

**Appendix D - UNIVERSITY HONORS PROGRAM
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PROJECT TITLE: Images of the Enemy: A Study of the
Images of Germans and French Collaborationists in the
Gaullist newspaper Combat

I have reviewed this completed senior honors thesis with this student and certify that it is a project commensurate with honors level undergraduate research in this field.

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Images of the Enemy: A Study of the Images of Germans and French Collaborationists in
the Gaullist newspaper *Combat*

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Introduction: The French Resistance and *Combat*

The seemingly endless years of the German Occupation of France during World War II remain among the most controversial in the nation's history. Today this period of time between 1940 and 1944 serves as a bittersweet reminder of the fragility of man's freedom, the sweetness of his liberation, and the shamefulness of one's neighbor's treachery. This was a unique time in modern history when ordinary citizens could become heroes fighting for *France libre*. Instead of physical combat, however, many Frenchmen chose to write and publish various clandestine newspapers and fight through more sophisticated means. Perhaps it was not physical freedom they sought so much as cultural freedom which was so obviously threatened by Nazi ideology, propaganda, and the censorship of the puppet government at Vichy. Indeed, it was these men and women who came together to form publications such as *Combat*.

Unlike the rest of the nations involved in the Second World War, the French fought or, better yet, "resisted" two enemies, the Germans and themselves, thus presenting a dangerous and unique dilemma for the French Resistance fighter: "On one side of the opposition lie France, we Frenchmen, truth, courage, and dignity, on the other the enemy and Vichy."¹ Indeed, the Resistance was never a strong national movement nor part of the war's popular culture until after the Liberation when the Allied victory was clearly in sight. Nevertheless, the non-communist movement saw the Resistance as "a powerful popular uprising, an élan of all French patriots against the enemy and the

¹ Margaret Atack, *Literature and the French Resistance: Cultural Politics and Narrative Forms, 1940-1950* (New York: Manchester University Press, 1989) 49.

traitors in his service.”² Though the numbers of Resistance organizers, fighters, and contributors could never be ascertained, the Resistance movement was proportionally small in comparison to the French population, due to the dangerous cost of membership or association with a Resistance organization.

Throughout this period of clandestine publishing *Combat* was able to distribute thousands of copies to French citizens, sharing various news articles, book reviews, editorials, and literary fiction. For instance, in its first full year, 1942, *Combat* published and circulated over 150,000 copies of its newspaper.³ This was no two-bit publishing operation, and it is the information contained in *Combat*’s articles and stories with which I shall concern myself in this paper. Certainly, the liberation of France was the primary goal not only for *Combat* but for all French Resistance publications. However, these clandestine papers portrayed somewhat different images of the enemy, both German and French. Though they fought on the same side against the same enemy, the publications produced varied images of Vichy and the German invaders. In *Combat* alone, the coverage of prominent Germans and French collaborationist leaders evolves throughout the history of the newspaper’s publication. In this paper, I will explore, compare, and explain the reasons behind the different images of Germans and French *collaborateurs* as portrayed in the Gaullist clandestine newspaper *Combat* as they evolved from the first days of *le drole de guerre* (the Phony War) through the preparations for the landings at Normandy until DeGaulle’s triumphant stroll down the Champs-Elysees in August 1944.

² John F. Sweets, “Oui, Mais... The Interior Resistance Movements and DeGaulle,” *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Western Society for French History* 3 (1975): 549.

³ Margaret Attack, *Literature and the French Resistance: Cultural Politics and Narrative Forms, 1940-1950* (New York: Manchester University Press, 1989) 31.

I will also discuss the implications of these images on French political and cultural identity.

The men and women of *Combat* voluntarily chose to join this military and political Resistance organization and Gaullist publication to create an innovative and unique type of literature, that of war. As the resistance writers depicted the horrendous face of the enemy in its editorials and news coverage of prominent Germans and collaborationist leaders, the face or, more appropriately, the faces of the enemy came to share many similarities yet have distinct differences in character, depiction, and personal nature. These images of the barbaric German invader and the traitorous “non-French” collaborator became a focal point for the newspaper. Therefore, by characterizing these images and their common and unique qualities, I will demonstrate that these images are a clear reflection of the Resistance writers’ ideology of Frenchness, location, and the paper’s political agenda. Though the creation of *Combat* clearly proposed to counterbalance German propaganda with the French resistance media and personal encouragement, the authors’ political aims remained fixed on “une publique pure et dure.”⁴ Perhaps then this Gaullist ideology, the political devotion to the man who became the symbol of the French Resistance, and the paper’s location in the Unoccupied Southern Zone of France played a significant role not only in the politics behind the scenes but in the articles published by Henri Frenay, former French military officer and founder of *Combat*, and his companions in *Combat*. The evolution of this publication throughout 1944 offers rare insight into the minds behind the French Resistance and the writers’ burden to fulfill France’s cultural and political responsibility to the world.

These publications served several purposes--to share news of the resistance movement, to make outsiders aware of the situation in France, but most importantly, to maintain France's cultural role in Europe. Serving as an inspiration to fellow resisters, these writers and their publications cried out for unity among the French people and openly condemned the treasonous acts of their collaborationist neighbors. According to Henri Frenay, his newspaper was created to fill a specific need, "to counterbalance Vichy propaganda--to offer information denied them [citizens of France] by the official press."⁵ However, this periodical like so many others took on a new life of its own, publishing articles and creating new purposes which went beyond the obvious goal of national liberation.⁶ Indeed, the creators (mostly supporters of General Charles DeGaulle or his fundamental beliefs) developed a clear purpose not only for their guerrilla fighting units but for their periodical as well. In a September issue of *Combat*, the newspaper mentions other conservative and communist parties and Resistance organizations but claims, "There will be also a great republican and revolutionary party which will renovate the political life of France and will build the IV Republic."⁷ *Combat* and other newspapers like it clearly had not only a war time agenda but a political and cultural agenda they wished to assert.

I. History of *Combat*

Combat, the larger political and military organization which served as the governing body of the clandestine paper, was perhaps "the most prestigious Resistance

⁴ *Combat*, no. 55, March 1944.

⁵ Henri Frenay, *The Night Will End*, Trans. Don Hofstadter (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1976) 56.

⁶ After the Liberation in August 1944 the paper became decidedly more political, serving as a forum for former resisters to discuss what governmental measures were best for France. Publication ended in 1947.

group within the non-Communist left.”⁸ Certainly, it was the largest with 70-75,000 people employed in its operation.⁹ The clandestine paper, like the organization itself, had a fairly long history. The paper had humble beginnings in an old rundown business building with a decrepit printer. Henri Frenay, former French military officer and founder of the newspaper, had dreams of fulfilling a need in *la France libre*—the need for reliable information among the French people. His original hopes included the creation of a military and political resistance organization to fight alongside the Allies against the Nazis, while publishing a newspaper for informational purposes only. Unaware of the future importance of the paper and the growing difficulty of finding credible news, *Combat* was “originated to fill a specific need—to counterbalance Vichy propaganda—offer information denied them [the French citizenry] by the official press as well as provide them with editorials that might provide them with some reason to keep on hoping.”¹⁰

Combat was not the first name chosen for Frenay’s new Resistance organization which began in 1940 after the Armistice or, in his eyes, the Defeat.¹¹ The idea for *Combat* developed over time, beginning with the publication of the rejuvenated *Les Petites Ailes de France* with its subtitle “Vivre dans la défaite c’est mourir tous les jours.”¹² Beginning with a mimeographed sheet which eventually developed into a

⁷ John F. Sweets, *The Politics of Resistance in France, 1940-1944: A History of the Mouvement Unis de la Résistance* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1976) 151.

⁸ James D. Wilkinson, *The Intellectual Resistance in Europe* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981) 52.

