

Chapter 1

(HI)STORIES AND MEMORIES
OF THE GREAT WAR IN FRANCE
1914–2018

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The historiography of the Great War cannot be fully grasped, as is generally the case, without appraising the place and social function of the war's memory in society as a whole.¹ In spite of a very strong institutional base, professional historians have always had competition, here, from people who have seen themselves as legitimate narrators of the war. Military people, first and foremost: the generations of those who served in 1914–18 have gradually been replaced by historians with a military background who were not actively engaged in World War I and who still have a considerable foothold in the domain. In the 1960s, the volume about the war (“military operations”) in the series *L'Histoire du XXe siècle* (The History of the 20th Century), edited by the historian Maurice Baumont for the Sirey publishing house, was put in the hands of General Louis Koeltz, who had served in the 2ème Bureau (France's external military intelligence agency) in 1914–18. Roughly at the same time, the great publishing house Fayard brought out the *Histoire de la Grande Guerre* (History of the Great War), written by two officers who had not known that conflict, General Fernand Gambiez and Colonel Maurice Suire. More recently, in the *Inventaire de la Grande Guerre* (Inventory of the Great War) published

by Larousse in 2005 and presented as a form of reference dictionary, out of forty-five authors, eight were officers and seven were researchers in military institutions.² Up until the fiftieth anniversary of the war, war veterans (*anciens combattants*) also turned themselves into historians of the Great War by distancing themselves a little from their own experiences in order to broaden their outlook—men such as Jacques Meyer, René-Gustave Nobécourt, Victor Bataille, and Pierre Paul produced their version of a historical assessment of the war. The history of 1914–18 is also a history of militants—a militant, politically engaged history. For a long time, the Russian Revolution and the birth of various communist parties and the Third International have informed the work of communist and left-leaning historians. Nowadays, in a new configuration, it is more generally the soldiers' sufferings and the excesses of military commanders and military justice alike that have been pounced upon by “left-wing” historians, as is made quite explicit by the title of François Roux's 2006 book, *Les Poilus contre l'Armée française* (*Poilus* against the French army). The powerful presence of the Great War in the public sphere, its “public history” dimension (a history written and made for a broad public), also explains the fact that many amateur historians have taken on the subject, thereby making their contribution to its history. In this context, they have capitalized on their knowledge of local terrain, such as the areas of the former front, or emphasized specific war experiences by soldiers from a given region (*poilus* from Normandy, the Vendée, and so on). Local history, which is traditionally strong in France, finds here a terrain of renewal. These many different historiographical voices, which attest to the scope of the challenges involved, are quite naturally punctuated by time frames that go beyond individual and academic schedules. Commemorations here have a considerable power in terms of impetus, as 1964–68, 1998, or 2014–18 have demonstrated in the most illustrative fashion. So to properly grasp the development of French historiography, it is useful to trace, perforce schematically, the main features of French memories of the conflict and the way they have evolved, with a special emphasis on the former soldiers' memory that was so pivotal in the definition of the commemorative challenges and stakes.

Remembering, Commemorating 1918–2018

Unlike the stereotypical image of a French nation univocally celebrating its *poilus*, not to say victory, the memory of 1914–18 has been immediately constructed in rivalries and commemorative tensions with considerable political implications. It is the war veterans who insisted, in 1922,

on having 11 November as a “day off,” a national holiday, whereas the government initially wanted to have the commemorative ceremony organized on the Sunday immediately following that date.³ But from then on, that date has been the high point of the memorial calendar. Likewise, the “making” of the Unknown Soldier, now a consensual symbol, has by no means been uncontroversial: promoted notably by a group of right-leaning war veterans, it has been the subject of numerous debates and disputes concerning the location of the tomb, the burial ceremony, and, more generally, the cult that developed around it.

The war veterans, moreover, did not obtain everything they expected in terms of memorial practices, as is illustrated by the fate of the law of 1919 “relating to the commemoration and glorification of those who died for France during the Great War.” The law included five main provisions: the inscription of the names of those who died for France and of the civilian victims in the registers held in the Pantheon, the establishment for each town and village (*commune*) of a register with the names of the *commune*’s combatants who died for France, the erection of a commemorative national monument “of the heroes of the Great War” in Paris or in the surrounding area, the granting of subsidies to *communes* for the “glorification” of the dead, and the introduction of a ceremony per town and village on 1 or 2 November. This last measure, as has been noted, has been transformed by the war veterans with 11 November as its annual high point. But for the rest . . . no grand national monument (Paul Claudel relaunched the project for the roundabout at La Défense in 1955, just before he died, and a relief “to the glory of France’s armies” by Landowski was inaugurated at the Trocadéro in 1956; however, it was far away from the original design, which was scaled back on several occasions), no register throughout the land, and no register at the Pantheon. In 1951, in the *Almanach du Combattant*, a somewhat conservative publication launched by 1914–18 veterans, Georges Pineau, a leading light in the movement, rounded on such a forgetful law: “The State has ‘dropped’ the heroes of 1914–1918.”

The construction of the memory of the Great War is thus less natural than it might seem, for it is also selective. The writing of the national master narrative grabbed the Great War in order to fashion it the way it wanted, in official publications, and in school textbooks too, to a certain extent. The Battle of Verdun, for example, has become emblematic of French “resistance” to the Germans, to the point of appearing to be the Great War’s battle of all battles. On the other hand, the Battle of the Chemin des Dames (1917), which was just as important, has been subject to a shortfall in memory, which war veterans were still grumbling about in the 1960s because it was a slaughter caused by the strategic choices of

the General Staff. The different memorial cultures of the conflict (literature of combatants about the war and of war veterans about what became of them afterward, films, plays, songs, and the like) are interwoven with political, social and historiographical issues, but we cannot go into detail about all that at this juncture. In a nutshell, retracing the developments of the memories and history of 1914–18 since the end of the conflict calls for reminding us about both the competition of memory, the tensions of remembrance, and the strength of the frameworks within which history is written.

1919–1939: The Burden of Mourning

Memorial Centers

For public institutions, during the postwar years, remembering meant coming to terms with the massive bereavement and mourning that weighed on French society as a whole. This included finding a way to express and acknowledge the particular mourning of those thousands of crushed bodies that had not been found. It was in 1916 that the idea seemed to emerge of honoring one soldier as a symbol for all those *poilus*. The sense of loss was so massive that new kinds of commemorations seemed called for, in France and elsewhere.⁴ The project assumed a parliamentary dimension in 1918. Several members of parliament agreed to propose the burial of one soldier in the Pantheon, a place of republican memory since the 1880s. Journalists and right-wing and far-right militants refused the site as the last resting place of the Unknown Soldier, too republican in their eyes, just as they rejected the merger between the inhumation of the Unknown Soldier and the fiftieth anniversary of the Republic (1920). Press campaigns were undertaken in favor of the Unknown Soldier's burial beneath the Arc de Triomphe. In 1919, this latter site received a large wood-and-plaster cenotaph that was used for the funereal evening gathering preceding the Victory Festival and the huge procession of 14 July. The final choice of the Arc de Triomphe for the burial of the Unknown Soldier ushered in the patriotic dimension of mourning and sacrifice. It also showed the central place held by the Battle of Verdun in the political commemoration of the Great War. It was in the city's citadel that the eight coffins were put together, brought from different battlefields, in order to designate the one unknown to be transferred to Paris. Different rituals surrounded the selection ceremony and added to its solemn character. The seven others are still at Verdun,⁵ buried in the Faubourg-Pavé cemetery, thus constituting an additional place of memory for the city, and one that is still very carefully maintained today. If the Unknown Soldier symbolizes all those who died during the

war, “the child of a whole people in mourning,”⁶ and those missing in action in particular, he is also a specific icon of the combatant memory, like a guardian genie in the postwar period and beyond. “The Unknown Soldier is ours, comrades,” proclaimed the *Almanach du Combattant* in 1922. So from 1921 onward,⁷ the Unknown Soldier became a central and essential place symbolizing the memory of the war. But as Antoine Prost underscores, that soldier is just one “among others, probably the most prestigious, but not the only one.”⁸

Public Places of Remembrance

The war altogether reshaped the public space of remembrance. It is possible to single out three main forms in this respect. The first, from the time of the war itself, was linked to the erection of plaques, monuments, and places of memory along the front lines of 1914–18, in the northeastern part of the country. In a second phase, there was the movement to erect monuments to the dead—war memorials—throughout the land, colonies included. Lastly, the national territory was filled with memorial inscriptions referring to the Great War. They are everywhere: on buildings, in streets, in railway stations, in cemeteries, and on war memorials. Rather than recalling well-known data, let us here take a somewhat detailed example. Nowadays, the small village of Sainte-Paule, perched amid vineyards in the Beaujolais region, with its golden stones and such distinctive hues and topography, has some 250 inhabitants, down from 372 in 1914, many of them winegrowers. The village seems to have hardly changed since the Great War, but the war’s traces are conspicuous for such a little place. As everywhere, there is a war memorial, here located in front of the communal cemetery. On one of the column’s sides are listed the places where the village’s children fell (Alsace, the Marne, etc.), while on another side there is an inscription saying that the memorial was erected in 1921 “with the generous help of all the inhabitants,” as was often the case. The communal archives confirm as much, because they hold the subscription accounts book: some people subscribed individually, in their own name, others as “households” (*maisons*). The monument here was undoubtedly a matter involving all and sundry. In other places, however, there may have been general, religious, and political disputes about the sense and form of the monument.⁹ At Sainte-Paule, communal and departmental grants complemented the subscription. It was in 1919 that the process was launched with the appointment of a mixed committee made up of village councilors and war veterans. The side of the memorial facing the village bears the names of the dead and the place where they died. There are twenty-one of them. All this is common enough. What is less so is the attention paid to the soldiers missing in action whose

bodies have never been found. The monument in fact includes a “Missing in Action” (*Disparus*) category, which has four names. Furthermore, in a Catholic region, a rather original inscription reads, “Lord have pity on the unknown soldiers who lie nameless in the cold, bare fields.”

