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History, Heroism, and Narrative Desire: The "Aubrac Affair" and National Memory of the French Resistance

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CONTRARY TO WHAT ONE STILL OCCASIONALLY READS OR HEARS, the French have not, in recent years, refused to remember the so-called "dark years" of the Vichy regime under German occupation (1940–1944). While the more shameful aspects of Vichy—notably, its collaboration with the Germans in the roundup and deportation of seventy-five thousand Jews from French soil—was for many years a taboo subject in public discourse as well as in the academy, that is no longer the case. Indeed, some historians have lately deplored the French "obsession" with memory of the Vichy years. Henry Rousso, in his acclaimed 1987 book *The Vichy Syndrome*, showed that increasingly after the mid-1970s, Vichy and its turpitudes became a focus of public attention.[1] This was aided by a series of highly publicized trials for crimes against humanity, starting with the 1987 trial of Klaus Barbie, a Nazi functionary notorious for his role in the persecution of *résistants* and Jews in Lyon, and ending with the 1997 trial of Maurice Papon, a highly placed French bureaucrat in charge of the roundup of Jews in Bordeaux.[2]

It was just a few months before the opening of the Papon trial, in February 1997, that the so-called "Aubrac affair" burst into the French press, where it occupied considerable attention for over six months and beyond. Raymond and Lucie Aubrac, who enjoyed national and international fame as heroes of the Resistance, were suddenly placed under suspicion of having betrayed their comrades, and in particular the Resistance hero Jean Moulin, fifty-four years earlier. As even this one-sentence summary suggests, the "Aubrac affair" raises fascinating issues about the history and memory of the Resistance in France. It also raises important issues about narrative, in particular about what I call narrative desire: on the one hand, the desire for heroic aggrandizement (or for its opposite, the toppling of heroes); on the other hand, the desire for narrative coherence and plausibility, or what in fiction is called verisimilitude.

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An Affair of Memory

Modern French history is rife with "affairs." One interesting feature of the Aubrac affair of 1997 is that, while arousing passions and involving high stakes, it seemed to be concerned exclusively with past history. In the Dreyfus Affair, the immediate fate of the accused was at stake, and the historical event that was the crux of the affair (somebody had transmitted military secrets to Germany) was almost exactly contemporary to the debates about it. In the Aubrac affair, the historical event (somebody had tipped off Klaus Barbie to the secret meeting at which Jean Moulin and others were arrested in 1943) had occurred more than half a century earlier, and nobody's immediate fate was at stake. But can a public "affair" arouse passions without being in some way about the present? The passions aroused by the Aubrac affair suggest that the Resistance, and certain events of the Resistance like the arrest of Jean Moulin, continue to be "present" in France, even while being historical.

What happened in the Aubrac affair, exactly, and why is it of interest? In order to answer that question, we must take a leap back to the trial of Klaus Barbie, which constituted a watershed in French collective memory of the Vichy period. This was especially true regarding the memory of Vichy's role in the persecution of Jews; indeed, it was largely because of the efforts of those acting on behalf of Jewish victims—notably, Beate and Serge Klarsfeld, who had made it their mission to bring to justice perpetrators of crimes against humanity in France—that Barbie was tracked down and extradited to France.[3] However, given Barbie's role in the story of Jean Moulin, his trial also reactivated, in a troubling and complicated way, the memory of the Resistance. The trial itself lasted only a few weeks in the spring and early summer of 1987, but its preparation took more than four years. Barbie, first identified under his false identity (as the shady businessman Klaus Altmann) in 1972, had been extradited from Bolivia in February 1983, and jailed in Lyon. From that moment on, until his trial, Barbie and his flamboyant defense lawyer Jacques Vergès were constantly in the public eye. Vergès's strategy was to try and turn attention away from Barbie's actions against Jews (which clearly fell under the rubric of crimes against humanity) and to emphasize, instead, his actions against the Resistance, which came under the heading of war crimes. War crimes have a statute of limitations, which by 1983 had run out for crimes committed during World War II. Vergès was using Barbie's crimes against the Resistance as a diversion.[4]

Vergès's focus on the Resistance revived painful memories. He emphasized, in his numerous media appearances and in his book *Pour en finir avec Ponce Pilate* (1983) that the Resistance was not the unified entity of legend but consisted of groups with differing, sometimes hostile agendas. Thus, he recalled, Barbie's arrest of Jean Moulin and other Resistance leaders at a meeting in the Lyon suburb of Caluire in June 1943 was the result of a betrayal. Moulin, a former Préfet who had been dismissed from his post by the Vichy regime because of his left-wing sympathies (he had been involved with the Popular Front, and also showed a clear animus against the German occupants in 1940), joined De Gaulle in London and was parachuted into France as De Gaulle's representative in January 1942. He worked for more than a year to bring the diverse groups of the interior Resistance together into a single organization, and finally succeeded with the formation of the Conseil National de la Résistance in May 1943.[5] Despite this show of unity, however, his leadership was not unchallenged. His arrest by Barbie, Vergès insisted, was due chiefly to internal dissension and jealousies among Resistance leaders, in particular between those who were close to the Communist Party and those who came from right-wing backgrounds. In Vergès's version, both left-wing and right-wing Resistance groups had reason to want Moulin out of the way.[6]

At least two factors made Vergès's revival of the Moulin story particularly sensational, in the early 1980s. First, Moulin had become, over the years, the national symbol of the Resistance: in 1964, De Gaulle had enshrined him in the Pantheon, France's repository of "great men," an occasion on which André Malraux pronounced what is perhaps his most famous speech, the funeral oration in praise of Moulin as heroic martyr of the Resistance.[7] This was at the height of what Rousso calls the period of "repressed memory" in French collective remembrance of the Vichy years: no memories of collaboration, only of glorious Resistance. After May 1968 and De Gaulle's departure from the political scene, however, other memories began to surface that put to rest the Gaullist myth of "la France résistante," according to which all of France (not just a small minority) had actively resisted the enemy. In the process, Moulin himself became a target of accusations and insinuations: a former *résistant,* Henri Frenay, leader of the anticommunist group *Combat*, accused Moulin of having been a "crypto-communist."[8] By launching his own accusations not against Moulin but against those who had allegedly betrayed Moulin, Vergès was recalling the political divisions and fault-lines within the Resistance, which had been forgotten during the period of "repressed memory" and were still not a subject of open

discussion even in the 1980s. Vergès could claim to be seeking historical truth, but his role as Barbie's defender made that claim dubious. To most observers, and in particular to former *résistants,* his emphasis on betrayal was an attempt to discredit the Resistance as a whole, as well as to divert attention from Barbie's crimes—whence the public outrage provoked by his media appearances.

Another factor of sensationalism was that no one had ever been condemned in court as Moulin's betrayer. René Hardy, a member of *Combat,* was tried twice after the war (in 1947 and 1950), and is generally considered to be the culprit. Like Raymond Aubrac and five other Resistance leaders who were arrested and imprisoned with Moulin, Hardy was present at the meeting at Caluire—unlike the others, however, he had not been invited. And, while he too was arrested, he escaped before being taken to prison.[9] Raymond Aubrac, as well as his wife Lucie, testified against Hardy at his postwar trials. But Hardy denied the charge to his dying day, and despite conclusive evidence furnished at his second trial, he was acquitted. The fact that both of Hardy's trials became highly politicized in the context of the Cold War (he staunchly proclaimed his anticommunism) undoubtedly contributed to his acquittal. Klaus Barbie himself had confirmed, in testimony taken from him in Germany at the time of Hardy's second trial, that the latter had been the one who led him to Moulin.[10] In 1972, shortly after he was identified in Bolivia, Barbie gave an interview to a Brazilian journalist, in which he named Hardy again. The interview was reproduced and much commented upon in France, but Hardy continued to deny the charge. In 1984, just before he died, Hardy published a long and rambling book of self-justification, *Derniers mots*, in which he repeated his claim of innocence—and accused others, notably his former "boss" at *Combat* Pierre de Bénouville (who, another staunch anticommunist, had supported him earlier) and Raymond Aubrac (who was close to the communists, and had been accusing Hardy for years). Meanwhile, Vergès was making the same accusations in the media; both Vergès and Hardy preferred insinuation to explicit statement, but their meaning was unmistakable. In the spring of 1984, both men repeated their accusations in a documentary film that never attained distribution, but that was shown at least once at a public screening.[11]

Once again, the outcry in the press was enormous.[12] It appeared clear that the Resistance itself was being attacked, its memory tainted. The Aubracs and Bénouville sued Vergès and Hardy for libel (and won, though it took a long time).[13] Henri Noguères, a lawyer who had written a multi-volume history of the Resistance, published *La vérité aura le*

dernier mot, refuting Hardy point by point. And Lucie Aubrac, ever an outspoken woman, with an advanced degree in history and years of experience as a *lycée* history teacher, wrote a bestselling memoir about her and Raymond's adventures in Lyon during the dramatic months between March 1943 and February 1944. In her book, *Ils partiront dans l'ivresse,* she recalled that they had been among the founders of the Resistance group *Libération,* and that Raymond was one of its leaders. She recounted his arrests in March and June 1943 (by French police the first time, and then by Barbie at Caluire) and her foolhardy but courageous schemes to free him: the first time, she threatened a French magistrate with reprisals if he didn't free Raymond; the second time, she pretended to be Raymond's pregnant girlfriend, enrolling the Gestapo's help in making "an honest woman" out of her, and then organized an armed commando to hold up the truck returning Raymond and other prisoners from Gestapo headquarters to prison. She told of their hiding in the countryside after his dramatic escape in October, and of their airlift to London in February 1944, where she gave birth to their second child upon arrival.