⁹ John F. Sweets, *The Politics of Resistance in France, 1940-1944: A History of the Mouvements Unis de la Résistance* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1976) 39.

¹⁰ Henri Frenay, *The Night Will End*, Trans. Don Hofstadter (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1976) 56.

¹¹ Throughout the issues of *Combat* from 1941-1944, the term *armistice* is usually referred to as the defeat.

¹² Henri Frenay, *The Night Will End*, Trans. Don Hofstadter (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1976) 182. The subtitle is a quotation from Napoleon.

properly printed journal, the paper expressed many of the same views that *Combat* would in the future. This publication folded as a result of those individuals involved in its publication and Frenay's desire to join forces with other similar groups which would ultimately enable them to be more effective. Frenay went on to combine with another Resistance newspaper, *Verités*, which was published through 1941 with the accompanying subtitle "Je hais les mensonges qui vous ont tant fait de mal."¹³ Frenay continued to combine Resistance organizations to eventually create *Combat* whose first issue appeared in December 1941 with the accompanying subtitle (Frenay's contribution once again) "Dans la guerre comme dans la paix le dernier mot est à ceux qui ne se rendent jamais."¹⁴

Frenay had chosen to unite with these other movements who had resisted Nazism and collaboration in all its forms not only to make his organization stronger, but also as his partner Robert Guédon claimed because there was no point in creating potential rival groups: "They [other rival Resistance organizations] would have cost us precious time and created unnecessary conflicts."¹⁵ Certainly, *Combat* called for unity among the French people in its articles, but the organizations with which it eventually affiliated in 1942 were republican or Gaullist in political terms: Emanuel d'Astier de la Vigerie's *Libération* and Jean-Pierre Lévy's *Franc-Tireur*.¹⁶ Contacted along with these other Resistance leaders in September 1942, Frenay was convinced by Jean Moulin

¹³ Henri Frenay, *The Night Will End*, Trans. Don Hofstadter (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1976) 186. The subtitle is a quotation from Marshal Pétain.

¹⁴ *Combat*, no. 1, December 1941.

¹⁵ Henri Frenay, *The Night Will End*, Trans. Don Hofstadter (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1976) 61. The possible conflict and rivalry among the different Resistance groups refers specifically to the Communist Resistance movements.

¹⁶ Hilary Footitt and John Simmonds, *France 1943-45* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1988) 31.

(DeGaulle's personal representative in France and perhaps the most popular of French Resistance heroes) to meet in London with DeGaulle to form the Mouvement Unis de la Résistance (MUR) which would ensure support for DeGaulle's Free French Forces (FFI) and place these Resistance movements under the leadership and command of DeGaulle.¹⁷

Reactions among the organizations were mixed as Frenay questioned what specific role DeGaulle would play. Many resisters within France experienced some resentment towards people like DeGaulle and others in London and Algiers because they sometimes appeared cowardly, almost as if they had abandoned France. There was also a fear of manipulation by these leaders who had no real understanding of the danger involved or complexities of the underground movement. Nevertheless, Frenay did admit that his own political views corresponded with those of DeGaulle when his newspaper called for a movement toward "une république pure et dure."¹⁸ In essence, Frenay joined forces with DeGaulle because they agreed on several fundamental issues:

The Resistance, the true Resistance, that of the men of the first hour, never felt that it owed its existence to the call of June 18....we derived our mission from our conscience alone and from our will. Our attachment to [DeGaulle] was spontaneous and voluntary....Because we were not 'chargé de mission,' but free men, accepting fully his authority, we brought him the support of a captive but struggling France.¹⁹

It was fairly easy to persuade Frenay when Moulin and DeGaulle offered monetary support; thus, they would be able to accomplish more with their operation by purchasing

¹⁷ Ibid., 31.

¹⁸ Henri Frenay, introduction, *The Night Will End* by Henri Frenay, Trans. Don Hofstadter (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1976) xiv.

¹⁹ Quoted in John F. Sweets, "Oui, Mais....The Interior Resistance Movements and DeGaulle," *Proceedings of the Annual Meeting of the Western Society for French History* 3 (1975): 543. The quote to which the author refers appears in "DeGaulle et la Résistance," *Preuves*, no. 70, December 1965, p. 84.

and securing arms for their Armée Secrète.²⁰ There was no doubt that DeGaulle was a benefit to the operation. The Resistance movements accepted the authority of DeGaulle, yet sometimes they asserted their military and literary independence because they felt their role in creating the Resistance movement gave them special consideration and privileges.

Though the clandestine paper *Combat* was partially funded by DeGaulle and considered itself a part of a Gaullist organization, that did not necessarily mean that all the writers were republican or even pro-Gaullist. DeGaulle could not control every operation of the underground movement. The group of writers, participants, and contributors included French rightists, Jews, Freemasons, and even a few communists.²¹ Like many of the other first Resistance groups, *Combat* included a high proportion of army officers dissatisfied with current events, trade unionists, and “déclassé intellectuals.”²² Many considered themselves “de-facto Gaullists” who felt that French unity and control over the community were more important than political affiliation.²³ Furthermore, most were employed in fairly “liberal professions” such as professors and journalists who were involved in both the writing and military operations of the movement. *Combat* was composed primarily of individuals with leftist political tendencies, forming a mass movement with revolutionary aims which Frenay readily admitted: “We wanted a social revolution.”²⁴ Perhaps what truly united this eclectic

²⁰ The Armée Secrète refers to the guerrilla forces of *Combat*.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 70.

²² Jonathon H. King, “Emmanuel d’Astier and the Nature of the French Resistance,” *European Studies Review* 8.4 (1973): 32. D’Astier was from a highly aristocratic family with a tradition of service in the navy and diplomatic corps.

²³ Hilary Footitt and John Simmonds, *France 1943-1945* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1988) 31.

²⁴ Henri Frenay, introduction, *The Night Will End* by Henri Frenay, Trans. Don Hofstadter (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1976) xv.

group was an attachment to the Romantic ideas of the French past and its superior French culture which resulted in an attraction to the political left so that this cultural superiority could be expressed freely. However, as one reads the various issues (particularly those printed after the creation of the MUR) of *Combat*, it is undoubtedly a strongly pro-Gaullist paper with this affiliation being mentioned in virtually every issue after 1942.

Combat's writers' sense of mission for the Resistance is clear—unity against the German Occupation and Vichy. While *Combat* did not focus on publishing short stories, novelettes, or book reviews like the more literary based *Les Lettres Françaises*, it did print articles, editorials, and respectable news reports meant to inform the French. The journalists involved in such operations wanted to avoid not only the tactics of German propaganda, but they refused to return to the unpopular and unethical practices in journalistic reporting that had haunted the profession in the 1930's.²⁵ The French press of the 1930's could only be described as *scandalous* and biased, “consciously exploiting the prejudices of its readers.” It was naturally a part of the Resistance theology when in 1940 the Comité Nationale de Résistance (CNR), of which *Combat* was a part, called for freedom of the press “with respect to the state, moneyed interests, and foreign influences” because the French journalistic establishment had yielded to all these vices in the past.²⁶ Furthermore, they did not want to be compared to the propaganda produced by the Germans and their infamous Nazi Minister of Propaganda, Joseph Goebbels. They did not want to dictate public opinion but encourage “active cooperation” in judging the

²⁵ James D. Wilkinson, *The Intellectual Resistance in Europe* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981)

60.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 60

reliability of news reports while encouraging readers to draw the “appropriate” conclusions from the events covered in the paper.²⁷

The press would serve as an example of open-mindedness and courageousness, crusading for the truth, which would thus encourage readers to rise to the occasion and revolt against the German invader. Undoubtedly, it was this sense of purpose which attracted Albert Camus to join the ranks of its writers in 1943. According to Camus, the role of the Liberation press was “to awaken [the reader’s] critical faculties rather than appealing to his spirit of complacency.”²⁸ Camus was undoubtedly among the most prominent writers for *Combat* and with his help, the paper’s general reputation in France, England, and most importantly, among other Resistance organizations was without reproach.