Bodies and Bereavement

The small cemetery at Sainte-Paule is also an interesting epigraphic source. One inscription expresses, again, the importance of those soldiers missing in action: “In memory of her son Antoine Lachal missing in action for France at Souain on 4 September 1914 at the age of 32. Dear child, you lived to love us. I would [*sic*—she meant ‘will’] live to weep for you. Your mother.” Here it is the mother talking about her unmarried son, a winegrower. Such words of mourning and family suffering are to be found on another grave—and they are plentiful. Joannès (Jean-Marie) Marduel died on the Macedonian front in September 1918. The family was apparently either unable or did not wish to have the body repatriated, and the inscription decorating the grave in Sainte-Paule is one that, in a way, replaces the body. In all the countries engaged in the conflict, the issue of how to handle the remains of the fallen was raised. Should they be left in the cemeteries and graves in the front zone, or should they be repatriated? Many discussions, on differing scales, dealt with these questions here, there, and everywhere. In France they culminated in a law in 1920 that authorized families—if they so desired—to transfer the bodies of their nearest and dearest slain in the war to a cemetery that suited them, all paid for by the state. The state’s financial commitment was huge at that time, and the institutional and railway arrangements introduced were considerable and sophisticated: the state was responsible for all the various stages, from exhumation to final burial, including the coffin.¹⁰ It would seem that some 30 percent of deceased combatants identified thus had their bodies transferred. The case of Levallois-Perret illustrates this general process with its many variations. It was in fact in liaison with this repatriation that the local war memorial itself was conceived. It overlooks a crypt in which Levallois soldiers repatriated to the communal cemetery were all brought together. In accordance with the law of July 1920, 270 Levallois families requested that bodies be transferred. Some 151 soldiers were thus reburied, up until 1926, in the crypt, as we are told by the municipality. But the Great War is a history with no end, and repatriations, like searches for those missing in action, continued for many more years, giving rise to various legal extensions.¹¹ The Levallois archives hold several individual transfer bulletins for the 1930s. After the war, the search for the missing went on, and was the object of an official and methodical organization.

The strategy for centralizing and creating a symbolic space encompassing graves and monument was not unanimously accepted in Levallois. Some families wanted the soldiers to remain in the burial plots they had chosen for them. Once again, places of mourning were liable to become places of conflict. The artilleryman André Auguste Thernisien was killed near Margival in October 1917. His widow wanted to keep her own burial place, and wrote as much to the mayor:

I have just indirectly learnt that the bodies of soldiers . . . will be removed and put in the vault of the so-called Memory monument. This is truly distressing, not to let them rest where they have been taken to, because they have truly dearly earned this tiny piece of land by sacrificing their hearth and their children. And after a whole week of work, Sunday was for me and his two children a gentle pilgrimage to lay flowers on that beloved grave, whereas now it is the grave for everyone. . . . I thought that this monument would be erected to the memory of all those poor unfortunate men whose families have never known what had become of them, and not for our men recognized in every grave. I accept your decision, Sir, but I wish to keep the body of my husband for myself alone in a separate grave.¹²

But let us get back to Beaujolais and Joannès Marduel. As has been studied by Tanja Luckins for the mourning of Australian families, the remoteness of theaters of operation ushers in a whole set of mourning practices and habits, which make up for the impossibility of traveling to soldiers' graves, when they exist. Here, the Marduels affixed an inscription at the top of the family grave, as if surveying it:

To the memory of Joannès Mardeul who died for France at Thessaloniki on 24 September 1918 at the age of 26. O dear child whose immense love was our joy and all our hope. One day you left beautiful France, never to see it again. Mortally wounded, you succumbed to honor as a martyr. Sleep in peace in that distant land. Sublime soldier whose cruel death broke our hearts.

In addition to the expression of suffering and absence, the rhetoric here is patriotic. The inscription that accompanies the less labored evocation of his brother, Jean Antoine/Tony, who also died—another wartime casualty—of typhoid fever, is written in a similar style. Unlike his brother, Tony was married, so it was his wife and children who spoke to and for him. The inscription refers to the father and husband that he was, dying a victim of duty. “We shall live to weep for you.” The Marduel family is a family of well-off farmers and winegrowers who did not hide their affluence¹³—they purchased Russian loans and went off to Paris to see operettas—which probably made it possible both to have such in-

scriptions engraved and also to display their bereavement in the public place of the cemetery. As well as such relatively lengthy rhetorical evocations, the small cemetery at Sainte-Paule, like so many others, houses graves that indicate those who died in the war by the description of the deceased as “died for France” (Paul Alix), to which was sometimes added the place, which had an evocative effect for one and all; thus: “Died for France at Notre-Dame de Lorette Pas-de-Calais” (Jean-Pierre Chatoux, killed in combat during the great Artois offensive of 1915). Last of all, here as elsewhere, a war veteran, Jean-Marie Chavant, who died in 1932 aged fifty-four, has as his epitaph “*Mutilé de guerre*” (injured and disabled ex-serviceman), a reminder of how much the memory of the conflict, in mind and body alike, produces powerful identities, here a primary one, because nothing else is said about him.

So this simple cemetery illustrates both the breadth of the funerary inscriptions of the Great War in the most modest of public places and the variety of these words of memory, from a simple reference or mention to nothing less than funeral eulogies engraved in stone. It also gives us an idea of the space of the development of mourning occasioned by the Great War, which, on a hitherto unknown scale, implied the absence of bodies, either missing in action and vanished or remaining more or less voluntarily in the war grave cemeteries close to the battlefields.

From World War II to the 1980s

The Competition of Heroes

Even if they were traversed by numerous conflicts and claims, the memories of the Great War borne by the 1914–18 war veterans undoubtedly had great legitimacy prior to World War II. In 1944–45, however, the figure of the heroic combatant of the trenches, then standard-bearer of the fight against oblivion and for peace, risked being relegated to the background by new heroic figures, that of the Resistance fighter, or the combatant for the operations of 1944–45. Even if the figure is rarely promoted, there is also the soldier of 1939–40. In the *Almanach du Combattant*, in 1950, a fictitious dialogue about the place of 1914–18 war veterans clearly asserted this form of competition among heroes: “And it would seem that the time has come for the 1914–18 elders to play the role of ‘veterans.’ I can see you coming, you belong to the category of those who would really like it if people no longer talked about those who waged the war. This is a language that we have become accustomed to hearing since the Liberation. Tell me about the Resistance fighters; but not about the combatants.”¹⁴ We can thus see an increased number of speeches and appeals from veterans of the Great War who are explicitly part and parcel

of this competition between heroes: either to sweep it away in the name of unity or to recall their memorial existence in the face of the risks, real or alleged, of relegation. One of the rhetorical dimensions of this competition between heroes emphasizes that those of 1914–18 were victorious; another extends the notion of “resistance” to the Great War. At times, rivalries were played out in families and family memories. François Ridel, the singer with the Massilia Sound System group and composer of a song about his great-uncles in the war, recounts the “competition,” to use his own word, between his father, a veteran of 1940, and his grandfather, a veteran of 1914, which marked him.¹⁵

A Period of Lower Intensity

In a more general way, it appears quite clearly that the 1950s were a low moment for the position of 1914–18 in the public sphere. Between 1945 and 1958, World War I–related cultural and scholarly production of all sorts was less important than before and also less significant compared to what was to come in the 1960s. Commemorations sometimes seemed to lack ambition.¹⁶ If we are to believe the *Almanach*, the thirty-fifth anniversary of Verdun in 1951 was a “forgotten anniversary,” with no coverage in the press, unlike in the years after 1918: “Gone into oblivion.”¹⁷ This lesser interest in 1914–18 was undoubtedly explained by the shadow of World War II, as was noted by François Mauriac in *Le Figaro Littéraire*: “But the Great War no longer belongs to a recent past, the protagonists in the drama have almost all left the scene. . . . What we still call ‘the Great War’ disappears beneath the muddy tide of 1940.”¹⁸ Others were all too inclined to follow that line of thought.¹⁹ *Poilus’* notebooks and war memories did not sell and did not interest many people, in the view of several publishers. We may gauge the contrast with the present-day period, since the 1990s, when the most prestigious publishing houses have been publishing the writings of 1914–18 soldiers, often unknown, sometimes with major success. We will come back to this later on.

It would nevertheless be an oversimplification to define the memory of 1914–18 during the 1950s as an old subject for aging war veterans. At times, the memory of the war could still resonate strongly with important political and social issues, particularly during the Algerian War. Take, for instance, the “scandal” Stanley Kubrick’s *Paths of Glory* brought about in 1958²⁰: the film recounts the judgment and execution of soldiers for “cowardice in the face of the enemy” after a failed attack (based on a novel by Humphrey Cobb and real stories of French soldiers executed by firing squad). Opposition to the film was so heated that it could not be shown in France, but discussion about the work’s merits were rife in the press. The various arguments brought to the fore many stories about the

Great War: combatants and their families attest to as much.²¹ If the truth be told, what made Kubrick's film matter the way it did (and this is also true for the *Notebooks* of Abel Ferry, a war veteran and minister in 1914, which were published at the same time [1957]), was the fact that France was at war: the French army sent young, conscripted Frenchmen to Algeria. Critics of that policy stepped up the number of parallels between the two periods, for example around the relations between civilian powers and military powers, in order to make their case.

Pains in the Neck and Old Jerks

As time passed, the disappearance of the war generation took up more and more room in the various discourses about the conflict. What was obviously a matter of concern, over and above nostalgic dimensions and harking back to the past, was the question of how the memories of the war could be passed on to the next generation. At the end of a 1964 book about the fate of soldiers in the Great War, Pierre Bourget asked himself rhetorically: after the death of the “‘last man’ at Douaumont . . . nothing?”²² These concerns were expressed in a context where the slowly disappearing generation of *anciens combattants* resented what it considered the absence of well-deserved public recognition. Unsurprisingly, criticisms of and poking fun at the war veteran spirit are painfully felt by those aging men of 1914. In her novel *Numéro Six*, Véronique Olmi describes a war veteran, who was a doctor and reactionary, through the voice of his loving daughter reading his war letters: “May ’68 saved me. You wept, when students called *poilus* assholes. You had fought for children who were spitting gleefully in your face. That was your second defeat after Emile’s death [his brother who was killed close to him].”²³