It is a tale of risk and romance, almost too beautiful to be true. But true it is, writes the author in her Preface: "I have tried to give an account as exact as possible in time and in the facts. I have been helped in this by my own memories, by my husband's, and by the testimonies of our comrades."[14] As corroboration of the latter, the book contained an Appendix consisting of two brief testimonies by comrades involved in the story. A note preceding these testimonies stated that they had been "established so as to be presentable in court"—not mere narrative recollections, but testimonies in a legal sense.[15] This book too, then, was a response to the accusations coming from Hardy and Vergès; the quasi-legal language of the Appendix alluded to Barbie's trial, which was then being prepared.

Narratives of heroism are deeply satisfying, like fantasies of wish-fulfillment; they are also, generally speaking, morally unambiguous, the characters drawn in broad brushstrokes, the plots linear and schematic: confrontation, apparent defeat, ultimate triumph. The story told by Lucie Aubrac in her memoir conforms to this pattern, with the added twist that she frames it in the nine months of her second pregnancy: the heroine who organizes her husband's spectacular escape from the Nazi prison is a loving wife and mother, five months pregnant. The book's plot is best summed up by its English title: *Outwitting the Gestapo*. The French title, more poetic, emphasizes the elated, larger than life aspect of the heroic experience: *Ils partiront dans l'ivresse*, "They will depart

in ecstasy." The author explains in her Preface that this was the coded message transmitted by the BBC in February 1944, to signal the couple's airlift to London.

Ils partiront dans l'ivresse, published in the fall of 1984, became a bestseller, translated into many languages; and Lucie and Raymond Aubrac, in their seventies, became media stars. Featured on radio and television programs, in newspaper and magazine articles, in classrooms and learned conferences, the Aubracs were, throughout the 1980s and well into the 1990s, the country's favorite Resistance heroes. Lucie, tireless, went into schools to talk about her book and to inspire young people with the "spirit of resistance," past and future. Raymond, more reserved, recollected his interrogation sessions with Klaus Barbie when called upon by journalists or filmmakers; and he too was writing a memoir, in fact a full-scale autobiography, which was published in 1996. Raymond Aubrac, an engineer and graduate of an elite *grande école,* had an important career after the war, named by De Gaulle as a Commissaire de la République in Marseille in 1945 and then occupying a series of influential positions in France and abroad. Raymond spent relatively little space, in his book, on the episode with Barbie, but his version did not contradict Lucie's.[16]

One well-known historian and specialist in the wartime period, Jean-Pierre Rioux, wrote in his review of Raymond Aubrac's *Où la mémoire s'attarde* in *Le Monde* that the book would "play an important role in the history of Resistance testimonies." And he ended with a heartfelt homage: "There remains Raymond, sparkling with wicked wit, courageous in the extreme, likeable as all hell. On his feet, always. With Lucie. And that alone matters. God, how we love those two!"[17] Rioux's exclamation reflects both the historian's appreciation and the "average Frenchman['s]" admiration of these two elderly figures (by now, they were well into their eighties). It also reflects what I am calling the desire for heroic aggrandizement in narrative—specifically, in narratives that possess collective significance. In collective terms, Lucie and Raymond Aubrac represented not only an ideal couple, still united after so many years, but also an ideal image of the French Resistance; the Resistance, in turn, represents what was best and most noble about France during the Vichy years—it embodies what De Gaulle called "*la France éternelle*."

The popular, collective appeal of the Aubracs' story is confirmed by the fact that it inspired not one but two film adaptations, both of them based on Lucie Aubrac's memoir and focusing on the woman-in-love-who-is-also-a-heroine. The 1992 film, *Boulevard des Hirondelles*, di-

rected by Josée Yann, met with little reaction or success, perhaps because neither the actors nor the director were well-known. Five years later, the version by the popular director Claude Berri, known for his large-scale adaptations of French classics like *Germinal*, elicited huge public commentary. Starring two famous actors (Carole Bouquet and Daniel Auteuil) as the heroic couple, Berri's *Lucie Aubrac* was panned almost universally by critics at its release in February 1997: too stereotypical, too focused on the love story, not accurate enough about the Resistance; altogether too "Hollywood," was the critical verdict.[18] Yet, the film did well at the box office; in fact, in terms of tickets sold, it has been the most popular film about the Occupation in the past thirty-five years, outdoing François Truffaut's *The Last Metro,* Louis Malle's *Lacombe Lucien,* and even his *Au revoir les enfants.* It received the blessing of the French Ministry of Education, which featured it in publications intended for teachers, who took schoolchildren in droves.[19]

As if to prove that reality is rarely simple, it was during the very week that Berri released his hero-worshiping film that the Aubracs' name became attached to an "affair." They were accused, by a journalist who was about to release a book on the subject, of having falsified certain crucial aspects of their story. The long-forgotten insinuations of Barbie's lawyer, concerning Raymond Aubrac's role in Moulin's arrest, were suddenly revived. Just as France was getting ready for the Papon trial, which would once again point to the ignominies of Vichy toward the Jews, the "Aubrac affair" churned up troubled memories of the Resistance.

The distinguished classicist Jean-Pierre Vernant (himself an active member of the Resistance) has spoken about possible conflicts or tensions among three kinds of memory as far as the Resistance is concerned: personal memory, social memory, and the memory of historians.[20] In fact, these categories are applicable to all events of collective significance, including most recently the American catastrophe of September 11. Personal memory is the memory of actual participants or witnesses of the event. Social or collective memory refers to the way the event is recalled and interpreted in a given society at a given time, as indicated by a wide range of public discourses, from official statements to works of art and literature. Historical memory, finally, refers to the specialized work accomplished by those who, trained in the historian's discipline, seek to distinguish public mythologies and illusions from documented facts. Vernant points out that all three kinds of memory are dynamic and contextual, continually reworked in light of present needs and interests; they are to be understood, in other words, as part of an ongoing negotiation between past and present.

The mutual influences among these three kinds of memory have interested theorists for a long time, and continue to do so. Maurice Halbwachs, in his pioneering work on collective memory, showed that individual memory always takes place within—and is influenced by—a social framework, beginning with the family and moving out to larger groups and the community.[21] Historians rely on documents rather than on social memory. Yet, to the extent that historians are themselves individuals living in a specific setting, their work is inevitably influenced by collective categories; furthermore, as Hayden White has shown, the writing of history relies on patterns of narrative that shape the raw documentary material, thus establishing at least formal similarities between historical narratives and fictional ones.[22]

The overlappings as well as the potential conflicts among these three kinds of memory become especially evident concerning historical events with strong affective resonance, such as the Vichy regime and the Resistance in France. Where such events are concerned, the relations among historical research, collective representations, and personal testimony become increasingly tense. What makes the Aubrac affair so interesting, aside from its specific content, is that it offers a complex illustration of such tensions.