The newspaper served not only as a reliable source of information and news; it was ultimately a call to action as it often gave explicit orders to encourage resistance.²⁹ Moreover, it offered a choice to its readers, Resistance or capitulation: “Sa position étant ainsi clairement définie, chaque Français pourra choisir: il sera avec ou contre nous.”³⁰ The roles of the Resistance fighter, the German/Nazi invader and the infamous *collaborateur* were clearly defined. Indeed, Frenay and his *Combat* cohorts were not only clear in creating a specific purpose, but they also created memorable and distinct images of the enemy whether he be French or German.

Many of these images were popular among contemporary clandestine papers, but some were distinctly Gaullist and perhaps “combatant” in nature. Of course, there are

²⁷ Ibid., 59.

²⁸ *Combat*, no. 59, August 1944.

²⁹ *Combat*, no. 2, December 1941.

varying reasons for the different images, namely the ideology of Frenchness, the location of the Resistance movement in the Unoccupied (Southern) Zone, and finally, the political agenda which the newspaper chose to assert.³¹ Though originally intended to serve a secondary role, supplementing the more important and successful military and political operations of Combat, *Combat*, as the representative paper for the greater organization, soon began to play a new and vital, yet unforeseen, role in the Resistance movement as it provided the French people with solidarity. Frenay readily admits in his autobiography: “People sometimes forgot the name of our movement but never that of our paper.”³²

II. Images of Nazi Germany and the Germans

The figure or image of the German/Nazi enemy is complex and partially the result of a long history of French and German animosity. The veritable plethora of literature written before the Second World War is infamous and often filled with stereotypical German characters. Perhaps the feelings between Germans and the French could be best described as a love-hate relationship. Like the rest of Europe, the French people admired German achievements in the sciences and fine arts (music) which influenced Europe in the 1920's and 1930's—the Germany of Kant, Goethe, and Beethoven. They admired their passion, yet at the same time recognized their idealistic and naïve nature. However, as a part of this image, many French writers also found Germans perhaps too “ponderous” and somewhat “submissive,” often lacking individuality and initiative.³³

³⁰ *Combat*, no. 1, December 1941.

³¹ *Frenchness* is used to illustrate the sense of cultural and political superiority which, according to *Combat*, made the Germans inferior to the French.

³² Henri Frenay, *The Night Will End*, Trans. Don Hofstadter (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1976) 56.

³³ Margaret Attack, *Literature and the French Resistance: Cultural Politics and Narrative Forms, 1940-1955* (New York: Manchester University Press, 1989) 58.

Nevertheless, there remained a contrasting view of the typical *allemand*. The Franco-Prussian War of 1870 had been a major turning point in French literature as it introduced the new phenomenon (which was not reserved for the French only)—“les deux Allemagnes.” These contrasting images and resentment promoted the idea of an internal German conflict, “Goethe and culture versus Bismarck and Prussian militarism.”³⁴ These stereotypical identities of German characters and character traits did not play major roles in the literature from the First World War, but the rise of Nazi Germany offered these French authors the opportunity to revive these images of Germany and its people. The writers of *Combat* were also quick to exploit these common fictitious images and maintained such stereotypes while contributing some of their own, perhaps with a bit of a Gaullist touch.

The typical German character depicted was that of a barbarian/monster created by his Teutonic, mythical past. His “irrational, demonic soul” is best illustrated by German romanticism and Wagner.³⁵ The second Germany is perhaps best captured by Vercors in his Resistance novelette *Le Silence de la Mer*—aristocratic, quiet, learned, musical, and most importantly, appreciative of French culture. Therefore, it is obvious that the writers of the Resistance and *Combat* were extremely familiar with these stereotypes and unafraid to utilize the images from the French literary tradition, often exemplified by “the musical German, the aristocratic Prussian officer, [or] the stupid German private soldier.”³⁶ *Combat* was prepared not only to report the news but to exploit these images,

³⁴ Ibid., 58.

³⁵ Ibid., 58

³⁶ S. Beynon John, “The Ambiguous Invader: Images of Germans in Some French Fiction About the Occupation of 1940-1944,” *Journal of European Studies: Literature and Ideas from the Renaissance to the Present* 16 (1986): 187.

playing on the fears and ignorance of the French people so that their propaganda would be just as effective as that produced by Nazi Germany.

The image which dominates the pages of *Combat* is the idea that the German Occupation is not merely an invasion or conquest of France but a Holy War between France and “l’ennemi héréditaire.”³⁷ Perhaps the most obvious example or illustration is the proud symbol of DeGaulle—the cross of Lorraine—integrated into the “c” of *Combat* in each issue’s title beginning in October 1942. The articles also make mention of the cross: “Fiers de nos morts et de notre croix de lorraine, nous sommes fiers de notre chef.”³⁸ In the first article of the issue, the war is clearly portrayed as a French crusade against the barbaric German invaders from the East, depicted much like the Arabs or Turks from the Crusades of the medieval era: “Organisons ensemble la Croisade de la Vérité contre le Mensonge, du Bien contre le Mal, du Christianisme contre le Paganisme, de la Liberté contre l’Esclavage.”³⁹ The articles composed by DeGaulle specifically portray the victory of France over Germany as a “victoire française et humanisme” which would require sacrifices as if all Germans were Pagans whom “nous [the Resistance fighters] vaincrons”⁴⁰

Combat goes even further to portray these so-called barbarians as pillaging thieves by publishing explicit lists of items and resources stolen throughout the invasion and Occupation.⁴¹ Those dying for the cause of France become not only heroes but

³⁷ Margaret Atack, *Literature and the French Resistance: Cultural Politics and Narrative Forms, 1940-1950* (New York: Manchester University Press, 1989) 58.

³⁸ *Combat*, no. 43, April 1943.

³⁹ *Combat*, no. 1, December 1941.

⁴⁰ *Combat*, no. 30, May 1942.

⁴¹ *Combat*, no. 33, August 1942.

martyrs.⁴² The writers even go so far as to offer formal blessings to the Frenchmen fighting the Germans: “Grace à la résistance, grace à ceux que la presse allemande vichyste appelle des ‘terroristes.’”⁴³ By portraying the invasion and occupation of France as a Holy War or a crusade, the German occupiers become all the more despicable. By offering this blessing to both the occupier and the occupied French, Frenay, DeGaulle, and the rest of the writing staff appeared that much kinder--thus, superior to the Germans in their tolerance of foreign cultures. Furthermore, *Combat* continues the metaphor of the Holy War by referring to Hitler’s *Mein Kampf* as “la Bible du nouveau pangermanisme” which certainly may have been true, but the assumption is made that all Germans must agree with Hitler or think the same way.⁴⁴ Indeed, the Germans are portrayed as virtually inhuman, thus making the French Resistance writers guilty of some of the same beliefs as the Nazis. This distinction contributed to the idea of Frenchness in that the real, resistant French could never behave like a German, like a virtual barbarian. Unfortunately, the writers of *Combat* discovered all too soon just how barbaric the French could be.

In the popular French literary tradition and perhaps as an outgrowth of the metaphorical image of the French-German Holy War, *Combat* portrays the German invaders of the Northern Zone as barbaric. Not only are these heathens invading their nation, but they are taking over their culture. Throughout the issues of *Combat* between 1940-1944, the writers suggest or, more appropriately, command not only their readers but all of France to resist German culture. They consistently warn against believing in

⁴² *Combat*, no. 46, August 1943.