In the context of the growing politicization of the 1960s, the critical and amused eye of some of their contemporaries in a way ratcheted up the anxiety caused by the disappearance of traces. Several journalists and publicists went so far as to criticize World War I commemorations. Maurice Sieklucki, chairman of the Federal Union of War Veterans, was saddened to see war veterans being ridiculed and disparaged as militarists: “They don’t understand, they can’t understand.”²⁴ The figures of the Great War rebels struck a chord with the antimilitarism of the late 1960s. Take for instance the case of future Action Directe leader (Action Directe was an ultra-left-wing group that employed violent means of action) Jean-Marc Rouillan, who began his activism in Toulouse. His memories of those times conjure up many references to rebels of the past and cases of disobedience in the Great War: “We had seen *Paths of Glory*, Stanley Kubrick’s censored film, and we had read the rare books about mutiny and fraternization with the enemy in the trenches, and needless to add, from

my early childhood, I knew everything about the adventures of corporal Vincent Moulia. . . . Our fraternization with the Reds was meant above all to preserve that collective and hunted memory. We combined it with our rejection and our uprisings.”²⁵ Far from clinging to a form of inner exchange with the past, the militancy of those young people of Toulouse took on the provocative form of painted inscriptions, associated with the burning of French flags prepared for the occasion, at the War Memorial on Boulevard d’Arcole on the eve of 11 November 1970. On that same day, just after de Gaulle’s death, and elsewhere, too, as in Tours (“dead for nothing”), several war memorials were “sullied by protestors.” This memorial chord of political criticism grew weaker in the 1980s. But at the same time and in the same context of political activism, the voices and the testimonies of popular soldiers emerged in the public sphere, when in the previous years most of the publications came from the upper social milieu. The success of the notebook of Louis Barthas (a barrelmaker of southern France), edited in 1978 by Rémy Cazals in a series dedicated to promote the “voices” of people “from below” in a rather militant perspective, was followed by numerous publications of texts and letters written by “ordinary” soldiers (*Années cruelles*, 1983; *La Plume au fusil*, 1985), which means it was not only the elites whose capability and intention of writings proved quite “natural.”²⁶ In a more general way, this interest for the war experiences of ordinary soldiers paved the way for the rediscovery of World War I memories in a new political context.

Returning Memories: The 1990s

The “Derniers Poilus”

In the 1990s, in many different forms, the presence of the Great War in the public sphere actually increased, something that was marked at the end of the decade, in 1998, by an important speech from Prime Minister Lionel Jospin, at Craonne in the Aisne department, that triggered a controversy about the memory of 1914–18 and the memory of war refusals in particular.

The figure of the “last *poilus*,” the last living World War I veterans, spread in the public domain in general and in the media in particular. In 1995, an initiative introduced by the government awarding the Legion of Honor to 1914–18 veterans who did not have it gave them a certain topical attention. It was also at the local level that the cult of the “last *poilus*” would be organized, as was attested by an enormous amount of regional press articles putting forward the local veterans. In this regard, the 2000s represented a turning point: the “last *poilu*” category became the main term for relating to the veterans, and, above all, a form of countdown

was triggered in newspaper headlines and article headers. From then on, the “last *poilus*” became nothing less than media icons. This attention culminated in the national funeral ceremonies and tributes for the last of the lasts, which started to be projected in 2005. These national commemorations brought together three distinct commemorative traditions: the tradition of national funerals and the republican Pantheon admission ceremonies, the funerals of the leading World War I generals in the interwar years, and the already mentioned cult of the Unknown Soldier. In 2007, however, this initiative clashed with the reluctance of the last two *poilus*, Louis de Cazenave and Lazare Ponticelli, who had no intention of receiving the honor of a national funeral. Instead, they preferred, as they explained it, to remain loyal to their comrades who had not been sufficiently honored, a line of thought that is reminiscent of Georges Pineau’s discourses in the 1950s. Lazare Ponticelli, who lived to become, from January 2008 up to his death in March 2008, the very last *poilu* and as such received much media coverage, ended up changing his mind and accepting a form of national homage. The staging and success of the “last *poilus*” symbol indicates, first and foremost, that, for our contemporaries, the Great War is still a resource period in the face of uncertain collective horizons of expectation. The figure of the “last *poilus*” also permits ecumenism: in a rare display of unanimity, both right and left have promoted and endorsed the idea of a national funeral ceremony, with each side insisting on the narratives and values that suit them most (courage versus criticism, patriotism versus pacifism, etc.). The last *poilus* have thus become national memory icons in a period when, in a more general way, the Great War is stirring up a great deal of interest among French people.

Various Forms of Memory Activism

The fact that, during the early 2000s, World War I became a literary *sujet* of some importance plainly attests to the growing relevance of the war’s memory in the public sphere. In 2004 alone, major French publishing houses published ten novels whose plot was set in a WWI-setting—with a special emphasis *poilus*’ war experiences—or centered around memory issues. Most were written by authors belonging to the generation of grandchildren or great-grandchildren. That same year, Jean-Pierre Jeunet’s film *Un long dimanche de fiançailles* (*A Very Long Engagement*), a tale of disciplinary repression during the war adapted from the novel by Sébastien Japrisot, attracted an audience of more than four million! The Great War in France is thus a great deal more than history. It stirs up an interest that is evident in the many different cultural productions. In addition to films, books, comic strips—take for instance the great success of Jacques Tardi—and plays, there are contemporary rock and pop songs (by Miossec

and Indochine, for example). Countless associative activities are taking place in the former front zone. Associations, often staffed by volunteers, are maintaining the patrimony, recreating it, organizing visits and lectures. In many ways, they are stepping in for the state, which is—at least from their point of view—somewhat faltering when it comes to preserving the Great War’s vestiges. There are also plenty of amateur historians and genealogists taking up histories of their ancestors during the war, even in some cases editing their notebooks as fully-fledged books or posting them on the internet. In a word, far from being merely a scholarly subject, the 1914–18 war has, over the past thirty years or so, become nothing less than a major social and cultural activity, which reached its climax during the centenary.

This interest is part and parcel of the development of patrimonial associations and the vitality of local history, stimulated by the spread of higher education, which is turning out ever better trained individuals. A twofold series of factors is involved here. The first stems from the specific features of the Great War, which affected the entire population (eight million people were mobilized). Everyone can include their “family history” in the “Great History”: individual destinies find their way into the collective struggle and go beyond the ordinary horizons of the regional environment. This family inclusion in collective history is helped by the dominant images of 1914–18 today: the *poilu* appears first of all as a victim of the terrible conditions of war, or as a battlefield hero, or both. There are very few other collective experiences on the basis of which memories can build so many positive figures. The second series of explanations for this revival of attentiveness to the history of the Great War goes beyond the conflict itself. Interest in the past is fueled by the blurring of collective horizons in France, with the fading of grand narratives and the projects associated with them: the fall of state communism, the liberal turning point of social democracy, and so on. In a nutshell, our societies are without any doubt in a new relation to memory and history. Among the dramatic periods of history that resonate with contemporaries, World War I clearly rings out loudly.

It is too early to draw definitive conclusions about the war’s centenary (2014–18), but it seems that the last four years can best be understood as a confirmation of the existing commemorative and memory dynamics and patterns: during the French centenary, a massive engagement of the state (with at least one major commemorative ceremony—but more often than not several of them—involving the president of the Republic being organized by the official *Mission du Centenaire* each year) intersected with an even more impressive memory activism “from below” (with thousands of media, pedagogical, commemorative, cultural, and scholarly

projects being organized throughout the entire country). On the whole, the important media coverage and the no less important (public) funding probably combined to open up new audiences (especially in generational terms). Beyond any doubt, one of the distinctive and new features to emerge during the centenary period has been the ambition to develop a global and international commemorative discourse, without, however, abandoning national narratives that came to the fore on many different occasions. On a bilateral level, it was in particular the French-German dimension that was very present across the centenary. In many regards, the new monument of Notre Dame de Lorette embodies the “transnationalization” of memory: the names of all the fallen soldiers in northern France, friends and foes alike, are engraved in alphabetical order on the walls of the huge Anneau de la mémoire. The monument was inaugurated by President François Hollande in November 2014. Given the centenary’s importance, it is not surprising that the centenary is itself becoming a research topic.²⁷

The contemporary historiographical arguments that we are about to broach overlap and intersect with these many different areas of interest in the war.

Historiographies

Interwar Years

In this period, and, first and foremost, in its initial phase, the history of the war was synonymous with diplomatic and military history: prewar diplomacy and the diplomacy of the summer of 1914, more or less secret negotiations during the conflict itself, explanations of strategic and tactical choices, and the unfolding of battles seen from the point of view of the commanding generals, have attracted historians’ attention. Quite often, the historical *acteurs* themselves claimed to provide a valid historiographical narrative. Journalists and men of letters described the war, backed up by varying degrees of research. Gallimard thus published in 1936 a very imposing *Histoire de la Grande Guerre* by former war correspondent and literary critic Henry Bidou, who had already written a battlefield travel guide. Bidou had found a historian’s legitimacy by taking part, under the editorship of Ernest Lavisse, in the *Histoire de France contemporaine* (vol. 9 *La Grande Guerre*): here, in seven hundred dense pages, everything is seen from the military and political decision makers’ perspective.

National narratives often lay at the heart of the argument (*pro domo* plea, “lessons” to be learned for the good of the country, etc.). This dimension was further heightened by the choice of themes. If we look at

the World War I bibliography of the interwar years, studies about Verdun, once again, are at least four times more numerous than those about the Chemin des Dames. The intermingling of political and historical issues also led to giving a central place to the question of “responsibilities” for the conflict. In an impressive scholarly work about the mechanism of the 1914 crisis, Pierre Renouvin accuses the Central Powers of bearing the main responsibility for the war’s outbreak.²⁸ In response, pacifist intellectuals (Gustave Dupin, Félicien Challaye, René Gerin) did their utmost, in a nearly Dreyfusard manner, to demonstrate that the thesis positing sole (German) responsibility did not hold water, accusing, in particular, the general mobilization of the Russian army. In working on the origins of the war, pacifists, for their part, fought against international tensions and sought to display and dismantle the warmongering lies of the past.²⁹ These issues were the subject of many public debates, and militants attached much importance to them. Here, first and foremost, 1914 was a publicly discussed subject with tremendous political implications.³⁰ The same was the case with the history of the working-class movement and the revolutions during and just after the war, much studied by militants, one such being the trade unionist Alfred Rosmer, who, since the beginning of the war, had been part of the “minority voices” opposed to the war and to the “union sacrée.”³¹ Through its systematic criticism of the imperialist war, the new Communist Party also produced a whole set of articles, texts, and pamphlets about the history of the war, all the more so because many intellectuals had rallied to their cause (see in particular the Clarté series).

