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Marianne is Watching:  
Knowledge, Secrecy, Intelligence and the  
Origins of the French Surveillance State (1870–1914)

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction  
of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy  
in History

by

Deborah Susan Bauer

2013



## ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Marianne is Watching:  
Knowledge, Secrecy, Intelligence and the  
Origins of the French Surveillance State (1870–1914)

by

Deborah Susan Bauer  
Doctor of Philosophy in History  
University of California, Los Angeles, 2013  
Professor Caroline Cole Ford, Chair

“Marianne is Watching” presents a history of the institutionalization of professional intelligence and counterintelligence services in France from 1870 to 1914. As the practice of secret politics, once exclusive to the domain of royal authority, gave way to calls for greater transparency in the nineteenth century, the acceptable exercise of state secrecy shifted from leadership to professional surveillance teams. This process, which notably took place during a period of peace, not war, highlights the enduring tension between surveillance, secrecy and national defense within an ostensibly open, democratic society. Interrogating these concerns in the French case, the Third Republic appears as a regime that ultimately valued security over transparency and other freedoms. Led by the army’s administration, with contributions from services within the police and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, espionage and counterespionage teams became an integral part

of the French state. They carved out important roles in determining France's international policy, in policing domestic populations, and in regulating speech and expression. What began as a reconnaissance service to achieve military parity with enemies like Germany thus grew to be a professional domestic surveillance apparatus with considerable autonomy in identifying threats to the nation. The embedding of institutions devoted to secrecy had a significant effect on French *fin-de-siècle* society and culture by contributing to fears of competition, weakness, and decline, as well as popular ideas of citizenship and belonging. The atmosphere created by the perceived presence of foreign spies in turn gave rise to a shared mindset of desperation, paranoia, and yearning for honor and heroism. As understandings of the reality of international espionage changed, views of spies changed, facilitating the popular acceptance of the notion of *raison d'état*, or the idea that the state has the right to act by whatever means necessary. This study of the origins of bureaucratized intelligence shows the extent to which regimes rely on the perception of real or imagined enemies to justify the establishment of legal and social structures that permit secret state actions, even in the most open society.

The dissertation of Deborah Susan Bauer is approved.

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Gail Kligman

Caroline Cole Ford, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2013

To my grandparents:  
Alex and Frizzi Bauer  
Sam and Bea Tolmach  
Teachers of history and of life.

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## ABBREVIATIONS AND TERMS

### Abbreviations

- AM Archives départementales des Alpes-Maritimes (Nice)
- AN Archives Nationales de France
- APP Archives de la Prefecture de Police of Paris
- MAE Archives de la Ministre des Affaires Etrangères (Foreign Affairs Ministry)
- MM Archives départementales de la Meurthe-et-Moselle (Nancy)
- SHD Service Historique de la Défense
- SR Service de renseignements<sup>1</sup> or Section de Renseignements
- SRT Services de renseignements territoriaux
- SS Section de Statistiques/Statistical Section

### Terms: Intelligence Services

*Bureaux arabes* – Teams of army officers charged with learning about native Algerians during the French conquest of Algeria. They were established in 1844 by Marshal Thomas Robert Bugeaud.

*Commissaires spéciales* – police commissioners in the local departments who often worked alongside the Statistical Section in gathering intelligence, and especially performing counterespionage duties for the army during the first few decades of the Third Republic.

*Dépôt de la Guerre* – Reconnaissance arm of the army under the Second Empire.

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<sup>1</sup> There is discrepancy in references to the French generic term for intelligence services, whether the spelling is *service de renseignements* or *service des renseignements*. I have chosen to use the former, except when quoting other sources that employ the plural.

*Deuxième Bureau* – One of the divisions of the French *état-major*, or high command, it was charged with anything related to information – its collection, analysis, publication, and more.

*Gendarmerie* – Militarized police forces responsible to the Ministry of War; often conducted policing in local departments.

*Section de Statistique* (Statistical Section) – The Statistical Section became the official name of the espionage and counterespionage service around the end of 1886.

*Section de Renseignements* – The name that was given to the former Statistical Section by decree of Sept 12, 1899.

*Service de renseignements* – General term for “Intelligence Service.”

*Services de renseignements territoriaux* – Smaller intelligence outposts located on the frontier zones: Nancy, Belfort, Nice, Chambéry, Briançon, Epinal, and Remiremont. They were small offices run by the local army high command, whose intelligence officers often received information from and reported back to Paris.

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my arguments and to look for the whole picture of politics, society, and culture in each and every question that I posed. That all three committee members have taken the time and effort to read through and provide insightful comments on my lengthy manuscript is most appreciated.

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how to critique subjects far and wide have paid off, and I am proud to be among a group of such fine young scholars.

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“Georges Boulanger: The Third Republic’s Spy Master?” Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Western Society for French History, Portland, OR. November 12, 2011.

“He’s surely a spy! Denunciation letters and Public Participation in the Hunt for Spies in Early Third Republic France.” Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Society for French Historical Studies, Tempe, AZ. April 10, 2010.

"Light of the State: The Army’s Role in the Creation and Direction of French Intelligence Services at the Fin-de-Siècle." Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Society for the Study of French History, Dublin, Ireland. June 29, 2009.

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“The Scope of Intelligence: The Uses and Necessity of Espionage and Reconnaissance in Fin-de-Siècle France,” Presented at the Rocky Mountain Interdisciplinary History Conference, Boulder, CO. September 20, 2008.

## INTRODUCTION

“Secrecy is the first essential in affairs of state.”  
– Richelieu, “Maxims,” *Testament Politique* (1641)

“For warre, consisteth not in Battell only, or the act of fighting; but in a tract of time.”  
– Thomas Hobbes, *The Leviathan*

During the last several decades of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, professional French spies operated in several countries in a variety of contexts. A French agent faked illiteracy to gain access to the quarters of the German military attaché; another fooled one of Bismarck’s top spies into spilling trade secrets; French officers paid informers to learn Italian schemes in North Africa, and yet another agent, convicted of espionage, used technical cunning to escape from a German prison.<sup>1</sup> Spies, intelligence operations, and information leaks were common features of the day-to-day politics and culture of the early French Third Republic. The Dreyfus Affair, the Schnaebelé Affair, and international disputes and alliances in Europe and in the colonies all rested on questions of *renseignement*, or intelligence.<sup>2</sup> Whereas espionage, *renseignement*, and

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<sup>1</sup> The first is Marie Bastian of the Dreyfus Affair, the second, an agent of the Statistical Section named Edmond Lajoux, the third refers to Colonel Sandherr’s intelligence team in Tunisia, and the convicted and escaped agent is Captain Lux of the Belfort SR. More on all of these cases in the chapters that follow.

<sup>2</sup> The term *renseignement* in French is best translated as “intelligence.” Scholars of intelligence have found the term “intelligence” difficult to define, though one of the best attempts came from an American intelligence practitioner and scholar, Sherman Kent, who refers to “a certain kind of knowledge, the activity of obtaining such knowledge and to the organizations whose function is to obtain it.” Peter Jackson and Jennifer Siegel, *Intelligence and Statecraft: The Use and Limits of Intelligence in International Society* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2005), 4. For more of the Dreyfus Affair, see Chapter 2 and for the Schnaebelé Affair, see Chapters 4 and 7.

The Dreyfus Affair stemmed from the false accusation of Captain Alfred Dreyfus for espionage, based on a *bordereau*, or note, retrieved from the German embassy in September 1894 by Marie Bastian, agent of the *section de statistique*. The note, which indicated that someone with the French General Staff was passing technical military information to Germany, was immediately brought to the attention of the officers in the French intelligence agency, who subsequently notified the War Minister, General Mercier. After a series of interrogations, and in spite of his protests of innocence, Dreyfus was convicted of espionage and treason based on the supposed similarity between his handwriting and that on the incriminating *bordereau*, along with documents allegedly

reconnaissance have histories dating back centuries, the first official intelligence section in France came into being with the army's reorganization project of June 8, 1871. This was less than one year following the establishment of the Third Republic itself, a democratic regime formed from the ashes of Napoleon III's Second Empire. The development of institutions dedicated to secrecy alongside the growth of the liberal, republican polity is the subject of this dissertation. By interrogating the individuals and groups who advocated for intelligence, along with the actual practices of intelligence and counterintelligence, one arrives at an assessment of the Third Republic as a regime that ultimately valued security over transparency and other freedoms.

The small intelligence division created in 1871 constituted a subsection of the French army's *Deuxième Bureau*, and would eventually be known as the *Section de statistique*, and later as the *Section de Renseignements*.<sup>3</sup> Members of these services both worked alongside, and competed with, agents gathering information and conducting surveillance within the police and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

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proving his guilt, which throughout the trial against him remained in a "secret dossier." In the years following, Captain Dreyfus' brother, Mathieu Dreyfus, continued to work to prove the Captain's innocence, and a series of events gave greater certainty to his side, bringing the issue into the wider public. In July 1895, head of the Statistical Section Colonel Sandherr suffered an attack of general paralysis, and was replaced by Colonel Georges Picquart, who along with Emile Zola would become one of the Dreyfusards' heroes for recognizing the flimsiness of the evidence used to convict Dreyfus. Dreyfus' conviction and ensuing cover up revolved around lies and fraud practiced by the officers of the Statistical Section.

The Schnaebelé Affair took place in April 1887 when Guillaume Schnaebelé, a police agent working for French intelligence, was caught and arrested on the German side of the French-German border. The circumstances of his arrest were questionable, and so in response to popular outcry, Bismarck released him after the agent spent just a few days in jail.

<sup>3</sup> It has become quite common in histories of the period to mistakenly confuse the *Deuxième Bureau* with the smaller services actually performing espionage and counterespionage work. The *Deuxième Bureau* was the larger intelligence section within the army's general staff, but it did not actually run spies, as was the task of the Statistical Section (SS) and later the *Section de Renseignements* (SR). I also note here the discrepancy in the French spelling of their term for "intelligence service," or *service de renseignements*, which is at times spelled using the plural, as *service des renseignements*. I have chosen to employ the former, except when quoting other sources that use the plural.

These entities grew and developed over the course of this period with considerable autonomy and little regard for transparency or responsibility for their actions. It was during the *fin-de-siècle* – notably a period of peace, not war – that professional intelligence and official secrecy became directly connected with the institutions of state. The late-nineteenth-century French Republic watched, noted, arrested, seduced, and dissimulated, all under the auspices of national defense.

The history of the construction of professional intelligence in France is one of institution building and the means by which such institutionalization was managed. The creation of intelligence edifices came about largely through the efforts of bodies that were not explicitly political, in particular the army and the police. Through discourse and through practice, these actors worked to assure that surveillance was integral to national security and therefore a necessary part of the state apparatus. This project then gained legitimacy at the end of the nineteenth century via the creation of laws, representations in the media, and the outpouring of literature speaking to this new reality of modern war and peace. Building the institutions of the “secret state” necessarily entailed clarification, over time, of what constituted espionage and of what information entailed protection. The fact that this project fell largely on the army had profound results for the development of the European diplomatic landscape. Consistent with its *raison d’être*, the army prioritized using intelligence to learn about the size and capabilities of armed forces, rather than focusing on the aims and intentions of foreign leaders. This “militarization” of threat assessment also would mean the militarization of mindsets.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> David Stevenson, “Militarization and Diplomacy in Europe before 1914,” *International Security* 22, no. 1 (1997).

Importantly, professionalized intelligence in France was formed not by government decree, as was the case in some other countries, but by a convergence of action, practice, and the law.<sup>5</sup> Spies abroad were tasked with consolidating France's imperial holdings, bolstering alliances, and preparing for future war. At home, counterintelligence located scores of "traitors" and "enemies" of the regime. Thus, professional intelligence began to be viewed as a legitimate endeavor on behalf of the nation.

The lack of an administrative order to establish and govern espionage and counterespionage in the French case makes a history of intelligence origins somewhat challenging. In a short piece within a larger encyclopedia, historian Sébastien Laurent presents these obstacles to understanding the French secret services. He writes that as the services grew out of a continually evolving state throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, they thus progressed without a regular or rational trajectory. Few administrative and regulatory texts exist that defined these services, explains Laurent, and practices developed "more from

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<sup>5</sup> By contrast, intelligence agencies in Britain and the United States came about through policy decisions. In pre-War Britain, espionage and counterespionage work was minimal and sporadic. The military relied on small intelligence sections only during wartime, first during the Fenian scare in Ireland in the 1880s and again during the Boer War at the end of the century. During peacetime, however, intelligence services were nearly nonexistent. Intelligence was only professionalized in Britain in 1909, following decades of primarily imagined spy scares fueled by popular author William Le Queux and his friends. The state finally heeded the recommendations of a war committee and established the Secret Service Bureau, separated within a year into divisions that would later become MI5 and MI6. Christopher Andrew, *Her Majesty's Secret Service: The Making of the British Intelligence Community* (New York, N.Y.: Viking, 1986). In the American case, as Christopher Andrew explains, leaders used intelligence during war, but were hesitant to incorporate the activity during peace. "They regarded peacetime espionage, if they thought of it at all, as a corrupt outgrowth of Old World diplomacy, alien to the open and upright American way. It took two world wars and a cold war to persuade them otherwise." Christopher Andrew, *For the President's Eyes Only: Secret Intelligence and the American Presidency from Washington to Bush* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1996), 29. Although several branches of the military ran their own intelligence teams during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Congress established an official intelligence community (including the C.I.A.) with the National Security Act of 1947. Amy B. Zegart, *Flawed by Design: The Evolution of the CIA, JCS, and NSC* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1999).

individual initiative and an *esprit de corps* than from legal codifications.”<sup>6</sup> To approach this difficult subject, I have therefore aimed to present a picture of the services based on the intersection of institutions and individuals, observing the habits and customs of army, police, and diplomatic agents performing secret intelligence activities at this time.<sup>7</sup>

In spite of the importance of the professionalization of intelligence services to the history of French society, policing, and the growth of the state, this subject has been effectively ignored by historians of *fin-de-siècle* France.<sup>8</sup> The reason for the lacuna in intelligence history is understandable. In the quest to explore social and cultural history over the past several decades, historians have intentionally sidelined “institutional” history, elevating concerns of class and gender over diplomacy and military issues.<sup>9</sup> With the enormous wealth of exciting and

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<sup>6</sup> Sébastien Laurent, “Les Services Secrets,” in *Dictionnaire critique de la République*, ed. Christophe Prochasson and Vincent Duclert (Paris: Flammarion, 2002).

<sup>7</sup> On this pursuit, I have drawn from the work of cultural historians who studied the cultural and intellectual contexts that shaped individuals in order to understand their roles within politics and professional institutions. See, e.g. Debora Silverman, *Art Nouveau in Fin-de-Siècle France: Politics, Psychology, and Style* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989); Carl E. Schorske, *Fin-de-Siècle Vienna: Politics and Culture* (New York: Knopf : Distributed by Random House, 1980).

<sup>8</sup> Historians of the late nineteenth century have noted that society in the *fin-de-siècle* was “spy crazed,” or obsessed with “spy mania,” and have readily conceded that the notion of German espionage contributed to the period’s growing xenophobia, though have not probed the issue in any depth. See, e.g. Roger Magraw, *France, 1815–1914: The Bourgeois Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983). Magraw writes that the Dreyfus case “began in an era of spy mania and xenophobia,” 274. Numerous works repeat similar phrases. Authors writing about the Dreyfus Affair or some other issues make fleeting reference to the new Deuxième Bureau, the centralizing agency responsible for analysis of intelligence at the turn of the century. However, no histories have actually considered who was responsible for the creation of France’s first professional intelligence agencies, nor do they examine the origins or implications of the national obsession with foreign espionage.

<sup>9</sup> Whereas historians have paid little attention to the role of institutions of secrecy in state formation, disciplines such as sociology and political science have been less hesitant to broach the topic. See, e.g. David Lyon, *Surveillance Studies: An Overview* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007); Christopher Dandeker, *Surveillance, Power, and Modernity: Bureaucracy and Discipline from 1700 to the Present Day* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990).

informative scholarship that the cultural turn has produced, the field is now ripe for a reexamination of some of the drivers of history that have been left behind.

Turning attention to institutions brings the historian down the path classically paved by Michel Foucault. Foucault presents a historical analysis of shifts in disciplinary practices centered around the way sovereign power operates on the human body. Foucault argues that as populations grew, discipline became embedded in “training” institutions, with the result that humans internalized power in the production of “norms” of behavior and beliefs. With his now famous metaphor of the Panopticon, Foucault introduced a new way to conceive of power relations and their impact on “everyday” lives.<sup>10</sup> The principle of the Panopticon – in which the prisoner never knows whether he is being watched – translates to the notion that internalized discipline causes members of society to behave as if surveillance was “perpetual and total.”<sup>11</sup> Foucault views surveillance, moreover, as a mode of social ordering, and as such, asserts that it allows for the presence of “dividing practices,” or practices that identify and exclude.

It is easy to see how nascent institutions of permanent surveillance fit into the Foucauldian schema, with intelligence agencies as one of the many “specialized” institutions whose “function is to assure that discipline reigns over society as a whole.”<sup>12</sup> Although Foucault does not treat these professionals directly, there are many parallels to be drawn with other examples, in particular the notion of the “*dossier*,” or “file” as one of the disciplinary technologies used in the joining

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<sup>10</sup> Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), 205.

<sup>11</sup> Michel Foucault and Paul Rabinow, *The Foucault Reader* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), 19.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 206. The specialized institutions that Foucault cites include schools, prisons, hospitals, and the military.

of knowledge and power and as an essential part of the normalizing process.<sup>13</sup> As we shall see, it was during the late nineteenth century that intelligence agents began to collect and organize information on individual suspects as well as on nations and their military power.<sup>14</sup> One could argue that the illumination of national and occupational differences revealed in these *dossiers* set such individuals even further apart from the enforced homogeneity that Foucault argues becomes the norm in disciplinary societies. Nonetheless, as discussed in more detail below, Foucault's methods do not represent the only approach to such study. In particular, this work considers another theory of power, referred to as Machiavellian, or neo-Machiavellian, which asserts that power is conceived of as strategic and contingent.<sup>15</sup> While I accept many of Foucault's premises and use them to guide my interpretation of denunciation practices, self-regulation, and the power stemming from the objectification of subjects, I argue that particular actors – intelligence agencies and the men employed by them – maneuvered strategically in order to introduce certain tactics into a nation that had previously been reluctant to embrace them.

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<sup>13</sup> For example, Foucault discusses the use of individual dossiers within prisons to acquire knowledge about certain prisoners to aid in the punitive process. It was the use of documentation, Foucault argues, that provided for the creation of the category of "delinquent." He writes that, "[t]he overall aim was to make the prison a place for the constitution of a body of knowledge that would regulate the exercise of penitentiary practice." Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 250.

<sup>14</sup> The dossiers that become relevant in my case are part of a project that involved the creation of a national list, known as the Carnet B, of individuals suspected as potential spies against France who, in the event of mobilization for war, would be arrested and interned in camps across France. For details on the Carnet B and its egregious overstep of liberties, see Chapter 4. See also, Jean-Jacques Becker, *Le Carnet B: les pouvoirs publics et l'antimilitarisme avant la guerre de 1914* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1973).

<sup>15</sup> On theories utilizing a Machiavellian approach to power, see Dandeker, *Surveillance, Power*; Stewart Clegg, *The Theory of Power and Organization* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979); Stewart Clegg, *Frameworks of Power* (London: Sage Publications, 1989).



Moreover, this dissertation poses a challenge to Foucault's presentation of the disciplinary apparatus as a structured, coordinated machine. Rather, as alluded to above and described throughout this work, intelligence in France developed almost organically, pushed by determined individuals in an atmosphere of heightened international tension, which together led to the acceptance of practices that had previously been met with scorn. The system of surveillance that arose in France at the end of the nineteenth century was not installed in a top-down process, but instead surfaced and grew without coordination or oversight.

Although this dissertation considers the impact of the creation and growth of an intelligence industry on all of France – from the faceless “state” itself, to ordinary citizens in Paris and the provinces – the major protagonist is the army, or more specifically the War Ministry and a handful of smaller bodies connected to the army's administration. In disregarding the army, recent historiography has missed the critical contributions to French policy and French culture made both intentionally and through unintended consequences of actions taken by influential figures such as War Ministers George Boulanger and Charles de Freycinet. The names of these two leaders are familiar to all historians of the Third Republic, yet their connection to the important project of state intelligence has been virtually ignored. The army leadership played a much larger role in shaping the contours of the early Third Republic than has previously been acknowledged.

The important, but unseen, role of the army within the state came from its ability to harness and control secret information. The quest to seek and protect supposedly “confidential” information motivated the actors and the emotions central to this work. The late nineteenth century was the moment when the notion of official confidentiality itself was created. Prior to democratic government taking

root in France, politics was deeply connected with secrecy, and it was understood that monarchs or emperors engaged in covert activity both in the diplomatic realm and in domestic affairs. The ideals of the French Revolution were opposed to this practice, and France's Jacobin politicians worked to eliminate secrecy from state proceedings. With the institution of the Third Republic, politics and state activities were to be treated with a much greater degree of transparency. Actions were to be open, and the public was to be engaged – via the vote, public assembly, and other means – and was to have a say in the affairs of state.

Nonetheless, secrecy persisted, no longer at the highest levels of government where it would be protested, but instead within intelligence services, where it was accepted under the aegis of the important task of national defense. Throughout this period, the French parliament was in effect kept at a considerable distance from intelligence and counterintelligence operations by the ministries of War and Interior. Slowly, but methodically, the army administration created institutions tasked with secrecy, with discovering secrets of neighboring countries and simultaneously defending their own. Both projects had tacit and evident support from the public (as far as they were known), as the notion of secrecy became crucial to the sustainability of the nation. The actual number of individuals practicing intelligence during this period was small, yet the project was recognized as an important one. Secrecy gives the impression of power, and thus according to the new intelligence professionals, whoever controlled, directed, or had access to whatever might have been deemed “secret” had a kind of power over others who were denied access.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Sociologists such as Richard Wilsnack and Ritchie Lowry have written on secrecy and the power involved in keeping others from obtaining information that one wants to remain hidden. See

## *The Study of Intelligence*

Historians of intelligence like to refer to it as the “missing dimension,” positing secret discoveries, correspondence, agreements, etc, as being the pieces to fill the gaps in historical questions of diplomacy or other decision-making.<sup>17</sup> Indeed, knowledge of what went on “behind the scenes” of political action illuminates important aspects of the progress of nations and societies. The study of intelligence can provide access to understanding foreign and defense policy-making. It can expose the political and legal concerns surrounding domestic intelligence-gathering. It can bear witness to the use of intelligence agencies as mechanisms of oppression, and more. Further, the history of espionage and counterespionage can also inform modern policy concerns, as the nature of intelligence, and many of the factors causing intelligence failures, have not changed considerably over time.<sup>18</sup> With issues of transparency versus security continuing to trouble democratic society today, this exploration of the French case demonstrates the centrality of the human desire to feel safe and free from danger, whether from an internal or external, real or imagined, enemy. Indeed, familiar concerns raised in the context of the post-9/11 security regime in the United States can be seen to have historical antecedents in *fin-de-siècle* France.

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Richard W. Wilsnack, "Information Control: A Conceptual Framework for Sociological Analysis," *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 8, no. 4 (1980); Ritchie P. Lowry, "Toward a Sociology of Secrecy and Security Systems," *Social Problems* 19, no. 4 (1972). For more on relations between power and secrecy, see Chapter 3.

<sup>17</sup> Christopher M. Andrew and David Dilks, *The Missing Dimension: Governments and Intelligence Communities in the Twentieth Century* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984).

<sup>18</sup> For example, Jackson and Siegel write, “Careful study of the uses and limits of intelligence in the history of international relations over the longer term can provide a new and more comprehensive perspective on the nature of intelligence information and its relationship with policy making.” Jackson and Siegel, *Intelligence and Statecraft*, 10.

It is only within the past decade or two that the study of intelligence has become somewhat mainstream. Historians interested in illuminating the “secret” aspect of modern political and diplomatic history have long decried the academy’s failure to take such pursuits seriously. Books and articles tackling intelligence in the 1970s and 1980s consistently prefaced their findings with statements such as, “The treatment of intelligence by both mass media and publishers often seems ideally calculated to persuade the academic world that it is no subject for scholars.”<sup>19</sup> In part, the resistance to intelligence history came from its connection to institutional and military history. Additionally, the nature of the subject – the lack of traces of “secret” dealings, and the difficulty in accessing the necessary documents to accurately piece together a picture of intelligence communities – explained scholars’ reticence to take up the task. Thus while a handful of individuals did research and publish on intelligence organization – in particular the role of spies and codebreaking during major international conflicts – the narrative of secret agencies’ relations with the broader society in which they were situated remained untold.<sup>20</sup>

While shying from studies of the actual agencies themselves, cultural historians during the last few decades of the twentieth century gave credence to the historical importance of spy fiction, using novels and other publications with spies as protagonists (or antagonists) to reach a number of conclusions about

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<sup>19</sup> Andrew and Dilks, *Missing Dimension*, 3.

<sup>20</sup> See, e.g. David Kahn, *The Codebreakers: The Story of Secret Writing* (New York: Macmillan, 1967); David Kahn, *Hitler’s Spies: German Military Intelligence in World War II* (New York: Macmillan, 1978); Ernest R. May, *Knowing One’s Enemies: Intelligence Assessment Before the Two World Wars* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1984); Andrew, *Her Majesty’s Secret Service*; Andrew and Dilks, *Missing Dimension*; Wesley K. Wark, *The Ultimate Enemy: British intelligence and Nazi Germany, 1933-1939* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985).

contemporary societies. For example, considerable scholarship exists to equate the rise of spy fiction in Edwardian England with contemporary concerns of imperial decline, threats to national security, and “the changing contours of alignments and alliances.”<sup>21</sup> Historians, literary theorists, and social scientists have pointed to works like Erskine Childer’s 1903 *Riddle of the Sands* and William le Queux’s invasion novels to demonstrate the role that such fiction had on the actual development of Britain’s intelligence community at the turn of the century.<sup>22</sup> Such fictionalized accounts allowed scholars to gain insight into pre-World War I society, just as Rudyard Kipling’s spy novel *Kim* offered a telling picture of the “Great Game” in Central Asia, and nineteenth-century American spy tales provided rich material for understanding the need to legitimize marginalized types.<sup>23</sup> As Wesley Wark, an expert on espionage fact and fiction, wrote, contemporary audiences found spy fiction to be so compelling because it “rests on the artifice of apparent realism,” and scholars could, as Michael Miller attempted in his *Shanghai on the Métro*, use spies as “emblematic of the period” under interrogation.<sup>24</sup> While these accounts do thus offer an insight into contemporary fears, or the “mood and

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<sup>21</sup> David A. T. Stafford, “Spies and Gentlemen: The Birth of the British Spy Novel, 1893-1914,” *Victorian Studies* 24, no. 4 (1981): 498.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., Christopher R. Moran and Robert Johnson, “In the Service of Empire: Imperialism and the British Spy Thriller, 1901-1914.” *Studies in Intelligence*, Volume 54, Number 2, June 2010; Wesley K. Wark, “The Spy Thriller,” in *Mystery and Suspense Writers: The Literature of Crime, Detection and Espionage*, Vol. 2, eds Robin Winks and Maureen Corrigan (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1998), pp. 1199-1218. Andrew, *Her Majesty’s Secret Service*. Niall Ferguson even discusses the effect of such spy stories in his tome on WWI, *Pity of War*. Christopher Andrew and Moran and Johnson both stress the impact of the books on people like Lt. Colonel James Edmonds, head of domestic intelligence, in working to keep the nation safe from spies.

<sup>23</sup> Moran and Johnson, “In the Service of Empire”; Christine Bold, “The Spy Figure in American Popular Fiction,” in Wesley K. Wark, ed., *Spy Fiction, Spy Films and Real Intelligence* (London: Frank Cass, 1991), 17-29.

<sup>24</sup> Wark, *Spy Fiction*, 2; Michael Barry Miller, *Shanghai on the Métro: Spies, Intrigue, and the French Between the Wars* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 4.

atmosphere,” of an era as Miller put it, they do not give the full picture of the interplay between state and society that the study of intelligence has the potential to offer.

By the twenty-first century, finally, it appeared that the resistance to the study of intelligence was finally beginning to wane, leaving the field open to scores of historians and theorists interested in a variety of national contexts. Within the past decade and a half numerous excellent scholarly works on subjects of intelligence and espionage have been published as articles, books, or collections.<sup>25</sup> Such studies have illuminated the gendered aspects of espionage in Britain and in the United States, provided new features of French resistance under the Vichy regime, considered the role of intelligence in Empire building, and more.<sup>26</sup> The recent opening of KGB and East German security archives has also ushered in a whole new era of scholarship on the use of intelligence under Communist government, considering intelligence agencies as tools of foreign policy, as well as

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<sup>25</sup> Just to list a very few: Jackson and Siegel, *Intelligence and Statecraft*. Sean Halverson, “Dangerous Patriots: Washington’s Hidden Army during the American Revolution,” *Intelligence and National Security*, 25:2, 123–146; Howard Jones, *The Bay of Pigs* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2008); Thomas Boghardt, *Spies of the Kaiser: German Covert Operations in Great Britain during the First World War Era* (London: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2005); Sarah-Jane Corke, *US Covert Operations and Cold War Strategy: Truman, Secret Warfare, and the CIA 1945-1953* (New York and London: Routledge, 2007); Tennent H. Bagley, *Spy Wars, Moles, Mysteries and Deadly Games* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press 2007).

<sup>26</sup> Some of the newer work on gender and spies includes Tammy M. Proctor, *Female Intelligence: Women and Espionage in the First World War* (New York: New York University Press, 2003); Julie Wheelwright, *The Fatal Lover: Mata Hari and the Myth of Women in Espionage* (London: Collins & Brown, 1992); Elizabeth P. McIntosh, *Sisterhood of Spies: The Women of the OSS*, (Naval Institute Press, 2009). On Vichy France, see Simon Kitson, *The Hunt for Nazi Spies: Fighting Espionage in Vichy France* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008). On empire see C. A. Bayley, *Empire and Information: Intelligence Gathering and Social Communication in India, 1780-1870* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Patrick A. Kelley, *Imperial Secrets: Remapping the Mind of Empire* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic Intelligence Research, 2008); John Fisher, *Gentleman Spies: Intelligence Agents in the British Empire and Beyond* (Stroud: Sutton, 2002).

actors in their own right.<sup>27</sup> There is an International Intelligence History Association, and three peer-review journals dedicated entirely to questions of intelligence, espionage, and counterespionage: the *Journal of Intelligence History*, the *International Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence*, and *Studies in Intelligence*.

In spite of this uptick in publications on intelligence and spying in recent years, much still remains to be done, especially regarding the origins of modern intelligence. A recent collection of studies published in a volume entitled *Intelligence and Statecraft* spells out this dilemma. Acknowledging the significant growth of work by historians and political scientists focused overwhelmingly on the twentieth century, the editors write that

“study of the evolution of permanent intelligence bureaucracies in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries remains in its infancy. ... As a result, the historical and political context within which information gathering and assessment was institutionalized as a permanent component of the policy-making process of modern states has not received the attention it deserves.”<sup>28</sup>

The exception in the French case is the work of a handful of French scholars focused on the development of *renseignement* in their country.

Gaps in understandings of specific details regarding the growth and practice of intelligence services in national contexts have been and are being filled by studies on the theoretical nature of intelligence practice. Historians and political scientists including Peter Jackson, Amy Zegart, Mark Lowenthal, and Loch Johnson, among others, have used events from the past to draw conclusions about intelligence

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<sup>27</sup> See, e.g. Jeffrey Burds, "The Soviet War against Fifth Columnists: The Case of Chechyna, 1942-44," *Journal of Contemporary History* (2007); Mary Elise Sarotte, "Seeing the Cold War from the Other Side: The Stasi and the Evolution of West Germany's *Ostpolitik*, 1969-1974," in Jackson and Siegel, *Intelligence and Statecraft*; David E. Murphy, *What Stalin Knew: The Enigma of Barbarossa* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005); Kristie Macrakis, *Seduced By Secrets: Inside the Stasi's Spy-tech World* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

<sup>28</sup> Jackson and Siegel, *Intelligence and Statecraft*, 2.

practices and failures generally.<sup>29</sup> Such studies are excellent contributions to the understanding of the evolution of intelligence agencies, as Peter Jackson notes that, “while the practice of intelligence has undergone successive and often revolutionary transformations, neither the essence of intelligence work nor the nature of intelligence information has changed in any fundamental sense.”<sup>30</sup> Thus theoretical findings on the structures and psychology of intelligence are useful in historical pursuits. Examples include generalizations about the role of institutional cultures, politicization, and ideological biases in shaping intelligence analysis and product. For instance, awareness that, “political assumptions determine what is considered a threat and what is not,” challenges historians to get at the bottom of the political and institutional culture of the organization in question.<sup>31</sup> Knowing that belief systems serve as a “perceptual lens” for intelligence analysts, the job of the historian is to ascertain what contemporary political and cultural assumptions existed, and to discover how those may have influenced the intelligence product.

The project of understanding the development of an intelligence community in France at the end of the nineteenth century therefore drew from many of these theoretical discoveries. As professional intelligence sprung predominantly from the army, this dissertation considers the culture of the army at the time, which was one known as the culture of the offensive. The offensive strategy, frequently present in

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<sup>29</sup> Mark Lowenthal, *Intelligence: From Secrets to Policy* (Washington D.C.: CQPress, 2009); Loch K. Johnson, *Handbook of Intelligence Studies* (London; New York: Routledge, 2007). Amy B. Zegart, *Spying Blind: the CIA, the FBI, and the Origins of 9/11* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2007); Zegart, *Flawed by Design*. Roberta Wohlstetter, *Pearl Harbor: Warning and Decision* (Stanford, 1962).

<sup>30</sup> Peter Jackson, “Historical Reflections on the Uses and Limits of Intelligence,” in Jackson and Siegel, *Intelligence and Statecraft*, 11.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.



French military culture, dictated that preemptive means should be taken on the occasion that French autonomy and security was threatened.<sup>32</sup> Moreover, the study of intelligence during this period needed to accompany an understanding of contemporary political concerns and the development of the nation. As a consequence, such evolution cannot be separated from desires for revenge against Germany following the Franco-Prussian War, colonial and imperial designs, the need to secure alliances to remain competitive on the global stage, and the rising tide of xenophobia. All of these French concerns and preoccupations are therefore considered alongside major advances in industry and technology, and the resultant change in warfare. The totality of these issues and concerns was reflected in a need for more information and the need to predict the projects of internal and external enemies.

The French case is particularly informative for a number of reasons. France's distinction as one of the birthplaces of modern democracy, as well as being the first democratic country to professionalize intelligence, makes it an ideal place to interrogate the role of secret services within the Republic. While democracy was new, the practice of intelligence was not, and thus the continuities and changes in the practice of and regard for intelligence from Louis XIV through Richelieu, Louis XV's King's Secret, the French Revolution, Napoleon, and the Republic illustrate the way that regimes espousing different political ideologies embrace tools for survival. In the nineteenth century, the instability of government and volatility of regimes provide insight into how intelligence services maintained their place and their

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<sup>32</sup> Lawrence Sondhaus, "Strategic Culture and Ways of War," *Cass Military Studies* (2006); Jack Snyder, "Civil-Military Relations and the Cult of the Offensive, 1914 and 1984," *International Security* 9, no. 1 (1984).

mission in the midst of continued upheaval. Lastly, the history of the French services is particularly interesting in light of the agencies that would develop across Europe in the following century. Though they emerged from the army, the French intelligence services blended tools and cultures with those of the French police, a group with a tendency to focus on domestic matters over foreign questions. As Eric Denécé and Gérald Arboit wrote, "The fight against the enemy within is one of the salient features of the French cultural [intelligence] model."<sup>33</sup> It is possible that many of the tactics used at the *fin-de-siècle* made their way into the routines of Gestapo, Stasi, and KGB agencies.

The picture of French intelligence at the time of its professional origins has up until recently remained almost entirely obscured, with the exception of brief references in histories of the Dreyfus Affair. A handful of serious scholars have broached small aspects of French intelligence, the best account in English being Allan Mitchell's excellent article in the *Journal of Modern History*, "The Xenophobic Style."<sup>34</sup> Military historian Douglas Porch published a lengthy volume on the history of the French Secret Services, "from the Dreyfus Affair to the Gulf War," which provides an outline of the state of French intelligence in the periods prior to the Dreyfus Affair, but he dedicates the majority of the book to intelligence in the twentieth century.<sup>35</sup> Christopher Andrew, likely the most prolific scholar of

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<sup>33</sup> Eric Denécé and Gérald Arboit, "Intelligence Studies in France," in *Journal of Intelligence and Counterintelligence*, December 4, 2010.

<sup>34</sup> Mitchell's article considers the attitudes of French counterespionage practitioners in the 1880s and 1890s and establishes that these groups' inclination towards a fear of foreigners explains the readiness to convict Dreyfus of treason in 1894. Allan Mitchell, "The Xenophobic Style: French Counterespionage and the Emergence of the Dreyfus Affair," *The Journal of Modern History* 52, no. 3 (1980).

<sup>35</sup> Douglas Porch, *The French Secret Services: from the Dreyfus Affair to the Gulf War* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 1995).

Western intelligence, has also dedicated a number of articles and chapters to the French services, though Andrew, like Porch, relies almost entirely on published documents to construct the history of the French services, and therefore both miss much of the rich material extant in various archives.<sup>36</sup> With the exception of Michael Miller's treatment of interwar adventure tales, *Shanghai on the Métro*, no one has attempted to fuse the history of the development of these services with the broader culture in which they were situated.<sup>37</sup>

Where Anglophone scholars have yet to undertake an in-depth study of intelligence origins during the Third Republic, French historians have in recent years finally taken up the mantle. The first French historian to thoroughly treat the topic of spying was Alain Dewerpe, whose *Espion: Une anthropologie* (1994) approached the realm of spying from a number of different angles.<sup>38</sup> In his structuralist analysis of the world of the spy, Dewerpe adeptly describes the social construction of the diplomatic secret over time.<sup>39</sup> A thematic rather than chronological work, Dewerpe used published sources to gauge shifts in practices and reception of spies and spying at different times and in several national contexts.

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<sup>36</sup> Christopher Andrew's work on the French services includes: Christopher Andrew, "France and the German Menace," in *Knowing One's Enemies: Intelligence Assessment Before the Two World Wars*, ed. Ernest R. May (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984); *Théophile Delcassé and the Making of the Entente Cordiale*, (1968), and comparisons between the French and other European services in articles such as Christopher Andrew, "Governments and Secret Services: A Historical Perspective," *International Journal* 34, no. 2 (1979). He has written extensively on the history of Britain's intelligence community, including the following publications: Andrew, *Her Majesty's Secret Service; Defend the Realm: The Authorized History of MI5*, 2009. He has also published histories of American and Russian intelligence. Andrew, *President's Eyes Only. KGB: The Inside Story of its Foreign Operations from Lenin to Gorbachev*, (1990), and he has also edited several volumes treating intelligence in various contexts.

<sup>37</sup> Miller, *Shanghai on the Métro*.

<sup>38</sup> Alain Dewerpe, *Espion: Une anthropologie historique du secret d'État contemporain* (Paris: Gallimard, 1994).

<sup>39</sup> Dewerpe breaks down the socialization of the secret and secret agencies through the process of proliferation, politicization, and signalization. *Ibid.*, 129.

While he provides an excellent, in depth overview of the sociological world of the spy, his account avoids using intelligence to understand one particular era.

Dewerpe's work therefore serves as an excellent framework in raising a number of crucial questions of the morality and practicality of intelligence work that can be applied to any number of historical inquiries.

The twenty-first century has seen a well-needed follow-up on Dewerpe's work in France, with the emergence of a small group of historians working on intelligence questions, which has included the formation of a research group, and the holding of occasional conferences.<sup>40</sup> The most complete of the recent French works is Sébastien Laurent's *Politiques de l'ombre*, published in 2009.<sup>41</sup> Laurent's monograph is an exhaustive treatment of the history of the connections between the French state and the practice of *renseignement* from the Restoration through 1914. Laurent persuasively argues that French intelligence developed throughout the nineteenth century alongside the evolution of communications technology, increased wealth, and the bureaucratic state. One of his most interesting contributions is in connecting this development with the evolution of the practice of *statistique*, or the sociological practice of observation, so that in the early nineteenth century in France, the "*État statisticien*" became the "*État surveillant les opinions*."<sup>42</sup> His dense work presents scores of previously unpublished details of the

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<sup>40</sup> Younger scholars within this group include Sébastien Laurent, Olivier Forcade, Eric Denécé, and Gérald Arboit. A conference in 2003 at the CNRS was dedicated to intelligence, and a research group, the Centre Français de Recherche sur le Renseignement exists which performs research and publishes on questions of current and historical questions centered on intelligence. Researches from this Centre (CF2R) post regular articles on their website, found at [www.cf2r.org](http://www.cf2r.org).

<sup>41</sup> Sébastien Laurent, *Politiques de l'ombre: État, renseignement et surveillance en France* (Paris: Fayard, 2009).

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 57.

development of intelligence and surveillance practices in France. However, Laurent's tome can be regarded as predominantly institutional history, leaving little room for analysis of the intellectual and cultural background that produced these institutions, nor the social and psychological ramifications that the newfound stress on spying had on the French population. Moreover, while Laurent takes "the state" as his central object of inquiry, I have chosen to zoom in on the actual institutions, the characters and personalities behind them, and the society that they touched.

Following Laurent's book, a number of other more and less serious histories of intelligence services have been published in the past year by French publishers, including a book on the "secret dossier" at the heart of the Dreyfus affair, a journalistic-style rendering of "the unpublished archives of the secret services," and another account promising unpublished statements from former French spies.<sup>43</sup> A study of the professionalization of French intelligence within its cultural and intellectual context at the *fin-de-siècle* for the Anglophone audience is therefore long overdue.

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<sup>43</sup> Pierre Gervais, Pauline Peretz, and Pierre Stutin, *Le dossier secret de l'affaire Dreyfus* (Paris: Alma Éditeur, 2012); Bruno Fuligni and Jean-Baptiste Bourrat, *Dans les archives inédites des services secrets: Un siècle d'espionnage français, 1870–1989* (Paris: Iconoclaste, 2011); I describe this book as having a "journalistic style" because while it recounts historical subjects, it makes almost no citation to actual archives, documents, or published material. An earlier version of such work, which did accurately present a number of details regarding the French intelligence services, but in a non-scholarly manner, is Pascal Krop, *Les secrets de l'espionnage français de 1870 à nos jours* (Paris: Jean-Claude Lattès, 1993). Also referenced is Sébastien Laurent, and Jean-Pierre Bat, *Les espions français parlent: Archives et témoignages inédits des services secrets français* (Paris: Nouveau Monde, 2011). Gérald Arboit, Director of Research for the Centre Français de Recherche sur le Renseignement and lecturer at the University of Arras, has published numerous well-researched and sourced online articles on various aspects of French intelligence and just defended a work entitled, *Des services pour la France. La lente gestation d'un « renseignement à la française », 1856-2012*. He has also just published a book on intelligence, *Au Coeur des services secrets: Idées reçues sur le renseignement* (Paris: Le Cavalier Bleu, 2013).

*Secrecy, Liberalism, and the Third Republic*

A study of the professionalization of intelligence services at the end of the nineteenth century provides an opportunity to examine questions of secrecy in society and in the liberal state during the period in which France solidified its political position as a Republic. The use of and views towards secrecy serve as important points of inquiry to understand the past. Recent scholarship on cultures of secrecy in early modern and modern European history has demonstrated a variety of purposes that can be served by secrecy and dissimulation, from gaining social leverage, to strengthening the state, to shielding the existence of a homosexual family member.<sup>44</sup> Secrecy helped to sustain political and organizational groups like the Freemasons, certain anarchist communities, and has allowed for the practice of religions when they were banned.

In twenty-first-century society, it is understood that certain activities are not held up for public scrutiny. As the historian of Britain's "culture of secrecy," David Vincent comments, "secrecy is as integral to a liberal democracy as openness; the latter indeed could not exist either as a concept or as a practice without the other."<sup>45</sup> Such an understanding had to be constructed, however, and this dissertation argues that within the French context, the idea that secrecy was a necessary part of the modern, democratic state gained credence during the end of the nineteenth century, during the same period that democracy itself was taking root.

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<sup>44</sup> See, e.g. Jon R. Snyder, *Dissimulation and the Culture of Secrecy in Early Modern Europe* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009); David Vincent, *The Culture of Secrecy in Britain, 1832-1998* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998); Edward Shils, *The Torment of Secrecy: The Background and Consequences of American Security Policies* (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1956). Deborah Cohen, *Family Secrets; Shame and Privacy in Modern Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

<sup>45</sup> Vincent, *Culture of Secrecy*, vii.

The notion of publicity was anathema to theories of governance in the centuries preceding the French Revolution. Secrecy had allowed early modern states such as Venice to amass considerable power in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.<sup>46</sup> Machiavelli famously advocated for leaders to employ duplicity in their dealings with other states and with their people.<sup>47</sup> The Prince was to act like a fox, employing the ruse whenever necessary. In later centuries, absolutist theories of the state dictated that the monarch was to control knowledge, and that his subjects had no reason or authority to access state decision-making.<sup>48</sup> The Enlightenment and the French Revolution would overthrow centuries of sanctioned state secrecy, a process that was facilitated with the emergence of a public sphere.<sup>49</sup>

Liberal thinkers took up the cause of publicity across the European continent during the nineteenth century. Jeremy Bentham, the British Utilitarian philosopher, expressed his distaste for state secrecy in his posthumously published essay “Of Publicity.” Bentham wrote that, “Publicity is the fittest law for securing the public confidence, and causing it constantly to advance towards the end of its institution... Secrecy is an instrument of conspiracy; it ought not, therefore, to be the system of a

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<sup>46</sup> Snyder, *Dissimulation*, 107. Venice was known to employ spies and secret services well before other neighboring states, and its government bodies also operated in secret.

<sup>47</sup> Machiavelli’s assessments were rooted in a critique of the openness of humanist republican style government practiced in other Italian city-states.

<sup>48</sup> Jon Snyder writes that theorists of *raison d’état* thus “tended to see ‘political’ dissimulation as a legitimate technique of information-control for princes to practice in the interest of state security and dynastic stability.” Snyder, *Dissimulation*, 107. For a good account of the construction of the “information state” via a consolidation of knowledge, see Jacob Soll, *The Information Master: Jean-Baptiste Colbert’s Secret State Intelligence System* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2009). I discuss this work and Colbert’s actions in Chapter 1.

<sup>49</sup> Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1989).

regular government.”<sup>50</sup> John Stuart Mill agreed, declaring that, “The moral sentiment of mankind, in all periods of tolerably enlightened morality, has condemned concealment.”<sup>51</sup> To these thinkers, the notion of secrecy was so tied to the forms of absolutist government that they despised, and thus they advocated openness between leaders and the people for an ideal society.

In France, champions of republican rule similarly called for transparency in governance. While both republicanism and liberalism took a number of forms and republican thinkers differed on many viewpoints, their philosophy converged around certain core beliefs such as the centrality of reason, the critical role of education, an attachment to the nation, a commitment to the law, and an almost mythical identification with “the people.”<sup>52</sup> The establishment of a society attending to such ideals would need to be open, with a free dialogue between governors and the governed. The prolific theorist and statesman, François Guizot, emphasized publicity as a guiding principle for the creation of a government based on reason.<sup>53</sup> Guizot believed that in line with the liberalizing *zeitgeist*, France required representative government, stressing accountability and transparency, as well as civil associations and a free press. Such exhortations continued during the brief Republican interlude from 1848 to 1851, with Charles Renouvier calling in his

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<sup>50</sup> Jeremy Bentham, “Of Publicity,” cited in Vincent, *Culture of Secrecy*, 3.

<sup>51</sup> John Stuart Mill, “Thoughts on Parliamentary Reform,” (1859) cited in *ibid.*, 3.

<sup>52</sup> Sudhir Hazareesingh, *Political Traditions in Modern France* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 66.

<sup>53</sup> Aurelian Craiutu, “Rethinking Political Power: The Case of the French Doctrinaires,” *European Journal of Political Theory* 2, no. 2 (2003). Craiutu argues that Guizot and a group of statesmen known as the Doctrinaires stressed the importance of communication between government and society. The Doctrinaires, who were viewed as centrist or conservative in comparison with a number of more left-leaning liberals included François Guizot, Pierre-Paul Royer-Collard, Charles de Rémusat, Prosper de Barante, Victor de Broglie, Hercule de Serre, and Camille Jordan.



*Manuel républicain de l'homme et du citoyen* for freedoms including speech and publicity.<sup>54</sup> Later in the nineteenth century, writes Philip Nord, numbers of French liberal groups, from Jewish to Protestant Republicans, continued to highlight publicity as one of their central demands.<sup>55</sup>

Nonetheless, secrecy and liberal democracy at times remained at odds. Although publicity made sense in theory, both politicians and philosophers recognized that secrecy also carried intrinsic benefits. The German sociologist Georg Simmel, considered by some as the “the greatest theorist of modern secrecy,” provided a framework for thinking about the significance of secrecy for the structure of human relations.<sup>56</sup> Simmel agreed with the liberal position that “the democratic principle is bound up with the principle of publicity,” and that this “follows from the fundamental idea that each should be informed about all the relationships and occurrences with which he is concerned.”<sup>57</sup> However, Simmel advocated for secrecy in interpersonal and group relations, and described several settings in which secrecy helped to strengthen opposition parties, therefore helping in the creation of a balanced polity.

Simmel’s study of secrecy looked favorably upon particular uses of secret-keeping for both individuals and groups in modern society. He equated complete transparency with the state of the juvenile, writing that humans “need a certain

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<sup>54</sup> Jerney Jennings, “Liberty,” in Edward Berenson, Vincent Duclert, and Christophe Prochasson, *The French Republic: History, Values, Debates* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011), 99.

<sup>55</sup> Philip G. Nord, *The Republican Moment: Struggles for Democracy in Nineteenth-Century France* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1995), 70, 103, 109.

<sup>56</sup> The designation comes from Vincent, *Culture of Secrecy*, 4. Georg Simmel, “The Sociology of Secrecy and of Secret Societies,” *The American Journal of Sociology* 11, no. 4 (1906).

<sup>57</sup> Simmel, “Sociology of Secrecy,” 469, 487.

proportion of truth and error as the basis of our life,” as well as “a similar mixture of definiteness and indefiniteness in the picture of our life-elements.”<sup>58</sup> For Simmel, relationships – from friendships to marriage – required secrecy in order to maintain their vitality. Secrecy would keep the mind active and guessing, wrote the philosopher, offering “the possibility of a second world alongside of the obvious world.”<sup>59</sup>

Simmel’s connection of secrecy with the discovery of a hidden world – in the same essay that described the use of secrecy for political power and for social cohesion – speaks to the pervasion of a discourse of concealment in a variety of places at the *fin-de-siècle*. Knowledge itself had become a subject of debate during the Third Republic. Intellectuals began to question many of the new scientific schools of thought, including the doctrine of positivism, choosing instead to turn to man’s unconscious, and to rely on intuition over empiricism.<sup>60</sup> The rise of Symbolism in the arts and mass journalism in the public sphere demonstrated that knowledge was relative and subjective, as well as open to those able to declare ownership of it.<sup>61</sup>

Artists and philosophers of the nineteenth-century Symbolist movement consequently sought to evoke the secret meaning hidden beneath the exterior of the

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 461.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 462.

<sup>60</sup> See Debora Silverman, *Art Nouveau*, and H. Stuart Hughes, *Consciousness and Society: The Reorientation of European Social Thought, 1890-1930* (New York: Knopf, 1958).

<sup>61</sup> For a discussion of the discovery of the subjectivity of knowledge, see *ibid.* 63-66. In philosophy, thinkers like Henri Bergson preferred to explain society in terms of an *élan vital*, while artists and poets turned to the Symbolist movement to express that which could not be understood by the senses alone. As art and linguistic historian Joan Halperin noted, the relativity of knowledge depended “on both the receiver and the creator to establish meaning.” Joan U. Halperin, *Félix Fénéon, Aesthete & Anarchist in Fin-de-siècle Paris* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1988), 193.

phenomenal world. Men like Gustave Kahn and Jean Moréas believed in the existence of a universal message that lay often deep within the subconscious. They distrusted science and the notion put forward by the French state that knowledge was certain or determined and therefore attributable to one sole producer, and able to be possessed.<sup>62</sup>

Doctors and psychologists, too, explored the hidden side of the human psyche.<sup>63</sup> Commenting on studies of patients in various states of consciousness, the philosopher Alfred Fouillée observed that conscious human behavior incorporated thoughts and sensations held unconsciously.<sup>64</sup> He noted that the human tendency to represent one's mind as "a theater where a troupe of multiple, diverse characters" play different roles was based on sound scientific research that showed the existence of a "double conscience."<sup>65</sup> The notion of the solid self is an illusion, Fouillée concluded, and as such, humans were continually constructing and reconstructing their own identity.<sup>66</sup>

The fluidity of image and identity that intrigued turn of the century artists and psychologists would both frighten and excite the general public when it was

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<sup>62</sup> Chapter 5 provides an overview of the Third Republic's use of the law to assert a primacy over defense knowledge.

<sup>63</sup> Silverman, *Art Nouveau*, 75-106.

<sup>64</sup> Simmel also connected the development of social structures in terms of the evolution of secrecy with the evolution of understandings of consciousness. He writes: "The historical development of society is in many respects characterized by the fact that what was formerly public passes under the protection of secrecy, and that, on the contrary, what was formerly secret ceases to require such protection and proclaims itself. This is analogous with that other evolution of mind in which movements at first executed consciously become unconsciously mechanical, and, on the other hand, what was unconscious and instinctive rises into the light of consciousness." Simmel, "Sociology of Secrecy," 463.

<sup>65</sup> Alfred Fouillée, "Les Grandes Conclusions de la psychologie contemporaine – la conscience et ses transformations," *Revue des deux mondes* 107(1891): 798. Also discussed in Silverman, *Art Nouveau*, 91.

<sup>66</sup> Fouillée, "Grandes Conclusions," 813-815.

combined with the ability to undermine national security, as was believed to be the power held by the spy.<sup>67</sup> Disguise, viewed as a necessary element of espionage, was equally troubling to a society in which some members refused to adhere to one set identity. Simmel's essay had broached the shadier side of disguise, in which the fact of donning a secret identity allowed a person to carry out actions that he or she otherwise would not have.<sup>68</sup> Individuals or groups who chose to employ disguise or coded messages, including Félix Fénéon and other anarchists, consequently attracted the attention of French authorities.<sup>69</sup> It was their anonymity and choice to act in secret that made these people appear especially frightening. Secrecy, disguise, and coded messages all had the ability to give power to those with inside knowledge, a fact that was recognized by a state looking to consolidate its authority.

This was the intellectual world in which the French Third Republic developed agencies whose sole role was the maintenance of state secrets and the discovery of those held dear by other nations. As greater transparency made its way into the process of state governance, secrecy required a unique place. While

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<sup>67</sup> Chapter 7 explores public reaction to spies, considering questions of disguise and loyalties both in demonizing foreign espionage and in glorifying French spies.

<sup>68</sup> One example that Simmel uses for this demonstration is the case of African secret orders that employ disguise in their rituals. In one group, for example, a leader dresses as a tree spirit, and in this costume, "commits at will upon whomsoever he encounters any sort of violence, even to robbery and murder. No responsibility attaches to him for his outrages, and evidently this is due solely to the disguise." Simmel, "Sociology of Secrecy," 496.

<sup>69</sup> See Halperin, *Félix Fénéon*. She describes the tendency of Fénéon and his associates to assume varied identities, adopting pseudonyms, and striving to maintain anonymity. For more on correlations between anarchists, their use of secret codes, and assumptions that they could be spies, see Chapter 6. By the twentieth century, Symbolist artists, poets, and musicians like Alfred Jarry, Eric Satie, and Guillaume Apollinaire sought to cloak their creative works in hidden meaning, whose interpretation would rely on the senses of the receiver. See Roger Shattuck, *The Banquet Years: The Origins of the Avant Garde in France, 1885 to World War I* (New York: Vintage Books, 1968); Jerrold E. Seigel, *Bohemian Paris: Culture, Politics, and the Boundaries of Bourgeois Life, 1830-1930* (New York, N.Y., U.S.A.: Viking, 1986).

the modern Third Republic embraced publicity in a number of areas – for example allowing for right of public assembly and greatly limiting constraints on publication – the same state also created a shadowy, secret side. In order to protect its own right to surveillance on French territory, along its borders, and also in foreign countries, the Third Republic created a set of institutions that would work in secret and with little accountability either to the public, or to elected officials.

The members of these organizations, scattered amongst the army, the police, and the diplomatic service, therefore became privy to exclusive knowledge. Max Weber, in his famous analysis on the process of bureaucratization and social organization identified knowledge as resting at the base of social control. The guarding of knowledge was consequently crucial in securing power and control for the state. Weber wrote that, “the most decisive means of power for officialdom is the transposition of official knowledge into secret knowledge, by means of the notorious concept of the ‘official secret’. This is simply a way of securing the administration against external control.”<sup>70</sup> The guarding of secrets by employees of the modern state allowed these individuals a kind of power that they might not ordinarily possess.

It was during this period, moreover, that the idea of the official secret was translated into the notion of bureaucratic confidentiality. This process, in turn, privileged the receiver of information over its content.<sup>71</sup> With papers stamped

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<sup>70</sup> David Beetham, *Max Weber and Theory of Modern Politics* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1985), 74. In a sociological study of government secrecy, author Ritchie Lowry writes, “[I]t appears that the spread of secrecy has been partly a function of processes of bureaucratization and, ironically, democratization. With the breakdown of traditional sources of authority in medieval society and the subsequent rise of bureaucracy as the predominant mode of organizational life, manipulation and persuasion arose as instruments of power within organizational contexts.”

<sup>71</sup> As Simmel writes, the abstract value afforded to the secret means that the “substantial significance of the facts concealed often enough falls into a significance entirely subordinate to the fact that

“secret” or “confidential,” the idea that their contents held significant value increased.<sup>72</sup> Simmel recognized the potential that the possession of this kind of information might have on its holders. He discussed how the knowledge that someone possesses a secret at the exclusion of others gives the secret the appearance of having a special value. As such, Simmel noted, “secrecy gives the person enshrouded by it an exceptional position.”<sup>73</sup> Applying this theory to the development of intelligence services at the end of the nineteenth century, one sees that the leaders of the French state created a group of individuals who conceivably had more power in questions of repressing liberties and defining social control than the elected officials. These power dynamics, along with the theory of social cohesion created by the process of shared secrets, were undoubtedly at the base of the behavior of the members of the Statistical Section during the time of the Dreyfus Affair.<sup>74</sup> Behavior that has previously been interpreted as stemming from the values of honor and loyalty towards the army, combined with a fear of the foreign,

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others are excluded from knowing them.” Simmel, “Sociology of Secrecy,” 464. For more on this, see Chapter 2.

<sup>72</sup> A number of theorists of institutional secrecy in the United States have that noted that the classification of documents has led to a trend of over-classification, which itself results in more complications than protection and tends to reduce the importance of secrecy in the first place. For example, quoting Ritchie Lowry: “Since secrecy is really an element of power, more and more individuals within organizational contexts become involved in and concerned with the security process. Lower-level personnel frequently classify information at higher standards of security than higher-level personnel, in conflict with the rational organizational structure; and security processes breed upon themselves as more people try to have a hand in the game of power. ... These dynamics of secrecy, therefore, work in such a manner as to actually minimize the power potential of knowledge in at least several ways. ... What often results is a security system which begins to defeat itself, debase the information available, and create a situation which is worse than the use of no security whatsoever.” Lowry, “Sociology of Secrecy,” 439-440.

<sup>73</sup> Simmel, “Sociology of Secrecy,” 464-465.

<sup>74</sup> Simmel argues that there is something inherent in the nature of secrecy itself that unites individuals apart from those not privy to particular secrets.

can therefore be reinterpreted as symptomatic of the offshoot of the creation of the modern “official secret.”

An exposition of secret practices therefore reveals the French nation’s acceptance of the use of state secrecy in the name of security. This would not be the first time that the French willingly made the sacrifice of liberty for safety. Howard Brown has demonstrated that a Revolution-weary French populace welcomed Napoleonic forces of order as an alternative to the chaos resulting from the aftermath of the Revolution.<sup>75</sup> French society subsequently allowed the restoration of the French monarchy in 1815, and again in 1830. The brief experience with the Second Republic (1848–1851) ended, as Marx famously described it, in “farce,” with the elevation to power of Emperor Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte.<sup>76</sup> In the latter case, Napoleon III had won election to the presidency of the Second Republic and confirmation as Emperor thanks to a peasantry looking to protect their religious beliefs and their world that they felt threatened by increasing secularism.<sup>77</sup>

Alexis de Tocqueville wrote in 1856 that the French population was particularly inclined to accept an authoritarian-style rule.<sup>78</sup> Tracing the history of French political centralization from the *ancien régime*, Tocqueville feared for the modern French state as a society that eschewed public participation in politics and consequently allowed itself to be governed by an elite ruling class. He wrote that

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<sup>75</sup> Howard G. Brown, *Ending the French Revolution: Violence, Justice, and Repression from the Terror to Napoleon* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2006).

<sup>76</sup> Karl Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon* (New York: International Publishers, 1964).

<sup>77</sup> Edward Berenson, *Populist Religion and Left-Wing Politics* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984).

<sup>78</sup> Alexis de Tocqueville, *The Old Regime and the French Revolution* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1955).

according to the governors and the governed, the centralized state that was inherited from the monarchy operated under a rationale of acting for the public good, although with varying opinions of the source of legitimacy.<sup>79</sup> Along Tocquevillian lines, state leaders and functionaries were able to act in the public's "best interest" to professionalize espionage and counterespionage. They thus constructed a secret state and an intelligence edifice at the end of the nineteenth century, at times at the expense of personal liberties for the French population, under a push for national defense and public safety. Although the ushering in of the secret state was hardly on the level of surveillance societies in the second half of the twentieth century, it did set the precedent for the acceptance of the use of secrecy in government, and demonstrated a notion of *raison d'état*.

### *The Third Republic and the Army*

Histories of France in the period from 1870 to 1914 must reckon with a number of political, social and cultural changes that set this era apart. The establishment of democratic government and an extension of the franchise to all male citizens meant that the masses were given a say in matters of politics and government. Culturally, however, the optimism that should have accompanied progress in industrial growth and liberty was tempered by a loss in the Franco-Prussian War and a nationwide sentiment that French society and culture were going into decline. It was into this milieu that professional intelligence services emerged in France, responding to a need to modernize and keep up with advances

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<sup>79</sup> Each regime therefore legitimated its actions based on different impressions of the nature of truth. For example, the monarch justified his rule with traditional and theological arguments, while the revolutionaries acted under the aegis of science and reason. During the Third Republic, I argue, the power of the secret state could be justified by a discourse of war that prioritized national defense.



in warfare, to protect the nation from further degeneration, and to remain aware of goings on within the hexagon and outside.

The French Third Republic came into existence on September 4, 1870 after Emperor Napoleon III abdicated in the face of a resounding defeat of his imperial army at the Battle of Sedan. The provisional heads of the new republic continued to fight Bismarck's Prussian army under the French Government of National Defense until finally surrendering in January 1871. A series of elections, open to all male citizens, was subsequently held to decide upon the regime's new leadership. To the chagrin of provisional leaders on the left, as well as the populations of cities like Paris, Lyon and Marseille, the French population returned an overwhelmingly conservative majority to direct the new government. From this ideological disparity arose the experiment in socialist government, turned to bloody tragedy, known as the Paris Commune, a short-lived polity whose suppression on May 28, 1871 by the traditional French armed forces, got the new Republic off to a rocky start.

In the decade that followed, the composition and the longevity of the Republic were far from certain. Frenchmen with ties to the monarchy hoped that the downfall of the Second Empire would allow for the restoration of a royal lineage, although disputes between the Legitimist and Orleanist factions meant that this group was unable to present a unified alternative to the Republic.<sup>80</sup> Similarly,

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<sup>80</sup> The Legitimist faction held that the proper successor to the French throne would be a descendent of the Bourbon dynasty, last represented in France by Charles X, who was overthrown in 1830. The Orléanists believed that France should be ruled by a descendant of the Orléans dynasty, last represented by King Louis-Philippe, who ruled France from 1830 to 1848. The two factions did in fact manage to overlook their differences during the early Third Republic by agreeing to nominate the childless Legitimist comte de Chambord as the next king. Chambord, however, ruined the chances of all of the royalists by refusing to accept the tricolor flag over the white flag with a fleur-de-lys. The *Seize Mai* 1877 crisis would assure that the monarchy was not to return, regardless of faction.

other conservative members of society hoped for a return to a Bonapartist-style Empire. These factions vied with inheritors of the Jacobin legacy and other republicans throughout the 1870s, subsequently denying any kind of constitutional basis for the Third Republic until 1875.<sup>81</sup> It was only following the 1877 *Seize Mai* crisis that the Republic was finally able to rest on solid ground.

Stanley Hoffmann has classically characterized the politics of the Third Republic as defined by France's "stalemate society."<sup>82</sup> He described the French state during this period as centralized, but limited, writing that "political consensus was missing; there was no agreement either on the objectives for which political power is to be used, or on the procedures through which disputes over such objectives can be resolved."<sup>83</sup> With very few exceptions, politicians on the right and left avoided attempting to fight this system, thus failing to produce policy that would guide the Third Republic forward. One exception was in the powerful colonial lobby; another, this dissertation argues, was in the push to professionalize intelligence for the project of national defense.<sup>84</sup> This task would be left in the hands of the army, the body that prioritized defense more than any other.

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<sup>81</sup> In February of 1875, the National Assembly passed a series of acts, including one known as the Wallon amendment, which established the constitutional background of the new Republic. These acts established a president as head of the French state, as well as a two-chambered parliament made up of the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies.

<sup>82</sup> Stanley Hoffmann, *In Search of France* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963), 3-18.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

<sup>84</sup> Alice Conklin argues that leaders of France's liberal Third Republic were able to reach consensus on the legitimacy of imperialism through the concept of a special "civilizing mission." Alice L. Conklin, *A Mission to Civilize: The Republican Idea of Empire in France and West Africa, 1895-1930* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1997).

As French army historian Paul-Marie Gorce asserts, “the history of the army is inseparable from that of the nation.”<sup>85</sup> The two evolved together from the *ancien régime* through the Revolution, growing and changing along with the French state and society. The Revolution had introduced the notion of the “nation in arms,” with a citizen’s army composed of men conscripted from across the country fighting in defense of France. The Revolutionary army brought the message of changing times across Europe, and continued to fight under Napoleon for glory of the *patrie* and for revolutionary ideals. During the Restoration and subsequent republics, the army supported the regime in power. Led by General Cavaignac, French soldiers put down popular insurrection under the Second Republic. By the time the Third Republic arose from defeat in the Franco-Prussian War, the army had acquired a reputation as the nation’s *arche sainte*, reflecting the “holy alliance” between the French army and the Republican regime.<sup>86</sup>

The historiography on the army and the Third Republic is limited, and what exists tends to focus on purely operational history, the growth of antimilitarism at the turn of the century, and the Dreyfus Affair.<sup>87</sup> The traditional narrative describing the role of the army within the Republic in the half century following the Franco-Prussian War involves a vacillating relationship between the army and the

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<sup>85</sup> Paul-Marie de La Gorce, *The French Army: A Military-Political History* (New York: G. Braziller, 1963).

<sup>86</sup> Anja Johansen, *Soldiers as Police: The French and Prussian Armies and the Policing of Popular Protest, 1889-1914* (Aldershot, Hants, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate Pub. Co., 2005), 41. She writes that successive governments endorsed pro-military sentiments through the educational system and in public statements.

<sup>87</sup> Historian John Lynn in a recent book, *Giant of the Grand Siècle* commented on the paucity of French army history in recent historiography, writing that “Particularly in America, the historical community has most often paid attention to military institutions only to condemn them and has mistakenly censured those who concentrate on the military past as individuals who must idealize war.” John Lynn, *Giant of the Grand Siècle: The French Army, 1610-1715* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), xi.

nation. Historians write that the army enjoyed the support of the majority of the population in the years after 1870. The Republic had introduced universal conscription in 1872, serving to integrate and “democratize” the armed forces. In many quarters, military life was glorified, and the soldier was viewed as an inquisitive and intrepid individual, willing to leave his native village in exchange for the camaraderie and adventure that accompanied the defense of his nation.<sup>88</sup> Most important, the army offered the promise of *revanche* against Germany, and the revival of French glory.<sup>89</sup> Militarism seemed to be a necessity for the nascent Republic, and right and left successfully worked through differences on a variety of military questions during the early 1870s, at the same time as parties struggled to determine details of the regime.<sup>90</sup>

This prestige associated with military life began to fade in the late 1880s and early 1890s, however, with the rise of antimilitarism accompanying a growth of class consciousness, predominantly among the working classes. With the army called in to put down strikes in the mid 1880s and 1890s, citizens’ everyday

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<sup>88</sup> La Gorce, *The French Army*, 6-9. Eugen Weber offers the counterpoint to the glorification presented by army historians, describing peasants’ antipathy for the army and resistance to the draft in the poorer areas of France throughout the nineteenth century. He does concede, however, that the Franco-Prussian War had a role in transforming attitudes towards the military, and that “by the 1890s there is persuasive evidence that the army was no longer ‘theirs’ but ‘ours.’” Eugen Weber, *Peasants Into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1976), 292-302.

<sup>89</sup> On attempts by French leaders to stress the connection between army and honor in French society, see Raoul Girardet, *La société militaire dans la France contemporaine, 1815-1939* (Paris: Plon, 1953), 165-166.

<sup>90</sup> La Gorce, *The French Army*, 7-8. He writes that the Right acquiesced on their opposition to compulsory military service, while the Left was willing to make national defense a central part of its program. One of the major changes was that the army of the Third Republic had gone from being a professional army to a “nation-in-arms,” employing conscription to recruit soldiers from a variety of backgrounds.

association with soldiers suffered.<sup>91</sup> The Dreyfus Affair, and the army's obstinacy in not conceding its mistake of falsely accusing Captain Alfred Dreyfus of espionage drove the final stake into the army's reputation.

In terms of the military leadership and the officer class, the army has traditionally been regarded as a conservative body, opposed to the liberalizing ideals of the new Third Republic. Historian Douglas Porch, however, has disputed this categorization, noting that many within the army embraced the Republic, especially from the late 1870s, once it became clear that there was not likely to be a monarchist revival.<sup>92</sup> Léon Gambetta had declared the army to be "the embodiment of the nation," and proclaimed the republicanization of the army in the 1880s.<sup>93</sup> Despite the fact that the social and ideological composition of the army did not really reflect that of the Republic, soldiers embraced the new regime, as they believed that the republicans had a goal that included the resurrection of French military power.<sup>94</sup> Moreover, the army had a strong tradition of obedience to civilian power and to the acting legal government.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>91</sup> General André Bach writes that similar to the Second Empire, the Third Republic was willing to use the army and force to maintain its rule. André Bach, *L'armée de Dreyfus: Une histoire politique de l'armée française de Charles X à "l'Affaire"* (Paris: Tallandier, 2004), 214-218. On the military's role in putting down strikes, see Johansen, *Soldiers as Police*.

<sup>92</sup> After all, the army did not intervene during the *Seize Mai* crisis or the Boulanger Affair, nor did it attempt a coup at any other stage during this period.

<sup>93</sup> From Gambetta's *discours* in Annecy in 1872, cited in Bach, *L'armée de Dreyfus*, 63. Bach writes that the idea of "nation" brought army officers closer to the anti-clerical Republic. Rituals around a flag or other ceremonies helped to ease the shift from connection with a personal monarch to the abstract notion of the nation. Indeed, the culture of popular militarism in France included enthusiasm for military parades and symbols, culture that could be shared between military and civilian spheres.

<sup>94</sup> Douglas Porch, *The March to the Marne: The French Army, 1871-1914* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

<sup>95</sup> Olivier Forcade, "L'Armée," in Christophe Prochasson and Vincent Duclert, eds., *Dictionnaire critique de la République* (Paris: Flammarion, 2002), 649.

The constitutional position of the army reflected the uncertainty that Third Republican leaders felt regarding the army's loyalty to the new regime.<sup>96</sup> Unlike their German counterparts, French officers did not have to swear an allegiance to the Republican Constitution.<sup>97</sup> Nonetheless, all soldiers and officers were required to be apolitical, meaning they were not given permission to vote and were barred from active participation in politics. The War Minister was appointed the nominal chief of the army (as opposed to the President of the Republic), but was accountable to the National Assembly and could only act with this body's consent. Moreover, the frequent shifting of cabinets meant that the nation's leaders really only concerned themselves with defense policy during moments of crisis.<sup>98</sup> Generals consequently had substantial autonomy in decision-making when it came to military affairs.

This traditional presentation of the army leadership therefore paints it as resting on the margins of the French state during this period. The position of the War Minister, for instance, was to be a relatively weak one in comparison with the other members of the French governing cabinet.<sup>99</sup> In part, this weakness stemmed from the volatility of cabinets and their continual overthrow in the Third Republic. In addition, writes Douglas Porch "the war ministry went by default to rather

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<sup>96</sup> Johansen, *Soldiers as Police*, 43-47. Johansen points out that the French officer corps had served six consecutive regimes in the span of eighty years.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, 44. This is a direct contrast to Restoration policy, when the monarchy passed a law of August 30, 1830 that required all civil servants and army officers to swear fidelity to the new king, new charter and new laws. Paul Jankowski, *Shades of Indignation: Political Scandals in France, Past and Present* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2008), 22.

<sup>98</sup> Andrew, "France and the German Menace," 138.

<sup>99</sup> Frederick Seager states that, "the cabinet posts of War and the Navy were considered by almost all Republicans to be nonpolitical." Frederick H. Seager, *The Boulanger Affair: Political Crossroad of France 1886-1889* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1969), 27.

junior divisional commanders.”<sup>100</sup> Porch’s assessment of the impotence of this position may be correct regarding a number of the generals he lists (e.g. Farre, Campenon, Lewal), yet with further examination, one sees that even weak ministers were able to play critical roles in the development of French intelligence.

In particular, this dissertation presents hitherto unseen sides of two of the Third Republic’s War Ministers: Georges Boulanger (Jan 1886 – May 1887) and Charles de Freycinet (April 1888 – May 1893 and Nov 1898 – May 1899). Boulanger, the far better known of the two, is notorious in the annals of French history for his role in nearly destabilizing the Republic. His biographers and historians of the “Affair” bearing his name overlook the importance that Boulanger placed on developing professional intelligence in France, and in guarding the nation’s secrets. Rather than destabilizing the regime, therefore, he should also be regarded for his role in putting in place legislation and infrastructure that many believed would actually help to secure the Republic against potential enemies. One of his major contributions was passing a law in April of 1886 against espionage, which allowed for the prosecution of a range of French and foreign individuals for crimes related to intelligence. De Freycinet has the distinction of being the Republic’s first civilian War Minister, an engineer who never served in the military prior to his political appointment as the army’s head. He is known for his overhaul of the Third Republic’s rail network, and for toeing a delicate balance between ideological factions that allowed him to serve successfully in a number of political positions in several of the Republic’s governments. Similar to Boulanger, de Freycinet’s connection with French espionage and counterespionage was ignored by his

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<sup>100</sup> Porch, *March to the Marne*, 47. From 1870-1914, ministries turned over every eight months on average, though most ministries retained some of the ministers from the previous cabinet.

biographers. Nonetheless, from the Government of National Defense through to the turn of the century, he continued to insist on the necessity of secret services in France, and pushed for the army's agency to play a dominant role in the state's intelligence activities.

Both of these men, whose connections with French intelligence will unfold in the chapters that follow, came to Third Republican politics as men of either the center (de Freycinet) or the left (Boulangier). Although General Boulangier is typically associated with the conservative and royalist factions that later embraced his political candidacy, he was appointed War Minister at the urging of the Radical Georges Clemenceau. De Freycinet is connected most often with the Opportunist party, but was known for his ability to work with individuals from various ideological backgrounds.<sup>101</sup> Such associations are indicators of the appeal of professional intelligence from across the political spectrum, and undermine the notion of the French spy agency that has been left by the legacy of the Dreyfus Affair.

The traditional narrative of relations between the army and the state during the first half of the Third Republic views the Dreyfus Affair as one of the most polarizing events of the pre-War period, with sides drawn between right and left, Catholic and secular, and "intellectual" and military.<sup>102</sup> The Statistical Section had

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<sup>101</sup> Hector Depasse, *De Freycinet* (Paris: A. Quantin, 1883).

<sup>102</sup> Some examples of works on the Dreyfus Affair that present this dichotomy are: Bredin, *The Affair*. Pierre Birnbaum, *L'affaire Dreyfus: La République en péril* (Paris: Découvertes Gallimard Histoire, 1994), and Venita Datta, *Birth of a National Icon: the Literary Avant-Garde and the Origins of the Intellectual in France* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1999). Ruth Harris has offered a different interpretation, declaring that this division set by the established historiography is oversimplified, thus presenting an interpretation of the Affair based on shared emotion and superstition. Ruth Harris, *Dreyfus: Politics, Emotion, and the Scandal of the Century* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2010).



committed the initial errors of falsely accusing Captain Dreyfus of espionage and covering up the mistake by forging documents, but the responsible officers – Sandherr, Henry, Du Paty de Clam – all had the support of the army and its leadership in the trials and retrials that followed. However, the attention that has been placed on the mistake and cover-up at the origin of the Dreyfus Affair has distorted the picture of the growth and reception of secret intelligence at the time of its initial bureaucratization. The reigning view of the French Statistical Section in the 1890s presents a service that was close-minded, xenophobic, and willing to sacrifice republican ideals for the preservation of the reputation and honor of the army. Rather, in looking at the Section from its inception, one sees an organization based in ideas that are the opposite of those exposed in the Dreyfus Affair; that is science, rationalization, and a state-building project that saw the intelligence arm as working organically with other institutions – police, foreign affairs, politicians, and the judiciary – rather than working *around* them as has been put forward.

While the officers behind the false accusation of Dreyfus may have fit into the category described by historians like Arno Mayer as “solidly conservative with strong right-wing, not to say antirepublican and monarchist, sympathies,” the services themselves were not conceived along conservative lines.<sup>103</sup> In particular, during its formative years in the decade of the 1870s – when French politics was dominated by conservative parties – the military’s intelligence service found champions from amongst some of the more liberal and republican-leaning members

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<sup>103</sup> Arno J. Mayer, *The Persistence of the Old Regime: Europe to the Great War* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1981), 308.

of the army.<sup>104</sup> Jules Lewal, who could be regarded as the father of modern French intelligence, was a prolific scholar and a dedicated republican. Abraham Samuel, head of the intelligence section from 1871–1873, was Jewish. While the majority of the literature surrounding the Dreyfus Affair adheres to the notion that it was the subsequent coalescence of a reactionary right that privileged national security over human rights, this study shows a concern for security over liberty coming from across the ideological spectrum. Examining the institutions of secrecy, as well as the culture that fostered them, one sees a unity of opinion in support of the environment that produced the Dreyfus Affair, with relative consensus from politicians and society in support of foreign and domestic surveillance.

#### *Influences, Sources, and Methods*

Students of modern surveillance societies acknowledge intellectual debts to a variety of disciplines, drawing from sociology, psychology, organization studies, information science, criminology, law, political science, and geography.<sup>105</sup> This dissertation too, while methodologically at the intersection of military, political, social, and cultural and intellectual history, has been informed by theories and theorists from a variety of disciplinary contexts. I have drawn considerably from

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<sup>104</sup> Indeed, an analysis of the socioeconomic composition of the Statistical Section shows a different picture of the organization than the image bequeathed by the legacy of the Dreyfus Affair. The Statistical Section (the intelligence gathering arm), in comparison with the Deuxième Bureau (the larger, analysis arm), employed far fewer officers coming from bourgeois origins. Sixty-one percent of officers working for the *service de renseignements* came from either the popular or middle classes, compared with twenty-three percent for the Deuxième Bureau. The breakdown in social origins among the two sections is the following: Officers of the S.S./S.R. coming from the bourgeoisie made up 39%, from the middle class made up 22% and from the “popular” classes made up 39%. For the Deuxième Bureau, the figures were 77% from the bourgeoisie, 12% from the middle class, and 11% from the “popular” classes. Laurent, *Politiques de l'ombre*, 408.

<sup>105</sup> David Murakami Woods, “Beyond the Panopticon? Foucault and Surveillance Studies,” in Jeremy W. Crampton and Stuart Elden, *Space, Knowledge and Power: Foucault and Geography* (Aldershot, Hampshire, England: Ashgate, 2007).

canonical theorists of knowledge and the state like Foucault and Weber, whose theories contributed to the overarching framework, as well as from the work of countless historians exploring crime, society, war, culture, and emotions in the modern era. Of three critical traditions within social theory often used to interpret the parallel growth of bureaucracy and surveillance defined by sociologist Christopher Dandeker, I have relied on the tradition understood as “neo-Machiavellian,” in which bureaucracy is rooted in political imperatives and the place of surveillance stems “largely from the geopolitical and military struggles between nation-states,” as well as, in the French case, from struggles at home.<sup>106</sup> The rise of surveillance institutions is tied to the emergence of the rational, modern state.

Max Weber’s work on the growth of the modern, bureaucratic state served as a model for my construction of the history of professional spying. Weber argues that the institutionalization of rationality in all social institutions was central to the growth of modern society. In tracing the emergence of professional intelligence I was able to identify a number of the features Weber designates as constitutive to the growth of modern capitalism. Notable among his characteristics of bureaucracy are the move towards specialization, the establishment of a hierarchy based on clear levels of authority, the introduction of full-time paid officials, and the recognition of a career track within a particular industry.<sup>107</sup> It also entailed the building of a

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<sup>106</sup> Dandeker, *Surveillance, Power*, 3-6. The other two traditions that Dandeker identifies are Marxist theory and the theory of industrial society.

<sup>107</sup> Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, trans. A. M. Henderson & Talcott Parsons, (New York: The Free Press, 1947). Similarly, historians in recent decades who have studied the professionalization of a variety of occupations in France begin their studies with a definition of professionalization that includes a body of esoteric knowledge, monopoly of the potential to exploit that knowledge, and autonomy of the profession over the work. Jan Goldstein, *Console and Classify: The French Psychiatric Profession in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,

knowledge base so that decisions would be based on a mastery of information. Weber proclaimed, “Bureaucratic administration means fundamentally domination through knowledge. This is the feature which makes it specifically rational.”<sup>108</sup> Whereas Weber’s characterization applies to an ideal type, his method of identifying the characteristics of modern, rational society is useful in locating the shift in treatment of intelligence at the end of the nineteenth century. The writings of a number of the early advocates of an espionage service, combined with army directives and circulars, demonstrate a discourse of professionalism – identifying hierarchies, specifying need for experience, detailing a division of labor and more – for a *métier* that had hitherto not enjoyed such a status.

Michel Foucault’s *Discipline and Punish* provided theoretical underpinning for considering the role of surveillance as a tool of social control.<sup>109</sup> Following on his earlier work that established discourse as knowledge, and subsequently power, this important text showed that systems of surveillance encouraged particular thought and action about behavior and self. In particular, the notion of military science as a form of knowledge provided a foundation for understanding the process of working questionable methods into a modern, bureaucratic society. In turn, the “disciplinary power” internalized by the presence of new ways to observe society allowed for an identification of insiders and outsiders. The control and surveillance of the state’s enemies subsequently provided an opportunity for the

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1987), 10; Robert Fox and George Weisz, *The Organization of Science and Technology in France, 1808-1914* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 15.

<sup>108</sup> Max Weber, *Economy and Society*, cited in Dandeker, *Surveillance, Power*, 9.

<sup>109</sup> Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*.

surveillance of the general population.<sup>110</sup> Foucault's theories illuminated my thinking of police and popular treatment of foreign spies, particularly in the way that the public joined in the process of identification with evident support. The presence of denunciation letters framed in a discourse of understandings of the spy as a specific threat showed that society accepted the new authority structures, justifying police work, and therefore playing a part in the calls for increased surveillance.

In the decades that followed, countless historians have applied the analytical frameworks laid out by Weber and Foucault in various chronological and national contexts. As the French nation grew, both political and social life became more "modern." With the spread of wealth and education came the growth and formalization of professions. Law, medicine, psychiatry, and scores of other lines of work became professionalized during this period. A number of histories treat the *fin-de-siècle* surge in professionalism, with notable contributions from Robert Nye, Ruth Harris, and Jan Goldstein.<sup>111</sup> All three traced the rise of new professions during this period, and adeptly demonstrated how discourses inflected with medicine or the law played a role in the development of policy and behavior. Nye's ambitious study of the professionalization of the fields of medicine and criminal anthropology showed how newly asserted expertise was able to identify crime, deviance, and other degenerate behavior. Moreover, these definitions arose in conjunction with a pervasive social discourse of decline, allowing Nye to highlight the cultural impact of professional theories. Ruth Harris and Jan Goldstein

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<sup>110</sup> Dandeker, *Surveillance, Power*, 27.

<sup>111</sup> Robert A. Nye, *Crime, Madness, & Politics in Modern France: the Medical Concept of National Decline* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1984); Ruth Harris, *Murders and Madness: Medicine, Law, and Society in the Fin de Siècle* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989); Goldstein, *Console and Classify*.

advanced analogous arguments about the growth of expertise, informing my understanding of the power of discourses produced by those supposedly “in the know.”

Along similar theoretical lines, this dissertation turns to a combination of professional military theory, public discourse, and the law, alongside the process of professionalization of intelligence and social control. Though military expertise was spread to a lesser breadth than that of the medical profession, I argue that society fostered and accepted the development of intelligence professionals who would watch and report on what they saw, adopting within daily life a discourse of threat and defense and the need to prepare for upcoming war. Within a short amount of time, police and military surveillance was joined by surveillance under the law and by individual citizens, acting as agents of coercion along with state actors. Like Nye, I view “social defense” as the theoretical motivating factor for the advancement of these knowledge-based professions.

Policing and other careers dedicated to surveillance, such as detective work, gained in numbers and in prestige during this time.<sup>112</sup> The detailed studies of the professionalization of police forces by historians like Clive Emsley and Hsi-Huey Liang show how the increase in numbers and centralization of French police was viewed as a form of social and material progress.<sup>113</sup> Policing grew and

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<sup>112</sup> Dominique Kalifa, *Naissance de la police privée: Détectives et agences de recherches en France, 1832-1942* (Paris: Plon, 2000); Clive Emsley and Haia Shpayer-Makov, *Police Detectives in History, 1750-1950* (Aldershot, Hants, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006); John M. Merriman, *Police Stories: Building the French State, 1815-1851* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006); Clive Emsley, *Gendarmes and the State in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

<sup>113</sup> Hsi-Huey Liang, *The Rise of Modern Police and the European State System from Metternich to the Second World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); Clive Emsley and Barbara Weinberger, *Policing Western Europe: Politics, Professionalism, and Public Order, 1850-1940* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991).

professionalized in response to the spread of “dangerous classes,” and a rise in beliefs of an “enemy within” and an “enemy without.”<sup>114</sup> This dissertation complements understandings of the growth of police surveillance by showing an even greater expansion of watching activities incorporating the gendarmerie, forest guards, and numerous special agents performing counterespionage work. In addition, according to Emsley, the police detective, gaining professional status in the nineteenth century, appeared as “the force of progress illuminating, and by illuminating undermining, the dark and sordid world of criminality.”<sup>115</sup> Like detectives, the modern intelligence agents would be expected to rely on informers and use reason to solve the mysteries before them. Moreover, both presumed a certain insight into recognizing the enemy.<sup>116</sup>

New mechanisms for identification used by detectives and police also display a French fear of what has been called “the invasion of foreigners.”<sup>117</sup> This fear was manifested administratively with demands that foreigners identify themselves, beginning with a decree of October 2, 1888 requiring them to register at the local *mairie* within fifteen days of their arrival in France. This law was followed

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<sup>114</sup> The idea of “dangerous classes” within French society allowed for the putting in place of a number of social controls. See Louis Chevalier, *Laboring Classes and Dangerous Classes in Paris During the First Half of the Nineteenth Century*, trans. Frank Jellinek (New York: Howard Fertig, 2000); Nye, *Crime, Madness*; Dominique Kalifa, *L'encre et le sang: récits de crimes et société à la Belle Époque* (Paris: Fayard, 1995).

<sup>115</sup> Emsley and Shpayer-Makov, *Police Detectives*, 77.

<sup>116</sup> Emsley writes that police detectives claimed to “know” the offenders by their looks or their *modus operandi*. *Ibid.*

<sup>117</sup> James R. Lehning, *To be a Citizen: The Political Culture of the Early French Third Republic* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001), 109-127. One such mechanism of identification was *bertillonage*, or anthropometry. It was a system that allowed authorities to distinguish individuals through photographs and a series of physical measurements. Created by a police officer, Alphonse Bertillon, in 1879, the police adopted this system as a way of identifying recidivists and other criminals. Gérard Noiriel, *The French Melting Pot: Immigration, Citizenship, and National Identity* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 68-70.

by a series of others, including one on August 8, 1893 requiring the registration of foreign workers. As such, writes Laurent Dornel, the law itself “participated in the social construction of the foreigner.”<sup>118</sup> In the 1891 census, foreigners figured for the first time in a separate volume, and surveillance increased on Germans, Italians, and other suspect groups. The need to look out for spies, and among foreigners in particular, contributed to the development of new forms of surveillance and identification. Gérard Noiriel and Rogers Brubaker have both published excellent studies on the development of official and unofficial means of identification in France.<sup>119</sup> Such works adeptly demonstrate how decisions and discourse promoting just vs. unjust, healthy vs. ill, or inclusion vs. exclusion became part of the national narrative of the Third Republic. Using an entirely new subject as my source of inquiry, I analyze intelligence within the context of the growth of social control, with the presence of newfound “experts” able to define friends and enemies.

Another element central to the story of intelligence origins is warfare. Scholars have demonstrated that intelligence and surveillance practices develop the fastest during wartime; yet early Third Republic France was a time of peace.<sup>120</sup> In order to delineate what aspects of warfare had permeated the culture of the Third Republic during peacetime, it was necessary to understand contemporary military mentalities. Karma Nabulsi’s monograph, *Traditions of War*, demonstrates the coexistence of several very differing discourses of war during the twentieth

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<sup>118</sup> Laurent Dornel, *La France hostile: Socio-histoire de la xénophobie (1870-1914)* (Paris: Hachette littératures, 2004), 212. Of these laws, Dornel writes: “Observe that this was not a simple decree, but a law, that is to say, a political decision passed by the majority of the Chamber. This confirms that *the foreigner* was at the heart of debates engaging the nation.” 209-210.

<sup>119</sup> Noiriel, *French Melting Pot*; Rogers Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992).

<sup>120</sup> Dandeker, *Surveillance, Power*, 31.



century.<sup>121</sup> The Republican war tradition had two strands: viewed either as defensive or offensive, with the latter having the aim of exporting republican ideas abroad. Nabulsi's work, along with other texts on military strategy, proved helpful in approaching the theoretical writings of a number of my protagonists, and in explaining the mentality of others. The offensive strategy, frequently present in French military culture, meant that the French leadership intended to act first, regardless of actual message that intelligence might provide.<sup>122</sup> I argue that this culture shaped the development of professional *renseignement* at the turn of the century.

In addition to learning about warfare from the point of view of the military, I also sought historical perspectives on the role of war and militant thinking on society. David Bell's study of warfare during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic eras, *The First Total War*, examined the cultural context within which ideas of war and peace fused with politics.<sup>123</sup> His study located the genesis of a number of facets of war that made it "total," including a hatred of the enemy that drove a desire for extermination and the distinct separation of military and civilian spheres, all within a political context of national determination. Whereas Bell's work treats the role of militarization predominantly during times of actual warfare, a recent study by Rachel Chrastil, *Organizing for War*, investigates the presence of war preparation

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<sup>121</sup> Karma Nabulsi, *Traditions of War: Occupation, Resistance, and the Law* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999).

<sup>122</sup> Sondhaus, "Strategic Culture and Ways of War."; Snyder, "Civil-Military Relations."

<sup>123</sup> David Avrom Bell, *The First Total War: Napoleon's Europe and the Birth of Warfare as We Know It* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 2007).

within civil society during years of peace (1871–1914).<sup>124</sup> Looking at charity workers and civil associations, Chrastil concludes that civil society played an important part in reconstruction after the Franco-Prussian War and in being prepared for the eventuality that another war could come. Her presentation of citizens' efforts to have a role in the mobilization process supports my finding of an atmosphere of anxiety and anticipation of warfare, even during continued decades without actual fighting. Books like Bell's and Chrastil's successfully reflect the challenge for cultural historians to attend to cultures of war and peace, something that I have also attempted in this dissertation.<sup>125</sup>

Additionally, the dissertation draws heavily on a number of histories that have treated, broadly speaking, sentiment. My assessment of the cultural impact of the growth of professional espionage and surveillance is indebted to literature on loss, fear and xenophobia, and honor. In particular, Wolfgang Schivelbusch's *The Culture of Defeat* provided insight into the various forms of French collective mourning after the military loss in 1871, as well as the political, social and cultural projects to alleviate suffering and rebuild a sense of national pride.<sup>126</sup> In order to understand the cultural construction of the notion of honor within French society – a term that I found often associated with spies, in both its positive connotation and the negative inverse, dishonor – I turned to numerous studies, including work on honor in the French context by William Reddy, Edward Berenson, Robert Nye, Ruth

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<sup>124</sup> Rachel Chrastil, *Organizing for War: France, 1870-1914* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2010).

<sup>125</sup> Another recent collection that offers a variety of perspectives on war, memory, art, and literature in France is Patricia Lorcin and David Brewer, *France and its Spaces of War: Experience, Memory, Image* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

<sup>126</sup> Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *The Culture of Defeat: On National Trauma, Mourning, and Recovery* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2003).

Harris, and most recently, Andrea Mansker.<sup>127</sup> These scholars, looking at issues of honor in varied gender, class, and cultural contexts, adeptly demonstrated the evolution of the notion and its ability to suit a number of needs, such as – as I demonstrate in this dissertation – the need to seek honor for the nation.

Lastly, much of my thinking in the final chapter stemmed from recent historical inquiries into the history of emotions. The field of emotions history is just now securing respect and attention from historians from a wide array of backgrounds. Emotions and the accessibility to different sentiment offer a key to locating meaning within historical contexts, and therefore served as the ideal tool for my attempt to reconstruct understandings of something so new, and ostensibly secret. I found guides in this pursuit in William Reddy's *Navigation of Feeling*, Barbara Rosenwein's *Emotional Communities*, and Ruth Harris's *Dreyfus: Politics, Emotion, and the Scandal of the Century*.<sup>128</sup> Reddy's ambitious 2001 text laid the groundwork for thinking about emotions in history, coining the term "emotives" to describe the emotional expressions that belied experience. Rosenwein's work narrowed the scope of sentiment to individual communities with shared sentiment, which could be as small as a group of monks living in the same monastery or as big as the nation. Rosenwein explains that emotional communities are groups sharing a common discourse and way of thinking that impacts the way that individuals

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<sup>127</sup> William M. Reddy, *The Invisible Code: Honor and Sentiment in Postrevolutionary France, 1814-1848* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997); Robert A. Nye, *Masculinity and Male Codes of Honor in Modern France* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993); Harris, *Murders and Madness*; Edward Berenson, *The Trial of Madame Caillaux* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992); Andrea Mansker, *Sex, Honor and Citizenship in Early Third Republic France* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

<sup>128</sup> William M. Reddy, *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of Emotions* (Cambridge, U.K.; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Barbara H. Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities in the Early Middle Ages* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2006); Harris, *Dreyfus*.

view themselves and the world. Harris most recently delved into this field to reinterpret the traditional narrative of the Dreyfus Affair, using emotions to show that Dreyfusards and anti-Dreyfusards were driven by similar dynamics, and were therefore not as different as past histories have made them to be. Embracing this “emotional turn,” I therefore consulted various works on sentiment from historians, as well as from psychologists, anthropologists, sociologists, and literary theorists, looking in particular to learn about emotions such as humiliation, shame, fear, honor, and the desire for revenge, all of which contributed to understandings of spies and spying as they formed and changed over the course of this period.<sup>129</sup>

This dissertation is the product of many years spent in a variety of French archives. The attempt to piece together the workings of the army’s *Section de statistique* took me to the French military archives in Vincennes, just outside of Paris (Service Historique de la Défense; SHD). Recreating the goals and activities of this service was no easy task, as the occasional discovery of papers marked, “burn after reading,” alerted me to a depth of information that would never be known.<sup>130</sup> In addition, the French destroyed a large quantity of the military archival material by order in August of 1914, and again destroyed holdings, especially those pertaining to intelligence, during WWII. Nonetheless, significant “traces” of intelligence operations still exist in the army’s archives, and allowed me to reconstruct the creation of these services and a number of their operations. There I found plans for

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<sup>129</sup> For example, Thomas J. Scheff, *Bloody Revenge: Emotions, Nationalism, and War* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1994). William Ian Miller, *Humiliation: And Other Essays on Honor, Social Discomfort, and Violence* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993). Nico H. Frijda, *The Laws of Emotion* (Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2007). Peter N. Stearns, *American Fear: The Causes and Consequences of High Anxiety* (Hoboken: Routledge, 2006).

<sup>130</sup> See e.g., letter dated December 1893, Archives de la Sérvice Historique de la Défense (SHD) 7N 674. Roger Mennevée confirms the orders to destroy *bulletins* and *bordereaux* in his *Espionnage international en temps de paix*. (396-397).

the creation of services before their existence, intelligence bulletins testifying to military concerns throughout the years, correspondence stressing the primacy of the army in surveillance activity, and logbooks of intelligence collected in Europe and in North Africa. These collections testified to a service looking to grow and to assert itself as critical to national security and survival.

In addition to the army's service, employees of the police and diplomatic corps also conducted a considerable amount of intelligence work. I therefore learned about their practices through investigations in the archives of the Paris Prefecture of Police (APP) and in the archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MAE). Both services were active in tracking the activities of individuals and groups in Paris and in embassies across the globe. The police of the Interior Ministry also collected and stored thousands of circulars, instructions, reports, letters, news clippings related to espionage, and more, which I was able to consult in Paris at the French National Archives (AN). The National Archives also store judicial material, which I consulted in order to see how the courts applied the 1886 law against spies, along with a number of important documents confiscated from the Statistical Section in the aftermath of the Dreyfus Affair. Lastly, in order to assess the operations on the ground in important locales of espionage and counterespionage in the east and southeast, I visited regional archives in Nancy (Archives départementales de la Meurthe-et-Moselle; MM), and in Nice (Archives départementales des Alpes-Maritimes; AM).

Besides the archival material, the dissertation relies heavily on a number of published sources, from military manuals to the popular press. The end of the nineteenth century was the first time that a real dialogue about the need for intelligence services took place in the public sphere; consequently, my work was

able to draw from several published sources by military, legal, and lay scholars who discussed the merits and drawbacks of professionalizing espionage during this period. Added to these serious works on intelligence were a number of more “popular” texts, usually xenophobic pamphlets or books, that described the growing spy peril to an audience eager to learn about the threats in their midst. Similarly, memoirs by former spies or agents informed my work, though certainly such recollections had to be taken with several grains of salt. Along with almost all histories of this period, my work would not be complete without a thorough perusal of the popular press, which presented regular reports of captured spies, the threat of spies, or accounts of French heroes spying for the nation. These portrayals of the dangers of foreign espionage came from newspapers representing a variety of social and political opinion, further confirming the centrality of the message to French daily life at the time.

For a portion of the published material, I must express a gratitude to the late Roger Mennevée, a French journalist and self-proclaimed historian whose fascination with a number of “curious” topics led him to collect whatever he could find regarding the history of French intelligence from the *ancien régime* up until his death in 1973.<sup>131</sup> In 1929, Mennevée published his findings in a two volume work entitled *L’espionnage international en temps de paix*, which has without a doubt informed the histories of the French secret services in the century that followed.<sup>132</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> In addition to his fascination with espionage, Mennevée also studied subjects as varied as political synarchy and flying saucers. His collection is stored at the University of California, Los Angeles, Young Research Library Special Collections, collection 899. The collection also holds, as described by Eugen Weber, charged with its acquisition, “an exhaustive mine of information, precise and documented, on almost every aspect of French political, social, economic, ideological, and, to a certain extent, artistic life since 1910 or so, and also of international affairs.”

<sup>132</sup> Roger Mennevée, *L’espionnage international en temps de paix* (Paris: Chez l’auteur, 1929).

Mennevée's personal archives are stored at UCLA in the Young Research Library's Special Collections, and contain a wealth of clippings, notes, pamphlets, and observations dealing with espionage across centuries.

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A study of professional intelligence origins during the French Third Republic also serves as a missing dimension, in particular into the discussion of origins of the First World War.<sup>133</sup> The quest for official secrets by the French and by their enemies in the decades prior to WWI without a doubt contributed to the rise in belligerency and the construction of a military ethos that reached its apex in 1914. Espionage and counterespionage serve as the "missing dimension" because of the profound impact that these practices had within the army and without, on military planners, and on the social psyche itself. The fact that the project of state-run intelligence was spearheaded and dominated by the army had an important effect on the way that information was understood and used. The army's intelligence teams sought information primarily about military force, and therefore such was the information that was prioritized over, for example, diplomatic concerns of foreign aims and

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<sup>133</sup> The historiography of the causes of World War I is immense, and viewpoints on the origins of the war range from blaming Bismarck's *realpolitik* to England's aggression and to social and cultural malaise and the need for a "rebirth." Fritz Fischer, *Germany's Aims in the First World War* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1967); Niall Ferguson, *The Pity of War* (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1999); Modris Eksteins, *Rites of Spring: The Great War and the Birth of the Modern Age* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1989). An entire school within the French historiography rests on the notion of the *union sacrée* and idea that the French populace was willing to put aside political, social, and religious disagreements in the name of national survival, thus able to enter into a long war in support of a determined patriotism. See, e.g. Jean-Jacques Becker, *The Great War and the French People* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1986); Leonard V. Smith, Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau, and Annette Becker, *France and the Great War, 1914-1918* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003). Another school contradicts this idea of a nebulous notion of patriotism giving the strength to fight four, violent years of bloody battle, arguing instead that the state forced young men into the greatest destruction that Europe had known. See e.g. Jean-Pierre Bernard, ed. *Je suis mouton comme les autres: lettres, carnets, et mémoires de poilus drômois et de leurs familles* (Valence: Éditions Peuple Libre & Notre Temps, 2002); Dominique Carrier, ed. *"On prend nos cris de détresse pour des éclats de rire": Lettres d'un poilu, 1914-1916* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2008). A study of the institutionalization of intelligence adds another dimension to this debate.

intentions. As David Stevenson remarks, such militarization of diplomacy would have important consequences for relations between states in the years before WWI.<sup>134</sup>

Intelligence and spying helped to heighten nationalism and xenophobia, with the association between German spies and the French defeat in the Franco-Prussian War an oft-cited connection. Germans were sneaky and devious, while the French were brave and honorable. The novel notion of professional intelligence practiced by the world's superpowers allowed for the blurring of the military and the civilian spheres, and in many ways provided for the origins of the state of exception that would become the norm during wartime. Fear of spies and the promise of what they could accomplish also crossed ideological lines, resulting in support for intelligence (or at least acquiescence) from people of all parties, prefiguring the *union sacrée* itself.<sup>135</sup>

The dissertation approaches the question of institutionalized secrecy from a number of angles, and examines questions about the nature of intelligence, the state, and concerns of legitimacy and authority. As understandings of the role that official secrets played in the state-building process spread from a handful of individuals within the army to society at large, the preoccupation with spies and unauthorized individuals aiming to discover secrets grew. The institutions erected to perform reconnaissance inside and outside of France contributed to the

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<sup>134</sup> Stevenson, "Militarization and Diplomacy." See also Jackson and Siegel, *Intelligence and Statecraft*, 26.

<sup>135</sup> It is difficult to depart from a teleological argument, knowing well that war does in fact come in 1914. Nonetheless, while this eventuality was clearly not a given at the time, the fact that intelligence officials and the broader population constantly discussed an upcoming war should be probed in more depth. The existence of spies, and the reality of information collected seemed to confirm the intentions that they were seeking.



development of a shared consciousness of the importance of spying and the danger it could cause the nation. Thus the institutions and public opinion operated in tandem, with each interacting with the other. In this sense, the institutionalization of secrecy had as a direct result the creation of an atmosphere of paranoia, fear, the quest for honor, and ultimately, the sense of living through a cold war.<sup>136</sup> The argument will be laid out as follows:

The first chapter begins by examining intelligence and the use of secrecy in politics and diplomacy in France in the centuries prior to the establishment of the Third Republic. It traces the use of secrets and secret agents to advance the cause of the sovereign over competing monarchs as a means to gain power over his subjects. The chapter demonstrates that the use of intelligence was personal, with individuals like King Louis XV or Napoleon using spies and other agents at their own discretion, rather than creating any particular organization or state system to uncover and protect secrets. The Restoration governments and Second Empire failed to use intelligence to any significant degree, and therefore the leaders of the Third Republic approached the question almost from scratch. The chapter displays an increased understanding among theorists and members of the military that intelligence was important and necessary for success in modern war.

