society as a way to halt the nationalists, to one of firm repression.⁴¹ Philippeville essentially exacerbated the political polarisation of Algerian society.

In February 1956, Guy Mollet, the new premier, visited Algeria only to be heckled by settlers in what Clayton has called 'the first overt display in Algiers of demagogue-inspired *colon* street power.'⁴² A divide between Paris and Algiers was becoming evident. A month later even the Communists voted in favour of granting Mollet special powers to regain order. The year also witnessed the first conscripts being sent across the Mediterranean, numbering roughly half a million consistently over the following eight years, and the

³⁸ In 1954, there were about 8.5 million Algerians living in Algeria and a quarter of a million in France. Ninety percent were illiterate and only 859 were in post-secondary education. These figures alone make a mockery of France's proclaimed civilising mission. Clayton, *The War of French Decolonization*, p. 108.

³⁹ Wall, *France, the United States, and the Algerian War*, pp. 13-14.

⁴⁰ Clayton, *The War of French Decolonization*, p. 118.

⁴¹ Stephen Tyre, 'From *Algérie Française* to *France Musulmane*: Jacques Soustelle and the Myths and Realities of "Integration", 1955-1962', *French History* 20 (2006).

⁴² Clayton, *The War of French Decolonization*, p. 20.

disastrous Suez Crisis which had a significant effect on both France's prestige and the army's morale. The year ended amidst the Battle of Algiers. What began with tit-for-tat killings quickly escalated with the bombing of the Algerian Casbah area by a settler group, followed by the placing of bombs in cafés and the Air France offices by FLN women disguised as Europeans. General Jacques Massu took over police powers in Algiers and, armed with 8,000 paratroopers, successfully tamed the city with textbook counter-insurgency measures including a systematic use of torture.⁴³ The French intellectual community, particularly but not restricted to those on the left, began to speak out publicly and in the mainstream media against French policy in Algeria, especially in relation to torture.⁴⁴ In December 1956, General Raoul Salan, 'France's most decorated soldier' as well as 'an extremely well-developed political animal', became Commander-in-Chief.⁴⁵

On 8 February 1958 French forces air-bombed the Tunisian village of Sakiet Sidi-Youssef on the Tunisian-Algerian border, killing 69 people including 21 children.⁴⁶ Photographs of the destruction, including that of a Red Cross vehicle, were front page news in France.⁴⁷ The events of Sakiet were an example of the increasing autonomy taken by the army without direction from Paris which, alongside Massu's takeover of civil authority in Algiers, saw an increasing concern that the republic was losing control of the army. At the same time the army felt the politicians were attempting to curb their successes.⁴⁸ A joint political and military crisis was escalating which would bring down the Fourth Republic.

The legalities of de Gaulle's take-over of power are complex and are frequently concluded on the basis of which side of the political spectrum the assessor sits. The bedrock of his support came from the settlers and the professional army in Algeria, where Massu and Salan were presiding over a Committee of Public Safety, a revolutionary reference clear to everyone. A Parisian demonstration on 28 May in defence of the Fourth Republic 'was only a pale image of the huge parade that had on 12 February 1934 marked the people's

⁴³ I use the term textbook because the case of the Battle of Algiers has been famously studied for counter-insurgency measures by the United States amongst others. P. G. Schulte, 'Interrogating Pontecorvo: The Continuing Significance and Evolving Meanings of *The Battle of Algiers*' Royal College of Defence Studies, 1996).

⁴⁴ Mohammed Kane, 'Le Monde and the Algerian war during the Fourth Republic', Alec G. Hargreaves and Michael J. Heffernan (eds), *French and Algerian Identities from Colonial Times to the Present: A Century of Interaction* (New York, 1993) pp. 130-131.

⁴⁵ Alistair Horne, *A Savage War of Peace: Algeria 1954-1962* (London, 1977) pp. 178-179. This latter description would prove his undoing.

⁴⁶ Tanya Matthews, *War in Algeria: Background for Crisis* (1961) p. 76.

⁴⁷ See for example, *L'Express* (13 and 9 February 1958) and *Paris Match* (22 February 1958).

⁴⁸ Horne, *A Savage War of Peace*, pp. 267-268.

will to save the Third Republic.⁴⁹ Premier Pierre Pimflin's resignation and President René Coty's appointment of de Gaulle, secured by a majority of one vote in the Chamber of Deputies, was certainly in response to the concern over the army's power; paratroopers had landed in Corsica on the 24 May and the threat of invasion was tangible. De Gaulle, revelling in ambiguity, managed to be the figurehead for *Algérie française* on one side of the Mediterranean and the return of civil power on the other.

Having been given powers to rewrite the constitution, de Gaulle's first objective was to restore civil authority in Algeria. The makeup of his first cabinet included members from across the main political spectrum including former premiers Mollet and Pflimin, as well as André Malraux as, briefly, Minister for Information.⁵⁰ The majority were loathed in Algeria, but this did not dampen de Gaulle's welcome when he arrived in Algiers on 4 June and made his famously ambiguous statement, 'Je vous ai compris' to the cheering crowds. A referendum was held on de Gaulle's newly-written constitution in September 1958. On the mainland, 80 percent of an almost 85 percent turnout voted in favour; in Algeria, wherein universal suffrage was granted for the first time with Algerians voting on the same level as the settlers in a freshly-granted franchise, a similar turnout produced a 97 percent vote in favour.⁵¹ The Fifth Republic was declared in January 1959.

De Gaulle now appeared to go through several stages in his policy towards Algeria. Initially brought to power to keep Algeria French, he began by following an assimilationist line through the Constantine plan, a five-year programme of economic and social development as well as granting citizenship including suffrage to all men and women of Algeria, regardless of origin. In September 1959 he spoke of self-determination for the first time, which was met warmly by a war-weary French population including the conscripts, but was considered a betrayal by the settlers and professional army alike. Even the Gaullist Massu spoke out and was immediately removed from Algeria. In January of 1960, Barricades Week saw the members of the professional army and the settlers revolt, through a general strike which degenerated into violence. The revolt was quick to crumble and enabled de Gaulle to be granted special powers for a year.⁵² When, in November of 1960 (by which time he was in conversation with the FLN) de Gaulle included the words 'Algerian Algeria'

⁴⁹ Matthews, *War in Algeria*, p. 89.

⁵⁰ Sowerwine, *France since 1870*, p. 302. In a concession to the *Algérie française* supporters, Malraux was moved to the new Ministry of Culture in July and replaced with Jacques Soustelle. p. 304.

⁵¹ Ibid. pp. 305-306.

⁵² Clayton, *The War of French Decolonization*, pp. 162-164.

and ‘Algerian Republic’ in a speech, violence was somewhat predictable. General Maurice Challe, the current Commander-in-Chief, resigned in protest in January 1961 and went underground to set up the OAS, ‘dedicated to the “elimination” of de Gaulle and any others who would abandon Algeria’.⁵³ In April 1961, Challe along with Generals Salan, Jouhaud and Zeller, with the support of many paratroopers, attempted a *putsch* in Algiers. De Gaulle used the radio to appeal to the rank-and-file of the army to disobey the *putschists’* orders and the attempted *coup* failed. Many of those involved deserted to join the OAS, including Salan. Favourable historians have concluded that de Gaulle’s policy of gradual movement towards independence was part of his plan all along; Irwin Wall, however, has concluded that if this had been the case, he was responsible for the ‘worst of all possible outcomes’; he blames the resulting situations of the settlers and the *harkis* on de Gaulle’s early ‘untenable promises to the army and the settlers’ which allowed the extremism of the OAS to explode.⁵⁴

On the Algerian side, the Provisional Government of Algeria (GPRA), headed by Ferhat Abbas, was declared in September 1958 and refused all offers of peace which did not involve full independence. Terrorist attacks by the FLN also reached France for the first time, although by the final years of the war these were eclipsed by the metropolitan attacks organised by the OAS. In Algeria, the conscript army remained, predominantly attempting to halt the FLN through cutting off their supplies. The policing of villages and forced removals into containment camps were the norm. In France, the question of torture, considered to have calmed following the revelations of Henri Alleg in 1958, was resurrected by an article published on 2 June 1960 by Simone de Beauvoir in *Le Monde* concerning the rape and torture of an Algerian woman, Djamila Boupacha, by French soldiers. The following month, the *Manifesto 121*, an anti-war declaration initially signed by 121 people from across the French cultural sphere, argued for the moral right of French soldiers to desert. It was unpublishable but became known during the trial of Francis Jeanson and his associates who had been supporting the FLN. The text was finally published in October, a month before de Gaulle’s ‘Algerian Algeria’ speech.

By 1961 France was presiding over a three-way war which had reached its metropolitan centre. The enemy of the republic, now that the talks between de Gaulle’s government and

⁵³ Ibid. p. 168.

⁵⁴ Wall, *France, the United States, and the Algerian War*, pp. 252-253.

the FLN in Evian were public, was the OAS. It pursued a policy of bombings and assassinations including against conscripts and members of the French government, all of whom became symbols of France's retreat from *Algérie française*. In counter-terrorism measures against the FLN in Paris, a curfew was introduced in 1961 applicable only to those of Algerian origin but ostensibly targeted at all those who 'looked' Algerian, at the discretion of the police, who themselves had been targets of FLN attacks. In an incident which was reported in the press at the time but which only yielded significant historical research in the 1990s, up to two hundred Algerians were killed by Parisian police on the night of 17 October 1961.⁵⁵ The FLN had organised a strictly peaceful protest march through Paris against the discriminatory curfew, involving men, women and children. They were met with violence by the police, many were killed and almost 12,000 were herded onto buses and held in the Palais des Sports and the Parc d'Expositions.⁵⁶ The incident gained renewed publicity in 1997 when Maurice Papon stood trial for crimes against humanity in relation to his actions under the Vichy regime.⁵⁷ Papon had been prefect of the Parisian police in 1961. He refused to admit to any wrongdoing, claiming the violence had been a result of sectarianism between the FLN and the MNA, absurd given that the MNA had been defunct in France since 1959.⁵⁸ Papon's official report from the time admitted only three dead, including one American student.

The OAS terrorist campaigns, including attempts on Jean-Paul Sartre's and Malraux's lives, led, in February 1962, to an anti-OAS demonstration. This was met with brutal police force which would turn the Charonne métro station into one of Paris's symbols of left-wing martyrdom; eight demonstrators were crushed to death by the police when they attempted to join the demonstration from the station.⁵⁹ Their funerals drew crowds of half a million.⁶⁰ In such a climate, the majority of the French public no longer had time for the cries of *Algérie française*. The pursuit of peace and an independent Algeria was both imminent and popular. In April 1962, a referendum on the Evian Accords gained a 91 percent approval rating in mainland France.

⁵⁵ Jean-Luc Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris: 17 octobre 1961* (Paris, 1991); Jean-Luc Einaudi, *Octobre 1961: un massacre à Paris* (Paris, 2001); Jean-Luc Einaudi and Élie Kagan, *17 Octobre 1961* (Paris, 2001).

⁵⁶ Richard J. Golsan, *Vichy's Afterlife: History and Counterhistory in Postwar France* (London, 2000) p. 171.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.* pp. 159-163.

⁵⁸ Philippe Bernard and Benjamin Stora, "'One of the few times since the nineteenth century that police have fired on workers in Paris': An interview with Benjamin Stora", Richard J. Golsan (ed.) *The Papon Affair: Memory and Justice on Trial* (London, 2000) p. 235. Originally published in *Le Monde*, 14-15 February 1999.

⁵⁹ Irwin M. Wall, 'French Communists and Algerian War', *Journal of Contemporary History* 12 (1977) p. 538.

⁶⁰ Sowerwine, *France since 1870*, p. 314.

Algeria was granted independence in July 1962 following a 99 percent vote in favour by Algerians. The provisions of the Evian Accords allowed a free movement of peoples between the two countries and a guarantee that the settlers could remain in Algeria. The unrelenting activities of the OAS, however, made a mockery of such agreements and the vast majority of settlers, about three quarters of a million, left in a mass exodus to France (where most had never lived) over the summer months. At the same time, despite the Evian provisions, the majority of *barkis* (Algerians who had fought on the French side) were forced to remain in Algeria, leading to at least 30,000 deaths as they found themselves victims of brutal reprisals by the FLN.⁶¹

Given the optimistic agreements of the Evian Accords, there were barely any provisions made for the settlers entering France and they were met with a good deal of hostility by a French population who considered them in league with the OAS. Nevertheless, whilst maintaining a well-organised network which campaigned for compensation from the government for a loss of livelihood (which gained some success in 1970, and further funds in 1987), most assimilated well into French society, even creating economic booms in the south where most settled.⁶² Certainly, they fared a good deal better than their Algerian counterparts. Those *barkis* that did make it across the Mediterranean received no aid from the authorities, no pensions for their military service and were not automatically granted citizenship like their white counterparts, despite having been French citizens since 1958; they were essentially stateless, living in makeshift shanty-towns as outcasts even to Algerian communities within France.⁶³

The Fifth Republic completed its constitutional duty in a referendum over the direct election of the President in October 1962, of which 13 million voted for and 8 million against.⁶⁴ De Gaulle's seven-year term ended in 1965 and he won the subsequent election against Socialist François Mitterrand, but not without requiring a second round run-off. In 2005 there were about 1.5 million people of Algerian origin living in France, the majority

⁶¹ Ibid. pp. 314-315. William Cohen suggests that the figure could have been far higher, up to 150,000. Given that there were approximately 200,000 *barki* auxiliaries and only 52,000 made it to France, such a figure is not implausible. William B. Cohen, 'Legacy of Empire: The Algerian Connection', *Journal of Contemporary History* 15 (1980) pp. 107-108.

⁶² Cohen, 'Legacy of Empire', p. 100.

⁶³ Claire Eldridge, "'We've Never Had a Voice': Memory Construction and the Children of the *Harkis* (1962-1991)" *French History* 23 (2009).

⁶⁴ Agulhon, *The French Republic*, p. 405.

now French citizens.⁶⁵ This was the same year in which the infamous law on the positive teaching of colonialism was tabled.⁶⁶ In April 2011, the law banning the covering of the face in public places, aimed essentially at those women who wear the *hijab* was introduced. The legacy of the relationship between France and Algeria is by no means over.

I.II Methodology: Approaches

I.IIa Republican culture

This thesis is a cultural history in the sense that its source material is derived primarily from novels and films, but its conclusions are socio-political. In this way I owe an obvious debt to the work of Roger Chartier and Lynn Hunt.⁶⁷ In considering the use of culture in its very formal form which I utilise here, I am actively suggesting that there is a direct and multi-directional exchange of meaning between the producer, their cultural product and the consumer, none of which operate autonomously from wider society.⁶⁸ As Jacques Le Goff has conceptualised it, '[t]he mentality of any one historical individual, however important, is precisely what that individual shares with other men [and, no doubt, women] of his time.'⁶⁹ This is not to say that I consider culture to be 'reflective of social reality' and take heed that each reader or watcher is affected 'in varying and individual ways.'⁷⁰ But I do consider that culture has much to tell us about the society in which it was produced and that cultural history has a methodology which can be pursued transparently and effectively. It is here that I take guidance from Robert Darnton's ubiquitous study of the Parisian cat massacre:

⁶⁵ Dominique Maillard, 'The Muslims in France and the French Model of Integration', *Mediterranean Quarterly* (2005) p. 62.

⁶⁶ Philip Dine, 'The French Colonial Myth of a Pan-Mediterranean Civilization', Hafid Gafaïti, Patricia M. E. Lorcin, and David G. Troyansky (eds), *Transnational Spaces and Identities in the Francophone World* (London, 2009) p. 20.

⁶⁷ Roger Chartier, *Cultural History: Between Practices and Representations*, trans. Lydia G. Cochrane (Ithaca, 1988); Lynn Hunt, ed., *The New Cultural History* (London, 1989).

⁶⁸ I dislike this consumerist language but it seems to be the most effective description, and perhaps is appropriate in a thesis which covers the boom era of the *trente glorieuses*. Marc Ferro uses the following language to describe the same relationship: 'the three-way traffic between society, the artist it secretes and the work which is directed at it', but I do not think this is any more pleasant. M. Ferro, 'Film as an Agent, Product and Source of History', *Journal of Contemporary History* 18 (1983) p. 363.

⁶⁹ Jacques Le Goff quoted in Roger Chartier, 'Intellectual History or Sociocultural History? The French Trajectories', Dominick LaCapra and Steven L. Kaplan (eds), *Modern European Intellectual History: Reappraisals and New Perspectives* (London, 1982) p. 22.

⁷⁰ Hunt, ed., *The New Cultural History*, pp. 13-14.

The anthropological mode of history has a rigor of its own, even if it may look suspiciously like literature to a hard-boiled social scientist. It begins from the premise that individual expression takes place within a general idiom, that we learn to classify sensations and make sense of things by thinking within a framework provided by our culture. It therefore should be possible for the historian to discover the social dimension of thought and to tease meaning from documents by relating them to the surrounding world of significance, passing from text to context and back again until he has cleared a way through a foreign mental world.⁷¹

There are some modifications I make to this prescription, although I do not think it affects the methodology itself. Primarily, my study is one which deals with the political more than the social. My general idiom is not folk tale-telling peasants or Parisian artisans, but of republican culture. That is to say, culture that is part of the dominant republican sphere in that it is not anti-republican in political leaning, meaning that, in the period after 1958 it is not on the extreme right of French politics.⁷² However, it is not to say that I will only be considering culture that is pro-Gaullist. This idiom corresponds with William H. Sewell's second conception of culture: his first considers culture as an abstract and theoretical category, as a section of society akin to economy, politics or biology. It is a singular culture in which something is culture or cultural. His second conception is of a culture or cultures, which are a set of beliefs or practices often isomorphic with a society. There are multiple cultures, distinct within themselves but which are also able to intersect with other cultures. He uses the examples of middle-class culture, American culture and ghetto culture, but the idiom of republican culture conceptualised here also corresponds to this definition.⁷³

⁷¹ Robert Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History* (New York, 1999) [1984] p. 6.

⁷² The PCF (*Parti Communiste Français*) cannot really be considered a threat to the republic in the second half of the twentieth century, not least because they were part of it, sitting in the Chamber of Deputies. Furthermore, on key issues relating to the Algerian war they voted with the government, voting emergency powers to Guy Mollet's government in 1956 and campaigning for a yes vote in the Evian referendum. Only those on the extreme right campaigned against the Evian Accords. Martin S. Alexander, Martin Evans and John F. V. Keiger, 'The "War without a Name", the French Army and the Algerians: Recovering Experiences, Images and Testimonies', Martin S. Alexander, Martin Evans, and John F. V. Keiger (eds), *The Algerian War and the French Army, 1954-62: Experiences, Images, Testimonies* (Basingstoke, 2002) p. 17; Serge Berstein, *The Republic of de Gaulle, 1958-1969*, trans. Peter Morris (Cambridge, 1993) p. 55.

⁷³ William H. Jr. Sewell, 'The Concept(s) of Culture', Victoria E. Bonnell and Lynn Hunt (eds), *Beyond the Cultural Turn: New Directions in the Study of Society and Culture* (London, 1999) p. 39.

The republican culture studied here is self-evidently political, which immediately brings to mind the work of Robert Gildea. His *The Past in French History* is essentially a study of political cultures, although he never specifically considers republicanism.⁷⁴ Gildea is interested in how different political communities construct and narrate the past to meet their own ends. In this sense, '[t]here can be no objective, universally agreed history... What matters is myth', and it is their own particular version of history, their own myth, which a political community or ideology, like republicanism, strives to achieve acceptance of, which 'promotes the interest of the community that constructs it.'⁷⁵ Furthermore, he writes, 'it is not possible to envisage the writing of a universal and objective history. But this does not prevent each political community, in order to underpin its cause, from campaigning to have its own particular version of events or presentation of a cult figure accepted as universal and objective.'⁷⁶ In this thesis, what I mean by the study of republican culture is the study of cultural products (novels, films and paintings but also histories themselves) which are part of a promotion of a particular republican version or narrative of history.⁷⁷ The particular republican elements which I trace – citizenship, universalism and the *guerre franco-française* – will be outlined at the beginning of each chapter.

To return to the three-way relationship of producer-product-consumer, the producers are also the result of the influence of this particular historical narrative, as are their consumers; the political community is wider than the source material on which this study is based. As Stephen Bann has articulated, such sources 'cannot be satisfactorily analysed apart from their binding narratives to which they belong'.⁷⁸ It is precisely this 'binding narrative', the particular historical myth of the republican community, in which this thesis is interested.

The republican political community, in the period this thesis covers, is tied to the government, which is itself republican, but it is also wider than the government and dominates the mainstream of political culture. In the republican understanding, France is the republic and vice versa. This does not necessarily imply that all republican culture is

⁷⁴ Robert Gildea, *The Past in French History* (London, 1994).

⁷⁵ Ibid. pp. 12, 340 and 10.

⁷⁶ Ibid. p. 343.

⁷⁷ Whether this promotion was necessarily each authors' intention is not of primary concern here. In this sense I take a similar tack to Lynn Higgins who says of her novel and film sources, 'They may or may not have a partisan purpose, serve a cause, or be politically *engagés*, but they are always and inevitably "engaged," like gears, with other contemporary discourses.' Lynn A. Higgins, *New Novel, New Wave, New Politics: Fiction and the Representation of History in Postwar France* (London, 1996) pp. 2-3.

⁷⁸ Stephen Bann, *The Inventions of History: Essays on the Representations of the Past* (Manchester, 1990) p. 72.

uncritical of the government. Rather it is the case that, whilst republican culture can be critical, even aggressive towards a republican government, it does not promote the overthrow of the republican regime itself; it is not calling for a revolution. As *The Past in French History* so deftly illustrates, the French government has consistently been involved in the creation of historical myths which justify it in all its guises. Culture plays a fundamental part in this myth creation and, as such, the French government has traditionally been very much involved in promoting its own particular myths through such means. As Jill Forbes and Michael Kelly have noted, 'cultural politics in France is often considered, by parties of the Left and of the Right, as the pursuit of war by other means.'⁷⁹ This connection has the effect of both suppressing and promoting culture, depending on the message required, but the government's involvement illustrates just how much power cultural products are considered to have in terms of pursuing a particular historical narrative. One only needs to consider the fact that, following the Franco-Prussian war, performances of Wagner's work were banned from the French stage, or the frequency with which politicians quote great French writers and pay homage to French literature, the tradition of strong government support for the arts, or the investment Marshal Pétain gave to his National Revolution despite the period of extraordinary national crisis, to see this connection made tangible.⁸⁰ Such political investment in the arts has not faltered under the Fifth Republic and in many ways was strengthened under de Gaulle with his creation of the first Ministry of Cultural Affairs in 1959. Malraux, who was appointed to head this ministry, was both a 'very prominent intellectual' and 'a key political supporter since the Occupation.'⁸¹ A year earlier, as Minister for Information, Malraux had suggested that three French literary giants, including Albert Camus, 'should go to Algeria to investigate allegations that the French army was making regular use of torture against prisoners.'⁸² Whether such a close relationship is exceptional to France is not really a concern here but as John Cruickshank quips, it is hard to imagine Hemingway, with the authority of the United States' government, sending Steinbeck and Faulkner to Saigon.

⁷⁹ Jill Forbes and Michael Kelly, 'May 1968 and after', Jill Forbes and Michael Kelly (eds), *French Cultural Studies: An Introduction* (Oxford, 1995) p. 189.

⁸⁰ Marion Schmid, '*À bas Wagner!* The French Press Campaign Against Wagner during World War I', Barbara L. Kelly (ed.) *French Music, Culture and National Identity, 1870-1939* (Woodbridge, 2008) p. 77; Charles Rearick, 'France's Cultural Clashes: Arts and Taste Since the Impressionists', Martin S. Alexander (ed.) *French History Since Napoleon* (London, 1999) pp. 293 and 305.

⁸¹ Michael Kelly, Tony Jones and Jill Forbes, 'Modernization and Avant-Gardes', Jill Forbes and Michael Kelly (eds), *French Cultural Studies* (Oxford, 1995) p. 151.

⁸² John Cruickshank, 'Revolt and Revolution: Camus and Sartre', John Cruickshank (ed.) *French Literature and its Background. The Twentieth Century* (Oxford, 1970) p. 226.

Whilst on one level it is patently obvious why the government would want to invest so much in culture given its perceived influence, it is worth presenting a firmer basis for this relationship. There is evidently an element of power to be considered here in the sense that the government (or the wider political community) can utilise culture as a way to promote its vision and its particular historical narrative; it is a ‘soft’ power, or to use Jean Baudrillard’s conception, ‘soft seduction’.⁸³ Tony Chafer sums this relationship up rather succinctly in his study of colonialism in French culture:

[T]o what extent were such uses of images promoting particular views of empire and to what extent were they merely reflecting prevailing perceptions? It is not always easy to distinguish between the two... Textbooks, newspaper articles, films and exhibitions were designed to influence the public and ensured the dissemination of particular images of the colonies, even if some of those images were themselves already a part of popular culture.⁸⁴

It is precisely this relationship which led Walter Benjamin to declare that ‘[t]here is no document of civilization that is not at the same time a document of barbarism.’⁸⁵ In essence, Benjamin considered dominant cultural productions to be reflective of the narrative of ‘History’s’ victors. Given the dominance of both the republican narrative and the republican regime in the period which this thesis covers, such a warning is worth keeping under consideration. It is a concern also shared by Edward Said and Michel Foucault; Said’s primary concern in *Orientalism* is to insist on the extraction of power relationships in order to be able to understand cultural texts, a nod to Foucault’s idea that discourse is central to the construction of power.⁸⁶ My interest is in texts which support the republican narrative (or myth, in Gildea’s terminology) of French history, which is also the dominant narrative not only within French culture, but also within the Anglo-Saxon historiography of twentieth-century France.⁸⁷

⁸³ Jean Baudrillard, *Baudrillard Live: Selected Interviews* (London, 1993) p. 5.

⁸⁴ Tony Chafer and Amanda Sackur, eds, *Promoting the Colonial Idea: Propaganda and Vision of Empire in France* (Basingstoke, 2002) p. 7.

⁸⁵ Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations*, trans. Harry Zohn (London, 1968) [1955] p. 258. There are several variants of Benjamin’s ‘Theses on the Philosophy of History’ from which this quotation comes, some of which replace ‘civilization’ with ‘culture’, which would perhaps be a more useful translation in this context. See for example, Howard Caygill, ‘Walter Benjamin’s Concept of Cultural History’, David S. Ferris (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to Walter Benjamin* (Cambridge, 2004) p. 73.

⁸⁶ Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (London, 2003) [1978] pp. 2-28. See also Bart J. Moore-Gilbert, *Postcolonial Theory: Contexts, Practices, Politics* (London, 1997) pp. 35-37.

⁸⁷ See Chapter 3.

I.IIb A note on memory

Gildea's *The Past in French History*, as well as being a study of political cultures, is also a study of collective memory. He takes as his theoretical guide the work of the early twentieth-century sociologist Maurice Halbwachs.⁸⁸ It is through this that he concludes that France does not possess 'a single collective memory', rather different political communities in France have 'parallel and competing collective memories'.⁸⁹ Halbwachs considered personal memories to be the result not just of individual experiences but also framed by a collective construction, dependent on the society we inhabit and the present significance of our memories. He suggested that '[m]emory needs continuous feeding from collective sources and is sustained by social and moral props' and, furthermore, believed 'that the mind reconstructs its memories under the pressure of society'.⁹⁰ He concluded with the belief that memories were part of the make-up of a unified society and as such 'society tends to erase from its memory all that might separate individuals, or that might distance groups from each other'.⁹¹ It is on the basis of these ideas that historians have incorporated memory studies into their work, inspired by the approaches of Jay Winter and, particularly in relation to French history, Pierre Nora and Henry Rousso. Whilst Nora's collection, *Les Lieux de mémoire* focused on 'sites' of memory which were part of French national identity, Rousso argued that the collective memory of the Vichy era, particularly in relation to collaboration and the complicity in the Holocaust, had been repressed for many decades, before becoming an unhealthy obsession from the 1980s.⁹²

Rousso's work particularly has gone on to inspire many scholars working on the Algerian war. Unfortunately, his psychoanalytical metaphor has frequently been transposed uncritically into studies of this later period. An 'Algerian' or 'colonial syndrome' are frequently cited in relation to the way in which the French have dealt with the war since its end in 1962.⁹³ This raises two concerns. Firstly, this intertextuality between the two periods

⁸⁸ Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, trans. Lewis A. Coser (London, 1992).

⁸⁹ Gildea, *The Past in French History*, p. 340.

⁹⁰ Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory*, pp. 38 and 51.

⁹¹ *Ibid.* pp. 182-3.

⁹² Pierre Nora, ed., *Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past. Volume 1: Conflicts and Divisions* Vol. I, (Chichester, 1996); Rousso, *The Vichy Syndrome*.

⁹³ Donadey, 'Une Certaine idée de la France', p. 228; Evans, 'From Colonialism to Post-Colonialism', p. 412; Ezra, *The Colonial Unconscious* p. xii; MacMaster, 'The Torture Controversy', p. 450; Murray, 'Women, Nostalgia, Memory', p. 235; Prochaska, 'That was Then, This is Now', p. 133. Others talk of a 'collective

through Rousso's work has led to the suggestion that there has been a repression of less palatable aspects of the French involvement in the Algerian war, often in regard to its practice of torture. Rousso argues, in relation to the Vichy period, that the collaboration of the French with their Nazi occupiers was not part of the public discourse for several decades after the war, a claim he backs up by, amongst other things, the lack of such representations in culture. Scholars such as Anne Donadey, Alison Murray and David Prochaska have made similar claims concerning culture after the Algerian war.⁹⁴ Yet, over the course of my research and as will become evident in this thesis, such claims have struck me as bizarre and quite without substance. Certainly, the Italian-Algerian film *The Battle of Algiers* was banned in France for a number of years, and indeed was not shown on French television until 2004, but there are numerous French films and novels from the art house to the mainstream which have covered many of the 'dirtiest' aspects of the Algerian war, beginning with Henri Alleg's *La Question* published in 1958.⁹⁵ This is by no means a new discovery; William B. Cohen has declared that since the war's end there has been 'a fairly steady diet of books, movies, and television shows' which have 'clarified the extent to which torture had been ubiquitous in Algeria.'⁹⁶ A decade earlier, Philip Dine expressed that 'French literature and cinema of the Algerian war are primarily remarkable for their frequently alleged non-existence' when in reality, 'this body of discursive and performative narratives may not reasonably be denied.'⁹⁷ It is thus quite evident on a quantifiable level that this drawing of parallels between the two periods through this syndromic metaphor is utterly untenable.

Secondly, I share the reservations which Peter Burke and Wulf Kansteiner have expressed in relation to the historians' application of psychoanalysis, particularly when its use as

amnesia' which seems equally without substance. Alexander, Evans and Keiger, 'The "War without a Name"', p. 16; Paul A. Silverstein, *Algeria in France: Transpolitics, Race and Nation* (Bloomington, 2004) p. 207.

⁹⁴ Donadey, 'Une Certaine idée de la France'; Murray, 'Women, Nostalgia, Memory'; Prochaska, 'That was Then, This is Now'.

⁹⁵ *The Battle of Algiers* had a cinematic release in 1971. Donald Reid, 'Reviewing *The Battle of Algiers* with Germaine Tillion', *History Workshop Journal* (2005) p. 98; Henri Alleg, 'La Question' (1958), Algeria Watch [accessed 29 September 2009] <http://www.algeria-watch.org/farticle/1954-62/laquestion.htm>.

⁹⁶ William B. Cohen, 'The Algerian War and the Revision of France's Overseas Mission', *French Colonial History* 4 (2003) p. 229.

⁹⁷ Dine, *Images of the Algerian War*, p. 234. Other authors have also noted this evident coverage of French torture in the Algerian war in both books and films. See for example, Pascal Ory, 'L'Algérie par écran', Jean-Pierre Rioux (ed.) *La Guerre d'Algérie et les français* (Paris, 1990); Pierre Guibert, 'La Guerre d'Algérie sur les écrans français', Laurent Gervereau, Jean-Pierre Rioux, and Benjamin Stora (eds), *La France en guerre d'Algérie* (Paris, 1992); Mouloud Mimoun, ed., *France-Algérie: Images d'une guerre* (Paris, 1992); Maryse Bray and Agnès Calatayud, 'Remembrance of Things Past: New Perspectives on Films and French Domination in Algeria: The Significance of François Luciani's *L'Algérie des Chimères* (2003)', *e-France* 1 (2007).

metaphor creeps over into a more analytical function. For Burke the concern is related to the attempts to analyse the work of an artist through such psychoanalytical means, but for Kansteiner it is its application to the notion of collective memory and repression which is worrying.⁹⁸ He argues that, unlike in individual cases, repressing traumatic elements of a collective memory does not lead to psychological ill health. Indeed, it can be the case that ‘forgetting’ such episodes is a necessary part of collective memory.⁹⁹ Such a conclusion is damning to Rousso’s thesis of repression of memory followed by an ‘unhealthy’ obsession, but he goes further to suggest that the use of such theories avoids considering the political element of such a focus:

The concept of trauma, as well as the concept of repression, neither captures nor illuminates the forces that contribute to the making and unmaking of collective memories... the delayed onset of public debates about the meaning of negative pasts has more to do with political interest and opportunities than the persistence of trauma or with any “leakage” in the collective unconscious.¹⁰⁰

It is precisely these ‘forces’ which interest me in this thesis; it is the relationships of power highlighted in the previous section which I wish to question. The application of what is essentially a theory designed for individuals being applied to a collective seems to me to obscure such relationships. Repressing an event from collective memory in a modern and democratic state, particularly one in which so many have been directly involved, is a ridiculous assertion and really rather improbable.¹⁰¹ More feasibly perhaps, and I think here of the massacre which took place in Paris on the night of 17 October 1961 or the fate of the *barkis*, events do not come to prominence in a dominant (in this case, what I have identified as a republican) narrative, because they are not important to people with

⁹⁸ Peter Burke, *Eyewitnessing: The Uses of Images as Historical Evidence* (London, 2001) pp. 170-1; Wulf Kansteiner, 'Finding Meaning in Memory: A Methodological Critique of Collective Memory Studies', *History and Theory* 41 (2002).

⁹⁹ Kansteiner, 'Finding Meaning in Memory', p. 186. This is of course also at the heart of Ernest Renan’s understanding of the creation of a national identity. Ernest Renan, *Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?* (Paris, 1882).

¹⁰⁰ Kansteiner, 'Finding Meaning in Memory', p. 187.

¹⁰¹ Alon Confino has made the same argument directly in regards to Rousso, stating that it ‘is improbable that the mass of French men and women who collaborated with the Nazis, some out of opportunism, others out of ideology, simply forgot it all.’ Alon Confino, 'Collective Memory and Cultural History: Problems of Method', *American Historical Review* 102 (1997) p. 1394. See also, Richard L. Derderian, 'Algeria as a *lieu de mémoire*: Ethnic Minority Memory and National Identity in Contemporary France', *Radical History Review* 83 (2002) p. 39.

power.¹⁰² Such silence is not politically neutral – these events, as Chapter 3 shows, have the potential to challenge the republican narrative of the Algerian war – but nor is it one solely controlled by the government.

Events do not disappear; they are retrievable, can be brought back into the wider public sphere, and can even challenge a particular narrative. Stora has considered the memories of the *barkis*, the conscripts and the *pieds noirs* as being distinct and absent from the broader French collective memory of the war, but maintained within these groups.¹⁰³ It is here where I consider the realm of cultural history rather than memory studies as allowing greater insight into these occurrences. To return to the rhetoric of Le Goff and Darnton, rather than that of Halbwachs and a bastardised Sigmund Freud, these groups which Stora has identified are often absent from the republican culture idiom which I trace in this thesis but they are present in their own idioms and, should they become powerful enough, can intersect with the republican idiom. The result of such an intersection can either be one of integration (as is the case with the *pieds noirs*) or challenge (as has been the case with the conscripts and the *barkis*, to differing degrees of success). These intersections with the republican narrative, extractable from the cultural sources which I analyse, shed light on its purpose and thus its underlying power.

I.IIc Representation

I do not consider this thesis, then, to be adding to the corpus of work on memory studies. Rather, my approach, as outlined above, owes its influence to the work of cultural historians. My particular interest is in representations and what they can tell us about the society which produces them. It is thus worthwhile spending some time outlining what is meant by ‘representation’ in this thesis, and how it is employed. There are two issues that need to be dealt with here. The first is what I consider a representation to be, the second is what I consider representations to do; a typical ontological-epistemological divide.

All historians work with representations in the sense that all our source material is some kind of representation of the past; however closely one reads a document, it can never be a presentation of the past precisely because the past is no longer there to be presented. But

¹⁰² I consider 17 October 1961 in Chapter 3 and the *barkis* in Chapter 1.

¹⁰³ Stora, *La Gangrène et l'oubli*, pp. 256-268.

there are many, like John Zammito, who would contend that there are differences in value in terms of representations of the past. In a reply to the work of F. R. Ankersmit, Zammito is keen to draw a distinction between historical and artistic representations of the past.¹⁰⁴ Ankersmit sees representations of reality as being infinite. Zammito has no contention that *artistic* representations of reality have the potential to be infinite but rejects this same possibility for a *historical* representation because it ‘seeks to assert actuality, and *the actuality exerts constraint*’; the historian is not free to invent.¹⁰⁵ The key to Zammito’s counter-argument is cognition. Ankersmit denies any cognitive aspect to representation as a whole, seeing it as only part of its aesthetic value; for Ankersmit, theories in the natural sciences cannot be called ‘true’ but only ‘plausible’ or ‘better than rival theories’.¹⁰⁶ But as Zammito points out, in the natural sciences these theories are still tied to ‘essential elements in the functioning of the world’, as real as a table or chair, and as such, whilst a scientific theory may not be falsified it has a falsifiable quality.¹⁰⁷ He applies this same logic to historical representation; because historical narratives are ‘not free to invent’ they too are not infinite. In Zammito’s words, ‘concepts (in historical representations) can be conceived to refer, in this epistemological sense, in roughly the same way that theoretical terms do in natural-scientific theories’.¹⁰⁸ Thus, ‘discrimination is possible among rival versions [of a historical representation], and some can be deemed inadequate in light of the contingent, fallible, but *best current* explanations.’¹⁰⁹ Ankersmit himself sees such a critique coming and rejects the comparison and thus the conclusion Zammito goes on to make but, as Zammito states, what ‘separates Ankersmit’s view from mine remains the question of whether there is *any* referential element in a historical representation’.¹¹⁰ Ann Rigney has applied this theorising in practical terms in *The Rhetoric of Historical Representation* and come to a workable understanding of the distinction between fiction writing and history writing: the historian is not free to invent, rather they are constrained by what we understand as historical facts as well as the ‘discursive and narrative strategies’ of the discipline.¹¹¹ I will return to this in Chapter 3 wherein I question the supposed innocence of these ‘discursive and narrative strategies’ in relation to the narrative of the *guerre franco-française*.

¹⁰⁴ John Zammito, ‘Ankersmit and Historical Representation’, *History and Theory* 44 (2005); F. R. Ankersmit, *Historical Representation* (Stanford, CA, 2002).

¹⁰⁵ Zammito, ‘Ankersmit and Historical Representation’, p. 171. Emphasis in the original.

¹⁰⁶ Ankersmit, *Historical Representation*, p. 97.

¹⁰⁷ Zammito, ‘Ankersmit and Historical Representation’, pp. 177-9.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.* p. 177.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.* p. 178.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.* p. 178fn.

¹¹¹ Ann Rigney, *The Rhetoric of Historical Representation: Three Narrative Histories of the French Revolution* (Cambridge, 1990) pp. xi-xii.

What is more pressing for this thesis is understanding what representations do. I am studying representations of the Algerian war in republican culture. Specifically, French films and novels which refer (whether directly or metaphorically) to the Algerian war and which support a republican version of events in the sense that they do not openly challenge the existence of a republican regime. For such research to be of any value, I begin with the premise that such representations are more than a sum of their parts; that they play an interactive role in the society in which they are produced.¹¹² To return to Ankersmit, his distinction between description and representation is useful in these terms. Representations attribute properties to something as well as referring to it whereas with descriptions the two can be separated.¹¹³

History writing is a representation of the past rather than a description; it is clear that there can be multiple historical accounts of the same event, all tied down by actualities but weaving the narrative differently between them. But just as we do not take artistic merit from precision, ‘it follows that precision, in the sense of an exact match of words and things, will never be attainable in artistic representation [or] historical writing’.¹¹⁴ Ankersmit does not see the need to distinguish between artistic and historical writing, as I have already noted. Whilst Rigney is in many ways correct to suggest that historians are not free to invent as fiction writers are, the authors with which this project is concerned are restricted in the sense that the Algerian war (for example) as a point of reference must be ‘true’ enough to be recognisable, even in the case of the most fantastical of my sources; Pierre Guyotat’s *Tombeau pour cinq cent mille soldats* as a case in point, never refers to France or Algeria by name, or indeed any recognisable historical character, but the novel is evidently about the war. I do not contend that this is in any way similar to the ‘truth’ generations of historians have based their careers on, but fiction is not as free to invent as Rigney asserts

¹¹² I do not consider my approach to be in any way novel in this respect, and here I take inspiration again from Edward Said who has argued that ‘nations themselves *are* narrations. The power to narrate, or to block other narratives from forming and emerging, is very important to culture and imperialism, and constitutes one of the main connections between them.’ Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (London, 1994) p. 8.

¹¹³ Description ties words to things; a chair would still maintain its properties if it was not called a chair (a rose by any other name). Representation relates things to words; the storming of the Bastille, the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the execution of the king make the Revolution and it would not be called so without these things. Ankersmit, *Historical Representation*. The examples are taken from Chapter 2 ‘In praise of subjectivity’.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.* p. 87.

when it wishes to represent an historical event. Thus, as Stephen Bann has asserted, there are a plurality of possible ‘forms of representation of the past.’¹¹⁵

Historical representation, and artistic representations of history, do not go unrestrained; they are reined in by the requirement of coherence and consistency: whilst one could write of the date of Robespierre’s death and then the GNP of Britain in 1867, both these are based in reality but they are not a historical representation.¹¹⁶ Representation, then, *orders*. By ordering the past, historically-based representations give it meaning by connecting individuals and groups to the particular narrative of the past which they promote. As K. M. Baker argued in one of the first issues of *Representations*,

politics in any society depends upon the existence of cultural representations that define the relationships among political actors, thereby allowing individuals and groups to press claims upon one another and upon the whole. Such claims can be made intelligible and binding only to the extent that political actors deploy symbolic resources held in common by members of the political society, thereby refining and redefining the implications of these resources for the changing purposes of political practice. Political contestation therefore takes the form of competing efforts to mobilize and control the possibilities of political and social discourse, efforts through which that discourse is extended, recast and, – on occasion – even radically transformed.¹¹⁷

Whilst Baker is interested in a particular political class, this holds true for wider society and hints at why the artistic representations of the past which I am interested in have so much to tell us about the understanding and manipulation of that past. The study of this source material, which both creates and is part of a republican narrative of the past, provides us with an insight into a relationship between culture and politics and a bridge between politics and society.¹¹⁸ In essence, a ‘text can act as an arena for engagement with questions of identity and its representation.’¹¹⁹

¹¹⁵ Bann, *The Inventions of History*, p. 3.

¹¹⁶ Ankersmit, *Historical Representation*, Chapter 2 ‘In praise of subjectivity’.

¹¹⁷ K. M. Baker, ‘Memory and Practice, Politics and the Representation of the Past in 18th-Century France’, *Representations* (1985) pp. 134-5.

¹¹⁸ I owe many of these ideas to reading Lynn Hunt’s ‘New Cultural History’, although my emphasis is more political. Hunt, ed., *The New Cultural History*, pp.12-17. On ordering and communities see particularly, Susan

I.IId Republican historians

The particular idiom I am interested in, republican culture, is not just a political community, it is *the* dominant political community in France.¹²⁰ The cultural representations that carry this idiom are thus both powerful and pervasive and are not limited to the fictional sphere. The three main chapters of this thesis each begin with a particular historiography, rather than a single historiographical essay being given in the introduction. This is because the history writing to which I refer is as much a part of the republican story of the past as the films and novels, even those written by non-French scholars.¹²¹ Consider Nora's introduction to *Les Lieux de mémoire*:

History, especially the history of France's development as a nation, has been our most powerful collective tradition, our *milieu de mémoire* par excellence... France's entire historical tradition has developed as a disciplined exercise of mnemonic faculty, an instinctive delving into memory in order to reconstruct the past seamlessly and in its entirety.¹²²

The history written in relation to the Algerian war is no exception to this: the *Invention of Decolonization* narrative which Shepard critiques slips seamlessly into such a contention wherein history is about drive, about development, moving forward by considering how far you have come. Nora goes on to suggest that historiography,

cannot be innocent, because it lays bare the subversion from within of memory-history by critical history... Historiography begins when history sets

Desan, 'Crowds, Community, and Ritual in the Work of E. P. Thompson and Natalie Davis', Lynn Hunt (ed.) *The New Cultural History* (London, 1989).

¹¹⁹ Timothy Mathews, *Literature, Art and the Pursuit of Decay in Twentieth-Century France* (Cambridge, 2000) p. 5.

¹²⁰ This is not to say republican culture as conceptualised here is monolithic or entirely homogeneous. Whilst it is dominant it also functions in an open and democratic society where many other cultures and sub-cultures also freely exist. Because it is so wide-ranging politically, based on a regime and a political community that is far broader than the government, republican culture is not without its internal contradictions and debates. Nevertheless, the story of the past which I trace in this thesis follows a largely consistent understanding of the republic as the progressive force in France and sees the republic as synonymous with the French state.

¹²¹ Non-French historians working on France are influenced by the republican narrative which this thesis is interested in although, not least given the language in which they write, they have considerably less direct influence in the development of the narrative within France, hence my concentration of specifically French artistic representations.

¹²² Nora, ed., *Realms of Memory*, vol. 1, pp. 3-4.

itself the task of uncovering what in itself is not history, of showing itself to be the victim of memory and seeking to free itself from the memory's grip.¹²³

Thus the writing of history, the history of history, is meant to challenge this developmental narrative; 'historiography sows doubt; it runs the blade of a knife between the heartwood of memory and the bark of history.'¹²⁴ Whilst I do not doubt this to be the case, historians do not themselves write free of the influence of France's 'powerful collective tradition'. The influence of the dominant republican narrative, which this thesis attempts to identify and critique, may be driven by other actors – artists, writers, filmmakers, politicians – but academic historical writing has been 'taken up' by this narrative which is essentially concerned with development to the point of being teleological.¹²⁵

Ceri Crossley has written on a not dissimilar case in relation to the period of Louis-Philippe in which contemporary liberal historians were part of the intellectual life which attempted 'to establish the legitimacy of the post-revolutionary nation-state' by considering the July Monarchy as the legitimate end to the Revolution.¹²⁶ As I will argue in Chapter 3, a similar trend by current historians to place an end date of the Revolution with the advent of the Fifth Republic has added weight to the developmental and teleological republican narrative which undermines the place of Algeria in the history of France (and particularly in the history of the French republic).

I feel the need to confront this in the thesis because of the weight history writing has in the defining of the French self, as Nora, amongst others, has noted. Historical representation is a particularly powerful mode in which the republican narrative is transmitted for reasons which Paul Ricoeur touches on when considering the different natures of historical and artistic representation:

¹²³ Ibid. p. 4.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Bann, *The Inventions of History*, p. 72; Stefan Berger, 'On Taboos, Traumas and Other Myths: Why the Debate about German Victims of the Second World War is Not a Historians' Controversy', Bill Niven (ed.) *Germans as Victims: Remembering the Past in Contemporary Germany* (Basingstoke, 2006) p. 212.

¹²⁶ Ceri Crossley, 'History as a Principle of Legitimation in France (1820-1848)', Stefan Berger, Mark Donovan, and Kevin Passmore (eds), *Writing National Histories* (London, 1999) p. 49. Whilst the liberal historian, Adolphe Thiers, may have considered this something worth celebrating, the republican Jules Michelet was rather less taken with the prospect, as Hayden White has shown. Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (London, 1973) pp. 135-162.

A novel, even a realist novel, is something other than a history book. They are distinguished from each other by the nature of the implicit contract between the writer and the reader. Even when not clearly stated, this contract sets up different expectations on the side of the reader and different promises on that of the author. In opening a novel, the reader is prepared to enter an unreal universe concerning which the question where and when these things took place is incongruous... In opening a history book, the reader expects, under the guidance of a mass of archives, to re-enter a world of events that actually occurred. What is more, in crossing the threshold of what is written, he stays on guard, casts a critical eye, and demands if not a true discourse comparable to that of a physics text, at least a plausible one, one that is admissible, probably, and in any case honest and truthful. Having been taught to look out for falsehoods, he does not want to have to deal with a liar.¹²⁷

This thesis does not have the scope to consider the reader in any great depth; it is not a history of the reception of the source material I consider. But this passage from Ricoeur illustrates precisely why historical representations must be considered alongside artistic representations in the critique of the republican narrative of the Algerian war: the trust residing in such works grants them great influence.

I.IIe A contextualised and longitudinal study

The origins of this thesis stem from a frustration with a historiography that frequently considered the Algerian war and its aftermath solely in relation to the Occupation of 1940-44. Given the significance placed on the Occupation, it seemed this undermined the importance of the Algerian war and rejected its differences and peculiarities. Particularly, it avoided both the fact that France was defeated in Algeria and that its moral compass was not steady during the war; by placing Algeria in the shadow of Vichy, the myth of a victorious Resistance-led victory over Nazism eclipsed any consideration of a failed eight-year dirty war based essentially on a belief of racial superiority left over from the nineteenth century. The Algerian war seemed demoted in significance by historiography which considered it only in reference to Vichy. The Algerian war should be considered as an event in republican history, rather than the epilogue to a Gaullist biography. The themes,

¹²⁷ Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, trans. Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer (London, 2004) p. 261.

concerns and problems present in the representations of the war have similarities throughout republican history which are hidden by a singular comparison with the Vichy era. The aim of this thesis, then, is to place the Algerian war into the history of republican France; it needs to be considered in relation to the whole of republican history rather than just a specific period.

The basis of this study is longitudinal in the sense that it considers themes that have been present through republican history. The three grandest themes are covered by the three chapters: citizenship, republicanism and the *guerre franco-française*, but they are all permeated by others, such as heroism and rebirth. A historiographical study of French history since the Revolution led to the initial highlighting of the themes considered by the chapters. But the thesis is concerned with artistic as well as historic representations. As such, republican artistic representations of war and defeat in relation to the Franco-Prussian war and the Third Republic provide a contextual basis. It would be beyond the scope of a doctoral research project to undertake a comprehensive study of artistic representations of war and defeat since the Revolution of 1789; as Pierre Goubert has noted, '[d]espite some glorious episodes, we must admit that wars, especially great wars, did not bring success to the French state or nation.'¹²⁸ The Franco-Prussian war was chosen to provide more in-depth contextualisation both because of its basic similarities to the Algerian war and its saliency for republicanism. Both the Algerian and Franco-Prussian wars ended in defeat, initiated the founding of a new republic, witnessed the massacre of citizens in Paris and resulted in the loss of territory and subsequent mass population movements. Whilst the Algerian war has largely failed to make an impact in the historiography of French republicanism, except as a footnote to the Occupation, the Franco-Prussian war and founding of the Third Republic has often been considered republicanism's pinnacle, with François Furet famously declaring that it was the Revolution 'coming into port.'¹²⁹ As such, alongside a historiographical basis stretching back to 1789, the contextual inclusion of republican representations of the Franco-Prussian war enable the grounding of representations of the Algerian war in more long-term republican trends and essentially into a republican narrative. By pursuing a longitudinal study of French republicanism, I hope to put Algeria

¹²⁸ Goubert, *The Course of French History*, p. 253.

¹²⁹ François Furet, *Revolutionary France 1770-1880*, trans. Antonia Nevill (Oxford, 1992) [1988] p. 537. See also Sudhir Hazareesingh, 'Conflicts of Memory: Republicanism and the Commemoration of the Past in Modern France', *French History* 23 (2009) especially pp. 199-207.

back into the history of republican France, rather than it being an adjunct to the memory-history of Vichy.

I. III Methodology: Sources

Novels and films make up the majority of the primary source material analysed in this thesis. I have already said much about my approach and my considerations on cultural history so I will use this section primarily to set out my choice of source material and how I use them as documents. I will look at novels, films and paintings separately here but this separation is somewhat artificial and not present in the thesis itself. However, there are a couple of points to be emphasised before setting out this final aspect of my methodology. The first relates to the part I consider culture playing in political society, the second how it fits within the social.

The cultural documents considered in this thesis were individually crafted by a small group of people, whether an author and their editor or publisher, or a director, writer, actors and production team. They do not work in a socio-political vacuum and their work is not received into one; they are a part of the society which they inhabit. Thus,

[c]ulture is a mental construct, built by individuals in shifting experience. Moving together in communication, people become alert to problems requiring action. Their thought becomes orientated to key paradoxes around which interpretations coalesce. Agreeing on the importance of certain issues, people come into social association and link their destinies through compatible understandings, at once making a culture among themselves and cutting a collective track through time.¹³⁰

Here, Henry Glassie suggests that there is a collectiveness to consciousness insofar as producers of culture often become focused on particular issues and share understandings; patterns can thus be detected across different productions – different novels, films and paintings – which otherwise share no tangible personal links. Furthermore,

¹³⁰ Henry H. Glassie, *Material Culture* (Bloomington, 1999) p. 25.

[c]ultures, like histories, are created by people to serve them during their ordeal. People might be equal in brilliance, but they have not been allotted resources equally. Societies are lucky or not, and their members in interaction build their cultures towards distinct points of value.¹³¹

It is precisely these points of value which are of interest to this thesis; identifying them, accounting for them and critiquing their wider purpose. I am looking for commonalities in the source material – ordered representations – to build a picture, bigger than the sum of its parts, which provides a greater understanding of how particular events are dealt with by republican society.

This is not to say that one perspective will be identified to the detriment of another in hope of building a coherent and flawless picture. One of the strengths of these artistic representations is that, unlike modern historical representations, they offer ‘multi-perspective narratives’ of events; they can often lack a clear linear narrative and can even be internally contradictory, elements which are frowned upon in historical representations of the past.¹³² It is how these potentially contradictory representations are largely able to support, but on rare occasions challenge, the dominant republican narrative which makes them worthy of study in the context of this thesis.

On the second point, how cultural representations relate to the social sphere, I both accept that it is predominantly an elite *milieu* which produces the representations considered here, and at the same time reject the notion that there is necessarily a strict divide between popular and high culture, even in the nineteenth century. With notable exceptions (Pierre Guyotat was living in dire poverty when he wrote *Tombeau pour cinq cent mille soldats*), the authors, painters and filmmakers whose work is of interest here, inhabit an elite strata of French society, and not simply a cultural elite. As Nicholas Hewitt has noted, because of the ‘unusually high profile accorded to culture in twentieth-century France...there has been an easy symbiosis between politics, education and culture’ meaning that ‘cultural figures, especially writers, are members of the governing elite’.¹³³ Malraux is an obvious figure here, but this both transposes to the nineteenth century (the most obvious figure here is Victor

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Lloyd S. Kramer, 'Literature, Criticism, and Historical Imagination: The Literary Challenge of Hayden White and Dominick LaCapra', Lynn Hunt (ed.) *The New Cultural History* (London, 1989), p. 117.

¹³³ Nicholas Hewitt, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Modern French Culture* (Cambridge, 2003) pp. 8-9.

Hugo) and to less official levels: Jean-Paul Sartre did not require a government post to influence politics. Given such close ties, it is my contention that cultural representations promote a narrative of historical events favourable to the republican regime, although this does not mean they are uncritical.

Yet, like both Chartier and Darnton, I wish to ‘abandon the usual distinction between elite and popular culture’ precisely because I think ‘intellectuals and common people coped with the same sort of problems’ when considering the Algerian war in respect to republican French history.¹³⁴ Particularly in the twentieth century, but also in the nineteenth with the explosion of literacy, cheap serialised novels and the mass printing of popular paintings as postcards, there is a ‘fluid circulation and shared practices across social boundaries.’¹³⁵ As already noted, cultural representations are not produced in a vacuum, absent from society as a whole, but, furthermore, they are able to be pervasive in society not only through their consumption but also through shared discourses and social exchanges, from a university lecture on a novel to a *Télérama* review of a film; they are not an end product in themselves. Thus, whilst I do not deny that the producers of the cultural representations considered here are essentially part of a bourgeois *milieu*, and that this is reflected in their productions, it does not restrict their representations to consumption only by such a *milieu*.

Before moving on to the consideration of each genre of cultural production, it is worth saying a few words on the selection process. In relation to the Algerian war, the material is restricted to novels and cinematic films which can be considered French in origin and were specifically aimed at a French market.¹³⁶ The start date is 1958, the year of de Gaulle’s takeover of power and the beginning of the Fifth Republic, because it is from this moment that the republican narrative goes through shifts and changes to be able to deal with the changing situation in Algeria. Some publications may have been conceived prior to this date, some will have hit the shelves before May, but their impact is part of this changing

¹³⁴ Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre*, pp. 6-7.

¹³⁵ Roger Chartier, 'Texts, Printings, Readings', Lynn Hunt (ed.) *The New Cultural History* (London, 1989) p. 169. Michael Kelly has also argued that such a distinction in the publishing industry is much less valid in the twentieth century, especially with the launch of the *Livre de poche* in 1953, which brought French classics to the masses and ‘jostled with contemporary fiction for a place in railway station bookstalls.’ Kelly, Jones and Forbes, 'Modernization and Avant-Gardes', p. 144.

¹³⁶ I look at fiction, biography and autobiography over the course of this thesis but I have found these distinctions largely arbitrary and I find they add little to the analysis.

scene.¹³⁷ Evidently they must make some comment on the Algerian war itself but this does not need to be their primary focus and there are a variety of ways to go about this: a conscripted soldier in a wider story about modernisation in Jacques Démy's *Les Parapluies de Cherbourg*, the loss of a brother and the making of a *pied noir* friend in André Téchiné's *Les Roseaux sauvages*, or a tale of civil war and filth with no mention of Algeria or France but evidently about the conflict as with Pierre Guyotat's *Tombeau pour cinq cent mille soldats*. As Noah McLaughlin has commented in his study of war films, '[t]he richest films about the French experience of war are not violent anthems of patriotism but complex, literary, and introspective efforts'.¹³⁸ Certain sources in this thesis are set in a war zone, but many are not. Some of the productions, Démy's film being a prime example, are not new to historians but, as I hope has been made clear in this introduction, have not previously been part of a thesis which considers them within a wider, longitudinal narrative of French republicanism. This brings me to the final category in the selection process: the films and novels must themselves be republican in nature – not necessarily Gaullist, not necessarily uncritical and certainly not necessarily celebratory, but not anti-republican. By the mid-twentieth century this generally means not on the extreme right: representations of the war authored by those sympathetic to the OAS or overtly pro-*Algérie française* do not feature. The focus is on how culture develops and supports a narrative of the war from within the republican idiom.

The thesis is not a comprehensive overview of all the films and novels made in France which take the Algerian war as their subject matter or even those that do so with a republican sympathy. Some sources, whilst fitting the categories discussed above, have not made it into the final text largely because they offer only a repetition of the argument; conforming to the same tropes as their contemporaries but not really adding anything new to the overall thesis. They are absent for want of space. I have not found large contradictions to the thesis in the texts I have studied and where I have, as is the case with Leïla Sebbar's *La Seine était rouge* (2003), I have embraced them.¹³⁹

The contextual element of the Franco-Prussian war is dealt with in a similar way but the visual medium employed is painting rather than cinema. The start date in this instance is

¹³⁷ This periodisation is why the work of Albert Camus is distinct by its absence in this thesis. On Camus's non-involvement in the Algerian war, see James D. Le Sueur, *Uncivil War: Intellectuals and Identity Politics During the Decolonization of Algeria* (Philadelphia, 2001) pp. 87-89.

¹³⁸ Noah McLaughlin, *French War Films and National Identity* (Amherst, NY, 2010) p. 53.

¹³⁹ See Chapter 3.

1871. The purpose is to contextualise and thus the sources are restricted to a role which highlights similar trends throughout republican culture (which I began to identify when considering a much wider body of source material), and thus these sources only appear to flesh out such an argument, rather than aid the development of their own.

I.IIIa Novels

There is no longer anything particularly controversial about using novels as a source for investigating history; the purpose is not to reconsider what occurred, but the way in which what occurred has been represented and considered by people after the event.¹⁴⁰ However, it is worth spending a little time on the specific context of republican France, and France in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in relation to the novel, in order to provide some basis for it being regarded here as a useful source material for this thesis.

The historiography of the Third Republic was dominated for many years by Eugen Weber's thesis, *Peasants into Frenchmen*, in which he placed the republic's education reforms in high regard in relation to the expansion of literacy, the French language and a republican nationalism.¹⁴¹ Whilst there are considerable problems with Weber's thesis, not least its republican teleology and its lack of recognition of the reforms brought in under the July Monarchy and Second Empire, the expansion of primary schooling alongside the incredible reverence given to national literary figures cemented the link between literacy and republicanism; reading (and thus writing) was a political activity.¹⁴² Gilbert Chaitin sums up this mood very well:

The birth of the Republic, with its universal suffrage, universal education, and the influential role of public opinion in an era of expanded journalism and publishing, provided an advantageous context for the abundance of novels[,] of ideas. In a democracy, however imperfect it may be, the writer has a special

¹⁴⁰ Dominick LaCapra, *History and Criticism* (London, 1985), Chapter 5 'History and the Novel'.

¹⁴¹ Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France 1870-1914* (London, 1977).

¹⁴² Apart from the criticism of Weber's thesis, Arnold Hauser also considers the expansion of the novel to be tied to the trend of serialisation, and thus the expansion in accessibility, since 1830, something which he considers to signify 'an unprecedented democratization of literature'. Arnold Hauser, *The Social History of Art Volume 4: Naturalism, Impressionism, The Film Age* (London, 1951) p. 16.

role to play in the fight to establish the meaning of events in order to sway the public toward the policy or candidate she favors.¹⁴³

The importance of literature for identity is nothing new in France, but with the advent of relaxed censorship and a rise in the rates of literacy, the latter end of the nineteenth century firmly established the importance of the novel as a socio-political object for the masses, and as such, also witnessed the rise in status of the public intellectual.¹⁴⁴ This latter element is perhaps best evidenced by Émile Zola's seminal role in the Dreyfus Affair of the 1890s, and the dual cultural and political role of Victor Hugo considered to be the 'poetic high priest of the Republic', in a culture which considered 'that words were tantamount to acts.'¹⁴⁵

It does not take much to assert that this importance to the republic of the literary figure and their work continues beyond the nineteenth century. The political prominence of literary Resistance figures like Vercors and Malraux in the post-Second World War period, Jean-Paul Sartre's call to arms via the means of a pen in his 1948 *Qu'est-ce que la littérature?*, the frustrated quip of de Gaulle in relation to Sartre's continued outspoken criticism of French policy in Algeria – 'one does not put Voltaire in the Bastille', even Stéphane Hessel's best-selling political essay of Christmas 2010, all serve as evidence of the continued influence of the literary intellectual on the French republic.¹⁴⁶ It is not only that French politicians frequently quote great writers; the writers themselves are more than aware of the political impact of their work. For the *Tel Quel* group of the 1960s, of which Georges Perec (whose short story *Quel petit vélo à guidon chromé au fond de la cour?* is studied in this thesis) was a member, considered that all writing was political and needed to be disseminated beyond universities to the general public. They pursued this belief through mediums beyond writing, including radio and television.¹⁴⁷ Michael Worton has also asserted that novels 'are reviewed widely on the radio and television as well as in the press, and, significantly, writers are asked for their opinions whenever there is an event of

¹⁴³ Gilbert D. Chaitin, *The Enemy Within: Culture Wars and Political Identity in Novels of the French Third Republic* (Columbus, 2009) p. 13. Chaitin's choice of pronoun here is rather bizarre given the nature of 'universal' suffrage as the Third Republic conceived of it!

¹⁴⁴ Baycroft, *France: Inventing the Nation*, p. 9.

¹⁴⁵ Jack Hayward, *Fragmented France: Two Centuries of Disputed Identity* (Oxford, 2007) p. 220; Sowerwine, *France since 1870*, pp. 70-72; James R. Lehning, *To Be a Citizen: The Political Culture of the Early French Third Republic* (London, 2001) p. 60.

¹⁴⁶ Stéphane Hessel, *Indignez-Vous!* (Montpellier, 2010).

¹⁴⁷ Michael Worton, 'The Author, the Reader, and the Text after 1968', Jill Forbes and Michael Kelly (eds), *French Cultural Studies: An Introduction* (Oxford, 1995) p. 192.

national importance.¹⁴⁸ Not only, then, are writers considered to be of great public importance, their work is disseminated in ways other than through their original printed texts.

Novels are used, in this thesis, as objects in themselves. As such, the same questions are asked of them as it is traditional to ask of any written document: who wrote it, in what context, who was its intended reader, what was its purpose? But above all, the source itself will be considered. I am interested in how ‘history is inscribed in fiction’ and whilst I perceive it to have an impact on (and be impacted by) wider society, this thesis is not a study of reception.¹⁴⁹ The intention is to push the interpretations beyond what Philip Dine set out to achieve in his work *Images of the Algerian War*, for he backs away from considering the impact of the works he discusses in any detail for fear of falling foul of the ‘continuous, intense, and frequently acrimonious debate’ over whether ‘or not literature can change the attitudes of its readers’.¹⁵⁰ However, the realms of Wolfgang Iser’s intersubjectivity and the admittedly fruitless search for the ideal reader are not delved into; it is the texts themselves which are of interest here.¹⁵¹

I.IIIb Cinema

Much akin to the use of novels as an historical source, the debate over the use and value of film has been well rehearsed.¹⁵² From Marc Ferro’s and Pierre Sorlin’s works in the 1980s, to Robert Rosenstone’s somewhat aggressively prescriptive work of the 1990s, and Hayden White’s concept of *historiophoty*, a visual partner of historiography, even Walter Benjamin

¹⁴⁸ Ibid. p. 211.

¹⁴⁹ Jim Reilly, *Shadowtime: History and Representation in Hardy, Conrad, and George Eliot* (London, 1993) p. 2.

¹⁵⁰ Dine, *Images of the Algerian War*, p. 14.

¹⁵¹ Wolfgang Iser, *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response* (London, 1978), Chapter 2 ‘The Rudiments of a theory of aesthetic response’; LaCapra, *History and Criticism*, p. 129.

¹⁵² I do not study archive footage, newsreels or television in this thesis, primarily for manageability, but also because I think cinema has had the most consistent impact over the period covered in this thesis; television for instance, was slow to catch on in France with only 2 million sets owned in 1960, a second channel introduced only in 1964 and colour only available in 1967. Furthermore, output was strictly controlled by the Ministry of Information to such an extent that Guy Austin has argued that it ‘functioned as an apparatus of the State.’ See Kelly, Jones and Forbes, ‘Modernization and Avant-Gardes’, p. 146; Guy Austin, *Contemporary French Cinema: An Introduction* (Manchester, 1996) p. 18.

Forbes and Harris have also argued that by the 1970s (when ninety percent of French households owned a set) television became ‘a major source of finance for French feature films’ and worked as a complimentary medium, rather than being in competition with cinema.’ Jill Forbes and Sue Harris, ‘Cinema’, Nicholas Hewitt (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to Modern French Culture* (Cambridge, 2003) p. 332.

theorised about cinema and history in the 1930s.¹⁵³ Luckily the discipline has come a long way since 1977 when Ferro declared that film, '[a]lmost a century old but ignored, ... does not even rank among leftover sources. It does not enter the historian's mental universe.'¹⁵⁴ Just like the novel, 'historical film is an interpretation of history', and it is this interpretation which I am interested in here.¹⁵⁵

Ferro's work is notable in that he identifies film as both a product and agent of history, not unlike the trilateral relationship I discussed between culture, its author and its consumer earlier. As much as I would argue it is true for all the cultural sources I include here, 'the film as art cannot be separated from the cultures that secrete it or the audience at which it is aimed.'¹⁵⁶ Rosenstone has suggested this can be taken further: rather than simply analysing the film 'as a document (text) that provides a window into the social and cultural concerns of the era', instead consider 'how a visual medium, subject to the conventions of drama and fiction, might be used as a serious vehicle for thinking about our relationship to the past.'¹⁵⁷ It is this subtle shift in focus which this thesis employs; essentially I am considering the films (and novels and paintings) as not simply providing a representation of the past, but having their own identifiable historical narrative of that past; they have written their own history. Unlike Jay Winter, however, I do not believe that this necessarily 'challenges conventional categories of thought'; my thesis illustrates how cultural representations often help shape and bolster the dominant republican narrative, rather than challenge it.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵³ Marc Ferro, *Cinema and History*, trans. Naomi Greene (Detroit, 1988) [1977]; Pierre Sorlin, *The Film in History: Restaging the Past* (Oxford, 1980); Robert A. Rosenstone, *Visions of the Past: The Challenge of Film to Our Idea of History* (London, 1995); Robert A. Rosenstone, *History on Film, Film on History* (Harlow, 2006); Hayden White, 'Historiography and Historiophoty', *American Historical Review* 93 (1988); Vanessa R. Schwartz, 'Walter Benjamin for Historians', *The American Historical Review* 106 .

A few academics still claim to be mavericks in this field, arguing that other historians spend their time critiquing the historical accuracy of films. Given the depth of theorising in this field, this assertion is little more than absurd; under Rosenstone's initiative, *The American Historical Review* even began its own film review section in 1989. Rosenstone also has moments when he likes to claim that film is still marginal in the historians' field of interest, despite this. See, for example, William Howard Guynn, *Writing History in Film* (London, 2006) p. 2; Robert A. Rosenstone, 'Introduction: Film Reviews', *The American Historical Review* 94 (1989); Robert A. Rosenstone, 'Film and this Issue', *Rethinking History* 4 (2000).

¹⁵⁴ Ferro, *Cinema and History*, p. 23.

¹⁵⁵ Burke, *Eyewitnessing*, p. 160.

¹⁵⁶ Ferro, 'Film as an Agent, Product and Source of History', p. 358.

¹⁵⁷ Rosenstone, *Visions of the Past*, pp. 3, 23-33 Rosenstone actually takes this further still, suggesting that film can become a medium for history, beyond the current written form, but that is not the purpose of this thesis.

¹⁵⁸ Jay Winter, 'Film and the Matrix of Memory', *The American Historical Review* 106 (2001).

Ferro mentions in passing a factor that does distinguish cinematic film as a genre when he says, ‘films and the world of films stand in a complex relationship with the audiences with money and with the state, and this relationship is one of the axes of history.’¹⁵⁹ Of the three genres I consider in this thesis, film is the most expensive to produce and it also most overtly involves the participation of more than one person. The French state has been at the forefront of both funding and protecting the national film industry throughout much of the twentieth century and as such it has survived ‘in the face of multiple onslaughts of Hollywood’.¹⁶⁰ Indeed, a percentage of money made on Hollywood films was taken by the state and reinvested into domestic production. The protection awarded to the French cinema industry has continued following a decision by the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) in 1993 to allow the continuing subsidisation.¹⁶¹ This illustrates the importance of film for the French state and French national identity. The original subsidies in the 1950s and early 1960s were crucial for many young film makers of the *nouvelle vague* movement and the likes of Alain Resnais, whose film *Muriel, ou le temps d’un retour* is studied here.¹⁶²

Cinema, more than any other cultural medium considered here, is a bourgeois art; novels and paintings may have been more highly regarded on occasion, but they do not require the expense of a film. As Sorlin has insisted, one ‘must bear in mind the fact that cinematic images are contrived by middle-class adults who, unwittingly, emphasize the reactions of their social circle and age groups, and forget or misinterpret the concerns of other groups.’¹⁶³ Given the relationships I have outlined in regards to republican politics and culture, and my interest in this dominant narrative, this is not particularly troublesome methodologically – indeed in some ways it is quite useful – but it is still worth keeping in mind. When considering authorship of films in this thesis, I will look primarily to the director; whilst I do not wholeheartedly subscribe to the *auteur* theory and consider filmmaking to be a complex and multi-perspective art, the films as projects studied in this thesis do have a clear relationship with the politics of the director, and such an understanding makes contextualisation manageable.

¹⁵⁹ Ferro, 'Film as an Agent, Product and Source of History', p. 358.

¹⁶⁰ Ginette Vincendeau, 'Contemporary French Cinema: Dead or Alive?', *Screen* 34 (1993) p. 299. On the French state's involvement in cinema see Jean-Pierre Jeancolas, 'The Reconstruction of French Cinema', Elizabeth Ezra and Sue Harris (eds), *France in Focus: Film and National Identity* (Oxford, 2000).

¹⁶¹ Florianne Wild, 'Film in the 1990s', *Contemporary French Civilization* XXII (1998) p. 135.

¹⁶² Kelly, Jones and Forbes, 'Modernization and Avant-Gardes', pp. 171-172.

¹⁶³ Pierre Sorlin, 'Children as War Victims in Postwar European Cinema', Jay Winter and Emmanuel Sivan (eds), *War and Remembrance in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, 1999) p. 108.

Cinematic film is a particularly powerful cultural medium. Whilst it is no longer new, as Jean Baudrillard has said, ‘that quality of image, of light, that quality of myth, that hasn’t gone.’¹⁶⁴ It is this myth-like quality that makes film such an obvious source for this study; its power to support or challenge a particular historical narrative is formidable.¹⁶⁵ The individual stories as microcosms of larger narratives is a common and powerful method used to engage with an audience, and its mixture of visual and oral stimulus can make it a particularly emotive medium, even to the point at which ‘film saves and stores the past so completely that human memory becomes superfluous.’¹⁶⁶ Even whilst it may not trump individual memories of an event, film certainly has the power to help shape a collective understanding of an event, like the Algerian war, too big for a singular memory; it can bridge ‘the gap between personal experiences and accepted knowledge.’¹⁶⁷ To put it in Ferro’s terms, film ‘affects people’s imaginary universe.’¹⁶⁸

I.IIIc Paintings

Painting is utilised to give the Third Republican period a visual culture element.¹⁶⁹ The rationale here is not to consider painting as directly comparable to film; the thesis’s purpose is to identify particular themes and narratives which these varying artefacts present and support. Painting is the obvious artistic genre to engage with given its popularity in the latter half of the nineteenth century, and its broad appeal. Whilst attendees of the Salon may have been of a particular class, many of the most famous paintings quickly became

¹⁶⁴ Baudrillard, *Baudrillard Live: Selected Interviews*, p. 31.

¹⁶⁵ See for example the introduction to Elizabeth Ezra and Sue Harris, eds, *France in Focus: Film and National Identity* (Oxford, 2000).

¹⁶⁶ Robert A. Rosenstone, ‘The Historical Film: Looking at the Past in a Postliterate Age’, Marcia Landy (ed.) *The Historical Film: History and Memory in the Media* (London, 2001) p. 55; Anton Kaes, *From Hitler to Heimat: The Return of History as Film* (London) p. 197.

¹⁶⁷ Sorlin, ‘Children as War Victims’, p. 106. See also Naomi Greene, *Landscapes of Loss: The National Past in Postwar French Cinema* (Princeton, 1999) p. 6; Marnie Hughes-Warrington, *History Goes to the Movies: Studying History on Film* (London, 2007) p. 10.

¹⁶⁸ Ferro, *Cinema and History*, p. 82.

¹⁶⁹ Ludmilla Jordanova suggests ‘visual culture’ is a ‘more *historical* category than “Art”’. I do not consider the semantics of particular importance here but for simplicity, when I refer to ‘art’ in this thesis, it is inclusive of all three genres of my source material. I also find ‘visual culture’ a little misleading in reference to cinema as of course there is also a textual and aural element. Ludmilla Jordanova, *History in Practice* (London, 2000) p. 89.

well-known through reproductions and satirical versions of them published in daily and weekly newspapers, most notably *L'Illustration* and the *Journal Amusant*.¹⁷⁰

Two broad schools of painting feature in this thesis. The first and perhaps the most obvious in a thesis concerning war and defeat is the tradition of military painting which was hugely popular during the Third Republic. The paintings of Alphonse de Neuville and his run-away-success of an apprentice, Edouard Detaille, were frequently the most popular in the Salon, an institution which itself boomed in popularity during the period when these two artists were working, attracting an average of over half a million visitors in the 1880s compared to just 150,000 in 1840.¹⁷¹ The second school to feature, a little less obviously, is that of the impressionists. The rag-tag bunch of Salon-rejected (and thus rejecting) artists are central to Arnold Hauser's claim that in 'the second half the nineteenth century painting becomes the leading art' in France.¹⁷² These feature primarily in Chapter 3.

E. H. Gombrich argues that the impressionists led a revolution in painting which 'contributed to the collapse of representation in twentieth-century art.'¹⁷³ Gombrich's thesis in *Art and Illusion* is 'that all representations are based on conventions', meaning that the 'form of representation cannot be divorced from its purpose and the requirements of the society in which the given visual language gains currency.'¹⁷⁴ That is to say, representations are not only products of the society in which they are constructed, they are also restricted by the conventions of earlier periods in terms of their method of representation. This restriction by convention is also the case for those viewing such representations. Such an understanding of art, in terms of painting but also of film and novels, is a vital one in terms of the feasibility of this thesis. As such, whilst Gombrich may consider that impressionism began a revolution which ended the representation of 'things' in art, this is not the same thing as the representation of narratives, of which this thesis is concerned; paintings still have a story to tell.

¹⁷⁰ Whilst the caricaturists evidently distort the paintings, much of the time it is in the process of mocking the artist or the visitors to the Salon and the paintings' historical narratives remain obvious, but I will deal with this when discussing particular examples.

¹⁷¹ Detaille's work is some of the most frequently reprinted and caricatured. The caricatures in *Journal Amusant* either tend to make puns on his name and the detail of his work, or totally obscure his painting with the hordes of people desperately trying to see it. On the attendance figures see Gordon Millan, Brian Rigby and Jill Forbes, 'Industrialization and its Discontents (1870-1914)', Jill Forbes and Michael Kelly (eds), *French Cultural Studies: An Introduction* (Oxford, 1995) pp. 21-2.

¹⁷² Hauser, *The Social History of Art*, p. 164.

¹⁷³ E. H. Gombrich, *Art and Illusion: A Study in the Psychology of Pictorial Representation* (New York, 1956) p. xi.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.* pp. 25 and 90.

The principles employed in the analysis of the sources are the same across the three genres; I am questioning the historical narrative which they represent, even if their method of doing so differs, both across and within genres. There are great differences in the particular ways in which these three genres represent war and defeat, thus they require different nuances in the questions asked of them. However, they remain comparable and part of the same cultural narrative because the fundamental question being asked of them is what they represent, rather than how they do so.

I.IV Chapter Synopses

This thesis argues that the Algerian war had a revolutionary effect on French republicanism, particularly in relation to citizenship and assimilation. Furthermore, this revolution has been concealed, a process which is identifiable through a longitudinal study of republican cultural representations of war and defeat. The chapters each build upon this argument and highlight the consequences of the concealment for republicanism in the twenty-first century.