Social Memory vs. Historical Memory: The Power of Legends

It is highly significant that the accusations against the Aubracs were timed to coincide with the release of Berri's film, *Lucie Aubrac*. Gérard Chauvy, whose book *Aubrac, Lyon 1943* was to be released in early April, jumped the gun by publishing an article that listed the major accusations the week before the film's release.[23] The first time the words "*Affaire Aubrac*" appeared in print was in an article in the conservative daily *Le Figaro*, which criticized the film for "magnifying the legend of the Aubrac couple," and then went on to give a brief summary of Chauvy's forthcoming book; the latter thus appeared to be the historically accurate corrective to the "official legend" propagated by the film.[24] That was exactly the way Chauvy himself presented his book; in addition, he enlisted a former *résistant* to write a Preface, which also insisted on the priority of History over legend. [25]

As part of his painstaking investigation, Chauvy had combed through the *dossier d'instruction* (the criminal investigation file, assembled by an investigating magistrate, the *juge d'instruction,* in every criminal

case) of the 1987 Barbie trial, as well as through the dossier of a second trial that never took place because of Barbie's death in 1991. Among some hitherto unpublished documents, Chauvy found various depositions made by Raymond Aubrac between 1944 and 1990, concerning his two arrests in Lyon in 1943 and his time in prison from June 1943 until his escape in October. Some of these depositions, which Chauvy published in an Appendix, contradict (or appear to contradict) each other about certain details, and also contradict what Raymond and Lucie had written in their memoirs. In addition, the Appendix included a notorious document that Barbie had placed into the dossier shortly before his death: the so-called "*testament de Barbie*," written in impeccable French and thoroughly researched, looking more like a legal brief than a personal narrative. In this fifty-page text, Barbie claimed—for the first time in all the years since 1944, during which he had made numerous depositions and given numerous published interviews—that Raymond Aubrac, aided by his wife Lucie, had been the betrayer of Jean Moulin.[26] The existence of this "testament" had been known since 1991, when it had already occasioned a media flurry and a vigorous reaction by Raymond Aubrac.[27] But it had never been published before Chauvy's book. As any reading makes clear, the "testament," although signed by Barbie, was not written by him. Most likely, it was the work of Vergès, stating baldly what Vergès had only insinuated in his accusations against Aubrac seven years earlier.

Although Chauvy claims the status of dispassionate historian, his obvious animus against the Aubracs and his attempt to discredit every major aspect of their story place him squarely in the role of accuser. Thus, even while recognizing that Barbie's "testament" is not to be trusted, he implies in the end that the document tells the truth. Through his minute examination of certain details deprived of larger context, and through his uncritical use of some documents combined with a "hypercritical" approach to others, Chauvy succeeds in creating—by insinuation and innuendo, not outright statement—an abject counternarrative to Lucie Aubrac's (and Claude Berri's) heroic one. Of course, one can ask: is there absolutely nothing valid in Chauvy's demonstrations? What about the real inconsistencies in the Aubracs' statements? I will get to them shortly. For now, I want to emphasize the role that Chauvy's book played in the construction of social memory. In fact, it fostered confusion between social memory and historical memory, even while claiming to "correct" the former by the latter.

Chauvy, as we have seen, defined his book as history opposed to legend, fact opposed to fantasy. Yet, he too offers a powerful fantasy

and satisfies a narrative desire, one that is perhaps even stronger, in our time, than the other: it is the desire to unmask, to demystify—in a word, to dethrone what was previously extolled. True, the myth of "*la France résistante*" had been destroyed decades earlier; but individual *résistants,* and even the Resistance itself, reduced to a small but heroic minority, continued to be revered. Vergès's attempt, in the early 1980s, to discredit the Resistance had been successfully countered; the Aubracs had played a major role in that success, due to the popularity of Lucie Aubrac's memoir and their frequent appearances on radio and television, in classrooms, at public conferences, as well as to their charismatic personalities (especially Lucie's, by all accounts). Now, Chauvy's book insinuated a different story, a story of abjection: Raymond Aubrac betraying his comrades as early as his first arrest in March 1943, followed by the betrayal of Moulin in June. Chauvy offers no documentary proof for this story, as all the historians who have weighed in on his book agree.[28] Indeed, he doesn't even tell the story, contenting himself with suggesting it by means of conjectures and innuendos. The Aubracs sued him and his publisher for libel, and won.[29] But a court judgment is no protection against popular fantasy.

The problem is, the abject scenario is appealing: it not only reverses the heroic plot, but also complicates the character of the protagonists. The Aubracs suddenly become people with secrets to hide, people who may have been living a lie for fifty years, so much more interesting than a straightforward hero to a postmodern sensibility! It is not an accident, I think, that Jean-Luc Godard, in his 2001 film *Éloge de l'amour* (*In Praise of Love*), features an old couple of *résistants* about whom we are told that the husband betrayed his own wife and caused her to be deported during the war—Godard, the antithesis of a popular filmmaker, would obviously prefer the abject scenario to Berri's heroic one. Somewhat shockingly, he goes so far as to report (via the character of the granddaughter) that the couple's real name is Samuel, different from the name they have been using since the war.[30] Raymond Aubrac's given name was Raymond Samuel (he is Jewish); Aubrac is his Resistance pseudonym, which he legally adopted for his family after the war. In Godard's film, the couple's current name is Bayard, as if to underline their fictional status (they are "not the Aubracs"). But the insertion of Raymond Aubrac's real given name into a fictional representation in the abject mode (Bayard betrayed his wife during the war) creates a troubling amalgam, reminiscent of the innuendos in Chauvy's book. Indeed, one could suggest that Godard's amalgam reflects a change in collective representation or social memory, rendered possible by those

very innuendos. What was purportedly history as a "corrective" to the heroic legend of social memory has become the vehicle for another kind of social memory, another kind of legend.

The desire to replace heroism with abjection is not limited to modern (or postmodern) times. Pierre Vidal-Naquet has shown that the social tendency to "deheroize" even the greatest heroes has existed since antiquity.[31] Nevertheless, I think a strong case can be made that this tendency has become increasingly dominant. In literature as in life, we tend to be suspicious of heroes. Chauvy's book capitalized on that suspicion, as have a number of other recent books by journalist-historians who have taken Jean Moulin himself as their target: there have been numerous "*affaires Jean Moulin*" since Frenay published his accusations of "crypto-communism." According to one recent book, Moulin, immortalized as De Gaulle's martyred representative, contacted an American agent in a maneuver against De Gaulle before his arrest! The historian Annette Wieviorka, reviewing the book in *Le Monde*, deplored the public's taste for "affairs" and "secrets," which risked reducing the Resistance to no more than "a series of detective stories." [32]

Chauvy's book provoked a huge polemic in the press. Many journalists and historians rushed to the Aubracs' defense; others, even while condemning Chauvy's methods, were troubled by some of the contradictions he had unearthed and asked the Aubracs for explanation.[33] Furthermore, as in all "affairs" concerning collective events, the stakes involved not only a search for historical truth; they were also political. The Aubracs had never hidden the fact that they had lifelong left-wing sympathies; it is clear from Raymond Aubrac's autobiography that they were for a long time very close to the Communist Party, even if they never formally joined. In 1997, the intellectual mood in France was largely anticommunist; fierce polemics were being waged, even among politically liberal intellectuals, over whether communism had been as great an evil of the twentieth century as fascism and nazism, or even a worse one.[34] The way people lined up, in defense of the Aubracs or in suspicion of them, was at least partly influenced by their position in the debate over communism. Another political factor was the imminence of the Papon trial. Since official French collaboration with the Nazis in the persecution of Jews would be the focus of that trial, any suggestion of abject behavior during the war by a Jewish *résistant*—whose parents, moreover, were deported and murdered in Auschwitz, as Raymond Aubrac's were—necessarily had a political resonance.

What may we conclude from all this, about the relation between historical memory and social memory? First, that it becomes increasingly

difficult to draw the dividing line when works of history become immediately transformed into vehicles of public scandal, and even more difficult when works claiming to seek "historical truth" become themselves purveyors of legend—albeit a different kind of legend. The second conclusion is that the writing of history is deeply implicated in shaping social memory, as well as being shaped by it. The fact that Gérard Chauvy's book is not "responsible" history merely emphasizes this point, which even historians who have greater respect for historical objectivity and responsibility can take to heart.

But what about the contradictions unearthed by Chauvy? This question brings us to the next item of interest in the Aubrac affair: the confrontation between historians and memoirists, and the relation between historical and personal memory.