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<sup>136</sup> It is true that the term "cold war" applied to this period is anachronistic, though it nonetheless reflects the atmosphere of the period. Like in the actual Cold War, this was a time when for the military, politicians, and the public, hostilities with Germany seemed tangible, and the possibility of an imminent war felt very real. I note that other historians have also used the term cold war when referring to this period. See, e.g. Michael E. Nolan, *The Inverted Mirror: Mythologizing the Enemy in France and Germany, 1898-1914* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2005), 2. Also, in a Western Civilization textbook, Bonnie Smith writes: "As early as the mid-1890s, one socialist had called the situation a "cold war" because the hostile atmosphere made physical combat seem imminent." Lynn Hunt, Thomas R. Martin, Barbara H. Rosenwein, R. Po-chia Hsia, and Bonnie G. Smith, *The Making of the West, Peoples and Cultures, Vol. C* (Boston: Bedford St. Martin's, 2009), 790.

The second chapter treats professional intelligence origins in the Third Republic, demonstrating the emergence in the late 1860s and 1870s of a collective understanding of the importance of secrets to success in battle. The chapter introduces a number of foresighted individuals who point to a shift in modern warfare and the need to embrace espionage as a necessary tactic to advance the interests of the army and the nation. These leaders in this new military field shared a vision of an intelligence service as something scientific: a body that would collect, list, analyze and assess a wide array of data. Moving from the haphazard reconnaissance of strategically-placed diplomats, or the personal spies of the sovereign, these individuals institutionalized the use of experts in the field of intelligence. They believed that secret information was a matter of state security, and that it should be centralized within and directed by the army. The chapter shows a reorganization of the army following the defeat in the Franco-Prussian War, with a move towards Weberian bureaucratization and specialization in imitation of the successful German model. It describes the theoretical goals of early intelligence practitioners, and introduces the practical running of the service from the army's vantage, developing an autonomy from the Republic's other institutions.

Chapters 3 and 4 follow the theoretical and initial presentation of the new intelligence service with an in-depth understanding of how the services actually worked and operated. Chapter 3 introduces the role of secretive knowledge in furthering the consolidation of the French state throughout the nineteenth century. The army learned the importance of knowledge collection through the gathering of intelligence on native peoples in North Africa thanks to the *bureaux arabes*, while the French police confirmed the utility of knowing "hidden" information about the populace and potential subversives. The chapter shows the convergence of the

military and police “watching” practices in the early years of the Third Republic and demonstrates how intelligence was used to frame national narratives about the need for defense and for further reconnaissance projects. Information is power, and intelligence professionals acted upon the notion that knowing more about surrounding countries would provide a feeling of power in knowing what might result.

The following chapter describes how the use of the narrative of upcoming war with Germany constructed by France’s nascent intelligence organizations enabled these services to grow – relatively unchecked – and how they relied on the notion of national defense to support their continued expansion. This chapter provides the details of the substantial growth of French intelligence services under General Boulanger and Colonel Jean Sandherr, in particular with the extension of counterespionage services and surveillance of the domestic population. The majority of this growth took place under the army’s watch, and therefore gave the War Ministry the greatest role in defining and regulating the nation’s intelligence industry, over traditional practitioners, the police and diplomats.

The second half of the dissertation moves from the specifics of the practice of espionage and counterespionage in France to demonstrating how the creation of these new agencies brought a number of new preoccupations from the military into the civilian sphere. Chapter 5 examines the introduction of France’s first law against espionage, giving the Republic the ability to penalize during peacetime a practice that up until 1886 was only punishable when connected with war. The April 18, 1886 law against espionage made official the concept of state secrets, and punished anyone who attempted to expose particular information. The law itself did not clearly define these secrets, however, and therefore the specifics of what

kind of knowledge was deemed to be property of the French state was left to be determined by the courts. This chapter describes how the army again played a major role in the creation and implementation of the law, contributing to the “cold war” mentality by spreading its desire to “practice during peace that which one would implement during war.”<sup>137</sup> In the process, the state was able to use the law to curtail certain individual liberties, a practice that went virtually unquestioned by a public just beginning to enjoy a number of other freedoms, viewing national defense as a higher priority.

Chapter 6 follows the previous chapter’s argument about a “militarization” of the public sphere by presenting the effect that the establishment of a law against espionage had on the greater population. With the state given the legal right to arrest and imprison foreign and French spies, the public gained an increasing awareness of the presence of threatening individuals lurking on French soil. The newly liberated mass press played into these anxieties by printing frequent articles about the foreign spy menace, stirring up fear and paranoia among the population. New ideas of national belonging at the time contributed to the formation of particular spy stereotypes. The discourse employed by the mass press, as well as by intelligence professionals and by a concerned public tended to identify certain “types” of people as being more likely to act as spies threatening the safety of the French republic. In particular, foreigners, “liberated” women, Jews, anarchists and socialists drew the public’s attention and ire, helping to define these groups of people as opposed to and apart from the Republic. The zeal with which local agents then went after suspect groups, combined with the presence of denunciation

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<sup>137</sup> Robert Detourbet, *L’espionnage et la trahison: étude de droit français et de législation comparée* (Paris: L. Larose, 1897), 83.

letters written to police or military authorities identifying neighbors and associates as spies confirms the extent to which citizens and the state engaged in a symbiotic relationship seeking to eliminate threatening elements of society. The range of participation and the spread of vocabularies of identification helped to unite a population at odds over a variety of contemporary issues.

The final chapter turns to an additional dimension of the institutionalization of espionage and counterespionage by asking what kind of psychological and emotional impression the change in warfare and the introduction of this new element of threat had on French society and culture. Chapter 7 therefore draws upon recent work in the history of emotions to posit a shift in the understanding of the place of spies within society and the state. It demonstrates how views of spies were constructed through discourse and shared emotions and changed over the period examined in this dissertation, tracing the connections made between these emotions and spies, not just among the army as has been argued, but among the public as a whole.<sup>138</sup> Despite the fact that the real nature of intelligence remained a relative unknown during this period, French men and women formed associations with the spy based on emotions connected with humiliation, shame, paranoia, vengeance, and honor. Although in the aftermath of the Franco-Prussian War spies had been viewed almost entirely as devious and dishonorable, the need to seek national glory and honor in the face of a changing international situation led the French public to accept the role that their own spies might play in advancing the national cause. The chapter looks at fiction and nonfiction to demonstrate a growth of accounts of honor and glory associated with spies, arguing that their devious

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<sup>138</sup> Mitchell, "Xenophobic Style."

ways could be overlooked in the pursuit of heroism and national grandeur. As a consequence, this consent facilitated an acceptance of *raison d'état*, or acts of state by any means necessary. With the aim of furthering French ambitions, the public contended with the means (the use of espionage and secrecy), justified by the ends of revenge against Germany and French national safety.

The institutions of surveillance put in place in the first half of the Third Republic would continue to grow and expand during the second half. The coming of world war in 1914 made the anxiety-ridden *fin-de-siècle* appear as more of a *belle époque*. Ultimately, the “cold war” atmosphere generated by the fear of spies and the threat of upheaval that they carried transformed into the realities of actual war. As many historians have argued, by 1914 the nation was ready for battle.<sup>139</sup> The history of the first half-century of the Third Republic is one of division and unity.<sup>140</sup> Although many sharp ideological gulfs kept French citizens fighting over a number of issues, people across the country were nonetheless able to come together over shared experience. Scholars have treated many of the subjects that brought citizens together at the turn of the century, including the popular “cult of heroes,” the experience of diversions, participation in mutual-aid societies, and more.<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>139</sup> Becker, *The Great War*.

<sup>140</sup> Numerous works have been published that demonstrate how France went from a country fragmented into isolated regions to a nation with shared language and goals. See, e.g. Weber, *Peasants Into Frenchmen*; Caroline C. Ford, *Creating the Nation in Provincial France: Religion and Political Identity in Brittany* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1993). Similarly, the story of division over Church, socio-economic policy, and political ideology is present in much of the literature. For an overview, see R. D. Anderson, *France, 1870-1914: Politics and Society* (London; Boston: Routledge & K. Paul, 1977).

<sup>141</sup> On the “cult of heroes,” see Venita Datta, *Heroes and Legends of Fin-de-Siècle France: Gender, Politics and National Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Edward Berenson, *Heroes of Empire: Five Charismatic Men and the Conquest of Africa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011). On diversions, see Vanessa R. Schwartz, *Spectacular Realities: Early Mass Culture in fin-de-siècle Paris* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998). On mutual-aid societies, see Chrastil, *Organizing for War*.

The evolution of professional intelligence offers an additional way that a divided society was able to unite. The need to reestablish French glory prompted the creation of intelligence services within the army and the police, services that developed unchecked while elected representatives stood aside. Fear of a spy infiltration in the decades that followed garnered support for internal surveillance, by officers of the state in the *gendarmerie* or other forces, and through a self-enforcing discourse encouraged by the passage of a law against espionage in 1886. The rhetoric that allowed and encouraged these practices could be found in cities and in newspapers from across the country, and from individuals of mixed political backgrounds. This period saw the emergence of the notion of the spy as a soldier. French society understood that for the nation to be victorious, the state would need to engage in the secret war.

## CHAPTER 1

### **Intelligence in History: The Birth of Modern Espionage**

It was France's nemesis and the mastermind of *realpolitik*, Chancellor Otto von Bismarck, who acknowledged that in order to achieve his goal of uniting the German states, he would have to employ that "most modern of weapons," espionage.<sup>1</sup> As the French Third Republic reorganized its military bureaucracy in 1874, General Ernest de Cissey, the War Minister, similarly requested that the commanders of the army organize an information service, asserting intelligence to be a "veritable specialty."<sup>2</sup> Spying, of course, had been used as a tactic in both warfare and diplomacy since at least as long as humans have recorded history. Spy stories figured in biblical accounts; the ancient Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans all employed spies to their advantage, and the Chinese theorist Sun Tzu famously dedicated a portion of his 500 B.C. *The Art of War* to extolling the merits of the practice.<sup>3</sup> In the Middle Ages, Machiavelli recommended that his Prince employ "any means necessary" for the maintenance of his power, discussing espionage in further writings.<sup>4</sup> English theorists like Francis Bacon recommended espionage to Queen Elizabeth I, who readily made use of such advice through her principal secretary, Francis Walsingham.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, espionage has been called "the second

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<sup>1</sup> Krop, *Secrets*, 7.

<sup>2</sup> Confidential circular from General de Cissey to the corps commanders of the army dated July 31, 1874, Service Historique de la Défense (SHD), X1 224.

<sup>3</sup> Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, trans. John Minford (New York: Viking, 2002).

<sup>4</sup> Nicolo Machiavelli, *The Prince* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988); *The Art of War* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1965).

<sup>5</sup> Stephen Budiansky, *Her Majesty's Spymaster: Elizabeth I, Sir Francis Walsingham, and the Birth of Modern Espionage* (New York: Viking, 2005); Stevan Dedijer, "The Rainbow Scheme," in *Clio Goes*



oldest profession.”<sup>6</sup> The question then arises as to when and why terms such as “modern” and “scientific” became associated with this age-old tradition. As we will see, the practice of intelligence collection and analysis became modern when it shifted from the realm of the personal to the professional, from being practiced by a loyal servant to a faceless bureaucracy.

In highlighting the idea of “modern,” I myself enter into contested terrain, acknowledging that the term “modern” is amorphous, ambiguous, and difficult to define. For the purposes of this chapter, I cite a recent encyclopedia definition of espionage, which notes that “most nations have developed large, centralized, civilian intelligence communities that conduct operations in wartime and peacetime with increasing technological sophistication.”<sup>7</sup> As this was certainly not always the case, I argue that steps were taken in the history of intelligence organization that enabled the construction of an “intelligence community” that was, as the definition declares, centralized and extant in both war and peacetime. In the second half of the nineteenth century intelligence became “modern” by taking the initial steps toward that formulation: by becoming centralized, permanent, and recognized as a necessary weapon for the survival of the nation.

Modern intelligence at the end of the nineteenth century would be a necessary accompaniment to modern politics and modern war. Politics in the early modern world revolved around the personalities of monarchs and their

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*Spying: Eight Essays on the History of Intelligence*, ed. Bo Huldt Wilhelm Agrell (Lund, Sweden: Dept. of History, University of Lund, Sweden, 1983).

<sup>6</sup> Philip Knightley, *The Second Oldest Profession: Spies and Spying in the Twentieth Century* (London: Pimlico, 1986).

<sup>7</sup> Adrienne Wilmoth Leiner, “Espionage and Intelligence, Early Historical Foundations,” in *Encyclopedia of Espionage, Intelligence, and Security*, ed. K. Lee Lerner and Brenda Wilmoth Lerner (Detroit: Thomson/Gale, 2004), 420.

confidantes. War between states therefore was war instigated by these individuals as a way to exert dominance over their personal competitors. The entrance of “the people” as a factor in state decision-making changed both war and politics. Both were increasingly less personal, and as the nineteenth century wore on, both grew more professional as well. By the nineteenth century, writes Christopher Dandeker, the armed forces had “became component parts of a bureaucratized war machine.”<sup>8</sup> The history of intelligence would follow a similar trajectory; spies and agents moved from serving the person of the ruler to serving the state. With intelligence less wedded to a particular regime, a system would therefore need to be in place to assure its continuance.

The changing use of espionage and other intelligence over time also accompanied developments in history. In France, the centuries encompassing the last reigns of kings, the Revolution, Empire, Restoration, first and second Republics and Second Empire saw the state take a variety of approaches to domestic and international affairs. The growth of professional intelligence in France consequently mirrored the particular aims of state leaders, with spying and secret intelligence directed either at home or internationally, depending on the regimes’ chief concerns. During the early to mid-nineteenth century successive royal regimes sought legitimacy at home, and therefore concentrated their surveillance on domestic concerns. By the early 1870s, the period in which intelligence finally obtained professional status, the French state sought to mitigate presumed threats

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<sup>8</sup> He continues: “With the emergence of a modern war machine, members of the officers’ corps were fully incorporated as components in a bureaucratic chain of command. Officers became members of a ‘bureaucratic profession’ in the service of the state.” Dandeker, *Surveillance, Power*, 93.

from outside. Prussia was becoming more powerful, and French leaders recognized the potential of intelligence to curb their enemy's hunger for power and territory.

The principal role in developing a formalized system of intelligence thus fell to the very institution charged with protecting France and its people, the French army, the "*arche sainte*" of the nation. Significant changes in warfare in the nineteenth century were also accompanied by certain theoretical adjustments. As industry and society modernized in a myriad of ways in the nineteenth century, a handful of military theorists began to recognize the importance of espionage that their predecessors had missed. In order to remain competitive in a modernizing, global Europe, the Republic would need to embrace new, challenging practices.

### *Intelligence in the Ancien Régime*

With the rise of large, centralized states in Europe, gathering intelligence became an essential aspect of early modern diplomacy. As the cost of war grew increasingly prohibitive, European monarchs in the sixteenth century recognized the utility of negotiation and deal making. The new reliance on diplomatic relations, however, forced leaders to acknowledge the uncertainty of situations, and the fact that they could never be sure of the intentions and desires of those with whom they were dealing.<sup>9</sup> Information, or intelligence, would help them to determine state policy.

Information traveled by a budding network of ambassadors, messengers, couriers, and other servants of European monarchs and nobility. Ambassadors served as representatives of the monarch in foreign courts, taking on a variety of

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<sup>9</sup> Denice Fett, "Information, Intelligence and Negotiation in the West European Diplomatic World, 1558-1588" (Ph.D. Dissertation, Ohio State University, 2009), 17.

duties. In the *ancien régime*, the ambassador did not possess administrative status, but was connected to the sovereign with personal ties. The ambassador had a number of functions in royal society, and one of the commonly accepted functions of the monarchs' representative was to learn about foreign projects using clandestine means.<sup>10</sup> They were welcomed as messengers of sovereigns, using gifts, entertainment, and personal exchanges to conduct diplomacy, while also allowed and expected to maintain certain ruses.<sup>11</sup>

The ambassador was essentially an early-modern intelligence officer.<sup>12</sup> As personal accounts and subsequent histories show, little distinction existed between diplomacy and secret politics, or between the ambassador and the spy. Abraham de Wicquefort, the Dutch statesman who served at the court of Louis XIII, described the role of the ambassador as being one of “an honorable spy, because one of his principal occupations is to discover the secrets of the courts where he finds himself.”<sup>13</sup> Leaders, ambassadors and their entourage all recognized that as the diplomat essentially played the role of the spy, others needed to maneuver accordingly to keep their own precious information hidden.<sup>14</sup> To trust – or not to trust – an individual ambassador or diplomat was incredibly important to successful decision-making.

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<sup>10</sup> The Duke of Sully recalled having instructed Henri IV: “The ambassador is permitted to employ corruption to discover the intrigues plotted against his own sovereign.” From Sully’s memoirs, cited in Mennevée, *L’espionnage international*, 30.

<sup>11</sup> Dewerpe, *Espion*, 61.

<sup>12</sup> Donald E. Queller, *The Office of Ambassador in the Middle Ages* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1967), 90-92.

<sup>13</sup> Abraham de Wicquefort, *The Ambassador and his Functions*, trans. John Digby (London: Bernard Lintott, 1716), 86.

<sup>14</sup> M. S. Anderson, *The Rise of Modern Diplomacy, 1450-1919* (London; New York: Longman, 1993).

Access to information in the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries depended on one's personal connections. William Cecil, the powerful Secretary of State to Queen Elizabeth I aptly stated, "A man without friends at court is like a workman without tools."<sup>15</sup> Information networks during the sixteenth century relied on personal connections to thrive. Ambassadors used connections to acquire news and pass it along to their sovereign or other interested parties. Agents sought a variety of information, and collected anything from confirmed facts to nebulous rumors. As information spread, so did the numbers of people who could gain access to it, again stressing personal connections.<sup>16</sup> Duplicity being part of the norm of early-modern diplomacy, it also became incumbent on individual agents to assess the veracity of the intelligence that they gathered.

The importance of storing and guarding secrets grew even more central as rulers worked to extend and consolidate their kingdoms. In a recent intellectual history of Louis XIV's chief finance minister Jean-Baptiste Colbert, historian Jacob Soll presents the creation of a "secret state" as crucial to the growth of the French monarchy.<sup>17</sup> An adviser like Colbert or a ruler like Spain's Philip II recognized the centrality of knowledge to the governance of the state, along with the necessity of keeping many facets of knowledge – finances, military, communications – secret. It was the secrecy of the information that allowed Colbert to amass such substantial power for Louis XIV. Domination of information also allowed for tighter policing of knowledge, such as the example of publishing, which was observed and regulated under Louis XIV as never before. Further, an innovative aspect of

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<sup>15</sup> Cited by Fett, "Information," 27.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>17</sup> Soll, *Information Master*.

Colbert's information system was its ability to influence opinion and knowledge among the public. Unlike the secret diplomacy of his predecessors which focused on relations between elites, Colbert's secrecy could be used to strengthen the state by creating public propaganda and limiting exposure to particular information.

Soll argues, moreover, that the intelligence system built up by Louis' finance minister broke down after Colbert's death, demonstrating that in this era the person of the individual information collector and user remained central. Moreover, Colbert's project was in service of the monarch, rather than one that can be viewed as a modernizing or rationalizing effort. As Soll writes, "*L'Etat c'est moi*" was quite literal and in stark opposition to the Weberian ideal of the impersonal centralized state."<sup>18</sup> For a secret information network to survive series of rulers and regimes, as would be the case in the modern era, it therefore needed to move from the province of the personal to the professional.

Although the majority of Colbert's information-collection apparatus fell into disuse after his death, Louis XIV's war secretary, the Marquis de Louvois, subsequently applied Colbert's ideas of information gathering and centralization to the war effort.<sup>19</sup> In 1688, Louvois created the *Dépôt de la Guerre*, an organization that employed engineers and geographers as officers specialized in reconnaissance. For the first century of its existence, the *Dépôt* primarily constituted the army's historic archives, until the end of the eighteenth century when the *Dépôt* began to concern itself with topography and cartography. The *Dépôt* had become the French

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 154.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 157.

military body to centralize information, although it eschewed espionage and many of the important intelligence activities necessary to fully inform a nation's army.

Whereas Louis XIV had relied on his ministers to build and operate his secret state, his successor, his great-grandson Louis XV, continued the seventeenth-century practice of employing secrecy and spying for international diplomacy. Louis XV instituted his own team of devoted agents, known as the *Secret du Roi*, created initially to help Louis' cousin, the Prince de Conti, ascend the Polish throne. The team subsequently grew into an entourage of men assigned varying roles to assess and further France's place in the Continental balance of powers.<sup>20</sup> Among this group of spies figured the famous Chevalier d'Eon, a flamboyant individual whose sexuality was called into question in both life and death, but who successfully used a ruse to influence a powerful member of Catherine the Great's Russian court.<sup>21</sup> As with other early-modern intelligence services, this network relied heavily on personal connections and on the shared goal of serving the particular French king. It was dissolved shortly after Louis XV's death and remained a secret kept from the French public until 1774.

Although rulers gradually came to accept the necessity of secrecy and spying in diplomatic relations, in the military realm, espionage did not find the same

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<sup>20</sup> As part of this process, Louis XV was careful not to alienate other European powers by being too overt in his efforts to have Conti elected as the Polish monarch. He therefore instituted a policy of secrecy whereby the French ambassador to Poland, the Duc de Broglie, was to correspond separately and secretly with Conti, while keeping the king's plans secret even from his own foreign embassy. Later, Louis XV would use the *Secret* in order to solidify an alliance between France, Sweden, Prussia, and Poland to counter the growing force of the Austro-Russian alliance. Gary Kates, *Monsieur d'Eon Is a Woman: A Tale of Political Intrigue and Sexual Masquerade* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 57-64.

<sup>21</sup> Gary Kates explains that as a spy, d'Eon represents the decadence of the profession and the lack of transparency between monarchy and populace, as well as the contradictions within the monarchy itself. To some, his role as a cross-dresser represented honor and patriotism, as he was willing to sacrifice even his own sex to the nation. *Ibid.*

support. French military literature in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries focused on tactics of combat, giving little attention to information that would prove pertinent before actually entering into battle. Once in the midst of battle, armies would collect information from foreign lands – details of topography of the place of combat, modes of communication, and military and naval forces of the enemy. When the campaign ended, however, these information-collecting bodies were dissolved. The principal characteristic of military intelligence in the *ancien régime* was thus to be temporary and limited to times of war, often to only one campaign at a time.<sup>22</sup>

Spies, in particular, were viewed by military theorists as untrustworthy and therefore never associated with the officer class or with more respectable military personnel.<sup>23</sup> While ambassadors like Wicquefort were referring to themselves as “honorable spies,” others taking on the role of procuring intelligence for their governments were disparaged. Montesquieu, for example, in his *Esprit des Lois*, claimed that espionage could be tolerable if practiced by honest men, but otherwise the infamy of the person could hardly be separated from the infamy of the act.<sup>24</sup>

The fact that spies acted upon financial, as opposed to personal, motivations raised

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<sup>22</sup> A few writers, however – Bérault Stuart (1508), Jérémie de Billon (1622) and Henri de Rohan (1636) – did profess to the importance of knowing the designs of the enemy, and the use of human surveillance to seek out this information. (Bérault Stuart, *Traité sur l'art de la guerre* (La Haye: Martinus Nijhoff, 1976); Jérémie de Billon, *Les Principes de l'art militaire* (Rouen: Jean Berthelin, 1641); Henri duc de Rohan, *Le parfait capitaine* (Osnabrück, Biblio, 1972).) Cited in Hervé Coutau-Bégarie, “Le renseignement dans la pensée militaire française,” [http://www.stratisc.org/strat\\_073\\_aHCBdoc.html](http://www.stratisc.org/strat_073_aHCBdoc.html). However, in the century or so following, such recommendations became increasingly rare.

<sup>23</sup> In Marshal de Puységur’s 1748 *Art de la guerre*, Puységur noted the value in news gathered through espionage but then continued by conceding that while useful, spies also present the difficulty of trustworthiness. Notably, this is essentially all of the space that he dedicates to intelligence in his copious two-volume treatise, confirming the early view of spies as useful but questionable.

<sup>24</sup> Montesquieu, *Esprit des lois*, cited in Capitaine Numa de Chilly, *L’espionnage* (Paris: Librairie Militaire de L. Baudoin, 1888), 14.



doubts among military strategists. Whereas the diplomatic secret was anchored in the aristocratic ethos of personal fidelity, the military spy did not necessarily feel such a connection.

Montesquieu's insight into espionage likely came from the book that served as inspiration for the main character of his *Persian Letters*.<sup>25</sup> The original novel was another epistolary account entitled *Letters of a Turkish Spy* by Giovanni Marana, which told the tale of a Turkish spy in the French court. Marana's spy, Mahmut, gathered information about Louis XIV's court that revolved around political gossip and satire of current events. The foreign, oriental spy here is indeed a figure for French society to beware, and an example of the seventeenth and eighteenth-century notion that spies' damage consisted in infiltrating royal courts and slandering characters through personal revelations. Espionage, intelligence and secrecy in the early modern period remained the province of an elite group of ministers, ambassadors, and other visitors to royal or high society. The military's rejection of these methods confirms the view of espionage as something devious and sneaky. The French Revolution, which ushered in democracy and equality on several planes, would also see the expansion of behavior and attitudes connected with spying, while Napoleon's drive for military domination of Europe brought the practice to the armed forces.

#### *Revolution, Empire, and the Dawn of Professional Intelligence*

In the years preceding and following the French Revolution, protagonists on all sides utilized espionage to outwit their enemies. Many suspected that the British

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<sup>25</sup> Gustave L. Van Roosbroeck, "Persian Letters Before Montesquieu," *The Modern Language Review* 20, no. 4 (1925): 432-433.

secret service had played a role in instigating the Revolution in the first place, whereas others argued that the British employed agents in the years following 1789 in France and in Switzerland to advance the cause of counterrevolution.<sup>26</sup> The Committee of Public Safety sent spies – or “agents of the people” – to neighboring countries to ascertain foreign reaction to the Revolution.<sup>27</sup>

The French Revolution was to expose much of the secret politics that had transpired in the centuries past. One of the major complaints in the *cahiers de doléances* was against the practices of intercepting and opening mail at the monarchs’ discretion.<sup>28</sup> The *cabinet noir*, created by Henry IV, was an office that secretly kept tabs on correspondence passing throughout France and neighboring countries. It became the target of attacks by revolutionaries condemning the royal practice of secrecy, and in 1791, the legislative assembly confirmed the principle of the inviolability of correspondence.<sup>29</sup> The rise to prominence of surveillance committees, from the Committee of Public Safety to the “*bureau de l’esprit public*,” allowed the Revolution’s leaders to return to the practice of intercepting mail in the interest of public safety. In many of the state’s departments, local revolutionary surveillance committees thus seized and opened mail passing through their local

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<sup>26</sup> Alfred Cobban, “British Secret Service in France, 1784-1792,” *The English Historical Review* 69, no. 271 (1954). Though he dismissed the role of the British secret service in this instance, Cobban does present other moments where secret diplomacy played an important role in international affairs. Alfred Cobban, *Ambassadors and Secret Agents: The Diplomacy of the First Earl of Malmesbury at the Hague* (London: Cape, 1954). See also Elizabeth Sparrow, *Secret Service: British Agents in France, 1792-1815* (Woodbridge, Suffolk, UK; Rochester, NY, USA: Boydell Press, 1999).

<sup>27</sup> Recueil des Actes de Comité de Salut Public, etc, par F. A. Aulard, Tome XVIII p. 273 seance du 1<sup>er</sup> Fumician III 21 novembre 1794. Espionage and Secret Service Archive, Series E 899, Box no. 749, Mennevée Collection, UCLA Department of Special Collections, Los Angeles, CA. (Hereafter abbreviated as UCLA Spec. Coll. 899.)

<sup>28</sup> Eugene Vaillé, *Le cabinet noir* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1950), 211.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 227-230.

post offices.<sup>30</sup> In a regime where everyone's loyalty was suspect, the wrong words voiced in a letter could, and did, cost one his or her life.

The introduction of *droit des gens* at the end of the eighteenth century served to discredit much of the previously acceptable practices undertaken by monarchs employing secret diplomacy. Along with a notion of rights, the Revolution introduced concepts of public opinion, citizenship and society, which together opposed the idea that the sovereign alone possessed access to secrecy.<sup>31</sup> Revolutionaries hoped to introduce transparency into government and into its actions.

As sides grew increasingly factious in the years following 1789, however, the ruling authorities imposed a number of limits on liberty aimed to "protect" the Revolution. Included among these was the imposition of secretive intelligence collection that contributed to the creation of a makeshift security state. Charles Walton explains that in order to establish internal stability, the Terror mobilized a system of information gathering that collected political opinion, as well as assessments of the nation's physical and economic resources.<sup>32</sup> The covert gathering of intelligence, previously used by leaders to gain knowledge that would impact the balance of power among nations, now allowed citizen leaders to watch their own people. With this move, dominance of the practice of intelligence began to expand from diplomatic personnel to encompass the French police forces.

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 231-248.

<sup>31</sup> Dewerpe, *Espion*, 77.

<sup>32</sup> Charles Walton, *Policing Public Opinion in the French Revolution: The Culture of Calumny and the Problem of Free Speech* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

The structures of political policing put in place by the Revolutionary governments would be reinforced and increased under the Directory and the Empire. In 1800, Napoleon created the position of police prefects, enacting surveillance of foreigners and anyone considered a threat to the new regime.<sup>33</sup> They would be charged with policing the interior and watching all sorts of activities. In a recent reinterpretation of the period encompassing the Terror and the early years of Napoleon's rule, Howard Brown argues that the "security state" created by the Directory and Napoleon was necessary to end the chaos of the Revolution and to give legitimacy to the new state in the eyes of citizens.<sup>34</sup> Brown shows that in order to save the liberal democracy introduced by the Revolution, the Directory applied increasingly repressive measures, and that the citizenry accepted the escalation of authoritarianism in the name of order. Additionally, fear of bandits, violence, and sedition facilitated the state's actions, demonstrating French potential to give up some civil liberties in the name of security. Fear would similarly play a role in the expansion of espionage and counterespionage at the expense of liberty under the Third Republic.

During the Napoleonic Empire, the use of intelligence and secret information greatly expanded. Napoleon's Italian campaigns had succeeded in part due to his establishment of a *bureau secret* within the army, and he continued to employ secret intelligence in his leadership roles in France.<sup>35</sup> The Emperor maintained the domestic surveillance established by Robespierre and the Terror, and also saw its value for diplomatic and military activities. On the domestic front, Napoleon relied

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<sup>33</sup> Laurent, *Politiques de l'ombre*, 74-77.

<sup>34</sup> Brown, *Ending the French Revolution*.

<sup>35</sup> Jean Savant, *Les espions de Napoléon* (Paris: Hachette, 1957), 11-24.

heavily on his police chiefs, first Joseph Fouché and then René Savary, to institute a regime of surveillance, watching the Empire's friends and opponents alike. Historian Douglas Porch writes that though Fouché was himself of dubious morality, Napoleon needed the man with "the reek of intrigue, the odor of treachery... [for his] contacts, skills, and police experience built up during the decade of revolution to help him impose his authority."<sup>36</sup> Fouché coordinated the several branches of internal police established under the Empire, helped to intercept letters to and from all parts of Europe, and orchestrated press and mail censorship among the French population. However, Napoleon never really trusted Fouché, and therefore replaced him with Savary in 1810. It was during Savary's reworking of the Napoleonic police that the observation of "communications with foreign countries" was officially added to the functions of surveying public opinion, political groups, and religious associations.<sup>37</sup>

Napoleon took the first step in creating professional services dedicated almost entirely to intelligence, although he did so in a way that left little question that intelligence operatives were personal servants of the Emperor. Napoleon selected individuals to serve him whom he could trust, including his Postmaster General, Antoine Lavallette, who ran the Emperor's *cabinet noir*.<sup>38</sup> Like his predecessors, Napoleon relied on a *cabinet noir* to keep track of the activities of royalists and other enemies, as well as his own ministers, generals, and others

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<sup>36</sup> Porch, *French Secret Services*, 7.

<sup>37</sup> Laurent, *Politiques de l'ombre*, 81.

<sup>38</sup> Savant, *Les espions*, 167-189. Lavallette supposedly wanted nothing to do with the particular jobs that Napoleon assigned to him, but accepted them and worked successfully out of devotion to the Emperor.

serving the Empire.<sup>39</sup> Napoleon's spy network successfully unearthed numerous schemes against the Empire and contributed to the functioning of his new bureaucratic state.

Napoleon would also become one of the first French generals to see the importance of incorporating intelligence into his military arsenal. The Emperor's respect for espionage is revealed in his writings, both in works on military strategy, and in his correspondence with generals and advisers.<sup>40</sup> He occupied himself with it on a personal level, studying strategy and continually learning about the peoples and places that he hoped to fight.<sup>41</sup> He stressed the importance of mapping to his campaigns, and thus had his scouts focus on producing detailed accounts of the land that the army would later traverse. Napoleon emphasized not only the need to be informed, but also the necessity of having some sort of system of informers,

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<sup>39</sup> The reorganization of the *cabinet noir* had begun under the Directory, and Napoleon finished the job. In addition to the *cabinet noir* of the post office, he also created a second organization at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MAE) specializing in the interception of diplomatic correspondence. The office at the MAE remained in place, while the *cabinet noir* at the post office eventually moved to the office of the Sûreté générale within the Interior Ministry. Christopher Andrew, "Déchiffrement et diplomatie: le cabinet noir du Quai d'Orsay sous la Troisième République," *Relations internationales*, no. 5 (1976): 37-39.

<sup>40</sup> As early as 1796, Napoleon articulated his thoughts on the importance of collecting information, asserting in one of his military maxims that a good general would do whatever it took to understand the area in which he was fighting both physically and psychologically. He wrote that a successful general would need: "To reconnoiter accurately defiles and fords of every description. To provide guides that may be depended upon. To interrogate the curé and postmaster. To establish rapidly a good understanding with the inhabitants. To send out spies. To intercept public and private letters. To translate and analyze their contents. In a word, to be able to answer every question of the general-in-chief when he arrives at the head of the army; these are the qualities which distinguish a good general of advanced posts." Napoleon's Maxim LXXVI, *The Military Maxims of Napoleon*, trans George C. D'Aguilar (New York: Da Capo Press, 1995), 81.

<sup>41</sup> Gérard Arboit, "Napoléon et le renseignement," August 14, 2009, *Centre Français de Recherche sur le Renseignement* (<http://www.cf2r.org/fr/notes-historiques/napoleon-et-le-renseignement.php>). In addition to consulting the small library that accompanied him on his campaigns, the Emperor kept up to date on happenings across Europe through police bulletins, letters intercepted by the Paris postal service and translations of articles from the foreign press.

something that later writers on intelligence would pointedly recall at the end of the century.<sup>42</sup>

Napoleon's use of intelligence for his military campaigns is well known, and historians have suggested that deception and strategic surprise contributed to each of his successes.<sup>43</sup> He worked to acquire intelligence using a variety of means, including employing spies, intercepting correspondence, sending engineers and field officers on reconnaissance, and as campaigns progressed, interrogating prisoners. His intelligence projects received theoretical and structural support for his new intelligence network from the resurgent *Dépôt de la Guerre*.<sup>44</sup> His spies gauged the physical environment of the places where he would eventually battle, as well as the opinion of neighboring leaders and armies.<sup>45</sup> Napoleon's best known and probably most successful spy was an Alsatian named Charles Schulmeister, a shop-owner and smuggler from Strasbourg, recruited to work for Napoleon by

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<sup>42</sup> Henri Constant Fix, *La stratégie appliquée* (Bruxelles; Paris: C. Muquardt, 1885), 117.; A. Froment, *L'Espionnage militaire et les fonds secrets de la guerre en France et à l'étranger* (Paris: F. Juven, 1897); James Violle, *L'espionnage militaire en temps de guerre* (Paris: Larose, 1903), 83-84; Jules Lewal, "Tactique des Renseignements," *Journal des Sciences Militaires* (1881).

<sup>43</sup> Dave Hollins, "The Hidden Hand - Espionage and Napoleon," *Osprey Military Journal* (March 18, 2008), [http://www.ospreypublishing.com/articles/napoleonic/the\\_hidden\\_hand\\_espionage\\_and\\_napoleon/](http://www.ospreypublishing.com/articles/napoleonic/the_hidden_hand_espionage_and_napoleon/).

<sup>44</sup> See, [A. Allent], *Mémorial topographique et militaire, rédigé au Dépôt Général de la Guerre, par ordre du ministre. IIe trimestre de l'an XI*, Paris: Imprimerie de la République, Germinal an XI (vol 4, March 1803); Comte de Philippe-Henri Grimoard, *Traité sur le service de l'état-major général des armées* (Paris: Magimel, 1809), 195-199 is a section entitled "Espions".

<sup>45</sup> Military historian Jay Luvaas explains how Napoleon utilized intelligence in his campaigns across Europe, gathering as much intelligence as he could in what the General called "preparations for war." For example, one of Napoleon's generals sent Baron Marbot to Berlin in 1806 to act as Napoleon's spy. As Luvaas writes, Marbot "listened to court gossip, sensed the public mood, took special note of the bearing and equipment of Prussian soldiers, and observed haughty young guardsmen vowing to humiliate their ancient enemy as they whetted their sabers on the steps of the French Embassy." Jay Luvaas, "Napoleon's Use of Intelligence: The Jena Campaign of 1805," in *Leaders and Intelligence*, ed. Michael I. Handel (London: Frank Cass & Co., 1989), 46.

Colonel Savary. He is credited with infiltrating the Austrian army and facilitating the French victory at Ulm, as well as with the plot to kidnap the Duc of Enghien.<sup>46</sup>

However, even though Napoleon and his officers may have recognized the importance of intelligence to military strategy, the professional task of reconnaissance still carried with it a negative connotation. Charles Schulmeister, for example, forever faced the disappointing fact that for all of his hard work and devotion, he would not receive the Emperor's legion of honor.<sup>47</sup> The oft-repeated aphorism applied in Schulmeister's case, that the Emperor had supposedly insisted, "gold is the proper reward for spies – no more and no less."<sup>48</sup> Napoleon's spies received his personal recognition, but not professional acknowledgment, something that was to change with the development of intelligence services at the end of the nineteenth century.<sup>49</sup>

With Napoleon's fall, intelligence too, became sidelined. The tactic that had served the great general so well in his many campaigns no longer garnered admiration from strategists, and even Carl von Clausewitz and Baron Antoine-Henri Jomini, the two military theorists who studiously observed Napoleon's wars to take lessons from them, gave almost no credit to espionage and intelligence in penning their own treatises.<sup>50</sup> Napoleon's pupils and subsequent military leaders instead attributed the Emperor's victories to his military genius and the talent of

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<sup>46</sup> Savant, *Les espions*, 135-143.

<sup>47</sup> Porch, *French Secret Services*, 14-15.

<sup>48</sup> Richard Deacon, *The French Secret Service* (London: Grafton, 1990).

<sup>49</sup> To the contrary, Napoleon bestowed considerable honors on his head postmaster and spy, Lavallette. Savant, *Les espions*, 175. Additionally, it is interesting to note that many of the officers who would perform intelligence work for the Deuxième Bureau in the late nineteenth century received many honors, including the *légion d'honneur* that had eluded Schulmeister.

<sup>50</sup> Porch, *French Secret Services*, 11.



other generals. This attitude, which William Serman, in his study of the professional life of French officers in the nineteenth century, calls the *Ecole innéiste*, or the “innate school” of warfare, was common among military theorists in the nineteenth century.<sup>51</sup> The mindset, best expressed by Clausewitz in his 1832 *On War*, reflects the belief that officers had an instinctive talent to lead in battle and that faith should rest in the ability of the leaders to make split-second decisions or to predict the moves of the enemy. Clausewitz, for example, tended to view intelligence as unreliable and distracting, favoring a leader’s intuition or military genius to information passed along through spies or reconnaissance.<sup>52</sup>

In the half-century following the departure of Napoleon, French leaders again turned away from the use of espionage and secretive monitoring of foreign rivals.<sup>53</sup> With attempts to broker European peace in the post-Napoleonic era, the Bourbon leadership was opposed to encouraging spies in foreign embassies.<sup>54</sup> This is not to say, however, that the leadership of the Restoration, the July Monarchy and the Second Empire did not recognize the importance of information, nor employ covert methods of intelligence gathering.<sup>55</sup> Instead of focusing on external,

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<sup>51</sup> William Serman, *La vie professionnelle des officiers français au milieu du 19e siècle* (Paris: Christian, 1994), 97-98.

<sup>52</sup> Michael Handel, "Intelligence in Historical Perspective," in *Go Spy the Land: Military Intelligence in History*, ed. Keith Neilson and B. J. C. McKercher (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1992), 180-182.

<sup>53</sup> Richard Deacon states that in the 40 years following 1815, there was a gradual decline in France’s intelligence services, both civilian and military, inside and outside of French territory; Deacon, *The French Secret Service*, 59. Pascal Krop notes that throughout the 1860s, the French government treated the question of counterespionage with scorn and disdain; Krop, *Secrets*, 13.

<sup>54</sup> Alfred Vagts, *The Military Attaché* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1967), 17.

<sup>55</sup> For example, the Bourbons under the Restoration made use of the *cabinets noirs* that had been set up by their predecessors. The government opened mail in order to ascertain public opinion of important events, such as the fall of Prime Minister Duc de Richelieu in 1818, the assassination of the Duc de Berry in 1820 and the death of Napoleon in 1821. Parliament complained about these practices such that they were abolished in 1828, a declaration reiterated by King Louis-Philippe in 1830. Andrew, "Déchiffrement," 38.

international threats, however, authorities reinforced the surveillance work of their predecessors – that of internal spying, or secret police. The years between the fall of the First Empire and the establishment of the Third Republic saw a focus on domestic surveillance with increased size, power, and bureaucratization of police forces.<sup>56</sup> Hsi-Huey Liang dates the rise of what he terms the “modern police” to the period following Napoleon’s 1812 defeat in Moscow, when in order to maintain a balance of power throughout Europe, states needed to assure the stability of populations at home.<sup>57</sup>

The growth of police surveillance was a substitute for the building of external intelligence networks. In nineteenth-century France, the police rose in connection with the country’s shifting demographics. The convergence of the working classes, also viewed as “dangerous classes,” in cities, as described by Louis Chevalier, led leaders and the bourgeoisie to seek increased state protection.<sup>58</sup> Indeed, the growth of bourgeois society and its accompanying infrastructure – schools, hospitals, paved streets, etc. – seemed to call for a new force to watch and protect it. Throughout the 1800s, the police forces received greater amounts of state funding, and came under increasingly centralized direction, with officers given more sophisticated equipment and training.<sup>59</sup> These early signs of

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<sup>56</sup> Liang, *Rise of Modern Police*.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

<sup>58</sup> Chevalier, *Laboring Classes*.

<sup>59</sup> Jennifer Davis, “Urban Policing and its Objects: Comparative Themes in England and France in the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century,” in Emsley and Weinberger, *Policing Western Europe*.

professionalization of the police would build throughout the Second Empire, until policing became much more of a 'career' under the Third Republic.<sup>60</sup>

One sector of this internal police operated as a "political police," a group that found itself responsible for locating any potential threats to the regime in place. Napoleon's political police had been initially abolished after the Restoration, but quickly restored when the government realized the importance of gathering political intelligence, and the French secret police was thus instrumental in restoring order at various stages of crisis throughout the first half of the nineteenth century.<sup>61</sup> The task of the political police was to protect the regime in power, and did so using methods such as attending meetings, reading mail, censoring books and plays, and scanning newspaper editorials. Importantly, the political police did not constitute a separate body of officials, but bore the description as merely an administrative term, and in fact these officers performed other functions as well.<sup>62</sup> Thus it is not until the second half of the nineteenth century that surveillance as a specific function became recognized as a job in itself. Though members of the French police did carry out surveillance activities, they were not spies, and made a point to distance themselves from such an association.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Jean-Marc Berlière, "The Professionalisation of the Police Under the Third Republic in France, 1875-1914," in *ibid.*

<sup>61</sup> Liang, *Rise of Modern Police*, 42-62.

<sup>62</sup> Howard C. Payne, "Theory and Practice of Political Police During the Second Empire in France," *The Journal of Modern History* 30, no. 1 (1958).

<sup>63</sup> Police commissaires during the Second Empire were told to act in such a way that they would "never deserve the epithet of *mouchard*." *ibid.* citing Emile Thomas, *Le livre des commissaires de police* (Montdidier, 1864), 18. Also, Richard Deacon notes that at this time there was, "a kind of consensus among the chiefs of police and intelligence (military as well as civilian) that the best spy or counter-spy was a criminal, or someone who had at least committed some misdemeanors earlier in life." Deacon, *The French Secret Service*, 60. The prototypical example of the type of criminal who served as a police spy was the famous Vidocq. Eugène François Vidocq had entered a life of crime at an early age and found himself arrested, sentenced, and escaping from prison on multiple occasions. In 1809

The rise of policing, and political policing in particular, is important in understanding how modern society moved towards the process of sacrificing liberty for order, a precursor for attitudes that would accompany the rise of professional espionage services. It was through the police, therefore, that the use of secretive means by government slowly became a reality in the public imagination. A study by French historian Pierre Karila-Cohen analyzing the *fonds secrets* (secret funds) allocated to the French police during the Restoration and the July Monarchy (1814-1848) shows a gradual acceptance of the necessity of domestic espionage and other secret intelligence-gathering activities typically burdened with a base reputation.<sup>64</sup> Deputies evoked contemporary domestic and international politics in their calls for funding, as shown in the example of the Baron de Morogues who requested money to combat what he saw as the revolutionary peril. Thiers and Lamartine who discussed spying in terms of “necessary evil.”<sup>65</sup> The debates in the French Chamber of Deputies on this subject and their results show a move towards the transition to the Weberian state monopoly on violence, and the necessity to compromise certain aspects of liberty in exchange for greater protection.

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he offered his service to the Paris police department and reentered prison as a police spy. He worked his way through the ranks of the police department, maintaining his connection to the criminal underworld, and eventually was appointed head of the new *Sûreté nationale*, where he continued to hire former convicts to serve as his secret agents. In 1833, Vidocq would open his *bureau des renseignements*, the nation’s first detective agency.

<sup>64</sup> Pierre Karila-Cohen, “Renseigner et surveiller en France au XIXe siècle: Les fonds secrets ou la méfiance légitime. L’invention paradoxale d’une “tradition républicaine” sous la Restauration et la monarchie de Juillet,” *Revue historique*, no. 636 (2005). Sébastien Laurent also viewed the debates over *fonds secrets* as an important window into feelings towards the use of covert information. A budget for the secret funds was fixed during the Restoration for the Ministries of Interior, Foreign Affairs, War and Marine, and allocated based on a set of rules, with the amounts debated annually. Although the usage of the funds was to remain secret, the total amount was made public, as were the debates, which were published in the annual *Moniteur universel*. A number of deputies expressed the opinion that secret funds had no place in an era of transparency and publicity in contrast to Adolphe Thiers (as Minister of the Interior) and Lamartine’s presentation of “necessary evil.” Laurent, *Politiques de l’ombre*, 95-110.

<sup>65</sup> *Le Moniteur universel*, n. 148, May 28, 1837, 1337-1339.

Such discussions showed that surveillance and other intrusive police and government activities became acceptable in the name of protecting the state and instilling order. However, this covert watching became translated only slowly, and very gradually, into the recognition that a threat existed outside of France's borders as well. In order to watch and protect from the outside, therefore, the role of surveillance that had been occupied domestically by the secret police and in Algeria by the military's *bureaux arabes* was expanded with the creation of an entirely new police force.<sup>66</sup> In the 1830s and 1840s, with the development of railroads, a number of police forces were tasked with monitoring the comings and goings of French citizens and foreigners using this new mode of transport. When Napoleon III came to power, he continued to rely on the police to protect citizens and the state.<sup>67</sup> He formalized the function of the railroad police with an imperial decree of February 22, 1855 which created a distinct force, known as the *police spéciale de surveillance des chemins de fer*, whose duties soon involved political policing and observation of foreigners on French territory.<sup>68</sup> According to Liang, these officers "were chosen for their education, intelligence, and discretion and expected to report all their observations accurately, with discrimination and subtlety,"<sup>69</sup> a sign that specific characteristics were being used to identify a specific task force. This was the group that served as the nineteenth century's first attempt at a bureaucratic

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<sup>66</sup> For more on the convergence of these two surveillance forces, see Chapter 3.

<sup>67</sup> Payne, "Political Police," 14-23.

<sup>68</sup> Decree of February 22, 1855, analyzed in "Note sur les commissaires spéciaux de police sur les chemins de fer," issued by the Ministry of Justice, Archives Nationales (AN) BB<sup>80</sup> 953.

<sup>69</sup> Liang, *Rise of Modern Police*, 56.

counterespionage force, with certain of these officials occasionally “watching” foreign nations and nationals as well.

*Lone Voices Speak Out for Professional Espionage*

The force Napoleon III instituted in 1855 was the first official policing agency responsible for tracking down foreigners or domestics who might serve as a threat to France. Meanwhile, there was almost no treatment given to the collection of external information.<sup>70</sup> Of the few individuals who noted this lacuna in the mid-nineteenth century, the Maréchal Bugeaud stands apart for his early insistence on the need for spies. Thomas Robert Bugeaud was a highly decorated officer serving the French army under Napoleon and later under King Louis-Philippe. He was a prolific military writer, penning treatises on a number of subjects, including his ideas about the use of intelligence and espionage which he took from his service in Algeria in the 1830s and 1840s.<sup>71</sup> Bugeaud’s 1832 *Aperçus sur le détail de la guerre* impressed his contemporaries and later analysts of military strategy alike, who would invariably reference his work.<sup>72</sup> The short book discussed a number of kinds

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<sup>70</sup> This ignorance had been noted and made public by at least one deputy during the July Monarchy. In 1842, amidst discussions for a law of finance, the deputy Baron Raymond Duprat (1782-1861) defended a piece of the budget for the ministry of Foreign Affairs, asserting, in regards notably, to England: “It is said that one of the principal causes of our inferiority in the diplomatic sphere comes from the fact that we are badly informed of what is going on outside of France. A neighboring people, that we hear cited to no end, is warned about political matters by its commercial establishments, by its national travelers, and by its political and official agents, better paid than ours. To compensate for these means which we lack and which we cannot create, we only have extraordinary missions.” This was printed in the *Moniteur Universel*, no. 92, April 2, 1842, 649. As Sebastien Laurent notes, in fact, throughout the first two thirds of the nineteenth century, authorities relied on an organization of external intelligence inherited from the monarchy. Laurent, *Politiques de l’ombre*, 67-71.

<sup>71</sup> Violle, *L’espionnage militaire*, 86. For more on the connection between the Arab bureaus in Algeria and intelligence in Third Republic France, see Chapter 3.

<sup>72</sup> For example, after its initial run, Louis-Philippe found it so important that he stressed its place as crucial reading material for all young officers. Later writers like Froment, Violle, and countless others lauded Bugeaud for his early insight into the importance of espionage as military strategy.

of reconnaissance activities, from the need to sketch unknown terrain to the utility of scouts in the field. In this and in subsequent works, Bugeaud raised the question of espionage, and asserted it to be “one of the most important parts of the art of war,” noting that “the general who knows how to employ it skillfully will take from it considerable advantage.”<sup>73</sup> For Bugeaud, employing espionage encompassed a number of activities, from procuring information through mere observation to using ordinary citizens to serve as decoys and pass along misinformation.

Bugeaud is also an interesting character in the history of intelligence, as he was one of the first strategists to insist on combining the military cunning of the well-trained officer with the dubious, yet useful, profession of the spy. Though spies themselves could surface from varied sectors of society, the individuals able to find and direct them needed to possess certain qualities. He recommended that each corps maintain an espionage service and even suggested that the army produce a manual providing instruction in this important aspect of war. The person best able to direct this service, he explained, would be someone skilled in the art of interpreting, yet not revealing, certain facial characteristics. In fact, the conditions that he described for a good spy, and a good officer, overlap. “Intelligence is most precious,” he observed, “when it comes from the most intelligent and well educated sources. One must leave nothing aside to find spies who are able to understand all, to guess all, and to know all.”<sup>74</sup> In specifying what sort of individuals fit this exacting description, Bugeaud emphasized the need to

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<sup>73</sup> Thomas Robert Bugeaud, *Maximes, conseils et instructions sur l'art de la guerre ou aide-mémoire pratique de la guerre a l'usage des militaires de toutes armes et de tous pays* (Paris: Leneven, 1863), 65. See also Maréchal Bugeaud, *Aperçus sur quelques détails de la guerre* (Paris: Duverger, 1832).

<sup>74</sup> Bugeaud, *Maximes*, 67.

have spies culled from the ranks of the army itself, as loyal officers would be much more efficient than “the Jews, women and hawkers that we employ now in this profession.”<sup>75</sup> Bugeaud’s rejection of individuals falling into these categories, besides being prejudiced, showed a desire to have trained professional agents with military background as the nation’s secret eyes.<sup>76</sup>

Indeed, in 1856, Colonel Joseph Tanski, head of an intelligence-gathering team during the Crimean War (1853-1856), prepared a memo for the French imperial army laying out the necessity of a “*service central de renseignements*,” noting failures of intelligence during that campaign, and giving suggestions for a future service.<sup>77</sup> In spite of the French victory in this conflict, Tanski began his memo by highlighting the French insufficiencies in intelligence through a comparison with the successes of their opponents, the Russians. According to Tanski, the “incontestable advantage” possessed by Russia came from its efforts at observing and mimicking the institutional structures of other European armies, while maintaining secrecy regarding its own resources.

Whereas the Russians possessed detailed plans of French troop positions, the Allied armies had no such thing. The lack of ability to predict not only the movements of enemy troops, but also the failure to understand the true layout of the country, the disposition of its inhabitants, and the extent of enemy force,

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<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> The stress that Bugeaud put on knowledge and education shows that he thought of information-gathering as a true profession, one to be undertaken by the most skilled and talented individuals, in his case, army officers. Bugeaud’s counsel is therefore important in highlighting this early push for the use of officers as intelligence professionals, a request that would be reinforced in analysis of actual scenarios in the years to come.

<sup>77</sup> “Mémoire sur la création d’un Service central de Renseignements militaires,” dated January 15, 1856. SHD 1 M 2037.



gravely hurt the French. "From the moment of landing in Crimea," Tanksi stated, the dearth of positive intelligence was "the principal cause preventing a decisive success on our part that we could have expected from the superiority of our troops."<sup>78</sup> Following a brief analysis of specific failures, he stressed the necessity of organizing an intelligence service in a manner that would be both "regular and complete."

Tanski's memo laid out faults in the French policy of sidelining intelligence and also offered suggestions for creating a centralized intelligence service. He stressed the need for interpreters and agents able to understand the language and customs of foreign nations, not merely to observe enemy plans and intentions, but also to interpret them for the future.<sup>79</sup> In order to be properly informed, intelligence services would need to be set up during times of peace. Echoing Bugeaud, Tanski insisted that the ideal agents to gather and process intelligence would be trained by the French military, critiquing the "half-civilian, half-military" character of the few agents that they had. Without being fully versed in military pedagogy, these agents were unable to comprehend the organization of their own or of enemy armies, and therefore officers could not fully utilize their services. These issues would be solved only through the creation of an official intelligence service under the direction of

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> For example, Tanski noted that during the Crimean War, one reason that the Russians could achieve a strong position facing France stemmed from the fact that many Russian officers or members of the army corps could speak French, had visited France, or even attended French schools where they had mixed with French soldiers. Conversely, very few French officers spoke Russian or any other European languages, nor had they traveled to Russia (though he conceded that physical conditions made this specific travel very difficult).

the Ministry of War, which would imbue it with both practical know-how, and the moral character inherent in the military institution.<sup>80</sup>

Most important, however, was that the army needed to create a centralized agency for intelligence analysis. The service would be centered in Paris, where it would coordinate several disparate sources of intelligence, as well as all military documents produced by the statistical bureaus of the ministries of War, Foreign Affairs, and the Marine.<sup>81</sup> Once gathered, the centralized service would summarize these accounts and analyze them alongside other information such as the reports of officers sent on missions abroad or affairs described in the foreign press.<sup>82</sup> For Tanski, the importance of external intelligence gathering was clear, as was the need to pair competent officers and agents with a centralized, analytical department.

The Crimean War as an important stage in recognition of the need to professionalize intelligence coincided with increased competition for land and resources among the European powers. The war had been fought over disputes between Russia on one side and France and Britain on the other regarding influence in the Ottoman Empire. The Crimean War was also the first one in which photographs and news coverage returned in a timely fashion to the home countries, giving citizens in France and Britain views of the fighting as it occurred. With

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<sup>80</sup> "In according a regular and official position to the heads and the agents of this service, one could stimulate the growth within them of the sentiments of duty and *esprit de corps*, without which they would never have either moral responsibility or legitimacy." Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> In the mid-nineteenth century, information reached the Dépôt de la Guerre from internal sources (reports within its archives, the foreign press) and external sources (diplomatic dispatches, consular reports, officers sent abroad by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and marginally, espionage).

<sup>82</sup> Tanski notes that during the Crimean campaign, the best intelligence on Russian troop movement came from military newspapers in Vienna or Berlin. However, as neither the French ambassador in Constantinople nor *le quartier general* actually received these papers, this information didn't make its way to the French army except through "the imperfect, unintelligent, and delayed reproduction," of these newspapers from Paris.

citizens able to watch and sympathize, the importance of international victory was even stronger, giving armies and governments added incentive to employ better strategies to assure favorable results.<sup>83</sup>

Part of the newfound recognition of the importance of intelligence was linked with changes in modes of warfare in the nineteenth century. Following the Industrial Revolution in Europe, weapons and military technology became much more advanced. The speed with which armies could descend upon their enemies increased multifold, and thus advance warning of position and intention of enemy forces became critical.<sup>84</sup> With the advent of railroads and communications technology, war was very different from a century prior. Armies, like science and industry, had become emblematic of the nation-states of nineteenth century Europe, and progress by one nation resulted in feelings of inferiority and a drive for recovery and ascendancy in another. The French army had suffered from declining esteem in the decades after Napoleon's defeat, and a victory in Crimea, along with French military adventures in Africa, served as points of pride to improve French international standing.<sup>85</sup> Improved intelligence could presumably help to bolster France's military.

One of Colonel Tanski's chief complaints with the state of French intelligence in the 1850s had been with its failure to centralize information. As noted above, the

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<sup>83</sup> In fact, in Britain, a retired major named Thomas Best Jervis registered complaints similar to Tanski's, as the state of England's intelligence forces during this conflict was no greater across the Channel. Andrew, *Her Majesty's Secret Service*, 9. Stephen Harris notes that in Britain, the Crimean War marked the start of the transition between Napoleonic and industrial warfare, with intelligence technology beginning to get its due at this time. Stephen M. Harris, *British Military Intelligence in the Crimean War, 1854-1856* (London; Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 1999), xviii.

<sup>84</sup> John Keegan, *Intelligence In War: Knowledge of the Enemy from Napoleon to Al-Qaeda* (London: Hutchinson, 2003), 20.

<sup>85</sup> Michael Howard, *The Franco-Prussian War: The German Invasion of France, 1870-1871* (New York: Macmillan, 1961), 15.

army did possess an office dedicated to “*statistique*,” known as the Dépôt de la Guerre, the information storage center inherited from Louvois. The Dépôt had continued to function under Napoleon, even producing military literature that touched on the importance of intelligence, yet gave little consideration to espionage.<sup>86</sup> While throughout the nineteenth century the majority of its budget was dedicated to cartography, under the July Monarchy, the Dépôt, and in particular its statistical section, had also begun to gather information about the other European countries.<sup>87</sup> Their information came predominantly from public sources – newspapers and journals published in the foreign press, maps in the public domain, and memoirs or other historic documents.

The failings of the Dépôt de la Guerre were no secret. In the mid-nineteenth century General Bardin, in his *Dictionnaire de l'armée de terre* wrote an entry on the Dépôt de la Guerre which noted that by 1830 it had begun to fall into oblivion. Bardin wrote, “few translators are connected with it... the few works coming from abroad are sitting in dust... the library contains an incomplete collection... and finally, many treaties and productions that should be found there are lacking due to a shortage of funds.”<sup>88</sup> The entry proclaimed that the “very new kind of science, that of statistics” had occupied the *savants* at the Dépôt previously, but that now it

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<sup>86</sup> The Dépôt de la Guerre was notably not a body practicing espionage, whereas other groups, to a limited extent, did so. A small military organization, known as the Dépôt des Fortifications, as early as 1839, was known to have organized espionage missions charged with gathering useful information about the fortifications of foreign powers. Likewise, the Dépôt de la Marine, relying on industrial espionage, used spies to collect technical information on foreign navies, in particular, the British navy. Beyond these, however, the French armed forces had a very limited means of understanding what might have been occurring in the militaries of competitors. Laurent, *Politiques de l'ombre*, 164-165.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 148-158.

<sup>88</sup> Étienne Alexandre Bardin, *Dictionnaire de l'armée de terre : ou, recherches historiques sur l'art et les usages militaires des anciens et des modernes* (Paris: Perrotin, 1841-51). Entry “Dépôt de la Guerre,” Vol. III, pp. 1866-1867.

“is currently appreciated and cultivated in many foreign militaries.”<sup>89</sup> Notions of progress and advancement, spurred by the industrial revolution and subsequent discoveries, had helped arouse a scientific consciousness in France in the 1850s and 1860s, and theorists believed that these principles could be applied in a variety of fields. Bardin’s dictionary demonstrates that in the mid-nineteenth century, what many had considered the most “scientific” arm of the military continued to neglect intelligence, and that this was a major failure in adapting to a modern world.<sup>90</sup>

Another weakness of mid-nineteenth-century French intelligence was its failure to take advantage of officers or staff stationed outside of France to gather information about other countries. In the years immediately following the Napoleonic Wars, French leaders had adamantly rejected using professional emissaries as spies on the grounds that they would disrupt the newly established European peace.<sup>91</sup> Gradually this hesitation wore off, and from 1826 through the remainder of the Restoration, the July Monarchy and the Second Empire, France slowly began to introduce military attachés – officers with direct access to diplomatic information who could use their military training to gather information

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<sup>89</sup> Many early proponents of the study of *statistiques* in France viewed it as the scientific study of society and took measurements of populations, resources, churches, and more. Sébastien Laurent therefore equates the growth of census and other *statistique* with observation and surveillance, dating the origin of this type of information gathering to the time of Louis XIV and Colbert. Laurent, *Politiques de l'ombre*, 47-57.

<sup>90</sup> Bardin’s definition defined the organization as “the literary and scientific arsenal of the army.” Bardin, *Dictionnaire*.

<sup>91</sup> Vagts, *The Military Attaché*, 16-17. A similar phenomenon took place in Britain with their foreign office choosing to turn from espionage in the nineteenth century. Christopher Andrew notes, “Envoys to the great powers at the end of the nineteenth century shunned the personal involvement with spies and bribery often expected of their eighteenth-century predecessors. They were probably right to believe that the risks of such activities outweighed any potential advantage to be gained from them.” Andrew, *Her Majesty’s Secret Service*, 6.

about foreign powers – into their embassies abroad.<sup>92</sup> The creation of military attachés in the middle of the nineteenth century was an important step in the institutionalization of information gathering. As the military moved into this domain, they would work on modernizing the gathering and analysis of intelligence. During the first half of the nineteenth century, however, the assignment of officers to foreign embassies was minimal, and hardly at an organized, professional level.<sup>93</sup> As late as 1860, Napoleon III's Minister of War Jacques Louis Randon had informed the Emperor that foreign officers placed in embassies in Paris were gathering information about French military forces, while the French were doing nothing of the kind.<sup>94</sup> Randon implored the Emperor to remedy this deficiency.

Napoleon III heeded Randon's advice to detach quality officers to embassies abroad, and between 1860 and 1870, the Emperor sent military attachés to England, Austria, Russia and Germany. One of these military attachés, the Colonel Stoffel,

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<sup>92</sup> Laurent, *Politiques de l'ombre*, 180-184. Notably, over half of diplomats during the eighteenth century belonged to the military profession, and thus had an understanding of what to look for in terms of advancements by foreign armies. This number declined through the nineteenth century, however, as more civilians made their way into the diplomatic corps.

<sup>93</sup> For one, the officers sent abroad had to pay their way themselves, meaning the position was limited to those who could afford it, not necessarily the most talented. Also, there was no official "post" that they were sent to, and often officers would go abroad, stay for a limited amount of time, and return to France without anyone else taking over their position. Further, according to the memoirs of General Jarras, a number of the officers sent as agents to other countries could not receive official missions, but were instead sent on "semi-official" missions. Général Jarras, *Souvenirs du Général Jarras, Chef d'état-major général de l'armée du Rhin publiés par Madame Jarras* (Paris: Plon, 1892), 10.

<sup>94</sup> Randon transmitted his findings to Napoleon III in a report on January 18, 1860. In his memoirs, Randon recalled the gist of his discovery: "The major European powers consistently maintained officers on mission attached to their embassies in Paris; without actually defining their position, it is certain that they had as a goal the collection of intelligence on the organization of French military forces.... After having regretted that France had for a long time failed to act in the same fashion, [Randon] proposed that they send well-chosen officers to Berlin, St. Petersburg, Vienna and London." Jacques Louis Randon, *Mémoires du Maréchal Randon* (Paris: Typographie Lahure, 1877), tome II, 49.

posted to Berlin in 1866, left behind a record of his findings and his correspondence with French leadership.<sup>95</sup> Upon his initial assignment, Stoffel received instructions from Minister of War Randon to learn the constitution of Prussia's military forces, and was told specifically to "observe and reflect," but not to betray any confidence or compromise his character; in other words, not to employ espionage.<sup>96</sup> Similar to the Dépôt throughout the nineteenth century, military attachés were to rely on open information (such as newspapers, maps, military reports, etc.) to accomplish their task of learning details of foreign powers. Stoffel, however, in fact went beyond this instruction, as the correspondence between him and high-ranked representatives of the Second Empire shows that he was indeed encouraged to gather as much information as possible, using means beyond those specified in his initial instructions.

Moreover, Stoffel was encouraged to report directly to the Minister of War himself, as well as to Franceschini Pietri, Napoleon III's personal secretary. Therefore, while observations made their way to the ruler or the ministry, they rarely arrived at the Dépôt, and if they did, it was merely to be added to historical archives. The case of Stoffel reinforces the fact that even though towards the end of his reign Napoleon III did attempt to employ officers in the collection of intelligence, neither the army nor the Ministry of Foreign Affairs possessed any official system to deal with the data gathered. Furthermore, with the personal connection to the Emperor and his chief representatives, this example shows that

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<sup>95</sup> SHD 1M 1538. He also published many of these reports in 1871. Colonel baron Stoffel, *Rapports militaires écrits de Berlin 1866-1870* (Paris: Garnier, 1871).

<sup>96</sup> Letter from Randon to Stoffel dated August 2, 1866, SHD 1M 1538.

prior to the Franco-Prussian War, intelligence was collected *outside* of the bureau that was supposedly the army's chief intelligence arm, the Dépôt de la Guerre.

The limited Second Empire intelligence-gathering system was not to last long. In 1866, Austria fell to Prussia at the battle of Sadowa. This unforeseen event altering the European balance of power was strong impetus to consider the state of French intelligence. In response to this event, Napoleon III finally decided to take advantage of the augmented role of military attachés, dispatching Colonel Stoffel to Berlin, and sending officers to other nearby embassies. Meanwhile, France's glaring deficiencies in terms of the Dépôt de la Guerre as a place to collect and assess information on the Empire's most immediate threat was becoming more and more obvious to a number of officers employed in the service.<sup>97</sup>

Although for centuries many strategists had failed to acknowledge the importance of espionage and alongside it, the centralization and analysis of secret reconnaissance, by the 1860s, the Dépôt de la Guerre employed a handful of individuals who saw eye to eye on the importance of this military science. Officers Ducrot, Jarras, Lewal, d'Andlau, Samuel and Jung were all members of the Dépôt who separately wrote and spoke about the drastic need to improve French intelligence forces and centralize information. Each of these men sought to modernize French military intelligence through a variety of means, including coordinating published intelligence, training agents to act as spies, establishing a

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<sup>97</sup> One of these officers working within the Dépôt de la Guerre, General Ducrot, observed the Prussian campaign culminating in the victory at Sadowa. Shortly thereafter, he stressed the need for the French to abandon their reluctance to employ espionage, having observed already in 1866 that the Prussians had sent spies into French territory. In a letter to General Trochu sent from Strasbourg in December of that year, Ducrot noted that for a while, Prussian agents had been moving about in departments on the border, particularly in the region between the Moselle and the Vosges. Moreover, he added that they "had proceeded in a similar fashion in Bohemia and Silesia three months before the outbreak of hostilities with Austria." Général Ducrot, *La vie militaire du Général Ducrot d'après sa correspondance: 1839-1871* (Paris: Plon, 1895), tome II, 147.



designated intelligence hierarchy, and creating one official agency to serve as the nation's main intelligence arm. With the growing threat of Prussia and the realization that France lagged behind other countries in developing espionage and counterespionage, these voices were finally heeded and the early steps to organizing an intelligence agency were set in motion.

In 1867, General Hughes Jarras was charged with reworking the *Dépôt de la Guerre*. Jarras began by sending early military missions of espionage into German territory towards the end of 1867 and in the years following.<sup>98</sup> Jarras was one of the first to truly try to professionalize the intelligence-gathering missions performed by the *Dépôt*. He and his staff drafted a number of different instructions to the officers – documents like *Instructions destined for officers on mission*, *Instruction for the drafting of notices*, “*Verbal recommendations*” for officers going abroad – that assured a consistency within the work performed by different people in different places. Reports sent back to Jarras in the format proscribed indicate that in fact his project of professionalization was taking hold.

Minimal at first, in 1868, the *Dépôt* stepped up this project and deployed a number of people to go on information-gathering missions in Germany. Between April 25, 1868 and November 9, 1869, 29 officers departed on 37 missions, for durations of between 16 and 125 days. The total time out of the country equaled 1416 days on mission, with an average of 38.27 days.<sup>99</sup> Their goal was relatively straightforward. Instructions sent to the officers on mission told them to observe a

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<sup>98</sup> Jarras, *Souvenirs*, 1-35.

<sup>99</sup> Laurent, *Politiques de l'ombre*, 211.

variety of details about their designated region.<sup>100</sup> The objective certainly appears to have been a thorough topological assessment, as well as a determination on how best to fight a war in each of the various regions. However, it is important to note that in at least one of these detailed instruction packets, officers were told that they “should use all means necessary in order to inform themselves.”<sup>101</sup> This description, used before in other senses to tacitly condone espionage, was new for this branch of the military.

In order to maintain their cover, the officers were given specific instructions for these operations: avoid bringing attention to themselves; take the appearance of tourists; when searches necessitated moving around, look for a picturesque spot that would serve as the perfect pretext for this walk; use signs and abbreviations in notes that only they can understand; if caught, say that they are military and thus are looking around as relates to their profession, with the simple purpose of learning and instruction; keep maps and notes on their person and not in their suitcase.<sup>102</sup> Officers on mission were encouraged to carry “recommendations” or letters of introduction from authorities in France to influential Germans, or else to get in touch with French diplomatic agents in the assigned region in Germany.<sup>103</sup> These instructions appear well thought-out, but it is important to bear in mind that the men sent on such missions did not have any prior training in reconnaissance,

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<sup>100</sup> Officers were to learn details of campsites, resources and means of transport. They were instructed to focus on various lines of communication and assess how to capture and maintain them. This involved figuring out how to occupy and protect railroad stations, and studying water boundaries in order to either use or close points of passage. Using existing maps, they were to confirm present intelligence, or correct inaccuracies of details gleaned from past campaigns.

<sup>101</sup> Instructions destinées aux officiers en mission [undated, probably 1868-1869], 1M 1541.

<sup>102</sup> “Recommandations Verbales,” [undated] SHD 1M 1577.

<sup>103</sup> “Instructions destinées aux officiers en mission” [undated, probably 1868-1869], 1M 1541.

and in fact, in more than one instance, the Germans caught the French officers on their territory.

One of these men, Captain Lahalle, sent on a secret topographical mission in Wurtemberg, was stopped in 1868 by police but managed to get away and complete his mission under a different disguise thanks to the help of a local aristocrat.<sup>104</sup> Other officers, however, were caught in Germany and sent back to France. Captain Leroy was captured gathering information under the pretense of being a painter, and when exposed, was expelled from Germany.<sup>105</sup> The Leroy incident ended smoothly, but not entirely quietly, as the press both in Germany and in France printed short summaries of the events for the public.<sup>106</sup> His episode, along with those of Foucher and Clément, two other officers working for the Dépôt and caught and expelled contemporaneously, also highlights the relatively benign role

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<sup>104</sup> Story of Colonel Oscar Lahalle comes from his memoirs, *Mes souvenirs*; cited in Laurent, *Politiques d'Ombre* 214-216.

<sup>105</sup> Details of Leroy and Foucher come from SHD 1M 1577. On assignment of the Dépôt de la Guerre, Captain Leroy left on a mission July 22, 1868 to the Fulda Valley. For approximately two weeks, Leroy traversed the region, observing the geography of the area, means of transportation, and houses that would make for potential dwellings for forces that would be stationed there. While the French may have had some idea of the layout of this particular region, it is clear that they considered their information outdated, as among Leroy's papers were notes that had been gathered during the Seven Years War, fought over a century earlier between Prussia and Great Britain on one side and France, Austria, Russia, and a number of smaller states on the other. This testifies to a recognition of the necessity to modernize information, and the quasi-scientific process of learning from past wars and developing upon them. This particular mission proved short-lived, however, as within little time, Leroy had attracted the attention of the local authorities. According to a note that Leroy drafted for the Dépôt's director, Jarras, a policeman had stopped him on the sixth of August in the city of Hersfeld, requested his passport, and demanded to know his profession. As per the Dépôt's instructions, Leroy explained that he had sketched the Prussian landscape in his capacity as a painter. Three days later, Leroy was approached again, this time by the *Landrath*, or deputy prefect of police, and the town's mayor. Questioning his story as a painter, the two went to his room and asked to see his drawings, at which point he was forced to admit his connection to the French army command. Thus the true nature of Leroy's mission was revealed, and the *Landrath* took his papers and extracted from him a promise that he would return to France immediately. Report from Leroy addressed to General Jarras, August 14, 1868, SHD 1M 1577.

<sup>106</sup> Articles in Germany appeared in the *Gazette de Cologne* and the *Gazette d'Augsbourg*, with translations of them appearing in the French *l'Ordre*, *le Progres du Nord* and *l'Union de l'Ouest*. The articles in both languages also note that other officers were known to be collecting information from Germany. SHD 1M 1577.

of espionage in the years prior to the Franco-Prussian War.<sup>107</sup> In fact, the atmosphere between France and Prussia in terms of spies has been described as almost cordial. As occurred with Leroy, when caught on one side of the border, spies would just be sent back to their place of origin.<sup>108</sup> Part of the explanation for this behavior came from neglecting a firm definition of espionage and punishment for such activities during times of peace. As we will see, this would be one of the many ideas relating to espionage and intelligence that would change over the first few decades of the Third Republic, not only in France, but in Europe globally.

Even though a few of the Dépôt's officers were caught in the act, notes in the army's archives indicate that on the whole, those sent on missions abroad did indeed succeed in gathering a decent amount of information on German projects. The officers returned descriptions of major centers of population in Germany, as well as equally detailed reports on waterways, mountains, and other physical landscapes. With translations of pamphlets and newspaper articles, officers like Captain Abraham Samuel reported back on the organization of the Prussian army following the recent annexations, the draft law obliging military service and an analysis of the Zollverein.<sup>109</sup> An undated report even outlines plans for potential war led by France on German territory, focusing on the areas of Baden, Heidelberg, and Wurzburg.<sup>110</sup> Based on various intelligence gathered, members of the Dépôt guessed that this war would be fought in Belgium, or on the banks of the Main

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<sup>107</sup> After the third capture, that of Clément, French authorities were becoming nervous and on August 20, 1868, decided to stop the reconnaissance missions for a while. Note to the Minister of War from General Jarras dated August 20, 1868, SHAT 1M 1577.

<sup>108</sup> Laurent, *Politiques de l'ombre*, 222.

<sup>109</sup> Analysis of statistique of North Germany by Captain Samuel, SHD 1M 1540.

<sup>110</sup> "Considérations Générales," [undated], SHD 1M 1577.

River. From the sum of these observations and translations of German material, the French appear to have possessed enough intelligence to be better prepared for the war that followed. However, lacking a team to actually process this information, they were unable to fully take advantage of it.

Jarras' officers and colleagues in the Dépôt recognized the limitations of the service, even prior to the outbreak of war. By the end of the 1860s, there was little doubt that hostilities between France and Prussia were on the point of breaking out, and yet, France was not as prepared as it ought to have been to counter its eastern rival. In fact, after the capture of a handful of officers by Prussian police, Maréchal Niel, who had succeeded Randon as Minister of War in 1867, had decided to cut back on a number of the Dépôt's intelligence missions. General Ducrot, stationed in Strasbourg, wrote to General Frossard on January 31, 1869 expressing his consternation with France's failure to establish a useful intelligence service.<sup>111</sup>

“It is truly regrettable that we have no means of observing what is going on or being prepared by our very active neighbors. Would it not be indispensable to organize from this moment forward a military *service de renseignements* that would put at our disposition a certain number of agents charged with keeping us up to date of the smallest incidents presenting whatever signification, and which, from the day when war breaks out, could deliver us invaluable services?”<sup>112</sup>

Ducrot pointed out the obvious, which was that France needed to establish this kind of service immediately, while relations were perhaps strained, but still cordial, as opposed to waiting until hostilities actually opened, when access to different parts of the country would be rendered much more difficult.

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<sup>111</sup> An editor's footnote in the book following his letter notes that this was not the first time Ducrot made this observation, and that he had insisted in vain about this matter to the minister.

<sup>112</sup> Ducrot, *La vie militaire*, 208.

This principle that an intelligence service needed to be cultivated, and therefore extant in times of peace and not only war, was indeed foreign to the French army, even in the second half of the nineteenth century. Colonel Jules Lewal, one of the chief proponents of both creating an intelligence service, and utilizing espionage, reminded his colleagues of the importance of establishing a network of agents as soon as possible. In his text on "Tactics of Intelligence," he noted that, "espionage is a tree that does not bear fruit until many years after it has been planted."<sup>113</sup> Lewal realized, however, that in advocating for an intelligence service he was facing a country that for long had resisted the notion of using spies to be informed of the projects of an enemy. In 1869, during conferences at the Ministry of War led by the Maréchal Niel, Lewal recalled drawing the Minister's attention to the risks in not utilizing espionage, stressing the necessity of such a service in pleas that fell on deaf ears.<sup>114</sup> Only at the very last minute would the French put forward a team to counter the work that many officers had noted the Prussians already employing.

On the eve of the Franco-Prussian War, leaders of the French army created a true "*service de renseignements*," dedicated to gathering information about the Prussian forces. As the new task force was formed, the Minister of War had told General Frossard, commander of forces at Saint-Avold, to above all organize and utilize espionage, offering him secret funds to serve as the "army's eye."<sup>115</sup> Maréchal Bazaine, the head of the army during the war, appointed General Lewal

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<sup>113</sup> Jules Lewal, *Etudes de guerre, Tactiques de renseignement*, cited in Violle, *L'espionnage militaire*, 79.

<sup>114</sup> Lewal, "Tactique des Renseignements," 185.

<sup>115</sup> Charles-Alexandre Fay, *Journal d'un officier de l'armée du Rhin*, 5 ed. (Paris: Berger-Levrault, 1889), 19.

to direct this service. In the middle of July, Lewal and Minister of War General Leboeuf called officers Samuel, Fay, Jung, Lemoyne and Fix to service for France in the east. These men had all previously been assigned to the *Dépôt de la Guerre*, and were among the small number of officers in favor of modernizing projects of intelligence. During this campaign, Lewal's officers finally employed the methods eschewed by the *Dépôt* and the army for decades prior. According to Charles de Freycinet, a circular dated October 24 laid down the bases for this new organization.<sup>116</sup> He recalled in his memoirs the varied and multiple sources of information exploited by the new service and passed to the French administration.<sup>117</sup> The efforts of these secret emissaries, ordinary workers, and *gendarmes* interrogating prisoners, along with the officers chosen from the *Dépôt de la Guerre*, helped the French to gather at least a bit of information regarding the projects of the Prussian army. French intelligence agents even managed to perform counterespionage, capturing and executing a number of spies working for Prussia during the war.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> Charles de Freycinet, *La guerre en province pendant le siège de Paris, 1870-1871* (Paris: Michel Lévy frères, 1872), 26.

<sup>117</sup> Freycinet described how the administration received intelligence from special emissaries who would circulate around France and attempt to penetrate Prussian lines, as well as from "collaborators of the most varied nature, like mayors, telegraph workers, forest rangers, road and railroad menders, etc. We also found other sources of information in the translation of German documents and correspondence seized from the enemy. ... Finally, there was the regular interrogation of prisoners, an operation directed with much tact and finesse by a former member of the *parquet*, Mr. Amilhau, and a leading officer of the *gendarmerie*, Mr. Desnouettes." *ibid.*

<sup>118</sup> See, for example, the case of the spy Schull/Degelmann identified by Theodore Jung. SHD 1K 732, fonds privées of General Jung. The affair began when Jung encountered a man, going by the name Schull and travelling with an American passport. He had claimed to be a staunch enemy of Prussia, and offered himself to the French claiming a wish to return the favor granted to his homeland by Lafayette. Jung claims that he saw flaws in Schull's story, and eventually learned that his name was not Schull, but that he was really the baron de Degelmann from Austria who had served with Maximilien in Mexico. He was working as a spy for the Prussians. The French captured Degelmann and executed him by firing squad on August 22, 1870, but not before extracting from him a number of details about the German espionage network. Some of the information that he disclosed, such as

The existence of Prussian spy networks confirmed that the warnings that Ducrot pointed out in 1866 following Sadowa about the Germans' use of spies to gain a tactical advantage over the French had merit. Contemporary French accounts of the war indicate that the German spy menace proved incredibly effective in giving Bismarck an edge over the French army. Whether this was indeed true factually, it certainly was psychologically, as the attitudes towards espionage that captured the public imagination in the years following seem to have their roots in this momentous defeat. According to the rumors swirling in military and police files, as well as in the popular press, the Prussian army succeeded in defeating Louis-Napoleon's troops thanks to Bismarck's man in Paris, William Stieber, a former chief of police who established himself in the capital and recruited and staffed a mass network of spies throughout France. These spies supposedly gauged the physical landscape posing as artists along the Rhine River, and measured the moral strength of the nation by becoming friendly with locals in small, provincial towns.<sup>119</sup> Stieber's own memoirs attest to his understanding of a need not only for a handful of reliable spies, but for "an army of agents," who would provide considerable intelligence that would be analyzed as a whole.<sup>120</sup> Heeding Stieber's advice, Bismarck's lieutenant general Von Moltke had established a permanent competitive service, the Intelligence Bureau, in 1867.<sup>121</sup> Only in

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the use of gold medallions around one's neck as the identifying feature of German agents, was recorded and discussed in later decades by French theorists in the creation of their own service.

<sup>119</sup> Fix, *La stratégie appliquée*, 151. Also, Robert Detourbet, in his *fin-de-siècle* scholarly work entitled, *Espionnage and Treason*, explained the French defeat as follows: "And the invading army arrived upon us, speaking our language, familiar with the resources of each village, its spirit". Detourbet, *L'espionnage et la trahison*, 70.

<sup>120</sup> Wilhelm Stieber, *The Chancellor's Spy: The Revelations of the Chief of Bismarck's Secret Service* (New York: Grove Press : distributed by Random House, 1980), 97.

<sup>121</sup> Jeffrey T. Richelson, *A Century of Spies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 6.



hindsight would French society and its leaders recognize the full impact of the failure to counter this intelligence threat with spies of its own. The tide towards establishing a modern spy service was changing across Europe, and the Third Republic would be the first French regime to take on the challenge.

### *Conclusion*

From the *ancien régime* through to the second half of the nineteenth century, the French state made use of secrecy, intelligence, and espionage in a wide array of situations. Prior to the French Revolution, intelligence remained almost entirely the purview of rulers and their entourage. Its primary purpose was for engaging in diplomacy, relying on gossip, news, and secret information to maintain an upper hand and to consolidate power. With the growth of absolutism under Louis XIV and Colbert came the recognition that intelligence and secrecy could also be used to control a domestic population. Louis' ministers gathered and centralized intelligence on subjects in France and outside, and used the information to centralize power under the French monarch, while expanding his kingdom far beyond its traditional borders.

Under the French Revolution, the Terror, the Directory, and Napoleon's Empire, secret knowledge often spelled the difference between life and death. Rejecting the king's exclusive right to secrecy, revolutionaries spied on royalists, on foreign nationals, and on each other. As the chaos of the Revolution was replaced with Napoleonic authority, the power to observe the actions and opinions of French and foreign citizens again shifted to the head of state. This move, however, was viewed as necessary to restore order to a frenzied country and thus was accepted in the name of national security. At the same time, Napoleon utilized spies and

intelligence to further his expansionist aims, capitalizing on advance knowledge to bring victory and glory to the French army and the nation. The Emperor was able to remain in power thanks to his cunning use of internal and external intelligence and keeping the balance of secret knowledge in his favor.

From Waterloo through the remainder of the nineteenth century, rulers of France found themselves far more concerned with domestic security than international competition. Years of successive insurrections and popular protest led the Restoration governments and Napoleon III to strengthen the internal police, using police as professional agents along with less savory *mouchards* to stabilize the nation and attempt to secure the regime in power. Domestic politics in neighboring European states facilitated this, and with no major international threat, the military intelligence used to great success by Napoleon was allowed to fall into desuetude.

Only towards the middle of the nineteenth century did the French military articulate an understanding of the necessity of intelligence to sustain a strong nation. Diplomats and various police forces had almost exclusively been the ones to handle spying and other forms of intelligence from the *ancien régime* through to the fall of Napoleon III. With technological discoveries and aspirations for empire as the century progressed, the need for superiority on a European stage surfaced again. The group best designed to help the nation regain its prowess would be the French military.

Intelligence gathering had served the French army well in North Africa, while lack of intelligence in the Crimean War highlighted the importance of being informed for military success. Finally, the French defeat in the Franco-Prussian War hammered home French insufficiencies in terms of intelligence collection and analysis. The task of organizing a proper intelligence service in the wake of defeat

would rest with the new leadership of the Third Republic, declared on September 4, 1870, in the ashes of Louis-Napoleon's Second Empire. The contours of development, as will be seen, lay almost entirely with the army, as opposed to the traditional intelligence actors in the Foreign Affairs and Interior ministries. This process would be spearheaded by a number of forward-looking individuals, and would get significant boosts along the way from War Ministers like Georges Boulanger and Charles de Freycinet.

Throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, intelligence had begun to move from the personal to the professional. Professionalism in this case meant establishing a degree of permanency and regularity. Groups of individuals would rotate through a new agency, and would be educated and trained in their particular pursuits. The service would exist regardless of external questions such as the nature of the regime in power, or whether or not the nation was at war or at peace. With the establishment of a specific task force within the army's general staff, intelligence became bureaucratized. Thus it became modern.

## CHAPTER 2

### **Intelligence in Theory: Planting the Espionage Tree – The Professionalization of Intelligence from the Franco-Prussian War through the Dreyfus Affair**

On September 2, 1870, Napoleon III's forces suffered defeat to Bismarck's Prussia at the Battle of Sedan. Two days later, his Second Empire was replaced by the French Third Republic, a regime which was then left to salvage French pride in the wake of defeat. Léon Gambetta, along with a handful of devoted Republicans, subsequently established the temporary Government of National Defense to lead the new Third Republic in the fight against Prussia. Not yet ready to surrender to Bismarck, the French attempted to carry on the war effort in the months that followed, continuing the fight as the French national guard until it finally surrendered in late January 1871, accepting a shameful defeat.

In the wake of the loss and the establishment of the Third Republic, French leaders set about on a project to reorganize the state and its institutions, including the military. The defeat that France suffered at the hands of Bismarck's armies in 1870–1871 was devastating, both militarily and psychologically. The French had been caught completely unprepared to fight a war on their own territory. Ironically, the French army possessed better maps of Algeria than of Eastern France.<sup>1</sup> Such lack of knowledge and preparation was not the case for the victors, and the French were quick to recognize their deficiencies in the face of their more enterprising neighbor to the east. Failure to properly utilize intelligence played a major part in the French loss.

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<sup>1</sup> Porch, *French Secret Services*, 23.

Nonetheless, it was not immediately obvious that intelligence would need to be factored into a reorganized army. Republicans had traditionally displayed a reluctance to employ secrecy and espionage, considering it immoral and contrary to principles of transparency and openness.<sup>2</sup> For espionage to become an official state practice, ideas of defense and safety would need to triumph over moral principles.

Leaders of the Third Republic represented an array of political viewpoints. The early leadership of the Third Republic, elected democratically by the male French population, was politically conservative, earning the regime the epithet of the Government of Moral Order. Gambetta, charged with defending the nation in 1870 and remaining one of the leading politicians in the years that followed, was on the left. The military was by rule to remain apolitical, although coming from traditionally elite backgrounds, many officers were known to hold sympathies closer to the right.<sup>3</sup> It was in this mix of political friction that army reorganization would take place.<sup>4</sup> The standard historiography of the Dreyfus Affair uses the ideological divisions within French society to paint the Statistical Section (the nation's intelligence section) as unquestionably loyal to the army, even in the face of moral doubt. An analysis of the Section's creation and examination of the motives of its founders, however, show that the spy agency was established according to

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<sup>2</sup> Laurent, *Politiques de l'ombre*, 321. He cites Jules Bastide in the *Dictionnaire politique: encyclopédie du langage et de la science politiques* who in the article "Espion, Espionnage" defines the practices as follows: "Without a doubt, since revelations are given by a defector or a traitor, it is immoral to provoke or receive them; it is even highly imprudent to rely on the reports of someone so debased, and morality is in line with common sense to make us suspicious of the services of such a spy."

<sup>3</sup> Porch, *March to the Marne*. In debunking the traditional narrative that the officer class was almost entirely opposed to the Republic, Porch shows how the army reconciled itself to the new regime.

<sup>4</sup> For details on the discussions and disputes of army organization see Allan Mitchell, *Victors and Vanquished: The German Influence on Army and Church in France after 1870* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984).

principles usually attributed to the other side in the Dreyfus Affair: notions of rationality, modernity, and progress.

Although politics played a major role in a number of decisions in the early Third Republic, political views were put to the side when it came to creating the nation's first intelligence community. Such occurrence can be attributed to the open-minded individuals who recognized the necessity of intelligence in the face of hesitation to employ it. The absence of any regulation unique to the services practicing intelligence meant that their practices and culture would be shaped more by individual initiative than by any sort of judicial codification. To understand the development of these services, one must try to understand the motives of the individuals who encouraged them. This chapter will introduce a handful of men of varying renown in the historical record who were instrumental in the push for professional intelligence, and who viewed national security as more important than other issues facing the new Republic. These men – Jules Lewal, Theodore Jung, and Joseph-Emile Vanson, along with early proponents like Charles de Freycinet, Ernest de Cissey, and a few others – worked and wrote concurrently, advocating the professionalization of intelligence services.

Beyond a disdain for factionalism, these men had in common an intellectual trajectory that embraced science, rationality, and expertise, and sought to employ these principles to the defense of the nation. This allowed them to embrace something new, seeking to shed the reliance on the external forms of information-gathering employed throughout the first two thirds of the nineteenth century, which were essentially inherited from the monarchy. Moreover, and most important for the narrative of the introduction of professional espionage, they also believed that for an intelligence service to be successful, it needed to maintain a

degree of independence from the institutions with which it worked. The push for autonomy would shape the character of French intelligence in the decades that followed.

Calls for developing and perfecting intelligence collection had been voiced prior to the calamitous defeat of 1871. Until the first couple of decades of the Third Republic, however, these appeals received little response. The fact, then, that espionage and counterespionage – activities that throughout the previous centuries had been regarded as something “traitorous and disloyal”<sup>5</sup> – became a legitimate “profession” and part of the national bureaucratic structure spoke to the successful appeals of the men pushing for such a service.<sup>6</sup> Their vision, along with the particular circumstances of a defeat to Prussia, allowed for the beginnings of bureaucratized intelligence in France.

Although the particularities of the French intelligence service would be shaped by its creators, there can be no question that the defeat to Germany allowed these men to “sell” the service to military and state leadership. One of the keys to understanding the development of bureaucratized espionage during this period lies in Europe’s shifting geopolitics and in France’s complicated relationship with Germany.<sup>7</sup> As the army reorganized in the wake of defeat, leaders borrowed a

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<sup>5</sup> Jules Lewal, quoted in Krop, *Secrets*, 14.

<sup>6</sup> One definition of “professionalization” that fits in this context is that used in Everett Hughes’s sense of “the collective effort of an organized occupation to improve its place and increase its power in relationship to others.” See Everett C. Hughes, “The social significance of professionalization” in Howard M. Vollmer and Donald L. Mills (eds.), *Professionalization* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1966), 65. Cited in Fox and Weisz, *Organization*.

<sup>7</sup> Claude Digeon, *La crise allemande de la pensée française, 1870-1914* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1959). The notion of France reacting to an intellectual crisis brought about by the Franco-Prussian War is not new. Claude Digeon, in his 1959 *La Crise Allemande de la Pensée Française*, paved the way for this theoretical pursuit, demonstrating that although French reactions to the defeat shifted as time passed, the event profoundly shaped the intellectual climate of generations of writers and thinkers. Building on Digeon’s work, scholars like Allan Mitchell have narrowed upon the early

number of organizational principles from Bismarck and his chief strategist, Helmut von Moltke. Among the elements of military strategy in which the French noted the superiority of their neighbor was the German efficiency in employing espionage. As A. Froment would later note, it was the Prussians and their army who mastered the technique, utilizing espionage as “a veritable science, with its rules, its precepts, its organization and its direction.”<sup>8</sup> It was such strategy that French theorists had understood before the war that was finally adopted afterward.

At its outset, the army’s intelligence service developed quietly and on a small scale, but before long it began to take on the familiar characteristics of bureaucratic organization – the move towards specialization, the establishment of a hierarchy based on clear levels of authority, the introduction of full-time paid officials, and the recognition of a career track within a particular industry.<sup>9</sup> The proponents of an intelligence service within the army all talked about military “science,” referring to what they viewed as rational and methodical organization used to further French strategic interests. Thus, the writings of the early advocates of an espionage service, combined with army directives and circulars, demonstrate a discourse of

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years of the development of the Third Republic and its institutions. Mitchell asserted that the “*crise*” within French consciousness in regards to Germany actually had a profound effect on the policy and formation of the Third Republic. One of the particular “paradigms of influence” that Mitchell identifies is the penchant for imitation. The establishment of a secret service bureau in the wake of defeat by those more advanced in intelligence technology reflects the impetus to keep up with the competition. The army was one of the French institutions troubled by “the German question,” and as Mitchell describes in *Victors and Vanquished*, the leadership of the Third Republic engaged in a number of politically loaded debates about how to reorganize France’s defeated army and the merits of adopting a Prussian model of organization. The national and military leadership agreed on the need to reform the army after 1870, but the exact changes, including which facets should be borrowed from the victorious party, were subject to lengthy discussion and debate. Allan Mitchell, *The German Influence in France after 1870: The Formation of the French Republic* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979); Mitchell, *Victors and Vanquished*.

<sup>8</sup> Froment, *L’Espionnage militaire*, 150.

<sup>9</sup> Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, trans. A. M. Henderson & Talcott Parsons, (New York: The Free Press, 1947).



professionalism for a *métier* that had hitherto not enjoyed such a status. In such a manner, the Third Republic's intelligence bureau developed relatively unnoticed and with the autonomy that the theorists had desired, up until the national scandal following the revelations of the Dreyfus Affair, at which point the French practice became familiar to the entire nation. At the end of the nineteenth century, the army had pioneered intelligence, and developed it into a formal institution, taking the lead over other branches of government also engaged in reconnaissance activities. Through this process, the Republic began to consolidate its secret state.

### *Intelligence Origins in the Third Republic*

In October of 1870, with war still being fought with Germany in the months following Napoleon III's departure, Léon Gambetta, serving as Minister of War and Interior in the Government of National Defense, had appointed Charles de Freycinet to head the nation's defenses. Upon his appointment Freycinet, trained as an engineer at the *École polytechnique*, took note of the lack of an intelligence service within the French army, and the failure to systematically organize the information that the army did possess.<sup>10</sup> One of his initial tasks was therefore to help get the French army caught up in this important area.

To help him in organizing French intelligence, de Freycinet nominated a highly insightful and ambitious "civilian," Joseph Cuvinot, to work on designing an information service – called the *Bureau des Reconnaissances* – at the disposal of the

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<sup>10</sup> "The *service des reconnaissances* had as object, as its name indicates, gathering from the enemy the totality of information that until this day was completely missing. I think that even under the Empire, no one occupied themselves with the organization of information in a systematic manner. When I arrived at the Ministry, no such thing existed, and there was not even a budget envisaged for this work." Charles de Freycinet, *La guerre en province pendant le siège de Paris 1870 - 1871: Précis historique* (Paris: Lèvy, 1871), 25.

army and the nation. Cuvinot was also an engineer, a polytechnician from *Ponts et Chaussées* who worked on a hydrographic service in the Doubs during the 1860s. Though Cuvinot was hardly trained to deal with espionage, Freycinet would later look back in his memoirs and note his appointee's "love for the art" of intelligence gathering and assessment.<sup>11</sup>

Cuvinot immediately set to the task, and on December 14, 1870, he drafted a proposal for Freycinet, wherein he noted: "Finally, to the so perfect organization of Prussian espionage, we must respond with energetic measures in the aim of overcoming its consequences."<sup>12</sup> Attempting to learn from the French unpreparedness in the Franco-Prussian War, Cuvinot stressed the necessity of creating an intelligence service that would operate not only during times of war, but also in those intermediary times of peace. Though a semblance of the kind of service he envisioned existed in the years just prior to the war, he complained that up until now, the reconnaissance agency had been poorly defined. He therefore laid out in detail the need for interpreters at the service of the Ministry of War to interrogate prisoners, the importance of maintaining a foreign *bureau de presse* to track events and news from abroad, and the necessity to appoint special military police specifically under direction of the War cabinet to look out for the presence of secret agents serving Prussia, otherwise known as counterespionage.<sup>13</sup> He suggested hiring agents and paying them a regular salary. In this realm, he devised

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 26. According to an undated note in the archives for the *Bureau de Reconnaissances*, Cuvinot earned 7000 francs per year, with a daily indemnity of 4 francs in addition. SHD La 36.

<sup>12</sup> Letter from Cuvinot to Freycinet, dated December 14, 1870, SHD La 36.

<sup>13</sup> Bertrand Warusfel notes that the term "counterespionage" does not appear in French dictionaries until the twentieth century. The Robert historical dictionary dates the term to 1899, and gives the following definition: "the action of spying on spies." Warusfel, *Contre-espionnage*, 7.

a project for a corps of *éclaireurs*, or scouts, in imitation of American detectives.<sup>14</sup> Cuvinot's engineer-trained mentality brought the idea of rationalization to this industry. He put instructions into written form, such as the details of interrogating prisoners of war, and made use of other engineers from the *Ponts et Chaussées*, having them help to establish a code to transmit messages. Significantly, he emphasized the importance of centralizing all of these tasks within the Ministry of War. Freycinet responded within the following few days, in full agreement.<sup>15</sup>

With this early service, Charles de Freycinet's role in the creation of an intelligence community in France had begun. De Freycinet took some time off from public service following the defeat to Prussia, but would return to politics, and to military organization in the following decades. His role in the origins of professional intelligence was pivotal, and he would prove a crucial player in the strengthening of French espionage and counterespionage in his role as War Minister in the late 1880s and early 1890s. His background and place within Third Republican politics also reflect the character of French intelligence as it developed. Biographers describe him as "destined to the pursuit of science," and as having a "keen and analytical spirit."<sup>16</sup> Moreover, though he sat with the Opportunists, he was viewed as a moderate politician who most often chose to unite right and left, and to act with the nation as his foremost priority, over factionalism.<sup>17</sup> This spirit of

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<sup>14</sup> Freycinet, *La guerre en province*. In the United States, detective services had a long association with the intelligence community, dating back to Lincoln's appointment of Allan Pinkerton as Major General McClellan's intelligence chief during the Civil War. Andrew, *President's Eyes Only*, 16.

<sup>15</sup> Letter from Charles de Freycinet dated December 15, 1870, reproduced in Krop, *Secrets*, 601.

<sup>16</sup> Depasse, *De Freycinet*, 5, 29.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

rationality and primacy for national security would serve him and France's intelligence project throughout the early years of the Third Republic.

In spite of the significant breakthroughs made in intelligence organization under Gambetta's Government of National Defense, the war ended before Freycinet and Cuvino's projects could fully be put into effect. The French service did have some success during the war – the most notable achievement being one agent's acquisition of the plan of the works of investment around Paris, stolen from one of von Moltke's staff officers.<sup>18</sup> Though impressive on occasion, on the whole the efforts were not enough, and in hindsight, many within France commented on Prussia's success at employing espionage during the war. Just as Digeon discussed the complacent, and even admiring, attitude of intellectuals towards Germany in the 1860s army leaders *post-facto* described their failure to correctly identify the German potential to overcome the French in the Franco-Prussian War. Through their sneaky devices, Colonel Fix would write, the Germans were always precisely informed of everything: "They didn't neglect a single costume, from the blouse of the canteen-keeper to the frock of the priest or the charitable nun. All of this information, no matter what its origin, was gathered, centralized, controlled, and implemented; they knew everything that occurred in the French camps."<sup>19</sup> This was in stark contrast to the French, who did not possess this kind of detailed information about their opponents. Colonel Vanson, who would play a significant role in the organization of the *service de renseignements* at the beginning of the Third Republic, viewed the Franco-Prussian War as a lesson to the French in the realm of

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<sup>18</sup> Lewal, "Tactique des Renseignements," 190.

<sup>19</sup> Fix, *La stratégie appliquée*, 155.

gathering and analyzing intelligence, noting the advantage that the victors gained in having had such a service organized for years before the outbreak of war.<sup>20</sup>

Robert Detourbet best summarized the ideas of many within the army by later noting regarding German espionage: “it is up to us to imitate them, up to us to respond to their arms by using their arms.”<sup>21</sup>

When considering the failure to enter into war fully prepared, it seems that not only did Bismarck’s army defeat the French, but the French also beat themselves by neglecting to adapt to all of the conditions of modern warfare. The army leadership under Napoleon III had in fact fallen victim to an intelligence pitfall, which in this case involved overconfidence and failure to analyze information that indicated Prussia’s plans and potential.<sup>22</sup> Prussia had, by contrast, learned from its

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<sup>20</sup> Emile Vanson, “Résumé des idées et des faits sur lesquels sont basées les propositions soumises par le 2<sup>e</sup> Bureau, au Général Chef d’Etat Major général en ce qui touche l’organisation générale du Service des renseignements et la préparation au service de Guerre.” SHD 1M 2256.

<sup>21</sup> Detourbet, *L’espionnage et la trahison*, 67.

<sup>22</sup> General Trochu described this failure in his memoirs, writing that, “our successes at war, elsewhere, contributed to our loss, *because these victories habituated us to not prepare for war until the moment that it would be waged*, with confidence in the bias shared by the nation, its government and its army.” Louis-Jules Trochu, *L’armée française en 1879 par un officier en retraite* (Paris: J. Hetzel et cie, 1879), 16. His italics. In fact, between the police, the army, and printed newspapers, it became clear after the fact that the French did possess enough knowledge to have allowed them to be better prepared for the war, but because of the confidence that Trochu describes, coupled with the lack of any bureau designated to compile and analyze such material, they did not take advantage of this intelligence. Lieutenant-Colonel Charles Fay would note in his journal that he felt that even by the beginning of August 1870, the French had very poor knowledge about the structure of the Prussian armies, in spite of the use of “diverse agents and newspapers” to assess this information. Fay, *Journal*, 39. Moreover, Sebastien Laurent asserts that the civil authority likely had enough information to assess the Prussian threat. They also knew – from police, diplomatic and military sources – of the extent of Prussian espionage on French soil from 1866. The prefect of the Moselle acknowledged receiving a number of letters, anonymous and signed, denouncing the activity of Prussian officers at the border. Laurent, *Politiques de l’ombre*, 220. According to Richards Heuer, this is one of the typical and difficult pitfalls of intelligence – the tendency to fall victim to a cognitive barrier, with mindsets that are quick to form and resistant to change, unable to fully process the available intelligence to the fullest. Richards J. Heuer, *The Psychology of Intelligence Analysis* (Washington, D.C.: Center for the Study of Intelligence, 1999).

past mistakes, and had responded by creating an efficient, organized military command that included an intelligence team.<sup>23</sup>

Although several writers and officers acknowledged the deficiencies of the French intelligence service after the Prussian victory in the Franco-Prussian War, very few had championed the institution of espionage beforehand. Towards the end of 1870, the lone advocates were finally rewarded.<sup>24</sup> In addressing this deficiency, General Lewal had begun his 350-page tome dedicated entirely to espionage by proclaiming that espionage was not a holdover from an older, less advanced age, but something modern, to be studied. "Everyone speaks of intelligence, praises the insight of those who use it, reproaches the ineptitude of those who lack it, and even so, the science of intelligence, its research and its use, is the branch of the military the least understood and the most neglected up until now in France."<sup>25</sup> To counter this, he declared espionage as something to be examined, analyzed and absorbed.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Lewal, "Tactique des Renseignements," 186. Ernest Renan also noted Prussia's success in rebuilding after its defeat to Napoleon at Iéna. He said that "The reform of the army was a masterpiece of study and reflection," and thus encouraged the French to do likewise after their defeat. Ernest Renan and Alain de Benoist, *La Réforme Intellectuelle et Morale, et Autres Ecrits* (Paris: Albatros, 1982), 52.

