

Francia. Forschungen zur westeuropäischen Geschichte

Herausgegeben vom Deutschen Historischen Institut Paris

(Institut historique allemand)

Band 32/3 (2005)

DOI: 10.11588/fr.2005.3.64119

Rechtshinweis

Bitte beachten Sie, dass das Digitalisat urheberrechtlich geschützt ist. Erlaubt ist aber das Lesen, das Ausdrucken des Textes, das Herunterladen, das Speichern der Daten auf einem eigenen Datenträger soweit die vorgenannten Handlungen ausschließlich zu privaten und nicht-kommerziellen Zwecken erfolgen. Eine darüber hinausgehende unerlaubte Verwendung, Reproduktion oder Weitergabe einzelner Inhalte oder Bilder können sowohl zivil- als auch strafrechtlich verfolgt werden.

des centaines de chercheurs ouest-allemands (qui s'étaient brusquement intéressés à l'histoire de ce pays) se sont demandés si des citoyens est-allemands pouvaient contribuer à écrire l'histoire de leur pays. La réponse fut majoritairement négative. Aussi bien plus de la moitié des historiens est-allemands avaient été très tôt chassés de leurs postes. Sabrow souligne qu'il a fallu attendre au moins dix ans avant des historiens de l'ex-RDA soient de nouveau considérés comme des historiens »acceptables«.

Deux articles traitent du livre de Goldhagen. La tournée de l'auteur en Allemagne connut un succès extraordinaire, tandis que la majorité des historiens contestaient ou relativisaient l'intérêt de son ouvrage. Les médias accentuèrent encore le fossé qui existait entre le public et les historiens, bien que ceux-ci aient été souvent invités par la presse et la télévision aux nombreux débats qu'elles organisèrent. Le résultat fut d'une part un intérêt accru pour l'holocauste, d'autre part une réflexion sur le rôle qu'avaient pu jouer des Allemands (silence, approbation, voire participation) lors de la déportation des Juifs.

L'exposition des crimes commis par la *Wehrmacht* de 1941 à 1944 lors de la guerre contre l'URSS a suscité des débats qui ont dépassé, et de beaucoup, la vivacité des controverses précédentes. Aussi les auteurs de »*Zeitgeschichte als Streitgeschichte*« ont-ils jugé bon de lui consacrer deux articles. L'auteur du premier expliquait le silence des historiens en affirmant que presque tout avait été dit sur les actes de la *Wehrmacht* sur le front de l'Est. De fait entre-temps ces crimes avaient été oubliés ou passés sous silence. Par exemple le livre de Christian Streit, publié en 1977, qui relatait comment l'armée allemande avait délibérément laissé mourir de faim des milliers de prisonniers soviétiques, n'avait connu qu'une vente modeste. D'autre part, après la mort de Hitler, les généraux allemands s'étaient employés à glorifier la *Wehrmacht*. Or voici que cette exposition apportait les preuves de nombreux massacres commis par les armées allemandes à l'Est. Hans-Ulrich THAMER n'était pas très à l'aise pour parler de cette exposition: il ne cite pas, par exemple, ni le nombre très élevé des visiteurs, ni l'utilisation d'explosifs pour tenter de détruire l'exposition. Michel JEISMANN au contraire note d'entrée de jeu que »chaque soldat de la *Wehrmacht* était soumis à un mode de commandement qui pouvait, à tout moment, faire de lui un criminel« et que »les juifs«, mais aussi la population civile ainsi que les »prisonniers russes« en furent les victimes (p. 229). Jeismann reconnaît que plusieurs auteurs avaient »trente ans plus tôt dénoncé les meurtres du régime«, mais il pense qu'un éclaircissement n'en était pas moins encore nécessaire (p. 233). Ainsi était justifié l'exposition, surtout la seconde, qui avait après deux années de silence, corrigé quelques erreurs de la première.

Les auteurs de l'ouvrage regroupant, dans une quatrième série de textes, des controverses qui ont eu lieu, à la même époque dans des pays voisins de l'Allemagne: en France, en Pologne, où il est question des juifs assassinés par les Polonais à Jedwabne, en Suisse, en Autriche et en Espagne.