Historical Memory vs. Personal Memory: The Power of the Plausible

Historians of the Second World War and the Occupation have tremendous popular prestige in France today, and are constantly solicited as "experts" by the media. They were also called as expert witnesses in the highly publicized trials for crimes against humanity, notably in the Papon trial. It was no doubt because of this prestige that Raymond Aubrac requested, soon after Chauvy's book appeared, that a group of distinguished historians meet with him and his wife to discuss the accusations. Aubrac fully expected to be exonerated at such a meeting of all suspicion that he had been involved in the betrayal of Jean Moulin: "I have been calumnied, and I want to respond to the calumny."[35] Already in 1991, at the time the "*testament de Barbie*" first surfaced, he had requested a similar meeting at the Institut d'Histoire du Temps Présent, a research institute with which a number of distinguished historians of World War II and the Occupation are affiliated. But that meeting never took place.[36]

This time, a meeting did take place, in the offices of the daily *Libération*, over a whole day on May 17, 1997. Participating in the discussion were five well-known historians affiliated with the IHTP, specialists in the Second World War and the Occupation: Henry Rousso, Jean-Pierre Azéma, François Bédarida, Laurent Douzou, and Dominique Veillon; the former *résistant* and admired biographer of Jean Moulin, Daniel Cordier; and two other distinguished scholars who were there as personal friends of the Aubracs, Maurice Agulhon and J. P. Vernant.

All of the participants knew the Aubracs personally. Also present, though not taking part in the discussion, were two journalists from the paper, Béatrice Vallaeys and Antoine de Gaudemar.

From just about every point of view, the meeting was a failure. The historians, even while castigating Chauvy's animosity and lack of adequate historical method, and even while affirming that his allegations of betrayal were not supported by any documentary evidence, declared at the end of the day that "areas of shadow" existed in the Aubracs' version of the story. Instead of an exoneration, the *Libération* round-table thus produced only further suspicion, and increasing animosity among the participants. The discussion was taped, and a slightly edited version was published in July.[37] This was followed, over a period of several weeks, by impassioned commentaries on the event, published in *Libération*, *Le Monde*, and other papers—first by all the participants, including the Aubracs, then by other historians who responded to the published transcript, often extremely critically. A large number of ordinary readers also gave their opinion. Three years later, the *Libération* round-table was still the subject of heated discussions: in summer 2000 the legal journal *Justice* published two lengthy critical analyses of the proceedings by a jurist and a sociologist, followed by responses from the participating historians.[38]

What was the crux of the criticisms of the round-table? First, critics deplored the use of a daily newspaper for an attempt to arrive at historical truth: A round-table that lasts a whole day is neither an interview nor a scholarly inquiry and can only lead to confusion, in addition to the pressure and negative effects of "mediatization." This confusion between journalism and scholarship would be another version, then, of a negative overlap between historical memory and social memory. The second criticism concerned the historians' mode of questioning the Aubracs, which gradually turned into an interrogation. The historians, according to this view, had breached the ethics as well as the methodology of historical research. The noted historian Antoine Prost wrote in a much-cited article in *Le Monde*: "The historian must examine all hypotheses and there are no taboos for him . . . But he does not have the right to formulate hypotheses without foundation."[39] Prost was referring to a particularly painful moment in the discussion, toward the end of the afternoon (xxi), when Daniel Cordier, soon followed by François Bédarida, emitted the "hypothesis" that Lucie Aubrac had been followed by Barbie's men after her visits to the Gestapo, when she was pretending to be Raymond's pregnant girlfriend; and that that may have lead to the arrest of Raymond's parents a month later (they were deported and

died in Auschwitz). In formulating their hypothesis, according to Prost, the historians had "crossed the yellow line." Or, in our terms, they had transgressed a line between historical memory and personal memory.

With that in mind, I want now to look closely at the published transcript of the round-table, reading it as a dramatic text; it even has the structure of a classical drama, with five chapters/acts and an introduction and epilogue.[40] What were the interpretive twists and the interpersonal dynamics that led to the negative dénouement? And how can that question illuminate the role of narrative desire, both in the writing of history and in the writing of personal memory or testimony?

Testimony, Fiction, History

Paul Ricoeur has noted that the activity of testifying, whether orally or in writing, is linked to both narrating and promising.[41] The witness narrates what he or she has experienced, and promises that the account is true to the best of her or his knowledge. Ricoeur also notes that a historian who manifests suspicion toward a given testimony (and by implication, toward a witness) does not betray the historian's vocation—on the contrary, a certain kind of suspicion is necessary to historical research: "We must rely on testimony and on the critique of testimony to accredit the historian's representation of the past" (364). By "historian's representation" (*représentation historienne*), Ricoeur means an account as faithful as possible of something that "once was" but is no longer (367). The ontological status of something that "once was" distinguishes the historical past from an imagined or fictional past. Even though we can never recapture the historical past in its absolute "truth," the fact that it *once was* confers a special status on the historian's representation of it. It follows that for the historian, the value of a written or recorded testimony—a first-person narrative that purports to tell what the narrator actually lived through—is determined above all, and essentially, by its veracity. How can one determine the veracity of a testimony? Through the confirmation of the account by other documents, in the best case; through the coherence and explicative power of the narrative; and/or through the personal reliability of the witness. Reliability is confirmed both by the "character" of the witness and by the fact that his or her account does not vary over time. Ricoeur and other theorists of testimony (whom he cites) call this invariance the principle of reiteration: "The reliable witness is one who can maintain his testimony over time" (206).

What did the historians do at the round-table? Chauvy had supplied them with documents they had not seen until then—not the fraudulent "*testament de Barbie*," but genuine transcripts of depositions made by Raymond Aubrac between 1944 and 1972, usually in the context of judicial proceedings (trials of Hardy and Barbie). The historians compared these various depositions, and also compared them to the memoirs published by the Aubracs in 1984 (Lucie) and 1996 (Raymond). They noted some contradictions, and they charged ahead. Critics blamed them for acting like judges, and that did in fact become a problem; but it is worth noting that judges—especially the *juges d'instruction* of French legal proceedings, who gather evidence and question witnesses in preparation for a trial—and historians have some traits in common, as well as differences. Ricoeur points out similarities between the search for judicial proof and the search for historical proof: "both accord priority to questioning, to the play of the imagination with possibilities; both make an effort to detect contradictions, inconsistencies, implausibilities . . . In that regard, the judge and the historian are . . . equally masters in the art of suspicion" (417).

Of course, the judge and the historian work with different time-frames, and different aims. The confusion between these two roles in the round-table became flagrant (as the critics noted) because the historians were confronting not only documents, but persons. The Aubracs were counting on the fact that they were known *in any case*, personally and publicly, to be honorable people, from which it followed that they were reliable witnesses. The problem occurred because the historians, even while repeatedly affirming the witnesses' honorability (sincerely, it must be assumed), allowed their professional "suspicion" to prevail. In the process of confronting not the written texts but the witnesses themselves, they moved into the role of judge and even of prosecutor, and ended up putting the witnesses' reliability as a whole into question. Thus, quite late in the day, in the fourth "act" of the drama (the chapter titled "*Le rapport du commissaire Porte*"), they began to express doubt about a key episode of the story told by Lucie Aubrac in her book. How, they asked, could she enter several times, without being stopped, into the headquarters of the Gestapo (to arrange the fake marriage with Raymond)? "Can one really say that one could enter the Gestapo like a windmill?" asked Azéma. "It is hard to believe that in Lyon one could come and go freely, without being checked, in the headquarters of the Gestapo," added Bédarida. And Rousso: "During all those visits . . . , they never at any time had knowledge of who you were?" (xv). Lucie Aubrac could only repeat that indeed, that's how it was, no one ever

asked her for proof of identity, just as later she would repeat that she hadn't been followed after her visits. But it seems clear that the historians were not convinced.

Raymond Aubrac was conscious of that fact, for at that point he intervened: "When the 'testament de Barbie' was composed, the author took advantage of all those aspects of our adventure that are hard to believe in order to construct the accusation of betrayal. At this moment we are treading on the terrain of Gérard Chauvy" (xvi). This exasperated comment, which sounds like an accusation ("You are like Chauvy!"), may have been somewhat unjust, but it was not wholly unjustified. For paradoxically, the historians would embark, *in the name of historical truth,* on the quest for counternarratives that appeared to them more plausible and logical than the narrative told by Lucie. The "hypothesis" that Lucie was followed, leading to the arrest of Raymond's parents, was the culminating example (in the last act, chapter 5); but already in the morning, well before Raymond's exasperated comment, we can see three of the questioners trying to find a more "plausible" version of an episode told by Lucie in her book, regarding her visit to the prosecutor Ducasse (May 1943) to obtain Raymond's release from prison after his first arrest by French police. The historians all agree that it was a foolhardy act, and so does she; but in her version, the foolhardy act was effective: she threatened Ducasse with reprisals by the Resistance, whereupon he ordered Raymond's release. The historians find this explanation implausible, and offer various alternatives. Henri Rousso proposes "a simpler hypothesis. Prosecutor Ducasse . . . didn't really take you seriously. Luckily for you and especially for Raymond Aubrac, he believed neither that he was holding 'an envoy of General de Gaulle' nor that he might be personally threatened." To which Lucie Aubrac replies: "I think he got scared." But her old friend Vernant intervenes: "Not I. Things are more complicated," and he launches into an explanation of the motives of the French police in 1943! (x).