<sup>24</sup> Indeed, General Hugues Jarras, the officer charged with reworking the Dépôt de la Guerre in 1867, would later say that he would have liked to employ espionage to a greater extent than Niel was able and willing to, because of both the financial cost it would bring, as well as the reserve of certain people within the *Conseil des ministres* from "political considerations of a certain gravity." Jarras, *Souvenirs*, 9, 26. Later, others would attest to the poor state of intelligence at the end of the Second Empire, such as Froment who wrote that at the start of the war, the French *service de renseignements* was practically nonexistent.

<sup>25</sup> Jules Lewal, *Études de Guerre: Tactique des Renseignements* (Paris: J. Dumaine, 1881), 1.

<sup>26</sup> The penchant for analysis was in the air in late nineteenth-century France. For example, historians have noted that one of the reasons that Zola's novels were so popular was because "his 'scientific approach' offered bourgeois France some indirect comfort: his naturalism taught that human society can be studied dispassionately and its diseases, like alcoholism and crime, cured by police." Liang, *Rise of Modern Police*, 57.

### *Army Reorganization Under the Third Republic Yields a Place for Intelligence*

In the aftermath of the startling defeat, the new Third Republic recognized the need to completely reorganize the shattered remnants of the French military. By this point, it was clear to many that the structure of the army itself needed significant change. One of the army's major deficits was failure in strategic planning, whereas the Prussian army had been able to rely on its General Staff led by Moltke to oversee various aspects of military preparation.<sup>27</sup> In contrast with Moltke's skillful planning, the French army lacked a directorial body, and consequently was without an arm that would coordinate policy or draw up an overall war plan. In reorganizing the army, therefore, the French looked to the east for inspiration.

On June 8, 1871, the entire French army underwent a massive reorganization – one of seven that would take place during the Third Republic – focusing on centralization of the staff and preparing for the case of hostilities to come. The June 8, 1871 decree, signed by Adolphe Thiers as President of the Third Republic, created an *État-Major Générale* (EMG), a high command, or General Staff, attached to the Ministry of War. This added an additional, specialized layer to the hierarchy of the War Ministry, with the high command located beneath the Minister and above the *grandes unités*. The EMG was then divided into two bureaus – the first, composed of

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<sup>27</sup> Whereas on one hand, the Prussian victory could be attributed to its superior forces, on the other hand, Prussia's army was able to succeed in part due to the prowess of its leadership – in particular the General Staff and its architect, von Moltke. Moltke, appointed Chief of the Prussian General Staff in 1857, had worked to expand and consolidate the existing high command, aiming at choosing the top officers from Prussia's *Kriegsakademie*, and training them to be a body of professional military experts with common methods and doctrine. Moltke had created a number of *Abteilungen* (sections or departments) that represented scientific and technical departments within the General Staff, capitalizing on new technology such as railroads and the telegraph. He also created an intelligence service in 1867. William Lloyd McElwee, *The Art of War: Waterloo to Mons* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1974), 67, 107-120.

civilians, was more of a directorial or leadership branch, charged with general correspondence, troop movements, decorations and decrees, and the second, or the Deuxième Bureau (further subdivided into five sections), was charged with military statistics, archival and historical work, geodesy and topography.<sup>28</sup> This entire structure would be replaced three years later by a reworked *état-major*, even more similar to the Prussian one in terms of command structure.<sup>29</sup> With this first reorganization, the Ministry of War officially created a service aiming to be informed of the plans and the potential of the enemy.

From the early years of the Third Republic, the army turned to a strategy guided by the “philosophy of the offensive.”<sup>30</sup> This was not offensive in the sense of conquest, maintaining the army’s chief aim to be security, but nonetheless, it was to be a strategy that would greatly affect the way that France entered into the First World War.<sup>31</sup> Much has been written about the army’s offensive strategy, ground shared by both left and right in the first few decades of the Third Republic.<sup>32</sup> I am interested here, however, in how champions of intelligence reform viewed espionage as a critical part of that strategy. Military theorists in the 1870s and 1880s stressed the constant need to be prepared for war, not only in the event of

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<sup>28</sup> Per the June 8, 1871 division, the five sections within the Deuxième Bureau were: 1) Military Operations (organization of armies, mobilization, railroads) 2) Military statistics 3) Historical works 4) Geodesy, topography, sketches and prints 5) Historical archives, library, archives of maps and plans.

<sup>29</sup> David B. Ralston, *The Army of the Republic; the Place of the Military in the Political Evolution of France, 1871-1914* (Cambridge, Mass.: M.I.T. Press, 1967), 143-144. In 1904, the British head staff was also reorganized along the Prussian model. Andrew, *Her Majesty’s Secret Service*, 11.

<sup>30</sup> Porch, *March to the Marne*, 24.

<sup>31</sup> Snyder, "Civil-Military Relations."

<sup>32</sup> Douglas Porch, "The Marne and After: A Reappraisal of French Strategy in the First World War," *The Journal of Military History* 53, no. 4 (1989): 368. See, e.g. Bruno Colson, "La culture stratégique française," *Stratégique* 53(2005), [http://www.stratisc.org/strat\\_053\\_Colson.html](http://www.stratisc.org/strat_053_Colson.html); Sondhaus, *Strategic Culture*.



hostilities, but particularly during peacetime. While this readiness certainly involved numerous factors, some writers stressed that, “espionage is the first line of security for an army.”<sup>33</sup> Secret agents outside of France were already in prime position in the event that war would erupt.<sup>34</sup> It was because spies were already beyond enemy lines that they were considered the first soldiers to advance when fighting began. Thus, the placement of agents and the collection of intelligence in peacetime slowly became recognized as crucial to French military strategy. The ability to collect and assess hidden information would separate victors from vanquished and thus assure French national security.

With the presence of the Deuxième Bureau within the army’s high command, a service specially assigned to gather and assess intelligence for the army was in place. With professional intelligence in its infancy, the question then remained as to how it would develop, the way it would be run, who should be in charge of what aspects, and what its duties should entail. A handful of individuals weighed in on this discussion, considering not only the importance of such a service to the French army, but also to the French state. It was these men who would shape the future of French intelligence, and consequently have a major impact on the development of the French state.

These military minds saw their push for intelligence as integral to modernizing French military strategy in moving forward from the loss in the Franco-Prussian War. Men such as Theodore Jung, an officer working within the former Dépôt de la Guerre, Jules Lewal, the man who for decades was likely the

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<sup>33</sup> Fix, *La stratégie appliquée*, 167.

<sup>34</sup> Froment, *L’Espionnage militaire*, 130.

strongest advocate of utilizing espionage and creating a centralized service, and Joseph-Emile Vanson, the individual most instrumental in shaping the army's early intelligence service and serving as its first head, separately couched their arguments with similar rhetoric. In their works, these men, along with others who echoed them, presented a vision of an intelligence service as something "scientific." This term, lifted from their works, can be defined as the pursuit, discovery and exploitation of knowledge and information, organized and centralized in a rational way, allowing for strategic advantage. Science, like professionalism, was a concept that was equated with modernity in the nineteenth-century mind, and offered the promise of innovation and progress, things that a defeated France was eager to embrace.

#### *Early Champions of Professionalized Intelligence*

Theodore Jung was working for the Second Empire's *Dépôt de la Guerre* when he was approached to participate in the 11<sup>th</sup> hour *service de renseignements* in July 1870. Prior to the outbreak of hostilities, Jung's place in the *Dépôt* was that of a scholar. Jung, a graduate of the military academy Saint-Cyr, was frequently described by his peers as an atypically intellectual representative of the French military.<sup>35</sup> During the 1860s, he worked in the *Dépôt's* historical archives, where he furiously set about the task of reading and learning as much as he could about military strategy and the history of French preparation for war. When not perusing

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<sup>35</sup> From Jung's personal archives, it is evident that he focused more on the intellectual aspect of warfare than the physical. SHD 1K 732. General André Bach also cites a report from one of Jung's superiors from 1865, which noted "This officer would have more merit if he would think a bit less. He needs the experience of the active life to calm somewhat the exaltation to which he seems inclined." Bach, *L'armée de Dreyfus*, 163. Additionally, a newspaper article in the *Télégraph* of October 15, 1880 did a "portrait du jour" which made a point of lauding his intelligence and skill, going as far as calling him prophetic. Archives de la Préfecture de Police de Paris (APP) BA 916.

the archives, Jung occupied himself with penning his thoughts for the army's potential improvement.<sup>36</sup>

Armed with his knowledge of the history of French strategy, in 1872, shortly after the first reorganization of the army under the Third Republic, Jung published an article in the *Journal des Sciences Militaires* entitled, "The Dépôt de la Guerre: What it Was, What it Is, and What it Could Be."<sup>37</sup> His article lauded Louvois' foresight and determination in creating the Dépôt in 1688, and critiqued Napoleon III for failing to take advantage of the service and allowing it to lose its autonomy. With the army reorganization of June 8, 1871, the Dépôt de la Guerre became a part of the Deuxième Bureau of the *état-major*. This subversion of one within the other caused Jung to view the new system as "defective," claiming that upon absorption into the Deuxième Bureau, the Dépôt lost much of its autonomy. Moreover, he noted that under the reorganization, the service would take on too many tasks, "rendering its application impossible."<sup>38</sup> Objecting to the fact that the bureau would have to design, institute and direct intelligence operations itself, Jung put forward an early argument for specialization, the idea that without a specially designated office, tasks would be less likely to be met with success.

Jung's article continued by equating the development of intelligence with what he understood to be the implementation of "military science." Using history as his guide, Jung defined two "directions" within the army, one defined as

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<sup>36</sup> Jung's personal file in the army's archives reveals much of this work, including a book that he wrote in 1866 entitled, *De l'organisation de l'armée en 1866*, giving suggestions for an organization that included a centralized general staff, and a special role for the Dépôt de la Guerre. SHD 1K 732.

<sup>37</sup> Henri-Théodore Jung, "Le Dépôt de la Guerre: ce qu'il été, ce qu'il est, ce qu'il peut être," *Journal des Sciences Militaires* 3(1872): 49-63.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 62.

“spiritual,” or the *direction intelligente*, charged with preparation for war, and the other as “temporal,” based on administration and the mechanical aspects of the army. In the past, the Dépôt determined the former, thus employing intelligence to develop France’s military strategy. Jung sought a return to this, noting as well that it was the autonomy of the Dépôt that allowed it to consider strategy without undue influence from outside.<sup>39</sup> Though he advocated a centralization of intelligence – he asserted that the reconstituted Dépôt should possess practical means of knowledge such as books, maps, plans, and models, gathered from other branches of the state: Army, Marine, Interior, and Foreign Affairs – he viewed the Dépôt as the most important of them all, possessing “the spirit of the nation.” This spirit for Jung was more than a nebulous cosmic concept; it was the force that guided the development of strategy that would lead France to victory, and could only be equated with what he called the scientific aspect of war.<sup>40</sup> If science offered society the prospect of progress and modernity, it likewise offered the military the opportunity to advance into the modern age. Military science, he explained, encompasses the skills of organization, intelligence, and foreknowledge. It was such activity that was being performed by some of the former members of the Dépôt de la Guerre, now employed by the *État-Major Générale* within its Deuxième Bureau. Jung’s professions on the promise of “science,” or rational organization of intelligence, to guide the army, and with it the nation, serve as an example of the intellectual basis on which French intelligence was to be built. Its early proponents

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 66.

<sup>40</sup> He writes, “It is necessary to recall the precept of Frederick the Great: War is a science for men of valor, an art for the mediocre, and a *métier* for the ignorant.” *ibid.*, 66.

strongly felt that with careful study and application of what was learned, the French army could be prepared for whatever might come its way.

While the Deuxième Bureau came into being with the army reorganization in 1871, its functions were not dictated at this stage, and continued to be defined by those working with it in the years that followed. Another individual who contributed to the process of intelligence professionalization was the supportive Minister of War during the period of reorganization, General Ernest de Cissey. De Cissey served in Algeria, the Crimea, and the Franco-Prussian War before being nominated deputy from Ille-et-Vilaine and then Minister of War, a post he held from June 1871 to May 1873, and again from May 1874 to August 1876. His biographers note his penchant for scientific study, through an emphasis on reading and reflecting, encouraging the publication of reviews such as the *Revue Militaire de l'étranger* (a publication started by Colonel Vanson in 1871 to inform the army of activities occurring beyond its borders), and in his quest to find more modern and advanced weapons.<sup>41</sup> In a directive to his corps commanders dated June 10, 1872, de Cissey lauded the study of military rivals and the work of the incipient intelligence service to translate its findings into digestible information thanks to the new *Revue*. He emphasized the need for the army to progress through an imitation of its successful neighbor, echoing the calls of intellectuals like Ernest Renan, who insisted that France should take cues from Prussia in devoting itself more to the study of science.<sup>42</sup> "It cannot escape you," de Cissey wrote,

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<sup>41</sup> Georges Gugliotta, "De Cissey" in Olivier Forcade, Éric Duhamel, and Philippe Vial, *Militaires en République, 1870-1962* (Paris: Publ. de la Sorbonne, 1999).

<sup>42</sup> Renan and Benoist, *La Réforme*, 68.

“that in the epoch in which we are living, the army can no less than any other branch of national activity, rest on its own laurels and neglect the study of progress going on beyond our borders. Not only must it follow the example which has long been given by science, art and industry, but, it is clearer, moreover, that called by the mission to fight for the honor and security of the country, [the army] has the duty to know well in advance the strengths and weaknesses of her enemy.”<sup>43</sup>

Certainly part of this clear knowledge entailed spying on France’s rivals, and the War Minister himself stressed to his commanders his satisfaction with the presence of an institution to undertake this task and to transmit information gleaned from observing foreign armies. In 1874, de Cissey prepared a confidential memorandum for the army’s leaders stressing the need to prepare a *service de renseignements* while still in peacetime, and asking the leading generals to designate someone within the *état-major* to head such a service in the event of war.<sup>44</sup> In this letter, de Cissy referred to intelligence as a “veritable specialty,” and the service as having “considerable importance.” The fact that de Cissey, at the head of the army, approved of and encouraged secret intelligence work facilitated the development of a secretive service without delineated powers during his tenure and in the years that followed.

Finally, without a doubt, the development of France’s military intelligence service in the early Third Republic owes much to the ideas and entreaties of the Colonel (and later General) Jules Lewal. Whereas Jung had waxed philosophically on the importance of intelligence, Lewal envisaged concrete ideas and directions regarding the necessity of such a service and offered detailed instructions for how it

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<sup>43</sup> Directive dated June 10, 1872, SHD 7N 664.

<sup>44</sup> Lettre-circulaire confidentielle du vice-président du Conseil, ministre de la Guerre, le general de Cissey, to the commandants les corps d’armée, July 31, 1874. SHD 2X 224.

should be run. Lewal's career developed under the Second Empire, serving in Africa (1852-1859), Italy (1859-1860), Mexico (1862-1867), and Rome (1867-68), before being nominated to the *Dépôt de la Guerre* in 1868 and eventually serving as Minister of War in the Ferry government.<sup>45</sup> Charged with direction of the hastily organized *service de renseignements* in July of 1870, Lewal travelled to Germany where he was captured and held prisoner in Metz. Lewal was a highly decorated officer, and colleagues described him as capable, intelligent and as possessing honorable morals.<sup>46</sup> From at least the 1860s, Lewal took up the cause of integrating espionage into the French military, producing the most comprehensive strategic works employing it to date, and discussing it directly with Minister of War Niel in conferences organized at the War Ministry in 1869.

Under the Third Republic, Lewal, himself a dedicated republican, played an active role in the reform of the French army, sharing the lessons learned from his years devising reconnaissance missions for the *Dépôt*, as well as his observation of German spy tactics. In 1871, he published a book entitled *La Réforme de l'armée*, in which he put forward his ideas for a centralized leadership of the army, along with suggestions for organization and operations.<sup>47</sup> He called attention to the disorganization within the War Ministry itself, asserting that lack of communication among departments – which he said behaved as separate tribes, or miniature autocracies – left France vulnerable in 1870.<sup>48</sup> Lewal expressed his belief that the

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<sup>45</sup> SHD 7Yd 1616 (Lewal's personal file). Lewal's tenure as Minister of War was from January 3, 1885 to April 6, 1885.

<sup>46</sup> *Annuaire*; also *Inspection* dated 1869, SHD 7Yd 1616.

<sup>47</sup> Jules Lewal, *La réforme de l'armée* (Paris: J. Dumaine, 1871).

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 461-464.

French defeat was in part grounded in France's failure to employ "the scientific method" in warfare, something that the victors in the Franco-Prussian War had perfected.<sup>49</sup> Lewal's definition of science and its methods can be interpreted from his writings as the organization and systematization of warfare, and in this case, espionage. He described the need for "a reasoned, rational" system, providing for collection, centralization, comparison and control of information. Without an espionage service that is "organized, followed, methodical and profitable," Lewal noted, instead France would be left with something "occasional and haphazard, and from that, we could take almost nothing."<sup>50</sup> He therefore began his missive on the tactics of intelligence with a chapter entitled, "The Science of Intelligence and its Necessity." As with the generally accepted definition of scientific method, Lewal's vision of espionage included experiment and learning from observation. His writings on *renseignement* are therefore historical as well as practical and theoretical, guiding his reader through the centuries of intelligence in war and peace, in order to demonstrate the importance of learning from both successes and failures.

Above all, Lewal declared espionage as something to be studied. Lewal published substantially on espionage, including an entire volume of his multi-volume *Etudes de Guerre*, which he titled *Tactique de Renseignement*, and articles on the subject in military journals.<sup>51</sup> In his writings, Lewal laid out the problem of the French insufficiency in terms of espionage, noting frequently that a solution could

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<sup>49</sup> Mitchell, *Victors and Vanquished*, 23. The Oxford English Dictionary defines the scientific method as: "a method of procedure that has characterized natural science since the 17th century, consisting in systematic observation, measurement, and experiment, and the formulation, testing, and modification of hypotheses."

<sup>50</sup> Lewal, "Tactique des Renseignements," 180-185.

<sup>51</sup> Lewal, *Études de Guerre: Tactique des Renseignements*.



be reached only by studying the application of intelligence in detail. He claimed that his outline of facts depicting French inferiority in terms of intelligence “shows the obligation to undertake a study of reconnaissance and the reception of spies.”<sup>52</sup> He discussed the need for training and a system in which information is gathered by spies, and then analyzed by expert officers.<sup>53</sup> His articles on intelligence were published in a journal called the *Journal des sciences militaires*. According to Allan Mitchell, Lewal was one of the authors regularly featured in this journal, whose title itself served as “a programmatic statement” of these theoreticians to advance the cause of science and the application of the scientific method within the French army.<sup>54</sup> The fact that Lewal chose the topic of intelligence for many of his articles stresses his devotion to the development of this particular field, using reason and rationality, and calling for the codification of such methods, noting that, “It is indispensable that we introduce formal prescriptions into our regulations in this regard.”<sup>55</sup> His article, also titled “Tactiques de renseignements,” treats espionage as a profession, (in fact using the term “*profession*” himself at one point), describing a hierarchy both of spies and of the officers dealing with them, specialization within the industry (the hiring of permanent versus temporary spies, the need for people with special skills such as speaking a foreign language, technical skills, etc), and a development of an esoteric “discourse” recognized only by those within the field. Only in this way would France be able to truly benefit from espionage’s potential.

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<sup>52</sup> Lewal, “Tactique des Renseignements,” 180.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 190.

<sup>54</sup> Mitchell, *Victors and Vanquished*, 23.

<sup>55</sup> Lewal, “Tactique des Renseignements.”

Lewal's insistence on organization and education must also be viewed in connection with the deep *crise* felt in the French army and in society about the nation's failure to compete with Germany. Lewal makes this explicit, commenting that, "our faults prove overwhelmingly that the absence of organized espionage constitutes a state of notorious inferiority for our army."<sup>56</sup> As with many other structural changes in the early decades of the Third Republic, the development of intelligence could without a doubt be attributed to a drive to remain competitive with Germany. Lewal had learned from observation of Prussian successes, and therefore the office that was to develop employed many of Lewal's lessons and suggestions.

#### *Development of the Deuxième Bureau and the Statistical Section*

In 1874, the high command underwent another reorganization, modifying the system that was put in place in June of 1871. The decree that passed on March 12, 1874 established the *État-Major Générale du Ministre de la Guerre*, organized into a head of the General Staff and six smaller bureaus, replacing the original two that had been created just after the war.<sup>57</sup> As part of the reorganized high command, the new Deuxième Bureau, called "*Statistique militaire - Bureau historique*," took up the activities that would include espionage and counterespionage, while the elements that formerly accompanied these tasks under the old structure – geodesy, topography, archives of maps, etc., (in other words, the tasks that had once occupied the Dépôt de la Guerre) – fell under the jurisdiction of the fifth of the six

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 180.

<sup>57</sup> *Journal militaire officiel*, 1er semestre 1874, 230-31. This would remain in place until the next reorganization of 1890 under Freycinet that created the *État-Major de l'Armée* (EMA).

bureaus.<sup>58</sup> This reorganization placed the Deuxième Bureau under the authority of one of the two sub-lieutenants [*sous-chefs*] of the *état-major*, and in removing some of the earlier functions with which it had been charged, left it free to deal primarily with issues of *renseignement*.<sup>59</sup> Moreover, this reorganization of the General Staff was inspired by the Prussian model, as outlined in a note by Colonel Vanson, the head of the Deuxième Bureau from 1871-1880, in December 1873, which was at the base of the Ministry's decision.<sup>60</sup> Vanson would continue to champion the cause of intelligence throughout his tenure in the General Staff.

From June 1871, and especially after the reorganization of March 1874, the Deuxième Bureau of the *état-major* officially took up the functions of military intelligence. Colonel Vanson, the bureau's first chief, had served under Lewal in the Second Empire's *Dépôt de la Guerre*, and like his former superior, took a keen interest in the ability of intelligence to advance France's military security. Vanson distinguished two different functions of the intelligence services: the search for information, or *espionage*, and the synthesis and analysis of the information collected. In the mid-1870s, Vanson drafted a number of lengthy documents outlining his views of the operations and how the services would be shaped.

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<sup>58</sup> The *Dépôt de la Guerre* disappeared in stages. A note in 1885 in the *Journal militaire officiel* removed the *bureau historique* and had it belong to the Deuxième Bureau of the EMG. At this time, the *état-major* took the form of having four bureaus. The second had functions of statistic, of "all questions relative to the following services: historic archives, library of the minister, library of the garrisons, *études historiques*." A decree of May 24, 1887 eliminated the phantom *Dépôt de la Guerre*, of which what little was left seemed based on the *Section géographique de l'armée*. SHD Xs 43.

<sup>59</sup> Olivier Forcade, *La République secrète: histoire des services spéciaux français de 1918 à 1939* (Paris: Nouveau monde, 2008), 23.

<sup>60</sup> SHD 1M 2253-2254.

Taking inspiration from the Prussian model, Vanson described a successful intelligence service as one with access to resources and qualified recruits.<sup>61</sup>

Moreover, Colonel Vanson sought to create even greater specialization within the Deuxième Bureau, and wrote to his superiors about the need to separate the connected tasks of intelligence collection and analysis. Locating the Deuxième Bureau as the organization to carry out the synthesis and analytical work, Vanson described a smaller section attached to the larger one tasked with the duties of intelligence gathering. This “*service des renseignements*,” as Vanson identified it, was eventually called the *Section de statistique*, or Statistical Section of the Deuxième Bureau, and will be described below.<sup>62</sup> Vanson remained in charge of the first, and nominated Commandant Abraham Samuel and then Commandant Emile Campionnet as head of the second.

### The Deuxième Bureau

The establishment of the Deuxième Bureau reflected the response by military leadership and the state to the calls of individuals such as those above who championed the cause of national security. The larger Deuxième Bureau at its outset occupied several roles, with the chief aims being to aid, inform, and prepare the army for a future war. A statement in the 1876 *Annuaire de l’armée française* (Directory of the French Army) described the work of the bureau as follows:

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<sup>61</sup> His draft had noted Bismarck’s perspicacity in appointing their most skilled officers to direct the study of intelligence, and putting at their disposal funds, materials and personnel. “Résumé des idées et des faits sur lesquels sont basées les propositions soumises par le Deuxième Bureau,” au Général Chef d’Etat Major général en ce qui touche l’organisation générale du Service des renseignements et la préparation au service de Guerre. SHD 1M 2256.

<sup>62</sup> Whereas the Statistical Section did have an official administrative existence, it did not appear in official decrees.

“Study of the military forces of different States and the organization of their armies. Study of the progress accomplished abroad in the different branches of military service. Communications with appropriate services or popularization in the army of the most useful works and information on foreign armies using the *Revue militaire de l'étranger* and special publications. Examination of works sent by military attachés, officers on mission, and officers traveling abroad. Drafting of requests for the authorization to publish writings that fall under the rubric of the Bureau of Statistics. Documents and *renseignements* that are interesting to the Minister of War, furnished by the foreign press.”<sup>63</sup>

The Deuxième Bureau's stated role was thus to synthesize, analyze and disseminate information collected by other sources. Knowledge that was hidden and needed to be uncovered and decoded held particular value. This information reached the Deuxième Bureau from a number of avenues: from military sources like officers on mission, military attachés, and agents of the Statistical Section<sup>64</sup>, as well as from non-military sources at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of the Marine, Ministry of the Interior, and the Prefecture of Police.<sup>65</sup> To glean information, members of the Deuxième Bureau and their informants perused the foreign press, exchanged information with other military attachés, interrogated prisoners or deserters, and performed espionage.<sup>66</sup> With reports from its sources, the Deuxième

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<sup>63</sup> *Annuaire de l'armée française*, 1876, p. 4. « *Etude de la force militaire des différents Etats et de l'organisation de leurs armées. Etude des progrès accomplis à l'étranger dans les différentes branches du service militaire. Communications aux services compétents ou vulgarisation dans l'armée, au moyen de la Revue militaire de l'étranger et de publications spéciales, des travaux et renseignements les plus utiles sur les armées étrangères. Examen des travaux envoyés par les attachés militaires, les officiers en mission, les officiers voyageant à l'étranger. Instruction des demandes en autorisation de publier des écrits de la compétence du bureau de statistique, formées par des militaires en activité de toutes armes. Documents et renseignements intéressant le Ministère de la guerre, fournis par la presse étrangère.* »

<sup>64</sup> Sébastien Laurent notes that “the most numerous and useful sources of the Deuxième Bureau came from confidential information taken from closed sources that were transferred to them by the Statistical Section.” Laurent, *Politiques de l'ombre*, 342.

<sup>65</sup> SHD 1M 2256. More details on these intelligence practices are found in Chapters 3 and 4.

<sup>66</sup> SHD 7N 674. The notes in the archives make a point to assert the trustworthiness of their sources. Summaries often describe information coming from “a very well-informed correspondent,” or a “very serious correspondent meriting all confidence,” who was often able to observe the event being reported on.

Bureau divided its work into three geographic sections and a fourth called the “central and technical section” per a directive in 1880 issued by Lieutenant-Colonel Samuel, who succeeded Vanson as head of the Deuxième Bureau in the same year.<sup>67</sup>

For each piece of information collected, the Deuxième Bureau received a *bordereau*, or memorandum, enclosing and summarizing the particular finding. These would be viewed and then signed most often by the heads of the sections sending and receiving the intelligence, as well as by the Deputy Head of the *état-major* assigned to that section.<sup>68</sup> The reports mainly discussed general military intelligence, focused particularly on Germany and Italy. They talked about the manufacture of weapons (detailed reports on the Krupp factory, or descriptions of new kinds of bullets), about fortifications, and about various details of army training. The *bordereaux* would describe the uniforms worn by soldiers in foreign armies (resulting in a table created by the Deuxième Bureau of all of the different uniforms to help French soldiers recognize them), the music played within armed

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<sup>67</sup> Directive from the Ministry of War entitled “*Ordre de Service No. 1*” dated Feb. 23, 1880, SHD 7N 664. “The first section is charged with the *statistique militaire* of foreign countries situated in the first line on our Northern and Eastern borders: Belgium, Holland, German Empire, Switzerland, Italy, Austria-Hungary. The second section is in charge of *statistique militaire* of foreign countries situated in second line on our Northern and Eastern borders: Denmark, Sweden and Norway, Russia, Slavic States, Turkey, Greece, Persia, Turkistan, Morocco. The third section is charged with *statistique militaire* of foreign countries situated to the West and far from France, as well as countries on our border to the South: England, the Indies, the Americas, China, Japan, Spain, Portugal. The fourth section takes the name of *Section centrale et technique*. It is especially dedicated to comparative studies and treats questions either of general tactics, or of special tactics of specific armies. It will study from a technical point of view questions of administration, material of all kinds, communications, etc.”

<sup>68</sup> Per the reorganization of 1874, there were two *sous-chefs* of the *état-major* below the head. One of the two had authority over the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Bureaus (plans of operations), and as such, had direct supervision of the Statistical Section, helping to mitigate the distance between that section and the rest of the Deuxième Bureau.

camps, and even the style of beard required of enemy soldiers.<sup>69</sup> By collecting, listing, analyzing and abstracting a varied array of data, the employees of the Deuxième Bureau applied the modern notion of classification, encouraged by officers like Lewal, to the task of *renseignement*. It also assured that this branch of the army would be the ultimate destination for information and an assessment of that information as affected national security.

In addition to digesting the information brought from officers and agents abroad, the officers of the Deuxième Bureau would themselves read foreign newspapers and prepare a “*bulletin de presse*” summarizing the most important contents. They were also responsible for the drafting and editing of the *Revue militaire de l'étranger*, the journal lauded by the General de Cissey in 1872, which circulated to battalions and fortresses throughout France.<sup>70</sup> General Trochu referred to the *Revue* as “a modern military encyclopedia” that gave the French army access to “practical military science.”<sup>71</sup> Such accolades confirm that appreciation for intelligence was on the ascendant, and that leaders were encouraging the entire army to embrace a view that had previously been appreciated by only a small number.

While the Deuxième Bureau fulfilled many of the functions that Lewal and others called for, advocates of professionalized intelligence such as Colonel Vanson argued that an additional service was yet needed to complement the analysis and

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<sup>69</sup> SHD 7N 674. In a text on strategy, Colonel H.C. Fix notes that “These details are very precious, as knowing one of them indicates immediately the presence of which regiment, which division, of which army corps, and sometimes, which army.” Fix, *La stratégie appliquée*, 130.

<sup>70</sup> A Ministerial decision of November 1875 declared that the *Revue* was to be sent for free to all French battalions. Circulaire Ministérielle dated Nov. 10, 1875, SHD 7N 664.

<sup>71</sup> Trochu, *L'armée française*, 101, note 1.

synthesis of the officers of the Deuxième Bureau. Vanson foresaw a separate service, charged with the gathering of information, that would be annexed to the Deuxième Bureau, though still remaining apart. This would be the Statistical Section. In his "Summary of Facts and Ideas for the Organization of the *Service des Renseignements*" submitted to the head of the *état-major* in 1875, Vanson described a service that would be based in the War Ministry, also having assistance from diplomats in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and from representatives from the ministries of Marine, Finances, and Public Works.<sup>72</sup> He called upon the cooperation of the Ministry of the Interior, and especially the Prefecture of Police and service of the *Sûreté Générale*, "from the point of view of establishing a vast network of observation and espionage, undertaken by salaried agents."<sup>73</sup> Even within the army itself, he requested access to various missions of exploration abroad, by officers acting officially, or unofficially. While working with all of the other departments, in Vanson's view this *service de renseignements* was also to operate as a centralizing organization. Thus, Vanson, like Jung before him, argued for the autonomy of the agency assigned to what they considered the most intelligent, scientific, and important of the army's ventures.

#### The Service de Renseignements/Section de Statistique

As Vanson hoped, in the years following the creation of the *état-major*, a smaller section within the Deuxième Bureau began to crystallize around a few officers and agents. This section, also charged with the collection of intelligence to

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<sup>72</sup> Vanson, "Résumé des idées et des faits sur lesquels sont basées les propositions soumises par le 2<sup>e</sup> Bureau, au Général Chef d'Etat Major général en ce qui touche l'organisation générale du Service des renseignements et la préparation au service de Guerre." SHD 1M 2256.

<sup>73</sup> SHD 1M 2256.



facilitate the decisions and actions of the French army, carried out clandestine missions abroad and counterespionage within France. On paper, the two bodies charged with the Third Republic's military intelligence appear similar, and closely connected. The smaller service – whose appellation itself remains difficult to pin down – was most often referred to as “*Deuxième bureau – section de statistique*,” or the Statistical Section, though contemporary notes also refer to it as the *service de renseignements*.<sup>74</sup> Although by name it appears defined as a subsection of the Deuxième Bureau, which itself was one of the parts of the *état-major*, in reality, the Statistical Section maintained only a tenuous attachment to the larger institutions with which it was linked. Indeed, in his detailed study of the army during the nineteenth century, General André Bach confirms that the Statistical Section was more closely tied to the leadership of the War Ministry than to the *état-major* to which it technically belonged.<sup>75</sup> The repercussions of this autonomy would be revealed in the Dreyfus Affair, as will be seen below.

Moreover, in accord with the wishes of some of its founders, the army's intelligence unit maintained its autonomy in financial, as well as hierarchical, terms. Colonel Vanson noted in 1875 that the Statistical Section is “only, at base, fictitiously attached to the Deuxième Bureau. The officer at the head of the *service de renseignements*, alone, is responsible for this service, as the director of the

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<sup>74</sup> General André Bach discusses some correspondence between administrators in the Deuxième Bureau looking for the name of this service as late as 1886. He notes that the term, *section de statistique*, referred to a part of the Dépôt de la Guerre at the end of the Second Empire, designating a small team responsible for keeping up to date useful information for an idea of the real force of armies that the country might confront. The Germans had named their intelligence service a *service de renseignements*; thus the French sought a different name, and wanted to choose something that wouldn't be obvious to the press, or to others. They therefore chose Statistical Section. Bach, *L'armée de Dreyfus*, 540. Notes throughout the archives refer to this section both as *service de renseignements* and *section de statistique*.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 541.

Deuxième Bureau does not possess a centime of the total sum to which it is consecrated."<sup>76</sup> Vanson believed that with its own independent budget, the intelligence service could operate smoothly without outside meddling. And indeed, this service operated in part thanks to the *fonds secrets* that were at the disposition of the Minister of War.<sup>77</sup> The military's secret funds, which used just a small part of the Ministry's budget, were used solely for intelligence, and it was from this money that the agents working for the section were paid.<sup>78</sup>

Although the office's leadership attested to and acknowledged the separation of these two services, such distinction was not made public. Unlike the Deuxième Bureau, whose tasks and personnel were listed in the army's directory, the *section de statistique* was not, and the names of officers working within the smaller section were listed merely as being employed by the larger bureau.<sup>79</sup> Nonetheless, we know that from its origins up through the Dreyfus Affair, the section was headed by Abraham Samuel (1871-1873), Emile Championnet (1873-1880), Paul Grisot (1880-1883), François-Honoré Vincent (1883-1886), and Jean Sandherr (December 1886-1895). Whereas the Deuxième Bureau employed approximately thirty people, mostly officers, aided by a few civilians, only five

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<sup>76</sup> Note sur le Service et le recrutement du Deuxième Bureau de l'Etat-Major général. SHD 1M 2256.

<sup>77</sup> Mennevée, *L'espionnage international*, Mennevée citing déposition Billot, 381-382. Lieutenant-Colonel Nicolas Rollin, a former director of French intelligence, confirmed the use of "secret funds" to pay spies. He described the varying "cost of renseignements or documents," noting that the price the service would pay often depended on who was selling the intelligence. Prices varied according to the person's social class, personal situation, degree of confidence in them, or risks that they ran in acquiring the information. Rollin also noted that it was in periodically checking on the use of secret funds that the head or vice-head of the *état-major* had any input in intelligence activities. Lieutenant Colonel Nicolas Rollin, *Le Service de renseignements militaires en temps de paix, en temps de guerre* (Paris: Nouvelle librairie nationale, 1908), 32.

<sup>78</sup> Laurent, *Politiques de l'ombre*, 480-493.

<sup>79</sup> Bach, *L'armée de Dreyfus*, 540.

officers worked for the smaller intelligence service, including the head, the vice-head, and an archivist.<sup>80</sup> In addition, the Statistical Section employed a few other individuals as administrative personnel: a military secretary, civil employees working as editors, and an office guard, shifting per the needs of the office's head. Beyond these permanent employees, the military's intelligence unit used a variety of agents and other individuals to assist in the collection of information, including diplomats, police, civilians, and other individuals within the Republic's different institutions. The service would send them on tasks into embassies or other locales, on intelligence gathering missions abroad, or place them in domestic scenarios where they were likely to procure interesting information.<sup>81</sup>

The Statistical Section was the body that Lewal, Jung, Vanson, and others had been envisioning as a necessary aspect of national security all along. Like the Deuxième Bureau generally, the Statistical Section's missions were at first predominantly focused on the gathering of military information, seeking knowledge of advancements in weapons, organization, and plans for future battles. Although its mission was never openly defined, the duties of the Statistical Section were more or less "understood" by those who worked there.<sup>82</sup> In the aftermath of the Dreyfus Affair, a number of former employees of the service came forward and revealed much of the workings of the Section that had hitherto been kept secret.

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<sup>80</sup> Mennevé, *L'espionnage international*, 394-395.

<sup>81</sup> Lacking any kind of archival record – either due to prudence in not keeping such a list, or else its destruction at some point in the last hundred and fifty years – there is no way of knowing who and how many individuals worked for the army's statistical section. However, a number have surfaced in public and private records throughout the years, and will be covered in the following chapters.

<sup>82</sup> From deposition Cordier: "...il n'y avait aucune règle écrite pour la direction du Service des Renseignements. Il y avait seulement des traditions et des ordres successifs donnés par les ministres, les chefs du Cabinet, les chefs ou les sous-chefs d'Etat-Major qui se succédèrent." Cordier in *La révision du procès Dreyfus. Enquête de la Cour de cassation*, (Paris: P.-V. Stock, 1899). Tome 1, Instruction de la Chambre Criminelle, 302.

During his examination in 1898 in the case against Colonel Picquart, General Gonse, who had served as a deputy head of the *état-major*, described the three missions of the *service de renseignements* as follows: “1) The search for what was occurring or being prepared abroad, in the interest of national defense; 2) The service of surveillance along our borders; 3) The service of counterespionage in France and abroad.”<sup>83</sup> Beyond that, the direction and interaction with agents seemed to operate without much guidance.

The trial transcripts also provide an understanding of how the Statistical Section operated. The five officers working for the *service de renseignements* were each assigned a different geographical specialty, with one focusing on Germany, another on England, another on Italy, and so on. Nonetheless, each officer was familiar with the work of the others, so that they could replace each other if necessary.<sup>84</sup> The service was responsible for drafting daily *bulletins de renseignement*, under cover of the *bordereaux* described above, which in principle were to be destroyed after being sent along.<sup>85</sup> These bulletins would summarize findings from different dossiers, which the officer would lock in his personal safe, for which he

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<sup>83</sup> Interrogatoire dans la procédure contre le colonel Picquart (le 15 juillet 1898), Seine. Tribunal de première instance, *L’Instruction Fabre et les décisions judiciaires ultérieures* (Paris: Edition du Siècle), 14.

<sup>84</sup> Mennevée, *L’espionnage international*, 395. He notes that though assigned to different sections, each officer knew well what the others were working on, both so that if one was out another could replace him, and also, “*au point de vue moral et au point de vue de la responsabilité, l’avantage de contribuer à maintenir entre eux une confiance absolue.*” This is in contrast with how secret intelligence was supposedly run in Austria-Hungary, according to the memoirs of a former agent. Colonel Von Walzel writes that in order to keep secrets, the officers were unaware of what the others were doing, there were no trash cans, and papers were burned right away. Clemens von Walzel, *Un service d’espionnage: souvenirs de quatorze années au service des renseignements austro-hongrois, 1905-1918*, trans. G. Lepage (Paris: Payot, 1935), 14.

<sup>85</sup> Mennevée, *L’espionnage international*, 396-397. Many *bulletins* destined for the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> bureaus are now in SHD 7N 674.

alone possessed the keys.<sup>86</sup> The idea behind this was to assure the confidentiality of the section's sources, which it claimed to keep in absolute confidence from the Republic's other agencies. As such, the office also intentionally chose not to keep track of documents coming in or out, a system that, as noted after the Dreyfus Affair, "had more inconveniences than advantages."<sup>87</sup> When intelligence reform came onto the table in the decades following, one suggestion would be for a more efficient way of storing and classifying information.<sup>88</sup>

As noted above by Gonse, as the years went on, the Statistical Section became increasingly occupied with the tasks of counterespionage. Considering its aims to inform the French high command of the status and progress of the German army, and learning as a result that for most counts the situation of the French army was inferior, it is no surprise that the officers of the Section became increasingly suspicious of reports of Germans within France.<sup>89</sup> As the French became more aware of Germany's strengths, paranoia and xenophobia spread within the ranks of the French army, and in the Statistical Section more particularly.<sup>90</sup> The turn towards counterespionage within the Statistical Section, which began with insecurity in the face of the German victory, was only augmented with the appointment of General Boulanger as Minister of War in 1886, and had a profound effect on the French nation, as will be discussed in later chapters.

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 396, quoting Gonse in *L'Instruction Fabre*, 14-15.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., 397.

<sup>88</sup> See Raoul Victor Castex, *Questions d'état-major: principes, organisation fonctionnement* (Paris: L. Fournier, 1923-24), tome 1, 37.

<sup>89</sup> In his article, "The Xenophobic Style," Allan Mitchell demonstrates that the two decades prior to the Dreyfus Affair show an increasing preoccupation with foreigners on French soil generally, a concern that I will turn to in later chapters. Mitchell, "Xenophobic Style."

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

*Intelligence Modernizes: Methods and Practices*

By the turn of the twentieth century, many individuals within the armed forces had begun to recognize the importance of employing intelligence for military strategizing. War had modernized substantially in the course of a century, and new technologies meant that soldiers, goods, and communications could travel much faster than ever before. Intelligence was critical in allowing an army to be prepared to react to the speed with which the enemy moved. “Nothing is more important,” General H.C. Fix wrote, “than the organization of a *service des renseignements*. ... The one of two parties which is best informed about its adversary has an immense advantage: its resolutions rest on solid bases, on *positive* data. It *knows*, whereas its adversary is reduced to *guessing*.”<sup>91</sup> As Fix’s quote makes clear, modern intelligence would be the key to winning in a modern war. The reference to positive data reflected the scientific inclination of those leading the quest to establish an intelligence service, and the need to make it professional.

Due to the covert nature of espionage and counterespionage, texts such as training manuals for the Statistical Section either didn’t exist, or else were destroyed and no longer remain in the archival record. However, a number of other notes and indications demonstrate that at the fin-de-siècle, officers and agents were utilizing new methods and becoming more professionalized through standardization. For instance, while the military’s *service de renseignements* made a point not to write down their duties, the *commissaires spéciaux* received confidential instructions on

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<sup>91</sup> Fix, *La stratégie appliquée*, 118. His italics.

how to pass unnoticed when infiltrating a village.<sup>92</sup> Likewise, they were charged with carrying standard *lettres cachetées* when they were on mission, attesting to the process of making official their dubious and undercover duties.<sup>93</sup>

Within the Ministry of War, too, the practice of intelligence got more technical, with the efforts of Lewal and his colleagues resulting in the creation of and access to a good military library, a technical publication like the *Revue Militaire de l'étranger*, and the hiring of more adept individuals to translate works from other languages. Moreover, as Lewal articulated, in addition to a changed organizational structure, the revamped army would also require a new way to look at military education.<sup>94</sup> He was thus instrumental in establishing a number of specialized military courses and an *École militaire supérieure* of which Lewal was placed in command.<sup>95</sup> The introduction of permanent training schools, and the move to hire officers instructed therein fits into the framework of professionalization and bureaucratization as set forth by Max Weber and studied more recently by Jan Goldstein and other historians.<sup>96</sup> Although these courses were not exclusively

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<sup>92</sup> "Instructions très confidentielles," Undated, Archives Nationales (AN) F<sup>7</sup> 12648.

<sup>93</sup> AN F<sup>7</sup> 12648.

<sup>94</sup> In Allan Mitchell's description of the army's reorganization project and Lewal's role therein, he writes, "The agent of such transformation would be a new military academy dedicated to the study of the methods and principles of modern warfare, said Lewal as if reciting from Auguste Comte, because 'war is today a positive science.'" Mitchell, *Victors and Vanquished*, 87. Mitchell is quoting from Lewal's *Etudes de Guerre*.

<sup>95</sup> Laurent, *Politiques de l'ombre*, 314-315. The school employed 35 military professors and 11 civilian professors, teaching 11 military and civil subjects, giving the ensemble what Laurent terms a very "encyclopedic" aspect. Moreover, he notes that certain critics belonging to the "old corps" of the general staff found the pedagogy of the *Ecole supérieure de guerre* to be too "savant."

<sup>96</sup> Goldstein, *Console and Classify*, 10-15. Goldstein also explains how psychiatrists used statistics and other rational mathematical methodology to 'sciencize' the treatment of patients, 89-105. Further, it was during the nineteenth century that the idea of research itself gained both popularity and official recognition. Robert Fox, "Science, the University, and the State in Nineteenth-Century France" in Gerald L. Geison, *Professions and the French State, 1700-1900* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1984).

geared towards intelligence, they blossomed under the leadership of those same individuals who championed the growth and study of that field, and thus should be considered an important step in the development of professionalized *renseignement*.

Modern war also meant modern technologies. New technology was applied in various fields, from police work to medicine, and in the army.<sup>97</sup> Intelligence likewise adapted to the progress of modern discoveries, and the work of spies and counterspies certainly changed with dramatic developments in transportation (railroads) and communications (the telegraph in the 1840s, and the invention of the telephone in 1876). With breakthroughs in aviation – balloons early on, and planes later – intelligence agencies could have “eyes” in the sky. At the turn of the century, the scope of military intelligence encompassed not only weapons, tactics, and troop details, but also technical information.

The Statistical Section made use of the new technology, intercepting telegrams, utilizing advanced cryptanalysis and code breaking (the one field in which the French excelled over their European and American counterparts), invisible ink, and photography to capture a document before passing it along to the Deuxième Bureau.<sup>98</sup> In its choice of subjects on which to inform the army, the

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<sup>97</sup> Jean-Marc Berlière, in his studies of the French police force, noted how the new criminology of the late nineteenth century, along with novel methods of identification pioneered by Alphonse Bertillon, contributed to the cohesion and professionalization of the French police force. Jean-Marc Berlière, “The Professionalisation of the Police Under the Third Republic in France, 1875-1914,” in Emsley and Shpayer-Makov, *Police Detectives*.

<sup>98</sup> In 1883, a Dutch schoolteacher living in France, Auguste Kerckhoffs, published *La cryptographie militaire* which “revolutionized cryptography by adapting it to the telegraph,” and at the end of the nineteenth century, the *cabinet noir* at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs employed the brilliant codebreaker, Bazeries. Porch, *French Secret Services*, 37. Christopher Andrew, however, describes the competition between the *cabinets noirs* of the Sureté and the Quai d’Orsay, along with general incompetence as rendering diplomatic intercepts “worse than useless.” Christopher Andrew, “Codebreakers and Foreign Offices: The French, British and American Experience” in Andrew and



intelligence service also worked to be at the forefront of European scientific advancements. It observed and monitored the advancements in weaponry – from steel cannons to rapid-fire guns.<sup>99</sup> Inventions like bicycles modernized warfare and society at large, adding another element of transport besides horses, trains and cars to European armies. Moreover, the discovery of the ability of carrier pigeons to transmit messages over long distances allowed for a new means of communication, and the development of balloon technology introduced the potential for aerial surveillance. Thus the Deuxième Bureau kept close tabs on the purchases and uses of this modern equipment. It also respected the professionalization of intelligence by seeking recourse to experts, such as the handwriting analysts heavily relied upon during the Dreyfus Affair.<sup>100</sup>

In addition to material technology, the intelligence services also recognized the need for expertise in comprehending human instincts. In his book *La Stratégie Appliquée*, the general and strategist H.C. Fix emphasized the necessity of a profound knowledge and understanding of human nature.<sup>101</sup> Lewal, too, quoted the theorist Hardegg, who proffered that, “The direction of espionage requires a profound understanding of man.”<sup>102</sup> One of the agents of the Statistical Section, Edmond Lajoux, confirmed that in practice, espionage was “the hunt for mankind

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Dilks, *Missing Dimension*, 42. On photographing documents see Gonse in *L’Instruction Fabre*, 39. For an image of a letter using invisible ink, see Annex A.

<sup>99</sup> SHD 7N 674.

<sup>100</sup> Analysis of handwriting was also used against the French intelligence services, as was the case with the Lux affair. Charles Lux, *L’évasion du Capitaine Lux* (Paris: Les Oeuvres Représentatives, 1932), 26-27. For more on Lux, see Chapter 4.

<sup>101</sup> Fix, *La stratégie appliquée*, 117.

<sup>102</sup> Lewal, “Tactique des Renseignements,” 188.

as much as any other hunt.”<sup>103</sup> Lajoux stressed that French intelligence agents needed training to understand the morality and the means of thought employed by German agents in order to catch them. This need to comprehend human psychology is reflected in a number of writings on intelligence, as theorists attempt to classify different spies into “types,” thus attesting to the fact that those who studied espionage thought deeply about how human nature reflected onto intelligence practice. The combination of the latest technological innovations with a honed understanding of military strategy fit into the definition of science as proposed by advocates of intelligence reform. Knowledge and information would help France to remain strong in the face of belligerent neighbors.

Yet another process that contributed to assuring that intelligence services became both official and tied to the army bureaucracy involved what the historian Alain Dewerpe refers to as the “formalization of the secret.”<sup>104</sup> This occurred through the rationalization of covert and specious activity under the rubric of an agency, making the work of the intelligence agent almost ‘just another job,’<sup>105</sup> as well as by making secrets official through specific processes of classification. Dewerpe locates the nineteenth century as the moment when secret information became formalized through the process of secret notation, to the point where a stamp could actually give greater value to a piece of information than the content

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<sup>103</sup> Edmond Lajoux, *Mes souvenirs d’espionnage* (Paris: A. Fayard, 1905), 14.

<sup>104</sup> Dewerpe, *Espion*, 119-151.

<sup>105</sup> During the Schnaebelé Affair, a newspaper out of Toulouse, *La Dépêche*, derided the German government for arresting the French agent for something that they claimed should be considered his job. “Où irons-nous si chaque pays s’attribue le droit de qualifier judiciairement de crime de haute trahison les tentatives que font par métier, pour se préparer en cas de conflit, les agents, des gouvernements étrangers; – de garder, dans quelque tiroir, des condamnations prononcées ainsi sans que les intéressés aient été ni cités, ni avertis; – et de les saisir la première fois qu’ils passent la frontière.” Article by Camille Pelletan, *La Depeche*, May 1, 1887. (My emphasis.)

itself.<sup>106</sup> The existence not just of numerous documents marked with the stamps, “Confidential,” “Secret,” “Very Confidential,” etc, but of specific army directives explaining which documents should bear which markings and chastising officers for failing to indicate the level of secrecy on a document testify to the increasing bureaucratization and professionalization within the army of the regulation of intelligence.<sup>107</sup>

Thus it should come as little surprise that the process of making information secret developed along with intelligence itself during the first half century of the Third Republic. A letter sent in January 1882 from the head of the *état major*, Miribel, alerted military attachés to the potential sensibility of the information collected, noting that certain information was of such character that the Minister should be the first to read it.<sup>108</sup> Attachés should therefore label such documents, “*Confidentiel et pour le Ministre seul.*” In 1886, Boulanger took this requirement a step further, insisting that such correspondence should be kept absolutely hidden from the relevant ambassador.<sup>109</sup> By the 1890s, official decrees determined the sensitivity of information, such as the *Décision Ministerielle* of December 30, 1891 that attempted to define categories of ‘secret,’ and specified the hierarchy of which

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<sup>106</sup> Dewerpe, *Espion*. 142-149. The process of designating secrecy also imbues knowledge with more power. Sociologist Ritchie Lowry writes, “Secrecy theoretically guarantees maximum control over how, when, where, and to whom specific information is released. Thus, more and greater secrecy is seen as indispensable to the proper and efficient functioning of the organization and its leaders.” Lowry, “Sociology of Secrecy,” 438. However, Lowry, along with other late twentieth-century commentators on secrecy and security organizations, argues that in the long run, the requirement to designate documents with particular levels of access and confidentiality proves to be incredibly inefficient.

<sup>107</sup> See numerous instructions found in SHD cartons: 7N 664, 5N 1, 7N 11.

<sup>108</sup> Letter from the head of the *État-Major Generale* Miribel, on letterhead reading: “*Deuxième Bureau, statistique militaire*” dated January 4, 1882, SHD 7N 664.

<sup>109</sup> Letter from Boulanger dated March 18, 1886, SHD 7N 664. Boulanger’s fears about confidential information leaving tight circles will be explored in more detail in further chapters.

individuals would be privy to which information.<sup>110</sup> Freycinet, the signatory on the *Décision*, emphasized the place of the War Ministry and the army's leaders in making the choice of what documents should be considered secret and confidential. Another decision half a decade later, in 1896, broadened this definition and noted that all correspondence related to affairs of espionage would also be considered confidential, and treated as such.<sup>111</sup>

### *Repercussions of the Section's Autonomy: The Dreyfus Affair*

Thus far, this chapter has discussed the development of professional, bureaucratized intelligence within the aegis of the French army. Although the army was by law to be an apolitical institution, there is little doubt that officers held a spectrum of opinions on the new Republic.<sup>112</sup> Without being directly involved in politics, the army could indeed still have a role in shaping it, and the creators of the French intelligence service stressed the primacy of a *service de renseignements*, not just for advising military matters, but for political issues as well. In an 1875 document, Vanson noted that one of the most important objectives of the *service de renseignements* was "to permit the government, in the case of an external crisis, to make a decision based on a complete understanding of events and causes."<sup>113</sup> The idea that the *service* would advise France's highest-ranked decision makers emphasizes the importance that this new organization held in the minds of its creators. Moreover, this notable change from the treatment of almost strictly military intelligence a century earlier testifies to the changing view of intelligence

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<sup>110</sup> *Décision Ministérielle* signed by Charles de Freycinet as Minister of War, December 30, 1891. AN BB<sup>19</sup> 68.

<sup>111</sup> Note from the Statistical Section, signed by Minister of War Cavaignac, March 10, 1896, AN BB<sup>19</sup> 68.

towards the more modern, contemporary definition that takes account of political considerations too, and does so during peacetime as well as during moments of overt hostility.

The fact that intelligence was important for politics was not lost on the Third Republic's leadership. As the years went by, the Statistical Section, with its autonomy in regards to the rest of the Ministry of War, developed a special relationship with the nation's leaders. General André Bach notes that because the hierarchy of these various sections was confused and convoluted, often certain War Ministers, or ministers of other departments, could appeal directly to the intelligence service without any intermediary or the *Conseil de Guerre*, a cast of senior generals to be consulted on defense questions, being aware of these interactions.<sup>114</sup> The head of the intelligence service had direct access to the War Minister, as revealed by the declaration of a number of the service's former employees in their testimony for Dreyfus' appeal.<sup>115</sup> Lieutenant-Colonel Cordier, who worked for the Statistical Section for nine years (from 1886-1895), described the relationship between his section and the Republic's leadership as follows:

*"The section de statistique, while belonging technically (en droit) to the État-Major of the Army, had direct and constant relations with the Cabinet [of the Minister] and often with the Minister himself. These relations took place daily, or every other day, according to the Ministers. Under certain ministries, the meetings would only take place with the head of the Cabinet, but with others, they would*

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<sup>112</sup> See Porch, *March to the Marne*, 8-9.

<sup>113</sup> "Résumé des idées," 1875, op cit, SHD 1M 2256.

<sup>114</sup> Bach, *L'armée de Dreyfus*, 499.

<sup>115</sup> Cordier in *La révision du procès Dreyfus. Enquête de la Cour de cassation*, Tome 1, Instruction de la Chambre Criminelle, 302. Picquart also noted his "daily visit" with the Minister in *Le Procès Dreyfus devant le conseil de guerre de Rennes*, tome I, p. 450.

sometimes take place with the Minister himself and with his head of Cabinet.”<sup>116</sup>

Such confessions, along with requests by civil authorities for members of the Statistical Section to perform intelligence tasks including reading the correspondence of French politicians,<sup>117</sup> demonstrate the extent to which by the turn of the century, the professional intelligence service had become, as Vanson had hoped in 1875, an integral part of the Republic’s operation.<sup>118</sup> Moreover, it confirms the centrality of intelligence to War Ministers like George Boulanger (1886-1887) and Charles de Freycinet (1888-1892) whose tenures both overlapped with Cordier’s years in the service.<sup>119</sup>

It was this privileged relationship, as well as the lack of checks and balances on a service which itself was never actually defined by any written code, that resulted in a national uproar encompassing this service during the Dreyfus Affair. To remind ourselves, the affair surrounded the false accusation of Dreyfus for spying, based on a *bordereau* retrieved in September 1894 by Marie Bastian, agent of

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<sup>116</sup> Deposition Cordier, December 27, 1898 in *Revision*, tome I, 302; also cited in Mennevée, *L’espionnage international*, 399.

<sup>117</sup> For example, Sandherr, while on mission for the *service de renseignements* in Tunisia in 1881, took time away from his observation of Tunisian tribal relations to open the correspondence of deputy Amédée La Faure, and watch his activities there. Gérald Arboit, "L’affaire avant l’affaire: le discrédit du colonel Vincent, chef de la section de statistique de l’état-major de l’armée," no. 14 (June 7, 2008), [http://www.cf2r.org/fr/notes-historiques/l-affaire-avant-affaire-le-discredit-du-colonel-vincent-chef-de-la-section-de-statistique-de-etat-major-de-ar.php#\\_ftnref9](http://www.cf2r.org/fr/notes-historiques/l-affaire-avant-affaire-le-discredit-du-colonel-vincent-chef-de-la-section-de-statistique-de-etat-major-de-ar.php#_ftnref9).

<sup>118</sup> Citing the Procureur général Baudouin in the second revision of the Dreyfus trial, Mennevée reports that when an important document was put together at the SR, it was copied immediately in many copies destined for the Minister, the head of the état-major, and sometimes the President of the Republic or the Minister of Foreign Affairs. These envois took place every two days and were contained in a chemise that one called “*Bordereau*” or “*Bulletin*” de Renseignements, dated and signed by the head of the service. Mennevée, *L’espionnage international*, 396, citing *Gazette du Palais*, 774.

<sup>119</sup> This interesting recognition of the importance of intelligence is left out of nearly all contemporary biographies of both Boulanger and de Freycinet. For more on Boulanger’s connection to intelligence, see Chapter 4.

the *section de statistique*, which was brought to the attention of the officers working for the section, including Commandant Henry and the intelligence section's head, Colonel Sandherr.<sup>120</sup> Sandherr, with his close ties to the Republic's authorities, spread the news to the War Minister, General Mercier, and before long, Dreyfus had been convicted of treason based on the supposed similarity between his handwriting and that on the incriminating *bordereau*, and on documents proving his guilt, which throughout the trial remained in a "secret dossier." In July 1895, Colonel Sandherr suffered an attack of general paralysis, and was replaced as head of the Statistical Section by Colonel Georges Picquart, who along with Emile Zola would become one of the Dreyfusards' heroes for recognizing the flimsiness of the evidence used to convict Dreyfus. After a series of retrials between 1898 and 1906, the true traitor and author of the *bordereau* was exposed as Commandant Ferdinand Esterhazy, and the evidence located in the so-called "secret dossier" was found to have been forged by Commandant Henry. Henry was condemned to prison for his forgery, where he subsequently committed suicide. The conviction of Dreyfus and ensuing cover up all revolved around lies and fraud practiced by the officers of the Statistical Section. Thus, with the series of trials that would eventually result in Dreyfus' innocence, not just the army, but also its *service de renseignements* came under scrutiny.

Prior to the Dreyfus Affair, the Statistical Section had escaped the attention of the great majority of Frenchmen. This was to change afterward, although even with the exposure of the workings of the Section with the publication of the Dreyfus transcripts, confusion remained regarding the distinction between the *Deuxième*

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<sup>120</sup> Bredin, *The Affair*.

Bureau and the smaller *service de renseignements*. They were melded together as an example of the unchecked power of the French army. For example, in a pre-war novel, the author of the Fantômas series pays heed to the understanding that officers of the Deuxième Bureau could do as they pleased, noting that the character in question, the officer de Loubersac could leave the country without permission as, “attached to the Second Bureau as he is, no doubt the ordinary military rules and regulations would hardly apply to him.”<sup>121</sup> The Dreyfus revelations were met with repugnance, with people like the deputy Joseph Reinach referring to the Statistical Section as a “sentinel of spies.”<sup>122</sup> Observers condemned the very secrecy and autonomy that Lewal and fellow theorists had encouraged for the nation’s benefit. Thanks to a highly public and emotional episode such as the Dreyfus Affair, the disjunction between the necessary bureaucratization of intelligence and the negative connotation of spying remained a reality in public discourse.

The Dreyfus debacle and the revelation of the role of the *section de statistique* therein helped prompt a major restructuring of French intelligence. Following the Affair and the Statistical Section’s botched efforts to “catch” the army’s spy, the primacy of the military in terms of counterespionage ended. On May 1, 1899, the Minister of War, Gaston de Galliffet, ordered that all counterespionage duties be taken from the Ministry of War and given to the Ministry of the Interior.<sup>123</sup> Galliffet’s decree officially removed direction of domestic surveillance from the

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<sup>121</sup> Pierre Souvestre and Marcel Allain, *A Nest of Spies* (New York: Brentano's, 1917), 207.

<sup>122</sup> Joseph Reinach, *Histoire de l'affaire Dreyfus* (Paris: Éditions de la Revue blanche, 1901), tome 1, 27.

<sup>123</sup> 1899, *Bulletin Officiel*; Decision was made official by a decree dated August 20, 1899, *Bulletin Officiel du Ministre de l'Intérieur*, 1899, no 9, pp 153-154. And made public on September 15: “La Section de statistique devient une des sections du 2e bureau (...) Elle ne s’immiscera en aucune façon dans les services de police et de contre-espionnage qui restent exclusivement dans les attributions de la direction de la Sûreté générale.”



Statistical Section, and many of the officers involved with the Affair were dismissed shortly thereafter. However, though the Interior Ministry was now the body charged with counterespionage, the Statistical Section was not directly forbidden from practicing it, and thus continued to do so on a smaller scale. Within a decade, a reconciliation seemed to be reached, as a number of notes and directives from 1908 and 1909 attest.<sup>124</sup> An official *Instruction* from Minister of War Alexandre Millerand in 1912 noted that surveillance tasks between the two services were shared with a mutual goal. “In a word, the two personnel of War and Interior, charged with *service de renseignements* of the border, must make a point of collaboration with a common sentiment: the concern of assuring the best defense of the country.”<sup>125</sup> Noting that much important work was needed to assure the safety of the French nation and its borders, the *Instruction*, and others similar to it, sought an entente between the two departments.

### *Intelligence Moves Into the Public Sphere*

The discussion about espionage work on a larger scale in the wake of the Dreyfus Affair brought issues of intelligence out into the open. Whereas the subject had received little attention prior to the mid-nineteenth century, by the turn of the twentieth it had become viewed as crucial to national defense. From the late 1880s up through World War I, a number of works surfaced dedicated in part or entirely to the study of intelligence. Texts with titles such as, *Espionage, Tactics of Surveillance, Espionage and Treason*, and *The True Laws of War*, put forward the idea of

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<sup>124</sup> SHD 7N 21 and 7N 676.

<sup>125</sup> “Instruction sur le Service des Renseignements à la frontière et sur le concours prêté aux Officiers chargés de ce service par les Commissaires spéciaux de la Police des Chemins de Fer.” Signed by Minister of War, Alexander Millerand, November 1, 1912. SHD 7N 21.

intelligence as one of the major sciences of war at the turn of the century.<sup>126</sup> Authors considered espionage and counterespionage both in theory and in practice, and almost all of them paid homage to previously unsung heroes like Jules Lewal.

Similar texts gained in popularity as the years went on. Some, such as James Violle's *Military Espionage in Times of Peace*, were academic texts, published in 1903 as a doctoral thesis in law at the Université de Paris. A. Froment's work, *Military Espionage and the Secret War Funds in France and Abroad*, responding to what the author called the "impassioned public opinion" and "general curiosity" after the Dreyfus Affair, traced the history of espionage from ancient times before proclaiming its necessity and utility at the turn of the century. Froment writes, "The utility of this service is today uncontested; all writers, all professors at military academies, French as well as German, recognize the absolute necessity [of an intelligence service] and consecrate long pages to it."<sup>127</sup>

In their texts, these turn-of-the-century writers grappled with a number of important questions relating to this relatively new phenomenon, attempting to classify spies just as others were classifying criminals, degenerates, or diseases.<sup>128</sup> Authors recalled historic instances of spies serving during war, and then returned to modern times to emphasize the changed international climate and the need for intelligence services in peacetime too. Throughout, they continued to insist that intelligence gathering was a true military science, thus working to assure its permanence and its legitimacy. Froment's book makes many references to

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<sup>126</sup> de Chilly, *L'espionnage*; Detourbet, *L'espionnage et la trahison*; A. Pillet, *Les lois actuelles de la guerre* (Paris: A. Rousseau, 1901); Violle, *L'espionnage militaire*.

<sup>127</sup> Froment, *L'Espionnage militaire*, 11.

<sup>128</sup> See Daniel Pick, *Faces of Degeneration: A European Disorder, c.1848-c.1918* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Goldstein, *Console and Classify*.

espionage as a “veritable science,” and General Fix, writing in the 1880s on the continued need for secrecy, intelligence, and centralized organization pointed out certain aspects of what he calls the “extensive, complex and difficult,” science of war.<sup>129</sup>

Espionage also gained recognition as an official practice when it was codified for the first time on an international stage. In 1874, representatives from across Europe met in Brussels at a convention with the aim of defining the laws of war as understood towards the end of the nineteenth century. Led by Baron Jomini, the representative from Russia, the delegates sought to define the responsibilities of government, the people and the military in warfare, and to stress the preeminence of armies, generals and soldiers over the others.<sup>130</sup> Section 1, Chapter 5 of the Brussels treaty covers spies and their treatment in the event of capture. At the conference, the European representatives debated who could be considered a spy, what the individual’s motive for spying might be, and who had the right to determine his punishment. In concluding several paragraphs regulating the treatment of spies, the representative nations demonstrated an overt acknowledgment that in times of warfare, armies maintain and employ secret agents. Further, they declared that spying is serious army business, and any civilian embarking on such a dangerous task must understand that he is operating in a military milieu. These rules were codified in 1880 by the Swiss jurist Johann Bluntschli with the creation of the Manual on the Laws of War (commonly known

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<sup>129</sup> Fix, *La stratégie appliquée*, ix.

<sup>130</sup> See: *Nouveau Recueil Général de Traités et autres actes relatifs aux rapports de droit international*. eds., G.F.R. de Martens par Charles Samwer et Jules Hopf. 2e Série, Tome IV. (Gottingen: Librairie de Dieterich, 1879-1880).

as the Oxford Code), and further confirmed by international conventions in The Hague in 1899 and 1907.<sup>131</sup>

The fact that international law defined the spy through its connection to armies is congruent with the professionalization of espionage in France. Over the course of just a few decades, intelligence practice became increasingly dominated by the military, as will be revealed in greater detail in the chapters that follow. Thanks to insistence and efforts of men like Charles de Freycinet, Theodore Jung, Jules Lewal, and Emile Vanson, the task of *renseignement*, which had previously been associated first with departments of foreign affairs, and then police, was now something undertaken by the army as well. With a focus on rebuilding the military both to achieve parity with Germany, as well as to guarantee safety and confidence for the French nation, the army's service quickly became the dominant collector and processor of secret material. The other departments continued with their efforts – and in fact, it has been argued that competition between these varied intelligence teams hampered the development of an intelligence community in France at a time when it was most needed<sup>132</sup> – but the army's service was clearly the one that grew and blossomed in the early years of the new regime.

### *Conclusion*

The proliferation of serious texts about intelligence, combined with the codification of international espionage practice and punishment, serves as solid evidence that by the end of the nineteenth century, espionage and intelligence

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<sup>131</sup> Nabulsi, *Traditions of War*, 162.

<sup>132</sup> Porch, *French Secret Services*, 38-44.

gathering had firmed up a place of their own within the French army, and moreover, within the French state. This chapter has shown the intellectual and practical trajectory of the implementation of an intelligence service, growing first out of reaction to defeat by Prussia and subsequently through its recognition as a true military science, needed to assure the safety of the nation. The impetus for the change in the way intelligence was perceived and practiced in France came from an understanding of its importance harbored by a number of like-minded men. These men viewed national security as more important than questions of politics, and therefore pushed their agenda to whichever group was in power.

The establishment of this intelligence service and the work of the individuals acting within and in correlation with it demonstrate adoption of attitudes and practices of professionalization and bureaucratization. Through a definition of espionage as a military “science,” army leaders and officers within the Deuxième Bureau employed procedures of specialization, hierarchy, study, and education to assure intelligence a place in the reconstituted French army. In order for an intelligence service to adequately protect the French nation and its people, its creators believed that it would require a certain degree of independence.

Espionage, intelligence collection and analysis, and from the mid-1880s on, counterespionage, occupied an important place in the army of the Third Republic. As the army remade itself in the face of a unified Germany, its leaders recognized the importance of hidden information that would allow them to calculate military strategy. As the *crise* with regards to Germany widened, the idea that Bismarck’s empire might be employing the same strategy, and doing so more successfully, caused a turn inward. Domestic security then became the chief focus of France’s intelligence service, and along with it, the growth of a veritable “spy mania” within

France. As one of the nation's revered bodies, the army became the branch tasked with rounding up spies, in addition to identifying them. The need to develop an offensive strategy that could overcome Germany trumped any such consideration, and couched in the language of science and rationality, the push for intelligence reform patently neglected moral concerns. Only with the exposure of its sloppy and unethical methods would the primacy of the army's espionage and counterespionage functions be questioned.

Through insistence on rational and professional means as championed by the fathers of French intelligence, within the first few decades of the Third Republic, the army took over a profession that in the past had not only failed to be viewed as a serious vocation, but that still met with resistance from outsiders. When he drafted his diary of the Dreyfus Affair for publication, the statesman Maurice Paléologue asserted that what really surprised him about the whole imbroglio was the profile of those practicing espionage. Paléologue writes:

“Intelligence work, which I have never seen so closely before, hardly justifies the romantic and fascinating reputation which it enjoys from afar. I do not hold against it the fact it is generally dirty and disgusting and full of impostures and deceits, for it is that, so to speak, by its very nature. But what deprives it of all its glamour and poetry in my eyes is that it is carried out by officers.”<sup>133</sup>

Yet, what Paléologue fails to mention is that the office in which he was employed, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, used diplomats and attachés to do very similar work. Moreover, it was the Quai d'Orsay that up until the early 1900s maintained the best of France's codebreaking teams, regularly violating the precept made famous by Henry Stimson that “gentlemen don't read each others' mail.” In

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<sup>133</sup> Maurice Paléologue, *My Secret Diary of the Dreyfus Case, 1894-1899*, trans. Eric Mosbacher (London: Secker & Warburg, 1957), 54.

fact, Paléologue's diary makes it evident that those men who deprived espionage of its glamour were the same individuals with whom he worked, consorted and dined. Together they all told secrets, kept secrets, and participated in the newly-created system that he condemned.

This tension and antagonism expressed here by Maurice Paléologue in fact took place on a much larger scale, as described by historian of French intelligence Douglas Porch. According to Porch, one of the major flaws in the use and development of secret services in France at the end of the nineteenth century stemmed from interministerial rivalries.<sup>134</sup> The diplomats and codebreakers at the Quai d'Orsay were hesitant to share material with the officers of the Statistical Section, and vice versa. In addition, as demonstrated, the police also performed a variety of espionage and counterespionage tasks. "Suffice it to note," Porch states, "that the lack of coordination of foreign and defense policy made for a fragmented intelligence world, a compartmentalization of information where assumptions or attitudes too often did duty for hard fact."<sup>135</sup> Thus, while the chief proponents of an intelligence service within the army rightly emphasized the need for centralization, the reality of pre-WWI intelligence dictated that France's various intelligence bureaucracies remained fragmented.

The real reforms targeting the centralization of *renseignement* took place after World War I, but had their base in the development of professionalized espionage and counterespionage at the turn of the century. The role of the army in driving France towards the institutionalization of intelligence was therefore critical. In rebuilding and reconstituting the French army, a handful of individuals stressed the

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<sup>134</sup> These rivalries will be explored in more depth in further chapters.

<sup>135</sup> Porch, *French Secret Services*, 44.

importance of a mastery of intelligence, especially when faced with a more powerful enemy willing to devote the resources to do so. Through their work, and the growing inclination of others to view intelligence as a rational, scientific pursuit, the practice of watching, listening and analyzing data about foreign armies and governments became regulated and systematized. The normalization of this mysterious field, however, extended beyond its performance by military and civilians working for the army's general staff, and allowed for an expanded discussion about the practical and emotional implications of intelligence within the larger public.



## CHAPTER 3

### Intelligence in Practice I: Secrecy, Intelligence Practitioners, and the Construction of the Enemy (1830–1886)

*“Savoir, afin de prévoir, prévoir afin de pouvoir.”*

–Francis Bacon, quoted in *La République*, 1904<sup>1</sup>

As Francis Bacon famously noted, knowledge is power. Michel Foucault gave major theoretical ballast to the connection of knowledge and power by identifying discourse as a powerful component in shaping beliefs and hierarchies.<sup>2</sup> The information that one is able to access constitutes the tools by which one is able to establish “truth.” Information that is secret – defined as that which other people do not want you to have – gives even greater power.<sup>3</sup> In France at the end of the nineteenth century, “secret” information, once the preserve of traditional sources of authority, was becoming democratized and bureaucratized, like the state itself. The German sociologist Georg Simmel conceptualized the secret as a means for social cohesion, as well something that gave its possessors an inflated sense of power.<sup>4</sup> The secret, according to Simmel, provided a value distinct from its contents, and because exclusive, it “confers power to modify fortunes.” For the late-nineteenth-century French state, secrecy would be the tool that would allow for a sense of security.

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<sup>1</sup> The quote continues: “Dans l’état actuel du monde, on n’en peut conclure rien d’autre que ceci : Afin d’être fort, en savoir le plus possible. Afin de se préserver, veiller non pas par crises malades et par à-coup, mais veiller toujours.” “L’Espionnage,” *La République*, June 13, 1904.

<sup>2</sup> Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972); Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*.

<sup>3</sup> Richard Wilsnack defines secrecy as the process of keeping other people from obtaining information you do not want them to have. Wilsnack, “Information Control.” Lowry, too, writes of secrecy as having the potential to imbue knowledge with greater power. Lowry, “Sociology of Secrecy,” 438.

<sup>4</sup> Simmel, “Sociology of Secrecy.”

The last chapter demonstrated how the bureaucratization of intelligence organizations in France at the start of the Third Republic rendered the quest for hidden information into a specific profession. At the end of the nineteenth century, professionalism and expertise commanded the respect of society both within designated industries and outside. As the intelligence profession developed new methods and goals, it became the definitive authority on information that could not openly be accessed. The fact that it needed to be uncovered put certain knowledge at a premium, lending it particular credibility according to its collectors.<sup>5</sup>

Knowledge allows its holder to tell a story, and thus the possessors of intelligence would be the ones responsible for crafting a narrative based on the information gathered. As sociologist Ritchie Lowry writes, "Manipulation and persuasion depend upon knowledge and information. Thus what one knows and does not know determines who has power and how that power can be utilized."<sup>6</sup> Whether or not intelligence agents at the fin-de-siècle *aimed* to manipulate or persuade cannot be known with certainty; however, the information that they gathered and passed along did indeed help to paint a particular picture of France's security situation at the turn of the century. We now turn to the information collectors, asking how they operated, with what aims, and to what conclusions the information gathered might have led.

Over the course of the nineteenth century, both French police and military developed methods of intelligence gathering that would be honed and perfected as

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<sup>5</sup> Much has been written by sociologists and social scientists about the power of secret knowledge, and the – often incorrect – belief that secret information that an opponent seeks to keep hidden gives the collector of that information an edge that he or she would otherwise not have. See, e.g. Lowry, "Sociology of Secrecy"; Simmel, "Sociology of Secrecy"; Wilsnack, "Information Control."

<sup>6</sup> Lowry, "Sociology of Secrecy," 438.

the practice made its way into the bureaucracy of the Third Republic. Earlier in the century, covert information, or hidden knowledge, had been the purview of the police forces. Under the First Empire, the Restoration, and Napoleon III, agents of the French police served as the primary intelligence-collecting authorities, focusing principally on tracking internal dissidents rather than concentrating on assessing external threats. In this way, they were able to use intelligence for the purpose of controlling the domestic population and maintaining the authority of the regime in power. Contemporaneously, the army launched an intelligence project of its own, though far from mainland France. An integral part of the colonization of Algeria in the mid-nineteenth century was the attempt to understand and classify both the land and its population. The army's topographical reconnaissance teams were charged with the first, while the second was left to a new institution founded by the army, the *bureaux arabes*. These teams gathered intelligence about the native populations in Algeria, which the French state could then employ to "pacify" the region, or essentially control it in order to exploit its land and resources.

Thus as surveillance practices evolved, the police developed an expertise on watching domestic populations, while in Algeria the army became expert at identifying a local population that happened to be "foreign" to them. As the two came together during the *fin-de-siècle*, both groups observed that intelligence could illuminate the goals and projects of non-French peoples. Moreover, intelligence collectors discovered what the theorists introduced in previous chapters already knew: that uncovering secrets could be a new way to mitigate potential threats to French national security. As this chapter demonstrates, it was thus in the last few decades of the nineteenth century that the police and the army's intelligence-gathering practices would converge, when the exercise of uncovering "secret"

information was translated into support for a national narrative about France's place in Europe. For police and army, the intelligence that they gathered would confirm the important place of the Republic in comparison with other European and colonial states, and would increasingly revolve around the threat posed by a newly united Germany.

Following the Franco-Prussian War, defeated France found itself alone in a Europe in which the balance of power was shifting. Bismarck had allies in the other large and powerful monarchies: Austria-Hungary and Russia. Meanwhile, France's relationships with England, Belgium, and Italy were far from secure. French leaders recognized that in order to build a stable Republic, the nation needed to find a way to protect itself in the face of German aims of expansion and domination. Security could come by improving the French armed forces, remaining aware of German military strength and projects, and by securing powerful alliances. Secret intelligence would prove crucial for each of these aims. Without any legislation dictating how intelligence services would operate, practices came to be dictated by uses and habits. The cultures of the military and political police would consequently shape understandings of what intelligence gathered in secrecy could accomplish.

As espionage and counterespionage in the Third Republic became increasingly dominated by the military, the intelligence product came to be shaped by the military's strategic vision. In a recent study on strategic cultures and national ways of war, Lawrence Sondhaus describes several aspects of French strategic culture, noting that at the end of the nineteenth century one of the principal goals of the military and the nation "involved the defense of land and

liberty or spreading the benefits of French civic culture.”<sup>7</sup> Bruno Colson, a French military theorist, stressed that France’s military strategy was based on the desire to preserve national autonomy, even in the face of outside threats.<sup>8</sup> Military theorists describe French strategic culture throughout the centuries as “offensive,” taking the lead in seeking defense of land, liberty and autonomy with the ability to strike first should these ideals be threatened.<sup>9</sup> This strategy became ever more central to the French military mentality after the loss in the Franco-Prussian War and the recognition of France’s poor preparation for battle. Advocates of the development of espionage within the military believed that information gleaned through secretive methods would allow the army to overcome deficiencies in numbers, materiel, and strategic planning.<sup>10</sup> Intelligence would allow a nation at peace to envision and prepare for future wars, while working to improve various aspects of the military and strategy. This third way between war and inaction would allow the French to pursue a military and diplomatic lead over their enemies by

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<sup>7</sup> Sondhaus, *Strategic Culture*.

<sup>8</sup> Bruno Colson, “La Culture Strategique Francaise.”

<sup>9</sup> This does not mean that at every stage of military planning that plans entailed attacks or invasions. Military historian Paul-Marie de la Gorce writes that from 1875 on, mobilization plans were all based on the fact that “the ruling idea was entirely defensive.” Only in 1889 did the army’s planners envision an offensive attack in the direction of Metz and Strasbourg. La Gorce, *The French Army*, 12. Nonetheless, the mentality of acting offensively to protect the nation appeared to dominate the army’s culture.

<sup>10</sup> This belief comes out in a number of Lewal’s writings. It is an understanding that continues to be fostered by advocates of secret intelligence communities, as demonstrated in the following quote by Ritchie Lowry, who disagrees with the proposition. Lowry writes, “Coser (1963) has pointed out that most public policy and military secrecy is based upon the belief that if one deprives a competitor or enemy of important information, it is possible to keep him off balance to the point where violent conflict is less possible, compromise and bargaining are more probable, and one’s chances for success are maximized. He indicates, by referring to Georg Simmel’s work on conflict, that a precise knowledge of the comparative strengths of two parties is the most effective deterrent to violent, overt, disruptive conflict. In a context of maximum secrecy this knowledge can only be gained by actually fighting out the conflict. In other words, secrecy enhances the probability of conflict, attenuates the possibilities for peaceful competition or compromise, and thereby, minimizes one’s chances of success and threatens one’s position of security.” Lowry, “Sociology of Secrecy,” 440.

strategizing and entering into alliances, without commencing another war that they were not presently ready to fight.

Similarly, the French police system has been characterized as employing a strategy described as “*défense du territoire*.”<sup>11</sup> According to Hsi-Huey Liang, police leaders in the early Third Republic championed the development of a force that would stress surveillance of foreigners and would work to safeguard the integrity of French land and values from outside. He writes that, “with the French nation, its sovereign body, thus protected from any unwanted influence from outside, France could afford true political freedom at home (the right to free association and free speech), that its citizens might oppose one another without fear, and through democratic elections determine their country’s future.”<sup>12</sup> This desire to defend the freedoms and values on which the Republic was founded would shape the intelligence gathered by police inside and outside of France as they strove to identify potential threats to the state’s autonomy.

The deployment of these strategies and cultures aiming to defend French interests necessitated a target, whether it be colonial subjects resisting the benefit of the spread of French “liberties,” countries that offered the promise of needed alliances, or a militarized neighbor seeking European hegemony. To intelligence collectors during the Third Republic, Germany represented the latter. As a scholar of intelligence and security, Peter Gill, writes, “the basic mandate of security intelligence agencies is to defend the parent state against threats to its integrity and

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<sup>11</sup> “According to a spy report to Chancellor Bismarck, Clemenceau in 1879 made the following declaration: ‘We want to destroy the political police and replace it with an aliens police. What we want is a police for the defence of the national territory [*une police de défense du territoire*] which will extend [from the French frontier] to the interior and exterior to hunt down the enemies of France [*les enemies du territoire*] and not [French] political parties.’ Liang, *Rise of Modern Police*, 45.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 45-46.

autonomy, or in other words, its ability to exercise power.”<sup>13</sup> Secrecy would be needed to protect the power of the French state from German influence.

In twentieth-century analyses of the French army in the years prior to WWI, historians note military planners’ obsession with Germany, yet focus almost entirely on the decade immediately preceding the war.<sup>14</sup> Whereas scholars mention that prior to a 1909 war plan that declared Germany as France’s main foe – before entering into a series of alliances and agreements – France’s primary enemy could have just as easily been Britain or Italy, perusal of intelligence archives says otherwise.<sup>15</sup> In fact, it appears that the prevailing notion of German aggression was present even before police and military agents gathered intelligence, and thus their “discoveries” about German capabilities and intentions served essentially as self-fulfilling prophecies.<sup>16</sup> In the mission *to know* the designs harbored by France’s

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<sup>13</sup> Peter Gill, *Policing Politics: Security Intelligence and the Liberal Democratic State* (London: F. Cass, 1994), 55.

<sup>14</sup> Christopher Andrew, “France and the German Menace,” and Jan Karl Tanenbaum, “French Estimates of Germany’s Operational War Plans,” both in May, *Knowing One’s Enemies*.

<sup>15</sup> The “official” declaration of Germany as France’s primary enemy came with war plan no. XVI composed in 1909, which proclaimed: “In the present state of our foreign relations only one conflict of decisive importance for France is foreseeable – the conflict with the German armies on our northeastern frontier.” Andrew, “France and the German Menace,” 126-128. At the beginning of the twentieth century, German military planners Von Moltke and Schlieffen both recorded their view that France was Germany’s number one enemy, and the country around which war preparation would revolve. Mark Hewitson, “Images of the Enemy: German Depictions of the French Military, 1890-1914,” *War in History* 11, no. 1 (2004): 4-5.

<sup>16</sup> Historians have taken different approaches to assessing German war aims in the decades prior to WWI. In Fritz Fischer’s famous 1961 thesis, he argued that Germany was wholly responsible for the outbreak of the war, and that Germany felt pressure to grasp for “world power” rather than face decline. Niall Ferguson then countered this argument by placing the blame for the war on Britain and the other European powers. Disputing Fischer, he denies that Germany held a Napoleonic aim of European domination, and while he does not want to go so far as calling Germany’s move a “preventive war,” he advances the idea that Germany may have sought a military “first strike” to prevent military deterioration. Disputing both of these and subsequent theses, military historian Mark Hewitson argues that German assessments of French military strength in the half-century prior to World War I did in fact allow the German military to calculate how and when a successful war against France could be waged. He shows that while the French were correct in predicting that Germany had visions of a future war, German certainty of potential victory against France came later than many would imagine, and importantly for this chapter, not until the 1890s. Using records

main foe, the collectors of secret information working for the nascent intelligence services would be the authority to provide the army and the nation with the best possible means of discovery. It was thus these so-called experts – whose word went all the more unquestioned because of the secrecy involved – who were able to develop the narrative of a hostile neighbor with a voracious appetite for war.

Between 1870 and 1914, the specific goal of France's intelligence experts was never explicitly set forth. In practice, however, agents spent a large majority of their time watching Germany, both in France and outside. Germany was of course not the only place where intelligence was deployed, and the French army, police, and diplomatic forces also devoted energies to watching other European neighbors (England and Italy in particular), as well as the state's colonial interests. As intelligence developed, confidence in what it could achieve grew, and thus practitioners used their observation of secret information to bolster their own notions of how best to protect France. The search for evidence of hostilities therefore yielded just that, contributing to anxieties that filled the space between war and peace.

Confirmation of bellicose intentions piled up through years of intelligence gathering. The account created by French intelligence was the product of "professional" collectors of knowledge, and therefore was construed not as impressions, but as fact. Taken together, the reports and analyses of intelligence agents told the story of Germany building its armed forces, producing more weapons, attempting to copy French weapons, and becoming more militarized,

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from diplomats, military attachés, the German General Staff, and other planners, Hewitson shows that Germany perceived France as "a powerful and, at times, expanding military force until the late 1890s," after which it assessed France as a weakening military power. Fischer, *Germany's Aims*. Ferguson, *Pity of War*; Hewitson, "Images."



with the presumed obvious goal of starting a war with France. The reality of Germany's warlike intentions – which waxed and waned throughout the period between 1870 and 1914 – is less relevant than the results of harboring that belief.<sup>17</sup> To defend the nation from what military intelligence claimed was inevitable, France would have to improve its military capabilities, and be prepared for a war to come.

### *The French Police: Traditional Bastion of Intelligence Work*

For centuries, the French police had a reputation as being the often-unscrupulous body that would undertake reconnaissance work for the nation. The establishment of internal police dates back to 1667, though it was in the eighteenth century that the preference for a central organization of police surveillance evolved.<sup>18</sup> These networks relied on informants, plot mentalities, and patterns of violence and disorder. Under Napoleon, intelligence and secret information gained a place of greater prominence, as well as an increased association with the military. The Emperor also strengthened his police operations by utilizing the *gendarmerie*,

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<sup>17</sup> Studies of the records of the German General Staff, intelligence networks, and others responsible for information gathering in Germany reveal that Germany was constantly assessing its readiness for a potential war against France, and studying the French military to determine the extent of the competition. Robert T. Foley writes that with the exception of the technological realm (predominantly in armaments), German intelligence viewed the French military as tactically weak prior to 1914. This assessment allowed Germany to believe that it would be assured a quick victory in the event of a future war against France. In part this assurance depended on knowing French war plans, and thus German spies and its intelligence service would be crucial for that side. Robert T. Foley, "Easy Target or Invincible Enemy? German Intelligence Assessments of France Before the Great War," *Journal of Intelligence History* 5, no. 2 (2005). Similarly, Hewitson found that Germany viewed the French military as weak, though only from the 1890s onward. Hewitson, "Images." An example showing that Bismarck was not seeking war, at least in 1887, was the Schnaebelé Affair. During this affair, which brought France and Germany to the brink of war, Bismarck was the one to back down, releasing Schnaebelé back to France rather than commencing hostilities. Subsequent analysis presumes that this decision came due to the fact that Germany was not yet ready for war. See, e.g. Liang, *Rise of Modern Police*, 146.

<sup>18</sup> Arlette Farge, *Subversive Words: Public Opinion in Eighteenth-Century France*, trans. Rosemary Morris (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994); Richard Cobb, *The Police and the People: French Popular Protest, 1789-1820* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970).

France's paramilitary force, as well as his more infamous "administrative police," a unit serving in part as the secret police of Napoleon's Ministers of Police Joseph Fouché and his successor Jean-Marie Savary. These forces became expert at gathering information about France's domestic and foreign enemies.

The years between the fall of the First Empire and the establishment of the Third Republic saw a focus on domestic over international surveillance with increased size, power, and bureaucratization of police forces.<sup>19</sup> As the police presence grew throughout the country in the first half of the nineteenth century, officers helped to define insiders and outsiders, friends and "enemies" of the regime.<sup>20</sup> When Napoleon III came to power, he continued to use the nation's police to watch presumed internal enemies and anyone else who might disrupt the peace of the Empire. He also began to turn his gaze to France's borders, and with an imperial decree of February 22, 1855 created the railroad police, the *police spéciale de surveillance des chemins de fer*, whose tasks involved policing and surveying foreigners on French territory.<sup>21</sup>

The rise in prestige experienced by the French police throughout the nineteenth century came at the expense of France's military. While the military did

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<sup>19</sup> In nineteenth-century France, the police rose in connection with the country's shifting demographics. The convergence of the working classes, also viewed as "dangerous classes," in cities, as described by Louis Chevalier, led leaders and the bourgeoisie to seek increased state protection. Throughout the 1800s, the police forces received greater amounts of state funding, and came under increasingly centralized direction, with officers given more sophisticated equipment and training. See, Chevalier, *Laboring classes*; Liang, *Rise of Modern Police*. The French police also "made aggressive use of spies and *agents provocateurs* to disrupt the revolutionary groups which threatened the regime." Porch, *French Secret Services*, 18.

<sup>20</sup> Merriman, *Police Stories*.

<sup>21</sup> Decree of February 22, 1855, analyzed in "Note sur les commissaires spéciaux de police sur les chemins de fer," by ministry of justice, Archives Nationales (AN), BB<sup>80</sup> 953. According to John Stead, "There were originally thirty commissaires of police, six stationed in Paris, two in Lyon, and the rest singly at the more important railway stations. To assist them there were seventy *inspecteurs*." Philip John Stead, *The Police of France* (New York: Collier Macmillan Publishers, 1983), 68.

begin to gain political influence after the Revolution, the July Monarchy removed officers commanding military divisions from missions of surveillance and opinion gathering.<sup>22</sup> The work of political policing and surveillance was left to the prefects and those beneath them. The only real intelligence gathering being performed by the military, aside from the topographical work of the *Dépôt de la Guerre*, was that charged to the officers of the *bureaux arabes* in Algeria.

Notably, the majority of the police work through the fall of the Second Empire focused much more on domestic surveillance than on foreign affairs. The practice of watching and observing French citizens, which dated from the *ancien régime*, continued through the Revolution and well into the nineteenth century. As Douglas Porch notes, “in France, [up through the 1860s] the fear of internal subversion, aided by outside influence, was the first preoccupation of intelligence.”<sup>23</sup> However, the Franco-Prussian War would change this, as after the defeat, the entire nation grew to be much more suspicious about the schemes of its neighbors. It was therefore at this time that intelligence began to broaden beyond France’s borders, as well as extending from the police to the military.

Under the Third Republic, the police force continued its practices of observation. The police in Paris had been called upon in September of 1870 to support the fledgling Republic upon its proclamation, and in the early years of the Republic worked to minimize Bonapartist dissent. With the Republic’s stability far from ensured in the first decade of its existence, much of the police surveillance in France and in neighboring Switzerland was on presumed threats to the regime,

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<sup>22</sup> Laurent, *Politiques de l’ombre*, 239.

<sup>23</sup> Porch, *French Secret Services*, 20.

watching those from former Communards to popular leaders like Gambetta.<sup>24</sup>

Within France, the political police – the branch that performed intelligence duties – and police such as the *brigade de recherches* headed by Captain Lombard was responsible for the role of “spying” on the Republic’s own citizens.<sup>25</sup> Over time, this domestic spying would expand to put much focus on the task of counterespionage, as the notion grew that German and other foreign spies represented major threats to the Republic.<sup>26</sup>

Police intelligence operations abroad similarly aimed to gather necessary information to protect the new regime. The changed international situation after the Franco-Prussian War meant the need to assess how foreign politics would affect the French Republic. France found itself in need of allies to secure its position against a united Germany. Meanwhile, the remaining monarchical states fought the rising trend of Socialist and revolutionary discontent, which police feared presumably could spread to France as well. Previous French regimes throughout

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<sup>24</sup> For example, the political police expressed concern in 1880 that Gambetta sought war with Germany, and worried that his bellicose overtures were expressions of his own desire to take more power. Either way, the police feared that too much support for him could result in the downfall of the Republic. A police report dated August 3, 1880 noted, “People begin to say that M. Gambetta wants war with Germany and that he will succeed in having it. The idea is gaining ground and becoming accepted even though no one welcomes it. Everyone thinks it is a folly but is nonetheless prepared to do his duty when the time comes. The friends of Gambetta talk about it all the time and in the mess halls the army officers begin to take on bellicose airs.” Liang, *Rise of Modern Police*, 141.

<sup>25</sup> Andrieux called Lombard the “eyes and ears of the prefect.” Lombard was charged with recruiting and paying agents. The police maintained secret agents who were not actually on the payroll of the municipal police, but who held “ordinary” jobs and were then paid by the *fonds de police secrete*. The political police had been disbanded under the Paris Commune, but was reinstated quietly in 1874. Former police prefect Louis Andrieux describes some of the roles of political police, which involved a variety of ways of placing secret agents in disguise among the French population. Louis Andrieux, *Souvenirs d’un préfet de police* (Paris: J. Rouff, 1885), 33-36.

<sup>26</sup> Police watched foreigners on trains, in commercial activities, personal affairs, society meetings and more. They noted the entry into France of German officers dressed in plainclothes, described suspicious correspondents employed with French newspapers, and even prepared reports on the operation of the German intelligence services. Notes found in Archives de la Prefecture de Police (APP) BA 1332-1334. For discussion of operation of German intelligence services, see note dated November 24, 1872 from a correspondent in Berlin, APP BA 1332.

the nineteenth century had succumbed to revolutionary discord following moments of unrest, and it was therefore possible that the new Third Republic could as well. Secret intelligence collection would allow the state to remain at least one step ahead in the event that any chaos might break out across Europe.<sup>27</sup> The Prefecture of Paris thus maintained agents in foreign regions, who used intelligence gathered in secret to predict threats to the regime, both ideologically and militarily.

Police agents therefore began to studiously gather the type of information that would allow the state to assess the status of European neighbors. Reporting from places such as Brussels, Stockholm, Athens, Hamburg, London, St. Petersburg, Rome, and other locales, agents wrote to Paris with observations on a variety of questions.<sup>28</sup> These notes sent to the Prefecture of Police in Paris were unsigned without any headers for identification, yet all spoke with the authoritative tone of an expert in describing weapons technology, political allegiances, or the view of officials.<sup>29</sup> At a time when open-source information was limited, these reports would have served as means for authorities in the Third Republic to view their

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<sup>27</sup> In fact, it was the anxiety of governments following the revolutions of 1848 that contributed to the development of the political police in the first place. Emsley and Weinberger, *Policing Western Europe*, x.

<sup>28</sup> APP BA 311, BA 317, BA 323, BA 332, BA 336 (and other boxes in this series). Other folders included Breslau, Rostock, Potsdam, Luxembourg, the Hague, Italy, Austria, Bulgaria, Tunisia, Spain, Turkey, Egypt, and more. The focus of these notes included weapons, military maneuvers, political rumors and actions taken by foreign governments.

<sup>29</sup> The agents' letters conveyed the confidence they maintained in their information. For example, on November 30, 1877, one agent wrote from Belgium that based on his contacts, he was "sure" that German scouts had fully assessed Belgian territory and that French agents needed to do likewise. He wrote that the news that he gathered "definitively confirms" the "conditions that I have previously spelled out." Another wrote on May 26, 1874 that information from Russia "proved" the theory that he had suggested prior about lack of military preparation. In addition, the letters use technical information to indicate the authors' familiarity with the subjects. APP BA 311.

place in the world. In fact, the opinions and observations of these agents were occasionally passed along to French leaders eager to learn the latest intelligence.<sup>30</sup>

Agents' collected information from abroad that would confirm their view of the superiority of the Republic that they had helped to consolidate. They criticized Bismarck's heavy use of the military to patrol society, as well as his crackdown on German Socialists.<sup>31</sup> Prior to the assassination of Alexander II in 1881, they saw the Russian police as unable to control the wave of revolutionary activity aiming to overthrow the traditional monarchy. French secret police in Brussels expressed concern that King Leopold would succumb to German strength and ally with Bismarck over Republican allies.<sup>32</sup> Even neutral Switzerland fell victim to criticism by the Paris police for its role in facilitating the spread and smuggling of leftist propaganda to and from other European nations. As the police gained practice in their reporting on foreign revolutionaries, they were also able to use their secret knowledge to aid the Republic; for example establishing ties with Russian police that would lay the groundwork for the eventual Franco-Russian military allegiance so necessary to protect French interests in the face of an increasingly hostile Germany.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Mitchell, "Xenophobic Style," 416. Observations written by commissaires speciales also made their way to the desks of military leaders and the ministry of foreign affairs.

<sup>31</sup> Liang, *Rise of Modern Police*, 102-106.

<sup>32</sup> Note dated July 7, 1877, APP BA 311.

<sup>33</sup> Throughout the 1880s, French police worked with Russian police to help track Nihilists and other opponents to the Russian tsar who worked on producing propaganda and gaining support for an eventual revolution. Liang notes that the language in which the French police portrayed the Russian revolutionaries took an unfavorable bias towards the tsarist perspective. This confirms how the opinions of those secretly collecting intelligence could be written in a way that would eventually help secure French national security. Liang, *Rise of Modern Police*, 112-134.

The reports aimed to recount the views of insiders, such that agents often pointed out that their intelligence was counter to that circling in the public sphere. For example, a correspondent in Hamburg discussed troop movements near Poland provoked by religious conflict, movements that he claimed had been denied by German officials.<sup>34</sup> From London, another agent wrote with insight into the debates within the English Cabinet, in particular those regarding the question of whether or not to carry out an expedition to the interior of Africa near the Gold Coast. Others with a particularly military bent reported from places like Brussels, Berlin, and Mainz about the development of weapons using technology unavailable on the open market. The agents' choice to stress that their information differed from that accessible to the public shows their own belief in the strength of intelligence gathered secretly, although how it may in fact have been interpreted is harder to know. In his studies of secrecy and security operations, Ritchie Lowry writes that while "secrecy maximizes the power potential of knowledge," one must beware that at times "the adequacy, correctness, or appropriateness of knowledge and information is not [necessarily] the central concern" of those gathering it.<sup>35</sup> The police agents reporting back to the prefecture in Paris therefore either consciously or subconsciously selected the information that leaders would use to make decisions, thereby giving the agents the power over how the security of the Republic would be viewed.

This language illuminated a genre of knowledge production that stemmed from observation paired with individual assumptions, one typically associated with

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<sup>34</sup> Note dated February 21, 1874, APP BA 311.

<sup>35</sup> Lowry, "Sociology of Secrecy," 438.

the practice of espionage.<sup>36</sup> Therefore, the reports from agents were not simply summaries of the information that they collected, but also attempts at synthesis or prediction of future affairs, speculating on possible allegiances, or imagining imminent hostilities. Writing in 1874, one of the Prefecture's agents speculated that Russia was far from being prepared for war, and would not be ready until at least 1878. The same note claimed that Prussia predicted French war preparation wouldn't be complete until 1877 and concluded that, "we thus understand the importance of these figures," highlighting the question of war readiness as a critical factor for intelligence estimates.<sup>37</sup> Such calculations would allow powers to decide not only *if* to go to war, but *when* to go to war. In the 1870s, French police intelligence assumed that Bismarck's preference for the Republic over other possible autocratic regimes in France was one preventative factor to the start of another war, later reports did not betray similar confidence.

Messages coming from Brussels regarding German war intentions were emblematic of the kinds of conclusions that intelligence professionals drew over the course of the next several decades. The police agents there considered an upcoming war with Germany, and Belgium's possible involvement. In a note from 1877, an agent speculated on Germany's territorial ambitions, fearing that Belgium might be next to succumb to German desires. The report stressed the need for Republican France to protect its northern neighbor, particularly from the threat to democratic

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<sup>36</sup> For example, Lowry writes, "Spies and counter spies are employed to ferret out needed information or to be sure that privileged information is not disclosed. In such a context it is no longer possible to separate facts from lies, truth from fiction, research from gossip, or useful information from useless trivia." *ibid.*, 440.

<sup>37</sup> Note dated May 26, 1874, APP BA 311.



virtues.<sup>38</sup> Another, however, expressed concerns that several German agents had taken up residence in Belgium, with apparently tacit approval from King Leopold.<sup>39</sup> While unsure of the role that Belgium would play, in one of his reports the French agent described war with Germany as “upcoming and inevitable.”<sup>40</sup> This assured statement again demonstrates the kinds of conclusions that intelligence led those who ingested it to draw – conclusions that seemed to reflect a common mentality among intelligence agents.<sup>41</sup> Police notes transmitting intelligence gathered in secret in France and abroad display a conviction in the moral superiority of the Republic. This desire to uphold the new regime and protect the integrity of the nation resulted in the forging of an alliance with Russia, and in the growth of an attitude towards Germany based in resentment and fear.

*Perfecting Military Intelligence: The Algerian Conquest and the Bureaux Arabes*

The French state’s use of intelligence to inform itself of the behavior, attitudes, and intentions of another group has in recent years garnered the attention of historians in the case of the North African colonies. Patricia Lorcin and George Trumbull, among others, have described how in order to carry out the project of “pacification” of Algeria during the nineteenth century, French authorities collected knowledge about colonial populations in order to determine policy towards them.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Note dated April 19, 1877, APP BA 311.

<sup>39</sup> Note dated July 7, 1877, APP BA 311. This warning was evidently taken seriously by the army’s intelligence service, as they hired at least one agent to travel undercover to Brussels in order to learn the identities and projects of German spies in Belgium. See Lajoux, *Mes souvenirs*.

<sup>40</sup> Agent report from Brussels dated April 19, 1877, APP BA 311.

<sup>41</sup> Note that at least one agent, identified only as agent B No. 3, sent dispatches from Hamburg that helped to convince the Duc Decazes that there was no actual war scare in 1875. Mitchell, “Xenophobic Style,” 416. This did not mean, of course, that war was not being prepared for a later date.

Lorcin develops the idea that expertise in social science justified assumptions about native populations. Trumbull's recent monograph presents information gathering as a fundamental aspect of imperial rule. He centers on ethnography as a form of knowledge production, describing how a particular genre of reporting allowed authors to present impressions based in politics and culture in the form of "facts."<sup>43</sup> These impressions then helped to dictate decisions made in the colonizing process.

The intelligence-gathering project in Algeria centered around groups of officers who formed military institutions known as the *bureaux arabes*.<sup>44</sup> The *bureaux* were established in 1844, and had a variety of different tasks, including policing, administering justice, surveying topography, and drafting reports on their findings.<sup>45</sup> Yet the Arab Bureaus had a principally informative function, being conceived essentially to assure the "intellectual conquest" of Algeria and to

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<sup>42</sup> Patricia M. E. Lorcin, *Imperial identities: Stereotyping, Prejudice and Race in Colonial Algeria* (London; New York: I.B. Tauris, 1995); George R. Trumbull, *An Empire of Facts: Colonial Power, Cultural Knowledge, and Islam in Algeria, 1870-1914* (Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

<sup>43</sup> Trumbull centers his argument on opposition to the historical notion of the development of ethnology as a "value-free description of other cultures." Instead, he writes, ethnographical practices arose out of the power politics of empire. "Ethnography, as its concomitant form of narrative, marshaled that methodology [observation] to make authoritative statements, enabling the oppressive political interests of the colonial state to appear less obtrusive." Thus ethnographers, who by profession were theoretically to be objective observers, "worked in close partnerships with the colonial administration's intentions and parroted its goals." Trumbull, *Empire of Facts*, 13-14, 53.