The first chapter addresses the nature of republican citizenship and the Algerian war's impact on its development. In two parts, the chapter initially argues that the symbol of the citizen soldier has been fundamental in the development of republican ideas of citizenship. The absence of this figure in representations of the Algerian war signifies not only a discursive shift but a revolution in the nature of republican citizenship. The second part of the chapter takes these conclusions alongside representations of Algerians to argue that the revolution in republican citizenship has been one that is racially defined. With the absence of the citizen soldier as the quintessential republican citizen alongside the redrawing of identity wrought by the Fifth Republic's policies in the summer of 1962 and their subsequent representation, citizenship has become negatively defined in relation to race.

Given that Chapter 1's conclusions contradict the values of universalism and assimilation, historically central to republicanism, Chapter 2 considers how the republican narrative of French history conceals the revolutionary impact of the Algerian war. Through a study of

historiography and artistic representations from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, this chapter traces a teleological narrative, inherent in the ideology of universalism, which enables this concealment through rhetoric of civilising, decolonisation and modernisation. The resulting denial of the role the historic Franco-Algerian relationship has had on the French republic has allowed the extreme right to take sole claim to the historical relevance of empire and control the agenda in regards to assimilation.

The final chapter takes the discourse of the *guerre franco-française* as its axis and traces how this has been a central element of the republican narrative of French history since the Revolution. By drawing a binary distinction between France and anti-France, the *guerre franco-française* aids the teleological nature of the republican narrative by encouraging it towards the conclusion marking 'the end of the Revolution'. This declaration, made first in reference to the Third Republic and more recently in relation to the Fifth, has assisted the concealment of the revolution in republicanism. The appearance of the *guerre franco-française* discourse in representations of the Algerian war reveals assumptions made about anti-France (usually the professional army) and those who are un-French and thus not a part of the civil war (usually Algerians, in line with Chapter 1's conclusions on citizenship). However, by utilising the discourse of the *guerre franco-française* in representations of the suppression of the FLN protest on 17 October 1961 there is a potential to challenge these assumptions within the republican idiom's own framework.

Bertrand Taithe has written that 'the Algerian past of France is that of its people. As such, it is intensely political today, and it is undoubtedly part of the most vibrant historiographical development in contemporary France. It is also deeply relevant to current world affairs, and it places the historians of this relationship at the heart of a genuine intellectual debate.'¹⁷⁵ I hope this thesis adds something to that debate.

¹⁷⁵ Bertrand Taithe, 'An Algerian History of France', *French History* 20 (2006) p. 239.

1

Citizenship and the Republic

This chapter argues that 1958-62 marked a revolution in the nature of French republicanism. Specifically, it considers the nature of citizenship and the ways in which it was fundamentally altered due to the Algerian war and the founding of the Fifth Republic. Todd Shepard and Patrick Weil have already considered the legal and constitutional changes of this period; I focus on the tenacity of this impact on culture and how such changes have slipped seamlessly into a republican *mentalité*, escaping debate despite their rejection of the key republican values, *liberté* and *égalité*. The chapter begins by outlining the historiography of the citizen soldier since the Revolution and argues that republican citizenship is based upon this revered and heroic figure. A closer look at novels and paintings which represent soldiers in the Franco-Prussian war will further support this relationship. In the representations of the Algerian war, this figure is strikingly absent; soldiers are no longer central figures in an heroic struggle for the republic, but outsiders lacking in agency to the point of being framed as victims. Such representations point to much larger conclusions: the place of the soldier in society, the meaning of republican citizenship and the gendered element that arises from such a relationship.

The second part of this chapter will turn to the republican artistic representations of Algerians alongside their changing legal status as subjects and citizens of France since 1848. It is apparent that the racial distinctions present in the laws are supported and legitimised in artistic representations in such a way as to avoid open debate; the ‘invention of decolonisation’ which Shepard identifies in the legal sphere is also present in republican culture. Since the revolution in republicanism between 1958 and 1962, which the chapter will establish, the French republic defines its citizenship by means of race rather than through the now-absent citizen soldier of the past. The ‘invention of decolonisation’ narrative denies space to challenge the ‘colour blind’ myth of republican, and thus French, citizenship.

Part I. Citizenship and the citizen soldier

1.1 The citizen soldier in republican history, 1789-1954

In 1789, the status of the French altered from subjects to citizens. Rodney Barker, whilst accepting both as legitimate, considers the difference between the two as being based on the level of engagement one has with governance: ‘a mere subject...is not a participant in the activity of governing, the activity whereby she is subjected. Citizenship contributes another dimension. The citizen engages in politics and by so doing authorizes and influences the government.’¹ Thus, in a state which is populated by citizens rather than subjects, the political legitimacy of the ruler is dependent upon a two-way process of exchange. Yet citizenship is more than a political status or a trading of legitimacy because it is far more emotive than such a construction allows. To be a citizen is to embody an identity, to be part of an ‘imagined community’, to employ Benedict Anderson’s ubiquitous phrase. For Abbé Sièyes, a contemporary theorist of the Revolution, the nation and the people ‘must be synonymous.’² 1789 is not an important date in French history because of the paperwork it produced, but because it offered values and ideals which fundamentally changed the identity of the French people, and primary amongst these was the notion of citizenship.

The army had, along with the church, been a central pillar of the French state prior to the Revolution, but it was an exclusive club for the aristocracy to wield power within the state, not a mass army which pursued war abroad. The founding of the National Guard in 1789 fundamentally altered this state of affairs by introducing a democratic element into a military organisation with the election of officers.³ The democratic values initiated by the Revolution cut across the political sphere and into the military. The new civic model of the nation was affecting such changes, indeed it made possible ‘the role of the army in nation-building’ through a balance of citizenship rights (an ideal of franchise) with duties (military service).⁴

This relationship was cemented under the First Republic. In July 1792, the membership of the National Guard was opened up to all male citizens, regardless of income, and the

¹ Rodney S. Barker, *Political Legitimacy and the State* (Oxford, 1990) p. 3.

² Emmanuel Joseph Sièyes, *What is the Third Estate?*, trans. M. Blondel (London, 1963) [1789] p. 10.

³ Jack Hayward, *Fragmented France: Two Centuries of Disputed Identity* (Oxford, 2007) p. 60.

⁴ David M. Hopkin, *Soldier and Peasant in French Popular Culture, 1766-1870* (Woodbridge, 2003) p. 6.

franchise was broadened in September, although, as Albert Cobban has pointed out, ‘the atmosphere...was not the best calculated for the free expression of the will of the people’.⁵ Nevertheless, the Republic had voiced the ideal of universal male suffrage and was about to put into practice a universal male military service. This was the era of Robespierre’s idealised citizen soldier, a soldier who

was of the people from whose ranks he had emerged, and it followed that he was therefore good and virtuous, the representative and standard-bearer of the *peuple souverain*. He was a citizen first and his citizenship, it was implied, informed everything he did, including his motivation as a soldier.⁶

As such he was a more powerful force, and a greater moral one, than those soldiers of the monarchical armies of Europe. Between 1790 and 1795, the mass naturalisation of foreigners with between one and three years residency was enacted in both a move to assimilate them into the revolutionary ideals and to make them eligible for conscription.⁷ The ideal of a mass citizen army was in development.

The Jacobin decree of 23 August 1793 which gave rise to the first *levée en masse*, was a response to the threat of invasion, but it was also embedded with revolutionary principles even if many of those were also bound up with the continuing Terror. Previous call-ups had permitted mass evasion, particularly by the richest who were able to pay the poorest to take their place. Whilst true conscription without exemption would not appear until five years later, the ‘Jacobin demand that all must be equally liable for service’ was not only a practical necessity but also a response to the resentment towards the unfairness of the previous systems.⁸ As such it was met with less resistance than previous call-ups, and the later ones of Napoleon’s doing.⁹ In 1789 Sièyes had written, in relation to the balloting for military service,

⁵ Albert Cobban, *A History of Modern France, Volume 1: 1715-1799* (London, 1963) p. 203.

⁶ Alan Forrest, *Napoleon's Men: The Soldiers of the Revolution and Empire* (London, 2002) p. 30.

⁷ Patrick Weil, *Qu'est-ce qu'un Français ? Histoire de la nationalité française depuis la Révolution* (Paris, 2002) pp. 23-25.

⁸ Alan Forrest, ‘La Patrie en danger: The French Revolution and the First *Levée en masse*’, Daniel Moran and Arthur Waldron (eds), *The People in Arms: Military Myth and National Mobilization since the French Revolution* (Cambridge, 2003) pp. 8-12.

⁹ *Ibid.*

any public need is the responsibility of everybody and not of a separate class of citizens, and that one must be ill-acquainted with reasoning as with fairness if one cannot think of a more national means of constituting and maintaining whatever kind of army one wants to have.¹⁰

The *levée en masse* saw these ideals come to fruition. It also encapsulated the importance of military duties for a citizen as, under the Republic, any soldier who served would have full citizenship rights, including the franchise. Whilst the percentage who utilised such a right is rather pitiful, it was not an empty gesture; means were provided to allow soldiers to vote even when half-way across Europe.¹¹ Furthermore, once such an ideal was implanted, it became an expectation not a privilege.

The citizen soldier thus became a fundamental building block of republican citizenship with conscription as ‘one of the primary links between the people and the State’.¹² It had a further purpose in that a citizen army provided a buffer between the republic and the professional army, a conflict that is present throughout modern French history and has produced numerous *affaires* and crises.¹³ In his study of ordinary soldiers’ letters from the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars, Alan Forrest has argued that men ‘remained citizens as well as soldiers’ and ‘continued to identify with the villages which they had left behind[,]... to dream of the day when they, too, would be able once more to bring in the cattle or turn the lathe in the local workshop.’¹⁴ For the citizen soldier loyalty remained with his civilian life, not with the army itself. This should be considered a mark of success for the Republic; loyalty to the constitution rather than the army addressed what would be a consistent concern of the underlying threat from a frequently anti-republican professional army.

The rhetoric of the citizen soldier, as much as the legislation, was fundamental to the identity formation it encouraged. The Republic never used the language of conscription, always of volunteering, ‘a distinction that, however implausible on its face, would prove

¹⁰ Sièyes, *What is the Third Estate?*, p. 64.

¹¹ Forrest, *Napoleon's Men*, pp. 61-62.

¹² Timothy Baycroft, *France: Inventing the Nation* (London, 2008) p. 124.

¹³ The Boulanger and Dreyfus affairs of the late nineteenth century being the prime examples.

¹⁴ Forrest, *Napoleon's Men*, p. 161.

surprisingly robust.¹⁵ These were active citizens by choice, showing their support of the regime through their willingness to spread its values across Europe, earning their citizenship through military service.¹⁶ Centred on the language of the Rights of Man, the power of this rhetoric should not be underestimated: ‘the image of France’s soldiers fighting for a cause in which they believed, serving as citizens of a regime which recognised and rewarded their sacrifices, would be an essential part of the mythology of the French Revolution.’¹⁷ The national and emotive term *patrie* also originates from this period; there was something new and specifically French worth fighting for and defending.¹⁸

The Empire retained much of the Revolution’s language in relation to the citizen soldier although conscription became more regularised whilst suffrage fell away as the balance became weighted entirely towards military duty over civil right. The focus for the Empire moved away from citizenship towards grandeur and national unity through military glory.¹⁹ From 1815, the restored Bourbons were interested neither in citizenship nor in war, and certainly not the ordinary soldier. Indeed, the White Terror directed against soldiers has led Natalie Petiteau to argue that ‘the army, at the beginning of the Restoration, was absolutely not perceived as an incarnation of a nation mobilised against a foreign enemy. This army was, on the contrary, regarded with suspicion, a force recruited and paid by an internal enemy.’²⁰ However, two early laws from the July Monarchy suggest that the Republic’s ideal of the citizen soldier survived the counter-revolution. The National Guard was resurrected and elected municipal councils were set up, with the tax qualification being dramatically lower than that for the Chamber of Deputies and the lowest since 1792.²¹ Maurice Agulhon has referred to these two changes as ‘irreversible’.²² The trend towards citizenship through the two prongs of military service and enfranchisement were certainly on the march. Its

¹⁵ Daniel Moran, ‘The Legend of the *Levée en masse*’, Daniel Moran and Arthur Waldron (eds), *The People in Arms: Military Myth and National Mobilization since the French Revolution* (Cambridge, 2003) p. 2.

¹⁶ Alan Forrest, Karen Hagemann and Jane Rendall, ‘Nations in Arms - People at War’, Alan Forrest, Karen Hagemann, and Jane Rendall (eds), *Soldiers, Citizens and Civilians: Experiences and Perceptions of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, 1790-1820* (Basingstoke, 2009) p. 3.

¹⁷ Forrest, *Napoleon’s Men*, p. 54.

¹⁸ Pierre Goubert, *The Course of French History* (London, 1988) p. 202.

¹⁹ Baycroft, *France: Inventing the Nation*, pp. 19-20.

²⁰ Natalie Petiteau, ‘Survivors of War: French Soldiers and Veterans of the Napoleonic Armies’, Alan Forrest, Karen Hagemann, and Jane Rendall (eds), *Soldiers, Citizens and Civilians: Experiences and Perceptions of the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars, 1790-1820* (Basingstoke, 2009) p. 49.

²¹ In relation to the democratically-elected officers of the National Guard, Pilbeam has quipped that ‘the frequency with which republicans were chosen as officers in the Guard was enough reason for Orleanists to disregard demands for franchise reform.’ Pamela Pilbeam, *Republicanism in Nineteenth-Century France, 1814-1871* (Basingstoke, 1995) p. 110.

²² Maurice Agulhon, *The Republican Experiment, 1848-1952* (Cambridge, 1983) p. 13.

effects would be evident in the Revolution of February 1848 when the social make-up of the National Guard was indistinguishable from that of the Parisian protestors.²³

The first act of the Second Republic's Provisional Government was to declare universal male suffrage, increasing the electorate from 250,000 to nine million.²⁴ Sovereignty now lay not with a monarch or an emperor but with the people, citizens of the Republic. To reiterate its importance, the Second Republic was re-declared after the elections of 4 May in order to show that the regime was born from democracy not the barricades; its anniversary would be celebrated in May rather than February for the following three years.²⁵ Whilst suffrage had been an element of republican thought since the Revolution, it was only in 1848 that it came to be seen as the only legitimate source of power by a wider selection of the political class. When the people used their new-found source of political power to elect Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte and subsequently voted in 1851 to make him de-facto Emperor of France, thus ending the Second Republic in its infancy, republicans would question the people's education and their political understanding, but universal male suffrage as an ideal was not ever seriously brought back into question; it became the norm.²⁶

Placing such power in the hands of a wide electorate ensured the need to question the place of education in French society. As Agulhon put it in his study of the Second Republic, if 'the peasant was an elector, the teacher who helped shape his mind inevitably found himself promoted to a level of responsibility analogous to that of the priest or the doctor.'²⁷ Education would come to dominate the policy of political regimes in the nineteenth century as each faction attempted to ensure school children were taught to vote in the correct way. The conservative Second Republic's Falloux law, which essentially put

²³ Ibid. p. 24; Hayward, *Fragmented France*, p. 61.

²⁴ Albert Cobban, *A History of Modern France, Volume 2: 1799-1871* (London, 1965) p. 137. Cobban suggests that this move was tantamount to the Second Republic committing suicide, although Pilbeam's quote in the above footnote would suggest not; there was nothing inevitable in the rise of Louis-Napoleon in February 1848.

²⁵ Agulhon, *The Republican Experiment*, pp. 47-48.

²⁶ The Second 'Republicans' (many of them were actually Orleanists, like Adolphe Thiers, and known as *républicains du lendemain*) had removed universal male suffrage after gains by the left in the Paris by-elections of March 1850, thus allowing Louis-Napoleon to present himself as the defender of democratic freedoms.

Elections under Napoleon III used universal male suffrage, with a varying residency threshold. Censorship of the press and threats of violence meant they were not necessarily 'free and fair' elections, but such a measurement is perhaps unfair in the nineteenth century; universal male suffrage is not synonymous with liberal democracy. On Louis-Napoleon's democratic credentials and press freedom, see Wilfred Jack Rhoden, 'Caricatural Representations of Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte, 1848-1871', PhD thesis (University of Sheffield, 2011).

²⁷ Agulhon, *The Republican Experiment*, p. 121.

universities under the watchful eye of bishops, pushed the republican left into support for Louis-Napoleon. The increased interest in education would come to a head under the Third Republic, not only to avoid an uneducated peasant mass voting for a Bonaparte but also to produce a higher class of soldier following complete defeat at the hands of the (considerably more literate) Prussians in 1871.²⁸ Education was seen to create both better citizens and better soldiers.²⁹

When Napoleon III surrendered to Bismarck on 2 September 1870, it was a personal rather than a national defeat; the Third Republic, declared in Paris on 4 September, vowed to continue the war and employed the revolutionary language of the *levée en masse* to do so. 'The Bonapartist edifice collapsed with hardly a whimper' and with it went the republic's most successful opponent.³⁰ It was replaced in a matter of days by the Government of National Defence headed by General Trochu with Jules Favre as vice-president and Léon Gambetta as minister of the interior. Gambetta escaped the Prussian siege of Paris, in 'perhaps the most celebrated balloon flight in history', to lead the republican 'cult of revolutionary mass war.'³¹ He raised an auxiliary army of National Guardsmen and *francs-tireurs*, which saw a reawakening of the citizen soldier ideal as those that fought for the French became French: 'Arms could make the citizens. Foreigners serving with the French thus became citizens *de facto*', Garibaldi being only the most famous example.³² The heroic if futile attempts by Gambetta's army and the National Guard to break through the siege cemented the legend of the citizen soldier into the founding of the Third Republic. As Jack Hayward has argued,

²⁸ Napoleon III's army had used the ballot system rather than universal conscription to raise armies. Gordon Wright suggests that this was popular both with the bourgeoisie, who could buy their way out if necessary, and the peasants, because it 'appealed to their gambling instinct!' However, by 1868, with the country in the grip of anti-Prussian sentiment, all able-bodied non-conscripted men were included in the National Guard. The Third Republic (and many republican historians including Agulhon and Weber) have misunderstood or misinterpreted the electoral results of December 1848 by concluding that Louis-Napoleon's victory was entirely due to an ignorant peasantry. He was, after all, most popular in Paris. Gordon Wright, 'Public Opinion and Conscription in France, 1866-70', *The Journal of Modern History* 14 (1942) p. 31; Stephen Badsey, *The Franco-Prussian War, 1870-1871* (Oxford, 2003) p. 25; Rhoden, 'Caricatural Representations of Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte', pp. 135-138.

²⁹ Tombs sees this relationship going full circle when, with the introduction of universal male conscription in 1889, the army became, alongside the much celebrated republican primary school, 'an instrument for inculcating national culture and identity.' Robert Tombs, *France 1814-1914* (London, 1996) p. 35.

³⁰ Roger Lawrence Williams, *The French Revolution of 1870-1871* (London, 1969) p. 85.

³¹ J. P. T. Bury, *Gambetta's Final Years: The Era of Difficulties, 1877-1882* (London, 1982) p. 2; Bertrand Taithe, *Citizenship and Wars: France in Turmoil, 1870-1* (London, 2001) p. 41.

³² Taithe, *Citizenship and Wars*, p. 42.

[i]ronically, it was the disastrous defeat...that made the armed force a supreme national symbol and restored their prestige... The defeat of Gambetta's 1870 attempt to revive the Jacobin nation in arms led to reliance upon a disciplined conscript army, the male national common denominator, to retrieve France's honour.³³

This was only the case in relation to the republican citizen army and contrasted with both Napoleon III's sickly surrender and General Achille Bazaine's surrender of Metz at the end of October.³⁴ Bonaparte and his generals (with the exception of Marshal de MacMahon) became objects of ridicule rather than heroes; such a status was held only by those rank-and-file soldiers that rallied to France's defence.³⁵

The first elections held by the Third Republic, in January 1871, had voted in a monarchist majority but squabbling amongst the Orleanists and Legitimists assured the tenacity of the republic long enough for republicans to take power, which they did over a course of elections between 1876 and 1879. A variety of legislation towards the end of the century ensured the maintenance of the citizen soldier relationship with the republic even in peace time. Camille See and Jules Ferry's series of education laws from 1880-1882, which provided free and secular education for both boys and girls nationally, were inspired by two concerns. The first, and most emphasised, was 'a complex effort on a hitherto unprecedented scale to alter the identity of the nation'; to turn 'peasants into Frenchmen', or more accurately, citizens into republicans.³⁶ The hope was that a secular, state-controlled education system would produce generations of republican voters. Secondly, the Prussians had proven that educated soldiers were better soldiers. In 1870, about 30 percent of eligible voters in France were illiterate; even if maps of France had been provided to the troops (an oft-cited example of France's poor preparation for war), many would have not been able to

³³ Hayward, *Fragmented France*, pp. 61-62.

³⁴ In Metz, a large proportion of the regular army had been immobilised under siege since September 1870. On the 27 October, having exhausted himself smoking and playing billiards, General Bazaine surrendered himself, the city and his entire 180,000-strong army thereby freeing up a large Prussian force and removing much of France's. He would be later tried for treason and sentenced to death, commuted to life in prison. Goubert suggests that 'his case would have been handled better by a psychiatrist', which is one of the kinder assessments of his conduct. The quip concerning Bazaine's activities comes from Alistair Horne; it is an entertaining if somewhat unverifiable statement. Alistair Horne, *The Fall of Paris: The Siege and the Commune* (Revised Edition edn, London, 1989) [1965] p. 106; Goubert, *The Course of French History*, p. 261.

³⁵ Dominique Lerch, 'La Représentation de la guerre par l'imagerie populaire (1854-1945)', *Ethnologie française* xxiv (1994).

³⁶ Gilbert D. Chaitin, *The Enemy Within: Culture Wars and Political Identity in Novels of the French Third Republic* (Columbus, 2009) p. 7; Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France 1870-1914* (London, 1977).

make sense of them.³⁷ The education laws of the Third Republic were not just about creating republican voters, but republican citizen soldiers. The unpopular and expensive introduction of conscription during peace time in 1889 illustrates the significance the republic gave to the nation-in-arms.³⁸

Having witnessed its two predecessors falling foul of a Bonapartist *coup*, the Third Republic also inherited a deep suspicion of the army elite. The introduction of universal conscription was not only a method of educating citizens into republicanism, it also provided a strong counterbalance to the power of the generally Catholic and anti-republican professional army.³⁹ The experience of the Boulanger and Dreyfus affairs brought the antagonism between the republic and the professional army to the fore, dominating public politics for much of the last two decades of the nineteenth century. The republic survived both affairs intact and indeed strengthened, particularly in light of the Dreyfus affair, but the divide and its tension would continue to shape France well into the twentieth century.

As a result of military conscription, by 1914 most of the adult male population had served in the army for two or three years.⁴⁰ Despite the pacifism present in the run up to the First World War, particularly on the left, the language of the *levée en masse* was employed once again and the heroic sacrifice of the citizen soldier for the *patrie* was very much in evidence.⁴¹ Despite the enormity of the war in terms of its scale and loss, the relationship between the republic, the citizen and the soldier did not fundamentally change as a result; unlike many other European countries, the nation's sacrifice did not result in the enfranchisement of women.⁴² The First World War, rather than heralding change, was actually the culmination of the citizen soldier's role as bastion of republicanism. This was reflected in the mass state-sponsored memorialisation as war memorials to the fallen

³⁷ Hazel C. Benjamin, 'Official Propaganda and the French Press during the Franco-Prussian War', *The Journal of Modern History* 4 (1932) p. 214.

³⁸ Tombs, *France 1814-1914* p. 54; John Horne, 'Defining the enemy: War, law, and the *levée en masse* from 1870 to 1945', Daniel Moran and Arthur Waldron (eds), *The People in Arms: Military Myth and National Mobilization since the French Revolution* (Cambridge, 2003) p. 103.

³⁹ In 1876-8, Gambetta held a secret enquiry into the political preferences of the professional army and found that 70 percent of generals were anti-republican with just nine percent overtly republican. Hayward, *Fragmented France*, p. 317.

⁴⁰ Tombs, *France 1814-1914*, p. 309.

⁴¹ Leonard V. Smith, 'Remobilizing the citizen-soldier through the French army mutinies of 1917', John Horne (ed.) *State, Society and Mobilization in Europe during the First World War* (Cambridge, 1997).

⁴² See section 1.4.

soldiers appeared in ‘virtually every French commune.’⁴³ Furthermore, rather than being centres of nationalist sentiment, the monuments were largely republican, secular and memorialised individuals, not the army as an institution.⁴⁴

The celebration of the citizen soldier had a thinner basis during the Second World War due to a swift defeat and occupation, but the Resistance was able to utilise the rhetoric for their own cause: posters incited a *levée* with the traditional headline of *la patrie en danger* and one resistance group named themselves after the *francs-tireurs*, the auxiliary forces much in evidence in Gambetta’s army of 1871.⁴⁵ De Gaulle’s speech upon entering Paris claimed that France had liberated herself, which, whilst evidently false given the much larger use of Allied over French troops, was necessary to maintain the heroic figure of the citizen soldier in the republican consciousness.⁴⁶ The myth of the resistance in the post-war years helped to maintain the centrality of the citizen soldier. The conscripts of France did not face war again until 1956 when Guy Mollet, socialist premier of the Fourth Republic, increased the length of conscription and sent conscripts outside of Europe for the first time.⁴⁷ Yet in the Algerian war the language of the heroic citizen soldier would prove to be entirely absent.

The heroic citizen soldier had been seen to be a bastion of republicanism and a foundation of what republican citizenship incorporated (the duty to serve was inextricably tied to the right to enfranchisement). Crucially, this had not been solely the result of government policies and favourable commemorations. As Owen Connelly has argued, the

⁴³ Hayward, *Fragmented France*, p. 62. The Franco-Prussian war also witnessed mass memorialisation which Karine Varley details, but in a significant difference to the First World War, these commemorations were largely locally rather than state funded. Antoine Prost, *Republican Identities in War and Peace: Representations of France in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, trans. Jay Winter and Helen McPhail (London, 2002) p. 12; Karine Varley, *Under the Shadow of Defeat: The War of 1870-71 in French Memory* (Basingstoke, 2008).

⁴⁴ Prost, *Republican Identities in War and Peace* pp. 14-29.

⁴⁵ John Horne reprints an example of such a poster. Horne, 'Defining the enemy', p. 120. The figure of the citizen soldier defending the Republic was not restricted to the Gaullists after the Second World War. In a survey of Louis Aragon’s writings (a life-long member of the PCF), Angela Kimyongür suggests that ‘Aragon’s views on war were articulated in the context of the French Republican ideal of the “Nation in Arms”, whereby the existence of universal and compulsory male conscription ensures the readiness of the nation to defend the Republic.’ Angela Kimyongür, *Memory and Politics: Representations of War in the Work of Louis Aragon* (Cardiff, 2007) p. 2.

⁴⁶ Charles de Gaulle, on the steps of the Hôtel de Ville on 25 August 1944 declared, ‘Paris ! Paris outragé ! Paris brisé ! Paris martyrisé ! mais Paris libéré ! libéré par lui-même, libéré par son peuple avec le concours des armées de la France, avec l’appui et le concours de la France tout entière, de la France qui se bat, de la seule France, de la vraie France, de la France éternelle.’

⁴⁷ Baycroft, *France: Inventing the Nation*, p. 118.

heroic soldier of the Year II exemplified republican virtue and French national identity, combining valor and spontaneity, generosity of spirit and a very Gallic virility. That the myth proved to be so enduring is due in no small measure to the efforts of succeeding generations of French historians, most of them committed republicans, who lavished their affection as well as their analytical skills on the soldiers who had fought to defend the Revolution.⁴⁸

Connelly surveys the historiography only in relation to the revolutionary period, but the trend is evidently apparent in the historiographical narrative presented here, and it will also become apparent in the analysis of culture in the Third Republic below. This only serves to make the break in such a representation with the Algerian war all the more stark.

1.2 The citizen soldier as hero: cultural representations from the Third Republic

The centrality of the citizen soldier to republican meanings of citizenship is evident in both the history of republicanism itself and is given further standing by the emphasis placed upon it in the historiography considered above. It is also patent in artistic representations of war in which the heroic citizen soldier dominates the narrative, regardless of the final outcome of the war itself. An examination of the place of the citizen soldier in the artistic representations of the Franco-Prussian war will provide a deeper context than a purely historiographical one in which to place similar representations of the Algerian war. The Franco-Prussian war, like the Algerian war ninety years later, was an intimate and bloody war with conscripts making up the rank-and-file of the army and which resulted in the defeat of France, the retreat of French troops and the secession of territory. Despite this bleak result, the representations of the citizen soldier in the Third Republic were not only favourable but heroic. The characters themselves were human and sympathetic, not without flaws but frequently placed in favourable contrast to their superiors and men who did not meet the ideal of the republican citizen-in-arms. The citizen soldier came in many and varied forms, from the mysterious *franc-tireur* to the exhausted *poilu*, but all embodied

⁴⁸ Owen Connelly, 'The Historiography of the *Levée en masse* of 1793', Daniel Moran and Arthur Waldron (eds), *The People in Arms: Military Myth and National Mobilization since the French Revolution* (Cambridge, 2003) p. 33.

the same heroic narrative – that of sacrifice, resistance and moral victory – which was the foundation of the republican citizen soldier.

The genre of military painting, a consistently popular form in France throughout the nineteenth century, is an obvious place to begin when considering artistic representations of soldiers.⁴⁹ As David Hopkin has shown, ‘it would be wrong to give the impression that the image of the soldier as national standard-bearer was born, like Minerva, ready-armed on the battlefields of 1870-1’; such an image had been around since the Revolution.⁵⁰ The glory of war was frequently celebrated in military paintings, as were the regally dressed commanders; Jacques-Louis David’s *Bonaparte franchissant le Grand-Saint-Bernard* epitomised such sentiments.⁵¹ Yet when the war was lost, the high command became difficult to depict in an heroic manner. Instead, the rank-and-file were represented, doggedly determined in the face of insurmountable odds, fighting for a just if futile cause and always, as the genre itself insisted, heroic. These are the representations of citizen soldiers in a republican age.⁵²

Chief among the military painters of the 1870s and 1880s was Alphonse de Neuville, a student of Eugène Delacroix. De Neuville painted a prolific number of representations of the Franco-Prussian war. One of the most famous of his works was the 1873 canvas, *La Dernière cartouche à Balan* (Figure 1), which helped to immortalise the Bavarian attack on Bazeilles at the end of August 1870, prior to the surrender of Napoleon III. The painting represents an actual event which became an iconic symbol of martyrdom and bravery in the French memory of the war.⁵³ It frames a rag-tag bunch of soldiers wearing varying degrees and varieties of uniform in a last ditch attempt to fight off the unseen invaders from an ordinary home under siege. The domestic setting, rather than the traditional battlefield, emphasises the dual role of the painting’s actors, both citizen and soldier. The continuation of the battle despite a plethora of injuries, rifles flung down made useless by lack of ammunition and the house falling apart around them, all ensure the painting

⁴⁹ Military painting was very popular from 1871-1914 and certainly more so than impressionism, the retrospectively great artistic leap of the time. Military paintings were frequently reproduced as cheap prints and postcards during this period and were dominant in the Paris Salon. Reviews of the Salon from contemporary journals ranging from the conservative *L’Illustration* to the satirical *Le Journal Amusant* never failed to devote a significant section to the military genre.

⁵⁰ Hopkin, *Soldier and Peasant*, p. 18.

⁵¹ Better known in the English-speaking world as *Napoleon Crossing the Alps*.

⁵² Military painting is a notoriously conservative genre and solidly institutionalised in the Second Empire. I do not lay claim to the overt republicanism of the artists’ discussed here, but merely suggest that their paintings are consistent with the dominant republican narrative of the war and the defeat.

⁵³ Varley, *Under the Shadow of Defeat*, Chapter 6.

portrays desperate heroism in the face of certain defeat. As one critic summed up, it was ‘un tableau qui nous fit révéler la tête.’⁵⁴ Presented at the Salon, *La Dernière cartouche à Balan* gained much praise and publicity. *L’Illustration* called de Neuville ‘un des succès et un des succès les plus mérités’ and his painting ‘les mieux réussies du Salon’⁵⁵ The house itself, an ordinary home at the time of the war, became the Maison de la dernière cartouche, a museum which celebrated the soldiers’ heroism and where this painting now hangs.⁵⁶



Figure 1. Alphonse de Neuville, *La Dernière cartouche à Balan, 1 Septembre 1870, 1873*.

That this painting represents an event prior to the fall of Napoleon III does not undermine its position in the republican narrative of the war. Painted some three years after the event it has as much to tell the historian about its time of creation as the time it represents. That de Neuville avoided either Napoleon III or any of his generals as his subject and instead picked an unregimented group in a very unmilitary setting allowed him to paint essentially ‘a patriotic counter-image to the humiliation of Sedan.’⁵⁷ Indeed, John Milner suggests that

⁵⁴ Arsène Alexandre, quoted in John Milner, *Art, War and Revolution in France, 1870-1871* (London, 2000) p. 55. [a painting which makes us raise our heads once more]

⁵⁵ Francion, ‘Salon de 1873’, in *L’Illustration*, (24 May 1873) p. 362. [one of the successes, and one of the most deserving successes / the most successful of the Salon] Francion continues to swoon over the painting and de Neuville in later weeks and the painting is still referenced in a comparison in 1881. Francion, ‘Les dernière cartouches’, (2 August 1873), pp. 78-79; Anonymous, ‘Le Salon’, (7 May 1881), p. 296.

⁵⁶ Varley, *Under the Shadow of Defeat*, pp. 122-123.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.* p. 153.

it was intended as a ‘stirring...public propaganda piece for an audience in need of reassurance.’⁵⁸ The Third Republic was still finding its feet in the early years following the total defeat by the Prussians and the bloody conclusion of the Paris Commune; this painting, so admired that it had prints published for popular consumption in the same year that it was shown at the Salon, provided a narrative of bravery, heroism and resilience which could not but instil pride and hope in those who saw it.⁵⁹ The men may have lost the battle against the barbarous Bavarians, but they gained a moral victory through these qualities. As Claude Digeon has argued in his study of artistic responses to the Franco-Prussian war, such depictions of glory in battle against such brutal opposition was typical.⁶⁰ The republican citizen soldier was victorious in the face of defeat.

The theme of sacrifice, even martyrdom, which penetrates *La Dernière cartouche* embodies ‘the idea of the nation as one of ideas not aggressive military might, and of resilience, patriotism, and intelligence of the people. In their democratic qualities, the concepts are implicitly republican’.⁶¹ The narrative of the citizen soldiers’ heroism is the central element in the painting. The bravery of ordinary French men in the face of an insurmountable obstacle is an emphasis which both celebrates the soon-to-be republican citizens and critiques the Empire for the folly of declaring war when under-prepared.

La Dernière cartouche does not provide an image of the enemy other than through the damage inflicted upon the house and its defenders, but this is not unusual in de Neuville’s paintings of the Franco-Prussian war, or indeed of those of his young protégé Edouard Detaille and his contemporaries, Aimé Morot and Henri Dupray. In Detaille’s *Charge du régiment de cuirassiers dans le village de Morsbronn* (Figure 2), a street is packed full of French soldiers on horseback under attack, indeed ambushed, but all we see of their attackers is white paint depicting shot gun fire from the upper windows of the timber-framed houses which enclose the painting. Milner has suggested that in ‘Detaille’s interpretation the charge was glorious, romantic and rash as well as fatal. It is clear in Detaille’s view that the brave soldiers of France had been tricked,’ but their heroism remained intact.⁶² Stop’s caricature of the painting in *Le Journal Amusant* mocks the shot gun fire by placing smoking pipes in the windows but pays respect to the French soldiers in his caption: ‘Mais, rapprochez-

⁵⁸ Milner, *Art, War and Revolution*, p. 55.

⁵⁹ Ibid. p. 55.

⁶⁰ Claude Digeon, *La Crise allemande de la pensée française (1870-1914)* (Paris, 1959) p. 51.

⁶¹ Varley, *Under the Shadow of Defeat*, p. 153.

⁶² Milner, *Art, War and Revolution*, p. 37.

vous ; vous resterez profondément émus devant ce drame terrible et vivant.⁶³ Cavalry charges at Rezonville painted in 1873 by Dupray, now held by the Musée de l'armée in Paris, and Reichshoffen by Morot, shown at the 1887 Salon, also follow this narrative of futile bravery in which the enemy is absent except for his destructive power.⁶⁴ The absence of the Prussian armies in these representations of war allowed the French soldiers to take centre stage with full focus on their heroic sacrifice.



Figure 2. Edouard Detaille, *Charge du régiment de cuirassiers dans le village de Morsbronn, 1874.*

Detaille, a student of Ernest Meissonier's, was a dominant figure of the Third Republic Paris Salon and the war of 1870-1 his topic of choice.⁶⁵ The crowds jostled to view his paintings, the reviewers of *L'Illustration* gushed over his compositions, and Stop, *Le Journal Amusant*'s caricaturist, exhausted the puns upon his name.⁶⁶ In the 1880s Detaille embarked

⁶³ Stop, 'Le Salon pour rire', *Journal Amusant* (30 May 1874) p. 5. [But, come closer; you will be profoundly moved before this terrible and living drama.]

⁶⁴ Aimé Morot, *Le Charge Reichshoffen, 6 août 1870, 1887*; Henri Dupray, *La Charge de la dragons à Rezonville-Gravelotte, août 1870, 1873.*

⁶⁵ Francion, 'Salon de 1873', *L'Illustration* (24 May 1873) p. 264.

⁶⁶ Both Stop, and *L'Illustration*'s rather inferior caricaturist, Bertall, depicted the crowds surrounding Detaille's paintings. Detaille's *détails* were a favourite pun of Stop's. Francion, 'Salon de 1873', *L'Illustration* (3 May 1873); (24 May 1873); (14 June 1873); (16 May 1874); Bertall, 'Revue comique du Salon', *L'Illustration* (24 May

on two grand projects with de Neuville, *Le Panorama de Champigny* and *Le Panorama de Rezonville*. These two enormous paintings were displayed at purpose-built *rotondes* in Paris in 1882 and 1887 respectively (*Le Panorama de Rezonville* had spent a previous five years on display in Vienna).⁶⁷ ‘Designed to surround, and thereby visually and psychologically to involve the viewer,’ the physical enormity of these paintings makes their impact difficult to comprehend.⁶⁸ In one of Stop’s caricatures, as the painting fades away into the distance, a buyer asks Detaille whether he would consider selling his painting by the metre.⁶⁹

The jest would be less amusing to the artist in retrospect; the two paintings no longer exist in their original forms.⁷⁰ From the fragments present in the Musée de l’armée as well as the detailed descriptions and black and white photographs of the whole panoramas printed in *Le Monde Illustré*, it is evident that a narrative of futile heroism runs through them both.⁷¹ The panoramas are big enough to encapsulate a variety of episodes across their canvases. In the *Rezonville* fragments held at the Musée de l’armée there are groups of soldiers, their packs weighed down, ready for battle; in another, bodies of French soldiers lay strewn across a corn field; and a further fragment shows an injured soldier passing his ammunition to another, illustrating his bravery and patriotism above concern for his own mortality (Figure 3). The view of Metz, noted in *Le Monde Illustré*, a city which became a symbol of defeat following Marshal Bazaine’s surrender, suggests a certain fatalism, or indeed the treachery of a Napoleonic commander contrasted against the metres of doggedly-fighting soldiers. The myth-like quality of these repetitive representations of the citizen soldier bravely fighting on regardless of command, organisation or futility, are precisely the same qualities which make up the image of the citizen soldier which is so fundamental to the meaning of republicanism.⁷²

1873); Stop, ‘Le Salon pour rire’, *Journal Amusant* (30 May 1874); (20 May 1876); (28 June 1879); (3 May 1884); (28 April 1888).

⁶⁷ François Robichon, ‘Les Panoramas de Champigny et Rezonville par Edouard Detaille et Alphonse Deneuville’, *Bulletin de la Société de l’Histoire de l’Art français* (December 1979) p. 260.

⁶⁸ Ibid. ; Milner, *Art, War and Revolution*, p. 49. Their physical scale and visual impact is perhaps comparable to Claude Monet’s *Les Nymphéas* in the Orangerie or Marc Rothko’s *Seagram Murals*.

⁶⁹ Stop, ‘Le Salon de 1884’, *Journal Amusant* (3 May 1884) p. 4.

⁷⁰ They were cut up into 65 and 115 fragments and sold, much to Detaille’s horror: he refused to autograph the fragments from *Rezonville* because he “‘ne voulant pas sanctionner ce massacre’”. Robichon suggests that this is because he considered this second panorama to be his own work as he had conceived of it as a whole and edited de Neuville’s work on it. Robichon, ‘Les Panoramas de Champigny et Rezonville’, p. 261.

⁷¹ Olivier Merson, ‘La Bataille de Champigny’ *Le Monde Illustré* (4 November 1882); George Bastard, ‘Le Panorama de Rezonville’ *Le Monde Illustré* (23 November 1889).

⁷² Some eighteen years after the fall of Napoleon III, Detaille painted one of his most famous works, *La Réve*, which won the Salon medal in 1888. This canvas, which shows a field of soldiers sleeping whilst the sky is filled with their collective dream of the charging and victorious Napoleonic armies of the First Empire, could be taken as a slight against the soldiers of the Franco-Prussian war. Indeed, this is the interpretation which



Figure 3. Edouard Detaille and Alphonse de Neuville, fragments of *Le Panorama de Rezonville*, 1883.⁷³

The representations of the Franco-Prussian war considered above were unproblematic for a Republican audience; they ‘played down the role of the Emperor, omitted scenes of Prussian success and rarely acknowledged the Commune’.⁷⁴ By avoiding clear articulations of the enemy and representing defiance, heroism and sacrifice rather than overwhelming defeat, the paintings suited the republican narrative’s place of citizen soldiers in the war.

Stop offers in his caricature, drawing sleeping soldiers wearing bonnets which could be taken for Phrygian caps, an unmistakable republican symbol, whilst their ‘comarades montent à l’assaut.’ But the painting itself is not critical of the soldiers, if anything it is critical of the Second Empire which failed to live up to the glory of the First. Painted at a time when the Third Republic was well established and confident in its success over both monarchists and Bonapartists, the painting allows some reminiscence to the glory of war under Napoleon I, but does not undermine the heroic narrative of the republican citizen soldier; it is, after all, those very men who dream of repeating such glory. Stop, ‘La Salon de rire’, *Le Journal Amusant* (28 April 1888).

⁷³ Photographs taken by the author at the Musée de l’armée, L’Invalides, Paris.

⁷⁴ Milner, *Art, War and Revolution*, p. 215.

Meissonier captures this mood definitively in his 1884 composition, *Le mémorial du Siège de Paris* (Figure 4).



Figure 4. Ernest Meissonier, *Le mémorial du Siège de Paris*, 1884.

The dead and dying lie all around but those that can still fight stand alongside Marianne, the formidable female allegory of the republic who is defiant in their midst, facing the distant enemy, clutching both sword and *tricolour* flag. Women, children and the elderly are present on the battlefield, an unconventional inclusion which reminds the viewer that the siege is a collective struggle in which the Prussians are killing innocents as wilfully as soldiers; their presence is a moral criticism of the enemy. The figure of Marianne, not yet the radical Phrygian-capped figure she would commonly become, is confident enough to display the *tricolour* at the painting's very centre.⁷⁵ She, above all else, is what the still-standing citizen soldiers are fighting for.

⁷⁵ For a discussion on Marianne's controversial headwear, see Maurice Agulhon, *Marianne into Battle: Republican Imagery and Symbolism in France, 1789-1880* (Cambridge, 1981) especially Chapter 7.

Following a visit to the Paris Salon in 1872, Zola remarked that there were few military paintings of the Franco-Prussian war, such artists preferring to focus on the glory of the Crimea.⁷⁶ But this reserve was rapidly overcome and representations of the battles of the 1870-1 war became some of the most popular pieces of art at the Salon in the following years. It is not particularly surprising that it took a few years before artists felt comfortable enough to depict a very traumatic and overwhelming episode of French history through such a stark medium as military painting. One of the earliest well-known artistic comments on *l'année terrible* was Victor Hugo's novel *Quatrevingt-treize*, published in 1874.⁷⁷ Ostensibly about the Revolution and Terror of its title, the novel was also an allegorical comment on the more recent upheavals. Such an indirect treatment of recent and difficult events is not unusual; a novel by Pierre Guyotat considered later in this thesis never mentions Algeria or France by name but is evidently a response to the Algerian war.⁷⁸ In a consideration of literature on the Vichy period, S. B. John considers similar "distanced" works as coming 'closest to creating the feel of the period and its moral complexities'.⁷⁹

By 1874 Hugo was a committed republican. A hero of Paris on his return from self-imposed exile following the surrender of Napoleon III, he secured this reputation by resigning as a deputy over the peace terms agreed by Thiers's government. That he had previously been a supporter of the July Monarchy and had spent the period of the Commune in Belgium were mere inconveniences.⁸⁰ His civic state funeral and subsequent Pantheonisation in 1885 became 'the most spectacular attempt to fashion a symbol of the secular moderate Republic'.⁸¹ The crowds that lined the streets for the event and Hugo's continued reverence in France suggests that this attempt was certainly successful. Such fame warranted *Quatrevingt-treize* an exceptionally long and largely favourable review even in

⁷⁶ Albert Boime, *Art and the French Commune: Imagining Paris After War and Revolution* (Chichester, 1995) p. 62.

⁷⁷ Victor Hugo, 'Quatrevingt-treize' (1874), Project Gutenberg [accessed 27 September 2009] <http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/9645>.

⁷⁸ Pierre Guyotat, *Tombeau pour cinq cent mille soldats* (Paris, 1967).

⁷⁹ S. B. John, 'Vichy France, 1940-1944: The Literary Image', John Cruickshank (ed.) *French Literature and its Background. Volume 6: The Twentieth Century* (Oxford, 1970) p. 213. There is a connection here with the frequently-noted lack of dialogue between conscripts in the Algerian war and wider French society concerning their experiences (see section 1.3c). As will be discussed, conscripts' stories were not entirely 'repressed' but rather shared only amongst those who had similar experiences, a not unusual method of coping with trauma. Distanced works, particularly by ex-conscripts like Guyotat, allow some bridging of this divide through more indirect representations. Benjamin Stora, *La Gangrène et l'oubli: la mémoire de la guerre d'Algérie* (Paris, 1991) pp. 265-268; Forrest, *Napoleon's Men*, p. 133.

⁸⁰ Peter Starr, *Commemorating Trauma: The Paris Commune and its Cultural Aftermath* (New York, 2006) pp. 60-62.

⁸¹ Varley, *Under the Shadow of Defeat*, p. 67.

the notoriously conservative *L'Illustration*.⁸² The novel itself is set largely in the Vendée where civil war is raging between the moderate and moral republican Gauvain and his royalist uncle the Marquis de Lantenac. Gauvain is mentored by his childhood teacher and ex-priest, Cimourdain, who has ties to the Jacobins in Paris. Whilst largely concerned with civil war, and thus, allegorically, the Commune of 1871, the novel is rich in its consideration of citizenship and the ideal of the republican citizen soldier embodied in Gauvain.

The war itself remains static in the novel; Sandy Petrey has argued that if 'we look at the struggle in the West independently of the personalities who wage it, it becomes apparent that nothing happens in *Quatrevingt-treize*.'⁸³ It is the characters, and the ideal types which they represent, which are the crux of the novel's message. Gauvain is the republican ideal type, the balance between the political extremes represented through the morally detestable violence of Cimourdain and Lantenac. Conservative, honest and moral, Gauvain is the ultimate Third Republican. Commander of the republican armies, he considers a moral victory more fundamental than a military one. In the finale of the novel, Lantenac has escaped 'La Tourgue' which is under siege by Gauvain's army but in doing so has left a peasant woman's children to burn to death as Gauvain is unaware of their presence in the fortress's library. On hearing the mother's cry of desperation, Lantenac returns to save the children and as a result is captured and sentenced to death. Gauvain, having witnessed Lantenac's progression from a kidnapper and a murderer to a man willing to lay down his life for the sake of innocents, cannot allow his enemy's sentence to be carried out. Knowing Cimourdain to be immovable because of the extremes of his politics, Gauvain secretly switches places with Lantenac in his prison cell, allowing the marquis to escape and condemning himself to death for the treachery. Thus, whilst ensuring a military stalemate on which the novel ends, Gauvain has been morally victorious. As he is taken to the guillotine, his soldiers cry 'grâce ! grâce !' and a grenadier offers his life in Gauvain's place. The citizen's final words are 'Vive la République !'⁸⁴ Such a representation of the quintessential citizen soldier shares much with the representations provided by de Neuville, Demaille and Meissonier. It supports the republican ideal of a heroic citizen soldier securing

⁸² Jules Claretie, 'Revue Littéraire', *L'Illustration* (14 March 1874). *L'Illustration* can safely be described as conservative, and indeed Bonapartist, given its continued reverence of Napoleon III and, most notably, its favourable opinion of the much pilloried Marshal Bazaine throughout the 1870s.

⁸³ Sandy Petrey, *History in the Text: Quatrevingt-Treize and the French Revolution* (Amsterdam, 1980) p. 15.

⁸⁴ Hugo, 'Quatrevingt-treize'.

a moral victory even in the face of military defeat; a narrative essential for the Third Republic born from capitulation.

More than twenty years after the conclusion of *l'année terrible*, Émile Zola's *La Débâcle* (1892) dealt with the events in a much more direct manner than *Quatrevingt-treize*.⁸⁵ By 1892 the conservative republic was entrenched and more confident than in the early 1870s when the republicans were not yet in control of government; the shoddy shadow of Bonapartism had been vanquished following the Boulanger Affair of the 1880s and the upheavals of the Dreyfus Affair were as yet unknown. The penultimate volume in his hugely successful Rougon-Macquart series, which used the genre of the novel to trace Zola's fascination with naturalist theories of hereditary degeneration within the context of the Second Empire, has the Franco-Prussian war and the Commune at its centre. Whilst Colette Wilson has made a strong case for the presence of the Commune in the earlier novels of the series, it is *La Débâcle* which offers a rich representation of the citizen soldier.⁸⁶

Beginning with the defeat of Napoleon III at Sedan, the novel traces the lives of two unlikely friends, Jean Macquart and Maurice Lavasseur, as they attempt to fight the enemy, are captured, separated and eventually tragically reunited during the *semaine sanglante* which marked the end of the Paris Commune. The unmistakable hero of *La Débâcle* is Jean, an honest and hard-working peasant. Like Gauvain, he is the ultimate republican citizen soldier, and yet is very different to Hugo's aristocrat. Whereas Gauvain is directed by his superior intelligence and ideology, Jean has not progressed further up the chain of army command because of his illiteracy and is driven by a calm rationality and balance.⁸⁷ He fights for his country because he is a patriot, not because of a particular dedication to republican ideology. Above all, he is exceptionally ordinary even in his heroism; the citizen soldier is a status available to all men, indeed it is almost theirs by default. Such is the confidence of republicanism in the 1890s.

Whilst Jean represents the quintessential republican citizen soldier in *La Débâcle*, the novel contains many representations of far less ideal types, beginning with Maurice and deteriorating, particularly towards the political extremes. Zola is particularly condemning of

⁸⁵ Émile Zola, *La Débâcle* (Paris, 1892).

⁸⁶ Colette E. Wilson, *Paris and the Commune, 1871-78: The Politics of Forgetting* (Manchester, 2007).

⁸⁷ 'Les camarades disaient qu'avec de l'instruction il serait peut-être allé loin. Sachant tout juste lire et écrire, il n'ambitionnait même pas le grade de sergent. Quand on a été paysan, on reste paysan.' Zola, *La Débâcle*, p. 3.

Chouteau, a fervent, amoral Parisian revolutionary and Pache, a pious but self-serving Breton, both of whom are in Jean's regiment but who both consider republican patriotism as secondary, the former in relation to revolution, the latter to the church. Neither are good soldiers and neither are envisaged to be citizens of Jean's new France which will grow from the ashes of the Commune. There is a consistent link between the good soldier and the good citizen.

Zola has drawn noticeable distinctions between the rank-and-file soldiers who largely, with the few noted exceptions, fight bravely and courageously against an overwhelming enemy, and the imperial high command who are weak, incompetent and pursue only selfish glory. In short, Zola damned the army elite. This is in evidence from the very beginning of the novel where a poorly-planned war has left Jean's regiment without the necessary supplies and in disorder, marching and retreating without ever firing a shot. The Emperor himself is portrayed as both physically weak and selfishly frivolous; whilst logistics have failed to provide the soldiers with basic supplies, Napoleon III is seen commandeering the house of an elderly lady with numerous carts of delicate crockery and fine wines in tow.⁸⁸ His commanders cannot even agree who is in charge on the battlefield.⁸⁹ Zola was condemning the imperial high command, but he was also suggesting a dividing line between the rank-and-file who became citizen soldiers, and the professional army which, as the Dreyfus Affair would bring into stark relief, did not share the sentiments required of republican citizenship.

As such, it is unsurprising to find that the most intense and heroic scene of the novel does not involve the higher-ranking members of the army at all and its central character is not even conscripted; he is a simple citizen. This is the iconic scene of Weiss, Maurice's brother-in-law who had been, to his frustration, exempted from military service because of his eyesight.⁹⁰ He had travelled to Bazeilles to protect his house, bought only recently for him and his new wife to raise their family. As the town comes under attack from the Bavarian armies, Weiss stays behind with his gardener and a small group of soldiers to make a last stand. It is a deliberate homage to the much celebrated battle captured by de Neuville's painting and savoured by the *Maison de la dernière cartouche*. Unlike the painting, Zola's story is able to continue the narrative beyond the final defence of the

⁸⁸ Ibid. pp. 72 and 114-115.

⁸⁹ Ibid. p. 53.

⁹⁰ Ibid. pp. 285-297.

house and directly represent Weiss as a true martyr, shot by a firing squad as his wife watches, hysterical in her despair.⁹¹ The brutality and the sacrifice of these scenes provide the ‘patriotic counter-image to the humiliation of Sedan’, the narrative of which surrounds Weiss’s battle in Zola’s novel.⁹² Nowhere is the trope of the heroic republican citizen soldier, a true citizen-in-arms, more evident than at this peak in the dramatic narrative.

Weiss is representative of the spontaneous uprising of citizens against the enemy reminiscent of the republican *levée en masse*, the final frontier, psychologically and militarily against the nation’s defeat after the surrender at Sedan.⁹³ Zola’s novel does not refer directly to Gambetta’s raising of an auxiliary army and the attempted *sorties* from a besieged Paris, but it does include representations of the *francs-tireurs*, guerrilla fighters who to the Prussian army were an illegal force but to the French became symbols ‘of continued struggle and defiance [which] was itself a reaffirmation of France as a nation.’⁹⁴ These figures are more shady than the clear-cut heroics of Weiss given that the tactics of the *francs-tireurs* were not always considered honourable, but they play a role both in *La Débâcle* and a semi-autobiographical novel, *Robert Helmont* by Alphonse Daudet, in representing a defiant and wilful patriotism worthy of the citizen soldier and, crucially, one divorced from the professional army.⁹⁵

Daudet’s own politics are not as clear cut as Zola’s but it would be wise not to judge them on the basis of his son, Léon, who went on to be an important figure in the extreme-right league *Action française*.⁹⁶ He was certainly an anti-Dreyfusard, but that was hardly unusual, even for a conservative republican. Daudet and Zola do share similarities in their representations of *francs-tireurs* which, in turn, concur with the republican narrative of the citizen soldier. Daudet’s novel, first published in serial form in 1873, is written as a diary, beginning on 3 September 1870, the day after Napoleon III’s capitulation. Robert Helmont, a bourgeois character residing in the rural outskirts of Paris, has a broken leg so when, upon hearing the news of the Prussian advance his fellow villagers join the fight or flee the village, he remains alone at home, documenting his days in the novel.

⁹¹ Ibid. pp. 242-252.

⁹² Varley, *Under the Shadow of Defeat*, p. 153.

⁹³ Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *The Culture of Defeat: On National Trauma, Mourning, and Recovery*, trans. Jefferson Chase (London, 2001) pp. 8-9.

⁹⁴ Badsey, *The Franco-Prussian War*, p. 61.

⁹⁵ Alphonse Daudet, *Robert Helmont: Journal d'un solitaire* (Paris, 1891) [1874 *Robert Helmont: études et paysages*].

⁹⁶ Hayward, *Fragmented France*, p. 234.

The only other inhabitant of the village is the farmer Goudeloup, who refuses to leave and arms himself to protect his property. In reference to the advancing armies he tells Helmont, “‘S’ils me laissent tranquille, je ne bougerai pas... Mais s’ils ont le malheur de toucher à la ferme..., gare!’”⁹⁷ It is not long before Helmont discovers Goudeloup has been carrying out his threats when he stumbles across a murdered Prussian. Goudeloup’s actions are reminiscent of stories in the Parisian press in November 1870 concerning a Sergeant Ignatius Hoff who slit the throats of Germans at night.⁹⁸ Helmont himself cannot conceive of ‘tuer pour tuer’ and passes up the opportunity to shoot a lone Prussian when he has the option.⁹⁹ But he harbours a kind of condescending sympathy for the farmer’s actions. Protecting his property just as Weiss had planned to do in *La Débâcle*, Goudeloup’s efforts are represented as rather dishonourable but still patriotic. Whilst hardly a member of an organised band of *francs-tireurs*, Goudeloup is representative of the darker side of the citizen soldier, a little too radical for the monarchist republic of the early 1870s which had been concerned by Gambetta’s call for a nation-in-arms and its homage to the revolutionary armies of 1792.¹⁰⁰ The same anxiety is represented by the fanatical Cimourdain in *Quatrevingt-treize*.

In *La Débâcle*, the *francs-tireurs* are a slightly more ordered group who are targeting Prussian soldiers around Remilly during the siege of Paris. In league with Maurice’s Uncle Fouchard, they are poisoning the enemy soldiers by selling them rotten meat.¹⁰¹ The group are well-aware that their interpretation of patriotism leads to harsh reprisals for their fellow villagers but Zola paints a more forgiving if still brutal picture of them when they carry out the mock trial and murder of Goliath, a Prussian spy who was responsible for several personal miseries in the novel.¹⁰² Neither Zola nor Daudet represent their *franc-tireur* characters with the same degree of heroism as those of the regular armies; they are more ambiguous, certainly dangerous, but not without patriotism. Essentially, whilst citizen soldiers in the historical sense of 1792, they were too radical for the conservative republic of the late nineteenth century. Education and order were the central tenets of the Third Republican

⁹⁷ Daudet, *Robert Helmont* pp. 65-66. [“If they leave me alone, I shall not stir... But if they are imprudent enough to meddle with the farm... Let them beware!” Alphonse Daudet, *Robert Helmont. Diary of a Recluse, 1870-1871*, trans. Laura Ensor (London, 1892)]

⁹⁸ Horne, *The Fall of Paris*, p. 136.

⁹⁹ Daudet, *Robert Helmont*, p. 86. [killing for the sake of killing]

¹⁰⁰ Varley, *Under the Shadow of Defeat*, pp. 204-205.

¹⁰¹ Zola, *La Débâcle*, pp. 519-523.

¹⁰² *Ibid.* pp. 533-538.

citizen; rash violence, even when pursued in the name of patriotism, was best left to history.

These artistic representations of the Franco-Prussian war have served to illustrate the centrality of the citizen soldier in forming and cementing the meaning of citizenship during the Third Republic, an identity that not only had a legal basis, but a socio-cultural one too. The heroism present on the battlefield, however futile, was traded in for enfranchisement, education and stability to ensure the success and longevity of the republican regime. As the historiography has made clear, this narrative of citizenship is not restricted to the Third Republican period but is pervasive and consistent throughout republican history since the Revolution. Whilst the artistic representations of the Franco-Prussian war have provided a firm contextual basis for a consideration of representations of the Algerian war, the heroic commemorations of the soldiers of the First World War and the celebrated place of the Resistance from the Second, suggest a continuation of the republican focus on the citizen soldier in defining citizenship. The bastion of the republic is the heroic, moral and sacrificial citizen soldier. Yet, in artistic representations of the Algerian war, as the following section will illustrate, such a figure is entirely absent. Sidelined entirely from the narrative of war, the absence of the citizen soldier throws into question the very nature of republican citizenship. This absence points to a revolution in republicanism itself.

1.3 The absent hero: cultural representations of conscripts in the Algerian war

George Kelly has argued that Algeria was part of the French army's soul.¹⁰³ For most of the colonial period, the army had a free hand in Algeria and most professional soldiers had done a tour of duty there.¹⁰⁴ Yet the arrival of French conscripts did not represent a peak in this relationship, but the beginning of its end.¹⁰⁵ The citizen soldier was not a hero of the Algerian war, not even a martyred one in the face of defeat and retreat. This section argues

¹⁰³ George Armstrong Kelly, *Lost Soldiers: The French Army and Empire in Crisis, 1947-1962* (Cambridge, Mass., 1965) p. 374.

¹⁰⁴ Charles de Gaulle was rather exceptional in having not served in Algeria prior to his landing there as head of the Free French in 1943.

¹⁰⁵ Decrees in August 1955 and April 1956 recalled the conscripts from 1952-3 and extended conscription from 18 to 30 months (36 months for settlers), with two years in Algeria. Anthony Clayton, *The War of French Decolonization* (London, 1994) p. 120.

that in the artistic representations of the Algerian war there are no symbolic citizen soldiers, only sidelined conscripts lacking in agency. Unlike *La Débâcle*'s Jean who drives the narrative forward, the soldier in Algeria is a pawn to wider forces. Rather than a self-sacrificing hero, the conscript becomes a victim.

The implications of such a shift in the representation of soldiers in the national context are stark given that, as Graham Dawson has argued,

[h]eroic narratives have been given a particular inflection in discourses of the nation generated since the emergence of the nation-state in early-modern Europe. Intimately bound up with the foundation and preservation of a national territory, the deeds of military heroes were invested with the new significance of serving the country and glorifying its name. Their stories became myths of nationhood itself, providing a cultural focus around which the national community could cohere.¹⁰⁶

As the first part of this chapter has shown, in France these narratives of heroism are not only bound up with a national identity but with a specifically republican identity and one which has defined the notion of citizenship since the Revolution. Dawson considers the creation of military heroes to be a method of avoiding the complexity of war, but this does not mean that the lack of the hero in the representations considered here brings with it a reconsideration of these complexities.¹⁰⁷ Whereas a heroic war narrative supports a moral triumphalism which is self-evidently nationalist, the representation of the soldier as a victim is a method of avoiding responsibility for a pursuit of war that, in the subsequent republican narrative, was not a moral pursuit.

The teleological narrative of the 'invention of decolonization', which Todd Shepard identifies, is precisely the culmination of finding the Algerian war morally indefensible and retelling it as a story of progress and success of the *mission civilisatrice*.¹⁰⁸ Artistic representations of the war within this narrative cannot depict a heroic soldier because he would be fighting against the inevitable tide of History. Instead, the conscript is

¹⁰⁶ Graham Dawson, *Soldier Heroes: British Adventure, Empire, and the Imagining of Masculinities* (London, 1994) p. 1.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.* p. 286.

¹⁰⁸ Todd Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization: The Algerian War and the Remaking of France* (London, 2006).

represented as a victim. As such, the agency of the character is removed and the republic's responsibility for war, sometimes even the war itself, can be denied.¹⁰⁹ The conscript can be visible in republican artistic representations of the war without challenging the discourse of decolonisation.¹¹⁰

Antoine Prost, in a discussion of the memory of the Algerian war, sees the notion that ex-conscripts could 'claim their rights as victims of war' as 'implausible' because the 'war itself lacked the legitimacy for this claim.'¹¹¹ Prost unwittingly raises a crucial point in terms of victimhood. He is quite right in rejecting the possibility that the conscripts were either able to claim to be, or be represented as, victims of the war against Algeria given that the war itself challenged the 'invention of decolonisation' narrative. However, this does not connote a rejection of a victimhood status, only a rethinking of what the conscripts were victims of.

The concept of victimhood has been scrutinised by Robert Moeller, amongst others, in the context of German artistic representations of the Second World War, particularly in literature and cinema.¹¹² The German people, initially in both the DDR and the Federal Republic and latterly in a unified German state, were popularly represented as victims of the Nazi regime, suffering from the aggressive war machine for which, by extension, they were not responsible. As civilians living under the bombing raids in Dresden, *Wehrmacht* soldiers being pushed to their death on the Eastern Front and expellees fleeing the Communist advance, the German cultural narratives of the war clearly separated the aggressive Nazi state from the victimised German people. This 'rhetoric of victimisation' served a variety of political and social purposes in both East and West Germany but most particularly was a unifying force which could hold together a war-ravaged and politically fragmented society; as Aleida Assmann has noted, 'nothing unites as much as the historical

¹⁰⁹ Those who are represented as possessing agency, the professional army, will be returned to in Chapter 3.

¹¹⁰ The phrase 'discourse of decolonisation' is used here to bring together Shepard's legally-based argument of 'the invention of decolonisation', and my own cultural history of the dominant republican narrative present in representations of the Algerian war.

¹¹¹ Prost, *Republican Identities in War and Peace*, p. 122.

¹¹² Robert G. Moeller, *War Stories: The Search for a Usable Past in the Federal Republic of Germany* (London, 2001); James J. Orr, *The Victim as Hero: Ideologies of Peace and National Identity in Postwar Japan* (Honolulu, 2001); Dagmar Barnouw, *The War in the Empty Air: Victims, Perpetrators, and Postwar Germans* (Bloomington, 2005); Robert G. Moeller, 'Germans as Victims? Thoughts on a Post-Cold War History of World War II's Legacies', *History and Memory* 17 (2005); Bill Niven, ed., *Germans as Victims: Remembering the Past in Contemporary Germany* (Basingstoke, 2006); Helmut Schmitz, ed., *A Nation of Victims? Representations of German Wartime Suffering from 1945 to the Present* (Amsterdam, 2007); Stuart Taberner and Karina Berger, eds, *Germans as Victims in the Literary Fiction of the Berlin Republic* (Woodbridge, Suffolk, 2009).

trauma of a collective experience as victims.¹¹³ The basic premise of such a rhetoric comes from being able to make 'a radical distinction between ordinary Germans and fanatical Nazis' which then creates a connected opposition between victim and perpetrator.¹¹⁴ Furthermore, the 'rhetoric of victimisation' concentrates on specific and selective events that avoid a discussion of the war's origins, an acknowledgement of which would implicate many as perpetrators.¹¹⁵

In representations of the Algerian war, what the conscripts are represented as victims of varies, particularly over time, but it is certainly 'implausible' for them to be victims of Algerians; to suggest such a thing would be to entirely undermine the republican discourse of decolonisation as an inevitable and progressive force. Algerians cannot be represented as the enemy in republican culture because this would undermine the progressive element of the narrative inherent in the perceived success of the *mission civilisatrice*.¹¹⁶ Furthermore, the occurrence of the 'rhetoric of victimisation' in relation to French conscripts, as with the German case, avoids the representation of the war's origins, which again would undermine the decolonisation discourse by highlighting that the republic had originally been fighting against 'decolonisation' in 1954. There is a shift in the status of victimhood over time in the representations of conscripts and, as such, these representations will be considered roughly chronologically in order to draw out these distinctions and suggest reasons for such changes.

1.3a Representations in the 1960s

Unlike the German literature studied in relation to victimhood in which expellees dominate the narrative, representations of conscripts in republican culture in the first decade after the end of the Algerian war are largely sidelined.¹¹⁷ They exist almost in the background of a more dynamic story which they are not party to and, indeed, often cannot access. This difference in prominence comes from the different places the two groups have in their

¹¹³ Moeller, 'Germans as Victims?', p. 150; Aleida Assman, 'Erinnerung als Erregung. Wendepunkte der deutschen Erinnerungsgeschichte', *Wissenschaftskolleg Jahrbuch 1998/1999* (2000), cited in Ruth Wittlinger, 'Taboo or Tradition? The 'Germans as Victims' Theme in the Federal Republic until the mid-1990s', Bill Niven (ed.) *Germans as Victims: Remembering the Past in Contemporary Germany* (Basingstoke, 2006) p. 64.

¹¹⁴ Helmut Schmitz, 'The Birth of the Collective from the Spirit of Empathy: From the "Historian's Dispute" to German Suffering', Bill Niven (ed.) *Germans as Victims: Remembering the Past in Contemporary Germany* (Basingstoke, 2006) p. 103.

¹¹⁵ Moeller, *War Stories*, p. 3.

¹¹⁶ This is expanded upon in Chapter 2.

¹¹⁷ Wittlinger, 'Taboo or Tradition?', p. 70.

own national narratives; whilst the expellees are representative of the suffering inflicted upon the whole German nation as a result of the Nazi war machine and its aftermath, the French conscripts do not play a significant role in the decolonisation discourse and, indeed, if they were to figure too prominently, would be damaging to such a narrative.¹¹⁸ This will become apparent in the analysis of three sources from the 1960s: Alain Resnais's film *Muriel, ou le temps d'un retour* (1963), Jacques Démy's film *Les Parapluies de Cherbourg* (1964) and George Perec's short story, *Quel petit vélo à guidon chromé au fond de la cour?* (1966). Whilst there are many other novels and films from the 1960s which contain representations of the Algerian war, there are only three included here as the others do not contain representations of conscripts, only the professional army, further evidence that the conscript is not a dominant figure in republican representations of the Algerian war.¹¹⁹ In contrast to representations of conscripts in the Franco-Prussian war, the would-be citizen soldier of the Algerian war does not take centre-stage.

Muriel is Resnais's second collaboration with the writer Jean Cayrol, who scripted the 1955 documentary film *Nuit et Brouillard* on the Nazi concentration camps, and it followed on from the critical success of his 1961 film *L'Année derrière à Marienbad*.¹²⁰ Set over a fortnight in the coastal city of Boulogne, *Muriel* focuses on four characters, their deceits and their relationship with the past. Antiques dealer Hélène has invited her old flame Alphonse to stay. He brings with him Françoise who purports to be his niece but is, in actual fact, his young lover. Of the same generation as Françoise is Bernard, Hélène's step-son who has recently returned from his tour of duty in Algeria. The film itself is intentionally muddled and confusing, fast-cutting between inanimate objects, upsetting chronology by switching between day and night and overlaying sound from one scene onto another. It is an uneasy film portraying abstruse and disturbed characters. In essence, it is very characteristic of the *nouvelle vague* style through its use of 'repetition, circularity, return, refusal (or inability) to achieve closure, spiralling in on themselves, gaps, holes, blank spaces, aporias of all kinds,

¹¹⁸ Annette Seidal Arpac, 'Lost in Translations? The Discourse of "German Suffering" and W. G. Sebald's *Luftkrieg und Literatur*', Helmut Schmitz (ed.) *A Nation of Victims? Representations of German Wartime Suffering from 1945 to the Present* (Amsterdam, 2007) p. 161.

¹¹⁹ Thus among the absent are novels by Claire Etcherelli, Pierre Leulliette, Jean Pélégri, Jules Roy and Pierre-Henri Simon, and the films, *Cléo de 5 à 7*, *Le Combat dans l'Île* and *Le Petit Soldat*.

¹²⁰ Alain Resnais, *Muriel, ou le temps d'un retour* (France, 1963); Alain Resnais, *Nuit et Brouillard* (France, 1955); Alain Resnais, *L'Année derrière à Marienbad* (France, 1961). The first twenty-five or so pages of the September 1961 issue of *Cahiers du cinéma*, the film journal associated with the *nouvelle vague* movement (of which Resnais was on the periphery), were dedicated to *L'Année derrière à Marienbad*. *Muriel* would garner a fifteen-page discussion. *Cahiers du cinéma* (no. 123, September 1961) and (no. 149, November 1963).

jumps and cuts.¹²¹ Despite *Muriel's* avant-garde quality, it gained much public exposure in France, not only in the intellectual *Les Temps modernes*, but also through long reviews and discussions in *Le Monde*, *L'Express* and the entertainment magazine, *Télérama*.¹²²

Jacques Démy's *Les Parapluies de Cherbourg* looks and sounds a world apart from *Muriel*, and yet it utilises familiar tropes which support the republican decolonisation discourse: the agency-free victimhood of a conscript who is sidelined from the main story, a lack of origins of the war and a suggestion that the Vichy era is of far greater relevance to France than the troubles of a single soldier.¹²³ *Les Parapluies* is an extravaganza of music and colour in which every sentence is sung and brightly coloured dresses complement equally vibrant backdrops. The storyline is simplicity itself in comparison to the muddle of Resnais's film. Geneviève and Guy are in the throes of young love when Guy is called up for military service in Algeria. Geneviève discovers after his departure that she is pregnant and, with some coordination from her mother, marries the older and considerably wealthier Roland Cassard who is willing to bring the child up as his own. Guy returns to Cherbourg, marries his aunt's carer and the film ends some years later with a chance meeting between the two former lovers. In both *Muriel* and *Les Parapluies* the heroic citizen soldier is absent and in his place is a victimised conscript. This is represented in two ways: firstly, through their marginalisation from society upon return from war and, secondly, by undermining the significance of their experiences through reference to the Occupation period.

Muriel's Bernard is a marginalised outsider on many levels. He leads an antagonistic relationship with his step-mother and is frequently seen leaving the house and being bewildered by the constant rotation of possessions and furniture (Hélène deals in antiques from the flat). He is out of work, seemingly of his own accord and has thus separated himself from society at a civil level since his return from military service. He rarely engages in conversation unless pushed and frequently seems detached from what he is saying. He lies to the other characters, telling Hélène that his non-existent fiancée Muriel is ill, only to immediately backtrack and say that she is not. He leaves Françoise one evening explaining

¹²¹ Lynn A. Higgins, *New Novel, New Wave, New Politics: Fiction and the Representation of History in Postwar France* (London, 1996) p. 15.

¹²² Bernard Pingaud, 'Clefs pour Muriel', *Les Temps modernes* (no. 210, November 1963); Jean de Baroncelli, 'Au Festival de Venise : Accueil favorable pour "Muriel" d'Alain Resnais', *Le Monde* (3 September 1963); Jean-Luc Godard, Pierre Kast, André-S. Labarthe, Henri Langois et Jacques Rivette, 'Faut-il comprendre Resnais?', *L'Express* (3 October 1963); Claude-Jean Philippe, 'Faut-il une clé pour comprendre Muriel ? Le nouveau film d'Alain Resnais', *Télérama* (13 October 1963).

¹²³ Jacques Démy, *Les Parapluies de Cherbourg* (France, 1964).

that he is going to see a girl who he insinuates is his fiancée, only to be found by Hélène alone in a bar. Bernard films the world through his hand-held camera, recording scenes through windows in cafes and even in his own home when an argument breaks out; there is a pane of glass between him and the world.¹²⁴ And yet, being on the outside and looking in, Bernard is also the most perceptive character, seeing Alphonse for the fraud he is in terms of his tales of his life in Algeria (which is entirely fabricated) and his relationship with Françoise.

The only character in the film Bernard appears close to is his lover Marie-Do, who is not known to any of the other characters and also seems to know nothing of the mysterious Muriel. In one scene, he encourages Marie-Do to look at him through a kaleidoscope, the fragmentation of him through the lens serves to represent the fragmented nature of his character in relation to the rest of society. It is not until the scene following Marie-Do's announcement that she is leaving Boulogne that we discover the true identity of Muriel. Over footage he shot on his hand-held camera when deployed in Algeria, Bernard narrates his participation in the torture of an Algerian prisoner, Muriel. The scene is reminiscent of a flashback, giving the viewer both 'images of memory, the personal archive of the past...', [but also] images of history, the shared and recorded past.¹²⁵ Bernard is both an individual and at the same time representative of ex-conscripts. The incident with Muriel is at once his own private experience yet also signifies the common experience of those involved in torture during the war. As the shot pans out to take in Bernard's studio we see that he is actually talking to an older man, of Hélène's generation. The shots of this conversation focus on each of the participants' faces individually, exacerbating the divide between them; between France and the returning soldiers. Whilst the complicated back-story which involves Alphonse and Hélène, whose hearts, minds and memories are still in the Second World War, is in the process of being resolved by the end of the film, Bernard remains as he began: a traumatised victim on the edge of society.

Guy is only present at the beginning and end of *Les Parapluies*; as the plot moves on apace in Cherbourg, he is serving as a conscript in Algeria. His departure is a starkly bleak scene compared to the bright and jazzy *mise-en-scène* of the rest of the film, and his equally austere

¹²⁴ I am indebted to Nicholas Shaw for this turn of phrase. Nicholas Shaw, *The Pane of Glass Between Me and the World* (Britain, 2009) http://www.dailymotion.com/video/xcg3gx_the-pane-of-glass-between-me-and-th_shortfilms (accessed 23 June 2010).

¹²⁵ Maureen Cheryn Turim, *Flashbacks in Film: Memory and History* (London, 1989) p. 2.

return is compounded by the fact that it occurs immediately following Geneviève and Cassard's vivid and joyful wedding scene. Guy is a victim of change. The only time he appears in the central part of the film during his military service is in a static black and white photograph, standing alone with a background that provides him no context. Upon his return he is alienated by the changing landscape of Cherbourg, which culminates in the replacement of Geneviève's old umbrella shop with a store selling washing machines. The road name has changed from 'la rue de notre amour' to 'la rue des regrets'. He is discarded by his true love and separated from his child. One reviewer described him as 'plutôt passif', in direct contrast to the bright and dynamic residents of Cherbourg of which he used to be a part.¹²⁶ But he is more than passive; he is helpless, agency-less and a victim.

Kirsten Ross has argued that French culture has drawn a relationship between decolonisation and modernisation which, in its dying days, 'bolstered' the claims of colonialism being a civilising mission and thus maintaining, 'at the peak of the empire's most barbarous behaviour', its republican credentials.¹²⁷ Geneviève's pregnancy and the transformation of the shop into one selling washing machines, a clear symbol of modernity and the consumerism of *les trente glorieuses*, are reflective of such a narrative. This notion of modernisation, of an inevitable progress, is evident in the decolonisation discourse.¹²⁸ In this environment, Guy has spent most of the film fighting for a cause that disappears before his very eyes whilst at the same time, being entirely removed from the modernisation engulfing his home town, making it unrecognisable upon his return. The social effect of his military service has been to move Guy away from the centre to the periphery of society. Furthermore, despite bearing witness to this change in his absence, Guy is totally incapable of comprehending the world around him and claims that nothing has changed; he is portrayed as psychologically traumatised by his unseen experiences in Algeria. When the film ends with Guy alongside his wife and child, his trauma is concealed by the apparent success of his civil duty as a father and provider, but it is not the happy ending of a true love story. Whilst Bernard is marginalised from civil society, without a job or a fiancée, Guy's apparent integration is actually a front for his lost life.

Bernard is certainly not an heroic citizen soldier character; he is not the future of France and for the most part his existence is inconsequential to the other characters and their

¹²⁶ Madeleine Chapsal, 'Fanny à Cherbourg', in *L'Express* (20 February 1964) p. 24.

¹²⁷ Kristin Ross, *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies: Decolonization and the Reordering of French Culture* (London, 1995) p. 114.