It is a curious, one could almost say a charming, moment, as the historians and the witness spar over the meaning of the event and even over what actually happened. One can see here an instance of the "play with the imagination of possibilities" that Ricoeur referred to as part of the historian's activity. And one can also see the witness defending her own account, with some irritation at being challenged, but without animosity. No position definitively prevails, and the mood remains cordial.

Later, however, the mood worsens. Noticing the obvious (and increasing) skepticism of the historians, Raymond Aubrac exclaims that they are treading on the terrain of Chauvy. And Lucie makes an unex-

pected admission that radically alters the debate. Furious at the historians' questioning, she says to Bédarida: "I'm not a researcher at the IHTP. I'm a woman who wrote her book because people were starting, with Vergès, to attack the Resistance. [. . .] I didn't write a history book with a capital H, but a book in which I told the story of a pregnancy and a life" (xvi). At this, the historians jump. Rousso: "Ever since I started to work on this period, I've always heard *résistants*, and you in particular, repeating constantly: 'Listen to our testimonies.' [. . .] Now how are we to react when you tell us that we can't do that because you 'arranged' some details?" Lucie Aubrac replies: "You are right." Next, it's Daniel Cordier's turn: "You wrote an exciting adventure novel that you rashly presented as your memories. I consider that slippage shocking." Cordier explains why: famous *résistants* speak for "all the unknown members of the Resistance," and they have the duty to tell the truth. "You have a duty to remember that is the duty of a historian" (xvi).

It's a fascinating moment. Does a memoir that "arranges" some details become, by virtue of that fact, a novel? And if so, is it a matter of *some* details only, or do all details have the same importance? If details don't all have the same importance—if some can be "arranged" without transgressing the genre of the memoir—how is one to decide at which point the balance shifts, and the memoir becomes a novel? Lucie Aubrac does not consider her memoir a novel. And yet, it is certain that some of the details she recounts, including some non-trivial ones, are untrue, and that she knew them to be so when she wrote her book—which does not mean that she consciously intended to deceive the reader.[42] She states right at the beginning of the round-table:

> I am now accused of having made some errors in dates in a book that I dictated in four months, and that students in middle school and high school read and study. It must be recalled why I wrote that little book. It was because Jacques Vergès was starting to attack us. Of course, my book is not the work of a historian, but of a teacher, a pedagogue. My life as a teacher is that of an activist, it's not a life that insists on searching for exact times, names, or dates. (vii)

Personally, I have some problem with the notion implied by this statement: that the work of a teacher or pedagogue—which consists, according to Lucie Aubrac, of "making things come to life"—requires that one should overlook the difference, in a historical narrative, between factual elements and invented ones. But I understand that for Lucie Aubrac,

what matters are the values associated with the Resistance, values that she feels she transmitted in her book.

Still, the question must be asked: under what circumstances and for what reasons does the author of a historical testimony (for it is as a historical testimony that Lucie Aubrac's book is presented, and that it is read and studied in schools) feel authorized to recount things that she knows (and I am willing to accord all the necessary ambiguity to that verb) to be inaccurate?

Narrative Desire

We arrive here at the most problematic aspect of the *Libération* round-table, and more generally of the "Aubrac affair." For independently of the procedure, which was rightfully criticized, the historians at the meeting pointed to genuine inconsistencies in the various accounts of their adventure given by the Aubracs since 1944. I believe that one must be able to say this, without being accused of wanting to besmirch the Resistance; but one must also be able to say it without wishing to put into doubt the courage and honorability of two aged *résistants*.

The need to balance respect for the witness with the pursuit of historical truth is, as Rousso pointed out in a book published not long after the round-table, the difficult task of any historian whose subject is the "history of the present."[43] In the case of the round-table, this led him to a suspension of judgment: "In the absence of other elements, and considering the replies of the witness [Raymond Aubrac] who declared that he could not explain [the contradictions], I forbade myself to draw any conclusion" (126). Azéma was somewhat harsher: he maintained, in an article published even before the transcript of the round-table, that the Aubracs' story contained "zones of shadow" that, "for reasons known only to him, Raymond Aubrac does not intend to clear up."[44] As for Cordier, he concluded in good positivist fashion that "new discoveries will have to be made in the archives in order to know the replies" to the unresolved questions concerning Raymond Aubrac.[45]

Personally, I am interested in the psychological as well as the literary and historical implications of these inconsistencies—and of one in particular, to which the historians returned again and again during the round-table. It concerns the question of what Barbie knew about Raymond Aubrac's identity after his arrest at Caluire. The historians noted, in comparing Aubrac's numerous statements between 1944 and 1996, that he gave varying answers to that question. We must recall that "Aubrac" was a pseudonym, designating a highly placed member of the Secret

Army, the newly formed military wing of the interior Resistance. The Germans knew the name and the role, since they had captured an organigram of the Secret Army in an earlier operation. Like all members of the Resistance, Raymond, whose real name was Raymond Samuel, carried false papers with other names—Vallet when he was arrested in March, Ermelin in June. Soon after his arrest in June, Barbie recognized "Ermelin" as Vallet, the man he had questioned months earlier.[46] But did Barbie also know that Ermelin/Vallet was Aubrac, a leader of the Secret Army?

By all indications, the answer is yes. Raymond stated it clearly in his first "debriefing" in London in February 1944 ("I was obliged to admit that I was Aubrac when they identified me as Vallet . . ."),[47] and he reconfirmed it during the *Libération* round-table (xiv). (It is thought that one of the other men arrested at Caluire, Henry Aubry, revealed both Moulin's identity and Aubrac's under torture.) But according to the documents published by Chauvy, Raymond did not always say the same thing, and in particular, he did not say it in his 1996 autobiography. On the contrary, he affirmed in the book (at least, that is what one concludes on a first reading) that Barbie had "never gone beyond" his identity as Vallet: "Each time my name was called for a confrontation with Barbie . . . I feared that my true role had been discovered, my identity exposed. In that case, all would have been lost."[48] After the round-table, and until the present day, Raymond Aubrac has explained that he did not deny, in his book, that Barbie knew he was Aubrac. When he wrote that Barbie did not know his "true identity," he was referring to his identity as Raymond Samuel. "When I repeat several times that my identity was not discovered I'm thinking of Samuel," he said in a published interview after the round-table.[49]

Here we face a question of textual analysis, if ever there was one: when Raymond Aubrac writes that he feared his "true role" and "identity" had been discovered, is he referring to Aubrac or to Samuel? All the historians at the round-table pointed out that while "identity" could refer to Samuel, "role" designated a role in the Resistance and could therefore only refer to Aubrac. Hence their repeated question: Why did you sometimes say that Barbie knew you were Aubrac, and at other times that he didn't? In fact, as Daniel Cordier pointed out after analyzing the documents (most of them furnished by Chauvy), Aubrac's various statements fell into three categories, not two (xvii–xviii). Below is a summary of Cordier's analysis, to which I have added a few details based on my own research:

1. *Affirmation*: Raymond states that Barbie recognized him as Vallet and as Aubrac: February 1944 (debriefing in London); April 1948 (*dossier d'instruction* for second trial of Hardy); 1950 (testimony in court at Hardy's second trial); 1992 (*dossier d'instruction* for second trial of Barbie, which never took place).

2. *Omission*, or I would say *ellipsis*: Raymond states that Barbie recognized him as Vallet, without adding anything more (he was not asked): June 1944 (debriefing in Algiers); 1983 (preliminary investigation, Barbie trial); 1987 (testimony in court, Barbie trial—not cited by Cordier);[50] one could also cite here Lucie Aubrac's version in 1984 (*Ils partiront dans l'ivresse*, 87).