Senior officers, for their part, defended themselves, offering insights into the way operations were conducted, putting forward their legitimacy as skilled military practitioners in the process, whether those involved were great leaders like Philippe Pétain, who wrote *Bataille de Verdun* (1929), or lower-ranking generals like Jean Rouquerol, who described the offensive of the Chemin des Dames (1934). Maxime Weygand, who took part in the 1918 negotiations beside Foch, published a book titled *11 Novembre*, which described the armistice and then the celebration of the Unknown Soldier (1932) in a very patriotic and antipacifist spirit.

In many cases, professional historians, teaching at the university or in charge of the secondary curriculum, were also war veterans, two such being Pierre Renouvin and Jules Isaac. The figure of Pierre Renouvin thus acquired stature: a war veteran who had returned home an amputee, a man of order who became one of the most influential figures of French contemporary history, and a professor at the Sorbonne for more than thirty years (1931–64). When the war ended, he was appointed curator

of the Bibliothèque-Musée de la Guerre (War Museum Library, the future BDIC), where an immense documentation was brought together. To begin with, Renouvin played an institutional role of prime importance, not only with his chair but also in the *Revue d'histoire de la Guerre mondiale* and as editor of the *Revue historique*. In addition to this, he also supervised the publication of French diplomatic documents. A large part of his own work also focused on 1914–18 and the political and diplomatic aspects of the war. Among other things, he offered an important reflection about the way the French executive and legislative institutions evolved during the war years.³² As already mentioned, he also linked historiography and politics by defending the French position on German responsibilities. Last of all, he supervised the works of those who, through their positions, extended the institutional importance of the Great War after World War II.

The voices of simple soldiers and the various social challenges and movements appeared only rarely in this initial historiographical moment, which ran from the 1920s to the 1950s. Once again, Renouvin's *oeuvre* is a case in point: although being a World War I veteran himself, he never paid much attention to what ordinary soldiers might have to say about the conflict.³³ Combatants' experiences were thus above all delivered in the form of testimonies, a genre among whose authors members of the social elites were overrepresented for obvious reasons. When firsthand accounts of the fighting were integrated into a broader narrative, this was first and foremost done by the *poilus* themselves. Two books stand out in that regard. The first one is Jacques Péricard's colossal book on *Verdun*, published in 1934. Péricard, a war hero and right-wing militant, had called upon the testimonies of simple soldiers who had taken part in the various battles in the Verdun region and in particular in the battle of 1916. These were fully incorporated in his narrative (Péricard lists them at the end of the volume) without, however, gaining any priority over the description of the overall events. The second one was the book by Jean Norton Cru, another war veteran and a professor of literature who, in order to establish the "truth" of testimony, became involved in a considerable critical work yielding an acute analysis of combatant authors. *Témoins* (Witnesses) (1929) was an "analytical and critical essay about the memories of combatants written in French between 1915 and 1928." Applying the methods of the French *école méthodique*, Norton Cru compared and counterchecked sources, ascertaining the level of "truth" of any given *témoignage*. The result was a truth hierarchy of sorts, with Norton Cru classifying the soldiers' testimonies "by order of value." Some of the greatest successes of the day, Barbusse's *Le Feu* and Dorgeles's *Les Croix de bois*, were listed among the "mediocre" titles in the school of truth.

Writers who were denounced for their tall stories and their effect-seeking defended themselves vigorously, and the debate became heated. Behind quarrels about details, broad issues were played out: Where was the truth of testimony to be found? How was the experience of the front to be transmitted? The various controversies also brought to the fore the classical opposition between literature and history. Arguments about the scope and relevancy of combatant testimony went on and on.³⁴

From World War II to the 1990s

In the 1960s, the history of the Great War benefitted from the development of economic and social history, and from more attentive ways of looking at average, low-level combatants and civilians that emerged in the context of a period marked by the powerful presence of Marxism in intellectual and political debates.³⁵ The works of historians thus focused on the link between the state and the economy, the emergence of a mixed economy, the interaction between capitalist interests and public policies, and social struggles. Quantification (of elements of discourse and people, etc.) was widely used. The working class and its role in industrial mobilization played an important part in the works, all the more so because the subject was linked to the revolutionary openings of 1917–19.³⁶ Then Jean-Louis Robert embarked on his research about Parisian workers during wartime.³⁷ Anthropology and social sciences started to enrich all this work: with the help of a statistical processing of registers and rolls, private sources and oral investigations, Jules Maurin offered a large monograph about the soldiers of Languedoc from the prewar period to the end of the conflict.³⁸ In particular, he showed the social differentiation of losses of life and the soldiers' low ideological involvement in the conflict. In a more classical tradition, Georges-Henri Soutou was, for his part, interested in the goals of economic war through broad comparative research, in France, England, Germany, and the United States.³⁹ As far as Germany is concerned, his study corrects some of Fritz Fischer's theses as to the continuity of German war aims from the second half of the nineteenth century to World War I. As for the French case, he insists, on the contrary, on the continuity of strategic goals between 1871 and 1919.

It behooves us to note the powerful impetus provided by the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Great War in 1964–68. Historiographic production, at that time, abounded, and a variety of subject matters were covered. Due to the development of television in general and history on television in particular, World War I enjoyed quite a media presence at that juncture. Yet, the anniversary also showed the extent to which traditional battle history, in particular around the heroic diptych of the Marne

and Verdun, was still significant. That was also a time of publications of testimony from personalities (Fayolle, Maginot), as well as more ordinary soldiers (Louis Planté). Above all, the fiftieth anniversary represented in many ways the apotheosis and swan song of war veterans as historians of the war they endured fifty years earlier. Many were those who, beyond their own experience, retraced a battle or provided an overall view of the conflict or one of its aspects.⁴⁰

Gradually, with the full-scale spread of higher education during the 1970s, the Great War became a central subject of university-based research, when, at the time of the fiftieth anniversary, journalists and men of letters had still been dominating the field. In this way, chairs at the Sorbonne were obtained by Guy Pedroncini (1978, after having been senior lecturer from 1969 to 1972), whose research focused on Pétain, the high command, and the mutinies of 1917; Antoine Prost (1979); and then André Kaspi, whose university career started with a thesis on American assistance to France in 1917 (1988 for his chair).⁴¹ Supervised, like Prost, by Renouvin, Jean-Jacques Becker became professor at Nanterre in 1985 after having been senior lecturer there, with an acclaimed thesis on “the opinion” in 1914, which did away with the idea that there was general enthusiasm for mobilization.⁴² This university and institutional centrality of the Great War was also notable in following generations. At the Sorbonne, Jean-Louis Robert, whose studies on the workers’ movement during World War I have been mentioned earlier, took over from Antoine Prost. The post of director of the Centre of Military History at the University of Montpellier (III) went to a Great War specialist, Frédéric Rousseau.

Undoubtedly, the Great War was a world war. Yet, this dimension is not to be found in due proportion in French World War I research. As a matter of fact, the attention French historians have paid to other belligerents is quite uneven. For example, Great Britain and Austria-Hungary have never given rise to major French works. There is a certain interest in the United States and war in the 1970s and 1980s, often seen through the prism of “international relations studies,” before that interest faded.⁴³ Lastly, colonial war experiences have led to important works, which, however, tended to start from the actual terrain of colonial history.⁴⁴

The Great War through the Lens of Culture?

For about twenty-five years or so, cultural history has been experiencing a growing popularity among historians. This area of research is becoming increasingly diversified. The rise of this historiography has to do with questions peculiar to the historian’s discipline and the more general

movements of contemporary societies. For 1914–18, it goes hand in hand, among a group of historians gathered around the Historial of Péronne (Somme), with an argument of methodological rupture, which sees itself as an operation of historiographical revision under the aegis of “cultural history.” This meant placing the representations of World War I-contemporaries and in particular the way “cultural mobilizations” operated squarely in the center of the research agenda. The title of the book published in 2000 by Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau and Annette Becker, *Retrouver la guerre*, neatly typifies this viewpoint. The authors argue that earlier generations of researchers did not pay enough attention to the importance of culture in the maintenance of hostilities, thereby minimizing soldiers’ and civilians’ identification with the nation at war. Against historiographies deemed to be too close to the historical *acteurs*, it would be necessary to review the various viewpoints and break with the arguments of 1914–18 soldiers, the significance of which we have seen, and with that of their memories. The historians referred to have developed their proposals to re-read the history of 1914–18 based on a museographical undertaking on a large scale, the Historial de Péronne (opened in 1992), which stimulated the contemporary presentations of the conflict. Bringing together historiography and museography, the museum represents an important stage in the new policy involving the patrimonial development of 1914–18 sites linked to territorial cultural development. So, it is pertinent to consider the historiographical propositions being discussed here as part of a dynamic situated at the crossroads of the renewals of cultural history, revisionist endeavors being conducted on the history of the French Revolution (around François Furet) and on other terrain, and broader political and cultural trends.

The term “culture of war” is the matrix of the interpretation proposed by the historians of the Historial de Péronne. It describes “a corpus of representations of the conflict crystallized in a veritable system, lending war its deep-seated meaning,” a corpus rooted in “hatred” of the enemy and shared by the populations of the different belligerent countries. It is the culture of war that, say its advocates, explains the violence and longevity of conflict. Added to this is a wave of religious fervor, where the idea of crusades is being revived.⁴⁵ These overall viewpoints are accompanied by an understanding of new research subjects. Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau, for instance, worked on rape occurring in wars and on children during the war, the latter a theme further researched by his student Manon Pignot.⁴⁶

Audoin-Rouzeau also wrote on the phenomenon of mourning, without, however, claiming any representativity, because these “narratives of mourning” are above all those of educated elites, familiar with writing. The historian’s intent here is to “grasp as closely as possible . . . the heart

of the pain left by the great wave of 1914–1918, once this has ebbed . . . , understand the bereavement, and the private dimension of loss.”⁴⁷ Nowadays this approach of history of sensibility, or history of the intimate, is followed by several works, not always taking much into account the social backgrounds as a key context.⁴⁸

The cultural approach encourages works on every possible medium. Nicolas Beaupré has extensively worked and published on war literature,⁴⁹ and Laurent Véray has proposed an analysis of World War I films. In *La Grande Guerre au cinéma*, he intermingles overall views and zooms in on certain important films showing how we move from “the glorification of combat to the denunciation of the horror of the trenches.”⁵⁰ There are now plenty of works on the pictorial and visual representations of the war, too many to cite all of them.⁵¹ The notion of “*sortie de guerre*” extends these lines of thinking. Bruno Cabanes thus examined demobilization in its technical dimensions (five million soldiers had to get their civilian lives back), here ending with a success of administration. He also analyzes in detail two major experiences for those soldiers who lived through them: going to and staying in the provinces recovered, and the occupation of the Rhineland.⁵² Far from clichés about wondrous finds, Cabanes draws up a subtle picture of the contact between French troops and the people of Alsace-Lorraine. The occupation of the Rhine’s left bank, a form of “war after the war,” gave rise to a “growing tension” between French soldiers and the population, marked by the famous propaganda campaign launched by the Germans against the colonial troops, studied by Jean-Yves Le Naour.⁵³