<sup>44</sup> Additionally, rumors exist of French spies in Algeria at the beginning of the century, including Boutin, a spy for Napoleon, who was claimed to have embarked on a reconnaissance mission to Algeria in 1808 that paved the way for the invasion of 1830. Léo Berjaud, *Boutin, agent secret de Napoleon Ier et précurseur de l'Algérie française* (Paris: F. Chambriand, 1950).

<sup>45</sup> For the tasks assigned to this office, see *Instruction réglementaire sur le service des bureaux arabes du 21 mars 1867 avec une note sur ce service, réponse aux attaques dirigées contre le gouvernement de l'Algérie en 1868* in SHD 1H 238. For a thorough account of the *bureaux arabes*, see Jacques Frémeaux, *Les bureaux arabes dans l'Algérie de la conquête* (Paris: Denoël, 1993). Frémeaux describes their function as initially consisting of the activity of *renseignement*, but also developing authority over policing, fiscal policy, education, and administration. According to Moshe Gershovich, these officers, chosen from among the army's elite, "were supposed to become France's experts on Arab affairs," demonstrating an early respect for the expertise of knowledge production. Moshe Gershovich, *French Military Rule in Morocco: Colonialism and its Consequences* (London; Portland, OR: F. Cass, 2000), 84.

maintain order.<sup>46</sup> Officers were dealing with the unknown, unearthing information that while not “secret” in the same way that a mobilization plan would be, was equally mysterious and needing somehow to be unlocked. The information they collected on native populations subsequently allowed the French state to reach conclusions about Algerians’ primitiveness, and the need for benevolent European “civilization.”<sup>47</sup> As Abdelmajid Hannoum notes from his perusal of the records of the *bureaux arabes*, the conquest of Algeria was in fact a “conquest of knowledge.”<sup>48</sup> He states, “Knowledge is a means by which and through which an institution not only justifies its practices, but also rules others. Thus, it is a weapon and precisely because it is so, it is a disputed realm of conflict and struggle.”<sup>49</sup> Intelligence provided this knowledge, and thus, as officers honed it at the end of the nineteenth century, it became an ever-greater weapon of control.

The connection between the army’s intelligence work in North Africa in the middle of the century and its development on the Continent at the beginning of the Third Republic remains to be teased out in its entirety, but there can be no question that it exists. The mastermind behind the *bureaux arabes* was Maréchal Thomas Robert Bugeaud, Algeria’s governor general appointed in 1840. Bugeaud also authored a number of books on military strategy, within which he championed the use of spies at a time when nearly everyone else held them in disrepute.<sup>50</sup> His

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<sup>46</sup> Abdelmajid Hannoum, “Colonialism and Knowledge in Algeria: The Archives of the Arab Bureau,” *History and Anthropology* 12, no. 4 (2001): 345.

<sup>47</sup> On the *mission civilatrice* in Algeria, see Lorcin, or Herman Lebovics, *True France*.

<sup>48</sup> Hannoum, “Colonialism,” 344. Here he is citing Bernard Cohen.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 353.

<sup>50</sup> Maréchal Bugeaud, *Aperçus sur quelques détails de la guerre* (Paris: Duverger, 1832).

writings on military strategy, and advocacy of espionage in particular, evince an “any means necessary” attitude that reflects contemporary understandings of the French colonial projects. He argued that intelligence work should be conducted by officers and soldiers, and thus urged that military personnel take up training during peacetime. Texts discussing the need to foster and improve professional intelligence at the end of the nineteenth century invariably cited Bugeaud as one of their inspirations.<sup>51</sup>

Moreover, nearly every single officer who would take the lead in designing or directing French intelligence at the beginning of the Third Republic had served in Africa, where intelligence practices were commonplace. Fathers of French intelligence theory Jules Lewal and Theodore Jung, as well as former heads of the high command’s *service de renseignements* Abraham Samuel, Emile Louis Campionnet, and Paul Grisot all served in campaigns in Africa in the 1850s or 1860s.<sup>52</sup> Moreover, one of the Third Republic’s intelligence masters, Colonel Jean Conrad Sandherr, spent a number of years conducting reconnaissance in North Africa before being appointed head of the Deuxième Bureau’s Statistical Section in 1886. The knowledge collection undertaken by military intelligence specialists in North Africa undoubtedly helped to successfully shape the French colonial agenda in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries; therefore it is little surprise that specialists would seek to do the same back in Europe.

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<sup>51</sup> See, e.g. Violle, *L’espionnage militaire*, 86; Lewal, “Tactique des Renseignements.”; Froment, *L’Espionnage militaire*. An article in *l’Éclair* dated March 5, 1890 noted that Bugeaud “claimed honor for spies,” and discussed his advocacy of this profession.

<sup>52</sup> See the officers’ individual files in SHD: 1K 732 (Jung), 10Yd 340 (Campionnet), 9Yd 170 (Grisot), 7Yd 1616 (Lewal), 5Yf 41489 (Samuel).

*"Official" Sources of Secret Intelligence-Gathering*

During the first two decades of the Third Republic, the army enjoyed an unprecedented prestige. Army historian Paul-Marie de la Gorce wrote that this was a period when, "perhaps more than at any other time, [the army] was in rapport with public sentiment, enjoyed the support of all social classes and was regarded with a warmth of feeling that precluded all risk of crisis."<sup>53</sup> The source of this positive emotional attachment to the army, the *arche sainte* of the Republic, stemmed from the defeat of 1870 and the Commune, following which the army appeared as the body most likely to contribute to the resurrection of French glory, as well as a desire to avoid any further catastrophe. Although politicians disagreed on certain details regarding conscription and service, leaders and the public were equally in favor of maintaining a strong army, ready to respond in the event of attack from outside. By the 1890s, however, this enthusiasm began to fade, as memories of Alsace-Lorraine and *revanche* were replaced by the quest for colonial glory, and anti-militarism rose in conjunction with the power and voice of the working class. It was in the formative decades of intelligence practice, however, that the army was able to operate without protest from outside, and in this environment that the elite *état-major* and its scientific practice of intelligence collection was able to gather knowledge about France's friends and enemies.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> La Gorce, *The French Army*. He also writes that the attitude of "fervent enthusiasm" towards the army "year after year was reinvigorated by a literature that evoked memories of the 1870 defeat, by the homage paid to the memory of Alsace Lorraine and by accounts of France's colonial epic. With every summer, July 14 returned and strengthened the cult of the Army." 17.

<sup>54</sup> Douglas Porch describes the discrepancy between conscripted soldiers and professional officers in the first few decades of the Third Republic, writing that during this period the officers of the *état-major* became the "army's new elite." Porch, *March to the Marne*, 57.

With the creation of the Deuxième Bureau in 1871, and the *service de renseignements* within it in 1874, the military began to expand its role as a collector of hidden intelligence by going now on fact-finding missions in Europe as their colleagues had once done in Africa. As demonstrated in the last chapter, a handful of individuals within the army had put forth theoretical arguments for the use of espionage to gauge the intentions and the potential of France's friends and enemies. In turning to examine this activity in practice, we see what material the army's agents collected from abroad and in turn conveyed to Paris. Contrary to suggestions proffered by Bugeaud in the first half of the nineteenth century and echoed by later theorists, the *fin-de-siècle* intelligence services did not appear to offer any kind of training for spies, nor did they possess any set of instructions regarding how the practice would operate. Thus, the groups gathering intelligence for the army were varied, and certainly not all were "spies," in the vulgar sense of the word.<sup>55</sup> Some officers stationed abroad, like their predecessors in the *bureaux arabes*, were tasked with collecting intelligence in an "official" context. Not all information the army sought was openly available, however, and often France's "official" representatives abroad chose to gather intelligence "unofficially." Regardless, the act of collecting intelligence was seen as crucial to the military's ability to assess its situation, however the information was amassed. The variety of agents whose intelligence contributed to the army's overall understanding consisted of a network across Europe and beyond, who together provided the military with the presumed

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<sup>55</sup> Military theorists, analysts, and even contemporary historians have long sought to draw a line between espionage and other sorts of reconnaissance missions by the military. The distinction likely has to do with cultural perceptions of propriety and honor, which will be discussed in further detail in Chapter 7.

knowledge to confirm what had become a national bias of German strategizing to begin another war against France.

Falling within the grey area between espionage and open reconnaissance were military attachés and army or navy officers designated “on mission,” with some missions considered official and others more secret. The fact that officers on mission typically worked to gather information that could not be found in official sources allowed some people to concede that in spite of a view to the contrary, officers could indeed be considered spies.<sup>56</sup> Military attachés were also officers or soldiers who represented the army in embassies abroad, thereby giving them privileged access to foreign intelligence.

From archival notes it becomes apparent that in the first few decades of the Third Republic the importance of officers on mission gained greater recognition. Directors of the Deuxième Bureau and other highly placed officers discussed the need to find men of quality with language skills and other “special aptitudes” to represent them on such missions.<sup>57</sup> While sometimes officers would have official missions outside of France, other times individuals would merely be released “on vacation” to places that the military was interested in learning about.<sup>58</sup> These

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<sup>56</sup> Roger Mennevé, for example, qualifies “officers on secret mission,” as fitting into the category of “spy,” along with secret agents and spies in the accepted view of the word. Mennevé, 127. Also, in an interview in the newspaper *La France Militaire*, an anonymous intelligence professional conceded, “Each year, French officers are sent on ‘missions abroad.’ One knows very well what that means. These missions consist of discovering the secrets of foreign governments by disguising themselves and appealing to traitors.” “Espionnage et Trahison: Entretien avec un Colonel,” *La France Militaire*, November 20, 1894.

<sup>57</sup> Letter from the Minister of War dated June 2, 1880, SHD 7N 664.

<sup>58</sup> General Jarras testified in his memoirs to the fact that officers, in lieu of going on official missions, would take “congés” or “vacances” in foreign countries to learn about them. Jarras, *Souvenirs*, 124. While some officers only traveled in uniform, in certain cases the Ministry encouraged officers to travel in disguise, sending some officers dressed *en tenue bourgeoise* to inspect various factories in Germany. See note dated March 19, 1890, SHD 1M 2195.

officers would be given specific instructions with a particular itinerary and were asked to make a variety of observations about procedures within foreign armies. Officers on mission were given supplementary funding that most likely came directly from the War Minister's *fonds secrets*.<sup>59</sup>

The information collected by officers on mission represented material believed to be helpful for the *état-major* in planning for future wars. Officers tried to recreate a detailed picture of the physical and administrative landscapes of the areas they would enter – describing things such as rail networks, positions of troops, and authority structure of various institutions in places like Alsace-Lorraine and along the Vosges.<sup>60</sup> Whether or not it actually made any difference in the eventual war that transpired, the intelligence gathered by these officers was considered valuable by both sides involved. In France, all of the reports sent back to the War Ministry were stamped “confidential,” giving heed to their worth in the eyes of their readers. In Germany, too, the intelligence gathered by these officers was clearly deemed worth protecting, as French officers found collecting this kind of information were routinely captured and arrested.<sup>61</sup>

Notably, a number of officers who went “on mission” for the army also played significant roles in the development of the French intelligence community, including Jean Sandherr in Germany at the end of the 1870s and Jules Lewal in

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<sup>59</sup> See letter from Minister of War dated June 2, 1880 wherein he mentions that he would be willing to give officers “who seem to possess the conditions to fulfill such a mission” supplementary funding beyond their own personal costs. SHD 7N 664, and Froment, *L’Espionnage militaire*, 98-99.

<sup>60</sup> See SHD 1M 2137.

<sup>61</sup> Officers arrested abroad and charged with espionage include Degouy and Delguey, Reclus, Tissot, and Letellier. See also, note copying report of the Gazette de Cologne has a list of French spies arrested in Germany from 1875-1886, includes twelve different people, often officers. Archives de la Ministère des Affaires Etrangères (MAE) Affaires Diverses politiques, Allemagne 32.



1888.<sup>62</sup> Another high profile “vacationing” officer collecting reconnaissance for the Deuxième Bureau was Colonel Jung, who voyaged to Spain and Andorra in 1881.<sup>63</sup> A letter from the Minister of War informing Jung that he was not on a formal mission in Spain suggests that Jung was in fact carrying out a secret mission, as the War Office extended his “vacation” from two to six months and proceeded to ask him to look specifically at the work being done on Spanish rail lines, reminding him not to take any notes while on the spot.<sup>64</sup> While in Spain, Jung made detailed observations regarding the topography of the country, provided “precious intelligence on defensive conditions,” and combined these with archival research to learn about Spain’s past wars and subsequent division of territory.<sup>65</sup> His research must have proved useful to the army, as in a report on the Pyrenees compiled in 1883, Minister of War Jean Thibaudin noted that, “Colonel Jung did significant work, demonstrating a considerable talent for observation and research.”<sup>66</sup> The need to build knowledge regarding each of France’s proximate neighbors again confirms the military’s view that the best strategy for protecting the land would be to gain familiarity with it, and the fact that Jung performed this mission “under cover” seems to have given it even greater legitimacy.

A second group of “official” state representatives unofficially gathering information for the Deuxième Bureau were military attachés. Military attachés

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<sup>62</sup> On Sandherr, see his personal file in SHD 1K 171, and for Lewal, see note dated July 28, 1888 SHD 7N 662, going on a mission to Germany in August of that year.

<sup>63</sup> Fonds privées of General Jung, SHD 1K 732, Carton 1.

<sup>64</sup> Letter to Jung from the Minister of War dated June 10, 1881, referencing a confidential circular from the Deuxième Bureau of June 1880.

<sup>65</sup> See report by Colonel Thibaudin dated 1883. SHD 1K 732, Carton 1.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

were military officers placed abroad in foreign embassies. Though military attachés were officially commissioned and accredited by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the army reorganization of the 1870s had made the Deuxième Bureau the centralizing office for information coming from outside of France. An announcement of March 20, 1878 officially declared that this office should deal with all affairs concerning military attachés abroad and officers on mission in foreign countries.<sup>67</sup> Officials in the War Ministry thus often came between the attaché and other diplomatic personnel. In a scholarly account of military intelligence, A. Froment claimed that military attachés were France's "most precious and most competent of our sources of *renseignement* in military matters."<sup>68</sup> These men were to represent France and the military, and as such, should be "distinguished officers with true valor" who also had an extensive knowledge of military questions.<sup>69</sup> By the mid-1880s, Minister of War Jean-Baptiste Campenon declared that the Deuxième Bureau had already acquired considerable information over the previous fifteen years to be used by attachés as a base for their missions.<sup>70</sup> With the requisite details of terrain and other questions accounted for, the next step in intelligence gathering would presumably be more based on individual assumptions or intuition, which themselves would necessary arise from views engrained by contemporary politics and culture.

In fact, as the Deuxième Bureau sought to define its purpose in the early decades of the Third Republic, leaders asserted their views regarding the roles of military attachés. A number of letters and directives in the military archives reveal

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<sup>67</sup> SHD 1M 2195.

<sup>68</sup> Froment, *L'Espionnage militaire*, 77.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, 93.

<sup>70</sup> Note dated November 17, 1885, SHD 1M 2195.

complaints about French military attachés, identifying issues of recruitment, criticizing the quality of individuals selected, and the lack of training that they seemed to receive. A letter from Lieutenant Colonel Samuel as head of the Deuxième Bureau identified the problem of the openness of information collected by military attachés.<sup>71</sup> He expressed concern that as their correspondences necessarily passed through several channels – first being seen by the ambassador, then the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, before finally reaching the Ministry of War – attachés were reluctant to express their real political opinions. Viewing politics as inextricably related to military questions such as armament, troops, and purchasing of material, he feared that the reports from attachés had lost their utility. A solution would be a division of duties, or else requests from the Deuxième Bureau for particular information.

While theoretically the concept of diplomatic exchange precluded representatives from carrying out espionage while stationed abroad, there is little question that a number of them did. In 1892, the attaché posted to Berlin passed along to the Deuxième Bureau a sample of some new material being used for German artillery, noting that he would “remain vague regarding the circumstances of how I could obtain it.”<sup>72</sup> This must have been a fairly common occurrence, as in a directive at the very end of the nineteenth century, the War Minister laid down in clear detail a statement that military attachés were specifically not to practice espionage when stationed abroad, as such behavior “compromises their position as

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<sup>71</sup> Letter dated March 1886, SHD 7N 664.

<sup>72</sup> Report from the attaché dated January 27, 1892, SHD 7N 1107.

privileged guests of the nation to which they are sent.”<sup>73</sup> One cannot say whether or not attachés all abided by this instruction, but its very presence in 1899 indicates that at least some military attachés had been engaged in espionage beforehand. Further, the War Minister’s statement was most likely a reaction to political opposition to the practice of allowing states to exchange military attachés. No doubt spurred by the revelations of Schwartzkoppen’s perfidy that surfaced during the Dreyfus Affair, a few of the Socialist deputies suggested reducing funds for attachés, given that these representatives often served unofficially as spies.<sup>74</sup> Even though the majority of information that would tell France about German military intentions, and vice versa, was available through open sources, the idea that secrets existed and could be unearthed both inspired and frightened leaders on both sides.

Like officers on mission, the attachés responded to specific requests from the War Minister, who would ask for information ranging from details of weapons technology to contemporary political issues. The information collected by military attachés at the request of the Deuxième Bureau helped to confirm to the army high command that France’s enemies were preparing for war. Many of the reports coming from officers on mission and military attachés described the state of the German army – in its numbers as well as its resources. They reported on weapons manufacturing technology, rail construction, signifiers such as details of uniforms and the kind of music played by the army on different occasions, and on public opinion, particularly regarding public views on warfare. The method of gathering –

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<sup>73</sup> *Instruction sur le service des attachés militaires à l'étranger* dated November 1899. SHD 7N 662.

<sup>74</sup> See discussion in the Chambre des Députés on March 11, 1899, reprinted in Mennevée, *L'espionnage international*, 103-118. The Socialist proposition was rejected. Schwartzkoppen was Germany’s military attaché stationed in the Parisian embassy who was known to buy military information from French soldiers and citizens, and who was responsible for hiring the real traitor of the Dreyfus Affair, Fernand Esterhazy.

in secret – gave credence to the reports as being truth, such as the report from an attaché who described a new German technique of cannon construction as something he observed that was “contrary to all of the military literature in France regarding German artillery.”<sup>75</sup> This information was passed along to the Deuxième Bureau, which could use it to assess the readiness and willingness of other European nations to go to war. With this intelligence, leaders could hope to improve French chances by having the best weapons production and the ability to recognize enemy tactics, if that eventuality were to transpire. Having entered into the Franco-Prussian War unprepared, intelligence professionals sought to assure that such a mistake was not repeated.

Indeed, the notes that remain in the files of the Deuxième Bureau and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs testify to the fact that beyond merely collecting “factual” information, military attachés acting as intelligence agents abroad speculated on the likelihood of upcoming war. In 1888, the military attaché posted in Austria-Hungary reported to his superiors that the Hapsburg army was “in point of fact, preparing for war.”<sup>76</sup> A report from Russia a few months later recounted a conversation between Prince Dolgoroukoff and a number of generals, wherein the prince presumed a good possibility of war in the spring because of Bismarck’s desire to consolidate more territory.<sup>77</sup> In the early twentieth century, the French military attaché to Belgium Captain Victor Duruy – whose file indicates that he did indeed engage with spies while in Brussels – submitted several reports that

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<sup>75</sup> Note from attaché militaire in Berlin to the Deuxième Bureau dated January 27, 1892, SHD 7N 1107.

<sup>76</sup> Report dated January 5, 1888, MAE Series C, Administrative, 4.

<sup>77</sup> Report dated March 28, 1888, MAE Series C, Administrative, 4.

hypothesized bellicose German intentions.<sup>78</sup> Observing Germany's construction of a rail network in poor regions along the borders of Belgium, Luxembourg and Holland, Duruy surmised that Germany's long-term plans involved taking parts of Belgium or Luxembourg in a future war in order to expand along the border with France and to be able to station troops just across from England.<sup>79</sup> Notably, while authorities certainly took Duruy's warnings into account as evidence that Germany was planning for an upcoming war, they neglected some of the details, as just a few years before the start of WWI, Duruy exchanged correspondence with the War Minister in which he predicted the eventual German attack on France through Belgium.<sup>80</sup>

The Duruy example also illustrates the fact that the military and its representatives did not hesitate to use "unofficial" sources of intelligence gathering, referred to in contemporary terms as agents or spies. The traces left by these individuals are unfortunately slim, but from what remains it is clear that intelligence officials employed a variety of civilians from different classes and backgrounds to assist in the collection of information, several of whom will be covered in more depth in the following chapter. Intelligence officials positioned these agents in embassies or other locales, sent them on intelligence gathering missions abroad, or placed them in domestic scenarios where they were likely to procure interesting information. From the evidence that remains, we see officials strategically placing agents in places affording access to intelligence about

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<sup>78</sup> Fonds Capitaine Duruy, SHD 1K 413.

<sup>79</sup> Note dated January 21, 1911, SHD 1K 413.

<sup>80</sup> See Tanenbaum, "French Estimates of German War Plans," in May, *Knowing One's Enemies*, 160-161.

Germany, and consequently returning knowledge that confirmed the notion of belligerency they were sent to discover.

*Army uses Intelligence to “Militarize” the Police*

By the early to mid-1880s, the Deuxième Bureau and the *service de renseignements* were quite convinced of the utility of intelligence to paint a picture of the military, political, and diplomatic situation of a variety of European nations. This knowledge would only increase with an expanded force of agents able to collect intelligence about France’s neighbors. It was from approximately this time that the military’s intelligence services turned to the Ministry of the Interior, seeking to employ members of France’s well-trained police forces to assist in gathering intelligence about Germany, Italy, England, and others. In working along with the army to observe any action taken by France’s enemies that could be construed as hostile or with belligerent aims, the police, too, contributed to the idea of France needing to be prepared to defend its land and its liberty.

One way in which members of the police force joined the army’s intelligence-gathering project was in working directly alongside officers of the Deuxième Bureau and the Statistical Section. Already from the 1870s, the *service de renseignements* and the Préfecture de Police had begun to develop a rapport involving exchanges of intelligence.<sup>81</sup> As professional espionage and counterespionage networks developed within the army, the relationship grew, to the point where police agents in Paris were put to work directly for the Statistical

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<sup>81</sup> For example, in 1872, head of the army’s intelligence service Abraham Samuel had written to the prefect of police asking him to transmit alerts and passport records of German subjects who crossed the border. In exchange, he would send them information relative to confirmed suspects. Letter dated April 5, 1872, APP BA 1332.

Section, such as the policeman who accompanied intelligence director Colonel Vincent on a mission to Zurich in 1883. On Vincent's instruction, the police agent followed and reported on an individual who Vincent found suspicious.<sup>82</sup> In the 1880s and 1890s, in addition to smaller missions, one or two members of the police force – usually a special commissioner – were administratively attached to the intelligence section of the army.<sup>83</sup> One such officer was Thomas-Louis Tomps, a policeman who began working with the intelligence section of the army in October 1886 under Vincent, and continued working for Sandherr throughout the 1880s and 1890s.<sup>84</sup> Tomps performed several important services for the SR, including traveling to Germany to recruit their officers as French agents.<sup>85</sup> His connection to the Section would result in his becoming embroiled in a few of the major side stories of the Dreyfus Affair.<sup>86</sup>

In addition, the War Ministry's espionage section recruited police agents with access to information about foreign projects, in particular the *commissaires spéciaux* located in border regions.<sup>87</sup> The area that got the most attention was not surprisingly the area along France's eastern border with Germany, although the War Ministry also asked police agents to collect reconnaissance in northern Italy

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<sup>82</sup> Agent report dated March 27, 1883, APP BA 1332.

<sup>83</sup> The connections began during the Vincent era, and the first to fill this role was an agent named Louis Geisen. Sébastien Laurent writes that the SR hired these officers as intermediaries between the Section and the more sordid spies who they employed to gain intelligence. Laurent, *Politiques de l'ombre*, 376-380.

<sup>84</sup> Tomps surveillance file in the police archives, APP BA 1285.

<sup>85</sup> See AN F<sup>7</sup> 12925, and Laurent, *Politiques de l'ombre*, 378.

<sup>86</sup> See documents describing Tomps' role in the Wessel/Przyborowsky affair in AN F<sup>7</sup> 12925.

<sup>87</sup> Letter from the Minister of the Interior to the Prefect of Police dated December 24, 1873 mentions that *commissaires spéciaux* on the Eastern border were taking up the "collective work" of rooting out secret agents of the French government.



and in areas bordering the English Channel such as Cherbourg. In their efforts to secure borders and strengthen the physical defense of the land, agents worked to provide details and lists of photographs of forts, barracks and other structures of defense.<sup>88</sup>

Initially, these agents were merely charged with counterespionage tasks that involved watching foreigners suspected of crossing the border to spy in France. Before long, however, a number of them were also recruited to cross into Alsace-Lorraine and collect intelligence on the public mood and rapport with the Germans.<sup>89</sup> One intelligence-gathering network was headed by Guillaume Schnaebelé, a police chief in Pagny whose controversial capture brought France and Germany to the brink of war in April 1887.<sup>90</sup> Until the early 1880s, the border police mostly stuck to observations on their side of the border and on maintaining relations with authorities of neighboring countries. However, in 1880 or 1881, the War Ministry in Paris, and specifically the Deuxième Bureau and SR, began approaching border guards to initiate direct interaction between the services rather than having the Minister of the Interior act as a go-between.<sup>91</sup> From then on, in addition to their regular task, they would answer the requests of officials like Vincent to gather intelligence from across the border, or work on their own initiative by maintaining networks of agents on their own. In April 1887, under the

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<sup>88</sup> For Italy, see departmental archives of Alpes-Maritimes, and for Cherbourg/London, see AN F<sup>7</sup> 12644-5.

<sup>89</sup> The reports from some of these *commissaires* were in fact viewed by officials back in Paris, for example on from the *commissaire spéciale* in Avricourt whose November 14, 1877 letter was forwarded first to the local prefect in the Sûreté in Paris, and then to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Liang, *Rise of Modern Police*, 98.

<sup>90</sup> I will return to the Schnaebelé "Affair" in more depth in future chapters.

<sup>91</sup> René Goblet, "Souvenirs de ma vie politique: l'affaire Schnaebelé," *Revue politique et parlementaire* (1894).

regime of Georges Boulanger as War Minister, the Sûreté Générale sent instructions to all *commissaires spéciaux* seeking information that would be crucial in the event of mobilization for war.<sup>92</sup> Certainly the fact that the Statistical Section and other bodies in Paris provided agents with defined itineraries, mentioned upcoming war, and asked them to research the exact questions that fit into a particular agenda contributed to shaping the direction of the agents' reports.<sup>93</sup>

Thus, in Nancy and its environs, when Schnaebelé was police commissioner, he undertook a variety of different intelligence-seeking missions, with a number of different people reporting back to him. In response to requests from above, agents would report to Schnaebelé with such information as the numbers of troops in Metz, details of troop composition, numbers of cavalry stationed at forts, information about gunpowder, conditions of drinking water, and numbers of boulangeries.<sup>94</sup> They would provide topographical information such as designs of a number of the cities in Alsace-Lorraine, water supply, and a variety of different

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<sup>92</sup> The circular asked *commissaires* to designate by name particular agents to send to the other side of the border within 24 hours of declaration of mobilization in Paris. AN F<sup>7</sup> 12648.

<sup>93</sup> Spies at the time were often given questionnaires to fill out in responding to particular requests for information. The given questions thus helped to define the direction of the story that intelligence was able to tell. Additionally, an undated set of "very confidential" instructions from the director of the Sûreté Générale [from folder labeled "Circulaires 1887-1907] gave instructions to French agents to enter German towns with the mission: 1) To learn the layout of the town; 2) To establish a few good contacts with local inhabitants without, however, disclosing their mission to them; 3) To discover places where they might stay in case of war (hotel, someone's home) and to identify the restaurants, cafés or other public places that are useful to frequent because of the kind of people or the information that can be found there; 4) To assess the importance of the local newspapers for local and national news; 5) To study the best way of collecting military information like enemy troop movements; 6) To study the safest and fastest way of sending information back to the French authorities; 7) In peace time where best to pick up military and political news; 8) To establish contacts at the railroad station. Cited in Liang, *Rise of Modern Police*, 145.

<sup>94</sup> AN F<sup>7</sup> 12641. Notes date throughout the 1880s and 1890s. People designated "furnishers of intelligence" included Ismert, Klein, Becker, and many others. Klein was an architect working in Strasbourg, along with his brother in law Grebert, also an architect, who were useful to the French as they were able to provide plans of fortresses. APP EA 59.

maps of the area, including maps of presumed German military ambitions.<sup>95</sup> This information was such that would allow the army to properly defend French territory in preparation for future war, and confirmed the narrative that Germany sought to militarize Alsace-Lorraine for future hostilities.

Once Schnaebelé received this intelligence, he proceeded to produce very professional, detailed reports that he would send to the War Ministry. Schnaebelé corresponded directly with the head of the Statistical Section – first Grisot, then Vincent – providing analyses of information described above, and responding to specific demands from the intelligence chiefs in Paris.<sup>96</sup> The intelligence collected by these various agents in Alsace-Lorraine clearly was of considerable value to the Statistical Section and the army. Vincent responded to Schnaebelé’s assessments with gratitude, noting in response to one request that the police commissioner’s information was “as always, very precise.”<sup>97</sup> Vincent paid Schnaebelé with money most likely from the Section’s *fonds secrets*, and Vincent would offer his agent whatever amount was necessary to carry out his tasks.<sup>98</sup>

Schnaebelé’s network in Pagny was one of several bureaus during the *fin-de-siècle* providing military intelligence to the War Ministry. The army’s intelligence office also collected information from *commissaires spéciaux* in places such as

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<sup>95</sup> See notes from Schnaebelé in Archives départementales de la Meurthe-et-Moselle (MM), 2R 10.

<sup>96</sup> For example, Grisot wrote asking for details on movements of troops via train into Alsace-Lorraine, and Vincent requested things including details of means of communication, information about forests, and looking for particular documents not available on the public market, also asking about details of other agents. AN F<sup>7</sup> 12641.

<sup>97</sup> See letter from Vincent to Schnaebelé dated December 15, 1884, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12641.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

Avricourt, Audun-le-Roman, Confleurs-Jasny, Cherbourg, and Nice.<sup>99</sup> Other police agents who provided helpful information to the Statistical Section included Louis-Othon Fischer (Igney-Avricourt), Nicolas Venner (Pagny), and Charles Marie Nicolas Simonin (Longwy). Within the border regions, intelligence of various sorts appeared a priority, and other policemen, along with regional army divisions had sections devoted to gathering local intelligence.

Whereas earlier in the century, officers of the Dépôt de la Guerre – the predecessor to the Statistical Section – refrained from using spies to gather their intelligence, the individuals working in Alsace-Lorraine and elsewhere represented an array of the population. The bureaus employed retired policemen, architects, and restaurant-owners, and worked with both men and women. In 1894, Madame Ismert, the wife of a former police inspector in Pagny who had worked along with Schnaebelé, was caught practicing espionage along the border, found carrying a questionnaire and a model of a German detonator.<sup>100</sup> In addition, foreigners worked for the police networks in order to boost their intelligence gathering. For example, Saraun, an officer from former Danish Schleswig, passed along information about the German army to the French, and Polish-born Kraszinski provided intelligence to France about the advance of German armies to the west.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> AN F<sup>7</sup> 12642. See also MM 2R 10 bis1 with several reports of commissaires spéciaux de police concerning: German railroads, work on fortifications of Alsace-Lorraine, voyages of German officers, reports concerning German troops including numbers, barracks, equipment, material, provisions, and more.

<sup>100</sup> AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6082. Evidence of Monsieur Ismert practicing intelligence for Schnaebelé is in AN F<sup>7</sup> 12641 and MAE Affaires Diverses Politiques, Allemagne 38 bis. The Germans released Mme Ismert shortly after her capture, demonstrating what Maurice Baumont ascribed as a certain amount of sang-froid, though another explanation is that in 1894, Germany was not militarily ready to cause an international fuss about captured spies. Maurice Baumont, *Aux sources de l'affaire: l'affaire Dreyfus d'après les archives diplomatiques* (Paris: Productions de Paris, 1959), 19.

<sup>101</sup> AN F<sup>7</sup> 12641. Another note dated March 6, 1885 mentions a few Germans supposedly accused of being in the service of the French War Ministry.

Former Prime Minister Goblet reflected on this service in hindsight and noted that “though it provided certain inconveniences,” it was nonetheless “well organized” and served an important purpose in the defense of the nation.<sup>102</sup>

Goblet’s comment is testament to the fact that the upper echelons of French government viewed these reconnaissance missions as important ways of collecting knowledge. In attempting to understand the goals and projects of their enemies, authorities thus relied on the speculation of a number of military and police agents. In Nice, the special commissioner on the border described movements of Italian citizens and theorized about the mood of the border populations.<sup>103</sup> Similarly, in Nancy, a police agent reported to his superiors on the “delicate mission that you confided to me verbally” to assess a variety of opinion in Alsace-Lorraine.<sup>104</sup> The agent traveled by train throughout the two provinces, visiting what he declared to be the most important brasseries, cafés and hotels frequented by Alsatians, Lorrainers, and Germans, and tried to listen to conversations to determine popular opinion. His report conveyed hope from the former French population that France would intervene in their favor, based on the discourse coming from France, with General Boulanger as current war minister. It was just this type of informal report that allowed leaders of the Third Republic to conclude that the populations of Alsace-Lorraine were desperate for liberation by their natural motherland and that France should fight on their behalf.

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<sup>102</sup> Goblet, “Souvenirs,” 180.

<sup>103</sup> For example, one note describes an agent seeing two Italian soldiers who he assumed were sent by their captain to scope out and identify trails and paths in the region. Archives of the Alpes-Maritimes (AM) 1M 359.

<sup>104</sup> Note dated November 23, 1886, MM 4M 278.

The use of police agents and their informers to gather military and political information before World War I represented a shift in “watching” practices under the Third Republic. Whereas the French police became more expert in gathering intelligence throughout the nineteenth century, most of their practice had been concentrated on internal threats to the regime rather than those from outside. Meanwhile, the army would demonstrate the success of intelligence gathering outside of France in its projects in North Africa. In employing members of the police force to gather information on France’s neighbors for the sake of defense, the army’s intelligence service in a sense served to militarize a small portion of the French police. With a country at peace, as opposed to at war, both army and police utilized intelligence as a way to fight back against potential enemies without taking part in overt hostilities.

*The Tunisian Case: Intelligence Helps to Shape Colonial Decisions*

The role of intelligence officials in shaping the military’s view of international affairs can be seen in the case of the French invasion of Tunisia in 1881. Whereas in Algeria officers used intelligence to understand a geographical area and its population that were already colonized, in places like Tunisia and Morocco, intelligence appears to have been used to familiarize the army with the country in preparation for future invasions, and to help maintain a military presence after the invasion occurred.<sup>105</sup> The case of Tunisia affirms the role of

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<sup>105</sup> In Morocco, French army officers and diplomats directed a number of “scientific missions” that would pave the way for the invasions of 1907 and 1912. Examples included a military officer travelling between Geryville and Haci bou Zid from November 1892 to January 1893 to discover what kind of water resources were available in the region, and assessing how to distribute water throughout the country, and scientists sent by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, such as Emile Mauchamp, a doctor and agent of the MAE, one of many used for the “peaceful penetration” of Morocco. See the officer’s *Journal de route*, SHD 3H 21. For Mauchamp, Ellen Amster, “The Many

military intelligence agents as gathering and using knowledge to prepare an offensive strike against groups or individuals aiming to impose upon what they viewed as French land, liberties or autonomy. The colonies were viewed as critical to the French national image, and thus defense of French interests overseas could easily be equated to national defense and survival. Moreover, the success of intelligence collection in Tunisia in the early 1880s helped to affirm the potential of military intelligence when translated back to the European context in later years.

France had already manifested an interest in Tunisia during the Second Empire, though competed for both financial and commercial benefits with other European powers, in particular England and Italy. The three powers maintained expatriate communities in the small North African territory, as well as consulates.<sup>106</sup> At the time of the establishment of the Third Republic, Tunisia was a province of the Ottoman Empire, but it maintained a fair amount of autonomy under a *bey*, a local sovereign. Following a Russian defeat of the Ottoman Empire in 1877, several European nations met to discuss a partition of some of the North African Ottoman territories. At the Berlin Conference of 1878, France was granted overlordship of Tunisia, though it did not immediately act upon a takeover. Two major financial controversies in 1880, however, demonstrated the extent of Italian designs on

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Deaths of Dr. Emile Mauchamp: Medicine, Technology, and Popular Politics in Pre-Protectorate Morocco, 1877-1912," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 36, no. 3 (2004); Jonathan Glustrom Katz, *Murder in Marrakesh: Émile Mauchamp and the French Colonial Adventure* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006).

<sup>106</sup> Robert Aldrich, *Greater France: A History of French Overseas Expansion* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996), 28-31. France had advanced a major loan to Tunisia in the mid-1800s, and maintained trading interests there.

curbing French hegemony in Tunisia, and French diplomats thus began “looking for a new incident to precipitate intervention.”<sup>107</sup>

The incident they sought occurred in March of 1881, when a skirmish started by the Tunisian Khoumir tribe along the border between Tunisia and Algeria resulted in the death of a number of Algerians. The French used this incursion into their territory to send in armed forces in the middle of April. On May 12, 1881, the Tunisian *bey* signed the Treaty of Bardo, granting France a protectorate over Tunisia. However, even after the signing of the agreement, a number of insurrections occurred, causing France to declare that according to the treaty, the French “were obligated to expand our occupation to all points of the regency and increase our number of occupying troops.”<sup>108</sup> The occupying army maintained an intelligence service called the *Service des Renseignements de la Division d’Occupation*, whose stated mission was to understand the roles played by various tribes in the insurrections and to discover which individuals in Tunisia the army could trust.<sup>109</sup> This institution was based upon the system of *bureaux arabes* from Algeria.<sup>110</sup> In line with the military’s strategic culture of defending French liberties and autonomy, intelligence officers assessed the French intervention as motivated by the need to maintain the protectorate and its ruling *bey*, as well as “our own defense and the

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<sup>107</sup> Aldrich, 30.

<sup>108</sup> “Service des Renseignements de la Division d’Occupation; l’Occupation de la Tunisie, 1881-1883.” SHD 2H 35.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid. Notably there was no centralized intelligence service for the colonies that functioned like the Deuxième Bureau did for the army. Intelligence missions were often therefore in conjunction with different army, police, or colonial divisions. Roger Mennevée wrote that all of the colonial powers no doubt had some sort of “special service” gathering political intelligence, opposition movements, news of planned insurrections or revolts, as well as military or naval intelligence. Mennevée, *L’espionnage international*, 415.

<sup>110</sup> Gershovich, *French Military Rule*, 84.



safeguard of our interests.”<sup>111</sup> Intelligence, the army believed, would help to validate its noble cause.

As part of the army’s quest to gather intelligence in Tunisia, the War Ministry in Paris put together a special team to conduct both licit and illicit reconnaissance activity. Heading this team was Colonel Sandherr, detached from the army’s *service de renseignements*, who would later direct the Statistical Section in Paris from the end of 1886 until his illness at the height of the Dreyfus Affair.<sup>112</sup> At the time of his deployment to Tunisia, Sandherr had already garnered experience in both African issues and intelligence. Upon his exit from the *Ecole de guerre* in 1875, he was sent to North Africa, where he undoubtedly familiarized himself with intelligence by working with the *bureaux arabes*. Returning to Europe, the army sent him on a number of reconnaissance missions in Germany at the end of the 1870s that won him great praise from his superiors, and in 1880 he joined the Deuxième Bureau’s *service de renseignements* under Colonel Grisot.<sup>113</sup> In April 1881, the new director of the SR in Paris, Colonel Vincent, was informed that Sandherr had been chosen to lead an intelligence mission in Tunisia as part of the occupying army’s intelligence service. Writing to the head of the French army in Africa, the Minister

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<sup>111</sup> SHD 2H 35.

<sup>112</sup> The detailed records that Sandherr maintained during this mission provide us with the insight into the activities of the army’s intelligence service during 1881 and 1882. See bound journal from April through December 1881 titled “Mission Sandherr” and stamped “Absolutely Confidential,” SHD 2H 1. Also see Sandherr’s personal file that contains a large quantity of notes and correspondence from this mission, SHD 1K 171. Note that it took until May 1882 to occupy the whole country and stamp out resistance, at which point France had officially expanded its colonial empire.

<sup>113</sup> See letter appointing Sandherr to the *Service des Renseignements* dated December 18, 1881. For examples of praise for work in Germany, see letter from Minister of War Gresley dated December 18, 1879, and letter from Minister of War General Farre dated July 12, 1881 congratulating him for his work. “Capitaine, le travail d’étude que vous avez exécuté en 1879-1880 m’a été signalé, d’une manière particulière, comme méritant à tous égards d’être encouragé et récompensé. Je vous en témoigne toute ma satisfaction.” SHD 1K 171.

of War informed him that Sandherr would “watch the movements and behavior of Italian agents in Algeria and in Tunisia and keep you completely informed on this front.” The War Minister noted that Sandherr would “remain in constant communication with the head of my État-Major General, from whom he will receive special instructions... for the accomplishment of my confidential mission.”<sup>114</sup> Sandherr was given full powers upon his arrival, a special military interpreter at his disposal, and access to the funds that he needed.

Sandherr’s intelligence mission during his year in Tunisia was twofold, centering on observation and assessment of both the native Tunisian and the Italian populations. On the one hand, the French army and state were concerned with the role of the various tribes in uprisings against the *bey* and against French influence. They worried that with the insurrections and a string of bad press, public opinion was turning against the French, manifested in overt hostility by Tunisians through attacks upon French workers and residents. The intelligence team thus prepared many analyses on the different tribes, looking at their background, composition, attitudes, and motives for future action. The compilation of intelligence on rural and tribal populations of Tunisia greatly resembled that compiled by the *bureaux arabes* in Algeria decades prior, and that which would take place in Morocco during the 1890s.<sup>115</sup> The French state would use this intelligence to justify their intervention in Tunisia one year later, as well as their institution of a protectorate in Morocco in 1912.

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<sup>114</sup> SHD 2H 1.

<sup>115</sup> On Morocco, see SHD 3H 21 and 3H 22.

Sandherr and his team closely monitored the actions and attitudes of the native Tunisian population. They were to observe the *bey* and his entourage in order to determine the nature of his associations. They also paid close attention to the attitudes of dissidents and various tribes, traveling throughout the country to get a complete overview. They assessed local Tunisian feelings towards French, Italians, and Turks who seemed prepared to provide aid, and reflected on the enthusiasm of the local population at such help. Intelligence agents speculated on Muslim fanaticism and the role of Islam in bringing together a variety of France's opponents. They also made a point to measure the response of various parties to the French penetration into Tunisia, and they worked to assess reactions among the local native and European populations to any future takeover or aggression.<sup>116</sup> Such reports taking the pulse of the populations under surveillance had critical importance for the colonial project, serving as a means to resolve problems or manipulate interests.

On the other hand, intelligence gathered by Sandherr and his team was used to help construct the narrative of Italy's desire to erode French hegemony in North Africa. An analysis prepared by intelligence officers claimed that as early as 1862 Italy "had begun to dream of playing a role in Africa," viewing Tunisia "as a future Italian Algeria," and therefore sought to increase the number of Italian settlers there.<sup>117</sup> As a result, claimed the report, speculators began to turn their sights to

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<sup>116</sup> SHD 1K 171.

<sup>117</sup> "Service des Renseignements de la Division d'Occupation; l'Occupation de la Tunisie, 1881-1883." SHD 2H 35.

undeveloped land.<sup>118</sup> France clearly desired to maintain influence in Tunisia, and also expressed concern for Algeria in the event that there would be “a rival and hostile European presence” just adjacent to its colony. Intelligence reports thus confirmed the story of protecting Algeria from aggressive neighbors, exactly the case that gave France the impetus to invade in 1881.

The intelligence-gathering project in Tunisia also reflects the army’s strategy of using knowledge to define the need to protect French interests. In Tunisia, the army saw not only a chance to broaden France’s colonial holdings, but also the opportunity to redeem the nation after an embarrassing defeat in Europe. The intelligence summary that assessed the projects in 1885 – after the invasion and protectorate – had noted: “Our disasters of 1870 and 1871, whose echoes continued to be heard for a long time in the West, have doubtless undermined our authority in Tunisia,” and that learning about Tunisia in order to “protect” it (through invasion) was “important for our national honor and the reestablishment of our authority in the East.”<sup>119</sup> Intelligence played a large role in attempting to curb Italian ambitions and in trying to discover if the Italians and the Tunisians could work together to undermine the French role in the country, and therefore its global prestige as well.<sup>120</sup>

The Italians in Tunisia had raised French concerns, as the former were employing a number of tactics to secure a place in North Africa, including using

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<sup>118</sup> For example, in 1880, the British owners of the railway linking Tunis with the coast put their company up for sale. An Italian concern successfully bid for the enterprise, leaving France worried about possible Italian intervention. Aldrich, *Greater France*.

<sup>119</sup> Bound intelligence summary: “Service des Renseignements de la Division d’Occupation; l’Occupation de la Tunisie, 1881-1883,” dated February 1, 1885, SHD 2H 35.

<sup>120</sup> See SHD 1K 171 for several notes that discuss the possibility of the two sides coming together.

spies and agents of their own. Thus, before his arrival, Sandherr's superiors had identified a number of individuals working as espionage agents for the Italian government, and informed him that he and his agents should follow them, become familiar with their associates, and discern the purpose of their missions in Tunisia.<sup>121</sup> In addition, the French sought to learn whether the Italian agents were corresponding with their counterparts in Algeria, or with other foreign influences. Besides the agents, the French were supposed to watch the Italian colonists, military, and other leaders.

The French and the Italians were not the only ones benefitting from the application of intelligence practices in North Africa. French intelligence officers noted that the Tunisian government was pleased with the fact that the European powers were having difficulties among themselves, and that "by encouraging disaccord, they have found a way to take back some of their own authority. The entourage of the bey is profiting from this situation."<sup>122</sup> This suggests the presence of a fluid field of "information transfer," whereby different power interests view their access to information as leverage. Tunisian knowledge of the open and "secret" hostilities between France and Italy provided the promise of potentially recapturing authority in the context of the colonial project.

The impact of the mission went beyond the details of the knowledge gained, as the means by which it was gathered also would go on to have an influence on the development of French intelligence. For Sandherr, this experience was educational, demonstrating the role that intelligence could play in dictating diplomatic relations.

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<sup>121</sup> SHD 2H 1.

<sup>122</sup> SHD 2H 35.

Through his observations, one can get a sense of the purpose and use that Sandherr derived from intelligence and his style of collecting it. To begin, the intelligence gleaned from Tunisia centered on social, political and economic information rather than purely military intelligence. It paid heed to gossip and rumors, collecting and assessing viewpoints from a variety of angles. Sandherr looked for relations between groups in Tunis and groups in Algiers, moving beyond his immediate surroundings to predict future movements. Sandherr's service in Tunisia appeared to follow the Machiavellian dictum of collecting information "by any means necessary," as the documents show him willing and interested to procure information from a wide variety of sources. He hired natives to spy on each other, Jews friendly to France, Italian turncoats, and other supposedly disreputable characters to help him gather intelligence from the heterogeneous population.<sup>123</sup> Sandherr's service sought to use money to purchase information from the Italian agents, and if not the agents themselves, then, as Sandherr suggested, presumably it would be "possible to pay off the mistresses of [Italian agents] Maccio or Martorelli."<sup>124</sup> His reliance on these sources indicates a desire to unearth hidden knowledge in order to produce a complete account.

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<sup>123</sup> The SR in Tunisia enlisted the help of a variety of individuals, from natives to politicians and Jews. They sought to enlist French missionaries, saying that "they have relationships with the Arabs, and are patriots. We must take advantage of this connection." "If necessary, we should use Jews as well, since they make their way among the border tribes, and live in the villages on the coasts and the borders." "Recruit a Jewish merchant; through him, and with the help of Jewish freemasons, we can get everywhere." The natives would be able to give them information about local leaders, as well as about certain Italians that they befriended, or had married. SHD 1K 171. Interestingly, the use of disreputable characters to spy on suspects was an age-old practice in France, such as the infamous café informants or former convicts like Vidocq used by the Parisian police. Here we therefore have the military taking up police methods to gather intelligence.

<sup>124</sup> SHD 2H 1. Notes from "absolutely confidential" book marked "Mission Sandherr" from April to December 1881.

The missions to Germany and subsequent posting in Tunisia developed Sandherr into one of France's foremost experts on intelligence.<sup>125</sup> The centrality of intelligence to the state-building project could not have escaped him. Authorities in Paris had insisted on a close connection between the military working in the colonies and leaders in France. Sandherr therefore kept a register of all his telegrams that indicates him both sending and receiving correspondence from military and civil leaders like Paul Grisot, Charles de Freycinet, the head of the *état-major* in Paris, as well as army leaders in Bone, Tripoli, and Tunis. In addition to the correspondence that told the story of agents' observations in Tunisia, Sandherr kept incredibly detailed records of his activities, holding on to notes and scraps, and also putting together an extensive diary of his daily operations. The diary, reflecting all of Sandherr's observations and conclusions, was filed away along with topographic maps and other studies of the Tunisian population, giving credence to the account constructed by this intelligence professional. Returning to Paris a few years later, Sandherr would continue to craft the history of perceptions of others, the next time that of his European neighbors.

### *Conclusion*

The practice of intelligence during the first decade and a half of the Third Republic had, reflecting the desires of individuals like Jules Lewal, Emile Vanson, and Ernest de Cissey, become more professional, and showed itself as having an important role to play in the defense of the Third Republic. During these early

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<sup>125</sup> After leaving Tunisia, he worked on mission in Italy, was in the entourage of the French ministry in Morocco, and served as head of the second regiment of riflemen in Algeria. It also appears from his private papers that he was sent on a handful of other secret missions during the period from 1883-1886. He was in Algeria at the end of 1886 when Boulanger approached him to replace Vincent at the head of the Statistical Section.

years of bureaucratized intelligence, police officers, army officers, and their agents began to discover what these theorists already knew, and therefore compiled information about foreign nations based on visual and oral evidence. As professionals, these officers understood that it was their role to do more than just collect the intelligence, but also to try to interpret it. In this task, they often reached the conclusion that their evidence pointed to German aggression, and the likelihood of an upcoming European military conflict.

During the Third Republic, the onus for intelligence gathering and assessment moved from being the charge of the police or diplomats to being the task of a special police force or the intelligence service within the army's general staff. As this process evolved, French intelligence practitioners combined practices of varied agencies in order to perfect the missions with which they were charged. On the Continent, these missions included assessing the domestic political situation in neighboring countries to help secure alliances as well as tracking revolutionary movements. Most frequently, however, missions involved intelligence gathering on Germany as a way to be prepared to defend French interests. Leaders also recognized the potential of intelligence as a means to defend French interests in the colonies, and sent experts to gather information that would assist the military in maintaining French dominion. As the successful operation in Tunisia demonstrates, confidence in what secret information could accomplish was in the ascendant during this period.

This chapter has treated the collection of information, rather than the assessment of it, and unfortunately the full extent of how political, diplomatic, and military leaders received the intelligence – the weight given to different reports, the ability to sift through biases, or the decision to accept one view over another – can



never be known. Although the information gathered confirmed the importance of secret intelligence to collectors, we know that in the end, while officials accepted the narrative of a German threat, buying into the pessimism that would come as the years passed, they did not react to it in a way that allowed France to escape the bloody destruction that would come.<sup>126</sup>

By the time Colonel Sandherr took up the mantle of intelligence chief in December 1886, espionage and counterespionage had begun to carve out a place in France's defense arsenal. Sandherr's enthusiasm at using these tactics to advance French interests would gain a considerable boost with support from the French War Minister, General Georges Boulanger, in power since January of the same year. Under the two, French intelligence would refocus its gaze from espionage to counterespionage, playing into the military strategy of offense that called for defense before the occurrence of a preemptive attack. The following few decades would therefore see the expansion of French intelligence even further, the direction of intelligence clinched by the military, and the action of officers working to assure their own future by assuring the necessity of the practice of intelligence in protecting the nation.

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<sup>126</sup> Details of the French failure to predict German war plans (in particular the Schlieffen Plan) and the lack of proper preparation for war in spite of intelligence saying it was coming will be covered in the next chapter. Douglas Porch illuminates some of the tension between intelligence gathering and decision-making in the twentieth century based on the tone of intelligence reports that displayed anxiety in the face of the German threat. He writes, "Intelligence reports which underscored France's relative weakness vis-à-vis its German adversary only invited demoralization and despair. This did not encourage the French high command to adopt rational strategies tailored to French means. On the contrary, the disparity of the odds against him drove Joffre to take excessive risks, to adopt offensive strategies beyond the capabilities of his armies." Porch, *French Secret Services*, 77.

## CHAPTER 4

### **Intelligence in Practice II: Targeting the Enemy (1886-1914)**

After a decade and a half of operation, France's modern, professional intelligence services had begun to show progress. The practice had grown and expanded, with a variety of actors recognizing the utility of intelligence for projects of national defense. Agents had compiled years' worth of notes, maps, designs, and estimates, which were centralized in Paris and used to understand France's place in a changing Europe. The story that these notes told was one of a hostile German neighbor sitting beside France stockpiling weapons, expanding its army, creating new materials, and preparing for another war that would demonstrate its power and prowess, along with its destination for European dominance.

In France, however, civil society had just begun to move past the last war, and in the 1870s was more concerned with recovery and establishing a new Republic, than with starting a new conflict.<sup>1</sup> This was not necessarily the case within the army, particularly in regards to the intelligence service. Intelligence practitioners viewed themselves as experts, having witnessed first-hand the "facts" of German intentions. Because the service remained small and unknown, its practices failed to resonate much beyond the Deuxième Bureau. Intelligence at this time was a small enterprise, and was hardly very efficient or effective. The decision-makers in terms of developing the service were those who found

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<sup>1</sup> Schivelbusch, *Culture of Defeat*, 149-150. In the early years of the Republic, the royalists and conservatives were against another European war, as they feared that France would lose, and in defeat, would undergo another revolution, similar to the events of a century prior. William D. Irvine, *The Boulanger Affair Reconsidered: Royalism, Boulangism, and the Origins of the Radical Right in France* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 32. Rachel Chrastil describes electoral politics in the 1870s, particularly around the *Seize Mai* crisis, as driven in part by attempts to paint opponents as pro-war and one's own party or candidates as pro-peace. Chrastil, *Organizing for War*, 39-44.

themselves appointed to positions of leadership, rather than the elected officials of the state. Even within the army, intelligence officers were not overwhelmingly respected, and the practice was certainly not highly sought out. Thus in the 1870s, *renseignement* under leaders like Samuel and Vanson grew and improved, yet remained contained and esoteric. This would change with the ascension to power and prominence of individuals with more respect for intelligence – in particular the General on Horseback, Georges Boulanger.

Boulanger came into the field of Third Republican politics in January 1886, appointed Minister of War at the urging of Radical party minister Georges Clemenceau. His penchant for intelligence evidenced itself early in his tenure, and resulted in the passing of a number of laws and decrees that would serve to dictate the way that espionage and counterespionage proceeded in France in the decades that followed. Moreover, Colonel Jean Sandherr, the officer Boulanger appointed to head the intelligence service (the Statistical Section) in December 1886, was like-minded and also contributed much to the development of intelligence practices in the Third Republic.

As a result of the efforts of Boulanger, Sandherr, and their intelligence teams, the years 1886 to 1914 saw the solidification of intelligence practices and assured them a greater place in the army and in the nation. Operating on the narrative bequeathed by the first era of intelligence practitioners, the army's intelligence service continued under the impression that Germany was the enemy, and that to assure French security and national survival, the French army would need to act first to be prepared for a wartime scenario. Thus, this "strategy of the offense," led to boosting national defense. In so-doing, the army helped spread throughout France the idea that Germany was preparing for an eventual war that it believed it

would win, not only by improving soldiers, weapons, and technology, but also by sending an army of spies to invade France, just as it had in the years prior to the Franco-Prussian War. The idea certainly took hold, and made its way beyond the confines of the War Ministry. In 1896, a French writer, Maurice Schwob, published a book called *Le danger allemand*, warning of German intentions in the economic, industrial, and colonial spheres in addition to its military prowess. He warned his readers to beware of German designs on French interests, noting, "It is the same clever organization [as in 1870], with the same attention to details, the same perfection in using resources, the same intelligence agency of spies, extended to the whole world this time."<sup>2</sup>

Adopting the army's rhetoric of defense, the Statistical Section (later the *Section de Renseignements*) during this period took up the task of defending against such threats. As a result, intelligence grew and expanded outside of France, as well as within. By establishing a need – that of national safety – and offering the solution, the army's intelligence team was able to take the lead on surveillance duties, over the traditional practitioners, the police force. Moreover, the gradual process primarily transpired independently from the Third Republic's political and bureaucratic institutions. National defense was the intelligence service's *raison d'être*, and consequently, in order to perpetuate itself, the service had an interest in showing that the nation was under threat from an unseen enemy.

Boulangier's paranoid fears of spies infiltrating France diffused throughout the nation from the mid-1880s onwards, and allowed for the establishment of a xenophobic apparatus that saw foreign invaders around every corner. The more

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<sup>2</sup> Maurice Schwob, *Le danger Allemand* (Paris: L. Chailley, 1896), 1-2.

agents looked for spies and for intelligence about threats to national security, the more they found, thus creating a cycle that demanded additional intelligence. The experts in the field would be the ones able to protect France from this danger. In this way, the goals of the military's intelligence service became a part of the national narrative that demanded security – overt and covert – for a threatened France, and an army that would come to her defense.

*Boulangier as War Minister: A Turning Point in French Intelligence*

The importance of intelligence in directing the military's narrative about the prospects of French national security underwent a major shift with the ascension of General Georges Boulanger to the War Ministry. Though most of what is written about Boulanger discusses his role in nearly destabilizing the Republic in 1888, the historiography has virtually ignored his role in building up a French intelligence apparatus that would isolate and discriminate against foreigners, and push for a shared national mentality that viewed war with Germany as a near certainty.<sup>3</sup> Boulanger's actions as Minister of War demonstrate a keen appreciation for the maintenance of secrecy and a deep paranoia about the place of spies in undermining the stability of the Third Republic. Thus an examination of his tenure in these terms will show how he elevated intelligence to a new and important place within the War Ministry and the nation. The faith that he put in intelligence also

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<sup>3</sup> An exception to this is found in the accounts of a few scholars of intelligence, who introduce a number of Boulanger's directives that had an important impact on the development of French intelligence. See: for example Porch, *French Secret Services*, 29-30. The most thorough discussion of Boulanger's role in French intelligence can be found in two pages of Mitchell, "Xenophobic Style," 414-425, 419-421. Sébastien Laurent's recent history of the development of French intelligence acknowledges Boulanger as well, although his work presents much more of an institutional history of intelligence than a cultural analysis. Laurent, *Politiques de l'ombre*.

made him more likely to accept its findings unequivocally, allowing the narrative told by agents to shape the decisions of his cabinet and of cabinets to come.

Georges Boulanger joined the Freycinet government as Minister of War on January 7, 1886. Prior to his political appointment, he served the French army in several campaigns both in Europe and overseas. Like a number of officers instrumental in advancing French intelligence, Boulanger spent several years in North Africa, exposing him to the work of the *bureaux arabes* and other military intelligence operations. After graduating from Saint-Cyr in 1856, he served in Algeria, Italy, and French Indochina before returning to France.<sup>4</sup> He fought in the Franco-Prussian War, joined the French army against the Communards, and eventually served as the French military commander in Tunisia in the two years prior to his ascension to the War Ministry.<sup>5</sup> Throughout the course of these campaigns, he received the Legion of Honor several times, and his path to promotion through the ranks was faster than nearly any military officer before him.

Even with no prior experience in politics, Boulanger's appointment as War Minister was not out of the ordinary, as the position was one that military historian Douglas Porch notes typically "went by default to rather junior divisional commanders," and further was almost always nonpolitical.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, politics in the nascent Third Republic were extremely instable; cabinets – which included the army's chief, the War Minister – changed frequently. As a general, Boulanger had often professed his allegiance to republican ideals, which had brought him to the

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<sup>4</sup> Boulanger's army file, SHD 9Yd 37.

<sup>5</sup> Bach, *L'armée de Dreyfus*, 357-359. One of the reasons that he left Tunisia was that he had come in conflict with Paul Cambon, then the French governor of Tunisia, who wanted to maintain civilian control, while Boulanger sought control for the army.

<sup>6</sup> Porch, *March to the Marne*, 47.

attention of the left-wing Radical party in the first place. His appointment, at the behest of Clemenceau, was likely part of a reconciliation deal between Opportunists and Radicals after elections held in 1885.<sup>7</sup>

Once in power, however, Boulanger's political ambitions came to the fore, as he dictated a number of changes within the army, including the institution of a press office, the expulsion of princes from the army, and the use of the army to suppress strikes. He lost the support of the Opportunists, however, with his failed attempt to remove General Saussier as military governor of Paris, a move that indicated his personal desire for power. Simultaneously, early in his tenure as War Minister, Boulanger began to discuss military preparedness, and by autumn of 1886, his commentary found voice in a number of weekly papers dedicated to *revanche*.<sup>8</sup> Boulanger's pro-war rhetoric was picked up by Chancellor Bismarck, who used the fear of the French War Minister to advocate for increased military service in Germany.<sup>9</sup> At the same time, this reaction increased Boulanger's popularity at home. Eventually Boulanger's bellicosity caught up with him, and in May 1887, the Opportunists and the Royalists came together to overthrow the Radical government, and Boulanger lost his position. While his fall from the War Ministry meant the end of Boulanger's career as leader of the French army, it also meant the beginning of his more notorious existence as politician. The "Affair" bearing his name stemmed from his embrace by the French Right and his political campaigns that mobilized mass politics. Whereas many details of this trajectory

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<sup>7</sup> Seager, *Boulanger Affair*, 23-26.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 49.

<sup>9</sup> The Septanate, or seven-year military bill was voted into law by the German Reichstag on March 11, 1887.

have been covered in existing historiography, historians of the Boulanger Affair have consistently missed the General's importance to the development of French intelligence, and therefore have ignored the xenophobic tendencies that he displayed from the beginning, rather than having been co-opted by the right as has been asserted.

Boulanger's interest in intelligence revealed itself in a variety of ways throughout the year and five months that he served as Minister of War, beginning with the company he kept. He surrounded himself with advisors known to be partial to intelligence at the time of its infancy, including his choice for *chef du cabinet*, Theodore Jung, and the officer who had been serving as head of the Statistical Section since 1883, Colonel Honoré Vincent. Furthermore, Boulanger made one of the most important decisions in the development of a French intelligence community with his choice of Vincent's successor after the latter was forced out of his position over his questionable handling of the Section's finances. Boulanger's appointee for the position of the nation's next intelligence director was Colonel Jean Conrad Sandherr, an officer who had already served the Republic in intelligence operations in Germany and Tunisia, and who would have a considerable impact on French intelligence in his decade and a half leading the Statistical Section. With individuals such as Jung, Vincent and Sandherr as his guides, Boulanger began to learn more about the potential of intelligence. Not surprisingly, being privy to such knowledge also made the War Minister wary of the ramifications of secrets falling into the hands of France's competitors.

Boulanger's concern with secrecy made itself evident early in his tenure, with his original focus on the threat of leaked secrets within the army itself. In several notes to his officers, the War Minister expressed his fear that army



documents, even “those designated as confidential,” had been falling into the hands of representatives of foreign powers.<sup>10</sup> His notes reminded ministers of the secretive nature of information such as French mobilization plans and measures related to the protection of borders that could put the army and the nation at risk if discovered. In calling upon officers to oversee the maintenance of strict confidentiality, he deemed them responsible to observe and prevent leaks from adjutants and soldiers serving under them, noting that the former would be held accountable for any indiscretions. “They should be made to understand,” he noted, “that they have a moral obligation to keep secret certain communications made to them, even after they have returned to their homes.”<sup>11</sup> Boulanger promised a serious investigation to follow the disappearance of any document or indication that information had escaped the army’s grasp, demonstrating an early appreciation for the potential of intelligence to influence the fate of an army or nation.

As War Minister, Boulanger made a number of significant contributions to the growth of French intelligence, both in developing more varied means for French agents to spy at home and abroad, and in countering spies from outside. One of his initial acts was to take the lead in putting in place France’s first law directly targeting espionage. Passed on April 18, 1886, the law was France’s earliest attempt to legislate against spying during peacetime, and left no doubt as to Boulanger’s view of the threat of espionage to French national security. The April 1886 law served to define espionage in peacetime for the first time in French history.

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<sup>10</sup> Note Ministerielle dated February 19, 1886, SHD 5N 1.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

According to the law, espionage activity included exposing “plans, writings, or secret documents relative to the defense of territory or the external safety of the State,” through a range of different means of access and dissemination. The law also defined *how* state secrets would be procured, qualifying espionage as illegally entering a secure location by employing a disguise or falsifying one’s nationality, profession, or other quality. Anyone serving as an “accomplice” to this activity could also be considered to have engaged in espionage.<sup>12</sup>

Providing a legal definition of the spy as enemy of the state, the law subsequently served as the basis for Boulanger to spread beyond the War Ministry his fears of the power of spies in weakening France. Two major directives drafted by Boulanger in the fall and winter of 1886 thus laid out the responsibilities of the army, the police, and the *parquet* in the quest to catch individuals daring to spy on France. These mandates, discussed in more detail below, marked a major shift in French intelligence towards the escalation of counterespionage. Further, they highlighted the role of the War Ministry in pursuing spies, from making prefects responsible to the military authority to assuring intelligence officers a place in judicial trials against accused spies. Additionally, Boulanger advanced French intelligence by creating new divisions and expanding the roles of existing ones to focus on gathering information and catching foreigners or Frenchmen seeking to do the same. This included the institution of smaller *services des renseignements territoriaux* within regional army corps and charging both prefects and the military gendarmerie with the search for spies. Not only did these moves increase the

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<sup>12</sup> For more on the 1886 espionage law, see Chapter 5.

surveillance power of the French state, but they also placed it firmly under the control of the army.

As War Minister, Boulanger took a direct approach towards intelligence issues, often intervening personally, or asking to make himself the first point of contact in questions related to espionage. Within weeks of his appointment to the cabinet, Boulanger instructed the military attachés, who were technically under the purview of the *Ministre des Affaires Etrangères*, to address all of their communications directly to him.<sup>13</sup> Boulanger insisted that any intelligence gleaned by military attachés while meeting with foreign dignitaries be sent to him immediately, and asserted moreover that they actually be kept hidden from the relevant ambassador.<sup>14</sup> As his awareness of intelligence progressed throughout his tenure, his need to micromanage increased. Just before his ouster from the Ministry, Boulanger addressed the corps commanders with an assertion that efforts to document espionage attempts and arrests were highly incomplete, and proposed bringing the cases directly before him.<sup>15</sup> He requested dossiers for each suspect to be transmitted to him monthly, and retained in the Section's archives.

Boulanger's role as 'spy master' surely impressed his colleagues; even after the conclusion of his term as War Minister, Boulanger remained cognizant of counterespionage challenges and privy to pursuits of potential spies.<sup>16</sup> In the year

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<sup>13</sup> Note dated January 1886, SHD 7N 664.

<sup>14</sup> March 18, 1886, SHD 7N 664.

<sup>15</sup> "Very confidential" letter from Boulanger dated May 7, 1887, SHD 7N 674.

<sup>16</sup> Letter from Boulanger dated May 20, 1887 in which Boulanger asserted that following arrests of Germans by the French, the German government decided to recruit agents of other nationalities, particularly Italian and English. Moreover, he noted that army officers had recently discovered a German agent posing as a Russian subject warning his colleagues in the army of German reaction to French efforts to target their spies. SHD 7N 674. In addition, in an affair about a certain powder V from the Servan Livry factory, army leaders continue to consult Boulanger regarding the French

and a half that Boulanger served as War Minister, the Statistical Section saw a significant increase in its funding, with a near tripling of its budget.<sup>17</sup> With an augmentation of resources, the Statistical Section under Boulanger and Vincent grew more than it had, and more than it would, for the remainder of the pre-War years.<sup>18</sup> When Sandherr took over from Colonel Vincent, the Section's importance was thus in its ascendancy, and continued to grow during Boulanger's last six months as War Minister.

#### *Growth of the Power and Scope of the Statistical Section under Sandherr*

Called from North Africa to replace Vincent as head of the Statistical Section in 1886, Colonel Sandherr joined an office already operating under the impression that war with Germany was imminent. Accordingly, the new intelligence director continued in this vein. Sandherr believed that the practices of the small *Section de statistique* were so crucial that he believed that the men working within the Deuxième Bureau should be at the service of his intelligence team, rather than the other way around.<sup>19</sup> With Sandherr at its head, the Statistical Section began to assert itself as a necessary part of the Third Republic's military forces. The intelligence collected during the first decade and a half of the Republic's existence had confirmed to military leaders a real possibility of war with Germany.

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suspicion of Germans of attempting to steal the secrets for manufacturing the powder, even though he was no longer Minister of War. Correspondence at the end of July 1887, SHD 1M 2197.

<sup>17</sup> Krop, *Secrets*, 31.

<sup>18</sup> Laurent, *Politiques de l'ombre*, 480-481. While the amount of secret funds and the percentage of these funds within the army's budget rose consistently in the years following 1870, it took its greatest leap, and was at its highest point while Boulanger headed the War Ministry.

<sup>19</sup> Note dated May 1, 1893, signed by Sandherr, SHD 7N 674.

Moreover, it had shown that by comparison, France's status as a military power was inferior to that of Germany. Therefore, during the decade of Sandherr's tenure, the Statistical Section focused on assuring that the army and the nation were prepared for potential mobilization, as well as thwarting foreign spies from having any chance to interfere with French military preparedness.

The Statistical Section used its position collecting, assessing, and maintaining critical knowledge to assure itself a necessary place within the army, in view of the inevitable future mobilization. As wartime would be the condition that most necessitated an intelligence service, Sandherr set about preparing for such an eventuality. Just weeks after Sandherr took over the direction of the Section, the service put out a detailed "*Instruction sur l'organisation au Service des Renseignements en temps de guerre*," giving the most complete written instructions for an intelligence service to date.<sup>20</sup> This comprehensive directive aimed to organize the activities of many different units, both within the Ministry of War and the Ministry of the Interior. Sandherr defined the mission broadly as creating an entire network of intelligence operatives that would be responsible for informing the army's leadership of the movements and plans of the enemy army. Between the central intelligence service in Paris and local intelligence services in regional army units, officers would gather information from newspapers, deserters, diplomatic and private correspondence, interrogation of prisoners, and moreover, from emissaries or spies. The *Instruction* stressed on several occasions the need to have this service well established during peacetime, so that it could be ready as necessary when war began. Further, in the event that foreign armies would occupy French territory,

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<sup>20</sup> *Instruction sur l'organisation au Service des Renseignements en temps de guerre* dated January 10, 1887, SHD 7N 674.

Sandherr pointed out that the intelligence service “should not cease to function, even if the country is invaded.” His emphasis on the necessity of a team to collect and analyze intelligence as absolutely central to engaging in modern war thus absolutely justified its presence during peacetime too.

In terms of foreign intelligence gathering, the work of the Section under Sandherr did not change drastically from the way it had operated earlier in the decade. A vast network of agents stationed in places like Vienna, Rome, Constantinople, St. Petersburg, London, Madrid, Berlin, and numerous other cities across Germany continued to observe the progress of foreign armies and return the information to Paris where it was assessed, prefaced with a cover sheet, or *bordereau*, and passed on to relevant authorities.<sup>21</sup> The intelligence coming from Germany confirmed the idea held by the *service de renseignements* of Bismarck preparing for war with France. In “secret” documents, the Statistical Section shared access to German armament plans, along with plans detailing various stages of the German army’s organization and reorganization. Such information provided insight into the Germans’ progress, but interestingly did not seem to affect the French strategy of the offense. In a *bordereau* prepared by one of the Section’s officers and signed by Sandherr in July 1890, the French wrote that, “the adoption of new arms and new powder does not change the spirit of our tactical methods, but it changes their application. We will practice the offensive in the case that circumstances permit.”<sup>22</sup> In this instance, it appears that even intelligence estimates

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<sup>21</sup> SHD 7N 674; AN BB<sup>19</sup> 84. See also Henri Navarre, *Le Service de renseignements, 1871-1944* (Paris: Plon, 1978), 16.

<sup>22</sup> Confidential *bordereau* dated July 21, 1890, SHD 7N 674.

did not dissuade the French from their projects.<sup>23</sup> This shows us as well that while the practice of gathering intelligence had gained respect, the process by which it was assessed and used by leaders still needed improvement.

Beyond visual and numerical observations, Sandherr's team relied on intelligence proffered to them by those they considered insiders, especially when the latter confirmed the narrative that the service sought to tell. For example, in a letter in the Section's archives directed to the French *état-major* in Paris, a German citizen pleaded with the French army to protect itself and Europe from Bismarck and the increasing strength of the German army, attaching newspaper clippings that presumably supported this assertion.<sup>24</sup> In addition, a number of notes from agents of the Deuxième Bureau summarize "intimate conversations" with anonymous officers of the German army. These conversations often led the interlocutor to conclude that war preparation was continuing in earnest.

Such rumors of German aggression also found confirmation in interviews with deserters of foreign armies. Formalizing the process of interviewing foreign deserters became increasingly important as professional intelligence developed, both to learn about foreign armies, and for counterespionage measures to ensure that soldiers were not posing as deserters to spy on France. Throughout the early

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<sup>23</sup> Douglas Porch writes of the difficulties faced by French intelligence in countering the strategy of the offensive: "[T]he disparity of the odds against him drove Joffre to take excessive risks, to adopt offensive strategies beyond the capabilities of his armies. This posed a dilemma for French intelligence. If they continued to supply information on the enemy which challenged Joffre's strategic assumptions, then the French commander would see intelligence, especially accurate intelligence, as a threat, and the Deuxième Bureau would be reduced to irrelevancy. Better 'go with the flow,' tailor intelligence to Joffre's strategic vision, and retain influence and resources by settling into a tactical and operational role. The stalemate on the Western Front allowed French intelligence to do just that." Porch, *French Secret Services*, 77.

<sup>24</sup> Note date August 6, 1887, SHD 7N 664. Bear in mind that this intelligence contradicts other sources, as well as Bismarck's behavior during the Schnaebelé Affair that indicated that Germany was not yet ready for war.

Third Republic, both the army's intelligence service and the *Sûreté* put together official guidelines for how to approach individuals claiming to be defecting members of foreign armies.<sup>25</sup> By interrogating deserters about the movements of their divisions and the behavior of their units, the Statistical Section reached conclusions about Bismarck's plans that countered some information available to the public. These pieces of information show the reliance on intelligence over open-source means of information gathering. The reports that were passed along suggest that the Section frequently sought word of mouth to confirm existing suspicions. For example, after interrogating a deserter from Germany's 114<sup>th</sup> regiment, the intelligence officer concluded that, "despite the affirmations to the contrary in German newspapers, we still remain convinced that there will be a mobilization attempt before next spring."<sup>26</sup> Similarly, a conversation with an Italian deserter informed the Statistical Section that Italian civilians believed a war between France and Italy was imminent, and would give the latter the opportunity to take back Nice and Savoy.<sup>27</sup> In choosing to pass along this particular sentiment, we note the Section's use of human intelligence to confirm its biases and agenda.

As his years leading the Statistical Section advanced, Sandherr continued to argue for the role of his intelligence service in framing the direction of the next war. Because of his responsibility for all things related to information, Sandherr

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<sup>25</sup> See, Instruction for Foreign Deserters, SHD 9N 19, letter from Minister of the Interior to the prefects dated February 25, 1897, SHD 2I 322, and also Instruction of June 1, 1913 on what measures to take in regard to deserters of foreign armies and non-deserter foreigners coming to France to engage in a foreign regiment. (Annex No. 1 is a questionnaire asking things about why deserting, profession, resources, etc.) See also examples of *laissez-passer* cards that the deserter would be given to carry around, SHD 7N 676.

<sup>26</sup> Bordereau dated February 13, 1891, SHD 7N 674.

<sup>27</sup> Bordereau dated July 24, 1894, SHD 7N 674.



extended his authority beyond the army high command, giving orders that he deemed necessary to protect French secrets. Examples include promoting a law to be voted “*dans le plus grand secret*” to regulate the activities of the postal service in the event of mobilization, or preparing drafts of a decree to make the carrying of passports obligatory.<sup>28</sup> Such proposals proffered by the Statistical Section to the *Conseil Supérieur de la Guerre* for actions “during periods of political tension” included prohibiting anyone – French or foreign – from leaving French territory without a passport, and forbidding French citizens in military service or eligible for service according to age from even receiving passports.<sup>29</sup> With the threat of war solidly established by intelligence experts, the Section therefore successfully expanded its scope to these related fields.

According to Sandherr’s projects, the intelligence service itself would also need to expand when war broke out. In 1893, six and a half years into Sandherr’s tenure, the director prepared another long note detailing the role of the Statistical Section in the event of mobilization. In this proposed scenario, the intelligence section would need to expand and would be combined with the rest of the *Deuxième Bureau*, together forming one larger “*bureau des Renseignements de l’État-Major de l’armée au Ministre de la Guerre.*”<sup>30</sup> As before, Sandherr anticipated which officers would undergo what duties, as well as identified means for transmission of

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<sup>28</sup> For regulation of the postal service, see note dated December 27, 1888. The law included provisions such as requiring mail from abroad to be held for four or five days and forbidding telegrams to be exchanged with foreign countries. The Statistical Section addressed the first bureau of the *état-major* on September 11, 1889 with a draft of the decree to require the carrying of passports. SHD 7N 674.

<sup>29</sup> These requests took place during a session of the *Conseil de Guerre* on April 1, 1889. See *Projet du Rapport au Ministre* drafted by Sandherr and the Statistical Section, dated May 11, 1889, SHD 7N 674.

<sup>30</sup> Note from Sandherr dated May 1, 1893, SHD 7N 674.

crucial intelligence. The summaries show that the Statistical Section considered itself having a major role in the reorganized army in the case of war. Thus, the officers must have recognized that for the Section to be most valued, there would need to be a war. This hypothesis also explains why the Section continued to collect evidence confirming the thesis of impending warfare.

Finally, according to Sandherr, additional preparation for full-fledged mobilization required a vast and thorough effort to assure that French military and political intelligence did not fall into the hands of the enemy. This entailed a two-step process of identifying, and subsequently arresting, any and all individuals who could be suspect as spies for a foreign power residing on French territory. The details of this plan, described below, made for some of the most draconian and xenophobic endeavors targeting foreigners on French soil since the Terror, essentially calling for the imprisonment of these individuals from the moment that war began.

### *The Expansion of Counterespionage*

Boulangier and Sandherr's intense paranoia of Germany seeking to commence another European conquest led them to hypothesize a potential infestation of foreign spies on French soil. Acting on this paranoia, the War Minister and his intelligence director created or recruited several additional entities to watch foreigners in France, and considered how to treat this segment of the population when war finally broke out. The Statistical Section from 1886-1900

consequently gathered amounts of information on France that nearly equaled that gathered on Germany and on Alsace-Lorraine.<sup>31</sup>

The first major step in constructing a counterespionage apparatus within the French military was put in place with the passing of the espionage law championed by Boulanger in April 1886. With a legal definition of the spy secured, Boulanger was able to appoint those he pleased to implement the new legislation. One of the groups entrusted with the surveillance of potential spies was the *gendarmerie*, the military's policing arm under the Third Republic. In a formal *Instruction* dated December 9, 1886, the War Minister thus charged the *gendarmerie* with "the pursuit and arrest of spies." Such a task, he stressed, was "of the essence," and he called upon the *gendarmes* to "provide their valuable services in the execution of a law that is of such great importance to national defense."<sup>32</sup> Boulanger instructed the officers to watch suspect individuals across the country, and laid out a number of qualifications for what might make someone a potential spy— doing his part to frame the narrative that these officers would create in their reports on presumed enemies.

Tracking enemies on French soil had traditionally been the role of the French police, and as espionage became a growing concern towards the end of the nineteenth century, the police continued to undertake this role. In pursuit of foreign spies, the French police in Paris, along with regional police agents across France therefore watched and noted suspicious civilians, soldiers, and various

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<sup>31</sup> See Statistical Section archives, SHD 7N 676.

<sup>32</sup> "*Instruction très confidentielle sur l'application du loi du 18 avril 1886 law relative à la Surveillance de la Gendarmerie*," dated December 9, 1886. SHD 7N 11.

professionals, looking to expose those spying under the cover of other identities.<sup>33</sup> Police agents watched train stations, attended meetings, and followed up on tips from newspapers or concerned citizens.<sup>34</sup> They collected newspaper articles about spies rampant throughout France and speculated on connections between prominent foreign expatriates and the itinerant travelers and salesmen coming and going from foreign lands. The police worked with the military in certain cases, and in others, worked on their own.

For General Boulanger, however, the police work to catch spies would not be sufficient for the threat that he believed faced the nation. The next measure to advance the military's role in surveillance projects was the creation of regional intelligence services along the border zones.<sup>35</sup> Unsatisfied with the extent of contemporary intelligence practices, Boulanger had requested that army commanders help him organize territorial *services des renseignements* that would be charged above all with tasks such as the surveillance of foreigners and the protection of railways, telegraph lines, and military structures. Using the 1886 espionage law and the fear of spies that inspired it as the basis for justifying the

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<sup>33</sup> Police notes displaying counterespionage activities are found in the archives of the Paris Prefecture of Police (BA 1332-1334), the Archives Nationales (F<sup>7</sup> 12644-5, F<sup>7</sup> 12581, F<sup>7</sup> 12925), as well as in regional archives such as those of the departments of Alpes-Maritimes (1M 359, 1M 870, 4M 1357, etc.) and Meurthe-et-Moselle (4M 273, 4M 278, 4M 277, etc).

<sup>34</sup> For more on denunciation letters sent to police, see Chapter 6.

<sup>35</sup> In confidential letters to a few army division heads, Boulanger requested their help in identifying – *urgently* – officers who could serve in such a service. Letter marked “Absolutely Confidential” from General Boulanger to the General Commander of the 2<sup>nd</sup> army corps dated December 20, 1886, SHD 5N 1. On December 22, 1886, Boulanger prepared a note asking these commanders to organize a service to take on domestic surveillance “of foreigners established on French territory.” He stressed that it should be especially active in military centers, on the border, etc. “I believe that the best way to exercise this surveillance is to be informed to a degree as exact as possible on the movements of foreigners in the city, movement which is given by the *relevé des entrées* in hotels and garrisons.” He instructed commanders to communicate with the civil authority, and that they should request surveillance help from municipal or administrative police forces. The gendarmerie would also have a role in this mission. See letter dated December 22, 1886 from the War Ministry to the General Commander of the 2<sup>nd</sup> army corps, SHD 7N 674.

creation of such a service, Boulanger recruited agents from the police, army and gendarmerie to watch for potential spies and gather information about the enemy. As part of Boulanger's decision to create additional intelligence services, he requested that at least one officer be designated to head the local *service de renseignements*. An officer who would be "a superior officer at least, whose aptitude, discretion, previous studies, knowledge of foreign armies and foreign languages (notably German and Italian)" would qualify him for such a task.<sup>36</sup> When war came, these intelligence services would then be integrated directly into the complete intelligence network.

Boulanger's projects in this sense not only aimed to boost counterespionage efforts, but also to extend the cooperation between army and police on his terms. He demonstrated this desire in a confidential letter to his counterpart in the Ministry of the Interior in which he stated, "the department of war cannot by itself undertake this essential work necessary to the national defense and security of the territory," noting that the means of his own ministry were insufficient for the full surveillance of foreigners and transport lines that he desired.<sup>37</sup> Notably, however, the partnership between military and police was not entirely on even ground, as Bertrand Warusfel notes that "this cooperation was done completely under military direction, the SR [*service de renseignements*] officers having no responsibility to report to the Minister of the Interior regarding the use of police officers who were

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<sup>36</sup> "Absolutely Confidential" letter from General Boulanger to the General Commander of the 2<sup>nd</sup> army corps dated December 20, 1886, SHD 5N 1.

<sup>37</sup> Letter marked "*très confidentielle*" from General Boulanger to the Minister of the Interior dated December 20, 1886, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12581. Boulanger's emphasis on cooperation with the police testifies to a sophisticated understanding of the needs and processes for intelligence collection and handling, as even well into the twentieth century, the failure of different intelligence units to share findings was something that resulted in intelligence fiascos which could otherwise have been avoided. See Zegart, *Spying Blind*.

put at their disposal.”<sup>38</sup> Thus, while other branches continued to practice intelligence, the War Ministry managed during the first few decades of the Third Republic to control the operations that they had perfected.

The records of one such regional intelligence service – that connected with the first army corps and based in Lille in the north of France – allow us to understand the role of this new force.<sup>39</sup> Though under the domain of the War Ministry – and funded by the War Minister’s *fonds secrets* – the individuals staffing the service in Lille represented a spectrum of professionals, including retired gendarmes, property owners, builders, and businessmen.<sup>40</sup> A note on the organization of the service in March 1887 stated that its members “displayed exceptional patriotism.”<sup>41</sup> The number of people working for this service grew considerably in the decade from 1887 to 1897, employing only 25 people in August of 1887, up to a height of 151 in November 1892.<sup>42</sup> According to Sébastien Laurent, this increase “indicates at once the importance given by the authorities to missions of counterespionage, and the receptivity of local society to this demand.”<sup>43</sup>

The counterespionage missions of the first army corps’ *service de renseignements territorial* (SRT) entailed a lot of watching and noting of individuals

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<sup>38</sup> Warusfel, *Contre-espionnage*, 15.

<sup>39</sup> See SHD 2I 322 and 2I 323. The archives of the 1er corps were transferred to the central archives in Paris from the departmental archives of the Nord in the middle of the twentieth century. Laurent, 363. Of the services envisioned by Boulanger, only the records for the SR in Lille could be found, though references to such service also existed in the archives in Nice. This service appears to have disbanded in the wake of the Dreyfus Affair, though the particulars of its dissolution are not known.

<sup>40</sup> Laurent, *Politiques de l’ombre*, 364.

<sup>41</sup> “Note on the organization of a *service territorial de renseignements*,” March 29, 1887, SHD 2I 323.

<sup>42</sup> Laurent, *Politiques de l’ombre*, 365. The number was down only to 132 in December 1897.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 364-365.

who did not seem to fit in with the local population. Personnel were told to refrain from exercising any “police functions,” but instead to watch and unveil any facts, or foreigners, “considered harmful to the interest of the country.”<sup>44</sup> They received instructions from the War Ministry about how to fill out and administer the new Carnets A and B, and were given examples of the kinds of intelligence to ascertain about suspects. In their ventures, members of Lille’s SRT established direct links of communication with Sandherr and the Statistical Section in Paris, with the latter playing a substantial role in the organization and staffing of the territorial service.

The archives testify to the zeal of this service, with detailed notes on several suspects, such as a man named Lahola, the Austrian owner of a café in the north of France.<sup>45</sup> Throughout a few months in early 1889, members of the service collected daily notes from the café, observing relations that Lahola entered into, transcribing snippets of conversation overheard, noting individuals frequenting the café, and watching moments when money was exchanged. At one point, an officer compiling the reports noted, “this seems to leave no doubt what role he is playing on our territory,” and commented that he would send Lahola’s dossier to the *Sûreté Générale* as a high priority. Following the production of a considerable amount of paperwork, the Prefect of the Nord department wrote a report summarizing the surveillance, concluding that no evidence existed to accuse Lahola of espionage.

It is clear, therefore, that as a foreigner running a successful business in northern France, Lahola, like other foreigners in similar situations, raised suspicions

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<sup>44</sup> Report of the *1er corps d’armée sur le service territorial de renseignements*, 1887, SHD 2I 323.

<sup>45</sup> See notes dated February and March 1889, SHD 2I 323.

of those tasked with being paranoid.<sup>46</sup> Other individuals who caught the attention of the intelligence service were foreigners who spent their time with soldiers or sailors, or others who visited with Germans. The notes mention that several suspects had aroused the attention of the local population, mostly for seeming to spend more money than their situation called for. One such person, a woman named Rosalie Campbell who was supposedly of Polish-Austrian origin, was arrested in March 1889 on grounds of being evasive about her past, and allowing German men to frequent her room.<sup>47</sup> These examples show that the convergence of xenophobic attitudes and suspicions of espionage spread far beyond the centralized intelligence authority in Paris.

The creation of the regional intelligence services added another layer between military and civilian authorities in the task of watching foreigners suspected of espionage. Correspondence between the heads and representatives of the Ministries of War and Interior testify to the fact that the services shared responsibilities, though a letter from a representative of the War Minister in June of 1887 made it clear that of the two, the army would be more likely to step outside its public bounds and watch suspected areas covertly. Writing to an army commander in Amiens, a representative of the War Ministry wrote,

“In telling you that the War department cannot be charged with the surveillance of the railroads during peacetime, I meant that it could not be charged with this *officially*, and by military means, but I never meant to discredit my previous prescriptions on the functioning during peacetime of the *service territorial des renseignements* and the occult organization made available to you by the Statistical Section.”<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Another good example was the case of Bofinger, the owner of the brasserie of the same name in Paris, who was accused of being a spy by a newspaper editor in Paris. APP BA 1333.

<sup>47</sup> SHD 2I 323.

<sup>48</sup> Letter dated June 10, 1887, 7N 674.



Acting upon this, in addition to the first corps in Lille, a number of army corps along the eastern border developed thorough intelligence teams, with services based in Belfort, Nancy, and Nice that would report back to the War Ministry with intelligence on foreigners.

Beyond designating additional members of the military forces to watch “suspicious” foreigners on French soil, Boulanger and Sandherr also worked to assure that other ministries stepped up surveillance work, yet did so in cooperation with the military’s intelligence service, or under its watch. Following his December 9, 1886 *Instruction* to the gendarmerie, Boulanger stressed the need to work with the civil administration. Thus on January 7, 1887, he addressed his colleague in the Interior, requesting that the prefects work alongside the gendarmes and regional army corps in observing foreigners and means of communication. Writing to the Minister of the Interior, Boulanger commented upon “the necessity of the surveillance seeming very urgent, given current circumstances,” and requested his colleague’s assistance in preparing lists of foreigners passing through each commune.<sup>49</sup> In compliance, the Interior Minister informed prefects across France of Boulanger’s regional intelligence services, and described means for watching and documenting foreigners passing through French territory.<sup>50</sup> In this vein the War Ministry helped to create a standard questionnaire of observations for *aubergistes* and police agents regarding foreigners. In defining the particulars of the pursuit of

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<sup>49</sup> See letter dated January 7, 1887, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12581.

<sup>50</sup> Letter from the Minister of the Interior to the prefects, dated February 9, 1887, SHD 1M 2197, as well as letter from the Minister of the Interior to the prefects dated January 20, 1887, AM 1M 870.

spies, Boulanger therefore helped to define the results that would follow.<sup>51</sup> The conformity demanded by Boulanger in each region of France in regard to the surveillance of spies can also be viewed as an important step in his attempts to centralize power within the military's administration, and as an example of the role of military intelligence in dictating the story that intelligence would tell.

Although Boulanger's tenure as War Minister ended with the overthrow of the Goblet cabinet in May 1887, Colonel Sandherr took up the mantle with increased energy. With Sandherr heading the Statistical Section, the notion that France's neighbors were stealthily preparing to wage war continued to grow. Accompanying the paranoid assumption of German aggression was the idea that Germany was accruing a military advantage by dispatching spies across French territory.<sup>52</sup> The solution to this issue, as commenced by Boulanger in 1886, was to observe the individuals supposedly threatening to France. The next step, taken under Sandherr, was to move from merely watching foreigners to identifying and registering them.

Identifying foreigners as distinct from French citizens was not a new phenomenon in France, but the systemization and processes of identification, coupled with attitudes towards foreigners, changed significantly in the nineteenth

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<sup>51</sup> Letters from prefects across France attest to their attempts to follow in conformity with Boulanger's prescriptions. A few of the prefects did protest, however, such as the prefect of the Orne, a department in northwest France, who complained of the expense to *aubergistes* and others in having to print off all of the forms that the War Minister required them to print out. See letter dated June 22, 1887. AN F<sup>7</sup> 12851.

<sup>52</sup> There is certainly merit to the fear that Germany would be sending spies to learn of French military projects. As Robert Foley writes, the French army did have an advantage over Germany in terms of technology, and therefore German intelligence realized that the best way to reverse that edge would be with advance knowledge of French mobilization plans. Foley, "Easy Target." I believe, however, that the French fear of spies was to a much greater extreme than necessary.

century.<sup>53</sup> Gérard Noiriel's *French Melting Pot* locates a change in the middle of the nineteenth century from a welcoming rhetoric of inclusion in France to a more hostile and xenophobic attitude. Whereas through the 1860s, the status of "foreigner" did not exist in the sense that it came to signify generations later, by the turn of the century, specific mechanisms were in place to assure the identification of both insiders and outsiders.<sup>54</sup> In his analysis of the process by which the foreigner truly became "foreign" during the late nineteenth century, Noiriel cites Pierre Bourdieu's commentary that an entire set of sociological conditions must be met in order for "words to become deeds."<sup>55</sup> These conditions, he explains, came together with the introduction of new means of identification, specifically *bertillonage*, the system of identifying individuals based on physical characteristics and named after its creator, Alphonse Bertillon, and eventually the issuing of ID cards.<sup>56</sup> Noiriel leaves out, however, the elements of fear and perceived danger, as well as the role

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<sup>53</sup> Peter Sahlin, for example, presents an early attempt by the State to master definitions of French or otherwise in looking at the policies of absolute monarchs of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and argues that in the early modern period, the line between insider and outsider was drawn based on legal or property laws, but was not yet colored with a political or moral tinge. Peter Sahlin, *Unnaturally French: Foreign Citizens in the Old Regime and After* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2004). A number of histories locate the end of the nineteenth century as the era when ideas of citizenship and belonging to a nation crystallized in the popular mentality. See, for example, Weber, *Peasants Into Frenchmen*; Ford, *Creating the Nation*.

<sup>54</sup> Noiriel, *French Melting Pot*, 47-51. Rogers Brubaker also notes that until the 1880s, the French nation-state was accommodating and encouraging to foreigners. One reason why this distinction came about at this time had to do with the 'type' of foreigner immigrating to France. Whereas earlier in the nineteenth century immigrants may have come from Western European nations and therefore did not seem overwhelmingly different from the French, the next wave of immigrants from the East were poor, dirty, spoke in bizarre tongues and practiced strange customs. Brubaker, *Citizenship and Nationhood*.

<sup>55</sup> Bourdieu, *Ce que parler veut dire*, cited in Noiriel, *French Melting Pot*, 66.

<sup>56</sup> Bertillon's system was introduced around the same time as the emergence of a number of scientific theories on identification and its use for locating criminals and other "types" of people. For example, Cesare Lombroso's studies on criminology looked at heredity and race as factors in determining potential criminals, thus leading to questions of definitions of nationality. *Ibid.*, 54.

of intelligence professionals in contributing to perceptions of foreigners as outsiders and threats to national security.

The idea of using intelligence to identify foreigners as threats to the regime was introduced as early as 1886, when the Statistical Section discussed taking advantage of the new census data to identify foreigners.<sup>57</sup> Boulanger's *Instruction* to the gendarmerie in December 1886 subsequently laid the groundwork for the formalization of surveillance practices by introducing the idea of noting and registering suspects. This concept would evolve over the following few months into the national lists known as the Carnets A and B.<sup>58</sup> Carnet A identified foreign males of military age living in France, while Carnet B listed anyone, French or foreign, suspected of possible espionage, and therefore deemed a threat to French national security. As described by an instruction manual, the actual carnets were "formed of pliable folios, easy to detach, in order to follow individuals in all of their movements."<sup>59</sup> The small booklet would note the suspect's name, nationality, date and place of birth, current address, profession, and physical description. The main part of the carnet was composed of a list of the various actions that made the individual suspect. For example, in the case of the Bavarian Louis Stocker, the Carnet B listed four separate reports including having visited a French fort, and

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<sup>57</sup> See letter dated August 14, 1886, and passed along again April 7, 1887, SHD 7N 674.

<sup>58</sup> Though a number of different dates have been provided for the actual origin of the Carnets A and B, Jean-Jacques Becker traces its beginnings to Boulanger's December 9, 1886 *Instruction*. Becker, *Le Carnet B*, 105. According to a summary of exchange of correspondence between the Minister of War and the Minister of the Interior regarding Carnet B, on March 4, 1887, the War Minister informed the army's commanding generals that the gendarmerie was being charged with the establishment of the Carnet B. See "Note confidentielle," undated, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12581. Warusfel claims that Boulanger's instruction to create the Carnets A and B came on July 25, 1887. Warusfel, *Contre-espionnage*.

<sup>59</sup> Instruction signed by Minister of War Billot and Minister of the Interior, Barthou, dated May 10, 1897, SHD 7N 674.

frequent receipt of *lettres recommandés* from Berlin.<sup>60</sup> At the bottom of the page, the carnets contained an entry reading “Measure to be applied.” In Stocker’s case, the measure was arrest.

Identification of subjects was the first step for Sandherr and his colleagues regarding the Carnet B. Once an individual had a Carnet B filled out in his or her name, he or she was to be subject to increased surveillance. Finally, when the army mobilized for the inevitable war that would come, those listed on the Carnet B were slated for internment.<sup>61</sup> Shortly after the details for the project were conceived and designed within the War Ministry and the Statistical Section, the War Minister made several attempts to assure the cooperation of the Interior Ministry, which at first was resistant. When Charles de Freycinet took up the position of the Republic’s first civilian War Minister in April 1888, however, he helped to advance Sandherr’s cause, seeking the cooperation of Premier and Interior Minister Charles Floquet in advancing these plans. Thus de Freycinet wrote to Floquet, asking the Interior Minister to help identify locations where, for “the necessity of assuring public safety,” foreigners could be housed in case of internment.<sup>62</sup> With their aid, Sandherr continued his plans, intending to finally seek the approval of the

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<sup>60</sup> See Stocker’s Carnet B, SHD 7N 674. (See Annex B.)

<sup>61</sup> The idea was that mobilization, or wartime, would be considered a state of siege, which would accord power to the military authorities. Bach, *L’armée de Dreyfus*, 546. Mitchell notes that “under the terms of Sandherr’s scheme, males of military age should be made prisoners of war and the rest – women, children, and the aged – should be expelled from France. Mitchell, “Xenophobic Style,” 422. Interestingly, a note filed by the Statistical Section in 1891 asserted that the Germans planned to arrest French citizens living in Alsace-Lorraine in the event of mobilization as well. See note dated May 21, 1891, SHD 7N 674.

<sup>62</sup> See letter from Freycinet to Floquet dated June 6, 1888, SHD 7N 674.

president of the Republic at the very last moment before mobilization would occur.<sup>63</sup>

The project remained active up until the First World War, with military leaders continuing to define the terms of civil and military involvement. Sandherr took the lead on initiating a rapport between the War and Interior Ministries on the subject of surveillance for the Carnets A and B, though he complained that his letters remained unanswered. Nonetheless, in the years that followed, both ministries would instruct their troops to carefully maintain lists of suspects, seemingly going back and forth regarding who took the leading role, and therefore contributing to competition between army and police over counterespionage duties.<sup>64</sup> In addition, Sandherr called upon other branches of the army, who recognized the need to organize “a service of surveillance of our border departments and our zones of defense,” calling for assistance from agents of various administrations including Posts and Telegraphs, Finance, Public Works, and Water and Forestry.<sup>65</sup> Indeed, in the years that followed, customs agents, hunters, forest guards, as well as agents of the railroad companies, the police, and the gendarmerie watched the borders, all reporting back to the Statistical Section on their findings regarding France’s external and internal safety.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> See undated directive [probably 1888], SHD 7N 674.

<sup>64</sup> See note dated October 2, 1888 from Floquet that reinforced the Ministry of the Interior’s role over surveillance of foreigners, another from Minister of Interior Ribot to the departmental prefects dated January 31, 1893 doing the same, and another dated May 10, 1897 signed by both Ministers (Billot for War and Barthou for Interior), that put the power for inscriptions on the Carnet B more in the hands of the army.

<sup>65</sup> Note dated June 20, 1888, SHD 7N 674.

<sup>66</sup> See note dated December 17, 1908, SHD 7N 21; also several notes and instructions regarding surveillance of espionage in border zones by the Office of *Eaux et Forêts*, gendarmes, douaniers and chasseurs forestiers. This was particularly expanded in 1899, as noted: « *A la suite d’un examen attentif des mesures de sûreté nationale actuellement pratiquée en France, M. le Ministre de l’Intérieur s’étant*

Over the course of the following decades, both civil and military authorities stressed the importance of “searching, during peacetime, for enemies of France.”<sup>67</sup> Throughout this time, authorities strove to assure that the Carnet B remained a matter of utmost secrecy. Addressing the leading generals in 1893, the War Minister wrote, “I certainly don’t need to direct your attention to the fact that these dispositions must remain absolutely secret, though it seems indispensable for me to communicate this to you,” and further, “I recommend that you burn all minutes of reports or letters that you address to me in executing the above prescriptions.”<sup>68</sup> Moreover, the military authorities stressed that under no circumstances were those individuals listed on the Carnet B to be made aware of their status.<sup>69</sup>

Judging by the stacks of documents with details of individuals either listed on the Carnet B, or removed from it, there is no doubt that civil and military officials were hasty to inscribe suspects on these national lists.<sup>70</sup> In an *état numérique* prepared by the Statistical Section, estimates were provided of how many foreigners would be interned in the different departments in the event of mobilization.<sup>71</sup> While the list locates harmful individuals in all of the different departments in France, the majority of people were located in the Seine region,

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*rendu compte de l’insuffisance de la surveillance des espions et des émissaires étrangers, a décidé, après entente avec ses Collègues des Finances, du Commerce, des Travaux publics et de l’Agriculture, la création d’un vaste réseau de surveillance qui utiliserait le personnel de ces divers Ministères et a chargé, par Circulaire du 1<sup>er</sup> Mai 1899, MM les Préfets, avec le concours d’une Commission renfermant des délégués des administrations intéressées, de l’organisation du dit service. »* AM 7M 645.

<sup>67</sup> See letter dated January 31, 1893 from Minister of the Interior, Ribot, to the Prefects, SHD 7N 674.

<sup>68</sup> See letter dated December 1893, SHD 7N 674.

<sup>69</sup> See letter from General Zurlinden dated September 6, 1895, SHD 7N 674.

<sup>70</sup> See SHD 2I 323 and AN F<sup>7</sup> 12587.

<sup>71</sup> SHD 7N 674.

around Lyon, and Grenoble. Adding up all of the figures cited on the list, one arrives at a figure of tens of thousands of people.<sup>72</sup> Nonetheless, in notes throughout this period, different ministers made a point to complain that not enough was being accomplished in terms of isolating potential spies, and that current levels of surveillance were insufficient.<sup>73</sup>

Without a doubt, the institution of the Carnet B represents one of the more xenophobic uses of surveillance and intelligence in France at the turn of the century. The use of a modern, methodical, and secret system of notation to document secret information about suspect individuals showed how intelligence could be used to target populations at home, just as it had abroad. Moreover, the contemporary spy phobia so present in popular discourse encouraged this behavior as opposed to questioning it.<sup>74</sup> Borrowing a turn of phrase from Noiriél's analysis on the effect of *bertillonage* and its system of identification, the list-making fit into a new epistemological framework, "a new state of mind, a perception of the world and of others."<sup>75</sup> By normalizing the administrative process of identification and description, intelligence and police authorities "undoubtedly contributed to modifying the perception of the 'Other.'"<sup>76</sup> The 1886 espionage law, and the Carnet

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<sup>72</sup> The numbers on this list found in the archives do not match up with the numbers actually listed on the Carnet B. On July 27, 1914, the number of people listed on the Carnet B was 2481. Of these, 710 (less than 30%), were listed as suspected of espionage. The breakdown between French citizens and foreigners was 149 of the former and 561 of the latter. Becker, *Le Carnet B*, 128.

<sup>73</sup> See, i.e. letter from Minister of the Interior Ribot to the prefects dated January 31, 1893. The note is covered with a bordereau and signed by Sandherr on February 1, 1893, and Confidential note from Minister of War de Freycinet dated December 6, 1898.

<sup>74</sup> For more on the connections between popular discourse and actions towards presumed spies, see Chapters 6 and 7.

<sup>75</sup> Noiriél, *French Melting Pot*, 69.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 70.



B on which it was based, also allowed for the establishment of a link between watching foreigners, and the equally new concept of “national defense.” In the majority of cases, men and women became suspect merely because they were foreign, or acted contrary to perceptions of the norm, rather than because they engaged in behavior that implied the practice of espionage.

Reasons for individuals to have been listed on the Carnet B run the gamut from displaying an exaggerated paranoia to being plain ridiculous. For the most part, foreigners found their way onto the Carnet B for various reasons that Jean-Jacques Becker describes as “facts of existence”: failing to make the effort to become naturalized citizens, traveling abroad from time to time, and spending more money than officials deemed within their means.<sup>77</sup> In the Ardennes, for example, six foreigners were inscribed merely for living a short distance from a bridge over the Meuse, and another man made his way onto the list for having “the formal, stiff gait of a German soldier.”<sup>78</sup> In Lille, a father and son named Metzmaeker were both put on the list, even though, as an officer noted, “no proof can be established of the crime of espionage. ... [However,] these individuals don’t show any sympathy for France, and for this reason can be considered as suspect foreigners.”<sup>79</sup> The 18-year old son had been placed on the Carnet B after being overheard singing songs of German patriotism. He was then watched in strict detail without authorities finding any other reason to suspect him of espionage, and was therefore removed from the list when it seemed that he was joining the French army. This anecdote serves as proof of unnecessary paranoia, and of the contemporary “spy fever,” with

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<sup>77</sup> Becker, *Le Carnet B*.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 140 and 158.