¹²⁸ This theme of inevitability and modernisation will be developed further in Chapter 2, section 2.3b.

storylines in the film. He is a victim of his traumatic experiences of war, as well as French society's unsympathetic reaction to him upon his return. As such, Resnais's film suggests a potential to present a radical challenge to the republican decolonisation discourse and the lack of a connection between Algeria and France. However, two aspects of the film prevent this being the case. Firstly, the Algerian war is represented as a timeless entity; it has neither origins nor conclusions, but exists only as a static memory of Bernard's which has no wider context. As with the victimhood narrative attributed to post-war Germany, the failure to acknowledge the war's origins avoids attributing any cause, and thus responsibility, for the war itself. Bernard's memories do not interrupt the flow of the decolonisation discourse. His marginal place in society, in which he lacks agency, emphasises that he could not possibly interrupt such a course of history.

Secondly, Bernard's victimhood is usurped by that of his step-mother. Hélène has suffered because of the collective trauma of the Vichy era, which is omnipresent in *Muriel*. The film is laced with Hélène and Alphonse's memories of their wartime love affair; the mystery of the film centres on their conflicting recollections of the past.¹²⁹ The Second World War is present in the very fabric of the film, with the setting of Boulogne. The viewer is constantly reminded of the past conflict by the newly-built apartments upon the rubble of the destroyed port. Despite the name in the title being part of Bernard's story, it is Hélène and Alphonse's troubled affair of the past which bookends and dominates the film. In *Muriel*, all begins and ends with Vichy; there is no start or end to the Algerian war, no leaving and returning by Bernard and no wider consequence of his whole experience in terms of the films' narrative. Vichy dominates. Resnais, rather than presenting a challenge to the republican narrative of the Algerian war, is party to the same trope as the historians noted in the introduction to this thesis; the Vichy era takes precedence over the Algerian war thus undermining, indeed denying in *Muriel's* case, the latter's importance and impact on the French Republic.¹³⁰

Guy, like *Muriel's* Bernard, is a victim alienated from the society in which he lives. Like Bernard, too, he is marginalised both *by* the film and *in* the film to avoid the Algerian war becoming too prominent a feature. The war itself is never seen, is never discussed and has no beginning or end beyond Guy's involvement in it. A fundamental character of the story,

¹²⁹ Naomi Greene, *Landscapes of Loss: The National Past in Postwar French Cinema* (Princeton, 1999) pp. 46-47.

¹³⁰ See Introduction, section I.IIb.

Guy's existence is barely commented upon in the central part of the film and his absence does not prevent the film's narrative driving forwards. His loss of Geneviève and his child is the most evident example of his marginalisation but there is a further element which emphasises this and denies the significance of the Algerian war to France. Given that his absence in the film, the loss of both his way of life and his first child are all singularly due to his conscription into the French army, his aunt's flippant contention that "le régiment n'est pas la guerre"¹³¹ is indicative of the status young conscripts shipped off to Algeria had to the generation that lived through the Occupation.¹³¹ His part in the war, and the war itself, is entirely undermined by the attitude of his aunt's generation. The implication is clear: the post-Vichy era of modernisation and affluence is not to be interrupted by the unnecessary and unspoken troubles of those who had experienced 'le régiment' in Algeria.

Two years after Démy's hugely popular musical production, Georges Perec penned a ludic short story, *Quel petit vélo à guidon chromé au fond de la cour?*, as much a challenge to literary conventions as it was an amusing tale.¹³² Perec had just published his first novel, *Les Choses*, which Max-Pol Fouchet, writing in *Le Nouvel Observateur*, picked for one of his top three books of 1965.¹³³ He would go on to become a member of *OuLiPo*, a collective of writers and mathematicians who were fascinated by the potential of language and wished to push the boundaries of literature, as their full title suggests: *Ouvroir de littérature potentielle*.¹³⁴ Under the influence of this group, Perec constructed what is probably the longest palindrome ever written, at over 5000 characters in length, but his penchant for inventiveness with language was already apparent in *Quel petit vélo*.¹³⁵ It also effectively illustrates the rhetoric of victimisation in the Algerian war context. The story follows the attempts by a group of Parisian intellectual chums to help a young conscript avoid being sent to Algeria in the closing months of the war. It is narrated by Perec whose friend, Henri Pollak, is a sergeant in the same regiment, as well as an intellectual; he leads 'une double vie'.¹³⁶

¹³¹ ["Military service isn't war."]

¹³² Georges Perec, *Quel petit vélo à guidon chromé au fond de la cour?* (Paris, 1966). Perec even cites Démy's film in his story. p. 52.

¹³³ Max-Pol Fouchet, 'Les Trois livres qu'ils ont préférés en 1965', *Le Nouvel Observateur* (29 December 1965).

¹³⁴ For an overview on Perec's background and his works see Leonard R. Koos, 'Georges Perec: P or the Puzzle of Fiction', *Yale French Studies* 75 (1988).

¹³⁵ Georges Perec, 'Le Grand Palindrome', 1967 [accessed 18 June 2009]
<http://home.urbanet.ch/urba7038/motscroises/lexique/palindrome.htm>.

Perec is perhaps most famous for his lipogrammatic 1969 novel, *La Disparition* in which the letter 'e' is never used. He also won the Prix Médici in 1978 for his huge tome, *La Vie Mode d'Employ: Romans*.

¹³⁶ Perec, *Quel petit vélo*, p. 12.

The conscript they are attempting to save from deployment is a rather simple character. Karamanlis is a feckless private whose first action in the tale is to sob ‘comme un petit enfant’ and plead with Pollak to injure him sufficiently so that he is prevented from being sent to Algeria.¹³⁷ Karamanlis is then left to the whim of the narrator and his friends. He is given no further agency in the tale, indeed his ‘immédiat avenir’ is decided by a round of voting when he is not even present.¹³⁸ When he does arrive into the narrator’s house, where his future has been plotted and prepared, he is intimidated and sits with

la morve au nez, mais n’osant se moucher, recroquevillé dans un coin, ne soufflait mot, ou bien parfois, sous la bienveillant insistance de nos regards convergents, il esquissait un faible sourire et disait d’un ton neutre : ‘C’est bien chez vous quand même, c’est petit, mais c’est bien.’ Ce qui était on ne peut plus juste.¹³⁹

His fate decided in his absence, Karamanlis is led to it by Pollak and another (‘dont le nom ne vous dirait rien’), the plan being that it should be made to look as though Karamanlis was mentally unstable and had attempted to take his own life.¹⁴⁰ The plot plays out in a farcical manner and entirely fails, blamed, by the narrator at least, on Karamanlis’s own drunken foolishness.

Karamanlis’s victimhood is developed in various ways: his evident weakness and malleability as a character, his sick and defeated state at the end of the novella as he is made to board the train, but also in the nature of his representation from the very beginning of the tale. *Quel petit vélo* begins by introducing him,

C’était un mec, il s’appelait Karamanlis, ou quelque chose comme ça : Karawo ? Karawasch ? Karacouvé ? Enfin bref, Karatruc. En tout cas, un

¹³⁷ Ibid. p. 18. [like a baby. Georges Perec, ‘Which Moped with Chrome-Plated Handlebars at the Back of the Yard?’, Georges Perec (ed.) *Three* (London, 1996)]

¹³⁸ Perec, *Quel petit vélo*, p. 55 [immediate future].

¹³⁹ Ibid. pp. 62-3. [his snot-filled nostrils, not daring to blow his nose, curled up in the corner, not breathing a word, unless, egged on by the convergence of our friendly gazes, he would sketch a feeble smile and say, deadpan: ‘Nice place you’ve got here, anyway, small, but nice.’ Which as dead on goes, was dead on.]

¹⁴⁰ Ibid. p. 88. [whose name would mean nothing to you]

nom peu banal, un nom qui vous disait quelque chose, qu'on n'oubliait pas facilement.¹⁴¹

This initial paragraph not only sets out the ludic tone of the story, it also introduces the first of many literary conventions which are broken in the novella by consistently changing the name of a central character.¹⁴² Karamanlis is only called Karamanlis in this first sentence; whenever he is referred to subsequently the suffix of his name changes. This linguistic game serves to weaken Kara-'s character all the more, not even being sturdy enough to hold on to a consistent proper noun. As Sylvie Rosiensi-Pellerin has argued, 'le héros porte un nom afin qu'on puisse y associer tous ses succès'.¹⁴³ Without a name, Kara- cannot be the hero required of a citizen soldier.

It has another and perhaps more pertinent effect too. Whilst many of the various different suffixes seem chosen purely for amusement's sake ('Karamel'), some are recognisable as common ends to surnames, such as 'stein', 'schoff', 'berg' and so forth.¹⁴⁴ A character's name 'doit nous dire quelque chose, ce n'est certainement pas sur l'origine ethnique ou le statut du personnage'.¹⁴⁵ By not defining him thus, Kara- is able to be more than one conscript: he is the representation of many in the same position. Unlike Bernard and Guy in *Muriel* and *Les Parapluies* who are distinctly alienated individuals, the multiply-named Karamanlis collectivises the conscript experience, suggesting that it is not just Karamanlis who is the victim of being forced into war, but all the Kara-s. As such the novel considers all conscripts in the Algerian war to be victims, victims of an army high command (who are present at the end of the story, loading the conscripts onto their trains) continuing a fruitless war.

¹⁴¹ Ibid. p. 11. [There was once this character called Karamanlis. Or something like that: Karawak? Karawash? Karapet? Well, anyway, Karathingy. It was a weird enough name, whatever it was, a name that rang bells, that stuck in your mind.]

¹⁴² This ludic tone is present throughout the novel and culminates in the bizarre inclusion of an index which bares precious little relation to the rest of the text and trails off after 'Psittacisme, certes' with 'etc., etc., etc.' Ibid. p. 119. For more on Perec's use of the index, see Bernard Magné and Peter Consenestein, 'Georges Perec on the Index', *Yale French Studies* (2004).

¹⁴³ Sylvie Rosiensi-Pellerin, 'Jeux Péri-textuels: *Quel petit vélo à guidon chromé au fond de la cour?* de Georges Perec', *Études Littéraires* 23 (1990) p. 37. [the hero has a name so that we can associate all of his successes with it]

¹⁴⁴ Perec, *Quel petit vélo*, pp. 34, 60, 14 and 41.

¹⁴⁵ Rosiensi-Pellerin, 'Jeux Péri-textuels', p. 37. [must tell us something, but it certainly not the ethnic origin or status of the character.]

The notion that the war is fruitless is central to both Karamanlis's victimhood and the nature by which *Quel petit vélo* presents a story complementary to the republican narrative of the Algerian war. Much like *Muriel* and *Les Parapluies*, Perce's short story does not include the beginning or the end of the Algerian war and the site of conflict is never represented in the narrative. As such, there is no discussion of the origins of the war and thus no responsibility is attributed. But unlike the two earlier films, the end of the war is alluded to, indeed repeatedly and flippantly so. The affirmation throughout the story that 'l'armistice c'est dans la poche et la paix est signée' follows the post-war teleological decolonisation discourse.¹⁴⁶ This extenuates Karamanlis's victimhood (particularly at the end of the story as he is packed off to a war in which he will serve no purpose) and collectivises it, as all those who had been conscripted had served in a futile conflict. Yet, once again, the conflict and the conscript are sidelined by the narrative; for the narrator and his intellectual chums, their part in Karamanlis's fate was evidently just an amusing episode in their day and would have no lasting impact on their lives. The Algerian war was simply an inevitable process of decolonisation and of little concern for the future of the French republic.

The rhetoric of victimisation dominates these republican artistic representations of French conscripts in the Algerian war. The conscripts are not the heroic and self-sacrificing citizen soldiers of earlier wars, but marginalised figures with little impact on French society. Unlike the victimhood narratives in Germany where the Nazi state is the collective counter-image, that is to say representations of ordinary Germans always portray them as victims *of* the Nazis, there is no collective consensus for the conscripts in the Algerian war. As Helmut Schmitz has argued, collective suffering is necessary to 'serve collective purposes and underwrite a collective narrative.'¹⁴⁷ This lack of a collective in relation to representations of conscripts in the Algerian war reiterates their marginality from society, a society which remains unaffected by their existence, able to pursue their past obsessions, modernisation or intellectual japes with no interruption.

This lack of unity and collective consensus in the victimhood narrative, is caused by the lack of unity in what the conscripts are victims *of*; there is no suitable alternative to the collective enemy of the Nazis. Indeed, there are no representations of an enemy and no

¹⁴⁶ Perce, *Quel petit vélo*, p. 30. [the armistice is in the bag and peace is signed] Also 'ils nous la flanqueront la dégelée et que la paix elle est signée', 'le négoce il s'enclenche et que la paix elle est signée', 'le cessez-le-feu il sera conclu et que la paix elle est signée', and 'la trêve c'est pour tantôt et que la paix est signée.' pp. 29, 33, 78, 84. These phrases always come at the end of a paragraph, giving them additional finality.

¹⁴⁷ Schmitz, 'The Birth of the Collective', p. 94.

representation of the war itself, not even the French-dominated battlefields akin to those in the paintings of de Neuville and Detaille. Because they are now the success stories of France's *mission civilisatrice*, the Algerians, even just the FLN, cannot be represented in the same way as the Bavarians who destroyed Weiss's house in *La Débâcle*. In the Franco-Prussian war, Bertrand Taithe has argued, 'national identity had been strengthened against the Germans, and Germany then became the counter-image of France'.¹⁴⁸ In representations of the Algerian war there is no such counter-image. As such, even their victimhood is confused and intangible: they are victims of France's obsession with the Vichy past to the detriment of its present in *Muriel*, to modernisation in *Les Parapluies* and to the ambiguous professional army who bundle the sick Karamanlis onto a train in *Quel petit vélo*.¹⁴⁹

The rhetoric of victimisation in relation to representations of conscripts in the Algerian war does two things. The first, in a similar way to the rhetoric of victimisation in post-Second World War Germany, is to avoid a consideration of the origins of the war, the reasoning behind the existence of the conscripts' (or the expelled in the German case) and thus the responsibility for and purpose of the war itself.¹⁵⁰ Secondly, the lack of unity in the conscripts' victimisation marginalises them, thereby denying the importance of their experiences. There are no heroes in these representations of the Algerian war, and certainly no heroic citizen soldiers. As the beginning of this chapter asserted, the citizen soldier was the basis of republicanism's understanding of citizenship. The absence of this heroic figure, and his replacement with a marginalised victim in artistic representations of the Algerian war suggests a fundamental shift in this understanding. The denial of the conscripts' relevance alongside the teleological decolonisation discourse which permeates these texts, avoids a consideration of this alteration in republican citizenship and of questioning how such definitions have changed.

¹⁴⁸ Taithe, *Citizenship and Wars*, p. 158.

¹⁴⁹ Both Guy Austin and Timothy Baycroft have asserted that 'in the range of French films with the Algerian War as either the background or the main subject, in almost none does "the Algerian", much less "the enemy" appear at all.' They are correct in terms of the films in the first decade after the war but, as the following section will show, this changes somewhat in the 1970s. Baycroft, *France: Inventing the Nation* p. 119; Guy Austin, 'Representing the Algerian War in Algerian cinema: *Le Vent des Aurès*', *French Studies* 61 (2007) p. 183.

¹⁵⁰ Robert G. Moeller, 'Victims in Uniform: West German Combat Movies from the 1950s', Bill Niven (ed.) *Germans as Victims: Remembering the Past in Contemporary Germany* (Basingstoke, 2006) p. 57.

1.3b Representations since the 1970s

The avoidance of the conflict zone in artistic representations of the Algerian war did not last and the war became a central theme of many films and novels once the first decade after the war had elapsed. The conscripts became more prominent actors in these representations and, subsequently, the enemy also became more tangible, akin perhaps to the much greater visibility of the Prussian armies in *La Débâcle* of 1892 in comparison to earlier works. Yet the enemy remained ambiguous and whilst fire is aimed at the FLN in battle, the continued lack of representation of the origins or endings of the war as well as the often complex relationships which make up the stories, suggest that the true enemy is not necessarily the one faced on the battlefield.

Two films from the early 1970s took audiences directly into the arid landscape of the Algerian theatre of war. René Vautier's *Avoir 20 ans dans les Aurès* (1972) and Yves Boisset's *R.A.S.* (1973) both placed the conscript as a central figure in Algeria.¹⁵¹ *Avoir 20 ans* follows a group of green conscripts on their tour of duty in the Aurès mountains accompanied by Lieutenant Perrin and a young parachutist, Noël.¹⁵² Two events stand out in the film: the first is the conscripts' reaction to de Gaulle's plea for loyalty to France during the Generals' *putsch* in Algiers in April 1961. After hearing him on the radio the conscripts arrest Perrin until a further broadcast from de Gaulle has confirmed the threat's end. The second is the desertion of Noël in reaction to the treatment of a prisoner. This adventure ends in tragedy with the death of himself, the prisoner and an Algerian family who had helped them. *R.A.S.*, an abbreviation of *rien à signaler*, or nothing to report, begins in 1956 and follows three conscripts, Charpentier, March and Dax, from their departure held up by protests at the train station, to their posting with the formidable Commandant Lecoq. The film presents a very similar environment to Vautier's film and depicts the break-up of the three friends with the tragic death of Charpentier and the desertion of March.

Both Vautier's and Boisset's films include scenes of conflict between the conscripts and the FLN, torture, killing and *Avoir 20 ans* also graphically depicts the multiple rape of an Algerian woman. Yet the narrative of victimhood permeates both films and their empathy lies clearly with the conscripts. This is achieved in three interconnected ways. Firstly, the

¹⁵¹ René Vautier, *Avoir 20 Ans dans les Aurès* (France, 1972); Yves Boisset, *R.A.S.* (France and Italy, 1973).

¹⁵² Noël is played by Alexandre Arcady, director of *Le Coup de sirocco* discussed in Chapter 2. His ambiguity as a sympathetically-depicted paratrooper is discussed alongside Pierre Leulliette's semi-autobiographical novel *Saint Michel et la dragon* in Chapter 3.

Algerians themselves lack any real characterisation; they rarely have names, motives or desires and are usually simply a collective mass.¹⁵³ Even the prisoner who Noël rescues in *Avoir 20 ans*, whilst honoured with a name, Youssef, is unable to speak French. As such there remains a very palpable divide between Noël and Youssef which is also a divide between the audience and Youssef as his words are not subtitled and thus would make little sense to most of the French audience. Whilst it would be an exaggeration to suggest that the Algerian characters were dehumanised in either of these films, they are certainly not a particular concern and indeed often feel incidental to both narratives. The fate of the conscripts is given far more importance than the fate of a few background figures.

Secondly, related to this is the strong characterisation of the professional army, embodied in the two films by Lieutenant Perrin and Commandant Lecoq. The conscripts' victimhood is in relation to this army elite. Both narratives imply that the fault of the conscripts' postings to Algeria lies with their commanders and by implication, their actions are a result of their unwanted duties. This is the third strand of victimhood: the lack of agency. When Dax kills a *sous-officier* and subsequently commits suicide in *R.A.S.*, it is Dax's death which is a tragedy, pushed beyond his limits and driven to extremes by a situation outside of his control. Both March's and Noël's desertions are futile gestures, the latter resulting in the death of innocent civilians and thus excusing those who stayed in their posts. Furthermore, *Avoir 20 ans* ends in a similar manner to its beginning, with Lieutenant Perrin addressing a fresh batch of novice conscripts. The message is clear: regardless of their actions and their protests, the pursuit of war is out of the conscripts' control. It is a circular process which they have no ability to end.

Vautier and Boisset were both militant left-wing filmmakers, but these films continue to perpetuate the same teleological decolonisation discourse of their earlier counterparts.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵³ Jean-Charles Jauffret has argued that the lack of 'distinctive, declared enemy' in the Algerian war altered the culture of war for the French combatants and caused a division between the professional paratroop regiments and the conscripted soldiers. Jean-Charles Jauffret, 'The War Culture of French Combatants in the Algerian Conflict', Martin S. Alexander, Martin Evans, and John F. V. Keiger (eds), *The Algerian War and the French Army, 1954-62: Experiences, Images, Testimonies* (Basingstoke, 2002) p. 101.

¹⁵⁴ *Télérama's* review of the *Avoir 20 ans dans les Aurès* includes a whole paragraph on Vautier's political activities including acts of resistance under the Vichy regime as a teenager, a prison spell in Tunisia and support for the decolonisation of black Africa in the 1950s. The centre-right journal, *Le Figaro's* tirade against Boisset's film leaves one in no doubt of the director's left-wing credentials. The left-wing *Nouvel Observateur* is not impressed by the film either despite, as the reviewer writes: 'Ce devrait être tout simple: Yves Boisset a fait un film de gauche, "Le Nouvel Observateur" va donc dire du bien du film d'Yves Boisset. Normal et confortable. Les ennemis de nos amis sont nos ennemis.' The issue in this review is less a political complaint and more a problem with a poorly made film. Jean-Louis Tallenay, 'Avoir 20 ans dans les Aurès', *Télérama* (21

This is particularly clear in the inclusion in both films of the events surrounding the Generals' *putsch* of April 1961. The scenes in the films relating to this event deliberately and effectively draw a very distinct dividing line between the conscripts and their military superiors, a separation already clear through previous incidents. The filmmakers are not anti-republican, rather they are opposed to the army elite who are represented as 'brutal and fascistic'.¹⁵⁵ As such, the conscripts' status as victims is affirmed and the republican narrative of an inevitable decolonisation prevents a deeper questioning of the role and actions of the soldiers themselves. William Cohen makes a very astute point when he suggests that many 'of the films on the war are projections of what France today wishes its soldiers had done.'¹⁵⁶ The futile acts of desertion in *Avoir 20 ans* and *R.A.S.* are very clear instances of such a projection and it is such a desire that drives even politically radical filmmakers to reiterate the decolonisation discourse: ordinary French people did not support the war, did not fight the war willingly and consistently foresaw an independent Algeria as an automatic outcome. As such, there remains an avoidance of questioning the war's origins or its effect on the nature of republicanism itself, particularly in relation to citizenship. The responsibility for war is at most placed in the hands of the professional army (and later, the OAS), or simply denied altogether.

The distinction between the conscript and the professional army is also a regular trope in literature and repeated in many different forms in order to separate the conscript from the brutality of the Algerian war. Philip Dine has identified this separation in his overview of novels which represent the war through into the 1990s. In Philippe Labro's *Des feux mal éteints* (1967) the professional army is associated with the terrorist group, the OAS, and the conscript, Seb, shoots himself; in Guy Croussy's *Ne pleure pas, la guerre est bonne* (1975) the main character, again a conscript, is against the war being waged by his superiors; in both Robert Pépin's *Pavillon 144* (1981) and Pierre Bourgade's *Les Serpents* (1983) the conscript

May 1972); Jean Pouget, 'A Propos de "R.A.S." : Réflexions lumineuses sur le film d'Yves Boisset', *Le Figaro* (10 August 1973); Pierre Ajame, 'A la française !: Du cœur et du courage mais une lourdeur qui rend anodin ce qui se coulait explosif', *Le Nouvel Observateur* (20 August 1973).

Jill Forbes notes a shift to much more overt political cinema from the 1970s. I reject the implication that the cinema of the 1960s is thus not political, but certainly in terms of cinematic representations of the Algerian war, those of the 1970s are more clearly politically aligned. The same is true for right-wing filmmakers, such as Pierre Schoendoerffer and his 1977 film *Le Crabe-tambour*. Jill Forbes and Sue Harris, 'Cinema', Nicholas Hewitt (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to Modern French Culture* (Cambridge, 2003) p. 332. See also Guy Austin, *Contemporary French Cinema: An Introduction* (Manchester, 1996) pp. 40-42.

¹⁵⁵ Philip Dine, *Images of the Algerian War: French Fiction and Film, 1954-1992* (Oxford, 1994) p. 229. Stora notes that both these films were made in a post-1968 atmosphere in which comparing figures of authority with the Nazi SS had become part of the generation's discourse. Stora, *La Gangrène et l'oubli*, p. 251.

¹⁵⁶ William B. Cohen, 'The Algerian War and French Memory', *Contemporary European History* 9 (2000) p. 490.

central to the narrative commits suicide after being forced to participate in torture, an end also met by six of the eight conscripts in the short story collection, *Trente ans après: nouvelles de la guerre d'Algérie* (1992).¹⁵⁷

The division between conscript and career soldier is also present in Virginie Buisson's autobiographical novel, *L'Algérie ou la mort des autres*, in which the narrator, who begins the story as an eleven-year-old girl, moves to Algeria in 1954 with her family as her father, a high ranking military official, is stationed there.¹⁵⁸ Her father, as one would expect in a novel narrated by the young daughter, is seen mainly in a domestic setting, protecting his family and showing no desire to be in Algeria. The division between conscript and professional army occurs outside the home. She shares friendships, and later sexual relationships, with individual conscripts she meets. Their commanders and, later, members of the OAS remain impersonal and distant figures. Her relationship with Jacques dominates the final third of the novel and who, as a *pied noir*, is represented as both a civilian and a conscript:

J'avais une robe rose de collégienne en vacances, tu étais encore en civil. Tu m'as dit qu'il te restait huit mois d'armée et qu'après tu retournerais dans la ferme de tes parents à Sédrata. J'ai aimé que tu ne dises pas la guerre.¹⁵⁹

Their summer romance is cut off by Jacques's return to the war ('La guerre nous a repris'). The responsibility for their separation is represented as the Generals' *putsch* of April 1961 and the rise of the OAS. The narrator's description of these events is sandwiched in between two references to Jacques's absence:

Je n'ai plus vu Jacques et j'ai retrouvé l'isolement dans une école qui se barricade.

...

Je ne vois plus Jacques.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁷ Dine, *Images of the Algerian War*, pp. 116-145; Daniel Zimmerman, ed., *Trente ans après: Nouvelles de la guerre d'Algérie* (Paris, 1992). There are sixteen short stories in this collection, eight by French authors, which are the stories I am referring to here, and eight by Algerian authors.

¹⁵⁸ Virginie Buisson, *L'Algérie ou la mort des autres* (Paris, 1981) [1978].

¹⁵⁹ Ibid. p. 81. [I had the pink dress of a middle school student on vacation, you were still in civilian clothes. You told me that you only had eight months left in the army and that afterwards you would return to your parents' farm in Sédrata. I was pleased that you did not say the war.]

He returns in the finale of the book as the OAS-led violence and fear is at its peak and of which he too is a victim: 'J'ai peur de la mort des autres. J'ai peur pour Jacques, pour mon père qui ne parle pas, pour mes frères qui ne jouent pas.'¹⁶¹ Jacques's death, at the hands of the OAS immediately after she witnesses them killing a ten-year-old boy, ends the novel. His body is removed by a faceless patrol and 'ils m'ont forcée à t'abandonner.'¹⁶²

That the narrator is never in a position to see Jacques in combat evidently makes it easier to portray him as a victim, but the clear division drawn between his superiors alongside the OAS, and the conscripts and civilians in Algeria, ensures that he is as much a victim as those not so actively involved in the war. Akin to the novels Dine reviews, the conscript becomes a victim of the anti-republican professional army and the OAS. As such they maintain a lack of agency and thus responsibility for the pursuit of war itself.

Whilst the artistic representations of conscripts in the 1970s are more willing to place them in the conflict zone, they confirm the narrative already present in the representations from the 1960s. These men are not the heroic citizen soldiers common in republican representations of earlier wars, but marginalised victims lacking in agency. This lack of agency enables Vautier's and Boisset's films to overcome the problem of portraying a torturer as a victim, but the more complex and direct representations of the conscripts is most notably balanced by a clear drawing of who they are victims *of*: not the FLN, not the republic, but the professional army.¹⁶³

This division between conscript and professional continues into the twenty-first century and is present in Philippe Fauçon's *La Trahison*, Laurent Herbiet's *Mon Colonel* and even Jean-François Richet's 2008 blockbuster *Mesrine: l'instinct de mort*.¹⁶⁴ *Mesrine* caricatures the trend by suggesting at the beginning of the film that the notorious gangster, Jacques Mesrine's brutality was a result of the brutality he witnessed and was forced to take part in

¹⁶⁰ Ibid. p. 83 and 85. [I never saw Jacques again and I found isolation in a school that was barricading itself... I do not see Jacques anymore.]

¹⁶¹ Ibid. p. 86. [I am afraid of the death of others. I am afraid for Jacques, for my father who no longer speaks, for my brothers who no longer play.]

¹⁶² Ibid. p. 93. [they forced me to abandon you.]

¹⁶³ This division between the republic and the army is discussed further in Chapter 3, section 3.2a.

¹⁶⁴ Philippe Fauçon, *La Trahison* (2005); Laurent Herbiet, *Mon Colonel* (France, 2006); Jean-François Richet, *Mesrine: L'Instinct de mort* (France, 2008). I will consider these films in more detail, including the relationship between conscript and professional soldier, in Chapter 3.

as a conscript in Algeria. Whilst this relationship will be considered further in Chapter 3, it is worth noting that it is not itself new or unique in representations of the Algerian war and is in evidence with the division between the incompetent generals and the heroic Jean and Maurice in *La Débâcle*. It is the absence of heroism and, instead, the presence of the rhetoric of victimisation, which makes this relationship distinctive in the case of the Algerian war.

1.3c *An Algerian syndrome?*

Antoine Prost has raised concerns in relation to the conscripts' memory of the Algerian war. He argues that because of the nature of the war's end, when it became an illegitimate cause to fight, conscripts were unable to form collective memories which should have impacted on the national memories of the period.¹⁶⁵ Instead, according to Prost, their memories remained cloistered amongst fellow veterans, shared through veteran associations. Yet, as Alan Forrest has argued, the sharing of memories only amongst other soldiers rather than with amongst civilians, is not unusual. In relation to the Napoleonic wars of the early nineteenth century, he considers the popularity of veterans' associations:

[Joining these associations], just like the veterans of other wars in modern times, suggests that their military experience was not one which they entirely wished to forget, even if many chose to brush out from their memory moments of particular brutality or overarching fear. The fact that they found it so difficult to communicate with civilians, with those who had not shared the same arcane rituals and absurdities, helping in the process of healing in which they were all involved, of searching for a meaningful narrative of their lost years.¹⁶⁶

In a documentary film of 1992, Bertrand Tavernier and Patrick Rotman interviewed many veterans of the Algerian war who were all members of the same veterans' association in

¹⁶⁵ Prost, *Republican Identities in War and Peace*, pp. 169-171.

¹⁶⁶ Forrest, *Napoleon's Men*, p. 133. The idea that having different 'collective memories' of an event is somehow damaging or detrimental is one that continues to be rolled out in relation to the Algerian war. This concern is very much tied to the universalist aspect of the republican narrative of French history and the Algerian war, discussed further in Chapter 2. See, for example Pascal Blanchard and Isabelle Veyrat-Masson, eds, *Les Guerre des mémoires: La France et son histoire, enjeux politiques, controverses historiques, stratégies médiatiques* (Paris, 2008); Eric Savarèse, *Algérie, la guerre des mémoires* (Paris, 2007).

Grenoble.¹⁶⁷ *La Guerre sans nom* actively promotes the argument that these men are traumatised because they have been unable to share their memories and that those memories have been repressed. Tavernier declared he wanted ‘to bring back to life a forgotten memory’.¹⁶⁸ Certainly, they find it difficult to communicate such experiences to those who are unable to comprehend the horrors of war, but many of the interviewees state that they share such memories with their fellow veterans. This is not to say that the men in the documentary are not traumatised; many clearly are and show signs of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) on film, particularly in the conclusion when the camera pans a hall full of veterans, many with obvious tremors. But it is extremely manipulative to suggest that such trauma is because they have been unable to communicate their experiences effectively to the broader public who have little to offer in the way of empathy. PTSD was first identified in American soldiers who had fought in the Vietnam war in 1980 and has only slowly gained acceptance as a legitimate condition. Tavernier’s film unwittingly hinders such an understanding of the veterans’ mental trauma by suggesting it is a result not of the war itself, but of the inability to communicate their memories of war to a wider audience.

In the interviews Rotman conducts, whilst recalling particularly traumatic events is unsurprisingly a struggle for some, the veterans are clearly happy to talk about their experiences, to have them filmed and to be presented to a public audience. It is simply that it is the first time for most that they have been asked. This is the crux of the matter: not that there is a repression of conscripts’ memories in relation to the Algerian war but that there was no interest in them. The invention of decolonisation narrative essentially paints the conscripts’ role in the war as, at best, peace-keepers during the period of the OAS, and at worst, entirely illegitimate.

The figure of the conscript is present in many artistic representations of the Algerian war, from the years immediately following the war’s end to the present day. Initially he is a marginal character, either in his importance to the story of which he is part, or is represented as marginal within the society he inhabits. But within a decade the conscript came to be at the forefront of both cinematic and literary representations. This is not an

¹⁶⁷ Bertrand Tavernier, *La Guerre sans Nom* (France, 1992).

¹⁶⁸ Bertrand Tavernier, ‘I Wake Up, Dreaming’, *Projections* 2 (1993) p. 267. See also Greene, *Landscapes of Loss*, pp. 125-127. For a more critical consideration of Tavernier’s intentions, see Maryse Bray and Agnès Calatayud, ‘Remembrance of Things Past: New Perspectives on Films and French Domination in Algeria: The Significance of François Luciani’s *L’Algérie des Chimères* (2003)’, *e-France* 1 (2007) p. 113.

unusual state of affairs; Hugo's 1874 novel *Quatrevingt-treize* avoids direct representation of *l'année terrible* whereas Zola's *La Débâcle* (1892) represents the soldiers in the Franco-Prussian war in great detail; a short passage of time before representations of defeated soldiers become prominent does not seem to be particularly surprising. Hollywood was no more quick off the mark with films about Vietnam as, with the exception of the gung-ho *The Green Berets* (1968), the war was not represented in film until well into the 1970s.¹⁶⁹ What is clear is that there is no lack of representations of the conscript in the Algerian war, and certainly no 'repression' as those who have claimed the existence of an Algerian syndrome would have it. Moeller, in his consideration of the victimhood narrative in post-Second World War Germany is critical of a similar phenomenon, arguing that historians and commentators are 'constantly claiming to break the silence that...has never really existed.'¹⁷⁰

This claim of repression of the conscript memory is deliberately reminiscent of Rousseau's thesis on the Vichy syndrome, but it is also part of his 'syndrome': the obsession of repeated controversies and already-known 'revelations' about the Vichy era.¹⁷¹ This is perhaps best considered in relation to the film *Muriel*. Philip Dine considers it a radical film in relation to Algeria, breaking the 'cinematic taboo on the French military's use of torture' and exposing the repressed memory of the war.¹⁷² His opinions are echoes of ones made by the reviewers in *Cahiers du Cinéma* upon its release.¹⁷³ Yet, whilst it was the first film to be released which referred to the use of torture in the war (Jean-Luc Godard's *Le Petit Soldat* was made in 1960 but censored until 1964, a year after *Muriel's* release), it was in no way breaking a taboo in relation to the use of torture which had been extensively covered in the French press during the war and particularly during flashpoints like the release of Henri Alleg's *La Question* (1958) and Gisèle Halimi and Simone de Beauvoir's *Djamila Boupacha* (1962).¹⁷⁴ That the film represents the returned conscript Bernard as an outsider to the

¹⁶⁹ Gilbert Adair, *Hollywood's Vietnam: From 'The Green Berets' to 'Apocalypse Now'* (London, 1981).

¹⁷⁰ Moeller, 'Victims in Uniform', p. 28.

¹⁷¹ Henry Rousseau, *The Vichy Syndrome: History and Memory in France since 1944*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (London, 1991) [1987] pp. 132-216.

¹⁷² Dine, *Images of the Algerian War*, p. 223.

¹⁷³ Jean-Louis Comolli, Jean Domarchi, Jean André Fieschi, Pierre Kast, André S. Labarthe, Claude Ollier, Jacques Rivette et François Weyergans, 'Les Malheurs de *Muriel*', *Cahiers du Cinéma* (149, November 1963). See especially Ollier and Fieschi's comments.

¹⁷⁴ Henri Alleg, 'La Question' (1958), Algeria Watch [accessed 29 September 2009] <http://www.algeria-watch.org/farticle/1954-62/laquestion.htm>; Simone de Beauvoir and Gisèle Halimi, *Djamila Boupacha. Témoignages d'Henri Alleg, Mme Maurice Audin, Général de Bollardière, R.P. Chenu, Dr Jean Dalsace, J. Fontuyt-Esperuber, Françoise Mallet-Joris, Daniel Mayer, André Philip, J.F. Revel, Jules Roy, Françoise Sagan. Portrait original de*

society he inhabits is not, as has been shown in this chapter, a radical challenge to the decolonisation discourse which delegitimises his actions in the war, indeed it compounds such a discourse. Resnais's film is certainly radical in terms of its representation of the Vichy period and its aftermath, but it strikingly conventional in the representation of the conscript in the Algerian war. Resnais transfers the trope of repression from his older characters to Bernard, suggesting that he suffers from the same trauma. Not only does this undermine the very different nature of Bernard's experience (and thus his experience, which we barely witness at all), it avoids the Algerian war's origins and conclusions by fixing his experience within the narrative of the Vichy era; the film itself begins with the reuniting of H el ene and Alphonse, separated by the Occupation, and ends with the mystery of their relationship solved. Bernard's story is simply pulled along in its wake.

There has been no silence in regard to the conscript in the Algerian war, but that is not to say the representations have been a balanced and truly critical affair.¹⁷⁵ The dominance of the Vichy comparison in terms of the claim to 'repressed' memory in historiography, film and literature, is a further method of downplaying the importance of the conscript in the Algerian war by placing their experiences, or the interpretation of their experiences, in the shadow of the earlier period. As such, the representations continue to bolster, or certainly leave unchallenged, the teleological republican decolonisation discourse. The trope of Vichy is used to conceal or undermine the role of the conscript in Algeria and, as such, to conceal the revolution in citizenship which this absence of the citizen soldier signals. What this revolution entailed is the subject of the second part of this chapter.

Picasso. Hommage des peintres Laponjade et Matta. (Paris, 1962). The discussion of torture in representations of the Algerian war is discussed in more detail in Chapter 3.

¹⁷⁵ Much of the literature that suggests there has been a 'repression' or absence of the conscript in the memory of the Algerian war has looked specifically at official commemorations, particularly the assertion that there was no official memorial to those that served in the war until 1996. This literature is not at odds with my argument here, indeed it supports it; whilst the conscript as a alienated figure is represented in artistic outputs, the ultimate symbol of a citizen soldier, the bulwark of the republic and heir to the *lev e en masse* is entirely removed from the war itself by the lack of an official monument to those who served. The lack of equal pension rights with veterans of other wars is also symbolic of this refusal to recognise those that served in Algeria as citizen soldiers. See T. G. Ashplant, Graham Dawson and Michael Roper, 'The Politics of War Memory and Commemoration: Contexts, Structures and Dynamics', T. G. Ashplant, Graham Dawson, and Michael Roper (eds), *The Politics of War Memory and Commemoration* (London, 2000); Cohen, 'The Algerian War and French Memory', pp. 493-494; Martin Evans, 'Rehabilitating the Traumatized War Veteran: The Case of French Conscripts from the Algerian War, 1954-1962', Martin Evans and Kenneth Lunn (eds), *War and Memory in the Twentieth Century* (Oxford, 1997); William Kidd, 'Representation or Recuperation? The French Colonies and 1914-1918 War Memorials', Tony Chafer and Amanda Sackur (eds), *Promoting the Colonial Idea: Propaganda and Vision of Empire in France* (Basingstoke, 2002); Prost, *Republican Identities in War and Peace*, especially Chapter 5.

1.3d Conclusions

The victimhood narrative which runs through the representations of conscripts in the Algerian war is both a method of denying responsibility for the war and denying its existence as a brutal conflict between the French Republic and the Algerian FLN. Initially this victimhood is ambiguous: conscripts are marginalised victims of a society in which they no longer fit because of their war experiences, usurped by the march of modernity or sidelined by the importance of an earlier conflict. In later representations, they become victims of the professional army and particularly the OAS. This allows the conscripts to be represented as fighting in Algeria but their role is futile and they are fighting an unwinnable war, forced into fighting against the very march of progress.¹⁷⁶ This rhetoric of victimhood complements, even allows for the fact that, by 1962, there was ‘an absence of a generally accepted sense of the legitimacy of the Algerian war’.¹⁷⁷

There is no doubt that conscripts did suffer during the Algerian war and many lost their lives. Yet suffering is morally neutral whilst victimhood is ‘ethically coded’; one can both suffer violence and perpetrate it, but a rhetoric of victimhood is a claim to a sole right to be considered a victim.¹⁷⁸ In the republican narrative of the war, the conscript can be nothing other than a victim, and no other group can lay claim to the same status in relation to the Algerian conflict.¹⁷⁹ As such, the consideration of the effects the war had on Algerian society is entirely absent.¹⁸⁰ The power of this rhetoric enables the framing of a victim even when such a character has perpetrated the most violent of acts. Despite his involvement in Muriel’s torture and death, it is Bernard who is the victim in Resnais’s film. As James Orr has noted in relation to a similar rhetoric he considers in Japanese culture after the Second World War, this tendency towards a singular victimhood is ‘self-serving and ultimately apologist’.¹⁸¹ It is this aspect of the rhetoric of victimhood which allows the responsibility for the Algerian war to be dismissed and avoids a consideration of the war’s impact, particularly, as this thesis is concerned, on the republican conception of citizenship.

¹⁷⁶ Raphaëlle Branche and Jim House, ‘Silences on State Violence During the Algerian War of Independence: France and Algeria, 1962-2007’, Efrat Ben-Ze’ev, Ruth Gino, and Jay Winter (eds), *Shadows of War: A Social History of Silence in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, 2010) p. 126.

¹⁷⁷ Antoine Prost, ‘The Algerian War in French Collective Memory’, Jay Winter and Emmanuel Sivan (eds), *War and Remembrance in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, 1999) p. 171.

¹⁷⁸ Schmitz, ‘The Birth of the Collective’, p. 94.

¹⁷⁹ This includes Algerians who, in the republican narrative, have been successfully civilised and gained a new, independent state modelled on the French republic; they are a success story of the *mission civilisatrice* not victims of a brutal war.

¹⁸⁰ Evans, ‘Rehabilitating the Traumatized War Veteran’, p. 83.

¹⁸¹ Orr, *The Victim as Hero*, p. 176.

The conscript is not absent in artistic representations of the Algerian war, but the same cannot be said for the citizen soldier. The image of the heroic citizen soldier has been present in the republican narrative of France since the Revolution; the mythical power of the *levée en masse* permeated artistic and historic culture right into the twentieth century.¹⁸² War, for the republican soldier, was not simply a defence of the *patrie* but a fight ‘for a new way of life, a set of institutions, a part of their national heritage that dated back to the Revolution.’¹⁸³ The citizen soldier is a moral force, who fights with courage and enthusiasm.¹⁸⁴ The decolonisation discourse which permeates republican cultural representations of the Algerian war erases the possibility that the conscripts stationed in Algeria are a moral force fighting for the republican cause, heirs to the *levée en masse*. As was argued at the beginning of this chapter, throughout republican history, the citizen soldier has been synonymous with the republican citizen. The soldier was central to defining a republican citizen. Yet, as is evident from the artistic representations studied here, in the mid-twentieth century the conscript went from national symbol to a marginal and futile figure. The Algerian war of 1954-62 fundamentally altered the historical relationship between the soldier and republican citizenship.

The second part of this chapter will consider how this change in representation is evidence of a revolution in the understanding of republican citizenship; how, in both legal and cultural terms, the Algerian war marked a fundamental shift in defining what it meant to be a French citizen. Additionally, identification of this change also suggests a fresh perspective into an old debate concerning France’s slow pace of reform in the sphere of gender equality, particularly in comparison to Britain and Germany. It is to this issue that this chapter will briefly turn.

1.4 Citizenship and Gender

There has been much debate in French historiography concerning the role of women in society and particularly in relation to the slow and often regressive policy changes in

¹⁸² Sudhir Hazareesingh, *Intellectual Founders of the Third Republic: Five Studies in Nineteenth-Century French Republican Thought* (Oxford, 2001) p. 295.

¹⁸³ Forrest, *Napoleon's Men*, p. 188.

¹⁸⁴ Prost, *Republican Identities in War and Peace*, p. 227.

relation to women being part of the active citizenry. These debates often centre around the restrictive Napoleonic Civil Code and the late enfranchisement of women, some thirty-six years after their peers in Britain or Germany.¹⁸⁵ Despite the frequency with which suffrage in France is referred to as ‘universal’ from 1848, only half the adult population were able to vote until roughly a century later. The most frequently cited and ‘republican-friendly’ reason for this delay is that granting women the vote would simply boost the power of the anti-republican Catholic right, given that women were generally assumed to be far more pious than men (and, indeed, attended church with greater frequency). This is the main explanation Sian Reynolds offers in terms of the regular blocking by the Senate during the interwar period of bills attempting to widen the franchise to include women.¹⁸⁶ Sudir Hazareesingh provides a broader range of reasons, beyond the immediate political implications, for such a slow realisation of electoral equality in the Third Republic:

[S]ince the Revolutionary era, moderate republicans had always taken a restrictive view of equality, always defined in civil as opposed to social or physiological terms...

[There were] elite republican concerns – probably well-founded – that enfranchising women would give an enormous boost to the Catholic Church and its political allies...

[A] socio-cultural argument could be offered, drawing out the “bourgeois” nature of republicanism and identifying the normative constraints on the equalization of gender roles...

Republican anti-feminism thus arose through a combination of these factors together with the fact that many powerful women in nineteenth-century France deliberately eschewed a robust form of feminism...[advocating] feminine difference rather than feminine equality.¹⁸⁷

No doubt all of these explanations had some influence in society but they are all based on negative reasoning, on anti-feminism or restrictive equality or, as the clerical argument would suggest, even an anti-democracy. None of these ring true with the largely positive

¹⁸⁵ De Gaulle announced the inclusion of women into the franchise in Algiers in 1944, prior to the invasion of France by the Allied forces. They were first able to exercise this right in 1945 and it was enshrined in the constitution of the Fourth Republic in 1946.

¹⁸⁶ Sian Reynolds, 'Outsiders by Birth? Women, the Republic and Political History', Martin S. Alexander (ed.) *French History Since Napoleon* (London, 1999) p. 132.

¹⁸⁷ Hazareesingh, *Intellectual Founders of the Third Republic*, p. 290.

rhetoric of republican ideology which stems from the Revolution. Robert Tombs has noted that the 'lack of a vote for the female half of humanity should perhaps have posed an important philosophical problem, but it did not', yet he fails to consider why this was the case.¹⁸⁸

As this chapter has argued, both in historiography and in artistic representations, republican citizenship is represented as a positive trait and intrinsically related to the heroic and dynamic figure of the citizen soldier. The relationships between citizenship and enfranchisement, and citizenship and the citizen soldier are intrinsic, and it is here that the reasons behind women's political inequality lie. 'National imageries', as T. G. Ashplant has noted, are 'centred around the idealized figure of the masculine soldier' and nowhere is this more true than in republican France.¹⁸⁹ Unlike the largely professional traditions of Britain and Germany, the French army is centred around the figure of the citizen soldier and has been since the first *levée en masse*. Thus, to be a republican citizen was synonymous with being a citizen soldier, a pathway not open to women. As such, the calls for votes for women remained stunted, less because they were women than because they could not be citizen soldiers.

The gendered nature of republican citizenship was not an inevitable ideological outcome of the Revolution. Abbé Sièyes considered the Revolution's purpose to be one of overcoming such divisions, or at least eradicating their impact on citizenship:

Advantages which differentiate citizens from one another lie outside their capacity as citizens. Inequalities of wealth or ability are like inequalities of age, sex, size, colour, etc. In no way do they alter the nature of the *equality of citizenship*; the rights inherent in citizenship cannot attach to differences.¹⁹⁰

It was the militarisation of society from the Revolutionary wars that tied gender so intrinsically to citizenship through the imagery of the *levée en masse*. Alan Forrest considered this imagery to be 'highly gendered' as women 'occupied the wings or played a secondary role in the action... there to encourage their sons and brothers, husbands and lovers, to

¹⁸⁸ Tombs, *France 1814-1914*, p. 63.

¹⁸⁹ Ashplant, Dawson and Roper, 'The Politics of War Memory and Commemoration', p. 21.

¹⁹⁰ Sièyes, *What is the Third Estate?*, pp. 161-162. Italics in the original, although in an editor's note accompanying the translation, S.E. Finer notes that Sièyes's use of capital letters 'was erratic as it was lavish' so perhaps the punctuation should not be given too much importance.

urge them to put their love for the Republic above such feelings as they had for the women in their lives.¹⁹¹ Women could thus be sacrificial, but not heroic in the manner of men.¹⁹²

In contrast to the heroics of masculine citizen soldiers, women who take a more active role during periods of conflict become threatening and even savage, visions which are particularly in evidence around the myths of the *tricoteuses* of the Terror and the *pétroleuses* of the Commune, as well as the jibes against the ‘idea of battalions of “Amazons”’ during the Second Republic.¹⁹³ Karine Varley utilises this trend to explain why, in French artistic representations of the iconic defence of Bazeilles during the Franco-Prussian war, women are absent from accounts; there was a fear of associating the savage image of *pétroleuses* with an episode of heroic resistance.¹⁹⁴ Charles Bernheimer, in a study of cultural representations of prostitutes in the nineteenth-century, has argued that their prominence in art was a method ‘to control and dispel her fantasmatic threat to male mastery.’¹⁹⁵ The prominence of the prostitute as a figure in cultural representations, particularly after the defeat of 1871 (in the paintings of Degas, Toulouse-Lautrec and Manet for example, but especially in the short stories of Guy de Maupassant which feature the figure of the prostitute in direct relation to representations of the war) are potentially a reaction to the threat to masculinity after military defeat; a way of re-emphasising the control and power of the citizen soldier in relation to a debased view of women.¹⁹⁶

On the other hand, positive depictions of women in art after the 1871 defeat place them in very controlled bourgeois environments. Albert Boime contrasts Gustave Caillebotte’s *Jeune homme à sa fenêtre* (1876) with his *Intérieur, Femme à la fenêtre* (1876) in which the former is ‘unabashedly authoritarian’, in a masculine stance surveying his territory, whereas in the

¹⁹¹ Forrest, ‘*La Patrie en danger*’, pp. 18-19.

¹⁹² Such a representation of women on the sidelines is also familiar to the immediate post-war understanding of women in the Resistance. See Margeret Collins Weitz, *Sisters in the Resistance: How Women Fought to Free France, 1940-1945* (Chichester, 1995).

¹⁹³ Tombs, *France 1814-1914*, p. 13; Pilbeam, *Republicanism in Nineteenth-Century France*, p. 193.

¹⁹⁴ Varley, *Under the Shadow of Defeat*, p. 157.

¹⁹⁵ Charles Bernheimer, *Figures of Ill Repute: Representing Prostitution in Nineteenth-Century France* (London, 1989) p. 2.

¹⁹⁶ Gordon Millan, Brian Rigby and Jill Forbes, ‘Industrialization and its Discontents (1870-1914)’, Jill Forbes and Michael Kelly (eds), *French Cultural Studies: An Introduction* (Oxford, 1995); Guy de Maupassant, ‘Boule de suif’, *Les meilleurs contes* (New York, 1996); Guy de Maupassant, ‘Mademoiselle Fifif’, *Les Meilleurs Contes* (New York, 1996). Millan *et al* make the beginnings of this argument about the debasement of women in these painters’ works. I am less convinced by the notion that these images are intended to be ‘debased’ as I cannot, for the most part, interpret them as negative, some are even celebratory. But there is certainly an underlying warning about the danger of power in the hands of women and as such they relate very much to the tropes of the *pétroleuses* who were frequently considered to be synonymous with prostitutes.

latter the equally bourgeois woman ‘is denied the same degree of hierarchical control’, her stance more tentative and her space infiltrated by a man seated in the foreground of the picture.¹⁹⁷ The contrast between the sexes is even more evident in Hugo’s *Quatrevingt-treize*. Near the beginning of the novel, Michelle Flécharde, peasant mother of the children who the Marquis de Lantenac would later kidnap, is happened upon by a group of revolutionary soldiers from Paris. They question her allegiances in ways which are entirely alien to her:

‘Quelle est ta patrie?’

‘Je ne sais pas, dit-elle.’

‘Comment! tu ne sais pas quel est ton pays?’

‘Ah! mon pays. Si fait.’

‘Eh bien, quel est ton pays?’

La femme répondit: ‘C’est la métairie de Siscoignard, dans la paroisse d’Azé.’

Ce fut le tour du sergent d’être stupéfait. Il demeura un moment pensif. Puis il reprit: ‘Tu dis?’

‘Siscoignard.’

‘Ce n’est pas une patrie, ça.’

‘C’est mon pays.’ Et la femme, après un instant de réflexion, ajouta: ‘Je comprends, monsieur. Vous êtes de France, moi je suis de Bretagne.’

‘Eh bien?’

‘Ce n’est pas le même pays.’

‘Mais c’est la même patrie!’ cria le sergent.

La femme se borna à répondre: ‘Je suis de Siscoignard!’¹⁹⁸

The confusion is evidently one of etymology and the inability to distinguish between *pays* and *patrie*, the latter of which is more than an indicator of geographical location but ‘expresses in addition the concept of a parent-child relationship between an area and its inhabitants, a filial bond to a political entity which Michelle Flécharde, the natural mother,

¹⁹⁷ Boime, *Art and the French Commune*, pp. 89-92.

¹⁹⁸ Hugo, ‘*Quatrevingt-treize*’. [‘Which is your side?’ / ‘I do not know,’ she said. / ‘How? How do you not know your own country?’ / ‘Ah, my country! Oh yes, I know that.’ / ‘Well, where is it?’ / ‘The farm of Siscoignard, in the parish of Azé.’ / It was the sergeants turn to be stupefied. He remained thoughtful for a moment, then resumed: ‘You say –?’ / ‘Siscoignard.’ / ‘That is not a country.’ / ‘It is my country,’ said the woman; and added, after an instant’s reflection, ‘I understand sir. You are from France; I belong to Brittany.’ / ‘Well?’ / ‘It is not the same neighbourhood.’ / ‘But it is the same country,’ cried the sergeant. / The woman only repeated, ‘I am from Siscoignard.’ Victor Hugo, *Ninety-Three*, trans. Unknown (London) [1874]]

cannot understand.¹⁹⁹ The soldiers, on the other hand, have a clear sense of the usurping importance of the *patrie* and represent the republic, something of which Flécharde cannot conceive; there is a degree of security in 'belonging to a gendered national collectivity'.²⁰⁰ The artistic representations of the early Third Republic are a reassertion of masculinity taking place after the defeat of the heroic citizen soldier. The formation of citizenship into an essentially masculine entity has become ubiquitous in republican culture. In essence, even when defeated, war acts as a boost to the gendered nature of citizenship precisely because it is evidence of the active nature of republican citizenship through the citizen soldier.

The combination of gendered citizenship and war would effect the status of women throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In the highly militaristic society of the First Empire, the introduction of the 1804 Civil Code drastically demoted the legal status of women, even losing their French nationality altogether if they married a foreigner.²⁰¹ This particular clause was only removed in 1924 when natalist concerns brought on by fear of the rise of Germany took precedent; women's nationality became important again once their purpose as mothers to citizen soldiers became paramount.²⁰² It is possible even to suggest that the enfranchisement of women in the aftermath of the Second World War was in recognition of their role as citizen soldiers in the Resistance, although it may be stretching the point somewhat. It is certainly not a coincidence that the legal recognition of women as citizens is so temporally close to the breakdown of the citizen soldier narrative which this chapter has documented.

Robert Aldrich touches upon but does not explore a key element to gendered citizenship when he writes, the 'very acts of colonisation – exploration, conquest, development of natural resources, pacification of indigenes, the governance of new domains – were associated in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century thought with the male gender'.²⁰³ Essentially, for the most part, such acts were pursued by the army. It is not surprising, therefore, that with the retreat from the colonial territories which had been at the very heart of the French army, most particularly Algeria, that these inherent links of gender, soldiery and citizenship begin to be redesigned. Whilst the gendered element of citizenship

¹⁹⁹ Petrey, *History in the Text*, p. 54.

²⁰⁰ Dawson, *Soldier Heroes*, p. 282.

²⁰¹ Cobban, *A History of Modern France*, vol. 2, p. 27; Weil, *Qu'est-ce qu'un Français ?*, p. 14.

²⁰² Weil, *Qu'est-ce qu'un Français ?*, p. 73.

²⁰³ Robert Aldrich, *A History of French Overseas Expansion* (Basingstoke, 1996) p. 154.

loses its prominence just at the same moment the image of the citizen soldier does, an opposite – an ‘other’ – surfaces to stand as the contrast to, and thus help freshly define, the French republican citizen. This is the revolution in republicanism which occurred during the Algerian war. The second part of this chapter will argue that the Algerian war led to a redefining of republican citizenship in relation to race.

Part II. Citizenship, origin and race

The first part of this chapter has argued that republican citizenship had always been inherently connected to the figure of the citizen soldier. The absence of this figure in relation to the Algerian war suggests a fundamental change in republican ideas of citizenship. The revolution which occurred during the Algerian war oversaw the end to the citizen soldier tradition and essentially reconfigured what it meant to be a republican citizen. This second part considers what has defined citizenship since the Algerian war and how the war, particularly alongside the decolonisation discourse, has altered French national identity. Essentially, I will argue that citizenship is no longer defined by a positive trait (the citizen soldier) but in a negative manner.²⁰⁴ The Algerian war oversaw a revolution in republican citizenship in which origin and race became pronounced indicators of who was and, most critically, who was not a citizen. Whilst I in no way imply that race is a novel concept in French citizenship, the Algerian war and its aftermath gave it a new prominence.²⁰⁵ This section begins with a legal discussion of citizenship in relation to Algerians based on the historiography, largely on Todd Shepard’s and Patrick Weil’s research, and will then move on to consider how artistic representations have reconstructed citizenship along racial lines.

²⁰⁴ As I have just argued above, the slow pace of change in relation to women becoming full citizens through the franchise was a result more of the positive association of citizenship with the figure of the citizen soldier than the negative conception of women as threatening through their assumed ties to Catholicism.

²⁰⁵ For example, on the race and religious distinctions defining French citizenship in relation to the Jews, see Timothy Baycroft, ‘Ethnicity and the Revolutionary Tradition’, Timothy Baycroft and Mark Hewitson (eds), *What is a Nation? Europe 1789-1914* (Oxford, 2006).

1.5 Algeria and the legal basis of citizenship

From 1848, Algeria was France but this did not equate with Algerians being French. Algerians remained subjects rather than citizens, a distinction which had not applied to anyone on French soil under a republican regime.²⁰⁶ Only with the founding of the Fifth Republic did all Algerians become full French citizens, an identity which was collectively removed five years later in direct violation of the Evian Accords which brought the Algerian war to an end.²⁰⁷ Between 1848 and 1958 ‘Muslim’ was a legal distinction in relation to the population of the three Algerian *départements*, rather than a religious identification.²⁰⁸ Racial categorisation, language relating to ethnicity or origins, was specifically avoided and never codified in legal texts as to do so would be to reject the goals of the Revolution.²⁰⁹ The view was taken that Algerians would become full citizens through assimilation although it was Napoleon III, not the republic, that actually embraced such a possibility with the *Senatus-Consulte* of 1865. To become citizens, Algerians had to renounce Islam and their Koranic local civil status. The latter was extremely restrictive in terms of civic freedoms in relation to the French state (qualifying freedom of movement, rights to employment and representation before the law) but allowed a use of Islamic law in non-state matters.

The Third Republic saw the collective granting of citizenship to all Jewish inhabitants of Algeria with the 1870 Crémieux decree which, along with the distinctions that the French attempted to draw between Berbers and Arabs despite the centuries of integration, ‘indicates the extent to which Islam was held up as a object of contempt.’²¹⁰ The necessity to renounce Islam in order to gain full citizenship remained until 1947. Further legislation in 1884 ‘automatically naturalized all children of European origin born in Algeria, thus creating the so-called “French-Algerian community”.’²¹¹ Azzedine Haddour is right to suggest this was in part due to the fact that the non-French European population of

²⁰⁶ Of course, colonial peoples were considered subjects rather than citizens, but Algeria was not just French, it was part of France.

²⁰⁷ The Fourth Republic abolished the term ‘subject’ from law and ‘Muslims’, both men and women, residing in metropolitan France since 1938 gained full citizenship in 1947. The civil status of those residing in the *départements* across the Mediterranean did not significantly alter. In 1947 free movement for ‘Muslims’ across the Mediterranean to the metropole was also allowed for the first time. Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization*, pp. 40-41; Weil, *Qu'est-ce qu'un Français ?*, p. 166.

²⁰⁸ No one sought to identify whether such a definition of ‘Muslim’ was appropriate in a religious sense.

²⁰⁹ Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization*, pp. 12-13.

²¹⁰ Martin Evans, ‘Culture and Empire, 1830-1962’, Martin Evans (ed.) *Empire and Culture: The French Experience* (Basingstoke, 2004) pp. 13-14.

²¹¹ Azzedine Haddour, *Colonial Myths: History and Narrative* (Manchester, 2000) p. 6.

Algeria had begun to outnumber the French, which was both embarrassing and, most fundamentally, a security issue. Yet it also reiterated that Islam, as defined by the republican state rather than by Algerians, was the barrier to assimilation. A more cynical view would suggest that this religious distinction, made clear by the collective legal assimilations of 1870 and 1884, was a useful cover for a discrimination based upon origins, which of course would be a rejection of the Revolutionary and republican belief in universalism.

Patrick Weil rejects the argument that French citizenship was based on race at any time during the period when Algeria was considered to be a part of France, with the exception of the Vichy period.²¹² In the run up to the Algerian war and in response to the Cold War, Weil argues, questions of origin and citizenship did arise but were thoroughly rejected in 1953 and from then on, for a further twenty years, ‘le critère de l’origine disparaît des débats sur la nationalité et des pratiques de naturalisation en particulier, et de la nationalité en général.’²¹³ His argument is reminiscent of the Vichy exceptionalism which the introduction to this thesis takes issue with. It is also utterly indefensible in light of the legal evidence Shepard provides in relation to the changing nature of citizenship over the course of the Algerian war and its end.

As has already been noted, the Fifth Republic finally granted full adult universal suffrage to all citizens of the French republic, specifically extending it to include all Algerian men and women who had maintained their local civil status – the vast majority. ‘The French Revolution’s promise of universal adult suffrage was fulfilled’ not in 1944 but in 1958.²¹⁴ De Gaulle’s intention with this move was evidently to appease the rebels by offering a real chance of equality and recognition within a French state. As such, the Algerian local civil status was maintained by de Gaulle, although only as a temporary step on the path to assimilation. But the demands from the FLN had always been based on independence and such late-in-the-day gestures had little effect on their support and certainly none on their aims. Three years later, when de Gaulle’s government had accepted the steadfastness of such demands and entered into peace negotiations, discussions on nationality maintained this new egalitarian quality. The policy of a dual nationality was championed by the French delegation at Evian. The settlers would have dual nationality for three years and must then

²¹² Weil, *Qu’est-ce qu’un Français ?*, p. 183.

²¹³ Ibid. p. 160. [the criterion of origin was absent from the debates over nationality and from naturalization practices in particular, and nationality in general. Patrick Weil, *How to Be French: Nationality in the Making since 1789*, trans. Catherine Porter (London, 2008) [2002]]

²¹⁴ Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization*, p. 46.

choose between two options, 'devenir Algérien ou adapter un statut de résident étranger privilégié.'²¹⁵ A similar arrangement for Algerians was suggested in which they would be free to move to mainland France, although this was in direct contrast to the GPRA's united Algeria ideal.²¹⁶ According to French law, in 1962 all 'people from Algeria remained French citizens unless they officially renounced it'.²¹⁷ Equally, according to the Evian Accords, all those wishing to remain in Algeria had the right to do so.

Yet during the exodus over the summer of 1962 in which the European population of Algeria, almost in its entirety, left for mainland France and were 'repatriated', measures were put in place to prevent a similar trip being made by *citoyens français musulmans d'Algérie* (to use their official title). Over the course of several months, the language of French citizenship became overtly based upon race. Aimed particularly, although not exclusively, at the tens of thousands of *harkis* (Algerians who had fought for the French during the war) fleeing Algeria, the government moved to prevent their arrival on French soil. Whilst the leaked Joxe telegram of 12 May 1962 which exposed this policy caused some initial outrage, in an Ordinance of 21 June the French government 'unilaterally altered one of the primary elements of the Evian Accords: the right of all people from Algeria to keep French citizenship', a right central to the government's successful referendum campaign in April.²¹⁸ By July de Gaulle openly announced that 'the term repatriates obviously does not apply to the Muslims. In their case we are dealing only with refugees.'²¹⁹ This not only breached the Evian Accords, it also drew a very distinct dividing line between who qualified to be French, on a basis entirely dependent on race. Those who were considered 'repatriates' were eligible to specific state benefits, those who were 'refugees' were not.²²⁰ Shepard identifies documents from May 1962 which distinguished between European and Muslim

²¹⁵ Jean Lacouture, *Algérie, la guerre est finie* (Bruxelles, 1985) p. 161. [become Algerian or take the status of privileged resident foreigner]

²¹⁶ Ibid. pp. 83-85.

²¹⁷ Todd Shepard, 'Excluding the *Harkis* from Repatriate Status, Excluding Muslim Algerians from French Identity', Hafid Gafaïti (ed.) *Transnational Spaces and Identities in the Francophone World* (London, 2009) p. 95.

²¹⁸ Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization*, p. 97.

²¹⁹ Ibid. p. 236; Martin Evans, 'The *Harkis*: The Experience and Memory of France's Muslim Auxiliaries', Martin S. Alexander, Martin Evans, and John F. V. Keiger (eds), *The Algerian War and the French Army, 1954-62: Experiences, Images, Testimonies* (Basingstoke, 2002) p. 127; Charles de Gaulle quoted in Shepard, 'Excluding the *Harkis*', p. 97.

²²⁰ Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization*, p. 220. For an engaging and in-depth study of the lives of the 'repatriated' and their relationship with the French republic see Valérie Esclangon-Morin, *Les Repatriés d'Afrique du Nord de 1956 à nos jours* (Paris, 2007). Claire Eldridge has written about the 'repatriated' settlers' changing conception of their place in French society. Claire Eldridge, 'Blurring the Boundaries Between Perpetrators and Victims: Pied-Noir Memories and the Harki Community', *Memory Studies* 3 (2010). See also Jean-Jacques Jordi, *1962: L'Arrivée des Pieds-Noirs* (Paris, 1995).

origine.²²¹ By 1963, nine million people had had their French citizenship removed on the basis that they were Algerian of Muslim origin rather than Algerian of European origin. The majority of the latter continued to be French.²²²

Republicans had, for over a hundred years, insisted that Algeria was an integral part of France and Algerians were either French citizens or in the process of becoming French citizens through assimilation. The revolution in republicanism caused by the Algerian war witnessed this rhetoric of the assimilability of Algerians being fundamentally rejected based purely on their origin. For Shepard, that this became an acceptable norm in republican France, a regime based on the ideology of the Revolution with its belief in universalism, assimilation and effectively colour-blindness, was due to the invention of the decolonisation narrative. The purported belief that France had played her part in the civilisation of Algeria which had thus earned its right to independence was a complete rejection of all earlier justifications for French military involvement in the country. It also allowed a complete rejection of any responsibility for the safety and well-being of former French citizens, particularly the *harkis*, of which hundreds of thousands were brutally killed by the FLN. For de Gaulle, they were simply ‘the victims of that unavoidable and planetary evolution that has been called decolonization.’²²³

1.6 Representations of Algerians and the reconstruction of citizenship

Part of the contention of this thesis is that the legal changes which Shepard documents in his invention of decolonisation thesis, are supported by cultural representations which sympathise with republican ideology. The final section of this chapter will return to these representations of the Algerian war, and specifically consider the representation of Algerians. The racial distinctions in French citizenship drawn by de Gaulle are in evidence and continue to support the decolonisation discourse. The representation of the *harkis* and their relationship with the citizen soldier symbol will make up the first half of this section, followed by a broader consideration of the representation of the Algerian, first in Algeria and then in France, which will argue that the Algerian is now the focus of the ‘other’ in

²²¹ Shepard, 'Excluding the *Harkis*', p. 97.

²²² Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization*, pp. 2-3.

²²³ Charles de Gaulle quoted in *ibid.* p. 7.

France, the opposite of a French citizen and thus an aid to a negative and thus exclusive and racist understanding of citizenship.

1.6a The harkis and the rejection of the citizen soldier

The Evian Accords stipulated that,

Nul ne peut être inquiété, recherché, poursuivi, condamné, ni faire l'objet de décision pénale, de sanction disciplinaire ou de discrimination quelconque en raison d'actes commis en relation avec les événements politiques survenus en Algérie avant le jour de la proclamation du cessez-le-feu.²²⁴

There can be little doubt that the fate of the *harkis* was at the forefront of the minds of the men that drafted this paragraph. The likelihood of the *harkis'* fate was predictable at the beginning of 1962 but just as the French government ignored the agreement on dual nationality, so the new Algerian government had little interest in honouring such proclamations of protection, particularly for a group considered to be abhorrent traitors. In November 1962, *Le Monde* estimated that more than ten thousand *harkis* had been killed in Algeria since the cease-fire; Shepard and Alexander conceive of a final estimate being closer to 100,000.²²⁵ Given that there were roughly 200,000 *harkis* serving in the French army during the war and 52,000 managed to cross into France in the summer of 1962, Shepard's figure may be considered feasible although a gross underestimation if one also includes the collective reprisals against *harkis'* families.²²⁶ The ferocity of these murders was not muted by their occurrence after the ceasefire.

In the novels and films studied in this thesis, the *harki* is rarely a dominant character and is frequently absent in representations of the war. But this absence is not total and nor can it

²²⁴ Quoted in Lacouture, *Algérie, la guerre est finie*, p. 177. [No one can be investigated, searched for, charged, condemned nor receive any penal decision, disciplinary sanction or any manner of discrimination as a result of acts committed in relation to the political events in Algeria before the date of the proclamation of the cease-fire.]

²²⁵ Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization*, pp. 232-233; Martin S. Alexander, Martin Evans and John F. V. Keiger, 'The "War without a Name", the French Army and the Algerians: Recovering Experiences, Images and Testimonies', Martin S. Alexander, Martin Evans, and John F. V. Keiger (eds), *The Algerian War and the French Army, 1954-62: Experiences, Images, Testimonies* (Basingstoke, 2002) p. 25.

²²⁶ These figures come from William B. Cohen, 'Legacy of Empire: The Algerian Connection', *Journal of Contemporary History* 15 (1980) p. 107. Cohen estimates that around 130,000 Algerians, *harkis* and their dependents, arrived in France in the summer of 1962.

be explained away by some kind of collective amnesia. An analysis of four sources, Pierre-Henri Simon's 1958 semi-autobiographical novel, *Portrait d'un officier*, and the films, *Cher Frangin* (1989), *La Trabison* (2005) and *Cartouches Gauloises* (2008), will give a clearer understanding of why they do not feature prominently as characters in republican culture, and what insights this provides into the altered nature of republican citizenship caused by the Algerian war.²²⁷

Simon was a Catholic republican intellectual who came to prominence in the beginning of 1957 with his pamphlet, *Contre la torture* which spoke out against the use of torture specifically influenced by the Battle of Algiers being waged by General Jacques Massu and his paratroopers.²²⁸ A frequent contributor to *Le Monde's* literature reviews in the early 1960s, Simon was appointed to the Académie française in November 1967. He was consistently critical of France's use of torture by the military, considering it to be sully the honour of the nation, but neither *Contre la torture* nor *Portrait d'un officier* engage with the possibility of Algerian independence. Essentially Simon, in 1958, continued to believe in the *mission civilisatrice* but was not willing to accept the methods used to maintain it.²²⁹ *Portrait d'un officier* tells the story of Jean de Larsen who meets the narrator of the book on a train as he travels back from Algeria. They knew each other as prisoners of war in the 1940s but unlike the narrator, Larsen continued to pursue his military career, first in Indochina and then in Algeria. His experiences with an Algerian family, a father in his battalion in Indochina and then his son in Algeria, led Larsen to prematurely end his army career. The son, a *harki* (although the word itself is not used in the novel), particularly represents an altering perception of the citizen soldier (of which the sources previously discussed are a culmination) and, when compared to later cultural representations, show the development of the decolonisation discourse in the cultural sphere which Shepard has identified through legal history.

The father, Brahim Sadoun, had served with Larsen as a conscript in the liberation of France:

²²⁷ Pierre Henri Simon, *Portrait d'un Officier* (Paris, 1958); Gérard Mordillat, *Cher Frangin* (France, 1989); Fauçon, *La Trabison*; Mehdi Charef, *Cartouches Gauloises* (France, 2007).

²²⁸ Pierre-Henri Simon, *Contre la torture* (Paris, 1957).

²²⁹ Dine, *Images of the Algerian War*, p. 67.

Frères d'armes, nous l'avion été magnifiquement pendant vingt-six mois, du Sud algérien au Rhin et au Danube, et cela dit tout : une confiance absolue, un certitude de connaître l'autre.²³⁰

The relationship of loyalty and bravery between Larsen and Sadoun is both reminiscent of the relationship between Jean and Maurice in *La Débâcle* (brothers, although not equal brothers, in arms) and also a clear representation of the republican tradition of the citizen soldier which is notably absent in representations of the Algerian war.²³¹ Sadoun was loyal to France, believed in educating his children and had aspired to one day be a French officer, but the death of his own father had meant he had been forced to leave school to provide for his family.²³² A situation not dissimilar to Jean's, the quintessential citizen soldier of the Third Republic who, despite his expertise as a soldier and loyalty to France, is unable to progress further up the ranks of the army because of his lack of education.²³³ Sadoun remains in the army after the Second World War to continue to fight by Larsen's side and as such finds himself fighting against the independence movement in Indochina.

Larsen then tells of an exchange between himself and Sadoun in Indochina in which Sadoun is intending to leave the army. Feeling that not only is the war in Indochina not his to fight, Sadoun's loyalty to France, given the lack of progress in Algeria, is faltering, indeed has failed: 'que les Français s'arrangent avec les Viets, ça les regarde ; mais ce n'est pas mon affaire d'empêcher des Jaunes de reprendre leur liberté, quand nous n'avons pas encore la nôtre.'²³⁴ Larsen entirely rejects Sadoun's reasoning (as, one is left to suppose does Simon who, as the narrator, never seeks to defend it) and emotionally blackmails Sadoun to stay, appealing to his personal trust and loyalty to himself rather than to France. Four days later, Sadoun is killed in combat.²³⁵

²³⁰ Simon, *Portrait d'un Officier*, p. 97. [We had been the most perfect brothers in arms for twenty-six months, from southern Algeria to the Rhine and the Danube, and that says everything: complete confidence, the certainty of knowing each other. Pierre-Henri Simon, *Portrait of an Officer*, trans. Humphrey Hare (London, 1961) [1958]]

²³¹ Simon, *Portrait d'un Officier*, pp. 97-99. In *La Débâcle*, Jean is Maurice's superior in the army as well as his main bastion of support and advice.

²³² Ibid. p. 99.

²³³ Zola, *La Débâcle*, p. 3. Indeed, Jean is not even able to reach the rank of sergeant which, under Larsen's guidance, is the rank Sadoun eventually achieves.

²³⁴ Simon, *Portrait d'un Officier*, p. 106. [let the French fight it out with the Viets, that's their affair, but it's no business of mine to prevent these yellow men recovering their liberty, while we still haven't got ours.]

²³⁵ Ibid. p. 108.

Larsen's service then takes him to Algeria where he pays a visit to Sadoun's family and finds he has become a family hero, a 'personnage mythique'.²³⁶ As such, Sadoun's son Kadour, whose life Larsen had saved as a child by loaning the family money for medical treatment, signs up to serve under Larsen in the fight against the FLN. Kadour becomes a *barki* of his own volition based on the same loyalty to Larsen that killed his father. What is notable is that Kadour is never represented as having the loyalty to France which his father had when fighting in the Second World War. Instead, Kadour is representative of a conspicuously different generational mindset to his father. Larsen's description of him to the narrator is worth quoting at length. Kadour was

un soldat consciencieux, discipliné, et sur ce point je retrouvais bien le fils de Brahim ; cependant, plus évolué que son père, il était l'homme d'une génération à la fois plus imprégnée d'influences françaises et plus susceptible dans son amour-propre national. Le premier Brahim que j'avais connu n'était pas déchiré, sa fierté de se battre pour la France éclatait dans un cœur où demeuraient pourtant intactes ses croyances et ses traditions d'Algérien musulman. Il avait fallu les froissements infligés par les maladresses et l'absurde orgueil de beaucoup des nôtres pour l'éveiller progressivement à une douleur que la guerre l'Indochine avait fait éclater. Chez son fils, je sentais que le drame existait virtuellement, congénital, antérieur à l'expérience, mais avec un autre accent, plus trouble : l'esprit, les mœurs de notre civilisation, et pas toujours dans ce qu'elle avait de meilleur, l'avaient marqué ; il avait vécu dans sa petite ville de province africaine à peu près comme un garçon de chez nous, aimant le sport, la rue, le café, le cinéma, les pin-ups ; de sa religion, il ne gardait guère que des coutumes extérieures, quelques gestes consacrés, le respect du nom Allah ; mais, plus détaché de la spiritualité de son peuple, il tenait davantage à sa personnalité d'Arabe, plus fier et plus crispé dans sa différence, dans sa déférence même.²³⁷

²³⁶ Ibid. p. 110.

²³⁷ Ibid. pp. 122-123. [a conscientious, disciplined soldier, and as far as that went I could see in him the son of Brahim; however, he was better educated than his father and belonged to a generation that was at once more imbued with French influences and more conscious of its national pride. Brahim, when I had first known him, had not been torn two ways, his heartfelt pride in fighting for France had been apparent though he had preserved intact his Algerian Muslim's beliefs and traditions. It had been only the slights inflicted on him by many of our fellow-countrymen...that had gradually brought him to the state of mind that had come to a crisis in the war in Indo-China. In the son's case, I felt that this emotional drama was innate and congenital, that it preceded experience but had another, and more disquieting, accent: the mentality and habits of our

Kadour would eventually desert to the Algerian side and be killed as a result; Larsen's part in this is his reason for leaving the army. Importantly, it is a personal relationship rather than a disillusionment with the army's cause that leads to Larsen's resignation. The above quotation is, in essence, an abbreviation of the success of the civilising mission which Simon continues to hold dear in 1958. Kadour is both more educated and, crucially, more secular than his father, both values which have dominated republicanism particularly since the Third Republic. Kadour has become so like a Frenchman that he can no longer be a Frenchman. There is a distinct whiff of the decolonisation discourse which permeates later representations of the Algerian war, although given the early nature of Simon's book, and his rather moderate political leanings, it is not yet fully formed.