The proposals of the historians of Péronne did not give rise to consensus. Some historians rejected them head-on (Rémy Cazals, Frédéric Rousseau), others in less radical ways (François Cochet, Antoine Prost). They questioned the sources used (or not) to build the notion of the “culture of war,” observing a large choice of documents often written behind the lines and by the elites of the day. Nothing in any of these cases can serve as proof on a sufficiently broad and representative scale, which embraces populations examined in series over a significant period of time (the length of the war, at least). Recently, Nicolas Mariot has offered new findings backing up criticism.⁵⁴ By studying the letters and notebooks of forty-two intellectuals who went to war as foot soldiers or with a lower rank, Mariot concludes that ideological involvement in conflict does indeed depend on the individual’s social situation (a point that has been emphasized in the case of the German Empire by Benjamin Ziemann and Nicolas Patin⁵⁵). Those intellectuals rightly lamented the fact that the working classes whom they observed at the front failed to share their ideals. Over and above that issue, Mariot shows that intellectuals did not

mix with the peasants, craftsmen, and workers with whom they rubbed shoulders. For their part, specialists in combatant testimony note that hatred of the enemy was rarely expressed among soldiers at the front after the first few weeks of war: as for the crusade idea, it was not part of the common vocabulary of most soldiers.

For many, the history of the “culture of war” is a history that also minimizes political stakes and power struggles. More generally, it is true that, in the 1990s and 2000s, the political history of the conflict was not much studied. Bruno Cabanes’s book about French soldiers at the end of the war illustrates this tendency. He does not situate the return of combatants in the social and political conflicts of the years 1919–21. The notion of “patriotic consent” has also been widely discussed. In its actual conception: to consent, you must have the choice. The fact is, of course, that conscription does not permit such a choice. Nicolas Mariot has then argued that it was presumptuous to derive from an act (the fact of not rebelling, for example, and “doing one’s duty”) a belief (that of belonging to a cause, through a heightened sense of patriotism in this instance). Nothing makes it possible to move directly from an analysis of apparent patterns of behavior to beliefs rooted in those persons involved. Studies carried out on voluntary service (Jules Maurin, Frédéric Rousseau) show further that, after the initial engagement of 1914, the decrease was quite clear, and that the vast majority of those volunteering for service chose combat duties as far removed as possible from trench warfare, by gradually refining their survival strategy.

In a more general way, it has been underscored that the behavior and beliefs of soldiers at war could not be the object of any monolithic explanation, and with time this commonsense viewpoint attracted wider attention. Frédéric Rousseau emphasized that it is important to embrace a “bundle of factors” in order to understand soldiers’ motivations, for example the major part played by comradeship and the small group, that “local” solidarity which is not national.⁵⁶ The term “culture of war,” though widely used in historiography, has been called into question around the actual method making it possible to bolster the notion. How can a “culture of war,” i.e. a specific cultural dimension, be shared by all populations, even in differing degrees, and even with great nuances? First of all, as we know, the split between being behind the lines and at the front provides some structure in the representations and behavior of one and all. Antoine Prost, who has a balanced position in this debate, has effectively highlighted this difference. Then to have such a decisive role in the all-encompassing nature of the conflict, the “culture of war” should have retrieved, from the people involved, the other cultural matrices. The fact is that the internalization of the demands of the conflict cannot

ignore all the other forms of allegiances (political, religious, local, affective, etc.), some of which do not go well with all-out war. Otherwise put, for the soldiers, “the uniform does not abolish identities.”⁵⁷

What is more, the historicization of the “culture of war” also poses problems. Since when were societies imbued with such a culture? It is often said that it would erupt in 1914, here attributing a decisive role to the German “atrocities” during the invasion, and their representations, among the Allies in particular, in order to polarize identities, then throughout the conflict subsequently.⁵⁸ But how are we to grasp that a culture was “crystallized” from the early days of the war, when the very nub of the culture resides in the fact that it is a makeshift cobbling together of varied elements that are consolidated in the long term? Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau nevertheless notes that the “culture of war” should be set within a broader chronological frame that, in particular, takes into account “its roots in the previous century.” It is not hard to see the difficulties here: either the “culture of war” is incorporated in the long term, and in this case it is hard to understand what turned it into a driving force in 1914, or the “culture of war” “appeared” in 1914, and in this case the term “culture” is inappropriate for describing such a brutal phenomenon. In the heat of these debates, 2005 saw the formation of a research group on the Great War, partly in reaction to the “culturalist” turning point already mentioned. The Collective for International Research and Debate on the 1914–18 War (CRID) brought together researchers from varied backgrounds: some came from social history (Rémy Cazals), others from the social sciences (Nicolas Mariot is a specialist of political sciences), and others still had been nurtured on history/social sciences or on socio-history (André Loez and we ourselves). These professional researchers have been joined by historians whose research is not the main activity. But what is involved is in no way a “School of Constraint”—this point needs stressing—as opposed to a “School of Consent.” The CRID 14–18’s brief was thus also to encourage a broad exchange, even beyond academia, even more so given the fact that the Great War has continued to stir up questions in a public that is far wider than history professionals.⁵⁹

These debates have been based on—and have also stimulated—works on movements resisting the war. André Loez completely reused the file on the 1917 mutinies.⁶⁰ Equipped with solid social science tools, he first showed that the mutinies, and the mutineers, were part and parcel of a political context open to the possibilities perceived and used by the actors involved. He also underscored the strength of the movement, all the more so because the risks taken by those who were involved in it were very considerable. The actions of the mutineers, analyzed in detail, make it possible to conclude that the movement was “a massive refusal of war

taking many different forms.” Beyond this, many works have shown the extent to which the *poilus* were forever setting up strategies of avoidance and ways of dodging and sidestepping things in the face of the constraints of trench warfare. Charles Ridet has proposed an overall view of the matter of “shirkers.”⁶¹ These men, who were rightly or wrongly accused of wanting to avoid their duties by running away from dangerous postings and positions, gave rise to countless denunciations and press campaigns. Here, Ridet sees nothing less than an “obsession” in France at war, where the notion of equality in the face of the “blood tax” powerfully structured mentalities. Unlike the hasty ideas that can be read on this subject, truces and tacit agreements, and other “minor gestures of non-aggression,” were repeated practices of the trench war on the different fronts, which often affected the soldiers. The fraternizations of Christmas 1914, consisting of meetings in no-man’s land around exchanges involving a drink, or a smoke, or food, undoubtedly had a particular scale on the Anglo-German front, but those moments of peaceful contacts between one camp and the other existed before, after, and right up to 1918, depending on various intensities and periods of time and taking on many different forms. All the practices on which we have here shed light attested to “a great capacity of resistance to warmongering words.”⁶² Already in 1977, Antoine Prost’s thesis had shown the importance that war veterans placed on commemorating the arbitrariness and excesses of military justice; we have had a closer look at the trajectories of that memory over a century,⁶³ while several books, adopting differing viewpoints, have greatly developed the functional mechanisms and challenges of courts martial and execution squads.⁶⁴

It is not a question of overpromoting actions that are only one aspect, among many others, of combatant practices, but rather of emphasizing that they do not tally with the image of soldiers full of hatred and ready at any moment to get into a fight. Nor is it a matter, here, of contrasting a historiography of refusals and avoidance tactics with that of “consent”—we must again stress this point—but of showing, in the various practices, how the soldiers organized their different types of conduct without necessarily relating them to general ideological phenomena.

Recent Research Tendencies

Deeper Investigations

Today, the internationalization of research, which has definitely not come full circle, is leading to a relative standardization of questioning and methodologies. Numerous thematic fields broached by historians of

France thus intersect with the international output. So it is henceforth common currency to broadly question the role of the historian in the actual making of history, the interaction between his present position and his ways of working, as has been illustrated by the publication in French (but swiftly translated into English) of the historiographical volume authored by Jay Winter and Antoine Prost.⁶⁵ One of the particularly convincing features of the volume is its ambition to systematically link the historiographical analysis of World War I to the social and memory contexts in which it takes place. Recently, Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau, for his part, has tried to define the effects of war on his family, finally including himself in the end of the sequence, providing a personal version of the apprentice's narrative of a historian, and hiding neither his subjectivities nor his feeling of clumsiness.⁶⁶

As in other subfields of the discipline, the history of the Great War today plays to a great extent with scales. That is to say, that the general questions about the conflict find answers in analyses that vary the breadth of the frame depending on desires and needs. Some historians thus focus on individuals and couples who talk beyond their own history, like the deserter turned transvestite to hide himself studied by Fabrice Virgili and Danièle Voldman.⁶⁷ The works inspired by gender studies, however, are still limited. The city also appears like a fertile and renewed area of observation for societies at war, as is attested to by the program run by Jay Winter and Jean-Louis Robert about capitals at war, and Elise Julien's dissertation about war memories in Paris and Berlin.⁶⁸ These interplays of scales often encompass similar issues. There is the general issue, expanding on the questionings of the 1990s, of the ideological and cultural mobilization of societies, which was tackled in studies on propaganda and the construction of war references and arguments. Jean-Yves Le Naour, for instance, questions the religious charisma of Claire Ferchaud, a modest countrywoman from Loublande (Deux-Sèvres), part of the reactionary tradition of La Vendée: in 1916, she announced herself as a bearer of messages from Christ crucial for France's victory. There was no dearth of enthusiasm, like that displayed by those pilgrims who betook themselves to the family farm to meet the heroine of a combative Catholicism, sometimes even forcing the door to see her.⁶⁹

The history of economic mobilization has been looked at anew by François Bouloc, who studied "war profiteers" both from the viewpoint of representations, political customs, and the construction of the category and from that of practices.⁷⁰ He then shows how productive it is to overlap these different aspects by, in particular, underscoring the fact that industrialists and manufacturers did not espouse the practices of their patriotic public commitments. They greatly impeded the creation of taxes

on war profits (1916). With the work of Laura Lee Downs on the gendered division of labor in the metallurgical industry,⁷¹ this is one of the rare recent research projects that incorporate the new approaches to economic history. Various research and publication projects conducted in the context of the centenary have, however, further accentuated this trend: in the last couple of years we have seen some major conferences being organized by institutions that did not have a World War I-related research activity prior to the anniversary but that—like, for instance, the Institut de la Gestion publique et du développement économique or the Comité pour l'histoire économique et financière de la France—took advantage of the centenary and enhanced our understanding of the war's economic and labor history.⁷²