<sup>79</sup> See note dated November 28, 1892, SHD 2I 323.

the use of espionage as an excuse to fight back against perceived attacks on French integrity. Though kept a secret from the individuals in question, placement on the Carnet B could have had an adverse effect on foreigners living in France, even without mobilization taking place. For example, in 1912, War Minister Jules Joffre sent a letter to the various departmental prefectures that urged managers to check if potential employees were listed on the Carnet B before hiring them due to the risk they could pose to various establishments.<sup>80</sup>

These cases show the extent to which an association with *l'étranger* – particularly Germany – rendered individuals suspect from the “national point of view.”<sup>81</sup> By identifying and subsequently arresting these foreign elements, the military promised the French Third Republic that it was protecting the nation, and did so by instituting a centralized, national system. The link between surveillance of foreigners and the notion of defending the nation was therefore solidly established, and would be called upon by authorities in the years to come. Moreover, as social and political demographics changed, the military increasingly used the Carnet B to identify French subversives – particularly anarchists, socialists and anti-militarists – and add them to a list that had originally been conceived for targeting spies.<sup>82</sup> In terms of counterespionage, Carnet B did much to conflate the notions of foreigner, spy, and danger to the nation. Thus, Allan Mitchell asserts that it was with the Carnet B that “the roots of the Dreyfus affair were firmly planted within the French army.”<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> A copy of this letter is found in AM 1M 870.

<sup>81</sup> This is the terminology used in a number of French documents.

<sup>82</sup> Becker, *Le Carnet B*.

<sup>83</sup> Mitchell, “Xenophobic Style,” 421.

*Spying in the Paris Embassies: Embassy as Microcosm of Espionage and Counterespionage Activities*

One of the main locales used by French intelligence to seek out knowledge about the projects of friends and enemies alike was right in its metaphoric backyard: the foreign embassies in Paris. During Sandherr's tenure as head of the intelligence services, the French Statistical Section placed agents in embassies to learn what representatives of foreign powers were discussing. As the army believed that war was imminent, it sought to learn from insiders how close it actually was. With officials from foreign countries stationed in France, embassies afforded direct access to clues about war planning. The army's intelligence service and those working alongside— including another *service de renseignements* at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs— used a number of different tactics to procure information from foreign representatives based in Paris. Through a variety of techniques, the Statistical Section was able to intercept messages to and from international capitals such as Berlin, London, Vienna, Luxembourg, Madrid, and Alexandria.<sup>84</sup> Thus, during the late 1880s and 1890s, the embassies became a microcosm of the secret war being played out between France and her rivals, and also emblematic of the use of intelligence both to craft a narrative of impending hostilities and to accelerate paranoia of potential threats to the nation.

Intelligence gathered from foreign embassies in Paris came from several different sources before being turned over to the Statistical Section for analysis. Telegrams could be intercepted directly from the ambassadors' and attachés' home

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<sup>84</sup> A large collection of these intercepts and summaries are found in AN BB<sup>19</sup> 84, the papers of Lt. Col. Armand du Paty de Clam (released during the Dreyfus Affair).

ministries, and would be translated and decrypted if sent in code, before being passed on to the Section. The Section also paid individuals for specific documents, as occurred when an agent working for Sandherr purchased a questionnaire that the Italian military attaché had been circulating to attain information about French military progress. In another case, a French correspondent gleaned his information at a dinner party with several Prussian officers present. Noting that the wine had loosened the guests' tongues, the correspondent reported what he learned about the latest developments in German artillery and materiel, which the Section would invariably compare with its own.<sup>85</sup> Once the Statistical Section intercepted a document, they passed it on to the relevant interested parties, whether it be the head of the Deuxième Bureau, the Minister of War, Minister of the Marine, Minister of Foreign Affairs, or even the President of the Republic. Thus, informed by the army's intelligence section, policy-makers would have been equipped to make important military and diplomatic decisions.

In order to confirm their suspicions of hostile adversaries, French intelligence sought proof of rivals' plans. One of the Section's best means for procuring documents from representatives of foreign governments was by placing hired agents directly in the embassies. The most famous of these agents was Marie Bastian, the cleaning woman who recovered the notorious *bordereau* that launched the Dreyfus Affair in 1894. Bastian had been employed in the German embassy from the mid-1880s, and was recruited by a man named Brücker to work for the army's intelligence section towards the end of that decade. Known to the Statistical Section by her code names, either "Auguste," or "*voie ordinaire*" (meaning "ordinary

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<sup>85</sup> See note entitled "Résumés de conversations," dated July 2, 1898. AN BB<sup>19</sup> 109.

route”), Bastian regularly emptied the embassy’s trashcans, and brought the pieces of paper to her handlers in the intelligence section. The attachés’ attempts to destroy their compromising notes consisted of ripping them into small pieces, which the Statistical Section managed to reconstruct without much difficulty.<sup>86</sup> The Section originally paid Bastian 25 francs per month for her services, and doubled the amount after three or four years. By the time of her exposure during the Dreyfus Affair, she was receiving 150 francs per month in recognition of the “*plus grands services*” that she rendered the army’s intelligence service, “furnishing diplomatic documents, reports of military attachés, and pieces relating to all sorts of current issues.”<sup>87</sup> Although the French diplomat Maurice Paléologue erroneously described her as “vulgar, stupid, and completely illiterate,” the agents of the Section referred to her “excellent services,” and she herself referenced her tasks as “rendering services to my country.”<sup>88</sup>

Bastian would either correspond directly with an agent of the intelligence service, or else hand the documents to another trusted agent, Brücker. According to Paléologue, one such handover took place regularly in the evening, in the chapel of St. Clothilde in Paris.<sup>89</sup> Brücker had been working with the Statistical Section since at least 1884, and was described as “having remarkable skill, demonstrated

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<sup>86</sup> Carton AN BB<sup>19</sup> 109 contains a number of notes to and from foreign military attachés that have been ripped up and pieced back together with tape. See images in Annex C.

<sup>87</sup> See report prepared by an agent of the Statistical Section dated November 11, 1899. AN BB<sup>19</sup> 73. By calculations using the website of the Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques ([www.insee.fr](http://www.insee.fr)), 150 francs at the turn of the century was worth approximately 560 euros of today’s value, which per exchange rates of February 2013 is the equivalent of approximately \$750.

<sup>88</sup> Paléologue, *My Secret Diary*, 13, and AN BB<sup>19</sup> 73. Marie Bastian may have pretended to be illiterate so as to not arouse the suspicions of Schwartzkoppen and others whose papers she took; however, several notes in the National Archives confirm that she was able both to read and to write. For more on the notion of spies and patriotism, see Chapter 7.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

dedication, and having provided considerable services" to the agency.<sup>90</sup> Brücker was credited with the recruitment of a number of agents staffed in various foreign embassies, who were able to procure precious documents that often reached the Statistical Section even before reaching their designated recipients. These documents allowed Foreign Ministers like Ribot and Freycinet access to daily notes and reports sent by ambassadors from England, Italy and other powers to their respective governments.<sup>91</sup> For his services, Brücker received 350 francs per month.<sup>92</sup>

The intelligence procured by these varied sources covered a considerable range of diplomatic and military concerns. Reports closely followed the developments of various military technologies, including cannons, shrapnel, gunpowder, and more. From this correspondence, intelligence analysts were able to track developments in Alsace-Lorraine, such as the construction of a railroad line from Thionville to Bouzonville. While helpful, these documents also confirmed to the French army their inferiority in a variety of areas, for example acknowledging British naval superiority from interception of documents from the British embassy. Within the microcosm of the embassies, French intelligence also focused on informing itself about diplomatic questions. The Statistical Section learned the positions and concerns of foreign governments regarding a number of key current

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<sup>90</sup> See report prepared by an agent of the Statistical Section dated November 11, 1899, AN BB<sup>19</sup> 73.

<sup>91</sup> Paleologue recounts the way papers were stolen from the British ambassador, which was by having hired the ambassador's personal valet to get into his desk and remove his secret papers each night, where they would be reviewed by Rollin of the Statistical Section before being returned. He states: "You can imagine the manner in which the British Government would have demanded redress if it had discovered this violation of human rights, carried out at night, and in the Ambassador's own bedroom, and with the connivance of a serving officer in the bargain." Paléologue, *My Secret Diary*, 45.

<sup>92</sup> In November 1899, Brücker was arrested in Berne and detained, and though released, the intelligence section considered him "burned." However, as a result of the services he rendered, Charles de Freycinet had offered to set him up with a commercial venture, and to continue to pay his monthly salary until that begun. Note dated November 11, 1899, AN BB<sup>19</sup> 73.

event issues of the day, such as assessments of commercial treaties, reactions across Europe to Germany's passage of its 2-year military law, questions of what material the countries would bring to display in the World's Fair Exposition in Chicago in 1893, Italy's reaction to a Franco-German treaty regarding Africa in 1894, and a report by the German attaché Schwartzkoppen of the anarchist Vaillant's explosion in the Chamber of Deputies in December of 1893.<sup>93</sup> Analysis of this kind of intelligence would provide the French army with insight regarding which nations could be considered allies if a war was to break out.

In addition, from their spies in the embassies, the French learned that some of the foreign attachés stationed in Paris were engaging in espionage themselves, paying agents to provide particular information, a discovery that was made public during the Dreyfus Affair. The notes gathered by the Statistical Section show considerable efforts by military attachés Maximilian von Schwartzkoppen from Germany and Alessandro Panizzardi from Italy, in particular, to use their positions to procure documents or other information about the French military, often through direct contact with French agents. Intelligence that these two gathered included information Schwartzkoppen would pass along to Berlin about a new French cannon and other weapons, and from Panizzardi a number of documents about various aspects of the French military, including changes to weaponry, and a map of French carrier pigeon positions and routes.<sup>94</sup> In addition to corresponding with their own home governments, the two attachés also corresponded with each other,

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<sup>93</sup> AN BB<sup>19</sup> 84 and AN BB<sup>19</sup> 109. Example of commercial treaty is note intercepted from Vienna, August 11, 1893 that discusses Germany's frustration with a commercial rapprochement between Austria and Russia. The author's opinion is that Austria is trying to profit from "*la guerre douanière*" that Germany and Russia are waging. AN BB<sup>19</sup> 84.

<sup>94</sup> See note dated February 18, 1892. AN BB<sup>19</sup> 84.

with Panizzardi signing notes with his code name, Alexandrine.<sup>95</sup> The French were aware of these relations, and also feared Swartzkoppen expanding his network of spies, so that they took it upon themselves to closely watch him and a number of his associates, whether they be foreigners, or French citizens. The Section feared that the Spanish military attaché, Commandant de Mendigorria, had secretly joined the Germans, and thus devoted agents to performing background research on him, tracking him, and following in his daily activities.<sup>96</sup> The French were also concerned about the new Romanian attaché, and noted his frequent conferences with the German military and naval attachés and with the Italian attaché.<sup>97</sup> The process of intercepting notes and tracking foreign agents revealed the French military's concern with defending the nation from outside threats. The actual information gathered, like other military intelligence, would help the army to be prepared for a possible war. The fact that this duplicity was occurring on French soil threatened the security of French institutions. Nonetheless, the fact that officers were aware of it for years, but never admitted it until the Dreyfus Affair suggests that in spying on spies, the Statistical Section could feel secure that it had control over knowledge and intelligence, and likely used these channels to pass along false information.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> AN BB<sup>19</sup> 109.

<sup>96</sup> See for example, "Secret summary" about Mendigorria dated March 30, 1894, AN BB<sup>19</sup> 109. See also notes in the Foreign Affairs archives, where agents wrote up reports on the relations between Mendigorria and Schwartzkoppen. MAE Affaires Diverses Politiques, Allemagne 50.

<sup>97</sup> See letter dated July 11, 1896, AN BB<sup>19</sup> 109.

<sup>98</sup> In fact, some have suggested that the famous bordereau from the Dreyfus Affair was a fake and that Esterhazy was playing the role of a double agent in passing it along. Douglas Porch cites Jean Doise who "argues that the Statistical Section refused to admit their mistaken accusation of Dreyfus, not because of anti-Semitism or a belief in the infallibility of their codes, but because they needed to protect Esterhazy, through whom they were passing information to deceive the Germans about the



All of these notes indicate that the Statistical Section certainly had reason to be suspicious of foreign officers and the governments and armies that they represented. Moreover, the exposure of a number of French secrets suggested the likelihood of leaks within the French military. Two affairs in the early 1890s – the Boutonnet and Grénier/Borup Affairs – demonstrate that the attachés were able to purchase documents from people working within the French army, thus laying the groundwork for accusations against Dreyfus.<sup>99</sup> Boutonnet, an archivist in the artillery section, had attracted the intelligence service's suspicion in the spring of 1890 when agents noticed that documents concerning artillery had reached the hands of the German military attachés.<sup>100</sup> Enlisting the help of the Paris Prefecture of Police, the Statistical Section had Boutonnet watched and followed. Observed in a detective-style handoff of documents to German military attaché Huene on a bench on Avenue Friedland, Boutonnet was caught, tried, found guilty, and sentenced to 5 years in prison and 5000 francs fine. The Grénier/Borup Affair, two years later, involved the exposure of a shipping clerk in the Ministry of the Marine, Joseph Grénier, caught passing documents to Henry Borup, the American military attaché. The French government also accused Borup of sharing the information with German attaché Susskind and the Italian Panizzardi.<sup>101</sup>

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development of the 75 mm artillery piece. Few historians of the period give much credence to this theory, however." Porch, *French Secret Services*, 530.

<sup>99</sup> Apparently the Section was informed of both Greiner's and Boutonnet's treason thanks to discoveries made by Marie Bastian. Gérald Arboit, "Renseignement et diplomatie au XIXe siècle: aux origines du rapprochement Franco-Russe en 1887," [http://www.cf2r.org/fr/notes-historiques/renseignement-et-diplomatie-au-xixe-siecle-aux-origines-du-rapprochement-franco-russe-en.php#\\_ftnref78](http://www.cf2r.org/fr/notes-historiques/renseignement-et-diplomatie-au-xixe-siecle-aux-origines-du-rapprochement-franco-russe-en.php#_ftnref78). Laurent, *Politiques de l'ombre*, 471.

<sup>100</sup> SHD Dossier Dreyfus, Cote 4J118, Doc. No. 130.

<sup>101</sup> SHD Dossier Dreyfus, Cote 4J118, Doc. No. 128. While Borup admitted receiving documents from Grénier, he denied that he had communicated them to Germany or Italy. In an interview with the *New York Times*, Borup claimed, "All military attachés are liable to receive visits from persons

The discovery of espionage in the embassy and treason within the military helped the Statistical Section to justify its counterespionage activities, and contributed to an undercurrent of mutual suspicion, which undoubtedly affected relations between France and Germany. The German ambassador von Münster, recalling the paranoid and restrictive atmosphere of the embassy during this period, reflected on the consequences of this spying. "At the embassy, we lived as if in a fortress and in wartime, despite being at peace. Under Boulanger, who had intentionally put in place and directed French espionage, it was even worse than it is today."<sup>102</sup> French intelligence agents used their discoveries in the foreign embassies, and in the German embassy in particular, to bolster their ideas that Germany was working behind the scenes to prepare for another defeat of France. With information about French military capabilities, this potential attack would become a much more likely possibility.

### *Intelligence and Diplomacy*

In addition to knowledge of troop strength and weapons capability, preparation for war in the twentieth century meant an understanding of international diplomacy. Thus, more than ever, intelligence concerned itself with

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offering to furnish them with secret Government documents. Grénier is possibly one of these men who have made similar proposals to me. But have I listened to these proposals? A point which I cannot understand is, how can they suspect a citizen of a country on friendly terms with France of lending himself to such a shameful transaction?" "French Secrets Stolen," *New York Times*, June 26, 1892. Nonetheless, Borup was recalled back to the United States, at the insistence of U.S. representatives reacting to the hostile Parisian press. Grénier, moreover, was charged with burglary and condemned to twenty years of forced labor. The *New York Times* speculated that the French "authorities evidently desired to make an example of Grenier, and the severity of the sentence which was imposed on him was no doubt intended as a warning to other servants of the Government not to betray the trust which reposed in them." "Grenier's Severe Sentence," *New York Times*, September 7, 1892.

<sup>102</sup> Cited in Baumont, *Aux sources de l'affaire*, 280-281.

questions of allegiances. After the Franco-Prussian War, France found itself in a state of diplomatic isolation, imposed by the Bismarckian system of alliances with the other monarchical powers. Germany, Italy, and Austria-Hungary had entered into an agreement, known as the Triple Alliance in 1882; Bismarck had also agreed upon an allegiance with Russia, which the Kaiser let expire at the end of the 1880s. The scramble for Africa and a handful of incidents in Morocco made France increasingly aware of the need to secure allies and know the extent of its enemies' forces. Intelligence would serve as a means to assess the views and actions of other states or actors that would directly interact with the French.

A particularly sensational example of intelligence used for diplomatic advantage is the story of self-styled aristocratic spy Henri Adalbert Foucault de Mondion, who employed "media diplomacy" to help the French intelligence services and the Foreign Ministry in improving relations with Russia.<sup>103</sup> An extensive traveler, who had spent several decades as a tutor to individuals with important diplomatic connections, Foucault de Mondion was able to offer access to the type of information valued by French authorities. In the early 1880s, his career turned to journalism, writing for Juliette Adam's *Nouvelle Revue*, the *Journal de Débats*, and a number of papers in Belgium. In these functions, he would publish articles describing affairs of various countries of interest to French intelligence authorities, based on his own observations and on leaks from one of his former students turned officer and diplomat, a Chinese man named Chen Jitong.<sup>104</sup> Pleased

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<sup>103</sup> Arboit, "Renseignement et diplomatie". For many of these details about the exploits of Foucault de Mondion, see Roger Mennevée collection, UCLA Spec. Coll. 899, box 751.

<sup>104</sup> Foucault de Mondion wrote under the pseudonym Paul Vasili for the *Nouvelle Revue*, publishing articles like "Un Secret d'État- traité secret entre Léopold II et l'Allemagne," July 1, 1888 and "Neutralité belge et neutralité suisse," July 15, 1889. He wrote about places like Berlin, Russia, Macedonia, Belgium, the Mediterranean, and more; Arboit speculates that his articles were destined

with the articles and Foucault's access to secret information, Colonel Vincent had turned him from a "contact" of the Statistical Section to an "agent," which allowed him a role in exposing a secret document wherein Belgian authorities discussed the question of whether or not to maintain neutrality in the event of war between France and Germany.<sup>105</sup>

Foucault de Mondion's most important contribution to French diplomacy, however, came with the discovery in July 1887 of letters between the newly-elected Prince Ferdinand de Saxe-Cobourg et Gotha of Bulgaria and his cousin, the Duchess of Flanders. The letters, intercepted by Foucault's contact in the Belgian Foreign Ministry and then photographed and brought to Paris by the French spy, discussed Bismarck's desire to entertain secret, favorable relations with the new Bulgarian monarch.<sup>106</sup> The French leaders, realizing that this covert connection would anger Russia – itself eager to control affairs in the Balkans – utilized a series of connections that would result in making the letters known to the Tsar. Indeed, this scheme paid off, as irked by German duplicity, Tsar Alexander III pointedly did not invite the Kaiser to naval exercises in Stettin that September. Though the affair eventually blew over, it marked the beginning of Russian overtures towards France,

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to be read by the Deuxième Bureau and the Statistical Section to keep them informed. Some of the important articles he published with information from Chen Jitong included information about the situation with China in Tonkin and the war in 1885. These include a series entitled "La société de Berlin," published in *La Nouvelle Revue*, t. 24, September 15, 1883, pp. 223-238, October 15, 1883, pp. 667-691, et t. 25, November 1, 1883, pp. 461-482. Arboit, "Renseignement et diplomatie."

<sup>105</sup> Adalbert-Henri Foucault de Mondion, *La Belgique livrée à l'Allemagne, 1886-1891* (Paris: A, Savine, 1891). Evidence that Foucault worked for Vincent under Boulanger surfaced during Boulanger's trial for misappropriation of War Ministry funds. At the trial, Foucault de Mondion produced a receipt for payment for his services. UCLA Spec. Coll. 899, box 751.

<sup>106</sup> Adalbert-Henri Foucault de Mondion and Juliette Adam, *Le Prince de Bismarck démasqué, 1887-1888* (Paris: Nouvelle revue, 1889). He published this and some of his other books under the pseudonym Charles Maurel.

as both authorities and the Russian press showed gratitude for French complicity in revealing Bismarck's deceit.

Such use of intelligence to influence diplomacy continued into the twentieth century, viewed as an essential way to be best prepared for victory in a future war. The alliance eventually formed with Russia in the early 1890s was very important to France strategically.<sup>107</sup> This allegiance meant that the French could counter their military inferiority to Germany with a large number of reserves who could support the front line of the army.<sup>108</sup> It also meant, however, that for Germany, it became even more important to ascertain the strength of the French army, in the event that the Kaiser's army would need to fight a war on two fronts.

Intelligence could thus help to bolster this alliance. For one, the surveillance work of French police agents in response to the failed assassination attempt of Alexander III in 1887 led to a crackdown on Russian Nihilist exiles in Paris in the years following, which earned the Tsar's gratitude when the alliance was being sought.<sup>109</sup> The military's intelligence service also worked to support their eastern allies. In his memoir, former head of the SR from 1908 to 1913, Charles Dupont,

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<sup>107</sup> Up until 1890, Germany and Russia had been allied through a secret Reinsurance Treaty, which expired in that year, and was not renewed, in spite of Russian desire to do so. Russia therefore displayed itself willing to enter into an allegiance with France, the details of which were worked out between 1892 and 1894. The Franco-Russian alliance was a secret treaty; the text, if not the entente itself, remained unknown to the public until after WWI.

<sup>108</sup> Mitchell, "Xenophobic Style," 415.

<sup>109</sup> The French police had worked in close cooperation with the Russian secret police, the Okhrana, from the first few decades of the Third Republic, prior to the assassination of Alexander II, and even more so thereafter. Recognizing the necessity of an alliance with Russia to France's national security in the case of future German aggression, the relationship between the French police and the Okhrana (previously known as the Third Section) was strengthened in the mid-1880s and early 1890s. For a contemporary police account of the relationship, see "*Note sur les polices étrangères en France*," and "*La police russe*," dated June 1914, AN F<sup>7</sup> 14605. On the relationship from its early years, see Liang, *Rise of Modern Police*, 123-129., and for an assessment of the role of Okhrana agents in Paris at the turn of the century, see Rita T. Kronenbitter, "Paris Okhrana 1885-1905," report by the CIA *Studies in Intelligence*, released September 22, 1993. [https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/kent-csi/vol10no3/html/v10i3a06p\\_0001.htm](https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/kent-csi/vol10no3/html/v10i3a06p_0001.htm).

described an intelligence mission he embarked upon to Germany in the early twentieth century to secure Russian support in the event of a war with Germany.<sup>110</sup> In this particular mission, Dupont sought to allay Russian fears that Germany would attack first to the east. Using a disguise, Dupont thus traversed Germany where he discovered considerable defensive fortifications on the eastern side of Prussia. He relayed this intelligence to the Russian high command, which all took as a sign that Germany intended to attack France, not Russia, initially, meaning that the French could ask their ally to mobilize closer to the border in order to prevent destruction of the French forces. The Russians responded favorably, granting Dupont one of their highest decorations.

The French Ministry of Foreign Affairs also employed intelligence to ascertain matters of diplomatic concern. It was well understood that diplomatic agents stationed in other countries provided exceptional access to information abroad.<sup>111</sup> In fact, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had an intelligence service of its own, which from the mid-1880s had contacts with the Statistical Section in the Ministry of War, and contributed funds to the Section's counterespionage work.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> See Dupont memoire, SHD 1KT 526, 21.

<sup>111</sup> Fix, *La stratégie appliquée*, 147-150. Notes in the Statistical Section's archives also confirm Sandherr's use of diplomatic agents to procure certain intelligence. SHD 7N 674.

<sup>112</sup> Records for this service could not be found at the Ministry's archives, though the statesman Maurice Paleologue describes his employment with this service in his diary of the Dreyfus Affair. In this position, he had frequent contact with the Statistical Section of the War Ministry, meeting with Sandherr and others. He references visits from Lt-Colonel Henry of the Statistical Section to collect the monthly contribution to the SS from the Foreign Ministry's secret funds. Paleologue, *My Secret Diary*. Another former diplomat, Jules Hansen, naturalized French but originally of Danish nationality, claimed to have been part of a *service des renseignements politiques et militaires* established by Thiers in Versailles in September 1872. His papers contain information on foreign countries that confirm some sort of intelligence role. MAE PAP 85/1. Christopher Andrew cites a number of debates in the French Chamber of Deputies to confirm the existence of *fonds secret* within the MAE used to pay for human intelligence. He states, "though the Foreign Ministry had no organized espionage network, both the Quai d'Orsay and French embassies and legations regularly recruited agents and informants on an ad hoc (and usually part-time) basis. Embassies and legations were given a virtually free hand in how they used their secret funds." Andrew, "France and the German

Examples of agents on the payroll of this service included the Baron de Saint-Aubonet, a former naval officer, who, according to Maurice Paléologue was, “very alert, spick and span, very well-dressed, always has a flower in his button-hole, has been very fond of women and is still able to please them, and adores intrigue, adventure, and nosing about.”<sup>113</sup> Saint-Aubonet brought the service information from Italy, among other places. Another example of secret intelligence coming out of embassies came from China, where an interpreter at the French embassy in China was able to locate the key to the Chinese diplomatic code, and therefore intercept and translate correspondence between the Chinese government and representatives in Europe.<sup>114</sup> Finally, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was also known to take advantage of professionals stationed abroad; for example using doctors involved in the “peaceful penetration” of North Africa to spy for France, as was the accusation leveled against murdered medical missionary Émile Mauchamp.<sup>115</sup>

In addition to being able to place agents in embassies abroad, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs also maintained its own agents outside of embassies, and worked to gather information by intercepting and reading correspondence. In fact, this

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Menace,” 132. Porch notes that French diplomats were given large sums to recruit local agents and to bribe journalists to write favorable articles about French policy. Porch, 43-44. Other clues that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs participated in espionage-related activities involve notes in the archives discussing individuals looking to provide confidential intelligence to the service, both in France and beyond. See e.g. note dated March 13, 1895 to General Zurlinden at the War Ministry, MAE, Série C administrative, Carton 180, and also Laurent, *Politiques de l'ombre*, 498-499.

<sup>113</sup> Paléologue, *My Secret Diary*, 69.

<sup>114</sup> See letter to Foreign Affairs Minister Eugene Spüller from anonymous interpreter dated October 16, 1889. MAE PAP 164/2 (Spüller).

<sup>115</sup> On Mauchamp, see Amster, “Many Deaths of Dr. Emile Mauchamp.” Amster notes that Mauchamp was “an agent of the Affaires Etrangères,” and that, “all members of the 1877 French military mission had intelligence roles, and the Mission Scientifique du Maroc of 1905 helped prepare the 1907 and 1912 invasions.” 419. An entire book by Jonathan Katz is also dedicated to the medical mission and murder of Mauchamp, though through all his research, Katz appears unable to locate concrete evidence of Mauchamp’s role as a spy for the MAE, referring only to his “alleged espionage.” Katz, *Murder in Marrakesh*.

ministry's particular strength in intelligence matters was its cryptography section. Taking up the mantle of the *cabinet noir* used by Richelieu in the seventeenth century, the Foreign Ministry intercepted messages to and from Frenchmen and foreigners, whether in plain language or code.<sup>116</sup> A Dutch teacher living in France, Auguste Kerckhoffs, helped to revolutionize cryptography by applying it to the telegraph, and renowned codebreakers Bazeries and Haverna famously broke a number of important codes for the Foreign Ministry and for the Prefecture of Police.<sup>117</sup> Before the War, French codebreaking was the most advanced of all the European nations. However, as intelligence historians have demonstrated, due to inter-ministerial competition France's various ministries neglected to share their cryptanalytical successes.<sup>118</sup> Therefore although *military* intelligence grew and began to be centralized during this time, the rivalries between the Ministries of War, Interior, and the Quai d'Orsay hindered the development of a cohesive "intelligence community" able to take advantage of these modern breakthroughs.<sup>119</sup>

Moreover, policy makers appeared divorced from an understanding of the uses and benefits that intelligence could play in modern warfare. Leaders of the Third Republic were known to rely upon intercepted correspondence and decoded

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<sup>116</sup> Douglas Porch makes an interesting comparison between the French and British use of intercepted mail to learn about domestic and international affairs. "For starters, French politicians remained untouched by notions of gentlemanly fair play which induced at least discretion among Anglo-Saxon politicians over the interception of foreign diplomatic messages. Even after WWI, British intelligence chiefs feared a widespread public reaction if news leaked that diplomatic correspondence was monitored. The French population, on the other hand, while they might grumble about the eavesdropping habits of the *Sûreté* and the Quai, when push came to shove accepted it as a necessary requirement of security. These attitudes translated into law: The French government had the legal right to intercept telegrams, whereas the British government had no warrant to do so in peacetime, which stunted the development of cryptanalysis in Britain." Porch, *French Secret Services*, 40.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, 37-38.

<sup>118</sup> See Andrew, "Governments and Secret Services." and Porch, *French Secret Services*.

<sup>119</sup> See Porch, *French Secret Services*, 43-48.



messages to make decisions about international relations, yet failed to maintain the secrecy of breakthroughs.<sup>120</sup> The two most prominent examples cited involve diplomatic crises where French politicians used decrypted telegrams to try to learn the projects of their rivals, to the extent that they relied far too heavily on intercepted communications, and used them for personal gain. The crises and decoded telegrams that accompanied them also demonstrate how as a result of political infighting, France squandered the advantage that its strength in codebreaking should have afforded. In one case, Théophile Delcassé, who had erroneously relied on a false decrypt in 1898 to end the Fashoda affair with Great Britain, found his own career compromised by reading intercepted mail in 1905 during the Tangier crisis.<sup>121</sup> Among the decrypts of communications between the German embassy in Paris and Berlin in the months following, Delcassé discovered secret dealings between Germany and the French Prime Minister, Paul Rouvier, both of whom sought to remove Delcassé from his position as Foreign Minister. Dismissed from his post and angered by the duplicity, Delcassé made public the fact that he had read the incriminating decrypts.<sup>122</sup> A similar incident transpired between Joseph Caillaux and Justin de Selves in 1911, when the former discovered

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<sup>120</sup> The failure of diplomats to keep secret French intelligence advances is described in a number of books and articles by intelligence historians Christopher Andrew and Douglas Porch. See, i.e. Porch, *French Secret Services.*, Andrew and Dilks, *Missing Dimension*; Andrew, "Governments and Secret Services."

<sup>121</sup> The Fashoda crisis involved an incident in 1898 when French and British military expeditions challenged the other's right to establish an outpost at Fashoda in Egypt. The crisis was resolved in favor of the British with a French withdrawal. Douglas Porch explains that in reaching this conclusion, the French Foreign Minister Delcassé, had relied on a (false) decrypted telegram that assumed Britain would declare an ultimatum of war, which they in fact had never intended. The Tangier crisis revolved around Kaiser Wilhelm II's declaration of support for Morocco to maintain its independence, in spite of French desire to make Morocco part of French North Africa, with British support.

<sup>122</sup> Porch, *French Secret Services*, 46-47.

that the latter had been talking about him in secret correspondence. The incident was made public during the 1914 trial of Madame Caillaux, and again alerted the Germans that France had the potential to decode and read German correspondence.<sup>123</sup> These examples show that by the turn of the twentieth century, the importance of intelligence resonated well beyond the War Ministry, and was viewed as a vital instrument in the maintenance of national security. Moreover, it confirms the fact that while policy makers were happy to make use of intelligence to read each other's mail, they did not fully understand the nature of intelligence as it developed and improved at the turn of the century.

#### *Importance of Military Intelligence Post-Dreyfus*

The Dreyfus Affair and the trials that went on for years in connection with it brought France's intelligence practice into the public eye.<sup>124</sup> The Affair stemmed in part from the Statistical Section's focus on exposing Germany as a primary enemy. As a consequence of the national outcry questioning the workings of France's intelligence service, the implicated officers were replaced by others.<sup>125</sup> Colonel Sandherr had suffered an attack of general paralysis in July 1895, ending his tenure

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<sup>123</sup> Christopher Andrew notes that these examples show the lack of depth of understanding of intelligence and its interception by high-ranking French cabinet members. Regarding Caillaux, he says that, "Though a public scandal was averted, the rumours which reached foreign embassies in Paris persuaded most governments to change their diplomatic codes. Thus it was that on the very eve of the First World War, when communications intelligence was of the highest importance, the codebreakers were rendered powerless to provide it by the government's inability to impose even minimum standards of discretion." Andrew, "Governments and Secret Services," 174.

<sup>124</sup> For details on the Dreyfus case and the Statistical Section's involvement therein, see Chapter 2.

<sup>125</sup> The main implicated officers had already died before the Affair reached its full exposure. Sandherr had resigned for health problems in 1895 and died in 1897. Henry died by his own hand in prison in 1898. In August 1898, sous-officers of the Deuxième Bureau Generals de Boisdeffre and de Pellieux requested to be relieved from their duties. War Minister Cavaignac resigned in September 1898, replaced by General Zurlinden. Zurlinden refused to consider the possibility of a retrial for Dreyfus, and resigned as War Minister only two weeks later.

as head of the Statistical Section that he helped to define. He passed away two years later. Even with the Section's errors revealed in the attempt to frame Dreyfus, however, Sandherr's work during his decade heading the service paid off. A quarter of a century after the Franco-Prussian War, intelligence had become an indispensable part of the military's war planning, and thus in the early twentieth century, operations continued more or less as they had before. A decree issued by Minister of War, Gaston de Galliffet, in 1899 had removed counterespionage duties from the Ministry of War and given them to the Ministry of the Interior.<sup>126</sup> The army's intelligence service – whose name was formally changed from the *Section de Statistique* to the *Section de Renseignements* at this time – continued gathering intelligence, with officers and agents who remained focused on exposing Germany's war preparation, and hoped that France would be the better prepared of the two.<sup>127</sup>

As the nineteenth century passed into the twentieth, French intelligence had in fact made considerable progress. With changes in personnel following the Dreyfus Affair, and arguably greater pressure to perform under public scrutiny, the focus of the service shifted from intelligence gathering to questions of how to employ and update the significant intelligence that the army now possessed.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> 1899, *Bulletin Officiel*; Decision was made official by a decree dated August 20, 1899, *Bulletin Officiel du Ministre de l'Intérieur*, 1899, no 9, 153-154.

<sup>127</sup> By decision of September 12, 1899, SHD Xs 43.

<sup>128</sup> In the years before WWI, French intelligence had managed to put together a considerable amount of information about German intentions and capabilities. In an undated circular (likely between 1911 and 1913), Minister of War Adolphe Messimy gave instructions for personnel of the various army staffs to cooperate with the *service de renseignements* during times of war. He described a packet of information on Germany gathered by the Deuxième Bureau that would be transmitted, including: 1) order of battle of the German army; 2) tableau of Germany army uniforms; 3) documents regarding the organization, tactic, or armament of the German army; 4) in general all the documents that the EMA possessed on political, military, and administrative organization of Germany, and 5) volumes 76 and 77 of the B.O.E.M. (Operational Bulletin of the État-Major. SHD

Thus, notes from the SR's files in the decade and a half before World War I show the service to be much more involved in actual war planning, with a continued focus on actions to take "in the event of mobilization."<sup>129</sup> Letters and memoranda discussed distribution of duties between different departments, how to deal with foreigners inside the country, and how to react to German ruses. Moreover, intelligence officials and the general staff focused on means of communication to a far greater degree than before, discussing how information would be sent from the border offices to Paris, and the other way around, as well as insisting upon learning and using codes.<sup>130</sup> Notes continued to comment on construction of forts and details of progress on railroads, as well as assessing materials that Germany used to construct its weapons.<sup>131</sup> War had become a more concrete reality, as had the role of intelligence in it.

Galliffet's 1899 order shifting counterespionage duties from the army's intelligence service to the police represented a temporary victory for the *Sûreté* in what Sébastien Laurent has termed the "guerre des polices."<sup>132</sup> With the pioneering Prefect of Police in Paris, Louis Lépine, and inspector Célestin Hennion, who would become Director of the *Sûreté Générale* in 1907, creating a number of new brigades,

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7N 676. The Deuxième Bureau also possessed significant information on German armament and mobilization plans, and famously, had enough intelligence to predict Germany's eventual attack via Belgium in WWI, though failed to recognize it. On knowledge of the Schlieffen Plan, see Tanenbaum, "French Estimates."

<sup>129</sup> See, e.g. "Information sur les fonds secrets au cas de mobilisation," dated June 21, 1907; "Plis secrets de mobilisation," dated February 12, 1908; "Mésures à prendre vis a vis les étrangers au cas de mobilisation," dated April 20, 1906 and another dated January 22, 1909. "Note au sujet de la mobilisation du service des renseignements," [undated], SHD 7N 676.

<sup>130</sup> See, i.e. Note dated February 8, 1908; "Observations" of offices in Verdun, Epinal, Belfort dated November 1912, SHD 7N 676.

<sup>131</sup> See Dupont memoire, SHD 1KT 526, 7.

<sup>132</sup> Sébastien Laurent « Aux origines de la « guerre des polices » : militaires et policiers du renseignement dans la République (1870-1914) », *Revue historique* 4/2005 (n° 636): 767-791.

including a *brigade de renseignements* and Clemenceau's famed *Brigades du Tigre*, the French police developed into a well-trained force to watch for foreigners perceived to be threatening the integrity of the nation.<sup>133</sup> Nonetheless, by the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, the two forces recognized the necessity of cooperating on intelligence questions for the good of national security.<sup>134</sup> Charles Dupont, head of the Section de Renseignements from 1908 to 1913, responding to "an appeal to [his] patriotism" by the War Minister, made one of his goals the repair of relations between police and military over intelligence.<sup>135</sup> During the years of Dupont's tenure, the War Ministry supported the intelligence section, with numbers of personnel, a considerable budget (almost the entirety of the War Ministry's *fonds secrets*), and the ability to rely on regional intelligence services and police commissioners for assistance.

With an understanding of the necessity of intelligence to French national security, the idea of services on the periphery began to garner more and more attention from the central intelligence practitioners in Paris. In the years just prior to World War I, various regional intelligence services along France's eastern and

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<sup>133</sup> APP BA 354. These brigades also maintained secret agents, who were paid by the Interior Ministry.

<sup>134</sup> The departments of War and Interior entered an agreement on February 1, 1909 that laid out their cooperation in working to combat foreign espionage within France, especially regarding the functioning of the *services des renseignements territoriaux*. SHD 7N 676. Even though the War Ministry was not technically in charge of counterespionage duties, it certainly seems to have been taking the lead on directing reconnaissance and other means of observation on the borders. Letters in the police archives from officers of the SR request assistance from the Prefecture in watching foreign officers and other foreigners on French territory. APP BA 913. In a very detailed *Instruction*, War Minister Alexandre Millerand detailed the duties of police, prefects, special commissaires, and the SR in observation and intelligence-gathering activities, specifically on the French side of the border. He specified the duties for each service, but stressed that police and military should work in collaboration, with the "common concern of assuring the best defense of the country." The two services would indeed work together, yet it is clear from his decree that the army and the SR occupied the highest rung of this hierarchy. November 1, 1912 SHD, 7N 21.

<sup>135</sup> See Dupont memoir, SHD 1KT 526.

southeastern borders picked up where the services of Boulanger's creation had left off.<sup>136</sup> By 1909, the army had important outposts of the *service de renseignements* in Nice, Nancy, Belfort, Chambéry, Briançon, Epinal, and Remiremont, and by 1912, the army was discussing adding another in Mézières, near Amiens in the north of France. Advocating for this additional post near the Belgian border, War Minister General Joffre noted that it would be an analogue to the already extant services in the east and southeast, and that like the others, it would depend on the Deuxième Bureau of the *état-major*.<sup>137</sup> The authorities in Paris discussed a variety of details for this future office, aiming to improve upon current structures with more space, which would facilitate the reception of agents and spies.<sup>138</sup> The numbers within these bureaus were small – staffing on average between one and three officers – yet these individuals also maintained agents and a steady supply of informers, and in the later years, some stations even acquired a secretary.<sup>139</sup>

At the time of their creation, the *services de renseignements territoriaux* were tasked with the “official surveillance of foreigners” on French territory.<sup>140</sup> In this

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<sup>136</sup> Boulanger's service had been disbanded following the Dreyfus Affair. The regional intelligence services were then started up again in the early twentieth century along the eastern and southeastern borders. *Instruction Générale sur l'Organisation et le Fonctionnement des Secteurs de renseignements territoriaux (S.R.T.)* dated February 1, 1909, from both Ministers of War and Interior, giving instructions on how to operate the service in both peace and in war. SHD 7N 25.

<sup>137</sup> Letter from Joffre dated December 8, 1913, SHD 7N 674.

<sup>138</sup> Though by 1914, the service was still not yet in place, advocates considered its layout, discussing the necessity of having two adjoining rooms, one for the office, and an outer space to receive the individuals who sought out the service. This is in contrast to the station in Belfort that Michael Miller describes as being “quartered in a single room so obviously situated that no agent could visit without the risk of exposure.” After 1913, however, this changed, with the Belfort station expanding during the war to incorporate “a separate *bureau d'exploitation*, housed in a separate building, [that] sifted through mountains of information about German military movements.” Miller, *Shanghai on the Métro*, 38, 42.

<sup>139</sup> Note from General Dupont dated November 4, 1909, SHD 7N 676.

<sup>140</sup> See notes on the organization of the SRT in Lille, *Rapport du 1er corps d'armée sur le service territorial de renseignements*, 1887, SHD 2I 323.

venture, they often worked alongside – though sometimes expressly independent from – officers of the local police or the gendarmerie.<sup>141</sup> Whereas the police officers were technically tasked with helping to gather varied information, local police often focused on their own issues. For example, Captain Andlauer, head of the bureau in Belfort from 1913, complained that the *commissaires spéciaux* assigned to work with him directed more of their energy towards gathering political intelligence for their prefects than military intelligence to help the army.<sup>142</sup> Although the SRTs focused on activities in their own regions, they also maintained direct relations with the *Section de Renseignements* in Paris, demonstrating the latter's place as a centralizing entity for France's intelligence networks. Just before the war, the SR stressed the vitality of maintaining the secrecy of information, instructing officers working in the territorial bureaus on the necessity of encoding any telegrams that were sent to Paris containing important information.<sup>143</sup> The War Ministry also displayed its influence over the regional services, by reaching an understanding with the Interior Ministry that instructed when and how *commissaires spéciaux* were to take charge of the intelligence services in the event of war.<sup>144</sup>

Though officially their charge entailed observing foreigners in France and counterespionage, these regional intelligence bureaus were clearly doing more than merely watching for potential spies crossing the border. A letter from the director

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<sup>141</sup> See, i.e. Note dated August 27, 1892 from the SRT in Nice, AM 1M 891. See notes from SR in Nancy, MM 2R 10. In Nancy, the head of the SR at some points gives express directions to the commissaire spéciale. Letter dated March 4, 1913, MM 4M 278.

<sup>142</sup> Miller, *Shanghai on the Métro*, 38.

<sup>143</sup> Letter stamped secret and dated February 1913, SHD 7N 676.

<sup>144</sup> Accord of February 1, 1909, SHD 7N 676.

of the SR in Nice, for example, noted that in addition to watching for “spies and suspect persons” in France, his service was “charged with the search for *renseignements* in Italy.”<sup>145</sup> In Nancy, officers of the SR for the sixth army corps would venture into Alsace-Lorraine to gather information, and in Belfort, near both the Swiss and German borders, regional intelligence officers conducted a wide network of reconnaissance activities. While these services worked to gather military information about France’s neighbors, however, those being spied on were often aware of the movements of French agents. This became clear to the French in the famous case of the capture, imprisonment and subsequent escape of the head of the Belfort service, Captain Lux. His case shows the advancement of intelligence practice by this time, as well as the degree to which both the French and German governments took espionage seriously.

Charles Lux had been the chief of the intelligence bureau in Belfort since January 1910. He engaged in a variety of intelligence activities, such as attempting to learn about German espionage and counterespionage, purchasing documents and weapons from other agents, and addressing German soldiers in attempts to get them to betray their country. All of this work theoretically could be performed without leaving France, and Colonel Dupont, the head of the *Section de Renseignements* in Paris at the time of Lux’s arrest, noted in his memoirs that, “like all of the officers in the *Service des Renseignements*, [Lux] was under strict orders never to step foot in Germany.”<sup>146</sup> Nonetheless, in private correspondence, a representative of the SR conceded that while it was best to avoid having officers go

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<sup>145</sup> Note dated January 29, 1894 from Commander Verrier, head of the *État-Major* of the 29e division and head of the SR, AM 1M 891.

<sup>146</sup> Memoirs of General Dupont, SHD 1KT 526.



on direct meetings with agents, intermediaries could not always be trusted, and thus it was best at times to send the officer on the mission himself.<sup>147</sup>

The tale of Captain Lux's capture began on December 4, 1910, when Lux went on a mission to Germany to meet an agent at a Zeppelin factory, in Friedrichshafen, Germany. As aviation was in its early stages, there was much competition between France and Germany regarding the development of a dirigible balloon.<sup>148</sup> Lux was familiar with this technology, as he had graduated from the prestigious engineering school, the *École Polytechnique*, had served as an officer in the army's engineering corps, and was an expert in military air balloons, or dirigibles. Assigning an officer with this kind of expertise to head the espionage and counterespionage service in Belfort was a sign of the professionalism of the intelligence industry. In order to gain information about Germany's development of this new weapon, Lux had set up a meeting with an agent named Heinrich Hirsch, who turned out to be an *agent provocateur*.<sup>149</sup> Before meeting, Hirsch had alerted the German authorities of Lux's plans, leading to the French captain's arrest and questioning at the local police station. Although Lux had tried to deny his association with the SR, the attempt proved futile, as the German secret services was already aware of the names of all of the officers in the Belfort bureau, and also

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<sup>147</sup> Letter dated January 5, 1911, SHD 7NN 2431.

<sup>148</sup> Lux writes, "France, following the path laid by Colonel Charles Renard in 1889, was moving towards a high level of sophistication for the blimp (*le dirigeable souple*). In Germany, Count Zeppelin, a partisan of the rigid dirigible, continued relentlessly and despite resounding disappointments, to study and experiment in order to see his design projects fulfilled. He had created a floating hanger on Lake Constance that was oriented in the direction of the wind. His workshops, his hydrogen factory, and his laboratories, had equally begun considerable development and had become our cynosure." Lux, *L'évasion du Capitaine Lux*, 14-15.

<sup>149</sup> Lux notes that, "Of his real name, Heinrich Hirsch, he would be arrested in May 1919 in Strasbourg where he continued to play the role of spy after the return of the French." *ibid.*, 17.

possessed an array of letters that Lux had written to agents, filled with meeting times and details of his requests.<sup>150</sup>

At the end of December 1910, Lux was tried, convicted, and sentenced to jail for six years, to be locked in the prison fortress of Glatz in Silesia.<sup>151</sup> Even with Lux in jail, the French intelligence services were able to learn the details of his capture and trial, getting access to court documents, “thanks to secret agents, whose courage can never be sufficiently esteemed.”<sup>152</sup> Through these documents, officers learned that Lux had been set up, both by the *agents provocateurs*, and by a Swiss inventor and agent named Gustave Brugger, who felt spurned after Lux declined to purchase a weapon from him, and then chose to denounce Lux to the Germans.<sup>153</sup> While Lux was in prison, members of the intelligence bureaus in Paris and in Belfort were able to keep in touch with him through a number of creative and interesting ways, including using invisible ink on letters and communicating via advertisements in newspapers.<sup>154</sup> This too highlights the degree of professionalism

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<sup>150</sup> Memoirs of General Dupont, 30, SHD 1K 526. See also SHD 7NN 2431.

<sup>151</sup> Lux had concluded that the real reason for the decision to imprison him for 6 years was to prevent him from thwarting the German system of counterespionage now that he knew about many of their agents, something confirmed by writings of the German agent, Bauer, discovered after Lux’s escape. Lux, *L’évasion du Capitaine Lux*, 105.

<sup>152</sup> Dupont memoir, SHD 1KT 526, 42.

<sup>153</sup> See file, 7NN 2431.

<sup>154</sup> Lux’s letters from prison are contained in a file in the army’s archives, SHD 7NN 2431. He had written notes in invisible ink on the back of letters and on the envelopes addressed to a Mlle Levi. Judging from the burnt pages, the *Section de Renseignements* in Paris must have used fire in order to read the letters. On one of these, Lux writes, “If you have received my letters, put an announcement in *Le Matin*.” Lux’s description in his memoir of his use of these inks involved him trying “to create different kinds of invisible ink, using milk, salted or sugared water and toothpicks to write with.” He asserted that the best method, however, was to use the lemon juice from lemons that would accompany his meals, and he would therefore often request beefsteak with lemon slices. To develop the invisible characters, he says that he heated them with contact with the conduits of central heating. He describes the process as slow and uncertain. He takes apart the envelopes he is given and writes his invisible message on there, along with a note in lemon juice at the bottom of the letter to “*Voir interieur enveloppes*.” He was writing his brother and apparently would make repeated reference to “a certain person who was known only by our *Service de Renseignements*” which drove

and expertise of French officers working in intelligence services. Not only was Lux able to communicate through his prison cell by testing various substances for their ability to transcribe invisible characters, but in addition, through deliberate observation and planning, the captive devised an escape plan. With the help of his brother and officers back in France, Lux broke out of the fortress on Christmas, taking trains across Germany and Italy, in order to return to France on December 31, 1911.

Lux's time in captivity served to reinforce the notions that the French army, and particularly its intelligence service, had already formed regarding German intentions. Upon his return to Paris, Lux met with a number of French authorities, including the War Minister, who asked him his impressions of the Germans. According to Lux's memoirs, he replied, "I have just passed six months in the fortress of Glatz, in daily contact with Prussian, Bavarian and Saxon officers, representing very diverse professions and many belonging to the highest of the German elite milieu. From everything they said emerged the desire for a "*coup de force*" to undertake the dream of German hegemony."<sup>155</sup> Lux stressed the unanimity of opinion in Germany that war was imminent, the view that the German army was by far superior to the French, and that of those he observed, none considered the possibility that Germany might not come out victorious.<sup>156</sup> Returning to Paris with this report in January 1912, Lux added his own intelligence expertise to the extant narrative of war being near.

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his brother to submit the letters to the examination of this service. "Thus they discovered my secret correspondence and it was by this means that the Minister of War was regularly kept au courant of all of the details of the affair." Lux, *L'évasion du Capitaine Lux*.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid., 202.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid., 141.

In the year between his capture and escape, Lux's case involved several levels of French government, with Ministry of War, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Justice, the various intelligence services, and more, corresponding and paying close attention each step of the way.<sup>157</sup> In particular, the judgment pronounced against Lux by the court in Leipzig riled tempers back in France. At the Ministry of War, officials had been expecting an acquittal, or even a light condemnation out of principle.<sup>158</sup> Representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs sought explanations from their German counterparts, who responded that Lux had indeed committed an act of espionage on German territory. French judicial opinion asserted that Lux was convicted unfairly, citing improper use of the quoted articles from the German 1893 espionage law.<sup>159</sup> The press also weighed in, claiming that Lux had not committed espionage, but was only acting under his role as head of the Bureau des Renseignements in Belfort, making the judgment "faulty according to the rights of man."<sup>160</sup>

The trial raised important questions for French intelligence, determining whether officers or functionaries whose job entailed performing intelligence services could be liable to arrest when traveling as tourists in Germany, even if they had never actually performed intelligence work on German territory.<sup>161</sup> This

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<sup>157</sup> See the large file on Lux's case, SHD 7NN 2431.

<sup>158</sup> Just prior to this, some English officers who had been caught by German agents "in flagrant practice of espionage," on the Isle of Borkum in northwestern Germany were only sentenced to 4 years in prison.

<sup>159</sup> In an article in the *Journal de Droit international privé*, M. Chrétien, a law professor from Nancy, demonstrated the illegality of the judgment against Lux. He asserted that the articles of the Code invoked by the Reichsgericht could not be applied to a foreign officer or functionary in the exercise of his functions outside of the accused state. (tome 39-1912); Lux, *L'évasion du Capitaine Lux*, 108.

<sup>160</sup> *L'Écho de Paris*, July 1, 1911.

<sup>161</sup> SHD 7NN 2431.

question is particularly interesting when compared with the case of Guillaume Schnaebelé, the French police commissioner turned intelligence agent arrested by the Germans when he crossed the border into Alsace in 1887. Whereas Chancellor Bismarck himself promptly released Schnaebelé in response to French protests, in 1911 German courts condemned Lux to a considerable prison term.

The disparity in treatment over this twenty year period is likely attributable to the diplomatic situation in 1911. Bismarck's decision in 1887 to release Schnaebelé has been attributed to the fact that Germany was not ready to provoke war at that time, particularly with General Boulanger so vocal about French desire for *revanche*. Conversely, by 1911, the German military had greatly improved, and the German desire for expansion had begun to show itself. Just prior to the ruling against Lux, the German military had sent its gunboat, *Panther*, to the Moroccan port of Agadir in an attempt to challenge both France's control in North Africa, and the French alliance with England. Germany's unnecessary demonstration of power backfired, leaving the Empire humiliated on the international scene.<sup>162</sup> This display also indicated that by 1911, Germany was not unwilling to provoke war, likely assuming that it had more to gain in the event that hostilities broke out. The capture and condemnation of Lux served as a demonstration of German strength and lack of the desire to compromise that had been shown earlier in the case of Schnaebelé. Lux himself, and the head of the intelligence service in Paris, Dupont, both saw the court's decision in these terms, ascribing the judgment to "*raison d'état*." Lux claimed that though the judgment against him was weak, the will of

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<sup>162</sup> Britain came to the side of France during this crisis, and although Germany did end up with territory in Cameroon, it was less than the Kaiser had initially sought, and France was able to establish its protectorate in Morocco the following year.

the German State was strong, and thus, the imperial police used “backhanded means” to create a case that would allow them “to dispose of an adversary qualified as ‘dangerous to the security of the Empire.’”<sup>163</sup> The Lux case, in all of its intricacies, indicates that by 1911, both France and Germany had perfected the way that they practiced and reacted to espionage, considering it both an important weapon, and a perilous threat to national security.

### *Conclusion*

Over the course of the half-century from 1870 to 1914, military intelligence developed slowly, yet steadily, and without significant oversight. As the practice of intelligence professionalized during this period, France saw the gradual shifting of roles of observation and intelligence gathering from the police to the military. Although the police continued to play a significant role in the collection of intelligence and surveillance of foreigners, they did so increasingly under military instruction or supervision. While the Dreyfus Affair served to temporarily return the role of internal intelligence to the Interior Ministry, by the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, the army again made the effort to centralize and direct intelligence under its authority.

The unchecked evolution of military intelligence in the early Third Republic also resulted in a relative degree of autonomy for the Deuxième Bureau and the regional intelligence services. Archival and published sources reveal that other than War Ministers such as Georges Boulanger and Charles de Freycinet,

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<sup>163</sup> Lux, *L'évasion du Capitaine Lux*, 12. Dupont had claimed that, “He was condemned by *raison d'état*. The Leipzig judges *faisaient litière de tout droit devant la sécurité de l'Empire*. » Dupont, 42. SHD 1KT 526.

government and policy makers were not very involved in the story of the growth and professionalization of intelligence. Some stamped off on various instructions or circulars promoted by Sandherr and others, but otherwise, the progress made by French intelligence was done through habits and practice. This claim perhaps does not seem so surprising when considering the republican notion of elite government, whereby those with specific knowledge were viewed as likely to make the best decisions. As historian R. D. Anderson writes regarding the autonomy of the army, "The feeling was that foreign affairs were 'above politics', and that a partisan approach would encourage France's enemies. Much of the activity of the army and navy escaped civilian scrutiny for the same reason, at least until the Dreyfus affair."<sup>164</sup> Throughout the first few decades of the Third Republic, the French military retained its reputation as the "*sacrée armée*," and respect for the army increased in these early years. Further, public opinion was not aware of the bulk of the Statistical Section's activity, especially its focus on monitoring illegal activities in France.<sup>165</sup> Historian General André Bach notes that there were no limits to the investigations or procedures that the service could employ, whether they be considered legal or illegal, compared to its police counterparts. The Republic's leadership, from Thiers to War Ministers de Cissey or Freycinet, helped to assure the Section's independence, just as its early founders had desired.<sup>166</sup>

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<sup>164</sup> Anderson, *France, 1870-1914*. Further, "[t]he laws on conscription were a politically controversial matter, but military policy proper was left to the generals, and Parliament generally voted whatever credits were requested for arms and equipment. Civilian control undoubtedly existed in principle (though its chief representative, the minister of war, was always a general until 1888), but in practice the army was seen as an untouchable 'ark of the covenant' and given a potentially dangerous autonomy." 82.

<sup>165</sup> Bach, *L'armée de Dreyfus*, 542.

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.*, 542.

Another reason that military intelligence was able to develop without considerable outside influence was its stress on carrying out a project of protecting the nation. When General Gonse, the *sous-chef* of the *état-major* responsible for the Deuxième Bureau and Statistical Section, testified before court during the Dreyfus Affair, he provided a definition of the French *service de renseignements* as serving “the interest of national defense.”<sup>167</sup> Whereas the police had developed a negative reputation for its part in spying on individuals in France throughout the nineteenth century, during the first few decades of the Third Republic, the military – including its intelligence service – remained the institution respected for its attempt to protect the French nation.<sup>168</sup> The army’s surveillance work could be understood as operating in the best interest of French citizens by learning what was transpiring with its potential enemy. The intelligence services created the notion of Germany as a belligerent enemy, and consequently spent the majority of its time and focus watching the German military and German citizens.

Convinced that Germany was indeed a threat to French national security, the intelligence services – and by extension the state that they aimed to protect – could call upon the notion of *sûreté de l’État* to perform secret acts that might violate otherwise established notions of liberty. The shift to counterespionage, the creation of the Carnet B, and the extension of a legal apparatus to target espionage (which

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<sup>167</sup> See Gonse interrogation in the trial against Colonel Picquart in July 1898. instance, *Instruction Fabre*, 14.

<sup>168</sup> Former Prefect of Police Louis Andrieux discusses in his memoirs the police’s use of secret agents using a variety of disguises: as journalists, attendees at political meetings, flower sellers, and more. Under protest from the public, Andrieux made it appear as if he was disbanding the service (the 4<sup>th</sup> brigade, headed by Lombard), when in reality he just changed its status. Andrieux, *Souvenirs*, 33-46. The army was regarded by many as the organization which would restore French national pride, and was considered by conservatives and republicans alike to be the “*arche sainte*” of the Republic. Johansen, *Soldiers as Police*, 41.



will be considered further in the next chapters), allowed the Republic to discriminate against particular groups, under the auspices of national defense. Moreover, as Gérald Arboit notes, the emergence of counterespionage as the principal mission of the army's intelligence service in the post-Boulangier years led to confusion of the conceptual distinction between external espionage and internal subversion. "The objectives of the Third Republic which focused obsessively on Germany reinforced this trend, with internal security being the cornerstone of foreign intelligence."<sup>169</sup> What began as a way to develop a solid military strategy, had within less than two decades bred an unaccountable service, fed by and perpetuating the concept of unstoppable German growth and belligerency.

Lastly, the development of professional intelligence in France at the end of the nineteenth century set the standard for the national intelligence community in the century that would follow. Douglas Porch's tome on the history of French intelligence from "the Dreyfus Affair to the Gulf War," concludes that the majority of intelligence failures throughout modern French history stemmed from poor military-civilian relations and, moreover, that the values inherent in the military's culture prevented impartial analysis of the intelligence that was gathered.<sup>170</sup> At the *fin-de-siècle*, therefore, the culture to be faulted was that of the strategy of the offense. Porch argues, "the ascendancy of the offensive mentality in the French army" had as a result "to strip French commanders of their ability to view intelligence offensively. The French army was not so much hostile to intelligence as

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<sup>169</sup> Arboit, "L'affaire avant l'affaire: le discrédit du colonel Vincent, chef de la section de statistique de l'état-major de l'armée".

<sup>170</sup> Porch states that, "generally speaking the hierarchical values of loyalty and obedience sit uneasily with an intelligence culture which requires independence of mind and the pursuit of 'truth.'" Porch, *French Secret Services*, 476.

close-minded.”<sup>171</sup> In reality, the intelligence reports showed German military superiority compared with the weaker French army. Yet, these reports ended up being ignored as the offensive strategy took precedence. “In fact,” Porch states, “one can only conclude that had Moltke walked into the French War Ministry and dropped the Schlieffen Plan on Joffre’s desk, it would have made little difference. Intelligence in French war planning was simply irrelevant.”<sup>172</sup> Though intelligence did not serve France with a military advantage in the half century before World War I, it did have a role in shaping the character of the army and the nation. War became viewed as inevitable, and watching for enemies became one of the central ways to assure victory once it came.

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<sup>171</sup> Ibid, 66. This assertion is a running theme in analyses of French military campaigns. See also Jan Karl Tanenbaum, “French Estimates of Germany’s Operational War Plans,” and Robert J. Young, “French Military Intelligence and Nazi Germany, 1938-1939,” both in May, *Knowing One’s Enemies*.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid.

## CHAPTER 5

### **Intelligence and the Law: Defining Secrecy, Repressing Spies, and Limiting Liberties**

“Charged with assuring safety for all, the police must inevitably disturb the liberty of some.”  
– Louis Andrieux, Paris Prefect of Police, 1885<sup>1</sup>

As a result of modernizations in military technology and strategy, by the end of the nineteenth century espionage and counterespionage had become necessary aspects of developing and protecting a strong nation. The institution of professional spies allowed French leaders a sense of the goals and the military strength of neighboring countries; however, this benefit was coupled with the realization that foreign intelligence teams sought to do the same. The fear of spies and the damage that they could do had pervaded military and police intelligence communities throughout the 1870s and 1880s, yet was not limited to these professions. Reacting to a shared perception of the threat to French national security, politicians, too, took up the question of how best to prevent outsiders from gaining knowledge of French secrets.

Military and communications technology advanced at a rapid pace at the end of the nineteenth century, and with it, the quest to know plans and strategies of competitor nations evolved as well. In France, leaders therefore found themselves looking for ways to combat enemy spies, recognizing that protecting the nation required adapting to new practices. As the means through which knowledge could be accessed and spread grew, the ability to regulate it appeared more and more pressing. The first requirement of adequate repression involved identifying exactly who and what constituted a threat to national security. Professional espionage was

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<sup>1</sup> Andrieux, *Souvenirs*, 13.

in fact so new at the end of the nineteenth century that even its definition was elusive. Part of repressing espionage therefore required defining what exactly spying entailed.

As intelligence grew to become an ever-present reality in European life, leaders of the Third Republic recognized the need to develop a law specifically targeting the threat of spies to the safety of the French nation. While laws against treason had been extant for centuries, military and political leaders quickly perceived that legislation targeting the new wave of spying was lacking. A new law, developed and proposed by General Boulanger and the War Ministry and passed by the French Parliament on April 18, 1886, filled the lacuna in the French legal canon, defining the practice of espionage in law for the first time. The law dictated that spies could be held accountable for their deeds and, moreover, introduced a role for civilian courts in condemning individuals viewed to be a threat to French society.

For centuries, rulers of France had acknowledged the importance of maintaining state secrets and the need to protect national sovereignty by targeting anyone seeking to peddle confidential information.<sup>2</sup> *Ancien régime* monarchs

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<sup>2</sup> Under Francois I and Charles IX, the monarchy developed a series of royal ordinances defining crimes that included sharing intelligence with the enemy, defining such conduct – along with other crimes – as treason against the person of the monarch. Ordonnance de Villers-Cotterêts, August 10, 1539. Following this was a decree passed by Charles IX of August 16, 1563, which targeted the act « *de pratiquer, avoir intelligence, envoyer et recevoir lettres écrites en chiffre, ni aucune écriture feinte ni déguisée princes étrangers pour des choses concernantes à l'Etat* » Warusfel, *Contre-espionnage*, 143. Those violating such charters were guilty of treason against the person of the monarch, or *lèse-majesté*, a crime punishable by death, and often in quite a brutal fashion. Paul Jankowski also notes of these kings: “Louis XI appended (sic) any who knew of treasonous plots and failed to reveal them; Francis I, any who received and did not divulge letters from a foreign prince at war with France, who parleyed with the enemy without permission or turned over troops or fortresses to him.” Jankowski, *Shades of Indignation*, 12-13. With the transformations of the French Revolution and the fall of the monarchy, the sanctity of the royal person faded from view, replaced with the concept of an inviolable nation. Instead of needing to protect the monarch, therefore, laws such as the Constitution of 1791 aimed to safeguard the “*sûreté de l'Etat*.” This was Article 7, Titre IV of the new Constitution, under the section “*De la force publique*,” which reads: “*Toutes les parties de la force*

viewed treason – whether by information sharing or otherwise – as one of the main threats to the safety of the state. When, under Napoleon, jurists set about creating a new penal code, the crime of treason continued to have an important place, occupying articles 75-85 of the 1810 code.<sup>3</sup> The code provided for crimes that targeted both the internal and the external safety of the state, with the former referencing acts such as plots against the emperor and the use of the army to foment civil war, and the latter dealing with treason along the lines of collusion with an enemy power.<sup>4</sup> While the code itself did not differentiate between war and peace, the language in the articles makes quite evident that the Penal Code’s drafters contemplated an existing or future war, intending to punish anyone who could be deemed responsible for the advent of hostilities.<sup>5</sup>

However, of the eleven articles in the *Code Pénal* dealing with treasonous interaction with the enemy, only one – Article 78 – actually used the term

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*publique, employees pour la sûreté de l’Etat contre les ennemis du dehors, agiront sous les ordres du roi.”* Likewise, crimes against the new state went from being designated as *lèse-majesté* to the new *lèse-nation*, although the latter definition came under fire in subsequent eras, as observers questioned whether loyalty was to an abstract nation or to a particular regime. The answer varied depending on circumstances, though the lessening of severity of punishments for crimes designated political indicates an understanding of this discrepancy.

<sup>3</sup> Penal Code of 1810. [http://www.napoleon-series.org/research/government/france/penalcode/c\\_penalcode3a.html](http://www.napoleon-series.org/research/government/france/penalcode/c_penalcode3a.html). Accessed June 10, 2011. The articles that treat what we now consider “intelligence” are 76, 78, and 80-82.

<sup>4</sup> These articles alluded to deals with foreign powers or their agents, providing assistance to the enemy by disclosing details related to forts, strongholds, weapons, and territory, harboring an enemy spy or soldier, or failing to protect any kind of valuable information entrusted to individuals in relevant professions. Article 81 noted that in addition to punishing individuals for deeds against France, it would also hold them liable for similar transgressions against France’s allies. For all of these acts of treason, the code made clear that the punishment would be death.

<sup>5</sup> This is why in certain well-known cases of espionage, lawyers for the defense would argue against the use of the Penal Code, in favor of the 1886 law. Theoretically, this meant that the burden of proof would be on the prosecution to show intent of future war. Venita Datta, for example, explains with the 1911 case of Benjamin Ullmo that his lawyer had “declared that Ullmo’s intention was not to betray his country and to provoke a war by trying to sell documents to the Germans but rather to obtain money.” Datta, *Heroes and Legends*, 209. For more on Ullmo, see Chapter 6.

espionage, with a second – Article 83 – forbidding the harboring of a spy.<sup>6</sup> Robert Detourbet, a late nineteenth-century jurist, noted that while the Penal Code worked for combating treason, viewing its provisions as targeting espionage was “considerably forcing the meaning of the articles.”<sup>7</sup> Not surprisingly, prior to the 1886 law, the codes that best combined the repression of treason and espionage in the nineteenth century were the military’s own justice codes, which although they could on occasion be applied to civilians, remained mostly applicable for the military and during times of war.<sup>8</sup>

Late nineteenth-century attempts to define espionage in national and international military codes similarly classified the practice as one with direct connections to military campaigns. Contemporary definitions of espionage – from the 1863 Lieber code to the 1874 Brussels declaration – defined it as using false

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<sup>6</sup> Article 78 reads: “If the correspondence with the subjects of a hostile power, without having for its object any of the crimes mentioned in the preceding article, has, nevertheless, had for its result, the giving to the enemy information prejudicial to the military or political situation of France, or its allies, those who shall have kept up such correspondence, shall be punished with banishment; without prejudice to the infliction of heavier penalties, in case any such information have been given in consequence of such a plot, as amounts to an act of espionage.” And Article 83 reads: “Whoever shall have concealed, or caused to be concealed, any spy or soldier of the enemy, sent to reconnoiter, and whom he shall have known so to be, shall be condemned to the penalty of death.”

<sup>7</sup> By focusing on treason, he argued, the Code failed to target espionage practiced by foreigners. Detourbet, *L’espionnage et la trahison*, 89.

<sup>8</sup> The military code of Oct. 19, 1791 included two articles (11 and 13) that targeted soldiers, officers, and other personnel who shared information with the enemy. Two years later, the Convention passed a decree on June 16, 1793 that aimed at “any French person or any foreigner” convicted of espionage in a fort, stronghold or other military locale. Warusfel, *Contre-espionnage*, 144. For more on the 1791 code, see Charles H. Jr. Hammond, “The French Revolution and the Enlightening of Military Justice,” *Proceedings of the Western Society for French History* 34 (2006). Though earlier codes targeted only the military, under the Convention and the Terror, punishments for espionage and treason were extended to civilians as well. The military’s codes – revised officially under the Second Empire – did allow civilians to be tried for these offenses, but again predominantly during wartime. The army’s 1857 *Code de justice militaire pour l’armée de terre*, which required a hearing in front of the *conseils de guerre* and included the provision of a forced military degradation for traitors, remained the applicable military law until 1928.

pretenses to communicate information to the enemy.<sup>9</sup> To leaders of the French Third Republic concerned with national defense, however, these definitions proved unsatisfactory. In this age of technological advances and shifting global allegiances, it became clear that espionage was no longer just a wartime concern, but also one that had become relevant during times of peace.

In addition to the concern of needing to combat spying during peacetime, a second problem with existing legislation was that although the codes included provisions that referenced *how* espionage took place, they failed to consider *what* spies might be interested in, and thus what secrets needed protection. Trains, roads, and mass communications meant that knowledge of all varieties and authenticities could easily traverse local and national boundaries. In this atmosphere, the line between public and private knowledge was difficult to define, and consequently, so was the notion of secret versus knowable information.

The emergence of the espionage law in 1886 thus offered the promise of making knowledge exclusive, and allowed the state to identify those who breached new norms of secrecy. Legislators across the political spectrum displayed the desire to define what information would be considered proprietary to the state in order to punish attempts to learn about it. In order to keep up with technological advances, the law and its interpretation needed to be fluid. Rather than adhering to

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<sup>9</sup> Article 88 of the Lieber Code, otherwise known as the Instructions for the Government of Armies of the United States in the Field drafted during the U.S. Civil War, dated April 24, 1863, states, "A spy is a person who secretly, in disguise or under false pretense, seeks information with the intention of communicating it to the enemy." The Brussels protocol also offered a very succinct definition of the spy: "A person can only be considered a spy when acting clandestinely or on false pretenses he gathers or seeks to obtain information from localities occupied by the enemy, with the intention of communicating it to the opposing party." This definition limits spies to those acting outside of their native territory, and assumes belligerence between the two parties. Article 19 of Brussels treaty; G.F.R. de Martens, Charles Samwer, and Jules Hopf, *Nouveau Recueil Général de Traités et autres actes relatifs aux rapports de droit international* (Gottingen: Librairie de Dieterich 1879-1880), 222.

strict legal doctrine, the courts and others concerned with espionage would therefore see the definition of espionage evolve too, based on practice in addition to legislation.

The question remained of who within the Third Republic would be responsible to decide what actions would be defined as “espionage,” and therefore could be subject to penalty. The process involved many of the new Republic’s institutions – the legislature, the judiciary, and the Ministries of War and Interior. Within the Chamber of Deputies, support for the law and opinions on its characteristics came from across the ideological spectrum. Multi-party support for issues was rare during the Third Republic, and the fact that Republican, Conservative, and Boulangist deputies seemed to see eye to eye on the question of countering espionage suggests an exception to Stanley Hoffmann’s characterization of the Third Republic as a “stalemate society.”<sup>10</sup> The upshot of this agreement, moreover, was the inevitable vesting of power in this arena in the hands of military intelligence.

Though many French leaders had a role in determining the definition of espionage, the army and the courts took the lead in dictating what constituted confidential information. The military leadership, along with the Statistical Section, helped to draft the law and had considerable influence on its application within society. In the name of protecting the nation, politicians had thus given permission to the military’s counterespionage arm to act in an unbridled manner that under the auspices of catching spies extended its reach to French civilians with no

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<sup>10</sup> Hoffmann, *In Search of France*, 3-21. Another exception to the typically partisan government during the Third Republic was the colonial lobby, which was comprised of representatives espousing a variety of political ideologies.



demonstrated intent of harming the *patrie*. In so doing, these actors, with the support of the state, helped to impose limits on speech and on publication that had been recently won as part of the institution of Republican liberties.<sup>11</sup> These restrictions for the most part went unquestioned within the public sphere, demonstrating that on the whole, French society deferred to authority (in this case, the authority of military and judicial “experts”) in allowing what was best for national defense.

In taking the lead regarding the definition and identification of espionage crimes, the army’s intelligence division asserted itself far beyond its limited scope, making silent strides into the civil sphere. Whereas the delegates at the Brussels conference defined espionage as taking place during wartime, the 1886 law, implemented during a period of peace on the Continent and referring specifically to peacetime, provided a different, and national definition.<sup>12</sup> Giving a definition to espionage allowed for state control over it, and consequently control over anyone suspected of engaging in the practice. For military representatives who concerned

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<sup>11</sup> Jean-Pierre Machelon has identified many scenarios demonstrating that the quest for stability and order under the Third Republic also led to a restriction of liberties among several parts of the population in the name of national security and social discipline. He describes how Republican leaders pushed their supposedly liberal agenda at the expense of personal liberties for a number of categories of individuals. Religious congregations, striking workers, anarchists, and State functionaries, along with royals, foreign aliens and prostitutes saw their rights limited in the Republic’s push to institute and protect a progressive, secular regime valuing social peace over total liberty. Jean-Pierre Machelon, *La République contre les libertés: les restrictions aux libertés publiques de 1879 à 1914* (Paris: Presses de la Fondation nationale des sciences politiques, 1976). Following Machelon’s lead, historians like Robert Nye discussed the way so-called deviants were isolated and marginalized by the Republic’s politicians and judiciary, and Florence Rochefort similarly looked at how women, denied the vote, did not enjoy the full liberties under this Republican regime. Nye, *Crime, Madness*. Florence Rochefort, “The French Feminist Movement and Republicanism, 1868-1914,” in Sylvia Paletschek and Bianka Pietrow-Ennker, eds., *Women’s Emancipation Movements in the Nineteenth Century* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), 77-101.

<sup>12</sup> Countless newspapers referenced the new, legal definition for spies, quick to point to the law as a source of protection, noting, as did the paper *L’Information*, that regulating espionage was crucial, necessary to “the security of the country in the present, and especially in the future in the event that war should break out.” *L’Information*, November 15, 1888. AN F<sup>7</sup> 12644-45.

themselves with spies, this meant the realization of Lewal's axiom to "Practice during peace that which one would implement during war."<sup>13</sup> This subsequently translated to the need to apply a strict and watchful regime long before hostilities actually began. The espionage law provided the framework within which to define secrecy and practice prudence.

### *Creation and Critique of the April 18, 1886 Law Regulating Espionage*

The fact that that no specific legislation existed to counter the wave of "spy mania" coursing through France in the years following the Franco-Prussian War troubled authorities and the public alike. A decade and a half into the French Third Republic, the primary legal recourse available to authorities in countering espionage was the *Code Pénal* of 1810. To many working in defense of the nation, the Napoleonic Code, whose articles focused far more heavily on treason than on espionage, was found wanting. Legal theorists pointed to the vague terms found in the specific articles, leading to questions of the applicability of the Penal Code in countering espionage.<sup>14</sup> The military, too, found flaws in the existing legislation, and complained of France's leniency towards spies in the years prior to the conclusion of the 1886 law.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Detourbet, *L'espionnage et la trahison*, 83.

<sup>14</sup> Victor Colonieu, *L'espionnage au point de vue du droit international et du droit pénal français* (Paris: A. Rousseau, 1888), 70. For example, Article 76, the article under which famous espionage suspects Dreyfus and Ullmo were convicted, which targeted "machinations" with foreign powers, troubled several judicial theorists who complained of its failure to provide a specific definition of the targeted act.

<sup>15</sup> In a series of communications between Minister of War Campenon, the general heading the army's *état-major général* (EMG), and some other high-ranking commanders, the military authorities asserted their dissatisfaction with the legal system's inability to try and convict individuals considered dangerous to national security.

On September 19, 1885, the head of the army's general staff wrote to War Minister Jean-Baptiste Campenon that "there is no question that the Government is not sufficiently armed against espionage, and that most often, foreigners arrested by the military authority and brought before the civil authority, end up released after a summary investigation."<sup>16</sup> Indeed, General Baron Berge, head of the 16<sup>th</sup> corps of the French army related a number of incidents of captured spies who were released without punishment due to lack of legislation.<sup>17</sup> It was precisely for this reason that shortly thereafter General Campenon began looking into the enactment of an espionage law to target foreign spies in France, seeking input from Colonel Vincent and the Statistical Section of the Deuxième Bureau.

Though the idea for the law was conceived under Campenon's tenure as War Minister, it was not until the ascent of General Boulanger that an espionage law finally became a priority.<sup>18</sup> In March of 1886, just months after taking his position in government, Minister of War Boulanger submitted a proposal to the Senate to create a new law targeting espionage in France. In step with Boulanger, the respective ministers of Justice and Navy, in accordance with the *Conseil d'Etat*, approved the proposal, and brought it before the Chamber of Deputies under the

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<sup>16</sup> Letter from head of EMG dated September 19, 1885, SHD 1M 2197.

<sup>17</sup> Letter from General Baron Berge to the Minister of War dated September 16, 1885, SHD 1M 2197. See also a number of other cases in the same file, mostly describing Germans and Italians who were caught supposedly engaging in espionage on French territory. Berge complained that whereas the War Minister had instructed the generals to leave the task of the prosecution of spies up to the civil and judicial authorities, he "had little reason to count on the help of the latter," and therefore felt unable to properly carry out his task of defending the French border.

<sup>18</sup> As has been described in previous chapters, Boulanger's exposure to intelligence within the War Ministry undoubtedly impacted his view of its importance to both offensive and defensive strategy for France. Note that in all of the works treating Boulangism (including Seager, *Boulangier Affair*. Irvine, *Boulangier Affair*. Adrien Dansette, *Le Boulangisme, 1886-1890* (Paris: Librairie Académique Perrin, 1938)., and Jean Garrigues, *Le Général Boulanger* (Paris: O. Orban, 1991), none of them cover this aspect of his ministerial career.

name of President Jules Grévy. This was a coalition of the Left, with Grévy representing France's *Gauche républicaine*, Boulanger then associated only with Republican tendencies, Minister of Marine and Colonies, Admiral Théophile Aube and Republican Minister of Justice Charles Demôle, all having been appointed to their posts by the moderate Prime Minister Charles de Freycinet. The *rapporteur*, or drafter of the law was Antoine Gadaud, a deputy from the Dordogne and member of the *Union républicaine*.<sup>19</sup>

In the weeks surrounding the law's proposal, the potential legislation received nearly unanimous approval from the press and from politicians. Papers like *Le Temps* and *Le Figaro* printed the law in its entirety in their pages, and urged the Chamber to pass the law without delay. Some editorials used the occasion to find fault with previous administrations for elevating issues such as the expulsion of religious authorities or aristocrats over questions of national security.<sup>20</sup> Laws against espionage had already been enacted in Germany, Italy, Austria-Hungary and Holland, and thus the French displayed the concerted need to catch up.

Observers noted that although the law passed quickly, a considerable effort did go

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<sup>19</sup> Gadaud took up the project of drafting the law based on an earlier version drafted by Victor Chauffour, (who had represented the far Left as a deputy under the Second Republic). Chauffour had been appointed to draft the original text by War Minister Campenon at the end of 1885.

<sup>20</sup> An example of the press' role in urging the passing of a law against spies came from a *Figaro* reporter, Gaston Calmette, who vocalized frustration with the French failure to target espionage in a front-page article on March 11, 1886. The author laid fault with the Assembly for letting over a decade and a half pass without addressing the threat of spies. Calmette noted, "For the past sixteen years, in none of our Assemblies was there found a deputy to demand this law of security, and before dreaming of this indispensable reform, they have exhausted, for sixteen years, all possible superfluous subjects of discussion, the demands of expulsion for religious members, changing the names of streets, the banishment of princes, with forgetting the creation of *bataillons scolaires* and pensions for the victims of December! There is no greater proof of the impotency of all our parliamentary Assemblies." Gaston Calmette, "L'Espionnage" in *Le Figaro*, March 11, 1886. He continued by pointing to General Boulanger as the leader with the strength and the assiduity to bring forward a law on espionage designed to protect the nation. This shows that not only did the law help Boulanger and the War Ministry in consolidating their role in the regulation of espionage and counterespionage, but that it also contributed to the popularity of the relatively new Minister himself.

into its preparation, with study and input afforded by the Ministers of Justice, War, Foreign Affairs, Navy and the Interior all contributing to the effort. The draft of the law came before the Chamber of Deputies in the April 15, 1886 session, where it was adopted unanimously without discussion.<sup>21</sup> Such uncharacteristic agreement from a Chamber divided politically shows the importance placed on this issue in the mid-1880s. Boulanger brought the law before the Senate the next day, demanding again a declaration of urgency, which was approved and the proposition passed. With the approval of these two bodies, the high Chamber made the proposal a law on April 18, 1886.<sup>22</sup>

The passage of the April 1886 law demonstrated an unambiguous political preoccupation with defending the nation from spies. Whereas on one hand the impetus to pass the espionage law stemmed from the simple fact that France lacked such legislation that other countries had begun to enact, the language of the law itself, along with the commentaries written about it, stresses its role as an instrument of national security.<sup>23</sup> This focus on national defense put into legislation the need to protect against attack by foreign powers at a time when the nation was clearly not at war. Individuals within the army had recognized the importance of espionage in undermining national security for decades. This law showed that protection was being sought beyond the uniforms of the armed services. The need

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<sup>21</sup> Mennevée, *L'espionnage international*, tome II, 37.

<sup>22</sup> By decree of June 18, 1886, the espionage law was declared applicable in Algeria, and by decree of February 19, 1894, it was made applicable to all of the colonies. The official name of the law was *Loi tendant à établir des pénalités contre l'espionnage*.

<sup>23</sup> In the "*exposé des motifs*" prefacing the law, the drafters write, "Such a seriously dangerous situation for the security of the country [the lack of a law to repress espionage] cannot continue," and elsewhere notes that the law's purpose is "to assure the external security of the State." Mennevée, *L'espionnage international*. Tome II, 34, 36.

to have such a law particularly during peacetime demonstrates that the notion of peace itself had become more nuanced, where not only officers and soldiers, but also politicians, lawmakers and ordinary citizens became aware that peacetime was merely the time when war was being prepared, and that these groups possessed the tools to fight it.

The law that was promulgated on April 18, 1886 contained 13 provisions creating a variety of infractions relating to French military secrets.<sup>24</sup> With this law, the Republic declared its rights over all “plans, writings or documents relative to the defense of land or the external safety of the State.”<sup>25</sup> The first articles of the law were directed towards functionaries who would have access to information by reason of profession or mission. A further article stated that not only would functionaries be penalized for intentionally passing along intelligence, but also if such information got out as a result of their negligence. Two of the articles specified the *means* of procuring information, punishing those who disguised themselves or concealed their profession or nationality.<sup>26</sup> The law prohibited observation of topography connected with military infrastructure, and forbade the crossing of barriers to access means of defense. Another new provision in this law targeted the publication or reproduction of plans or documents, meriting a penalty equal to that given to someone actually stealing or passing along the information.

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<sup>24</sup> *Journal officiel. Chambre. Débats parlementaires*, session of April 15, 1886: 796 ff. (Copy of the law and my translation in Annex D.)

<sup>25</sup> See Article 1 of the April 18, 1886 law against espionage.

<sup>26</sup> See Articles 5 and 8. The question of disguise had been central to the definition of espionage during wartime. For example, the American rules, the first code created regarding espionage, state that if someone caught on enemy territory was in uniform they would be treated as a prisoner of war, but otherwise, as a spy. Lieber Code, dated April 24, 1863, article 88 states, “A spy is a person who secretly, in disguise or under false pretense, seeks information with the intention of communicating it to the enemy.”

The penalties for violations varied according to which article was applied, but they were capped at a maximum of 5 years in prison and 5000 francs fine, relatively weak punishments for such a crime, and ones that would be critiqued for that very reason in years to come. All civilians, French and foreign, would be tried by the *tribunal correctionnel* according to the *code d'instruction criminelle*, while members of the army or navy would remain under the jurisdiction of their respective justice codes. Thus for the first time in the history of French law, espionage was defined as the passing along of information related to national security, gained either through one's professional position or by employing some sort of ruse.

Instead of characterizing espionage as a military crime, which historically resulted in hanging for the captured spy, under the 1886 law it could now be regarded as a political crime, which in France had been given a special character that precluded the death penalty.<sup>27</sup> This attribution, sixteen years into the Third Republic, worked toward changing the very understanding of espionage, giving it a civilian characteristic rather than solely a military one and acknowledging that it had an important, albeit different, role during peacetime than during war. While it might not determine the outcome of a particular campaign, it did have the ability to help nations to assess preparations for war, or even to gauge where they stood in competition with each other.

The leniency of penalties did not strike the drafters of the law as problematic, yet came under fire often in the following decades until the law was finally changed

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<sup>27</sup> On October 8, 1830, Louis-Philippe oversaw the shift of treason from being a regular crime under the Penal Code to a political crime. The Constitution of the Second Republic subsequently eliminated the death penalty for political crimes, and the regime shortly thereafter replaced capital punishment with perpetual deportation. This change was effectuated by article 5 of the 1848 Constitution, and the subsequent law of June 8, 1850. Warusfel, *Contre-espionnage*, 147.

in 1934. Indeed, at the period of the law's drafting, the *conseiller d'État* Victor Chauffour noted in his report that, "the punishment being relatively moderate, its application is more likely to be effective."<sup>28</sup> The drafters hoped that judges who might be averse to conviction resulting in very strict penalties would be encouraged to target the deed with less severe repercussions.<sup>29</sup> Another quite important reason for keeping penalties for espionage lenient was to avoid antagonizing other countries.<sup>30</sup> In spite of the stress on espionage as a danger to national security, the choice to punish it with a fine and a short prison sentence demonstrates an approach to the crime that can be viewed as fairly liberal.<sup>31</sup>

Within a short amount of time, it became clear that not everyone shared the view of the law's drafters in proposing limited penalties. To many, the idea of being civilized took a back seat to the notion of protecting the country. It was not

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<sup>28</sup> Victor Chauffour, "Rapport sur le projet de loi relatif à l'espionnage," Paris, Imprimerie nationale, February 2, 1886, 5. SHD 1 M 2197.

<sup>29</sup> Gadaud report, cited in Detourbet, *L'espionnage et la trahison*, 108.

<sup>30</sup> Colonieu, *L'espionnage*, 121-122. Colonieu's argument is that in using the 1886 law instead of Article 76 of the Penal Code, France was able to protect itself from spies, some of whom might be relatively harmless, while not imprisoning foreign subjects for lengthy amounts of time, which might anger foreign governments. Therefore, in later years, as politicians and legislators called for stricter penalties, it became clear that the concern with maintaining peaceful relations was diminished.

<sup>31</sup> In legislating that spying would result in limited punishment, some Third Republican lawmakers in effect worked to 'civilize' espionage. This outcome was not lost on the legal scholar Victor Colonieu whose discussion of the 1886 espionage law took a practical approach to the problem of espionage, differing from a number of his more hawkish countrymen who viewed spying purely as foreign pollution. Colonieu's text thus began and ended with the premise of modern espionage as the natural accompaniment to modern war, both of which he viewed as an unfortunate but inevitable consequence of the progression of science and of humanity. Colonieu notes that, "We must thus resign ourselves to accept all of its [war's] consequences, among which espionage takes the highest place. But, at least, we must try to civilize it as much as possible, to regulate the practices, the usages, the theories and the laws" that guide it. His treatment discusses heavier penalties for espionage in times that he coins more barbaric than the present, and approves of the decision by Boulanger and his colleagues not to apply the death penalty to guilty individuals. He notes that capital punishment should be used as rarely as possible against the spy, "as he doesn't always profess criminal opinions, and often, to the contrary, he believes that he is performing his duty, as the soldier does his." With this analogy, Colonieu connected civilians with soldiers, implying that in the altered climate of the late nineteenth century, the line between them was not always so clear. *Ibid.*, 154.



long after the passing of the espionage law that it began to come under fire by critics from across the political spectrum. Republican, Conservative, and Boulangist deputies alike noted that penalties were insufficient, that the “elasticity” of the text could allow spies to easily escape punishment, that the law lacked any sort of distinction between the offense/ misdemeanor (*délit*) of espionage and the crime of treason, and they contested the classification of the crime as political.<sup>32</sup> As Roger Mennevée noted in 1929, the lack of profound study and the speed with which the 1886 law had been passed led to a markedly imperfect law, demonstrating that its approval had in fact been the result of “an ambiance created by particular circumstances.”<sup>33</sup>

The circumstances that allowed the hasty passage of the law were varied, but combined displayed a mood of uncertainty and unrest, with national security and safety unclear. Besides the looming fear of German growth and belligerency, France faced an internal disorder wracked by fears of decadence and decline.<sup>34</sup> The military, which had enjoyed nearly unprecedented support in the decade following the Franco-Prussian War was coming under attack by the spread of working-class

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<sup>32</sup> Mennevée, *L'espionnage international*, tome II, 41. As a consequence of the insufficient penalties, in the years following the passing of the 1886 law, authorities chose to try a number of captured spies under the provisions of the Penal Code, rather than the new espionage law. Both Dreyfus and Benjamin Ullmo were convicted under the Penal Code, and not the 1886 law (see more details in Chapter 6). One of the first of such cases was that of Bonningre in 1889, a French officer accused of selling military documents to Germany. Military and judicial authorities assessed the harm done by his actions as “incalculable,” and noted that the punishments afforded by the 1886 law “were not *en rapport* with the enormity of the crime that he committed against the external security of the French state.” The War Ministry was particularly eager to pursue him for theft of documents and for espionage. Finding the 1886 law insufficient, Bonningre was tried using articles 76 and 77 of the Penal Code, and sentenced on April 6, 1889 to twelve years of forced labor, and 10 years of interdiction from traveling out of the country. AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6080.

<sup>33</sup> Mennevée, *L'Espionnage international*, tome II, 53.

<sup>34</sup> Much has been written about the fear of decadence, degeneration and decline in fin-de-siècle France, often represented culturally by the bohemian dandy or the protagonist of J.K. Huysmann’s 1884 work, *À rebords*. See e.g. Seigel, *Bohemian Paris*; Pick, *Faces of Degeneration*; Jean Pierrot, *The Decadent Imagination, 1880-1900* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981).

and middle-class anti-militarism. Demonstrating strength in the face of the very symbol of defeat – the sneaky German spy – would allow officers and politicians of all stripes to demonstrate to themselves and to the public that France would fight back against any menace to national integrity.<sup>35</sup>

Beginning in 1888, members of the French Chamber began to draft proposals of laws aimed to improve the one passed in April 1886. These proposals now had evidentiary support, noting that experience itself had shown the law of April 18, 1886 to be ineffective in punishing acts of espionage and assuring the defense of the nation. The first new draft, presented in the name of President Carnot, War Minister Charles de Freycinet, and the Ministers of Marine, Justice, and Worship, suggested changes in wording that would broaden the definition of items passed along to include “*objets*” (objects) and “*renseignements*” (intelligence), in addition to the existing “*plans, écrits ou documents secrets.*”<sup>36</sup> This expansion of the definition of information that the state sought to keep secret would be applied to a number of the law’s articles, and would mean that information stored in other forms besides on paper (whether an object, or intelligence passed along orally), was now to be subject to regulation.

Including this initial attempt to modify the espionage law, between 1886 and 1914 no fewer than eight draft proposals surfaced in the Chamber of Deputies seeking to redress the problems that many saw as inherent in the law.<sup>37</sup> The concern with regulating espionage and bringing spies to justice was one that

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<sup>35</sup> For more on the German spy as symbol of defeat and French fears, see Chapter 7.

<sup>36</sup> Mennevée, *L’espionnage international*, 41-46. This draft also included penalties for individuals who would allow intelligence to be copied or learned about.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 41-60. For discussion of attempts to modify laws against espionage and treason from the Dreyfus Affair through 1914, see pages 61- 311.

bridged ideological differences and united deputies from across the political spectrum. For example, in 1890 and 1891, three proposals from varying camps brought the issue of the leniency of punishment to the fore. The first, submitted in 1890 by deputies Lucien Millevoye and Albert Gauthier de Clagny – both Boulangists who would later become involved in the right-wing *Ligue des patriots* – proposed “the most rigorous of penalties that seem necessary to us to assure the safety of the *patrie*.” Similar proposals came from Republican, Conservative, Radical, and Socialist deputies, all pressing the idea that the divulgence of secrets concerning national defense constituted the highest crime against the wellbeing of the state.<sup>38</sup> Appealing to contemporary fears and anxiety, one of the proposals noted that “the particular situation of France since the war of 1870-1871 has given a special gravity to this act and obliges our country to defend itself with exceptional measures. The life of our soldiers, the existence of France itself, can be put in peril by such a crime.”<sup>39</sup> To counter this perceived leniency, deputies called for legislators to apply the death penalty to the crime of espionage. The extreme Leftist, Camille Dreyfus, as head of the Chamber’s *Commission de l’Armée*, presented a report in 1891 noting that his commission was unanimous in its view that the government required a stronger tool to repress the crime of espionage. None of these proposals passed, though their failure was not due to lack of support but due to the inability to hear the debates in a timely fashion before the close of the legislature.

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<sup>38</sup> Drafts of proposals regarding laws against espionage from 1888 to 1894 came from Boulangist deputies Albert Gauthier de Clagny, Lucien Millevoye, Césaire Paulin-Méry, and Marcel Habert, Conservative deputies Louis Brincard and Henri Deloncle, from Union republicaine Auguste Lacote, and from Radicals or Radical Socialists including Bernard Montaut, Charles Rousse, Antoine-Jean-Baptiste (Antide) Boyer, and Antoine Lagnel.

<sup>39</sup> Mennevé, *L’espionnage international*, tome II, 46-47.

Understandably, with the Dreyfus Affair falling squarely in the middle of this period, the divisive conviction and subsequent trials also served as fodder for discussion of harsher penalties both in the government and outside of it. One of the first submissions following Dreyfus' conviction and the sentiments that arose from it was an *article unique* submitted in December 1894 proposing the suppression of the political character of crimes or offenses against national security, whether in peace or war.<sup>40</sup> Thus, if another traitor like Dreyfus were to surface, the aim was that his crime would not be punished with deportation, but with death, as many writing about Dreyfus deemed fit.<sup>41</sup>

Legislators were not alone in discussing the merits and failures of the Third Republic's attempts to repress espionage. In the years following the passing of the law, the pros and cons of the 1886 law made their way into the public consciousness via press commentary, and through publications by legal students and scholars. The first of these analytic texts was Victor Colonieu's *L'Espionnage au point de vue du droit international et du droit pénal français*, submitted initially as a thesis for the law school in Lyon in 1888. Colonieu was one of the first academics to tackle the importance of considering espionage in peacetime as well as wartime, and set himself up against earlier theorists such as Johann Bluntschli, F.F. de Martens and Emerich de Vattel, whose writings stressed definitions of espionage as taking place

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 63; published in *Journal Officiel, Documents du Sénat*, January 27, 1895, 348.

<sup>41</sup> In the article in the anti-Semitic *La Libre Parole* that first revealed the name of Captain Alfred Dreyfus as the convicted traitor, the author quotes deputy Gauthier de Clagny as saying, "It will not be possible, given all the Codes and all the laws, to condemn that miserable wretch to death, and I regret that the Chamber has not yet acted on the law I proposed long ago concerning that subject..." "High Treason: Arrest of the Jewish Officer A. Dreyfus," *La Libre Parole*, November 1, 1894, reprinted in Michael Burns, *France and the Dreyfus Affair: A Documentary History* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martins, 1999), 34.

during times of war.<sup>42</sup> In approaching this “still obscure, poorly defined, and underdeveloped science,” Colonieu pointed out the damage that spies could inflict in peacetime, commending the decision of the French government to take up the issue before the law. He states,

“It is thus [peacetime] that intelligent and confident spies render immense services to a government, and that they are most dangerous for the nation against whom they operate; it is at this moment that it is important to watch them closely and to severely repress their deeds, as it is these preparatory acts that can most often decide later the destiny of a people. We have had this cruel experience, in 1870, and this experience has cost us dearly enough that we remember it.”<sup>43</sup>

Though he is referring to espionage acts leading to military campaigns, it is notable that he never mentions an army, and that it is to the government that the spy provides his services, and not to the military. Based upon the new law, the characterization of the crime of espionage had crossed over into the civilian sphere. Although the crime would affect the military, observers noted that civilians could carry it out, and thus the law needed to account for the fact that spying was not strictly a military crime.

Following Colonieu’s lead, two other jurists tackled the specific question of the legal repression of espionage, focusing on the 1886 law in comparison with the treason laws in place before it, assessing its successes and determining what was missing. In 1898, Robert Detourbet published his law thesis, *L’Espionnage et la*

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<sup>42</sup> Colonieu’s work also serves as a prime example of the recognition of spies as contributing to the blurring of the line between war and peace. His book, which focuses on peacetime, begins by considering war. He asks, “Is it not, in effect, without question, that when everyone wants peace, it becomes essential for all to prepare for war?” It seems to be an interesting recognition of the cold war mentality, that even when fighting isn’t going on, that it is being thought about and prepared for. He acknowledges the reality of espionage as a tool of war, claiming that intelligence is “as important for victory as the perfection of arms and the valor of the combatants.” Colonieu, *L’espionnage*, 2, 29.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 9-10.

*trahison*, and in 1913, Captain Fernand Routier, an officer who had sat on the *conseil de guerre* for his army corps, defended his thesis at Poitiers, *L'espionnage et la trahison en temps de paix et en temps de guerre*. Together, these three works help to show the extent to which the concern about espionage during peacetime had spread. Moreover, they emphasize the role of the judicial branch in determining policy, as these texts laid out in great detail their legal opinions supporting the notion that the state should have control over certain knowledge.

By the mid-1890s, the issue of regulating espionage, which had not been tackled in France's long history outside of a loose understanding of treason, had become subject to considerable scrutiny, debate, and criticism, yielding the result that scholar Sebastian Laurent characterizes as the "politicization of a question that up until then had remained technical."<sup>44</sup> One reason for the politicization of regulating espionage was the publicity that its repression had generated. Newspapers in the years following 1886 complained frequently about the government's failure to rein in espionage, and therefore a number of the deputies aiming to alter the 1886 law stressed the fact that public opinion had also been galvanized by learning of penalties that did not seem sufficient to counter the crimes at hand.<sup>45</sup> Leaders and social observers on both sides could now claim that they had moved to stop the flow of German espionage, and also attack those in power for weaknesses in applying the law. Politicians were able to unite in an

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<sup>44</sup> Laurent, *Politiques de l'ombre*, 541.

<sup>45</sup> In a draft proposal for a new law in 1890 presented by Boulangist deputy Césaire Paulin-Méry, the drafter (a member of the *gauche radicale*), Bernard Montaut writes, "Public opinion has been moved, in effect, declaring that the law of April 18, 1886 has pronounced penalties rightly regarded as insufficient and, furthermore, has repeatedly given rise to different interpretations by the courts." Cited in Mennevée, *L'espionnage international*, tome II, 48.

indictment of the Second Empire and its loose repressive policy while continuing to campaign for harsher punishments for spies.

Without question, the late 1880s saw a deluge in the mediatization of espionage, a fact explained by the spread of fear. Even in peacetime, the notion of espionage evoked anxiety of war and of competition with enemies and neighbors. At a time already rife with preoccupations with decline and degeneration, it is hardly shocking that such fears manifested themselves in paranoia about spies and the desire to see them snuffed out. With the debate surrounding the 1886 law, the reality of the secret state made its way into the open. No longer were discussions of state secrets and the repression of their spread kept behind the closed doors of the Ministries of War, Interior or Foreign Affairs. With debates in Parliament, in academia, and in the press, the question – and the fear – of espionage became a matter of national concern.

#### *The Military and the 1886 Law in Practice*

The 1886 law passed through the French Chamber of Deputies, nearly one third of whose members had a background of legal training.<sup>46</sup> However, it was neither the executive, legislative, nor judicial branch that took charge of the implementation and direction of the law, but the military. In a number of circulars and instructions in the fall and winter of 1886, the War Ministry contacted its corps commanders, heads of the gendarmerie, representatives of the Ministry of the Interior, and even generals in French colonies with directives as to how to keep the

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<sup>46</sup> Nord, *Republican Moment*, 115.

nation safe from spies.<sup>47</sup> Each of the most important documents coming from Boulanger or his colleagues in the War Ministry made the point to refer specifically to the April 18, 1886 law on espionage. The war department had brought the law into the civil sphere by targeting civilians, and once passed, the military made no effort to draw a distinction in operational spheres, making clear that it would again lead the way in approaching anything related to espionage.

In taking the lead on the application of the 1886 law, Boulanger and the War Ministry were able to assert their jurisdiction over the police, who were also tasked with the job of watching individuals on French territory to prevent the spread of confidential information. A number of directives that reference the April 1886 law speak to the division of labor between the police and the military, with the latter taking on the leading role of the two. In discussing the matter with one of the divisional commanders, Boulanger noted that the army should be able to rely on the municipal or administrative police forces for any surveillance work that it should require.<sup>48</sup>

The military was also able to assert its desires for national protection from spies by seeing the new law enforced in practice. The 1886 law contained the

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<sup>47</sup> See, e.g.: *Note confidentielle* dated August 19, 1886; letter from War Minister Boulanger to the military governors of Paris and Lyon and army heads dated October 9, 1886; letter from Boulanger to the military generals of Paris and Lyon, heads of the army corps, and the commander of the occupation troops in Tunisia dated November 10, 1886; *Instruction* of December 9, 1886 and letter dated December 22, 1886 from Boulanger to General Commander of the Second Army Corps, SHD 7N 11 and SHD 7N 674. Following Boulanger's instructions, the Interior Minister subsequently sent the War Minister's instructions to local prefects, thus expanding the army leaders' goals to the municipal level. Circular dated February 9, 1887, SHD 1M 2197. A similar letter had gone out to prefects on December 13, 1886.

<sup>48</sup> He further broadened the extent to which he thought the army should be informed, in demanding access to the *relevé des entrées* kept by hotels and garrisons, in order to be aware "to a degree as exact as possible of the movements of foreigners in the cities." Note dated December 22, 1886, SHD SHD 7N 674. Moreover, he asserted that he should personally be alerted to any arrest taking place on military territory. Note dated October 9, 1886, SHD 7N 11.



outline for the identification and punishment of spies, but turned out to be vague in many respects, and without a revision of the law, certain omissions could only be worked out through precedent. As will be demonstrated, the army's intelligence service subsequently had a hand in a variety of aspects of espionage cases – from the pursuit and capture of suspects to intervention in the trials that would ultimately convict them. With this involvement, the French military therefore played a part both in defining secrecy relating to ideas and materiel, and in delineating the meaning of espionage itself.

There was no official prescription regarding procedures by which individual spies were caught and tried; yet the cases followed certain patterns.<sup>49</sup> Typically, the suspected spy was initially pinpointed after being denounced, observed around secure locations, or otherwise appearing suspicious. Upon identification of a particular individual, the police or other agents would locate the suspect, and when found, he – or very occasionally, she – would be arrested.<sup>50</sup> Within hours of opening a case, the police and the local prosecutor would begin to gather substantial background on the individual in question, noting his or her age, place of birth, profession, language background, and other details. The police and justice representatives then acquired warrant permits allowing agents to search the house or property of the suspect individual. Once having gathered the requisite information, the regional prosecutor's office would send a description of the case to the Minister of Justice, who would then produce a summary of the facts and the relating legal questions. The dossier would grow as more information was

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<sup>49</sup> Information on espionage trials comes from the judicial files, AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6080-6085.