Simon's book supports the civilising mission, hints at its success, touches upon the inevitability of decolonisation and expertly avoids dealing with any of the complexities of the Algerian war which is raging as he writes. With the death of Sadoun in Indochina, the novel stops the possibility of the heroic republican figure of the citizen soldier becoming affiliated with the FLN, which would throw up a crisis of legitimacy in Simon's essentially colonialist story. If Sadoun had straddled both these identities he would have affiliated the Algerian independence movement with the liberation of France thus undermining France's entire history in Algeria, turning it into one of occupation, indeed Occupation, rather than one of *Algérie française* and the *mission civilisatrice*. Kadour is distinctly not the citizen soldier his father was; his loyalty is surely a personal one to Larsen not a patriotic one to France. As such, his defection to the FLN does not lead to a crisis for Simon's understanding of the war. Most importantly, in terms of the representation of the *barkis*, Kadour's death rejects any need to consider what his final fate would be at the war's end, an event not given any consideration by the novel thanks to Larsen's timely return to civilian life.

Portrait d'un officier avoids almost all the complexities of the Algerian war and the *barkis* simply by killing off the characters before they are in a position to highlight them. The ultimate fate and thus the responsibility for the *barkis* is of no concern to Larsen. Nevertheless, Simon's *Portrait* in many ways is a very balanced consideration of the *barkis*: it

civilisation, and not always what was best in them, had marked him; he had lived in his little provincial African town very much as would a boy in France, liking games, the streets, the café, the cinema and pin-ups; of his religion, he had preserved merely the outward semblance, a few sacred gestures and a respect for the name of Allah; but, though more detached from the spiritual side of his people, he was more tenacious of the fact that he was an Arab, prouder and more set in his difference, and even in the deference of his manner.]

represents reasons for the choices *barkis* take to both side with the French army and to turn against it. It is also not a negative portrayal of the *barkis*; Larsen is seen to be genuinely saddened by Kadour's betrayal, but he understands his reasons and is not embittered. *Portrait d'un officier* was written at a cross-roads; after the takeover of power by de Gaulle but a year before the public declaration of self-determination as a solution to the war.²³⁸ A positive depiction of the *barkis* is still possible within a republican discourse because the cause for which they are fighting is still a legitimate one. After this date, representations of *barkis* essentially disappear from the cultural imagination for several decades.

The absence of such representation is not surprising given the extreme marginality of *barkis* in France after the war. Those that had reached the metropole were housed largely in makeshift accommodation, isolated from the wider community and where many lived for decades.²³⁹ Having been French citizens since at least 1958, this status was stripped from them in direct disregard of the legally-binding Evian Accords in 1962 and done so purely on the basis of their race (a similar fate did not befall the 'repatriated' settlers). Government grants for the *barkis* were less than half of the amount given to their 'European' counterparts.²⁴⁰ Whilst such treatment was resented, research by Benjamin Stora and Claire Eldridge has indicated that the *barkis* did not speak out as a collective group; it was not until their children's generation that a collective movement which highlighted their marginality and demanded recognition came to the fore.²⁴¹ As a journalist in *Le Monde* wrote, '[t]heir cause goes against the grain, few are those who will defend men who are Arabs but French nationalists, poor but suspect of being right-wing, victims of racism, but heartily despised by its other victims.'²⁴² For the French republic they were an embarrassing reminder that their decolonisation discourse did not allow an accurate understanding of the pursuit of war and the loyalty to France of some Algerians.

The children of *barkis* began to protest in the 1970s and 1980s, occupying government buildings and going on hunger strike, in an attempt to gain official recognition for their

²³⁸ *Portrait d'un officier* was published at the end of 1958, reviewed in December in *Le Monde* and in January 1959 in the liberal Catholic journal *Esprit*. Jean Planchais, 'Portrait d'un Officier: Une Étude de Pierre-Henri Simon', *Le Monde* (28-29 December 1958); Jean-Marie Domenach, 'Librairie du mois: Essais: Pierre-Henri Simon, *Portrait d'un officier*', *Esprit* (no. 269, January 1959).

²³⁹ Cohen, 'The Algerian War and French Memory', pp. 497-498.

²⁴⁰ Cohen, 'Legacy of Empire', p. 108.

²⁴¹ Stora, *La Gangrène et l'oubli*; Claire Eldridge, "'We've Never Had a Voice': Memory Construction and the Children of the *Harkis* (1962-1991)", *French History* 23 (2009). See also Evans, 'The *Harkis*', p. 129.

²⁴² Bernard Brigoulieux, 'Être arabes, pauvres, et nationalistes français', *Le Monde* (24 December 1976) quoted in Cohen, 'Legacy of Empire', pp. 108-109.

parents and tackle their own marginality. In 1991 a widespread protest was launched which culminated in riots in the south of France, where most of the half a million *harkis* and their descendents still lived.²⁴³ In 1994, 'a law was passed to affirm the French Republic's gratitude towards the Harkis' and in 2001, President Jacques Chirac unveiled a plaque to commemorating those *harkis* who were abandoned by France in 1962.²⁴⁴ Géraldine Enjelvin has argued that this, along with the Algerian war memorial of 2002 'elevated the Harkis to the status of national heroes' but such a status is neither present in the artistic representations of the *harkis* nor felt by those who continue to protest for recognition and compensation (see Figure 5).²⁴⁵

Republican artistic representations of the *harkis* began to re-emerge around the same time as their children were making public their plight. A *harki* makes a brief appearance in Gerard Mordillat's 1989 film, *Cher Frangin* as a rather simple and obedient fellow but it is not until the twenty-first century that they become discernible characters of their own.²⁴⁶ Philippe Fauçon's *La Trahison* is in many ways exemplary in its portrayal of the complexities of the relationship between the French army and the *harkis*.²⁴⁷ Set in southern Algeria in 1960, Lieutenant Roque is attempting, with little success from what the film shows, to track down FLN members by controlling the movements of the local villages. Amongst his men are four *harkis* including Taïeb who has been with Roque for fourteen months, acts as his translator and with whom he appears to have a strong bond and a relationship of mutual respect. Yet at the beginning of the film Roque is warned that Taïeb is heading up a plan to attack the base. Whether this information is correct is left ambiguous in the film with the exchanges of words, the discovery of FLN propaganda and

²⁴³ Ibid.; Martin Evans, 'From Colonialism to Post-Colonialism: The French Empire since Napoleon', Martin S. Alexander (ed.) *French History Since Napoleon* (London, 1999) p. 412; Catherine Wihtol de Wenden, 'The *harkis*: A community in the making', Alec G. Hargreaves and Michael J. Heffernan (eds), *French and Algerian Identities from Colonial Times to the Present: A Century of Interaction* (New York, 1993); Géraldine Enjelvin, 'The Harki Identity: A Product of Marginalisation and Resistance to Symbolic Violence?', *National Identities* 8 (2006).

²⁴⁴ Enjelvin, 'The Harki Identity', pp. 121-122; Robert Aldrich, 'Imperial *Mise en Valeur* and *Mise en Scène*: Recent Works on French Colonialism', *The Historical Journal* 45 (2002) p. 918.

²⁴⁵ Enjelvin, 'The Harki Identity', p. 121.

²⁴⁶ Gérard Mordillat, *Cher Frangin* (France, 1989). Interestingly, the *Nouvel Observateur's* review of Mordillat's film commented that the Algerian war was a rarely considered topic of French cinema, a sentiment which the evidence in this thesis refutes, as does *Le Figaro's* review which lists the films of Resnais, Alain Cavalier, Démy, Godard, Vautier, Boisset, Laurent Heynemann and Pierre Schoendoerffer and declares, 'Pas de doute, la France demeure malade de son Algérie perdue.' Georges Wolinski, 'L'Algérie du frangin: Le premier film (depuis très longtemps) d'un Français sur la guerre d'Algérie', *Nouvel Observateur* (30 March 1989); Brigitte Baudin, 'Gérard Mordillat s'en va-t-en-guerre: "Cher Frangin": Trente ans après, la France est encore malade de la guerre d'Algérie', *Le Figaro* (12 April 1989).

²⁴⁷ Fauçon, *La Trahison*.

the assassination of an anonymous witness supporting the possibility of treachery but offering no conclusive evidence. More concrete are the changing attitudes of Taïeb and his fellow *harkis* as they witness the abuse of Algerians and are the subject of abuse both from the villagers and their fellow soldiers. The film ends with all four *harkis* being arrested. The parting shots are of Taïeb shouting to Roque, ‘Vive l’indépendance, mon lieutenant! Vive Algérie!’



Figure 5. *Harki* protest banners (including *tricolours*) on the Place du Président Édouard Herriot outside the Assemblée Nationale, January 2010.²⁴⁸

Medhi Charef's 2008 *Cartouches Gauloises* is set in Algeria in the summer of 1962.²⁴⁹ Everything in the film is shown through the viewpoint of its main character, eleven-year old Ali who knows the whole town through his paper round. Gradually his French friends and their families leave for France and the film ends with independence and the possible return of Ali's FLN father. The *harki* in the film is Djelloul, a corporal whose brutality Ali witnesses on several occasions and whose family consider him to be a traitor. Djelloul expresses to his French lieutenant that he knows that for him, the options are only 'victoire or exile', to which the lieutenant has no reply. At the film's close, as the French are leaving, Djelloul begs his superiors to let his fellow *harkis* and their families come with them. The lieutenant only offers passage for Djelloul alone; Djelloul shoots him in the back. Ali

²⁴⁸ Taken by the author.

²⁴⁹ Charef, *Cartouches Gauloises*.

discovers Djelloul hiding in his den which he and his settler friend, Nico, have been building. Ali gives no response to Djelloul's pleas to use the den as a safe-house and tells local farmers of his whereabouts. There is no doubt that he is killed. Ali is not without compassion, but he has born witness to the brutalities of the French army (including the torture of his father) of which Djelloul has been an active part. Instead, Ali saves Zina, a traitor of a different kind. She is a prostitute working in a brothel frequented by French soldiers whom Ali knows through his paper round and her fate is certain to be the same as Djelloul's without Ali's help.

In both *La Trabison* and *Cartouches Gauloises* the *barkis* are well developed, multi-dimensional characters, rather than the flippant background character present in *Cber Frangin*. Certainly in *La Trabison* and even to some extent in *Cartouches Gauloises*, they are sympathetic characters, their dilemmas clearly portrayed. Unlike in Simon's early novel, their fate is also clear; neither side will accept them, their brutal death is assured.²⁵⁰ Yet Simon's book is far more radical in terms of threatening the boundaries of the republican decolonisation discourse (although, given the time of his writing, without such intention). Fauçon's and Charef's films clearly show that *barkis* have no place in a decolonised Algeria. Charef is perhaps condemning the French army for not helping the *barkis* escape, but makes no allusion to government policy. Neither, however, consider representing the reasons the *barkis* are fighting on the French side. There are no personal histories, no justifications, no origins of this misplaced loyalty. As such, only part of the *barkis* story is told. Much akin to the refusal of the decolonisation discourse to consider the origin of colonialism and the belief in *Algérie française*, the absence of reasoning behind the *barkis*' involvement (whether through loyalty, like Kadour, or for survival, for protection or for numerous other diverse reasons) is a rejection of the legitimacy of the *barkis*' loyalty. As such, these films leave the decolonisation discourse unchallenged and indeed support it. Furthermore, with no representation of the possibility that the *barkis* were fighting for France in a cause they considered legitimate, they cannot symbolise the citizen soldier. Theirs cannot be a heroic sacrifice for the French nation, even less so than the conscripts, because to be seen as such would not only undermine the republican narrative of the war, it would give them claim to be French citizens. A claim that the republic continues to deny.

²⁵⁰ Fauçon's film is set almost two years later than the book from which *La Trabison* was adapted from in order to threaten this fate more clearly. Steven Ungar, 'Two Films and Two Wars in the Public Sphere', Patricia M. E. Lorcin and Daniel Brewer (eds), *France and its Spaces of War* (Basingstoke, 2009) p. 282.

1.6b *Algerians as the Other*

Thus far I have argued that citizen soldiers have underpinned the definition of republican citizenship in France, that the Algerian war altered this basis and produced a revolution in citizenship, that this revolution has remained undiscussed by means of a discourse of decolonisation, and that citizenship is now defined negatively, as the *barkis* have experienced to their detriment. The final section of this chapter will pursue this latter point further by considering the representations of Algerians, rather than just the *barkis*, in republican cultural representations of the war. The representations of Algerians share strikingly similar tropes to Third Republican artistic representations of the peasant. The peasant, in the initial years of the Third Republic, was frequently represented as the ultimate anti-republican. The same characteristics – ignorance, backwardness, religious faith and a connection to the natural world – are present in the artistic culture of the Fifth Republic in relation to Algerians. But the resulting implication is strengthened: Algerians are not simply anti-republican but un-French.²⁵¹ Peasants were anti-republican but reformable; the doctrine of assimilation was overtly pursued particularly through education policy, to create a republican, and thus a truly French, peasantry. This process was denied to Algerians. Whilst the sharing of tropes with Third Republican culture suggested a precedent, the Frenchness of Algerians was flatly denied, their potential to assimilate rejected. This final section will argue that the revolution in republican citizenship caused by the Algerian war led to a racial understanding of citizenship, a radical change tempered by the use of old tropes found in Third Republican representations of the peasantry.

Many of the French artistic representations of Algerians in Algeria are unsurprisingly written by ex-settlers, those Frenchmen most familiar with them. There is a post-war tendency, no doubt aided by the involvement of many settlers in the OAS, to assume that settlers were overtly racist, right-wing and militaristic. The settlers were not such a monocultural group and there are many examples of literature written by republican settlers, a few of whom even supported the independence movement (although generally in the expectation that the settlers would remain in Algeria). Whilst there are other novels and films many of which contain representations of Algerians in Algeria, many which feature elsewhere in this thesis, the novels of Jean Pélégri and Jules Roy are considered here

²⁵¹ Chapter 3 considers in greater detail the distinction between being ‘anti-’ and ‘un-’. See section 3.2. Using the logic of Jacques Derrida’s theory of opposites, to be ‘anti-France’ is to imply an opposition and thus an inherent connection with France, whilst to be ‘un-French’ is to be ultimately alien to France. Jacques Derrida, ‘Plato’s Pharmacy’, Peggy Kamuf (ed.) *A Derrida Reader: Between the Blinds* (Hemel Hempstead, 1991).

because they were both published between 1958 and 1962 when, in legal terms, all Algerians were full French citizens.²⁵² The racially-defined parameters of French citizenship, which became a legal reality in the summer of 1962, are already present in these two novels. This suggests that the racial definition of Frenchness was a part of the republican *mentalité* and not simply a practical piece of legislation designed to prevent an influx of refugees. A discussion of the transference of the trope of peasant will be included alongside Hugo's *Quatrevingt-treize* and David Hopkin's work on the figures of the soldier and peasant in popular culture. To conclude, it will be argued that this method of representation has not remained attached solely to Algerians in Algeria but has reached the metropole. The uncivilised peasant trope remains and is present in Michel Haneke's film *Caché*, where it is used to deny the legitimacy of claims to French citizenship by those of Algerian origin in the twenty-first century.²⁵³

In his study of soldiers and peasants in popular imagery and oral folktales in France in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Hopkin identifies 'distinctions between peasants and soldiers' which continue into the end of his period.²⁵⁴ This division is supported by both sides, being evident both in the urban literary culture of Zola and Balzac which scorned the peasantry, and rural culture which resented the imposition of conscription.²⁵⁵ As this chapter has noted, Hopkin also recognises the powerful symbolic presence the soldier has upon the understanding of a citizen, and this relationship's longevity as 'the soldier as national standard-bearer...had been appearing in folk art for at least a hundred years before the Franco-Prussian War.'²⁵⁶ Nevertheless, he does argue that the strength of the identity between the conscript and the nation comes to the fore as the republic finally finds its own longevity after 1870.²⁵⁷

Hugo was certainly part of the urban culture Hopkin identifies as throwing scorn upon the peasantry. His distaste for the rural masses was particularly acute because of the (not particularly accurate) association he and many other republicans had made between the

²⁵² Jean Pélégri, *Les Oliviers de la justice* (Paris, 1959); Jules Roy, *La Guerre d'Algérie* (Paris, 1960).

²⁵³ Michel Haneke, *Caché* (France, 2005).

²⁵⁴ Hopkin, *Soldier and Peasant*, p. 349.

²⁵⁵ Ibid. pp. 13 and 349.

²⁵⁶ Ibid. p. 18.

²⁵⁷ Ibid. p. 15.

rural vote and the success of Louis-Napoleon between 1848 and 1851.²⁵⁸ In essence, he held the peasantry responsible for the destruction of the Second Republic and the formation of the Second Empire, his hatred of which led him to spend its duration in self-imposed exile. The figure of Tellmarch in *Quatrevingt-treize* becomes the vessel into which Hugo pours his contempt for the peasantry. Tellmarch is a solitary Breton beggar, utterly ignorant of the politics around him and his ignorance is the cause of all the bloodshed in the novel as well as the failure of a peaceful republican conclusion.²⁵⁹ Unaware of the Marquis de Lantenac's identity at the beginning of the novel, Tellmarch feeds and shelters the outlaw, unwittingly saving the life of a bloodthirsty warrior. He learns of the marquis's identity upon discovering Lantenac's slaughter of a village, leaving Tellmarch to cry uselessly, "Si j'avais su!"²⁶⁰ His direction of the kidnapped children's mother also leads to the series of events around Lantenac's capture, escape and Gauvain's death. Tellmarch cannot be a republican citizen because he has no understanding of what such a thing entailed. As Hopkin has argued, 'this distinction between "peasant" and "French" rests on a...fundamental division whose origins lie much further back in the history of the formation of the nation-state – the division between peasant and soldier.'²⁶¹

The tenacity of this disassociation is important because it gives a foundation and thus a historical legitimacy to the refusal to consider those of Algerian origin to be French citizens. In an unforgivably nostalgic, *la vie en rose*-infected article, Richard Kuisel attempts to pinpoint what he considers to be the decline of a certain idea of France. His first 'discontinuity' is the decline of the peasantry, his second the loss of French society's 'capacity to assimilate outsiders.'²⁶² What he fails to consider, is that these two trends (whilst not marking a 'decline'), are intrinsically linked.

²⁵⁸ Karl Marx was in agreement with Hugo on this matter, claiming the victory of Louis-Napoleon was due to 'the heavy ignorance of the rural districts.' It is also the conclusion which Maurice Agulhon draws, although to do so he ignores his own figures on the popularity of Louis-Napoleon in Parisian elections.

Karl Marx, 'The Civil War in France', V. Adoratsky (ed.) *Karl Marx Selected Works in Two Volumes. Vol. II* (Moscow, 1933) p. 462; Agulhon, *The Republican Experiment*, p. 72.

²⁵⁹ Petrey comes to similar conclusions concerning Tellmarch's role in *Quatrevingt-treize*. Petrey, *History in the Text*, p. 75.

²⁶⁰ Hugo, 'Quatrevingt-treize'. ['If I had known!']

²⁶¹ Hopkin, *Soldier and Peasant*, p. 14.

²⁶² Richard F. Kuisel, 'The France We Have Lost: Social, Economic, and Cultural Discontinuities', Gregory Flynn (ed.) *Remaking the Hexagon: The New France in the New Europe* (Oxford, 1995) p. 34.

Jean Pélégri's *Les Oliviers de la Justice* is a novel which combines the life and death of Pélégri's father and of *Algérie française*.²⁶³ Much of the narrative focuses on his father's life and the characters of Pélégri's own childhood, among them an old Algerian, Embarek. There are striking similarities between Tellmarch in *Quatrevingt-treize* and Embarek. Both inhabit cave-like dwellings, primitive in their living conditions. Both have mystical characteristics: 'Tellmarch était un "philosophe", mot de paysans qui signifie un peu médecin, un peu chirurgien et un peu sorcier.'²⁶⁴ Embarek sits surrounded by candles, quietly whispering Arabic prayers which 'descendre en' and 'consomait' a young Pélégri.²⁶⁵ Embarek is also given a deep connection to the land, part of its soul, a familiar trope to the nineteenth-century peasant.²⁶⁶ He talks to the land and dies kissing it. Although seen to be critical of the unjust nature of colonialism in Algeria and his wish to break the intellectual silence of settlers on the war fashioned by Albert Camus, Pélégri cannot escape his own banal racism which justifies his position in the society within which he lives.²⁶⁷ Whilst the narrator's recollections of the Algerian individuals he has known in his life is always positive, it is also, 'dans un flot des clichés' primitive.²⁶⁸ Thus the primitive, mystical peasant of the nineteenth century who, as an opposite to the soldier, was considered to be an untrustworthy republican citizen, is a trope passed down to the Algerian of the twentieth century, and with it the incompatibility with French republican citizenship.²⁶⁹ The absence of the citizen soldier in the latter case negates a traditional route to assimilation for Algerians; without the citizen soldier-peasant binary, Algerians are not anti-French but simply un-French.

Jules Roy's reminiscences of his own childhood in Algeria which permeate *La Guerre d'Algérie*, a part-autobiography, part-political tract, are very similar to Pélégri's. His immediate recollections of Algerians are that the settlers referred to them as *figuiers*, fig-

²⁶³ Jean Pélégri, *The Olive-Trees of Justice*, trans. Anthony Burgess and Lynne Wilson (London, 1962) [1959].

²⁶⁴ Hugo, 'Quatrevingt-treize'. [Tellmarch was a "philosopher", a peasant phrase which means a little of a doctor, a little of a surgeon, and a little of a sorcerer.]

²⁶⁵ Pélégri, *Les Oliviers de la justice*, p. 23. [descend into / consume]

²⁶⁶ Ibid. pp. 21-23.

²⁶⁷ Dine, *Images of the Algerian War*, p. 76.

²⁶⁸ Alain-Gérard Slama, 'La Guerre d'Algérie en littérature ou la comédie des masques', Jean-Pierre Rioux (ed.) *La Guerre d'Algérie et les français* (Paris, 1990) p. 585. [in a wave of primitive clichés]

²⁶⁹ It is worth briefly considering the peasant Jean in Zola's *La Débâcle* who is the epitome of the citizen soldier, rather than its reverse. The difference is certainly one of timing. Jean encapsulates the mood of a more self-assured republic in the final decade of the nineteenth century; he has not benefited personally from the education laws of the 1880s but as a peasant he no longer represents a perceived threat to the stability of the republic through his ignorance; he is no Tellmarch.

trees, before they became *ratons* and *bicots*.²⁷⁰ The Algerians' connection to the land, their primitiveness and the closeness he felt to them as a child are all akin to Pélégri's representations:

Le plus vieil ouvrier de la ferme s'appelait Meftah. Il habitait avec sa famille une hutte de paille et de torchis près du bassin et du partager. Il n'a jamais eu d'âge. Un jour, j'ai appris qu'il était mort après avoir, pendant trente ou quarante ans, fait la litière du bétail que nous avons, conduit les voitures et les attelages, porté plusieurs arrosoirs d'eau par jour du puits à la maison. A cette nouvelle, j'ai pleuré parce que je l'aimais bien. Je l'accompagnais souvent à son travail. Au retour, il me hissait sur les chevaux et quelquefois me prenait sur son dos.²⁷¹

Like Pélégri, too, Roy offers no similarly close relationships with Algerians as an adult, indeed there is a distinct distance in their relationships even with those who used to work on their family farms. Essentially, the Algerians are represented as childlike in both novels. This is not to suggest there is overt racism in either of these two books; both offer extremely sympathetic portrayals of the Algerians they know and have known. In *La Guerre d'Algérie*, this is in marked contrast to the crass and abhorrent racism Roy attributes to many settlers, often his own family (although whilst he rejects their ideas, he suggests they are not responsible for them: 'Elle n'est pas responsable. Il y a cinquante ans, nous pensions tous de même'.)²⁷² Nonetheless, there is an implicit understanding of difference between themselves as Frenchmen and the Algerians as other, even though both Pélégri and Roy were writing during that small window of time when all were equally French under the constitution.

This is perhaps a more complex distinction in *La Guerre d'Algérie*. Roy is certainly an advocate of Algerian independence, suggesting a political reasoning behind his separation

²⁷⁰ Roy, *La Guerre d'Algérie*, p. 18.

²⁷¹ Ibid. p. 18. [The oldest worker on the farm was named Meftah. He and his family lived in a mud hut near the pond and the kitchen garden. He was ageless. One day I learned he had died after thirty or forty years of pitching hay for the cattle, driving the carriages and teams, and carrying several water jars a day from the well to the house. I cried when I heard the news, for I was fond of Meftah. Often I would follow him around as he did his work. On the way home he let me ride the horses and sometimes carried me on his back. Jules Roy, *The War in Algeria*, trans. Richard Howard (Westport, Connecticut, 1961) [1960]]

²⁷² Roy, *La Guerre d'Algérie*, p. 47. [She isn't responsible. Fifty years ago we all felt the same way] Roy's prejudice towards the *barkis* is much more overt: he refuses to talk to them as 'qu'auraient-ils pu me dire ? Je n'aime pas qu'on essaie de me mentir.' p. 85.

of Europeans and Algerians, but he also identifies himself as able to fight on the side opposing his own race:

Il n'y a plus rien de commun entre vous et moi, capitaine. Je ne serai jamais de votre côté en Algérie et si un jour, dans le collimateur de vos chars ou de vos avions, vous distinguez parmi les ratons en guenilles un grand bâtard de votre race aux cheveux blancs, ce sera moi.²⁷³

Roy has set himself up as an exception to the racial divide he represents throughout his book, finding more common cause with the Algerians than with the Europeans, whether settlers, the army or the citizens of the metropole. Yet the fact remains that the division is clearly one he defines by race and despite his common cause, his representation of Algerians through the trope of the peasant prevents any possibility of such a divide being bridgeable.

In his sources which range over a century of French history, Hopkin finds many different representations of the soldier, both attractive and repulsive, violent and orderly but, 'whatever he was, the soldier was definitely not a peasant.'²⁷⁴ By extension, given the republican connection between soldier and citizen, the peasant was often the antithesis of the ideal of the citizen soldier, particularly in the Second and Third Republics. The tropes familiar to republican cultural representations of the peasant in the nineteenth century are transferred to the Algerian in the twentieth. Whilst both peasant and Algerian may have legally been republican citizens, they were clearly not considered as such by the republican *mentalité* which supported the government. Whilst the divide was considered, rhetorically at least, bridgeable through assimilation in the nineteenth century, such a prejudice actually enabled the barely-noted backtracking over the citizenship guarantees made in the Evian Accords in 1962. Race was already an accepted distinction in regard to citizenship prior to the Joxe Telegram, which instructed the army to prevent the *harkis* crossing over to the metropole and prior to de Gaulle's overtly racial distinctions between settler 'repatriates' and Algerian 'refugees'. As Shepard has noted,

²⁷³ Ibid. pp. 169-170. [You and I have nothing left in common, Captain. I shall never be on your side in Algeria. And if some day, in the gun sights of your tank or your plane, you make out beside the tattered *ratons* a tall white-haired bastard of your own race, it will be me.]

²⁷⁴ Hopkin, *Soldier and Peasant*, p. 13.

the government embraced a simple division between ‘Algerians’ and ‘French’. The former were ‘Muslims’...while the latter were not. These categories did not accurately capture some obvious realities, nor did they respect republican principles and French law. They were, however, easier to understand and easier to explain to a metropolitan population that had tired of trying to figure out what was happening in Algeria.²⁷⁵

Core republican principles of universalism and assimilation were rejected with ease and without discussion, replaced with a racially-defined right to French citizenship. This was possible through the employment of the decolonisation discourse which, as this chapter has shown, was not confined to the political sphere but integrated into republican culture and supported by reference to recognisable republican traditions and prejudices.

Both Shepard and Weil detail the continuing impact of the racial turn on republican citizenship after 1962. Between 1927 and 1983, newly naturalised citizens in France ‘sont exclus de l’exercice des droits politiques et de l’accès à certaines professions pour une période de 5 à 10 ans’.²⁷⁶ For Algerians who arrived on the same boats as the settlers in 1962, this meant that not only did they have to apply for citizenship so recently revoked, even if they succeeded in being granted it, their continued civil and social discrimination had a legal foundation. In the late 1970s, Valéry Giscard d’Estaing attempted to forcibly ‘repatriate’ French Algerians to their country of origin, despite that country having been French at the time of their birth.²⁷⁷ Furthermore, Weil identifies the general principle of French nationality law since 1889 as being based on double *jus soli* which meant that someone would be automatically French if they were born on French soil to a parent who was also born in France. In line with the invention of decolonisation narrative Shepard identifies and this chapter supports, Algerians born in Algeria before 1962 were not considered to have been born in France. This was only addressed in 1993 but with two added provisions: that the parent prove residence in (metropolitan) France for a minimum of five years and the child officially declare a wish to be French between the ages of 16 and 21, rather than being granted citizenship automatically at the age of majority.²⁷⁸ The settler

²⁷⁵ Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization*, p. 220.

²⁷⁶ Weil, *Qu’est-ce qu’un Français ?*, p. 14. [were prevented from exercising their political rights and excluded from access to certain professions for a period of five to ten years]

²⁷⁷ David R. Howarth and Georgios Varouxakis, *Contemporary France: An Introduction to French Politics and Society* (London, 2003) p. 120.

²⁷⁸ Weil, *Qu’est-ce qu’un Français ?*, pp. 176-177.

‘repatriates’ faced none of these problems, regardless of which side of the Mediterranean they or their parents had been born.

The racism which defines who is legitimately a French citizen is not restricted to the legal sphere but permeates the republican *mentalité* through artistic culture. Nor is this racial distinction only present in the works of ex-settlers at the twilight of the Algerian war. In representations of French Algerians in France (thus officially French citizens) and in the context of the Algerian war, a divide is drawn based on race which delegitimises the Algerian as French citizen. Claire Etcherelli’s novel *Élise, ou la vraie vie* (1967), Didier Daeninckx’s novel *Meurtres pour mémoire* (1984), Alain Tasma’s film *Nuit noire, 17 octobre 1961* (2005) and most recently, Rachid Bouchareb’s *Hors la loi* (2010), all draw a clear divide between French and Algerian which, whilst not necessarily representing a racist narrative, is a distinction made on the basis of race which has become inescapable in French republican culture.²⁷⁹ Daeninckx, Tasma and Bouchareb are all openly political in their writing and film-making, attempting to bring issues, particularly of past French crimes against Algerians, to the fore. Michel Haneke, director of *Caché* (2005) made the same claim about wanting to ‘expose’ the massacre of Algerian demonstrators in Paris in October 1961.²⁸⁰ Yet all are unable to overcome the republican decolonisation discourse which effectively rejects the possibility of people of Algerian origin being French citizens.

Caché is particularly interesting because rather than being a representation of the Algerian war, it is a representation of the war’s aftermath forty years on, with specific reference to the repression of Algerians during the 17 October 1961 demonstration.²⁸¹ It is a very self-

²⁷⁹ For example, as Etcherelli’s novel ends, Élise’s attempts to reject the racial divide between her and her lover Arezki, are revealed to be futile and the narrative itself suggests a tragic but recognisable young woman’s rebellious dalliance against society’s norms, a society which she is slipping seamlessly back into. The division between French and Algerian is nowhere more stark than the awkward relationship between the stoic Abdelkader and sexualised young blond *porteuse* in *Hors la loi*. Claire Etcherelli, *Elise, ou la vraie vie* (London, 1985) [1967]; Didier Daeninckx, *Meurtres pour mémoire* (Paris, 1984); Alain Tasma, *Nuit Noire, 17 octobre 1961* (France, 2005); Rachid Bouchareb, *Hors la loi* (France, 2010).

²⁸⁰ Haneke, *Caché*. Such claims are made by both Tasma and Haneke in interviews with them included on the DVD extras. On Daeninckx see, Dine, *Images of the Algerian War*, p. 143. The representation of 17 October 1961 will be considered fully in Chapter 3.

²⁸¹ Haneke is Austrian, not French but the film *Caché* can certainly be considered a French film and indeed part of the French republican cultural sphere this thesis is concerned with. T. Jefferson Kline wastes a great deal of space attempting to justify his discussion of *Caché* as French in such absurd ways as suggesting Haneke’s appreciation for the Polish filmmaker Krystof Kieslowski makes him French and that, through *Caché*, ‘this Austrian director has become authentically “French,” so able is he to present us with such an insoluble paradox’, as though such things could only be possible from French filmmakers. In a final bid to insist on the Frenchness of the film he draws a baffling comparison with Albert Camus’ *L’Etranger*. Haneke is not French, nor does he make any claim to be. But *Caché* is a film concerned with a particularly French

aware film, commenting on bourgeois Parisian life, French culture and the current war in Iraq. *Caché* is essentially a psychological thriller or mystery by genre. Literature show television host, Georges and his wife Anne are being sent video tapes containing hours of footage of the outside of their house from an opposite street, Rue des Iris. There is no obvious motive but when they start arriving wrapped in childlike sketches Georges begins to have flashbacks to an experience from his childhood. Georges' parents adopted a young Algerian boy, Majid, after his own parents failed to return from the 17 October demonstration. Jealous of his presence, Georges told lies about Majid and his parents gave up their adoption, essentially depriving Majid of the privileged social sphere of which Georges is clearly a part.

The representation of the Algerian characters in *Caché* is markedly different from the French characters. Georges flashbacks to his childhood give the first representation of Majid, a silent, scrawny, half-naked boy, blood on his face, wielding an axe and beheading a chicken. A young cleanly-coiffed Georges in a shirt watches, afraid. As adults, the divide is the same: in the first adult appearance of Majid he is wiping his hands on a tea-towel and wearing a scruffy open-necked jumper, whereas Georges is in a suit jacket. The adult Majid is only ever seen in the back of a police van and in his poky flat, decorated with patterned wall paper, piled high with washing, boxes and possessions quite apart from Georges and Anne's pristine clean-lined house. Georges and his family, by contrast, are given freedom of movement, frequently seen entering and leaving their house and mobile across other places in the city. Both Georges and his mother admit to having forgotten all about Majid and in their first conversation, Majid suggests that he is invisible to Georges, he would walk straight past him on the street. Majid's son becomes starkly visible when he turns up at Georges white bourgeois office, although he is first seen in a setting more familiar to a French audience: pushed out of shot by policemen and then exposed to a long shot in the back of a police van with his father. He is never deemed worthy of a name.

subject, filmed in French, in France with a French cast and a largely French crew. Most fundamentally, for this thesis's purpose, it exhibits many of the features of the French decolonisation discourse in relation to Algeria. Mark Cousins frames this point effectively when he says, 'if, when we leave the auditorium, we are asking *who did it*, we are asking the wrong question, and that we should, instead, be asking about the nature of colonial guilt.' In such a context, the film is self-identifyingly French. Films are projects involving a multitude of people and companies and can rarely be considered solely the produce of a single country but most are usually grounded in one and for *Caché*, that country is, without contention, France. T. Jefferson Kline, *Unraveling French Cinema: From L'Atlantique to Caché* (Chichester, 2010), pp. 166, 170 and 172; Mark Cousins, 'After the End: Word of Mouth and *Caché*', *Screen* 48 (2007) p. 225.

Haneke may have had the intention to uncover and question 'colonial guilt', but *Caché* treats its one-dimensional Algerian characters as no more than stereotypes and plot devices for providing exotic intrigue; they are not characters but malleable symbols.²⁸² Majid is scruffy and marginal, his bloody suicide by slitting his throat is directly reminiscent of Georges' flashback to the killing of the chicken and pushes him into the borders of animalistic. Paul Gilroy takes this criticism further, arguing that Majid's suicide is representative of a long-term 'comforting idea that the colonial native can be made to disappear in an instant through the auto-combustive agency of their own violence' which in its modern context leads towards 'the idea that Europe's immigrants should be induced to disappear by any means possible.'²⁸³ Such an interpretation would be more convincing if Majid's graphic and sudden death was a comment on him or on colonialism, but it is the reaction of Georges with which the film is concerned; Majid is essentially seen to slit his throat for the benefit of representing a troubled bourgeois Frenchman.

Majid's confinement and his nameless son's exposure illustrate all too clearly that they do not have a place in French society. They are evidently not the active citizens which George and Anne's productive lives represent through their creative jobs and their son's involvement in that bulwark of republican citizenship, the school. Majid and his son's marginality from this society is represented as entirely a product of their race. So successfully did the republic of 1962 embrace the settler ideas of who was legitimately French, that its ramifications are long-term and striking even in culture forty years afterwards. So strong is the decolonisation discourse that the revolution in republican ideals of citizenship goes unchallenged even by films which purport to be subversive.

Conclusions

Patrick Weil begins his book on the history of French citizenship with an overview of the various disagreements over its definition which had taken place in the 1990s:

²⁸² As Richard Derderian and Eric Saverèse have both observed, Algerian characters remain background characters, marginalised even in films seemingly about them. Richard L. Derderian, 'Algeria as a *lieu de mémoire*: Ethnic Minority Memory and National Identity in Contemporary France', *Radical History Review* 83 (2002) p. 34; Eric Saverèse, *Histoire coloniale et immigration: Une invention de l'étranger* (Biarritz, 2000) p. 44.

²⁸³ Paul Gilroy, 'Shooting Crabs in a Barrel', *Screen* 48 (2007) p. 234.

‘On est français par le sang’, a avancé Valéry Giscard d’Estaing, renvoyant au Code civil de 1804. Non, ‘le sang c’est Vichy’, lui a répondu la gauche ; ‘on est français par le sol, c’est un principe républicain’. Faux, a jugé le Conseil constitutionnel en 1993 : le droit du sol n’est pas un principe fondamental de la République, il n’a été introduit dans le droit français qu’en 1889 ‘pour répondre notamment aux exigences de la conscription’. ‘On n’a plus besoin d’être français pour avoir des droits, pour voter par exemple’, ont alors revendiqué certaines associations, en se référant à la Constitution montagnarde de 1793.²⁸⁴

The laws of 1804 and 1889 matter little to French Algerians. It is the conventions developed between 1958 and 1962 that produced a revolution in republican citizenship and redefined how Frenchness would be conceived which now affect their relationship with the French state, and wider French society.

This chapter has argued that until the Algerian war, the defining figure of the citizen for the French republic was the citizen soldier, a moral and heroic symbol intrinsic to the republican *mentalité* since the raising of the first *levée en masse* in 1792. The absence of such a figure, and replacement by a marginalised conscript developed around a rhetoric of victimisation, suited the republican decolonisation discourse which framed the war as part of the onward march of History, an inevitable process of civilising modernity, and denied responsibility for the conflict or its aftermath. Most importantly, this transition represented a revolution in the meaning of republicanism through citizenship.

The Fifth Republic oversaw major legal changes in the area of citizenship, as Shepard and Weil have shown, but these changes were not, and could not be, restricted to the legal sphere. They required a socio-cultural basis, one that followed the same ‘invention of decolonisation’ narrative through a decolonisation discourse; a dominant and self-congratulatory method of representing such changes as inevitable and progressive in order to avoid considering the challenges and contradictions they meant for the very nature of

²⁸⁴ Weil, *Qu'est-ce qu'un Français ?*, p. 9. [‘One is French by blood’, advanced Valéry Giscard d’Estaing, throwing out the Civil Code of 1804. No, ‘blood is Vichy’, answered the Left; ‘one is French by land [by birth], it is a republican principle.’ False, judged the *Conseil Constitutionnel* in 1993: rights of birth is not a fundamental principle of the Republic, it was only introduced into French law in 1889 ‘in order to answer the demands of conscription.’ ‘One no longer needs to be French to have rights, to vote for example’, claimed certain associations, referring to the *Montagnard* constitution of 1793.]

republicanism. As Shepard has argued in relation to the politico-legal sphere, the ‘reliance on the tide of History...allowed most French people to ignore the radical implications for republican citizenship’.²⁸⁵ This narrative was supported in the cultural sphere by the replacement of the positive, if highly gendered, representation of the citizen through the citizen soldier with a negative conception of citizenship based on race and legitimated through republican language of the ‘other’, recognisable in nineteenth-century conceptions of the peasant. The changing nature of representations of the citizen soldier in republican culture suggests a shift in the understanding of what made a republican citizen. This shift, a revolutionary change, became clear as the racial distinction of citizenship in representations of Algerians, even during periods when they were considered to be full French citizens. These representations are evidence that this revolutionary change was not just a legal alteration but was bolstered by a wider republican *mentalité*. As such, the Revolutionary ideals of universalism, assimilation, of *liberté* and *égalité*, the foundations to which the Fifth Republic still lays claim, were entirely flouted. The following chapter will consider the nature of republicanism and the changes wrought on it by the Algerian war in greater depth, and will begin to suggest how this revolutionary change has gone largely uncommented upon.

²⁸⁵ Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization*, pp. 98-99.

2

Universalism, Assimilation and the Teleological Republic

This chapter builds upon the idea of the decolonisation discourse explored in Chapter 1 and argues that it is part of a broader narrative of universalism inherent within republicanism. This universalist narrative is a teleological one and has been used to effectively conceal a revolution in the application of republican ideals which occurred between 1959 and 1962. As this chapter will show, the teleological universalist narrative is employed in both historical and artistic representations of the Algerian war. Furthermore, this teleological employment has led to the rejection of assimilation, a core element of republican ideology since the French Revolution, in relation to those defined by the Fifth Republic as Muslim, Algerian or more broadly North African. As a result, religion and origin have become negatively defining features of French identity and have become so without any public reconsideration of the values of republicanism.¹

A history of French republicanism and a critical consideration of the republican histories of France are necessary to ground this argument. This dual endeavour will not only consider the development of universalism and assimilation, but also how historians have helped to shape and promote the ideological narrative of republicanism itself. Just as Ceri Crossley and Anne Rigney have critically examined the historical writings of constitutional monarchists and republicans in earlier periods, so I will consider the narratives of François Furet, Eugen Weber, Maurice Agulhon, Robert Tombs and Pamela Pilbeam who have helped shape the understanding of republicanism both in and outside France during the Fifth Republic.² I will then consider more specifically the historiography of French colonialism, particularly in relation to Algeria, how it has incorporated the decolonisation discourse identified in the previous chapter, and how the longitudinal cultural history pursued by this thesis is able to offer a challenge to this dominant teleological narrative.

¹ Negatively in the sense that to be French is to *not* be 'Muslim' or 'Algerian' (as defined by the republic rather than self-identified) rather than previously the positive identification of the citizen soldier.

² Ceri Crossley, 'History as a Principle of Legitimation in France (1820-1848)', Stefan Berger, Mark Donovan, and Kevin Passmore (eds), *Writing National Histories* (London, 1999); Ann Rigney, *The Rhetoric of Historical Representation: Three Narrative Histories of the French Revolution* (Cambridge, 1990). The origin of this idea that history writing is a part of the construction of a particular narrative, as well as my use of the term 'employment', stem from the work of Hayden White. White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (London, 1973).

In the third part of the chapter, I will return to an analysis of artistic representations of both the Franco-Prussian and Algerian wars and argue that the themes of rebirth and, latterly, modernisation are tropes used to further the teleological narrative which underpins the republican ideal of universalism, helping to conceal the ruptures and crises that would otherwise come to dominate the representations of such events. Finally, the chapter will turn to consider assimilation in the specific context of representations of the Algerian war. Building on the initial arguments made in the previous chapter in relation to citizenship, I show how, using the teleological narrative inherent in universalism, the value of assimilation is able to be promoted in relation to representations of settlers whilst concurrently ignored, or even rejected outright, in relation to Algerians, without causing a questioning of republicanism itself. As a result, the history of empire has become a history to which the extreme right alone has laid claim, allowing it to be used unchallenged in the promotion of their racist immigration agenda.

2.1 The history of French republicanism; the republican history of France

2.1a From the First to the Fourth Republic

French republicanism has its roots in the ideas and events which occurred across the Atlantic more than a decade before its own Revolution. The texts of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen of 1789 and the 1791 French Constitution are striking in their similarities to the likes of the Virginia Bill of Rights from June 1776 and the following month's Declaration of Independence of the United States.³ Whilst the ideas these documents incorporated were indebted to French and English philosophical thought, the tangible political reality given to them by the American Revolution and brought over to France by the likes of Tom Paine and Lafayette, had a direct influence on the timing and nature of the French Revolution. Ideals of equality (particularly before the law; the question of social justice would come later and be far less tenacious), of liberty and of sovereignty being held not by a monarch but by the people, are all stated in the Virginia Bill

³ Pierre Goubert, *The Course of French History* (London, 1988) p. 178.

of Rights and are now considered to be central to the French ‘values of 1789’, to which republicanism lays claim.⁴

The Revolution did not bring with it a republic; to say that it was in gestation from 1789 to 1792 would be to overestimate the desirability of such a regime to those steering the Revolution in its early years. Nor were Robert Tombs’ ill-defined ‘values of 1789’ claimed only by republicans. The regimes of constitutional monarchy, empire and republic all cited their origins in the Revolution. The fundamentals which they shared – in the shift from subject to citizen, rights as well as duties and equality before the law, all being based on sovereignty lying with the people rather than in divine right – whilst not always evident in practice, instilled each regime with the legitimacy of being a successor to the Revolution. Only the Bourbon monarchy refused such ideals and never returned to power through the actions of the French people.

Both Bonapartists and republicans went to war legitimated by the idea of spreading Revolutionary ideals beyond France’s borders; the belief that the ‘values of 1789’ were universal was a foundation stone of both empire and republic. This universalism of the Rights of Man, cannot be separated from the early experience of war which brought with it a suspicion of foreigners. This experience, as Jack Hayward has succinctly described, married the ideologies of universalism and assimilation for republicanism:

The ideological contradiction between universal human rights and exclusion of foreigners was in practice resolved against inclusiveness if only because otherwise the French nation would have been geographically boundless. However, the rejection of ethnicity or religion as a criteria of nationality (Protestants and the Jews were accepted as citizens) and the rapid abandonment of the 1794 attempt to impose linguistic unity as unworkable because it would in particular have excluded Alsace and Brittany from the French nation, meant that the proclaimed legal quality of citizens and the universalist symbolism of the 1789 Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen preserved a more assimilationist conception of nationality.⁵

⁴ Ibid. p. 178; Robert Tombs, *France 1814-1914* (London, 1996) p. 208. The understanding of who legally constituted ‘the people’ would not be resolved until the 1960s in either country.

⁵ Jack Hayward, *Fragmented France: Two Centuries of Disputed Identity* (Oxford, 2007) pp. 113-114.

Universalism, then, was an ideal stemming from the Revolution: distinctly visible in the thought of Abbé Sièyes and the actions of the government, not least with the abolition of slavery which Napoleon would later reverse.⁶ Assimilation, the idea that anyone could be French if they were to cast off any other identity, hold in respect the values of *liberté, égalité* and *fraternité* and, most fundamentally, be French above all else, was a product of the Revolutionary wars under the First Republic.

The French Revolution was an event, or series of events, ‘so dramatic, so abrupt, and so influential that it imposed its shadow on French society for at least the following two centuries.’⁷ Universalism has been perhaps the most tenacious of ideals, a belief in which has been easier to maintain than the practical application of the famous triptych. Tombs, in reference to the nineteenth-century historian Jules Michelet, sums up the conception of this belief in the nature of French civilisation:

The starting point was the conviction that French civilization was in important ways universal. The French were not merely a nation; in a sense they were *the* nation, *la grande nation*. Michelet expressed this plainly: a nation was not merely a biological race, and not merely a geographically defined population, but a personality that created itself through its history; and French history has been the greatest such act... The idea of universality originated from French cultural and political hegemony during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.⁸

As Tombs goes on to declare, such a belief was not confined to ‘nationalist extremists’ but was commonplace. Universalism clearly requires a belief in the superiority of one’s ideals and in this sense is not novel to French nationalism. The addition of assimilation is what has set French republicanism apart from the nationalism of its neighbours; because everyone *could* be French there is an underlying element which suggests that everyone *should* be French. In the 1790s such an ideology justified the Revolutionary wars; in the following

⁶ Emmanuel Joseph Sièyes, *What is the Third Estate?*, trans. M. Blondel (London, 1963) [1789]. As Peter Campbell has noted in the introduction to this edition, Sièyes’s commitment to the universalism of the political rights he outlines in his work was all encompassing, ‘even where their adoption might weaken the power of France herself.’ p. 31. Put like this, it is self-evident as to why the notion of assimilation, as a suitable balance to such a idea, became of paramount importance with the onset of war.

⁷ David R. Howarth and Georgios Varouxakis, *Contemporary France: An Introduction to French Politics and Society* (London, 2003) p. 2.

⁸ Tombs, *France 1814-1914*, p. 312.

two centuries, under the banner of the *mission civilisatrice* it would legitimise colonialism over and above the *liberté, égalité, fraternité* triptych.

The First Republic, which Agulhon confines to 10 August 1792 to October 1795 (that is until the Directory) could both be seen as a logical outcome of the Revolution (particularly given the American influence wherein the constitutional monarch was discarded along with the British) or, as Pamela Pilbeam has argued, the Revolution's failure, given that the revolutionaries had not begun 1789 with republican intentions.⁹ Neither interpretation aids an understanding of the development of republicanism itself, but both suggest that there were political rather than purely ideological reasons for moving from a monarchy to a republic. The new republic began by declaring, if not putting into practice, some of the elements which would become fundamental to later republican ideology, particularly in relation to suffrage. Yet many of these apparently republican foundation stones, like anti-clericalism which would truly come to the fore during the Third Republic, began prior to the deposition of the king with the sale of church lands and the removal of privileges from the Catholic Church. The Committee of Public Safety, which dominated the scene during these three years, seemingly rejects the Revolutionary, and later fundamentally republican principle, that sovereignty lay in the hands of the people. Whilst the Revolution imposed its 'shadow' on France, 'the oft-quoted ideals of the eighteenth-century enlightened writers offered no simple template.'¹⁰ As such, the interpretation and application of these ideals depended very much on the subsequent regimes and their circumstances.

Whilst Agulhon restricts his understanding of republicanism into three short years prior to his own passion of 1848, Pilbeam appeals to the classical heritage of the republic to see its continuities not only under the Empire but also the July Monarchy and even the Bourbon Restoration.¹¹ The importance of such a classical heritage should not be underestimated; certainly many of the symbols of the First Republic took their inspiration from Greece and Rome. Pilbeam argues that 'to the Anglo-Saxon mind there is always a certain inconsistency in calling a military dictatorship a republic. For those imbued with the classical tradition there was no inherent contradiction between the two... In this respect it

⁹ Maurice Agulhon, *The Republican Experiment, 1848-1952* (Cambridge, 1983) p. 2; Pamela Pilbeam, *Republicanism in Nineteenth-Century France, 1814-1871* (Basingstoke, 1995) p. 40.

¹⁰ Pamela Pilbeam, 'Revolution, Restoration(s) and Beyond: Changes, Continuities and the Enduring Legacies of 1789', Martin S. Alexander (ed.) *French History Since Napoleon* (London, 1999) p. 32.

¹¹ Pilbeam, *Republicanism in Nineteenth-Century France*, pp. 56, 58-59.

was entirely logical to call the constitution of December 1799 republican.¹² Fundamentally, however, the Napoleonic era would come to be seen as a rejection of republican ideals which were formulated under Louis-Philippe and made themselves heard, for a very short time, in 1848; to a great extent republicanism in terms of its specific aims and ideals shifted from the translucency of the eighteenth century to the more solid ideology of the nineteenth in opposition to Bonapartism. That Bonapartism would become the regime which usurped fledgling republics on two occasions would only strengthen the ideological opposition of the Third and Fourth Republics to the more dictatorial and militaristic regime.

There did not exist any self-defined republican parties under the Restoration, but they began to form in the more liberal environment of the July Monarchy. Republicanism's resounding rallying cry became, during this period, one of democracy and liberty. It also began to take on a social element, no doubt inspired in part by the economic recession which would exacerbate the troubles of Louis-Philippe culminating in the revolutionaries of February 1848 seizing power. Pilbeam sees 'universal suffrage and the "right to work"' as two central tenets of the Second Republic, although the former would not exist for over a century and the latter was rejected with the repression of the June Days.¹³ Nevertheless, to reiterate the importance of suffrage, the Republic was declared again, after the initial elections on 4 May 1848, in order to show that the Second Republic was a regime born out of democracy rather than the barricades.¹⁴ The reclamation of liberty by the Second Republic was a more tenacious ideal than the right to work, both in terms of freedom of the press and association, the abolition of the death penalty for political crimes and in the abolition of slavery.¹⁵ Elements of both democracy and liberty existed in the Second Empire to a greater extent than the First, but never to the extent that republicans demanded in opposition.¹⁶

¹² Ibid. pp. 48-49.

¹³ Ibid. p. 185. Universal suffrage did not exist until the inclusion of Algerians in 1958; it certainly did not exist in 1848 when women, Algerians and the Jewish population of Algeria were all excluded.

¹⁴ Agulhon, *The Republican Experiment*, pp. 47-48.

¹⁵ Ibid. pp. 27-28; Albert Cobban, *A History of Modern France, Volume 2: 1799-1871* (London, 1965) p. 137.

¹⁶ Elections involving the vast majority of the adult male population continued throughout the Second Empire and slavery was not reintroduced. Freedom of the press did not survive Louis-Napoleon's *coup d'état* though. Fernand Terrou, 'Le Cadre Juridique', Claude Bellanger, et al. (eds), *Histoire Générale de la Presse Française. Volume II: De 1815 à 1871* (Paris, 1969); Wilfred Jack Rhoden, 'Caricatural Representations of Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte, 1848-1871', PhD thesis (University of Sheffield, 2011).

The workshops of February 1848 which represented the right to work proved too costly for the more conservative government of May. They were shut down and replaced by conscription and forced labour. A bitter civil war, fought briefly in Paris, was won by the newly-elected government, with the support of the National Guard. For those lacking in sympathy for republicanism, the June Days served as a reminder of the violence and bloodshed witnessed under the First Republic. The Second Republic, then, ushered in what the Third Republic has so often taken credit for: a conservative republicanism. Social programmes on the scale of those enacted in the spring of 1848 were not seen again until the Popular Front of 1936.¹⁷ The anti-clericalism which would become a strong tenet of republicanism towards the end of the nineteenth-century was absent in the constitution of the Second Republic.¹⁸ The final nail in the its founding principles also stemmed from the chamber elected in 1848. An attack on suffrage came from the monarchist-turned-opportunist-republican Adolphe Thiers and was ironically, if somewhat cynically, defended by the Bonaparte he failed to outwit. The change in voting qualifications was accompanied by a sharp increase in stamp tax and repressive measures against the press.¹⁹ Louis-Napoleon's *coup d'état* was hot on its heels.

Napoleon III's final plebiscite in 1870 indicated that he was as popular towards the end of his reign as he had been in the beginning.²⁰ There was no mass republican movement trying to overthrow him, no brewing revolution. The surrender of Napoleon III on 4 September 1870 was predicated wholly by external military defeat; the Republic declared on the steps of the Hôtel de Ville was an opportunistic one. Fresh elections in 1871 provided it with legitimacy which allowed Thiers, the most popular deputy (he had been elected in twenty-six *départements*) and head of the new government, to obliterate the Paris Commune with a degree of force and violence not witnessed in France on such a compact scale. The Third Republic was not ruled by republicans until 1879 and owned its continued existence not to the republicanism of the enfranchised citizens who had filled its seats with deputies, but to the lack of unity amongst the majority of those who considered themselves to be, in one form or another, monarchist.

¹⁷ That government lasted little longer, although their programmes were not so hastily reversed.

¹⁸ Indeed, the Falloux law of 1850 which institutionalised the Church in university education, was introduced by a republican government, albeit one with a Bonaparte as president. Agulhon, *The Republican Experiment*, p. 122.

¹⁹ Ibid. p. 126; Pilbeam, *Republicanism in Nineteenth-Century France*, pp. 235-236.

²⁰ Cobban, *A History of Modern France*, vol. 2, p. 199.

Republicanism lost its revolutionary edge with the suppression of the June Days in 1848 and particularly the brutal slaughter which ended the Paris Commune of 1871. To this extent, near-universal manhood suffrage can be seen to have tamed the left wing of the republican political class wherein the violence or threat of violence by the mob became distasteful even to socialists. To be a republican citizen meant to have the right to vote, but also the responsibility not to attempt revolution. This made republicanism a much less threatening regime to those who had previously seen it only through the lens of the Terror. The fear of Jacobinism goes some way to explain the brutality of the repressions, but the desire to redefine republicanism as a stable, orderly and conservative regime was paramount. Nevertheless, the governments which enacted the repressions against Paris in 1848 and 1871 were not those which would define republicanism itself; indeed many, like Thiers and General Louis Eugène Cavaignac, were republican only by convenience.²¹ The new republicans, the likes of Léon Gambetta and Jules Ferry who would shape republicanism in the latter years of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth, were able to select aspects of republicanism which traversed both sides of the civil war, particularly in terms of suffrage, anti-clericalism and free, compulsory education.²² This triptych of ideals would remain central to republicanism for the following century.²³

Antoine Prost considers the First World War to be a particularly important moment in the development of French republicanism as it was at this moment that it became synonymous with the nation.²⁴ Such a synthesis was no doubt aided by the reintegration of Alsace and Lorraine into France and the popularity of republican regimes across Europe, as well as the eventual victory in the war itself. The First World War gave the Third Republic ‘the unbelievably presumptuous idea that their country was the beacon of the whole of humanity’, thus without doubt strengthening the conviction of universalism.²⁵ Even as the European republics fell with increasing rapidity in the 1930s, eventually including France’s in 1940, such a belief in the intrinsic relationship between the nation and the republic allowed for Charles de Gaulle to reinstate the republic in 1944. He refused even to declare

²¹ Cavaignac had led the suppression of the June Days and was Louis-Napoleon’s main challenger for the presidency of the Second Republic at the end of 1848.

²² The notion of civil war, *la guerre franco-française*, will be considered in Chapter 3.

²³ The first two had origins in the Revolution of 1789 and the latter was certainly not unique to republicanism; both the July Monarchy and the Second Empire had made enthusiastic inroads into educating the French population.

²⁴ Antoine Prost, *Republican Identities in War and Peace: Representations of France in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, trans. Jay Winter and Helen McPhail (London, 2002) pp. 79-87.

²⁵ *Ibid.* p. 87.

it anew on the steps of the Hôtel de Ville, as was the tradition, given that, according to de Gaulle (in an idea embraced by his supporters) it had never actually ended.²⁶ Nevertheless, as with the founding of previous republics, a period of civil violence occurred before being brought to an end by the republic in a show of strength and unity.²⁷ The belief in universalism as intrinsic to republicanism could only bolster such confidence in the longevity, even invincibility, of the republic, at least in retrospect.

Charles Sowerwine, like Prost, considers the Third Republic to mark a pinnacle of success for republicanism. He has argued that the Revolution of 1789 was politico-cultural and began a process which, through a belief in ‘reason’, altered the nature of the French state:

The triumph of the Third Republic ended a struggle begun in the French Revolution of 1789. That struggle can be called the republican project. It depended on the assumption that human beings could use Reason to change their world. Otherwise they would have had no right to change the monarchy, which was ordained by God. To use Reason to change the world, the universe had to be knowable and knowable by human beings. God could no longer be the source of knowledge.²⁸

In such an argument, it is evident how the Third Republic’s reforms in terms of ‘universal’ manhood suffrage, anti-clericalism and free, ‘universal’ education stem from 1789 and its Enlightenment heritage. The Catholic Church was considered an enemy of Reason and also a stalwart of absolute monarchy, but in addition to this, it had also traditionally played a formative role in education. Fervent anti-clericalism of the Third Republic thus led to a separation of Church and State in 1905. Suffrage was a way to legitimate regimes where divine right no longer had any place. A secularly-educated enfranchised citizenry was thus required to pursue a regime based on ‘Reason’; a true inheritor of the Revolution. These values can be considered the basis of republicanism and from this narrative it is clear how

²⁶ This steam-rolling of the Vichy era and the consideration of it as an anomaly in republican history is dealt with in more detail in Chapter 3.

²⁷ As the June Days of 1848 and the *semaine sanglante* of 1871 ushered in conservative republics, so the *épuration* of 1944 provided an opportunity for revenge against (and scapegoating of) collaborators whilst at the same time allowing de Gaulle and his allies to sideline the Communists and represent themselves as the party of order. See, for example Julian Jackson, *France: The Dark Years, 1940-1944* (Oxford, 2001) pp. 571-576.

²⁸ Charles Sowerwine, *France Since 1870: Culture, Politics and Society* (Basingstoke, 2001) p. 40.

François Furet was able to claim that, with the Third Republic the Revolution was ‘coming into port.’²⁹

2.1b Universalism, assimilation and teleology

The Revolution of 1789 did not just bestow the value of ‘Reason’ upon republicanism. It began a narrative which would remain a central theme in French republican thought, practice and history writing. The Revolution instilled upon France, and upon French republicanism in particular, a linear narrative, a path of history along which the Revolution would be fulfilled. As Pilbeam declares at the very beginning of her book on republican France, ‘for republicans a republic came to epitomize the final spiritual and institutional triumph of man in society.’³⁰ Thus, for republicans, everyone should be striving for this end and everyone, if they incorporated the ‘values of 1789’ to employ Tombs’ stock phrase, could reach it. This narrative then, linear, universalist and teleological, also incorporated assimilation; all people were free and equal and thus all could reach the ‘final triumph’ if they assimilated into the values of the French republic.

Historians, as Tombs has suggested in reference to Michelet above, are part of the creation of this narrative of universalism. However, their role did not end in the nineteenth century. Furet’s idea of the Revolution ‘coming into port’ serves to re-emphasise the teleological nature of the republican narrative, as does Tombs’ own obsession with identifying when the Revolution ended (with both Empires and the Fifth Republic in his analysis).³¹ Indeed most republican historians feel the need to identify when the Revolution ended, and it is not surprising to find that it is frequently with the regime in which they themselves are present.³²

The notion of progress is central to this narrative. Prost has argued this point as well as supporting it in his own historical narrative:

²⁹ François Furet, *Revolutionary France 1770-1880*, trans. Antonia Nevill (Oxford, 1992) [1988] p. 537. Furet enjoyed a neat ending to a book as much as a neat ending to the Revolution; he also claimed that with Napoleon’s *coup d’état* on the 18 Brumaire, ‘the Revolution was over at last.’ François Furet and Denis Richet, *The French Revolution*, trans. Stephen Hardman (London, 1970) [1965] p. 398.

³⁰ Pilbeam, *Republicanism in Nineteenth-Century France*, p. 1.

³¹ Tombs, *France 1814-1914*, p. 488.

³² This is the case in the work of Cobban, Hayward, Pilbeam and Tombs. Prost seems to favour the more traditional reverence for the Third Republic akin to Furet, a trend which will be considered in Chapter 3. Ceri Crossley has noted the same phenomenon in historians writing during the Restoration. Crossley, ‘History as a Principle of Legitimation’, pp. 49-56.

'Progress' is a key word in the republican vocabulary. The expression is electorally powerful because it is more than propaganda; it refers to a concrete reality, based above all on economic evolution but visible to all, a factor of which the republican school takes pains to create an awareness in order to use it for the credit of the regime.³³

The need for such a deterministic narrative stems both from the Revolution and from the many subsequent political crises France, and particularly the republics, have encountered. As Nick Hewlett has suggested, 'France's revolutionary, and therefore violent, past has become an enduring subject of national political pride and a symbol of progress, an integral and fundamental part of France's political identity.'³⁴ There is nothing more interesting for historians than a crisis, and a revolution or civil war suit such interests given that they are also easily dealt with on a national level. A narrative of progress allows certain crises to be positive; each crisis is overcome and the republic moves forward along a linear path towards an end, in the French case so frequently the end of the Revolution. Yet, as Henry Glassie has warned, if 'history reduces to a linear, segmented tale of change, it falls into alliance with the forces of oppression.'³⁵ Thus, to consider the republican historical narrative another way, a narrative of progress overcomes crises and provides ultimate legitimacy to the regime which overcomes them; such a narrative cannot be politically banal. Given the power that such a narrative has, it is hardly surprising that Gilbert Chaitin has considered French republicanism to be akin to religion.³⁶

The Third Republic is a particular focus of this narrative for several reasons: the enormity of the crises which it 'overcomes' (complete defeat by only one power, civil war in Paris, an anti-republican dominance in political circles for several years), the tenacity of the regime in comparison to all those which preceded it since 1789 and the 'progressive' successes it achieves (democracy, education, secularisation) which are considered to be (by republicans,

³³ Prost, *Republican Identities in War and Peace*, p. 78. This reference to economic progress is very reminiscent of the changes Guy encounters on his return to France in *Les Parapluies du Cherbourg* (see Chapter 1).

³⁴ Nick Hewlett, 'Explaining Conflict and Violence in France's Modern Political History, 1789-1945', Jan Windebank and Renate Günther (eds), *Violence and Conflict in the Politics and Society of Modern France* (Lampeter, 1995) p. 10.

³⁵ Henry H. Glassie, *Material Culture* (Bloomington, 1999) p. 39.

³⁶ Gilbert D. Chaitin, *The Enemy Within: Culture Wars and Political Identity in Novels of the French Third Republic* (Columbus, 2009) pp. 41 and 225. He writes that the 'keystone of the republican ideological edifice was...the claim that there exists a universal secular morality capable of taking the place of the Christian moral system'.

including republican historians) the almost natural outcomes of the Revolution. Sudhir Hazareesingh, in a study of Third Republican intellectuals in which he is specifically attempting to address this teleological narrative of progress, identifies it clearly in the thought of republican politicians and writers in the nineteenth century.³⁷ Whilst he credits the likes of Émile Littré as having a slightly more complex understanding of the Revolution's heritage and influence (particularly in its embrace of a conservative rather than Jacobin-style regime), teleological 'progress was a "natural" phenomenon' and 'republicans offered a conception of state and society which best corresponded [in Littré's words] with "the general rules of the development of humanity"'.³⁸ Fundamentally, Hazareesingh identifies the merging of two intellectual giants of the nineteenth century, positivism and republicanism, which together 'harked back to the Enlightenment's project of establishing a social and political order based on progress', of which reason (key to Sowerwine's understanding of republicanism) was a central legitimating factor.³⁹

The focus on the Third Republic for the likes of Furet, Prost and Eugen Weber thus not only allows a declaration of the success of republicanism as the progressive force of French history, but also promotes a narrative which from 1870 (or perhaps 1879 when the regime was fully 'republicanised') suggests that the French are from this point natural republicans, republicans by default.⁴⁰ This republican belief in its 'natural right' is not a trend novel to France as Stefan Berger demonstrates with great clarity:

all national histories showed a remarkable zeal in demonstrating the uniqueness of their particular nation-state, leading to a historiography of special paths which often obscured the common characteristics of the European heritage. Thus, Whig historians in Britain put in a claim for the unique tradition of liberal parliamentaryism, whereas French historians

³⁷ Sudhir Hazareesingh, *Intellectual Founders of the Third Republic: Five Studies in Nineteenth-Century French Republican Thought* (Oxford, 2001).

³⁸ Ibid. pp. 39-40 and 49.

³⁹ Ibid. p. 79.

⁴⁰ Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France 1870-1914* (London, 1977). It is precisely this linear narrative which has led to an obsessive questioning of the Vichy era, considered to be an anomaly in the otherwise unbroken republican line since 1870. This will be considered in more depth in Chapter 3. That this is reminiscent of the decolonisation discourse identified in Chapter 1 is not coincidental. As Chapter 3 will argue, it is precisely this transference of discourse between the two periods which allows the 'decolonisation' of Algeria to be brushed over and the constitutional changes of the Fifth Republic to be left unquestioned or debated. Hugo Frey is particularly astute in his analysis of the historiography in relation to the Vichy era. See Hugo Frey, 'Rebuilding France: Gaullist Historiography, the Rise-Fall Myth and French Identity (1945-58)', Stefan Berger, Mark Donovan, and Kevin Passmore (eds), *Writing National Histories: Western Europe since 1800* (London, 1999).

tended to stress the singular significance of the 'Great Revolution'... All of these claims to uniqueness were connected to the notion that one's own nation was superior to other nations.⁴¹

In French history this uniqueness and superiority is promoted in 'a universal mission...[of] spreading revolutionary values', as well as a belief in assimilation.⁴² For historians of the Fifth Republic it is precisely this narrative that requires the decolonisation discourse considered in the previous chapter and enables what Shepard has identified as the 'invention of decolonisation'.⁴³ This teleological narrative of universalism, present in the republican histories of France, is imperative in the concealment of the crisis which the Algerian war caused in republicanism itself.

The defeat of the French in Algeria was a twofold defeat for republicanism. Firstly it was a direct rejection of the assimilationist project and as such undermined the universalism of the Revolution and its values. Secondly, it was indicative of the fact that assimilation was never actually pursued as a policy in Algeria as it was within France (Weber's ubiquitous 'peasants into Frenchmen'). The complete denial of this second point, which is what Todd Shepard's thesis is concerned with, was concealed by rhetoric of a newly independent Algeria, brought up under French guidance and having matured into a secular republic; the culmination of the *mission civilisatrice*.⁴⁴ Thus, by denying that assimilation was never meaningfully pursued, the independence of Algeria could be represented as an example of the universalism inherent to the ideals of the French Revolution. In reality, 1962 marked not only a rejection of French universalism, but also its intrinsic failure, undermining the very essence of the French republic and the Revolutionary ideas of 1789.

⁴¹ Stefan Berger, Mark Donovan and Kevin Passmore, 'Apologias for the Nation-State in Western Europe since 1800', Stefan Berger, Mark Donovan, and Kevin Passmore (eds), *Writing National Histories: Western Europe since 1800* (London, 1999) p. 10.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Todd Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization: The Algerian War and the Remaking of France* (London, 2006).

⁴⁴ Ibid.

2.2 The historiography of colonialism and decolonisation

2.2a Algeria as 'an integral part of France'

In line with Hazareesingh's tracing of the relationship between positivism and republicanism in the intellectual thought of the later nineteenth century, Martin Evans argues that 'colonialism, along with a belief in the values of positivism, science and primary education, became an integral part of the Third Republic's unitary political culture.'⁴⁵ In essence, colonialism was a political rather than an economic companion of republicanism.⁴⁶ Robert Aldrich has argued that the colonies were intended to be profitable in a rationale much more familiar to British colonies, but in reality, they operated at a financial loss for France at least prior to the First World War.⁴⁷ The French empire of the nineteenth century, whatever its strategic value, was largely one of prestige.

This is particularly true of the empire during the Third Republic. Founded on a crushing defeat and a loss of territory, a refocusing towards colonial possessions to regain international standing was a natural progression for the regime. Evans considers the '1870-1 catastrophe' as being 'intimately connected to the evolution of a full-bodied colonial doctrine' which would 'signal an end to political and social decadence, proving beyond doubt that France was still a great power.'⁴⁸ It caused some criticism, particularly from those on the right who considered this focus on the colonies as cowardice when focus should have been placed on *revanche* against Germany.⁴⁹ Nevertheless, the colonies, and Algeria especially, became an important symbol of French greatness, and a more popular one than is often given credit.⁵⁰ Algeria's importance was enhanced after 1871 as many Alsatians, wishing to remain French, moved there, often to land 'confiscated' on their behalf by the new republic.⁵¹

⁴⁵ Martin Evans, 'Culture and Empire, 1830-1962', Martin Evans (ed.) *Empire and Culture: The French Experience* (Basingstoke, 2004) p. 10.

⁴⁶ This section deals only with the second wave of French colonialism mainly involving Africa and Indochina, rather than that across the Atlantic, which was largely lost by the time of the Third Republic.

⁴⁷ Robert Aldrich, *A History of French Overseas Expansion* (Basingstoke, 1996) p. 91; Martin S. Alexander and John F. V. Keiger, 'Defending France: Foreign Policy and the Quest for Security, 1850s-1990s', Martin S. Alexander (ed.) *French History Since Napoleon* (London, 1999) p. 284.

⁴⁸ Martin Evans, 'From Colonialism to Post-Colonialism: The French Empire since Napoleon', Martin S. Alexander (ed.) *French History Since Napoleon* (London, 1999) p. 396.

⁴⁹ Paul Déroulède, founder of the *Ligue des Patriotes* declared in response to Jules Ferry's colonial policy, 'J'ai perdu deux sœurs, et vous m'offrez vingt domestiques.'

⁵⁰ Tony Chafer and Amanda Sackur, eds, *Promoting the Colonial Idea: Propaganda and Vision of Empire in France* (Basingstoke, 2002) pp. 3-5.

⁵¹ Albert Cobban, *A History of Modern France, Volume 3: 1871-1962* (London, 1965) p. 92; Karine Varley, *Under the Shadow of Defeat: The War of 1870-71 in French Memory* (Basingstoke, 2008) pp. 102-103.

For a regime laying claim to a Revolutionary heritage, however, a focus on colony policy as pursued by key republican figures like Ferry and Gambetta, did not sit easily with the ideal of *égalité*. Abbé Sièyes's critique of the nobility's privileged position as a barrier to an equal society, is striking in its similarity to the issues which colonialism raises for republicanism:

The nobility, however, is also a foreigner in our midst because of its *civil* and *political* prerogatives.

What is a nation? A body of associates living under *common* laws and [re]presented by the same *legislative assembly*, etc.

Is it not obvious that the nobility possesses privileges and exemptions which it brazenly calls its rights and which stand distinct from the rights of the great body of citizens? Because of these special rights, the nobility does not belong to the common order, nor is it subjected to the common laws. Thus its private rights make it a people apart in the great nation. It is truly *imperium in imperio*.⁵²

The suggestion is that the nobility are the *colons* of a colonised France and given Sièyes' belief in equality regardless of race, it would not stretch his ideas to suggest that colonialism itself was not befitting of revolutionary ideals.

In lieu of one revolutionary ideal, the Third Republic looked to another to justify its colonial policy: universalism and the belief that the *mission civilisatrice* 'provided the moral underpinning which...distinguished French conquests from the selfish aggression of other colonial powers, especially Britain'.⁵³ A belief in universalism and a responsibility to it was foundational for Ferry and one that fitted well with his pursuit of state-led education; civilising the colonies shared the same strand of his ideology as educating the peasants.⁵⁴ Paul Sorum has identified such a belief in the civilising mission persisting and continuing to justify French colonialism well into the twentieth century.⁵⁵ Colonialism was promoted in

⁵² Sièyes, *What is the Third Estate?*, p. 58.

⁵³ Tombs, *France 1814-1914*, p. 202.

⁵⁴ On Jules Ferry's commitment to universalism through colonialism see his speech to the Chamber of Deputies in 25 July 1885 reproduced in Guy Pervillé, *De l'Empire Française à la décolonisation* (Paris, 1991) pp. 47-8; Raoul Girardet, *L'Idée coloniale en France de 1871 à 1962* (Paris, 1972) pp. 82-86 and James R. Lehning, *To Be a Citizen: The Political Culture of the Early French Third Republic* (London, 2001) p. 136.

⁵⁵ Paul Clay Sorum, *Intellectuals and Decolonization in France* (Chapel Hill, 1977) p. 209.

this way by the republic, not least through the *expositions universelles* of 1878, 1889 and 1900 and the *exposition coloniale* of 1931, so much so that Elizabeth Ezra has suggested that colonial culture became ‘inescapable’, that France had made it ‘an integral part of itself.’⁵⁶

If France was pursuing a *mission civilisatrice* in its colonies, spurred on by the ideal of universalism, the aim must be one of assimilation in order to maintain ideological coherence. This may have been less true for more traditional colonies but was certainly the case for Algeria; the Second Republic’s incorporation of the three Algerian *départements* into the French state suggests a pro-active move in support of such an intention. The colony as an integral part of France was an idea which stemmed from the Revolution, when decrees of March 1790 and August 1792 declared (but not did not act upon the declaration) that all colonial subjects were now citizens of France.⁵⁷ The republican project in Algeria could thus be seen as a culmination of these Revolutionary ideals.

However, assimilation, other than for a brief and panicked period between 1954 and 1959, was never pursued in Algeria. The belief in universalism was an excellent mode of justification but it was not a reality. The savagery and racism which the Algerians encountered from their ‘civilisers’ throughout the Third Republic is not simply explainable through personal gripes or manhandling by the army, it was systemic:

The fact that for Muslims wine cultivation [a key settler crop] was deeply offensive – a permanent affront to their religious sensibilities and savagely sapping of food resources for the local population – did not enter into the equation... By 1930 only 1 per cent of Algerians had a farm of more than 100 hectares as hunger became part of everyday life for the native population... [During the Great Depression] the French ruthlessly protected settlers’ interests, thereby provoking a pauperization process which produced a huge rural exodus on the part of the native population to the major coastal cities. This flight from the countryside climaxed tragically with the 1937 famine, widely remembered amongst North Africans as the terrible year of hunger, when people literally dropped dead of starvation on the roadside... [L]ocal

⁵⁶ Gordon Millan, Brian Rigby and Jill Forbes, 'Industrialization and its Discontents (1870-1914)', Jill Forbes and Michael Kelly (eds), *French Cultural Studies: An Introduction* (Oxford, 1995) p. 47; Evans, 'Culture and Empire, 1830-1962', pp 16-17; Elizabeth Ezra, *The Colonial Unconscious: Race and Culture in Interwar France* (London, 2000) pp. 2-3.

⁵⁷ Cobban, *A History of Modern France, vol. 2*, p. 39.

authorities took fright, ...most tried to send victims back in lorry-loads to their place of origin, and what underpinned such a reaction was the belief that Muslim Algerians did not constitute a modern nation. Theirs was a primitive culture based upon tribes and religion which, because it could not compete, was predestined for extinction.⁵⁸

Ferry's rhetoric had suggested that the republic considered Algerians to be in need of the same treatment as Breton or Corsican peasants: education, industrialisation, republicanisation. Yet this was evidently not what was pursued.⁵⁹ Timothy Baycroft has considered the comparison of regional and colonial assimilation in relation to Algeria and concluded that whilst 'the Republican rhetoric of empire was similar to that of the nation', the implementation of the policy was 'not completely parallel, and numerous differences can be seen.'⁶⁰ He implies that this was partly to do with the 'interpretation by subsequent generations', but Ferry himself openly considered the Algerians to be racially distinct from the French in a way that was certainly not the case for French regions.⁶¹ There may have been parallel rhetoric, but there was no parallel policy.

The claim to the pursuit of assimilation is made more absurd when considering how Algeria was run, even when referred to as 'an integral part of France' from 1848.⁶² Putting aside the apparent ridiculousness of 'deporting' June Days insurgents to what was ostensibly a region of France, Algeria possessed a civilian administration but was effectively controlled by the army; General Cavaignac was Governor-General of Algeria during the Second Republic.⁶³ That Algeria had a governor-general throughout its period as 'an integral part of France' further illustrates the absurdity of such a claim. Napoleon III was perhaps a little more honest about the relationship between France and Algeria; he

⁵⁸ Evans, 'Culture and Empire, 1830-1962', p. 12.

⁵⁹ Not all republicans were blind to the hypocrisy between rhetoric and reality in Algeria: opposition to Ferry's policies based on them being 'a violation of the ideals of the Revolution and the Republic' by the likes of the radical republicans Georges Clemenceau, Camille Pelletan and Georges Périn helped unseat him in the 1880s. Lehning, *To Be a Citizen*, p. 138.

⁶⁰ Timothy Baycroft, 'The Empire and the Nation: The Place of Colonial Images in the Republican Visions of the French Nation', Martin Evans (ed.) *Empire and Culture: The French Experience* (Basingstoke, 1996) p. 151.