⁴³ *Combat*, no. 54, February 1944.

⁴⁴ *Combat*, no. 28, March 1942.

the promises or the threats of German propaganda. For instance, they plead for the *réel* French people to boycott German films being shown in Parisian theaters during this time.⁴⁵ In several issues they also refer to the Germans as “les boches” which is used as a derogatory term.⁴⁶ Moreover, *Combat* quickly detected the danger of volunteering to work in German factories before it became well-known what occurred within them. As early as 1942, the French writers of *Combat* exposed the barbaric possibilities of these opportunities in Germany yet satirically commended them for “une belle orchestration” of this operation.⁴⁷ The German soldier becomes inhuman as well; he is a part of a greater force which must be destroyed or vanquished. Once again, the French Resistance fighters utilized humanism to present Nazism/Germanism in a negative light because of its rejection of individual importance over the collective group or nation-state.⁴⁸

Another image which is less popular than that of the German barbarian is the depiction of Germans as “negriers” or slave traders. Throughout the issues of *Combat* there are countless references to the Occupation as the enslavement of France by the German nation. The writers describe Occupied France as “la France allemande,” filled with young French slaves who are desolating the field of France.⁴⁹ They complain of the slave-like abuse of France and other nations’ resources whose only purpose is to supply the German nation: “La récolte-allemande profite tout entière au peuple allemand, qui reçoit en outre des surplus venant des territoires conquis.”⁵⁰ Therefore, the choice they

⁴⁵ *Combat*, no. 2, December 1941.

⁴⁶ *Combat*, no. 2, December 1941; *Combat*, no. 43, April 1943. This term is often used to describe foreigners in a derogatory manner such as the Huns or the Krauts.

⁴⁷ *Combat*, no. 32, July 1942.

⁴⁸ Margaret Attack, *Literature and the French Resistance: Cultural Politics and Narrative Forms, 1940-1950* (New York: Manchester University Press, 1989) 61.

⁴⁹ *Combat*, no. 28, March 1942.

⁵⁰ *Combat*, no. 35, October 1942.

offer is clear: “C’est l’indépendance ou l’esclavage.”⁵¹ The image of the German slave trader and France in bondage takes two further forms. Firstly, the Nazis are depicted as slave traders—selling French culture, trading away the French dream of “liberté, égalité, et fraternité.”⁵² Secondly, this image of the slave trader takes a more realistic form. Numerous articles appear about the infamous deportations of French citizens. They are described not only as thieves, stealing this labor unscrupulously, but as indifferent soldiers who enjoy robbing the nation: “Ils ont trouvé pour cela des trafiquants prêts à leur vendre le travail d’ouvriers français.”⁵³ Perhaps out of all the images and depictions of Germans in *Combat* (or in all of French Resistance Literature for that matter) the image of the slave trader is not only the most disturbing but, sadly, the most truthful.

Throughout these issues of *Combat* admittedly there are numerous images of Germans and Nazis, yet the most interesting and enlightening aspect of these images is the transformations which they undergo over time. Between the years 1940-1944, the most obvious change among the depictions of Germans is the evolution from the German versus the Nazi conflict to the idea that being German is equated with being Nazi. Only Germans could truly understand the predicament of France and its Resistance effort because they, too, were forced to endure the internal conflict of the war, often fighting fellow citizens. However, *Combat* never makes mention of this comparison or commonality. Indeed, as time passed whatever distinction had been made between Germany and Nazism was nonexistent.

⁵¹ *Combat*, no. 30, May 1942.

⁵² *Combat*, no. 39, January 1943.

⁵³ *Combat*, no. 54, February 1944.

The fact that there was once a distinction was fairly rare among clandestine newspapers. Frenay even admitted, “Like myself, some resistants made a clear distinction between Hitler and Germany, but they were very few. For the vast majority, Nazism was only the most recent manifestation of an eternal Teutonism.”⁵⁴ This sentiment was clearly reflected in his clandestine paper. In the early publications *Combat* is extremely careful in describing the German enemy as “Hitleran” or Nazi. For instance, in its first issue in December 1941, Pasteur B. warned, “Sa seule force est de savoir organiser le mensonge nazi.” Germans or all of Germany is never referred to as the collective enemy.⁵⁵ However, by late 1942, the two become virtually indistinguishable. For instance, *Combat* comes right out to claim: “L’ennemi c’est Allemand et ses valets de Vichy.”⁵⁶ Moreover, it is not the Nazis or the German Army with whom they wage war but all of Germany: “La vérité est qu’aujourd’hui l’Allemagne n’a pas seulement déclenché une offensive contre les meilleurs et les plus fiers de nos compatriotes, elle continue aussi la guerre contre la totalité de la France.”⁵⁷ Furthermore, the term *German* became more hated everyday. When the authors wanted to denounce or expose a prominent Vichy leader or another collaborator, the easiest way to discredit and shame him was to depict him as German.⁵⁸ What could be worse to a Frenchman, especially to such an intellectual who (particularly during the World War II era) prides himself and his country on its cultural role, than to be compared to a German? Indeed, in four years time, the image of the enemy evolves from “la croisade européenne contre nazisme” to

⁵⁴ Henri Frenay, *The Night Will End*, Trans. Don Hofstadter (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1976) 70.

⁵⁵ *Combat*, no. 1, December 1941.

⁵⁶ *Combat*, no. 46, August 1943.

⁵⁷ *Combat*, no. 55, March 1944.

⁵⁸ *Combat*, no. 56, April 1944.

“l’ennemi c’est Allemand.”⁵⁹ Certainly, this is partly the result of years under the Occupation, yet the evolution of the German throughout *Combat* is very closely related to that of the collaborator; thus, one must first understand the contrasting and similar attributes of the collaboration in order to understand the purposes and perhaps the excuses behind them. Moreover, the ideas of these resisters also enable one to see just what an impact they had during the war and post-war periods when DeGaulle became President of the IV Republic.

III. Images of the Collaboration

The image of the French collaborator is, of course, a bit more complicated than that of the German because of the situation in France during the Occupation; it was simply a little too close to home. The relationship between the two could not be described merely as exploited versus exploiter; the relationship was too complicated. In certain ways the figure of the French enemy is not altogether different from the German image. The collaborator was denounced as either a national traitor, enemy agent, or as a fascist oppressor.⁶⁰ According to the writers of *Combat*, the French people clearly had a choice: “Sa position étant ainsi clairement définie, chaque Français pourra choisir: il sera avec ou contre nous.”⁶¹ Moreover, the so-called armistice was just a farce or a deception by the Germans; it was not the peace which *les collaborateurs* made it out to be. Oftentimes, the collaborators become monstrous and despicable (like the Germans). The collaborators are utterly rejected in political terms as the enemy of the French people. Their allegiance was no longer to the state but to their selfish desires, power, and

⁵⁹ *Combat*, no. 1, December 1941; *Combat*, no. 46, August 1943.

⁶⁰ Margaret Attack, *Literature and the French Resistance: Cultural Politics and Narrative Forms, 1940-1950* (New York: Manchester University Press, 1989) 69.

prestige. Collaborators are rarely referred to as collaborators; the term is too euphemistic. Instead, they are described as the enemy, traitors, murderers, or accomplices: “La ‘France allemande’ se constitue avec la complicité des traites.”⁶² Therefore, the challenge offered by the Resistance writers is: “Les paysans français le permettront-ils?”⁶³ Would the French stand idly by while their nation was destroyed by foreign invaders?