<sup>50</sup> The arrest was often followed by the sending of a telegram in code typically using just numbers that presumably represented the name of the suspect and the deed for which he was being arrested.

gathered, including correspondence between local police, magistrates, and often representatives of the War Ministry. The majority of documents related to the cases bear the inscription: "Very confidential." Finally the individual would be tried, often in a closed courtroom (*huis clos*), where the presiding magistrate had the ability to sentence the suspect under one or many of the articles of the 1886 espionage law, acquit the defendant, or dismiss the case due to lack of evidence (*non-lieu*).<sup>51</sup>

Spies were arrested and brought before tribunals across France, as well as in the overseas territories. The files include cases from Paris, cities along the eastern border (Nancy, Dijon, Besançon, Belfort), cities in the north of France (Rennes, Lille, Lorient), cities in the south and southeast (Nice, Toulon, Montpellier, Aix, Avignon, Nîmes) and in other areas in the east and center of the country (Lyon, Bourges, Poitiers), and more. Trials also were held in Bastia in Corsica, and in municipalities such as Bône and Algiers in Algeria. The suspects represented a number of different nationalities, including Germans, Italians, British, Belgians, and French. Many individuals were suspect for gathering information on forts, railroads, and military strength, while some were accused of stealing materiel such as explosives, powders, guns, and cartridges, in particular cartridges from the new Lebel rifle.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> According to an article in the newspaper *Le Jour* dated September 13, 1897, investigative materials were kept in special cabinets only available to the Procureur de la République, and sometimes passed onto the War Minister. Decisions and judgments were read aloud in public audience, but were generally drafted in very general terms without specifying facts.

<sup>52</sup> The Lebel rifle was the first military rifle ever to make use of smokeless gunpowder, making it considerably more powerful and faster-firing than the Gras rifle which preceded it. Its invention was urged by General Boulanger upon his ascension to the War Ministry in January 1886, and the model was therefore designed in only three months. The 8mm bolt action infantry rifle officially entered service in the French Army in April 1887. As the first weapon to use the new smokeless gunpowder – itself invented only in 1884 by Paul Vieille – it is not surprising that foreign armies sought access to the new technology. Jean Huon, *Proud Promise: French Autoloading Rifles 1898-1979* (Cobourg, Ontario, Canada: Collector Grade Publications, 1995), 5-6.

While the majority were tried for having stolen military items, authorities recognized that spies in France were not only looking for defense items, but also aimed to discover details about the population and attempted to influence public morale, spirit, and opinion.<sup>53</sup>

There were few convictions using this new legislation in the months following April 1886, and judicial pursuits initially came up against obstacles in the courts. What appears to be the first case attempting to use the new law was brought against suspects Prim and Goldberg in August 1886. The two men were accused of taking photographs of ramparts in the environs of Nancy.<sup>54</sup> Captured by police, they were tried under Article 6 of the espionage law, which targets observation of topography and military works, but were not convicted for procedural reasons.<sup>55</sup> This particular offense occurred with more frequency in the years that followed, however, and suspects such as Raeche in 1908 and Annequin in Arras in 1909 were sentenced to prison and fined, an indication that in twenty years procedures had changed, with fluidity in the interpretation of the law in the decades following its creation.<sup>56</sup> As the realization of the importance of protecting

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<sup>53</sup> See Lajoux, *Mes souvenirs*, 44-45. A handful of cases prosecuting individuals under the espionage law included instances where the suspect was trying to instigate desertion from the army or lauding other nations at the expense of France. See e.g. case of Hunault-Budoc, June 1900 AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6083, and case of Manteuffel and Vladimiroff accused of spreading anti-militarist propaganda, June-Sept 1907, AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6085.

<sup>54</sup> AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6080.

<sup>55</sup> Article 6 states: *Celui qui, sans autorisation de l'autorité militaire ou maritime aura exécuté des levées en opération de topographie dans un rayon d'un myriamètre autour d'une place forte, d'un poste, ou d'un établissement militaire ou maritime, à partir des ouvrages avancés, sera puni d'un emprisonnement de un mois à un an et d'une amende de cent à mille francs.* (For translation, see Annex D.) The judge excused Prim because the court concluded that his intention was not espionage, and Goldberg because the act took place before the passing of the 1886 law, therefore opting to hold him in violation of an article in a decree of 1883.

<sup>56</sup> Raeche was caught in Lille in the summer of 1908 where he had been operating under a false name in order to gather intelligence on mobilization plans, the existence of carrier pigeons, and details of military compounds around Lille. He was condemned to two years of prison and 1000 francs fine

French military secrets grew, the law therefore evolved, through practice rather than through legislative changes. And here, the military would be at the forefront of defining the meaning of espionage and how the law was to be applied.

An early case that demonstrated to authorities the limits of the 1886 law at its outset was the *Affaire Jobin/Hahn*.<sup>57</sup> Like many others individuals accused of espionage during this period, Jobin's crime was an attempt to procure a Lebel rifle with the intention of selling it to Germany for a considerable sum. The authorities were alerted to Jobin's offense in June of 1888 when his attempt to acquire the gun led him to approach a French soldier named Victor Barbier, stationed near Epinal. Barbier had supposedly accepted Jobin's offer of 5000 francs in exchange for the gun, but instead alerted the authorities to the request, which put them on the trail of Jobin. The judicial authorities arrested Jobin and subsequently attempted to convict him under the two-year old espionage law.

Unfortunately for the prosecution, the law did not specify Jobin's precise acts as criminal, and thus the magistrates sought to identify ways that he could be convicted. One suggestion was to try him under articles 5 and 8 of the espionage law, making the argument that a gun could fit into the same category as

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for "tentative d'espionnage." Annequin had been a soldier in the French army, but started dating "a brasserie girl" who was responsible for his neglecting his service and going down a grade, before eventually deserting on June 6, 1906. The pair moved to Luxembourg and started working there, but before long, Annequin attracted the attention of a man named Schwartz who recruited him to spy for Germany. In order to make money, Annequin agreed, and took long trips to important military centers in Verdun, Reims, Mézières, and others, observing the layout and strength of French fortresses. Witnesses also affirmed that he had been asking for information on things such as hydraulic brakes. He was condemned by the tribunal in Arras in 1909 to three years prison and a fine of 300 francs. AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6085.

<sup>57</sup> Details of the Jobin case can be found in several different archives. The judicial documents are in AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6080, with a file on him in the military's archives in SHD 1M 2197, and in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, MAE Affaires Diverses Politiques, Allemagne 37.

*renseignements*.<sup>58</sup> Moreover, the judge supposed, Jobin's crime was punishable under the law as he had disguised his identity in his attempt to get the gun from Barbier, claiming to be a factory worker. Investigation revealed that not only had Jobin asserted a false profession, but his identity itself was suspect.<sup>59</sup> In looking up the name he had given (Joseph Jobin), the authorities found that it belonged to a man killed nine months prior, and that his papers, under the name Emile Jobin, appeared falsified. In reality, the suspect's name was Hahn. In spite of all of these findings, however, the authorities concluded that the evidence was not sufficient to convict him under the 1886 law, as the rifle that he had attempted to buy was not quite a "plan, writing, or document," as stipulated by the law. Jobin was in the end sentenced to two years in prison, but for attempting to incite desertion, not for espionage.<sup>60</sup> This limited definition of espionage would soon be expanded to suit the army's and the state's needs in the future.

The opportunity came only a few months later, with the capture and arrest of a man named Fritz Kilian Von Hohenburg. Kilian was a 39-year old German

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<sup>58</sup> Article 5 states: *Sera puni d'un emprisonnement de un à cinq ans et d'une amende de mille à cinq mille francs : 1) Toute personne qui, à l'aide d'un déguisement ou d'un faux nom ou en dissimulant sa qualité, sa profession ou sa nationalité, se sera introduite dans une place forte, un poste, un navire de l'état ou dans un établissement militaire ou maritime. 2) Toute personne qui, déguisée ou sous un faux nom ou en dissimulant sa profession ou sa nationalité, aura levé des plans, reconnu de soient de communication ou recueilli des renseignements intéressant la défense du territoire ou la sûreté extérieure de l'Etat, and Article 8 covers similar intent even if the crime is not successful: Toute tentative de l'un des délits prévus par les articles 1, 2, 3, et 5 de la présente loi sera considérée come le délit lui-même.*

<sup>59</sup> The report by the prosecution on June 15, 1888 notes that he had used different first names when registering himself at lodges, etc. It discusses his profession, noting that he was clearly not a worker, (authorities had even examined his hands to dispute whether he worked in a factory, to which Jobin responded that he was a surveyor), and his language skills (noting that he speaks French well, but with an accent). AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6080.

<sup>60</sup> The Minister of Justice disagreed with the decision by the local *tribunal correctionnel* and therefore asked the procureur of Nancy to appeal the case. The Nancy tribunal subsequently upheld the judgment of the court in Epinal. The jurisprudence that would allow attempts to buy a weapon to fall under the 1886 espionage law was only established after an 1891 decision by the *tribunal correctionnel* of Saint-Étienne, which condemned a defendant named Cooper for having tried to buy a carbine of the French army. See case in Mennevée, *L'espionnage international*, tome II, 459.

subject living in Nice who had aroused the attention of the authorities for his observation of French troop maneuvers in the mountains along the French border.<sup>61</sup> It was reported that Kilian would then send his findings to Berlin, addressed to a Mlle Irmgard, suspected by the police of being an intermediary. Throughout the summer of 1888, the police had managed to intercept some of these reports, which provided very detailed accounts of daily troop movements, locations where the army was stationed, and the various training exercises that the soldiers engaged in.<sup>62</sup> With reasonable suspicion, the police continued to watch at the post office for the suspect's mail going to or coming from Berlin. In the middle of August 1888 the police caught Kilian attempting to mail a cartridge from a Lebel rifle hidden in a pot of orange blossom flowers and arrested him on the spot.

Once arrested, the process began in earnest to convict Kilian of the crime of committing espionage against France, something which, according to the case files, was not considered guaranteed from the outset. A letter from the *Procureur Générale* (chief prosecutor) to the Justice Minister expressed the former's concern that in the search of Kilian's house following his arrest, the police were unable to find particularly incriminating documents, and without them, the only real evidence against him remained the cartridge, as opposed to documentary evidence, as the legislation required. Letters in the file thus discuss the challenge of locating a provision in the 1886 law that would cover this infraction.

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<sup>61</sup> Information for the Kilian case comes from AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6080.

<sup>62</sup> Explanation by the Procureur dated August 20, 1888. These documents that made their way to Berlin included details about the fort at St-Jean-la-Rivière, more than fourteen detailed reports on the strength of French alpine battalions, their equipment and the results of their shooting practice. He also had executed topographical operations near a fortified area.

Here entered the Ministry of War. On August 21, 1888, War Minister Charles de Freycinet sent a letter to the Minister of Justice weighing in on the gravity of the Kilian case and stressing the importance of convicting him.<sup>63</sup> In this letter, de Freycinet connected Kilian with the larger threat of foreign espionage, noting that the address for Mlle Irmgard, to whom Kilian had sent the cartridge in question, was one that directly served the German army's general staff in Berlin and was used by a handful of German agents on French territory. The letter claims that Kilian is "a German military agent, one of the most active as well as dangerous, as his competence is unquestionable and he has been able to access innumerable locales. He is a spy, in the worst sense of the term."<sup>64</sup> Yet again, when discussing possible convictions, the War Minister expressed his reservation that the 1886 law did not possess enough range to be applicable.

Nonetheless, the War Ministry and the Statistical Section were determined to see this dangerous spy punished for his actions. In the early stages of collecting information against Kilian, therefore, the Minister of Justice appealed to the Statistical Section to search the suspect's baggage in order to find incriminating material.<sup>65</sup> With the help of the experts from the War Ministry, the magistrate finally felt confident that he could convict the German. In a letter to the Minister of Justice, therefore, the *Procureur* referenced the officers, and noted his pleasure at the "favorable modification" of circumstances that would allow Kilian to be tried under

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<sup>63</sup> Letter dated August 21, 1888, AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6080.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Laurent, *Politiques de l'ombre*, 553. Minister of War Boulanger appears to have begun the practice of using military intelligence to search presumed spies by appointing a representative of the military to help the police and magistrates in gathering information about a suspect, a German named Christian Sandler arrested in Brest. See letter from Boulanger dated October 10, 1886, AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6080.

Article 5, paragraph 1 of the espionage law which targeted the use of disguise or identity falsification in entering a fort or another military center.<sup>66</sup> Assuming that Kilian would have had to employ such a pretense to obtain the cartridge, on October 26, 1888 the Nice court issued the nation's first conviction for the full penalty under the espionage law, sentencing him to the full 5-year prison sentence, along with 5000 francs fine.

The *Parquet* (Prosecutor's office) of Nice wasted little time in congratulating itself on the conviction of the spy Kilian. In a letter to the Minister of Justice written the day following the conviction, the representative of the *Parquet* wrote, "In condemning Kilian to the maximum punishment allowed by the 1886 law, the judges from Nice have not only punished a foreigner as deserved, who, abusing our hospitality, practiced espionage for more than ten years for the benefit of the German government," but also issued a loud warning for those considering such actions in the future.<sup>67</sup> The letter additionally noted that public opinion welcomed the condemnation with great satisfaction, especially in Nice where this organized system of espionage against France had existed for a while.

After this initial success, the army and its representatives in the intelligence department continued to work with other non-military state institutions to assure the arrest and conviction of people passing information along to France's

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<sup>66</sup> Letter from the Procureur de la République to the Minister of Justice dated October 1, 1888, AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6080.

<sup>67</sup> Letter from the Parquet to the Minister of Justice dated October 27, 1888, AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6080. Whereas this was the first instance of utilizing the full punishment available under the law, in retrospect, legal scholars such as Victor Colonieu noted that had Kilian been tried under article 76 of the Penal Code, as had previously been all that was available in such instances, the penalties in fact would have been considerably worse. He notes that judges must have "wisely thought that the penalty dictated by [article 76] was exorbitant, and that it would unleash, across the border, a flurry of negative insinuations and hateful comments, while our dignity and security would have nothing to lose by giving the guilty party a more moderate punishment." Colonieu, *L'espionnage*, 122.



competitors. One example of the Statistical Section's working with the police and with the Justice Ministry was the case of Louis Bonnet, a former French lieutenant, turned spy for the Germans, who was caught by an agent working for the Section, Edmond Lajoux.<sup>68</sup> According to the case file, Bonnet had turned to espionage after being released from the army for drunkenness and other behavioral problems. He began his spy work selling notes and documents related to French defenses via an intermediary in Switzerland named Henri Brun, and later attracted Lajoux's attention when he traveled to Brussels to meet with Richard Cuers, an agent of the German espionage service. Lajoux had made a connection with Cuers previously, managing to earn the trust of the German spy, which enabled him to be present as Bonnet informed Cuers of French military projects in the north. Leaving Brussels, Bonnet was on his way to meet Brun in Nancy where he was intercepted by French police agents who had been tipped off by Lajoux.<sup>69</sup> Once captured, Bonnet was brought before the courts where he was tried for violating articles 1, 2, and 3 of the 1886 law. The civilian authorities claimed that he had passed along sketches of maps of railroads and of the surrounding areas, details on weapons, and information related to the numbers and strength of the French armies. The War Ministry contributed to the prosecution both by submitting confidential information about Bonnet's conduct while he was in the military and by appointing a special officer to follow the case. Though he attempted to defend himself by asserting that the information he passed along was no different from that published

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<sup>68</sup> On the Bonnet case, see AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6081, and Lajoux, *Mes souvenirs*. Bonnet was arrested on September 30, 1890 in Nancy.

<sup>69</sup> Lajoux complained in his memoirs that these police agents actually managed to mess up the arrest by following Bonnet to Brussels, but that after a long chase, he was eventually caught and tried. *Ibid.*, 55-59.

in newspapers, Bonnet was found guilty and sentenced to five years of imprisonment, 5000 francs fine, and an interdiction to travel for ten years.<sup>70</sup>

In the years and decades following, counterespionage authorities continued to demonstrate what material they considered threatening, working within the contours of the law to arrest and convict spies for a variety of offenses. Police and magistrates also targeted individuals found making sketches or other reproductions of military locales, something that had been accounted for in the drafting of the 1886 law. One such case was that of Joseph Pierron and his wife, convicted by the Court of Appeals of Nancy for giving documents to German functionaries.<sup>71</sup> In examining the case, the court discovered that Pierron, an employee at the fort of Dugny near Verdun, had been making sketches of the French fortifications and traveling to Metz with his wife where he furnished the documents to German authorities. Noting the several trips the two had taken, the substantial payment received from the Germans, and the couple's attempts to recruit others to pass along information as well, the judge sentenced the Pierrons on May 13, 1903 to five years in prison and a fine of 3000 francs.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> In a note in the case, the prosecutor noted that Bonnet "seems to know the details of the espionage law and thus attempts to establish that his conduct is legally irreprehensible." This demonstrates that the details of the 1886 law were well known, even to practicing spies, and also shows how legal authorities sought to work around its holes. Note dated October 3, 1890. AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6081. In another note, the prosecutor responsible for the case expressed his hope that this case might serve as an example that certain legal provisions against espionage had been insufficient. Ibid. From prison, Bonnet wrote to Cuers with his suspicion that Lajoux had been the one to turn him over to the French authorities, though Cuers chose not to believe him. Lajoux asserted in his memoirs that this action proved that rather than punishing Bonnet, the condemnation only made him hate his country even more. Ibid., 61.

<sup>71</sup> MM 2U 1103.

<sup>72</sup> They were convicted under articles 1 and 2 of the espionage law, which target functionaries, government agents, or others who share privileged information. Interestingly, the two were given up by their 11-year old daughter, who was worried after they left her at home on one of their trips, concerned that her father might have been arrested in Metz. The wife was found guilty because she accompanied her husband, and would often hide documents between her breasts, as "one does not search (*fouiller*) women."

The selling of documents or materiel relative to French military defense appears to have been the most common crime for which people were convicted as spies. The courts sentenced individuals for selling confidential documents, as was the case of Raymond in 1889, or for passing along the formula for a kind of French gunpowder, such as the 1893 case of Dupetitpré, a factory worker in Angoulême. The most common offense was selling cartridges for the new French Lebel rifle, as occurred in the cases of Gérin in the Haute Pyrenées in 1888, the Italian Girodo in 1888, and Trollet in 1893, or passing along the design of the Lebel rifle itself, as was the case of Eberhardt in 1888, who was sentenced to the maximum of five years in prison and 5000 francs fine.<sup>73</sup>

Besides assisting in locating potential spies on French territory, the military positioned itself so as to also play an important role in the trials themselves. As in the Kilian case, representatives from the Statistical Section or from the regional SRs were known to participate in the collection of evidence from suspected spies, contributing to the way that the trial would be framed. In fact, this took place at the highest levels, with Colonel Sandherr or other intelligence directors at times intervening directly on the ground.<sup>74</sup> Once the suspect subsequently appeared before the judges, it was also common procedure for an officer representing the War

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<sup>73</sup> For Dupetitpré and Trollet, see AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6082, Raymond AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6081, Gérin, Girodo and Eberhardt AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6080. Whereas some of these individuals may have legitimately had contact with foreign governments, others seemingly just sought to make some money by selling classified documents and materiel. In the case of Girodo, for example, the judicial authorities concluded that he was not very intelligent, and thus had not been hired as a spy by a foreign government. To the contrary, they presumed that he had likely procured the weapons himself and thought he could make a decent amount of money by selling them to Italy. Nonetheless, he was charged under articles 3 and 8 of the 1886 law and sentenced to six months of imprisonment. In contrast, Eberhardt had been found actually corresponding with the German military in an attempt to pass along the design of a new gun, and thus was sentenced to five years in prison and 5000 francs fine. He was additionally under suspicion for instigating French soldiers to desertion.

<sup>74</sup> Laurent, *Politiques de l'ombre*, 553.

Ministry to attend espionage trials, both those open to the public, and those held behind closed doors.

A more dubious means of intervention in a trial took place against a suspect referred to as Schmeider, a former German officer working in Cuers' spy network.<sup>75</sup> Although the suspect was found with compromising documents, he had denied all knowledge and connection to the espionage work, making the task of the prosecutor in reaching a conviction somewhat difficult. Whereas the Statistical Section was well aware of Schmeider's guilt, the officers did not want to publicly reveal their source for fear of compromising him for future investigations. As a solution, Colonel Rollin of the intelligence section forged a letter to Cuers from Schmeider in order to have a response that Rollin would intercept at the post office and offer to the judge. With the returned mail from Cuers, the judge convicted Schmeider and sentenced him to the full penalty under the espionage law. This forgery by the Statistical Section, along with Henry's better-known forgery in the Dreyfus case, confirms the military's willingness to use morally questionable means to assure the conviction of supposed spies. Edmond Lajoux, describing the Schmeider case in his memoirs, held to his belief in the rectitude of the Section's actions: "I believe that we did our duty, all of our duty, and nothing but our duty."<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> On this case see, Lajoux, *Mes souvenirs*, 89-106. It is not certain that Schmeider was the man's real name, as Lajoux notes that "Schmeider" was German for "forgeron," or "blacksmith," as Cuers had previously referred to him.

<sup>76</sup> Lajoux acknowledged the parallel of the forgery in this case, and that of Henry and the Statistical Section during the Dreyfus Affair. Nonetheless, he still justified his action as patriotic. Ibid. 105. Lajoux also defended his actions with a Machiavellian assertion to acting with any means necessary, an idea that will be explored further in Chapter 7. "*Or j'avance que pour se mettre en garde contre de tels individus, pour répondre aux sourdes et perpétuelles attaques de tels misérables, pour lutter victorieusement contre des adversaires aussi peu scrupuleux, tous les moyens sont bons, tous les moyens sont légitimes, tous les moyens sont honnêtes, s'ils réussissent.*" 105. This idea of considering oneself honest even when acting dishonestly is brought out in an article by Elizabeth Everton, wherein she gives the definition

From Kilian to Bonnet to Schmieder, these cases demonstrate that the military was able to intervene in espionage cases, helping to assure convictions, and allowing army representatives to therefore play a role in civilian justice. The military's intent to control knowledge and secrecy is demonstrated not only by convictions for espionage, but also in cases where suspects were let go. For example, in the case against Eugène Pain in 1907, the investigating justices collected enough information to demonstrate that Pain, a former employee at the French Ministry of War, had indeed agreed to work for the German intelligence service.<sup>77</sup> The appeals court in Aix overturned the judgment of the original court in Marseilles, however, after consultation with the War Ministry, having learned that "the documents that were found on him have no relevance for the defense of the territory and the security of the state."<sup>78</sup> Without the support of the army in seeking his conviction, the judge brought the case to a *non-lieu*, writing that "simply being hired [as a spy] does not fall under the law of April 18, 1886." This decision appears counter to the wording of the law, as Article 8 stipulates that any attempt at one of the actions classified as forbidden in the law should be considered the *délit* itself. This example therefore confirms that the concepts of spying and betraying one's country were of secondary importance to the definition of what constituted

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of *honnêteté* as embraced by antidreyfusards as "a subjective truth based on the teller's personal integrity and honor as manifested by his or her relations with other people." Elizabeth Everton, "Scenes of Perception and Revelation: Gender and Truth in Antidreyfusard Caricature," *French Historical Studies* 35, no. 2 (2012). Lajoux also contrasts himself and other intelligence practitioners with the "intellectuals" who might protest such activity. "*Je sais bien que certains crieront au cynisme, mais que m'importe l'avis des « intellectuels! » Ces gens-là n'ont jamais, comme nous, risqué leur vie et leur liberté pour défendre les intérêts sacrés du pays.*" 106.

<sup>77</sup> AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6084. Pain was a specialist in marine information, and thus the Germans had charged him with gathering naval intelligence around Toulon.

<sup>78</sup> See note from the chief prosecutor of the Aix Court of Appeals dated March 26, 1907, AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6084.

secret knowledge and the military's exclusive privilege of knowing that information. Because the army deemed the information itself unimportant and therefore not strictly confidential, Pain escaped conviction.

Further, the War Ministry took advantage of the magistrates' legal ability to hold suspects in order to further its own knowledge of individuals and their networks. An officer from the Statistical Section, upon order from the War Ministry, was thus permitted to meet weekly with a representative from the justice department to collect information about any foreigner considered "suspect from the national point of view."<sup>79</sup> The army's intelligence division also took advantage of the ability to conduct investigations of suspects in custody who they found particularly interesting.<sup>80</sup>

The military's participation in espionage cases did not go entirely unquestioned. A number of cases demonstrate hostility between various departments over the handling of judicial matters. In another case involving individuals working within a spy ring headed by Henri Brun in Switzerland, the magistrates expressed frustration with military agents sent to theoretically assist the case. In a letter voicing his concerns, the *Procureur de la République* (State prosecutor) complained of "the special agents employed by the *état-major* as informers, who were at times unintelligent, at times dishonest, at the disposition of

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<sup>79</sup> Confidential letter from the Minister of War to the Minister of Justice dated September 24, 1890, AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6080.

<sup>80</sup> One such suspect was named Minéry, who had been arrested in Le Havre by the French police for fraud. Minéry was also known to have been in correspondence with the head of the German secret police in Strasbourg, an agent named Zahn, and thus Minister of War Mercier made a special request to interrogate this suspect. See letter from Mercier to the Minister of Justice dated June 27, 1894, AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6082. Similarly, in 1889, Minister of War Charles de Freycinet made a specific demand of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to receive the file of a French *sous-officier* condemned for selling a Lebel cartridge to the Germans. Note from Freycinet dated October 19, 1889, MAE Affaires Diverses Politiques, Allemagne 38 bis.

the first person to pay them or offer them a drink, and inclined to abuse their functions to serve personal grudges.”<sup>81</sup> Moreover, in a later letter, the State prosecutor asserted his opinion that the military had improperly directed the case in the first place.<sup>82</sup> His critique of the military’s practices showed differences of opinion among the various branches, which were known to have some difficulty working together.<sup>83</sup> After the exposure of the Statistical Section’s blundering of evidence in the Dreyfus Affair, the police were quick to assert their role as leading the inspection and prosecution of espionage cases instead of the military.<sup>84</sup>

At the same time, the military also complained about the police. In the case of Péquart, in December 1893, both the magistrates and the military representative (in this case, Commandant Henry) voiced opposition to the efforts of a local prefect to take over a case. According to the case notes, the prefect of the Vosges aimed to

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<sup>81</sup> Undated letter [likely December 1890] from the *Procureur de la République*, AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6081. The position of *Procureur de la République* was established under Napoleon. This person was given the task of deciding upon the instigation of criminal proceedings.

<sup>82</sup> Letter dated June 10, 1891. He asserted that it would have been better not to bring the case against so many of the named individuals, as many were outside the country, and not enough evidence existed to convict them; bringing the case would only serve to alert public opinion.

<sup>83</sup> It was not uncommon for employees of the military intelligence team to critique the police intelligence work, and vice versa. For a contemporary account, see Lajoux, *Mes souvenirs*, 12, 16, 49-59. For more on relations between police and military, see Sébastien Laurent, "Aux origines de la « guerre des polices » : militaires et policiers du renseignement dans la République (1870-1914)," *Revue historique* 4, no. 636 (2005). Laurent argues that the privileged position of the military over the police during the Third Republic came from the position occupied by the army in the new regime. "The disappearance of the former professional army of the Second Empire and its replacement starting in 1872 by an army resting in part on conscription accompanied a new mission: to breed the hope of revenge against Germany." 790.

<sup>84</sup> Recall the 1899 directive that gave all counterespionage duties to the Interior Ministry. In the case of a suspect named Jules Jobet, a police officer asserted his jurisdiction in pursuing the matter: « Vous n’ignorez pas, Monsieur le Ministre et Cher Collègue, que, depuis le mois de mai 1899 et après entente avec le ministère de la Guerre, mon Département a repris d’une manière définitive et en totalité le service du contre-espionnage, qu’il est seul désormais chargé de la surveillance des individus suspects au point de vue national et que, d’autre part, des mesures spéciales ont été adoptées par la Sûreté Générale pour assurer la surveillance des frontières terrestres et du littoral ainsi que des établissements militaires et maritimes. » He subsequently requested the transfer of any information regarding the case as it emerged. November 1902, AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6084.

make a personal matter of an affair that took place in his department, to the consternation of the other authorities who pointed out that espionage necessarily entailed correspondence with other parts of France and with foreign nations.<sup>85</sup>

Lajoux also complained that on several occasions police intervention in counterespionage cases thwarted the work of the Section.<sup>86</sup>

In total, between 1886 and 1914, French civil courts examined 193 cases of suspected espionage.<sup>87</sup> (See detailed charts, Annex E.) Of those, under half led to convictions, with 85 trials resulting in guilty verdicts under the April 18, 1886 law, 6 acquittals, 84 cases declared mistrial from lack of evidence (*non-lieu*), and another 18 still in progress at the outset of World War I. Looking at the convictions, perhaps surprisingly given the rhetoric attached to the “natural” German predilection for spying, fifty-four percent of those condemned were in fact French, while forty percent were foreigners, with the remaining unknown.<sup>88</sup> Of the foreigners, the

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<sup>85</sup> Letter from the Procureur to the Garde des Sceaux dated December 3, 1893. The Procureur writes, “Beside the jurisdictional issue, which seems to be taken into consideration first, the military administration appears to be the only one able to efficiently search and report to Justice regarding such crimes.” The case ended up declared a mistrial.

<sup>86</sup> This was the case in the Bonnet affair and in the Schneider (“*forgeron*”) affair. He writes elsewhere: “Believe in the patriotism of the Sûreté générale! This is the biggest error committed by our wise leaders, and one which they will later regret. Their naïve confidence will bring about a fatal stranglehold on the secret service and patriotic S.S. on the part of professional police.” Lajoux, *Mes souvenirs*, 59.

<sup>87</sup> The following figures and citations come from Laurent, *Politiques de l'ombre*, 562-571. Laurent’s calculations came from going through the judicial files in AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6080-6086, the same files consulted for this dissertation.

<sup>88</sup> These figures are also interesting when compared with the numbers of people inscribed on the Carnet B as suspects for espionage. Laurent provides figures taken from July 27, 1914 that show 561 out of 710 suspects as foreign, and only 149 as French citizens. In addition, one can compare this number with the comparable number of arrests and convictions for espionage in Germany. According to figures put together by the Colonel Nicolaï, head of the German intelligence bureau, between 1907 and 1914, 1056 people were arrested as suspected spies, with 135 convicted by the German courts. Of these, 107 were German, though that number included 31 citizens from Alsace-Lorraine, who likely did not consider themselves loyal to their new fatherland. The next highest number was Russians, with 11, and then Frenchmen, with only 5 convictions during this period (though it would be 36 if including those from Alsace-Lorraine, making French the large majority of foreigners convicted for spying in Germany). Looking at these figures, one can conclude that a



majority (22 out of 39) were German, with Italian, Belgian, English, and Swiss following in that order.<sup>89</sup> Of all of those condemned for spying in France in the pre-War period, eighty-nine of them were men, and only nine were women.<sup>90</sup> Lastly, the breakdown by region showed an unsurprising proportion of convictions coming from the eastern regions of France (53%), with 17% of convictions coming from the southeast, 14% from Paris, and the remaining from the north, the northeast, and a few other parts of the country. The figures show that while the law was effective in locating and prosecuting spies, the total number of successful convictions was much lower than the level of suspicion and anxiety displayed within the state administrations and the public sphere. Nonetheless, in defining what constituted espionage as gaining and distributing knowledge related to national security, the state took a major step in identifying what material it considered to be secret, giving itself sole access to this kind of information.

#### *April 1886 Law used to Target Press and Publication Freedoms*

The new espionage law gave the French state the ability to locate individuals who sought to profit from the sharing of intelligence about the French military or the nation. However, as the historical record shows, the passing along of bullets or blueprints by devious spies was not the only concern for national security; in

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nearly equivalent percentage of French and Germans were convicted for treason against their own nation. Meanwhile, the figures of French caught in Germany, in addition to those known to have been captured prior to 1907, demonstrates that contrary to the image held in the French popular imagination, the French were fairly active as spies. On this hypocrisy, see Chapter 7.

<sup>89</sup> Laurent points out that Belgian citizens made up 31% of the population of foreigners residing in France in 1895, with Italians representing 30%, and Germans only 10.5%. This certainly reflects a disproportionate number of Germans condemned for espionage.

<sup>90</sup> On women spying, see Chapter 6. Laurent notes that the reason the 98 total doesn't match up with the 85 in the other total is that for this latter number he calculated each of the defendants condemned, while the first number was just the number of cases that led to condemnations.

addition, the Third Republic worried about the potential ramifications of unrestricted speech. With the race to develop new and improved weapons came a heightened need to keep discoveries secret. Short of stamping “confidential” on all written material, however, the Republic lacked a clear way to dictate who was allowed to say what, and where. Here again, the April 1886 law came into play, though once more, it lacked precision in its exact dimensions. The law specified that information related to national defense was to be guarded, but remained vague on what was considered “secret.” Practice and application of the law in the decades that followed would demonstrate what things were confidential, and would therefore establish regulations on a press and a population that had just experienced unprecedented liberties.

Five years prior to the creation of the espionage law, legislators of the Third Republic had passed a law giving the press freedoms that it had never before enjoyed. On July 29, 1881, the Republic passed a law expanding freedom of the press and greatly reducing any administrative controls over content, publication, and distribution of printed material.<sup>91</sup> Though this law ushered in a period that press historian Claude Bellanger agreed to be “the golden age of the press,” the decades following its passage did include certain measures restricting the

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<sup>91</sup> The July 29, 1881 abolished the crime of *délit d'opinion*, meaning that papers were now free to criticize state institutions or the Church without fear of punishment. It also got rid of the necessity for papers to pay deposits, making publishing much more simple. The law was viewed by many as a continuation of the liberal principles set forward by the revolutionaries in 1789. For example, Article 11 of the *Declaration of Rights of Man* states: “The free communication of thoughts and opinions is one of the most precious rights of man. Every citizen may henceforward speak, write, and publish freely, except to answer for the abuse of this liberty in those cases determined by the law.” Dominique Kalifa writes, “The law of July 29, 1881, proved a signal achievement in this respect: by eliminating virtually all restrictions on what journalists could write, it officially celebrated the marriage between the press and the Republic.” Dominique Kalifa, trans. Renée Champion and Edward Berenson, “The Press,” in Berenson, Duclert, and Prochasson, *French Republic*, 191.

newfound freedoms.<sup>92</sup> While historians have discussed a number of ways that the state was able to limit press freedoms in the years between the passage of the July 29, 1881 freedom of the press laws and World War I – focusing foremost on the 1894 *lois scélérates* against anarchist publications and propaganda – they have failed to locate their precedents in limits on speech imposed by the 1886 espionage law.

The threat of information relevant to national security leaked by the press had plagued military and civilian leaders since before the Assembly determined to give the press its freedom. The military, in particular, voiced its opposition to the free reign of speech during the first decade of the Third Republic.<sup>93</sup> At the end of the 1870s the military discussed the need for a law to make the press accountable for indiscretions during mobilization or wartime, in order to prevent even the unintentional disclosure of troop movements and positions to France's enemies.<sup>94</sup> With the help of the April 18, 1886 law, such projects devised for wartime could additionally be implemented during times of peace.

The reasoning behind the military's desire to curb the voice of some aspects of the French press was sound. Having studied past military victories and defeats,

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<sup>92</sup> Claude Bellanger, *Histoire générale de la presse française* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1969), Vol 3, 22. Certain restrictions already existed, such as article 25 of this law, which specifically forbade publication of material that might incite members of the military to desert. On August 2, 1882, the government restricted publication further with the passing of a law catering to those outraged by the affront to morals from a liberalized press to curb the flood of pornographic materials. Christophe Charle, *Le siècle de la presse, 1830-1939* (Paris: Seuil, 2004), 135. In 1893, two other laws prevented papers from publishing certain seditious material. Lastly, from the end of 1893 through the middle of 1894, in response to a spate of anarchist violence, the Republic passed a series of repressive measures, known as the *lois scélérates*, that prevented publication of material advancing any kind of anarchist message, as well as limiting the kinds of trials for those violating these measures. See Machelon, *La République contre*, 429-436.

<sup>93</sup> As one example, in 1879 Gambetta signed a proposal of a law adopted by the Chamber of Deputies regulating the peddling of certain books, brochures, lithographs and other printed materials, arguing that their spread could harm national defense. SHD 1M 2211.

<sup>94</sup> See confidential note dated November 5, 1878 discussing the drafting of a law to take action against authors printing such information in the press. SHD 1M 2211.

a number of writers and theorists concluded that certain battles and campaigns had been decided in part because of revelations made by the press. To confirm this, members of the army staff compiled examples of the negative results of indiscretions by the press in campaigns from the Napoleonic Wars through to the war of 1870-1871.<sup>95</sup> These excerpts describe how through newspaper articles or private correspondence found on soldiers, enemy armies were able to learn the positions of French forces, thereby thwarting efforts at secrecy and surprise. Moreover, in nearly all of the tracts on espionage and intelligence at the end of the nineteenth century – written both by military and civilians – authors stressed that many of the major French failings in the Franco-Prussian War were attributed to imprudence on the part of the press.<sup>96</sup>

Having witnessed the pernicious effects of overzealous reporting in the past, French authorities were particularly worried about the potential harm that newspapers could bring to the nation. In 1874, a police report claimed to recount a conversation with a foreigner warning the French authorities about what Prussia could glean from French publications. “I have seen first hand,” went the report’s transcription, “that the Prussian authorities take a significant amount from the military publications in France. In Prussia they read the *ordres du jour* from the generals, and have a dossier on each general to be used in the event of war.”<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> See folder entitled *Renseignements sur faits de guerre fournis à l’ennemi par les journaux et les correspondances privées*, SHD 1M 2197.

<sup>96</sup> For example, they asserted that the press furnished Moltke with French battle plans and informed the German army of locations of French battalions. Colonieu, *L’espionnage*, 155-157. Fix, *La stratégie appliquée*, 144, 179-180. Froment, *L’Espionnage militaire*, 274-276.

<sup>97</sup> See note dated January 22, 1874. The foreigner – who was supposedly “very sympathetic to France” – named the *Patrie*, *Le Gaulois* and the *Moniteur universel* as the guilty newspapers. APP BA 311.

Similarly, Nicolas Rollin warned his compatriots that the German general staff expressed its gratitude and pride with the discretion of the German press regarding troop movements and other information, while the French press “continued to disclose all kinds of military intelligence.”<sup>98</sup> Certainly, the French also appreciated the offensive value that other nations’ press could offer, and thus encouraged reading military reviews during peacetime as well as wartime.<sup>99</sup>

The combination of hindsight and foresight therefore confirmed to strategists and state leaders that for the safety of the nation, the press would need to be regulated. Here, General Boulanger was again one of the first generals to vocalize fears of leaked information, expressing his concern in a directive early on in his tenure that he would tolerate neither leaks by the press nor the communication of confidential documents by officers or soldiers.<sup>100</sup> The espionage law, he hoped, would help to curb such indiscretions. While the April 18, 1886 law did not specifically designate the press, Boulanger issued a directive in October of the same year that indicated which provision might be interpreted as aiming at newspapers

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<sup>98</sup> Rollin, *Le Service de renseignements militaires*. 110. Robert T. Foley, studying German intelligence gathered on France confirms that the German services did indeed make substantial use of the French press. He writes that German intelligence, “believed that the ‘radical-republican form of government’ of France meant that information was shared with a much wider circle of people than in Germany and that, consequently, a good deal of intelligence about French intentions and plans leaked out via the press. Surviving reports show that they examined closely military journals such as *Revue militaire générale* and *Sciences militaire* and newspapers such as *Le Temps* and *Écho de Paris*.” Foley, “Easy Target,” 19.

<sup>99</sup> The French profited from the thoughtless verbosity of the press as well. In 1856, Colonel Tanski, discussing intelligence during the Crimean War, noted that, “the best information on Russian troop movement came from military newspapers in Vienna or Berlin.” Colonel Tanski, *Mémoire sur la création d’un Service central de Renseignements militaires, et d’un corps spécial de Guides d’état-major*, SHD 1M 2037. See also note from the French military attaché in Austria who wrote to Paris about Viennese newspapers likely to print information about troop transport and other military material. SHD 7N 1137.

<sup>100</sup> Note Ministérielle from Boulanger dated February 19, 1886, SHD 5N 1.

and other publications.<sup>101</sup> Moreover, he requested that he be personally alerted in any instance where newspapers would print information relative to military action. In the years following Boulanger's rise and fall, the War Ministry continued to institute a culture of "discretion," with rules for classification of confidential documents and the frequent issuance of orders or directives reminding employees of the need to maintain secrecy, both within the ministry and with the press.<sup>102</sup>

In addition to the fear of exposing details of France's military strengths and weaknesses, authorities also expressed concern about revelations relating to French intelligence practices, in particular details of counterespionage that might surface in news discussions of cases against suspected spies. Representatives of the Interior, Judicial, and War ministries viewed such leaks as threats to national security.<sup>103</sup> For example, Edmond Lajoux voiced the complaint that the newspaper *Le Figaro* was responsible for alerting Germany to the fact that Colonel Sandherr was the head of the French *service de renseignements*, resulting in German agents watching him more carefully.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> Directive dated October 9, 1886, SHD 7N 11. He suggested that it would be article 2, which stated: "Anyone other than those designated in the first article, doing the same thing, would be punished with 1-5 years in prison and 500-3000 francs. This article also targets "the publication or reproduction of these plans, writings or documents, which will be penalized with the same punishment."

<sup>102</sup> In March 10, 1896, Minister Cavaignac indicated that "from now on, correspondence treating affairs of espionage [must be considered as] secret." SHD 7N 674. The « *Instruction secrète au sujet de la répression de l'espionnage et de la surveillance de la frontière* » of May 6, 1897 had a specific paragraph stating that in communications with the press, an absolute silence needed to be kept regarding number of troops, maneuvers, etc. SHD 1M 2197.

<sup>103</sup> An example of what they feared getting out was French knowledge of the organization of German espionage; i.e. lists of other individuals who the French authorities also suspected of espionage, fearing that if those were exposed, Germany would just replace them with other people. See letter from Minister of Justice dated October 11, 1888, AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6080.

<sup>104</sup> Lajoux, *Mes souvenirs*, 17. Lajoux notes that the German papers were more prudent, and didn't speak about espionage.

The fear that the press could somehow be used to the detriment of French national interest was manifested in other ways as well. The French police, for example, were very suspicious of German attempts to print certain material in the French press. These articles could range from those favorable to Germany, to others aimed at stirring up hostilities between the two nations. The police often discussed the considerable sums – known as the *fonds de reptiles* – that came from German coffers to support this activity.<sup>105</sup> Authorities named specific newspapers with foreigners on the staff – the *Gaulois*, the *Rappel*, and the *Soir*, for example – and followed these reporters on their daily tasks.<sup>106</sup> The Foreign Ministry echoed these fears, as summarized in a report by a diplomat named Jules Hansen. Hansen wrote, “No head of state, not even Cavour, knows how to manipulate the press like Bismarck... when he wants to defeat a country, he begins by demoralizing the press, working to win over the most influential newspapers with the most readers. He does this by choosing the neediest journalist, and sending in spies.”<sup>107</sup> It was not only Bismarck’s efforts that French authorities feared, but also the potential for disgruntled Frenchmen with access to military information to transmit secrets to the press.<sup>108</sup> Lastly, newspapers could be used as a means of passing information

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<sup>105</sup> See, e.g. notes of September 2, 1873, November 20, 1876, November 1883, APP BA 1332. See also Lucien Nicot, *L’Allemagne à Paris* (Paris: E. Dentu, 1887), 87-92.

<sup>106</sup> See note dated June 8, 1888; APP BA 1332. They suspected that a number of these operations were run by a Prussian named Albert Beckmann, and watched him specifically. For more on Beckmann, see Chapter 7.

<sup>107</sup> Undated report in folder marked 1893-1904; MAE PAP Hansen. He names Beckmann as Bismarck’s intermediary in this mission.

<sup>108</sup> See e.g. discussion in October 1896 into the investigation of an officer named Sergeant F. Duclosmenil, who was purportedly trying to sell information to the press. The officers discussed what information he might possess, and the severity of it. They also described his financial straits, and the problem that pecuniary difficulties posed to national security. “Perhaps it is his debt that drives him to bargain with his conscience. One starts by offering information to French newspapers, and then finishes by selling to foreign papers.” Note dated September 11, 1896, APP BA 913.

between France and other countries without resorting to letters or other kinds of secret communication.<sup>109</sup> For all of these reasons, French military, police, and political leaders were particularly keen to regulate printed materials.

One easy way to limit the press's discussions of details of espionage trials was to declare the trial closed to the public. It was for this reason that the Bonnet case was heard under "rigorous" *huis clos*, which was adopted for a number of cases trying suspected spies during this period. The War Minister had made a special request that the Kilian case be heard behind closed doors, so that German agents would be unable to learn any of the information that the French possessed. The decision to close cases to the public was itself a strike against freedom and transparency, though the example of espionage trials demonstrates the willingness of authorities and of the public to accept certain restrictions in the name of public safety.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> For example, in the Ullmo case, the accused had communicated with German agents and the French war ministry through ads placed in *Le Journal* and *La République du Var*. Datta, *Heroes and Legends*, 182. During World War I, the Statistical Section observed the use of *petites annonces* in French newspapers as a way to pass along details of French troop movements or other information back to Germany. SHD 7NN 2780, Dossier 20, no. 77.

<sup>110</sup> As the paper *l'Humanité* wrote in its pages in 1908, public opinion generally disapproved of cases held in *huis clos*. "In principle, the *huis clos* is a detestable thing, especially when a man is sent to prison or somewhere further away such as Devil's Island. If one is to be condemned to such punishment, public opinion wants to know why." *L'Humanité* dated July 28, 1908; AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6085. During the Dreyfus Affair, one of the major complaints from the Dreyfusard camp was the use of a closed trial to condemn him, and the Captain's supporters protested with appeals to transparency, justice and truth. Nonetheless, the government encouraged a lack of transparency with regards to espionage cases, and for the most part, no one really protested. The 1886 espionage law itself had not given the courts express right to exclude the public from trials, though nations became more aware of this need as the years went on. In Britain, for example, it was not until the 1920 Official Secrets Act that this provision made its way into legislation. Rosamund M. Thomas, *Espionage and Secrecy: The Official Secrets Acts 1911-1989 of the United Kingdom* (London; New York: Routledge, 1991), 63. Paul Jankowski notes that transparency, "another ideal of 1789," became more and more difficult to assure through successive Republics, in spite of collective desires to see it maintained. Jankowski in Berenson, Duclert, and Prochasson, *French Republic*, 157-158.



In spite of closing trials to the public, the press still managed to obtain many significant details, which it then printed for readers eager for scandal and gossip. In the Kuhn affair, despite the trial's being held behind closed doors, the press leaked a number of important details, including the address to which Kuhn had sent the letter that began the case against him.<sup>111</sup> Certainly this leak had the potential to compromise future counterespionage attempts, and in a circular of February 21, 1890, the Justice Department announced that espionage trials were considered an interest of national security, and that newspapers reporting on them were therefore threatening the national interest.<sup>112</sup> Judges had reason to critique an overzealous press, as shown by an affair in Maubeuge in 1906 where a man referred to as "K..." escaped an officer's arrest warrant when learning of his imminent capture via the local press.<sup>113</sup> In the Troussier case in 1909, the justices discussed the problems of newspapers printing information about the case, with the prosecutor writing to the Minister of Justice that, "Conforming to your instructions, I have asked the *Substitut* in Reims to take all useful measures assuring that no indiscretion could be committed and I have reminded the magistrates that they can only share with the press communications with a purely informative character."<sup>114</sup> Nonetheless, even in the year just prior to WWI, a military representative expressed his frustration that

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<sup>111</sup> Letter from Minister of War to Minister of Justice dated March 26, 1889. AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6080.

<sup>112</sup> Circular dated February 21, 1890, AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6080. The circular states that certain courts hearing espionage trials would operate under *huis clos*, and yet details of the cases continued to be exposed. The circular therefore asserts that courts should be stricter about who they are willing to have sit in on the hearings. This followed a circular from the Ministry of Justice dated April 13, 1889 complaining of press commentary on espionage affairs.

<sup>113</sup> Note dated December 10, 1906, SHD 1M 2197.

<sup>114</sup> Letter dated December 11, 1909, AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6085.

suspects in an espionage case had been able to destroy evidence and prepare their statements as a result of press indiscretions.<sup>115</sup>

It is clear from the litany of such complaints that the authorities of the Third Republic were not entirely ready to give newspapers complete and unrestricted liberties, elevating national security over the freedom to publish whatever information writers desired. They therefore turned to the new espionage legislation, hoping that it would give them some recourse to target those who might stand in the way of protecting the nation. They examined the regulations imposed by other nations in this area, and used case law to create a framework for their own methods, trying to determine the best way to target leaks.<sup>116</sup>

One approach was litigation, and therefore the Justice Department brought a number of cases against different newspapers, accusing them of printing articles that would be harmful to the national interest. For the most part, these cases were instigated by the War Ministry, often at the highest levels. General Boulanger brought one of the earliest of such cases, issuing a complaint in May of 1887 against the paper *le Journal des Débats*.<sup>117</sup> Boulanger claimed that in an article entitled "*La Crise Ministerielle*," the newspaper printed information that was designated as confidential. Citing articles 1 and 2 of the espionage law which refer to the printing of information, yet make no direct reference to the press, he asked the Justice

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<sup>115</sup> See note dated February 20, 1914, signed by Noulens, SHD 1M 2197.

<sup>116</sup> The French military attaché to Austria advised Paris on December 19, 1887 that an Austrian lawyer had convoked the directors of Viennese newspapers informing them of the text of a new law forbidding such publication. SHD 7N 1137. A note of May 1892 shows the French examining modifications to the Russian penal code on the subject of disclosure of state secrets, and in May 1893, a French ambassador studied the changes in the German draft law against espionage. Notably at this time the Germans were seeking to add punishments relating to a number of offenses, including authorizing the seizure of any publication in violation of a particular article of Germany's Penal Code. AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6080.

<sup>117</sup> See note dated May 26, 1887, AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6080.

Minister to initiate proceedings against both the author of the article and against the person who had furnished the information. One of Boulanger's immediate successors, Charles de Freycinet, also sought to use his position as War Minister to attack the liberties of the press. At the end of 1888, the War Minister complained about an article on the front page of the *Figaro* entitled, "*Un nouveau plan Freycinet*," claiming that the paper revealed too much information about plans to build new railway lines.<sup>118</sup>

In the years that followed, the War Ministry called upon its colleagues in the Justice Department to prosecute a number of different newspapers. One case complained of reporters publishing a description of a new torpedo,<sup>119</sup> and another was directed at a paper for supposedly printing a letter that revealed details of military encampments and organization of soldiers found there.<sup>120</sup> A few rulings came down in 1908 and 1909 against papers that had printed details regarding a piece of military technology called the Obus P, a projectile shell whose form and

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<sup>118</sup> The note asserted that the author should be held responsible for "intelligence detrimental to defense of national territory," and held under the 1886 law. AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6080.

<sup>119</sup> This case was brought against a scientific journal, *La Nature*, claiming that the paper had printed details and drawings of a new automatic torpedo. The case was registered on July 26, 1904, but was brought to a *non-lieu*, with the magistrate concluding that the author's intention was not one of espionage or treason, and that bringing the case would likely cause more harm than the article itself. AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6084.

<sup>120</sup> See case opened on August 24, 1891 against a paper from Dijon, *Le Bien Public*. The magistrates had been alerted to the article in question by a letter from the War Ministry on June 22, 1891. The Président du Conseil (representing the War Ministry) wrote that the things exposed had a precision and exactitude that meant they could not have been personal insight but had been learned through the War Ministry. He stated that "it is regrettable and against the interests of national defense that the public's attention, and in connection that of foreign countries, be directed at the importance of these numbers." The War Ministry also offers to designate an officer to help with the case. The article stemmed from a letter mailed by an anonymous individual who had mailed the information to a number of different papers, some of which printed it, while others did not. The justices discuss bringing the case as a violation of article 2 of the espionage law: « ... *S'il s'agissait donc d'un simple délit de presse, ces rédacteurs devraient être poursuivis comme complices ; mais la question serait de savoir si l'article 2 de la loi du 18 Avril 1886 doit être appliqué en tenant compte des principes de la loi du 29 juillet 1881, ou si, au contraire, la loi sur la presse et celle de l'espionnage sont complètement indépendantes l'une de l'autre, au point que la première ne puisse servir à déterminer l'assiette des responsabilités édictées par la seconde.* » AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6081.

power was discussed in the articles.<sup>121</sup> In Toulon, the *tribunal correctionnel* ruled against the paper *La République du Var* and its director, Frédéric Auguste, holding him in violation of the 1886 law. The judgment noted that Auguste was well aware that he was disclosing information that the military authority aimed to keep secret. The magistrate noted, “He has committed an imprudence. Journalists, like all citizens, must demonstrate extreme circumspection, yet the habits of unbridled reportage seem to have entered into his morals.” The judgment revealed the tensions on both sides, with the defendant implying that a decision against the paper would threaten “the honor of the French press.”<sup>122</sup> Even though it is certainly reasonable to expect some kinds of information to remain secret, the notion that the government would dictate what was and was not permissible to publish harkened to prior centuries of state intervention into speech. Such cases demonstrate that while many leaders of the Third Republic aimed to carry on the liberal principles of 1789, the practical implementation of liberty of speech depended on a greater set of circumstances, so that concerns for national security would trump desires to avoid censorship. By acting against those individuals or journals that sought any kind of discussion of the nation’s safety, the State thereby demonstrated its singular access to means of offense and defense.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> One of the cases targeted the editors of the paper, “*La Vie Maritime et Fluviale*”, with the Tribunal de la Seine holding them responsible for divulging military secrets in their paper. Under the title, “Les tirs de l’Obus P,” the articles discussed tests of various torpedos launched by the submarine, the *Emeraude*. Another case, brought against Frederic Auguste, the owner of the paper the *Var de Republique*, also surrounded discussion of this technology. AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6085.

<sup>122</sup> Article in *Var de Republique* dated November 18, 1908. The judge had convicted him on articles 2 and 13 of the 1886 law and on 463 of the *Code Pénal* and sentenced him to pay a fine.

<sup>123</sup> The right of the State to regulate publication has been interpreted as consistent with the contemporary Liberal position. Jerome King writes in regards to discussion over the July 29, 1881 law, “The theme of the Opportunist, or Liberal, position lay in ... the ‘reconciliation’ of two general principles – ‘liberty, principle of natural right; responsibility, principle of social order.’ The emphasis on ‘responsibility’ is what distinguished the Liberal position most clearly from that of the

The jurist Robert Detourbet discussed the role of the 1886 law in limiting speech in his 1897 book, *L'Espionnage et la trahison*. He claimed that the increase in newspapers and in readership at the end of the nineteenth century made the revelations all the more dangerous, and warned against the "horde of newspapers, living for the revelation of any scandals, whether or not they threaten the honor of our country."<sup>124</sup> The expansion of the press in the decades following the July 29, 1881 liberalization laws had resulted in increased competition, seeing papers attempt to print more sensational stories than the next. At times, therefore, the press's desires to attract readership through sensationalized material came up against the protectionist aims of the military.<sup>125</sup> Detourbet noted the pernicious potential of the press to shift the balance of power among nations, and pointed to article 2 of the 1886 law, supporting the choice of magistrates to employ this provision to combat harmful press leaks. Echoing the sentiments of many of his contemporaries, he discussed a handful of military campaigns where one party was able to read about the other in local and foreign newspapers.<sup>126</sup> Acknowledging the tension between freedoms of press and the need for protection, Detourbet conceded that the press "is incontestably useful, as it represents the opinion of a nation," yet

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Radicals. ... the Liberal approach to the subject was dictated by the assumption that any reasonable man who knew he could be held criminally liable for his words would think carefully before he spoke dangerous thoughts." Jerome B. King, *Law v. Order: Legal Process and Free Speech in Contemporary France* (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1975), 56.

<sup>124</sup> Detourbet, *L'espionnage et la trahison*, 111.

<sup>125</sup> Rollin made this point in warnings to those interested in learning about intelligence. He wrote, "As a result of the extension of the press, the multiplication of newspapers, the speed with those they publish and distribute, the press is playing a bigger and bigger role in the service of intelligence. There is great danger, as in its desire to "tell all," the press could furnish important information to the enemy. In order to remain well informed, the papers in effect have no fear of revealing military positions, the composition of the army, probable operation plans, all of which would be sent immediately to the enemy by their spies or agents in neutral countries." Rollin, *Le Service de renseignements militaires*, 109-110.

<sup>126</sup> Detourbet, *L'espionnage et la trahison*, 79-80.

asserted that it was nonetheless dangerous when discussing military developments.<sup>127</sup> Moreover, he stated, “in our time, when there is feverish competition between newspapers to satisfy readers, where each looks to give more news than its competitors, one fears that considerations of defense don’t prevent them from publishing harmful revelations.”<sup>128</sup>

Since publishers were deemed incapable of determining what information could threaten the safety of the state, the role fell at times to the law to reach this conclusion, and in particular, to the Republic’s judges. As has been discussed, one of the problems of assessing guilt in espionage cases was the failure of the 1886 law to specifically define what type of information might be harmful to national security if disclosed, and therefore what was to be considered secret. The courts, finally, would resolve this dilemma, ruling on cases that would give justices the right to determine these important questions, consequently providing a role for magistrates to assert themselves in shaping the course of the Third Republic.<sup>129</sup>

One of the first major cases in which the courts asserted judicial authority in determining the meaning of “secret” was that of Eugene Turpin.<sup>130</sup> In 1891, the War

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<sup>127</sup> Ibid., 79. He concedes that for the most part, these discretions are inadvertent, but uses such publishing mishaps as reasons why the press needed to be watched and regulated.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid., 80.

<sup>129</sup> As Robert Nye explains, in many other instances, the magistrates occupied an inferior role to legislators in determining the course of the French Republic. The legislators of the 1790s, for example, regarded the judiciary with suspicion, leading them “to exalt codified law and statute, and to limit the autonomy of the magistracy in every way possible. A major effect of this outlook was to inhibit the development of a case-law jurisprudence in France and to make the legislature and the judicial administration the unique guardians of public liberties.” Nye, *Crime, Madness*, 25. This was in line with France’s civil law tradition.

<sup>130</sup> On the Turpin case see, Detourbet, *L’espionnage et la trahison*, 112-113. The judgment and appeals in the Turpin and Triponé case is reprinted in Mennevée, *L’Espionnage international*, tome II, 451-458. Case discussed in *Bulletin des arrêts de la Cour de Cassation*, Tome XCVI, 1891, (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1892), 329-333, Sept 24-25, 1891, 332 See also Eugène Turpin, *Comment on a vendu la mélinite* (Paris: A. Savine, 1891).

Ministry instigated a case against Turpin and some of his associates following his publication of a book entitled *Comment on a vendu la mélinite*. In the book Turpin attempted to defend himself against what he claimed were spurious accusations leveled against him by the press and the War Ministry. The source of contention was Turpin's invention and the later distribution of details relating to melinite, better known as picric acid, a powder used for explosions and in artillery shells.<sup>131</sup> Regardless of the details that preceded the publication of the book, the state took issue with its content, claiming that Turpin had therein publicly revealed details of the army's weapons, including diagrams of elements within the French arsenal. The War Ministry therefore took Turpin to court and won, convicting him of violating articles 1 and 2 of the 1886 espionage law.

In his defense, Turpin argued that the things that he had published had already been declared by the War Ministry to no longer be considered as official, confidential documents, yet the presiding magistrate disagreed. Ruling against him in 1891, the court stated that the documents he published were in fact secret, and that under the April 18, 1886 law, documents only cease to be secret when all who would be interested are able to learn of them, and when their "publication does not harm the national defense and the external security of the State, which the law aims to preserve."<sup>132</sup> This somewhat tautological interpretation of secrecy essentially

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<sup>131</sup> Turpin claimed that although he had invented the particular formula, he was tricked into selling it to a British manufacturer, Armstrong, led astray by an agent of the War Ministry named Triponé. He was subsequently the victim of a press campaign, which he sought to refute first through complaints to the War Ministry, and when those went unanswered, with the publication of the book. See Turpin, *Comment.*, and also Turpin's discussion of the case years later, where he paints himself as a victim of a gross miscarriage of justice. Eugène Turpin, *Demande en révision ou annulation de procès et traité. Pour la patrie: Comment on m'a volé la mélinite en trahissant la France, plainte-requête aux pouvoirs publics et à la nation* (Paris: [s.n.], 1906).

<sup>132</sup> Actual text of the judgment reads as follows: « *Les documents dont la loi du 18 avril 1886 interdit la publication ne cessent d'être secrets que lorsque la divulgation en a été telle que tous les intéressés peuvent être*

gave judges the ability to determine what documents were considered confidential and relevant to national defense.<sup>133</sup> The Turpin decision also set a precedent in ruling that the publication of documents or plans – even if partial or inexact – would be considered a crime of espionage.

In spite of the handily delivered verdicts, justice did not go unquestioned in this case. In the years following the condemnation against him, Turpin continued to challenge the War Ministry's accusations, contesting the military's exclusive right to the knowledge that it claimed.<sup>134</sup> Turpin's protestations revealed personal hostility between him and a handful of military elites, including the engineer Gustave Canet, Admiral Théophile Aube and Charles de Freycinet. Among his complaints figured a protest against being considered a traitor or a spy, having merely printed information to which he had been privy. The publicity surrounding the case brought the issue of state regulation of speech into the light, and resulted in many condemning the War Ministry for perceived injustices.<sup>135</sup> Turpin eventually

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*en mesure de se les procurer ou de les connaître sans cette publication, et qu'ainsi ladite publication n'a pas porté à la défense nationale et à la sécurité extérieure de l'Etat le préjudice dont la loi a entendu les préserver. »*

<sup>133</sup> The Cour de cassation had just previously reached a similar conclusion in the Theisen affair. Detourbet, *L'espionnage et la trahison*, 93, 112.

<sup>134</sup> See Turpin, *Demande*. Also, a number of letters exist from Turpin in Theodore Jung's personal files in the military archives, wherein Turpin insisted that he had rightly invented melinite and had systematically refused offers to sell it to any foreign countries. SHD 1K 732/4.

<sup>135</sup> Edoard Drumont took up the case in his *La Libre Parole* in an article dated August 29, 1898 entitled "Picquart et Turpin." He argued that Turpin had been unjustly accused, and that the inventor had in essence saved France from war in 1887 with the invention of melinite. Drumont also used the occasion to attack people like Jaurès and Clemenceau, for not standing up for this man who Drumont considered a legitimate patriot, in contrast to their support of Dreyfus. Even the *New York Times* picked up the case, quoting Turpin's lawyer, Henri Coulon, that "Turpin is the victim of the most terrible injustice of modern times. The Calas miscarriage of justice was nothing in comparison to his case." *New York Times*, "M. Turpin Seeks to be Vindicated," May 19, 1907. Like the author of this article, Turpin himself invoked the comparison with Dreyfus several times, claiming that while Dreyfus had been forgiven and reintegrated into the army, Turpin remained "a sacrificial lamb" without the support of the nation. In his own words, Turpin denounced as traitors to the *patrie* those who had once declared him to be a traitor. Turpin, *Demande*, 7.



won the support of high-ranking officials like Pierre Waldeck-Rousseau and General Louis André. The case shows the extent to which the state (here represented by the military and the courts) would go to maintain a primacy on knowledge, using the law to define as secret that which they desired to protect, even at the expense of the liberty of one considered by many to be a patriot.

Printed material was not the only kind of “speech” under attack by the War and Justice Ministries under the auspices of the 1886 espionage law. In addition to books and newspaper articles, Third Republican authorities feared the danger that could result from unauthorized photography or postcards bearing certain images.<sup>136</sup> By the end of the nineteenth century, photography was growing in both popularity and accessibility, and a greater number of people had the ability to take pictures of French infrastructure. Photography therefore became a major concern for the French police, and notes from police forces throughout the country comment on tourists traveling through France like “amateur photographers.”<sup>137</sup> In a letter to the Justice Minister, a representative of the *Section de Renseignements* laid out the concerns with this new technique:

“Photography constitutes one of the best means of espionage, especially regarding fortifications. A simple photograph of a building can provide details that can’t be reproduced with a sketch; two views of the same work taken from different points would permit a precise reconstruction... Illustrated postcards and illustrations from newspapers are also very useful” to those seeking details of French construction technology.<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>136</sup> The use of images in intelligence, or IMINT, was a new phenomenon in the mid to late-nineteenth century. One of the new ways that one could get images of enemy territory or fortifications was with hot air balloons. Another was photography.

<sup>137</sup> See notes, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12644-5 and BB<sup>18</sup> 6082.

<sup>138</sup> Letter dated December 13, 1905, AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6084.

The issue of postcard images, also a new phenomenon at this time, caused considerable anxiety for military and judicial authorities. In 1898, War Minister General Jean-Baptiste Billot, writing under the auspices of the Statistical Section, brought the issue to the attention of the Justice Minister in hopes that together they could establish judicial policy towards the printing and sale of postcards, in this case targeting a local merchant named Madame Rava in Briançon, near the border with Italy. Billot began,

“I would like to ask you to examine whether it would be judicially possible to seize the pictures in question and to deny authorization to reproduce them. The responsibility belongs to the judicial authority to take measures for the future that it judges necessary, for the application of laws and regulations aiming to safeguard the interests of the country.”<sup>139</sup>

Billot suggested using article 6 of the 1886 law that covered examination of topography. In spite of protest in support of Rava from the city council of Briançon, which noted the innocuous nature of the images, as well as the financial damage that a judgment would inflict, the court ruled in the military’s favor.<sup>140</sup> This case set a precedent for future cases, such that justices evoked it again a few years later to seize postcards for sale in Flines-les-Mortagne, a small city on the French border with Belgium.<sup>141</sup> Recognizing that forbidding the sale of postcards would not be possible with “just a simple administrative measure,” the War Minister stressed to his colleague in the Justice department the necessity of a legal case, looking to the

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<sup>139</sup> Letter dated June 4, 1898 from Billot to the Ministry of Justice, AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6084. According to the notes, the postcards in question showed images of buildings around the Place de Briançon and a number of other areas nearby.

<sup>140</sup> The city council of Briançon had noted that the silhouettes of military structures that appeared in some of Rava’s photographs were not dangerous to national defense, and that the War Ministry had overreacted, causing serious financial damage to Rava (they seized and destroyed her negatives) and to others trying to profit from the region’s tourism.

<sup>141</sup> See correspondence between Ministries of War and Justice in the summer of 1904, AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6084.

former trial against Madame Rava. In fact, the following year, military authorities used the details of a case of postcards being sold in Toulon to urge a modification of the espionage law that would target the printed images directly.<sup>142</sup> Even without this modification, the first few decades of the twentieth century saw an increasing number of seizures of postcards and the negatives used to produce them, targeting bookstores as well as individuals, in places like Dijon and Aix, always citing the “inconvenience” that they could bring from “the point of view of national defense.”<sup>143</sup>

In addition to going after individuals who made and sold postcards, the War and Justice Ministries brought cases against people spotted with photography equipment – in particular foreigners – even if the evidence of their purposes seemed to be far from spying.<sup>144</sup> The biggest fears came when individuals with cameras were seen in proximity to forts or other defensive structures. The republican War Minister, General Louis André, stressed this point in decrees to the army, suggesting article 6 of the 1886 law as the relevant provision to forbid this kind of behavior.<sup>145</sup>

While it is understandable that French leaders would not want images of defense structures circulating, the cases against certain foreigners show an extreme paranoia on the part of the police and other authorities. An example of such over-

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<sup>142</sup> Letter dated December 13, 1905, AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6084.

<sup>143</sup> See e.g. letter from prosecutor to the Minister of the Interior dated September 10, 1906, AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6084; and note from Minister of War Jean Brun dated October 29, 1910, SHD 7N 676.

<sup>144</sup> Some cases include: photographers Scherrer and Neumann found near Toul, June 28, 1906, AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6084; and others caught taking photos of places like La Rochelle and Pont-Saint-Vincent. AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6082.

<sup>145</sup> See notes dated May 20, 1901 and June 14, 1901 from General André discussing the use of cameras around forts. On February 13, 1905, the War Ministry published a “*Proscriptions pour appareils photographiques*,” that forbid the use of photography inside and nearby forts. SHD 7N 676.

exuberance by authorities was a case involving two Englishmen, Edward Andreac and Charles Cooper, who had taken a boat trip to the east of France in October, 1890. They traveled to places including Lyon and Toul, and took their boat up the Moselle River. This activity attracted the attention of authorities, who followed them and arrested them in Epinal. The two men were tried under articles 6 and 12 of the espionage law, based on evidence that the bridge at Flavigny, which they had been photographing, was only 9,060 meters away from the Fort Sainte-Barbe in Pont-Saint-Vincent. In the end, Cooper was let off, but Andreac was condemned to pay a one-franc fine and legal fees.

Although legal authorities thought that they had done their job in upholding the law, a lawyer and observer named Victor Riston documented what he considered the absurdity of the case in a pamphlet entitled, "Photography and Espionage before the Law." Riston argued that the army and the courts had gone too far, and that with the case against Andreac and Cooper, amateur photographers and artists found their creative liberty under threat. As a lawyer, he also found the case to be legally questionable, noting that the magistrate in Nancy had ignored the question of intention.<sup>146</sup> Even though the judgment against Andreac only amounted to one franc, Riston countered that the decision still adversely affected the defendant, as he now had a judicial record, and for a serious crime such as espionage. Riston did not dispute the utility of the espionage law itself, but claimed

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<sup>146</sup> Riston writes: "How do we support the idea that one punishes as a spy an individual, a peaceful and honorable citizen, who has merely taken a few pictures whereas no one even told him that there was a legal prohibition against it? Do the words espionage, spy, not imply by their force, and taking from ideas of good sense what these expressions call up in the mind, the intention to act in a criminal manner to furnish intelligence to the enemy of a nature to harm the security of the country and the defense of the territory?" Victor Riston, *La Photographie et l'espionnage devant la loi* (Moulins: Imprimerie de E. Auclair, 1891), 6.

that in this case, it was used without prudence and reason.<sup>147</sup> He blamed the “mania of seeing spies all over the place,” and suggested that as a result, everyone would be at risk of being unfairly caught and tried. The presence of the April 18, 1886 law therefore fostered a new kind of paranoia, which resulted in giving authorities the opportunity to regulate the practice of image taking and distribution. The definition of secret knowledge as understood by the laws had broadened to encompass anything that the military wished not to be seen, including outdoor structures and weapons that had already been widely distributed.<sup>148</sup>

### *Conclusion*

The April 18, 1886 law regulating espionage provided a legal and conceptual understanding of spying at the turn of the century. As interpreted by the police, the military, and the courts, espionage entailed the procurement and passing along of information that one had privileged access to or had found via deceit or deception. Spying was taken to involve disguising one’s person, and the intent to weaken the nation by strengthening another. Implementation of the law helped to define what particular materials would be considered threatening if passed along, with as one magistrate put it, “a very large leeway given to the expression ‘secret documents’” allowed by the courts as the years went on.<sup>149</sup> Additionally, the law gave the state apparatus the means to seek out and punish the individuals who violated these

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<sup>147</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>148</sup> In the years following the invention of the Lebel rifle, French military arsenals mass-produced the weapon, producing over three million in six years. At that quantity, it seems highly unrealistic to imagine that other countries would not gain access to the product. Huon, *Proud Promise*.

<sup>149</sup> Quote from the prosecutor regarding a case in Corsica, noting that past jurisprudence had allowed for liberal interpretation of secret documents. See note dated December 22, 1909, AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6085.

strictures. Such people were deemed a threat to French national security, and therefore were watched, tried, jailed, fined, and/or expelled from the country. Although punishments themselves were usually not all that severe, the discussions surrounding espionage cases reveal that the French considered spying to be a major threat to national sovereignty.

The concern with spies and the harm that they could inflict originated within the military. As the French army developed newer, more powerful weapons, it sought to keep these inventions secret in order to maintain technological superiority over other countries. With the development of professionalized intelligence across Europe at this time, the fear that army leaders nurtured regarding secrecy for weapons and war plans spread throughout society. The idea that another war was imminent was present in the minds of much of society in the decades following 1870. It was in this milieu that the law regulating espionage was formulated, urged by the military and passed by its supporters. It was an idea that crossed ideological boundaries, resulting in political leaders permitting the military to have considerable power in bringing civilian spies to justice. As spies bore an association with war and its preparation, the military was thus able to take the lead in pushing for the implementation of the law and in defining its contours.

As this chapter has shown, the application of the espionage law resulted in a definition of espionage more nuanced than that in early attempts to codify martial practices in the mid to late nineteenth century. Whereas both the American code of 1863 and the Brussels protocol of 1874 defined espionage strictly as the intent to communicate information to the enemy, the use of the French espionage law in the decades prior to WWI focused less on intent, and more on substance. Consequently, many individuals condemned under the April 18, 1886 law were not

those that one might consider spies in the traditional sense. Judgments were entered against people accused of instigating desertion from the army, against those spreading anti-militarist propaganda, against people selling or taking photographs of various infrastructure, and against journalists or other citizens discussing inventions or technology that they found to be of interest. Individuals like Madame Rava, Eugene Turpin, and the Englishman Cooper did not have any intent to weaken France, yet were convicted under the same legislation as others who did. All of these cases involved interpretations of knowledge, and the results show that the state had given itself power to determine the extent to which knowledge could be used and understood. When disseminated information appeared to have the ability to harm the nation, its unauthorized purveyors were therefore punished, often with little regard to whether they intended any harm, or even the likelihood that their actions would have any such result.

The process of regulating espionage also had more general negative effects on liberty. Citizens were forced to accept a lack of transparency with regard to judicial proceedings, newspapers were sanctioned, and photograph and postcard images were regulated. This process seemed perfectly necessary to authorities, as explained by police prefect Louis Andrieux who noted that, "Charged with assuring safety for all, the police must inevitably disturb the liberty of some."<sup>150</sup> The military and justices likely concurred with regard to applying the espionage law, considering that declaring ownership on "secret" information made the nation safer for its citizens, irrespective of the small freedoms some might have to give up.<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>150</sup> Andrieux, *Souvenirs*, 13.

<sup>151</sup> Paul Jankowski makes an interesting comparison between the use of the law to restrict liberties in France's past and the current use of the law in France to protect the nation from terrorism. He notes

It was the recognition of a threat to security during peacetime with the presumed presence of foreign spies that resulted in peace feeling a bit more like war. The 1886 law armed the French state with a legal weapon to fight spies, in lieu of physical weapons that could not be used during peacetime. As a result, French society got a small taste of the curtailing of liberties that would eventually accompany a more “martial” atmosphere.<sup>152</sup> An example of the view taken by intelligence professionals of what restrictions would be necessary during actual war surfaces in Nicolas Rollin’s 1908 *Service de renseignements militaire*. Regarding the desired role of the press during wartime, Rollin writes: “Silence is a strict duty and must be demanded as a measure of public safety; the press, whose liberty must temporarily be suspended, would be placed under the absolute authority and surveillance of the Minister of War.”<sup>153</sup> While certainly liberty of the press was far from suspended at the turn of the century, the cases discussed above have shown that precedents for such restrictive measures had begun to be laid down during peacetime.

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that while French men and women have accepted the urgency of acting against global terrorism, many outspoken figures are quick to fear potential repercussions in terms of the restrictions of liberties. Jankowski in Berenson, Duclert, and Prochasson, *French Republic*, 160-161.

<sup>152</sup> Scholars have looked at the atmosphere during WWI and concluded that the war did not come without costs in terms of civil liberties and basic republican principles. Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau writes, “War suspended all political activity including local and national elections. France’s political parties more or less went dormant. Add to these developments the state of siege (which gave substantial police powers to the military authorities), courts-martial, the influence of the general staff (at least until 1916), and finally what Olivier Forcade has called the wartime ‘information system,’ which featured censorship of the press, authorized by the law of August 5, 1914. As Jean-Jacques Becker rightly observes, ‘Democracy [was] in question.’” Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau, “War and the Republic,” in *ibid.*, 58.

<sup>153</sup> Rollin, *Le Service de renseignements militaires*. Military strategist General Pierron agreed with this need, and following conferences in 1876-77, he outlined regulations for the press to be imposed in the event of war. He writes that the War Ministry, in cooperation with the Interior Ministry should create a “law or directive on the press, to prevent it from revealing to the enemy the movements and positions of our troops, projects, etc.” Général Edouard Pierron, *Les Méthodes de guerre actuelles et vers la fin du XIXe siècle, par le lieutenant-colonel Pierron, conférences faites à l’École supérieure de guerre en 1876-1877* (Paris: Dumaine., 1878), 361.



In addition, the official quest for spies caused many to self-censor. Military representatives on several occasions expressed concern with exchanges taking place in the open, such as one note which worried about soldiers and “the danger of conversations throwing around military information that take place in a loud voice in public places such as cafés or train cars.”<sup>154</sup> Newspapers warned that potential spies were lurking in French establishments, listening to conversations and spreading misinformation of their own. As a result, soldiers and citizens alike were encouraged to hold their tongues and avoid openly discussing their feelings about the army or state, or any other information that could prove valuable to the enemy. Similarly, one could presume that a number of papers decided against printing defense-related information, for fear of action taken against them under the auspices of the espionage law. In conjunction with laws, the tendency towards self-censorship demonstrated an acceptance of particular principles. As legal historian Jerome King writes, “to be effective as a support of the social order, [self-censorship] must operate on habits of thinking themselves. In this way not only is speech censored; so also are the activities of mind which nourish speech.”<sup>155</sup> The law and subsequent trials had shown that the threat of espionage was real, (even if overstated), and various limitations on speech suggest that a mindset of imminent danger was spreading to more of the population.

In the end, the espionage law of 1886 proved to be weaker than its drafters had originally intended. With its vague language and its lenient punishments, lawyers and judges often eschewed it in favor of more severe articles of the Penal

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<sup>154</sup> Letter dated October 26, 1909, SHAT 7N 676.

<sup>155</sup> King, *Law v. Order*, 31.

Code in the Third Republic's big spy trials. Nonetheless, during the First World War, the espionage law allowed France to convict a series of "traitors," from the inept Mata Hari, to propagandists against the case of war such as Manuel Almereyda and Paul Bolo-Pasha.<sup>156</sup> Similar laws spread throughout the West, including the Official Secrets Act in Britain passed in 1911, and the Espionage Act of 1917 in the United States. Like the French law, while the outward purpose of these acts was to target spying, in reality they extended their reach beyond the actual practice of espionage, all the while undermining a number of personal liberties.<sup>157</sup> As the means through which knowledge could be accessed and spread grew, the ability to regulate it appeared more and more pressing. With the law on their side, elites tried their hardest to keep certain knowledge secret and remaining within limited circles.

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<sup>156</sup> On Bolo-Pasha and Almereyda, see AN F<sup>7</sup> 15933(2) and Jankowski, *Shades of Indignation*, 31-33. Also see the Epilogue.

<sup>157</sup> Regarding the British Official Secrets Act, originally drafted in 1889 and then revised in 1911, Tammy Proctor writes: "The act did change citizens' rights considerably. With its broader understanding of espionage crimes (including the crime of harboring a spy), police could enter individuals' homes, search them, seize materials, and arrest any person they believed suspicious, if necessary. Proctor, *Female Intelligence*, 32. Peter Gill, a scholar of politics and criminal justice in England agrees: "Even that classic of state secrecy, the British Official Secrets Act 1911, might be seen less as a reaction to a 'spy scare' than 'as part of a deliberate policy to control the civil service, and to restrict access to public information.'" Gill, *Policing Politics*, 51. For more on the Official Secrets Act and the way that it worked to define secrecy and spying in Great Britain, see Thomas, *Espionage and Secrecy*. In the United States, the Espionage Act of 1917 has been used in many instances, including against Socialist leader Eugene V. Debs, alleged communists Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, Pentagon Papers whistleblower Daniel Ellsberg, and continues in use with the current administration's desire to supposedly prosecute whistleblowers Bradley Manning and Julian Assange of Wikileaks, though actual desires regarding Assange are not confirmed. Much criticism has been levied against such uses of the Espionage Act since its inception, including a book by Daniel Patrick Moynihan deploring the "culture of secrecy" that the Act fosters. Daniel P. Moynihan, *Secrecy: The American Experience* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).

## CHAPTER 6

### **Intelligence in the Nation: Identifying Spies, Defining Loyalty, and Uniting Citizens through Participation in National Defense**

The passage of the 1886 espionage law and its enforcement by military, police, and judicial authorities served to define what kind of material the state took responsibility for protecting. The state thus declared that certain topics, including advances in military technology, geographic and numerical details about the army's strength, and attempts to prosecute spies fell singularly under the Republic's control. The state thereby gave itself the power to punish anyone seeking access to this newly declared confidential information. Privileged military intelligence became the concern not only of the army, but also of those within the civilian sphere such as police, magistrates, and judges, who were now charged to regulate it.

In the decades following the implementation of the espionage law, the militarization of the civilian sphere spread from police and judicial authorities to a wider public. This was a period which saw the entry of the masses into politics, and as a result, the masses developed a greater concern for a variety of national issues. One important issue at the end of the nineteenth century was building a strong and united nation, whether through political movements, the colonial project, attempts to slow the onset of a perceived degeneration, or keeping the nation safe from outside threats. When, thanks to the introduction of new legislation, police captured and convicted a number of spies, the public became aware of the threat of espionage on French soil. As the masses were brought into

the nation, they were also brought into its defense.<sup>1</sup> Local military and police agents worked zealously to locate spies, and both the press and the public assisted through denunciation letters aimed at exposing espionage practiced by neighbors and associates.

In order to pinpoint the spy threat at the turn of the century, a national dialogue arose which delineated the existence of specific spy “types.” Authorities and a spy-crazed public were especially attuned to the presence of foreigners, liberated women, Jews, and anarchists or Socialists when considering who might pose a threat to the French way of life. The contrast of actual figures of convictions for espionage with the perception of the harm that certain groups could inflict signals that opinions of threat were distorted by images and understandings of certain groups apart from reality.<sup>2</sup> For example, of those convicted for espionage, more than half were French citizens and not foreign, a fact clearly not reflected in the discourse surrounding the spy menace. We observe a similar disproportion along gender lines, in spite of rhetoric describing the natural tendency of women towards dishonesty and deception.

Real figures aside, the worried French masses followed on the heels of military leaders who had convinced themselves and the nation of the harm that spies could inflict on national defense. The years encompassing the professionalization and bureaucratization of espionage and counterespionage in

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<sup>1</sup> Rachel Chrastil presents other ways that the Third Republic’s masses participated in the nation’s defense project, demonstrating a movement of national preparedness for war among civil society. She asserts that with the creation of mutual aid associations, charities, raising of subscriptions to pay back war indemnities and more, French citizens created a civil society that would be capable of mobilizing for a future war. I contend that public participation in the project of identifying spies similarly prepared the nation mentally for a future war, that did in fact come. Chrastil, *Organizing for War*.

<sup>2</sup> For details of figures, see Annex E.

Europe therefore also saw the first real conceptualization of an understanding of *who the spy was*. By examining the discourse surrounding the nation's threat from foreign and domestic spies, one sees the close relation between new ideas of national belonging and the formation of spy stereotypes. Using spies as a foil to the ideal of the devoted French *citoyen* or *citoyenne*, discourse that identified particular groups as threatening served to unite a citizenry slowly demonstrating increasing fissures. Whereas politicians at the end of the nineteenth century sought a united base through movements such as *ralliement* and *solidarité*, military and police authorities found another way to unite the nation.<sup>3</sup> With overt calls on more than one occasion to support the nation with vigilance of its presumed enemies, authorities promoted rhetoric of inclusion and exclusion. The spy represented the aberration, someone with the natural inclination to do something that an honest, patriotic, French person could never do. In acknowledging certain types as apart, as an "Other," the fearful nation could unite in their pursuit.

#### *Delineating Spy "Types"*

Collective awareness of spies and other subversive enemies of the nation meant identifying a particular "type" of person to look out for. The creation of a discourse that identified national enemies subsequently meant that more people could unofficially watch for insidious elements. An examination of the archival, newspaper, and printed literature of the day illuminates a handful of groups who

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<sup>3</sup> On *ralliement* and *solidarité*, see Silverman, *Art Nouveau*, 43-51. Solidarism was proposed by Léon Bourgeois at the end of the nineteenth century as an antidote to class conflict and political infighting. Bourgeois sought a way around the divide between socialist collectivism and liberal individualism. He offered as a solution the doctrine of organic solidarity, which when applied to French society meant the subordination of individual liberty to the best interest of the cohesive group, or the nation. Léon Bourgeois, *Solidarité* (Paris: A. Colin et cie, 1896).

were considered more likely to be or more susceptible to become spies. These targets included foreigners, certain kinds of women, Jews, and political subversives. French citizens exposed during this period as traitors were described in ways to indicate that they, too, were somehow apart from the nation. These supposed outsiders were seen to threaten a national unity being formed during the first several decades of the Third Republic. The tendency of press, politicians, police officials and the public to associate these particular deviants as spies only confirmed developing negative opinions of them, and made it easier for ordinary, patriotic citizens to fear them.

### Foreigners

Foreigners often fell victim to accusations of disrupting the smooth construction of a national French identity. Countless historians have established the end of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century as a particularly xenophobic period, when the idea of foreigner as “Other” became solidified in the national consciousness.<sup>4</sup> With strange accents and unfamiliar backgrounds, foreigners gave the impression of threatening the new French Republic. Having passed the espionage law in 1886, the state now had an opportunity to act upon this threat through legislation and prosecutions.

Viewing foreigners as a threat fit into the narrative of the image of the “foreign” being constructed in popular culture, politics, and the law at the time.<sup>5</sup> Whereas up until the last third of the nineteenth century there was little legislation

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<sup>4</sup> See, e.g. Dornel, *La France hostile*; Noiriél, *French Melting Pot*.

<sup>5</sup> See Dornel, *La France hostile*.

that privileged being French over being foreign, the difference between the two would become accentuated in the first few decades of the Third Republic. By the 1890s, the stirrings of a new nationalism began to incorporate further negative views of foreigners. An ideology based in the integrity of the nation attracted thinkers on the right, with spokesmen like Maurice Barrès and Charles Maurras calling for an embrace of France that centered around a specific picture of the nation.<sup>6</sup> Borrowing ideas from the German nationalist Fichte, many on the right believed that the nation was grounded in race and soil, leading Maurras to fear that the “country is ruined when foreigners take position of it.”<sup>7</sup>

The xenophobic ideology espoused by Barrès and his contemporaries made its way into legislation, so that foreigners had to identify their presence within France on a national registry. Targeting foreign laborers in particular as threats to the French worker, the Third Republic passed a series of decrees and laws in the late 1880s and early 1890s that forced foreigners to declare themselves before public authorities.<sup>8</sup> In his study of the socio-history of xenophobia, Laurent Dornel notes that “between 1883 and 1893, the perception of foreigners evolved, and their presence, often described as an invasion, was slowly transformed into being a *problem*.”<sup>9</sup> These problematic invaders were characterized as untrustworthy

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<sup>6</sup> Michael Curtis, *Three Against the Republic: Sorel, Barrès, and Maurras* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959). Curtis writes that Barrès took a harsh attitude against newcomers to France, and referred to naturalization as a fiction allowed a person to obtain the advantages of a nation without giving him its character. 203-204. See also Maurice Barrès, *Scènes et doctrines du nationalisme* (Paris: F. Juven, 1902).

<sup>7</sup> Cited in Digeon, *Crise allemande*, 440.

<sup>8</sup> Decree of October 2, 1888 and law of August 8, 1893. Dornel views these laws as demonstrative of the xenophobic turn taken by the French Chamber and Parliament. Dornel, *La France hostile*, 208-210.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.* 214. His emphasis.

barbarians, and thus in this milieu, foreigners – and Germans especially – could easily be believed to be spies.

Even before Boulanger's ascension to the War Ministry and the passage of the April 1886 law, authorities and the public were particularly attuned to the presence of foreigners on French soil and their potential to gather and communicate confidential information. In the border areas in particular, foreigners observed walking too close to forts, working in professions where they might observe French military activity, or frequenting areas like train stations or cafés, attracted the attention of the police, the military, and the public.<sup>10</sup>

As described in the last chapter, prior to 1886, existing legislation had failed to provide military and police authorities with a proper procedure for punishing non-French citizens in the event that they were captured on French territory. Under the 1886 law, foreigners could be held accountable for spying, which was a major difference from the Penal Code that placed its onus on treason. The new provisions greatly facilitated prosecution of foreign spies, at times to the detriment of innocent foreigners who aroused suspicion. For example, Article 5, which specifically punished people donning disguises, made life particularly difficult for Germans trying to avoid overtly calling attention to themselves.<sup>11</sup>

Foreigners found themselves in an increasingly hostile climate in part due to the details surrounding the 1886 law's implementation. The xenophobic element of

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<sup>10</sup> The majority of indicators identifying foreigners as spies or threats pertained to German citizens, though many notes seek details on Italians in France, describe incidents of British people along coastal waters, and more.

<sup>11</sup> The law had provoked anger and frustration from Germany, as its citizens felt that it "targeted primarily Germans, who when visiting France, in seeking to avoid negative sentiments towards them, were obliged to hide their nationality, and given their accents, claim to be Austrians or Alsatians." Detourbet, *L'espionnage et la trahison*, 91-92. Detourbet however supports this article and does not find it to be excessive.



the new legislation, which was not evident in the text of the law itself, comes out in notes and directives in the months following the passage of the espionage law. In a letter to army heads and the military governors of Paris and Lyon in October 1886, Minister of War Boulanger detailed his policies for the application of the newly passed law. While asserting in one statement that there was to be no difference between French civilians and foreigners in applying the law, his other notes indicate otherwise. His major *Instruction très confidentielle sur l'application de la loi du April 18, 1886 tendant à remprimer l'espionnage* dated December 9, 1886 warned that, "in sum, the military spy is an individual, most often of foreign nationality," and a note to the General Commander of the Second Army Corps several weeks later instructed the army to take on domestic surveillance "of foreigners established on French territory."<sup>12</sup>

These official instructions also reveal the view of authorities that the public was to be counted on to watch foreigners for suspicious behavior. A February 9, 1887 instructional circular from the Interior Minister to the prefects told the police authorities to focus their efforts on itinerant foreigners traveling through the country, as opposed to foreign residents who were already established within a local community. The latter were "known in the localities in which they live," and therefore "the notoriety which they had acquired constituted a sort of constant surveillance."<sup>13</sup> Similarly, another "Secret Instruction for the Repression of Espionage" in 1897 noted that "it is the duty of every citizen," to be mindful of

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<sup>12</sup> See "*Instruction très confidentielle sur l'application de la loi du April 18, 1886 tendant à remprimer l'espionnage*" dated December 9, 1886, Archives de la Service Historique de la Défense (SHD) 7N 11 and letter from the War Minister to the General Commander of the 2e Corps d'Armée dated December 22, 1886, SHD 7N 674.

<sup>13</sup> "Very confidential" circular from the Minister of the Interior to the Prefects, dated February 9, 1887, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12582.

spies, and that “the vigilance of all must protect us.”<sup>14</sup> A question on the Carnet B form identifying subjects as spies consequently asked if public opinion suspected him or her of espionage.<sup>15</sup> Such documents thus demonstrate the spread of the notion of foreigners as apart from ordinary French citizens, acknowledging that even those who might be known to the area’s residents needed to be watched. In this era of mass politics, citizens were being called upon to participate in a variety of ways. These nods to communal surveillance thus showed the Republic’s understanding of espionage as a national concern and demonstrated willingness to encourage participation among the entire populace.

Police and army notes attest to a particular focus on capturing foreigners to bring before courts of justice. Local prefectures sought to observe foreigners in their locality who might have seemed particularly suspect, describing categories such as “manner of living, relations, and movements” that were now to be under observation, with recommendations to arrest anyone seeming to perform some kind of espionage.<sup>16</sup> Police would follow these individuals, and representatives of the prefects and the military would discuss their concerns, assessing the suspect’s loyalty, honorability, and other factors to determine if he or she was a potential spy. Observers often used the terms “foreign nationality” and “doubtful morality” in the same sentence.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> See the *Instruction secrète au sujet de la répression de l’espionnage et de la surveillance de la frontière*, dated May 6, 1897, SHD 1M 2197.

<sup>15</sup> AN F<sup>7</sup> 12587.

<sup>16</sup> See, e.g. Undated “*Instruction for Surveillance des Frontières terrestres et des Etablissements militaires/ Consigne des Gardes-Champêtres*.” This listed the types of things that a suspected spy might do, such as taking notes or tracing routes. AM 4M 278.

<sup>17</sup> See, e.g. letter dated July 26, 1888, MM 2R 10.

In the years that followed, the triple association of foreigner, spy, and negative or dubious character only escalated. French writers published a number of xenophobic texts in the years immediately following the passing of the April 1886 espionage law, with titles such as *The Revenge Dossier: German Espionage in France* and *The Invasion: Germany in France*, entertaining readers with sordid tales of German plans to demoralize the French nation.<sup>18</sup> Similar negative literature surged again around 1905, a year that saw increased tension with Germany. In one such book, titled *German Espionage in France: Its Organization, Its Dangers, Necessary Remedies*, the Boulangist author Paul Lanoir spelled out his view of the true purpose of such publications, envisioning, “a current of opinion and popular action. As a preventative measure,” Lanoir advocated that literature should “create a formidable movement of hatred – hatred is always destructive – against espionage in general, and against each presumed spy in particular.”<sup>19</sup> Indeed, the rhetoric disseminated by Lanoir and his contemporaries painted foreign spies as a threat to French honor and livelihood.

References to the invasion of foreign spies appeared with regularity in the public sphere. As Sebastian Laurent argues, “the theme of German espionage, driven by xenophobic and spy-crazed pamphlet literature, from the 1880s became an element of the nationalist discourse. Nonetheless, the espionage obsession equally penetrated the daily press, whether it was the news press or the opinion

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<sup>18</sup> François Loyal, *Le Dossier de la revanche, l'espionnage allemand en France* (Paris: A. Savine, 1887)., Adrien Nojerbahc, *L'Envahissement, l'Allemand en France* (Lyon: Aux bureaux de la Chronique française, 1888).

<sup>19</sup> Paul Lanoir, *L'espionnage allemand en France; Son organisation, ses dangers, les remèdes nécessaires* (Paris: Cocuand & Cie, 1908), 231.

press, in the capital or in the departments.”<sup>20</sup> The illustrated journals contributed as well, printing pictures of captured spies resembling as much as possible the stereotyped version of their respective countries.<sup>21</sup> Between Lanoir’s “yellow” journalism and many of his more and less respectable colleagues’ publications, the quantity of articles printed about foreigners practicing espionage surely worked to crystallize in the collective mentality a new form of fear of the foreigner. The vociferous reactions to many of the actual cases of espionage, such as those against Kilian and Giletta St. Joseph, confirm that these publications had the desired effect.

### The New Woman

At the end of the nineteenth century, women’s roles in the spheres of labor, family, and society were undergoing significant change. A small but visible number of primarily urban, middle-class women began to enter professions formerly dominated by men and to eschew the traditional roles assigned to the domestic female.<sup>22</sup> This new character was known as the *femme nouvelle*, or New Woman. Such progress did not go uncontested, however, and many negative

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<sup>20</sup> Laurent, *Politiques de l’ombre*, 574.

<sup>21</sup> See for example the cover of the *Petit Journal, supplément illustré* dated June 5, 1904. The photo, captioned, “Espionage in France: Arrest of an English colonel in Belle-Isle,” shows a man in British-style pantaloons, a plaid sweater covered in a blazer, and a British-style cap being surprised by two French gentlemen with French soldiers looking on in the background. On June 28, 1896, the same paper had a cover depicting the “Arrest of an Italian Spy,” picturing a devious-looking man with a cravat, and on May 28, 1911, the paper showed a barefoot man wearing a traditional shawl in front of a firing squad, with the title, “The events in Morocco: execution of a native (*indigène*) spy.” See images, Annex F.

<sup>22</sup> In part, these women were able to make such strides as a result of the Third Republic’s encouragement of secular, liberal education, which resulted in a much greater number of women receiving diplomas. Some chose to embrace traditionally male professions such as medicine, law, journalism and teaching. The divorce laws introduced in 1884 gave women an opportunity to leave unhappy marriages, and the *fin-de-siècle* saw a number of women choose to remain single or to enter nontraditional relationships. Mary Louise Roberts, *Disruptive Acts: The New Woman in Fin-de-Siècle France* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2002).

reactions surfaced to challenge feminine advances outside of traditional gender roles. One way that opponents of shifting gender norms expressed their resistance to the changing times was through the creation and perpetuation of stereotypes of these women as hideous *amazones* and languid *hommesses*, and their associates as weak and emasculated.<sup>23</sup> Into the mix of caricatures emerged the modern image of the female spy, the *femme fatale* with the ability to seduce unwitting leaders and slip away with the state's most important military secrets. Although the actual numbers of captured spies show males spying at a rate of ten times more than females, the image persisted nonetheless, perhaps in reaction to the increased prominence women were gaining in other parts of society.<sup>24</sup>

The idea that women would make good spies circulated widely. Writers imbued females with qualities that would give them the opportunity to learn state secrets, placing them in gendered locales such as salons or bedchambers. Women would use their wiles and cunning to extract the most valuable secrets, as they were considered to be "experts of disguise."<sup>25</sup> To observers, women's spying abilities came naturally. "Delicate, insidious, intriguing," began Lucien Nicot, "knowing precisely how to take advantage of nature's gifts – beauty, charm, wit – she is able to pass where even the most clever, able man would be stopped; she succeeds completely where others would suffer total defeat."<sup>26</sup> Moreover, as ideas of modern

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<sup>23</sup> Silverman, *Art Nouveau*, 63-67.

<sup>24</sup> Froment confirms in his book that many contemporary writers had taken up the subject of women in espionage, though more frequently than really existed. Froment, *L'Espionnage militaire*, 194.

<sup>25</sup> Detourbet, *L'espionnage et la trahison*, 76. An article in the newspaper *La France* warned in particular against women, claiming that in terms of intelligence gathering, they were the most dangerous, as they were the least suspected. *La France*, December 14, 1888, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12644-5.

<sup>26</sup> Nicot, *L'Allemagne à Paris*, 95.

espionage, and of the modern woman, began to crystallize in the popular mentality, the overlapping dual threat became clearer. The *femme nouvelle* of the *fin-de-siècle* was someone who took on an appearance apart from that expected of her gender and made use of the era's new technology, just as the spy was someone who was proficient in disguise and in the latest military advances.<sup>27</sup> Like the New Woman, the female spy betrayed her biological calling of remaining in the domestic sphere to raise the next generation of *citoyens*.

Thus women's propensity for espionage was at once natural and unnatural. As Nicot suggests, many contemporary writers' descriptions of the female spy showed espionage as being one of the few "important" professions where women could be considered to be even better than men. Lewal announced that, "a secret that cannot be discovered either by women or by priests will likely never be known."<sup>28</sup> Victor Colonieu called women the "ultimate" figures in the quest for secret information, though his flattery came hand in hand with his acceptance of a number of stereotypes. Women are, he writes,

"blessed with the highest of diplomatic tact. Under cover of foreign titles, adorned with beauty and fortune, they have no equal in their ability to converse with important men, in brilliant Parisian salons where the exotic element is welcomed; there they dominate, queens of fashion and good taste, skillfully weaving themselves into the intimacy of politicians, flattering them until they hear what they want to know."<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Silverman describes the association between the *femme nouvelle* and technology using the example of the bicycle, citing contemporaries who connected the technology with the inversion of sexual roles. Silverman, *Art Nouveau*, 67.

<sup>28</sup> In this instance, he is citing General von Decker, "It is from this sex that one will get the surest of intelligence." Lewal, "Tactique des Renseignements," 172.

<sup>29</sup> Colonieu, *L'espionnage*, 16.

Women were considered most able to discover a secret, and even the French police forces used women, “pretty for the most part,” as agents with the ability to penetrate where male agents could not.<sup>30</sup> Nonetheless, others were quick to point out that women were ruled by their passions, and thus could not necessarily be trusted with the most important missions.<sup>31</sup>

When discussing feminine wiles as a key to unlock secrets, writers inevitably returned to German perfidy and discussed Bismarck’s use of female agents to further his expansionist desires. Police authorities were therefore constantly on the look-out for foreign female spies, especially after newspaper blurbs confirmed their suspicions, or by intercepting notes that discussed the supposedly “relatively large number of women acting as part of the German spy service.”<sup>32</sup> The case that inevitably surfaced in discussion of female spies in the pre-Mata Hari era was that of the Baroness Lucie von Kaulla.

Lucie von Kaulla was a Jewish-Austrian baroness who initially made her way into French military society when she married then-Captain Theodore Jung in 1861.<sup>33</sup> The two divorced in 1865, but after a brief stint in St. Petersburg, Madame Kaulla returned to France where she lived among high society and engaged in a

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<sup>30</sup> Andrieux, *Souvenirs*, 178-179. He was describing Lombard’s brigades of secret agents.

<sup>31</sup> Froment, for example, wrote that while many women were employed as spies, “generally they did not succeed as well as men, as it requires a real energy to arrive at the goal.” This statement confirms the nineteenth-century belief that women were less suited than men for serious work, yet at the same time, found themselves drawn to intelligence work for its weaker, or seedier, side. Froment, *L’Espionnage militaire*, 184. The idea that women lacked the energy of their male counterparts was commonly invoked in antifeminist arguments at the fin-de-siècle. Elizabeth Everton writes that “women were believed to be naturally languid or frail, lacking in ‘masculine’ energy.” Everton, “Scenes,” 413.

<sup>32</sup> Note dated December 5, 1891, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12644-5.

<sup>33</sup> On Kaulla’s relationship with Jung, see APP BA 916.

number of romantic affairs.<sup>34</sup> One of the Baroness's lovers was none other than former War Minister, General Ernest de Cissey.<sup>35</sup> Kaulla and de Cissey's names became linked with espionage following an affair in 1880 involving Jung and the former War Minister, wherein Kaulla was accused of stealing confidential military documents, facilitated by her romantic liaisons.<sup>36</sup>

The case, which originally began as a defamation claim by Jung against two different newspaper owners, grew to become a public *scandale* centered on de Cissey.<sup>37</sup> The *commission d'enquête* formed to investigate the affair raised accusations of mismanagement of military funds, as well as the General's careless romance that resulted in the disappearance of French military secrets.<sup>38</sup> The ensuing explosion of news in the press not only damaged de Cissey's reputation, but also served to reinforce stereotypes of the wily female spy and the hapless officer who falls victim

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<sup>34</sup> See APP EA 9 for police notes on a number of Kaulla's affairs and personal dealings. It is not entirely clear why the police were observing her, but in the file the officers document different lovers of hers, guessing that one in particular – a prince Sulkowski – may have been a spy himself. See note dated July 21, 1879. The police also connected her with Beckmann, a journalist suspected by police and others of being a spy for Bismarck. Note dated November 18, 1880.

<sup>35</sup> De Cissey, who had been a widower since 1871, "had a reputation for not being able to resist the female charms." He met Mme de Kaulla in 1875, when he was 65 years old. According to André Bach, Kaulla had instigated the affair as a means to exact revenge on her ex-husband, Jung, who was also a political opponent of de Cissey. Bach, *L'armée de Dreyfus*, 186-187.

<sup>36</sup> The case began in August 1880, when three newspapers – *Gil Blas*, *Le Gaulois*, and *Le Figaro* – printed various rumors about Jung, including that he had taken up again with his ex-wife, and transmitted secret documents to her that she had sold to Germany. Jung then brought a defamation suit against his accusers, and during the process of the trial, de Cissey's name emerged. The press therefore quickly shifted its target from Jung to de Cissey. On October 28, 1880, *L'Intransigeant* wrote, "France has been delivered to Prussia by the General de Cissey, because it was the Kaulla girl, his mistress, who gave the plans of the fortifications of Paris to Prussia." Bach, 320.

<sup>37</sup> When de Cissey subsequently became the victim of press accusations, he too sued journalists for libel – this time Henri Rochefort and Charles Laisant. Both Jung and de Cissey won their respective libel suits, though the *enquête* against de Cissey found the army guilty of mismanaging funds. On the affair Jung-Woestyne-de Cissey, see APP BA 916.

<sup>38</sup> *Journal officiel de la République française. Chambre des députés. Débats et documents*, 1er semestre 1881, annexe no. 3462, 603-604, 613-614. De Cissey had been accused both of misappropriation of funds and treason. He was acquitted of the latter, but found guilty of the former charge.



to her cunning and seduction. While a number of French officers lost face in the affair, Kaulla herself was never prosecuted. In fact, the police officers who had been watching her for years conceded that they never found any proof of her practicing espionage.<sup>39</sup> Moreover, high-ranking intelligence officials within the French army denied that any documents had even gone missing.<sup>40</sup>

In spite of the lack of proof against her or her former lover, contemporary writers repeated the tale of the libidinous de Cisse, and the “clever and devious spirit” to whom he fell victim.<sup>41</sup> The story was retold over and over – using the actual characters, or adapting the contours into fiction – and even into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, sensation-seeking authors continue to evoke the tale of Madame de Kaulla as evidence of the danger of the exotic female spy using her sexual prowess to pilfer military secrets.<sup>42</sup> With untrustworthy women in real life and in popular fiction, the

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<sup>39</sup> See Andrieux, *Souvenirs*, tome II, 85.

<sup>40</sup> General Gresley, the former head of the *état-major* under de Cisse's ministry had declared, “There was not a disappearance of documents from the *état-major*. I had never heard of any disappearance of pieces from the ministry other than from the newspapers. Never did any documents go missing during my tenure.” And lieutenant-colonel Campionnet, who had headed the *service de renseignements*, confirmed, “There was never a disappearance of documents from the ‘*service spécial*’ of which I was charged under the ministry of M. de Cisse.” Cited in Bach, *L'armée de Dreyfus*, 330. Campionnet's testimony, as well as that of Captain Weil, another officer working in the army's SR was interesting in that it made the practice of intelligence by the army, and the names of those officers engaging in it, public knowledge. The truth of whether or not Kaulla obtained and sold information relating to the French military as a result of her affair with de Cisse remains unknown. If she did indeed see or hear any information, it would have been unlikely to have much military importance.