⁶¹ Ibid. In his 1885 speech to the Chamber of Deputies, Ferry draws distinctions between 'superior' and 'inferior' races. Aldrich, *A History of French Overseas Expansion*, p. 98.

⁶² This phrase is taken from Antoine Prost but he is not alone in using it. Prost, 'The Algerian War in French Collective Memory', Jay Winter and Emmanuel Sivan (eds), *War and Remembrance in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, 1999) p. 161.

⁶³ On the deportation to Algeria of insurgents after June 1848 see Agulhon, *The Republican Experiment* p. 61; Goubert, *The Course of French History*, p. 249; Pilbeam, *Republicanism in Nineteenth-Century France*, p. 216. Agulhon, *The Republican Experiment*, p. 31.

considered Algeria to be an Arabic kingdom of which he was protector.⁶⁴ This change in rhetoric meant little to most Algerians. The dominance of the army and existence of a governor-general remained consistent features of French rule until independence.

Yet, despite Algeria being a home-from-home for the army, even they did not consider it to be France. With the invasion and occupation of France by Nazi Germany in 1940, General Maxime Weygand was 'determined that the government should not leave the soil of France'.⁶⁵ Certainly this conclusion had much to do with preserving the army itself, but coupled with Marshal Pétain's pursuit of those deputies who did attempt to reach Algeria to continue governing, it clearly suggests that Algeria to both the army and the French populace generally, was not a true part of France.⁶⁶ During the war itself, the United States were the first to land in Algeria, during November 1942; de Gaulle did not arrive until May the following year.⁶⁷ Gathering troops for the liberation of France, much of the Free French armies were made up of colonial and Algerian soldiers but, under specific instructions from de Gaulle, they were removed from the armies which liberated Paris.⁶⁸ For both the army and the populous, Algeria was not considered to be French and nor were Algerians.

The reasoning behind the rhetoric and the civil administration, the need for Algeria's special status, stemmed from the dominance and political visibility of the settlers. They were bastions of the Third Republic which offered them both practical support and extended citizenship (in 1870 for the Jews, in 1886 for newly emigrated 'Europeans'). Settlers were republicans by virtue of not being Bonapartists (given Napoleon III's more favourable rhetoric directed at the Algerians). As such, their existence and the governance of Algeria needed to be justified in republican terms: through the language of universalism and assimilation. The settlers were taking civilisation to Algeria, creating farms from desert, setting up schools and building roads. That the farms were frequently vineyards offensive to Muslim sentiment, the schools were largely for the settlers' children and cars were a

⁶⁴ This of course did not endear him to the settlers but it did at least mean that the deportations of insurgents opposing his *coup d'état* were correctly defined. Goubert, *The Course of French History*, p. 261.

⁶⁵ Cobban, *A History of Modern France*, vol. 3, pp. 177-178.

⁶⁶ Jackson, *The Dark Years* pp. 121-122. For further discussion see Chapter 3, section 3.2a.

⁶⁷ Sowerwine, *France since 1870*, p. 221.

⁶⁸ Myron Echenberg, 'Morts pour la France; The African Soldier in France During the Second World War', *The Journal of African History* 26 (1985) pp. 363-380.

luxury few Algerians could even hope to afford, was of secondary concern.⁶⁹ Evans has argued that ‘the only interest that counted were those of the settlers, which in turn explains why the Third Republic became so closely associated with the attempt to make Algeria French.’⁷⁰ Algeria was French not because of assimilationist ideals but because of settler interests. The rhetoric was evidently powerful and successful enough so that by the time of the Fourth Republic, public opinion ensured that ‘it was impossible not to help the *Pieds noirs*, these not-so-distant cousins, against the threat of the Algerian “rebels”’.⁷¹ In reality, assimilation applied only to the settlers, never to the Algerians themselves.

The assimilation of Algerians into the French republic was not pursued with any degree of conviction between 1848 and the start of the Algerian war. This does not in any way undermine Todd Shepard’s ‘invention of decolonisation’ thesis by suggesting that Algeria never really was ‘an integral part of France’; the settlers, their farms and the cheap labour the Algerians provided were certainly considered and treated as such but the Algerians themselves largely remained a foreign entity. It was only when the republic’s authority came under threat that the rhetorical justifications for the status of Algeria produced practical policies.⁷² As Stephen Tyre has found, the outbreak of the war prompted much more assertive policies of integration.⁷³ Jacques Soustelle, governor-general between 1955 and 1956, planned a remarkably radical pursuit of assimilation which broke from the mould by suggesting it would be possible to maintain a Muslim identity whilst additionally gaining a French one.⁷⁴ His idea of integration was to make French and Algerians equal in terms of civil rights (including in the realm of female suffrage), remove the dominance of the secular model over an Islamist one and make Arabic compulsory in all schools.⁷⁵

⁶⁹ Vineyards in Algeria became highly profitable enterprises as phylloxera destroyed many of them in France. Cobban, *A History of Modern France*, vol. 3 p. 93. In 1954, roughly one in ten Algerian children went to primary school. The figure was much lower in some rural areas (between one in fifty to one in seventy) and for girls (one in sixteen). 94 percent of men and 98 percent of women were illiterate in French, the language of republican schools. Benjamin Stora, *Algeria, 1830-2000: A Short History*, trans. Jane Marie Todd (Ithaca, 2001) p. 24.

⁷⁰ Evans, 'Culture and Empire, 1830-1962', p. 12.

⁷¹ Prost, 'The Algerian War in French Collective Memory', p. 163.

⁷² In line with this, broadened access to civilian and military positions was granted by de Gaulle in March 1944. Stora, *Algeria, 1830-2000*, p. 21. A quota of 10% was introduced for civil service positions in Algeria. Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization*, p. 50.

⁷³ Stephen Tyre, 'From *Algérie Française* to *France Musulmane*: Jacques Soustelle and the Myths and Realities of "Integration"', 1955-1962', *French History* 20 (2006) pp. 276-296.

⁷⁴ Ibid. p. 280.

⁷⁵ Ibid. p. 278. Soustelle’s school policy was heavily influenced by his fellow ethnologist and colleague Germaine Tillion, perhaps most famous for founding a Resistance group and spending three years in Ravensbrück during the Second World War. Both, at this stage, could be considered Gaullists. Soustelle experienced a dramatic change of political opinion (that Alistair Horne attributes to his witnessing of the

Soustelle was removed from his position with the transfer of the head of government to Guy Mollet, but the pursuit of assimilation as a method of ending the war remained for a few more strained years. François Mitterrand, Minister of the Interior under Mollet, was heard regularly reiterating the principle that Algeria was France.⁷⁶ The subsequent governor-general (after General Georges Catroux's brief stint), Robert Lacoste, pursued similar policies to Soustelle, pouring money into attempts to raise Algerian living standards.⁷⁷ De Gaulle's enfranchisement of the whole adult population in 1958 and his five-year Constantine plan, a programme of social and economic development including land redistribution, was very much in the same vein.⁷⁸ In his speech in Constantine on 3 October 1958, de Gaulle 'referred to the notion that the people of Algeria were full-fledged Frenchmen.'⁷⁹ The FLN's reaction was to set up a provisional government. With the shift in policy towards self-determination in 1959, the desperate clambering for the republican ideal of assimilation ended, and was then denied. The pursuit of assimilation in the initial years of the war allowed the republic to engage in a very bitter conflict whilst maintaining a claim to republican values; in order to extract themselves from Algeria, such policies which laid claim to the idea that Algeria was 'an integral part of France' were replaced with a decolonisation discourse atoning to the successful civilisation of Algeria under French protection and the blossoming of a new independent republic.

2.2b *France vis-à-vis Algeria*

There was evidently a direct shift in the rhetoric used firstly to justify Algeria's place in relation to the French republic (1848-1954 and the assimilation of the settlers), secondly to justify the initial attempts to maintain it as such (1954-9 and the assimilation of Algerians) and finally to disengage from the war and draw a solid distinction between who was French

aftermath of the Philippeville massacre) which would lead him to join the OAS and spend 7 years in exile. Tillion would be amongst the voices lambasting the use of torture in Algeria under the Fifth Republic particularly in her role on the Djamilia Boupacha Committee. See also Alistair Horne, *A Savage War of Peace: Algeria 1954-1962* (London, 1977) pp. 109-110, 122-123; Simone de Beauvoir and Gisèle Halimi, *Djamilia Boupacha. Témoignages d'Henri Alleg, Mme Maurice Audin, Général de Bollardière, R.P. Chenu, Dr Jean Dalsace, J. Fonlupt-Esperaber, Françoise Mallet-Joris, Daniel Mayer, André Philip, J.F. Revel, Jules Roy, Françoise Sagan. Portrait original de Picasso. Hommage des peintres Laponjade et Matta.* (Paris, 1962).

⁷⁶ Kristin Ross, *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies: Decolonization and the Reordering of French Culture* (London, 1995) p. 123.

⁷⁷ Horne, *A Savage War of Peace*, p. 155.

⁷⁸ Anthony Clayton, *The War of French Decolonization* (London, 1994) p. 152; Aldrich, *A History of French Overseas Expansion*, p. 295.

⁷⁹ Dominique Maillard, 'The Muslims in France and the French Model of Integration', *Mediterranean Quarterly* (2005) p. 65.

and who was Algerian (the success of the *mission civilisatrice*). As Matthew Connelly has asserted, ‘the Algerian War was, in part, ideological combat, [thus] peacemaking required ideological disarmament.’⁸⁰ In many ways it was as much about an ideological conflict between changing interpretations of republican ideals to fit French interests as it was between the French and the FLN.

The teleological narrative of universalism and the decolonisation discourse, allowed a writing of history which suggested a loyalty to republican ideals in both the colonial and post-colonial eras; in essence, a writing over of history. There are similarities here with Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi’s thesis on forgetting:

at certain junctures, peoples are also capable of anamnesis, though it is not the group as such that initiates the process, but outstanding individuals or elites...Every ‘renaissance,’ every ‘reformation,’ reaches back into an often distant past to recover forgotten or neglected elements with which there is a sudden sympathetic vibration, a sense of empathy, or recognition. Inevitably, every such anamnesis also transforms the recovered past into something new; inexorably, it denigrates the intermediate past as something that deserves to be forgotten.⁸¹

Whilst, as the introduction has made clear, this thesis does not subscribe to the notion of a collective forgetting, the idea of recovering a ‘forgotten’ past (whether it is a real past or not is without consequence) – in this situation the recall from 1959 that France is engaged in a civilising mission which is reaching its inevitable end – is recognisable in the change in rhetoric in relation to Algeria over these three periods.

There are many historians who have accepted (and thus promoted) the decolonisation discourse in their works and, frequently, the ‘outstanding individual’ in this instance is often identified as de Gaulle. The General takes centre-stage for historians who view his leadership as creating a path for the inevitable decolonisation. Even writing before the end of the war Tanya Matthews suggests that de Gaulle ‘gradually unveiled what in all probability was his original purpose in Algeria, culminating in the offers of self-

⁸⁰ Matthew James Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution: Algeria's Fight for Independence and the Origins of the Post-Cold War Era* (Oxford, 2002) p. 215

⁸¹ Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, *Zakhor: Jewish History and Jewish Memory* (London, 1996) [1982] p. 113.

determination and of independence’, while for Pierre Goubert, the General’s gradual introduction of the possibility of independence, initially through ‘autodetermination... ‘inevitably gathered strength’.⁸² To avoid undermining the decolonisation discourse through a recognition that de Gaulle came to power on the back of the belief that he would maintain *Algérie française*, it is suggested that his intentions were never to pursue such a policy. Michael Kelly credits his creation of the Fifth Republic as giving de Gaulle ‘the scope to settle the Algerian war, at the expense of disappointing his erstwhile supporters’.⁸³ Anthony Clayton argues that, in ‘a major speech in September 1959, de Gaulle disclosed his project of the previous year by openly offering Algeria “self-determination”’.⁸⁴ John Talbott has argued that de Gaulle’s ‘admirers insist that no one else could have extricated France from Algeria without provoking a civil war.’⁸⁵ As Talbott implies, such a narrative of the war denies its hugely destructive and very bloody character. Jean Lacouture suggests it led to further bloodshed because the false narrative made space for the OAS who were able to re-appropriate the notion of *Algérie française*, a concept denied by the republic after 1959.⁸⁶

This pursuit of a decolonisation discourse within historiography thus ‘transforms the recovered past into something new’ and by doing so ‘denigrates the intermediate past as something that deserves to be forgotten.’ In this instance, de Gaulle’s return to power becomes the beginning of Algerian decolonisation and the period of the war beforehand is given scant importance. This allows Tony Chafer to suggest that assimilation of the Algerian population was always ‘unrealistic’ precisely because it was not in line with Algerian independence, rather than because the assimilation doctrine itself was flawed.⁸⁷ Beyond the historiography, Jean-Robert Henry has accused French political scientists of

⁸² Tanya Matthews, *War in Algeria: Background for Crisis* (1961) p. 62; Goubert, *The Course of French History*, p. 308.

⁸³ Michael Kelly, Elizabeth Fallaize and Anna Ridehalgh, 'Crises of Modernization', Jill Forbes and Michael Kelly (eds), *French Cultural Studies: An Introduction* (Oxford, 1995) p. 132.

⁸⁴ Clayton, *The War of French Decolonization*, p. 162. Clayton insists that de Gaulle’s policies were consistent throughout 1958-62, he simply remained ambiguous when he felt the public were yet to ‘catch up’ with his plans. Yet at the end of his book Clayton argues that the term decolonisation ‘connotes a rationalization not wholly deserved’ which suggests some contradiction to his faith in de Gaulle’s consistent pursuit of it. Even Shepard borders on this ode to Gaullist consistency as, whilst identifying the myth of inevitability bestowed upon Algerian independence, he credits de Gaulle with always considering Algerians to be fundamentally different to the French. Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization*, pp. 75-77.

⁸⁵ John Talbott, *The War Without a Name: France in Algeria, 1954-1962* (New York, 1980) p. 136. The idea that there was no civil war is returned to in Chapter 3.

⁸⁶ Jean Lacouture, *Algérie, la guerre est fini* (Bruxelles, 1985) p. 186. This argument and its relationship with the rise of the extreme right in the post-war republic will be returned to at the end of this chapter.

⁸⁷ Chafer and Sackur, eds, *Promoting the Colonial Idea*, p. 6.

having ‘passively accepted the apparently “given” fact of Algerian independence, pushing to the extreme the notion of...separate identities and completely overlooking the very real cross-currents which link together the identities of France and Algeria.’⁸⁸ Serge Berstein does not share the celebratory sentiments for de Gaulle evident in these works, criticising the false history present in de Gaulle’s *Mémoires d’espoir* in which he claims to have always considered independence to be the only solution to the Algerian war. Yet even Berstein is not able to extract his history from the dominant republican decolonisation discourse because, whilst critical of de Gaulle’s role, he is critical because he is suggesting that decolonisation was an inevitability and de Gaulle simply failed to see it as such and thus continued to pursue a bloody war.⁸⁹

This almost complete rejection of the history of the war prior to the shift in government policy to towards peace through Algerian independence has led to an overlooking, even a denial, of the very violent policies pursued by the French in the name of the republic. Alain-Gérard Slama absolves the republic of responsibility by suggesting that ‘la colonisation française fut l’œuvre d’aventuriers – soldats, entrepreneurs, administrateurs, condamnés et exclus – elle ne fut pas un projet collectif.’⁹⁰ Aldrich simply concludes that it is ‘remarkable...how few long-lasting effects in France the giving up of empire entailed.’⁹¹ This is also the conclusion that the education law of February 2005 (which demanded that the school syllabus ‘recognize in particular the positive role of the French presence overseas, notably in North Africa’) was attempting to support.⁹² These narratives not only reject the pre-history of decolonisation – covering Algeria’s time as part of France and the war itself – but also denies any possibility of a post-colonial history in which subsequent generations are still affected by the legacy of the colonial past.

⁸⁸ Jean-Robert Henry, 'Introduction', Alec G. Hargreaves and Michael J. Heffernan (eds), *French and Algerian Identities from Colonial Times to the Present* (New York, 1993) p. 2. Lawrence Kritzman goes so far as to call de Gaulle one of the ‘Hegelian heroes’ of French history who, alongside Napoleon and Louis XIV reifies ‘the very possibility of movement and change.’ Lawrence D. Kritzman, 'In Remembrance of Things French', Pierre Nora (ed.) *Realms of Memory: Rethinking the French Past. Volume 1: Conflicts and Divisions* (Chichester, 1996) p. x.

⁸⁹ Serge Berstein, *The Republic of de Gaulle, 1958-1969*, trans. Peter Morris (Cambridge, 1993) pp. 28-29, 51 and 56-57.

⁹⁰ Alain-Gérard Slama, 'La Guerre d'Algérie en littérature ou la comédie des masques', Jean-Pierre Rioux (ed.) *La Guerre d'Algérie et les français* (Paris, 1990) p. 583. [French colonisation was the work of adventurers – soldiers, entrepreneurs, administrators, convicts and the excluded – it was not a collective project.]

⁹¹ Aldrich, *A History of French Overseas Expansion*, p. 306.

⁹² Law of 23 February 2005 quoted in Peter Dunwoodie, 'Postface: History, Memory and Identity - Today's Crisis, Yesterday's Issue', *French History* 20 (2006) p. 319.

The decolonisation discourse has been fostered in its apparent veracity by the teleological nature of the narrative of universalism in which it resides. The myth created by this discourse, that of the success of the *mission civilisatrice*, the denial of any attempts at assimilation and, most fundamentally for those of Algerian origin in France, the impermeable division of Algerians from French, has led to a concealment of the revolution in republicanism which occurred between 1959 and 1962 and which this thesis is attempting to reassert.⁹³ In reference to the 2005 law, Peter Dunwoodie argues that the legislators were motivated by the ‘belief that they had the right to (re)interpret the past in the name of a homogenized history’.⁹⁴ This thus denies a space for a more critical understanding of the relationship between France and Algeria and the impact such a relationship has had, not only on the relations between France and those of Algerian origin who live within the ‘hexagon’, but also on the nature of republicanism itself, particularly in regards to the dishonoured claim to universalism and assimilation.

Republican historiography has thus become as ‘decolonised’ as republicanism itself; as Baycroft has argued,

[the] absence of the colonies in such works as Robert Gildea’s *The Past in French History* or...Pierre Nora’s *Les Lieux de Mémoire*...show just how little the colonial past is considered a part of France by historians. For the representatives of official Republican France, as well as for the majority of France’s ‘national’ historians, colonialism is something which France did, not a part of what France was.⁹⁵

As such, these histories reject the possibility that the Algerian war could have affected the nature of republicanism itself. Unsurprisingly, therefore, it has been historians who have studied those outside this decolonisation discourse (such as the *harkis*) who have critiqued both its dominance and its interpretation of the past. Todd Shepard has noted that it was not until 1959 that public discussion in France ‘presumed the need for Algerian independence’, that is to say it had not always been considered the inevitable progression

⁹³ I use myth here inspired by Roland Barthes understanding in which a myth creates an impression of reality which, in this case, distorts both the historical past and the present. Barthes, *Mythologies* (Paris, 1957).

⁹⁴ Dunwoodie, 'History, Memory and Identity', p. 322.

⁹⁵ Baycroft, 'The Empire and the Nation', p. 157.

others had described.⁹⁶ H. B. Sutton considers the amnesties for OAS members following the war to be a method of avoiding asking difficult questions about the cause for which they were fighting that would have 'blemished the image of de Gaulle as having successfully carried out decolonisation.'⁹⁷

In their critical histories of de Gaulle (rather than this dominant republican interpretation of history), Lacouture and Irwin Wall have raised another concern with this teleological discourse. Both identify de Gaulle's post-war insistence that he had always worked towards Algerian decolonisation and both reject such a claim, considering his policy to be much less consistent and, as such, the war was 'plus longtemps encore sinueuse et chaotique'.⁹⁸ Wall is most damning, arguing that de Gaulle's policy led to the 'worst of all possible of outcomes', particularly in relation to the *harkis*.⁹⁹ The decolonisation discourse, supported by the teleological narrative of universalism, effectively conceals these more troubling ruptures in French history and leaves no space for the deviating histories of the *harkis* or those that continued to fight for *Algérie française* with the OAS.¹⁰⁰

The dominant republican historiography is intimately tied to the narrative of universalism. The *mission civilisatrice* aspect of this narrative insists upon the importance of France in aiding Algeria to become a modern independent republic, implying that it was an image of France and thus proof of republican universalism. This narrative is necessitated by 'the inability of French...intellectuals to accept the idea that French culture and civilization could no longer be considered universal.'¹⁰¹ Such a narrative of history is dependent upon its own dominance, a rejection of the possibility of plural history, and thus unable to be inclusive to those which the republican history excludes, like the *harkis* studied by Shepard and Sutton. Julian Jackson has argued that in de Gaulle's Fifth Republic this 'republican

⁹⁶ Todd Shepard, 'Excluding the *Harkis* from Repatriate Status, Excluding Muslim Algerians from French Identity', Hafid Gafaïti (ed.) *Transnational Spaces and Identities in the Francophone World* (London, 2009) p. 94.

⁹⁷ H. B. Sutton, 'Postcolonial Voices: Vindicating the Harkis', *Contemporary French Civilization* 20 (1996) pp. 231-232.

⁹⁸ Lacouture, *Algerie, la guerre est fini*, p. 13. [both much longer and more chaotic]

⁹⁹ Irwin M. Wall, *France, the United States, and the Algerian War* (London, 2001) p. 252.

¹⁰⁰ Shepard has made a similar point arguing that those who continued to fight for *Algérie française* were perceived 'as lacking any logical explanation or attainable goal, actions taken to defend French Algeria were merely hateful and, since they bucked the tide of History, irrational.' Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization*, p. 88.

¹⁰¹ James D. Le Sueur, *Uncivil War: Intellectuals and Identity Politics During the Decolonization of Algeria* (Philadelphia, 2001) p. 257.

consensus has never been more total'.¹⁰² As a result it has excluded those marginal to this narrative, those who do not comply with the decolonisation discourse. Unable to find an identity in the republican narrative, the stories of those who continued to fight for *Algérie française* after 1959 find space only on the extreme right. As such the extreme right in French politics is able to lay sole claim to broad swathes of the history of empire from which it is able to set the agenda as regards identity and immigration. The republican history of empire is framed through an impermeable distinction to the metropole, making Frenchness exclusive.

The teleological basis of the decolonisation discourse is reflective of the nature of French republican ideology in which universalism demands an equally progressive, almost deterministic, understanding of French history. This teleological narrative which is evident in republican historiography effectively avoids the consideration that the Algerian war actually had a revolutionary effect on republicanism, particularly in relation to assimilation. By denying that Algeria had ever been considered part of the French republic between 1848 and 1954 during which time Algerians were deprived of *égalité* because of their race, and then denying that assimilation had been actively pursued in an attempt to maintain *Algérie française* (1954-1959), republican histories have concealed the challenge the Algerian war made to the belief in the universalism of French republicanism and, intrinsically related to that, the foundational Revolutionary belief that origin bore no relation to the possibility of becoming French.

As the following section will lay out, this teleological narrative was not restricted to republican historiography, but is identifiable in other cultural mediums. Nor, I will argue, is such a teleological narrative novel to the Algerian war but equally identifiable in the narratives of other periods of crisis for the republic, notably the Franco-Prussian war and Commune of 1870-1. This is consistent with the understanding that there is an inherent element of teleology in republican universalism itself; a universalist notion must intrinsically be one which proclaims to be superior and is thus destined to eventually dominate. The tradition of such a narrative in republican culture has lent additional power to the decolonisation discourse of the Algerian war which has itself concealed the revolutionary impact the war had on the application of assimilation.

¹⁰² Julian Jackson, 'Historians and the Nation in Contemporary France', Stefan Berger, Mark Donovan, and Kevin Passmore (eds), *Writing National Histories: Western Europe Since 1800* (London, 1999) pp. 245-246.

2.3 From rebirth to modernisation: The teleological trope of republican culture

Chapter 1 has already touched upon the tropes of inevitability in the republican narrative by means of a decolonisation discourse in artistic representations of the Algerian war. This discourse is present in Pierre-Henri Simon's pre-independence novel, *Portrait d'un officier*, in which Jean de Larsen is resigned to the end of his military career which has been so intimately tied to *Algérie française*.¹⁰³ Georges Perec's *Quel petit vélo à guidon chromé au fond de la cour?*, set before the war has ended but written afterwards, is quite convinced of the war's ultimate end and the subsequent independence of Algeria within its narrative.¹⁰⁴ This section adds to these initial observations by considering additional source material and suggesting that, along with the historiographical overview above, a teleological narrative is endemic in republicanism due to its connection to the doctrine of universalism. It is through this narrative that the republic is able to distance itself from less palatable elements of its own history. Thus, this section begins with a brief consideration of artistic representations of the Franco-Prussian war and the Commune in which the theme of rebirth is utilised to overcome the traumatic experience of *l'année terrible* and leave the republic untarnished. Whilst rebirth is transposed to representations of the Algerian war by some authors and filmmakers, modernisation provides a more popular and insistently forward-looking theme for this later period. Both provide a structure for the teleological narrative of republican universalism which denies the importance of unpalatable aspects of the past for the republican grand narrative of History.

2.3a The Third Republic's cyclical rebirth

Representations of war and defeat in republican culture of the late nineteenth century are thick with images of nature, the countryside and rebirth. The defeat becomes the birth of the republic; a tenacious image which effectively distances the new regime from the defeat inflicted by the Prussians and the slaughter of the Paris Commune (from the ashes of which the republic is so frequently depicted as being born, despite having been in power for the previous eight months). The symbol of rebirth after defeat is hardly unique to art in nineteenth-century France: Wolfgang Schivelbusch has noted, the 'myth of Troy as both an end and a beginning is one of the many expressions of the ancient idea, common to all the

¹⁰³ Pierre Henri Simon, *Portrait d'un Officier* (Paris, 1958).

¹⁰⁴ Georges Perec, *Quel petit vélo à guidon chromé au fond de la cour?* (Paris, 1966).

world's great cultures, that war, death and rebirth are cyclically linked.¹⁰⁵ Its presence in French culture also suggests a Catholic influence, regardless of the secular doctrine of the Third Republic, giving added moral strength to the idea of death and resurrection. The purging of the old to create anew also owes some heritage to the Enlightenment and the Revolution; Alan Forrest has noted the 'importance of images of regeneration and renewal...in revolutionary discourse and symbolism.'¹⁰⁶ Thus, rather than a defeat, republican culture represents the Franco-Prussian war 'as a purifying and renewing force'.¹⁰⁷ The focus on nature enhances this symbolism, particularly its cyclical aspect (defeat marks the return of the republic, its *rebirth*), and is common in both painting and literature at this time, influenced by the naturalist and impressionist movements.

One of the most literal artistic translations of the theme of rebirth in the aftermath of the defeat is Pierre Puvis de Chavannes's 1872 painting, *L'Espérance* (Figure 1).¹⁰⁸ The allegorical nude sits amongst ruins as the sun rises. Flowers are growing from the rubble around her as she sits on a white sheet clutching a tree branch. Her purity is evident and suggestive of the purity of the new republic which, even after the violent destruction of the Paris Commune, is able to grow anew from the ruins. The branch is symbolic of peace and unity. Puvis de Chavannes was a supporter of the Versailles government and the use of the female form (a frequent focus of his paintings) reclaimed the image from the aggressive depictions of Commune women as *pétroleuses*.¹⁰⁹ *Espérance* is passive, calm and revered; there is a gesture of reconciliation in the painting.¹¹⁰ The nature element suggests a cyclical

¹⁰⁵ Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *The Culture of Defeat: On National Trauma, Mourning, and Recovery*, trans. Jefferson Chase (London, 2001) p. 2.

¹⁰⁶ Alan Forrest, 'La Patrie en danger: The French Revolution and the First *Levée en masse*', Daniel Moran and Arthur Waldron (eds), *The People in Arms: Military Myth and National Mobilization since the French Revolution* (Cambridge, 2003) p. 21.

¹⁰⁷ Schivelbusch, *The Culture of Defeat*, p. 29.

¹⁰⁸ Puvis de Chavannes also painted a clothed version of this painting which Stop caricatured in *Journal Amusant* as a rather emaciated figure perched on a set of dominoes to which his caption prescribed a diet 'du fer et du vin de quinquina.' Stop perhaps did not share Puvis de Chavannes faith in the government of Adolphe Thiers. Stop, 'Le Salon de 1872', *Journal Amusant* (18 May 1872).

¹⁰⁹ On Puvis de Chavannes's politics see John Milner, *Art, War and Revolution in France, 1870-1871* (London, 2000) pp. 195-196. On the contrast to images of Commune women see Albert Boime, *Art and the French Commune: Imagining Paris After War and Revolution* (Chichester, 1995) p. 62.

¹¹⁰ David Britt describes Puvis de Chavannes style as having 'a deliberate lack of excitement' with 'the unending classically draped maidens (if anyone ever painted "maidens" rather than girls, it was Puvis)'. Such elements are evident in *L'Espérance*. David Britt, ed., *Modern Art: Impressionism to Post-Modernism* (London, 1989) p. 75.

narrative which has returned France to its rightful, even its natural state as a republic; its re-emergence was as inevitable as the coming of spring.¹¹¹

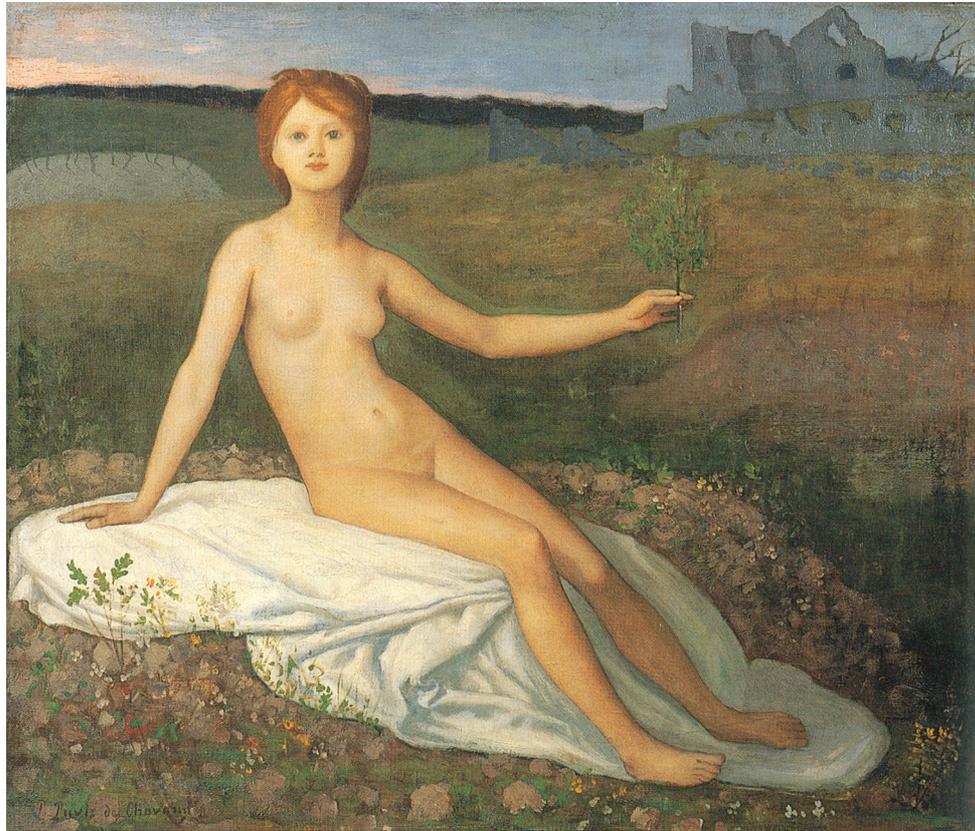


Figure 1. Pierre Puvis de Chavannes, *L'Espérance*, 1872.

The theme of rebirth is also very clear at the end of Zola's *La Débâcle* as Jean Macquart, peasant citizen soldier of France, emerges from the destruction of the war and Commune:

Le champ ravagé était en friche, la mission brûlée était par terre ; et Jean, le plus humble et le plus douloureux, s'en alla, marchant à l'avenir, à la grande et rude besogne de toute une France à refaire.¹¹²

¹¹¹ Indeed, as inevitable as the rising of the sun seen in the top left of this painting. Albert Boime also notes this element in Claude Monet's *Impression, soleil levant* (1874) seeing it as representing a new day dawning for France. Boime, *Art and the French Commune* p. 36. Impressionism is returned to later in this section.

¹¹² Émile Zola, *La Débâcle* (Paris, 1892) p. 636. [The ravaged field was lying fallow, the burnt house was down to the ground, and Jean, the most humble and grief-stricken of men, went away, walking into the future to set about the great, hard job of building a new France. Émile Zola, *The Debacle*, trans. L. W. Hancock (London, 1972) [1892]]

Zola's naturalism and his pseudo-scientific interpretations of the effects which environmental and hereditary factors played upon personal and societal health led him to pen the twenty-novel series, *Les Rougon-Macquart: histoire naturelle et sociale d'une famille sous le Second Empire* between 1867 and 1893, of which *La Débâcle* is the penultimate offering. His novels concluded that hard work and the countryside produced the fittest body and mind and Jean represented the epitome of such a character. In the final novel, *Le Docteur Pascal*, notable for its insularity in comparison to the very distinct historical and societal context of the rest of the series, Jean remains the celebrated character of the family.¹¹³ It is reported (much of the book summarises the lives of the series' earlier characters) that he has returned to peasant life and begun to rebuild France alongside his wife and healthy, hardworking children. Zola's naturalism bordered on determinism, largely removing the free-will of his characters in terms of their eventual fate which was often ordained by their hereditary and social environments.¹¹⁴ This had the benefit of excusing the social ills which the Third Republic had inherited from its predecessor (the series is consistently disparaging of the Second Empire), whilst also emphasising the means by which the republic could be built or, more in line with Zola's symbolism, grown anew.

This imagery of the natural environment as healthier and superior to the urban industrial background is repeated in other novels and paintings of the period, certainly evidencing a contemporary concern with urbanisation and industrialisation. Additionally, and most poignantly, it suggested that the Republic was a natural and thus inherently good entity in contrast with its enemy, whether that was the decadent Second Empire or the Prussian army machine. In *La Débâcle* as well as Alphonse Daudet's *Robert Helmont: Journal d'un solitaire* and the science-fiction writer Jules Verne's 1879 novel *Les Cinq Cent Millions de la Béguine*, the Prussian foe is depicted as an industrialised mass, the antithesis of the clean and healthy natural environment occupied by the French.¹¹⁵

Verne's novel, whilst never likely to be described as his masterpiece, ensured the author's popularity through its crass stereotyping of Germans whilst the mood of *revanche* was still palpable, if unpractical, in France.¹¹⁶ It tells the story of two men who inherit a vast

¹¹³ Émile Zola, *Le Docteur Pascal* (Paris, 1893).

¹¹⁴ Robert Gildea, *Barricades and Borders: Europe 1800-1914* (Oxford, 1996) pp. 263-164.

¹¹⁵ Alphonse Daudet, *Robert Helmont: Journal d'un solitaire* (Paris, 1891); Jules Verne, 'Les Cinq Cent Millions de la Béguine', Project Gutenberg, 1879 [accessed 24 September 2009] <http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/4968>.

¹¹⁶ Karine Varley notes that 'while revenge may have been a popular fantasy, it was never really a realistic foreign policy objective, being virtually forgotten even among nationalists by the late 1880s and scarcely

fortune. The first, a French doctor, uses it to build a utopian town dedicated to public health. The second, a German scientist, positivistic, mechanistic and a hearty consumer of sausages and sauerkraut, hears of Dr Sarrasin's plan and builds his own town. An urban and industrial dystopia, Schultze's town is built with the intention of destroying Sarrasin's France-Ville whilst also making a hearty profit as the world's greatest producer of arms. Schultze is finally hoisted by his own petard when his invention of a bomb containing frozen carbon dioxide accidentally explodes in his office.

As with *La Débâcle*, both *Robert Helmont* and *Les Cinq Cent Millions* end on the theme of rebirth through nature. Helmont ends his diary entries which make up the novel with the melting of snow and the possibility of spring budding forth wherein,

si quelque chose peut consoler de la guerre, c'est ce repos de la nature et des hommes, ce calme universel d'un pays meurtri qui répare ses forces dans le sommeil, oubliant la récolte perdue, pour préparer les moissons à venir !...¹¹⁷

In *Les Cinq Cents Millions*, with the assured success of the idyllic France-Ville, Sarrasin's young protégé, Marcel Bruckmann, becomes engaged to his daughter, a union which will no doubt bring about new life.

The novels of Zola, Daudet and Verne all present an antithesis to the natural rebirth of the republic. In *Les Cinq Cent Millions*, Schultz has built an industrial powerhouse full of dirty, deadly mines and huge factories to which his rough German workers crowd.¹¹⁸ Bertrand Taithe has identified a trend in the use of body metaphors in the French literature of this period, particularly in regards to the amputation of Alsace and Lorraine but also a more general 'medicalisation of French political representations.'¹¹⁹ As such, the figure of Doctor

mentioned in the press.' Varley, *Under the Shadow of Defeat*, p. 12. Verne himself was a well known writer in France by this time. The journal *L'Illustration* had noted his success and 'la popularité de son nom' some seven years previously. Jules Claretie, 'Revue Littéraire', *L'Illustration* (28 December 1872). To aid the *revanchist* plot, Sarrasin's patriotic genius of a protégé is the Alsatian Marcel Bruckmann. Verne, 'Les Cinq Cent Millions de la Bégum', Chapter II.

¹¹⁷ Daudet, *Robert Helmont* pp. 205-205. [If anything can impart consolation after a cruel war, it is this repose of all nature and mankind, this universal calm which rests upon a shattered country – a country recruiting its strength by sleep, forgetful of the lost harvest in preparing for that of the future!]

¹¹⁸ Verne, 'Les Cinq Cent Millions de la Bégum', Chapters III and IV. In Chapter IV of the novel, Bruckmann is undercover in Schultz's city. His landlady, a widow due to an industrial accident, also loses her fifteen year-old son when he asphyxiates in a mine.

¹¹⁹ Bertrand Taithe, *Defeated Flesb: Welfare, Warfare and the Making of Modern France* (Manchester, 1999) pp. 180-189.

Sarassin and his health-focused town is particularly poignant. The industrial city of Schultz's was an even more powerful antithesis to France-Ville in such a literary environment.

In Zola's novel the balance of natural France is tipped more towards agriculture than health. As such, its antithesis has a slightly different focus. When the Bavarians attack, a character describes how she saw,

des milliers et des milliers, qui arrivaient par les routes, par les champs, par les bois, en colonnes serrées, sans fin. Tout de suite, le pays en a été noir. Une invasion noire, des sauterelles noires, encore et encore, si bien qu'en un rien de temps, on n'a plus vu la terre.¹²⁰

From Bazeilles, Weiss sees 'un si noir fourmillement de troupes allemandes'.¹²¹ The metaphorical connection between the German armies and the vision of the ordered destruction by a mass of ants or locusts is the direct opposite of the healthy rebirth of France through agriculture and hard work. Nature has sustained the stranded Belmont as he has taken comfort in 'la tiédeur d'un œuf sous la paille', the forest has been his larder and he had kept track of the seasons by 'grandes troupes d'oies sauvages, le vol battant, le cou tendu' migrating.¹²² The occupying Germans are set against this natural beauty as mechanical brutes with no respect for the countryside around them. Just as Belmont is enjoying a 'claire journée d'automne, sous un ciel d'un bleu profond et pur' it is shattered by 'une détonation formidable, très voisine, a ébranlé la maison, secoué les vitres, le feuillage, et fait sortir de partout des vols éperdus, des cris, des effarements, une galopade !'¹²³ The arrival of the Prussians upsets the peace and balance of nature. They lack the respect Belmont has for the forest and they are wasteful of the resources which he

¹²⁰ Zola, *La Débâcle*, pp. 166-167. ['thousands and thousands of them coming along all the roads, over the fields, through the woods, in close-packed ranks, endlessly. A black invasion, like black grasshoppers, on and on, so that in no time you couldn't see the ground for them.]

¹²¹ Ibid. p. 210. [a black swarm of German troops]

¹²² Daudet, *Robert Belmont*, pp. 44, 90-91 and 94. [the warmth of an egg in the straw / large flocks of geese, with outstretched necks and beating against the wind]

¹²³ Ibid. p. 50. [clear autumn day, under a deep and pure blue sky'; 'a formidable explosion in my immediate vicinity shook the house, rattled the windows, and stirred the leaves, sending forth on all sides the sound of wild flutterings, screams, alarms, and galloping!]

relies upon. Helmont is even forced to kill his cockerel to prevent its cry alerting the occupiers to his presence, a scene which suggests an ancient sacrifice to nature.¹²⁴

These scenes of the beauty of nature and its vicious pillage by the invading army are illustrated in the paintings by Picard and Montégut that accompanied the novel in its second printing of 1891. There are many depictions signed by Picard of snippets of the countryside, a riverbank, the garden and the forest in which the brush strokes and blurred edges have clearly been influenced by the impressionist movement. As the novel progresses, pictures signed by Montégut appear, darker in shade and clearer in form, ominous in their depictions of German soldiers and the casting of Helmont's shadow when in hiding.¹²⁵ A painting of the French farmer, Goudeloup, hiding in the forest plays on these methods: buried up to his waste in foliage with his upper body blending into a tree trunk, Goudeloup is watching a German soldier whose straight lines of uniform cause him to stand out in this natural landscape.¹²⁶

The theme of nature is heavily present in many impressionist works after the Franco-Prussian war, a period during which 'the importance of landscape painting' grew in the French art world.¹²⁷ Agricultural scenes, such as his famous haystacks and bourgeois gardens, make up a significant section of work by Claude Monet (Figure 2). Scenes of leisure in the countryside were frequently represented by Edgar Degas and, later, Georges Seurat (Figures 3 and 4). Gordon Millan has argued that the impressionist interest in train stations, painted by Monet, Gustave Caillebotte and Edouard Manet, was actually a reference to the countryside, newly open to city-dwellers with the development of the public transport network.¹²⁸ Whilst this may be stretching the link a little too far, there was certainly a tendency to paint new life through nature rather than the destructiveness of war.¹²⁹ This helped to sideline the significance of the war as well as the destructive and divisive Commune, enabling the focus instead to be on the creation of the natural republic.

¹²⁴ Ibid. p. 74.

¹²⁵ Ibid. pp. 71 and p. 97.

¹²⁶ Ibid. p. 139.

¹²⁷ Richard Thomson, ed., *Framing France: Essays on the Representation of Landscape in France, 1870-1914* (Manchester, 1998) p. 2.

¹²⁸ Millan, Rigby and Forbes, 'Industrialization and its Discontents (1870-1914)', p. 31. See Edouard Manet, *Gare Saint-Lazare*, 1873; Gustave Caillebotte, *Le Pont de l'Europe*, 1876; Claude Monet, *Le Pont de l'Europe* and *Gare Saint-Lazare*, 1877 as well as various others from the same series.

¹²⁹ The works of Manet were an exception to this trend and will be considered in the next chapter.

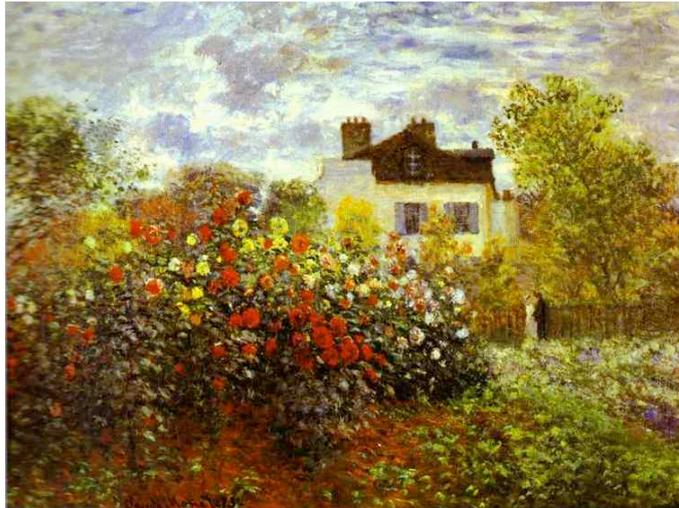


Figure 2. Claude Monet, *Jardin à Argenteuil*, 1873.



Figure 3. Edgar Degas, *At the Races in the Country*, 1872.



Figure 4. Georges Seurat, *Une Baignade à Asnières*, 1884.

Much of the republican culture after *l'année terrible* incorporated the themes of nature and rebirth, sometimes emphasised by the counter-image of the industrial German. Barbara Kelly has noted similar tendencies in music, particularly in her study of Claude Debussy's *Pelléas* which was both explicitly anti-German (particularly, anti-Wagner) and had a close relationship with nature.¹³⁰ Schivelbusch has noted that at 'the heart of both defeat and war lies the threat of extinction that resonates long past the cessation of hostilities.'¹³¹ The theme of rebirth through nature was certainly a method of overcoming what could otherwise become a paranoia, but it did more besides. This pervasive trend in Third Republican culture expressed a belief in the legitimacy of the republic; the connection to the natural world suggested that the republic was France's natural state and that its rebirth from defeat was part of a cyclical process of natural time. As with Zola's characters whose lives were determined by the environments, this went some way to remove the agency of those involved in the defeat and the Commune. As such it promoted an environment of reconciliation and avoided laying a wide net of blame for either of the two intertwining crises which shook France; the soldiers and the Communards, unless identified as leaders, were to become reconciled with the Republic at this new dawn.¹³² The Republic was thus universal. Given the cyclical and natural character of the allegories used in these representations (of spring, of dawn) there was also an inevitability tied to them; the return of the Republic was as natural as the rising of the sun and thus the preceding destruction of little consequence. The teleology of these various representations is intrinsic to their republican universalism.

2.3b The Fifth Republic's linear modernisation

In the 1870s and 1880s the Third Republic could be represented as having been reborn because it came about following the defeat of the most tenacious of nineteenth-century republican enemies, Bonapartism. The Fifth Republic could not claim such a triumphal flouting of a political nemesis. Rebirth suggests an inevitable blossoming from the ruins; representing the Fourth Republic as ruins would be problematic given that it laid claim to the same republican doctrine as its successor. The teleological aspect of universalism

¹³⁰ Barbara L. Kelly, 'Debussy and the Making of a *musicien français: Pelléas*, the Press, and World War I', Barbara L. Kelly (ed.) *French Music, Culture and National Identity, 1870-1939* (Woodbridge, 2008) pp. 58-76.

¹³¹ Schivelbusch, *The Culture of Defeat*, p. 5.

¹³² Bertrand Taithe similarly sees a 'transcendent' imagery in the history and literature about the Franco-Prussian war in the Third Republic. Bertrand Taithe, 'Rhetoric, Propaganda and Memory: Framing the Franco-Prussian War', Bertrand Taithe and Tim Thornton (eds), *Propaganda: Political Rhetoric and Identity 1300-2000* (Stroud, Gloucestershire, 1999).

remains, however, but rather than reaching the final destination of republicanism through a cyclical rebirth, the representations of the war and defeat in the Fifth Republic are frequently more linear. This is a particularly Gaullist republican trend which began with de Gaulle's interpretation of the Second World War. In not announcing the new Fourth Republic at the Hôtel de Ville, de Gaulle claimed the republic had never ended. In the Gaullist narrative of the Second World War, the republic lived on in exile; Vichy was un-French and thus not suitable for a cyclical narrative of rebirth.¹³³ Instead, a linear narrative of progress, and particularly of modernisation, informs the Gaullist republican interpretation of history. Identifiable in the phrase '*trente glorieuses*', referring to the three decades of economic growth following the Second World War, the progressive narrative is also present in many of the artistic representations of the Algerian war and defeat. Much akin to de Gaulle's claim to continuity with the founding of the Fourth Republic, this linear narrative, whilst maintaining the teleological element of the Third Republic, avoids considering the change of regime in 1958 as a revolution.

Four works from the Fifth Republic clearly illustrate this linear political narrative. Two are already familiar: Jean Pélégri's *Les Oliviers de la justice* and the 1964 film *Les Parapluies de Cherbourg*. The other pair are coming-of-age stories, a narrative style which serves to enhance their linearity: Claire Etcherelli's 1967 novel, *Elise, ou la vraie vie* and, to illustrate the enduring nature of the trend, André Téchiné's 1994 film, *Les Roseaux Sauvages*. These four artistic representations of the Algerian war all pursue a linear narrative that effectively dismisses the importance of the very war which provides them with context. By doing so, the consequences of the war on the French republic are given no consideration; the narrative is teleological thus the end of the war can present nothing new. By way of contrast, there are examples of republican artistic representations of the war which do not follow the linear Gaullist trend but share the trope of rebirth with Third Republican culture.¹³⁴ Pierre Guyotat's *Tombeau pour cinq cent mille soldats* (1967) and two recent films,

¹³³ Such an interpretation is part of the trend which I call Vichy exceptionalism, essentially a denial of the Frenchness of the regime. I consider this in detail, and highlight why it has had a detrimental impact on the history of the Algerian war, in Chapter 3.

¹³⁴ This thesis's focus is on republican culture, as defined in the Introduction. Two films which I judged not to correspond with this were Pierre Schoendoerffer's *Le Crabe-Tambour* (1977) and Brigitte Roüan's *Outremer* (1990). This was partly on the basis of their authors (Schoendoerffer is a right-wing filmmaker with a personal history attached to the professional army, Roüan is an ex-settler), but primarily on the films themselves. Neither film presents a linear narrative of progress or a cyclical narrative of rebirth. Schoendoerffer's film is bleak except for the flashback scenes which represent a golden era of the French army and colonialism. It ends with the acceptance that such an era will never return and the future stretches into an unending bleakness. Roüan's film is heavily nostalgic of settler life as *Le Crabe-Tambour* is of the

Cartouches Gauloises (2007) and *Hors la loi* (2010) all directly represent defeat and subsequent rebirth. However, as the analysis here will show, these three cultural productions still conform to the teleological narrative of universalism which denies a revolution in French republicanism caused by the Algerian war because the rebirth they represent is not that of the French Republic.

Divided into three parts, Pélégri's *Les Oliviers de la justice* is a novel of tragic resignation.¹³⁵ It recounts the story of the death of an old settler as told by his son, Michel. Part one documents the evening before his father's death and the day of the Muslim festival of Ashura. This latter event raises the anticipation of terror attacks in Algiers where the family now live, having moved from the vineyard Michel's father had set up. The second third of the novel narrates the day of his father's death and focuses on Michel's reminiscence of his idyllic childhood. In the final part his father's body is returned to their old farm. Here Michel speaks frankly of the misdeeds of colonialism yet voices the concern that the settlers' work is as yet unfinished. The life and death of Michel's father is reflective of the life and death of *Algérie française*. His father is dying as terrorism is taking over Algiers; both narrator and author are resigned to the French colonisation of Algeria being near its end. The notion that the settlers' work is unfinished suggests a linear and inevitable narrative of progress as Michel's sadness intertwines with the death of his elderly father and the end to the settlers' way of life.

Much like the representations of war in the Third Republic, nature is a strong element in the novel. Michel's father embodies Algeria physically in his connection with the land. Persistent references to cultivation build throughout the novel. Judas and orange trees, of which his father had planted 'dans le paysage desséché ils semblent flotter, comme un chapelet d'îles', the plain had become his kingdom 'parce qu'il avait défriché, labouré, planté – sans violences.'¹³⁶ There is a gradual escalation of this cultivating narrative until, in part three when his dead father is being returned to the old farm to be buried, it unfolds

professional army's, and follows three sisters from their lives in Algeria to their move to France. In the final scene, the youngest sister cannot take her wedding vows, 'she is obviously unable to begin life anew... She remains mute, paralyzed.' Neither of these films accept the independence of Algeria, seeing in it only an ending of a golden age without the possibility for anything new or progressive. As such, they are critical of the republican policy of decolonisation rather than supportive of it. Pierre Schoendoerffer, *Le Crabe-Tambour* (France, 1977); Brigitte Roüan, *Outremer* (France, 1990); Naomi Greene, *Landscapes of Loss: The National Past in Postwar French Cinema* (Princeton, 1999) p. 144.

¹³⁵ Jean Pélégri, *Les Oliviers de la justice* (Paris, 1959).

¹³⁶ Ibid. pp. 34 and 122. [float in the dried up countryside like a rosary of green islands / because he had cultivated, laboured, and sown the land – without harshness]

into a narrative of creation: 'Ils avaient défriché et planté ces terres difficiles, et ils en avaient fait un paysage neuf et fertile.'¹³⁷ These heartfelt visions of bringing oases to the sirocco-blasted land are consistent with the *mission civilisatrice* which suits a liberal settler like Pélégri in 1959 because it provides a justification for his existence, but it does not contradict the decolonisation discourse. Whilst Michel may express that the settlers have more work to do in terms of modernising Algeria, such an idea in itself also suggests that at some point in the future their work cultivating the land will be finished and Algeria will be 'civilised'.

Algeria in *Les Oliviers de la justice* is personified in a settler and as such was born only out of their hard work.¹³⁸ There is a feeling of regret in Michel's narrative not only because of the loss of his ancestral land but also the feeling that the work of building the country is incomplete. He fears his own generation has lacked the courage and the work ethic of their forefathers and may now never get the chance to attain their destiny. He blames his contemporaries for becoming distanced from the land, handing it over to rich businessmen, and in this perceives the seeds of the current war.¹³⁹ Whilst his father was able to create a country through his work on the land, Michel's own generation will lose the country lacking as they do the same intimate connection with creation and nature. There is a sense of inevitability in this narrative; the settlers have been the engines of progress but now independence lies upon the horizon. Whilst this is not a positive outcome for Michel, he considers it too late to change course, the future is already determined.

The same sense of an inevitable and linear progress pervades Jacques Démy's *Les Parapluies du Cherbourg*, but the focus here is France rather than Algeria and on modernity rather than independence.¹⁴⁰ Algeria is largely absent in *Les Parapluies*, just as France is in *Les Oliviers*. Whilst Pélégri's novel charts the death of Michel's father and *Algérie française*, Démy's film witnesses a period of gestation, through both Geneviève's pregnancy and of the changing town of Cherbourg. Nonetheless these two artistic representations are underpinned by the same republican, universalist narrative of the war. As Jean-Robert Henry as argued, 'Algeria helped sustain in the French imagination the distinctions between modernity and tradition,

¹³⁷ Ibid. p. 211. [They cleared and planted this unresponsive ground and they created a new and fertile landscape.]

¹³⁸ Azzedine Haddour has made a similar connection between the agricultural labour of the settlers and their identification with creating a country. Haddour, *Colonial Myths: History and Narrative* (Manchester, 2000).

¹³⁹ Pélégri, *Les Oliviers de la justice*, pp. 124-125 and 210-213.

¹⁴⁰ Jacques Démy, *Les Parapluies de Cherbourg* (France, 1964).

between civilization and the desert... Algeria was constructed against modern France and yet at the same time in its image.¹⁴¹ In this instance, as *Algérie française* is on its deathbed, no longer France's convenient antithesis, the 'hexagon' looks towards the future and modernity. Michèle Cone, in her study of twentieth-century French art has noted a similar concern with modernisation, particularly in the work of Marcel Duchamp and Yves Klein, suggesting that this trope is pervasive in culture.¹⁴²

Kristin Ross has identified a relationship between the discourses of decolonisation and modernisation in French culture, both of which share an element of teleology. The former as identified in the decolonisation discourse of Chapter 1, the latter as Ross explains:

Modernization is even because it holds within itself a theory of spatial and temporal convergence: all societies will come to look like us, all will arrive eventually at the same stage or level, all the possibilities of the future are being lived now, at least for the West: there are, arrayed before us, a changeless world functioning smoothly under the sign of technique.¹⁴³

This modernisation discourse, which runs through Démy's film, clearly also suits the republican claim to the Revolutionary heritage of universalism in the sense that it assumes to be on the path to the pinnacle of what society can, should and will achieve. Modernisation in the twentieth-century takes on the power which Sowerwine attributes to Reason in the nineteenth.¹⁴⁴ Both modernisation and decolonisation are linear rather than cyclical paths; the Republic, with no qualifying number (neither Third nor Fourth nor Fifth), is unending and infallible. The cyclical narrative present in republican culture after the Franco-Prussian war was dependent upon a representation of defeat, a rubble out of which the republic could grow. To maintain the linear narrative of the unending republic, defeat must be absent; the war may end but its outcome is insignificant.

This is true for *Les Parapluies* as Guy returns from his service prior to the war's end and its final outcome is never mentioned. For all except Guy the war has been invisible because modernisation within the metropole has been all consuming, as the loss of the umbrella

¹⁴¹ Henry, 'Introduction', pp. 3-4.

¹⁴² Michèle Cone, *French Modernisms: Perspectives on Art Before, During, and After Vichy* (Cambridge, 2001) pp. 162-167.

¹⁴³ Ross, *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies*, p. 10.

¹⁴⁴ Sowerwine, *France since 1870*, p. 40. See section 2.1a.

shop to be replaced by a washing machine store signifies. Such invisibility, an active concealment, brings to mind Guy Debord's criticism of modernity's spectacle:

The spectacle corresponds to the historical moment at which the commodity completes its colonization of social life. It is not just the threat the relationship to commodities is now plain to see – commodities are now *all* that there is to see; the world we see is the world of commodity.¹⁴⁵

The commodity, the ultimate symbol of modernisation in the 1960s, effectively conceals the political world, and in relation to the Algerian war, the revolution in republicanism which it promoted. Modernisation as a focus thus aided the post-1962 rejection of the idea that Algeria had ever been anything more significant than a colony; it 'slammed shut the Algerian chapter and relegated it to another temporality, made it and all of colonialism into an instant archaism'.¹⁴⁶

The outcome of the war is also concealed in Etcherelli's novel, *Elise, ou la vraie vie* which concludes prior to peace, and Téchiné's later film, *Les Roseaux Sauvages*, in which the war's end is hidden in the background and of scant interest to the characters.¹⁴⁷ Despite being a significant part of each novel or film's context, the actual event of the Algerian war – its story, its beginning and end – is able to be reduced to insignificance through the more dominant discourse of modernisation and, for Etcherelli and Téchiné, a coming-of-age narrative. Such a sidelining of what could be an over-powering context is relatively straightforward given that, as Robert Rosenstone has argued, they 'put individuals in the forefront of the historical process. Which means that the solution of their personal problems tends to substitute itself for the solution of historical problems'.¹⁴⁸ The death of Michel's father, the final scene of Guy's family life and the endings of both *Elise* and *Les Roseaux Sauvages* all conform to this tendency.

Elise, ou la vraie vie was Etcherelli's first novel and won her the Prix Fémina in 1967. It is set between 1957 and 1958, firstly in Elise's non-specified home town in northern France and

¹⁴⁵ Guy Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (New York, 1994) [1967] p. 29.

¹⁴⁶ Ross, *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies*, p. 196.

¹⁴⁷ Claire Etcherelli, *Elise, ou la vraie vie* (London, 1985) [1967]; Andre Téchiné, *Les Roseaux Sauvages* (France, 1994).

¹⁴⁸ Robert A. Rosenstone, *Visions of the Past: The Challenge of Film to Our Idea of History* (London, 1995) p. 57. Rosenstone is writing here in relation to film but I find it is just as applicable to novels in this instance.

then in Paris. Despite being twenty-eight, the novel documents Elise's coming-of-age, firstly out of the shadow of her attention-seeking political activist brother, Lucien, and then through her relationship with an Algerian worker, Arezki, who she meets whilst working in a Billancourt car factory. Like Pélégri's novel there is an element of autobiography in Etcherelli's work as she too worked in a car factory in Paris during this period and wrote the novel in the early 1960s, completing it after the end of the war.¹⁴⁹

Elise finds her independence amongst the anti-Gaullist protestors of May 1958. Having followed Lucien to Paris in hope of finding *la vraie vie* ('La vraie vie ne pouvait manquer de commencer'), it is not until Lucien's death and her lover Arezki's disappearance that she comes into her own.¹⁵⁰ Her participation in the protests alongside her fellow workers towards the novel's close truly invigorates her, indeed intoxicates her: 'je me levai dans un état voisin de l'ivresse.'¹⁵¹ The following morning:

Je ressentais un bonheur physique intense. Il me semblait qu'une ère nouvelle s'ouvrait et que nous avions fait la veille une manière de révolution... Le pain frais s'émiettait en craquant, et cette minute de flânerie prolongeait la jouissance de la veille qui m'imprégnait encore.¹⁵²

Of course, there was no revolution of the kind Elise imagines; her revolution is a workers' revolution against de Gaulle and thus it fails.¹⁵³ Crucially, it is only after this coming-of-age transformation that Elise, and the reader, become aware that the two characters who have dominated her life are now permanently removed.

Following the loss of Lucien, Arezki and her hoped-for revolution, Elise returns home to her grandmother's house. Whilst her future does not look bright – the unpleasant characters of Paris are replaced by those back home, a dead-end job replaces the

¹⁴⁹ John Roach, 'Introduction', John Roach (ed.) *Elise ou la vraie vie* (London, 1985) p. 2.

¹⁵⁰ Etcherelli, *Elise, ou la vraie vie*, p. 98. [The real life could not fail to begin. Claire Etcherelli, *Elise or the Real Life*, trans. June P. Wilson and Walter Benn Michaels (1970) [1967]]

¹⁵¹ Etcherelli, *Elise, ou la vraie vie*, p. 267. [I woke up in a state of close to drunkenness.]

¹⁵² Ibid. pp. 268-269. [I felt an intense sense of physical well-being. It seemed as if a new era was opening up and that the night before we had staged [affected] a kind of revolution... The fresh bread made crumbs as I broke it, and this minute of idleness prolonged the thrill of yesterday.]

¹⁵³ Elise's experience of the protest was a working-class one: 'Certains, les plus âgés, arboraient des cravates rouges'; "'C'est 36, dit Daubat derrière moi.'"; "'Et voilà Renault!' Le fer de lance de la classe ouvrière avançait sous les applaudissements.' Ibid. pp. 267-268. The reference to '36' is to the Popular Front movement of 1936 which also saw mass street protests by the working classes in Paris.

mechanised boredom of Billancourt – she is no longer the girl who has bobbed through much of the novel with seemingly little control of her own existence:

La douleur me guette, tapie dans mon futur, camouflée dans les souvenirs ; elle m'attend pour me frapper, mais je la contournerai et me défendrai hardiment. Je chasserai de moi jusqu'à la moindre image. Mais sous les cendres, l'inévitable espérance tiendra bon.¹⁵⁴

Elise has grown up, she has learnt her own mind and has the confidence to defend herself, out of the shadow of Lucien and Arezki. Philip Dine considers this to be Elise 'achieving enlightenment.'¹⁵⁵ This coming-of-age is aided by the theme of birth (but not rebirth), notable in the use of 'imprégnait' above but also in that 'La vraie vie aura duré neuf mois.'¹⁵⁶ Elise is, however, wrong in this assertion; her time in Paris was her own gestation period from which she would emerge as an independent and experienced woman rather than the naïve and passive girl who had been present in the beginning of the novel.

Her coming-of-age narrative is a necessarily linear one, a growth from childhood into adulthood, rather than cyclical narrative of death and rebirth. With no representation of defeat in the novel, ending as it does in 1958, there is no call for a cyclical element to the narrative. Instead there is a steady insistence of progress. Rosenstone has argued that, 'no matter what the historical film...the message delivered on the screen is almost always that things are getting better or have gotten better or both.'¹⁵⁷ Whilst one's film experience would have to be restrictively optimistic to find this consistently to be the case, for those films which trace a decolonisation and a modernisation discourse, it certainly rings true. Elise has experienced modernity through her connection with an urban metropolis and particularly the thoroughly modern image of the car production line. She has been driven forward by it in a linear progression which is tied to her move into adulthood. The coming-of-age narrative is intrinsically a teleological one and, when placed alongside that of modernisation, drives forward a linear narrative which rides roughshod over any possible obstacles raised by the Algerian war.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid. p. 281. [Sorrow shadows me, hovers over my future, lurks in my memories. It waits to attack me but I'll divert it and I'll defend myself. I'll drive it down from me down to the last image. And under the ashes, hope will hold on.]

¹⁵⁵ Philip Dine, *Images of the Algerian War: French Fiction and Film, 1954-1992* (Oxford, 1994) p. 203.

¹⁵⁶ Etcherelli, *Elise, ou la vraie vie*, p. 279. [The real life will have lasted nine months.]

¹⁵⁷ Rosenstone, *Visions of the Past*, p. 56.

The theme of modernisation is less powerful in *Les Roseaux Sauvages* not least because it was made in the 1990s, well after the end of the *trente glorieuses*, when the obsession had been somewhat tempered by the economic slowdown of the following twenty years.¹⁵⁸ Furthermore, unlike *Elise, ou la vraie vie*, it does cover the period of the Algerian war's end. It is essentially a coming-of-age film. Set in Villeneuve sur Lot near Toulouse, the film follows a group of teenagers through their final school year of 1961 to 1962, ending on the day of their *baccalauréat* results, that ultimate symbol of successful republican schooling.

François Forestier is very much the intellectual and struggles throughout the film to come to terms with his sexuality.¹⁵⁹ His best friend and daughter of his teacher, Maïté Alvarez has strong political convictions passed down to her from her mother who heads the local section of the Communist party. François's school friend and brief sexual partner, Serge Bartolo, comes from a poor farming family. Serge's brother is conscripted to fight in Algeria and loses his life in an OAS attack. Henri Mariani is a settler, new to the boarding school and considerably older than his classmates at twenty-one, having yet to pass his *baccalauréat*. These characters are microcosms of particular groups in the war: the unaffected civilian, the Communist activist, the family of the *soldat perdu* and the French settler. As such there is a particular antagonism at several points between Henri and alternatively Serge and Maïté, but the friendship of François brings them altogether by the end of the film. It ends, as coming-of-age films generally do, very positively; quintessentially it is a narrative where 'things are getting better or have gotten better'.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁸ Téchiné's film was extremely successful upon release and received four Césars including Best Film and Best Director.

¹⁵⁹ François never mentions the war, being too involved with his own battles concerning his sexuality and his place in the world. Brigitte Rollet suggests that there is a metaphor here 'between the "war with no name" and the "love with no name"...In a sense, his painful experience in fighting the hypocrisy surrounding his sexual orientation could be associated with the general hypocrisy of the time regarding the conflict and the failure to call it what it was, i.e. a war.' This interpretation, whilst interesting, does not stand up to scrutiny as François discusses his sexuality with his friends and openly declares his status to himself in front of the mirror, repeating 'Je suis un pédé'. This is not to suggest that coming to terms with his homosexuality is an easy step for François, indeed it troubles and occupies him throughout the film, but he is not silent about it, he speaks its name. This contrasts with the Algerian War, which does not appear to affect him at all, an apparent imperviousness to the war that is reminiscent of the civilian characters of Hélène in *Muriel* and Madame Emery (Geneviève's mother) in *Les Parapluies de Cherbourg*. Brigitte Rollet, 'Remembering the Algerian War: Memory/ies and Identity/ies in Téchiné's *Les Roseaux Sauvages*', Martin S. Alexander, Martin Evans, and John F. V. Keiger (eds), *The Algerian War and the French Army, 1954-62: Experiences, Images, Testimonies* (Basingstoke, 2002) p. 205.

¹⁶⁰ Rosenstone, *Visions of the Past*, p. 56.

Once again, the narrative of the film is politically linear with no representations of defeat and no suggestion of a cyclical narrative through the metaphor of rebirth. The characters are seen to go through their own trials and tribulations, some affected by the war but many not, and they reach the film's conclusion as adults ready to find their own way in the world. From the very beginning the war's end is suggested as inevitable when Mme. Alvarez says 'Algérie va être indépendante' to Serge's brother who is attempting to desert from the army.¹⁶¹ Thus when the war does end during the film, it is of no consequence to the young band of friends and changes nothing for them. Even Henri once having met Maïté, is no longer seen to be concerned about the fate of Algeria or the activities of the OAS; he no longer listens to his radio which had been his one connection with his old life. The linear narrative of progress which *Les Roseaux Sauvages* portrays conforms to the teleological narrative of universalism and rejects the possibility that Algerian war could seriously impact France; the republic had come-of-age rather than being reborn through revolution.

The linear narrative of modernisation and coming-of-age are used in these texts to support a republican interpretation of the Algerian war which is also specifically Gaullist.¹⁶² There is no defeat, no significant change for French society or politics other than the inevitable progress of republicanism which for de Gaulle meant, amongst other things, a shift towards a strong executive he had considered to be lacking in the Third and Fourth Republics. This absence of defeat is an absence of revolution; there were no ashes out of which a new republic could or needed to grow. But there are examples of republican culture which seem to take a more critical stance and actually follow a cyclical narrative similar to that seen in Third Republican culture, wherein a new republic is founded amongst the ruins of war. Two of these are very recent films, *Cartouches Gauloises* (2007) and *Hors la loi* (2010) but the first is Pierre Guyotat's 1967 novel *Tombeau pour cinq cent mille soldats*, which also shares similarities with the nineteenth-century culture already discussed in its use of nature as symbol of rebirth.

¹⁶¹ Téchiné, *Les Roseaux Sauvages*.

¹⁶² Hugo Frey has argued that Gaullist historiography tends to see the Vichy period as one of national decline and thus the subsequent era one of national revival, a 'rise and fall myth'. This concurs with the argument here as it views the *trente glorieuses* and the discourse of modernisation as part of this rise, amid which the Algerian war is of precious little significance. The relationship between the historiography of Vichy and Algeria will be returned to in Chapter 3. Frey, 'Rebuilding France', p. 205.

Guyotat joined the French army of his own accord, rather than being conscripted but deserted and was then jailed for encouraging others to do the same.¹⁶³ His writing is overtly challenging and political, his depiction of war incomprehensibly gruesome, nasty and vile. Set out in seven ‘chants’, the narrative is not always evident but does persevere in the sense that the book does not simply stop, it has a noticeable end. Algeria is never mentioned in the text, nor is France or any of the names and places we associate with the war. It is a figurative depiction, or perhaps more accurately, a hallucinatory one.¹⁶⁴ Inamenas, an island colony of Ecbatane for a hundred years, is the field of war and it is evident from the start that it is a war of decolonisation.

The ending could not be described as happy: the sixth chant ends with looting and rats taking over the city. But the short seventh chant, which reads like an epilogue, is one of love even if it is of a sordid, animalistic, indeed bestial kind, between Kment, a rebel leader, and Giauhare, carrying inside her the ‘le dernier-né du monde’, isolated from the vileness of the city and seemingly at one with nature.¹⁶⁵

Les arbres ployés contre le sol par le poids de boue, se détendent, jaillissent dans l’air délivré ; les sources, étouffées par les cadavres d’hommes et d’enfants assoiffés par le feu, giclent dans l’obscurité, cherchent leur ancien lit sous les herbes recourbées ; puis, l’ayant trouvé, s’élancent, se brisent avec des cris de joie, aux cascades, se mélangent, se perdent, se fuient, avec des rires.

Aux premières lueurs, des essaims d’abeilles, des vols criards d’oiseaux, s’abattent sur l’île, secouent les fleurs alourdies, les feuillages, les crimes froissées, se jettent dans la poussière, survolent les vals encore obscurcis ; le ciel élaboussé d’oiseaux déchaînés, d’abeilles enflammées, se dévoile, tourne vers le soleil dont la plaie sèche et se rétrécit.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶³ Stuart Kendall, 'Eden and Atrocity: Pierre Guyotat's Algeria', *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 28 (2008) p. 14.

¹⁶⁴ Stephen Barber, 'Introduction', Stephen Barber (ed.) *Tomb for 500,000 Soliders* (London, 2002) p. 5.

¹⁶⁵ Pierre Guyotat, *Tombeau pour cinq cent mille soldats* (Paris, 1967) p. 482. [the last-born of the world. Pierre Guyotat, *Tomb for 500,000 Soldiers*, trans. Romain Slocombe (2002) [1968]]

¹⁶⁶ Guyotat, *Tombeau pour cinq cent mille soldats*, pp. 485-486. [The trees bowing to the ground under the weight of the mud, unbend, shoot out in the freed air ; the springs, choked by the corpses of men and children made thirsty by the fire, squirt out in the dark, search for their ancient bed under the bent grass ; then, having found it, dash forward, break with cries of joy, to the waterfalls, mix, get lost, flow away from each other, with laughter. In the first light, swarms of bees, squalling bird flights, swoop down on the island, shake the heavy flowers, the foliage, the crumpled tree tops, throw themselves in the dust, fly over the still dark valleys ;

This passage is notable in its very striking antidote to so much of what the book has seen before. Gone are the scavenging violent rats, replaced by pollinating bees; the cesspit stench of the city is burnt away by the sun, washed clean by the springs. The place of water as a cleanser is particularly powerful given that, until now, the rivers and seas have been open sewers carrying bloated bodies, excrement, semen and blood, a veritable rat highway.¹⁶⁷ It is also an antidote to the fires that seemingly burn everywhere, metaphors for stifling heat of Algeria, anger, war and brutal sexual acts. Water has a calming and cooling presence that has not existed before. Guyotat claimed to set his writing against nature but the world he has created in *Tombeau pour cinq cent mille soldats* is one that is eventually redeemed by it; nature's power is able to eradicate the dystopia that has inhabited its earth.¹⁶⁸

Guyotat's novel also uses the theme of rebirth familiar to Puvis de Chavannes, Daudet and Zola, but it is not so straight-forwardly the rebirth of a republic. In *Tombeau pour cinq cent mille soldats*, Kment and Giauhare are liberated from a muddy grave:

s'accroupissant, il fouille la boue avec les mains, libère, relève le corps de Giauhare qu'il serre contre lui et baise sur les lèvres, aux épaules et aux seins. Giauhare s'éveille, le limon coule hors de ses paupières closes, dans les replis de ses oreilles ; ses joues gonflées de vase, Kment les baise et prenant les lèvres de Giauhare entre les siennes, il aspire ce limon ; ainsi mêlent-ils la vase de leurs bouches, leur semence originelle ; ainsi, nus glacés, se donnent-ils l'un à l'autre la vie et le soleil les enflamme et les place dans son orbite, comme deux planètes nouvelles. Ils s'élancent, ils plongent dans le fouillis de fleurs, de feuillages, d'oiseaux et de sources. La main de Kment sur le ventre

the sky splashed with wild birds, blazing bees, unveils, turns towards the sun whose wound is drying and shrinking.]

¹⁶⁷ For example: 'Dans le haut de la plage, la mer a poussé des galets, des cailloux ronds, des os de seiches, des écorces, des lièges que les hommes ont recouverts de leurs excréments : des rats s'y enfoncent, leurs crocs crèvent les vessies des goémons. Plus haut, dans les rochers plats, des petits poissons tremblent dans les flaques au fond rose. Plus haut encore, au pied de la falaise, les lézards courent entre les falques où l'urine des ânes et des homme fume.' Ibid. p. 313.

¹⁶⁸ John Taylor, 'The Inhuman Work of Pierre Guyotat', *The Times Literary Supplement* (15 March 2006).

de Giauhare, et la main de celle-ci sur la poitrine du garçon ; le soleil mousse dans leurs chevelures.¹⁶⁹

This passage is littered with metaphors of rebirth, from the bizarre vampire-like awakening from the soil, the reference to semen, the spring life which they throw themselves into and Kment's hand resting on the pregnant Giauhare's stomach. There is also a mutual affection, even love, in this passage which has been built upon throughout the novel; in a text so littered with sex in so many forms, very little of it consensual or caring, Kment and Giauhare's relationship stands out as the deviant form, even revolutionary. This is a bizarre utopia, but after the grotesque and gruesome dystopia of the war it is a happy ending of sorts.

Mehdi Charef's *Cartouches Gauloises* also represents the end of the war, through the eyes of eleven-year-old Ali.¹⁷⁰ Over the course of the film set during the summer of 1962, his settler friends are taken away by their parents, one by one, as the exodus gathers pace. Whilst he is sad to see them go, he has also witnessed the horrors of war including the shooting of his uncle and the terrible state of his FLN father in a French army prison. The cyclical element of the narrative in Charef's film is return rather than rebirth, as, at the end of the film when the town is awash with Algerian flags and the sound of singing, Ali's father appears on the horizon. Rachid Bouchareb's *Hors la loi* is similarly cyclical in its representation of the end of the war.¹⁷¹ Set in Algeria and Paris between 1925 and 1962, it follows the lives of three Algerian brothers. The eldest, Messaoud, has been a French soldier in both the Second World War and Indochina and works with his brother in the FLN in Paris upon his return. Abdelkader is an intellectual and becomes a key member of the FLN.¹⁷² The youngest, Saïd, is the joker who lacks the moral codes of either of his brothers, providing for his mother in their absence by setting up a strip club in Clichy. The film is book-ended with two scenes of the end of war, both shown through archive footage

¹⁶⁹ Guyotat, *Tombeau pour cinq cent mille soldats*, p. 486. [squatting down, he searches in the mud with his hands, releases, lifts up Giauhare's body, which he hugs against him and kisses on the lips, on the shoulders and on the breasts. Giauhare wakes up, the silt runs out of her shut eyelids, in the folds of her ears ; her cheeks swollen with sludge, Kment kisses them and taking Giauhare's lips between his, he sucks up that silt ; thus they mix the sludge of their mouths, their original semen ; thus, naked, frozen, they give each other life and sun inflames them in its orbit, like two new planets. They rush forward, they dive in the jumble of flowers, foliage, birds and springs. Kment's hand on Giauhare's belly, and hers on the boy's chest ; the sun sparkles in their hair.]

¹⁷⁰ Mehdi Charef, *Cartouches Gauloises* (France, 2007).

¹⁷¹ Rachid Bouchareb, *Hors la loi* (France, 2010).

¹⁷² Abdelkader is certainly named after the Algerian nationalist hero, Abd el-Kader, who fought against French colonial forces in the nineteenth century.

which is not otherwise present in the film. The first, following a brief opening scene of the family in 1925, is 8 May 1945 in France, VE Day, with street celebrations in black and white but with the colours of the *tricolour* visible. The final scene is very similar but in Algiers on 7 July 1962 and the flag coloured green and red rather than red and blue.

Tombeau pour cinq cent mille soldats, *Cartouches Gauloises* and *Hors la loi* all represent the end of the war and employ a cyclical element in their stories. However, unlike the cyclical narratives present in republican culture following the Franco-Prussian war, this does not represent a new dawn for French republicanism, indeed there is no suggestion that French republicanism is in any way affected by the war or its end. Guyotat's story does not return to Ecbatane after the first chant but remains in the colony of Inamenas which is where Giauhare is reborn. There is a new dawn represented in these stories, but it is that of Algeria, not of France.¹⁷³ The difference from the linear narratives is perhaps attributable to the authors' own convictions: Guyotat was a French soldier who deserted to join the FLN and both Charef and Bouchareb are French of Algerian origin who have previously made films about the position of French Algerians within France itself.¹⁷⁴ The cyclical narratives give legitimacy to Algeria's independence, suggesting the outcome is natural or with historical precedent, thus following the decolonisation discourse. All three also conform to the republican teleological narrative; the French republic is unaffected by the revolution in Algeria because it was an inevitable, and thus foreseeable, outcome.