Generally speaking, historians are today attentive to the wide diversity of war experiences, to borrow an expression that well describes contemporary orientations marked by the input of anthropology and renewed military history. Needless to say, there are the experiences of combatants henceforth being dealt with from every angle, including the most private ones, and those hardest to discern: motivations, comradeship, leisure pastimes in the trenches, and sports. The variety of civilians' experiences gives rise to ever larger works, especially in occupation zones, such as in the work by Philippe Salson about the occupied Aisne department, with more subtle and differentiated ways of dealing with the relations between occupiers and occupied.⁷³ Forms of resistance to the war, which also put into perspective different degrees of identification with the enveloping discourse of national defense, still have a significant place in recent books.⁷⁴

More and more, the Great War is understood as being part of a larger timeframe. This involves, on the one hand, an emphasis on the evolution of memory and its commemorative use, sometimes right up to the present day.⁷⁵ Many monographs are still being devoted to forms of mourning, national cults, and war memorials, as well as to presenting war in museums. On the other hand, there is the more delicate question as to how the Great War is connected with the wars that preceded it and those that have followed it. To give but one example, the development of 1914–18 studies today prompts us to question in new ways the wars of the early twentieth century—the Russo-Japanese War, the Balkan Wars—following a research protocol established in World War I studies.⁷⁶

Renewals

One of the striking renewals of the last few years involves getting away from the national framework to re-question other forms of belonging and

identification. This is especially the case with regions, long regarded as a matter of local erudition, or the framework of general monographs. Regional identities, those “small homelands,” are today being analyzed as an integral part of the conflict’s history, for the specific features of war experiences that they can produce, and for the upheavals that they suffer, but also for specific memories they give rise to. These works focus above all on regions with strong autonomist traditions: Alsace, Brittany, Corsica, Languedoc.⁷⁷ The wartime history of the various colonies and French territories also benefits from this trend with the centenary providing an additional impulse.⁷⁸ Not unconnectedly, the construction of figures and reports, in particular figures of losses, are being re-questioned from a more or less constructivist angle.⁷⁹ The connection to a larger scale is made in the book by Carl Bouchard, who studies a corpus of French letters sent to Woodrow Wilson: they demonstrate the extent to which the president of the United States represented a symbol of hope for average Frenchmen and -women.⁸⁰ More generally, works are more and more attentive to the question of the writing process and scripturality.

Among promising renewals, we should also mention less anthropocentric questionings. This is where the effects of the war on the environment come to the fore.⁸¹ Historians also seek to develop a global environmental history of the Great War (Tait Keller) and to deal with the ecological impact of the conflict, both on nature and on human representations. This approach is not limited to the Western Front but encompasses all kinds of ecological consequences of the conflict, due to the economic exploitation of the African colonies, Asia, and America.

In the same vein, the historian Eric Baratay, with the help of ethology, is trying, as far as is possible, to get people to understand what the experiences of animals have been in war, “just as historians have learnt to do for the vanquished, the conquered, and the anonymous.” In his book, we follow animals from their departure, leaving their familiar master, for example, to heroization (for at least some of them during the conflict), and then to oblivion, which has been their lot after the war. Animals caught up in the conflict, without directly participating in it, like wild beasts or roaming cats, are also taken into consideration.⁸² The approach chosen makes it possible to grasp the complex picture of animals’ lived experiences, which differed depending on their origin and their own history prior to the war. For example, horses living in relative solitude, with a peasant or craftsman, suffered more from being mobilized and integrated into a military collective than those whose past had accustomed them to the group, while for certain stray dogs, wartime conditions are better than what they knew beforehand. The study also takes into account the different ways human interaction with animals has been framed in different

national contexts. Environmental questions are of course related to human-animal interaction in various other ways. Take for instance the consequences of the war on hunting (in some parts of Africa for instance, the lack of hunters, who are mobilized, eases the pressure on wildlife).⁸³

Another subfield of World War I-related research that has received a considerable boost in the last couple of years is archeology. As a matter of fact, the archaeology of the 1914–18 war is becoming more and more professionalized, its questions becoming more refined, and its methods of investigation (parasitology, dendrochronology, radiography, etc.) multiplying.⁸⁴ Its results are not always as spectacular and conducive to advances in historical knowledge (about soldiers' everyday life, their equipment, funeral practices, etc.) as (some) archeologists would sometimes argue, but it is undoubtedly playing an important role in the different memorial, educational, and museographical contexts connected with the 1914–18 demand mentioned earlier. More generally, the questions of the artifacts and objects continue to be treated by historians, but not always using the many available tools of the social sciences to understand the relationships between humans and nonhumans.⁸⁵

The political history of the conflict still remains secondary in contemporary debates, or else it is dealt with in the manner of a traditional political history not always connected with the historiographical field of the Great War. We should nevertheless make mention of the works of Romain Ducoulombier.⁸⁶ The historian's intent is to propose an overall re-reading of the birth of the Communist Party, whose strength is based on two overlapping perspectives that, hitherto, often remained separate: the history of war experiences in 1914–18 and the solidly rooted tradition of the history of the working-class movement. Needless to say, there is nothing new about showing that the Communist Party was “born out of the fire” of World War I, or to insist on the importance of its war criticism in its making, but there is something innovative in studying, as Ducoulombier does, “socialist France in uniform” and emphasizing the renovating aspirations of French socialism outside of the historical circumstance of the Russian Revolution. The questions of diplomacy, peace processes, and the construction of peace ideologies also seems to raise new interests, especially in the context of the centenary of the Versailles Treaty.⁸⁷

Projects

After this general survey, it might seem that the history of the Great War has been largely exhausted, tilled by many furrows that have intersected a great deal. If the truth be told, this is a superficial impression. The fact is that contemporary involvement in cultural history has also contributed

to a shrinking of the area of investigation. As a result, military history, which has been relatively neglected, can be revisited on the basis of new questions, well tried and tested from a broader viewpoint—for example, auditory history, sounds at war and sounds of war.⁸⁸ The great battles in the conflict, like the war at sea, have in truth been little studied with regard to today's issues. There is still a lot to be said about the battles of 1915, the combats of 1918, and even about Verdun, even if, for the latter, there have been some recent advances.⁸⁹ Likewise, the narratives that have transformed the battles into memory, the ways in which they have been lent meaning at the time and afterward, and the ways in which they have been included in a general narrative of the war still merit whole studies.⁹⁰ The Eastern Front, a whole swathe of the Great War, despite the thesis of Francine Roussanne Saint-Ramond about the *poilus d'Orient* and despite the many calls of the historians to shift the focus in this direction, is still the poor relative of historiography in France for different and in particular archival and linguistic reasons.⁹¹ Still, a very successful exhibition at the Musée des Invalides, with a catalog, brought the theme to the spotlight in the last months of the centenary.⁹²

The relational dimension at the front should probably still encourage new investigations: relations between people (the gender notion should help progress to be made here) but also between people and objects, whose role is redefined in the war context. All forms of male bonds merit new investigations based on corpora that are not limited to literary texts. More than twenty years ago, Michel Foucault had properly sensed both the importance of and the yawning historiographical gap represented by these relations: “Outside one or two ideas about comradeship, soul brotherhood, and some very fragmentary testimony, what do we know about those emotional whirlwinds, those passionate tempests that there might have been at those particular moments?” He adds that people were held together “by an affective fabric, probably. I do not mean that it was because they were in love with each other that they went on fighting. But honor, courage, not losing face, sacrifice, getting away from the trenches with your friend, in front of your friend, all that implied a very intense emotional frame.”⁹³ A frame that historiography has begun to explore, but which is still probably one of the most important and open projects helping us to grasp the world of trenches and the deep-seated marks it has left behind.

Another area of World War I history that French historians should have a fresh look at is the colonial history of the war, which has not been renewed quite the way it should have been in the last decade or so, by making the most of the conceptual advances of postcolonial his-

tory: referring to relations of domination by adopting a more symmetrical viewpoint, putting the mechanisms of domination at the center of historical analysis, and, most importantly, considering the colonial dimension as a central feature of French history of that time should provide new insights. It is by no means a coincidence that American historiography, accustomed as it is to raise head-on ethnic and racial challenges, has filled this gap with several works about French colonial troops.⁹⁴

Generally speaking, a renewal of any kind should involve a thorough analysis of the way class and milieu determine practices and experiences instead of focusing on types of discourse that have already been analyzed all too well. It is too early to come forth with definite conclusions on the historiographical impact of the centenary, but it seems safe to say that, if we look at the huge number of World War I publications, many owe their existence to publishers' somewhat opportunistic choices and should not leave a lasting imprint on the historiography of the war. To be sure, there are now more state-of-the-art syntheses and compendia than before. Those general works deal with the Great War as a whole⁹⁵ or provide an overview over different aspects, e.g. World War I combatants or civilians. Some try to innovate in narrative and scope, encompassing the world at war.⁹⁶ A tremendous number of exhibition catalogues brought new material and new insights into local contexts and should prove very useful for studies to come. Many new themes of the civilian and front experiences are now largely treated, for instance: sciences at war, medicine, and alimentation.⁹⁷ The centenary did also see the publication of different inventories and research guides that should be useful for historians working on the conflict.⁹⁸

There is still a lot to discover about the return of war veterans to civilian life, about the burden of traumas in their family lives and their lives as fathers and lovers, about their sociable conduct and their patterns of behavior, and about their professional strategies in the abovementioned memorial context.⁹⁹ Anthropology and sociology will be a vital help here. The traces and memories of war in the public place have often, and not without reason, focused on war memorials and grand commemorative monuments (e.g. those marking the Verdun battlefield). Here again, a more general occupation of the public place by the Great War, and its more modest traces, might give rise to general studies, whether we think of funerary inscriptions in cemeteries (like ancient and mediaeval epigraphs) or street plaques (some inventories are already available for the Anglo-Saxon world¹⁰⁰). We would thus see in a much more detailed way how contemporaries have wanted to make sense of the conflict, both in broad corpuses and in broad spaces.