<sup>41</sup> Lucien Nicot wrote of her: “highly educated, fluent in all major languages, ambitious, skillful, witty at all hours, with an excessive need for excitement and intrigue, along with a clever and devious spirit, she was able to insert herself into the European political world where, with the help of beauty, she was greeted with open arms.” Nicot, *L'Allemagne à Paris*, 97.

<sup>42</sup> A. Froment, whose well-researched 1897 tome on the past, present and future of French intelligence recounted a tale of War Minister de Cisse having lunch in 1875 with the baroness de Kaulla during which she stole his briefcase and copied important information from it, which she then passed along to Berlin. Froment, *L'Espionnage militaire*, 201. François Loyal recounted a version of the story at length in his polemic, Loyal, *Le Dossier de la revanche*, 54-65. The factual details of the de Cisse/Kaulla case found their way into contemporary popular fiction too. In a Fantômas novel published in 1911, coauthors Pierre Souvestre and Marcel Allain drew upon this famed adventure with a similarly frightening scenario. The novel *L'Agent Secret*, translated in 1917 as *Nest of Spies*,

French public was led to conclude that women embarked upon affairs simply for their own profit, and that such females were harmful to the French national interest. The baroness de Kaulla's name and reputation were later superseded by famed World War I *femmes fatales* Mata Hari and Elsbeth Schragmuller, or Frau Doktor, both of whom, spies working for Germany, served as symbols of the danger of the eroticized female, the emancipated woman who posed a threat to male virility and livelihood.<sup>43</sup>

Certainly, the image of the devious female spy was pervasive at the turn of the century. A female suspect expelled from France for supposedly practicing espionage along the eastern border was described in terms similar to the generic ones used above. According to police notes, twenty-two year-old Adelaide Triebel had entertained a number of different men, including officers, and was likely obtaining information from them that she was subsequently selling for considerable

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opens with a scene in which a young, attractive woman steals a highly classified document from her older lover, the Captain Brocq, who also happens to work for the Deuxième Bureau. The woman, it turns out, had been corrupted by the evil antagonist Fantômas, but had nonetheless sought financial and social reward by using her feminine wiles to steal the document, with little concern as to the safety of the nation. Souvestre and Allain, *A Nest of Spies*. For contemporary accounts, see e.g. Tom Moon, *Loyal and Lethal Ladies of Espionage* (iUniverse.com, 2001), 10-11; and Terry Crowdy, *The Enemy Within* (Oxford; New York: Osprey, 2006), 192.

<sup>43</sup> Mati Hari was the alias of Margareta Gertrude Zelle, a Dutch woman who moved to Paris in 1904, escaping a failed marriage. She entered Parisian society working as an exotic dancer and courtesan, having a series of affairs with rich and important men of varying national backgrounds. The details of her foray into espionage are connected with her need to pay off her debts and her romantic liaisons with high-ranking politicians and military officials from both sides. She appears to have agreed to spy for both the French and the Germans, though the term "double agent" seems hardly applicable given the paucity of real intelligence that she is likely to have supplied. In spite of the likelihood that she did not perform any significant espionage work, she became a victim of the need for scapegoats in WWI France. Caught by the French agent Georges Ladoux, Mata Hari was sentenced and executed before a firing squad in the Chateau de Vincennes outside of Paris on October 15, 1917. The details surround the Frau Doktor, or Ellsbeth Schragmuller, are even more sketchy, and the majority of the tales of her exploits seem to have surfaced in the decades following the war. She was supposedly a spy for Germany who used her good looks and fearless nature to extract information from a number of Allied males. For a good account of the stories and symbolism of Mata Hari and the Fraul Doktor, see Proctor, *Female Intelligence*, 123-144. For more on Mata Hari, see Julie Wheelwright, *The Fatal Lover: Mata Hari and the Myth of Women in Espionage* (London: Collins & Brown, 1992).

profit in Germany.<sup>44</sup> Women like Ms. Triebel in the east, or Rosalie Campbell in the north, found themselves the objects of suspicion from nosy neighbors and acquaintances who were quick to link promiscuity and intelligence gathering in denunciation letters and other accusations.<sup>45</sup> Just as popular culture sought to portray the *femme nouvelle* as decadent and over-sexed, the image surrounding female spies connected them with sexually debauched women and prostitutes. Blurring the distinction between public and private, the character of the *horizontale* appeared frequently in denunciation letters and police notes. By working in private to carry out this most public of deeds, this female character “seemed not to recognize the boundaries of appropriate feminine behavior, just as the New Woman sought to transgress societal norms.”<sup>46</sup>

Similarly, foreign lovers or domestics who were involved with or working for French officers were likely to become objects of police scrutiny.<sup>47</sup> The police would watch these women and alert the War Ministry when they suspected that an

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<sup>44</sup> See her file MM 4M 163. She was expelled from France on March 12, 1888 despite the fact that authorities lacked proof of any actual espionage activities. See photo of Triebel, Annex G.

<sup>45</sup> Rosalie Campbell was a woman of Polish-Austrian origin who was the widow of an English marine captain. Living alone in Calais, she became the object of suspicion by curious members of the population who found her cagey about her past and her nationality, and about the source of her income. Moreover, German men were supposedly seen frequenting her room. She was therefore arrested as a spy in March 1889. SHD 2I 323. Another case confirming the suspicions of women’s devilish ways was the conviction of Marie Josephine Laurent, a 26-year old girl sentenced in April 1910 to 18 months in prison and 300 francs fine under article 3 of the 1886 law. Laurent had become the lover of a soldier in Nancy, and had attempted both to get him to desert the army and to procure documents that she would then sell to a German officer in Metz. She was arrested when the soldier gave her only unimportant documents and then alerted authorities to her plan. AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6085.

<sup>46</sup> Proctor, *Female Intelligence*, 124-125.

<sup>47</sup> E.g. letters dated February 7 and February 13, 1896 to the Minister of War passing along confidential information regarding the German cleaning lady of Dervieu, one of the officers attached to the *état-major*. The authors suspected that the woman might be passing along important documents. APP BA 913. Another series of notes dated June 1888 discussed a French officer and his German mistress, suspecting the latter of espionage, due in part to the significant amount of mail that she received from Germany. APP BA 1333.

officer could be compromised. Police notes display evidence of a particular fear of such women, like the Countess de Kessler, who Colonel Vincent, head of the Statistical Section, described as a, “very beautiful woman who can penetrate anywhere; particularly dangerous if she became engaged with intelligence, as she would stop at nothing to obtain it.”<sup>48</sup>

The press bought into all of this, printing stories whenever they surfaced, or talking about “societies” or groups of female spies supposedly set up from time to time around the country.<sup>49</sup> Articles described Bismarck’s penchant for hiring women as spies, giving them the “mission to listen to conversations, to speak with men who are near or far from politics and the army.”<sup>50</sup> Novels and other books, such as Ernest Daudet’s 1905 *L’Espionne* and Marcel Prévost’s 1913 *Les anges gardiens* perpetuated the notion of the female spy as the enemy within. Publications that warned of the dangers of particular women, maids as well as mistresses, hanging around those with information surely impacted the ordinary Frenchman or woman, as confirmed by the quantity of denunciation letters targeting women. Thus Tammy Proctor argues that as a result of these stereotypes, the definition of espionage itself was gendered, with espionage depicted as “a perverse, morally corrupt, and effeminate activity,” in contrast with intelligence, which was professional, bureaucratic, and masculine.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Note dated October 21, 1882, APP BA 1332.

<sup>49</sup> For example, in 1885 the police discussed a society supposedly set up in Batignolles and placed under the protection of the empress Augusta. APP BA 1332.

<sup>50</sup> *L’Information*, November 15, 1888, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12644-45.

<sup>51</sup> Proctor, *Female Intelligence*, 30.

Interestingly, it could be argued that the stress placed on female skill and prowess in this realm actually empowered women to take a role in the defense of their nation. A small but important number of women are among those known to have worked with French intelligence at the *fin-de-siècle*, although notably these women were portrayed in wholly different terms than the foreigners and domestics spying against France. Madame Ismert and Marie Bastian, described in other chapters, both served France as competent agents transporting and procuring documents for the men who would proceed to analyze them.<sup>52</sup> By World War I, this number grew significantly, with French *citoyennes* like Marthe Richard and Louise de Bettignies, or the Belgian women Gabrielle Petit and Marthe McKenna, serving as spies and heroines risking their lives to fight for and protect France and her allies.<sup>53</sup> However, in spite of the presence of such competent and efficient agents, the image that persisted, both at the *fin-de-siècle*, and in the following century, was that of the eroticized, sexualized deviant. The female spy was not a natural part of

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<sup>52</sup> Another woman, Mathilde Baumler, helped the Statistical Section as an intermediary at the end of the nineteenth century, and claimed to have been a spy herself. Baumler's involvement in the world of espionage and counterespionage came to light surrounding the Tomps-Wessel and Przyborowski-Czernuski affair regarding supposed denunciations of Dreyfus. Though she may have been some help to the Section at some stages, she appears to have been out for herself and likely to change stories and sides when in her interest. AN F<sup>7</sup> 12925.

<sup>53</sup> Marthe Richard, or Marthe Richer, was a female pilot who supposedly became a spy for France after her husband was killed in battle. As told initially by Georges Ladoux, and subsequently autobiographically, her story closely resembles that of Mata Hari's, though with Richard being the heroine to Mata Hari's villain. Richard was decorated with the Legion of Honor, though some more recent accounts have questioned her story. See Marthe Richard, *I Spied for France*, trans. Gerald Griffin (London: J. Long, 1935). Margaret H. Darrow, *French Women and the First World War: War Stories of the Home Front* (Oxford; New York: Berg, 2000), 292-294. Louise de Bettignies came from a manufacturing family in Lille, and though she was recruited by both French and British intelligence, she joined the war effort as a spy for the British as they offered her a salary. Along with a few other women, she gathered and transmitted reports across borders, giving the allies information on locations of artillery batteries, munitions depots, and troop concentrations. Captured by the Germans, de Bettignies was sent to prison in Germany where she died in 1918 of illness and complication from surgery. Tammy Proctor called her "a true soldier without uniform." Proctor, *Female Intelligence*, 115-120; Darrow, *French Women and the First World War: War Stories of the Home Front*, 281-284. Both Proctor and Darrow describe how de Bettignies and other female spies who died during the war were portrayed as martyrs embodying the virtues of Joan of Arc, without focusing much on their espionage activities.

the nation, and as such was identified and marginalized. Like the *femme nouvelle*, the female spy threatened French honor and masculinity, and therefore remained a natural villain and scapegoat for French insufficiencies into the First World War.<sup>54</sup>

### Jews

While women constituted one group that aroused the concern and attention of authorities and the public in the hunt for spies, another group that became guilty by association was the Jews. Although the Dreyfus case is by far the best-known example of an individual considered guilty of espionage in part because of his religious affiliation, he was neither the first nor the last to have been stereotyped in this way.

The connection of Jews to the practice of espionage came easily to a population that was quick to view them as apart from the nation. Froment expressed this assumption by stating matter-of-factly that the use of Jews as spies “is easily explained by the extent of their relations, the solidarity that unites them, regardless of which country they inhabit and, without even questioning sides, the incontestable ease with which they return to the question of money; the Dreyfus affair is but one more example.”<sup>55</sup> Even though in reality the nineteenth century saw Jewish populations distancing themselves from a notion of *diaspora* in favor of national identities, the perception of them as a suspicious “Other” still remained.

Compounding the suspicion of Jews as a nation-less people, Jewish men and women appeared particularly questionable because many of them came from – or

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<sup>54</sup> Darrow, *French Women and the First World War: War Stories of the Home Front*.

<sup>55</sup> Froment, *L’Espionnage militaire*, 206.

continued to reside in – the annexed provinces. As Vicki Caron argues, the “Frenchness” of inhabitants of Alsace-Lorraine had long come into question in the rest of the hexagon, and right-wing spokesmen like Edouard Drumont perpetuated the idea that many Alsatians, especially the Jews, were in reality German spies disguising their identities.<sup>56</sup> The fact that such individuals spoke French with Germanic accents and visited friends or relatives in the former French territories only served to heighten impressions that they were practicing espionage.

Not surprisingly, the right-wing press exploited this prejudiced mindset, with articles like “L’Espionnage Juif” running in *La France* in 1895, and printing works dedicated to anti-Semitism such as Edouard Drumont’s *La Libre Parole* or his vicious *La France Juive*, and Léon Daudet’s articles in the *Action française*. Daudet followed his journalist attacks on Jews as spies with his best-selling, supposedly documentary account *L’avant-guerre: études et documents sur l’espionnage juif allemand en France depuis l’affaire Dreyfus*.<sup>57</sup> These works portrayed Jews as lacking patriotism and therefore willing to spy for whoever was willing to pay. As the paper *La Croix* told its readers, “One day, a Jew steals secret documents; the next day the same Jew grimaces as he sells papers to a German. The homeland is to be found where the money is good.”<sup>58</sup> Such rumors only confirmed thoughts already latent in the imagination of a number of French people, as seen in Paléologue’s memoirs of the

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<sup>56</sup> Vicki Caron, *Between France and Germany: The Jews of Alsace-Lorraine, 1871-1918* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988), 128. Contrary to the belief spread by writers like Drumont, Jews in Alsace-Lorraine had chosen France over Germany in great numbers following the annexation. In the years between 1870 and 1880, at least 50,000 Jews from Alsace-Lorraine came to Paris alone. Bredin, *The Affair*, 26.

<sup>57</sup> *La France* article found in APP BA 1333; Léon Daudet, *L’avant-guerre: Études et documents sur l’espionnage juif-allemand en France depuis l’affaire Dreyfus* (Paris: Nouvelle librairie nationale, 1913). Daudet’s book uses a neologism to express his major fear, discussing “l’espionnement juif-allemand.”

<sup>58</sup> *La Croix* dated November 7, 1894, cited in Bredin, *The Affair*, 79.

Dreyfus Affair, who describing the degradation ceremony, quoted Sandherr as saying of Jews: “That race has neither patriotism, nor honor, nor pride. For centuries they have done nothing but betray. Remember that they betrayed Christ!”<sup>59</sup> The connection was clear – the Jew lacked loyalty and patriotism, and was therefore a natural enemy and traitor.

Such rhetoric designating Jews as natural spies had an influence on actual investigations. For example, in Brest in the late 1890s, authorities were quick to pin responsibility for charges surrounding the discovery of explosives found near the fort of St. Brieuç on a family of cosmopolitan Jews.<sup>60</sup> Following a denunciation from a local functionary claiming to have worked for the Gougenheim family at their store, the Grand Bazar, the local prosecutor, convinced of the family’s guilt, instituted surveillance of at least a dozen individuals. When nothing turned up, another civil official looked into the case and found the accusations against the Jews to be completely spurious and with almost no probable cause. The latter’s report reveals that the denunciation came from “an impenitent reactionary and fervent reader of *La Libre Parole*,” and that even the magistrate seemed to have assumed the family’s guilt based on demonstrably untrue rumors and suspicion of the family’s cosmopolitan lifestyle.<sup>61</sup> This false affair was just one example of denunciations

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<sup>59</sup> Paléologue, *My Secret Diary*, 41. This sentiment was echoed in other articles, which interestingly (and inaccurately) connected the counterespionage service of the police and the Ministry of the Interior with Jews. For example, a November 1895 article in *La France* described their service: “With the Jews, it is totally something else. These people have neither heart, nor patriotism and one can’t have any confidence in their reports.” *La France* dated November 10, 1895; APP BA 1333.

<sup>60</sup> See notes detailing the affair, which began in early 1898. AN F<sup>7</sup> 14605.

<sup>61</sup> The undated, unsigned report drafted from Paris goes step by step through the litany of supposed proofs against the Gougenheim family and their in-laws, the Kahns, refuting each one as unfounded. The accusations included the family’s travel in places like the annexed territories and Jersey, assertions that family members were German citizens and/or belonged to the German army, and that the family lived a lifestyle that was beyond their means as store owners. The author of the report, however, shows that the travel was perfectly logical and that their itineraries had been



made across the country which identified local Jewish citizens as spies. The presence of these individuals in local communities – whether business owners such as the Gougenheims or as outsiders as identified in notes to the Paris police – caused an irrational fear among the French public. Discomfort, jealousy, or fear of these seemingly “non-French” members of society led to their designation as enemies of the *patrie* and their identification as spies.

### Anarchists

While Frenchmen were much less likely to find themselves under suspicion than foreigners, one group of French nationals appeared more likely to be of concern to authorities: political dissidents like anarchists and socialists. These individuals, who voiced their opposition to the regime in a variety of ways, aroused suspicion for their supposed lack of loyalty to the nation. Colonel Rollin, a head of the army’s intelligence service, described “international socialists, anarchists, anti-militarists, and *les sans-patrie*,” as being the types of people willing to spy against a government with which they were dissatisfied.<sup>62</sup> Police notes attest to particular observation of anarchist groups, both in France and abroad, and police directors sent agents to watch their movements and intercept their correspondence. In Nice, for example, the *commissaire spécial* charged with surveillance of potential spies suggested centralizing this activity along with the surveillance of anarchists.<sup>63</sup>

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public, that family members had been naturalized French citizens since 1887, and that the earnings from the store were perfectly in line with the stated lifestyle. The report concludes that the Procureur had “accepted without proper scrutiny the affirmations of this fanatic who identified all of the “israélites” of Brest simply because they were Jewish.”

<sup>62</sup> Rollin, *Le Service de renseignements militaires*, 92.

<sup>63</sup> Report from the *commissaire spécial* of Nice to the prefect on the organization and surveillance of the Alpes-Maritimes region, dated October 9, 1901, AM 1M 871.

One of the features of anarchist correspondence that seems to have made this group so suspicious to the French police was their tendency to write using codes.<sup>64</sup> Fin-de-siècle anarchists, particularly those associated with the Symbolist movement in the arts, prided themselves on their ability to assume multiple identities and to communicate through veiled expression.<sup>65</sup> The existence of a secret alphabet and coded messages only heightened the suspicion that they were discussing subversive activity and tied them more directly in the police imagination with spies.

Authorities also at times suspected that German police agents were the ones responsible for directing the anarchist movement in France.<sup>66</sup> One such example was the Haupt affair of 1888, involving the discovery of a German *agent provocateur* posing in Switzerland as a French Socialist.<sup>67</sup> The Haupt affair produced lists of German secret agents across Europe, in London, Geneva, and Paris. The hunt for anarchists also resulted in international cooperation among secret police, so that for example the Russian secret service, the Okhrana, and Italian agents alike worked with French police and counterespionage agents on the trail of anarchist agitators.<sup>68</sup> While most cases of this cooperation remained secret, a handful of incidents led to

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<sup>64</sup> The police dedicated an entire folder to the coded correspondence of anarchists, dating from the 1880s through to 1901. AN F<sup>7</sup> 12829. From the notes it appears that the police were working to translate the symbols and codes used by the anarchists to transmit messages. The technology of cryptography was rapidly changing and improving at the time, and French counterespionage authorities used books such as F. Delastelle's *Cryptographie Nouvelle* to help figure out how to read secret messages. See book/pamphlet F. Delastelle, *Cryptographie Nouvelle* (Paris: Dubreuil, 1893). AN F<sup>7</sup> 12829.

<sup>65</sup> See Halperin, *Félix Fénéon*. She describes the tendency of Fénéon and his associates to assume varied identities, adopting pseudonyms and striving to maintain anonymity.

<sup>66</sup> See note dated September 29, 1882, APP BA 1332.

<sup>67</sup> APP BA 1333.

<sup>68</sup> "Note on the functioning of foreign police in France," dated June 19, 1914, AN F<sup>7</sup> 14605. This cooperation was at times a source of frustration for the French, as Italian agents, for example ended up using the anarchists as an excuse to send their own spies into southern France.

public exposure of the role of these secretive surveillance agencies. As Michael Miller notes, these revelations “focused attention on foreign revolutionaries as troublemakers or on the penetration of repressive secret police organizations into France...elevating discussion of spies and secret agents to the level of foreign threat and political nemesis.”<sup>69</sup> Because anarchists had ties to an international movement, the political association was particularly suspect.

The connection between spies and opponents of the established order such as anarchists and socialists was used as a rationalization of increased state repression as workers’ movements and anti-militarist agendas gained in popularity. In his groundbreaking study, now several decades old, French historian Jean-Jacques Becker demonstrated how the French state under the Third Republic used controls initially created to protect the nation from spies later to target anarchists, socialists, and anti-militarists.<sup>70</sup> In Becker’s examination of the Carnet B and its evolution in a number of regions throughout France, he shows that ideas of who the Republic considered its enemies shifted from foreigners to workers. Using the example of the Carnet B from the Vosges, Becker shows that at its origins and in the years following, the list only contained names of those connected with espionage – primarily foreigners – between 1909 and 1913, the number of Frenchmen and anti-militarists on the list quickly grew.<sup>71</sup> The notion of who could be considered a

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<sup>69</sup> Miller, *Shanghai on the Métro*, 28-29. Cases that he notes include the Padlevskii-Seliverstov affair of 1890 (the assassination of a Russian general in his Parisian hotel room), the identification of the Russian terrorist and police agent Azef in 1909, and the Landesén-Harting affair of 1909 (unmasking of a high-ranking Okharana official as an *agent provocateur* in Paris).

<sup>70</sup> Becker, *Le Carnet B*. In the introduction, Becker asks, “How can one have arrived at this astonishing situation where in the case of a European war, the preventative arrest of a certain number of Frenchmen found on this list would seem indispensable?” 13.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 108. The increase in arrests of anarchists, socialists, and other workers presumably focused on people who the authorities believed would stand in the way of mobilization of the army should the need arise.

threat to public order had demonstrably changed, and with a legal regime in place to identify these people, domestic dissidents found themselves watched and targeted as well.

### Traitors

The enactment of the 1886 espionage law gave the state the opportunity to distinguish between “good” and “bad” French citizens. The law’s drafters drew such distinction in their initial discussion, attempting to fathom what could bring a French citizen to practice espionage against his or her own country. In the *exposé de motifs* warning of the harm that spies could inflict on the nation, the reporter considered that foreigners might “have as accomplices and intermediaries the *mauvais Français*, someone with an underdeveloped moral sense, those thoughtless individuals” who could betray their country, either in war or in peace.<sup>72</sup> The idea that the traitor, a French spy, would have an underdeveloped mind put him in a category with criminals and outcasts, someone who turn-of-the-century society had little use for in the first place.<sup>73</sup> It is thus hardly a surprise that in the cases brought against Frenchmen accused of espionage, prosecutors or the military’s representatives were quick to point out suspects’ “degenerate” qualities: being alcoholics, drug addicts, or drawn to other unsavory passions. The natural

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<sup>72</sup> Cited in Mennevée, *L’espionnage international*, tome II, 36.

<sup>73</sup> The new discipline of criminology in the second half of the nineteenth century was based on the views of a number of scientists, including the Italian doctor Cesare Lombroso, who published a study in 1876 asserting the ability to distinguish criminals on the basis of certain anatomical characteristics. Lombroso’s French counterparts, however, rejected his anatomical reductionism, choosing instead to recall the theory of degeneration, and focus on the effect of the environment upon predisposed minds to spur the criminal impulse. Certain individuals, they asserted, possessed an unstable brain equilibrium that predisposed them to crime. See Nye, *Crime, Madness*, 97-131.

inclination to succumb to vices and abandon the nation thus meant that the criminal spy lacked an appreciation for the *patrie* that other citizens were supposed to have.<sup>74</sup> By portraying the French traitor as somehow “un-French,” the Republic could condemn domestic spies while still encouraging patriotic loyalties.

The creation of a legal definition of espionage created ambiguity in the way that the act of spying was described, in particular in distinguishing between the terms “espionage” and “treason.” As Robert Detourbet had noted, while there were certainly tremendous differences between the two terms, “contemporary speech constantly used one for the other, treating the two in our minds as synonyms.”<sup>75</sup> The main difference, he stressed, was in motive – serving one’s country versus betraying the nation by working for another country. Therefore a number of scholars and other authorities attempted to discern the distinction between espionage and treason, with the Chamber of Deputies making a point to note in law that treason was an act committed by the French citizen who “ignores the first of his duties towards the *patrie*,” and the foreigner who commits espionage “in serving his own country by threatening France.”<sup>76</sup>

The distinction seems fairly obvious to us today, yet was less so to late nineteenth-century theorists, given the need to explain it. Treason, like many other legal concepts, itself had changed meanings and context in France over time. Paul

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<sup>74</sup> One newspaper article makes specific reference to the notion that a person who becomes a spy does so less by choice and more by their “nature,” and that one is born with the inclination to practice espionage. *Le Journal* dated September 24, 1897.

<sup>75</sup> Detourbet, *L’espionnage et la trahison*, 1.

<sup>76</sup> *Annexe au procès-verbal de la séance du 26 juin 1895* (n° 1111-1186). Report filed on June 26, 1895 by Marc Sauzet to the Chamber of Deputies. Others, too, attempted to make a distinction between the two scenarios, such as Victor Colonieu who wrote of the difference between espionage and treason as also encompassing the act itself. For example, espionage is the act of collecting the information, while treason involved passing the information on to a foreign power. Colonieu, *L’espionnage*, 12-14.

Jankowski treats the evolution of treason in a book on political scandals, showing that accompanying the shift from monarchy to Republic were new ideas of loyalty, and consequently, novel understandings of betrayal.<sup>77</sup> The mass politics and mass culture at the close of the nineteenth century only exacerbated the potential for French citizens to betray their country, and espionage offered a glamorous and accessible means to do so.<sup>78</sup> And indeed, the numbers of Frenchmen tried for violation of the 1886 law during the years prior to WWI demonstrate the apparent widespread appeal to betray the *patrie*.

There were several reasons that people might betray their country.<sup>79</sup> The most obvious, and most common motive, was financial. Those in poor financial straits with access to information could theoretically reverse their fortunes by selling information or materiel to the enemy, a fact that was readily acknowledged by police and army officers. In an investigation into leaks made by an officer, Sergeant Duclosmenil, the police concluded that financial burden led him to divulge information to the press. The report noted that “pressing debt is the strongest factor of moral decomposition in the army. With the exception of Dreyfus, traitors generally have the excuse of poverty.”<sup>80</sup> And indeed, many of the

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<sup>77</sup> Jankowski, *Shades of Indignation*, 7-54.

<sup>78</sup> As Jankowski writes of traitors, “The democratization of war had inflated their numbers and debased their motives; its industrialization had expanded their scope and multiplied their rewards. Once they had come from the ranks of the illustrious and the puissant, went by the names of Condé, or Dumouriez, or Murat; apart from deserters flocking to a foreign flag, only the grand could betray. Now almost anyone could, because war delved so deeply into a nation’s resources and wits that any enemy might tap into them, if only he could find a helping hand.” *ibid.*, 29.

<sup>79</sup> Contemporary scholars writing about espionage often cited a number of reasons for what would lead someone to spy on his own country. Drawing a distinction between “voluntary” and “involuntary” spies, they list reasons ranging from social advancement, vengeance, and lack of morality for the former to threats to the individual or his family for the latter. See, e.g., Violle, *L’espionnage militaire*, 12-16.

<sup>80</sup> Note dated September 11, 1896, APP BA 913.

cases against individuals for espionage involved the sale of documents, materiel or other kinds of information.<sup>81</sup>

Money was not the only reason that people betrayed their country, however, and others were drawn to spy by adventure, careerism, revenge, or political reasons. Although the French narrative of their loss in the Franco-Prussian War told of German spies invading from the East, Bismarck's police chief William Stieber told a different story, writing of Frenchmen disillusioned with Napoleon III's Second Republic and therefore willing to divulge important state secrets. Stieber presumed that those who disclosed state and military secrets were likely individuals who had held important positions but had been dismissed and were looking to take revenge for their damaged pride. Others, he noted, were simply opposed to the Emperor's regime. "I soon discovered," Stieber wrote,

"how many Frenchmen there were who secretly spied on their own harbors and factories, stole documents, copied the plans of new machinery and weapons, and indeed, how many of the highest-ranking representatives of the French government, officers and officials who bore the sonorous names of ancient noble families were, for political reasons, all too ready to betray to my agents top secret information they had come to possess because of the positions they held."<sup>82</sup>

Stieber's words, if accurate, demonstrate the ease with which individuals could betray a regime in favor of their own political convictions.

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<sup>81</sup> Some examples include the sale of parts of an obus in 1886 by Jean-Baptiste Thomas (AN BB BB<sup>19</sup> 73); the sale of smokeless powder by the adjudant Châtelain in 1888; Blondeau, a civil engineer selling a map of a fort in the Meuse to Germany in 1889; (Mennevee tome II 435-437), Sergeant Nogues, condemned by the conseil de Guerre de Toulouse for selling a Lebel cartridge to the Germans in 1889. (MAE Aff. Div. Pol Allemagne 38bis), and Boutonnet and Gréiner, employees at the War Ministry, whose cases were discussed in Chapter 4.

<sup>82</sup> Stieber, *The Chancellor's Spy*, 131.

Under the Third Republic, moreover, information was much more widely available than it had been decades prior, and thus the prospect of its leaking was an ever-greater risk. A number of cases bear out the extent to which relatively low-level workers or soldiers could access classified information, and also speak to ideas of *patrie* and citizenship. Some French spies supposedly chose their path as a result of mental faults or weaknesses. In the Bonnet case, officers noted that the accused had been an alcoholic, which could have been the origin of the slippery slope that allowed him to betray his country. Others were presumed to have succumbed to feminine wiles or to the sneaky tricks of German agents.<sup>83</sup> Even captured French spies spoke of their transgression as the work of a troubled mind. An anonymous traitor sentenced to five years in prison in 1908 told his story to the paper *Le Matin*, in which he regretfully, and “with much anguish” described his time as a spy as having lived “a fictitious life, outside of myself.” To commit such treason he would have had to be sick – “my head was cloudy, as if in a storm” – or, alternately the cowardly victim of his mistress. Either way, he expressed his regret in not behaving as even he believed a true, patriotic Frenchman would behave.<sup>84</sup> In each of these cases, the suspect failed to show the moral fortitude that would enable him to resist a variety of vices, and therefore, just as Gadaud and the law’s other drafters had feared, the men “let themselves become the accessory to such hideous

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<sup>83</sup> An example of a Frenchman succumbing to female wiles was the case of Annequin, convicted by the court of Arras in 1909, who according to the case files was encouraged to desert the army and engage in espionage after starting to date “*une fille de brasserie*,” AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6085. An example of the kind of trick that could result in a betrayal of secrets was identified by the War Ministry. According to a note drafted by Picquart, foreign intelligence agents would approach French soldiers claiming to seek technical information for a revue in Belgium, asking the target to send the information to their offices. See note dated November 25, 1906, SHD 7N 676.

<sup>84</sup> “Les Aveux d’un Espion,” *Le Matin*, September 21, 1908, APP BA 1334.



actions.”<sup>85</sup> Thus they lacked the qualities that would make them ideal citizens and found themselves condemned under the Republic’s espionage laws.

In discussions of treason convictions during this period, one cannot leave out mention of Captain Alfred Dreyfus, whose case certainly highlights the widespread sentiment that those who betrayed France were fundamentally separate from the nation. Dreyfus, convicted for treason for supposedly passing documents to the German military attaché Maximilien von Schwartzkoppen, became the subject of public agitation for years, with many pointing to his Jewish and Alsatian origins as evidence that he could have betrayed with ease. The evidence presented by the War Ministry in support of the charges was flimsy. The *bordereau* indicating the presence of a traitor bore no illuminating markings, and even the conclusions of handwriting analysts as to the match with Dreyfus were mixed.<sup>86</sup> Instead, it was Dreyfus’s personality traits – his “haughty reserve, freedom of speech and judgment, lack of indulgence,” – along with his religious and geographic background that seemed to have convinced the army and the judges to believe the shoddy evidence in the “secret dossier” and to convict him as a spy and a traitor to France.<sup>87</sup>

Another widely publicized treason case was that of Charles Benjamin Ullmo, a naval lieutenant caught in attempted blackmail of the French naval ministry. In the fall of 1907, Ullmo had addressed a number of anonymous notes to the Ministry

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<sup>85</sup> Cited in Mennevée, *L’espionnage international*, 36.

<sup>86</sup> One expert, Alfred Gobert, had concluded with certainty that the handwriting in question was not Dreyfus’s, whereas Alphonse Bertillon, the police expert on the matter, had claimed that Dreyfus had employed a system of “self-forgery,” making use of three different handwritings to prove that he was not the author of the *bordereau*. Bredin, *The Affair*, 73, 95.

<sup>87</sup> Dreyfus himself identified those personal shortcomings as hindrances to his protestations of innocence. Quoted in *ibid.*, 86.

of the Marine, requesting money in exchange for stolen secret documents, threatening to sell them to Germany if the payment was not made. The Naval Minister alerted the army's counterintelligence team, which succeeded in capturing Ullmo and extracting a confession on the spot.

Recent analyses of the Ullmo case have focused on different aspects of the publicity surrounding the treason trial, drawing inferences about *fin-de-siècle* French ideals and culture. Venita Datta viewed Ullmo as the turn-of-the-century's "anti-hero," and argued that the case served as a link between fiction and reality, with the press as an influence on Ullmo himself and on the French public in the shaping of their view of the affair.<sup>88</sup> She called the naval traitor a "symbol of national decline," noting that he was described by contemporaries as a "specter," or a "cadaver," code words that signaled his lack of honor and a deviation from the turn-of-the-century's ideal of manhood.<sup>89</sup> Howard Padwa regarded the case as an example of the harm and social prejudice surrounding opium, as Ullmo was a confessed addict and had claimed both that his need for the drug drew him to seek alternate sources of income and that the drug's influence had led to his concocting of the espionage scheme. Both assessments inadvertently present Ullmo as a particularly "un-French," character, which presumably made it easier for people to deal with his betrayal. Just as Dreyfus was 'not French' because he was an Alsatian Jew, Padwa explains that Ullmo's drug habits, social isolation, and hereditary degeneration

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<sup>88</sup> Datta, *Heroes and Legends*, 179-225. Datta writes, "Unlike the celebrated heroes of the age, Ullmo had not sacrificed himself for his country but had instead attempted to sell it out for egotistical reasons. Such behavior was unpardonable, all the more so because Ullmo as a military man was entrusted both with the nation's security and with upholding national honor. Ullmo was the ultimate anti-hero whose fall served as a warning to his compatriots of the dangers of degeneration and national decline, especially because his unpatriotic behavior was linked to opium use and 'loose women,' both of which were seen as threats to national health and security." 184.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 222-223.

separated him from the rest of his peers, making his “loyalty to the nation suspect.”<sup>90</sup> Moreover, Ullmo was also Jewish, which according to the anti-Semitic journalist Léon Daudet gave him an “aptitude for treason...common among the Israelites.”<sup>91</sup> Ullmo’s military records confirmed him as an isolate and someone who failed to embrace his French citizenship and duty towards his nation.

Ullmo’s case is also interesting from a legal standpoint, as it shows the weakness of the 1886 law in targeting just the sort of behavior for which it was created. Although Ullmo’s lawyer argued that the defendant should be tried under the less strict espionage law, the prosecution favored charging him under Article 76 of the Penal Code, just like Dreyfus. One of the major questions concerned Ullmo’s intentions and the result of his actions – i.e. whether or not they had provoked hostilities. Ullmo argued that provoking conflict was never his intent, but instead offered the plans in order “to procure money for myself to continue to satisfy the passions to which I was lost.”<sup>92</sup> In spite of these arguments, the court convicted Ullmo under the harsher law and condemned him to deportation to a fortified compound in French Guyana.<sup>93</sup> These reactions demonstrate that the political climate in the Republic at this time called for an example to be set for traitors,

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<sup>90</sup> Howard Padwa, *Social Poison: The Culture and Politics of Opiate Control in Britain and France, 1821-1926* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012), 82.

<sup>91</sup> Cited in *ibid.*, 83.

<sup>92</sup> See Ullmo’s letter to M. le Commissaire du Gouvernement dated May 31, 1908, AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6085.

<sup>93</sup> This case and a few subsequent ones, including the treason trial of Rouët-Maimon-Pallier for passing along diplomatic documents, inspired the French Parliament to work once again to strengthen the 1886 law. The Caillaux government proposed a new text in 1911 aiming again to clarify the distinction between espionage and treason, but the discussion on the law lasted until the beginning of WWI, at which point the state of siege precluded such laws. See Warusfel, *Contre-espionnage*, 149.

especially those betraying not only the physical defense of the country, but its moral and cultural precepts as well.

Moreover, as Datta discusses, the publicity surrounding cases such as Ullmo's filled the press, making the capture of the spy almost a theatrical event. This collective sharing in the exposure and condemnation of the traitor served to unite a disparate population, sharing through the "imagined community" of the press the furor and indignation of Ullmo's betrayal.<sup>94</sup> In an illustration on the cover of *Le Petit Journal's* illustrated supplement, a crowd gathers around an indignant Marianne, gazing with scorn at a photo of Ullmo and another captured spy and former officer, Louis Berton. Importantly, the crowd is of mixed representation, with men and women, old and young, soldiers, sailors, workers, aristocrats, and judges all looking together in condemnation of the two traitors.<sup>95</sup>

The use of the 1886 espionage law and of Articles 76-78 of the Penal Code to condemn French citizens as spies at the turn of the century confirmed a new understanding of the term treason. Traitors could now come from any class and work on their own or with others. They seemed to embody particular traits that separated them from the rest of the population, and this lack of proper "Frenchness" was understood to facilitate their ease of betrayal.

As the new nationalism began to take hold in the early twentieth century, definitions of treason expanded even further, with the introduction of the term

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<sup>94</sup> The idea of the "imagined community" of the press as a means for the creation of a national identity was first explored in Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London; New York: Verso, 1991).

<sup>95</sup> *Le Petit Journal, supplément illustré* dated November 10, 1907. The photo's caption, reading "*Les actes d'Ullmo et de Berton ont soulevé l'indignation de la France entière,*" (The acts of Ullmo and Berton have stirred the indignation of the entirety of France), confirms this unity in condemnation. See image, Annex H.

*trahison morale*, or moral treason.<sup>96</sup> During World War I, the state brought treason cases against a number of individuals who worked for or with newspapers publishing pacifist or anti-war messages. For example, Paul-Marie Bolo, a.k.a. Bolo-Pasha, was convicted of espionage and executed in 1918 for taking German money to assist in such publications.<sup>97</sup>

To many at this time, treason remained intimately linked with espionage, and as Jankowski notes, “total war expand[ed] the scope of treason.”<sup>98</sup> The French press explained this to their readers, condemning individuals such as Bolo as inflicting the same harm that supposed spies such as Dreyfus had aimed to inflict during years of peace. *Le Journal* wrote in 1917: “The spy is no longer a romantic figure with glasses and a false beard sending accurate reports to the enemy; he’s someone who gives false reports to our own side, who terrifies the woman in the factory, the man in the trenches...he is the rust corroding the pure metal of the French soul.”<sup>99</sup>

Information had become both commodity and weapon, and those able to sell, share, print, or distribute information from one side to another became the targets of national fears and anxieties. Moreover, the traitor was an ordinary citizen who compromised the nation, and in so doing, betrayed not only the regime, but

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<sup>96</sup> Jankowski, *Shades of Indignation*. Jankowski writes, “The traitor of the piece (sic) emerged not as an Alfred Dreyfus but as a pied piper – the statesman or journalist or propagandist who might lead a now literate nation to doom and defeat. ... ‘*Trahison morale*’ conquered minds. And this, to [the army’s prosecutor Lieutenant] Mornet, far exceeded in gravity mere espionage.” 31-2.

<sup>97</sup> On Bolo-Pasha, see AN F<sup>7</sup> 15933(2). In a pamphlet titled “Les Procès de Trahison,” dated March 2, 1918, the author writes regarding Bolo-Pasha, “A campaign of defeatism and pacifism began to trouble spirits and plant the seeds of division and discouragement.” Other individuals and papers implicated for similar moral treason at this time included Manuel Almercyda, the editor of a paper, *Le Bonnet Rouge*, and even Senator Charles Humbert.

<sup>98</sup> Jankowski, *Shades of Indignation*, 32.

<sup>99</sup> *Le Journal* dated September 13, 1917; cited in *ibid.*, 34.

the composite of French men and women who constituted the nation. Finding and condemning traitors became increasingly prioritized as French men and women perceived a threat to their own safety. Contribution to the project of counterespionage therefore had the appeal of protecting France from supposed enemies, whether foreign or domestic.

*Public Participation: Denunciations*

The ability to give a legal definition to espionage and target its practitioners also resulted in an expansion of people who believed themselves able to recognize spies and who sought to alert authorities to their presence. As espionage entered the public consciousness as a danger to public security, more and more citizens joined in the effort to protect France from such threats. Numbers of individuals wrote letters, both signed and anonymous, to police, military, and diplomatic authorities, as well as to editors of a number of national and local newspapers, denouncing people or groups believed to be acting as spies in service of foreign powers. The presence and content of these letters serve not only as evidence of participation, but also as reinforcement from the public sphere of the work of new military and police institutions. This also reveals that the patterns that scholars identify as surfacing during the First World War had their roots in the supposedly “peaceful” Belle Époque.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Sheila Fitzpatrick and Robert Gellately, *Accusatory Practices: Denunciation in Modern European History, 1789-1989* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 15-16. The authors write, “War and occupation by foreign powers have seemed to provide particularly fertile climates for denunciation to flourish in the twentieth century. During the First World War, and again in the Second World War, the new situation of “total” mobilization of society in the belligerent countries produced new patterns of behavior that included widespread denunciation of spies, saboteurs, Germans, suspected Fifth Columnists, and so on.” This section demonstrates that such denunciations occurred even prior to wartime mobilization.

The practice of denunciation had been in place in France for centuries. Important scholarship in recent decades has unearthed a hearty tradition of denunciation among the French citizenry from the seventeenth through the twentieth centuries. Historians including Richard Cobb, Arlette Farge and Colin Lucas have tackled the question of denunciations, demonstrating the relationship between the public and state authorities in the administration of “justice.”<sup>101</sup> As denunciation became part of the Revolutionary fabric in the late eighteenth century, such behavior was understood to be a critical act of citizenship.<sup>102</sup>

A century later, denunciations took on an additional quality: namely a strong nationalist tinge paired with the dogmatic xenophobia on the rise in late nineteenth-century France. Identifying associates, who were almost exclusively foreigners residing on French soil, not only as enemies of the Republic but as spies, showed a pervasive conception of the existence of an enemy attempting to infiltrate and bring down French society and French ideals. Moreover, the particular flavor of the letters denouncing spies in the first half-century of the Third Republic was visibly influenced by a paranoid press and a xenophobic Ministry of War.<sup>103</sup> The establishment of this counterespionage service, along with more stringent identification procedures and the 1886 espionage law, put the official stamp on the

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<sup>101</sup> Cobb, *The Police and the People*. Farge, *Subversive Words*. Colin Lucas, “The Theory and Practice of Denunciation in the French Revolution,” in Fitzpatrick and Gellately, *Accusatory Practices*.

<sup>102</sup> Lucas also notes that with the shift to the Terror and Jacobin thinking, the importance of denunciation intensified and rendered it an imperative. Citing Etienne Barry in 1793, he demonstrates that individual denunciation was seen as an act by a member of the sovereign people on behalf of that people. Lucas, “The Theory and Practice of Denunciation,” 31.

<sup>103</sup> On the press, see Chapter 7.

xenophobic fear-mongering that the French press had been propagating over the previous decade and a half following the end of the Franco-Prussian War.<sup>104</sup>

Denunciation letters sent to police authorities demonstrate efforts of citizens at self-policing, and show how individuals viewed their national duties. In June of 1872, a Dr. Nérat addressed a letter to the prefect of Paris, stating, "I believe, in my duty as a good citizen, lacking neither in dignity nor honesty, that I know a man without doubt practicing the profession or the office of spy at the profit of our enemies."<sup>105</sup> Nérat was familiar with the suspect, a man named Vallier, as the latter lived in the furnished apartment of one of his neighbors, providing the doctor with access to Vallier's habits and routines. According to the letter, Vallier appeared suspicious for several reasons: besides being a German who claimed to be an Austrian, Dr. Nérat noticed that during the entirety of the previous year, Vallier rarely left the house, and when he did, it was mostly at night. This year, Nérat noted, he left slightly more frequently, and on Thursdays, he spent a good part of the night out and about. Moreover, he often received letters from abroad. Dr. Nérat expressed his hope that his information could help the police to target this malevolent behavior.

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<sup>104</sup> In terms of its relevance to the general public, therefore, this moment (1886), was the time when fear of spies and the need to collectively seek them out escalates. Looking at denunciation letters, one notes a few sent to authorities prior to 1886 but the greater majority came in the decade or two following Boulanger's tenure. This discrepancy is attributed to the success of Boulanger's campaign against spies, as well as his strengthening of espionage and counterespionage institutions, campaigns which the press also supported and helped spread. Consequently, the sample of letters examined herein – which includes predominantly those sent to the Prefecture in Paris as well as some that turn up in the National Archives and archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs – tends to reflect the belligerent language of Boulanger and the vigorous press. Though the sample is relatively homogenous geographically, the letters differ in authorship, penned by both men and women, signed and anonymous, and by individuals employing clear, stylistic language, those writing with blocky and ungrammatical text, and even those clipping and pasting together words and letters from printed material. Yet such variety of authors collectively hone in on similar messages using similar language, thus confirming the prevalence of 'spy fever' and its infiltration into the public sphere.

<sup>105</sup> Letter from Dr. Nérat to the Prefect de Paris dated June 27, 1872, APP BA 1332.



Nérat's letter, while not particularly interesting in itself, is emblematic of the style of denunciation letters during this period. The assumed German who doesn't identify himself as such was automatically believed to have been conspiring against France.<sup>106</sup> The activities described here of having slightly abnormal living habits aroused attention in many Frenchmen, as did the exchange of mail from abroad. Moreover, the note is typical in its use of heavily patriotic language, as well as guarantees of the author's own personal character, to give a degree of validity and authenticity to his accusation. In addition, the use of the term "enemies" to describe the country the suspected spy is working for, confirms the success of propaganda directed against Germany that had caused it to be viewed as France's main adversary.

The tone of the denunciations echoes the alarmist messages propagated by the daily press, borrowing language and ideas directly from these publications in framing the notes. The call of papers like the *Gaulois* to "Open Your Eyes" was heeded with a newfound sight of all presumed enemies.<sup>107</sup> One anonymous writer therefore looked around and claimed that the nanny and private tutor working for a neighboring family was indeed a German spy who had taken an oath to Bismarck, mimicking the exhortations of the press that Germans abroad were all serving the Chancellor, who himself was behind the German spy menace.<sup>108</sup> The press also contributed to the hunt for spies by printing denunciation letters or accusing

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<sup>106</sup> A note in the army's archives mirrors this suspicion: "French security officials should be especially aware that Germans often hide their nationality and claim to be Alsations, Lorrainers, Luxembourgeois, Swiss, Belgians, etc." December 1893, SHD 7N 674.

<sup>107</sup> *Le Gaulois*, July 8, 1873.

<sup>108</sup> Anonymous letter dated September 29, 1887, APP BA 1332.

individuals in their pages.<sup>109</sup> The letters identify work associates or social equals, neighbors, and those considered strangers in the region.

The idea that spies were working in French businesses pervades both the press and the denunciation letters. In a letter dated September 28, 1887, a tailor named Michel Mulder recounted to the police a number of things personally told to him by another tailor, a Prussian named Chirlin.<sup>110</sup> Mulder describes certain suspicious activity, such as Chirlin's making keys for the sole purpose of locking his personal papers in his hotel room. In the letter's conclusion, however, Mulder included an interesting phrase, seemingly irrelevant to the accusation of his colleague. "Where I, having opted for French citizenship, and being French above all, I hope that in presenting you with this declaration I am doing my job as a citizen." Unlike the letter's author, Chirlin had demonstrably chosen Prussia over France following the annexation of territories after the Franco-Prussian War, emphasizing Mulder's own inclusion while highlighting the presumed spy's exclusion. By writing a denunciation letter, Mulder appeared to be seeking recognition of his own devotion to the *patrie*, possibly hoping that the police would help him to edge out his competition. When the police followed up on this denunciation, they concluded that it was doubtful that Chirlin was a German spy.

While authors of these letters affect the notion of acting selflessly in the interest of the French state, it appears likely that a number of the denunciation

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<sup>109</sup> Often cases in the police files begin with press clippings denouncing people as spies, with the police subsequently using the printed details to follow up in pursuit of the matter. For the most part, these investigations led to the conclusion that the suspect was in fact not a spy. See, e.g. "Questionnaire," from a paper called the *Est-Frontière* asking, among other questions, "Is it true that Mme Frédérique Zimmer, living at 39 rue Lafayette is a German spy?" Undated [1887], APP BA 1332.

<sup>110</sup> Letter from Michel Mulder dated September 28, 1887, APP BA 1332.

letters accusing individuals of being spies for Germany were completely unfounded and motivated by some sort of spite or prejudice. After following up a denunciation letter signed simply “Emile,” the police concluded that the author likely had personal reasons for denouncing the suspect.<sup>111</sup> In another case, police followed up a report about a foreigner named Kiehl, who the police again concluded was likely not a spy. “The only reproach that one could give him,” reads the magistrate’s note, “is that he lives with a married woman, Madame Gauthier. One supposes that the anonymous denunciation is the vengeance of the husband.”<sup>112</sup> Romantic ties also came into play in a case where the police traced the origin of a series of denunciation letters to a family seeking to prevent their daughter from marrying a particular individual.<sup>113</sup>

Regardless of motives, the letters demonstrate a reliance on the institutions of the Third Republic to serve as the receptor of these jealous, xenophobic, or prejudiced sentiments. The conclusion that certain letters were unfounded rests on the *types* of people who were targeted; in particular, a disproportionate number of women, and also French nationals identified as Jews. While most of the denunciation letters targeting women at least provide some sort of evidence to back up their claims, those aimed at exposing the devious schemes of Jewish citizens and non-citizens alike take a much more irrational tone.<sup>114</sup> It is doubtful that the police put much stock in these sorts of denunciations; yet, they remain interesting in

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<sup>111</sup> Letter denouncing Jules Perrin as a German spy. The denunciation note is undated, but the police note following it up is dated October 1, 1888. APP BA 1333.

<sup>112</sup> Note dated April 7, 1890, AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6081.

<sup>113</sup> See correspondence in June 1907, APP BA 1334.

<sup>114</sup> See, e.g. anonymous note dated August 12, 1888, APP BA 1333.

demonstrating the extent to which the fever to denounce “un-French” spies spread through the country. Moreover, although such letters do not directly attest to the patriotism of the author, even the so-called “manipulative denunciations”<sup>115</sup> emphasize a definite sense of participation in the projects of the government, where helping out the French state also meant getting rid of a competitor.

Evidence that views about female spies discussed above had entered the public consciousness can be found in the disproportionate number of denunciation letters claiming to reveal the workings of suspicious women. While the historical record shows very few females employed as spies at the turn of the century, the accusations against them suggest a contradictory belief. One particularly inflammatory note from an anonymous author in September of 1888 accused a female associate of being “a traitor and a monster” based on the relations she kept.<sup>116</sup> In this denunciation of a woman named Marie Coleur, the author asserted that Mlle Coleur was having relations with a senior officer in the garrison of Paris. Her guilt as serving as a spy, however, was assessed by the fact that she came from “the annexed territories,” and that her brothers were German soldiers. Though women were not necessarily acting as spies with any frequency, the publicity around them would indicate otherwise.

The importance of these letters to a history of the growth and acceptance of espionage and counterespionage in the late nineteenth century can be understood by assessing the effect that they had on the authorities to whom they were directed. Although the denunciations appear only very rarely to have resulted in the arrest of

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<sup>115</sup> Fitzpatrick and Gellately, *Accusatory Practices*, 11.

<sup>116</sup> Letter dated September 1888, APP BA 1333.

an actual spy, the police notes demonstrate that they did indeed take citizens' accusations quite seriously. The majority of the denunciation letters found in the police archives are followed by one or several reports from the officer on duty pursuing the merits of the case. Former police chief Louis Andrieux discussed denunciation letters in his memoirs, claiming that they helped the police in their pursuits, noting also that anonymous letters greatly increased with the introduction of the postcard as an "economic mode of correspondence."<sup>117</sup> Boulanger, too, spelled out the importance of these denunciations in his official instructions to the military gendarmerie for its surveillance of the population, asserting that a denunciation would greatly help his gendarmes on the trail for spies.<sup>118</sup> Indeed, the files of a handful of individuals in the judicial and military archives identify the person in question as the subject of denunciations.<sup>119</sup> Robert Gellately, in his work, describes the success of denunciations in the interaction between people and the authorities.<sup>120</sup> The fact that the police routinely followed up on public accusations of others as spies encouraged citizens to continue to draft such letters. Moreover, the articles in the press and calls for keen vigilance kept ordinary Frenchmen on their toes.

The practice of denouncing the crime of espionage at the turn of the twentieth century is thus a continuation of a previous tradition and a forerunner of

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<sup>117</sup> Andrieux, *Souvenirs*, 302-303. He seems to find anonymous denunciation letters dishonorable, however, and complained of the difficulty of finding their author. See an example of such a postcard containing an anonymous denunciation, using words cut out from printed material, Annex I.

<sup>118</sup> *Instruction très confidentiel* on the application of the April 18, 1886 law relating to surveillance by the Gendarmerie dated December 9, 1886; SHD 7N 11.

<sup>119</sup> See, for example, the file of Ackermann, 1897, SHD 2I 323, and the file of Louis Brouillon, AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6080.

<sup>120</sup> Robert Gellately, "Denunciation as a Subject of Historical Research," *Historical Social Research* 26(2001): 17.

a new one. One hundred years after the French Revolution, these letters show that the institution of popular politics that Arlette Farge describes with regard to the seventeenth century had remained intact. The objects of denunciation had changed, however; whereas during the Revolution and the Terror individuals wrote in to denounce ministers, priests, aristocrats and then later enemies of the Jacobin regime, by the time of the Third Republic these letters mobilized opposition to an external, or otherwise “un-French” enemy, or those who might abet such an enemy like Jews or cosmopolitans. Whereas in previous eras the public found itself against the police role in domestic surveillance, these denunciations indicate that at least a portion of the population supported police and military authorities observing private lives.<sup>121</sup>

It is such public participation in domestic, and in a way, international, issues that demonstrates the other side of this tradition. In their analysis of denunciation practices, Sheila Fitzpatrick and Robert Gellately indicate that war and occupation provide particularly fertile ground for denunciations, and turn to the First and Second World Wars as examples of “the new situation of ‘total’ mobilization of society” in belligerent behavioral practices.<sup>122</sup> These letters demonstrate the practice anticipated prior to the outbreak of “hot” war, supporting the notion of the presence of a warlike sentiment during this period.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> For negative views of police surveillance earlier in the nineteenth century, see Pierre Karila-Cohen, “Les fonds secrets ou la méfiance légitime. L’invention paradoxale d’une ‘tradition républicaine’ sous la Restauration et la monarchie de Juillet,” *Revue historique*, no. 636, 2005.

<sup>122</sup> Fitzpatrick and Gellately, *Accusatory Practices*, 15-16.

<sup>123</sup> The idea that ordinary people could play a role in the development of both belligerent and strongly nationalist sentiments that characterize this period fits into Foucault’s project of rethinking subject and power in history. The presence of these letters and authorities’ reactions to them, show grassroots involvement in power relations.

*Pursuing Spies with "Excess Zeal"*

With the passage of the espionage law and Boulanger's subsequent instructions on how to implement it, representatives of the state across France went about their quest for spies. The hunt for spies grew to elevated proportions during the half-century before WWI, resulting in an atmosphere of "spy mania." While some of these pursuits did turn up legitimate threats to French national security, at other times authorities employed surveillance and arrests frivolously. Cases demonstrating what contemporaries describe as "an excess of zeal"<sup>124</sup> by police and military agents in pursuing individuals illustrate how everyday agents understood the aims of the 1886 law.

One indication of the vigor with which espionage was increasingly pursued following the institution of the legal regime is the quantity of police notes found in various archives. For example, the folder containing police pursuits for espionage by the Paris Prefecture of Police in 1887 is bigger than the combination of several of the folders for years preceding it.<sup>125</sup> A similar increase in policing activity can be noted from the archives of the Alpes-Maritimes, where police watched the movement of people along the border between France and Italy. An Italian language newspaper called *Il Pensiero di Nizza* observed in the summer of 1886 that the French gendarmes had become much more severe towards foreigners in the region.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> Letter to the Minister of the Interior from a concerned citizen dated September 22, 1895. AN F<sup>7</sup> 12644-45.

<sup>125</sup> APP BA 1332.

<sup>126</sup> Paper dated June 26, 1886, AM 1M 359.

The overzealous activity of officers scattered throughout the country was recognized by some of France's highest authorities. Following a series of incidents in 1891, the Ministers of Justice, War, Interior, and Foreign Affairs exchanged a significant amount of correspondence discussing the tendency of certain agents to carry out unwarranted pursuits and arrests, with some suggesting that the practice had become abusive.<sup>127</sup> One such case was that of the capture of a Danish citizen, Mr. Frederiksen, arrested in the Vaucluse upon his arrival by train when he was seen "examining the train station and noting his observations in a notebook."<sup>128</sup> The supposedly incriminating evidence against him included having locked the door to his hotel room and carrying a key ring with 12 keys. In another case, a gendarme stopped three Italian professors and 11 high school students because they weren't carrying passports. The students – who were in uniform – and the professors, were able to demonstrate their identity with their railroad passes. After the arrest of an Englishman named Heelis in the Cantal for carrying a sketchpad and maps, despite the fact that this central French region contained no major military infrastructure, and the arrest of Andreac and Cooper for their photographs of the bridge at Flavigny, the Foreign Affairs Ministry was clearly becoming exasperated.<sup>129</sup>

Some years later the Ministries of Justice and Foreign Affairs were again in contact regarding the arrest in Rouen of a German army officer named Kurtz. Kurtz was a veterinarian working in France to study a rare breed of horses. The file

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<sup>127</sup> MAE Series C, Admin, 179.

<sup>128</sup> Letter from Minister of War Charles de Freycinet, signed November 14, 1891. When finally brought before the Procureur de la République, Frederickson, a Danish professor, was released and permitted to travel in France. See AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6081 and MAE Series C, Admin, 179.

<sup>129</sup> See AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6081. In several letters, the Minister of Foreign Affairs asked that the police be "less rigorous" in these matters. For details of the Andreac and Cooper case, see Chapter 5.



shows little legitimate reason for his arrest, and indeed, the trial against him resulted in a *non-lieu*. According to the Foreign Minister (via the French ambassador in Berlin), the arrest greatly upset public opinion in Germany, and it seemed as if the French authorities were acting with unnecessary vigor.<sup>130</sup> The zeal was not reserved solely for foreigners, as demonstrated in a letter to the Minister of the Interior from a French citizen in Briançon complaining of being unfairly accused of espionage and having been avidly watched and followed by police agents for years.<sup>131</sup> Another state investigator acknowledged this problem after looking into the case discussed above regarding the Jewish family in Brest. In his report he writes, "This is not the first time that I have been concerned with the ease with which one accommodates denunciations for espionage. I am fearful of the sort of patriotic hysteria raging among certain men in this country."<sup>132</sup>

These incidents caused frustration among various departments for lack of communication and also for the potential damage that they might cause to France's relationships with its neighbors. In these cases, it was most often the diplomats in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MAE) who took issue with the police reaction in hastily arresting certain subjects. The MAE feared offense by foreign populations reacting to reports of arrests of their countrymen in their local press and the reactions of their fellow ambassadors as well.<sup>133</sup> A letter from the Foreign Affairs

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<sup>130</sup> See letter from the Minister of Foreign Affairs to the Minister of Justice dated April 7, 1893, AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6082.

<sup>131</sup> Letter dated September 22, 1895, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12644-5.

<sup>132</sup> Undated [probably 1899], unsigned letter, AN F<sup>7</sup> 14605.

<sup>133</sup> On October 16, 1891, the Minister of Foreign Affairs wrote, "It is not necessary to insist on the effect that such arrests produce in the countries from which the victims of these measures originate. The foreign press uses it against us, and the embassies and leagues are sending us complaints that we find difficult to answer." He calls for a meeting of the four ministries, and requests the

Minister to the Minister of the of Justice regarding the incident of the Italian students and teachers called upon the gendarmerie “to reconcile the respect due to the liberty of individuals with the duties that the necessity to defend France imposes on you.”<sup>134</sup> The Foreign Minister also directed grievances against the Justice Ministry, addressing a letter to the *Garde des Sceaux* in the Kurtz case reprimanding him for failing to take account of the potential damage that the “unjustifiable” arrest could have on foreign relations.<sup>135</sup> This attitude was supported by legal scholars and by ambassadors stationed abroad.<sup>136</sup> Even General Boulanger, the personification of *revanche*, had encouraged functionaries to avoid antagonizing foreign countries unnecessarily, demonstrating a foresight not generally associated with him, and showing recognition of the reach of espionage into the realm of foreign affairs.<sup>137</sup>

While some attacked the individual officers and functionaries, others defended them. In a response to complaints about the prosecution of cases, the

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introduction of new provisions that would force police, military, and judicial authorities to respect the liberty of foreigners traveling on French territory. MAE Series C, Admin, 179.

<sup>134</sup> See letter from the Minister of Foreign Affairs to Fallières, Minister of Justice, dated November 4, 1891, AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6081.

<sup>135</sup> Letter from MAE to the Minister of Justice dated April 7, 1893. AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6082.

<sup>136</sup> A note in the APP comments on resistance by the French ambassador to Germany, Jules Herbette, to establish a counterespionage service in France for fear of how the High Court in Berlin would react. Note dated December 6, 1890, APP BA 1116. Victor Colonieu also commented on this issue in his analysis of the 1886 law. Describing the decision to try Kilian under the April 18, 1886 law as opposed to the Penal Code, he writes that the lesser penalty demonstrated the government’s concern not to open itself up to criticism or questions that “could easily become irritating in the *rappports* of nation to nation.” Colonieu, *L’espionnage*, 119-122.

<sup>137</sup> In instructing his generals as to the means of apprehending and interrogating espionage suspects, Boulanger notes that “these measures must be pursued with as much care and tact as possible.” Letter from Boulanger to the army heads laying out policy for the new espionage law, dated October 9, 1886, SHD 7N 11. He often wrote that the military should pursue their cases with celerity, in order to avoid complaints of non-justified arrests or of excessive prevention, making sure that the recipients of the directive, as well as those under them, remained aware of the impact that their actions could have on international relations.

Justice Minister informed the Foreign Minister that his people were acting “with prudence and celerity.”<sup>138</sup> In his response to the accusations, the Interior Minister referenced the instruction issued on December 9, 1886, stating that the attitude of the gendarmerie remained in conformity with this document and that the arrests were justified by the imprudence of the individuals arrested. In 1891, Minister of War Charles de Freycinet, writing on letterhead of the Statistical Section, also cited this same instruction when responding to complaints about the Fredricksen case, noting that the Foreign Minister’s request to relax the regulations of the *Instruction* was imprudent, as “the number and audacity of foreign secret agents is only growing, with the German government asking its parliament for additional money to fund secret activities.”<sup>139</sup> In additional letters, he defended the actions of the authorities as to each complaint raised by the Foreign Minister and retorted that control of foreigners remained absolutely necessary to maintaining French national security. He dismissed the notion that ambassadors and legations would complain, asserting that they too should recognize the reality of the present situation.

“In sum,” Freycinet wrote, “whatever my desire to be agreeable to representatives of foreign powers, it is difficult, in the face of an increasing threat of foreign espionage, to restrict the initiative of our agents. I agree with the Interior Minister that this would only make our agents’ already difficult task even more challenging, which would discourage them, and in the fear of being repudiated, they would abstain from acting even in critical circumstances.”<sup>140</sup>

Discussions such as these reveal a divergence in national opinion between the need to protect the state and the need to protect individual liberty. In spite of

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<sup>138</sup> Letter from Minister of Justice to Minister of Foreign Affairs dated January 23, 1891; MAE Series C, Admin, 179.

<sup>139</sup> November 14, 1891, MAE Series C, Admin, 179.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid.

protests or recognition that authorities had the tendency to go too far in their interpretation of the French espionage laws, surveillance, pursuits, and arrests continued against innocent individuals who found themselves subject to suspicion or denunciation based on their gender, religion, or nationality. These overzealous pursuits were justified in the name of national safety and national defense. The overwhelming majority of the population seemed not to question these endeavors, and in fact, state functionaries were not the only ones eager to see the espionage law used as a means to protect the *patrie*.

In the years following the passage of the law, some elements of the ever-critical French press – which had championed the law’s passing in 1886 – criticized the government and the judiciary for not doing enough to enforce it. Various papers claimed that foreign espionage continued unabated in France, suggesting either that powerful German interests were keeping French politicians from enforcing the law, or that they were lax with their duties. Journalists critiqued the state with articles such as “The guilty inertia of the government allows the neglect of a patriotic law,” or by claiming that magistrates failed to take necessary precautions against suspected spies.<sup>141</sup> Other writers contributed to the public sentiment by identifying measures taken by German authorities to catch supposed French spies, claiming them to be in stark contrast with the French tendency to arrest and then release German spies without proper punishment.<sup>142</sup>

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<sup>141</sup> *La Presse*, October 16, 1889. See also articles in *La Lanterne* dated July 7, 1888, *La République* dated October 12, 1889, *L’Information*, November 15, 1888, *Petit Corporal*, July 19, 1888 (“Speaking several days ago about espionage, I said that the government had a strict responsibility to apply laws on this matter. More than ever is imposed the necessity of a severe and immediate repression.”), and *Le Rappel* dated November 11, 1904. AN F<sup>7</sup> 12644-5.

<sup>142</sup> See *Le Petit Parisien*, December 6, 1897; also letter from the prefect of the Marne to the Interior Ministry dated December 8, 1887, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12581. Authors repeated this sentiment in published books as well, such as Loyal, *Le Dossier de la revanche*.

When discussing certain infamous cases, the press identified individual judges or magistrates who it asserted failed to do their duty to uphold the aims of the 1886 law. For example, during both the Kilian and Giletta affairs, the press complained that the police and prosecutors let much slide.<sup>143</sup> In November 1888, the paper *La Cocarde* criticized the courts' failure to convict an accused German spy named Walter Heurck, attacking the *Président du Conseil* directly for letting this spy go free.<sup>144</sup> Other papers wrote about the Republic's failure to adequately protect information; for example the *Intransigeant* printed a long article condemning a man named Guillot who the paper said played a role in exposing confidential information about French military officers.<sup>145</sup>

It should be noted that the press calls for increased vigilance and stricter application of the espionage law came not only from the far right, as might be expected, but from newspapers representing opinion across the ideological spectrum. The years of perceived decline and degeneration within France had contributed to an atmosphere of fear, into which the image of the spy served as the physical representation of the threat of actual war. Although the press clearly exaggerated the extent of the spy menace, its continued calls for increased

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<sup>143</sup> For the Kilian case, see the prosecutor's note of September 21, 1888 describing his frustration with the press, which complains that the police and the parquet failed to capture one of Kilian's accomplices. AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6080. In the Giletta case, the paper *l'Eclairneur* attacked the head of special police, M. Nogier, while the *Petit Niçois* insulted the magistrate directing the investigation. BB<sup>18</sup> 6083.

<sup>144</sup> *La Cocarde* dated November 3, 1888. AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6080.

<sup>145</sup> Article in *Intransigeant* dated January 26, 1897, "Un Sous-Dreyfus." AN F<sup>7</sup> 12644-5. The article called for more stringent security measures, "for the confidence that we must have in the future in those whose mission is to watch over all that interests national defense. ... In the grave questions on which depend the Metz and the Sedans, where the integrity and the future of the patrie itself are at stake, there is no such thing as small indiscretions. Individuals working in such a profitable industry begin with a *tableau d'avancement*, like the Guillots, and finish generally by pieces of our weapons, like the Dreyfuses."

enforcement again demonstrate public support for the Third Republic's efforts to repress espionage. The fact that commentators continued to call for more surveillance and more convictions confirms the extent of the fear that the modern practice of espionage had unleashed.

### *Removing the Enemy: Expulsions*

The attitude of suspicion by the state and its institutions towards foreigners and others with questionable loyalty to the nation had a real impact on individual lives, with the state administration possessing the sovereign authority to determine whether or not foreigners were allowed to remain on French territory. During the first half-century of the Third Republic, prefects in Paris and throughout the country expelled individuals for a variety of reasons.<sup>146</sup> According to authorities or the population at large, in each case the individual represented some threat to French security. As a number of cases demonstrate, these views tended to be fairly subjective, and espionage served as a pretext for expulsion, even when no tangible proof of the act seems to have existed.

Public rumor provided one basis for characterizing individuals as possible spies worthy of expulsion from France. One example is that of Adelaide Triebel, described above, who became the object of police surveillance after neighbors reported that she might be a prostitute, or at least was known to sleep with a number of men. The officer's note in the file specifically mentions that he wasn't

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<sup>146</sup> The main reason for expulsion was for destitution, with crimes or political subversion as other reasons for expulsion at the end of the nineteenth century. See Frank Caestecker, "The Transformation of Nineteenth-Century West European Expulsion Policy, 1880-1914," in *Migration Control in the North Atlantic World: The Evolution of State Practices in Europe and the United States from the French Revolution to the Inter-war Period*, ed. Andreas Fahrmeir, Olivier Faron, and Patrick Weil (New York: Berghahn Books, 2003), 120-137.

sure about the basis for the accusation of espionage, but after collecting information such as Ms. Triebel's assertion that German officers were physically superior to French officers and therefore would be more likely to win in a future war, the police decided to expel her from the country.<sup>147</sup> In another example of rumor culminating in suspicions of espionage and expulsion, Jean Marie Mayaux, a schoolteacher in the annexed territories, "became the object of public disdain" for things such as supposedly punishing students who cried out in class, "*Vive la France*."<sup>148</sup> Mayaux often returned to France where his parents still lived, yet such visits apparently provoked "indignation [among residents] regarding his conduct, seeking that measures be taken in order to prevent such espionage."<sup>149</sup> Notably, while his file does indicate that he opted for German nationality over French, there is no evidence of actual spying or passing along of information. Nonetheless, to the consternation of Mayaux and his parents, the local prefect near Nancy issued the order of expulsion on January 30, 1889.

Similar examples of expulsion for personal choices and attitudes fill the files in police archives in border regions. Individuals viewed as having "bad morals," engaging "hostile sentiments towards France," or "having frequent relations with Prussians," were no longer welcome to reside within the hexagon. Those who failed to opt for French citizenship or declined to serve in the army also aroused police suspicion. As in the cases of men like Gustave Eble and Pierre Kind, police often instituted surveillance, looking for evidence of espionage practice, but even

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<sup>147</sup> See her file MM 4M 163. She was expelled from France on March 12, 1888.

<sup>148</sup> Quote is from police note dated May 1, 1887. See also police note dated April 29, 1887. Mayaux was sent an order of expulsion dated January 30, 1889. MM 4M 163.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid.

after failing to find proof, declared the individual suspect and ordered that he or she be removed from the country.<sup>150</sup> Others were expelled for more legitimate reasons, like Gribkowski who had attempted to procure a Lebel gun, or those caught using fake identification.<sup>151</sup> In addition to the ability to order expulsions, the police authorities could also declare a special “interdiction to travel,” which was levied upon people who had been convicted of espionage, served in prison, and had been released.<sup>152</sup>

The use of expulsion as a means of rooting out subversive or otherwise threatening elements of society greatly increased at the end of the nineteenth century, paralleling a more prominent presence of the state in everyday life.<sup>153</sup> Migration and alien policy was not limited to the jurisdiction of central authorities, and thus local agencies were given an important place in defining the stranger.<sup>154</sup> Expulsions for reason of espionage gave local officials the ability to purge their regions of suspected threats to the public order. On occasion, expulsion was used to target potential spies at times when not enough evidence was found to convict otherwise.<sup>155</sup> The growing use of deportation to prevent foreigners from

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<sup>150</sup> Gustave Eble was expelled on September 5, 1888. He aroused police suspicion for not choosing French citizenship, often being alone, and taking photographs in the area of Besançon. Pierre Kind had been seen watching forts and other areas, and traveled to Metz even though according to the police record, he didn't know anyone there. The police declared his conduct “suspect,” and stated that he was a “rebellious” German. He was expelled on January 14, 1888. MM 4M 163. For more accounts, see also MM 4M 170 and 4M 273.

<sup>151</sup> On Gribkowski see expulsion dated November 12, 1888; MM 4M 163.

<sup>152</sup> On many of these, see MM 4M 277.

<sup>153</sup> Caestecker, “Migration,” 120-137.

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*, 120. In a number of cases involving espionage, however, local prefects sought the help of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in ordering expulsions. See MAE Affaires Diverses Politiques Allemagne, 37 and 38 bis.

<sup>155</sup> See, for example, the case of Sidney O'Dann, an Irish national who supposedly offered his services in espionage to both the French and German governments. The French arrested him in 1887 along



supposedly practicing espionage on French territory mirrored stricter regulation of foreigners and a shift in the practice of nation-states to cater to the needs of their own citizens, while at the same time excluding individuals of different backgrounds. In expelling subversives, destitute persons, and spies, the late-nineteenth/ early twentieth-century state demonstrated its commitment to maintaining public order.

### *Conclusion*

With professional spy agencies sprouting up across Europe at the end of the nineteenth century, the fear that both amateur and well-trained spies could penetrate a nation's defense system had grown. The spy was no longer someone with important connections, but could be anyone seeking adventure, revenge, money, or power. The notion that spies could bring great harm to regimes in power meant that they would naturally be enemies of the state. They were therefore by nature opposed to the structure of the ordered Republic, and could be identified by their status as outsider. Political dissidents, Jews, the New Women, and weak or deviant Frenchmen drew particular attention.

With the expanded definition of their target, state functionaries, the press, and ordinary citizens alike participated in the hunt for spies and traitors at the turn of the century. The perception of a spy-infested nation became a shared reality that excluded some, yet served to unite the others. By writing and reading articles and letters identifying spies and championing their capture, the French public jointly

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with Karl Wilhelm Wollitz for attempting to buy a new model cartridge, yet did not possess enough information to convict them as spies. Instead, the state opted to expel the two, per ministerial order of February 5, 1887. APP BA 916.

shared in the quest to make the nation a safer place. In so doing, however, they also united unwittingly in the relinquishing of certain liberties and allowed the intrusion of the state into their private lives.<sup>156</sup> Increased surveillance, censorship, and other activities deemed necessary to protect the nation came at the expense of personal liberty for all individuals, as well as monetary expense, which itself was often kept secret.<sup>157</sup>

In the end, the spy menace proved to be greatly exaggerated, and the groups that found themselves the target of national suspicion were not necessarily those who the nation needed to fear. A French investigator, looking at a number of false affairs of espionage at the close of the nineteenth century, expressed his frustration with the imbalance between the fears and the reality. “How is one not struck,” he asked, “with the enormous disproportion between the amount of money spent in recent years for counterespionage and the results obtained?...Espionage exists, it must be fought, but we cannot strike at random and with the leniency that we often do.”<sup>158</sup> Such recommendations, however, were in the minority, and the hunt for

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<sup>156</sup> One example of this was in the state’s use of the espionage threat to intercept and access people’s mail. A handful of cases against presumed spies incorporate evidence that was found in postal boxes or in people’s correspondence. Police and military authorities discussed the desire to intercept and hold mail in the case of political tensions and sought to work with the office of *Postes et Télégraphes* to facilitate this. See, e.g. note from Sandherr dated December 27, 1888, SHD 7N 674 and note dated December 27, 1909, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12829. A number of details regarding the regime’s surveillance and seizure of correspondence of journalists and politicians were revealed in what was to be the last of the trials stemming from the Dreyfus Affair, known as the *Affaire Dautriche*. Laurent, *Politiques de l’ombre*, 506-507, 512-513. Similarly, the government began regulating the upbringing and storage of carrier pigeons. Moreover, Frenchmen or women known to associate with foreigners were deemed particularly suspicious and also found themselves the subjects of surveillance.

<sup>157</sup> The Third Republic paid for its surveillance activities, much as the regimes before it had, with secret funds, or “*fonds secrets*.” The state’s secret funds were split between the Ministries of War, Interior and Foreign Affairs, and could be used for whatever their holders deemed necessary. Although debates on the amounts of secret funds were at times published in official state journals, how they were spent remained discrete. Though complaints occasionally arose about the lack of transparency regarding the *fonds secrets*, the state maintained them throughout the period described herein. *Ibid.* 478-493.

<sup>158</sup> Unsigned, undated [1899] letter, AN F<sup>7</sup> 14605.

spies continued with vigor in the pre-War years, and into WWI, when spy fever only accelerated at a rate still far beyond the actual threat.<sup>159</sup> The spy was “the Other,” and the physical representation of France’s ills. With his or her pursuit and elimination, therefore, the French people hoped to come together in restoration of national safety and honor.

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<sup>159</sup> Margaret Darrow notes that during the War, the French army executed more than 250 people for espionage, convicting and sentencing many more to lesser punishments. In fact, an internal report of the German Intelligence Service in 1915 found that few of the people reported in the French press to be German spies worked for Germany, leading Darrow to conclude that “very few of them were actually spies.” Darrow, *French Women and the First World War: War Stories of the Home Front*, 269.

## CHAPTER 7

### **Intelligence in Perception: From Criminal to Patriot – How Emotions Dictated Perceptions of Espionage**

In September 1894, the French naval captain Roman Romani was arrested in Italy on grounds of engaging in espionage for France. His condemnation before a tribunal in San Remo was met with outcries and deemed an insult to the French people. The Italian Countess d'Ange based in Nice also protested, calling the sentence "incontestably an injustice," and feared for the damage that such a decision would have on relations between France and Italy.<sup>1</sup> The French public became "deeply indignant" with the Italian decision to try Romani in a closed session. Yet two months later, the French army would do the same with Captain Alfred Dreyfus.<sup>2</sup> Romani had the nation's support, while Dreyfus was vilified.

Although of an obviously different nature, the juxtaposition of the Romani and Dreyfus Affairs, which occurred within months of each other, demonstrates the difficulties of assessing the probity of espionage at the end of the nineteenth century. Dreyfus's condemnation elicited nationwide denunciation of the German practice of espionage, following decades of paranoid predictions by French journalists and writers of a great Bismarckian spy plot. At the same time, several cases throughout the first few decades of the Third Republic had exposed the

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<sup>1</sup> AM 1M 359. The diplomat Albert Billot wrote, "Public opinion is particularly moved by the treatment of Captain Romani, whose innocence and good faith seem without any contest. After the condemnation pronounced against him by the tribunal in Saint Remo and confirmed by the Court of Genes, the attacks have continued unabated." Albert Billot, *La France et l'Italie, histoire des années troubles, 1881-1899* (Paris: Plon-Nourrit et cie, 1905), 72. It appears that Romani was actually innocent, and that he had been confused by the Italians with Captain Gendron from the Statistical Section. Laurent, *Politiques de l'ombre*, 544, footnote 3. See also Gendron's testimony before Rennes in "Le procès Dreyfus, devant le Conseil de Guerre de Rennes (7 août-9 septembre 1899)."

<sup>2</sup> Paul de Cassagnac, quoted in George Barlow, *A History of the Dreyfus Case from the arrest of Captain Dreyfus in October, 1894, up to the flight of Esterhazy in September, 1898* (London: Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent, 1899).

French army's practice of maintaining an intelligence service of its own, and the capture of Dreyfus only confirmed that the French *services de renseignements* had placed spies in foreign embassies in Paris. Certainly, the obvious distinction between the two came in terms of nationality, allowing a line to be drawn between espionage and treason. "The contemptible character is not the military spy," said an anonymous army colonel discussing the two cases, "but the traitor."<sup>3</sup>

Regardless, the basis for the act was the same, with each nation presumably hiring a spy to unearth military secrets that would give the state an advantage over another. The reactions to these affairs represent the dual natured view of espionage at the turn of the century. On one hand, spying was viewed as treacherous, sneaky and dishonorable, and in that vein associated in particular with Germany. On the other hand, however, spying for the good of the nation had the potential to be viewed as honorable and patriotic. This chapter aims to reconcile the diverging views taken towards espionage when the individual in question was spying for Germany or another foreign nation versus spying on behalf of France. While it is not hard to understand the vitriol launched at the former, when compared with the praise heaped upon the latter, the disparity of discussion around the two versions merits more explanation than merely nationalist jingoism. French views of German spies reflect what Michael Nolan has termed the "inverted mirror," whereby citizens of one nation identify the vices of their enemies and ignore similar weaknesses in their own society.<sup>4</sup> I argue that the French ability to laud within their own nation what they condemned from Germany came about within a specific historical context, in

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<sup>3</sup> "Espionnage et Trahison: Entretien avec un Colonel," *La France Militaire*, November 20, 1894.

<sup>4</sup> Nolan, *Inverted Mirror*.

particular with the rise of *revanchiste* discourse, and the irredentist push to restore the lost territories of Alsace and Lorraine to France.

In tackling this disparity, it is necessary to consider what the prevailing view of spies and spying might have been at the time. The spy was not yet a popular character in fictional accounts, with clever detective Sherlock Holmes emerging just in 1887, and James Bond not to follow for another seventy years. Since the reality of espionage was a relative unknown, the “truth” about spying could only be exposed through supposition, hearsay, and, I argue, collective and personal emotions.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, the fact that the true nature of espionage was unknown hardly prevented writers from publicly proclaiming dogmatic statements that they believed to be truth, statements that also can be explained by considering them in the context of the wider culture. This chapter examines the discourse surrounding espionage in the French public sphere and in police files, arguing that through emotional association attitudes towards spies took on an irrational tinge that resulted in an about-face and acceptance of the practice of espionage by the early twentieth century. In particular, emotions associated with humiliation, shame, paranoia, vengeance, and honor played important roles in the understanding and eventual acceptance of espionage in *fin-de-siècle* France.

While the history of emotions is a relatively new field, it has been used with some success to understand both attitudes and behavior. In 2001, William Reddy sought to elevate emotions to greater prominence in historical analysis, arguing for

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<sup>5</sup> Paul Bleton, a scholar who has written extensively on the history of spy fiction, presents the emergence of spy adventure novels as a shared phenomenological experience that allowed a public knowing almost nothing about the reality of the intelligence world to presume that it was familiar with the activity of spies. Paul Bleton, "Ce qu'espionnier veut dire," *Belphegor* X, no. 1 (2011), [http://etc.dal.ca/belphegor/vol10\\_no1/articles/10\\_01\\_bleton\\_espion\\_fr.html](http://etc.dal.ca/belphegor/vol10_no1/articles/10_01_bleton_espion_fr.html). This chapter adds newspaper accounts, non-fiction works, and real spy scandals to the discourse that gave the general public the belief that they understand the mechanisms of foreign espionage.

the important role that they played in the course of historical events. Coining the term “emotives,” Reddy looked to emotional expressions as a way to understand underlying structures of meaning, and posited that different political and social regimes established varying frameworks within which individuals would be able to experience feelings.<sup>6</sup> Barbara Rosenwein followed in 2006 with a presentation of “emotional communities,” defined as groups in which people sharing common goals and values display similar physical and psychological reactions to the world around them.<sup>7</sup> Rosenwein writes that “emotional communities are in some ways what Foucault called a common ‘discourse’: shared vocabularies and ways of thinking that have a controlling function.”<sup>8</sup> Most recently, Ruth Harris contributed to the field with a reinterpretation of the Dreyfus Affair that used “emotional dynamics” to demonstrate that both Dreyfusards and anti-Dreyfusards were similarly driven by irrational feelings of vulnerability and dislocation.<sup>9</sup> Other literature on emotion in history comes from psychologists, anthropologists, sociologists, and literary theorists, providing accounts of the role that emotions such as humiliation, shame, honor, and the desire for revenge can have in shaping individuals and society as a collective.<sup>10</sup> Together, these theories give ballast to the notion that the French defeat produced painful emotions that sought alleviation through revenge and national devotion. Through an examination of the discourse

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<sup>6</sup> Reddy, *Navigation of Feeling*.

<sup>7</sup> Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities*.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>9</sup> Harris, *Dreyfus*.

<sup>10</sup> See, Scheff, *Bloody Revenge*; Miller, *Humiliation*; Frijda, *Laws of Emotion*.

surrounding spies, this chapter will draw on the above theories to show the critical role of emotion in shaping cultural perceptions.

Intelligence culture at the end of the nineteenth century thus developed as a dialectic between the rational and the emotional. The rational aspects of its development have been covered in previous chapters, coming about as a response to changes in technology and strategy that accompanied the advent of modern warfare. The second representation was constructed by the emotional attachment to a profession that in reality was quite secretive. Although emotions themselves are considered rational, having biological bases, I view the process of letting sentiments dictate the “truth” about something in the absence of empirical evidence as a departure from rationality. Certainly, aversion to the practice of intelligence existed at all levels, and was expressed most vividly in popular writings and newspapers. Nonetheless, throughout the course of several decades, views of espionage began to change, primarily as a result of shared attitudes that emerged in France as a consequence of the Franco-Prussian War. Whereas professional espionage developed through the view of practitioners as necessary for national defense early on in the Third Republic, its acceptance as a necessary action to defend the nation was legitimized in the public sphere belatedly through appeals to emotion. It was over the course of several anxiety-filled decades that the tension between ends and means played out in such a way to provide a positive association with the character of the French spy.

The rise of patriotism, coupled with evidence that spies could play an important part in international competition, allowed a reluctant population to turn to intelligence practice, and to accept the state’s use of secret methods. There is no denying that the appeals to emotion during the last few decades of the nineteenth



century had a pragmatic basis. France had just lost a large amount of land as a result of the war, and thus the return of the provinces of Alsace and Lorraine became a focal point on many national and personal agendas. Emotions ran high in support of this irredentist cause, with espionage factoring into the discourse on both sides. German espionage became a part of the narrative accounting for the loss in the war, and in the decades following, Germans on French soil were accused of gathering intelligence to maintain the imbalance. Meanwhile, although Frenchmen had claimed to reject spying before the Franco-Prussian War, the desire to return the lost provinces fueled reevaluation of this presumably dishonorable tactic. Thus Frenchmen caught rallying for their nation in the former French territories found themselves before the high court in Leipzig facing accusations of espionage in favor of France.

It was this use of spying – for a particularly patriotic cause – that elicited the first public shift of emotion and opinion in support of espionage in France. The public support would mirror the pleas for acceptance of espionage by the military and by a number of academics who recognized the place for spies in the altered space of modern warfare. In this way, discourse and emotion became inseparable, and importantly appeared in a number of what Rosenwein would refer to as “textural communities” with shared emotions, coming contemporaneously from private commentary by policemen and the military, erudite academic texts, spurious novels and other “non-fiction” accounts, and newspaper articles from daily and weekly papers across the political spectrum. This process resulted in an acceptance of the concept of *raison d'état*, or the idea that the state had permission to act with whatever means necessary in order to secure the best interests of the nation.

*Humiliation of Defeat Translates to Negative Associations for German Spies*

Through numerous accounts published over the course of the past century and a half, there is little question of the profound emotional impact of the defeat in the Franco-Prussian War on the collective French psyche.<sup>11</sup> Wolfgang Schivelbusch refers to “the national indignation, wounded pride” and “the deep trauma of defeat,” in describing the culture of *fin-de-siècle* France.<sup>12</sup> Ruth Harris concurred, noting that “defeat created a sense of overwhelming inferiority” towards France’s German neighbors.<sup>13</sup> Contemporaries exhibited this sentiment in speeches and in writing, such as Victor Hugo’s pronouncement before the National Assembly in Bordeaux that “Every one of us feels the nation’s wound in his own heart.”<sup>14</sup> In his memoirs, the senator Auguste Scheurer-Kestner had recalled having experienced “this humiliation, this heart-break... [this] patriotic grief,” in the wake of the loss and subsequent annexation of the provinces to Germany.<sup>15</sup> As these quotes attest, the defeat produced strong emotions of shame and disappointment, feelings that were shared throughout the nation.

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<sup>11</sup> Whereas historians point to a number of factors owing to the collective sense of disgrace and lost honor in France at the end of the nineteenth century – such as decadence, depopulation, the crumbling fabric of noble society – the defeat of 1870 is the easiest and most obvious factor to identify. The public sought explanations for the unexpected loss, and turned their eyes to those on the battlefield. In response to public outcry, the new government of the Third Republic agreed to bring once-celebrated officers before a military tribunal to seek accountability for the defeat. In 1873, Marshal Bazaine, the leader of the campaign that surrendered at Metz, and a number of other officers were found guilty of treason for their role in handing Prussia this precious victory, making the French loss of honor directly attributable to the army. With Bazaine’s conviction, the dishonor of defeat could shift from the general population, yet the rumors that France had been beaten in part because of the treachery of German spies remained.

<sup>12</sup> Schivelbusch, *Culture of Defeat*, 150, 154.

<sup>13</sup> Harris, *Dreyfus*, 60.

<sup>14</sup> Hugo, *Politique*, 758, cited in Schivelbusch, *Culture of Defeat*, 137.

<sup>15</sup> Harris, *Dreyfus*, 91.

The loss had demonstrated, moreover, that military tactics had changed, and that Prussia had taken advantage of certain techniques that France had failed to embrace. One of these tactics was espionage, which because unknown and unexpected – like the Prussian victory itself – was especially threatening, and bore the brunt of much of the French psychological angst. Added to the humiliation of defeat was the humiliation of being deceived, which in turn had a tremendous influence on the way that Frenchmen viewed their vanquishers.

Spying had long borne a negative connotation. Jurists and military scholars who produced tomes about espionage at the end of the nineteenth century invariably discussed the disrepute under which the profession had been regarded in centuries past. Famously, Montesquieu, in his 1748 *Esprit des lois*, established a tradition of thinking about spies wherein espionage could be tolerable if practiced by honest men, but the philosopher presumed that the necessary infamy of the spy would result in judging the deed infamous as well.<sup>16</sup> The eighteenth-century Swiss diplomat, philosopher, and legal theorist Emerich de Vattel considered espionage in his *Law of Nations* as treacherous and dishonest. “The employment of spies is a kind of clandestine practice or deceit in war,” Vattel wrote. “Spies are generally condemned to death, and with great justice, as we have little other means of guarding against the mischief they inflict. An honorable man,” he continued, would never subject himself to such a position.<sup>17</sup> At the end of the nineteenth century, the distinguished jurist and professor Paul Pradier-Fodéré wrote that all

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<sup>16</sup> “L’espionnage serait peut-être tolérable s’il pouvait être exercé par d’honnêtes gens ; mais l’infamie nécessaire de la personne peut faire juger de l’infamie de la chose.” Montesquieu, *Esprit des lois*, XXIII (Paris, Firmin Didot frères, 1862), 171.

<sup>17</sup> Emerich de Vattel, “The Law of Nations; or Principles of the Law of Nature Applied to the Conduct and Affairs of Nations and Sovereigns,” Printed for Messrs. Berry and Rogers, no. 35, Hanover-Square., <http://opac.newsbank.com/select/evans/45185>. Book III, Chapter 10, § 179.

spies “practice a despicable profession, as they cannot effectively operate without lying and being deceitful.” Espionage, he added, was a “vile practice, disreputable, and dishonorable.”<sup>18</sup> However, while these thinkers maligned espionage, they did not associate it with a particular state or nationality, something that was to change as understandings of war and nationalism took on new meanings.

In the decades following the Franco-Prussian War, a wounded public sought to demonstrate that it had been taken advantage of by sneaky, Prussian spies, and that Germany was the country that had perfected the dishonorable strategy of espionage. Serious writers and the daily press alike informed readers that Prussia had “put the practice in fashion,”<sup>19</sup> and that “the truth is that espionage is an essentially German product.”<sup>20</sup> According to these accounts, Germany had used spies to win a victory in the Franco-Prussian War, taking advantage of trusting Frenchmen to inflict a humiliating blow. The rumors that Bismarck had unleashed a network of spies across France in the years before the Franco-Prussian War appeared in newspapers and in texts for decades following the conclusion of hostilities. To the contrary, the French had (supposedly) not used spies as they considered the tactic immoral.<sup>21</sup> Embracing this juxtaposition would give French

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<sup>18</sup> Pradier-Fodéré's *Traité de droit international public*, tome I VI, p. 977, cited by Violle, *L'Espionnage*, 64.

<sup>19</sup> “L'Espionnage,” *Le Nouvelliste de Lyon*, September 17, 1888, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12644-45.

<sup>20</sup> *L'Information*, November 15, 1888. AN F<sup>7</sup> 12644-45.

<sup>21</sup> While newspapers and other written accounts informed French citizens that the French army was too moral to use spies, the military did in fact create an 11<sup>th</sup>-hour intelligence service during the summer of 1870 and during the period of the Government of National Defense. For details, see Chapters 1 and 2.

citizens a moral justification for the defeat, perpetuating an idea expressed in several places that one cause for defeat was French virtue.<sup>22</sup>

The idea that Prussian espionage had dealt such a blow to Napoleon III's army worked its way into the consciousness of Frenchmen, such that as Pascal Krop notes, espionage became the "storm that grabbed the French nerves."<sup>23</sup> Krop's expression is particularly apt, as contemporary descriptions exude feelings of deception and betrayal. Jules Michelet, one of the nineteenth century's great French historians, expressed the collective indignation in his 1871 *La France devant l'Europe*. "It is proven, confessed, certain, and public, that for three or four years in plain daylight Prussian spies came *to observe* unsuspecting, hospitable France, who received them, welcomed them, and hid nothing."<sup>24</sup> Michelet continued, "What an abuse of confidence, that we now know as disguises, lies, and a terrible abuse of man's word." Michelet's exposition revealed a very personal sense of betrayal, describing Germans who the French would have considered associates and friends. The prose is striking, as it belies a much deeper humiliation to be deceived by a familiar acquaintance than by an unknown enemy. Indeed, the literature on humiliation, honor and revenge conjures the notion of reciprocity when discussing the emergence of these emotions. As William Ian Miller notes, "much of the substance of honor is still rooted in a desire to pay back what we owe, both the good and the evil. The failure to reciprocate, unless convincingly excused, draws

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<sup>22</sup> Schivelbusch describes how in the years following the war, French men and women sought opportunities to translate military defeat into spiritual exultation, a tendency that he notes was not unique to the Third Republic. Schivelbusch, *Culture of Defeat*, 120-125.

<sup>23</sup> Krop, *Secrets*, 39.

<sup>24</sup> Jules Michelet, *La France devant l'Europe* (Florence; Lyon: Successeurs Le Monnier; A. Faure, 1871), 27.

down our accounts of esteem and self-esteem."<sup>25</sup> Much was made in contemporary writings of the fact that the French had welcomed the Germans onto French soil and that the foreigners had reciprocated with betrayal. Such accounts reveal the anger and humiliation that became engrained in the French national psyche, beyond that experienced simply through defeat.

Writers asserted that these spies were not only soldiers and other military personnel, but also ordinary citizens, who the trusting French had not suspected. "We must recall," wrote a correspondent for the *Petit Parisien* echoing Michelet, "that in the beginning of the unfortunate campaign of 1870-1871, the first *uhlans* who preceded the invading army and who guided our enemies across the lesser-known trails were precisely the housekeepers or shepherds who, six months before, were employed in a large number of farms in Lorraine and Champagne."<sup>26</sup> Emile Zola's novel presenting the horrors of the Franco-Prussian War, *La Débâcle*, featured a character who was a Prussian spy. When the French caught the spy Goliah, the character Sambuc reproached him in a similar way: "I accuse you, therefore of entering France to play the spy on us, recompensing us for our hospitality with the most abominable treason." Zola's character continued, echoing the pervasive sentiment that espionage had allowed Bismarck's army enough assistance to win the war. "It is to you to whom we are principally indebted for our recent disasters. ...Had it not been for you and your criminal action in settling among us and betraying us, the surprise of Beaumont would have never been; we should not have been compelled to retreat on Sedan, and perhaps in the end we might have come off

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<sup>25</sup> Miller, *Humiliation*, x.

<sup>26</sup> *Le Petit Parisien*, December 6, 1897.

victorious.”<sup>27</sup> Again, the trusting French had paid the price for their hospitality and were left to regret the mistake. As the notion of hospitality itself is connected to rituals of honor, in acknowledging this particular German deception, we see further evidence for the flipside of honor, or shame.

The idea that Germans were natural spies and had used this tactic to win a major military victory over France had important implications for understandings of espionage among ordinary Frenchmen. As Rosenwein notes, when events “interrupt expectations and goals... emotions are the result.”<sup>28</sup> From the treason of army commanders, to the invasion of the land by spies, the French populace faced an emotional conundrum leading to feelings of humiliation, paranoia, and vulnerability. Humiliation and shame, emotions experienced individually, or in this case as a nation, have the power to color views of the present, and hopes for the future. As the sociologist Thomas Scheff notes, often an event that causes shame also leads to suppressing it, and the anticipation of shame, in a spiral that haunts an individual or a nation, can lead to desire for revenge, or to violence. Scheff argues that in the decades preceding the First World War, the French public was “caught up in alienation and shame spirals,” and that collective French humiliation was both generated by and reflected in the mass media, cultural expression, and politicking.<sup>29</sup> In this instance, the shame of naively having opened the country up to spies resulted in the paranoia that such a mistake could be repeated.

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<sup>27</sup> Émile Zola, *The Downfall (La débâcle)*, trans. E.P. Robins (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1906), 476.

<sup>28</sup> Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities*, 14.

<sup>29</sup> Scheff’s studies argue for a rereading of the origins of World War I as having social-emotional causes that were stronger than economic or political causes. In regards to France, Scheff points out that the French saw their defeat as humiliating, and that “revenge brought about through the return of the two lost provinces, *revanchisme*, became the central issue in French politics of the whole era. Leading political figures such as Gambetta and General Boulanger talked about revenge openly in

The paranoia that emerged from the repressed anticipation of shame resulted in intolerance, expressed through assumptions and accusations of foreigners as spies. Lucien Nicot, reiterating claims that prior to 1870 France had welcomed Germans, but that in turn, Germany repaid the French hospitality with deception, suggested that the French work on changing their attitude. The only way to reclaim French glory, he asserted, was to transform those feelings of welcome into feelings of hatred.<sup>30</sup> The spy became the physical representation of these emotions, and thus in responding to national humiliation and shame, the meaning of espionage was invested with the feelings that were projected upon the figure of the foreign – almost exclusively German – spy.

The prevalence of German espionage was not merely attributable to strategy, but to a particular German character, meaning that the conclusions being drawn were less about what people *knew* about Germans as spies and more about what people *assumed* based on emotional phenomena that led them to a constructed picture of the enemy. “The Germans,” claimed the *Petit Parisien*, “seem to have ‘a particular taste’ for espionage, in a sort of national way, and they have always practiced it, not only without the least repugnance, but indeed with a true passion.”<sup>31</sup> *L’Autorité* concurred, asserting that, “in Germany, espionage has taken on a holy, priest-like dimension. To steal a document or corrupt an officer is to

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their campaigns. Vengeance against Germany was a popular theme in newspapers, magazines, poetry and fiction.” He also cites Derouledé’s patriotic poems, *Chants du Soldat*, as well as the rash of novels about the plight of Alsace-Lorraine under German occupation. Thomas J. Scheff, “Social-emotional Origins of Violence: A theory of Multiple Killing,” *Aggression and Violent Behavior* 16, no. 6 (2011): 457.

<sup>30</sup> Nicot, *L’Allemagne à Paris*, 1-9.

<sup>31</sup> *Le Petit Parisien*, October 10, 1888, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12644-45.



them more glorious than a heroic act undertaken on the battlefield.”<sup>32</sup> This claim affirmed to Frenchmen the idea that war for Germany was more than that fought by armies, and that France was constantly a target. The daily paper *La France* confirmed this notion, by stating that in Germany, and especially Prussia, “to be a spy is considered a sacred duty for any German patriot,” and that therefore “all classes of society spy with enthusiasm.”<sup>33</sup> These warnings imbued readers with the sense that any German in France could be one of Bismarck’s spies in disguise, and as spying on France was such a respected duty for Germans, Frenchmen should be wary of all who surrounded them. However, while these accounts concede the potential for patriotism for Germans in spying, the underlying idea remained that the deed itself was both a particular German enterprise, and was dishonorable.

This rhetoric from the press found support in published accounts as well, both academic and spurious. Two texts appeared in the years immediately following the Franco-Prussian War describing the dangers of German espionage, and the accusations grew in the 1880s.<sup>34</sup> In 1884, Victor Tissot published what would be the first bestseller of intelligence literature, *La police secrète prussienne*, reprinted twelve times that year, and again in 1886. Tissot’s book told of Germany’s use of secret agents to penetrate France, informing readers that the

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<sup>32</sup> *L’Autorité*, September 26, 1897, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12644-45.

<sup>33</sup> *La France*, October 17, 1888, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12644-45.

<sup>34</sup> See: J. Jacquet, *Les espions à Paris* (Paris: Imprimerie de Dubuisson et Compagnie). The second, Victor Valmont, *L’espion prussien: Roman anglais par V. Valmont. Traduit par Julien Dubrisay*. (Paris: Baillière, 1872), was actually translated from an English book published the year prior. Valmont took up the idea of the Prussian “military type” in civilian clothing, posing a threat because unsuspected. The character of the spy was also meant to highlight the French lack of military mentality. Paul Bleton, *La cristallisation de l’ombre: les origines oubliées du roman d’espionnage sous la IIIe République* (Limoges: Pulim, 2011), 33.

German Interior Minister had proclaimed that “the State has the right and the duty to use extraordinary means, when it is not possible to discover things elsewhere.”<sup>35</sup>

In 1887, a couple of particularly xenophobic texts surfaced that delineated the perils of the German spy menace, also advocating the idea that for Germans, spying was in their blood. Francois Loyal’s book, *Le Dossier de la revanche: L’espionnage Allemand*, described the high regard in which Germans viewed the “profession” of espionage, and repeated the idea that individuals from all social classes chose to practice it with passion, also pointing out the large budget that the German government dedicated to sponsoring this pursuit.<sup>36</sup> A second book, entitled *L’Allemagne à Paris*, by Lucien Nicot, repeated the idea of German spies in France during the Franco-Prussian War, and informed readers that while the spies laid low after 1870-71, espionage picked back up again in 1873 and 1874 after the occupying army returned to Germany and the French government in Versailles began the task of fortifying the new eastern border.<sup>37</sup> Nicot warned of the discipline taught to Germans practicing espionage, stating that, “the German spy is regimented like the German soldiers. He is submitted to iron discipline, owing strict obedience to his directors, just as if he wore a military uniform.”<sup>38</sup> This damning statement also serves as evidence of public acknowledgment of changed modern warfare, which will be described in more detail below. Civilians here are being equated with the military as sharing similar objectives and being just as

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<sup>35</sup> Victor Tissot, *La police secrète prussienne* (Paris: E. Dentu, 1884), ii.

<sup>36</sup> Loyal, *Le Dossier de la revanche*, 9.

<sup>37</sup> Nicot, *L’Allemagne à Paris*, 35-36.,

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 30.

dangerous. According to this theory, Frenchmen would now go to war not with the German army, but with the entire German nation.

More serious writers shied away from making such blatant stereotypes, but pointed to the potential harm engendered by German spies nonetheless. In his law school thesis, jurist Robert Detourbet recounted German skill in utilizing espionage during the Franco-Prussian War, Victor Colonieu noted the importance of espionage in allowing Germany to be ready and instructed in fighting in 1870, and Fernand Routier commented almost admiringly “to what degree of perfection,” the neighbors to the east had succeeded in mastering espionage.<sup>39</sup> Froment extrapolated the importance of espionage to the German leadership based on the number of those of high rank or birth occupied therein, and claimed that following on the precedent set by Frederick II, Germans were in fact “the masters of the art of espionage.”<sup>40</sup>

This insistence that Germans were natural born spies was contrasted with French morals that rejected this tactic. The idea that to spy ran contrary to the French national character was well entrenched. In Colonel Lewal’s early attempts to persuade the French army to adopt an intelligence service at the end of the 1860s, he had declared during conferences at the Ministry of War:

“In spite of its evident utility, espionage in France is used very little or not at all. We don’t have the taste for it, and it is neither organized nor regulated as it should be. The chivalrous character of our nation is not well disposed to work of this kind, which is presented as something traitorous and disloyal. We prefer face to face combat,

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<sup>39</sup> Detourbet, *L’espionnage et la trahison*, 67. Colonieu, *L’espionnage*, 9-10. Fernand Routier, *L’espionnage et la trahison en temps de paix et en temps de guerre* (Paris: Henri Charles-Lavauzelle, 1913), 6.

<sup>40</sup> For example, the *Gazette de Madebourg* announced on June 2, 1882 that the son-in-law of the crown prince would be charged with the study of the French army. Froment, *L’Espionnage militaire*, 29, 150.

without realizing that in front of our enemies we are playing the role of a dupe."<sup>41</sup>

Even after its necessity began to be recognized in the decades that followed, the press supported the notion that spying was not in the French nature. The paper *L'Information* noted that "the French character, with its chivalrous frankness, cannot bring itself to undertake such a task, which it finds to be supremely repugnant,"<sup>42</sup> while another paper claimed that "our race is not constituted for the job of being a spy."<sup>43</sup> This commentary reflects a very prevalent element of *fin-de-siècle* xenophobia, which associated all members of a group as sharing similar characteristics – in particular negative ones – and used Lamarckian language to claim that certain characteristics were innate.<sup>44</sup>

Ernest Renan, the French intellectual whose writings on the differences between the French Republic and the German Empire brought him renown, also allowed for this particular distinction.