The teleological narrative present in the artistic representations of the Algerian war, whether linear or cyclical, suggest an inevitability, a tide of History, in the outcome of the war. This inevitability, a rejection of the notion that Algeria was ever an 'integral part of

¹⁷³ By all ending at this juncture, the novel and films avoid asking difficult questions about what followed the liberation celebrations.

¹⁷⁴ Mehdi Charef, *Le Thé au harem d'Archimède* (France, 1985); Mehdi Charef, *La Fille de Keltoum* (France, Belgium and Tunisia, 2001); Rachid Bouchareb, *Indigènes* (France, 2006). Charef was born in Algeria in 1952 and moved to Paris when he was eleven where his father was a labourer. Bouchareb was born in France in 1953. Both Charef and Bouchareb have been considered to be part of a 'beur' culture meaning French people of Algerian descent. However I have not found a satisfactory definition of what *beur* is or where the term originates from and thus, much like *pied noir* which has been used in both a self-identifying and insulting way, tend to avoid it. These two films, can also be considered part of mainstream culture in France given their popularity, rather than tied exclusively to a subculture. Rodney Ball et al., 'French in the World: From Imperialism to Diversity', Jill Forbes and Michael Kelly (eds), *French Cultural Studies: An Introduction* (Oxford, 1995) p. 271; Nicola Cooper, 'Days of Glory? Veterans, Reparation and National Memory', *Journal of War and Culture Studies* 1 (2008). On *beur* culture see: Carrie Tarr, 'Questions of Identity in Beur Cinema: From Tea in the Harem to Cheb', *Screen* 34 (1993); Mark McKinney, 'Métissage in Post-Colonial Comics', Alec G. Hargreaves and Mark McKinney (eds), *Post-Colonial Cultures in France* (London, 1997); Alec G. Hargreaves, 'The *Beurgoisie*: Mediation or Mirage?', *Journal of European Studies* 28 (1998); Dina Sherzer, 'French Colonial and Post-Colonial Hybridity: Condition *Métisse*', *Journal of European Studies* 28 (1998).

France', is pursued in favour of the more deterministic notion of the *mission civilisatrice* for which the outcome was always to be independence. This has altered the nature of French republicanism by changing the meaning of universalism: rather than the assimilationist ideal of the Revolution in which it was possible for anyone to become French, universalism is now claimed to mean that anyone can become *like* France. According to this model Algeria reached this stage, was decolonised and became independent with no further impact on France or French identity. This is not simply an overwriting of history – the denial that Algeria had been considered to be an integral part of France between 1848 and 1959 whilst a very specific and racial distinction between who was French and who was Algerian was in place – but additionally a fundamental alteration to the ideals of French republicanism. Algeria can be *like* France but Algerians cannot *be* French. The doctrine of assimilation has become fundamentally altered by the war but this has been concealed through the use of a teleological narrative, inherent in universalism and present in both historical and artistic representations of the war. The next section will consider the representations of Algerians and settlers in republican culture to better understand and critique how this distinction was drawn and the impact it has had on the republican practice of assimilation.

2.4 *Black, Blanc, Beur*: Assimilation and the Fifth Republic

The image of Zinedine Zidane's face projected onto the Arc de Triomphe following the French victory at the 1998 football World Cup has become a ubiquitous feature in discussions about assimilation as the republic reaches into the twenty-first century. As Elizabeth Ezra has observed, the 'team's success was immediately transfigured into a metaphor for national unity, with implications what extended far beyond the soccer field.'¹⁷⁵ The racial diversity of the national team, it was suggested, was evidence of the success of the Revolutionary doctrine of assimilation. Thirteen years later, the French Football Federation was hit by scandal when *Mediapart*, a French news journal, revealed secret plans to restrict the number of foreign players in French football by means of a racial quota system for entrants to the prestigious national training academies.¹⁷⁶ Assimilation, it seemed, was only open to a select few, and certainly not to those of North

¹⁷⁵ Ezra, *The Colonial Unconscious*, p. 146.

¹⁷⁶ Fabrice Arfi, Michaël Hajdenberg and Mathilde Mathieu, 'Exclusive: French football chiefs' secret plan to whiten *les Bleus*', *Mediapart* (28 April 2011).

African origin who were Muslim.¹⁷⁷ The FFF apparently took the same view as Napoleon III's Senatus Consultate of 1865 wherein a select few Algerians could become French citizens but it was not considered a pathway open to the vast majority. This section looks specifically at the differences in the representations of Algerians and settlers in republican culture and argues that the Algerian war led to a fundamental altering of the Revolutionary doctrine of assimilation to one which has become particularly exclusionary towards those of North African origin.

It is worth reaffirming the three stages which Algerians went through in terms of assimilation and their relationship to the republican state. From the 1848 declaration that made Algeria a part of France, until the beginning of the war in 1954, the republican rhetoric insisted upon the integral nature of the three *départements* on the other side of the Mediterranean to France, but a strong distinction between Algerians and 'Europeans' (including Jews after 1870) remained, legally as well as socio-culturally. Whilst colonisation was justified along the same lines as 'the process of cultural assimilation and republicanization that was turning peasants into French men inside France', few assertive attempts were made to make this a reality; in 1944 when de Gaulle enfranchised women, he failed to extend this right to most Algerians.¹⁷⁸ In many ways the Third Republic moved against the assimilation of Algerians. The Crémieux decree of 1870, which collectively gave all Algerian Jews French citizenship, was a distinction based as much on origin as religious practice, as was the legal codification of the 'native code' in 1881 that contained twenty-seven infractions applicable only to Algerians, including travelling from a commune without a permit.¹⁷⁹

The term 'Muslim' was the preferred collective noun for Algerians but, as the court of appeals in Algiers stated in 1903, the term applied regardless of religious practice or belief; it was in essence a racial distinction.¹⁸⁰ In 1944, de Gaulle's Provisional Government coined the term *français musulmans d'Algérie* (FMA) as a new legal category which, like 'Muslim'

¹⁷⁷ The policy was clearly aimed at those of North African origin given the anti-Islamic policies pursued by the FFF, including the banning of halal meat from players' meals in 2010. Ibid.

¹⁷⁸ Tombs, *France 1814-1914*, p. 203.

¹⁷⁹ Patrick Weil, *Qu'est-ce qu'un Français ? Histoire de la nationalité française depuis la Révolution* (Paris, 2002) p. 233. Shepard calls the Crémieux Decree 'the high point of assimilationist practice' in Algeria but its targeting of groups rather than individuals, and particularly its targeting of race under the auspices of religion, was essentially a gross bastardisation of the Revolutionary doctrine of assimilation. As he notes later, local civil status, which had drawn the distinctions between Jews and Muslims, 'was assigned on the basis of descent'; it was not a self-defining religious category. Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization*, pp. 28 and 34.

¹⁸⁰ Weil, *Qu'est-ce qu'un Français ?*, p. 235.

before it was considered a civil status but was in essence a category based upon perceived ethnicity, and became officially based on 'origin'.¹⁸¹ Those labelled as FMAs did not need to self-identify as Muslims or practice any particular religion. They were identified as such by the republic and the identification was racially based. This legal distinction would become fundamental to the future of Algerians in 1962.

With the outbreak of war in 1954, particularly under Soustelle's governorship and in first year of de Gaulle's rule, assertive policies focusing on development and assimilation were pursued and the rhetoric of *Algérie française* was, in part, finally reproduced in social, economic and political policy.¹⁸² Shepard sees this period of economic assistance as 'unparalleled in the history of Western overseas imperialism'.¹⁸³ He also argues that, with the legal category of the FMA based upon origin, the French republic was able to target its integration programme in a similar way to the USA's later 'affirmative action' approach; a legal recognition of race had the potential to produce a positive outcome in terms of assimilation.¹⁸⁴

With the shift towards favouring self-determination and then independence from 1959, assimilation was once again rejected and instead the *mission civilisatrice* became one based on independence, a nation coming-of-age, rather than integration.¹⁸⁵ This period is identified by Shepard as the beginnings of the 'invention of decolonisation' and is when this thesis has attributed the origins of the decolonisation discourse which is pervasive in republican culture. In 1962 millions of Algerians were stripped of French citizenship based on their legal status as FMAs in direct violation of the Evian Accords. As both René Galissot and Max Silverman have asserted, assimilation was never really intended for Algerians anyway, but was a doctrine only ever meant for ignorant French peasants.¹⁸⁶ These changes in the rhetoric and policy of the republic have been concealed, in both historical and artistic representations, through a teleological narrative of modernisation and progress which

¹⁸¹ Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization*, pp. 47-49.

¹⁸² Tyre, 'From *Algérie Française* to *France Musulmane*', pp. 276-280.

¹⁸³ Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization*, p. 45.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.* p. 50.

¹⁸⁵ This was both a shift in government policy and a change in French public opinion: in 1957 only 18 percent considered independence to be an appealing option, a figure which, by the beginning of 1959, had increased to 51 percent. John Talbott, 'French Public-Opinion and Algerian War: A Research Note', *French Historical Studies* 9 (1975) p. 357.

¹⁸⁶ René Galissot, 'Nationalisme français et racisme: À l'encountre d'idées', *Politique Aujourd'hui* 4 (1984) p. 62; Maxim Silverman, *Deconstructing the Nation: Immigration, Racism, and Citizenship in Modern France* (London, 1992) p. 102.

promoted the idea of the *mission civilisatrice* as one that had always intended to lead to independence and thus deny the historical place of Algeria as ‘an integral part of France’. The celebration of the success of this *mission civilisatrice* has remained important for France, gushed over by Jacques Chirac and codified in the education law of 2005.¹⁸⁷ This self-congratulatory decolonisation discourse necessitates a sharp distinction between French and Algerian.

This division is patently evident in the republican culture, from Pélégri’s *Les Oliviers de la justice* to cinematic films from the twenty-first century. The previous chapter considered the representation of Algerians in the conflict zone, both in terms of FLN fighters and *harkis*. In this chapter, it is the comparative contrast between Algerian civilians and their French and settler counterparts that is of concern. The representations of these groups combine the republican teleological narrative and its inherent *mission civilisatrice* quality with the denial of the assimilability of the Algerian population in cultural representations. In *Les Oliviers*, the *mission civilisatrice* is the backbone of the novel, leading to Algeria’s coming-of-age under the guidance of the settlers, but there is never a possibility that the Algerians will become French; instead they will become independent.¹⁸⁸ The teleological narrative of universalism demands a false consistency on the road to Algerian independence, a denial that Algeria was ever France and thus that Algerians were ever, or could ever be, French.

To return to the two coming-of-age stories, Etcherelli’s 1967 novel *Elise, ou la vraie vie* and Téchiné’s 1994 film *Les Roseaux Sauvages*, the position of the Algerian character, and in Téchiné’s case also the settler, follows the republican assumption that only the latter is truly able to be French. Arezki, and the other Algerian and North African workers at the Billancourt factory, do not mix with the French workers, are not included in the unions for which Elise’s brother, Lucien, agitates and are considered and consider themselves to be separate from the French workers: they live in different areas, go to different cafés, wear different clothes. Whilst Lucien considers himself to be fighting “pour paix en Algérie”,

¹⁸⁷ Both as Prime Minister in 1988 and as President in the mid 1990s, Chirac declared the success of France’s *million civilisatrice* and the pride France should take in it. William B. Cohen, ‘The Algerian War and the Revision of France’s Overseas Mission’, *French Colonial History* 4 (2003) p. 234.

¹⁸⁸ Pélégri, *Les Oliviers de la justice*. Haddour has argued that Pélégri’s novel grasps ‘the failure of the assimilationist project, and as a consequence the political suicide of the *pièdes noirs*’ but actually the novel never suggests assimilation is in any way related to Algerians who are represented as too different to the settlers to ever be French. Instead, Algeria is set on independence as a home for Algerians, and this is how Pélégri situates the decline of the settlers’ way of life. Haddour, *Colonial Myths*, p. 189.

he does not attempt to include Algerians in his campaign.¹⁸⁹ Even supporting the same cause and working in the same factory, the French and Algerians cannot present a united front. At the beginning of the war, as Maurice Thorez himself admitted, the working class did not identify with the FLN's aims.¹⁹⁰ Martin Evans has suggested that this was because 'a colonialist mentality had successfully saturated the popular imagination, producing a network of prejudices about Algeria and Algerians.'¹⁹¹ Even when the Communist Party, of which Lucien is a part, did begin to support the cause, the perceived differences between the French and Algerians did not subside, as Lucien's attitude makes clear.¹⁹²

The relationship between Arezki and Elise is doomed from its very beginning as Arezki warns his friend after asking Elise out, "Laisse tomber... Les Françaises n'aiment pas les bicots."¹⁹³ Their date is secretive as they leave the factory separately and travel to an area unfamiliar to Elise. In the café, '[n]os voisins nous regardèrent sans discrétion...je pris conscience de ma singularité. J'étais avec un Algérien.'¹⁹⁴ Their courtship continues to make both themselves and the people around them awkward and uncertain. Elise's character is likeably naïve and whilst the novel appears to disapprove of the reaction their relationship receives it does not offer a challenge to it; it is clear their courtship can have no future. Arezki's disappearance at the end of the novel allows Elise to move on with her life, the adventure of *la vraie vie* complete. The two influences that have dominated her throughout the novel, first Lucien and then Arezki, are cleanly removed through death and disappearance.¹⁹⁵ Elise describes Arezki's disappearance as 'naturelle, elle s'inscrivait dans une fatale logique dont j'étais la seule à m'émouvoir.'¹⁹⁶ By conforming to this teleological narrative, Elise, and the novel, avoid facing the difficult questions that the relationship

¹⁸⁹ Etcherelli, *Elise, ou la vraie vie*, p. 138.

¹⁹⁰ Evans, 'From Colonialism to Post-Colonialism', p. 391.

¹⁹¹ Ibid. p. 391.

¹⁹² On the PCF and the Algerian war see Irwin M. Wall, 'French Communists and Algerian War', *Journal of Contemporary History* 12 (1977).

¹⁹³ Etcherelli, *Elise, ou la vraie vie*, p. 157. ["Forget it... French girls don't like Arabs."] *Bicot* is a racist term for Algerians and North Africans more generally.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid. pp. 158-159. [The people stared at us openly... I realised what was wrong. I was with an Algerian.] Kristin Ross has written about the relationship between the cultural obsession with modernisation and the 'Second Hausmannisation' of Paris during the 1950s, leaving the area around the Grotte d'or a small haven for the immigrant population. It is here that Elise goes with Arezki and feels alien. Ross, *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies*, pp. 150-154.

¹⁹⁵ After her first date with Arezki, Elise notes the dwindling importance of Lucien in her life: 'Je me souviens seulement le jeudi matin de l'invitation de mon frère. Tiens, c'est donc signe. C'est comme une épine qui se retire tout doucement, sans trop déchirer.' Etcherelli, *Elise, ou la vraie vie*, p. 161.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid. p. 278. [natural, it was part of a fatal logic and I was alone in being affected by it.]

would have faced beyond the very short term.¹⁹⁷ Elise desired a true partnership but knew that fate would not allow it because Arezki was Algerian and she was French. Thoroughly incompatible, assimilation would be impossible.

In contrast to Etcherelli's varied cast, *Les Roseaux Sauvages* offers only one Algerian character and not until near the film's close. Following a breakdown caused by the death of her ex-pupil, Serge's brother, at the hands of the OAS, Mme. Alvarez, Maité's mother, is replaced by M. Morelli as the school's French teacher. Morelli used to teach in Algeria, although specifically avoids Henri's question about whether he comes from there, and seems to offer a balanced view of the war.¹⁹⁸ Towards the end of the film Morelli meets Mme. Alvarez for lunch in a local café. As they leave he invites her to meet his wife who, it transpires, has been waiting in his car for the duration of their meal. Mme. Alvarez is notably if politely surprised to be introduced to an Algerian woman who merely says 'bonjour' when prompted, then turns to Morelli, says simply 'j'ai un peu froid' and Morelli directs her back into the car.¹⁹⁹ It is a brief and strange scene in comparison to the mood of the rest of the film, particularly the excitement of the following scenes as the students await their *baccalauréat* results and then go to the river to swim in the sunshine. Aïcha Morelli is evidently represented as being an alien in an foreign environment, rather strangely being left in the car outside the restaurant and with no further characterisation, or indeed recognition, given to her other than this fleeting introduction. She is certainly not represented as having assimilated despite Morelli's own belief in the possibility, given that she is unwilling or unable to join her husband for lunch, and does not engage in conversation with Mme. Alvarez. As the main characters of the film come-of-age, Aïcha Morelli seems static. This is particularly at odds with the changes Henri, the settler, has gone through during the film.

In Morelli's first class, he asks the students to analyse La Fontaine's fable, 'Le Chêne et le Roseau' in which the sturdy but rigid oak is blown over in a storm whilst the flexible reed survives. Morelli, whilst tutoring him privately, tells Henri that with his support of the OAS

¹⁹⁷ Ross also notes this need in a 'dominant contemporary French perspective', which I identify as republican, to view Algeria as 'an "exterior" experience, added on but not essential to French historical identity, an episode that ended cleanly'. Arezki's disappearance allows for this clean break. Ross, *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies*, p. 196.

¹⁹⁸ This comes across most profoundly when he asks the class to analyse La Fontaine's fable, 'Le Chêne et le Roseau' which is discussed further below.

¹⁹⁹ Téchiné, *Les Roseaux Sauvages*. [I am a little cold]

and *Algérie française* he is the oak from the story. By the end of the film, this is far from the case and it is Aïcha Morelli who seems to fit such a comparison more accurately. Henri, like his companions, has battled his demons throughout the film, as would be expected from the coming-of-age theme. Just as Maïté has tamed some of her Communist dogma through reading one of Henri's letters from his parents, so Henri has become more accepting of the 'inevitable': the independence of Algeria.²⁰⁰ Their two apparent opposite points of view meet literally in the middle when they have sex at the end of the film. Henri has become the reed in the fable, assimilating into French life. Morelli's Algerian wife cannot do the same.

Both *Elise, ou la vraie vie* and *Les Roseaux Sauvages* represent French and Algerians in contrast, the latter not being assimilable with the former. In two further films, Alexander Arcady's *Le Coup de Sirocco* (1979) and Laurent Herbiet's *Mon Colonel* (2006), the Algerians are seen within Algeria and in contrast to the settlers. The first follows the fortunes of the Narboni family from the birth of their child Paulo in 1945, through the war, the exodus and finally to a successful and integrated life in Paris.²⁰¹ In this light-hearted film based on Daniel Saint-Hamont's 1978 novel, the Narbonis overcome personal tragedies, including the emotional loss of their home and livelihood, to reach a happy ending with Albert Narboni, the father, setting up an *épicerie* in Montmartre and Paulo's only complaint being in regard to French girls. The Narbonis are clearly Italian rather than French in origin and lived in Algeria their whole lives until the exodus, yet they are a success story of assimilation. The film reiterates what Shepard identifies as the French government's 'ardent reaffirmation of the theory of assimilation' which focused on economic assimilation most particularly.²⁰² Much of the film follows Narboni attempting to claim the compensation that he is owed by the French state (there has been a mix up over names) and his success in this pursuit leads to his success in business. The Narbonis' transition is not smooth or easy, and proves emotionally traumatic especially for Paulo's mother, Marguerite, whose hyperbolic Mediterranean temperament provides much of the film's humour. Yet it is

²⁰⁰ This is a gradual and multi-layered process in the film: his connection with the OAS and *Algérie française* is through the radio which he is seen listening to on several occasions. As the film develops (and the war comes to an end), he is no longer seen with the radio. His relationship with Serge whose brother had been killed in an OAS attack, begins as highly confrontational and ends with them being, if not friends, companions. His relationship with Maïté also begins in a highly confrontational fashion as he intends to burn down the Communist Party building but stops short when he sees her studying there; the conversations they share and finally the scene in which they have sex are the most prominent representations of his assimilation.

²⁰¹ Alexander Arcady, *Le Coup de Sirocco* (France, 1979).

²⁰² Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization*, pp. 220-221.

never considered an impossible or even an unlikely integration, simply one that took effort from both sides.²⁰³ As such, the conservative journal *Le Figaro* spoke very warmly of the film on its release and commissioned Jules Roy, ex-settler and writer of the once scandalous *La Guerre d'Algérie*, to write an emotive and praising review.²⁰⁴

Despite its initial Algerian setting, however, few Algerians feature in the film other than to fill space in public places. None of the Narbonis' friends are Algerian and the few they know, like their housekeeper, are not even deemed worthy of names. The only Algerian character who speaks is the man who comes to buy Narboni's *épicerie* as the exodus mounts and he is represented as aggressive and unfair, paying much less than the shop is worth because he is able to exploit the family's precarious position. This lends power to the film's narrative that not only are the settlers able to integrate into French life, it is natural for them to do so because they are not Algerian. Indeed, France takes on the character of home for the dispossessed as the Narbonis are no longer either Italian or Algerian, instead France will offer them a home and they will work hard to earn their position there. The film uses the Revolutionary ideal of assimilation whilst denying the same possibility to Algerians who are far too distinct to qualify. The vastly different characterisations (or lack of them) from the very beginning of the film make such a conclusion inevitable.²⁰⁵

Ross's observations on the parallels of modernity and decolonisation are again apparent in the strong distinctions between the Narbonis and the Algerians. Ross notes how representations of modernity and domesticity are interconnected; the washing machine store in *Les Parapluies du Cherbourg* is her example but Marguerite Narboni's obsessive house-keeping furthers this connection:

If the woman is clean, the family is clean, the nation is clean. If the French woman is dirty, then France is dirty and backward. But France can't be dirty

²⁰³ Sophie Watt has argued that the film fails to engage with the socio-political context of the 'repatriation' of the settlers in Arcady's film, relying instead on nostalgia. Sophie Watt, 'Alexandre Arcady and the Rewriting of French Colonial History in Algeria', Unpublished research paper, (University of Sheffield, 2010).

²⁰⁴ Ariel Marini, 'Roger Hamon : un certain pied-noir', *Le Figaro* (7-8 April 1979); Jules Roy, 'La terre, le ciel et la mer d'Algérie : Un "coup de sirocco" sur des souvenirs', *Le Figaro* (20 April 1979). The very fact that Roy, once the scourge of conservative France for speaking out against the army's methods in the Algerian war, is invited to write for *Le Figaro* is evidence of the acceptance and success of the teleological republican narrative in which the independence of Algeria, and indeed the 'repatriation' of settlers, was seen to be inevitable.

²⁰⁵ Interestingly, Saint-Hamont's original book begins with the tale of the Narboni family leaving Algeria for France as their boat pulls out of Oran in the fog. This is titled 'Prologue' and 'Chapter 1' backtracks to Algeria. Thus the inevitability of their leaving Algeria is made even more apparent. Daniel Saint-Hamont, *Le Coup de Sirocco* (Paris, 1978).

and backward, because that role is played by the colonies. But there are no more colonies. If Algeria is becoming an independent nation, then France must become a *modern* nation: some distinction between the two must prevail. France must, so to speak, clean house: reinventing the home is reinventing the nation.²⁰⁶

This link between dirt and backwardness, cleanliness and modernity, is nothing new to the French cultural imagination, as Zola's naturalist novels evidence. The drawing of such a distinction between France and Algeria, though, emphasises their differences and thus, in the post-1959 decolonisation discourse, enables the denial that Algeria was ever France. This represents a revolutionary change in the nature of French republicanism because it asserted that Algerians could never be French; the universalist doctrine of assimilation is rejected.

Like *Le Coup de Sirocco*, *Mon Colonel* also travels between France and Algeria but does so less chronologically. France is represented in the multicoloured present wherein an attractive young army lieutenant is investigating the murder of a retired colonel, aided by the letters sent anonymously to her which detail the experiences of a newly-recruited lieutenant, Guy Rossi.²⁰⁷ As she reads, his story in Algeria unfolds in black and white whilst the present – that is to say, France – remains in colour, a striking expression of the claim to modernisation. It transpires that Rossi, part of Colonel Duplan's team in directing the 'pacification' of the 'ville française', Saint-Arnaud near Constantine, begins to question both the Colonel's methods and the war itself, aided in his change of heart by conversations with the communist teacher René Ascencio.²⁰⁸ His letters end as he goes to tell Duplan that he cannot double-cross Ascencio in order to kill members of the FLN. Officially, he is listed as missing in action but the film is clear that Duplan had Rossi killed.

²⁰⁶ Ross, *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies*, p. 78. Italics in the original.

²⁰⁷ Laurent Herbiet, *Mon Colonel* (France, 2006).

²⁰⁸ Much like the place of Mme. Alvarez in *Les Roseaux Sauvages*, the trope of the communist teacher appears to be an uncomplicated way of ensuring a character has resolute anti-war views without having to question the reasoning behind such convictions beyond the doctrine of communism. Generally civilians are represented as having little interest in the war itself because, as the republican narrative goes, it was of little importance to wider French society. The use of communist ideals also avoids the notion that people's views on the war shifted over time (as John Talbott's figures have shown was the case) which would undermine the teleological nature of the republican narrative. It is actually somewhat inaccurate to portray the communist line as consistent throughout the war, as Irwin Wall has shown, but the use of an indoctrinated communist allows the portrayal of an anti-war stance without requiring much consideration as to the reasons why, when few others appear to be sharing such staunch views. Talbott, 'French Public-Opinion and Algerian War', pp. 357-358; Wall, 'French Communists and Algerian War', pp. 521-543.

It transpires that Rossi's letters were written to his father who admits at the end of the film to having killed the Colonel.

Algerians feature rather more heavily in *Mon Colonel* than *Le Coup de Sirocco* but they are still given little characterisation, particularly compared to the settlers who Rossi meets, from Ascencio and his Pétainist school principle to the swooning girls at a picnic. Few Algerians are seen as individuals; Rossi interacts with them as a collective, whether organising the photographing of women for identification cards or appointing a classroom full of men to take responsibility for their areas. The settlers and the Algerians are very distinct in the film, inhabiting different public spaces and eating in different cafés. This contrast is particularly stark between the upmarket French restaurant which makes space for Rossi and Ascencio based upon the former's uniform and the latter's missing arm (wrongly presuming him to be a war veteran), and the couscous café run by a double-dealing Algerian. The women, particularly, form a contrast: those being photographed are swathed in the *hijab*, their faces covered and when the camera shows them close up they are elderly. The women who swoon over Rossi, however, are young, made up and decked in light summer dresses. They are, essentially, civilisations apart.

The only occasion in which a settler and an Algerian are seen to mix is when Rossi goes for lunch with Ascencio and his friends, Françoise and Ali. At first they struggle to know where to eat; they cannot go to a French restaurant because Ali would not be welcome and they cannot go to an Algerian restaurant because they would be unable to drink wine. Eventually they decide on a Jewish café which appears dark and tucked away, as though a secretive hideout for their deviant social behaviour. As Françoise explains, to her family he's a 'bicot', to his family she's a 'pute'.²⁰⁹ Even amongst friends, however, Ali barely says a word other than to point them in the direction of the café. This couple never reappear in the film. In the present, both Ascencio and Duplan exist but Françoise and Ali inhabit only this brief moment in black and white colonial Algeria; to represent their future, whether in Algeria or France, would upset the new meaning of republican universalism after the war in which Algeria had civilised and become like France but Algerians were not French.²¹⁰

²⁰⁹ Short for *putain*: whore.

²¹⁰ John Talbott asserts that such relationships were extremely rare, with intermarriages occurring at fewer than 100 per year. He continues, in 'colonial Algeria, linguistic, religious, and racial differences ran parallel along either side of one vast cultural vault' between Europeans and Algerians. Fundamentally, 'no institution served, at any point in society, to join the two sides of the fault together.' Such images truly make a mockery of the ideal of assimilation. Talbott, *The War Without a Name*, p. 14.

Ascencio, who as an activist with the FLN could have stayed in Algeria after the peace, is in France having served a prison sentence for his treason and subsequently amnestied. The implication is that, as an ex-settler, France is where he belongs; for de Gaulle he was a repatriate whilst Algerians like Ali would only be refugees.²¹¹

These four artistic representations conform to the post-1959 republican narrative of Algeria's inevitable independence and share its teleological trend which sees the *mission civilisatrice* as complete and France's connection to Algeria as neatly severed. The inevitability of decolonisation, as Shepard has argued, 'now appeared as wholly consistent with a narrative of progress' and this is aided in Etcherelli's and Téchiné's works through a coming-of-age narrative.²¹² Yet it is the very deep distinctions that all four books and films make between who is French and who is Algerian, and the impossibility of the successful combining of the two (Morelli's socially-absent wife, Françoise and Ali's lack of future), which fulfil the republican narrative's core assumptions. The racial element of national identity, already present in the legal sphere through the defining of origin in the 1944 and the active use of such a definition in 1962 to prevent an exodus of Algerians alongside the exodus of settlers, is reasserted and supported in these representations. The ex-settlers, from the hard-line Henri to the Italian-originating Narbonis and the communist Ascencio, with hard work and a little enlightenment are able to be fully assimilated into French society. Algerians are not.²¹³ All four assume the rightful place of Algerians is an independent Algeria but as such deny the possibility of Algerians being French.

The doctrine of universalism, and with it the practical application of assimilation, was altered by the Algerian war. Universalism requires a belief in the superiority of ideals but whilst prior to the Algerian war this meant everyone should attempt to *be* French, after the war it altered to mean that everyone should attempt to be *like* the French. The ramifications within France were such that the racial identifiers of the colonial period were transposed in the republican 'hexagon'. The additional elements of modernisation and

²¹¹ De Gaulle stated in July 1962, in relation to the *barkis*, "the term repatriates obviously does not apply to the Muslims. In their case, we are dealing only with refugees." Quoted in Shepard, 'Excluding the *Harkis*', p. 97. See Chapter 1, section 1.5.

²¹² Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization*, p. 6.

²¹³ Notably, military service is not a method by which they become assimilated into French society, in keeping with the demise of the citizen soldier figure as detailed in Chapter 1. Antoine Prost has questioned why the settlers have not 'found ways to commemorate collectively their experience and their losses.' In terms of government-sponsored commemoration, it would be counter to the republican narrative which considers the settlers *repatriates* and emphasises their assimilation into French society, particularly evident in Arcady's film. Prost, 'The Algerian War in French Collective Memory', p. 16.

progress allowed the republic to maintain its superior identity, intrinsic to any nationalism, vis-à-vis Algeria.

Conclusions: a revolution concealed

There is nothing new in asserting that the French are fixated with their own history, and particularly the history relating to the Revolution and its intellectual influence, from nineteenth-century historians' obsession with the 'principles of 1789' to what David Howarth has described as 'a profoundly historicist political culture' in the twenty-first.²¹⁴ It is this preoccupation which has continued to lend support to the ideology of French universalism which is identified within the longitudinal analysis pursued here. Through this context of historiography and Third Republican culture, a fixation with the discourses of the Revolution is clearly in evidence in both historical and artistic representations of the Algerian war. Whilst it is plausible that such values offer the French republic a favourable ideological baseline (*liberté, égalité, fraternité* still seem to be agreeable concepts two centuries later), such a focus has led to the concealment of practices which run counter to them. Universalism, the belief that French Revolutionary values are relevant to all peoples, is both paternalistic and necessarily teleological; tied to concepts like modernisation and progress, it lends itself to a linear and deterministic narrative. The paternalistic element justified the *mission civilisatrice* that was apparently pursued during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in Algeria, whilst the teleological strand concealed both the lack of pursuit of such a model (particularly in regards to its core practice of assimilation) and latterly the failure of the doctrine of universalism itself. As Bertrand Taithe has more succinctly put it, 'much of French universalism was tested to destruction in the empire'.²¹⁵

The problem with this dominant narrative is the concealment of those elements which do not find space in its linearity, particularly those who fought for and believed in *Algérie française*, but also Algerians living in France, with often devastating results.²¹⁶ Prior to 1954, most Algerians were practically considered to be unassimilable to France, post-1959 they

²¹⁴ Hazareesingh, *Intellectual Founders of the Third Republic*, p. 294; Howarth and Varouxakis, *Contemporary France*, p. 2. Historians continue to assess and reassess the influence of the Revolution and the 'values of 1789' (to use Tombs' phrase) in the present. In particular, many like to assert when the Revolution came to an end, a phenomena which the next chapter will consider.

²¹⁵ Bertrand Taithe, 'An Algerian History of France', *French History* 20 (2006) p. 236.

²¹⁶ See the discussion of Lacouture in section 2.2b and Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization*, p. 88.

were ideologically considered as such. This has altered the integrity of universalism in a way which has been concealed through a celebration of colonialism, particularly through the *mission civilisatrice* as well as through the discourse of decolonisation, both of which directly connect with the teleological nature of universalism to suggest a progressive, modernising and inevitable force. In practical terms this has impacted on how national identity has been defined in the republic because the post-1959 narrative insists that Algerians cannot be French; they are too distinct to be assimilated.²¹⁷ The teleological element also removes the responsibility of the republic for those affected by the war and its aftermath: ‘History’ was beyond their control.²¹⁸

The *mission civilisatrice* was the one consistent element of French republican rhetoric in relation to Algeria from 1848 through to the Fifth Republic. The doctrine of assimilation may have waxed and waned but the *mission civilisatrice*, a convenient tie-in with the paternalistic aspect of universalism, fitted the narrative regardless of whether Algeria was being colonised, was ‘an integral part of France’ or whether it was being prepared for decolonisation. As Alice Conklin has explained, the ‘notion of the civilising mission rested upon certain fundamental assumptions about the superiority of French culture and the perfectibility of humankind’.²¹⁹ Such a conviction of superiority inevitably produced the cultural prejudice necessary to justify colonialism.²²⁰

²¹⁷ Such discrimination, particularly during the exodus of 1962, is unchallenged by Algeria because it suits the doctrine of the FLN – an Algeria for Algerians (if the *mission civilisatrice* had taught them anything over generations, it was racial discrimination). Franz Fanon, writing in 1959 did not subscribe to the idea that the settlers would stay in Algeria in the way the French (as evidenced by the Evian Accords) assumed they would, but for him the distinction was not one of race but of politics: any European fighting for the FLN would be as welcome in an independent Algeria as an Algerian fighting for the FLN. Yet even this was perhaps naïve given Andre Nouschi’s assessment of post-war Algerian identity: ‘Arab culture and Islam became the twin foundations of a new Algerian identity after 1962. This policy consciously rejected the cultural legacy which the country inherited from the previous century of French colonialism... Modern Algeria has sought to reject all aspects of its colonial history and has struggled to re-establish a cultural connection with a more distant Arabo-Islamic heritage.’ It is difficult to see where a significant group of Europeans would fit in such an identity. Frantz Fanon, *Studies in a Dying Colonialism* (London, 1989) particularly Chapter 5; Andre Nouschi, ‘The FLN, Islam and Arab Identity’, Alec G. Hargreaves and Michael J. Heffernan (eds), *French and Algerian Identities from Colonial Times to the Present: A Century of Interaction* (New York, 1993) p. 128.

²¹⁸ Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization*, p. 98. Such a denial of responsibility goes some way to explaining how those who were conscripted to serve in Algeria were not granted ex-serviceman status, and the pensions and allowances attached to such a status, until 1974. Martin Evans, ‘Rehabilitating the Traumatized War Veteran: The Case of French Conscripts from the Algerian War, 1954-1962’, Martin Evans and Kenneth Lunn (eds), *War and Memory in the Twentieth Century* (Oxford, 1997) p. 77.

²¹⁹ Alice L. Conklin, *A Mission to Civilize: The Republican Idea of Empire in France and West Africa, 1895-1930* (Stanford, 1997) p. 1.

²²⁰ This is evidently not novel to France but part of the Enlightenment’s inheritance present in all modern European colonialism.

Max Silverman has proposed that in a post-colonial France (or a post-modern France as he sees it) there is a new racism whose ‘defining feature...is its abandonment of the old discourse of racial purity and racial hierarchy in favour of one based on cultural difference and cultural essentialism.’²²¹ This ‘new racism’, better understood as cultural prejudice, is nothing new to post-Revolutionary France. Indeed, cultural superiority and prejudice were inherent features of the republican doctrine of universalism. The revolutionary shift between 1959-62 was not one from racial to cultural prejudice, but in fact the reverse. The teleological and linear narrative of universalism concealed the revolution by implying a cultural rather than a racial distinction. However, the legal category of FMA, despite its use of ‘musulman’, was always a racial not a religious distinction; it was not applied after a survey of religious practice nor was it chosen by those who self-identified as Muslim. It was a legal category applied by the republic to those people it considered to be Algerian rather than European in origin. Its use during the early stages of the Algerian war, as a method of positive discrimination, was novel for French republicanism but conformed to the doctrine of assimilation. It marked a revolution in republicanism when it became a tool of exclusion from 1959 and particularly from the summer of 1962. FMA became a racial identification of who could be French.

The cultural representations of the Algerian war considered here have followed this logic, representing Algerians as too culturally distinct to be assimilated into France. Most radically, in the post-1959 republican narrative, this did not necessarily imply they were culturally backward, rather the Algerians had been successfully civilised and were thus able to create a state in France’s image, distinct from but equal to France. The Algerian republic was born from the ashes of war just as the Third Republic had been. Whilst in one sense this could be considered as a positive alternative to classic French universalism – an acceptance that it was not the only standard-bearer of ‘civilisation’ – it draws a racial and thus impermeable distinction between the French and the Algerian.²²² As such, in artistic representations of the Algerian in France, from *Elise, ou la vraie vie*’s Arezki to *Caché*’s Majid, they are always alien. The rejection of the assimilationist role played by the citizen soldier, which Chapter 1 has asserted, is fundamental to this shift from a cultural to a racial

²²¹ Maxim Silverman, *Facing Postmodernity: Contemporary French Thought on Culture and Society* (London, 1999) p. 44.

²²² Conklin identifies the term ‘civilisation’ as ‘a particularly French concept; the French invented the term in the eighteenth century and have celebrated the achievements of their own ever since.’ Conklin, *A Mission to Civilize*, p. 1.

understanding of national identity and allows the exclusion of the identifiable collective of the *harkis* from the French republic.

To lend strength to the decolonisation discourse which sees Algeria as coming-of-age under the guidance of the French republic, France too is seen to progress, moving forward along its own linear path. As Martin Evans has argued, specifically in relation to the exclusion of the *harkis*, for 'de Gaulle post-1962 the phenomenon of decolonization was reconfigured as a victory for modernization.'²²³ This theme of modernisation, as noted both by Kirsten Ross and in the artistic representations analysed in this chapter, is pervasive in post-war France, an added bulwark against the successfully decolonised Algerian republic.²²⁴ The rhetoric of modernisation, decolonisation and the progressive nature of universalism worked in a synchronicity of inevitability to conceal the revolution in French republicanism which occurred during the Algerian war.

²²³ Martin Evans, 'The *Harkis*: The Experience and Memory of France's Muslim Auxiliaries', Martin S. Alexander, Martin Evans, and John F. V. Keiger (eds), *The Algerian War and the French Army, 1954-62: Experiences, Images, Testimonies* (Basingstoke, 2002) p. 128.

²²⁴ Even in Charef's *Cartouches Gauloises* which ends with the success of the FLN, the train station manager expresses his concern to Ali that without French expertise, they may not know how to work the signals.

3

The One and Indivisible Republic

The previous two chapters have argued that there exists within French republican ideology a teleological narrative of history, supported by the belief in universalism and identifiable in republican historic and artistic culture. This narrative has framed the relationship between France and Algeria as one of paternalistic progress leading to Algerian independence through decolonisation, denying the impact of the relationship on France after 1962. In order to challenge this rejection of the Franco-Algerian relationship's saliency for modern France, this final chapter identifies another element of the republican narrative of French history: the discourse of the *guerre franco-française*. Here I consider how this discourse has been used by the dominant republican narrative of French history to conceal the revolution in republicanism of 1959-62, and how it can be utilised to challenge that narrative and put Algeria back into the history of France.

The chapter begins with a consideration of some of the historiography of modern France and republican artistic representations of the Paris Commune, which employ the *guerre-franco-française* discourse. I argue that it is a specifically republican discourse, tied to the Revolution and the progressive, teleological struggle of republicanism. The *guerre franco-française* discourse is a central element to the romantic emplotment of the republican understanding of French history, an ongoing 'drama of the triumph of good over evil, of virtue over vice, of light over darkness'.¹ This binary distinction, with its overtly moral claim, encourages the republican narrative towards a conclusion, to reach the 'end of the revolution'. The idea of romantic emplotment, identified originally by Northrop Frye in his analysis of literary texts and subsequently transferred to the historical sphere by Hayden White's study of nineteenth-century historiography, is used in this chapter to help identify the structure and meaning of the republican narrative of French history.² The romantic mode suggests a simple good versus evil mode of story-telling which most often concludes with a comedic or tragic mode, the former being one of reconciliation. This will be discussed in more depth over the course of the chapter.

¹ Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (London, 1973) p. 9.

² Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays* (Princeton, 1957); White, *Metahistory*.

In republican historiography, the identification of the end of the Revolution has shifted from the Third to the Fifth Republic. This concern has had an impact on the understandings of both the Occupation period and the Algerian war in relation to their place in French history. The initial 'ending' of the Revolution with the dawn of the Third Republic denied the implicitly French nature of the Vichy regime by inferring that the republic was France's 'natural' state after 1870. The revised 'ending', through the shift to a comedic mode of emplotment emphasising reconciliation between Bonapartism and republicanism, places the Algerian war in the shadow of Vichy and denies the revolutionary impact of the later event on the French Republic. The representation of the Third Republic as a key moment in the development of republican France has survived this shift by being considered to be the last revolutionary moment in the development of republicanism; as the last chapter showed, the rhetoric of revolution and rebirth ends with the Third Republic and the progression of republicanism then takes on a more evolutionary guise.

The second part of the chapter will, through an analysis of artistic representations of the Algerian war, illustrate how the *guerre franco-française* discourse structures narratives of the war. The republic is distanced from responsibility for both the use of torture and the terrorism of the OAS by the drawing of the professional army as the republic's opposite, anti-France, using the rhetoric of fascism transferred from the Vichy era. This transference has the added effect of undermining the place of the Algerian war in French republican history in two ways. Firstly it places the violence of the war in comparison to the mass slaughter of the Second World War and the Holocaust, thus diminishing its apparent significance. Secondly, in line with the teleological narrative of republican history and specifically with the shift from a revolutionary to an evolutionary stage of republican progress concluding with the founding of the Fifth Republic, the conflicts of the Algerian war are represented as a continuation of those of the Second World War. The romantic (good versus evil) mode is drawn as the same conflict through both periods. This prevents both a questioning of the origins of the Algerian conflict, which would act as a reminder of the 'Frenchness' of Algeria in republican discourse before 1959, and a consideration of its impact on the French Republic.

What is notably absent in these cultural representations of the *guerre franco-française* is the depiction of Paris, usually the centre of the civil war, and, less surprisingly, the drawing of

Algerians as the anti-France. The final part of this chapter thus turns to the events of 17 October 1961 in which up to 200 peacefully-protesting Algerians were killed by the Parisian police. Through an analysis of both the historiography and artistic representations of the event, I argue that the pervasive dominance of the Vichy era in the republican narrative of the Algerian war has had a detrimental effect on a more nuanced understanding of the conflict. However, the *guerre franco-française* discourse and the use of a longitudinal context also has the potential to offer a deeper and more complex understanding of the war and its place in the history of republican France.

3.1 The *guerre franco-française* and the ending of the Revolution

3.1a Revolution, civil war and regime change

The discourse of the *guerre franco-française* is a consistent feature in the histories of modern France. From the Terror of 1792-3 to the June Days of 1848, the Paris Commune of 1871 and the Dreyfus Affair at the end of the nineteenth-century, all have been identified by historians as flare-ups in the same civil war story.³ As Ann Rigney has asserted, ‘historical works are not only documentary sources of information about the past but also “verbal artefacts” which may be legitimately studied as such.’⁴ Whilst this thesis takes the same view as both Rigney and F. R. Ankersmit, noting that historical representations are subject to stricter constraints than those of a purely artistic bent, historical representations are powerful transmitters of certain narratives because of the authority this constraint endows.⁵

³ The clearest example of such a narrative can be found in Robert Tombs, *France 1814-1914* (London, 1996), but it is not exceptional. See also Albert Cobban, *A History of Modern France, Volume 2: 1799-1871* (London, 1965); Maurice Agulhon, *The French Republic, 1879-1992*, trans. Antonia Nevill (Oxford, 1993); Nick Hewlett, ‘Explaining Conflict and Violence in France’s Modern Political History, 1789-1945’, Jan Windebank and Renate Günther (eds), *Violence and Conflict in the Politics and Society of Modern France* (Lampeter, 1995); Pamela Pilbeam, *Republicanism in Nineteenth-Century France, 1814-1871* (Basingstoke, 1995); Sharif Gemie, *French Revolutions, 1815-1914: An Introduction* (Edinburgh, 1999); David R. Howarth and Georgios Varouxakis, *Contemporary France: An Introduction to French Politics and Society* (London, 2003); Jack Hayward, *Fragmented France: Two Centuries of Disputed Identity* (Oxford, 2007); Timothy Baycroft, *France: Inventing the Nation* (London, 2008). On the left wing of republicanism are those who consider the *guerre franco-française* to be an ongoing class struggle much akin to Karl Marx’s analysis of the Paris Commune. See Karl Marx, ‘The Civil War in France’, V. Adoratsky (ed.) *Karl Marx Selected Works in Two Volumes. Vol. II* (Moscow, 1933); Roger Magraw, *France 1815-1914* (London, 1983); Susan Milner, ‘What About the Workers? The Trade Unions’ “Short Century”’, Martin S. Alexander (ed.) *French History Since Napoleon* (London, 1999).

⁴ Ann Rigney, *The Rhetoric of Historical Representation: Three Narrative Histories of the French Revolution* (Cambridge, 1990) p. xi.

⁵ Ibid. p. xii; F. R. Ankersmit, *Historical Representation* (Stanford, CA, 2002) p. 284.

As such, the historiography of republican France is a fundamental element in the drawing of the *guerre franco-française* narrative.

Modern France possesses an impressive array of constitutions, fifteen by Robert Tombs' count, from Bourbon absolutism to liberal Empire and conservative Republic.⁶ All but the Bourbons would derive legitimacy from the Revolution of 1789, yet, without the provision of a long-term stable model, what such a heritage meant would remain a contentious issue.⁷ For Robespierre, the Republic of 1792 marked the end of the Revolution, for Pamela Pilbeam, it represented the Revolution's failure.⁸ Regardless, it began a long French tradition of regime change marked by political violence, by civil war. The massacres and repressions of the Terror would ensure a long-term association of republicanism with mass violence and yet the historical narrative of the *guerre franco-française* is a republican one. The Bonapartist narrative is one of unity, of uniting the revolutionaries and counter-revolutionaries, whilst legitimists 'pretend that the First Republic never existed'.⁹ The heritage of civil conflict is claimed by republicans alone.

This identification with civil violence by republicanism is at one level contradictory to successive republics' claim to be 'one and indivisible'; the phrase's inclusion on the coins of the embittered and short-lived Second Republic seems rather ironic. Yet it is part of the same teleological narrative discussed in Chapter 2 and is also inclusive of the *guerre franco-française*. The steady increase in civil violence in the early 1790s, aided by external wars, amplified the paranoia of a counter-revolution. The internal uprisings in Brittany and the Ardèche were couched in the language of treachery, not only anti-Revolution but anti-French. It is through the adoption of this language and its mergence – that to be anti-Revolution and thus anti-republican was synonymous with being anti-French – that the discourse of the *guerre franco-française* becomes evidently republican. The teleological element

⁶ Tombs, *France 1814-1914*, p. 3.

⁷ Pamela Pilbeam, 'Revolution, Restoration(s) and Beyond: Changes, Continuities and the Enduring Legacies of 1789', Martin S. Alexander (ed.) *French History Since Napoleon* (London, 1999) p. 32. Abbé Sieyès did not consider a consistent model to be a desirable outcome of the Revolution writing, '[n]ot only is the nation not subject to a constitution, but it *cannot* be and it *must* not be; which is tantamount to saying that it is not.' He asserted instead that a constitution should be flexible and answerable to representative democracy. Emmanuel Joseph Sièyes, *What is the Third Estate?*, trans. M. Blondel (London, 1963) [1789] pp. 126 and 134-137.

⁸ Albert Cobban, *A History of Modern France, Volume 1: 1715-1799* (London, 1963) p. 241; Pilbeam, *Republicanism in Nineteenth-Century France*, p. 40.

⁹ Baycroft, *France: Inventing the Nation*, p. 20; Pilbeam, *Republicanism in Nineteenth-Century France*, p. 61. Louis Napoleon's supporters were quite insistent that 'Bonapartism was neither right nor left' in an attempt to present him as a candidate of unity. René Rémond, *The Right Wing in France: From 1815 to de Gaulle*, trans. James M. Laux (Philadelphia, 1969) p. 138.

of the ‘one and indivisible’ claim insists upon the continued success of France (the Republic) over anti-France; anti-France can never be France in this logic.

The discourse of the *guerre franco-française* particularly highlights the romantic structure to which the republican narrative of French history adheres. Frye first described four modes which fictional narratives tend to follow, the romantic, comic, tragic and satiric, but these modes have since been used to analyse history writing and broader cultural narratives, notably by White and Lynn Hunt.¹⁰ The romantic mode of emplotment narrates ‘the story of a quest, a heroic struggle between good and evil, where either protagonist or antagonist stands to achieve decisive victory.’¹¹ Given that, in this narrative the Republic is France, only the Republic can be victorious. It is the mode which White has identified in the republican historian Jules Michelet’s writing of the Revolution, the “‘Romance” of the French people’s struggle against tyranny and division’.¹² The *guerre franco-française* discourse suits this emplotment well, taking on a binary distinction between France (the Republic, good) and anti-France (evil) which carries with it not only a moral claim but also a teleological one: an eventual victory of republicanism is the only future for France.

In republican histories of France, the moments identified as part of the *guerre franco-française* are those which follow the declaration of a republic or mark a turning point in republicanism. Under the Second Republic, the June Days of 1848 witnessed a repression of workers in Paris who, disappointed by the conservative results of the elections in May, found themselves jobless and forcibly conscripted with the closing down of workshops that had been set up following the relatively bloodless revolution in February. Five thousand were ‘deported’ to Algeria and many hundreds killed for their part in the uprisings against the new government’s retraction of the right to work.¹³ The scale of the repression of 1871 would dwarf the June days. Over 10,000 communards were killed in the *semaine sanglante* in which the Versaillais army, under the orders of the conservative republic sitting in Versailles, took Paris and destroyed the Paris Commune. These two most striking

¹⁰ Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism*, pp. 33-67, 158-239; White, *Metahistory* pp. 1-31; Lynn Hunt, *Politics, Culture, and Class in the French Revolution* (London, 1984) pp. 34-39.

¹¹ James Krapfl, ‘Revolution and Revolt Against Revolution: Czechoslovakia, 1989’, Kevin McDermott and Matthew Stibbe (eds), *Revolution and Resistance in Eastern Europe: Challenges to Communist Rule* (Oxford, 2006) p. 176.

¹² White, *Metahistory*, p. 161. Hunt also views the romantic mode as dominating the understanding of the Revolution from 1792, the first flare-up of the *guerre franco-française*, calling it a ‘series of life-and-death struggles with the demonic forces of counterrevolution.’ Hunt, *Politics, Culture, and Class*, p. 35.

¹³ Pilbeam, *Republicanism in Nineteenth-Century France*, p. 216; Maurice Agulhon, *The Republican Experiment, 1848-1952* (Cambridge, 1983) p. 61.

examples of civil war in nineteenth-century France were not just a *guerre franco-française* but also a *guerre republicaine*; a fight for the very meaning of republicanism. It is thus unsurprising that they feature so prominently in republican histories of France.

In contrast, the White Terror of 1814-5 barely makes a footnote in republican histories as, for the most part, it was a war between monarchists and Bonapartists and thus of little interest to the republican struggle.¹⁴ In their histories of nineteenth-century France, neither Pilbeam nor Tombs consider it worthy of more than a few paragraphs, Tombs simply suggesting it was 'much exaggerated', and Pierre Goubert fails to mention it at all.¹⁵ Ceri Crossley's work on the historiography of the July monarchy suggests by implication why the White Terror (and the Algerian war) do not feature prominently in the current historiography of republican France. Historians of France in the 1830s and 1840s, who Crossley studies, consider the regime they are living under to have ended the Revolution, their 'desired reconciliation between freedom and order had been achieved' and their versions of history dominated.¹⁶ Yet, the 'fall of the July Monarchy gravely undermined the liberal history's ability to function as a discourse of truth'.¹⁷ Once their political dominance was challenged with the revolution of 1848, the historical representation of the July Monarchy altered and was no longer considered to mark the end of the Revolution. In a similar manner the republican narrative, with which this thesis is concerned, remains dominant because it suits the current political regime in France, the Fifth Republic. As such, the *guerre franco-française* discourse is applied to those events which suit the republican narrative of revolutionary moments of progress in French republicanism.

Timothy Baycroft, in a study of the public commemoration of the Second Republic, has argued that whilst the regime is well studied by historians and has a prominent place in republican histories of France, it has not held the same significance for the French state and its public.¹⁸ It is certainly not commemorated like the Revolution or treated with the reverence of the Third Republic. The application of the discourse of the *guerre franco-française* is also more diverse in relation to the Second Republic: for Agulhon such a discourse

¹⁴ Pilbeam, *Republicanism in Nineteenth-Century France*, p. 69.

¹⁵ Tombs, *France 1814-1914*, p. 18; Pierre Goubert, *The Course of French History* (London, 1988).

¹⁶ Ceri Crossley, 'History as a Principle of Legitimation in France (1820-1848)', Stefan Berger, Mark Donovan, and Kevin Passmore (eds), *Writing National Histories* (London, 1999) p. 54.

¹⁷ *Ibid.* pp. 55-56.

¹⁸ Timothy Baycroft, 'Commemorations of the Revolution of 1848 and the Second Republic', *Modern and Contemporary France* 6 (1998).

appears more prominently in his discussion of Louis Napoleon's *coup* than the June Days, for Sharif Gemie it is a battle between utopian and (for want of a better word) practical republicanism, whilst for those of a more left-wing bent, the discourse is employed to give prominence to the June Days as an outbreak of class war.¹⁹ Thus, to give a longitudinal cultural context to the discussion of the *guerre franco-française* discourse in the representations of the Algerian war, it is worth turning once again to the artistic representations of the Franco-Prussian war and specifically to the Paris Commune, which encapsulates such a discourse in both historic and artistic representations.

3.1b A final flare? The guerre franco-française and the Paris Commune

The end of the Paris Commune has reached the status of a founding myth of republicanism, in which the conservative and reconciliatory elements won through and the violence of earlier republicanism was laid to rest. Revolution was tamed and republicanism became the choice of the majority (at least within a decade for those who were enfranchised). This is François Furet's docking station for the Revolution in which the fundamental conflicts within republicanism were resolved.²⁰ In modal terms, the romantic emplotment is replaced by the comedic, as the *guerre franco-française* is concluded with reconciliation.²¹ The comedic mode, frequently romance's partner in the conclusion of a narrative, is a particularly suitable solution to the *guerre franco-française* of republican history because of its tendency to implicate a conservative solution to conflict, precisely what Furet considered the Third Republic to be.²² As the previous chapter has shown, the artistic

¹⁹ Agulhon, *The Republican Experiment*, pp. 144-149; Gemie, *French Revolutions*, especially Chapters 5 and 6; Milner, 'What About the Workers?', p. 316; Magraw, *France 1815-1914*, especially Chapter 4, section II. Zola seems to favour a similar interpretation to Agulhon as his Rougon-Macquart series begins with the peasant revolt against Louis-Napoleon's *coup*, employing the discourse of the *guerre franco-française*. Émile Zola, *La Fortune des Rougons* (Paris, 1886).

²⁰ François Furet, *Revolutionary France 1770-1880*, trans. Antonia Nevill (Oxford, 1992) [1988].

²¹ The comedic mode, alongside the tragic, is the mode of conclusion. As Frye explains, 'The tendency of comedy is to include as many people as possible in its final society: the blocking characters are more often reconciled or converted than simply repudiated.' White's understanding of the comedic emplotment is very reminiscent of the end of Zola's *La Débâcle* (see below): 'the reconciliations which occur at the end of Comedy are reconciliations of men with men, of men with their world and their society; the condition of society is represented as being purer, saner, and healthier as a result of the conflict among seemingly inalterably opposed elements in the world; these elements are revealed to be, in the long run, harmonizable with one another, unified, at one with themselves and the others.' It is easy to see how such a mode of conclusion suits a doctrine of assimilation. Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism*, p. 165, see also pp. 44 and 54; White, *Metahistory*, p. 9.

²² White, *Metahistory*, p. 29.

representations of the Third Republic mimic Furet's conclusion (or rather Furet mimics theirs), implying that the Third Republic is France's final rebirth after a century of civil war.

The Commune embodies all the elements of the narrative of republican rebirth embedded within the *guerre franco-française* discourse: the founding massacre of a republic, the triumph of conservative republicanism over both Bonapartism and radicalism, the symbolic significance of Paris and the culmination of the Revolution.²³ With the representations of *pétroleuses*, it even harked back to the equally fictional *tricoteuses* of the Terror.²⁴ Under the German siege which lasted the whole bitter winter of 1870-1, 40,000 people died through bombardment, starvation, cold and disease.²⁵ Whilst most people were reduced to eating rats and queuing for hours for bread made from sawdust, the rich held exotic feasts supplied by the *ménagerie* in the Jardin des Plantes to keep their spirits up. Given such a background, it is unsurprising that Susan Milner considers the subsequent violence of the Paris Commune to be class-based.²⁶ On the 27 January 1871, terms for an armistice were agreed and a general election called. The results were conservative; it was an election for peace or war and the former won, except in Paris. Adolphe Thiers headed the new government and signed a peace agreement in Versailles: Alsace and much of Lorraine would be surrendered to the new united Germany, an occupying force would remain until reparations were paid, and the German army were given leave to parade through Paris.²⁷ The deputies of Paris, Alsace and Lorraine, including Léon Gambetta and Victor Hugo, resigned in protest. The defeat was total. It is understandable how such an event is considered by so many historians to have had such a profound influence on the development of French, and particularly republican, identity; Gildea considers it 'second only to the French Revolution' in terms of an event which redefined the political nation.²⁸

²³ On the importance of nineteenth-century Paris in both French history and symbolism see: Cobban, *A History of Modern France*, vol. 2, pp. 131 and 134; Goubert, *The Course of French History*, p. 241; Tombs, *France 1814-1914*, pp. 188-191; Robert Tombs, *The Paris Commune, 1871* (London, 1999) p. 3; Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *The Culture of Defeat: On National Trauma, Mourning, and Recovery*, trans. Jefferson Chase (London, 2001) p. 11; Bertrand Taithe, *Citizenship and Wars: France in Turmoil, 1870-1* (London, 2001) p. 137; Stephen Badsey, *The Franco-Prussian War, 1870-1871* (Oxford, 2003) p. 65

²⁴ For more on the image of the *pétroleuses* see Gay L. Gullickson, *Unruly Women of Paris: Images of the Commune* (London, 1996). For the ongoing cultural hysteria concerning women in the aftermath of the Commune see Charles Bernheimer, *Figures of Ill Repute: Representing Prostitution in Nineteenth-Century France* (London, 1989) and Janet Beizer, *Ventriloquized Bodies: Narratives of Hysteria in Nineteenth-Century France* (London, 1994).

²⁵ Tombs, *France 1814-1914*, p. 48; Badsey, *The Franco-Prussian War*, p. 75.

²⁶ Milner, 'What About the Workers?', p. 316. Adding a class analysis to the *guerre franco-française* discourse does not alter its republicanism, merely places it to the left of that broad spectrum.

²⁷ Reparations were set at just over 4.5 million francs and did not include the cost of the occupation which France also had to pay. Roger Lawrence Williams, *The French Revolution of 1870-1871* (London, 1969) p. 162.

²⁸ Robert Gildea, 'Province and nation', Malcolm Crook (ed.) *Revolutionary France: 1788-1880* (Oxford, 2002) p. 171.

Already angered by the election results and the peace terms, slighted by the government's continued residence in Versailles rather than returning to Paris, and becoming increasingly radicalised as many of the bourgeoisie, previously trapped by the siege, had left the capital, the Parisian National Guard organised itself into a central committee based in Montmartre where it took its 200 cannon.²⁹ When, on the 18 March, the French army went to confiscate the weapons, the women (and, less symbolically, the men) of Paris surrounded the cannons, the troops refused to fire and the two generals leading the army were shot. This was the beginning of the Paris Commune, declared officially after elections from the Hôtel de Ville on 26 March. It was modelled on the Commune of 1792 and rejected the peace agreements made with Bismarck.³⁰

R. D. Anderson considers the Commune to represent the break between socialism and republicanism, the latter being both legal and peaceful.³¹ Yet it had the democratic support of the populous it ruled over and produced very little violence except in its own defence during the *semaine sanglante*, and then in no comparable measure to the indiscriminate slaughter unleashed by the Versaillais forces.³² Furthermore, whilst the Commune lasted barely a hundred days many of its policies, like the separation of church and state, would eventually become synonymous with the Third Republic.³³

On 21 May, with 70,000 troops freed up in a temporary agreement with Germany, Marshal de MacMahon (one of the few commanders from Napoleon III's original army to survive the defeat with his reputation intact) entered Paris.³⁴ Over seven days Paris was taken in 'the worst civil violence in Europe between the French and Russian revolutions' by what

²⁹ Tombs estimates that around 50,000 military-aged middle-class men left Paris with their families prior to the Commune. Tombs, *The Paris Commune*, p. 67.

³⁰ A member of the Commune's Communal Assembly declared, 'we are behaving like plagiarists' when a vote was taken on setting up a Committee of Public Safety. Quoted in Rupert Christiansen, *Paris Babylon: Grandeur, Decadence and Revolution, 1869-75* (London, 2003) p. 333; Robert Gildea, *Barricades and Borders: Europe 1800-1914* (Oxford, 1996) p. 215. The Committee of Public Safety also resurrected the old Revolutionary calendar on 15 May 1871, or 15 Floreal Year 79. Alistair Horne, *The Fall of Paris: The Siege and the Commune* (Revised Edition edn, London, 1989) [1965] p. 345.

³¹ R. D. Anderson, *France 1870-1914: Politics and Society* (London, 1977) p. 88.

³² Tombs has noted that 'what is striking about Communard violence as a whole is its rarity and brevity, the lack of sanction by the leaders except for a small number of Blanquists, and the near absence of the gleeful carnivalesque rituals of popular violence of an earlier age. Horrified Communard leaders (unlike the Versailles authorities) made valiant efforts to prevent killings, regarding them rightly as a disaster for their cause.' Tombs, *The Paris Commune*, p. 177.

³³ Indeed, Anderson notes the separation of the church and state as one of the foundations of republicanism. Anderson, *France 1870-1914*, pp. 88-89.

³⁴ Badsey, *The Franco-Prussian War*, p. 86.

Bertrand Taithe has suggested was a ‘controlled civil war’, planned by Versailles and in total rejection of negotiation.³⁵ The figures for those killed by the Versaillais army range enormously, increasing from over 10,000 to 22,000 to 30,000, with Taithe’s diplomatic range of between 10,000 and 35,000.³⁶ Even figures on those deported to New Caledonia vary from 4,000 to 5,000.³⁷ *L’année terrible*, a phrase much used at the time and taken up by Victor Hugo was deserving of its name.³⁸ Thiers had earned his title of the ‘monstrous gnome’.³⁹

Republican artistic representations of the Paris Commune from the Third Republic tend to emplot the *semaine sanglante* into the romantic republic narrative of revolution versus counter-revolution.⁴⁰ This *guerre franco-française* discourse is evident in Hugo’s novel *Quatrevingt-treize*, played out through the characters of the reactionary Lantenac and the revolutionary Cimourdain.⁴¹ Hugo himself felt stuck in between these two forces; the novel’s opposing depictions of the revolutionary guillotine and the feudalistic tower ‘are identically horrible.’⁴² Hugo’s politics were somewhat stranded in the face of Commune which he was ‘for in principle, but against it in practice.’⁴³ In the character of Gauvin he placed ‘a spirit of clemency’; calm and rational, Gauvin was Hugo’s plea for the middle ground, an ideal he shared with Gambetta.⁴⁴

Albert Boime, in his study of impressionism in the Third Republic, has identified the likes of Edouard Manet, Claude Monet, Edgar Degas, Auguste Renoir, Paul Cézanne and Gustave Caillebotte as republicans whose paintings reflected a reserved sympathy for the Commune, a condemnation of the *semaine sanglante* and a desire for peaceful reconciliation in the aftermath of civil war.⁴⁵ Thus, for Boime, the peaceful bourgeois promenade in

³⁵ Tombs, *The Paris Commune*, p. 179; Bertrand Taithe, *Defeated Flesh: Welfare, Warfare and the Making of Modern France* (Manchester, 1999) p. 41.

³⁶ Tombs, *The Paris Commune*, p. 180; Karine Varley, *Under the Shadow of Defeat: The War of 1870-71 in French Memory* (Basingstoke, 2008) p. 129; Schivelbusch, *The Culture of Defeat*, p. 107; Taithe, *Defeated Flesh*, p. 43.

³⁷ Varley, *Under the Shadow of Defeat*, p. 181; Taithe, *Defeated Flesh*, p. 43. Cobban, who puts the figure for those killed by the Versailles at 20,000, estimates a 1,000 of the government troops lost their lives in the fighting. Cobban, *A History of Modern France*, vol. 2, p. 215.

³⁸ Victor Hugo, *L’Année Terrible* (Paris, 1985) [1872].

³⁹ Karl Marx, *The Paris Commune, 1871. Edited and introduced by Christopher Hitchens* (London, 1971) [1871] p. 74.

⁴⁰ Albert Boime, *Art in an Age of Civil Struggle, 1848-1871* (London, 2007) p. 4.

⁴¹ Victor Hugo, ‘Quatrevingt-treize’ (1874), Project Gutenberg [accessed 27 September 2009] <http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/9645>.

⁴² Sandy Petrey, *History in the Text: Quatrevingt-Treize and the French Revolution* (Amsterdam, 1980) p. 26.

⁴³ Hugo, *L’Année Terrible* p. 253, quoted in translation in Peter Starr, *Commemorating Trauma: The Paris Commune and its Cultural Aftermath* (New York, 2006) p. 64.

⁴⁴ Starr, *Commemorating Trauma*, p. 75; Robert Gildea, *The Past in French History* (London, 1994) p. 37.

⁴⁵ Albert Boime, *Art and the French Commune: Imagining Paris After War and Revolution* (Chichester, 1995).

Monet's *Boulevard des Capucines* and Caillebotte's *Rue de Paris, temps de pluie* (Figures 1 and 2), a vast painting of seven by ten feet, retrace 'the damaged sites of the Commune...and represent them as bright, flourishing spaces... [Impressionism] glosses over the ruins and minimizes the tension of the post-war culture, promoting the official ideology' of reconciliation in a conservative republic.⁴⁶ Caillebotte's painting is seen to literally wash clean the pavements, with the replaced paving-stones showing no sign of the barricades of 1871.⁴⁷ For the impressionists in Boime's interpretation, there is a need to paint over the *guerre franco-française* which the *semaine sanglante* represented in order to rebuild a calm and conservative France under a republican regime. There is a sense of reclaiming space and order for the Parisian bourgeoisie, a process begun by the Haussmann under Napoleon III. This is particularly evident in Caillebotte's street scene in which the boulevards and buildings which stretch into the distance are products of the slum clearance and Haussmanisation of Paris; the *semaine sanglante* essentially completed Haussman's work of eradicating the working classes from the centre of the city.⁴⁸



Figure 1. Claude Monet, *Boulevard des Capucines*, 1873.

⁴⁶ Ibid. p. 45.

⁴⁷ Boime, *Art in an Age of Civil Struggle*, pp. 764-765.

⁴⁸ Several authors have made this allusion. See for example, T. J. Clark, *The Painting of Modern Life: Paris in the Art of Manet and his Followers* (London, 1984) pp. 46, 68-69; Christiansen, *Paris Babylon*, p. 359.



Figure 2. Gustave Caillebotte, *Rue de Paris, temps de pluie*, 1877.

Boime also considers the frequent depictions of the Parisian railways and the surrounding countryside in his thesis on the impressionists but it is rather a leap to suggest that a painting of bourgeois leisure on the Seine is a political reaction to the Commune. Nevertheless, whilst Boime's thesis may be reading too much into the political banality of a hayfield, the opposing argument also seems somewhat unrealistic. Arnold Hauser and Alfred Cobban have both suggested that for the impressionists, 1871 was 'of merely passing significance in the history of France' and, whilst Bernard Denvir concedes that the revolutionary upheavals from 1848 up to the Third Republic shaped the lives of the group of painters, he considers there to be a continuity between their work before and after the Commune.⁴⁹ It seems inconceivable that the extreme civil violence of the Commune could have failed to have an effect on artists and writers who considered Paris both an artistic

⁴⁹ Arnold Hauser, *The Social History of Art Volume 4: Naturalism, Impressionism, The Film Age* (London, 1951) p. 157; Cobban, *A History of Modern France, vol. 2*, p. 215; Bernard Denvir, 'Impressionism', David Britt (ed.) *Modern Art: Impressionism to Post-Modernism* (London, 1989) p. 17.

and an actual home; Paris was, after all, ‘the political, intellectual, cultural and artistic focus of the nation.’⁵⁰

There is perhaps a middle ground. In his consideration of art and representation, E. H. Gombrich argued that ‘the true miracle of the language of art is not that it enables the artist to create the illusion of reality’ but that it teaches us ‘to see the visible world afresh’.⁵¹ This is particularly relevant in his analysis of impressionism:

With impressionism the popular notion of the painter became that of a man who paints blue trees and red lawns and who answers every criticism with a proud ‘That is how I see it.’ This is one part of the story but not, I believe, the whole. This assertion of subjectivity can also be overdone. There is such a thing as a real visual discovery, and there is a way of testing it despite the fact we may never know what the artist himself saw at a certain moment. Whatever the initial resistance to impressionist paintings, when the first shock had worn off, people learned to read them. And having learned this language, they went into the fields and woods, or looked out of their window onto the Paris boulevards, and found to their delight that the visible world *could* after all be seen in terms of these bright patches and dabs of paint. The transposition worked. The impressionists had taught them, not, indeed, to see nature with an innocent eye, but to explore an unexpected alternative that turned out to fit certain experiences better than did any earlier paintings.⁵²

This is an eloquent way of saying that whilst the impressionists had a tendency to paint seemingly banal pictures of bourgeois life, there was a little more to them than that. So although Hauser may enjoy suggesting that impression was ‘the climax of self-centred aesthetic culture and signifies the ultimate consequence of the romantic renunciation of practical, active life’, the influence of the most violent episode in modern France’s history did impinge upon such a life.⁵³ There is a juncture in French art which both T. J. Clarke and Philip Nord note and whilst Clark reserves pinpointing his historical context, he argues that ‘[s]omething decisive happened in the history of art around Manet which set painting

⁵⁰ Barbara L. Kelly, ‘The Roles of Music and Culture in National Identity Formation’, Barbara L. Kelly (ed.) *French Music, Culture, and National Identity, 1870-1939* (Woodbridge, 2008) p. 5.

⁵¹ E. H. Gombrich, *Art and Illusion: A Study in the Psychology of Pictorial Representation* (New York, 1956) p. 389.

⁵² *Ibid.* p. 324.

⁵³ Hauser, *The Social History of Art*, p. 160.

and the other arts upon a new course. Perhaps the change can be described as a kind of scepticism, or at least unsureness [*sic*], as to the nature of representation in art.⁵⁴

Whilst the majority of the impressionists maintained an aloof bourgeois stance towards politics, the violence which raged through their spiritual home and between their fellow countrymen did not go entirely unnoticed in their methods of representation.⁵⁵ For Monet and Caillebotte, and indeed Degas, Cézanne and Renoir, the discourse of the *guerre franco-française* was one they painted over, either unable, unwilling or uninterested in confronting the contemporary history of the city in which they based themselves. The same was not true for Manet who Denvir considers to have been the impressionists' leader 'in spite of himself.'⁵⁶ In an in-depth consideration of Manet's politics, Nord argues he was far more radical than other commentators have suggested and more so than his fellow impressionists, based upon both his associates and the subjects of his paintings, pointing particularly to his admiration for Gambetta and Clemenceau.⁵⁷ Whilst Nord concludes that he was a conciliator rather than a supporter of the Communards, his sympathies lay with the Commune as an ideal rather than the conservatism which bordered on reaction of Thiers and the Versailles government; he was a radical rather than a liberal republican.⁵⁸

Manet was novel amongst the impressionists in representing the *guerre franco-française* very directly, and indeed of baring witness to it; his 1871 lithograph, *La Guerre civile* (Figure 3) is thought to be based on a scene he witnessed during the *semaine sanglante* on his return to the capital.⁵⁹ The finality of the violence is striking, the picture is very still; there is no saving this revolution for Manet. Boime has made particular note of the picture's title which he considers a reference back to the recent American Civil War of which Manet had been

⁵⁴ Clark, *The Painting of Modern Life*, p. 10; Philip G. Nord, 'Manet and Radical Politics', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 19 (1989) p. 475.

⁵⁵ Their successors, the neo-impressionists, chose to be rather more overt in their political stances and more radical in their republicanism. It is rather a shame Hauser did not consider them worthy of a chapter in his book, jumping as he does from impressionism to the 'film age'. See Robyn Roslak, *Neo-impressionism and Anarchism in Fin-de-Siècle France: Painting, Politics and Landscape* (Aldershot, 2007).

⁵⁶ Denvir, 'Impressionism', p. 40.

⁵⁷ Nord, 'Manet and Radical Politics', pp. 459-460, 467-468.

⁵⁸ In March 1871, whilst condemning the executions of the two generals who had led the National Guard to remove the cannons from Montmartre, Manet wrote to a friend in reference to the National Assembly, "I did not think that France could be represented by such hideous people, including this little Thiers that I hope will one day croak at the Tribune and relieve us of his little, old personage." Quoted in John Milner, *Art, War and Revolution in France, 1870-1871* (London, 2000) p. 143.

⁵⁹ Manet was not in Paris during the Commune itself but returned during its repression.

particularly concerned.⁶⁰ Such a connection serves to emphasise the scale of the violence of which this picture bares small witness, as well as evidencing the *guerre franco-française* discourse in contemporary culture.

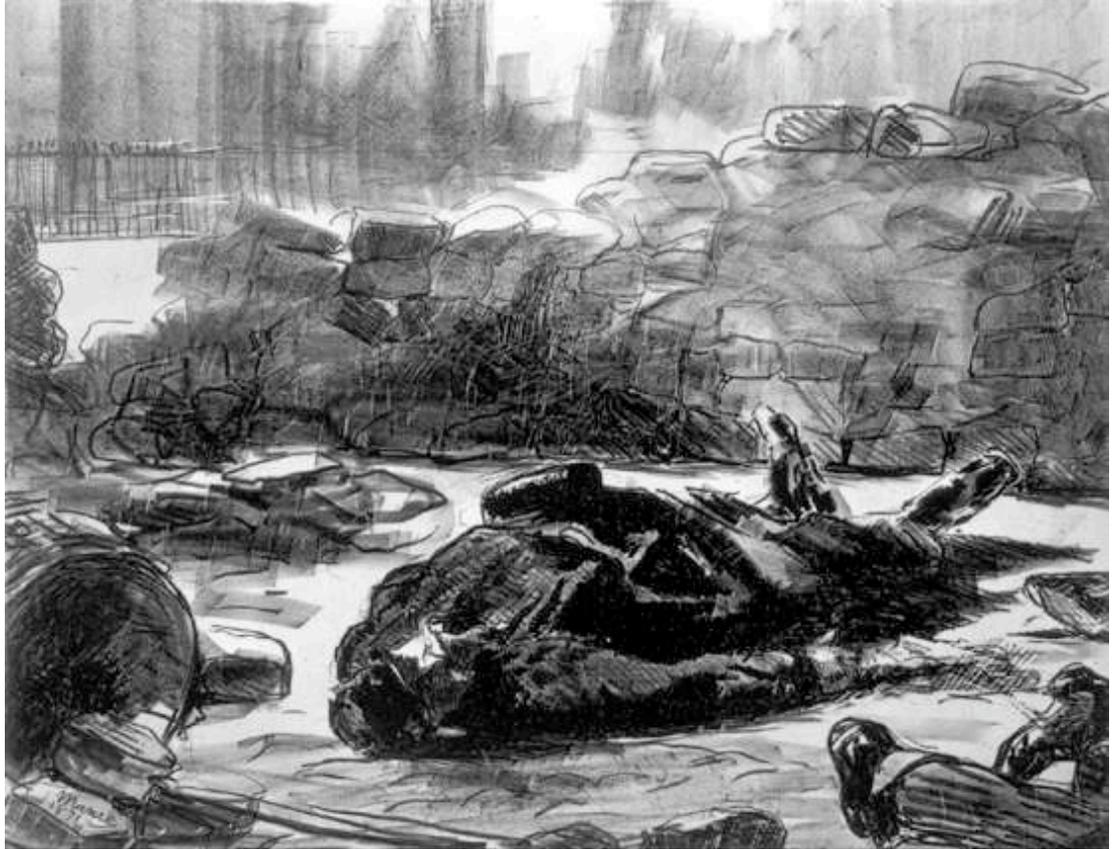


Figure 3. Edouard Manet, *La Guerre civile*, 1871.

There is a degree of intertextuality in *La Guerre civile* which suggests an affiliation with a longitudinal *guerre franco-française* discourse. The similarities with Ernest Meissonier's *La Souvenir de la guerre civile* (Figure 4), a representation of the June Days of 1848 with which there can be little doubt that Manet was familiar, are striking.⁶¹ They share a stillness, the representation of death rather than battle, of the vanquished rather than the heroic.⁶² Meissonier's employment of red, white and blue insist on a connection with the Revolution, providing a continuous thread of *guerre franco-française* discourse running

⁶⁰ Boime, *Art in an Age of Civil Struggle* p. 733. Manet's 1864 painting, *The Battle of the Kearsage and the Alabama* took this war as its subject and had an undercurrent of support for the North in direct opposition to Napoleon III's favouring of the South. See pp. 709-711 and Nord, 'Manet and Radical Politics', pp. 455-456.

⁶¹ Meissonier's painting was shown at the 1851 Salon.

⁶² I am indebted to Jordan Rose for these observations on Meissonier's painting. Rose, 'Picturing Rebellion in June 1848', paper presented at *1789, 1989, 2009: Changing Perspectives on Post-Revolutionary Art*, Courtauld Institute of Art, London, (12-13 June 2009).

through the paintings. There is some comfort in this intertextuality with a representation of an earlier event; Maurice Samuels understands the trend for realism in the nineteenth century as coming from ‘a desire to ground Revolutionary and post-Revolutionary identities in a stable vision of the past...the new spectacles of history purported to reassure spectators that a difficult past could be known and mastered.’⁶³ In this sense at least, Manet’s *La Guerre civile* need not represent an end of republicanism, only of the radicalism for which he held a cautious sympathy.⁶⁴ The inclusion of a barricade wrought out of paving stones is a part of this connection with previous revolutionary moments. As Tombs has argued, barricades held ‘a symbolic power’ beyond their purpose of stopping an enemy advance: ‘Barricades turned streets and neighbourhoods into protected spaces, and their inhabitants into a garrison...Barricades were rallying points... Their construction was often a community act, in which neighbours or passers-by would contribute a paving stone.’⁶⁵ This symbolism was enacted through previous Parisian uprisings, the spirit of which is part of both Manet’s and Meissonier’s pictures.