3. *Contradiction*, or I would say *denial*: Raymond states that Barbie did not recognize him as Aubrac: 1996, *Où la mémoire s'attarde*—but note that Raymond Aubrac refuses this reading; Jan. 1997 (television program, "La marche du siècle," where the statement is clear and unambiguous—not cited by Cordier; I will return to it).

Cordier is ready to excuse what he calls the omissions, but he feels that the autobiography of 1996 contains a "horrendous contradiction." And he adds: "It intrigued me all the more because your Memoirs are a carefully thought out and edited text, specifically destined for the public, where you weighed every word and phrase since it represents the version you are bequeathing to history" (xviii). Cordier is stunned at what he considers to be dissimulation on Aubrac's part: "For it is evident to all those who seek the truth that there is a black hole there" (xix). At that moment, Raymond Aubrac can offer no explanation in reply: he simply acknowledges that his testimonies over the years have varied. Later, as I've mentioned, he will explain that in his book he never denied what Barbie knew. In his published commentary on the round-table, he will state that he has never denied—either in his 1996 book or earlier—that Barbie knew he was Aubrac.[51]

A curious moment, when the author of a text and his readers disagree over the meaning of a sentence! But why all the fuss, one might ask? Why parse a text with no claim to literary status as if it were a page of Proust or a sonnet by Baudelaire? The answer is not as simple as one might think. To be sure, personal reliability and historical truth were at stake—matters of importance both for the historians and for the witness. But there was more. If the historians (not only Cordier, but Rousso, Bédarida, Azéma) returned repeatedly to the question of "what Barbie knew," it was because they were trying to explain what they considered a mystery: Why, alone of all those arrested with Moulin, was Raymond Aubrac not transferred to Paris after his first interrogations? (Besides

Moulin, two of the men captured at Caluire died in deportation.) Why was he left to vegetate in his cell for months, with no further action? According to the historians' criteria of plausibility and narrative coherence, it was impossible that Barbie knew he had "Aubrac" *and* that he left him alone, practically forgetting him, as he did. As Bédarida put it: "According to whether it's yes or no, everything changes. For if you are François Vallet, it's really a very small matter. [. . .] But the moment you are identified as Aubrac, you become a very big catch" (xviii). In fact, Barbie did know he had Aubrac—and yet, Raymond Aubrac remained in prison for several months (he had been condemned to death, he recounts in his book) without being otherwise disturbed. "Area of shadow." Black hole.

The aim and duty of historians is to search for the truest version of past events—of what "once was," as Ricoeur said. One way to accomplish this is by the construction of coherent narratives that conform to a logic of plausibility and cause and effect, which guarantees that history *makes sense*. The historians' persistent questioning of the witnesses at the round-table, whether on grounds of plausibility ("Could one really enter the Gestapo without being checked?") or on those of cause and effect ("If Barbie knew, why didn't he act differently?") indicates the power of that narrative desire.

And not surprisingly, that desire is shared by the witnesses themselves. Whence the fascinating phenomenon whereby the person who recounts his or her past experience feels obliged to provide the plausible version, even while knowing (or "knowing") that it doesn't fully correspond to the facts. This is somewhat similar to what psychoanalysts call rationalization (providing plausible motives or explanations for actions whose real motives remain hidden), except that in this case it is the events themselves, not their motives, that become "smoothed over" in the telling. And on some level, the process occurs consciously, although—as I've tried to suggest by the quotation marks around "knowing"—the exact degree of consciousness may be hard to determine. Suppose that the facts appear incomprehensible, or suppose that one is called on to reply to an accusation that provides a more "plausible" version than what happened, as far as one knows or recalls. Such circumstances may explain why a historical witness might feel authorized to "arrange" certain facts without consciously intending to deceive. In a context of accusation, the accused person feels obliged to furnish a logical version of past actions if the truth appears too illogical—or if he or she feels that others will consider it so. Lucie Aubrac, seeing her husband (and by extension, herself) accused by Barbie's lawyer in 1984, wrote a

book in which she implied that Barbie never knew him as "Aubrac."[52] Raymond Aubrac, who in 1992 told the truth unambiguously in a deposition before the *juge d'instruction* of the second Barbie trial, could have (and, according to a historian's logic, should have) done the same in his autobiography, which he was starting to write at the time. He would thereby have "corrected" the ambiguity of Lucie's account. Instead, he too opted for ambiguity, as the argument over the meaning of some sentences in his book makes clear. And a few months after the publication of his book, just a few weeks before the explosion of the "Aubrac affair," he stated totally unambiguously, to a public of *lycée* students filmed by television cameras at the Center for the History of the Resistance and Deportation, in Lyon: "Neither Vallet nor Ermelin was recognized as Aubrac. Otherwise, all would have been lost."[53]

How can one explain this blatant denial? The simplest explanation would be that Raymond Aubrac has something to hide, because he is guilty—this is the "counter-legend" of abjection, all too tempting and harmful. A more complex explanation, albeit one that remained quite unsympathetic to the witness, was offered by Cordier at the round-table: according to this hypothesis, Raymond Aubrac told the truth in situations unknown to the public (*dossiers d'instruction*, which are never published, testimony at the forgotten trial of Hardy), but wanted to "bequeath to history" a different version (xviii). (Cordier was referring to Raymond's autobiography, not to the "Marche du siècle" television program, which never came up in the discussion.) This explanation is plausible, but it implies a conscious decision on Raymond Aubrac's part to deceive the public. And even if it were correct, it would not answer the main question: *Why* was it necessary, according to Raymond Aubrac, to make people think that Barbie didn't know he was "Aubrac"?

In my opinion, what Raymond's wavering testimony and outright denial indicate is not (and certainly not necessarily) that he has something to hide, and even less that he is guilty of betraying Jean Moulin; rather, it indicates that he labors under the same logic of plausibility and cause and effect as the historians: "Otherwise, all would have been lost." Here is a case, furthermore, where personal memory falls victim to the pressure of media celebrity. In the fall of 1996, when Raymond Aubrac published his book, he and his wife were widely known and respected, and had become—with their willing participation, but also by a momentum of its own—quasi-legendary figures. That was even more the case in January 1997, only a few weeks before the release of Claude Berri's "heroic" film. Add to that the pressure of a live television broadcast, in a solemn place (museum of the Resistance and Deportation,

once the headquarters of the Gestapo where many had been tortured), on a solemn occasion (the theme of the program was "the duty to remember"). Is it surprising that, in front of a public of admiring adolescents, facing a journalist whose questions were becoming more and more pressing, the octogenerian Raymond Aubrac could not "remember" a story that would include both the fact that Barbie knew he was Aubrac and the fact that he was not deported? "Because if he had, all would have been lost." But what if reality does not follow the logic of plausibility? What if reality is not coherent?

Obviously, one cannot blame historians for seeking to construct, if not coherent stories, at least coherent explanations. Nor can one blame individual witnesses for allowing their desire for coherence to shape their memories. In any case, distributing blame has not been the aim of this analysis. Serge Klarsfeld, who has studied in intense detail all of Barbie's activities in Lyon, offered an explanation, after the publication of the round-table, for why Raymond Aubrac was allowed to vegetate in Lyon until his escape in October: Barbie was absent from Lyon between mid-July and December 1943, and the Germans in Paris were preoccupied with more important business during that time.[54] Azéma, who was present at the round-table and has written a great deal about the affair, accepted Klarsfeld's explanation about Barbie, but contested his explanation regarding the Germans in Paris.[55] Maybe one day it will all make sense, at least for historians. Meanwhile, from a literary and cultural perspective, the Aubrac affair continues to fascinate because it points up the problematic relations between public and private memory, and between history and fantasy, in the construction of both an individual and a collective past.

NOTES

An earlier version of this essay, in French, was delivered at the conference on "Témmoignage et éccriture de l'histoire" at Cerisy, France, in July 2001; it appeared in the proceedings of the conference, Témmoignage et éccriture de l'histoire: Déccade de Cerisy 21-32 juillet 2001, ed. Jean-Françoois Chiantaretto and Réggine Robin (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2003).

1. Henry Rousso, *Le syndrome de Vichy de 1944 à nos jours*. 2d ed. (Paris: Seuil, 1990). First published in 1987. In subsequent works, Rousso has deplored the "obsession" with Vichy. See Rousso and Eric Conan, *Vichy, un passé qui ne passe pas* (Paris: Fayard, 1994) and Rousso, *La hantise du passé* (Paris: Textuel, 1998).