Gilbert BADIA (†), Paris

Jerôme COTILLON, *Ce qu'il reste de Vichy*, Paris (Armand Colin) 2003, 242 p. (L'histoire au présent).

A considerable number of books have now been published about the Vichy French State, its doctrines, policies and personnel, and the degree to which it can justly be accused of collaboration with the enemy or complicity in the Holocaust. In a short, densely written and very informative book, Cotillon also deals with some of these issues and the diverse characters and points of view in the Vichy regime. However, he is primarily concerned with elucidating the fate and the activities in post-war France of numerous neo-Vichyites or neo-Pétainists, those people who had been attracted to the person of Pétain during the war, if not always to his doctrines or to the themes of Vichy's National Revolution.

Cotillon analyzes the heterogeneous mélange of individuals active in Vichy: the reactionary right, Catholics, royalists, nationalists, the pacifist left, technocrats, syndicalists, some socialists, ex-communists following the path of Jacques Doriot, corporatists, and opportunists. Some remained loyal to the regime, some broke with it after mid 1942, some joined the resistance or had links with it while still in Vichy.

With the end of the regime the fate of the Pétainists varied, ranging from voluntary exile in neighbouring countries, ostracism, condemnation, purges, and imprisonment to death. Considerable numbers were summarily punished or killed by illegal purges. Formal legal processes for examining actions and behaviour during the Vichy years had been established by the Gaullist authorities outside France in 1943, and in 1944. In addition to the committees of purges and various tribunals, the High Court Justice was set up in November 1944 to adjudicate behaviour of those who had held high political or administrative office in Vichy.

Between March 1945 and July 1949 the High Court heard 100 cases, 16 by default. Cotillon draws an interesting conclusion: decisions on the accused were uneven, depending on their political complexion. Of the 100 cases, 42 were not concluded and 3 people were acquitted. Of the other 55 individuals, 15 were sentenced to »dégradation nationale«, loss of civil and political rights, 22 to hard labour, and 18 to death, 3 of whom were actually executed (Pierre Laval, Joseph Darnand, and Fernand de Brinon). In general, most of those associated with Vichy escaped legal punishment or were treated lightly with minor penalties. This outcome was consonant with Gaullist policy, stressing the restoration of national unity and limiting penalties only to those who had played an important role in Vichy or were directly involved in complicity with the enemy.

The post-war legal purge was also uneven with respect to profession and to penalty. A striking example was that of pro-collaborationist publishers and writers, few of whom were punished in any serious or lasting fashion. Indeed, neo-Pétainist journals continued or were founded a short time after the war, such as »Aspects de la France«, »Cahiers Charles Maurras«, »La France catholique«, »Questions actuelles«, and »Rivarol«. Self-serving autobiographies and memoirs appeared, including those by Alfred Fabre-Luce, René Gillouin, Henry du Moulin de Labarthète, and Bertrand de Jouvenel.

Politically, penalties or restrictions were imposed on those former parliamentarians who had voted for the creation of the Vichy regime, the French State, on July 10, 1940, or who supported Marshal Pétain, the regime and its policies. The Socialist party, the SFIO, expelled 84 former deputies or senators who were in this category from their National Congress in November 1944. The parliamentarians who voted for Vichy were excluded from the post-war parliament unless they had become resisters, a fact that was decided by an honour jury which examined 436 cases. The stark reality was that 56% of the last parliament of the Third Republic had voted for the new regime on July 10. The consequence was that in October 1946, 173 were declared ineligible to become members of parliament. Yet, it was not long before those active in the Third Republic who were supportive of Vichy, such as Pierre-Étienne Flandin, were able to return to political life.

Cotillon goes methodically through the different arenas of French intellectual and cultural, as well as political, life, detailing the march of neo-Pétainists to acceptance and respectability. He makes clear how quickly, within three years of the end of the war, the neo-Pétainists became aggressive in pursuing their interests and policies, as well as maintaining a strong presence in important institutional bastions of France. Among these were the senior government administration, the church, the law schools, Catholic institutions, educational bodies such as the philosophy department at the Sorbonne, literary circles, and the Académie Française.