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Notes

1. We are borrowing here from a certain number of analyses made over many years about the historiography of the Great War, published in particular in André Loez and Nicolas Offenstadt, *La Grande Guerre, Carnet du Centenaire* (Paris: Albin Michel, 2013).
2. Louis Kloetz, *La guerre de 1914–1918: Les opérations militaires* (Paris: Editions Sirey, 1966); Général F. Gambiez, Colonel M. Suire, *Histoire de la Première Guerre mondiale* (Paris: Fayard, 1968); François Lagrange, ed., *Inventaire de la Grande Guerre* (Paris: Universalis, 2005).
3. Since 1977, we have been privy to Antoine Prost’s considerable work about the French war veterans: Antoine Prost, *Les Anciens Combattants et la société française, 1914–1939*, 3 vols. (Paris: Presses de la Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques, 1977).
4. For what follows, see Jean-François Jagielski, *Le Soldat inconnu: Invention et postérité d’un symbole* (Paris: Imago, 2005); François Cochet and Jean-Noël Grandhomme, eds., *Les Soldats inconnus de la Grande Guerre: La Mort, le Deuil, la Mémoire* (Saint-Cloud: 14–18/Soteca, 2012); and Prost, *Les Anciens Combattants*, 3:35–38.
5. Jagielski, *Le Soldat inconnu*, 93–95.
6. According to Roland Dorgelès, *Almanach du Combattant [From now on A/C]* (1970): 85.
7. “Le Poilu inconnu,” *A/C* (1922): 15.
8. Prost, *Les Anciens combattants*, 3:38.
9. See on this, Daniel J. Sherman, *The Construction of Memory in Interwar France* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), introduction and in particular 215ff.
10. See the work of Béatrix Pau, *Le Ballet des morts: Etat, armée, familles; s’occuper des corps de la Grande Guerre* (Paris: La Librairie Vuibert, 2016).
11. Communal archives of Levallois-Perret, 2 H 2.
12. *Ibid.*, 2 H 4, war victims, exhumations.
13. Interview with Michèle Viland, granddaughter of Jean-Antoine Marduel, Sainte-Paule, 21 August 2007.
14. “Les anciens de 14–18 doivent-ils se résigner à n’être que des ‘vétérans?’” *A/C* (1950): 5.
15. Telephone conversation, 8 December 2008.

16. Antoine Prost and Jay Winter, *Penser la Grande Guerre, un essai d'historiographie* (Paris: Le Seuil, 2004), 30.
17. *A/C* (1951): 164.
18. François Mauriac, "Race de Corneille," *Le Figaro littéraire*, 14 December 1957.
19. See the journal *Guignol*, 19 March 1958.
20. We might add that William Faulkner's extremely ambitious work *A Fable*, with 1914–18 as its setting, was translated by Gallimard in 1958.
21. On the film and its reception, let us refer readers to Nicolas Offenstadt, *Les fusillés de la Grande Guerre et la mémoire collective* (Paris: Odile Jacob, 2009), 124–28.
22. Pierre Bourget, *Fantassins de 1914* (Paris: Presses de la Cité, 1964), 269.
23. Véronique Olmi, *Numéro six* (Arles: Actes Sud, 2002), 97.
24. *A/C* (1976): 21.
25. Jean-Marc Rouillan, *De Mémoire* (Marseille: Agone, 2007), 87, 206.
26. Louis Barthas, *Les carnets de guerre de Louis Barthas, tonnelier, 1914–1918* (Paris: F. Maspero, 1978); Rémy Cazals et al., eds., *Années cruelles* (Villelongue d'Aude: Atelier du Gué, 1983).
27. See the complete research program of the Centenary Observatory, retrieved 30 August 2019 from <https://www.pantheonsorbonne.fr/autres-structures-de-recherche/observatoire-du-centenaire/>; see also Sylvain Antichan, Sarah Gensburger, and Jeanne Teboul, eds., "La commémoration en pratique: Usages et appropriations du centenaire de la Première Guerre mondiale," *Matériaux pour l'histoire de notre temps* 121–22 (2016): 5–66; Valérie Baudouin, Philippe Chevallier, and Lionel Maurel, eds., *Le web français de la Grande Guerre: Réseaux amateurs et institutionnels* (Nanterre: Presses Universitaires de Paris Nanterre, 2018).
28. Pierre Renouvin, *Les origines immédiates de la guerre* (Paris: A. Costes, 1925).
29. Significantly, the title of Mathias Morhardt's book about the origins of the war published in 1924 was titled *Les Preuves*, like Jaurès's book on the Dreyfus affair.
30. As is shown by an oral inquiry that we carried out in 1990–91 among pacifist war veterans of the 1920s and 1930s, whose answers are now to be consulted in *La Contemporaine* (Nanterre).
31. Alfred Rosmer, *Le mouvement ouvrier pendant la guerre* (Paris: Librairie du travail, 1936).
32. Pierre Renouvin, *Les formes du gouvernement de guerre* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1925).
33. Benjamin Gilles, "L'expérience de la guerre dans ses interstices: Pierre Renouvin et la création du fichier 'Psychologie du combattant,'" *Matériaux pour l'histoire de notre temps* 100 (2010): 14–20.
34. See Frédéric Rousseau, *Le procès des témoins de la Grande Guerre: L'Affaire Norton Cru* (Paris: Le Seuil, 2003); and Leonard F. Smith, *The Embattled Self: French Soldiers' Testimony of the Great War* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2007).
35. See the success of *Vie et mort des Français 1914–1918* by André Ducasse, Jacques Meyer and Gabriel Perreux, well highlighted by Prost and Winter, *Penser la Grande Guerre*, 31–33, 245–46.
36. Annie Kriegel, *Histoire du mouvement ouvrier français 1914–1920: Aux origines du communisme français* (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1964).
37. Jean-Louis Robert, *Ouvriers et mouvement ouvrier parisiens pendant la Grande Guerre et l'immédiat après-guerre: Histoire et anthropologie* (Paris: Thèse Paris 1, 1989); this research was partially published later under the title *Les Ouvriers, la Patrie et la Révolution. Paris 1914–1919* (Besançon: Annales littéraires de l'Université de Besançon/les Belles lettres, 1995).

38. Jules Maurin, *Armée, guerre, société: Soldats languedociens 1889–1919* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1982), for a historiographical overview of the work, see our preface, with André Loez, to the new edition of the work, 2013 by the same publisher.
39. Georges-Henri Soutou, *L'or et le sang: Les buts de guerre économiques de la Première Guerre mondiale* (Paris: Fayard, 1989).
40. In addition to those mentioned in the introduction, see, for instance, Job de Roince, *Charleroi 1914* (Rennes: Union nationale des combattants, 1967); Gabriel Perreux, *La guerre de 1914–1918* (Paris: Hachette, 1964); Gabriel Perreux, *La vie quotidienne des civils en France pendant la Grande Guerre* (Paris: Hachette, 1966); Paul Galland, *Histoire de la Grande Guerre* (Paris: G. Durassié et Cie, 1965).
41. Guy Pedroncini, *Les mutineries de 1917* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1967); André Kaspi, *Le temps des Américains: Le concours américain à la France 1917–1918* (Paris: Institut d'histoire des relations internationales contemporaines, 1976).
42. Jean-Jacques Becker, *1914: Comment les Français sont entrés dans la guerre* (Paris: Presses de la Fondation nationale des sciences politiques, 1977).
43. In addition to the works of André Kaspi cited before, see Denise Artaud, *La question des dettes interalliées et la reconstruction de l'Europe, 1917–1929* (Paris: Diffusion H. Champion, 1978); Yves-Henri Nouailhat, *Les Américains à Nantes et Saint-Nazaire, 1917–1919* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1972); Yves-Henri Nouailhat, *France et Etats-Unis: Août 1914–avril 1917* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1979).
44. Gilbert Meynier, *L'Algérie révélée: La guerre de 1914–1918 et le premier quart du XXe siècle* (Paris: Droz, 1981); Marc Michel, *L'appel à l'Afrique: Contributions et réactions à l'effort de guerre en A.O.F. 1914–1919* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1982).
45. Annette Becker, *La guerre et la foi: De la mort à la mémoire, 1914–1930* (Paris: A. Colin, 1994).
46. Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau, *L'enfant de l'ennemi 1914–1918; Viol, avortement, infanticide pendant la Grande Guerre* (Paris: Aubier, 1995); Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau, *La guerre des enfants: 1914–1918, essai d'histoire culturelle* (Paris: A. Colin, 1993); Manon Pignot, *Allons enfants de la patrie: Génération Grande Guerre* (Paris: Seuil, 2012); in a comparative perspective: Manon Pignot, *L'appel de la guerre: Des adolescents au combat, 1914–1918* (Paris: Anamosa, 2019).
47. Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau, *Cinq deuils de guerre, 1914–1918* (Paris: Noésis, 2001).
48. Clémentine Vidal-Naquet, *Couples dans la Grande Guerre: Le tragique et l'ordinaire du lien conjugal* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2014); Dominique Fouchar, *Les poilus et leurs familles après 1918* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2013).
49. Nicolas Beaupré, *Ecrire en guerre, écrire la guerre: France, Allemagne, 1914–1920* (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 2006).
50. Laurent Veray, *La Grande Guerre au cinéma: De la gloire à la mémoire* (Paris: Ramsay, 2008); Laurent Veray, *Avènement d'une culture visuelle de guerre: Le cinéma en France de 1914 à 1928* (Paris: Nouvelles Editions Place, 2019).
51. See, for instance, the question and the (political) role of the representations of the ruins in Emmanuelle Danchin, *Le Temps des ruines, 1914–1921* (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2015).
52. Bruno Cabanes, *La victoire endeuillée: La sortie de guerre des soldats français, 1918–1920* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 2004).
53. Jean-Yves Le Naour, *La honte noire: L'Allemagne et les troupes coloniales françaises, 1914–1945* (Paris: Hachette, 2003).
54. Nicolas Mariot, *Tous unis dans la tranchée? 1914–1918, les intellectuels rencontrent le peuple* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 2013).