Another fascinating aspect of the French collaborationist image is the pure hatred experienced by the Resistance writers toward their traitorous neighbors. Perhaps the most biting insult or description is the reference to the collaborator as being despised by his newfound German allies and comrades.⁶⁴ In this same article, they criticize the French for describing or making their treachery less than what it truly is by utilizing the euphemism of l’Armée de Transition rather than the Army of Vichy or German France.⁶⁵ These accomplices are often listed and denounced as traitors. The writers of *Combat* are unafraid to openly denounce collaborators. From the very beginning they condemn high ranking Vichy officials and their supporters such as Pierre Laval, Admiral Darlan, General Weygand, and eventually the former Great War hero, Marshall Pétain.⁶⁶ It is these “agents aux Nazis” who are ultimately responsible for the defeat of France which is very similar to the “stab in the back” theory which the Nazis used to explain the German loss during the First World War.⁶⁷ Germany was by no means stronger; it is just that the

⁶¹ *Combat*, no. 1, December 1941.

⁶² *Combat*, no. 28, March 1942.

⁶³ *Combat*, no. 28, March 1942.

⁶⁴ *Combat*, no. 38, December 1942.

⁶⁵ *Combat*, no. 38, December 1942.

⁶⁶ These men were numbered among the most notorious and most hated of Vichy France.

⁶⁷ *Combat*, no. 1, December 1941.

collaborators allowed the defeat to occur. It was these traitors whom the citizens of unoccupied France, *la France libre*, saw as their real enemy. If it were not for them, there would be no German Occupation.

These accomplices are ultimately not worthy to be French because they were willing to sacrifice their morals, loyalty, and freedom and also because they voluntarily betrayed their cultural heritage, their *Frenchness*. By deceiving their fellow citizens and their national history, the French collaborators created a divided France, the France of Vichy and the real, resistant France. An extremely revealing article clearly states the difference between “les vérités” between us [resistant France] and them [collaborators].⁶⁸ The treacherous nature of the collaborator is contrasted against the freedom-loving, loyal Resistance fighter. Their honor, liberty, and socialism are compared with that of the real French, emphasizing the differences between the role of the collaborator with Germany and the independent spirit of the Resistance.

Numerous articles throughout the paper’s history from 1940-1944 focus on the perilous and precarious position of the collaborator, as *Combat* constantly refers to the threat of deportation if one’s views do not necessarily correspond with the dogma of Nazi ideology. For example, the author of one article clearly describes the status of the French working class who willingly submits or accepts the German victory as “la classe ouvrière affamée, asservie, et déportée.”⁶⁹ In its attempt to appeal to the nationalistic tendencies in its reader, *Combat* contrasts “liberté, égalité, et fraternité” of “notre France” with the “malheur, terreur, déshonneur” of “leur France allemande.”⁷⁰ Frenay explains in his

⁶⁸ *Combat*, no. 38, December 1942.

⁶⁹ *Combat*, no. 38, December 1942.

⁷⁰ *Combat*, no. 38, December 1942.

article “Le Peuple a Choisi” that the people of France must make a choice; however, it is not between the two men representative of the two Frances, DeGaulle and Pétain. They must choose between “les valeurs,” once again illustrating the cultural values such as loyalty and freedom which France supposedly represents.⁷¹ Furthermore, this difference becomes a bit more political in February 1944 when *Combat* prints an article which clearly explains that there is only one type of government suitable for France, rule of the French by the French, yet this government is clearly meant to be a Gaullist government.⁷²

Another important distinction between these two Frances or Frenchmen is primarily cultural. It is apparent that the writers of *Combat* have a deep appreciation of France and its cultural role and/or leadership in twentieth century Europe, otherwise these men and women would not deem it important enough to publish a paper, fighting for its preservation and survival. The assumption is also made that the real leaders of the Free French are also numbered among this so-called elite. Indeed, one article in the April issue is entitled “A l’Elite” which is obviously an appeal to the French intelligentsia to take up arms and actively resist and “combat” the enemy.⁷³ Throughout the paper France and *les français* are encouraged in such a way. However, the collaborationist can not be included in this French culture or described as appreciating it because he was willing to make the this virtual devil’s pact, accepting the culture of the barbarians over his own. Therefore, the collaborators become everything which the supposedly Free French are not. For instance, the following is a description of Darnand Joseph who was the voluntary secretary general of the Gestapo in France: “Darnand n’est ni un brillant

⁷¹ *Combat*, no. 43, April 1943.

⁷² *Combat*, no. 43, April 1943.

⁷³ *Combat*, no. 43, April 1943.

canseur, ni un intellectuel, il est un Français moyen qui ne s'embarrasse pas de préjugés."⁷⁴ Furthermore, the milice, perhaps the most hated of all collaborators, are depicted as killing not only other Frenchmen but killing France itself: "Elle [the milice] consiste apparemment à prendre des otages, à tuer l'intellectuel et l'ouvrier, à torturer et à humilier pour, ensuite, profitant d'une presse à genoux, couvrir ses victimes de mensonges ou d'insultes."⁷⁵

Combat takes this image one step further as the contrast between the two Frances is illustrated by comparing its leadership. Frenay portrays DeGaulle as the head or "chef" of the real France who epitomizes all that Pétain is not: "Maréchal Pétain qui symbolise la politique de capitulation, puis de trahison, de s'être rangé aux ordres de Darlan, de s'être entouri d'hommes qui ont été les soutiens tenaces d'un régime abhorré."⁷⁶ DeGaulle is later described as the savior of France: "Le Général DeGaulle, au contraire, n'a jamais varié. Son appel du 18 juin 1940, alors que tout semblait perdu, fut la lumière dans les ténèbres, un cri de foi et d'espoir, un appel prophétique qui marque le debut de la résurrection française. Seul, ou presque seul, il sauve l'honneur."⁷⁷

Perhaps the most controversial image of the collaborationist and certainly a unique trait of *Combat* is its portrayal of Marshal Pétain. It seems as if the people of France, just like these writers, spent a great deal of time attempting to reconcile the old Pétain, the great military commander of the First World War and the hero of Verdun, with his new role as the leader of Vichy. *Combat* was at first very willing to give Pétain a chance, seeing him possibly as the modern Protector of France and her culture. In the

⁷⁴ *Combat*, no. 54, February 1944.

⁷⁵ *Combat*, no. 55, April 1944.

⁷⁶ *Combat*, no. 43, April 1943.

paper's second issue it clearly states its political doctrine that the accession of power by Pétain to the office of Chief of the Vichy State calmed their apprehensions; they even saw him as a savior: "Nous pensions que le Maréchal était le seul homme capable de tirer le meilleur parti d'une situation compromise par la défaite et l'Armistice."⁷⁸ The distinction between Pétain and other Vichy officials such as Pucheu, Lhéideux, and Marion is clear. They do not consider them to be of the same caliber or perhaps to be as French: "Notre attitude vis à vis du Maréchal est claire. En lui, il y a deux hommes: celui de la Grande Guerre que nous respectons. Celui de la Collaboration que nous nous refusons de suivre."⁷⁹ They refuse to be duped by these real traitors even as the deportations begin in the Northern Zone and are first reported in March 1942.⁸⁰ However, Pétain's image begins to develop, evolving from "le Père la Victoire" to "le Père la Défaite."⁸¹ In this issue *Combat* proclaims that France is dead. After Pétain's declaration of his new policy or *devise* to correct and *revue* France; the writers of *Combat* realized that "la France n'a plus de Maréchal sauf le Maréchal de Vichy."⁸² These writers gave up on the Pétainist myth, rejecting the hope that the Gaullist groups had shared that DeGaulle could be the sword of France while Pétain remained its shield.⁸³ The new state policy of Work, Family, and Country are depicted as forced labor, dislocation, and abandonment.⁸⁴ Pétain is declared guilty not only of collaborating

⁷⁷ *Combat*, no. 43, April 1943.