A later painting by neo-impressionist Maximilien Luce (Figure 5) also features a barricade and bears a great resemblance to both Manet’s and Meissonier’s compositions, as well as featuring the *tricolour* in its pallet akin to *Le Souvenir de la guerre civile*. Both the temporal distance between Luce’s painting with the event it represents, and his anarchist politics, makes *La rue de Paris en mai 1871* a much more radical painting than Manet’s *La Guerre civile* but continues the discourse of *la guerre franco-française*.⁶⁶ Like Meissonier but unlike Manet, Luce depicts a working class suburb of Paris rather than the bourgeois domination of his predecessors. This is a street not a boulevard and the woman’s dress, particularly, ensures the interpretation of the group of vanquished fighters as workers.⁶⁷ Most notably, unlike

⁶³ Maurice Samuels, *The Spectacular Past: Popular History and the Novel in Nineteenth-Century France* (London, 2004) p. 8.

⁶⁴ Manet’s conclusion to the romantic *guerre franco-française* is perhaps emploted as tragedy rather than reconciliatory comedy, which, as White explains, need not be ‘regarded as totally threatening to those who survive the agonistic test. There has been a gain in consciousness for the spectators of the contest.’ White, *Metahistory*, p. 9.

⁶⁵ Tombs, *The Paris Commune*, p. 166.

⁶⁶ Karine Varley also notes the connections between the three paintings. Varley, *Under the Shadow of Defeat*, p. 95.

⁶⁷ Boime has identified the setting of *La Guerre civile* between the boulevard Malesherbes and the rue de l’Arcade with the railings and columns in the background being those of the Madeleine. Wright has identified the area in Luce’s painting as a working class suburb. Boime, *Art in an Age of Civil Struggle*, p. 733; Alastair Wright, ‘Mourning, Painting, and the Commune: Maximilien Luce’s *A Paris Street in 1871*’, *Oxford Art Journal* 32 (2009) p. 226. On the anarchist sympathies of Luce and other neo-impressionists, and the paintings of the working class suburbs see Roslak, *Neo-Impressionism and Anarchism*, pp. 45 and 113-133.

either of the previous paintings, Luce paints in the weaponry of his fallen fighters.⁶⁸ Although the artists may differ in their definitions of republicanism, all emplot the romantic *guerre franco-française* within their paintings.⁶⁹



Figure 4. Ernest Meissonier, *Souvenir de la guerre civile*, 1851.

⁶⁸ The neo-impressionists tended to be much more direct in their representations of the Commune than their forefathers being both more radical in their politics (many were anarchists and thus favourable to the Communards) and having a degree of temporal distance between them and their subject. Georges Seurat, for example, confronted the destruction of the Commune in his *Les Ruines de Tuileries* in 1882. See Boime, *Art and the French Commune*, pp. 169-176.

⁶⁹ The Commune and the *semaine sanglante* were recurring themes in Luce's work even into the First World War period. His paintings, *Louis Michel à son retour de Nouméa* (after 1880), *Un Versaillais blessé* (early 1900s) and *L'Exécution de Varlin* (between 1910-1917) are all on display at the Musée d'art et d'histoire in Saint-Denis, an area that itself features regularly in his work.



Figure 5. Maximilien Luce, *Un rue de Paris en mai 1871*, 1905.⁷⁰

Manet's second lithograph of the *semaine sanglante* contains an intertextuality both closer to and further away from home but which again engages the longitudinal nature of the *guerre franco-française* discourse. *La Barricade* (Figure 6) depicts the shooting of a Communard by a group of Versaillais soldiers but directly references his earlier painting, *L'Exécution de Maximilien* (Figure 7). Maximilien was the French-supported Mexican emperor during Napoleon III's Second Empire but was abandoned by France following the North's victory in the American Civil War (in which Napoleon III had passively favoured the South but Manet the North), and was subsequently shot by his own countrymen in a fratricidal conflict.⁷¹ The replication of the executioners' positions make this connection evident (in mirror-image because *La Barricade* is a lithograph) and one which is surely intentional; these are both civil wars.

⁷⁰ Picture taken by the author at the Musée d'Orsay, January 2010. The date differs from that offered by the Musée d'Orsay which gives a range of 1903-1906 as it was exhibited first at the Salon des Indépendants in 1905. Wright, 'Mourning, Painting, and the Commune', p. 225.

⁷¹ In one of the five versions of the picture, Manet painted the executioners in uniforms which resembled that of the French army, firmly implicated who he felt was to blame for Maximilien's death. See Nord, 'Manet and Radical Politics', pp. 453-454; Boime, *Art in an Age of Civil Struggle*, pp. 712-715; Milner, *Art, War and Revolution*, p. 22.

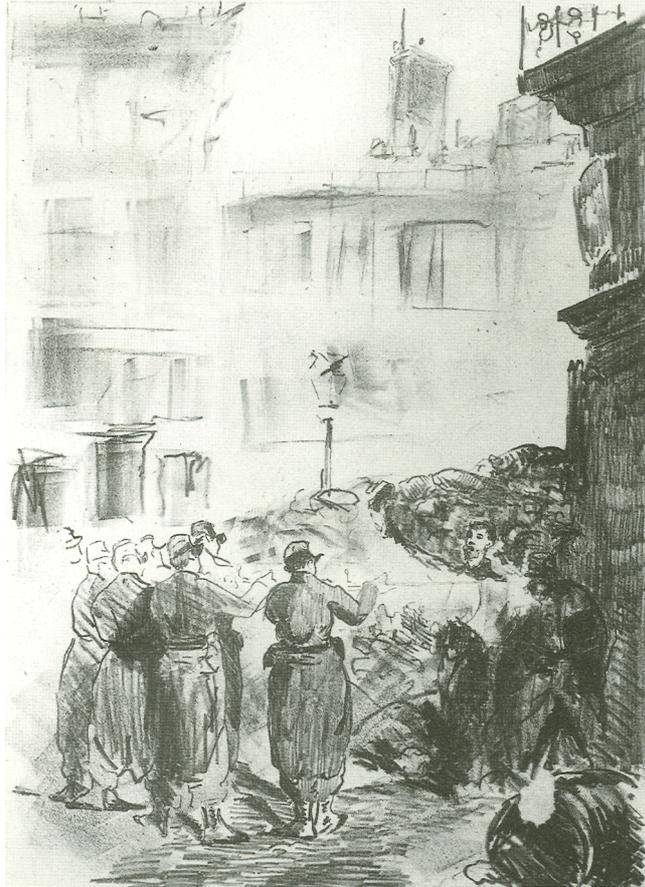


Figure 6. Edouard Manet, *La Barricade*, 1871.



Figure 7. Edouard Manet, *L'Exécution de Maximilien*, 1867-68.

Manet's political allegiances with the radical republicans and his distaste for Thiers' conservatives, is also apparent through the intertextuality of *La Barricade* and *L'Exécution de Maximilien* with Francisco de Goya's *El Tris de Mayo* (Figure 8). This renown Spanish nationalist painting depicts the execution by Napoleonic troops of defiant Spanish republicans and in composition can be seen to have influenced Manet's later works. Whilst by reference to Goya's work, *L'Exécution de Maximilien* is, as Milner has suggested, mocking of Napoleon III's connections to his more famous (and militarily more successful) uncle, its intertextuality with *La Barricade* illustrates where Manet's sympathies lie: with the executed.⁷² *La Barricade* represents the deadly reality of the civil war to which Manet bore brief witness.



Figure 8. Francisco de Goya, *El Tris de Mayo*, 1814

Manet shared his desire for a middle ground, between the Communards and the Versailles government, with Hugo and *Quatrevingt-treize*'s Gauvin. In 1871 and 1874, when they had

⁷² Milner, *Art, War and Revolution*, p. 23. Stephen Bann also draws the connections between these three works and notes that Manet saw Goya's painting in Madrid two years prior to painting *L'Exécution de Maximilien*. Stephen Bann, *The Inventions of History: Essays on the Representations of the Past* (Manchester, 1990) pp. 177-178.

produced their works, this middle ground was still unstable and neither Hugo's nor Manet's works represent much confidence in it; the comedic conclusion is not yet present. By the 1890s, the republic was on much firmer ground as the republicans had been in power for over a decade, key policies involving secular schooling were in place and the Communards had been amnestied, no longer considered a threat. In such an environment, the anarchist martyrs of Luce's pictures were acceptable and unthreatening. The *guerre franco-française* could be represented very directly even by committed republicans, because retrospect allowed the implication of a new dawn. This explains the differences in endings between *Quatrevingt-treize* and Zola's 1892 *La Débâcle*.⁷³ Whilst in Hugo's novel the *guerre franco-française* is at once removed from the present by being represented through the war in the Vendée, it also is not yet at an end. Indeed, Sandy Petrey has argued that there is a 'general stasis of the civil war from the beginning to the end of the novel'; in its broader narrative, nothing actually happens.⁷⁴ In 1874, Hugo is not yet satisfied with the state of the Third Republic and his own opinions on the Commune were, to use Petrey's word, 'contradictory'.⁷⁵ Thus the civil war, for Hugo, whilst not overt, was still ongoing as republicans wrestled to take control of the regime. Similarly, Manet's lithographs do not suggest a future in their narratives because it is still uncertain. In contrast, *La Débâcle* ends in expectation of a bright future.

The discourse of the *guerre franco-française* is at its most acute in the microcosm between *La Débâcle*'s two central characters, Jean and Maurice. Such a method of representing the final days of the Commune effectively brings the longitudinal nature of the *guerre franco-française* to the fore; these are individual citizens embodying the Revolutionary ideals which 'called upon the nation to play an active role in the making of history'.⁷⁶ As such, whilst Jean joined the Versaillais and accidentally killed his brother-in-arms, Maurice, who had joined the Communards, there is no doubt about Jean's republican credentials and the republican future he will build. Zola uses the culmination of a personal story to conclude a historical event.⁷⁷ In the roughly democratic and republican environment of the 1890s, such a

⁷³ Émile Zola, *La Débâcle* (Paris, 1892). Collette Wilson has argued that the earlier novel's in Zola's Rougon-Macquart series, whilst being set in the Second Empire, make reference to the Commune through the topography of Paris. Colette E. Wilson, *Paris and the Commune, 1871-78: The Politics of Forgetting* (Manchester, 2007) see Chapter 4.

⁷⁴ Petrey, *History in the Text*, p. 15.

⁷⁵ Ibid. p. 105.

⁷⁶ Rigney, *The Rhetoric of Historical Representation*, p. 6.

⁷⁷ Robert A. Rosenstone, 'The Historical Film: Looking at the Past in a Postliterate Age', Marcia Landy (ed.) *The Historical Film: History and Memory in the Media* (London, 2001) p. 55. See Chapter 2, section 2.3b.

method is present in *La Débâcle*. As individuals meet their enemies at very close quarters, the *guerre franco-française* is a war between brothers, but one man can also represent the future of the republic.

This analysis of some of the prominent contemporary artistic representations of the Paris Commune illustrates how the discourse of the *guerre franco-française* is not restricted to current historiography of modern France, but one which has pervaded republican culture. Whilst many of the impressionists painted over such a discourse, it was present in the work of Manet, Hugo, Zola and Luce. Furthermore, through references to earlier works and periods, the *guerre franco-française* was represented as being part of a longitudinal understanding of republicanism, a long-term romantic emplotment of good versus evil. As such it is represented as a trait of French history, a line which can be traced from the Revolution to the contemporary Third Republic. For Zola, as for François Furet, this line terminates with the Commune of 1871; the Revolution and its acolyte, civil war, has concluded in a reconciliatory comedic mode with the Third Republic as the natural and inevitable outcome of the previous century of struggle. The implications for the interpretation of French history after the Third Republic's demise are the subject of the next section.

3.1c The ending of the Revolution and Vichy exceptionalism

Furet is not alone amongst twentieth-century historians in asserting that the Third Republic was the culmination of the Revolution. It is a view shared with Eugen Weber whose *Peasants into Frenchmen* saw in the Third Republic the ascendancy of the ultimate republican model.⁷⁸ Both are unapologetically celebratory of the Third Republic's achievements. As noted in the previous chapter, such claims suggest that from this point on, the French are natural republicans which lends legitimacy to the teleological narrative inherent in republican universalism. In this instance, it also has a further effect: if republicanism is the natural state for the French from the 1870s then such a narrative assumes the Vichy government to have been an unnatural imposition, both un-French and doomed to failure,

⁷⁸ Furet, *Revolutionary France 1770-1880*, p. 537; Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France 1870-1914* (London, 1977). Most recently, Sudhir Hazareesingh has implied a similar argument, specifically in terms of democracy which, as Chapter 1 has made clear, is quite absent in 1870. Hazareesingh, 'Conflicts of Memory: Republicanism and the Commemoration of the Past in Modern France', *French History* 23 (2009) p. 194. See also Philip G. Nord, *The Republican Moment: Struggles for Democracy in Nineteenth-Century France* (Cambridge, 1995).

precisely de Gaulle's interpretation. Most significantly, in this narrative Vichy was not the responsibility of the French people. This interpretation rejects the possibility of French, indeed republican, influences in the Vichy state. Furthermore, it suggests a strong element of inevitability in the victory of the republic over its occupiers. Such a view of history thus exonerates the French from their accountability for the shameful actions of the Second World War and avoids analysis of why the Revolutionary values of equality and assimilation were entirely rejected for four years. By claiming the Third Republic marked the end of the Revolution, both Furet and Weber establish a narrative that dismisses the Vichy era as insignificant in the development of republicanism and avoids the continuation of the *guerre franco-française* discourse beyond the nineteenth century. As such the Vichy era, and all the difficult questions it raises in terms of citizenship, race and the values of the Revolution, can be viewed as an un-French blip, a blot on the republican landscape made by the Nazi invaders.

The historiography of the Vichy era has moved on significantly from this kind of representation as the work of Stanley Hoffman, Robert Paxton and Henry Rousso has been integrated into the broader histories of French republicanism.⁷⁹ Elements of Vichy may have been anti-France but they were no longer simply an 'un-French aberration, a German imposition.'⁸⁰ The proclaimed end of the Revolution has shifted and the *guerre franco-française* has been resurrected for the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The Third Republic itself is considered to have had several flare-ups of the *guerre franco-française* which threatened its existence. Both the Dreyfus and Boulanger affairs of the 1880s and 1890s witnessed the mobilisation of forces antagonistic and overtly threatening to the republic. France (the republic) versus anti-France (the reactionary army hierarchy) of the Dreyfus and Boulanger affairs confirmed the republicans' contemporary fear and added fuel to the *guerre franco-française* narrative of republican historians.⁸¹ A further flare-up is

⁷⁹ Stanley Hoffman, 'Collaborationism in Vichy France', *Journal of Modern History* 40 (1968); Robert Owen Paxton, *Vichy France: Old Guard and New Order, 1940-1944* (London, 1973); Henry Rousso, *The Vichy Syndrome: History and Memory in France since 1944*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (London, 1991) [1987].

⁸⁰ Martin S. Alexander, 'Historians and the Peculiarities of French History', Martin S. Alexander (ed.) *French History Since Napoleon* (London, 1999) p. 17. See also Nicholas Atkin, 'Renewal, Repression and Resistance: France under Nazi Occupation, 1940-44', Martin S. Alexander (ed.) *French History Since Napoleon* (London, 1999).

⁸¹ In terms of actual violence, the Dreyfus Affair was marked by anti-Semitic attacks the most vicious of which were outright pogroms in Algeria. Despite encountering more civil violence than Paris during the Affair, few of the republican histories give any space to this flare-up (Tombs mentions it in passing but none of the other works discussed above mention it). Such recognition would lead to difficult questions as regards assimilation and equality in republican Algeria (even discounting the majority of its unenfranchised population). Thus, even whilst being evidence of the *guerre franco-française* at its most acute, not least because of

noted with the Parisian riots of 1934 instigated by the rise of the right-wing leagues, this time largely in reference to the rise of the Popular Front of 1936 and thus representing a progressive shift in republicanism.⁸²

With a rejection of the Third Republic as marking the end of the Revolution, and the revisionist history of the 1970s and 1980s, Vichy became the primary focus of modern historians and the discourse *guerre franco-française* became entrenched. Jean-Pierre Rioux, who has traced the use of the phrase '*guerre franco-française*' by historians, considers its 'archetype' to be the Vichy era.⁸³ However, what is included in this newly-focused discourse is exclusive, and has raised a new problem: that of Vichy exceptionalism. The use of the *guerre franco-française* discourse in relation to the Second World War excludes an outbreak of civil violence in Sétif in 1945. Algerians, despite donning French uniforms and liberating the metropole, were not considered French enough to be included in the *guerre franco-française* discourse when their protests were brutally suppressed by French troops who had fought alongside them in the liberation of France. For Algerians, these uprisings now mark the beginning of the struggle for independence. For post-1962 republican historians, this explanation also suits; the repression at Sétif is part of the decolonisation discourse embedded in which is the narrative of a *mission civilisatrice*: Algerians were un-French rather than anti-France, and thus not part of the *guerre franco-française*.⁸⁴ In 1945, according to such a narrative, Algeria was not yet ready to become independent and further paternal guidance of the 'colony' was needed. To see the repressions as part of the *guerre franco-française* would thoroughly undermine the post-1962 consensus that Algeria had never been 'an integral

the dominance of the professional army in the area, it barely features in such a discourse. Tombs, *France 1814-1914*, p. 463. See section 3.2b for a more detailed discussion of the republic-army divide.

⁸² Brian Jenkins, 'The Six Février 1934 and the Survival of the French Republic', *French History* 20 (2006).

⁸³ Jean-Pierre Rioux, 'La Guerre Franco-française', Michael Scriven and Peter Wagstaff (eds), *War and Society in Twentieth-Century France* (Oxford, 1991) p. 284. It is only since the mid twentieth-century that historians have used the actual phrase, '*guerre franco-française*', to describe internal conflict, although such a narrative is clearly in evidence much earlier, as the previous section has shown. Michael Kelly considers the *guerre franco-française* to have pervaded 'all the images and stories' of modern France, which may be over egging the pudding somewhat but it is certainly a recurring theme in French culture. Michael Kelly, 'French Cultural Identities', Jill Forbes and Michael Kelly (eds), *French Cultural Studies: An Introduction* (Oxford, 1995) p. 2.

⁸⁴ As Todd Shepard has also argued, the 'invention of decolonization' allowed the French to portray Algerians to be 'so different, as a group, from other French citizens that they could not be accommodated within the French Republic. This was what the FLN had always proposed, arguing that Algeria formed a nation, defined by Arab culture, Berber roots, and Islamic tradition, that needed an independent state. Yet until the final years of the Algerian War, French leaders energetically rejected this contention.' That the later interpretation suited both the French and the Algerian governments meant that its dominance was difficult to challenge, as the experience of the *barkis* has shown. Todd Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization: The Algerian War and the Remaking of France* (London, 2006) p. 6, see also p. 11.

part of France'.⁸⁵ The absence of any discussion of a *guerre franco-française* in the historical representations of Sétif further sustains the notion that such an emplotment is reserved by and for French republicans. The exclusion of Sétif from the *guerre franco-française* discourse is part of the wider trend in the republican narrative of French history which rejects the impact Algeria has had on the shaping of French identity.⁸⁶

On the phenomenon of Vichy exceptionalism, Rioux himself follows the same line as those historians in his study when he identifies Vichy as the last real flare-up of the *guerre franco-française*. Alongside the demise of the 'great, all-encompassing ideologies' over the course of the century (a debate he calls 'glib' but appears to concede to), the divisive nature of French society is tamed.⁸⁷ Rioux makes no assertion as to whether such an end is positive or negative, but he is quite clear in his assertion that the great ideological battle between the republic and its enemies is at an end.⁸⁸ Such a conclusion conforms to the trend in republican historiography which has shifted the end of the Revolution from the Third Republic to the Fifth and the figure of de Gaulle marrying the two old enemies, republicanism and Bonapartism.⁸⁹ As Tombs, a key purveyor of this narrative, has argued, 'De Gaulle's Fifth Republic, the first political system since the Revolution to have attained practically universal acceptance, is a new version, shorn of dynastic complications, of the Bonapartist formula of the "republican monarch"'.⁹⁰ Even Furet has since rearranged his finale to the Fifth Republic.⁹¹

This does not undermine the celebratory space which the Third Republic occupies but rather suggests a gradual, and teleological, evolution of republicanism from 1870 which results in the strong executive constitution of the Fifth Republic. This is reminiscent of the Gaullist narrative noted in the previous chapter: there is no cyclical and revolutionary rebirth beyond the Third Republic but a linear path of evolution into the final stage of

⁸⁵ See Chapter 2, section 2.2a.

⁸⁶ This exclusive exceptionalism also allows Weil to argue that only in the Vichy era have racist citizenship policies been pursued, an assertion which both his own study and this thesis disprove. Patrick Weil, *Qu'est-ce qu'un Français ? Histoire de la nationalité française depuis la Révolution* (Paris, 2002) p. 183.

⁸⁷ Rioux, 'La Guerre Franco-française', p. 287.

⁸⁸ Rather bizarrely he leaves his conclusion open, leaving it to 'optimists' and 'pessimists' to make such a call. Ibid. pp. 289-290.

⁸⁹ For other historians who have concluded that 1958 marks the end of the Revolution with the marrying of republicanism and Bonapartism, see Albert Cobban, *A History of Modern France, Volume 3: 1871-1962* (London, 1965) p. 210; Tombs, *France 1814-1914*, pp. 130, 487-489; Pilbeam, *Republicanism in Nineteenth-Century France*, pp. 1, 23; Hayward, *Fragmented France*, p. 183; Baycroft, *France: Inventing the Nation*, p. 69.

⁹⁰ Tombs, *France 1814-1914*, p. 489.

⁹¹ François Furet, Jacques Julliard and Pierre Rosanvallon, *La République du centre: la fin de l'exception française* (Paris, 1988).

Gaullism.⁹² Whilst Michelet's romantic emplotment of the Revolution ended in tragedy, as he wrote during the July Monarchy, republican histories written during the Fifth Republic draw their romantic modes to a close with comedy, a conservative reconciliation.⁹³ As Alfred Cobban has written, the 'Fifth Republic seems to draw the threads of modern French history together. It has already concluded much hitherto unfinished business.'⁹⁴ As such, whilst 1958 may be represented as the end of the Revolution, it is not represented as a revolution in and of itself, rather it is a conservative conclusion. It is this thesis's argument that such a narrative conceals the revolutionary alterations to French republicanism which occurred during the Algerian war under de Gaulle's presidency.

3.2 The *guerre franco-française*: Algeria through the eye of Vichy

The second part of this chapter argues that the place of Algeria in French republican history has been undermined by the tendency, of both artists and historians, to represent the war as being of secondary importance to the Vichy era. Whilst on some occasions this is done very overtly, it is more regularly seen through more subtle methods of emplotment, as discussed above, and comparison through transference. This transference, which is particularly in evidence through the employment of rhetoric associated with fascism in the context of the Algerian war, is most acute in representations of torture and of the OAS.⁹⁵ Here the rhetoric is used to draw a distinct binary of France and anti-France in relation to the republic and the professional army.⁹⁶ Before turning to the analysis of such republican cultural representations, it is first necessary to expand upon the historiography which so frequently represents the Algeria war through the vector of Vichy and often employs uncritically the rhetoric of fascism in this process.

Whilst much historiography has challenged the binary of fascism and resistance present in the early histories of the Occupation, the rhetoric is powerful and tenacious.⁹⁷ The

⁹² In his study of republican intellectuals of the Third Republic, Hazareesingh considers republicanism to have moved from being revolutionary to conservative. Sudhir Hazareesingh, *Intellectual Founders of the Third Republic: Five Studies in Nineteenth-Century French Republican Thought* (Oxford, 2001) p. 2.

⁹³ White, *Metahistory*, pp. 152-153.

⁹⁴ Cobban, *A History of Modern France*, vol. 1, pp. 7-8.

⁹⁵ My thoughts on the analytical possibilities of rhetoric and the phenomenon of transference stem from two essays by Dominick LaCapra, although I tread only lightly in his footsteps. Dominick LaCapra, *History and Criticism* (London, 1985) pp. 15-44, 71-94.

⁹⁶ I expand on this distinction in section 3.2a.

⁹⁷ See for example, Robert Aron, *Histoire de Vichy 1940-1944* (Paris, 1954).

prominence of the Vichy era in both the historiography and the French public imagination has developed into the period being viewed as exceptional, an ‘obsession’, ‘un passé qui ne passe pas’.⁹⁸ The Occupation as the ‘archetypal’ *guerre franco-française* is part of this exceptionalism.⁹⁹ Its rhetoric, particularly that relating to fascism, has been transferred to historic and artistic representations of the Algerian war. That there is a relationship between the Occupation period and the Algerian conflict is a rather banal suggestion, not least because there is barely a decade to separate them and they share many of the same actors. As Benjamin Stora has noted, ‘la guerre d’Algérie éclate dix ans seulement après la Seconde Guerre mondiale. Le discours dominant, celui de la IV^e République, laisse alors entendre que les Français, mis à part une poignée de traîtres, ont été des résistants, ou des fidèles silencieux du général de Gaulle.’¹⁰⁰ Whilst historical periods are discursive constructions rather than concrete realities, these two wars are clearly two different events which occurred at separate times. In other words, transference between the two events is to be expected but it is at the same time an analysable phenomena for the historian.¹⁰¹

The republican discourse of the *guerre franco-française* requires a France (of which the republic is synonymous) and an anti-France; they are connected opposites in the Derridean sense.¹⁰² The anti-France is not un-French as it must have an intimate connection with France to be its opposite in a civil conflict. In 1958, for the first time in the history of France, the Fifth Republic enacted universal suffrage; all French adult citizens were enfranchised. Until this point, despite officially being French citizens, the vast majority of those of Algerian origin who came from any of the *départements* on the south side of the Mediterranean, were disenfranchised. Their *liberté* in terms of freedom of movement and freedom to work had also been tightly restricted, and they had no *égalité* before the law given that they were subject to different and more repressive laws than their European peers. From 1954, the French army was fighting a war against its own citizens in Algeria and from 1958 they were fighting citizens who had, on paper at least, equal rights, even if

⁹⁸ Rousso, *The Vichy Syndrome*; Éric Conan and Henry Rousso, *Vichy, un passé qui ne passe pas* (Paris, 1996).

⁹⁹ Rioux, ‘La Guerre Franco-française’, p. 284.

¹⁰⁰ Benjamin Stora, *La Gangrène et l’oubli: la mémoire de la guerre d’Algérie* (Paris, 1991) p. 109. [the Algerian War blew up only ten years after the Second World War. The dominant discourse, that of the Fourth Republic, leaves it to be understood that the French, with the exception of a handful of traitors, were resisters, or silently faithful to General de Gaulle.]

¹⁰¹ LaCapra, *History and Criticism*, p. 36.

¹⁰² Jacques Derrida, building on the work of Ronald Barthes and Claude Levi-Strauss, identified the phenomenon of ‘binary pairs’; in essence opposites are attached to each other and provide each other with meaning. In Derrida’s work, one half of the pair is dominant. Jacques Derrida, ‘Plato’s Pharmacy’, Peggy Kamuf (ed.) *A Derrida Reader: Between the Blinds* (Hemel Hempstead, 1991) pp. 129-137.

those citizens rejected their official nationality. Yet, the conflict between the French army and the FLN is not imbued with the discourse of the *guerre franco-française* because the post-1962 republican historical narrative rejects the idea that Algerians were ever French. Rather they had always been Algerians and France had aided their progress towards independence through the *mission civilisatrice*. Algerians, then, are un-French and cannot be, in the republican narrative, anti-France.¹⁰³ The *guerre franco-française* cannot apply to the conflict between the French army and the FLN.¹⁰⁴

In the republican narrative of French history, the founding of a new republic, and particularly one which ended the Revolution by uniting the conflicting traditions of Bonapartism and republicanism, needs a *guerre franco-française*. But this end is treated as an evolutionary progression, not a revolutionary rebirth. As such, the *guerre franco-française* in the Algerian war is drawn as a continuation of the republic's conflict with fascism, at least rhetorically. This narrative is particularly Gaullist, compatible with his refusal to declare the new Fourth Republic in 1944 because, he argued, the republic had never ended. Whilst the rejection of his executive-led governing model in 1946 showed the republic was still evolving, de Gaulle's return in 1958 brought it to its final stage. The discourse of the *guerre franco-française* during the Algerian war draws the distinctions between France and anti-France using the Vichy-inherited rhetoric of fascism and applies it to an anti-France familiar to the Third Republic: the professional army. In the cultural representations of the war, this equivocation of the professional army with fascism is most notable in representations of torture and is supplemented by the founding of the OAS by deserting generals.¹⁰⁵ The power of the fascist rhetoric, aided by the perceived exceptionalism of the Vichy era, allows an unbalanced focus on the period following the Generals' *putsch* in April 1961 by which time the government of the Fifth Republic had settled on a policy of 'decolonisation'. Algerians are missing from this narrative entirely and the difficult

¹⁰³ Similarly, in the pre-Paxton understanding of the Occupation period, fascists were un-French (specifically German), and the *guerre franco-française* was centred on the conflict between Gaullists and Communists in 1944. Post-Paxton, fascists were anti-France as the *guerre franco-française* became entwined with the whole period to the extent Rousso describes in *The Vichy Syndrome*.

¹⁰⁴ This is of course not the case in the sphere of international relations. France was adamant that the *événements* in Algeria were an internal dispute and thus not within the UN's remit of involvement. But they were neither proposed to be a civil war or a revolution either. The immediate external politics of the war were necessarily presented very differently to the historic and artistic representations.

¹⁰⁵ It was a binary used in political rhetoric too: in the referendum campaign on the Evian Accords, de Gaulle and his supporters equated those who voted 'no' with 'being in league with the OAS, of collaborating with "fascists" and "terrorists"'. Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization*, p. 250.

questions of Frenchness, race and assimilation which Algeria has posed since becoming part of France in 1848 are avoided.

Such a narrative conceals the revolution which occurred in 1958; rather than being a revolution, the new Fifth Republic simply fought against republicanism's traditional enemies: fascism and that nineteenth-century thorn, the reactionary elements of the professional army. Michel Wincock displays this narrative most blatantly when he lists the dates of France's 'revolutionary moments' as '1830, 1848, 1871, 1934, 1936, 1944 and 1968'.¹⁰⁶ 1958 is strikingly conspicuous in its absence and he is far from novel in missing (or avoiding) it.¹⁰⁷ Martin Evans begins to argue that 'the phenomenon of empire has been underestimated within mainstream histories of modern France' but then fails to go further or suggest it has actually had a fundamental impact on modern France, and particularly on French republicanism.¹⁰⁸ Even Patrick Weil in his analysis of changes in citizenship law, skirts around the changes which occurred with the fall of the Fourth Republic and the rise of the Fifth.¹⁰⁹ It is an extremely convenient narrative, ignoring as it does the entire Algerian population's involvement in the war, the violence pursued against them and the French refusal to consider independence as a viable option for a full six years of the conflict, the investigation of which would force awkward questions about impact of the history of the Franco-Algerian relationship and particularly its influence on the racial definition of French citizenship since 1962.

3.2a The republic and the army

Before turning to artistic representations which utilise the *guerre franco-française* discourse in reference to the Algerian war, it is necessary, given that a national army would usually be considered a symbol of patriotism and loyalty, to provide some context for the assertion that, in the republican narrative of the war, the professional army is drawn as anti-France. There are several initial points to assert: that the Republic is synonymous with France in this narrative; that the professional army is traditionally considered to be anti-republican; and that there is a strong distinction made between the professional and the conscript

¹⁰⁶ Michel Wincock quoted in Alexander, 'Historians and the Peculiarities of French History', p. 20.

¹⁰⁷ Timothy Baycroft also neglects 1958 in favour of 1968 in his chapter entitled 'Revolution and Civil War'. Baycroft, *France: Inventing the Nation*, pp. 130-145.

¹⁰⁸ Martin Evans, 'From Colonialism to Post-Colonialism: The French Empire Since Napoleon', Martin S. Alexander (ed.) *French History Since Napoleon* (London, 1999) p. 392.

¹⁰⁹ Weil, *Qu'est-ce qu'un Français ?*, p. 160.

army. Only the latter, as Chapter 1 suggested, are framed as citizen soldiers in the tradition of those participants in the *levée en masse* of 1792, regardless of whether they have independently rallied to arms in defence of the republic or been conscripted by the state.

The division and mutual suspicion between the republic and the army was in existence from the First Republic. As Alan Forrest argues, Jacobin reforms of the army were inspired by ‘a strong inherent distrust of the officer class, from a belief that men born into privilege were likely to betray their trust, to emigrate abroad, or to support the cause of monarchies and empires.’¹¹⁰ Such a distrust was further entrenched when the republic was overthrown by the career soldier, Napoleon Bonaparte. Robert Tombs’ identification of paranoia and conspiracy as a theme of modern France is applicable here and helps further understand the binary element of the republican narrative. He argues that,

[c]onspiracy theories perpetuated the ‘language of civil war’ in politics. They portrayed not a society pluralistically divided by legitimate beliefs and interests, but a ‘binary divide’ between a united, patriotic and wholly legitimate ‘us’, and a diverse unholy alliance of traitors and criminals – ‘them’. The struggle was dramatized into a historic battle for the soul of France and the future of the word. For each side, the struggle finally was one between “one true France” and an ‘anti-France’.¹¹¹

In such a description, romantic plotting is much in evidence; an uncompromising good versus evil struggle.¹¹² For republicans, this binary discourse helped ensure that a fear of Caesarism became entangled with that of ‘aristocratic, Catholic and royalist plots’.¹¹³ As such, republics tended to ‘maintain some form of conscription even after its military usefulness appeared to have been outlived’ in order to provide an armed balance to the officer class.¹¹⁴

¹¹⁰ Alan Forrest, *Napoleon's Men: The Soldiers of the Revolution and Empire* (London, 2002) pp. 60-61.

¹¹¹ Tombs, *France 1814-1914*, p. 88. Tombs encapsulates the ability of the ‘one and indivisible’ notion of the Republic to sit alongside the republican discourse of the *guerre franco-française* and its terminology of France and anti-France. See section 3.1a.

¹¹² Lynn Hunt sees the ‘French obsession with conspiracy’ to be part of the shift from romance to tragedy in the narrative of the Revolution around the time of the Terror. Hunt, *Politics, Culture, and Class*, p. 39.

¹¹³ Alan Forrest, ‘*La Patrie en danger*: The French Revolution and the First *Levée en masse*’, Daniel Moran and Arthur Waldron (eds), *The People in Arms: Military Myth and National Mobilization since the French Revolution* (Cambridge, 2003) p. 31.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.* p. 31.

With both its predecessors abolished by the militaristic Bonaparte family, the Third Republic took many precautions against the power of the professional army class. In 1872 military personnel were disenfranchised, forbidden from standing for parliamentary election, belonging to political parties, giving public speeches or writing for publication without ministerial approval.¹¹⁵ In 1874, conscription was re-introduced.¹¹⁶ Whilst an unpopular measure, it addressed the concern that the professional army was not republican. This paranoia was not without due cause: the higher ranks of the military ‘were an almost solid conservative, monarchist, and Catholic monopoly’ during the early Third Republic.¹¹⁷ The Boulanger affair certainly did not help to ease the politicians’ suspicions when an apparently republican general removed his mask to reveal a monarchist stooge. The Dreyfus affair cemented the army’s reputation as anti-republican, anti-democratic, anti-freemason and anti-Semitic, the outcome of which would be to pin the birth of the ‘new’ nationalist extreme right of the twentieth century onto its coattails; many of the right-wing leagues of the 1930s styled themselves as anti-Dreyfusards.

The experience of the First World War, at least in retrospect, was perhaps the heyday of the republic and army’s relationship; the rare occurrence of a unified victory no doubt aided the détente. In the absence of the *guerre franco-française* discourse, Tombs asserts an evolutionary narrative in suggesting simply that its upheaval was another step towards ending the Revolution.¹¹⁸ In terms of the Second World War, Jack Hayward has argued that the Vichy regime was the culmination of the army’s anti-republicanism and notes the dominance of officers in senior political and administrative positions.¹¹⁹ The reality was not as convenient. Marshal Pétain became head of the French state precisely because he was a republican hero, the Victor of Verdun. Furthermore he was elected into power by the same parliament that had formed the Popular Front of 1936. Prior to Pétain’s election, Édouard Daladier had been ruling by decree since October 1938 ‘with little respect for legal

¹¹⁵ Hayward, *Fragmented France*, p. 316.

¹¹⁶ Martin S. Alexander and John F. V. Keiger, ‘Defending France: Foreign Policy and the Quest for Security, 1850s-1990s’, Martin S. Alexander (ed.) *French History Since Napoleon* (London, 1999) p. 170.

¹¹⁷ Cobban, *A History of Modern France*, vol. 3, p. 48. This was also Gambetta’s conclusion after his secret survey of the political allegiances in the top ranks of the army between 1876-78. Hayward, *Fragmented France*, p. 317.

¹¹⁸ Tombs, *France 1814-1914*, p. 482.

¹¹⁹ Hayward, *Fragmented France*, p. 318.

niceties.¹²⁰ However, in 1940 the choice between armistice and capitulation, was essentially one between the government and the army, as Julian Jackson has explained:

An armistice was a political act engaging the responsibility of the government to end the hostilities in all French territories. The alternative was capitulation where the government would leave metropolitan France, take whatever forces could be salvaged, and allowed the army to capitulate in the field and sign a cease-fire. This solution, which had occurred in Holland, was proposed by Reynaud. Weygand objected on the grounds that it shifted responsibility for the defeat to the army.¹²¹

It was the analysis to which Hayward adheres, however, that became the popular republican interpretation after the war; the republic was once again betrayed by the army.

This is the crux of the republican narrative of the *guerre franco-française*; the professional army is the republic's most frequent enemy in the ongoing civil war but also a useful scapegoat.¹²² For René Girard, the scapegoat comes from within the community rather than from without: 'the sacrificial process requires not only the complete separation of the sacrificed victim [the scapegoat] from those beings for whom the victim is a substitute but also a similarity between both parties.'¹²³ The scapegoat must be similar enough to the rest of community for the blame to stick, but with a differentiating feature so as to exclude the rest of the community from blame.¹²⁴ Hence, as members of the army, there is no denying that the professional soldiers are French, but they can be painted as anti-republican and (by the republican logic of the republic being synonymous with France) anti-France; these two positions are necessary rather than contradictory in Girard's understanding.¹²⁵ Secondly, the scapegoat is a highly visible and distinguishable member of the community, frequently in a

¹²⁰ Julian Jackson, '1940 and the Crisis of Interwar Democracy in France', Martin S. Alexander (ed.) *French History Since Napoleon* (London, 1999) p. 233.

¹²¹ Ibid. p. 223. Paul Reynaud was a minister in the government, General Maxime Weygand was Commander-in-Chief.

¹²² Tombs views the purpose of conspiracy theories in French history as helping to create a scapegoat. Tombs, *France 1814-1914*, p. 94. See above.

¹²³ René Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, trans. Patrick Gregory (London, 1979) p. 39.

¹²⁴ Richard J. Golsan, *René Girard and Myth: An Introduction* (London, 1993) pp. 33-4.

¹²⁵ Much akin to Derrida's understanding of opposites which also, with its emphasis on the dominance of one opposite over the other, conforms to this chapter's argument that the *guerre franco-française* is part of a teleological narrative in which France always wins over anti-France. Derrida, 'Plato's Pharmacy'.

position of authority; a high ranking uniformed man of the armed forces clearly possesses both of these qualities.¹²⁶

Scapegoating, as both a political and cultural process, removes blame from a society for a canker in their midst. But the scapegoat is not simply a tool of distraction from the real issues, it has a rather higher purpose. For Girard and within the republican narrative considered here, the scapegoat allows the divisions present in a society at war (whether with itself or with an external enemy) to be transferred and amputated; the scapegoat becomes a vessel for the divisions which would otherwise tear the society apart. As such, the ‘sacrifice serves to protect the entire community, offered up by the members themselves. The sacrifice serves to protect the entire community *from its own violence*... The elements of dissension scattered throughout the community are drawn to the person of the sacrificial victim and eliminated, at least temporarily.’¹²⁷ The wider shift in historical narrative from violent romantic to reconciliatory comedic emplotment is aided by the scapegoating process. It is about avoiding violence, specifically internal violence and is designed ‘to restore harmony to the community, to reinforce the social fabric.’¹²⁸

The failure of the First and Second Republics can be easily pinned upon the treachery of the two Napoleons but the scapegoating of the professional army as anti-France is deeper than mere anti-Bonapartism. As Wolfgang Schivelbusch has put it, in France, ‘everyone who loses a battle is a traitor’ and the tradition of ‘holding generals responsible for lost battles and premature capitulations’ is a tradition dating back to the First Republic.¹²⁹ This trend is certainly played out in the republican artistic representations of the Franco-Prussian war, particularly in *La Débâcle*. To blame the rank-and-file citizen soldiers for the defeat would be impossible for a republic, and given the generals were anti-republican, scapegoating them as either incompetent or traitorous was straightforward.¹³⁰ Responsibility is very firmly placed at the top ranks of the army from the defeated Marshal Bazaine to gaunt and sickly Napoleon III himself.¹³¹ In Zola’s naturalist drama, these are

¹²⁶ René Girard, *The Scapegoat*, trans. Yvonne Freccero (Baltimore, 1986) p. 15.

¹²⁷ Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, p. 8. Emphasis in the original.

¹²⁸ Ibid. p. 8.

¹²⁹ Schivelbusch, *The Culture of Defeat*, p. 118.

¹³⁰ Marshal Bazaine, who incorporated both incompetence and treachery into his résumé with his capitulation at Metz, was a monarchist rather than a Bonapartist so suited the wrath of both sides.

¹³¹ The very conservative *L’Illustration* took offence at Zola’s depiction of Napoleon III and his undermining of the Empire but given that they also took the highly unusual step of supporting Marshal Bazaine during his trial for treason, it is indicative of the novel’s importance that the reviewer claims of Zola, ‘je l’admire tous les

the rotten elements dragging France down and are the antithesis of the conservative republic, which will rise at the end of the novel embodied in Jean. The citizen soldiers suffer the brunt of the army's incompetencies in every possible way: the lack of supplies through logistical ineptitude, the exhaustion and low morale due to lack of purpose, and the needless deaths caused by out-dated methods of fighting a war with an army desperate for glory; as Maurice and Jean exclaim watching the annihilation of a French cavalry charge, 'Tonnerre de Dieu, ça ne sert à rien d'être brave !'¹³²

The division between the citizen soldier and the high command is driven home by the endless marching and retreating with poor supplies set against Napoleon III's entourage requisitioning an old lady's house laden with 'la vaisselle d'argent, et des bouteilles de vin, et des paniers de provisions et du beau linge, et de tout !'¹³³ This, followed immediately by news of Marshal Bazaine's incompetency, is almost a caricature of such a narrative. The division is also evident in the republican narrative of the Vichy era, whether in artistic or historic representations, like that of Hayward's. As Chapter 1 has shown, the citizen soldier as the embodiment of the republic slips easily into the role of resister. This is notable even in the employment of *francs-tireurs* in the name of a resistance group, harking back to the tradition of an auxiliary republican army which also makes an appearance in *La Débâcle*.

The same tradition exists in the representations of the Algerian war. Indeed Philip Dine divides his study of novels into those that deal with the paratroopers and colonels, and those that tell stories of *le rappel*.¹³⁴ It is also a division frequently noted by historians, particularly with regard to the differing attitudes to the war between the conscripts and their superiors. This assertion is often made in reference to the relationship with the settlers which for the conscripts was considered to be frequently antagonistic, or in reference to the experience of the professional army in Indochina and the commitment to colonialism which was not shared by the conscripts.¹³⁵ The division between the

jours davantage' and concludes his review by saying, 'Ceux qui liront la *Débâcle* dans trente ans diront peut-être qu'elle a été le chef-d'oeuvre de M. Zola, et que, d'une manière absolue, c'est un chef-d'oeuvre. Tout pesé, je crois qu'ils auront raison.' Augustin Filon, 'A Propos de la *Débâcle*', *L'Illustration : Journal Universel*, (25 June 1892) pp. 559, 562. On the journal's support for Bazaine see A. Wachter, 'Le maréchal Bazaine', *L'Illustration* (4 October 1873) pp. 226-7 and further coverage of his trial in subsequent issues.

¹³² Zola, *La Débâcle*, p. 322. [Good God, what's the use of being brave?]

¹³³ Ibid. pp. 114-5. [silver plates and bottles of wine, hampers of provisions, fine linen and everything!]

¹³⁴ Philip Dine, *Images of the Algerian War: French Fiction and Film, 1954-1992* (Oxford, 1994) Chapters 1, 2 and 5.

¹³⁵ See for example, Alistair Horne, *A Savage War of Peace: Algeria 1954-1962* (London, 1977) p. 167; Anthony Clayton, *The War of French Decolonization* (London, 1994) pp. 140 and 184.

professional and conscript army becomes particularly noticeable with General Massu's Battle of Algiers in which torture was used most famously and systematically by paratroopers to break down FLN networks. The discourse of the *guerre franco-française* is especially aided by the rise of the OAS in the latter stages of the war. Made up of ex-generals and usually rich settlers, the existence of the OAS aids the scapegoating of the professional army as enemies of the republic.

3.2b Transference, torture and the OAS: the concealment of the revolution

This section will look first at artistic representations of torture, focusing particularly on three early works published between 1958 and 1962 which help establish the pairing of the transference and scapegoating tendencies. A brief consideration of later works will serve to illustrate the tenacity of this trend. Representations of the OAS have furthered and even facilitated this trend, although they are less pronounced. In all these representations, the fascist rhetoric from the Vichy era aids the separation of the republic and the army. By applying a fascist rhetoric to the actions of the professional army in Algeria, they are made anti-French, even treacherous like their collaborationist counter-parts in the Occupation, and thus are transformed into a suitable scapegoat. The moral hierarchy of labelling their opponents 'fascist' allowed the republic to justify 'decolonisation' in moral and progressive terms. Such a narrative avoided questioning the political shifts that led to the pursuit of such a policy and the changing assumptions it required in terms of race and assimilation.

Whilst viewing one historical period through the context of another is neither unusual nor necessarily problematic – as T.G. Ashplant notes, the 'memory of heroic victory or suffering endured in a previous war may act as the template through which later conflicts are understood' – the tendency to invoke a transference of the rhetoric of the Vichy era is overbearing, effectively removing the Algerian war's own context.¹³⁶ The analysis of cultural representations of the Algerian war illustrates the pervasiveness of the rhetoric of Vichy-era fascism transferred into representations of the Algerian war and illustrates how

¹³⁶ T. G. Ashplant, Graham Dawson and Michael Roper, 'The Politics of War Memory and Commemoration: Contexts, Structures and Dynamics', T. G. Ashplant, Graham Dawson, and Michael Roper (eds), *The Politics of War Memory and Commemoration* (London, 2000) p. 21. This idea of viewing one conflict through the context of another also works both ways; the Musée de l'armée at the Hôtel d'Invalides in Paris places the defeat of the Franco-Prussian war into the narrative of the eventually victorious First and Second World Wars in the intriguingly titled exhibition 'Les Deux Guerre Mondiales, World War I & World War II, 1871-1945'.

such a transference enables the concealment of a revolution in French republicanism by representing the Algerian war as a continuation of the *guerre franco-française* of the Occupation. Transference in this case works like White's understanding of metaphor and particularly of the metonymic type. Fascism in relation to representations of the Algerian war is often metaphoric but rather than purely 'representational', it is metonymic and thus reductionist; with the transference of the fascist rhetoric, 'one can simultaneously distinguish between two phenomena and reduce one to the status of a manifestation of the other.'¹³⁷ Due to the exceptional weight given to the Vichy period in the public perception and dominant republican narrative of French history, this transference undermines the impact of the Algerian war on republican history by suggesting its importance is usurped by the earlier Vichy regime.¹³⁸ With a transference of the fascist rhetoric, the Algerian war and the longer Franco-Algerian relationship has become an unimportant blip in French republican history, apparently baring little influence on the evolution of republicanism.

The three initial texts which, through a rhetoric of fascism, incorporate the *guerre franco-française* and identify a scapegoat, are biographical and autobiographical works. Published during or immediately after the war, they represent episodes of torture as perpetrated by the French and had a noticeable impact in the French public sphere at the time.¹³⁹ Henri Alleg's *La Question* (1958) is perhaps the best-known testimony to be published on the Algerian war.¹⁴⁰ Alleg was the editor of the banned communist newspaper *Alger républicain*, supporter of the FLN and Jewish in origin. He was arrested in the summer of 1957 during the Battle of Algiers and systematically tortured by paratroopers and police.¹⁴¹ *La Question* is a document of his experiences and additionally an accusation: he names his torturers and directly implicates them in the murder of the mathematics professor and his personal friend, Maurice Audin. The book was written in code, smuggled out of prison by his lawyer and published by Editions de Minuit. Selling 65,000 copies in the first five weeks of publication, Alleg's work was seized by the French government only to be published again

¹³⁷ White, *Metahistory*, pp. 34-35.

¹³⁸ Baycroft sees the Vichy period dominated French public discourse until the end of the twentieth century whilst Hayward views it as the biggest flare up of the *guerre franco-française*. In a poll of French citizens asked what de Gaulle represented for them, over half cited his Free French guise (43 percent his 18 June 1940 speech, 26 percent the Liberation) whilst only 15 percent cited the founding of the Fifth Republic and 7 percent the end of the Algerian war. Baycroft, *France: Inventing the Nation*, p. 156; Hayward, *Fragmented France*, pp. 178, 271.

¹³⁹ This latter point will be illustrated by the contemporary reaction to each of the three texts.

¹⁴⁰ Henri Alleg, 'La Question' (1958), Algeria Watch [accessed 29 September 2009] <http://www.algeria-watch.org/farticle/1954-62/laquestion.htm>.

¹⁴¹ General Massu had been granted civil powers and use of the police force in Algiers. Horne, *A Savage War of Peace*, p. 188.

with a preface by John-Paul Sartre which had begun life as an editorial in his journal, *Les Temps modernes*.¹⁴² It also caused a ruckus in the national press as references to it and published extracts resulted in the seizure of several newspapers, causing several indignant covers by *L'Express*, fiery rhetoric in *Esprit* and even carefully worded criticism in *Le Monde*.¹⁴³

Unperturbed by the government's reaction to *La Question*, Editions de Minuit published *Saint Michel et le Dragon* in 1961.¹⁴⁴ Written about his experiences as a paratrooper in North Africa between 1954 and 1957, Pierre Leulliette's book contains graphic depictions of rape, pillage and torture carried out by the French army against the Algerian population. During the course of his narrative, Leulliette moves from being a naïve young adventurer to a disillusioned intellectual, heavily critical of the policies enacted by the professional French army of which he had been a part.¹⁴⁵ The book was initially seized by the police and Editions de Minuit's director, Jérôme Lindon, was brought to trial whilst Leulliette was chastised by the Ministry of the Interior. The book was republished only to be seized again. In March 1962 it finally went on sale without further hindrance. During this time Lindon had been forced to move house following an attempt on his life by the OAS.¹⁴⁶

Finally, completed before but published just after the Evian Accords which ended the war, *Djamila Boupacha* (1962) recites the experience of a twenty-three year old Algerian woman who was arrested, tortured and raped with a bottle by French paratroopers in February 1960.¹⁴⁷ Boupacha came to French public attention initially as a court case taken on by

¹⁴² Michael Kelly, Elizabeth Fallaize and Anna Ridehalgh, 'Crises of Modernization', Jill Forbes and Michael Kelly (eds), *French Cultural Studies: An Introduction* (Oxford, 1995), p. 133.

¹⁴³ *France Observateur*, *L'Express* and *Les Temps Modernes* were all seized, the former on multiple occasions, over publication relating to Alleg's book. Covers of *L'Express*, (6 March 1958 and 13 March 1958); John Conilh, 'La Question et le réponse', *Esprit* (Mai 1958, no. 261) pp. 773-774; *Le Monde*, (28 February 1958) p. 2; (7 March 1958) p. 3; (9-10 March 1958) p. 4; (11 March 1958) p. 1; (20 March 1958) p. 3, etc. Interestingly, the indignation caused by Alleg's book focuses increasingly on the restriction of free press rather than on the contents of the book itself which was perhaps the result of vested interests on the part of those employed by the publishing industry or the restriction on what they could publish concerning the book's contents.

¹⁴⁴ Pierre Leulliette, *Saint Michel et le Dragon: Souvenirs d'un parachutiste* (Paris, 1961).

¹⁴⁵ Conscripted troops were not used in Algeria until the spring of 1955. Agulhon, *The French Republic*, p. 371.

¹⁴⁶ Tony White, 'Translator's Preface', Pierre Leulliette, *St. Michael and the Dragon: A Paratrooper in the Algerian War*, trans. Tony White (London, 1964) [1961] pp. v-vi.

¹⁴⁷ Simone de Beauvoir and Gisèle Halimi, *Djamila Boupacha. Témoignages d'Henri Alleg, Mme Maurice Audin, Général de Bollardière, R.P. Chenu, Dr Jean Dalsace, J. Fonlupt-Esperaber, Françoise Mallet-Joris, Daniel Mayer, André Philip, J.F. Revel, Jules Roy, Françoise Sagan. Portrait original de Picasso. Hommage des peintres Lapoujade et Matta*. (Paris, 1962). Boupacha's case, and her support from very prominent intellectuals, was covered in the national press prior to the book's release. See for example, Gisèle Halimi, 'Témoignages: D'Henri Alleg et Djamila Boupacha', in *Les Temps Modernes* (January-February 1960, no. 167-8) pp. 1822-1827; Françoise Giroud, 'Sur

Gisèle Halimi, a lawyer of Algerian descent from metropolitan France, and rapidly gained the attention and support of Germaine Tillon and Simone de Beauvoir. Introduced by de Beauvoir, the majority of Boupacha's testimony is told by Halimi with the final pages containing testimony from a variety of public figures including Alleg, Françoise Sagan and Jules Roy. The book is essentially the tale of Halimi's involvement in Boupacha's legal struggle both as defendant against the charges upon which she was arrested (the planting of a bomb in an Algiers café) and as prosecutor in the struggle to bring Boupacha's torturers to justice. Halimi's writing is an extended expression of frustration and disgust at the farcical nature of the Algerian justice system, and a comparatively favourable account of the French courts.

The obvious problem with considering *La Question* and *Saint Michel et le dragon* to be republican representations of the war is that the republic attempted to censor them. They were not, by any means, the first revelations on the use of torture to reach metropolitan France. That honour went to an article by Jean-Marie Domenach in *Esprit* in December 1954, and the left-leaning press regularly printed, or attempted to print, details of French torture almost as soon as the war began but particularly from the Battle of Algiers.¹⁴⁸ Whilst there is no doubt that *La Question's* publication caused a stir, it was not entirely revelatory. Its attempted suppression occurred primarily in the period before the change in government policy, from maintaining *Algérie française* to the 'Invention of Decolonization'. Indeed, Tanya Matthews pointed out that André Malraux, who would go on to become de Gaulle's Minister of Culture, was one of four authors to protest its seizure in April 1958.¹⁴⁹ She also noted that when the book reappeared in 1960, neither author nor publisher were prosecuted.¹⁵⁰ Certainly, there is an element of it being more trouble that it was worth attempting to suppress an already notorious book, but a change in regime, and a shift in policy, also meant it was less of a threat for the Fifth Republic. *Saint Michel et le dragon* was published when peace talks were already underway with the FLN and the actions it describes occurred under the Fourth Republic, yet it was still seized upon publication. The

une couverture blanche' in *L'Express*, (8 February 1962) p. 15. This edition of *Les Temps Modernes* also carried extracts of Halimi's testimony which appeared in the subsequent book.

¹⁴⁸ *L'Express*, *France Observateur* (which became the *Nouvelle Observateur* part way through the war) *Esprit* and *Témoignage chrétien* all spoke out against French methods in Algeria, and also often employed fascist rhetoric in their condemnations. See Hayward, *Fragmented France*, p. 325; Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization*, p. 66.

¹⁴⁹ Tanya Matthews, *War in Algeria: Background for Crisis* (1961) p. 67.

¹⁵⁰ A similar fate met *La Gangrène*, a book written by five Algerian students who detailed their experiences of torture. Seized on the day of its publication in 1959, neither authors nor publishers were prosecuted and the book was reprinted in 1960 with no further action taken. *Ibid.* pp. 68-69.

reasoning here is perhaps one of diplomacy; igniting passions against past misdeeds whilst in talks would certainly not favour the French government's negotiating position. Most significantly, however, is the aforementioned OAS attack on the novel's publisher; censorship was now an issue of national security as preventing attacks by the OAS became paramount.¹⁵¹ It is safe to include these texts in the thesis's definition of 'republican culture' because whilst they may have not been bedtime reading for the government of the Fifth Republic, they follow the same republican narrative in which the *guerre franco-française* is used to draw distinctive divisions between those who perpetrate torture and those who are 'truly' French.

In *La Question*, Alleg employs the rhetoric of fascism, specifically Nazism, but attributes this transference to his torturers who use it as a way both to boast and to mock. Just after being confronted by his friend Audin in a desperate state, Lieutenant Erulin, in a fit of anger at Alleg's refusal to talk, shouts "Ici, c'est la Gestapo! Tu connais la Gestapo?"¹⁵² Alleg does not respond but simply notes that his convictions were clearly worthwhile against 'ces brutes qui se flattaient d'être les émules de la Gestapo.'¹⁵³ Nearly a month into his ordeal, Alleg is taken to Captain Faulques, a legionnaire and captain of the paratroopers who introduces himself proudly as "le fameux capitaine SS"...chef des tortionnaires de la villa Sesini, particulièrement réputé pour sa férocité.'¹⁵⁴ Faulques then proceeds to rant at Alleg, promulgating his disparaging opinion on Communists, liberals and intellectuals generally, his wish for the war to spread across North Africa and his regret regarding the failure of the Suez campaign, all very typical complaints of the French extreme right at the time. Lieutenant Erulin had expressed similar sentiments previously although condensed into simply calling the republic a 'putain'.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵¹ Several writers have commented on the lack of representation of torture in films and the detrimental effect censorship had on this kind of film production. Certainly the threat of censorship is likely to restrain the making of a film far more than the writing of a book, simply given the costs and work involved. As a result, few films about the war were made until its end and the lifting of censorship, or the threat of censorship. In terms of torture, the only film made depicting it during the war was Jean-Luc Godard's *Le Petit Soldat*, which was banned from release until 1963, a fate shared with *Muriel* and *Le Combat dans l'île*, discussed below. Whilst the representations of torture in the Algerian war tended to be on the fringes of cinema they were nevertheless in existence and uncensored. Benjamin Stora has identified a selection of 'films documentaires et militants' that were censored under the Fourth Republic, alongside Stanley Kubrick's *Les Sentiers de la gloire* which portrayed the French as pacifists in the First World War. Benjamin Stora, *Imaginaires de guerre: Algérie - Vietnam, en France et aux Etats-Unis* (Paris, 1997) pp. 116-117, 122-123.

¹⁵² Alleg, 'La Question'. ["This is the Gestapo here! You know the Gestapo?" Henri Alleg, *The Question. With a new afterword by the author. Preface by Jean-Paul Sartre.*, trans. John Calder (London, 2006) [1958]]

¹⁵³ Alleg, 'La Question'. [these brutes who flattered themselves they were like the Gestapo']

¹⁵⁴ Ibid. ["the famous SS captain"...head of the tortures [at the Villa Sesini, whose reputation was particularly bloodthirsty.]

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

Through the powerful use of fascist rhetoric, Alleg's torturers are not only anti-republican, they are, apparently by their own admission, party to the beliefs and practices of the republic's most recent and powerful nemesis – Nazi Germany and Vichy collaborationists. Jean-Paul Sartre's preface to *La Question* is even more stark. Taking possession of the language of the Vichy era to an extent which Alleg never reaches, he opens his piece with a discussion of the torture performed by the Gestapo at Rue Lauriston in Paris. For Sartre the paratroopers are the Gestapo and Alleg is the Resistance. His equation is blunt, unapologetic and fundamentally in defence of the republic. He is proud that Alleg is French but takes no such national possession of his torturers, indeed he states that torture 'is neither civilian or military, nor is it specifically French: it is a plague infecting our whole era.'¹⁵⁶ Alleg's torturers are thus severed from the republic in his book by a transference of fascist rhetoric. They are the 'sacrificial victims', the scapegoats, in the republican narrative of the war which is imbued with the discourse of the *guerre franco-française*.

With his own position as part of the professional army and without Alleg's overt ideological convictions, Pierre Leulliette's book is a more complex portrayal of the relationships between the republic, the army and himself. *Saint Michel et le dragon* is written as a journey of self-discovery. At the beginning of the novel in 1954, Leulliette shares a naïve, ill-prepared desire for adventure and sport with his fellow parachutists, but his spirit for adventure which begins by uniting him with his regiment, gradually evolves over the course of the book to become something which distances him from them. He goes for solitary jaunts in the most dangerous of Algerian streets, seeking out those places where the troops are expressly told not to go, gaining thrills from the knowledge that his life hangs by a thread. Graham Dawson, in his study of the British soldier hero in biographies and autobiographies, notes that the portrayal of the adventurer is as 'an idealized figure whose actions render him superior to other characters and to the environment in which he moves.'¹⁵⁷ Leulliette's consistent survival despite his risk taking coupled with the very physical separation of being alone on these trips allows Leulliette to represent himself as a distinct individual outside the collective of his regiment. This sense of individuality and independence, however futile it ends up being, is a characteristic he shares with Noël in

¹⁵⁶ Jean-Paul Sartre, 'Preface: A Victory', Ellen Ray (ed.) *The Question. With a new afterword by the author.* (London, 2006) pp. xxxi and xxxvi.

¹⁵⁷ Graham Dawson, *Soldier Heroes: British Adventure, Empire, and the Imagining of Masculinities* (London, 1994), p. 55.

René Vautier's *Avoir 20 ans dans les Aurès*.¹⁵⁸ Here, too, is a character that has voluntarily joined the French army to fight in Algeria but subsequently distances himself from the camaraderie of his regiment and, in Noël's case, deserts with a prisoner.

The separation of himself from his parachutist comrades is further entrenched by the method in which Leulliette refers to the other men in his unit. For the most part they are represented only as a collective entity, 'nous' or 'vous' depending on his level of involvement. Of the individuals of his own rank, most remain nameless, their existence merely a passing stage in the novel. Such representation of his assumed close compatriots adds to the sense of isolation Leulliette is forming in relation to the army. The one exception which breaks Leulliette's solitude is in his friendship with Marc R., a lovelorn poet who sings Rimbaud, Baudelaire and Valéry to himself. In contrast to his detachment to the other men in his regiment, Leulliette states his friendship openly: 'Je compris cependant que je m'étais fait de lui un ami. Le plus grand qu'il me fût jamais donné d'avoir.'¹⁵⁹ Of an evidently intellectual bent, Marc R. shocks the whole company when, 'les yeux écarquillés par la fureur', he physically pulls a senior lieutenant away from a prisoner he was in the process of beating.¹⁶⁰ Marc R. possesses the qualities, both intellectual and moral, that Leulliette represents himself developing, the exact qualities at odds with the other paratroopers.¹⁶¹

Torture first makes an appearance in the passage in which Marc R. stands up to his lieutenant. Having already associated himself with Marc R., Leulliette has separated himself from those involved in the torture.¹⁶² His journey from green parachutist to moral intellectual continues as he quotes Baudelaire whilst describing the torture of a prisoner by his fellow paratroopers, a contrast which separates him from their actions.¹⁶³ *Saint Michel et le dragon* does not then return to torture *per se* until close to the end of the book and only after Leulliette has decided not to re-enlist. The parachutists are now part of the Battle of Algiers and 'chaque compagnie a sa propre petite salle de torture.'¹⁶⁴ Once again Leulliette

¹⁵⁸ René Vautier, *Avoir 20 Ans dans les Aurès* (France, 1972). See also Chapter 1, section 1.3b.

¹⁵⁹ Leulliette, *Saint Michel et le Dragon*, p. 60. [I realized then that I'd made a friend of him. The greatest I've ever had. Leulliette, *St. Michael and the Dragon*]

¹⁶⁰ Leulliette, *Saint Michel et le Dragon*, p. 62. [his eyes wide open with rage]

¹⁶¹ Towards the end of the book, Leulliette also begins to quote famous intellectuals, the diverse likes of Malraux, Talleyrand, Nietzsche, Rimbaud, Brecht and Sartre.

¹⁶² Leulliette, *Saint Michel et le Dragon*, pp. 62-63.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.* pp. 104-106.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.* p. 307. [each company had its own little torture chamber]

distances himself from the actions of his fellow Red Berets. He identifies the torturers specifically as Sergeant T. and an Alsatian sergeant 'à la monstrueuse musculature, célèbre au corps pour sa dureté en cours d'opération et la lenteur de son esprit.'¹⁶⁵ This latter character is Leulliette's intellectual antithesis. His place of birth is emphasised, always being referred to as 'the Alsatian'. Leulliette also attributes the running of Villa Sesini (Alleg and Audin's place of torture) to Alsatisans, whom he calls Germans with their Gestapo methods and their SS pasts.¹⁶⁶ Unlike Alleg, Leulliette is not a victim of torture but a witness, and a witness who does not actively intervene. Thus, he creates a divide between himself and his fellow parachutists through a very overt creation of the torturers as 'foreign'. Through his transference of language and assumptions from the Vichy era, Leulliette is able to separate himself by depicting himself as truly French, a patriotic intellectual worthy of any republic, and in contrast to the torturers.

Saint Michel et le dragon possess a tension in its narrative which *La Question* does not: Leulliette is a professional parachutist, an identity which would usually place him at odds with the republic in a *guerre franco-française* discourse. Yet Leulliette's story is one of realisation rather than dogmatism. He represents himself as an ideal republican citizen: a patriot, adventurer, intellectual and moral saviour, whilst gradually distancing himself from his fellow parachutists. He would be the archetypal republican citizen soldier if he were fighting a republican war but the book is clear in this: the Algerian war is not one France should be fighting.

Kirsten Ross discusses the mechanical nature of torture in Algeria, in reference to these 'torture houses' particularly in relation to Alleg's experience and his reference to ordinary domestic objects becoming sinister in such an environment (the kitchen sink where he is drowned, the telephone used to electrocute him). She sees them as symbols of modernisation in her theory of the connection between decolonisation and modernisation discussed in the previous chapter, particularly modernity's obsession with cleanliness. Raphaëlle Branche has drawn similar conclusions in that she argues that torture was more about power and control than extracting information and the use of electricity was symbolic of power over modernity. Such symbolism and metaphor is not new in French representations of war and defeat as Bertrand Taithe has shown in his identification of the proliferation of body metaphors and medical terminology, especially amputation, in relation to the Franco-Prussian war. Kristin Ross, *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies: Decolonization and the Reordering of French Culture* (London, 1995) pp. 108-114; Raphaëlle Branche, *La Torture et l'Armée Pendant la Guerre d'Algérie, 1954-1962* (Paris, 2001) pp. 423-425; Taithe, *Defeated Flesh*, especially Chapter 8.

¹⁶⁵ Leulliette, *Saint Michel et le Dragon*, p. 308. [with huge muscles, famous in the battalion for his toughness on operations and his slowness of mind.]

¹⁶⁶ Ibid. p. 307. This is a particularly acute insult to the patriotism of Alsatisans after the Second World War because Alsace was incorporated into the German Reich in 1940 rather than being considered as part of Occupied France. As such Alsatisans were conscripted into the German army. Most poignantly, Alsatian soldiers were amongst those who committed a massacre of 642 inhabitants of Oradour-sur-Glane, near Limoges in June 1944. In 1946 it was declared a historic monument, a martyred town. In 1953, fourteen of the Alsatian soldiers involved were tried in Bordeaux but were amnestied. For further discussion see H. R. Kedward, *La Vie en bleu: France and the French since 1900* (London, 2005) pp. 300-301 and 621-622.

As his comrades gradually partake in more and more disturbing acts of brutality against their enemies, Leulliette distances himself from them, setting himself up as a renegade individual, a resister against the soldiers' increasing collaboration with the reactionary settlers. Near the novel's close, with his convictions against the practice of torture at their strongest, Leulliette draws distinct comparisons with the Second World War. He writes of his desperation to inform French civilians of the horrors that he witnessed so they could never claim to have not known: 'A-t-il jamais cru vraiment aux crimes de Dachau et d'Auschwitz ? A-t-il jamais compris que, ne pas savoir, c'est alors aussi une façon d'être coupable ?'¹⁶⁷ This is not the first time in the novel that the earlier war gains a mention but it is the first time that Leulliette uses it in one of his own comparisons. Having just referred to the Algiers police as French only in inverted commas, Leulliette has drawn together the European settlers with the professional army and placed them in direct relation to the Holocaust.¹⁶⁸ By separating himself from those who perpetrate torture in his book, Leulliette is drawing a distinction between the French who could no more support the army's actions in Algeria than they could those of the Nazi government, and those that perpetrate torture who he suggests cannot be seen as truly French. His use of this rhetoric and such emotive comparisons gives authority through precedent to his division between the French Republic and the perpetrators of torture.

De Beauvoir, in her preface to Halimi's text of 1962, draws comparisons between Nazis and the practice of torture in Algeria akin to Alleg. And like him, she attributes the initial link connecting the two eras to someone else, in this instance M. Michelet, the minister of justice. She quotes him as saying "C'est du nazisme que nous vient cette gangrène ; elle envahit tout, elle pourrit tout, on n'arrive pas à l'enrayer."¹⁶⁹ De Beauvoir registers her shock at this statement given that it was a clear declaration from a well-placed official that there was no doubt torture had taken place, but she does not challenge his association. Instead it serves a purpose in laying the seeds for the comparison she draws at her closing. This writing of Nazism into the text builds into her concluding paragraph and is intrinsically linked to her conception of the army:

¹⁶⁷ Leulliette, *Saint Michel et le Dragon*, p. 319. [Did they ever really believe in the crimes of Dachau and Auschwitz? Did they ever realize that ignorance was another form of guilt?]

¹⁶⁸ Ibid. p. 318.

¹⁶⁹ Beauvoir and Halimi, *Djamila Boupacha*, p. 6. ["The Nazis are responsible for this canker in our midst. It spreads everywhere, and corrupts all it touches." Simone de Beauvoir and Gisèle Halimi, *Djamila Boupacha: The story of the torture of a young Algerian girl which shocked liberal French opinion*, trans. Peter Green (London, 1962) [1962]]

Il n'existe qu'une alternative : ou bien vous qui pleurez si volontiers et si abondamment sur des malheurs anciens – Anne Frank ou le ghetto de Varsovie – vous vous rangez parmi les bourreaux de ceux qui souffrent aujourd'hui.

...

vous ne pouvez plus continuer à balbutier : 'Nous ne savions pas...' ¹⁷⁰

De Beauvoir is simultaneously constructing an attack on the professional army, separate from the French republic, and a call to arms to her fellow citizens. To do so she is employing the rhetoric and imagery of the recent past which helps frame her argument and to help legitimate it. The transference tendency enables the framing of the professional army as a figure of blame by placing it in direct conflict with the French republic.

Such rhetoric only became more urgent after the publication of *La Question* and *Saint Michel et le dragon* because of the method in which the Fifth Republic was founded and the status of the man who led it. General de Gaulle returned to politics with the backing of his fellow generals in Algeria in the belief that he would maintain *Algérie française*. The use of fascist rhetoric, but specifically rhetoric from the Second World War in which de Gaulle disobeyed the army high command to set himself up as leader of the resistance in exile, is particularly useful in rationalising how de Gaulle was able to place himself on the side of the republic in opposition to his old supporters in the *guerre franco-française*. By the time of *Djamila Boupacha*, the rupture between the republic and the professional army had become extreme, with the Generals' *putsch* of April 1961 and the formation of the OAS. The professional army became the enemy even of the president. Thus de Gaulle, head of the Fifth Republic, was not in control of the army or its methods: 'L'homme à qui elle a prêté, en mai 58, l'apparence de l'autorité, n'a pas été capable, à travers ses manœuvres, ses atermoiements, ses équivoques, de briser sa souveraineté ; il la [l'armée] subit et il nous la donne à subir.'¹⁷¹ De Beauvoir, hardly the president's greatest supporter, nevertheless uses the context of the Second World War to separate de Gaulle from the professional army.

¹⁷⁰ Beauvoir and Halimi, *Djamila Boupacha*, pp. 12-13. [Either – despite your willing and facile grief over such past horrors as the Warsaw ghetto or the death of Anne Frank – you align yourselves with our contemporary butchers rather than their victims... You can no longer mumble the old excuse 'We didn't know'.]

¹⁷¹ Ibid. p. 11. [The man on whose shoulders it placed the mantle of authority in 1958 has proved, despite all his shilly-shallying intrigues and equivocation, incapable of breaking its [the army's] absolute power.]

In Halimi's own text, the reference to a Muslim prisoner with special status as a *kapo*, the 'méthodes para-nazies' of the 'SS' (that is, the *Section Spéciale*) in a resettlement camp and the 'jeunes fascistes' who interrupted the Djamila Boupacha Committee, all form part of an underlying rhetoric of fascism in *Djamila Boupacha*.¹⁷² It also has an opposing rhetoric of resistance which serves to enhance the power of the transference between the Algerian and Second World wars. At its most direct this simply involves those famous for their work in the Resistance being cited as having involvement in Boupacha's struggle for justice.¹⁷³ Of the hundreds of letters the Djamila Boupacha Committee received in support, Halimi quotes those from former Resistance members.¹⁷⁴

After Halimi's narrative ends, there is a collection of 'testimonies' from supporters and members of the Djamila Boupacha Committee whose authors also refer back to the earlier period. General de Bollardière (who was recalled to France when he protested against the use of torture during the Battle of Algiers) includes in this section two letters he wrote to Mme. Postel-Vinay who played a central role in the campaign. In them he pays respects to her status both as a 'Compagnon de la Libération' and as a former deportee of the Nazi regime.¹⁷⁵ Doctor Jean Dalsace and Jacques Fonlupt-Esperaber both interpret an evolution of torture from the Gestapo to Algeria whilst Jules Roy draws a distinction 'entre la nation et les S.S. qui se sont déguisés sous l'uniforme française.'¹⁷⁶ Nefissa, Djamila's sister, is quoted as having been just as astute in her division between the French Republic and the enemy:

C'est alors qu'elle voulut faire la distinction fondamentale entre les *Français de France*, qui ont souffert de la Gestapo ('Dieu ne peut pas leur avoir donné l'oubli') et ceux d'ici, méprisants, barbares ('Ils veulent les choses faciles, le soleil... Ils veulent nous empêcher d'être libres...').¹⁷⁷

¹⁷² Ibid. pp. 59, 146 and 148.

¹⁷³ André Schwarz-Bart, Elsa Triolet (wife of Louis Aragon) and Vercors all sat on the Djamila Boupacha Committee. Louis Aragon, a life-long member of the Communist party and renown for his activities in the Resistance also drew comparisons between Nazis and French soldiers in Algeria in his own writings: 'Aragon vous parle: d'un certain empoli du mot *France*', *France Nouvelle*, no. 729 (15 October 1959). See Angela Kimyongür, *Memory and Politics: Representations of War in the Work of Louis Aragon* (Cardiff, 2007) p. 122.

¹⁷⁴ Beauvoir and Halimi, *Djamila Boupacha*, p. 66.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid. pp. 239-240.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid. pp. 243-244, 247-248 and 276. [between the nation and the SS troops who have disguised themselves in French uniform]

¹⁷⁷ Ibid. pp. 47-48. [It was at this point that she insisted on the fundamental distinction between the *French in France*, who had suffered at the hands of the Gestapo ('God cannot have let them forget,' she said) and the arrogant, barbarous *colons* of Algeria, who wanted an easy life in the sun, and were determined to prevent Algeria from winning its freedom.]

Across these three books, the repetitions of Vichy-era rhetoric in relation to torture is evidence of an association between the two periods in such a way that the discourse of the former can displace blame for the worst aspects of the latter. This usage is what gives the transference between the two events its purpose, enabling those involved in torture to be separated and ostracised from the French Republic akin to the collaborator-resister binary of the post-Second World War period.¹⁷⁸

There are various commonalities, beyond the transference-scapegoating trend, which these three texts share. None of them implicate conscripts in the practice of torture, whether as witnesses or participants. They are not present at all in either Alleg's or Halimi's texts where the army is one made up of 'généraux, colonels, parachutistes et légionnaires'.¹⁷⁹ In *Saint Michel et le dragon* they are then seen only in the field of combat and never as torturers. Leulliette is disparaging of the conscripts as soldiers and also represents them as either apathetic or against the war, in contrast to the parachutists.¹⁸⁰ Settlers are portrayed very negatively in all three texts; identified as torturers, often in the guise of Algiers police in *La Question* and *Saint Michel et le dragon*, whilst in *Djamila Boupacha* they appear most frequently as members of the Algiers court system which is Halimi's nemesis, and directly contrasted with the efficient justice system she eventually finds in the metropole. As the analysis of later representations in the two previous chapters has shown, these two trends did not endure. Chapter 1 noted, in reference to the films of Alain Resnais, René Vautier and Yves Boisset, that conscripts do become instigated in the practice of torture, although usually with peripheral or unwilling involvement.¹⁸¹ Settlers, meanwhile tend to become more complex and more sympathetic characters, like those in *Le Coup de sirocco* and *Cartouches Gauloises*.¹⁸²

During the war, and particularly in representations of its early stages (these three works cover 1954 to 1959 and were published between 1958 and 1962), avoiding implicating conscripts in torture was plausible. Such representations would not be so viable in the long

¹⁷⁸ Robert Aron's history of the Occupation period draws this simplistic binary which has largely been debunked by the work of Robert Paxton and others. Aron, *Histoire de Vichy*.

¹⁷⁹ Beauvoir and Halimi, *Djamila Boupacha*, p. 12.

¹⁸⁰ Leulliette, *Saint Michel et le Dragon*, p. 335.

¹⁸¹ See Chapter 1, sections 1.3a and 1.3b. Alain Resnais, *Muriel, ou le temps d'un retour* (France, 1963); Vautier, *Avoir 20 Ans dans les Aurès*; Yves Boisset, 'R.A.S.' (France and Italy, 1973).