55. Benjamin Ziemann, *Front und Heimat: Ländliche Kriegserfahrungen im südlichen Bayern 1914–1923* (Essen: Klartext, 1997); Nicolas Patin, *La catastrophe allemande 1914–1945: 1674 destins parlementaires* (Paris: Fayard, 2014).
56. Frédéric Rousseau, *La guerre censurée: Une histoire des combattants européens de 14–18* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 2003). This latter aspect has been further developed by Alexandre Lafon, *La Camaraderie au front, 1914–1918* (Paris: A. Colin, 2014).
57. Prost and Winter, *Penser la Grande Guerre*, 143.
58. John Horne and Alan Kramer, *1914: Les atrocités allemandes; La vérité sur les crimes de guerre en France et en Belgique* (Paris: Tallandier, 2005).
59. See, recently, Thierry Hardier, ed., *Craonne: 100 ans de batailles inachevées* (Edhisto/CRID 14–18, 2018).
60. André Loez, *14–18: Les refus de la guerre; Une histoire des mutins* (Paris: Gallimard, 2010).
61. Charles Ridet, *Les embusqués* (Paris: A. Colin, 2007).
62. See Rémy Cazals's chapter in Marc Ferro, ed., *Frères de tranchées* (Paris: Perrin, 2005).
63. Offenstadt, *Les fusillés*.
64. André Bach, *Fusillés pour l'exemple, 1914–1915* (Paris: Tallandier, 2003); Emmanuel Saint-Fuscien, *A vos ordres: La relation d'autorité dans l'armée française de la Grande Guerre* (Paris: Editions de l'EHESS, 2011).
65. Prost and Winter, *Penser la Grande Guerre*. The title of the English version is *The Great War in History: Debates and Controversies; 1914 to the Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).
66. Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau, *Quelle histoire, un récit de filiation, 1914–2014* (Paris: Gallimard, 2014).
67. Fabrice Virgili, Danièle Voldman, *La garçonne et l'assassin: Histoire de Louise et de Paul, déserteur travesti, dans le Paris des années folles* (Paris: Payot&Rivages, 2011).
68. Elise Julien, *Paris, Berlin, la mémoire de la guerre, 1914–1933* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2009).
69. Jean-Yves Le Naour, *Claire Ferchaud: La Jeanne d'Arc de la Grande Guerre* (Paris: Hachette littératures, 2007).
70. François Bouloc, *Les profiteurs de guerre, 1914–1918* (Paris: Editions Complexe, 2008).
71. Laura Lee Downs, *Manufacturing Inequality: Gender Division in the French and British Metalworking Industries, 1914–1939* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995).
72. See for example Fabien Cardoni, ed., *Les banques françaises et la Grande Guerre* (Paris: IGPDE, 2016). See also Laure Manchu, Isabelle Lespinet-Moret, and Vincent Viet, eds., *Mains-d'oeuvre en guerre: 1914–1918* (Paris, La Documentation française, 2018).
73. Philippe Salson, *L'Aisne occupée: Les civils dans la Grande Guerre* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2015); see also James Connolly, Emmanuel Debryne, Elise Julien, and Matthias Meirlaen, eds., *Expériences d'occupation, transferts, héritages (1914–1949)* (Lille: Presses Universitaires du Septentrion, 2018).
74. André Loez and Nicolas Mariot, eds., *Obéir, désobéir: Les mutineries de 1917 en perspective* (Paris: Ed. la Découverte, 2008).
75. Nicolas Offenstadt, *14–18, aujourd'hui: La Grande Guerre dans la France contemporaine* (Paris: Odile Jacob, 2010), to be complemented by Baudouin, Chevallier, and Maurel, *Le web français*. For the *longue durée* of World War I-memories see Rémi Dalisson, *Histoire de la mémoire de la Grande Guerre* (Saint-Cloud: Soteca, 2015).
76. See, for instance, Heather Jones and Arndt Weinrich, "The Pre-1914 Period: Imagined War, Future Wars," *Francia* 40 (2013): 305–464. For the perception of the "lit-

- tle wars” prior to 1914, see also Olivier Cosson, *Préparer la Grande Guerre: L’armée française et la guerre russo-japonaise (1899–1914)* (Paris: Les Indes savants, 2013).
77. See for instance Michael Bourlet, Yann Lagadec, and Erwan Le Gall, eds., *Petites patries dans la Grande Guerre* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2013).
 78. See, for instance, the special edition “La Caraïbe et la Première Guerre mondiale,” *Bulletin de la société d’histoire de la Guadeloupe* 168 (mai–août 2014).
 79. Henri Gilles, Jean-Pascal Guironnet, and Antoine Parent, “Géographie économique des morts de 14–18 en France,” *Revue économique* 65, no. 3 (2014): 519–32; Henri Gilles, “La guerre 1914–1918: les morts par départements et par régions,” in *Mémoire et trauma de la Grande Guerre*, ed. Gwendal Denis (Brest, Rennes: Centre de recherche bretonne et celtique, Travaux d’investigation et de recherche, 2010), 275–323. Antoine Prost, “Compter les vivants et les morts: l’évaluation des pertes françaises de 1914–1918,” *Le Mouvement social* 222 (2008): 41–60.
 80. Carl Bouchard, *Cher Monsieur le Président: Quand les Français écrivaient à Woodrow Wilson (1918–1919)* (Ceyzérieu: Champ Vallon, 2015). Another noteworthy example for the heuristic value of adopting different scales of analysis is Romain Fathi, *Our Corner of the Somme: Australia at Villers-Bretonneux* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019).
 81. Jean-Paul Amat, *Les forêts de la Grande Guerre: Histoire, mémoire, patrimoine* (Paris: PUPS, 2015); Daniel Hubé, *Sur les traces d’un secret enfoui: Enquête sur l’héritage toxique de la Grande Guerre* (Paris: Michalon éditeur, 2016).
 82. Eric Baratay, *Bêtes de tranchées: Des vécus oubliés* (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 2013).
 83. Tait Keller, “Aux marges écologiques de la belligérance: Vers une histoire environnementale globale de la Première Guerre mondiale,” *Annales HSS* (2016/1): 65–86.
 84. See the impressive exhibition catalogue edited by Bernadette Schnitzler and Michael Landolt, *A l’est, du nouveau! Archéologie de la Grande Guerre en Alsace et en Lorraine* (Strasbourg: Musées de la Ville de Strasbourg, 2013).
 85. Patrick Harismendy and Erwan Le Gall, eds., *Un adieu aux armes: Destins d’objets en situation de post-guerre* (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2019).
 86. Romain Ducoulombier, *Camarades! La naissance du Parti communiste en France* (Paris: Perrin, 2010).
 87. Peter Jackson, *Beyond the Balance of Power: France and the Politics of National Security in the Era of the First World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013); for the articulation of judicial internationalism and the standards of diplomacy, see Rémi Fabre et al., eds., *Les défenseurs de la paix 1899–1917* (Rennes, Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2018).
 88. See on this subject, Nicolas Offenstadt, “L’histoire auditive, un nouveau chantier: Quelques remarques,” in *Clameur publique et émotions judiciaires: De l’Antiquité à nos jours*, ed. Frédéric Chauvaud and Pierre Prétou (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2014), 29–34.
 89. Paul Jankowski, *Verdun, 21 février 1916* (Paris: Gallimard, 2013); Antoine Prost and Gerd Krumeich, *Verdun 1916: Une histoire franco-allemande de la bataille* (Paris: Tallandier, 2015); Alexandre Lafon, ed., *Les Batailles de 1916* (Paris: Sorbonne Université Presses, 2018).
 90. In this respect, see Nicolas Offenstadt, “Comparer l’incomparable? La ‘victoire’ de Verdun et l’échec de l’offensive Nivelle dans l’entre-deux-guerres,” in *Verdun sous le regard du monde*, ed. François Cochet (Saint-Cloud: Soteca, 2006), 309–26; Nicolas Offenstadt, ed., *Le Chemin des Dames: De l’événement à la mémoire* (Paris: Perrin 2012, new ed.). For a convincing example of this kind of battle history, see Mark Connelly and Stefan Goebel, *Ypres: Great Battles* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018). See

- also Laurent Veyssière, *Vimy, un siècle d'histoires, 1917–2017* (Québec: Septentrion, 2018); Clément Puget, *Verdun et le cinéma: L'épreuve et l'événement* (Paris: Nouveau Monde éditions, 2016), and Hardier, *Craonne*.
91. Francine Saint-Ramond Roussane, *La campagne d'Orient, 1915–1918: Dardanelles-Macédoine, d'après les témoignages de combattants* (Villeneuve d'Ascq: Presses universitaires du Septentrion, 2001). Another exception is Alexandre Sumpf, *La Grande Guerre oubliée: Russie, 1914–1918* (Paris: Perrin, 2014).
 92. *A L'Est, la guerre sans fin, 1918–1923*, 5 octobre 2018–20 janvier 2019, Musée de l'Armée, Invalides.
 93. Michel Foucault, *Dits et Écrits, 1954–1988*, tome IV (Paris: Gallimard, 1994), text 293.
 94. Richard Fogarty, *Race and War in France: Colonial Subjects in the French Army, 1914–1918* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2008); Joe Lunn, *L'Odyssée des combattants sénégalais: 1914–1918* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2014). See recently the rich and interesting book of Claude Markovits, a specialist of Indian history, about the specificities of Indian troops, the perceptions of the war and its violence on the Western Front, and encounters and nonencounters with the French population, etc., *De l'Indus à la Somme: Les Indiens en France pendant la Grande Guerre* (Paris: éditions de la Maison des sciences de l'homme 2018).
 95. See, for example, Jay Winter, ed., *La Première Guerre mondiale*, 3 vols. (Paris: Fayard, 2014).
 96. Loez and Offenstadt, *La Grande Guerre*.
 97. Caroline Poulain, ed., *Manger et boire entre 1914 et 1918* (Dijon: Bibliothèque municipale de Dijon, 2015). For health policies, see the recent works of Vincent Viet.
 98. Agnès Chablat-Beylot and Amable Sablon du Corail, eds., *Archives de la Grande Guerre: guide des sources conservées par le Service historique de la défense* (Vincennes: SHD, 2014); Philippe Nivet, Coraline Coutant-Daydé, Mathieu Stoll, eds., *Archives de la Grande Guerre: des sources pour l'histoire* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2014).
 99. Recently see Marie Derrien, “‘La tête en capilotade’: Les soldats de la Grande Guerre internés dans les hôpitaux psychiatriques français (1914–1980)” (PhD diss., Université Lumière Lyon 2, 2015); Peggy Bette, *Veuves de la Grande Guerre: Itinéraires et combats* (Brussels: Peter Lang, 2017).
 100. More on the question in the Anglo-Saxon production: <http://www.epitaphsofthegreatwar.com/about/>, and Trefor Jones, *On Fame's Eternal Camping Ground: Epitaphs in the British Cemeteries on the Western Front* (2007).

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