2. For a good overview of the Papon trial in the context of the other trials for crimes against humanity, see Richard J. Golsan, ed., *The Papon Affair: Memory and Justice on Trial* (New York: Routledge, 2000) and also Sorj Chalandon and Pascale Nivelle, *Crimes contre l'humanité: Barbie Touvier Bousquet Papon* (Paris: Plon, 1998). For a discussion of the Barbie trial and its significance, see Rousso, *Le syndrome de*

Vichy, 229–48; see also my article "History, Memory, and Moral Judgment in Documentary Film: On Marcel Ophuls's *Hotel Terminus: The Life and Times of Klaus Barbie*," *Critical Inquiry* 28 (Winter 2002): 509–41.

3. Barbie was first identified in 1972 in Bolivia, to where he had escaped with his family in the 1940s. It was during the following years, when efforts were being made to extradite Barbie, that Serge Klarsfeld began publishing his books about the persecution of Jews under Vichy, starting with *Le mémorial de la déportation des Juifs de France* (Paris: Klarsfeld, 1977). Klarsfeld's book about the deportation of children from Izieu, in which Barbie played a major role, appeared shortly after the latter's extradition to France; Barbie's role in this deportation became one of the chief accusations against him at his trial. See Klarsfeld, *Les enfants d'Izieu, une tragédie juive* (Paris: FFDJF, 1984).

4. To complicate matters, the French Supreme Court of Appeals declared, in December 1995, that certain crimes against the Resistance could also be considered as crimes against humanity. For a good discussion of the juridical stakes involved in the recent trials, see Conan and Rousso, *Vichy, un passé qui ne passe pas*, chapter 3.

5. The most authoritative book on Moulin's life (and afterlife) is the massive 1999 biography by Daniel Cordier, a former *résistant* who acted as Moulin's secretary in Lyon; a self-taught but highly respected historian, Cordier has devoted his work exclusively to the study of Moulin's life and influence. See his *Jean Moulin: La République des catacombes* (Paris: Gallimard, 1999). For a recent collective volume on Moulin, see *Jean Moulin face à l'histoire*, ed. Jean-Pierre Azéma (Paris: Flammarion, 2000).

6. Vergès's first major media appearance where he accused members of the Resistance of betraying Moulin was on November 12, 1983, on French television. This produced an enormous outcry in the press in the days that followed—see, for example, *Le Monde*, November 15, and *L'Express,* November 18; these and other newspaper articles can be found in the voluminous *dossiers de presse* on Barbie and on the Resistance at the library of the Institut des Sciences Politiques in Paris.

7. "*Transfert des cendres de Jean Moulin au Panthéon: discours prononcé à Paris le 19 décembre 1964*," in André Malraux, *La politique, la culture* (Paris: Gallimard, Folio essais, 1996), 295–305. See my "Great Men to the Pantheon: Malraux and Moulin," *Revue André Malraux Review* 30 no.1–2 (2001): 97–109.

8. Frenay first made this accusation in his memoir *La nuit finira* (Paris: Laffont, 1973), and repeated it in a book devoted entirely to Moulin, *L'énigme Jean Moulin* (Paris: Laffont, 1977).

9. The arrests at Caluire occurred during a period of increased pressure on the Resistance, and followed a number of other important arrests. The meeting of June 21, 1943 was called in order to find a replacement for the head of the Secret Army (the newly formed armed branch of the interior Resistance), Général Delestraint, who had been arrested in Paris a few weeks earlier. Present at the meeting, besides Moulin, were representatives of the left-wing *Libération* group (Raymond Aubrac, André Lassagne), of the more conservative *Combat* group (Henri Aubry, René Hardy—the latter not invited), as well as three other men invited by Moulin (Bruno Larat, Colonel Albert Lacaze, and Colonel Emile Schwartzfeld). All were arrested by Barbie and his lieutenant, but Hardy, the only one not to be handcuffed, escaped, thus drawing the others' suspicion. Moulin was badly tortured by Barbie, then sent up to Paris half dead; he died in the train on his way to Germany a few days later. All the others, except Raymond Aubrac, were also transferred to Paris. Aubry was released; Larat and

Schwartzfeld died in deportation, and Lassagne, who was also deported, died a few years after the war. For detailed studies of Caluire and its aftermath, see Cordier, *Jean Moulin*, chapters 17–18; Dominique Veillon and Jean-Pierre Azéma, "Le point sur Caluire," *Les Cahiers de l'IHTP* 27 (June 1994): 127–44; and Dominique Veillon and Eric Alary, "Caluire: un objet d'histoire entre mythe et polémique," in Azéma, ed., *Jean Moulin face à l'histoire*, 184–94.

10. Barbie, who was working for U.S. intelligence in Germany (the U.S. refused to extradite him to France), gave three depositions in 1948 to the French police commissioner Louis Bibes; he affirmed that René Hardy had given away Caluire. Interestingly, Hardy himself reproduced the full text of Barbie's depositions in his 1984 book of self-justification, *Derniers mots* (Paris: Fayard). For a concise account of the two Hardy trials, see Cordier, *Jean Moulin*, chapter 24.

11. A few excerpts from this film, *Que la vérité est amère,* by Claude Bal, are included in Marcel Ophuls's documentary film, *Hotel Terminus: The Life and Times of Klaus Barbie* (1988). For a detailed account of Barbie's appearances in the French press from 1972 to 1984, see Henri Noguères, *La vérité aura le dernier mot* (Paris: Seuil, 1985). As its title suggests, Noguères's book is intended as a refutation of Hardy's *Derniers mots.* Noguères provides reliable information about press coverage and some other factual details.

12. See, for example, the daily *Le Matin,* 5, 7, 21 May, 1984; and many other articles in the *dossier de presse* on the Resistance, Institut des Sciences Politiques.

13. In 1990, the Court of Appeals upheld an earlier condemnation of Vergès and Bal for libel against the Aubracs. See *Le Monde,* 23 February 1990, p. 12.

14. Lucie Aubrac, *Ils partiront dans l'ivresse* (Paris: Seuil, 1986), 11; English translation, *Outwitting the Gestapo*, trans. Konrad Bieber and Betsy Wing (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1993), 7. The translation here, and throughout in quotes from the French, is my own.

15. These testimonies, by Eugène Brédillot and Serge Ravanel, were dropped from later editions of the book. Ravanel's statement regarding what the Germans knew about Aubrac's identity was erroneous.

16. Raymond Aubrac, *Où la mémoire s'attarde* (Paris: Eds. Odile Jacob, 1996), chap. 2.

17. *Le Monde des livres*, 6 September 1996, p. xi.

18. See, for example, Eric Conan, "Aubrac: le passé revisité," *L'Express,* 27 February 1997, and the review by Sophie Grassin in the same issue; reviews by Olivier Wieviorka, and by Gérard Lefort and Olivier Séguret in *Libération,* 26 February 1997; review by Jean-Michel Frodon and Laurent Greilshamer in *Le Monde*, 27 February 1997; by Anne Muratori-Philippe in *Le Figaro*, 28 February 1997.

19. Paul Quinio, "'Lucie Aubrac' hébergée dans les écoles," *Libération*, 26 February 1997. Regarding the box-office success of the film, see Laurence Alfonsi, "La réception du film *Lucie Aubrac*," *Communications et Langages* 116 (1998): 42. For a thoughtful discussion of the film and the "affair," see Leah D. Hewitt, "Identity Wars in 'L'Affaire (Lucie) Aubrac': History, Fiction, Film," *Contemporary French Civilization* 22 no. 2 (Summer–Fall 1998): 264–284.

20. Jean-Pierre Vernant, "La mémoire et les historiens," in *Mémoire et Histoire: la Résistance,* ed. Jean-Marie Guillon and Pierre Laborie (Toulouse: Editions Privat, 1995), 341–45.

21. Maurice Halbwachs, *Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire* (Paris: Mouton, 1976). First published in 1923.

22. Hayden White, *Metahistory* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973); and *Tropics of Discourse* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978).

23. Gérard Chauvy, "Les trois mystères Aubrac," *Historia* 603 (March 1997): 42–50.

24. Anne Muratori-Philippe, "Affaire Aubrac les ombres d'une légende," *Le Figaro*, 28 February 1997; many of the negative reviews of the film mentioned Chauvy's forthcoming book, opposing it to the "legend" shown in the film.

25. Gérard Chauvy, *Aubrac, Lyon 1943* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1997). The preface is by René Fallas.

26. Chauvy, *Aubrac*, 382, 385, 401.

27. See *Le Monde*, 10 October 1991: Raymond Aubrac asked, at a press conference on 8 October, that a commission of historians investigate "*l'affaire de Caluire*."