¹⁸² Alexander Arcady, *Le Coup de Sirocco* (France, 1979); Mehdi Charef, *Cartouches Gauloises* (France, 2007).

term and did alter early on in culture, as with Resnais's *Muriel*, although here the act of torture remains unseen.¹⁸³ Pierre Vidal-Naquet, a frequently vocal critic of French policy in Algeria, wrote passionately against the attempts to single out a few perpetrators and thus negate the systematic and widespread use of torture. In a tract from 1975 titled 'Ce petit livre est donc destiné à rappeler les crimes de l'armée française', he wrote :

Je dis bien de l'armée française, non de quelques officiers... Et j'entends bien que l'armée n'est pas la seule coupable. On pourrait faire, et on a dans une large mesure fait, des recueils analogues qui pourraient s'appeler les crimes...de la justice française, de la police française.¹⁸⁴

By the late 1970s, with Vautier's and Boisset's films, as well as a cinematic adaptation of *La Question*, torture, often involving French men at all levels of the military, was on the big screen as well as in novels.¹⁸⁵ Nevertheless, the use of fascist rhetoric remained in order to distance those responsible from the French republic.¹⁸⁶ Even whilst taking part in acts of torture, conscripts like those in Vautier's *Avoir 20 ans dans les Aurès* are still represented as victims of their superior (and fascistic) officers, as Chapter 1 has shown, and thus do not possess the agency which would demand they take responsibility for their actions.¹⁸⁷

The change in the representation of settlers, from pure cruelty in these early texts, to a much more complex understandings of their loyalties and experiences in later novels and films, became a necessary discursive shift following the Evian Accords and the exodus in the summer of 1962. Todd Shepard has noted the change in the representation of settlers in popular magazines like *Paris Match*, from fascist and Vichyite terrorists to young, hopeful and very French families.¹⁸⁸ With a pressing need to be integrated into France after successive generations of helping Algeria to civilise, so the republican narrative decrees,

¹⁸³ The representation of French-perpetrated torture in film was certainly not a rare occurrence in French film after the war, as became abundantly clear during the primary research for this thesis. It is also a conclusion reached by both Pascal Ory and Pierre Guibert. See Pascal Ory, 'L'Algérie par écran', Jean-Pierre Rioux (ed.) *La Guerre d'Algérie et les français* (Paris, 1990); Pierre Guibert, 'La Guerre d'Algérie sur les écrans français', Laurent Gervereau, Jean-Pierre Rioux, and Benjamin Stora (eds), *La France en Guerre d'Algérie* (Paris, 1992).

¹⁸⁴ Pierre Vidal-Naquet, *Les Crimes de l'armée française: Algérie 1954-1962* (Paris, 2001) [1975] pp. 6-7. [I mean the French army, not just some officers... And I understand that the army is not the only culprit. One could, and in many ways one has gathered an analogous collection of what could be called crimes...of the French justice system, of the French police.]

¹⁸⁵ Laurent Heynemann, *La Question* (France, 1977).

¹⁸⁶ See also Dine, *Images of the Algerian War*, p. 229.

¹⁸⁷ Chapter 1, section 1.3b.

¹⁸⁸ Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization*, pp. 89, 224-226.

republican artistic representations of the settlers could not place them on the wrong side of the *guerre franco-française*.

The tendency to transfer the rhetoric of fascism, and particularly language associated directly with the Occupation, was not restricted to the early artistic representations of the Algerian war, but is present in the press, in histories and in later representations, frequently, although not exclusively, in the context of French-perpetrated torture. Paul Clay Sorum in his study of intellectuals during the Algerian war has found that it was a tendency employed by former resisters, aiding the comparison's impact and legitimacy.¹⁸⁹ Further studies of literature, newspapers and official correspondence have all identified the same comparison present during the war itself through to the twenty-first century.¹⁹⁰ As William Cohen has stated, the 'use of the Nazi parallel for describing the [Algerian] war was a permanent fixture.'¹⁹¹ By transferring the rhetoric of the earlier period, these cultural representations are aided in their identification of a 'sacrificial victim', a morally bankrupt minority whose ideals oppose that of the republic's. That these scapegoats are not necessarily the right-wing anti-republicans which they are represented as, or that the republic shares in their responsibility is not of concern; as Girard explains, '[s]acrificial substitution implies a decree of misunderstanding.'¹⁹² The transference of the fascist rhetoric helps to conceal this misunderstanding by drawing a very solid moral divide between the professional army and the republic.¹⁹³

This division, and thus the credibility of the scapegoating, was aided by the Generals' *putsch* and the formation of the OAS in 1961. With these events, there was a tangible threat from

¹⁸⁹ Paul Clay Sorum, *Intellectuals and Decolonization in France* (Chapel Hill, 1977) p. 113.

¹⁹⁰ John Talbott, *The War Without a Name: France in Algeria, 1954-1962* (New York, 1980) p. 94; Alain-Gérard Slama, 'La Guerre d'Algérie en littérature ou la comédie des masques', Jean-Pierre Rioux (ed.) *La Guerre d'Algérie et les français* (Paris, 1990) pp. 583-586; Stora, *La Gangrène et l'oubli* p. 32; Dine, *Images of the Algerian War*, p. 133 in reference to Guy Lagorce's *Le Train du soir* (1983) and Richard Liscia's *Le Conscrit et le Général* (1980) both of which use both historical periods in their narratives; Naomi Greene, 'Empire as Myth and Memory', Dina Sherzer (ed.) *Cinema, Colonialism, Postcolonialism: Perspectives from the French and Francophone Worlds* (Austin, 1996) p. 104; James D. Le Sueur, *Uncivil War: Intellectuals and Identity Politics During the Decolonization of Algeria* (Philadelphia, 2001) p. 1; William B. Cohen, 'The Algerian War and the Revision of France's Overseas Mission', *French Colonial History* 4 (2003) pp. 228-230; Dominique Maillard, 'The Muslims in France and the French Model of Integration', *Mediterranean Quarterly* (2005) p. 68.

¹⁹¹ Cohen, 'The Algerian War and the Revision of France's Overseas Mission', p. 228.

¹⁹² Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, p. 5.

¹⁹³ Ibid. p. 317. Helmut Schmitz makes a similar point in his discussion of the West German cultural representations of Germans in the post-Second World War period in which imagery of the Holocaust was frequently borrowed 'in order to attain gravity and legitimacy' for the suffering of ordinary Germans against the minority of 'fanatical Nazis'. Helmut Schmitz, 'The Birth of the Collective from the Spirit of Empathy: From the "Historian's Dispute" to German Suffering', Bill Niven (ed.) *Germans as Victims: Remembering the Past in Contemporary Germany* (Basingstoke, 2006) p. 102.

an organisation set up by former generals to directly and violently challenge the authority of de Gaulle's Fifth Republic. Furthermore, the OAS was largely considered, by its contemporaries and by historians, to be on the right wing of politics, thereby aiding the transference of the fascist rhetoric. That it was founded in Franco-ruled Spain, a country where some of its members also lived in exile after the war, only served to further such comparisons.¹⁹⁴ It allows the likes of Benjamin Stora to construct 1961 as the date when the Algerian war really became a civil war, with the OAS targeting the president of the republic.¹⁹⁵

Despite this useful addition to the *guerre franco-française* discourse, there are few representations of the OAS in republican culture for sometime after the war. Both Jean-Luc Godard's *Le Petit Soldat* and Alain Cavalier's *Combat dans l'Île* make it the subject of their films but neither refer to the OAS by name.¹⁹⁶ Cavalier's film essentially becomes a battle between old friends who have grown up to occupy different extremes of the political spectrum and die at each others hands. Such a close portrayal of the *guerre franco-française* is reminiscent of the relationship seen between Maurice and Jean in Zola's *La Débâcle*. Nevertheless, neither film represents a clear notion of the OAS or the Algerian war. Stora has described *Le Petit Soldat* (a film so confusing that it was even interpreted by some on the left to be fascist) as a,

film [qui] attrape au col des morceaux de réalités contradictoires, les organise dans *un récit à la première personne*, où l'on découvre l'engagement et le désengagement ; l'anarchisme de droite, et la conscience de gauche ; la valse hésitation des sentiments ; et surtout, le balancement d'un camp à l'autre, de l'OAS au FLN. Le sujet du *Petit Soldat*, c'est bien la confusion d'une situation que la conscience tente de rendre cohérente sans y parvenir. Au moment où la guerre est sur le point de s'achever, le film a l'air de renvoyer tout le monde face à face, dos à dos. Impossible consensus par l'image.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁴ Talbott, *The War Without a Name*, p. 218.

¹⁹⁵ Philippe Bernard and Benjamin Stora, "'One of the few times since the nineteenth century that police have fired on workers in Paris": An interview with Benjamin Stora', Richard J. Golsan (ed.) *The Papon Affair: Memory and Justice on Trial* (London, 2000) p. 233.

¹⁹⁶ Jean-Luc Godard, *Le Petit Soldat* (France, 1960 [1963]); Alain Cavalier, *Le Combat dans l'Île* (France, 1961 [1963]).

¹⁹⁷ Stora, *La Gangrène et l'oubli*, p. 249. [film [which] grabs fragments of contradictory realities by the throat, organises them as a *story in the first person*, where we discover engagement and disengagement; anarchism on the Right and values on the Left; the tentative dance backwards and forwards of feelings; and above all the

There are certainly no heroes in Godard's film, and seemingly only fools in Cavalier's. Neither offer a clear representation of the war or the OAS's part in it. References to the OAS do punctuate later films, from the coming-of-age *Les Roseaux Sauvages* to the more recent French blockbuster, *Mesrine*, where it is used as short-hand for fascistic criminality, but its story is not told as a whole.¹⁹⁸

Whilst the OAS's existence is an aid for the *guerre franco-française* discourse in relation to the Algerian war and particularly in relation to the transference of fascist rhetoric, it seems only to be designated a minor role in the republican narrative of the war. Jean Lacouture has hinted at a possible reason for this. Lacouture argues that de Gaulle did not return in 1958 with a ready-made idea of independence for Algeria. Rather, his change in policy and his eventual rejection of the supporters of *Algérie française* who had brought him back to power, was a key factor in the rise of the OAS. He writes, 'le déchaînement de l'OAS...fut d'une certaine façon le fruit détestable de l'insuffisante attention portée par Charles de Gaulle à cette spécificité européenne dans la spécificité algérienne.'¹⁹⁹ The OAS, whilst a useful tool for the *guerre franco-française* discourse, is also a reminder of the betrayal which those in the OAS felt towards the Fifth Republic, a sense of betrayal that could serve as a reminder that *Algérie française* was what the republic had also been fighting for originally. To focus on the OAS would force the Gaullist government to engage in 'sustained explanations or discussion of why Algeria should be independent', a discussion which would naturally force a recognition of the war and question the teleological narrative of decolonisation.²⁰⁰ Maintaining the transference of the rhetoric of fascism in relation to the OAS thus keeps its 'Frenchness', possibly even its republicanism, removed from representations.²⁰¹

swinging from one camp to the other, from the OAS to the FLN. The real subject of *Le Petit Soldat* is the confusion of a situation that one's conscience tries to make coherent without success. When the war is about to end, the film seems to suggest that everyone is the same. An impossible consensus through image.]

See also Stora, *Imaginaires de guerre*, pp. 135-145. Whilst banned from release, the full script of *Le Petit Soldat* was published by the *Cahiers du Cinéma*, a magazine which Godard was aligned with and occasionally wrote for. *Cahiers du Cinéma* (May 1961, no. 119), pp. 23-38 and (June 1961, no. 120) pp. 12-27.

¹⁹⁸ Andre Téchiné, *Les Roseaux Sauvages* (France, 1994); Jean-François Richet, *Mesrine: L'Instinct de mort* (France, 2008).

¹⁹⁹ Jean Lacouture, *Algérie, la guerre est finie* (Bruxelles, 1985) p. 186. [the unchaining of the OAS...was in some ways the detestable fruit of the insufficient attention Charles de Gaulle gave to this European specificity within Algerian specificity.]

²⁰⁰ Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization*, pp. 97-98, see also pp. 91-97, 249.

²⁰¹ Slama, 'La Guerre d'Algérie', p. 586. Slama actually draws out a different historical theme in relation to torture – the Dreyfus Affair – which he sees as raising similar questions over the role of justice and the army. I have not found such direct references to this period in the material studied in this thesis but such an argument does concur with the framing of the army as perpetrators of torture and part of the *guerre franco-française* against the republic just as the anti-Dreyfusards were.

Identifying a scapegoat is about avoiding responsibility as much as it is about stemming internal violence. For the republic, the identification of the professional army was an obvious choice of 'sacrificial victim' because of the traditional antagonism between the two institutions. This is by no means a phenomenon novel to France. As Robert Moeller has argued, in German cultural representations of the Second World War, a small minority of people are held responsible for the crimes of the Third Reich, especially through the Nuremberg trials, leaving the majority, including the soldiers of the Wehrmacht to be victims of the regime.²⁰² Thus, in 'the public memory of the 1950s, only a handful of Germans appeared as perpetrators, the overwhelming majority were victims, and no one was both: guilt and innocence were mutually exclusive categories.'²⁰³ Such an argument is familiar in terms of the French conscripts being considered victims of the Algerian war in republican culture, but it also illustrates the binary and thus unyielding nature of such a narrative. An either/or approach cannot aid our understanding of such a complex conflict.

The transference tendency is embedded in the very figure of de Gaulle, president of the Fifth Republic and head of the Resistance. As Paul Sorum has argued, 'since French atrocities were constantly condemned by the top authorities, the French could take some comfort in the fact that, even if French soldiers might behave like Nazis, at least France had not made the perpetration of atrocities into a principle of its warfare.'²⁰⁴ The added tradition of the republic-army antagonism adds legitimacy to such representations. The transference tendency undermines the complexity of the war and has aided the avoidance of justice: the blanket amnesties of those involved in torture and OAS members in the years immediately following the war had much in common with those handed to collaborators following France's liberation.²⁰⁵ The republican government is left unaccountable.

²⁰² Robert G. Moeller, 'Victims in Uniform: West German Combat Movies from the 1950s', Bill Niven (ed.) *Germans as Victims: Remembering the Past in Contemporary Germany* (Basingstoke, 2006) p. 43. See also Helen Wolfenden, 'The Representation of Wehrmacht Soldiers as Victims in Post-War West German Film: *Hunde, wolt ihr ewig leben?* and *Der Arzt von Stalingrad*', Helmut Schmitz (ed.) *A Nation of Victims? Representations of German Wartime Suffering from 1945 to the Present* (Amsterdam, 2007) pp. 74-77.

²⁰³ Robert G. Moeller, *War Stories: The Search for a Usable Past in the Federal Republic of Germany* (London, 2001) p. 13.

²⁰⁴ Sorum, *Intellectuals and Decolonization in France*, p. 120.

²⁰⁵ Paul A. Silverstein, *Algeria in France: Transpolitics, Race and Nation* (Bloomington, 2004) p. 207.

Yet the transference of the discursive traditions of the Occupation has done more than absolve the republic of responsibility in relation to the use of torture or the formation of the OAS: it has usurped the importance of the Algerian war in the republican narrative and in so doing has been detrimental to the understanding of the war and its aftermath. As Cohen has suggested, 'France's main concern with its history in the 1960s and for a couple of decades thereafter was not the Algerian War, but its record during World War II. The preoccupation with France's role in World War II...was a means by which to delay a reckoning with the more recent Algerian War.'²⁰⁶ As though to illustrate the veracity of Cohen's statement, Claude Journes has gone so far as to suggest that the violence witnessed within the metropole during the conflict, which the next section will consider, was merely a 'set back' for an otherwise steady decline.²⁰⁷ The transference of the rhetoric from the Occupation thus not only serves to exonerate the republic from responsibility but also to disregard the Algerian war from having had any impact on the republic; at most it is a continuation of the struggles unleashed in the earlier conflict.²⁰⁸ In this sense, Paul Ricoeur is partly right when he states in relation to Rousso's work on obsession, 'seeing one thing is not seeing another. Recounting one drama is forgetting another.'²⁰⁹ But the Algerian war is not forgotten; the transference tendency places it in a secondary position to that of the Vichy period, it makes it an inferior partner in a metonymic association, and undermines its significance in the national narrative. The Algerian war has been utilised as a vector to talk about Vichy.²¹⁰

²⁰⁶ Cohen, 'The Algerian War and the Revision of France's Overseas Mission', p. 230. LaCapra has also noted the French preoccupation with the Vichy era. Dominick LaCapra, *History and Memory after Auschwitz* (London, 1998) p. 94.

²⁰⁷ Claude Journes, 'The Decline in Police Violence in the Maintenance of Order in France', Jan Windebank and Renate Günther (eds), *Violence and Conflict in the Politics and Society of Modern France* (Lampeter, 1995) p. 115.

²⁰⁸ Some historians, in consideration of 'revelations' about torture in the early twenty-first century have suggested that the 'obsession' of Vichy has now become one with Algeria. Putting aside the notion that such revelations actually revealed little not already well known, such a historical narrative only serves to evidence the inability of historians to consider the Algerian war in its own right rather than always in comparison with the previous conflict. See Robert Aldrich, 'Imperial *Mise en Valeur* and *Mise en Scène*: Recent Works on French Colonialism', *The Historical Journal* 45 (2002); Neil MacMaster, 'The Torture Controversy (1998-2002): Towards a 'New History' of the Algerian War?', *Modern and Contemporary France* 10 (2002).

²⁰⁹ Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, trans. Kathleen Blamey and David Pellauer (London, 2004) p. 452.

²¹⁰ This usurping of Algeria by Vichy is present in the films *Muriel* and *Les Parapluies du Cherbourg* as noted in Chapter 1, section 1.3a and 1.3c.

3.3 17 October 1961: Paris and the *guerre franco-française*

The *guerre franco-française* is a discourse which is part of the republican narrative of French history, an expression of the good versus evil battle in its romantic emplotment. Each new republic is born out of a period of civil conflict from which France, the Republic, is reborn. Each of these flare-ups of the civil war have been Parisian: from the guillotine on the Place de la Concorde, to the June Days, the Commune and even the Dreyfus Affair, centred as it was on the government and the press. As such, Paris has an important symbolic role in the republican narrative.²¹¹ The Algerian war was not fought only in the Kabylia mountains and the backstreets of the Casbah. With a large population of Algerians, particularly of young, male workers, the conflict also flared in the metropole, most notably in Paris. Initially these were struggles for power between the MTLD and the FLN, by the end of the war they were OAS terrorist attacks, but in the autumn of 1961 a murderous conflict raged between the Parisian police and Algerians.²¹² Only the OAS attacks are consistent with the republican *guerre franco-française* discourse as this chapter has understood it but, since the mid-1980s, challenges to the dominant republican narrative of the war have looked to the events of October 1961 within such a framework. The final section of this chapter will consider artistic representations of the events of October 1961 in Paris, how they have attempted to open up the republican *guerre franco-française* discourse and as such present a challenge to assumptions of assimilation and identity.²¹³ Due to the overpowering metonymic association of aspects of the Algerian war with the Vichy period, most have failed, but there have been suggestions of what a successful challenge may mean for the future of French republicanism. This section will begin with a brief sketch of the historiography of October 1961, with particular reference to the timing of works and their connection to the trial of Maurice Papon, before turning to an analysis of artistic representations of the events produced between 1984 and 2010.

²¹¹ See for example Cobban, *A History of Modern France*, vol. 3, p. 210; Tombs, *France 1814-1914*, p. 185. De Gaulle has also shown his acute awareness of this symbolism: refusing to have the capital liberated by 'colonial' troops (many of whom were Algerian) in 1944, and bringing out aged tanks onto the streets in response to the Generals' *putsch* in 1961 despite the air force's steadfast loyalty to de Gaulle meaning that Algiers was no real threat to Paris.

²¹² *Mouvement pour le Triomphe des Libertés Démocratiques*, later the MNA, an older and more moderate Algerian movement than the FLN, led by Messali Hajd which believed in pursuing self-determination through the democratic process.

²¹³ The phrase '17 October 1961' has become symbolic in writings about the Algerian war and is often used to cover a much broader period of conflict between the FLN and the French police in Paris. This is particularly noticeable in *Caché*, discussed below. When referring to the specific event, I will use '17 October 1961', but will also use 'October 1961' more generally. See Jim House and Neil MacMaster, *Paris 1961: Algerians, State Terror and Memory* (Oxford, 2006).

On 17 October 1961, an FLN-organised protest numbering around 25,000 men and women marched into central Paris, largely from the *bidonvilles* in the suburbs, to protest against a police curfew imposed on 'Muslim Algerian workers' a fortnight earlier.²¹⁴ The protest was to be strictly peaceful, a policy enforced by the FLN. The police response, well-organised and executed, was violent suppression. Police were stationed at metro stations to prevent the protestors' arrival into central Paris with buses being requisitioned to transport them away; many thousands were held in the Palais des Sports and the Parc d'Expositions as well as in prisons.²¹⁵ Those that did make it into Paris, again many thousands, were met with a similar response. The police numbered 7,000 with an additional 1,400 CRS including the use of *harki* auxiliaries.²¹⁶ Beatings, shooting and drownings all occurred as the police retook the symbolic space of central Paris. In the aftermath of the suppression, the figures of Algerians who died varied between the official police report of two and Jean-Luc Einaudi's figure of 200.²¹⁷ Hundreds were immediately 'deported' to Algeria. No police were reported killed, indicating the success of the FLN in enforcing its policy of peaceful protest. It was the most deadly night in Paris since suppression of the Commune of 1871; *L'Express's* editor Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber titled his 19 October 1961 article, 'L'Année Terrible'.²¹⁸

²¹⁴ Jim House, 'Antiracist Memories: The Case of 17 October 1961 in Historical Perspective', *Modern and Contemporary France* 9 (2001) p. 355; Richard J. Golsan, *Vichy's Afterlife: History and Counterhistory in Postwar France* (London, 2000) pp. 167-168.

²¹⁵ Golsan puts the total figure arrested at 11,730, Jim House suggests 11,538. Golsan, *Vichy's Afterlife*, p. 171; House, 'Antiracist Memories', p. 355.

²¹⁶ Golsan, *Vichy's Afterlife*, p. 169. CRS: *Compagnies Républicaines de Sécurité*, specially-trained riot police. Several authors imply the *harkis* were particularly violent. See Golsan, *Vichy's Afterlife*, p. 167; Martin Evans, 'The *Harkis*: The Experience and Memory of France's Muslim Auxiliaries', Martin S. Alexander, Martin Evans, and John F. V. Keiger (eds), *The Algerian War and the French Army, 1954-62: Experiences, Images, Testimonies* (Basingstoke, 2002) p. 119.

²¹⁷ Since 1961 there continues to be disagreement over the scale of the loss of life on the night of 17 October. Papon's original report stated two deaths but this is given no credibility by historians. The Mandelkern Report (commissioned during Papon's trial in 1998) set the figure at between 30-40 deaths but was criticised for its selective archive use. Jean-Pierre Brunet has estimated 30-50 deaths through an analysis which House and Neil Macmaster have called 'reductive' and place themselves as the middle ground between Brunet and Jean-Luc Einaudi who originally lists 74 named Algerians as having been killed by the police between September and November 1961 with a similar figure listed as 'disparu'. His lists and figures increase in his later book, suggesting around 200 people were killed. Richard J. Golsan, ed., *The Papon Affair: Memory and Justice on Trial* (London, 2000) pp. 4-5; Jean-Paul Brunet, 'Police Violence in Paris, October 1961: Historical Sources, Methods and Conclusions', *The Historical Journal* 51 (2008) p. 196; Jim House and Neil MacMaster, 'Time to Move On: A Reply to Jean-Paul Brunet', *The Historical Journal* 51 (2008) p. 206; Jean-Luc Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris: 17 octobre 1961* (Paris, 1991) pp. 314-318; Jean-Luc Einaudi, *Octobre 1961: Un Massacre à Paris* (Paris, 2001) p. 11. What is worth noting is that Algerian deaths at the hands of the French police were not restricted to this single night in October 1961 but were a running theme throughout the war and indeed before it. Bernard and Stora, "'One of the few times...'", p. 234; House, 'Antiracist Memories', p. 356.

²¹⁸ Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber, 'L'Année Terrible', *L'Express* (19 October 1961) p. 44.

The violence of 17 October did not spring from nowhere. Rather, it was the peak of an ongoing battle between the FLN and the Parisian police, under the prefecture of Maurice Papon since his appointment by Félix Gaillard in March 1958.²¹⁹ Papon had introduced an original curfew on North Africans in September 1958 in an attempt to prevent the FLN collecting revenue from Algerian workers and businesses. Such a blanket racial identification encouraged a racist approach to policing equalled by an identification of the Parisian police as key enemies of the FLN. The police were also being targeted by the OAS from 1961.²²⁰ Targeted retaliatory violence on both sides had increased steadily into the autumn of 1961.²²¹ In the days and weeks which followed the protest, reports of its suppression made it into the French press but moves were made to repress those which were critical of police violence.²²² *Les Temps modernes*, the monthly journal run by Jean-Paul Sartre, was seized on 19 October for running a petition against the violent suppression of the march. It was reprinted in the November issue.²²³

Little became of the events of 17 October 1961 for over two decades; no one was prosecuted, no further protests were held (unlike in aftermath of the suppression at Charonne in February of the same year), little was published and no films were made which represented the events.²²⁴ In 1977, Alistair Horne's 600 page tome on the Algerian war covered the event in two sentences in a section on the OAS in France.²²⁵ This lack of

²¹⁹ Golsan, *Vichy's Afterlife*, p. 159.

²²⁰ Richard J. Golsan, 'Memory's *bombes à retardement*: Maurice Papon, Crimes Against Humanity, and 17 October 1961', *Journal of European Studies* 28 (1998) p. 162.

²²¹ Brunet, 'Police Violence in Paris', p. 195. In his understanding of the growing violence between the police and Algerian workers, Brunet has argued that the police were sympathetic to the OAS rather than victims of their attacks. Whilst it is certainly possible that there were a few supporters, not least given Maurice Papon's former colonial roles, it seems unlikely to have been widespread given the general political environment at the time and the fact that the police were targets of the OAS violence themselves. See Jean-Paul Brunet, *Police contre FLN: La drame d'octobre 1961* (Paris, 1999).

²²² Golsan, 'Memory's *bombes à retardement*', p. 166. *L'Express* ran the march and its suppression as its cover story on 19 October, including photographs taken by Élie Kagan who secretly photographed the events and has since documented the violence he witnessed in book form with Jean-Luc Einaudi. *Les Temps modernes* and the Catholic *Esprit* also ran articles on the suppression of the march. Claude Krief, 'Le F.L.N. à Paris', *L'Express* (19 October 1961); Jean-Paul Sartre, 'La "Bataille de Paris"', *Les Temps Modernes* (November 1961); Le Comité directeur d'*Esprit*, 'Contre la Barbarie', *Esprit* (November 1961); Jean-Luc Einaudi and Élie Kagan, *17 Octobre 1961* (Paris, 2001).

²²³ Jean-Paul Sartre, 'Appel', *Les Temps Modernes* (November 1961).

²²⁴ Nine people (including eight PCF members) were killed by French police at the Charonne metro station on 8 February 1962 as they were leaving to join an anti-OAS demonstration. A general strike was held on the 13 February to commemorate the victims, the largest political demonstration in Paris since February 1934.

A film by Jacques Panijel, *Octobre à Paris* was made from footage and interviews surrounding the events of both Charonne and 17 October but it did not have a cinematic or television release until October 2011. Clips of the film were shown as part of a television documentary in 1992. House, 'Antiracist Memories', p. 359; Philip Brooks and Alan Hayling, *Une Journée portée disparu* (France, 1992).

²²⁵ Horne, *A Savage War of Peace* pp. 500-501.

coverage is not surprising as the stories of the Algerians killed in October 1961 served no dominant narrative in the war's aftermath; it was certainly not in the French republic's interest to pursue the matter and the new Algerian government had more pressing concerns. Furthermore, the struggles of Algerians on their home turf were far more important to the Algerian nationalist narrative than those fighting for recognition on enemy soil, and it was hardly a heroic story suited to the founding of a new independent state.²²⁶ The events were not deliberately concealed, but were simply of little interest to dominant narratives including the republican one and as such was not imbued with the *guerre franco-française* discourse. There was a mainstream silence on the events.²²⁷ The events of 17 October were, however, part of culture outside the republican narrative, as the research of both Mark McKinney and Seth Graebner has found; they was not 'repressed'.²²⁸

In May 1981, the satirical newspaper *Le Canard Enchaîné* exposed the then Minister of Budget, Papon, for his role in the deportation of French Jews when Secretary General of the Gironde prefecture under the Vichy regime. This began a slow but cumulative process of renewed interest and exposure to the events of 17 October 1961 as Papon became the focus of public attention. A detective fiction novel by Didier Daeninckx appeared in 1984 which opens with Algerians travelling into the centre of Paris for the protest.²²⁹ A year later, Michel Levine published a testimony-driven narrative of 'les ratonnades d'octobre'.²³⁰ In 1991, Jean-Luc Einaudi published his first book on the subject and strongly criticised the restrictions imposed on the use of archives relating to the events.²³¹ In 1997 Papon stood trial for crimes against humanity for his actions during the Second World War, an event which led to much greater public awareness of the events of October 1961. This increase in public discourse prompted an investigation, the Mandelkern report, and inspired further artistic representations. Papon did not face prosecution for his role in 1961 and the only court appearance he had in relation to those events was his failed attempt to

²²⁶ Raphaëlle Branche and Jim House, 'Silences on State Violence During the Algerian War of Independence: France and Algeria, 1962-2007', Efrat Ben-Ze'ev, Ruth Gino, and Jay Winter (eds), *Shadows of War: A Social History of Silence in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, 2010) p. 127.

²²⁷ I have taken the idea of silence, rather than overt repression from Branche and House's article and Jay Winter, 'Thinking About Silence', Efrat Ben-Ze'ev, Ruth Gino, and Jay Winter (eds), *Shadows of War: A Social History of Silence in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, 2010).

²²⁸ Mark McKinney, 'Métissage in Post-Colonial Comics', Alec G. Hargreaves and Mark McKinney (eds), *Post-Colonial Cultures in France* (London, 1997); Seth Graebner, 'Remembering 17 October 1961 and the Novels of Rachid Boudjedra', *Research in African Literatures* 36 (2005). The date has also been officially remembered in Algeria where it became, rather bizarrely, the 'Day of Immigration'. Bernard and Stora, "'One of the few times...'", p. 236.

²²⁹ Didier Daeninckx, *Meurtres pour mémoire* (Paris, 1984).

²³⁰ Michel Levine, *Les Ratonnades d'octobre: Un meurtre collectif à Paris en 1961* (Paris, 1985).

²³¹ Einaudi, *La Bataille de Paris*, pp. 288-290.

sue Einaudi for defamation. Nevertheless, his trial for crimes against humanity prompted a wide renewal of interest in 17 October 1961.²³²

In a similar way to the figure of de Gaulle, Papon thus became a symbolic connection between the Vichy era and the Algerian war and as such provided an already utilised method of representing the later period through transference with the earlier. In addition, the Parisian location and republican tradition also offered up the use of a *guerre franco-française* discourse. With these tropes in mind a detailed study of Daeninckx's *Meurtres pour mémoire*, three films – Alain Tasma's *Nuit noire*, Michael Haneke's *Caché* and Rachid Bouchareb's *Hors la loi* – and finally Leïla Sebbar's novel, *La Seine était rouge*, will provide an insight into how the events of 17 October 1961 were integrated into the republican narrative of the war and how, on rare occasions, they were utilised to challenge such a narrative.²³³ Rather than consider these cultural representations in chronological order of their production, they will instead be considered in the light of the narrative they promote.

Tasma's *Nuit Noire* and Bouchareb's *Hors la loi* were both made and released after the furore of Papon's trial in the late 1990s.²³⁴ Tasma's film takes the events as its central narrative and certainly has a feeling of revelation, which is how the mainstream review magazine *Télérama* received it.²³⁵ It attempts to represent the complexities of the conflict by following different characters – Martin, the honest *flic* with a young family, Sabine a journalist, Abde a young Algerian worker, as well as members of the FLN, racist police officers and Papon himself – in the build up to the night of 17 October. *Hors la loi*, by contrast, uses the 17 October as the end point to the film which has followed three Algerian brothers from their childhood in Algeria to their residency in Paris during the war. The eldest and politically moderate Messaoud has already been killed, and the apolitical Saïd survives. Abdelkader is shot by police in an underground station on his way to the protest in an image made iconic through Élie Kagan's photographs of the original event at Solférino.²³⁶

²³² House and MacMaster called Papon's trial a 'watershed' moment in the history of 17 October 1961. House and MacMaster, *Paris 1961*, p. 10.

²³³ Despite some of these cultural artefacts' attempts to challenge the dominant republican interpretation of the war, I still consider these to be basically republican sources because they are attempting revision not revolution, they are certainly not anti-republican. Furthermore, as the analysis will make clear, for the most part, this challenge fails and they come to support the dominant narrative, regardless of intention.

²³⁴ Alain Tasma, *Nuit Noire, 17 octobre 1961* (France, 2005); Rachid Bouchareb, *Hors la loi* (France, 2010).

²³⁵ Hélène Marzolf, 'Et Aussi: Nuit Noire, 17 Octobre 1961', *Télérama* (19 October 2005).

²³⁶ Einaudi and Kagan, *17 Octobre 1961*, pp. 37-41.

Representations of the events of 17 October 1961 have an opportunity to pose a challenge to the republican narrative of the war, and especially the assumptions of the impermeable distinctions between French and Algerian identity in the aftermath of the conflict, by integrating the traditional discourse of the *guerre franco-française*, otherwise considered to be relevant only to the sectarian violence of the OAS. This would challenge the assumptions about the nature of the historic French-Algerian relationship by recognising the citizenship rights and the racial identification of Algerians in the original curfew as inconsistent with the republican ideals of assimilation and equality. Neither of these two films attempt to challenge such a narrative, instead representing the conflict on the streets of Paris as one between non-French Algerians and racist police personnel, more closed affiliated with Papon than the republic. *Nuit noire* does this most blatantly by essentially suggesting de Gaulle and the FLN were already in the process of decolonisation in its opening text:

Automne 1961. Le Générale de Gaulle et le FLN tentent de mettre fin à un conflit sanglant qui a fait en sept ans des centaines de milliers de victimes. Depuis quelques mois, la guerre d'Algérie a franchi la Méditerranée. Dans les rues de Paris, les commandos de choc du FLN et les forces de police livrent un combat quotidien.²³⁷

The film continues to enhance this separation of those perpetrating the violence from the republic (in this example, the figurehead of de Gaulle) and the future citizens of Algeria through the individual characters it draws. Martin and Abde are not enemies themselves but are drawn into the conflict on opposing sides. Martin is always portrayed separately from his racist work colleagues, not taking part in the beatings of North Africans in custody, staying in the car wincing whilst Abde's uncle Tarek is killed, silent in the lively debate following Papon's visit. Abde does not involve himself with the FLN, concentrating instead on night school, and is critical of Tarek for giving them money. The film makes clear, by the murder of a Moroccan man who attempts to avoid marching, that the FLN were forcing all to take part in the protest. The sympathetic individuals who represent

²³⁷ Tasma, *Nuit Noire*. [Autumn 1961. General de Gaulle and the FLN try to bring an end to the bloody conflict which over seven years had produced hundreds of thousands of victims. For several months, the Algerian war had crossed the Mediterranean. In the streets of Paris, FLN shock commandos and the police forces had daily combats.]

ordinary people are caught up in a sectarian conflict, between a small faction of FLN ‘commandos de choc’ and hard-line police.

Hors la loi is a little more complex in its portrayal of the police; Abdelkader’s nemesis is an intelligent character with a respect for his opponent. But there is never a suggestion this is a Franco-French conflict. The brothers are Algerian and have only ever been victims of the French state, from the theft of their family home to Messaoud’s injury in the army and their squalid life in the Nanterre *bidonville*. Bouchareb’s film is a welcome novelty in its portrayal of Algerian independence in spite of, rather than because of, the French state and thus does not conform to the more celebratory elements of the decolonisation discourse, particularly relating to the *mission civilisatrice*, present in other republican cultural productions.²³⁸ But because of this, the film also has no interest in highlighting the inequality of Algerians as French citizens because it assumes, in a teleological way familiar to the decolonisation discourse, that Algerians were never French and would always, eventually, win their independence.

Whilst both *Nuit noire* and *Hors la loi* are products of the post-Papon trial era, neither depend upon his character for their stories. Michael Haneke’s *Caché*, on the other hand relies entirely on Papon’s name to give its otherwise vacuous story depth and historical importance.²³⁹ Haneke’s thriller, in Elizabeth Ezra’s words is ‘[b]oth fascinating and profoundly banal...[with a] deceptively narrow depiction of a world of material privilege corroded by psychic unease’.²⁴⁰ Unnerved by videos being sent to him anonymously documenting scenes from his everyday life, Georges tracks down Majid, accusing him of involvement and is then confronted by his wife, Anne, when a video of his meeting is sent to their home. In the only reference to the Algerian war in the whole film, Georges describes his relationship to Majid:

Ses parents travaillaient chez nous. Papa les aimait bien... En octobre ’61 le FLN a appelé les Algériens à manifester. Ils sont allés à Paris. 17 octobre 1961. Je ne te fais pas un dessein. Papon. le massacre policier. Ils ont noyé à peu près 200 arabes dans la Seine. Il semble que les parents de Majid étaient de ceux-là. En tout cas ils ne sont jamais revenus. Papa est allé à Paris pour se

²³⁸ See Chapter 2, section 2.3a.

²³⁹ Michel Haneke, *Caché* (France, 2005).

²⁴⁰ Elizabeth Ezra and Jane Sillars, ‘Hidden in Plain Sight: Bringing Terror Home’, *Screen* 48 (2007) p. 215.

renseigner. Ils lui ont dit qu'il devait être bien content d'être débarrasser de ses bougnoules.²⁴¹

The entire reference to the war and to the possible motives behind the film's mystery exists only in this exchange, relying on the audience to understand the reference to Papon, known because of his crimes during Vichy. The Algerian war is represented only through Papon's metonymic connection between Vichy and the Algerian war. Furthermore, the only relevance the events of 17 October 1961 are given for modern day bourgeois France are the (unfounded, the film eventually suggests) suspicions of revenge enacted by a recluse outsider, Majid. The protest is not important in and of itself, its context is irrelevant to film and there is certainly no suggestion that those effected by it, those killed, were in any way French.²⁴² Furthermore, as Anne and Georges domestic conflict plays out, scenes of the Iraq war play in the background, drawing connections between their experience of domestic terrorism and the 'international terrorism' which inspired the current war. This serves to 'contextualise' 17 October 1961 – 'je ne te fais pas un dessein' – in contrast to the on-going and far-reaching 'war on terror'. As Paul Gilroy has argued, 'an overly casual citation of the 1961 anti-Arab pogrom by Papon's police in Paris...[an] unmourned and unrememebered real event does a lot of narrative work for Haneke... The dead deserve better than a passing acknowledgement.'²⁴³ The events which effectively destroyed Majid's life are known only through a trial about the Vichy era and considered barely significant in comparison to the scope of the war playing out in real time on the television screen; the film is far more critical of American-led neo-colonialism than French imperialism.

Whilst the film suggests Georges should take a personal responsibility for his childhood actions which were a deliberate scheme to remove Majid from his privileged family home (Georges is by no means a sympathetic character), the issue resolves itself without him having to compromise his denial as Majid commits suicide. The film ends not with the questioning of history but with the unsolved mystery of who really sent the tapes.²⁴⁴ As Ranjana Khanna concludes, '[t]here is no lesson or anything in particular to be discovered

²⁴¹ Haneke, *Caché*. [His parents worked for us. Dad liked them...In October '61 the FLN called all Algerians to a demonstration in Paris. October 17 1961. Enough said. Papon. The police massacre. They drowned about 200 Arabs in the Seine including Majid's parents most likely. They never came back. Dad went to Paris to look for them. They said he should be glad to be rid of a couple of jgaboos.]

²⁴² See also Chapter 1, section 1.6b.

²⁴³ Paul Gilroy, 'Shooting Crabs in a Barrel', *Screen* 48 (2007) p. 233.

²⁴⁴ Mark Cousins, 'After the End: Word of Mouth and *Caché*', *Screen* 48 (2007) p. 225.

in the disturbingly long establishing shots...in *Caché*, there is only emptiness and spectacle.²⁴⁵ As with earlier films, *Caché* maintains the representation of the civilian milieu as unaffected by the Algerian War, except where it temporarily interrupts their ordinary lives. 17 October 1961 is no civil war; only in Majid and his son's case is the interruption permanent.

Meurtres pour mémoire is somewhat more ambitious in its use of historical context.²⁴⁶ An overtly political writer, Daeninckx's detective novel opens with the protests of 17 October 1961. Published in 1984, it was the first commercially successful artistic representation of the events, allowing Philip Dine to consider it to be 'a noble effort to penetrate this wall of silence.'²⁴⁷ The story weaves together the repression of 1961 with the deportation of the Jews under the Vichy regime, but these two events are not given equal saliency. Daeninckx uses the protests of 17 October 1961 to open his novel with a degree of controversial anticipation and he is clearly critical of the Fifth Republic that oversaw the repression. But nothing puts crimes against humanity into perspective quite like the Holocaust, and whilst October 1961 begins the story, it is the French complicity in the deportation of Jews which is at the centre of the plot. The novel's mystery is the murder of a French historian, Roger Thiraud, during the FLN protests of October 1961 and his son, Bernard, twenty years later. Cadin, the police detective, discovers the former murder during his investigation into the latter and makes the connection. Far from being part of the demonstration, its repression was used as a cover to kill Roger Thiraud and prevent him finishing his thesis on the French complicity in the deportations of Jews. His hired murderer, when confronted by Cadin, discloses that he was told Roger was a member of the FLN or the OAS thus merging the two organisations in the text. Bernard, having attempted to finish his father's thesis, was shot by the man who had ordered the murder of his father, Veillut. It transpires that Roger's thesis implicated Veillut in the Jewish deportations of the Second World War.

Papon does not feature in Daeninckx's story but it is clear that Veillut is as close as the author dare come to a representation of the former Prefect of Police. Veillut is Directeur des Affaires Criminelles in Toulouse by the time Cadin catches up with him, had spent the Second World War as 'Secrétaire aux questions juives de la prefecture de Toulouse' and was head of the Parisian 'Brigades Spéciales' in 1961, a career not so far removed from

²⁴⁵ Ranjana Khanna, 'From Rue Morgue to Rue des Iris', *Screen* 48 (2007) p. 241.

²⁴⁶ Daeninckx, *Meurtres pour mémoire*.

²⁴⁷ Dine, *Images of the Algerian War*, p. 211.

Papon's.²⁴⁸ Whilst Daeninckx does a commendable service in bringing the events of 1961 into wider public consciousness, clearly depicting their horror and violence through a multi-perspective narrative at the beginning of the book, the massacre on French soil is simply a smokescreen distancing the reader from the plot's solution which is buried in the Vichy era and has nothing to do with the events of 17 October 1961.²⁴⁹ The two Algerian characters who begin the novel are never returned to, their experiences beyond Roger Thiraud's death never considered. The suppression of the peaceful demonstration in 1961 is entirely sidelined in the book's plot as it turns out to have no relevance to Cadin's case. Instead the focus becomes the deportations, thus the crimes of the non-republican French state usurp those of the Fifth Republic. Additionally, the rhetorical joining of the FLN and OAS in the text places the republic's two enemies as one, avoiding the complexities of the situation. Whilst critical of the Fifth Republic, its crimes pale in comparison to those of the Vichy regime.

As with previous artistic representations considered in this thesis, in Daeninckx's novel Vichy usurps the importance of the Algerian war. The Papon-Veillut figure is pivotal to this: his crime is rooted in the Vichy era and the Algerian war is purely a useful smokescreen for the detective novel's plot. Whilst Daeninckx has brought the Algerian war into Paris, the *guerre franco-française* is only relevant to the earlier period, with both Roger and Bernard's murders an ongoing flare-up of the Vichy era. The Algerian war has had no such long-term consequences for the novel. In this sense, it sits comfortably with the republican narrative in which the Algerian war is not an equal partner in the transference relationship. This undermines the importance of the Algerian war and the effect it has had on French identity and citizenship. Given the dominance of the Vichy era in twentieth-century France, in public discourse, in politics, in cultural representations and commemorations, the metonymic transference can initiate a concealment of the Algerian war, unable to compete with the saliency of the Occupation.

The case of Papon certainly brought the events of October 1961 back into the French public sphere after decades of silence, but at the same time it has undermined its significance in comparison to the crimes against humanity for which Papon was being

²⁴⁸ Daeninckx, *Meurtres pour mémoire*, pp. 204, 188 and 205. Richard Golsan is among many others to have picked up on this connection, although in Daeninckx's 'happy' ending, the villain is killed rather than brought to trial. Golsan, 'Memory's *bombes à retardement*', p. 155-156.

²⁴⁹ The novel was very successful, winning the Grand Prix de la Littérature Policière and the Prix Paul-Vaillant-Couturier.

prosecuted. Additionally it has led to the writing of histories which depend too much on the historiography of the Vichy period. Golsan has argued, the trial which saw the ‘same sort of pseudo-revelations which repeatedly provoked flare-ups of the Vichy Syndrome according to Henry Rousso and Éric Conan, was now provoking similar flare-ups where *la guerre sans nom* was concerned as well.’²⁵⁰ This transference of the idea of a syndrome, as the introduction to this thesis has argued, has not aided a nuanced understanding of the conflict or its aftermath in France. As Golsan continues, ‘while the brutality and racism in both cases are certainly deserving of comparison and condemnation, the historical contexts are in reality different, and it is this difference that risks being overlooked.’²⁵¹ House puts a similar argument in reverse: ‘Very often, we have seen the figure of Vichy haunt and complicate these separate but interrelated histories, providing a vital comparative link to other forms of racism.’²⁵² As this thesis has attempted to argue, the Algerian war has been undermined in its significance to modern French identity because it has not been considered an important part of the republican narrative of history. On some occasions, however, rather than further undermining it, the transference between Vichy and the Algerian war has complemented the latter’s relevance.²⁵³ Whilst the focus on Papon’s involvement in the events of October 1961 may have been inspired by the desire to further deface the criminal’s character rather than provide some recognition or even justice for those caught up in the violence of October 1961, the result was still to end the silence.

Leïla Sebbar transfers imagery of Vichy in her novel, *La Seine était rouge: Paris, octobre 1961*, but rather than see the former usurp the latter in its importance, it serves to insist upon the relevance of 17 October 1961 not only to those involved, but for the understanding of modern France.²⁵⁴ This novel shares the tropes of other republican cultural representations in its transference of rhetoric from the Vichy era to the Algerian war and in its employment of the *guerre franco-française* discourse, but it also challenges the republican narrative’s assumption of irrelevance of the events in the making of contemporary republican identity within France. In *La Seine était rouge* the transference metaphor is synecdoche rather than metonym, which is to say that it is integrative rather than reductionist.²⁵⁵

²⁵⁰ Golsan, ‘Memory’s *bombes à retardement*’, p. 158.

²⁵¹ Ibid. p. 170.

²⁵² House, ‘Antiracist Memories’, p. 365. However, House himself does make claim to the idea of an Algerian syndrome. House and MacMaster, *Paris 1961*, p. 10.

²⁵³ *Les Temps modernes*, for example, used references to the French involvement in the deportation of the Jews to drum up support for its petition to condemn the actions of Papon’s police. Sartre, ‘Appel’, p. 624.

²⁵⁴ Leïla Sebbar, *La Seine était rouge: Paris, octobre 1961* (Paris, 2003) [1999].

²⁵⁵ White, *Metahistory*, pp. 34-36.

Sebbar was born in Algeria to an Algerian father and French mother (an unusual pairing in French Algeria) and has spent her adult life in France. *La Seine était rouge*, whilst by no means the first novel to represent the events of 17 October 1961, is the first to make them the central part of its narrative.²⁵⁶ The transference of rhetoric and symbolism from the Occupation to the Algerian war pervades the narrative, which is set in 1996. Amel and Louis have known each other since birth because their mothers, Noria and Flora are friends and, alongside Noria's mother Lalla, took part in the FLN's march on 17 October 1961. Omer knows Amel and Louis because he and his mother, Mina, are staying with Flora having left Algeria because of the civil war which broke out in 1992.²⁵⁷

The novel is multi-vocal and multi-perspective. In the contemporary chapters it is written in the third person but with a focus on the thoughts of one or other of the main characters. Other chapters, written in the first person, document the experiences of a variety of people on the night of 17 October 1961: 'le patron du café, L'Atlas', 'le harki de Papon', 'L'Algérien sauvé des eaux', both an 'amant français' and an 'étudiant français', 'le flic de Clichy' and so forth. The novel's narrative drive is one of discovery, as Amel learns of what occurred on that day through a variety of means and a variety of voices, but not, notably, from her mother. The novel thus pursues an interpretation of the events coming to light through the curiosity of the second generation; a search for identity through the events which their parents have remained silent about. Such an interpretation, which is shared by several historians, removes the dominance of Papon in the ending of the silence, a tendency which has forced an unhelpful comparison with the Second World War to the detriment of an understanding the significance of the events of 1961.²⁵⁸ Thus, whilst Papon

²⁵⁶ Anne Donadey, 'Retour sur mémoire: *La Seine était rouge* de Leïla Sebbar', Michel Laronde (ed.) *Leïla Sebbar* (Paris, 2003) p. 190.

²⁵⁷ All but Louis and Flora are of Algerian origin, although Amel was born in France. Flora was involved with the FLN in Paris during the Algerian war.

²⁵⁸ Jim House sees the anti-racist movements of the 1980s as stimulating the re-emergence of the events of 17 October 1961 (and the repressive measures against North Africans more generally before, during and after the war) into public discourse. The work of Graebner offers an example of the roots of this re-emergence. Others have also made a similar argument in relation to the previously silent *harki* milieu in which it has taken the actions of their children to force the injustice they faced into public discourse. House, 'Antiracist Memories', p. 356; Graebner, 'Remembering 17 October 1961', pp. 172-175; Stora, *La Gangrène et l'oubli*, pp. 261-265; Richard L. Derderian, 'Algeria as a *lieu de mémoire*: Ethnic Minority Memory and National Identity in Contemporary France', *Radical History Review* 83 (2002) p. 4; Claire Eldridge, "'We've Never Had a Voice": Memory Construction and the Children of the *Harkis* (1962-1991)', *French History* 23 (2009). Fatima Besnaci-Lancou makes and embodies this argument, being the daughter of a *harki* and a historian of the *harkis*. Fatima Besnaci-Lancou and Gilles Manceron, eds, *Les Harkis dans la colonisation et ses suites* (Ivry-sur-Seine, 2008).

plays his part in the narrative, he does not control it. This helps to prevent the deportations of the 1940s usurping the significance of the 1961 massacre.

To be a novel about discovery, it is also necessarily one about silence.²⁵⁹ Amel's mother and grandmother have not told her about their war-time experiences. The novel opens:

Sa mère ne lui a rien dit ni la mère de sa mère.

Elles se voient souvent, la mère et la fille, elles bavardent en française, en arabe. Amel ne comprend pas tout. Elle les entend de sa chambre. Si elle demandait ce qu'elles se disent dans l'autre langue, 'la langue du pays' dit Lalla, sa grand-mère lui répondrait, comme chaque fois : 'Des secrets, ma fille, des secrets, ce que tu ne dois pas savoir, ce qui doit être caché, ce que tu apprendras, un jour, quand il faudra. Ce jour viendra, ne t'inquiète pas, ce jour viendra et il ne sera pas bienheureux pour toi...'²⁶⁰

Thus, book begins with a rejection of the idea of forgetting, repression or amnesia and instead embraces the idea of a silence through an inability to translate the experiences, figuratively and literally, to the generation who did not live through them. What the novel does make clear is that such a silence can only be temporary precisely because the war, including the events of 17 October 1961, have a direct relevance to contemporary France and the identity of those who have lived only in their aftermath. *La Seine était rouge* shares a coming-of-age theme with *Élise, ou la vraie vie* and *Les Roseaux Sauvages* but rather than coming-of-age and leaving the war behind, for Amel the war is central to her adult identity and understanding her place in France.²⁶¹ For Amel, 17 October 1961 did represent a part of the *guerre franco-française*. There is a sense of return, of rebirth, rather than the linear narrative of progress present in the other two works. Like most teenagers, Amel feels she is ready to come-of-age, to know her mother's secret, before her mother is ready to talk about it.

²⁵⁹ Branche and House, 'Silences on State Violence', pp. 127-130.

²⁶⁰ Sebbar, *La Seine était rouge*, p. 15. [Her mother said nothing to her, nor did her mother's mother. Mother and daughter see each other often. They chat in French and Arabic. Amel doesn't understand everything they say. She hears them from her room. If she were to ask them what they were saying in the other language, 'the language of the homeland' as Lalla calls it, her grandmother would say as she always does: 'Secrets, my girl, secrets that you shouldn't know, they must be kept hidden. But you'll learn them some day, when you need to. The day will come, don't worry; it will come and it won't be a happy one for you.' Leila Sebbar, *The Seine was Red: Paris, October 1961*, trans. Mildred Mortimer (Bloomington, 2008) [1999]]

²⁶¹ See Chapter 2, section 2.3b. Claire Etcherelli, *Elise, ou la vraie vie* (London, 1985) [1967]; Téchiné, *Les Roseaux Sauvages*.

Amel learns of her mother's and grandmother's experiences partly through a film Louis is making about 17 October 1961 in which he has interviewed Noria. The novel presents her testimony in individual chapters titled 'La mère' scattered throughout the book. It is evidence that the events have not been forgotten, but also that they are painful for those involved to talk about; much like the 'porteurs de mémoire' of conscripts identified by Benjamin Stora and discussed in Chapter 1, they are directly passed on only between those who have shared the experiences.²⁶² It is also reminiscent of Patrick Rotman's interviews in *La Guerre sans nom* in which the ex-conscripts were more open with a stranger and a camera than with their own wives and children.²⁶³ It is through Noria's testimony to Louis's camera that Amel learns of the fate of her grandfather, 'refoulés' to Algeria.²⁶⁴

Sebbar's novel is extremely rich in its historical references, particularly (although not solely) Vichy. Yet, rather than be diminished by such references, the Algerian war is integrated into the narrative of French history through them. Omer, more familiar with the history of 17 October 1961 than Amel, acts as her reluctant guide through key points in Paris. At La Défense, as Amel describes the route of the march across the esplanade which she has learnt about through Louis's film, she stops to read the statue which commemorates the defence of Paris in 1870-1. Much like the novel's multi-voiced interpretation of the Algerian war, it is unclear what this statue is commemorating: 'Elle tient un drapeau, l'étendard de la victoire? De la défaite?'²⁶⁵ Amel continues to merge the two periods, suggesting correlations between the repression of the Commune and the 1961 protest. With her self-identified joint French-Algerian heritage, Amel compares the quintessential *guerre franco-française* of 1871 with the suppression of 1961 with no feeling of contradiction or torn loyalties; her grandparents were members of the FLN fighting for the independence of Algeria but the suppression of the protest was one of French police against French citizens. For Amel in the 1990s to be a French citizen and to favour an independent Algeria are not mutually exclusive positions.

²⁶² Stora, *La Gangrène et l'oubli*, pp. 265-268; Chapter 1, section 1.3c.

²⁶³ Bertrand Tavernier, *La Guerre sans Nom* (France, 1992).

²⁶⁴ Sebbar, *La Seine était rouge*, p. 117. [deported]

²⁶⁵ *Ibid.* p. 53. [She is holding a flag, the banner of victory? Defeat?]

Omer makes different connections. He is more radical and more critical than Amel and, in an exchange with Louis, makes it clear that he considers himself to be Algerian, not French.²⁶⁶ A plaque by La Santé prison reads:

EN CETTE PRISON
LE 11 NOVEMBRE 1940
FURENT INCARCERES
DES LYCEENS ET DES ETUDIANTS
QUI A L'APPEL DU GENERAL DE GAULLE
SE DRESSERENT LES PREMIERS
CONTRE L'OCCUPANT.²⁶⁷

Omer paints next to it a different commemoration, carefully replicating the other's language, for Louis to include in his film:

1954-1962
DANS CETTE PRISON
FURENT GUILLOTINES
DES RESISTANTS ALGERIENS
QUI SE DRESSERENT
CONTRE L'OCCUPANT FRANÇAIS²⁶⁸

To recognise the legitimacy of Omer's graffiti, a 'voiture de police qui passe ne remarque rien.'²⁶⁹ Before he paints, Omer takes note of 'Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité' marked above the door of the prison. He is openly critical not only of the actions of the republic in '1954-1962', but of the contradiction of their own stated values. Both Amel and Omer choose their own identity, regardless (particularly in Omer's case, as a political refugee) of the opinion of their chosen nation.

²⁶⁶ Ibid. pp. 28-29.

²⁶⁷ Ibid. p. 28. [On November 11 1940 in this prison were held high school and university students who, at the call of General de Gaulle, were the first to rise up against the Occupation.]

²⁶⁸ Ibid. p. 29. [1954-1962 in this prison were guillotined Algerian resisters who rose up against the French occupation.]

²⁶⁹ Ibid. p. 29. [police car passing by doesn't notice anything unusual.]

Noria makes another historical connection whilst at the same time dismissing its importance. Her memories of the police charging at them in 1961 are intermingled with May 1968, but it is an event that she does not identify with. In 1961 she felt fear and witnessed beatings, in 1968 she saw the protests only on television; in 1961 they sheltered from the police behind trees, in 1968 the students cut the trees down; 1961 is only now being told to Louis's handheld camera, in 1968 'les manifestations, les barricades, on a tout vu à la télévision.'²⁷⁰ Noira clearly feels that October 1961 has not been given the due recognition it deserves in the public sphere and at the same time does not feel part of other events which have. It takes the next generation, embodied in Amel, to integrate October 1961 into French history.²⁷¹ In Sebbar's novel, the intertextuality between the Algerian war and other flare-ups of the *guerre franco-française* throughout republican history is integrative rather than reductionist much like the intertextuality present in Manet's paintings.²⁷² It serves to give meaning and significance to the events rather than usurp them.

In his recent review of *La Seine était rouge*, House described it as 'highly multi-vocal', 'inter-generational', 'multi-directional' and representing 'a complex over-layering of personal and historical memory.'²⁷³ It is these factors which both integrate the Algerian war, particularly the events of October 1961, into the republican narrative of French history, whilst at the same time, challenging its assumptions about identity. With different voices of varying generations and backgrounds, the republican discourse of the *guerre franco-française* is applied, rejected, reworked, reapplied and removed. For Amel, the discourse applies to October 1961 without a problem, for Noira silence retains the tension between civil war and the fight for independence, for Omer the discourse applies to contemporary Algeria, not to France. These differing views are tied to different identities: Louis is French, Omer is Algerian, Amel feels affinity to both; to Noira the *harkis* are not French, to the 'harki de Papon', Noira's distinction is nonsensical.²⁷⁴ If there was civil war, for Noira and Lalla it was between the FLN and the MNA, felt personally through the killing of Noira's uncle.²⁷⁵

²⁷⁰ Ibid. p. 104. [we saw the demonstrations, the barricades, all of that on TV.]

²⁷¹ This concern for public recognition of the Algerian war is a running theme through the book, particularly in the focus on commemorative plaques which Omer graffiti and Louis films.

²⁷² See section 3.1b.

²⁷³ Jim House, 'Leïla Sebbar, *The Seine was Red. Paris, October 1961: A Novel*, *H-France* 10 (2010).

²⁷⁴ Sebbar, *La Seine était rouge*, pp. 43-46.

²⁷⁵ Ibid. pp. 42-43.

Sebbar's novel captures the complexity of the differing identities tied to French history but it is not simply a cacophony of unfocused voices; at the end of the book, as Louis prepares to make another film, Omer asks, "Et c'est qui ton héroïne ? Tu le sais déjà ?" "Oui, c'est Amel..."²⁷⁶ Amel's quest to understand 1961 is tied up with her understanding of French history and she employs the republican discourse of the *guerre franco-française* as effortlessly to the Algerian war as to the Commune and the deportation of the Jews during the Second World War. The novel is Amel's coming-of-age story in which the events of 17 October 1961 are reborn, not only from their violent repression over thirty years previously, but from their subsequent long silence. *La Seine était rouge* employs the republican tropes this thesis has identified to challenge the republican version of history. Sebbar insists upon the intimate connection between France and Algeria, not only in the past but in the present. Whilst Omer, perhaps against his wishes, illustrates the connection between contemporary France and Algeria through Algeria's adoption of civil war and revolution, it is Amel who is the figurehead of that connection; Amel is the challenge to the revolution in republicanism come to fruition.

Conclusions

This chapter has developed the theme of concealment to identify how republican France has maintained its claim to be 'one and indivisible' whilst at the same time overseeing a racial and exclusionary alteration in the application and recognition of citizenship. It has been argued that the discourse of the *guerre franco-française* is a republican one and is present, often endemic, in both historical and artistic representations of French history. Whilst this is inherently contradictory to the notion of the 'one and indivisible' republic, it co-exists through a series of subtleties. The 'one and indivisible' is part of the teleological element of republican universalism in which an anti-France may threaten or disrupt the republic, but will inevitably lose; the republic remains 'indivisible'. Centred on Paris, the symbolic home of revolution, the romantic emplotment supports the teleological element of republican universalism through a progressive and consistent struggle against anti-France in its various guises.

²⁷⁶ Ibid. p. 125. ["And who is your heroine? Do you know yet?" "Yes, it's Amel..."]

The teleology of the republican narrative is most notable in histories of France which proclaim the 'end of the Revolution'. This proclamation has shifted from marking the Third Republic to identifying the Fifth. In coordination with the previous chapter's identification of the theme of cyclical rebirth in artistic representations of the Third Republic in contrast to the linear modernisation narrative present in the Fifth, the 'end of the Revolution' has resulted from an evolution of republicanism since the Third Republic, rather than the revolutionary struggles of the nineteenth century. Historical representations of the Algerian war and the founding of the Fifth Republic thus followed a romantic emplotment with the *guerre franco-française*, concluding with a comedic mode which insists upon the end rather than a renewal of republicanism's (r)evolution through a reconciliation between France and anti-France (the republic and Bonapartism), effectively concealing the revolutionary impact of the Algerian war.

The second part of this chapter returned to the study of artistic representations of the Algerian war and identified the tendency to utilise the fascist rhetoric of the Vichy period in relation to the French use of torture during the Algerian war. This transference created a *guerre franco-française* between the republic (France) and the professional army (anti-France) using the language of fascism and resistance from the previous period. By representing the *guerre franco-française* using the rhetoric of the Second World War, the discourse played a part in the concealment of the revolution in republicanism which occurred between 1959 and 1962 by supporting a narrative of continuity between the two periods; the conflicts of the Algerian war were simply shadows of the Vichy era rather than new conflicts which would challenge the republic. It also displaced blame for the most heinous aspects of the Algerian war. The metonymic aspect of the transference further undermined the significance of the latter war, usurped by the Vichy era in both its violence and its importance to republicanism and French identity.

The drawing of a *guerre franco-française* binary denies the complexity of the Algerian war. Its teleological element also undermines the very real struggle by Algerians for their independence. By commandeering the *guerre franco-française* discourse to represent a civil war between the republic and elements of the professional army, its use in relation to the republic and its Algerian citizens is rejected. This in turn complements the decolonisation discourse which insists upon the historically un-French nature of Algeria. It has been neither in the interest of the French republic, nor independent Algeria to challenge such a

conclusion. As such, there have been aspects of the war which have been largely absent in republican representations, both in histories and in art. These absences or silences, like that of October 1961, are not evidence of a national collective amnesia, however, as they have continued to be present in narratives external to the dominant republican one.

The events in Paris, the symbolic home of civil war and revolution, in the autumn of 1961 involving French citizens and the police, have offered a glimpse of the potential for the re-working and reclamation the *guerre franco-française* discourse in a way which can question the racial assumptions implicit in the Fifth Republic's definition of citizenship. Through a multi-vocal yet coherent artistic representation of the events of 17 October 1961, Leïla Sebbar has begun to interrogate the complexities of the relationships between France and Algeria and to reconsider the history of Algeria *in* France, rather than as a metonymic footnote to the Vichy era. Representations of the violent events of October 1961 have the potential to expose the revolution in republicanism by exposing the contradictions in citizenship assumptions that derive from republican history's own romantic emplotment; to represent Algerians as part of the *guerre franco-française* rejects the post-1962 republican narrative of Algerians being un-French.

Conclusion

Blind idealism is reactionary.

- Franz Fanon

The Republic has been the ruling regime of France for all but four of the past one hundred and forty years. In many respects the republic has become France, as it always professed to be. In its various different guises, governed by monarchists, communists and all those in between, it has maintained a claim to be the rightful heir of the French Revolution. This inheritance insists upon republicanism's universal appeal and application, a belief originally encapsulated in the Rights of Man and the Citizen. For much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, this commitment to the universalism of French republicanism both drove and justified French colonialism. Fundamentally, it made sense of *Algérie française*, indeed *Algérie française* could be seen as its culmination. As such, the loss of Algeria had the potential to undermine the historical foundations of republicanism. This thesis has argued that between the beginning of the Fifth Republic and the end of the Algerian war (1958-62), citizenship took on a racial dimension which undermined the Revolutionary ideal of assimilation and fundamentally altered the nature of republicanism. Furthermore, by employing familiar republican tropes and narrative strategies, the revolutionary changes which occurred in republicanism between 1959 and 1962 were concealed.

This thesis has reconsidered the place of the Algerian war as part of modern French history, rather than only as an end of empire narrative or as a footnote to the Vichy era. In tracing a longitudinal republican narrative of war and defeat, I have identified the impact of war on the republican understanding of France. This understanding is so powerful because it is not restricted to the political sphere. Whilst Todd Shepard's work identified an 'Invention of Decolonization' as part of the republican political narrative of the Algerian war, through study of republican culture I have identified a complementary interpretation in a wider republican sphere – a republican *mentalité* – which helped to shape and bolster the idea of decolonisation in reference to Algeria.¹ The longitudinal nature of this study also helped to identify other interlinking republican tropes beyond the decolonisation discourse – the *mission civilisatrice*, the teleological narratives of rebirth and modernisation,

¹ Todd Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization: The Algerian War and the Remaking of France* (London, 2006).

and the romantic emplotment of the *guerre franco-française* – all of which have been used to conceal the revolutionary changes which occurred in relation to citizenship between 1959 and 1962 through an apparent allegiance to historical continuity.

Through an analysis of a body of cultural sources, largely literary and cinematic but also encompassing painting and historical writing, this thesis has argued that the Algerian war marked a turning point which was both wider and deeper than a purely political understanding of republicanism. This study of artistic artefacts identified tropes familiar to the dominant republican narrative of French history and considered their use and purpose in relation to representations of the Algerian war. The republican *mentalité* pervades history writing, nineteenth-century novels and twenty-first century films. Republican tropes in Michelet's history writing reappear in coming-of-age films from the 1990s. In identifying these tropes within a longitudinal study, the thesis unearthed anomalies in representations of the Algerian war that contradict republicanism's overt ideals of universalism and assimilation, suggesting a revolutionary change, albeit concealed, in republicanism itself.

Central to this revolution has been an altered understanding of citizenship, as Chapter 1 identified. By considering the representation of war and defeat in republican historic and artistic culture on a longitudinal scale, the common trope of the citizen soldier became noticeably absent in the Algerian war. The replacement of the citizen soldier with an agency-less conscripted victim suggests an avoidance of responsibility for military policy pursued in Algeria. However, given the prominence of the citizen soldier figure in earlier republican understandings of citizenship, its absence suggested a more profound shift. Artistic representations of Algerians used tropes similar to nineteenth-century republican conceptions of the peasantry to paint a sharp distinction between them and the French. Yet, unlike the malleable peasant, this othering was based on an inflexible racial identification; the route of assimilating 'into Frenchmen' was not open to Algerians.²

Such an understanding of citizenship is clearly at odds with the universalist doctrine of French republicanism and particularly the belief in assimilation as a method of obtaining citizenship. Yet this very clear move away from a key value inherited from the Revolution has been concealed within the republican narrative of French history, aided by the implicitly teleological element of universalism. By relying on the assumption of inevitable

² Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France 1870-1914* (London, 1977).

progress (present at the core of universalism), the discourse of decolonisation allowed the *mission civilisatrice*, which had justified the appropriation of Algeria in the nineteenth century, to become the justification for ‘decolonisation’ in the twentieth.³ In Chapter 2, the longitudinal nature of this thesis highlighted three different stages in the relationship between the French republic and the Algerians which have all been encapsulated under the supposedly consistent doctrine of the *mission civilisatrice*. From 1848-1954, Algeria was a part of France in the sense that those of European origin (and Jews from 1870) could be assimilated into the republic as part of the *mission civilisatrice*. Between 1954 and de Gaulle’s announcement of self-determination in 1959, the *mission civilisatrice* saw the republic actively engaged in policies to encourage the assimilation of Algerians although not, until 1958, including mass enfranchisement. Finally, following de Gaulle’s announcement of self-determination, the *mission civilisatrice* altered even more fundamentally to mean creating a civilised and independent Algeria rather than ‘an integral part of France’.

Unlike previous representations of new republics which have frequently used the metaphor of rebirth, a false continuity was implied through a linear narrative of modernisation within France, complemented by the *mission civilisatrice* in relation to France’s relationship with Algeria. In so doing, the impact of the Algerian war and Algeria’s subsequent independence on the Fifth Republic is denied any significance. In effect, the revolution in citizenship is concealed by a narrative of inevitable progress. This narrative has been compounded by the obsession of republican historians with marking the end of the Revolution.

Until the exodus of 1962, a front remained that Algerians who assimilated into France could become French. With this front removed as settlers became ‘repatriated’ and *harkis* became ‘refugees’ freshly stripped of French citizenship, assimilation became overtly exclusive to those identified by the Fifth Republic as being racially (because the category of the FMA was based on race not religion) un-French. By implying that an independent Algeria was always the republic’s intention through the *mission civilisatrice*, the teleological narrative of universalism enabled the concealment of its own corruption; it no longer meant that those who assimilated could become French. Rather, ‘decolonised’ Algerians

³ Rony Brauman has warned that this continued affiliation with the *mission civilisatrice* has uncritically affected France’s foreign policy in the realm of intervention. Rony Brauman, 'Indigènes et indigents: de la "mission civilisatrice" coloniale à l'action humanitaire', Pascal Blanchard, Nicolas Bancel, and Sandrine Lemaire (eds), *La Fracture coloniale: La Société française au prisme de l'héritage colonial* (Paris, 2006).

would become republicans in their own nation.⁴ This too is a revolutionary alteration in the historical understanding of French republicanism and its interpretation of universalism, and is specifically tied to the absence of the citizen soldier in representations after the Second World War. Algerian soldiers were never considered to be citizen soldiers, and thus never applicable for citizenship on the basis of assimilation through their participation in the *levée en masse*. They were not considered equals even when in uniform.⁵ The absence of the citizen soldier figure in republican representations of the Algerian war is intrinsically linked with the denial of Algerians as equals. Without a racial distinction, the part played by Algerian soldiers in the liberation of France and the role of the *harkis* during the Algerian war would have been worthy examples of citizen soldiery, achieving Frenchness through assimilation. The creation of the legal category, FMA, was late in codifying the racial element of republican citizenship that had been culturally assumed since the colonisation of Algeria.⁶

The republican teleological narrative of the Algerian war effectively conceals the ways in which the French republic has been shaped and altered by its relationship with Algeria. Kirsten Ross is not alone in identifying this concealment (or ‘denial’) as ‘the basis of the neoracist consensus of today.’⁷ To acknowledge this would be to accept the racial disqualification for assimilation and the failure of universalism, thus undermining theoretically integral elements of republicanism. However, by concealing this revolution, the history of the Algerian war – particularly the more difficult aspects of the settlers’, army’s and *harkis*’ experiences that are incompatible with the linear narrative which dominates republican interpretations – has become the domain of the extreme right. William Cohen has argued that the republic’s discrimination towards those of Algerian origin stems from the ‘French mentality’ not being ‘fully “decolonized”’, but the problem is

⁴ Additionally, this denies any agency to Algerians for winning their independence as the new Algerian republic existed only in the French republic’s shadow.

⁵ Myron Echenberg, ‘Morts pour la France; The African Soldier in France During the Second World War’, *The Journal of African History* 26 (1985).

⁶ Gilles Manceron has noted the long-term racial distinctions made by the French republic between Algerians and Europeans that was enhanced with the narrative of the *mission civilisatrice* in the nineteenth century. He argues that ‘la doctrine républicaine a été polluée par le racisme officiel de la IIIe République.’ Manceron, *Marianne et les colonies: Une Introduction à l’histoire coloniale de la France* (Paris, 2003) pp. 10-12, 159-175 and 308.

⁷ Kristin Ross, *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies: Decolonization and the Reordering of French Culture* (London, 1995) p. 196. Ross does not appear to consider ‘neoracism’ in the same vein as Silverman’s ‘new racism’, which is better understood as cultural prejudice. See also Gregory Flynn, ed., *Remaking the Hexagon: The New France in the New Europe* (Oxford, 1995) p. 6.

perhaps more accurately stated as one of the republic decolonising too effectively.⁸ If, as this thesis has argued, the discourse of decolonisation is part of the concealment of a revolution in republicanism that includes a shift from cultural to racial discrimination, then decolonisation essentially denies the importance of the relationship between France and Algeria. David Howarth has claimed that ‘in France nobody questions the relevance of the past to contemporary debates in itself. Rather, disagreement arises as to what the right interpretation of the past is, and this is what feeds political debate.’⁹ However, the republican narrative of the past has shown itself to be unwilling to engage with the experience of empire and the legacy it has left to generations of French people, not least those whose identities are directly connected to *Algérie française* (the settlers, *barbais* and professional army). As such, it has left space for the extreme right to lay sole claim to both the relevance of empire and pride in it, and offer their own interpretation of its effect on French society.¹⁰

With the republican narrative failing to critically engage with the issues the Algerian war raised for its assimilationist model, the extreme right have been able to attack the very ideal of integration:

While acknowledging lesser errors on its own side, it [the extreme right] places the primary responsibility for imperial failures on misguided, assimilationist policies promoted by the mainstream parties of the Third, Fourth and Fifth Republics. By denouncing the politicians and bureaucrats in Paris, but praising the qualities of many of those who served in the colonies, it uses the empire as a source of negative and positive justifications of the extreme right’s own positions.¹¹

By not critically engaging with its own interpretation and practice of assimilation, the French republic is, and has proven to be, unable to counter the overt and potentially violent racism of the extreme right and instead has felt the need to pander to such

⁸ William B. Cohen, 'Legacy of Empire: The Algerian Connection', *Journal of Contemporary History* 15 (1980) p. 115.

⁹ David R. Howarth and Georgios Varouxakis, *Contemporary France: An Introduction to French Politics and Society* (London, 2003) p. 4.

¹⁰ See Chapter 2, section 2.2b.

¹¹ Christopher Flood and Hugo Frey, 'Questions of Decolonization and Post-Colonialism in the Ideology of the French Extreme Right', *Journal of European Studies* 28 (1998) p. 85.

sentiments.¹² The implication for the some four to five million Muslims currently living in France is clearly one of concern.¹³

The extreme right consider Muslims, largely of North African origin, to be unassimilable. The legacy of the republican narrative of the Algerian war has meant the republic has been unable to challenge this assumption of unassimilability effectively because the same belief is integral to their own interpretation of ‘decolonisation’. Through this narrative the Muslim population in France represent a colonial problem within the metropole, unassimilable because the *mission civilisatrice* of universalism had created an independent Algeria and drawn a distinction between French and Algerians (and by association, other North Africans). The racial definition of the FMA was originally used by the republic to tackle discrimination and aid assimilation, but the need for a consistent discourse of decolonisation which rejected the recent past allowed the extreme right to make use of the legal distinction for their own more exclusionary agenda.¹⁴ Shepard has come to similar conclusions as he argued that the ideological clash over the war’s close ‘was between those who relied on historical determinism [the republican narrative] and others who looked to republican legalism [the extreme right].’¹⁵ However, Shepard is wrong to assert that this claim to ‘republican legalism’ negates the idea that there is a clash between republicans and anti-republicans; the extreme right’s selective application of ‘republican legalism’, the distinction of the FMA, is a purely cynical one. The republican linear narrative of inevitable modernisation and decolonisation has, as Glassie warned, fallen ‘into alliance with the forces of oppression’.¹⁶ Unable to counter the racial distinction now present in its own discourse without returning

¹² Richard Vinen has written very convincingly on the shift of focus for the extreme right from the figure of the Jew to the figure of the Muslim. Vinen, ‘The End of Ideology? Right-Wing Antisemitism in France, 1944-1970’, *The Historical Journal* 37 (1994). Maxim Silverman has been critical of the republican response to racism which has focused on a demonisation of Jean Marie Le Pen as a way of avoiding a recognition of its origins in the colonial policy of successive republics. Silverman, *Deconstructing the Nation: Immigration, Racism, and Citizenship in Modern France* (London, 1992) pp. 69 and 110.

¹³ Dominique Maillard, ‘The Muslims in France and the French Model of Integration’, *Mediterranean Quarterly* (2005)p. 62. Figures from the French High Council of Integration with Muslim being defined by ‘culture’ rather than religious observance.

¹⁴ Both Pierre André Taguieff and Silverman have noted the need to engage with group identity within the republic in order to tackle the racism which feeds off such a distinction; the colonial policy of republicanism created the distinctions and it now needs to recognise them to deal with the consequences. Pierre André Taguieff, *La Force du préjugé: Essai sur le racisme et ses doubles* (Paris, 1988); Silverman, *Deconstructing the Nation*, pp. 8-9 and 122-123.

¹⁵ Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization*, p. 83.

¹⁶ Henry H. Glassie, *Material Culture* (Bloomington, 1999) p. 39. See Chapter 2, section 2.1b.

to a pre-1959 understanding of assimilation, the republic has enabled the extreme right to effectively control the race and immigration agenda.¹⁷

The republican tropes identified in this thesis have largely been used to conceal the revolutionary changes which occurred in relation to citizenship. Yet, as Leïla Sebbar's novel *La Seine était rouge* has shown, these tropes can also be employed to offer a more inclusive narrative and, most importantly, a constructive alternative to a racially-defined citizenship in a decolonised republican France. Just as this thesis set out to do, Sebbar placed the Algerian war into a broader history of republican France. To do so required the utilisation of republican tropes – of rebirth and of the *guerre franco-française* – and enabled a more inclusive understanding of identity. An attachment to a blinkered, if not blind, republican idealism has led to a reactionary and racist conception of French citizenship and identity. Confronting this idealism by allowing space for more challenging aspects of the past has the potential to provide an alternative dialogue to that of the extreme right; as Jean Jaurès rather more eloquently put it, 'take from the altars of the past the fire, not the ashes.'

¹⁷ President Nicolas Sarkozy's speech and public debate on national identity are worrying examples of this trend. See Robert Marquand, 'France President Sarkozy drops national identity debate', *Christian Science Monitor*, 9 February 2010 [accessed 13 August 2011] <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Europe/2010/0209/France-President-Sarkozy-drops-national-identity-debate>. For the text of his 2009 speech see Nicolas Sarkozy, 'Speech by Nicolas Sarkozy, President of the Republic, La Chapelle en Vercors', French Embassy, 12 November 2009 [accessed 13 August 2011] <http://www.ambafrance-uk.org/President-Sarkozy-s-La-Chapelle-en.html>.

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