⁷⁸ *Combat*, no. 2, December 1941.

⁷⁹ *Combat*, no. 2, December 1941.

⁸⁰ *Combat*, no. 28, March 1942. This article describes the deportations taking place in the Northern Zone and blames the collaborationists, particularly Vichy, for allowing it to happen and doing nothing to prevent the deportation.

⁸¹ *Combat*, no. 32, July 1942.

⁸² *Combat*, no. 32, July 1942.

⁸³ Henri Frenay, *The Night Will End*, Trans. Don Hofstadter (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1976) 98.

⁸⁴ *Combat*, no. 32, July 1942.

but of betraying the national conscience and France's most sacred traditions.⁸⁵ Frenay was very intuitive and extremely harsh when he claimed, "Le peuple a jugé....et condamné avant l'histoire."⁸⁶ Therefore, as Liberation draws inevitably closer the once respected and beloved Marshal becomes the epitome of collaboration and treason, often serving as DeGaulle's adversary.

Throughout the German Occupation various images of the collaborator appear. Undoubtedly, this image is negative, almost to the point of hatred. The French collaborationist is also mentioned much more than the German enemy. Though most associate Pétain's name with France's dark and shameful period of collaboration, Pierre Laval, Pétain's second in command remains in *Combat's* eyes the most barbaric and despicable character of Vichy and the French collaboration. Even by December of 1942, the Governor of Madagascar who contributed to the periodical describes Laval using Pétain's good name or at least the good which is left of it: "Pétain nomme Laval dictateur et lui offre encore son nom pour couvrir toutes ses ignominies."⁸⁷ The fact remains that the overall image of the collaborator is just that--ignominious. Other than Pétain and what was left of his heroic First World War image, there is nothing redeeming about the collaborator and his newfound Germanness. However, the treatment of collaborators does undergo an evolution of sorts.

In the beginning the collaborator is a traitor, an accomplice, and ultimately the enemy, remaining so till the end. Yet, there remains an element of hope that the collaboration can be swayed. Many of the issues throughout 1942 contain heartfelt pleas

⁸⁵ *Combat*, no. 35, October 1942.

⁸⁶ *Combat*, no. 35, October 1942.

to the collaborationist to change his ways, to stop saying that this fight does not concern him, and to actively resist, and combat the enemy. This tone of optimism or hope eventually fades so that by December 1942 the writers become consumed not with the betrayal of the collaboration but with the complicated and controversial duty of judgement both now and after the Allied victory. Borrowing a quote from Charles Maurras writing for *l'Action Française* to describe Laval, the writers become not just resistors or résistants but judges: “Dans le fond de sa conscience si son intérêt particulier reçoimennçait à concorder avec eux, il les jugerait même meilleurs.”⁸⁸ Indeed, the real France sits in judgement over its treasonous deceivers: “La France a jugé. Elle sait, l’expérience vient de le lui prouver, les erreurs de jugement qu’elle a pû faire.”⁸⁹ The hostility and hatred toward the collaborator become almost personal as one article warns not to hide his or her thoughts but to be conscience of one’s power: “Narguez l’ennemi.”⁹⁰

This vindictive trend continues even through 1943 as neutrality becomes an impossibility: “Le temps vient ou les hommes de ce pays ne seront plus jugés sur leurs intentions, mais sur leurs actes que leurs paroles ont engagés. Cela seul est juste.”⁹¹ As this confrontation becomes inevitable, it is clear that a majority of the writers in this Resistance movement feel strongly not only that the guilty should be judged, but that it is necessary for the survival of France and her history. Albert Camus who began writing for

⁸⁷ *Combat*, no. 38, December 1942. The Governor of Madagascar served as *Combat*’s representative in Madagascar.

⁸⁸ Quoted in *Combat*, no. 38, December 1942. This reference originally appeared in *l'Action Française*, 4 November 1931.

⁸⁹ *Combat*, no. 39, January 1943.

⁹⁰ *Combat*, no. 46, August 1943.

⁹¹ *Combat*, no. 58, July 1944.

the paper in 1943 even admits in 1944 (just after the Liberation) that this controversial and unprecedented period of history calls for the real, resistant France to destroy a still living part of the nation in order to save France's soul, her unity in Frenchness.⁹²

Collaboration was certainly a political and military threat to France during the Occupation, but the threat to French cultural heritage seems more of a monumental loss than do the thousands of French lives lost during the war effort, resistance, or deportation. This is a somewhat sad commentary on the writers of *Combat*, making it easier for them to discuss and even call for the judgement and death of those involved with Germany and Vichy. In times of war, as one is faced with not only the death of him or herself but with that of his or her nation and society, this change in the treatment of French collaborationists is easier to understand as we remind ourselves to be careful when we judge others.

IV. Reasons Behind the Images

As we understand how these images are portrayed and evolve, it is just as important to analyze why these images exist. Why are there both shared and unique traits among the Germans and collaborators? What would lead them to depict these Germans and collaborators in such light? The influence of the French literary tradition and national animosity between Germany and France can readily be seen in virtually every issue, yet these are not the central reasons behind the images which dominate the pages of *Combat*. A distinct ideology of Frenchness develops in the clandestine paper, asserting that the real France is superior in strength and culture to both Germany and Vichy. The battle against both is portrayed negatively and reinforces the image of this struggle as a

⁹² *Combat*, no. 61, October 1944.

“national confrontation.”⁹³ The enemy whether French or German is separated from the real, resistant France by his “otherness.” The collaborators do not fit into the real French tradition because they have taken on what are considered to be German national characteristics such as barbarism, avarice, and greed which do not support the values of France which according to *Combat* have become intellectualism, elitism, generosity, and freedom. This is clearly illustrated time and again as the difference and superiority of real France is explored in its pages. Frenay even goes so far as to claim that Pétain does not even know how to speak the language of France; only DeGaulle and his resistance do.⁹⁴ The Germans are inherently the national enemy of France; thus, the distinction between the two is clear.

As the issue of collaboration and the German Occupation continue to be addressed throughout these years of German domination, it becomes evident that the two nations are not held to the same standards, culturally and politically. Perhaps the best way to illustrate this point is to compare the French reactions to the rise of Nazism and the government at Vichy. The rise of Nazism was merely proof of the victory of German barbarism over German humanism, the death of a culturally competitive Germany. With Pétain’s rise to power and the establishment of a collaborationist regime, the writers of *Combat* see this establishment of a puppet government at Vichy as an opportunity for Free France to overcome this barbaric invasion of their country and their people. Those who are responsible for the collaboration are not numbered among the real, the Resistant

⁹³ Margaret Attack, *Literature and the French Resistance: Cultural Politics and Narrative Forms, 1940-1950* (New York: Manchester University Press, 1989) 75.

⁹⁴ *Combat*, no. 43, April 1943.

French. They sold their national heritage and their birthright, maintaining their allegiance not to God and country but to money, power, and an inferior German culture.

The writers of *Combat* are very careful in making comparisons and emphasizing certain distinctions between France and Germany. For instance, France is faced with the unique and truly horrible national struggle between essentially two Frances. Very few nations understood the predicament because they remained either active supporters of a greater Germany and its accompanying Nazi ideology, like Austria, or vehement resisters, fighting in opposition to this cruel and racist form of pan-Germanism, like Poland. Unlike these nations France was divided (not necessarily equally) between those who welcomed Nazi domination and those who fought the German Occupation. It seems obvious that the only nation which could truly have a common bond or link with the French experience was Germany. Though its Resistance movement was not quite as large as that of France, Germany faced the same internal conflict, fighting fellow Germans and suffering as they or their loved ones were carted off to concentration camps, often never to be heard from again. *Combat* makes no mention of this shared and difficult struggle of a nation against itself. Instead, the real French are portrayed as heroes fighting these traitorous collaborationists while the Germans seem incapable of such division as they are lumped together as Hitleran agents, subservient to Nazi ideology.