28. While condemning Chauvy's method, historians nevertheless consider some of the documents he furnished to be important, as I discuss below.

29. The judgment against Chauvy and the publisher Albin Michel was handed down on 2 April 1998, the same day as the condemnation of Maurice Papon for complicity in crimes against humanity (see article by Nicolas Weill, *Le Monde,* 4 April 1998); the judgment was upheld on appeal.

30. The script has been published: Jean-Luc Godard, *Éloge de l'amour* (Paris: P.O.L., 2001), 117.

31. Pierre Vidal-Naquet, *Le trait empoisonné: Réflexions sur l'affaire Jean Moulin* (Paris: La Découverte, 1993), 41–58.

32. Annette Wieviorka, review of *Les secrets de l'affaire Jean Moulin* by Jacques Baynac, *Le Monde*, 18 November 1998. A few years earlier, another book had portrayed Moulin as a Soviet agent: Thierry Wolton, *Le grand recrutement* (Paris: Grasset, 1993).

33. The most detailed defense of the Aubracs in the press, refuting Chauvy's story point by point, was by the journalist Gilles Perrault: "Barbie, son Tartuffe, et les Aubrac," *Le Monde*, 23 May 1997; Chauvy responded to Perrault in *Le Monde,* 22/23 June 1997. A few months later, the historian François Delpla published a book-length defense and refutation: *Aubrac, les faits et la calomnie* (Paris: Le Temps des cerises, 1997). Among those who expressed some doubts, even while maintaining their support for the Aubracs, was Moulin's biographer Daniel Cordier, interviewed in *Libération*, 8 April 1997. The Aubracs answered questions in a long interview by Henri Amouroux, author of a multi-volume history of the Resistance, in *Le Figaro,* 12 April 1997. All of these publications occurred before the famous "round-table" at *Libération*, which I will discuss below.

34. These debates were triggered by the publication of the collective volume *Le livre noir du communisme: crimes, terreur, et repression*, ed. Stéphane Courtois (Paris: Laffont, 1997). Courtois claimed in his introduction that communism was the "equal" of nazism. But already months earlier, a strong debate was launched by Karel Bartosek's book about Arthur London, *Les aveux des archives* (Paris: Seuil, 1996), claiming that London—imprisoned in Prague during the Slansky trial, and later author of the best-selling book *The Confession*—had remained in the clutches of the Party he was denouncing. Bartosek's book mentions Raymond Aubrac, who worked with the Czech government as a consultant in the 1950s; Bartosek suggests that Aubrac had acted as an "agent." See Eric Conan, "Prague ou la mémoire blessée," *L'Express*, 7 November

1996, pp. 150–51. The links between "*l'affaire Aubrac*" and "*l'affaire London*" are explored in some detail in several articles in the weekly magazine *Politis*, 3 July 1997.

35. "Les Aubrac et les historiens," *Libération*, 9 July 1997, special supplement, p. ii.

36. See note 27 above. In November 1991, Raymond Aubrac contacted Robert Frank (who was then head of the Institut d'Histoire du Temps Présent) to repeat his request, and wrote to him again on 14 April 1992. Frank said he would look into the idea, but it never materialized. (Correspondence in Henry Rousso's personal archives—I thank him for letting me consult these documents.)

37. "Les Aubrac et les historiens," *Libération*, 9 July 1997. In what follows, I will refer to page numbers of this transcript in parentheses in the text; the special supplement was numbered in roman numerals.

38. *Justice* 2 (2000), special section, "Points de vues: les Aubrac et les historiens," with critical articles by Lucien Karpik and Daniel Soulez-Larivière, and responses by Agulhom, Azéma and Bédarida, Rousso, Vernant.

39. Antoine Prost, "Les historiens et les Aubrac: une question de trop," *Le Monde,* 12 July 1997; for a similarly critical view by two historians, see Claire Andrieu and Diane de Bellescize, "Les Aubrac, jouets de l'histoire à l'estomac," *Le Monde,* 17 July 1997.

40. *Libération* titled the dossier as a whole "Les Aubrac et les historiens," with two pages of introduction signed by the two journalists. The transcript proper is divided into five chapters, each with a title: (1) "Préliminaires pour un débat, l'histoire et ses acteurs"; (2) "Mars-mai 1943, la premières arrestation de Raymond Aubrac"; (3) "Caluire, guet-apens à la villa du Dr. Dugoujon"; (4) "Juillet-septembre 1943, le rapport du commissaire Porte"; (5) "Le 21 octobre 1943, hypothèses pour une évasion." The last section of the transcript is titled "Epilogue: Des zones d'ombre subsistent."

41. Paul Ricoeur, *La mémoire, l'histoire, l'oubli* (Paris: Seuil, 2000); further page references will be given parenthetically in the text.

42. The most significant of these details is the date she gives for Raymond's release from prison after his first arrest, 14 May, when in fact he was released on 10 May. Chauvy, following the "*testament de Barbie*," uses this discrepancy to suggest that Aubrac was held for "debriefings" by Barbie until 14 May. Lucie Aubrac has explained that, urged by her editor, she chose 14 May because that was an important anniversary in her and Raymond's life as a couple. Her editor, Serge Guillebaud, has seconded this account: see his "Calomnie d'outre-tombe," *Le Nouvel Observateur,* 24–30 October 1991.

43. Rousso, *La hantise du passé*. Further page references will be given parenthetically in the text.

44. Jean-Pierre Azéma, "Il n'y a pas d'affaire Aubrac," *L'Histoire* 211 (June 1997): 85. After the court judgment which condemned Chauvy for libel against the Aubracs, Azéma debated the Aubracs' lawyer Georges Kiejman, again affirming the primacy of historical fact over the respect due to persons. See Azéma and Kiejman, "L'histoire au tribunal," *Le Débat* (Nov./Dec. 1998): 45–51.

45. Cordier, *Jean Moulin,* 801.

46. Although the March arrest was by French police, not by the Germans, Raymond and those arrested with him had one interrogation by Barbie.

47. Document reproduced in Appendix of Chauvy, *Aubrac, Lyon 1943,* 323.

48. "*A chaque appel de mon nom pour être confronté à Barbie . . . je redoutais que mon véritable rôle ait été découvert, mon identité percée à jour. Tout eût alors été*

perdu." Raymond Aubrac, *Où la mémoire s'attarde* (Paris: Poches Odile Jacob, 2000), 124.

49. "Ma part de vérité," *L'Histoire* (June 1997): 79.

50. The Barbie trial was videotaped (the first such event in French judicial history), but was not allowed to be shown on television until November 2000, when the cable channel *Histoire* was allowed to screen approximately two-thirds of the footage, over consecutive days in two-hour segments, with commentaries by historians and jurists. Raymond Aubrac's testimony was among those shown; I saw it when the series was rebroadcast in July 2001.

51. Raymond Aubrac, "Ce que cette table-ronde m'a appris," *Libération,* 10 July 1997.

52. Lucie Aubrac's account is somewhat ambiguous, falling more into the category of "omission" discussed above. However, the testimony by Serge Ravanel that she included in the 1984 edition states unambiguously that "the Germans did not know his real identity, Raymond Samuel, the fact that he was Jewish, and that his name in the Resistance was Aubrac" (*Ils partiront dans l'ivresse* [Paris: Seuil, 1984], 256). As mentioned earlier, the two concluding testimonies were presented as "presentable in court," a sign of the circumstances of the book's composition. They were both dropped in later editions.

53. "*Ni Vallet ni Ermelin n'ont été reconnus comme Aubrac. Autrement, tout aurait été perdu*." Television program "La Marche du siècle," France 3, 22 January 1997 (Inathèque de France, reference number DL: DL T 19970122FR3 008.001/002). This was a live program featuring Lucie and Raymond Aubrac and Elie Wiesel, around the theme: "transmission of memory to young people." Raymond Aubrac stated the above sentence (or variants) three times, in response to questions by the journalist Ladislas de Hoyos, who had written a book about Barbie (*Barbie* [Paris: Laffont, 1984 and 1987]). As far as I know, no one has mentioned this program in any of the discussions of the "Aubrac affair."

54. Serge Klarsfeld, "A Propos de Raymond Aubrac," *Le Monde*, 25 July 1997.

55. Jean-Pierre Azéma, "Affaire Aubrac: les faits sont têtus," *Libération*, 28 August 1997.