Sympathy for neo-Pétainism was evident in the Académie française. Four members, including Pétain and Charles Maurras, were excluded from it at the end of the war, yet 15 others, sharing similar views of the principle of authority, were friendly to neo-Pétain-

ism. In 1946, 2 new members sharing this outlook were elected. One controversial case was that of Paul Morand, the writer who had been a film censor and an ambassador for Vichy, who had evaded prosecution after 1945, who applied unsuccessfully for admission to the Académie in 1958 and who was finally admitted in 1968.

Coming from different parts of the political spectrum, the neo-Pétainists pursued different tactics and degrees of militancy. The general tendency was peaceful but a small minority dreamed of an uprising necessary to defeat the communist peril. At the extreme, an atmosphere of »chouannerie«, guerilla actions, was present, and even thoughts of assassinating Charles de Gaulle. Former Pétainist militants came together in 1946 in the *Confédération générale des combattants*, formed out of the merger of the *Action républicaine des combattants* and the *Compagnons de la victoire*. Some neo-Pétainists established links with those who had exiled themselves, if only temporarily, in Switzerland, while others helped the emergence of the New Right. From their different perspectives, the neo-Pétainists concentrated on a certain number of political themes and specific ideas. Prominent among them were anti-communism, criticism of the institutions and policies of the post-war Fourth Republic, justification of their personal behaviour in Vichy, defence of France's colonial empire, concern for the rights of those purged, and calls for amnesty relating to Vichy activity.

On the last issue, amnesty, these calls were reinforced by support from some political parties and from some in the Church, including Cardinal Gerlier. The calls were successful, and amnesty came in stages, finally in August 1953. By 1958 only 19 individuals were still imprisoned for acts of collaboration. Even these were let free by 1964 because their sentence was subject to legal prescription of 20 years.

Within a short time the neo-Pétainists reentered the public political arena. In 1951 neo-Pétainists were elected to Parliament, illustrating they were recognized by some as respectable and legitimate. In the same year an association was set up to defend the memory of Pétain, whose centenary was celebrated in 1956 at a gathering organized by an honour committee. Not surprisingly, many of the neo-Pétainists were attracted to the mainstream right-wing parties. More surprisingly, others formed their own groups, or joined the more moderate, independent and peasant parties, the PRL, CNI, and CNIP. An outstanding example of this was François Valentin, an individual whose complex career embraced the PSF of Colonel La Rocque, regional leadership of the Catholic Association of French Youth, director of the Légion française de Combattants in Vichy until 1942, and then ambassador, and who became a senator in 1956. The ex-Vichyites could be found in still other parties, the RGR, the Democratic Alliance, the Parti républicain socialiste, and even the Gaullist organizations. A very symbolic figure in the RGR was Georges Bonnet, Radical-socialist parliamentarian, ambassador to the United States and foreign minister in the Third Republic, who voted for *pleins pouvoirs* for Pétain on July 10, 1940, who served on the Vichy National Council and who regained his old seat in the Dordogne as a deputy from the party in 1956 and became mayor of Brantome. A variety of other groups appeared. One important one was the Union of Independent Intellectuals with a diversity of members: writers, academics such as the scholar Jérôme Carcopino, minister for education for a time in Vichy, political activists such as Xavier Vallat, a renowned anti-Semite, military officers, lawyers such as Jacques Isorni and Jean Lemaire, journalists, and Vichy partisans, such as Pierre-Antoine Cousteau, and André Thérive.

Almost every page of Cotillon's book is dense with detailed lists of names of neo-Pétainists and their organizations engaged in their march back to general acceptance. The book, like a concise encyclopedia, is not easy to read or to digest, but it is very useful to have this inventory of hundreds of people, comprising a mélange of traditional values, populism, anti-parliamentarianism, anti-communist and anti-Semitic views, economic liberalism, extreme nationalism, colonialism, and Catholic religiosity, and to trace their post-war careers.

Michael CURTIS, Princeton