Another interesting comparison which the writers of *Combat* seem to miss or perhaps blatantly ignore concerns the role of the collaborator and the deportations of French men and women to Nazi concentration camps in the East or those established in France itself. Once again the innocence and superiority of France seems to come into

play. Throughout the history of the journal there is no mention of France's involvement in deporting thousands of her own to concentration camps. Though Vichy and Pétain himself are condemned for allowing the Germans to deport French Jews and political prisoners, never does this clandestine paper condemn Pétain or Laval for purposely and personally deporting French men and women when Vichy, unfortunately, actively collaborated with the Nazis by sending their own citizens as slave labor to Germany and by establishing such camps within France's boundaries. Indeed, the French are never referred to as negriers or slave traders as are the Germans.

The Resistance literature produced by Frenay's *Combat* follows what Robert Pickering describes as the "repressive code" as the writers describe Germany and France, depicting and stereotyping Germans, Nazis, and collaborators throughout the paper's history.⁹⁵ This code is characterized by an absence of references to internal division of the French speaking community. Though it is clear that two Frances do exist, they are never portrayed as two Frances or one divided nation. Instead one is the real France while the other remains un-French, apart from the Frenchmen involved in the Resistance movement. This code is also characterized by its references to the German enemy based on the depiction of the Germans' otherness or foreignness, focusing on the peculiarity of their culture or the difference between them and Frenchmen. *Combat* follows these examples distinctly as it describes Germany as barbaric and almost less than human, but definitely less than French. The difference is perhaps most evident as all Germans are equated with Nazism, whereas this could not be said of the French. This ideology of real Frenchness and its alleged superiority (as expressed by the writers of *Combat*) illustrate

not only how these images emerge but why the German stereotype remains dominant and fairly unimaginative. The collaborator and the definition of collaboration become the center of controversy both during and after the war. Certainly, it was more difficult to admit to the betrayal of the enemy than the betrayal of one's national brethren.

The location of *Combat's* headquarters in the Unoccupied or Free Zone of France is also extremely important in understanding these images of the French and Germans. In the paper's very first issue it is explained that this journal, though published in the Free Zone, was written for all Frenchmen but recognized the important differences which existed between the Occupied and Unoccupied territories of France: "Ils [the feelings of the people] sont différents en zone libre et en zone occupée, ils n'atteignent qu'un petit nombre de la population française. En un mot, ils n'ont pas réalisé l'union."⁹⁶ Location played a large role in the evolution of the image of Pétain and the Vichy government. Because the writers and the organization were headquartered under French control, they at first felt secure in believing that the Vichy government would save France; being under any French control was undoubtedly better than being under German domination. Georges Bidault, Catholic journalist and director of the Information and Press Bureau, though surprised at the number of Germans in the Free Zone when he first arrived, explained this general sentiment: "The Vichy government did not yet cooperate with the enemy as it did later on; it had not reached the final stages of 'collaborationisme' as we were to call it. Vichy tolerated, sometimes even helped, people to do things which would

⁹⁵ Robert Pickering, "Writing Under Vichy," *Vichy France and the Resistance: Culture and Ideology*, eds. Roderick Kedward and Roger Austin (London: Croom Helm, 1985) 262.

⁹⁶ *Combat*, no. 1, December 1941.

have been impossible in the Occupied Zone.”⁹⁷ Therefore, it is easy to understand how those writing for *Combat* would place their trust in Pétain if his government granted them leniency in the beginning. As events transpired over the next four years, these writers came to understand that Pétain had betrayed their country. Admittedly, there are more articles devoted to the betrayal of Vichy and its Nazi agents, primarily because the dictatorship under which they suffered and endured was French. Though the Nazis and Germany were still seen as the enemy, the German threat became almost secondary in nature. The mentality between the two zones was quite different. In the Occupied territory opposition to the barbaric Germans and their cruel Occupation overrode all other duties and responsibilities, whereas in the free zone, opposition to the Vichy government and its laws became almost inseparable from the opposition to Nazism.⁹⁸ Therefore, the writers of *Combat* addressed this threat, warning their readers not to give in to this collaboration, this betrayal, and creating an image of the French collaboration as even more despicable than the Nazis.

A sense of abandonment pervades these issues as if these collaborators value power and prestige over their own country. Those in the Unoccupied Zone had to face this everyday; thus it is arguably understandable that the Resistance movement in the Free Zone would not hesitate to express this resentment. The image of the collaborator is fairly varied, depending about whom one is talking. The collaboration also undergoes a significant evolution as the writers establish the idea of a real versus collaborationist France. These writers are so obviously consumed with their opposition and sometimes

⁹⁷ Georges Bidault, *Resistance: The Political Autobiography of Georges Bidault*, Trans. Marianne Sinclair (London: Weidenfeld, 1967) 15.

⁹⁸ Henri Frenay, *The Night Will End*, Trans. Don Hofstadter (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1976) 94.

their hatred for Vichy that they devote much of their own and the paper's efforts to exploring this betrayal and fighting collaboration. However, the images of the Germans as slave traders, remain fairly unimaginative and extremely stereotypical. It is almost as if the external German enemy becomes a secondary threat. Therefore, it is not worth their time to explore these German characteristics because they are more concerned with the mentality of collaboration. Perhaps that is why it is so much easier for these writers to simply stereotype all Germans as Nazis and not waste their time redefining these images when they are faced with their own countrymen's betrayal.

The political agenda and the influence of General DeGaulle remain the third and perhaps the most powerful influence over *Combat*'s portrayal of the French and Germans. Undoubtedly, his involvement and particularly his financial support were welcomed, a benefit to the paper and the Resistance movement. Once the partnership with DeGaulle was established in 1942, the purpose and the direction of the paper became more politically oriented. By March 1944 *Combat* claims that the aim of the paper is not just a French victory over German domination but the construction of the new strong and pure France which DeGaulle promises.⁹⁹ The paper became all the more adamant in its them vs. us attitude, claiming that everyone who is not with us is against us.¹⁰⁰ Moreover, Frenay readily admits in his autobiography that the goal of the paper was partly to instigate a social revolution with DeGaulle at its helm, creating the IV

⁹⁹ *Combat*, no. 55, March 1944.

¹⁰⁰ *Combat*, no. 58, July 1944.

Republic.¹⁰¹ Thus, it seems as if DeGaulle planned on using the paper not only to encourage Resistance but to solicit votes.

The influence of DeGaulle can best be illustrated in the portrayal of Germans and French collaborators as despicable characters. It would not be good for readers to see the writers of *Combat*, perhaps the most prestigious of Resistance movements, questioning, pondering, doubting and reflecting on these images or its own methods by subverting its own authority or that of DeGaulle. Indeed, these barbarians and traitors must be portrayed as such so that DeGaulle can be seen as the symbol of French freedom and its liberation. It is as if the writers of *Combat* have this objective clearly in mind as they prepare France for DeGaulle's triumphant stroll down the Champs-Élysées and the social revolution Frenay said was to come.

It is not until late 1942 and the beginning of 1943 that the emphasis on the real France is established. Only after DeGaulle becomes involved does *Combat* explore the true differences and the "otherness" of the French collaborators. Contrasting the traitorous Vichy with Pétain at its helm and the freedom-loving French led by Charles DeGaulle, *Combat* establishes the idea of two Frances, or more appropriately, the one real France, further promoting DeGaulle as the essence of the true Frenchman. DeGaulle becomes "l'espoir de France, la voix qui n'a jamais varié," whereas Pétain cannot speak the language of France.¹⁰² The ultimate condemnation of Pétain which fills the pages of *Combat* from 1942 on is largely the result of DeGaulle's influence. Frenay and his co-writers had certainly been appalled at the betrayal of the French World War One hero and

¹⁰¹ Henri Frenay, introduction, *The Night Will End* by Henri Frenay, Trans. Don Hofstadter (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1976) xv.

¹⁰² *Combat*, no. 43, April 1943.

their own pro-Pétainist stance early in the war. Until DeGaulle took over the underground movement, they did not utterly condemn Pétain but seemed hopeful that he might change his ways. DeGaulle, on the other hand, had been extremely aggressive towards Pétain well before his official collaboration and infamous handshake with Hitler.¹⁰³ This change in attitude towards Pétain was fully taken advantage of by DeGaulle's friends in *Combat*.

The idea of true collaboration was also largely the result of DeGaulle's influence and the political support he received from and in *Combat*. Though a succinct definition of collaboration is practically impossible to determine because of the ambiguity of the French situation, the Resistant French only seem to condemn the major collaborationists figures actively involved in the government and, of course, the milice.¹⁰⁴ Throughout the paper's tumultuous history from 1941-1944 there are several "Consigne d'Action" and other various articles which call for total resistance during total war.¹⁰⁵ Yet, the conclusion is never really drawn that no Resistance equals collaboration. Instead, the paper chooses to focus on the so-called major collaborators such as Pétain, Laval, and Pucheu, emphasizing that they will be judged by the real France. However, there is very little mentioned about the role of those French men and women who claimed neutrality and attempted to get on with their lives, earning a living from day to day.¹⁰⁶ Moreover, the list of those collaborators to be "gotten" at the Liberation which appears in March

¹⁰³ Margaret Atack, *Literature and the French Resistance: Cultural Politics and Narrative Forms, 1940-1950* (New York: Manchester University Press, 1989) 70.

¹⁰⁴ The Milice served as a "French Gestapo" in the Unoccupied Zone.

¹⁰⁵ *Combat*, no. 55, March 1944.

¹⁰⁶ *Combat*, no. 58, July 1944. This issue contains the only article which addresses neutrality and excuses those who remained neutral by allowing them to think that they had been resisters in the past but now must become more active and quit believing that this fight did not concern them.

1944 certainly does not represent of all those who collaborated with the Nazis.¹⁰⁷ Once again this Gaullist influence and the organization's intention to propel France into a Gaullist Revolution are evident; thus, those men and women whose collaboration is not condemned by DeGaulle and *Combat* may openly support or transfer their support from Vichy to DeGaulle without condemnation. DeGaulle's polished image is not tarnished in the least as he secures another group of supportive voters. Furthermore, this depiction and sort of forgiveness also increased DeGaulle's support among the French so that the fear of Allied, particularly American, intervention or further partitioning of France was no longer a real threat. These former collaborators and *neutrals* had changed their ways and earned forgiveness as explained by *Combat* and would rally to DeGaulle's side, now willing to fight for freedom from foreign domination.

Undoubtedly, this allegiance to DeGaulle also resulted in the focus on French collaboration, rather than the German Occupation. Of course, France was fighting Nazi Germany, but DeGaulle was fighting for the leadership and control of France. There was no imminent need among his supporters in *Combat* to paint a horrible image of Germany; it had already been done beginning with the Franco-Prussian War. It was more important among Gaullists to create the contrasting images of a real versus collaborationist France, to excommunicate Pétain with religious zeal, to pass judgement on the French collaborators in order to define the enemy, and to ultimately win support for the IV Republic whose origins are clearly found in *Combat's* rich history as an exceptional Resistance publication.

¹⁰⁷ *Combat*, no. 55, March 1944.

Conclusion: Impact and Contribution

The impact of the Resistance paper and its organization during the Occupation cannot be questioned. Though the articles in *Combat* were obviously influenced by several political, cultural, and geographical factors, it was by no means guilty of false reporting or pure sensationalism. Frenay and his companions on *Combat* were extremely intuitive and progressive in their journalistic efforts. *Combat* had long been aware of Hitler's intentions of racial enslavement discussed in *Mein Kampf* as evidenced in *Combat*'s first issue.¹⁰⁸ Moreover, they were acutely aware of what was happening to those Frenchmen who agreed to work in German factories, not to mention the racist acts committed by the French themselves. Much of this information that was reported in *Combat* was not reported in Allied newspapers either because of ignorance or government censorship.

Combat's impact on both other Resistance publications and the war effort was significant because of the information and leadership it provided for France. However, the precarious position of the Resistance movements in the Unoccupied Zone limited its circulation and its potential impact on those individuals and nations outside of France. Though copies were smuggled to DeGaulle in London and Algiers, they were not circulated in any other cities or countries. Sadly, the information concerning the concentration camps in France, Germany, and the East reported in *Combat* was not printed in many of the Allied countries. Perhaps if a copy of the paper or even this information had been distributed in Allied nations, it might have created widespread

¹⁰⁸ *Combat*, no. 1, December 1941.

awareness of these atrocities and hastened the Allies to invade the European continent prior to 1944 in order to save the lives of the French as well as other Europeans.

Combat did not end its publication until 1947. It pursued its political agenda even after the Liberation and victory in Europe, but now in an open and decidedly more aggressive manner. With the war out of the way, the paper could devote itself to a multitude of different subjects, from French constitutional law to the principles of education reform.¹⁰⁹ As a popularly recognized Resistance publication, *Combat* could claim legitimacy with which other papers could not compete. There was no question that the writers of *Combat* had been actively resistant, proudly supporting DeGaulle throughout the Occupation. *Combat's* contribution proved to be just as important after the war as during the Occupation.

The impact of the paper on France after the war, however, is extremely controversial. As a result of the Gaullist ideology of the paper, *Combat* often defined collaborators as primarily the prominent leaders in the Vichy government. Oftentimes, it was assumed that the free, resistant France was much larger than it actually had been; the circulation of the paper never went above 200,000.¹¹⁰ Because of the ambiguity of the term *collaboration*, its definition is difficult to determine and easy to alter so that those claiming neutrality or just earning a living could be called *resistants*. *Combat* could easily be seen as DeGaulle's accomplice in creating the ultimately disastrous myth of a resistant France.

¹⁰⁹ James D. Wilkinson, *The Intellectual Resistance in Europe* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981) 53.

¹¹⁰ Margaret Atack, *Literature and the French Resistance: Cultural Politics and Narrative Forms, 1940-1950* (New York: Manchester University Press, 1989) 31.

Because of the support the paper provided for DeGaulle and the definitions it used to characterize collaboration, *Combat* contributed to the Gaullist myth that France had been a nation of resisters. This myth proved to be ultimately disastrous because of the scars it left among the French. After the war France, as well as other nations, held criminal trials and paraded its traitors through the streets, believing that the nation had dealt with its guilt. DeGaulle along with the rest of France allowed many collaborators to go unpunished, believing that the traitors had been purged from society. The collaboration became a taboo subject, ignored and unreconciled among Frenchmen. The ideology of Frenchness and its superiority established by *Combat*, separating Vichy from the real France, was thus abused by DeGaulle and others to conceal France's shame. *Combat's* images of collaboration contributed to this myth perpetuated by DeGaulle which left France divided for decades as Frenchmen refused to address their national guilt until the 1980's.¹¹¹ Though it can be said that the images of Germans and French collaborators in *Combat* were the result of numerous influences both culturally and politically, *Combat* played just as significant a role in French politics after the Second World War and in France's inability to cope with the national guilt of collaboration.

¹¹¹ Alan Morris, introduction, *Collaboration and Resistance Reviewed: Writers and the Mode Retro in Post-Gaullist France* by Alan Morris (New York: Berg, 1992) 1.

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