"If in France, the masses are less susceptible to discipline than in Germany, the middle classes are also less capable of villainy. Note that to the honor of France, during the entirety of the last war it was impossible to find a Frenchman to passably play the role of spy; lying and deception disgust us too much."<sup>45</sup>

The newspaper *L'Autorité* responded to readers enraged to learn of German spying in the embassies by assuring them that Frenchmen would never do such thing.

"Here, it is the opposite. The French officer, or military attaché, makes it a point of

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<sup>41</sup> Lewal cited in *ibid.*, 12.

<sup>42</sup> *L'Information*, November 15, 1888, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12644-45.

<sup>43</sup> *Le Monde thermal*, November, 8, 1888, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12644-45.

<sup>44</sup> George W. Stocking, Jr., "The Turn-of-the Century Concept of Race," *Modernism/Modernity* 1, no. 1 (1994). For a short discussion of concepts of race in forming perceptions of German national character within France and vice versa, see Nolan, *Inverted Mirror*, 23-26.

<sup>45</sup> Renan in *L'Eclair*, March 5, 1890, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12644-45.

honor not to see anything or to learn anything. Never has an important piece of intelligence been furnished to us by him.”<sup>46</sup> Clearly, this assertion was false, yet in expressing such a claim, the author played into a specific idea of Frenchness. These statements express a desire for moral superiority, at a time when the French ego had undergone particular damage. As France had failed to be militarily superior to Germany, at least writers could claim to be morally superior. Therefore, traits such as repugnance, deception, lying and cheating, were associated with spies, solidifying the connection of such characteristics with Germans, while honor and honesty were attributes that could be claimed by Frenchmen, and French officers in particular.

Whereas to many writers this antagonism towards spying was evidence of the supremacy of the French character, others realized that in neglecting espionage, France remained open to further attack. A journalist who highlighted the “instinctive repulsion,” that caused the French to neglect intelligence until 1870, noted that, “even since then, and despite the terrible lesson learned, our prejudice in this sense has precluded us from taking the necessary steps to thwart an enemy with fewer scruples.”<sup>47</sup> Zola’s characters echoed this sentiment in *La Débâcle* while discussing the Germans’ natural inclination to spy. “I will even go so far as to say,” began Ducat in the novel, “that possibly [the Germans] are not wrong; our noble sentiments do us honor, but they have also the disadvantage of bringing us defeat.”<sup>48</sup> Thus while confirming the idea that the French were opposed to espionage by nature, these authors indicated a belief that such objection should be

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<sup>46</sup> *L’Autorité*, September 26, 1897, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12644-45.

<sup>47</sup> *Le Petit Parisien*, October 10, 1888, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12644-45.

<sup>48</sup> Zola, *La débâcle*, 477.

overcome for the benefit of national interest, or in confronting the Germans at their own game, a sentiment shared by some of the more professional writers on intelligence. Robert Detourbet urged readers not to condemn the Germans for their use of spies, but to learn from them and to imitate them. "Instead of cursing our enemies from 1870, we should profit from the hard lesson, and instead of chastising the means that allowed them to defeat us, we should assimilate and perfect them."<sup>49</sup> Froment concurred: "We should not incriminate the Prussians for their use of spies; in so doing, they fulfilled a mission and were better prepared for the war; it is the French that we should admonish for their insufficient memory. We are too confident, we forget too quickly, we don't watch over ourselves enough."<sup>50</sup>

The humiliation felt by a population that found itself the victim of untraditional military tactics impressed upon the French psyche a particular view of the spy. The emotions experienced with the unexpected loss projected onto the spy the dichotomy between German perfidy and French honor. The spy was defined as the sneaky and dishonorable foreigner, performing a vile duty that was in his blood. Over the years, this association would grow, and would lead to a marked paranoia that would play into the growth of xenophobic sentiment in France at the turn of the century.

*"Emotional Communities" of Fear, Paranoia and Xenophobia*

The development of the stereotype of the German spy served as an antidote to the shame experienced by the nation following the Franco-Prussian War. With

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<sup>49</sup> Detourbet, *L'espionnage et la trahison*, 67, 70-71.

<sup>50</sup> Froment, *L'Espionnage militaire*, 169.

that image in place, more complex emotional reactions to the spy arose. In particular, one finds a noticeable paranoia and xenophobia accompanying most discussions of foreign espionage during the first half of the Third Republic. This discourse emerged in a variety of settings – from the private notes of state representatives to xenophobic publications and the popular press – giving credence to the idea of an “emotional community,” similar to those Rosenwein describes that was “created and reinforced by ideologies, teachings, and common presuppositions.”<sup>51</sup> The common presumption uniting this emotional community was the noticeable concern with the potential effect of German spies on the health of the French national body. As demonstrated, the military’s preoccupation with German strength had resulted in paranoia throughout the army that some have viewed as being at the root of the Dreyfus Affair. This section will show that such paranoia existed among a greater swath of the French population as well.<sup>52</sup>

The police, whose vocation entailed watching the border, were not surprisingly among the groups signaling the presence of potential spies on French soil. The extent and hyperbole of their commentary, however, displays paranoia beyond what appears to have been the actual nature of the spy menace at the time.<sup>53</sup> Even though far from borders, the Prefecture of Police in Paris amassed enormous stacks of notes describing German officers, soldiers, and ordinary citizens making their way to various French cities, with the assumption that these individuals were

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<sup>51</sup> Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities*, 25.

<sup>52</sup> See Chapters 3 and 4. For more on the army’s paranoid xenophobia, see: Mitchell, “Xenophobic Style.” Ruth Harris also notes that, “the feeling of vulnerability meant that a climate of virtual paranoia pervaded the military establishment prior to Dreyfus’s arrest.” Harris, *Dreyfus*, 61.

<sup>53</sup> For details on actual arrests and trials of foreign spies in France during this period, see Chapter 5.

“destined for espionage service.”<sup>54</sup> The police kept detailed records of suspicious voyagers, noting names, ages, professions, origins, and destinations of a tremendous quantity of individuals entering France, not even sparing the passage of the Prince and Princess of Wales.<sup>55</sup> These lists documented the train cars that suspects traveled on, described facets of people’s appearance: hair color, height, weight, facial hair, and possession of external characteristics such as wearing glasses or carrying an umbrella. Police officers relied on rumor and hearsay, and over the years seem to have documented hundreds of individuals suspected to be spies.<sup>56</sup>

Police notes document observations of Germans at train stations, movements of officers dressed in plain clothes, and suspicious individuals living, working, or traveling in France. The police described indications that someone could be a spy by noting anti-social tendencies, sending letters abroad, reading letters or newspapers in German, speaking German, and moreover, not trying hard enough to learn French.<sup>57</sup> The police also received notes or letters from concerned citizens, and followed up these denunciations with investigations into the lives of the accused. The police paranoia involved uncovering the various disguises and alternate plans that German spies would employ to gather information, such as entering France on foreign passports, or taking on a different nationality. For

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<sup>54</sup> See note dated April 12, 1872, APP BA 1332.

<sup>55</sup> See the *État nominatif des voyageurs* in 1872, APP BA 1332.

<sup>56</sup> Note that the police were in touch with the War Ministry, and thus the paranoia and suspicion was mutually confirmed by these two bodies. It seems that the number of indications of foreigners on trains and in the country increased into the 1880s. This is likely attributed to rise in “spy fever” among the population, the publication in Germany of Stieber’s memoirs, and then the presence of Boulanger as War Minister starting in 1886.

<sup>57</sup> See note dated May 19, 1872, APP BA 1332.



example, police remarked on the number of Italians living or working in France, and suggested that Germany was directing this immigration, seeking to replace its spies with Italians.<sup>58</sup>

Police officers feared that German spies sought to disrupt civil life in France. The Parisian police believed that the German government was sending a number of agents to Paris charged with gathering intelligence on public opinion and attitudes towards the French government.<sup>59</sup> Police anticipated a group of German agents planning to provoke anti-German discourse at an organized demonstration in front of the statue of Strasbourg in Paris' Place de la Concorde, which if it had occurred, may have led to riots or other expressions of internal dissent.<sup>60</sup> Another note speculated that German agents were responsible for directing the French anarchist movement.<sup>61</sup> In the prefecture in Paris, police watched individuals in the country during the period of the July 14<sup>th</sup> holiday, and noted groups of people who could be considered suspicious, including a German gymnastics society, language teachers, correspondents for the German press, and members of a German reading group.<sup>62</sup> Any potential threat to public order could be considered the work of foreign agents.

The paranoia coursing through police agencies became public knowledge by way of local newspapers. In the spring of 1872, a paper announced that "Prussian espionage is beginning anew on a vast scale. People have noticed familiar agents in

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<sup>58</sup> See police note, 1881, APP BA 1332.

<sup>59</sup> Note dated June 26, 1882, APP BA 1332.

<sup>60</sup> Note dated July 13, 1882, APP BA 1332.

<sup>61</sup> Note dated September 29, 1882, APP BA 1332.

<sup>62</sup> Police report dated August 11, 1882, APP BA 1332.

Flanders, Artois, Burgundy, Ain, Isère and Midi.”<sup>63</sup> Papers such as the *Gazette de Paris* and the *Gaulois* released small announcements that military and administrative authorities in departments in the north and east of France had observed new spies aiming to learn about the resources of different municipalities and their inhabitants.<sup>64</sup> In an 1873 article entitled, “The Second Invasion,” a French paper warned its readers to “Open your eyes!” and be aware of the presence of foreigners on French soil.<sup>65</sup> These problematic foreigners, viewed by many as “invaders” were characterized as untrustworthy barbarians, and thus in this milieu of irrational fear, foreigners – and Germans especially – could easily be believed to be spies.<sup>66</sup>

One particularly pernicious theme that ran through police notes, the press, and other popular accounts was the fear of disguise. Police in Paris expressed concern that German agents could be entering France using Russian passports, and transferred these worries to the periphery as well. A note from a representative of the Minister of the Interior to the prefect of the Alpes-Maritimes in 1872 warned the police in the south of the fear that Germans on secret missions in France were stealthily entering the country using fake Russian passports, and requested daily reports to be sent from Nice to Paris about any individual coming in with such identification.<sup>67</sup> Other police notes warned officers to be on guard for Germans

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<sup>63</sup> *La Patrie de Suisse* dated April 12, 1872, APP BA 1332.

<sup>64</sup> See articles in *Gazette de Paris* dated August 2, 1872 and *Le Gaulois* dated August 4, 1872, APP BA 1332.

<sup>65</sup> “La Deuxième Invasion,” *Le Gaulois*, July 8, 1873, APP BA 1332.

<sup>66</sup> Dornel, *La France hostile*, 214.

<sup>67</sup> Letter dated April 17, 1872, AM 4M 574. Consequently, the representative from Paris tasked the prefect with the tedious responsibility of preparing a daily list of everyone coming into France on a Russian passport, noting their name, appearance, and points of origin and destination.

entering French territory dressed as tourists, or posing as infantrymen wearing the helmets of French dragoons.<sup>68</sup> In southeast France, border agents demonstrated suspicion of a local Italian priest traveling daily between Nice and Ventimillia.<sup>69</sup> While accusing clergymen of espionage appears especially paranoid, a tradition was known to exist of using priests as spies, and therefore this particular suspicion had a basis in historical reality.<sup>70</sup> The fear sparked irrational thought processes, as manifested in the discourse surrounding foreign spies.

The idea of disguise as a means to carry out subversive activity corresponds with the production of emotional responses contributing to the definition of espionage. As the German sociologist Georg Simmel wrote, disguise could give considerable power to an individual or a group that might not be afforded without a secret cover.<sup>71</sup> It was one thing for a soldier to spy, but another thing altogether to take on different identities. Jules Michelet had counseled readers to disabuse themselves of the idea that the spy is “a hideous beggar or a villainous Jew.” Instead, he noted, “most often the spy is the amiable blond with rosy cheeks, candidly spoken, who comes from the University, pockets filled with letters from respected individuals.”<sup>72</sup> French newspapers used spy scares to warn their readers not to be duped, and described the schemes of foreign spies. *La France*, for example,

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<sup>68</sup> See note dated 1887, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12643, and several others referring to tourists. AN F<sup>7</sup> 12644-45.

<sup>69</sup> See correspondence between the customs agent in Nice and the prefect of the Alpes-Maritimes describing surveillance of the Abbé Burtelli, July 1896, AM 1M 359.

<sup>70</sup> See for example Grimoard who recommended women or priests as the best kind of spies. Grimoard, *Traité*, 196-197. Fix also asserted that during the Franco-Prussian War, German spies dressed as priests served as one means by which to enter France. Fix, *La stratégie appliquée*, 155.

<sup>71</sup> Simmel, "Sociology of Secrecy," 495-497.

<sup>72</sup> Michelet, *La France devant l'Europe*, 31.

claimed that Germany had hired Belgian agents to enter into bars and cabarets in France to strike up conversation about the likelihood that France would lose another war against Prussia if it was to occur.<sup>73</sup> The *Gil Blas* warned its readers of a German gentleman who “played the role of Don Juan,” having tremendous success with the ladies outwardly, while secretly making trips to the post office to collect piles of mail in German.<sup>74</sup> It is hard to say whether the greater offense was in passing along intelligence, or in appropriating French romantic charisma.

Another consequence of disguise meant that spies could be anyone, and everywhere. Newspapers warned readers that, “everywhere you go in France you will see one of Bismarck’s compatriots. These spies are businessmen, peddlers, workers, and employees, and also people who work on railroads and forts.” Moreover, these spies were “even more dangerous since they are unknown; we cannot thwart their ruses, avoid the traps that they set against our good faith.”<sup>75</sup> Others warned against foreigners in any incarnation, from travelling salesmen to troupes of circus performers.<sup>76</sup> The paranoia in such statements is evident, as is the aversion to the presence of foreigners on French soil.

Moreover, if spies could not be recognized as such, they possessed the ability to witness “the most intimate part of French life.” A fear spread throughout the population that foreign spies could access “the secret of their bedrooms, the exact

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<sup>73</sup> *La France*, June 29, 1882, APP BA 1332.

<sup>74</sup> *Gil Blas*, April 8, 1884.

<sup>75</sup> *L’Information*, November 15, 1888.

<sup>76</sup> Nicot best expressed these fears by proclaiming that, “German espionage in France is exercised everywhere and on everything. The spy is the person one sees hanging around military buildings or forts, the musician following a troupe of acrobats, the travelling salesman who traverses France carefully observing everything that he sees or hears, and finally, the industrialist who returns to Germany with models that he has stolen from naïve Frenchmen.” Nicot, *L’Allemagne à Paris*, 33-34.

balance of their private fortunes, and more yet – their aspirations, sympathies, hatreds – everything that one would share with a friend, but that patriotism would carefully hide from the jealous curiosity of those who could be an enemy tomorrow.”<sup>77</sup> The idea of an invasion of French privacy by foreign spies would certainly have wreaked considerable emotional havoc on a population struggling to assert its vitality. By moving the threat of spies from the military realm to the public sphere, the press played an important role in spreading spy paranoia throughout the nation. Further, the public discourse helped to assure that emotions transcended the realm of the individual to that of the social, connecting the privacy of the home with the privacy of the nation.

Another perceived invasion into the intimacy of French life and identity was supposedly taking place linguistically. The paper the *Mot d'Ordre* claimed that the fear should not be of military spies surveying forts and plans, but “civil spies,” learning about French morals, politics and language.<sup>78</sup> *La Cocarde* and *La Lanterne* made similar comments, expressing concern that at the German military academy, soldiers were required to learn a foreign language and then live abroad in that country, or else come to learn French in the special *Academie de guerre*.<sup>79</sup> The fear, as the papers expressed, was that many German soldiers who could understand French would be mingling among the population, able to blend in and learn details of French life, just as they had prior to the Franco-Prussian War. Moreover, the anxiety over linguistic integrity became a social concern just as French men and

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<sup>77</sup> *Revue du Cercle Militaire* (Revue Violette), March 1890, no. 9: 191-193.

<sup>78</sup> “Les Espions,” *Mot d'Ordre*, September 17, 1888.

<sup>79</sup> *La Cocarde*, December 11, 1888 and *La Lanterne*, November 10, 1888, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12644-45.

women confronted the idea that youth in Alsace-Lorraine were becoming Germanized by learning that language in school instead of their “native” French.

French leaders and the press on the lookout for spies found themselves preoccupied with foreign journalists in France.<sup>80</sup> The French police paid careful attention to Germans working in the press, often stressing connections with members of the German embassy.<sup>81</sup> The Foreign Ministry echoed this fear, with an agent writing in a confidential report that, “No leader knows how to utilize the press like Bismarck. When he wants to conquer a country, he begins by demoralizing the press.”<sup>82</sup> They feared that Bismarck paid these correspondents considerable sums to print articles favorable to the German cause.

Of particular concern to the French was a German named Albert Beckmann, who had resided in Paris since the 1850s, and had worked as a reporter for *Le Temps* and for the *Gazette Nationale de Berlin*. Accusations against Beckmann appeared in countless newspaper articles, books, and police and diplomatic notes in the last three decades of the nineteenth century.<sup>83</sup> Journalists, police, and various French politicians accused Beckmann of serving as a German police agent and spy representing Bismarck and collecting intelligence in France. He was said to be

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<sup>80</sup> In 1872, the paper *Le Pays* published an article describing a German news agency “established in Paris for a good amount of time, and disguised as a *société commerciale* (trading company),” whose mission was to influence news stories in the Parisian press that could affect Prussian policies vis-à-vis France. *Le Pays*, August 20, 1872; APP BA 1332.

<sup>81</sup> These observations continued from the 1870s through the 1890s. See APP BA 1332-33, BA 913.

<sup>82</sup> The note continues: “He strives to access the most influential papers, or those with the highest readership, and he chooses the most needy of the journalists. He has placed a “confidence man” in each German embassy abroad, who serves as an intermediary for all secret things – for espionage and for relations with the press.” Confidential Report, undated [though in folder 1893-1904], MAE PAP Jules Hansen.

<sup>83</sup> See e.g. APP BA 1332-33, BA 1693, EA 9; see MAE Affaires Diverses Politiques, Allemagne 38 bis and PAP Jules Hansen. Beckmann also got lambasted by Loyal, 11 and Nicot, 69-82, amongst others.

directly connected with the German embassy in Paris, and to run rings of informers and agents in the press and throughout France. In 1889, War Minister Freycinet requested that Beckmann be expelled from France, along with another suspected agent, von Stuht, considering him to be “a danger for the security of the country.”<sup>84</sup> Public figures such as Beckmann, who was indeed in the employ of the German government, served to fuel the paranoia of spies invading French civilian life, yet also demonstrated that in some senses, paranoia was warranted.

Intelligence at the end of the nineteenth century was a very real tactic in the evolution of modern warfare. The French counterespionage apparatus, discussed in previous chapters, had modest success in capturing foreign spies. With each arrest, or even suspicion of spies by French authorities, the nation’s paranoia could be confirmed, and as a consequence, it grew and continued to spread. Following the capture of a presumed spy, the press made the inevitable comments about Germans as naturally inclined to espionage, noting often “the considerable emotion caused” by news of the arrest of different spies.<sup>85</sup> Similarly, the revelation of spying in the French embassy made public as a result of the Dreyfus Affair elicited strong condemnations in the press regarding German abuse of the position of military attaché.

The capture of numerous German spies over the years, paired with the conception of espionage constructed in the collective imagination, led to an understanding of the use of spies in the public sphere that reflected that in military and police circles: the notion that Germany was preparing for war, and spies would

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<sup>84</sup> Letter from Freycinet to Minister of the Interior Constans dated November 4, 1889. Constans passed the letter on to the Minister of Foreign Affairs on December 2, 1889. It does not appear that an expulsion was actually ordered. MAE Affaires Diverses Politiques, Allemagne 38 bis.

<sup>85</sup> *Gil Blas*, October 12, 1897, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12644-45.

help the Empire to be as ready as possible to punish the French with another defeat. Moreover, commentary made clear that spies served as the *avant-garde* of the army that would follow. In 1872, one paper wrote that supposed spies traveling throughout France were taking “many detailed notes that could serve as a base for requisitions, for the forward march of an army.”<sup>86</sup> Another, in describing the infestation of German spies, claimed that Frenchmen were “living in the middle of an army of spies,” all the more dangerous because they were not in uniform.<sup>87</sup> Continuing the army metaphor, one of the daily papers informed its readers that, “if war becomes imminent, espionage will grow to excessive proportions.”<sup>88</sup> Lucien Nicot’s book confirmed these fears, claiming that Germany was gathering intelligence about French military secrets, along with secrets of commerce, industry, and the spirit of the population, all of which would be useful in the event of another war or the invasion of French territory.<sup>89</sup>

The paranoia that German spies could cause France another devastating military defeat led to heightened xenophobia on the part of police, military, and the public. Along the eastern border, prefects and sub-prefects noted consistently that policing work in the area would require a very watchful eye on foreigners

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<sup>86</sup> *La Patrie de Suisse*, April 12, 1872, APP BA 1332.

<sup>87</sup> *L’Information*, November 15, 1888, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12644-45.

<sup>88</sup> *Le Monde Thermal*, November 8, 1888, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12644-45. The author then warns, “But the spies would then have to reckon with the fury of the people and the summary execution of courts martial. Woe to him who will be taken, his judgment will be short, immediate and terrible sentence.”

<sup>89</sup> Nicot’s text appears to have used emotion and psychological strategies to impress upon Frenchmen the importance of taking espionage seriously. He claimed insight into the minds of German officers, such as the Colonel von der Goltz, whose book praised the work of spies in assessing the situation of the adversary. Nicot warned his readers: “To those who still believe that German espionage is a myth and that spies are characters from fairy tales, these blind Frenchmen would do well to think for a moment on von der Goltz’s words. The facts are there to show how right the honorable officer is.” Nicot, *L’Allemagne à Paris*, 29-30.



anywhere in the region. In one note, the prefect established the requirement that access to boutiques, canteens, or housing in military areas be forbidden to anyone who failed to provide a guarantee of their national background.<sup>90</sup> Additionally, military leaders instructed soldiers not to frequent restaurants, cafés, or other establishments owned by foreigners, nor to hire foreigners as maids or other household workers.<sup>91</sup>

This association of foreigners as potential spies translated into xenophobic attitudes in the public sphere as well. A study undertaken by the *Progrès militaire* informed readers that spying took place in hotels and restaurants, in addition to military bases. In response, papers warned against foreign maids and servants, claiming they would enter people's rooms to read their papers, copy keys, and rifle through trashcans.<sup>92</sup> The warning to beware of maids, governesses, and other household workers certainly resonated among segments of the population, as a number of denunciation letters sent to French police identified foreign domestics as potential spies.<sup>93</sup>

The emotions producing this alarm surrounding spies also came from a place of envy and fear of competition at a time when German industrialism was surpassing the French. As Dutch psychologist Nico Frijda notes, feelings of shame and desire for revenge come not only from actual humiliation, but also from “comparing oneself with others and finding them to have superior power or

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<sup>90</sup> Note dated September 16, 1874, MM 2R 10.

<sup>91</sup> *Le Tour*, August 19, 1890, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12644-5.

<sup>92</sup> See article in *La France*, December 14, 1888, which lauds the study from the *Progrès militaire*. AN F<sup>7</sup> 12644-5. Notably, the article warns in particular against women, claiming that in terms of intelligence gathering, they were the most dangerous, as they were the least suspected.

<sup>93</sup> See APP BA 1332-1334. For more on denunciation letters, see Chapter 6.

capacities.”<sup>94</sup> Moreover, the desire to escape from shame was found to lead people towards a desire for revenge. Germany’s population was growing as France’s was contracting, contributing to the former’s increase in wealth and status. This imbalance had a profound effect on the French psyche, and as Schivelbush expressed, produced “a permanent sense of threat, ... an intense concern with mustering one’s dwindling strength,” and “a strange nervous anxiety about foreign powers.”<sup>95</sup> This anxiety would manifest itself in a new, particularly hostile form of nationalism at the turn of the century. The well-documented inferiority experienced by Frenchmen in the face of a strengthening Germany certainly contributed to the emotions under consideration here, and to the willingness to accept a variety of means to eliminate feelings of shame or dishonor.<sup>96</sup>

The welcome that Germans may have received in France before the war had turned to the opposite – a sense of exclusion. To avoid German espionage, newspapers encouraged a kind of segregation. The problem, noted *Le Paris*, was that German spies “mix with us, live our lives, rub shoulders with us in business and pleasure,” and with the knowledge they gleaned, reported back to friends and family in Germany.<sup>97</sup> The author warned that, “thanks to them Berlin knows what we are thinking, knows our taste for war, knows the confidence that we have in our leaders and our political organizations.” To prevent catastrophe he offered two remedies: “watch your tongues in relations with Germans, and avoid these superb

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<sup>94</sup> Frijda, *Laws of Emotion*, 272.

<sup>95</sup> Schivelbusch, *Culture of Defeat*, 159.

<sup>96</sup> For a good list of contemporary writings that expressed French fear of German industrial and economic expansion, see Digeon, *Crise allemande*, 480.

<sup>97</sup> *Le Paris*, 1890, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12644-5.

German brasseries, haunts of spies, where the beer steins seem to have ears, and which have killed the good, old, comfortable, and loyal French café." This last line shows us that while espionage was certainly a concern for many Frenchmen, it was being used as a proxy to mask a deeper anxiety about the place of foreign migrants taking over French jobs. The idea that German spies in particular were taking French business appeared in a number of cases. In the newspaper *La France*, an editorialist advised readers to avoid the Parisian brasserie *Bofinger*, as its owner was German, and it therefore served as a meeting place for scores of German spies, while an Italian restaurant near the rue Montmartre came under surveillance for the number of Italians who frequented it.<sup>98</sup> A scandal erupted in Lille when the Brasserie Universelle hired a band of supposedly German musicians contrary to regulation that Germans were not allowed in the café.<sup>99</sup> Despite the fact that the leader of the band claimed roots from Holland, the public declared him to be a German spy.

Public commentators were certainly not oblivious to the exaggerated nature of the paranoid obsession with seeing spies all around. The *Petit Corporal* recalled that following the Franco-Prussian War, "in Paris, one saw spies everywhere. For those few who had the misfortune to be named Müller or Vogel, they were certain to be followed, from morning to night and night to morning, by good patriots, more concerned with playing police than actually bowing before the homeland."<sup>100</sup>

Though his tone testifies to the overblown nature of the public's response, the

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<sup>98</sup> "A propos de l'affaire de Zurich," *La France*, January 1, 1888; APP BA 1333, and note dated September 1897, APP BA 1332. Lots of additional commentary could be found that encouraged Frenchmen to avoid frequenting German establishments and instead to purchase French products.

<sup>99</sup> Dornel, *La France hostile*, 302.

<sup>100</sup> *Petit Corporal*, July 18, 1888, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12644-5.

author played into the emotional landscape by warning readers of the threat of German espionage, and insisting that France was not doing enough to protect itself. Early in the twentieth century, another paper observed that, “the obsession with spies is a mental malady that takes over with each hint of war. ... If one focuses on spies, one sees them everywhere, just as was the case in 1870.”<sup>101</sup> Froment, whose scholarly text on intelligence advocated the practice within France, noted that “it is evident that our country is infested [with spies], yet we must also note the considerable exaggeration – on one hand, multiplying the number of cases, and on another, greatly increasing their seriousness.”<sup>102</sup>

These excerpts demonstrate the presence of varying versions of “truth” about espionage, all of which played into the understanding of spies and the potential harm they could inflict on the nation. As the last quotations have demonstrated, the paranoia of spies and the damage they could bring was itself a pernicious attitude for a France attempting to recover from war. Feeding the paranoia encouraged the growth and spread of xenophobic sentiments, which only reinforced ideas of having been dishonored. In order to move past shame, humiliation and paranoia, therefore, French women and men would turn to its corollary, the desire for revenge.

#### *Espionage Recognized as a Necessary Facet of Modern War*

As mentioned earlier in the chapter, conceptions about the nature of espionage at the end of the nineteenth century were on the whole constructed

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<sup>101</sup> *La République*, June 13, 1904, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12644-5.

<sup>102</sup> Froment, *L’Espionnage militaire*, 132.

through discourse and shared emotions. The public had little knowledge of the actual work of French intelligence, or its German counterpart. Nonetheless, the idea of spying had become intimately connected with dishonor and German perfidy. The potential for intelligence work to gain acceptance among a general population would therefore necessitate a cultural and intellectual shift.

This began with public pronouncements by professionals that intelligence had become a necessary component to modern war. The successful unification of the German states under Chancellor Bismarck indicated that the wars that Prussia had waged over the previous decade had altered not only the European landscape, but also the way that nations fought and regarded warfare.<sup>103</sup> The late nineteenth century was the time when many things became “modern;” war was no exception. The new, modern wars had much greater impact on the citizenry than wars of the past, as the definition of participants in the wars changed as well.<sup>104</sup> Importantly, in this new period, many of the sentiments associated with wartime did not disappear

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<sup>103</sup> Howard, *The Franco-Prussian War*. Not only did the means of fighting change, but the conception of open hostilities as a prerequisite to actual war had begun to shift too. Rachel Chrastil observed, “Molke’s Prussian General Staff had created the concept of mobilization as a separate, crucial stage between peace and war, during which soldiers and supplies were made mobile, assembled, and concentrated; a large reason for the French defeat had been their inability to implement this novel organizational strategy.” Chrastil, *Organizing for War*, 23. I argue that espionage contributed to the notion of mobilization and war preparation, and therefore it too fit into the space between war and peace.

<sup>104</sup> The “old view” of war was put forward by Vattel in the following quote: “...war is carried on by regular troops; the people, the peasants, the citizens, take no part in it, and generally have nothing to fear from the sword of the enemy.” Emerich de Vattel, *The Law of Nations* (Washington: Carnegie Institute, 1916), 318. Karma Nabulsi argues, however, that in late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Europe, there was actually much greater participation, whether via disobedience from an occupied population, political acts of resistance, and even armed acts of resistance from men and women opposed to enemy armies. Further, the *levee en masse* and other assorted insurrections demonstrated how “non-military” actors consciously chose to participate in warfare throughout the nineteenth century. Nabulsi, *Traditions of War*, 36-65. Recent scholarship debates the question of when wars began to engage a larger citizenry, such as David Bell’s *First Total War*, that claims that the Napoleonic Wars involved large segments of the European population. He also puts forth the argument that the mobilization of Napoleon’s invading armies also produced a distinct separation of military and civilian spheres. Bell, *First Total War*.

once fighting officially ended, ushering in what I describe as the original “cold war” landscape. Espionage fit directly into this new framework, as its performance during peacetime was not entirely distinct from the same activity during war. In modern war, spies became necessary, and thus any moral questionability was rationalized in the same vein.<sup>105</sup>

Although a number of theorists sought lasting peace, especially in the aftermath of the Franco-Prussian War with its accompanying occupation and reparation payments, contemporaries asserted that “perpetual peace” was illusory.<sup>106</sup> War was a reality – even in the absence of open hostilities – and thus writers and strategists acknowledged that it should be addressed, considered, and codified.<sup>107</sup> The first major effort along these lines involved an international conference in 1874 in Brussels, where representatives from across Europe met to discuss the laws and customs of war.<sup>108</sup> Many of the ideas discussed in the Brussels

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<sup>105</sup> See *Le Petit Parisien* of October 10, 1888 describing an interview with retired German lieutenant Hermann Vogt who expresses that espionage had become one of the new, necessary conditions of how war was carried out. Evidence that espionage did not fit in with the “old” laws of war can be found in a quote from Cassel’s history of the Franco-Prussian War published in 1871. In Volume 2, Edmond Ollier writes, “The leaders of the revolutionary party endeavoured to extenuate the murder of the generals by saying in their *Official Journal* that Lecomte ordered charges against women and children in the Rue Pigalle, and that Thomas was taking a plan of the barricades at Montmartre; so that both had ‘made themselves amenable to the laws of war, which do not allow either assassinations of women, or espionage.’” Edmond Ollier, *Cassel’s History of the War Between France and Germany, 1870-1871, Vol II* (London: Cassell & Co Ltd.: 1883), 329.

<sup>106</sup> The notion of “Perpetual Peace” comes from Kant. German general and strategist Helmut Von Moltke stated, “Perpetual peace is a dream, and it is not even a beautiful dream: war forms part of the universal order constituted by God. In war are displayed the most noble virtues, courage and abnegation, fidelity to duty, and the spirit of sacrifice which will hazard life itself; without war humanity would sink into materialism.” Moltke in a letter to M. Bluntschli in 1880, cited in Nabulsi, *Traditions of War*, 9.

<sup>107</sup> Karma Nabulsi outlines the competing viewpoints in turn-of-the-century thought towards the question of war, and consequently its legislation. Her study locates three different approaches to the modernizing of warfare, including the ‘realist’ paradigm that saw war as a necessary evil, and the ‘martialist’ viewpoint that saw military conflict as a necessary virtue. Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> In July 1874, representatives from Germany, Austria-Hungary, Belgium, Denmark, Spain, France, Great Britain, Greece, Italy, Holland, Russia, Norway and Sweden and Switzerland attended the meeting to discuss the rules of war. Martens, Samwer, and Hopf, *Nouveau Recueil*.

Conference were subsequently assessed, expounded upon, and codified in the *Manual on the Laws of War*, commonly known as the “Oxford Code,” drafted by Johann Bluntschli in 1880.<sup>109</sup> These efforts demonstrated the collective view that though war should be mitigated, it was nonetheless inevitable; banning it would be futile, and thus approaching it rationally would be the best way forward. Among the questions confronted in these conferences and guides was that of espionage, and thus delegates considered the reality and necessity of dealing with spies, both military and civilian.<sup>110</sup>

Indeed, a number of authors considering modern war stressed the importance of preparation for that eventuality. As technology and strategy had advanced, theorists acknowledged that espionage fit well into modern tactical planning. As Nicolas Rollin put it, “a nation concerned with its conservation cannot ignore what occurs beyond its borders; thus *vigilance* is one of the most important tasks for governments.” He continued that it was crucial to maintain “special bodies” to investigate and observe activity abroad, especially plots “against the interests of the *patrie* or threats to the nation’s existence.”<sup>111</sup> Intelligence in all of its forms was recognized as important to war preparation. When utilized in

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<sup>109</sup> Nabulsi, *Traditions of War*, 8-9. The Brussels Conference and Oxford Code followed the Lieber Code of 1863, which governed military justice during the United States Civil War, and was the first of its kind, defining, among other questions, spies and their uses in wartime scenarios.

<sup>110</sup> Section 1, Chapter 5 of this treaty covers spies and their treatment in the event of capture. At the conference, the European representatives debated questions of who could be considered a spy, what the individual’s motive for spying might be, and who had the right to determine his punishment. In concluding with several paragraphs regulating the treatment of spies, the representative nations therefore demonstrated an overt acknowledgment that, in times of warfare, armies maintain and employ secret agents. These provisions gave certain rights to the spy, such as dictating that he had the right to be tried according to the laws of the army that captured him, and provided safety for a spy who successfully returned to his own camp. Additionally, the treaty dictated that individuals not in disguise who penetrated enemy territory and sought information openly were not to be considered as practicing espionage.

<sup>111</sup> Rollin, *Le Service de renseignements militaires*, 7-8. His italics.

peacetime, open sources of information such as newspapers could facilitate discovery of new ways to construct ships, forts, and railroads. Writers described the importance of learning orders of battle, uniforms, and command structure, information that would be “all the more effective if one acts *promptly, and in secret.*”<sup>112</sup> Lastly, in stressing preparation, these theorists never strayed far from the memory of France’s loss in the Franco-Prussian War, and Prussia’s supposed use of spies to hasten the French defeat. However, in recognizing Bismarck’s tactics, they asserted that intelligence gathering should be viewed as a theoretical necessity that could not be separated from the realities of modern war.<sup>113</sup>

Military theorists recognized that not all intelligence could be gathered through newspapers or other open sources of information. Some things, they pointed out, remained hidden or secret, necessitating espionage to discern. “The spy,” said Colonel Fix, “means ‘he who sees,’ the things that the enemy intends to hide.”<sup>114</sup> Not only were espionage agents expected to learn about details of the military, stressed these authors, but also in order for the nation to be prepared for future war, spies would need to learn what authors called “*politique*,” or the knowledge of populations, their administration, relationships, and desires.<sup>115</sup> “If

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<sup>112</sup> Achille Morin, *Les lois relatives à la guerre, selon le droit des gens moderne, le droit public et le droit criminel des pays civilisés* (Paris: Cosse, Marchal, et Billard, 1872), xi-xvi. His italics.

<sup>113</sup> Victor Colonieu said, “Thus intelligent and able spies offer immense services to the government for which they work and therefore, are the most dangerous for the nation against which they operate. This is why it is important to closely monitor their deeds and punish them severely, as these are the preparatory acts, most often, that will later decide the destiny of a people. We suffered the cruel experience in 1870, and this experience cost us dearly enough that we will remember it.” Colonieu, *L’espionnage*, 9-10.

<sup>114</sup> Colonel Théodore Fix, *Le Service dans les états-majors* (Paris: Berger-Levrault, 1891), 559.

<sup>115</sup> See Fix, *La stratégie appliquée*, 123. Fix also quotes Lewal, who wrote that “we are obliged to study the *esprit public* to understand what we can fear, and to base thereupon the forces of occupation and their repartition.”



the cavalry is considered the eyes of the army," several writers noted, "spies could be considered its ears."<sup>116</sup> Besides giving a tacit acceptance of espionage, this comparison is also interesting as it clearly equates spies with ordinary soldiers, and in particular, the cavalry, which was one of the more respected divisions within the army. This elision of spies and soldiers appeared frequently during this period, and confirms an understanding of the changed nature of modern war.

Similarly, French writers sought to come to terms with the new cold war reality that required nations to remain on guard even in the absence of open fighting. The jurist Achille Morin rejected the idea of peace as the natural state of affairs and war an anomaly, suggesting that some of the new practices introduced in warfare had raised new questions about human rights, and therefore needed to be considered and presented to the public.<sup>117</sup> Among these new practices was espionage, and the scholar thus devoted several chapters of his text to its consideration. Morin, who found espionage immoral and condemnable, recognized that its use "is authorized by laws of war, and by the rights of man."<sup>118</sup> Therefore, he continued, "it could in certain cases be found lawful, or at least tolerated, by those who respect and teach principles of morality and justice. Thus, international law allows the practice of that which it recognizes as punishable." Moreover, he conceded that, "the action executed could be considered an act of patriotism,

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<sup>116</sup> Violle, *L'espionnage militaire*, 81. Rollin also uses this same terminology, noting that while the cavalry could observe what was around them, they would be unable to discern the enemies' plans. Rollin, *Le Service de renseignements militaires*, 83.

<sup>117</sup> "Partant de cette idée que la paix est l'état normal dans tout pays civilisé, que la civilisation actuelle considère la guerre comme un fléau accidentel à prévenir ou tempérer, autant que possible, et qu'il faut faciliter toutes conventions amenant le retour à la paix, je dois traiter tout sujet se trouvant *relatif* à la guerre, soit qu'il tende à la prévenir, soit qu'il ait pour but sa cessation, outre ce qui concerne ses tempéraments." Morin, *Les lois relatives à la guerre*, xvii. Morin had specifically pointed out that his book aimed to apprise the public of the new rules of war as accepted at the time.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, 240.

without dishonor, as a result of the goal pursued and the peril undertaken.”<sup>119</sup>

Likewise, legal scholar Victor Colonieu noted that one could not consider the morality of spying without considering the morality of warfare itself.

“I take as a constant that war between men is morally permitted, and by logical deduction, I recognize, along with other authors, that equally permissible is any means necessary or useful in order to practice it. ... I don't believe that one can contest the right to use spies in order to obtain information, which in this age is as necessary and important for victory as is the perfection of weapons and the valor of combatants.”<sup>120</sup>

For legal scholars to view espionage in this way showed Machiavellian thinking among civilians, and thus demonstrated the progress being made in viewing espionage as a valuable and valorous asset to the state. These theorists thus lay out the potential transference of considerations about espionage. Though seeming to concede the opprobrium for the practice of intelligence, they elevated the goal of the nation above the shame of the act, providing for the coupling of espionage and honor.

To integrate intelligence into the French military arsenal, proponents of the tactic recognized that they needed to overcome the reticence of a population, and an army, morally opposed to spying. The recognition that espionage had an indisputable place in modern warfare would allow people to view it as necessary to national survival. Some even went as far as to concede that espionage could be useful in preventing greater violence, claiming that though their morality might be dubious, often *ruses de guerre* could be “more humane and more moral than the use

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<sup>119</sup> Ibid., 239.

<sup>120</sup> Colonieu, *L'espionnage*, 29.

of overt force."<sup>121</sup> Colonel Rollin, a former officer of the army's *service de renseignements*, best summed up this sentiment:

"We must also unfortunately take the offensive, and in order not to fall into a state of marked inferiority compared with our neighbors, we must, in a certain measure, make use of the foreigner's espionage methods. Mr. Froment ended his book giving our leaders the following advice: 'We must remain positive regarding espionage: one does not make war with feelings, but with weapons; this has nothing to do with delicacy, and facts, like acts, will be brutal; it is thus necessary to be well informed, to admit a large staff of spies; this is an evil for the greater good.'"<sup>122</sup>

Even those who advocated for a French intelligence service recognized that many disapproved of the practice. However, as Froment had written in the quote cited above, for the survival of France, the ends would justify the means, and if spies were a critical element in modern warfare, the French army would need to employ them as a weapon.

### *Honor Found in Spying for National Revenge*

The emotional responses to the presumed harm that Germans could engender resulted in the general French population's reconsideration of its own use of espionage as well. The quest to reclaim honor and escape the shame of a defeat

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<sup>121</sup> Ibid., 32. This idea came from Vattel, t. III, 5. Modern theorists, however, have disputed the efficacy of secrecy in avoiding unnecessary conflict. For example, Ritchie Lowry writes, "There are other dysfunctions of secrecy as well – disparities between theoretical purposes and actual consequences. Coser (1963) has pointed out that most public policy and military secrecy is based upon the belief that if one deprives a competitor or enemy of important information, it is possible to keep him off balance to the point where violent conflict is less possible, compromise and bargaining are more probable, and one's chances for success are maximized. He indicates, by referring to Georg Simmel's work on conflict, that a precise knowledge of the comparative strengths of two parties is the most effective deterrent to violent, overt, disruptive conflict. In a context of maximum secrecy this knowledge can only be gained by actually fighting out the conflict. In other words, secrecy enhances the probability of conflict, attenuates the possibilities for peaceful competition or compromise, and thereby, maximizes one's chances of success and threatens one's position of security." Lowry, "Sociology of Secrecy," 440.

<sup>122</sup> Rollin, *Le Service de renseignements militaires*, 155.

and dismemberment of French lands would result in a willingness to overlook connections and similarities that appear obvious to the outside observer. A dispirited French population looked to revive its honor and find release of shame and frustration. One area of release was in the French colonial project, displaying French prowess through imperial expansion. Another, however, would be on the European scene, fostering hopes that Germany could be made to pay for its treachery and return Alsace-Lorraine to the hexagon. As Frijda notes, “revenge is a way to escape from shame and restore pride.”<sup>123</sup> Just as the military had been responsible for the depreciation of honor in French society, the effort to restore honor subsequently operated through the army as well.<sup>124</sup> In one instance of how this worked, spies – or individuals who risked their life for the nation – could be viewed as helping to restore some of its lost glory.

While theorists publicly proclaimed the need to accept espionage as a facet of modern warfare, among the greater public the practice still maintained its association with criminals, lowlives, and foreigners. Nonetheless, the French state had begun to recognize the utility of intelligence practice, and the army sought to maintain spy networks of its own. In order to accept that this decision represented an evil undertaken for the greater good, the public would need to associate spies not only with infamy, but also with the ability to bring honor and glory to a disgraced nation. Before staking a claim to unearthing evidence of increased respect for those practicing espionage, it is worthwhile to consider the concept of

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<sup>123</sup> Frijda, *Laws of Emotion*, 270.

<sup>124</sup> On French leaders’ attempts to stress the connection between army and honor in French society, see Girardet, *La société militaire*, 165-166.

honor in French society in order to understand what values were regarded with more or less favor.

Histories of honor locate the notion in its modern form as originally class-based and tied to the nobility. In pre-Revolutionary times, honor bound the nobles to their ruler, and thus facilitated the hierarchy that was to constitute absolutism.<sup>125</sup> Writing his *Esprit des lois*, Montesquieu contrasted the honor-based monarchy with the republic founded upon virtue. This branch of political thought found honor and patriotism to be irreconcilable, an idea that continued throughout the Revolutionary upheaval. During the Terror, honor was explicitly repudiated in favor of *vertu* and republican patriotism.

With the Revolution and subsequent establishment of the Empire and Napoleon at its helm, however, the ideal of honor began to shift from one anchored in blood to one achieved through merit. According to Norman Hampson, in Napoleon's meritocracy, the "new aristocrats" appropriated the old honor, but with the important distinction of placing loyalties not in ruler and class, but in Emperor and nation. Thus, honor became a commodity to be valued by the ascendant bourgeoisie, as in exchange for service to the State, Napoleon returned both honor and glory. Moreover, as Napoleon expanded the military class, he allowed the virtues embedded in military honor to spread throughout civil society, though many regarded the army itself as the locus of this particular sentiment.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> Norman Hampson, "The French Revolution and the Nationalisation of Honour," in M.R.D. Foot ed., *War and Society* (London: Elek, 1973).

<sup>126</sup> The writer Alfred de Vigny, for example, seeking a source of morality beyond the scope of religion in the 1830s, found the source of honor in the French army. Berenson, *Trial of Madame Caillaux*, 191. Berenson's analysis here is based on a reading of Alfred de Vigny's *Servitude et grandeur militaire* (1833-35).

Throughout the nineteenth century, honor continued to be democratized and extended to a greater portion of the population, so that by the *fin-de-siècle* a wide range of ideas and actions existed to uphold or besmirch the honor of French citizens. While historians of nineteenth-century France have located a handful of systems in which honor was challenged and could be defended – including masculinity, virulence, and bourgeois culture<sup>127</sup> – the important one for the purpose of furthering the place of espionage involves the vesting of honor in the nation. In his treatise on the transformation of honor in Western society, Geoffrey Best advances the idea that by the last decades of the nineteenth century, the personal honor of the pre-Revolutionary period had been completely collectivized, while the nation became personified as the collective self.<sup>128</sup> Asserting that psychologically, people want to associate with a “larger, brighter, stronger” power than themselves, he attributes nationalist sentiment to the collective view of the nation-state as a “super-person with all the personal attributes of body, blood, guts, mind, spirit, conscience, soul and honour.”<sup>129</sup>

Taking this view of national honor, it is fairly easy to comprehend the gaping affront to national pride experienced with the French defeat at the hands of Germany in the Franco-Prussian War. Robert Nye and Edward Berenson both discuss the impact that this humiliating loss had on collective feelings of damaged pride and masculinity. The defeat inspired French men to seek alternative means to restore their sapped virility, from stepping up relations with women, to engaging in

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<sup>127</sup> See Nye, *Masculinity*; Harris, *Murders and Madness*; Berenson, *Trial of Madame Caillaux*.

<sup>128</sup> Geoffrey Best, *Honour Among Men and Nations: Transformation of an Idea* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982).

<sup>129</sup> Best, *Honour*, 45.

duels with fellow countrymen. For many, however, the point of honor remained in France's potential to effect revenge on the country that defeated her. If, as James Bowman explains in his *Honor: A History*, the concept of honor can be broken down at its simplest to the idea of *quid pro quo*, blow for blow, it is clear that one way for the nation as a single honor group to restore its damaged pride would be through military victory where once lay military loss.<sup>130</sup> This idea of revenge, expressed by Frijda as "seeking to correct one's sense of power and the power relationship," would be played out in the irredentist struggle to see the return of Alsace and Lorraine to France. To achieve such victory, the nation would have to consider methods that had previously seemed unimaginable.

The immense literature treating *revanche* invariably brings forward the understanding that the desire for revenge was fraught with emotion.<sup>131</sup> Recalling defeat and the lost territories, Gambetta famously enjoined French citizens to "Let us speak of it never, but think of it always," encouraging the notion that revenge should remain in people's hearts and minds.<sup>132</sup> Contemporary writings proclaimed the need for revenge, and poets like Paul Déroulède directly connected vengeance with additional fighting and the chance to reclaim honor.<sup>133</sup> Schivelbusch notes that "the role played by *revanche*... was all the more intense, since... it served as a slogan

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<sup>130</sup> James Bowman, *Honor: A History* (New York: Encounter Books, 2006).

<sup>131</sup> See, e.g. Scheff, *Bloody Revenge*; Nolan, *Inverted Mirror*; Richard Thomson, *The Troubled Republic: Visual Culture and Social Debate in France, 1889-1900* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004); Peter M. Rutkoff, *Revanche and Revision: The Ligue des Patriotes and the Origins of the Radical Right in France, 1882-1900* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1981). Ruth Harris, for example, refers to France's inferiority complex as having "stoked the emotional fires of *revanche*." Harris, *Dreyfus*, 60.

<sup>132</sup> Cited by Schivelbusch, *Culture of Defeat*, 147.

<sup>133</sup> A stanza from a poem in his *Poesies Militaires* reads as follows: "French blood! – a treasure so august; And hoarded with such jealous care' To crush oppression's strength unjust; With all the force of right robust; And buy us back our honor fair." Paul Déroulède, *Poesies militaires* (Paris: C. Lévy, 1896).

for national salvation,” noting as well that “an abundance of poems, songs, ballads, odes, and manifestos, as well as journalistic articles and science fiction stories, fantasize[d] about military victory over Germany.”<sup>134</sup> In the presence of such a powerful neighbor, “*revanche* increasingly lost its original meaning and developed undertones of a readiness to *defend* France against renewed attack.”<sup>135</sup> While the nature of *revanche* changed over the course of several decades, in each iteration the French public experienced the desire to overcome feelings of inferiority and shame by proving themselves better than the Germans.

Espionage, consequently, held the potential to allow France to regain some of its lost glory. The connection between spies and revenge had been established in the French mentality regarding previous conflicts. Books and newspapers that discussed Bismarck’s use of spies during the Franco-Prussian War often noted that the motive for Bismarck to have waged war against France in the first place was to seek revenge for the Prussian defeat at Iéna by Napoleon’s forces.<sup>136</sup> In a spy novel published in 1874 by Alphonse Brot, the Prussian spies begin their plotting in 1866, with the specific intent of seeking revenge for this very defeat.<sup>137</sup> Further, in a curious case in Montmarquet, a small village in the north of France near Amiens, police intercepted a letter addressed to the head of the Prussian general staff, von Moltke, offering to sell maps and materiel.<sup>138</sup> The police traced the letter back to a

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<sup>134</sup> Schivelbusch, *Culture of Defeat*, 150, 154-155.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid. He continues by noting that more telling than the belligerent rhetoric was the construction of a line of fortresses along France’s eastern border.

<sup>136</sup> See, e.g. Loyal, *Le Dossier de la revanche. Le Siècle*, August 1888, “Aveux Allemands” AN F<sup>7</sup> 12644.

<sup>137</sup> Bleton, *La Cristallisation de l’ombre*. 38-40. Bleton refers to Brot’s book as one “in which lies the origin of the spy novel.”

<sup>138</sup> See case of Beaurain, May 1890. AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6081.



sixteen-year old boy named Beaurain who, when questioned, claimed to have sent the letter in an attempt to trick Moltke in order to avenge France in an upcoming war. The example demonstrates both the extent of the rhetoric of revenge into various areas of France, as well the connection made at this level between revenge, war, and spying.

For spies to be accepted as one tool towards effecting revenge, however, the general opinion of them would have to change. The attempt to distinguish the nineteenth century's use of spies from the disrepute in which their predecessors held the profession came with a tactic involving the definitions of two important terms: espionage and treason. The distinction lies with the goal of the spy's work, and who he or she is working for. The spy serving his own country can be respected, while someone working against one's nation in favor of rivals is a traitor. It is here that Machiavelli's dictum found strong resonance for the *fin-de-siècle* writers: "One must defend the *patrie*, either with opprobrium or with glory. All means are acceptable, provided that it is defended."<sup>139</sup> Using this powerful axiom, military thinkers like Detourbet, Violle and Numa de Chilly challenged the assessments of Montesquieu and his cohort. They used terms such as "necessary" and "indispensable" to refer to the practice of espionage, claiming that the need to bring national honor should excuse the common distaste for spying, and asserted that as a military mission, espionage is "never vile."<sup>140</sup> The General Charles Thoumas, in his 1889 *Causeries militaires*, recalled Marshal Bugeaud's advocacy of encouraging French officers to embrace espionage. Thoumas lamented the failure

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<sup>139</sup> de Chilly, *L'espionnage*, 13, quoting Machivelli, *Discours sur Tite-Live*, chapter XLI.

<sup>140</sup>Violle, *L'espionnage militaire*, 75. Detourbet, *L'espionnage et la trahison*, 36.

of many of his colleagues to take up “this profession that ennobles the motive of patriotism and the danger risked, a danger far more formidable than that of the battlefield.”<sup>141</sup> This new attitude towards spying – not embraced by all, but increasingly by some – and the emphasis on distinguishing between what really could be construed as two sides of the same coin reflects the emergence of stronger ideas of nationalism and patriotism in turn of the century Europe.

Among the first to stress the patriotism inherent in practicing an ignoble profession for the goal of restoring honor to the nation were those officers who had seen espionage practiced first hand, thus lauding its results and praising the devotion of those who engaged in it. In Charles de Freycinet’s 1871 memoir about his role in the Franco-Prussian War, he boasted of the successes of one of Cuvinot’s intelligence agents who had successfully stolen a war plan from one of the Prussian officers in Versailles.<sup>142</sup> Similarly, the French intelligence service received important documents from a German staff officer who identified himself only as “le Vengeur,” considering the material to be “among the most interesting that the Deuxième Bureau has had to study in recent years.”<sup>143</sup> The best way to obtain reliable information, asserted Rollin, was to assign secret missions to determined officers, in particular those who “put their patriotism above the false prejudices that are attached to this kind of reconnaissance.”<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>141</sup> Charles-Antoine Thoumas, *Causeries militaires* (Paris: Berger-Levrault, 1889).

<sup>142</sup> Freycinet, *La guerre en province pendant le siège de Paris 1870 - 1871: Précis historique*, 26-27. Freycinet spoke glowingly about Cuvinot’s abilities, and the successes of allowing division heads to be aware of enemy positions each day. For more on Cuvinot, see Chapter 2.

<sup>143</sup> Note dated February 8, 1904, cited in Tanenbaum, “French Estimates,” 154. According to Navarre, these documents contained an outline of what was to be the Schlieffen Plan. Navarre, *Service de renseignements*, 18.

<sup>144</sup> Rollin, *Le Service de renseignements militaires*, 101.

State representatives in the army, police, and diplomatic forces across the country also confirmed their respect for individuals willing to carry out intelligence duties. Lewal asserted that in the case of those working in “devotion to their country... the role of the spy is very honorable, and these individuals are as zealous as they are loyal.”<sup>145</sup> In terms of locating people to carry out this task, a *commissaire spéciale* from Pagny promised the local lieutenant that he would “send him the names of several intelligent, strong and determined men in my ranks who are willing to undertake dangerous missions abroad,” for the sake of the French army.<sup>146</sup> The Deuxième Bureau made a similar request in discussing the recruitment of agents, noting that officers had a duty to put forward “strong and intelligent men who speak the enemy’s language well, either military or otherwise,”<sup>147</sup> and in an interview with the journal *La France Militaire*, an anonymous colonel working with the intelligence services stated that “such missions could only be performed by officers, and very intelligent and loyal officers at that.”<sup>148</sup>

Those responsible for directing agents spoke of the honorability and patriotism of individuals supplying crucial intelligence. A note dictating the organization of territorial surveillance teams noted that “the patriotism of the members of the [regional intelligence] Service allows them to uncover all actions harmful to the nation’s interest of which foreigners might be guilty.”<sup>149</sup> When

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<sup>145</sup> Lewal, “Tactique des Renseignements,” 169.

<sup>146</sup> Report dated February 13, 1900 from Pagny, MM 4M 278.

<sup>147</sup> *Instruction particulière provisoire sur le service des renseignements*, SHD 7N 25.

<sup>148</sup> “Espionnage et Trahison: Entretien avec un Colonel,” *La France Militaire*, November 20, 1894.

<sup>149</sup> Note on organization of SRT, dated March 29, 1887, SHD 2I 323.

Sandherr sought informants in Tunisia, he suggested contacting French missionaries, noting that not only did they maintain good contact with Arabs, but also that “they are patriots.”<sup>150</sup> In private notes, Minister of Foreign Affairs Alexandre Ribot expressed concern for the personal safety of one of his agents, something that would not be expected if spies were only considered the lowest of the low.<sup>151</sup> Called to answer for his actions during the Dreyfus Affair, former intelligence officer Picquart explained before the courts that the Statistical Section had maintained some agents whose morality was questionable, but also others “of the highest repute.”<sup>152</sup> Even before the Chamber of Deputies, in a discussion over a proposition by the Socialist camp to cut funding for military attachés because of their presumed espionage activities, Minister of War de Freycinet proclaimed that, “at this very moment, I am maintaining agents abroad who provide the most invaluable services,” lauding the patriotism of those who work to help the army and the nation.<sup>153</sup>

Writers also publicly defended individuals who were known to have participated in the army’s professional intelligence service. In discussing espionage as a tactic practiced by all nations, the newspaper *L’Évenement* made a point to praise the work of the recently-deceased Abraham Samuel, a former head of the French *service de renseignements*.<sup>154</sup> Two decades later, Nicolas Rollin did the same

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<sup>150</sup> SHD 2H1.

<sup>151</sup> See notes from Ribot to the Minister of the Marine, January 28, 1891. MAE Série C administrative, Carton 180.

<sup>152</sup> From *Instruction Fabre*, tome I, 187.

<sup>153</sup> The debate took place in the Chamber of Deputies on March 11, 1899. The proposition by Marcel Sembat and the Socialists did not pass. Reprinted in Mennevée, *L’espionnage international*, 103-118.

<sup>154</sup> *L’Évenement* June 12, 1884. APP BA 1332.

for Sandherr, offering “an homage to the brave soldier and ardent patriot who devoted his time, energy, and intelligence to making the French *service de renseignements* one of the most important components of the project of national defense.”<sup>155</sup> In honoring the intelligence directors, these authors helped to legitimize the deed.

Individual spies worked to see honor in their ventures, viewing their actions as part of their service to the fatherland. Edmond Lajoux, himself an agent for the French *service de renseignementst*, described the work of the spy as requiring the ultimate sacrifice. “The agent destined for this difficult and often thankless career should be ready for everything,” he wrote in memoirs that were published first as a newspaper serial, and then as a book.<sup>156</sup> “He must have courage, be fearless before the enemy and, in a word, sacrifice himself for the benefit of the cause that he serves.”<sup>157</sup> Similarly, in describing the French army’s role in intelligence gathering, the officer interviewed by *La France Militaire* asserted that spies should not be accused of working for dubious motives, as their tasks entailed taking on tremendous risk, while not getting much in return. According to him, spies were driven “only by the desire to serve the *patrie* by any means necessary and to sacrifice for it as one would oneself.”<sup>158</sup> This statement reflects the growing

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<sup>155</sup> Rollin, *Le Service de renseignements militaires*, 135.

<sup>156</sup> *La Liberté* published the series from September 22 to October 5, 1904. APP BA 1334. His book was Lajoux, *Mes souvenirs*.

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>158</sup> “Espionnage et Trahison: Entretien avec un Colonel,” *La France Militaire*, November 20, 1894.

sentiment that individual honor would be subsumed to national honor, and that French citizens all had the responsibility to fight for this noble goal.<sup>159</sup>

As the specialists had noted, however, serving one's fatherland as a spy bore more risks than advantages. Such ended up being the case for Marie Bastian, the cleaning lady assigned to the German embassy who brought the Statistical Section the pieces of the *bordereau* that would implicate Dreyfus in 1894. While Bastian had no part in the drama involving the false accusation and subsequent cover-up, she nonetheless became one of the unfortunate victims in the Affair. Whereas the massive historiography on the Dreyfus Affair leaves Bastian after her passing along of the *bordereau*, her story continues somewhat tragically.<sup>160</sup> Once her role as the "ordinary route" by which documents made their way from the German embassy to the French intelligence services was made public, Bastian lost her job. Moreover, as she expressed her situation in letters to the intelligence services in the years following, she had trouble finding new work, as she had been the subject of so much publicity.<sup>161</sup> With a husband unable to work from physical disabilities, and without employment, Bastian found herself in a difficult situation. In pleading letters to her intelligence handlers, Bastian requested financial assistance, reminding them of "the great service that I have rendered to my country."<sup>162</sup>

Despite her patriotic entreaties, Minister of War Gaston de Galliffet instructed the

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<sup>159</sup> Félix Pyat wrote in the *Cri du Peuple*: « Pour un mot injurieux qui n'attente qu'à l'honneur personnel, l'individu se bat en duel, risque sa vie et l'avenir des siens, femme et enfants ! Et pour un outrage à la France, une attente à l'honneur, à la vie de la nation, à son indépendance, à sa souveraineté, nous fléchirions ! Qu'est-ce que la personnalité auprès de la nationalité ? Qu'est-ce qu'un individu à côté d'un Peuple ? Ne soyons pas moins citoyens que chevaliers. Aux armes pour tous comme pour un ! » May 2, 1887.

<sup>160</sup> Her file is in AN BB<sup>19</sup> 73.

<sup>161</sup> See letters dated throughout November 1899. AN BB<sup>19</sup> 73.

<sup>162</sup> Note from Bastian, undated, but probably around November 1899. AN BB<sup>19</sup> 73.

Statistical Section not to give her any more money. Beyond her financial straits, Bastian also found herself harassed by police agents, journalists, and other curious observers, many coming to her door for a variety of reasons connected with her role in the case. Only the press seems to have attempted to rehabilitate her reputation, with the anti-Dreyfusard *Libre Parole* describing her as “profoundly honest, and very devoted to France.”<sup>163</sup>

The Bastian story illustrates the human toll that the development of French intelligence would play on its agents, and also displays the mixed public reaction to such activity. Through it all, Bastian claims to have thought of herself as a patriot, and indeed, her work allowed the Deuxième Bureau to glean substantial intelligence regarding the dealings of foreign attachés in France.<sup>164</sup> These discoveries affirmed the decision of the French *service de renseignements* to engage in espionage within the embassies, so that Bastian and the public could both consider her role as a snoop to be a patriotic duty in service to the country. This example also shows how the notion of revenge – spying on those whose aim was to deceive and harm France – justified illicit activity. Schwartzkoppen’s exposure confirmed that the ends warranted the means.

In spite of the results that could follow, journalists and scholars writing about espionage concluded that it remained honorable to serve one’s country. In an article in the popular paper the *Éclair*, a journalist wrote:

“It is thus our type of espionage, espionage à la française. It is blindly chauvinistic, that the ruse understood as such seems so perfectly legitimate and not at all unworthy of men who wear engraved on their belt the words: Honor and Patriotism. Further... the grandeur of

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<sup>163</sup> *La Libre Parole*, February 15, 1900, AN BB<sup>19</sup> 73.

<sup>164</sup> See Chapter 4 for more details of this.

the risk run and the good done for the nation can, in certain cases, render heroic actions which are reputed vile in other circumstances."<sup>165</sup>

The circumstances needed to be right, therefore, and in the context of a nation seeking to regain its lost honor, the bravery of the spy could be worthwhile if his actions helped to effect revenge.

### *Public Support for Captured French Spies*

While Bastian's work entailed spying on French territory, other agents of the army's intelligence service performed reconnaissance duties outside of France. Though records of these endeavors were understandably kept secret (and subsequently destroyed or lost), the full extent of French intelligence was unknown to contemporaries. Nonetheless, Germans captured a number of French agents performing espionage during these years. Public reaction to cases that involved Frenchmen caught performing espionage against foreign nations – the majority of which occurred in the former French territories – reveals a marked hypocrisy among the French public in regard to feelings about espionage and spying. When it came to replacing negative emotions such as anger and shame with honor and glory, all methods were fair game. An examination of a handful of the more newsworthy cases during this period demonstrates this inconsistency, and suggests the role of emotion and crowd psychology as an explanation for the embrace of contradictory views.

The most well-known example of a French spy caught on German soil was Guillaume Schnaebelé, the police commissioner whose capture in part led to the

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<sup>165</sup> *L'Éclair*, March 5, 1890, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12644-45.



downfall of General Boulanger as War Minister. Schnaebelé, an Alsatian-born Frenchman who opted for French citizenship, had been employed by the French state as a *commissaire spéciale*, working as station chief in Pagny after the Franco-Prussian War on the French-German border. By at least 1880, the Deuxième Bureau recruited him to conduct reconnaissance for them, and he shortly became part of an espionage ring operating within the annexed territories of Alsace-Lorraine, reporting back to Colonel Vincent and others at the Statistical Section in Paris.<sup>166</sup>

The Schnaebelé “Affair” began on April 20, 1887 when in response to an invitation from his counterpart in Germany, an officer named Gautsch, Schnaebelé crossed the frontier into the no man’s land, where the German police arrested him as a French spy.<sup>167</sup> The French government protested the circumstances under which Schnaebelé had been arrested, and following some diplomatic wrangling and international pressure, Bismarck personally released Schnaebelé after the latter spent ten days in prison in Leipzig. However, while Schnaebelé did not end up going to trial as originally scheduled, three other men – Klein, Erhart and Grebert – who had worked alongside Schnaebelé, did face the German justice system around the same time, accused of being spies for the French government.<sup>168</sup> The rhetoric surrounding these trials, along with Schnaebelé’s unjust arrest and release, filled national and international newspapers for months, and testifies both to the

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<sup>166</sup> See notes in file AN F<sup>7</sup> 12641. Under the direction of the *Sûreté Générale*, a number of police commissioners had for years been given the responsibility of observing relations along the Alsatian border. In the early 1880s, the War Ministry became more involved with the transport of information across borders, and began to communicate directly with the police commissioners, with the intelligence bureau, headed by Colonel Vincent, facilitating this interaction. Goblet, “Souvenirs,” 180.

<sup>167</sup> AN F<sup>7</sup> 12572.

<sup>168</sup> AN F<sup>7</sup> 12572. According to news accounts, Klein was an architect in Strasbourg, who along with his brother-in-law Grebert, also an architect, managed to procure plans of various fortresses and pass them along to French officers. APP EA 59.

comprehension of espionage as carrying the potential to destabilize international relations, and to the power of patriotism and revenge in generating national opinion.

The conclusion that the captured French spies on trial in Leipzig were seeking to avenge the lost provinces came from both France and Germany. The German press proclaimed it “time to inform them that they are and must remain Germans,” asserting that the courts should act swiftly and harshly to assure that other spies did not follow in their footsteps.<sup>169</sup> Further, the German courts stressed the fact that Schnaebelé and his agents should not be considered as individuals working for their own benefit, be it for money or adventure, but as representatives of a sovereign state, identifying Vincent and Boulanger by name as authorities directing espionage activities.<sup>170</sup> The spies were seeking revenge for the annexation, as was the French state.

The reaction in France was indignant. Despite years of association of espionage with German treachery, the press defended the accused functionaries. Instead of being demonized, Schnaebelé and his cohort were portrayed as national heroes. The newspaper *Revanche* referred to Schnaebelé as a “devoted servant, [a] tried and tested patriot,”<sup>171</sup> and the French press took the side of the accused at Leipzig, asking, “Is this fidelity a crime?”<sup>172</sup> The newspaper the *Intransigeant* printed an excerpt of Klein’s interrogation that showed him as the kind of loyal

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<sup>169</sup> Excerpt from *Frankfurt Gazette*, July 24, 1887, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12572.

<sup>170</sup> The German lawyer Treplin made a distinction between these cases and prior trials, the latter being concerned with “individuals who gathered intelligence at their own initiative, in the interest of France.” Reported by the *Journal d’Alsace*, July 8, 1887, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12572.

<sup>171</sup> “Un Abjection,” *Revanche*, May 4, 1887, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12572.

<sup>172</sup> *Le Petit Parisien*, June 17, 1887, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12572.

Alsatian that the nation could support. Before the court, Klein proclaimed, "I am a French spy and, according to your laws, you are obliged to condemn me. In my place, you would act like me. I am French! I am a French soldier!"<sup>173</sup> Klein himself adopted the military discourse here, self-identifying as a warrior for the national cause.

Moreover, it is clear that this affront to French patriotism elicited an emotional response among the French populace, as several different newspapers testified. In the days after Schnaebelé's arrest, "emotion continued to take hold in Paris," stated the *Journal Indre Châteauroux*, a paper out of central France.<sup>174</sup> The "indignant outcry" from the French public resonated throughout France, and beyond.<sup>175</sup> Even the Germanic press in Lorraine, the *Metzer Zeitung*, claimed that "the arrest caused a lively emotion in Metz and in France."<sup>176</sup> In fact, some papers attributed Schnaebelé's liberation to the public's emotional reaction. The *Courrier de la Meurthe et Moselle* in Nancy wrote, "Schnaebelé is released. Bismarck, disconcerted by the general emotion took the initiative."<sup>177</sup> These papers noted the intensely visceral reaction in France to an accusation of espionage against a Frenchman, and used it to assert French patriotism.

Upon Schnaebelé's release from Leipzig, many Frenchmen reveled in his newfound freedom, claiming that "justice has been served," and that they could

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<sup>173</sup> *Intransigent* of July 9, 1887, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12572. In Klein's case, letters from Schnaebelé served as proof of his guilt. He was also aware that the French War Ministry was receiving his dispatches.

<sup>174</sup> *Journal Indre Châteauroux*, April 23, 1887, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12572.

<sup>175</sup> *L'Intransigent*, June 24, 1887, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12572.

<sup>176</sup> *Metzger Zeitung*, April 21, 1887, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12572.

<sup>177</sup> *Courrier de la Meurthe et Moselle*, April 23, 1887, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12572.

finally rejoice in “patriotic satisfaction.”<sup>178</sup> They also thanked the government, which had helped to facilitate such a joyous outcome. After the fact, French papers described Schnaebelé as a martyr and a hero, asserting that he had been “victim to his duty and his patriotic zeal, guilty only of having executed a mission confided to him by his superiors.”<sup>179</sup> Likewise, after serving the one-year prison sentence to which a number of the Leipzig spies were condemned, one returned to France to find himself the guest of honor at a large banquet.<sup>180</sup> Although the majority of papers avoided explicitly describing the activities of Schnaebelé and his agents as espionage, there could not have been considerable doubt regarding the Frenchmen’s intentions in the former territories.

In the days following Schnaebelé’s release, the newspaper *La France* held a subscription to raise money in order to offer Schnaebelé a “diamond cross” for his patriotism.<sup>181</sup> Noting that the police commissioner was “a casualty of his devotion to France,” and that the government wouldn’t have the ability to fully compensate him, the paper offered to raise the money as “a simple testament to the public sympathy and acknowledgment of his deeds.” Moreover, so that the subscription could be guaranteed as “democratic,” the organizers noted that any sum above one franc would be refused. To many, Schnaebelé represented the hard-working, simple, yet loyal citizens from Alsace-Lorraine who needed to be avenged for their displacement. These were thought to be more inclined for army work than for

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<sup>178</sup> *Journal de la Meurthe et des Vosges*, May 1, 1887, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12572.

<sup>179</sup> *La Revanche*, May 1, 1887, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12572.

<sup>180</sup> *La France*, May 19, 1888, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12572. The individual in question was M. Koechlin-Claudon, condemned by the tribunal at Leipzig to one year in prison, which he served in Magdebourg.

<sup>181</sup> See *La France* May 1, 1887, APP EA 59.

education, for example, and thus with his actions, Schnaebelé confirmed the stereotype of the dedicated citizen who chose France over Germany, and dedicated his life and career to serving the motherland.<sup>182</sup> Newspaper portraits showed an upright, proud man, wearing the lapel of service, someone to be honored and admired.<sup>183</sup> Such was his prestige that some people even suggested that Schnaebelé run for the public legislature.<sup>184</sup> This clear support for presumably questionable practices is indicative of the public opinion that would grow more and more boisterous in support of the nation. Moreover, the collective anger at the unjust way that Schnaebelé was lured across the border and captured – itself perhaps masking humiliation of being caught – added fuel to the fire in support of activities that could help to return Alsace and Lorraine.

These incidents also forced French society to come to terms with the reality that espionage was a part of modern war and modern cold war. The Germans had been correct in accusing Schnaebelé and his agents of gathering intelligence that could be used to exact revenge in the event that France and Germany would once again go to war. Over the years, Schnaebelé and his agents had handed over precious information to Paris detailing progress on German rail construction in Alsace-Lorraine, locations of forts, advancements in gunpowder, and more.<sup>185</sup> Thus, in defending Schnaebelé, the press and certain politicians were also defending France's right to collect such intelligence. The Radical deputy Camille Pelletan explained that it was no secret that countries are wary of each other and that all try

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<sup>182</sup> See Léon Goulette, *Avant, pendant et après l'affaire Schnaebelé* (Paris: C.Bayle, [s.d.]), 84-85.

<sup>183</sup> Portrait printed in the *Journal de Paris* dated April 29, 1887, APP EA 59. See Annex J.

<sup>184</sup> *L'Autorité* April 29, 1887, APP EA 59.

<sup>185</sup> AN F<sup>7</sup> 12641. See several reports from Schnaebelé in MM 2R 10. See also Chapter 4.

to spy on each other, but complained of Germany's decision to charge the practice of espionage – an action that he refers to as *métier* – as a crime of high treason.<sup>186</sup> In his analysis of the Schnaebelé affair, prominent Third Republican journalist and deputy Joseph Reinach conceded, “we have known for a long time that two great military nations cannot live side by side without seeking an exact knowledge of their mutual forces.”<sup>187</sup> However, he stressed, this task was not incompatible with maintaining peace, and he too chastised the German press for making such an issue of Schnaebelé's actions.

The incredibly defensive nature of the French public reaction to the Leipzig trials highlights the inconsistency in French approaches to espionage at the turn of the century. Though many had taken pains to insist that the French nature was not suited for spying, statements such as those by Camille Pelletan and Joseph Reinach demonstrate an understanding of espionage as a modern reality. Other journalists echoed this sentiment, yet maintained a hostile attitude. “The German government seeks to prove that the French government uses spies in Alsace-Lorraine?” bristled the paper *La Lanterne*. “It is possible that it does. Does this revelation surprise anyone?”<sup>188</sup> Certainly the realities of modern warfare had become public knowledge, and while the French public likely remained reticent about the use of espionage, the promise of recovering the lost provinces was appealing enough to overlook such hesitation.

A second case exposing French espionage occurred in the summer of 1893, when naval captains Degouy and Delguey were arrested near Kiel in northern

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<sup>186</sup> *La Depeche* May 1, 1887, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12572.

<sup>187</sup> Joseph Reinach, “Philosophy of the Incident,” *La République*, May 1, 1887, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12572.

<sup>188</sup> “Querelle d’Allemand,” *La Lanterne*, April 28, 1887, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12572.

Germany, close to the border with Denmark.<sup>189</sup> The two officers had been cruising the waters in an English pleasure boat called the *Insect*. When German crews stopped and searched the boat, they found Degouy and Delguy in possession of photos and maps of forts and of the surrounding areas. The Germans arrested the Frenchmen, and tried them as spies, where the high court in Leipzig condemned them to prison terms – six years for Degouy and four years for Delguy. At their trial, the officers claimed not to be on an official mission, but asserted that the French naval attaché in London had procured the boat, and that they had been given money from other superiors to undertake the expedition. However, the French press agency Havas reported that the marines admitted that their intention was for their government to profit from their findings, and the report mentioned the “system of organized espionage approved by the Minister and practiced by officers.”<sup>190</sup> Clearly, the French government’s practice of intelligence abroad was not entirely a secret.

The reaction among the French public offered support to the imprisoned naval officers. The *Monde Illustré* noted that “a very strong movement of sympathy is underway in France in favor of our two condemned compatriots,” and the paper *Le Matin* referred to the two as “brave men.”<sup>191</sup> Another Havas report called the men “clever, shrewd and intelligent,” noting that, “the accused had the intention of serving *leur patrie*.”<sup>192</sup> Additionally, in defending himself before the court, Degouy

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<sup>189</sup> For details on the case, see MAE Affaires Diverses Politiques, Allemagne 45 and 50.

<sup>190</sup> Havas telegram dated December 15, 1893, MAE Affaires Diverses Politiques, Allemagne 45.

<sup>191</sup> *Le Monde Illustré*, December 20, 1893; UCLA Spec. Coll. 899, box 750; *Le Matin*, December 20, 1893; MAE Affaires Diverses Politiques, Allemagne 45.

<sup>192</sup> Note dated December 16, 1893, MAE Affaires Diverses Politiques, Allemagne 45.

made a point to note that he had “led an honorable life.”<sup>193</sup> In the end, the captains spent only six months locked in the fortress at Glatz, as German Kaiser Wilhelm released them early at the request of a handful of prominent individuals. The case confirmed to the public the French practice of engaging in secret missions in attempts to assess the military prowess of their neighbor.

Several additional occasions of French spies captured by German (or occasionally Italian) authorities alerted French leadership and the public to the fact that French officers and citizens were practicing espionage. Germans arrested the officer Armand Reclus in Kiel and condemned him to prison in front of the tribunal of Flensburg in 1875, condemned Lieutenant Tissot in Strasbourg in 1880, arrested another officer, Letellier, in Karlsruhe in 1886, and exposed Colonel Vincent’s informer Dietz in Metz in 1888.<sup>194</sup> At the end of 1904, French intelligence authorities found some of their agents compromised with the exposure of a list of individuals working as spies for France in Germany.<sup>195</sup> Just as French courts were judging German citizens suspect of espionage, the German courts were filled with cases of suspect Frenchmen. The French police commissioners along the German border seem to have learned of many of these cases through the German press, and would

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<sup>193</sup> Cited in Mennevée, *L’espionnage international*, 187.

<sup>194</sup> For Reclus, see *ibid.*, 135-136. For LeTellier see report by the police commissioner in the Meurthe et Moselle dated December 18, 1886 MM 4M 278; and Dietz see MM4 M 278. and AN F<sup>7</sup> 12644-45. Dietz was a French agent who had stolen a number of documents at the behest of the head of the Statistical Section, Colonel Vincent, mostly pertaining to German plans for use of railroads in the event of mobilization. Dietz worked along with a female – papers call her either his wife or his sister – who served as an intermediary between the spy and Vincent. The German court at Leipzig sentenced him to ten years in prison. See report dated January 27, 1888, MM 4M 278.

<sup>195</sup> According to newspaper accounts, the Germans were given access to the list of French spies employed in Germany by a former French officer. The list also indicated that the number of French spies working for the SR in Germany had greatly increased in recent years. See note from the special police commissioner in Avricourt dated January 6, 1905, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12644-45. A number of French newspapers also printed stories about this leak in the last days of December 1904.



translate articles from German papers and transmit them directly to the Statistical Section in Paris. Moreover, the German police seemed as intolerant as their French counterparts, finding people suspicious for a number of reasons and accusing them of being spies, even without particularly damning evidence. Consequently, German authorities expelled a number of Frenchmen from Alsace-Lorraine.<sup>196</sup>

The accusations lobbed back and forth by governments and by various regional and national journals reflected a new dialogue on the use of espionage by states in modern war and peace. During the Schnaebelé Affair, German courts and newspapers were quick to place the responsibility for the affair on the French government, starting with Boulanger. An article in the *Gazette de Cologne* informed its readers that the actions of Schnaebelé, Klein, and their colleagues constituted crimes that could be attributed entirely to the French government.<sup>197</sup> Another paper, the *Metzer Zeitung*, narrowed a step further, connecting the spies directly to the Statistical Section and the Ministry of War.

“It is becoming more and more clear that the leadership of these attacks, as well as their source, comes from Paris, and that Colonel Vincent, head of the *bureau des renseignements*, who figures as “*grandmère*” in the letters of the accused, Klein, to his French agents, recruits spies and traitors. As he is attached to the Ministry of War, it is obvious that Vincent, with the consent of the highest leadership of the army, is working first and foremost for the Ministry of War and that the state is paying a high price to hire spies.”<sup>198</sup>

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<sup>196</sup> Indeed, the German reaction to French agents caught, or suspect, on German territory demonstrates that the question of having a “natural inclination” towards spying was not quite what the French made of it, and confirms the idea that different “truths” could emerge from different contexts. During the Leipzig trials in 1887 featuring Schnaebelé’s collaborators, the *Cologne Gazette* published a list of supposed French spies who had been arrested in Germany since 1875, many of whom were officers. This shows that in Germany, too, the exposure of spies was used to rile up public opinion, and certain writers suggested that the publication of this particular list was timed to coincide with a critical vote in the German *Reichstag* on Bismarck’s proposal to require military service for seven years. See, e.g. Goulette, *Schnaebelé*. Froment, *L’Espionnage militaire*, 109. The German Parliament did indeed pass the Septennate in 1887.

<sup>197</sup> AN F<sup>7</sup> 12572.

<sup>198</sup> Translation of *Metzer Zeitung* of July 10, 1887, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12572.

The article continued with attacks on the French government, pressing the idea that France was engaging in treason with the aim of weakening another state. This idea must have been quite pervasive throughout Germany, or at least throughout Alsace-Lorraine, as the prosecutor in the Leipzig trials expressed a similar sentiment. The Empire's lawyer, Mr. Treplin, argued that Klein's case represented the first instance of people "put at the service of France to betray the German Empire." He made a distinction between these cases and prior trials, the latter being concerned with "individuals who gathered intelligence at their own initiative, in the interest of France."<sup>199</sup> In the era of nationalism, even spies had become devoted patriots, acting not necessarily for their own interest, but for the greater good of the state and nation.

This idea of one state instigating citizens of another to practice espionage or commit treason, as opposed to individuals working for their own benefit, be it for money, adventure, or other motives, opened up bigger questions of the relations of states and the rights each were accorded in this modern era. It was also one that was considered by writers and theorists during this formative period of the professionalization of espionage. In the introduction to his scholarly work on modern espionage published in 1903, James Violle posed one of the central questions to understanding this new practice. "All civilized nations consider espionage exercised against them a crime, and a reprehensible crime at that... but at the same time, each nation organizes espionage at the expense of others, even

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<sup>199</sup> Reported by the *Journal d'Alsace*, July 1887, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12572.

encourages it and praises those citizens who practice it for the state's benefit."<sup>200</sup>

Violle continued, "The act [of espionage] is considered criminal by the person who commits it, yet the person who inspires and instructs him to commit it is considered innocent. And the public conscience does not protest!" This lack of protest can be attributed to the conflicting ideas of the purpose of espionage, with desire for revenge and release of shame preventing a clear vision of the hypocrisy.

The fact that espionage was commissioned at the high level of state leadership was not lost on observers. Victor Colonieu, for example, accepted that states were indeed entitled to practice espionage vis-à-vis their neighbors.

However, he claimed,

"A nation is an abstract entity, something that is not alive and is not manifested except with the help of a series of individuals that one calls public functionaries. Thus what is innocent for the nation taken as a collective should be innocent for each individual who represents it, for each functionary to whom it has delegated part of its authority."<sup>201</sup>

According to this theory, Schnaebelé and other spies like him did not deserve to be prosecuted, and in fact served as an integral part of the national fabric.

Such assertions, of course, run counter to France's practice of dealing with spies as established by the 1886 law. They demonstrate therefore how some within France considered spying on Germany to be a right belonging to the nation, even while legislation prevented adversaries from doing likewise, and at the same time display the hypocrisy of the French public and press. During the case of Degouy and Delguey, French War Minister Mercier protested the capture as unfair, arguing that German espionage was worse, and that French justice was far more lenient

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<sup>200</sup> Violle, *L'espionnage militaire*, 3.

<sup>201</sup> Colonieu, *L'espionnage*, 134.

than its German counterpart.<sup>202</sup> His reaction illustrates the irrationality of the French practice of intelligence, that appeared to operate under the assumption that French activities were patriotic and justified, while foreign espionage was disreputable and represented belligerent tendencies. A similar statement came from the legal authority Edouard Clunet – who interestingly would defend Mata Hari at her trial thirty years later – regarding Schnaebelé. “How does the functionary who works to satisfy this organic need of the State offend a foreign nation?” Clunet asked.

“How does a chancellor, a foreign minister, or a minister of war commit an act of treason towards a foreign state simply in fulfilling their duty towards *la patrie*? Finally, how does a State arrest and convict foreigners who are merely doing their duties towards their countries, just as their own functionaries do at home?”<sup>203</sup>

Certainly this hypocrisy is evident, as the French were quick to condemn the same actions undertaken against them.

Such arguments advanced by leading legal and political authorities can be interpreted as appeals to the notion of *raison d'état*. Defined by Olivier Chopin as the autonomous practice of government by its own rules, the term implies the justification of questionable practices in the name of national interest.<sup>204</sup> Chopin notes that *raison d'état* is a mode of legitimization, permitting acts of transgression that a sovereign state believes necessary to assure the conservation or the growth of

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<sup>202</sup> See letter from Minister of War Mercier dated December 31, 1893. MAE Affaires Diverses Politiques, Allemagne 45. Of course, this was only one side of the matter. The French ambassador to Berlin, Jules Herbette had noted that the imperial authority had considered drawing the case out and making the officers remain in prison even longer, to reflect the treatment of Germans arrested in France, AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6082.

<sup>203</sup> Edouard Clunet cited by Goulette, *Schnaebelé*, 111.

<sup>204</sup> Olivier Chopin, “La guerre au prisme de la raison d’État,” unpublished draft presentation dated January 13, 2009.

public power. Importantly, he notes that one of the elements composing *raison d'état* is the notion of secrecy. In terms of intelligence practice, therefore, the state would be absolved of any guilt for encouraging its representatives to spy, as such practice could be viewed as necessary for national preservation. Through appeals to emotions such as humiliation and revenge, a doubting populace was able to accept that the practice of espionage could bring about honor, and therefore accepted secrecy and spying as one of the necessary tasks of the French Third Republic.

Finally, while this section has demonstrated that the public was willing to view individuals as honorable when serving the nation in spite of their use of dubious means, I do not want to imply that this view was the consensus. A brief examination of the presence of counterarguments, which though denying the potential of honor for spies, will confirm that understandings of the practice of espionage were in flux, and thus demonstrate that the question had entered into the popular imagination. For example, the *Éclair* pointed out that the trials in France against German spies inspired disdain among the public, and thus made the French “reflect upon what our spies do for us when they practice espionage abroad.”<sup>205</sup> Others went further, saying that “the spy is only honorable in Fenimore Cooper novels,” and that the idea of glorifying spies through fiction is false.<sup>206</sup>

Some commentators who sought to rehabilitate the reputation of espionage made a distinction between military spies and civilian spies. Certain writers believed that officers on mission were “spared the ostracism leveled towards those

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<sup>205</sup> *L'Éclair*, March 5, 1890, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12644-5.

<sup>206</sup> See, *Le Tépharion*, July 18, 1888 and *Le Journal* September 24, 1897, both of which take this angle.

in France considered 'spies.'"<sup>207</sup> One journalist, for example, looked to the American Civil War and noted that "deception" was not contrary to military honor, as in war, a ruse could be valuable in advancing one's side.<sup>208</sup> His article summarized opinions of this distinction by looking to classic theorists: "Caro accepts it [espionage], if it is for wartime, Machiavelli accepts it everywhere and always. Bugeaud claims honor for it, and Lincoln sees nothing that is contrary to loyalty, if the spy is a military man." However, not everyone agreed. For example, an opinion piece in the *Petite République* in 1899 rejected this distinction, and asserted that all spies should be regarded disdainfully: "in dishonoring spies, one works for peace."<sup>209</sup> Maurice Paleologue also rejected Bugeaud's claim, and to the contrary, asserted that military representatives who spied disgraced the entire army. In his diary of the Dreyfus Affair he wrote,

"Intelligence work, which I have never seen so closely before, hardly justifies the romantic and fascinating reputation which it enjoys from afar. I do not hold against it the fact that it is generally dirty and disgusting and full of impostures and deceits, for it is that, so to speak, by its very nature. But what deprives it of all its glamour and poetry in my eyes is that it is carried out by officers."<sup>210</sup>

This debate demonstrates that like with all issues, a spectrum of opinion existed on the question of espionage and its public perception. The very existence of the debate, however, proves that entrenched notions were coming under question and that the honorability of the spy had advocates, as well as detractors. The fact that

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<sup>207</sup> Mennevée, *L'espionnage international*, 127.

<sup>208</sup> *L'Éclair*, March 5, 1890 AN F<sup>7</sup> 12644-5.

<sup>209</sup> Géralt-Richard in *La Petite République*, 1899 [no date given], cited in *Historique de de l'Incident: "Chambre de commerce – Moutier"; Extraits de journaux français appartenant à toutes les opinions*, (Paris: Imprimerie Becquart-Arien, 1899). UCLA Spec. Coll. 899, box 608.

<sup>210</sup> Paléologue, *My Secret Diary*, 54.

this change accompanied the shift in nationalism from the rational, liberal left to a tempestuous right is likely not a coincidence. The emotions involved in the consideration of espionage were strong, and therefore were experienced by individuals differently. The public debate reflected these viewpoints, indicating that the definition of the spy could be formed by the beholder.

*Spies Associated with Adventure, Honor and Glory*

As demonstrated above, at the turn of the twentieth century, French opinion towards espionage and spies had indeed begun to change, adapting to the realities of modern warfare and the rise of European nationalism. This final section will establish that spies began to be regarded not only as potentially honorable, but also were glorified, and the profession imbued with a sense of adventure. By the turn of the century, spies had surfaced as important characters in the quest for imperial dominion, and the successful use of espionage by the Japanese in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-5 demonstrated the real benefit that a skillful intelligence team could have in international competition.<sup>211</sup> While historian Michael Miller claims that the true sense of adventure regarding spies and their ability to capture the public imagination did not occur until after WWI, a number of examples demonstrate that the notion had begun to surface during the *fin-de-siècle*.<sup>212</sup>

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<sup>211</sup> See i.e. Bleton, *La Cristallisation de l'ombre*, 62-67. For more on the Russo-Japanese War, see Richard Deacon, *A History of the Japanese Secret Service* (London: Muller, 1982). Contemporary discussion of the role of espionage during the Russo-Japanese War in France surfaced in the press, and in texts such as Raoult de Rudeval, *Étude pratique du service des renseignements* (Paris: Charles-Lavauzelle, 1910).

<sup>212</sup> Miller, *Shanghai on the Métro*. Miller also notes that it would have been “difficult to imagine such people as the stuff of heroism or honor before 1914,” 205.

The first sign that the reputation of espionage and spying had begun to turn was the appearance of books, newspaper articles, and other commentary that regaled the French populace with tales of glorious spies of the French historical past. These ranged from spies serving the monarchs under the *ancien régime* to Napoleon's use of spies in the early nineteenth century. All the varied tales unearthed hidden histories that glorified this profession. In looking at such accounts, we locate the discourse of adventure, pride, and glory in academic texts, novels, and the popular press, associating spies of past and present with the nation's triumphs over its rivals.

With over a century separating *belle époque* France from its royal past, writers could reasonably write about the ruses of monarchs and the exploits of the spies who worked for them. At the end of the 1870s, a member of the French *Académie des belles lettres* published the unedited memoirs of Michel de la Huguerie, an agent working for Henri IV during the Wars of Religion, which were followed by the publication of historical accounts of de la Huguerie's life and actions.<sup>213</sup> Similarly, late nineteenth-century writers displayed an interest in le Père Joseph, the Capuchin friar who served as confidant and diplomatic agent in the 1600s, seeking hidden intelligence for Richelieu.<sup>214</sup> French readers also pored over accounts of Louis XV's *Secret du Roi*, the monarch's personal circle of spies and informers who worked for France during the eighteenth century, which were published as books, historical

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<sup>213</sup> Michel de La Huguerie and Alphonse Ruble, *Mémoires inédits de Michel de La Huguerye: publiés d'après les manuscrits autographes pour la Société de l'histoire de France par le baron A. de Ruble* (Paris: Renouard, 1877). Henri Longnon, *Un Agent politique au XVIIe siècle. Michel de La Huguerie (1545-1616)* (Paris: Les bureaux de la Revue, 1903).

<sup>214</sup> Gustave Fagniez, *La mission du Père Joseph à Ratisbonne en 1630* (Paris: [Daupéley-Gouverneur], 1885). Gustave Fagniez, *Le Père Joseph et Richelieu, 1577-1638* (Paris: Hachette, 1894).



reviews, and as articles in the popular press.<sup>215</sup> Of these, the most famous was the Chevalier d'Éon, whose spying elided with his cross-dressing to provide a character with the mystique of secret diplomacy and hazy gender barriers. Although a few things had been written about him earlier in the nineteenth century, the number more than doubled during the 1890s and 1900s, with tales of d'Éon's exploits gracing historical journals and presented by Third Republic political figures such as Octave Hombert.<sup>216</sup> The stories of the *Secret du Roi* emphasized the skill and cunning of Louis XV's spies, telling readers of how espionage helped the monarchy against rivals such as Russia and Britain.

Writers also heaped praise on Revolutionary figures, such as the Marshal Ney, who as brigade general in 1799 supposedly disguised himself as a peasant in order to gather intelligence on the military preparedness at Mannheim in order to help successfully capture the city.<sup>217</sup> In 1887, the historian François Aulard published a number of acts and decisions of the Committee of Public Safety relating to espionage, as well as a document entitled "Organization of the Service of Secret Agents during the First Republic."<sup>218</sup> In demonstrating that the nation's revolutionary forebears had accepted the use of espionage, and took advantage of it

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<sup>215</sup> See, "Espionnage en Angleterre pendant la Guerre de 7 ans," in *Revue d'Histoire Diplomatique*, 1900; P. de Pardeillan, "Poussière d'Archives," Paris: Flammarion, 1899; "Deux maitres espions au temps de Louis XV." UCLA Spec. Coll. 899, box 747. See also *Echo de Paris* of December 26, 1897.

<sup>216</sup> A couple of examples of fin-de-siècle works about the Chevalier d'Eon include: Octave Hombert, *La Carrière Militaire du chevalier d'Eon*, 1900, Charles Moiset "Le Chevalier Eon de Beaumont" in *Bulletin de la société des sciences historiques et naturelles de l'Yonne* (1892): 1-98, and Paul Fromageot, "La Chevalière d'Eon à Versailles en 1777. *Carnet historique et littéraire* (1901): 254-72.

<sup>217</sup> For this story, see Rudeval, *Étude pratique*, 42; Rollin, *Le Service de renseignements militaires*, 101.

<sup>218</sup> F.A. Aulard, "Organisation du Service des Agents Secrets dans la Première République," *La Révolution Française* 12 (1887): 1117-1128. F.A. Aulard "Instructions Générales aux Agents Diplomatiques de la République Française," *La Révolution Française* 13 (1887): 66-73.

to secure France's place amongst other European powers, nineteenth-century writers put forth their tacit approval of similar practices in modern days.

The majority of praise falling on past use of espionage, however, went to Napoleon, the skilled general who had brought France to glory in the decades following the French Revolution. Authors writing about intelligence at the end of the nineteenth century almost all paid some sort of tribute to Napoleon. "Any general," they quoted the former Emperor, "who operates not in a desert, but in a populated area, and who doesn't gain intelligence, fails at his profession."<sup>219</sup> Scholars looked through and reprinted Napoleon's old letters, demonstrating that the general had used ambassadors and diplomatic agents as informers and aids in organizing spy networks.<sup>220</sup> In critiquing the French failure to organize intelligence services during the Second Empire, Jules Lewal harkened to Napoleon, stating, "we know with what care Napoleon formed his intelligence service, how much money and resources he devoted to it, and what importance he attached to information of all kinds."<sup>221</sup> Most of all, writers praised Napoleon's decision to organize intelligence services during peacetime, a thinly veiled suggestion that the Third Republic should act likewise.

Contemporary authors lauded Napoleon's extensive intelligence networks, using police, generals, diplomats, and citizens to learn about military projects, discover foreign agents, and watch domestic troublemakers. Moreover, it was said that Napoleon employed women, priests, and questionable people as spies,

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<sup>219</sup> See, i.e. Rollin, *Le Service de renseignements militaires*, 61.

<sup>220</sup> Mennevée, *L'espionnage international*, 31.

<sup>221</sup> Lewal, *Études de Guerre: Tactique des Renseignements*, 7.

treasuring the information above the means of getting it.<sup>222</sup> The most famous of Napoleon's spies was Karl Schulmeister, a shop-owner and smuggler from Strasbourg, recruited to work for Napoleon by Colonel Savary.<sup>223</sup> Like Napoleon's intelligence strategy, Schulmeister's image saw a revival during the late nineteenth century. In 1896, a military historian named Paul Muller published a book about him, and an article in the *Patrie* the next year claimed to reveal how he had helped Napoleon lead France to a number of victories.<sup>224</sup> For Robert Detourbet, Schulmeister embodied the admirable qualities that could be associated with the spy, noting that, "he practiced his profession with the esteem of all, and is a worthy example of how espionage, even when paid, can be honorable."<sup>225</sup> Modern writers described Schulmeister's "prowess," though certainly he might not have been so respected earlier in the century.<sup>226</sup>

In addition to glorifying spies and spymasters of the past, *fin-de-siècle* writers and journalists also informed the public about the heroics and adventure that came from carrying out intelligence roles for the sake of France. In this era of Sherlock Holmes adventures, spies and other intelligence professionals were glorified for the risks they took in acting for the *patrie*. An article entitled "Amusing story" posthumously tells of Colonel Sandherr having stolen a German gun from German

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<sup>222</sup> Rollin, *Le Service de renseignements militaires*, 64-65.

<sup>223</sup> Schulmeister is credited with infiltrating the Austrian army and facilitating the French victory at Ulm, as well as with the plot to kidnap the Duc d'Enghien. Porch, *French Secret Services*, 14-15.

<sup>224</sup> See *Le Patrie*, November 13, 1897; Paul Muller, *L'espionnage militaire sous Napoléon Ier: Charles Schulmeister* (Paris: Berger-Levrault, 1896).

<sup>225</sup> Detourbet, *L'espionnage et la trahison*, 65.

<sup>226</sup> For example, Richard Deacon tells us that at the beginning of the nineteenth century, "[t]he Emperor insisted that gold was the proper reward for spies – no more and no less." Deacon, *The French Secret Service*.

military barracks, wearing the uniform of the unit commanders and speaking German fluently.<sup>227</sup> Agents themselves took on the notion of the adventurer. In one of Schnaebelé's reports on German military preparation, he discussed scaling the sides of fortifications in order to get in.<sup>228</sup> Edmond Lajoux, a former agent of the army's intelligence services, published his memoirs first as a series appearing in the paper *La Liberté*, and later as a book for French readers to share in his daring exploits.<sup>229</sup> These accounts glorified the practice of intelligence, by recounting tales of undercover work in Belgium, identifying traitors, and helping France to learn the military strength of her adversaries. The anonymous publication of the "memoirs of a military spy" in the feuilleton *La Vie populaire illustrée* in 1895–96, which appeared subsequently as a book in 1905, provided "the recollections of a spy who was on the reader's side, proud of his function."<sup>230</sup> By connecting with "real-life" spies working to promote French vitality, the public's views of espionage became more nuanced. Such sentiment was shared in other editorial notes, providing evidence for a gradual acceptance of the career of the secret agent.

One of the major cases staking its claim to "the rehabilitation of espionage" was that of Foucault de Mondion, the tutor turned journalist turned spy whose intelligence work helped to advance France's diplomatic interests during the 1880s

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<sup>227</sup> "Amusing story," *La Patrie*, 1897, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12644-5. This account is especially interesting in contrast with the French admonishments of German spies for donning disguises to gain intelligence.

<sup>228</sup> Note from Schnaebelé dated December 12, 1884, MM 2R 10.

<sup>229</sup> Lajoux, *op. cit.*

<sup>230</sup> The original memoirs were published under the name S\*\*\* in 1895-96, while the book, entitled *30 ans d'espionnage. Mémoires authentiques d'un agent du service secret*, bore the name Georges Le Faure. Although these accounts were written to resemble actual memoirs, in fact the author was not an agent and his accounts were fictional. Nonetheless, the editor of the notes of "Bergmann," expressed his willingness to overlook ethics, introducing the work by saying, "The spy offered me his hand and I automatically took it, forgetting the shady role played by this stranger and only recalling the nobility of the goal that he pursued." Bleton, *La Cristallisation de l'ombre*, 58-59.

and 1890s.<sup>231</sup> Foucault de Mondion's tales of working for the French secret services recalled thrill and adventure, but unfortunately for him, had a tragic ending. On June 18, 1894, Colonel Vincent's former spy was found in his apartment dead, seemingly poisoned. The murder was never solved, though some speculated that it could have been in connection with the agent's plan to publish a book related to the French intelligence services. Foucault's death made headlines across France, and he was eulogized by none other than Foreign Minister Emile Flourens. In an obituary in the *Figaro* given the title "L'Espion," (notably the French title of Fenimore Cooper's book *The Spy*), Flourens praised Foucault's "ardent patriotism."<sup>232</sup> In the article, Flourens asserted his desire to fight against "this barbaric prejudice" towards espionage, arguing for an acceptance of spies "in the interest of defense and national security." These pleas from a high-ranking political figure are testament to a growing understanding of the state's need to use any means necessary to defend itself.

Another agent whose widespread story glorified the work of espionage was Captain Lux, the officer from the Belfort intelligence office who escaped from a German prison in 1911. Lux's story bore all the markings of the spy adventure – he wrote letters using invisible ink, had maps and money smuggled into his cell hidden in books, and used saws to craft fake keys to escape. When out of prison, he disguised himself by trimming his mustache, getting a haircut, and donning a non-distinguishing uniform. His story filled papers in France and abroad, with the *New*

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<sup>231</sup> See Chapter 4. Quote attributed to Mennevé, *L'espionnage international*, 128.

<sup>232</sup> "L'Espion," *Le Figaro*, June 24, 1894.

*York Times*, for example, comparing his tale with adventures from Dumas novels.<sup>233</sup> In addition to recounting his heroism, French papers translated German newspaper articles about Lux, using humor to flaunt the victory of one of its citizens against the German penal system. Illustrations showed the gallant Frenchman in glorious escape from his German captors, with Lux portrayed atop a pointy helmet representing the militant Huns.<sup>234</sup> Moreover, one paper even offered to raise a subscription in Lux's name to buy him a work of art.<sup>235</sup> Though the War Minister put a stop to it, the attempt shows the respect that the French public had for this spy, and his honorable treatment.

#### *Novels Promote Adventure and Glory*

The shifting view of spies from being regarded with pure disdain to an appreciation for their work as patriotic can also be seen in an examination of espionage literature during the period from 1870 to 1914. While the amount of literature devoted to spies in France was not overwhelming, in particular in comparison with England, the Canadian literary scholar Paul Bleton has identified a number of publications with plots and characters centered around spies.<sup>236</sup> These tales of spy fiction took several forms: being published as series, or *feuilletons*, in popular newspapers, full-length novels, children's stories, the occasional theater production, and in the early twentieth century, as films.

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<sup>233</sup> "Captain Lux's Escape like a Dumas Tale," *New York Times*, January 2, 1912.

<sup>234</sup> See Annex K.

<sup>235</sup> Lux, *L'évasion du Capitaine Lux*, 209.

<sup>236</sup> See Bleton, "Ce qu'espionnier veut dire," and Bleton, *La Cristallisation de l'ombre*.

Bleton ties the emergence of the genre to the French defeat in the Franco-Prussian War, claiming that collective sentiment stemming from loss in France resulted in novels that expressed both victimization and the heroism of the citizen-soldier.<sup>237</sup> The latter was embodied in the form of the *franc-tireur*, the self-appointed guerrilla warriors who chose to fight for France after the defeat of Napoleon III's army at Sedan and Metz. The *franc-tireur*, who would serve as the hero in a number of early spy novels, often found himself counterpoised with the Prussian spy, the sneaky German employing any method to further Bismarck's expansionist goals. According to Bleton, the crime of the Prussian spy allowed the *franc-tireur* to "imagine the unimaginable," and to take up a mission of dissimulation himself in order to unmask his Prussian foe. Thus, this genre of fiction led to "the invention of an improbable hero," one driven by "virtuous indignation," to retaliate by adopting the antagonist's tactics.<sup>238</sup> It was through these unlikely heroes that the notion of counterespionage gained hold among the public as an acceptable way to fight the enemy.

Emergent publications of spy fiction provided their audience with the modern notion of the overlap of military and civilian spheres. Both the Prussian

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<sup>237</sup> Some titles that he mentions include *L'Homme du gaz* (1872) by Paul Féval, *Le Dr. Judassohn* (1873) by Alfred Assollant and *Les Coupeurs de routes* (1879) by Gustave Airmard. See Bleton, *La Cristallisation de l'ombre*, 34-46. In an earlier article, Bleton traces the history of spy fiction in the centuries before 1870. Like others, he points to Sun Tzu's *Art of War* as one of the first documented discussions of the use of spies, and cites the *Arthashastra*, an ancient Indian treatise by the author Kautilya, which discusses the use of spies as a political necessity. Bleton writes that this account of will to power and quest for domination left out any ethical considerations, introducing the notion of ends justifying means eighteen centuries before Machiavelli's discussion of how to get and maintain power. Real spy fiction, however, only appeared in the eighteenth century, first under epistolary form such as Montesquieu's *Persian Letters*. The book that he places firmly at the "origin of the genre" of spy fiction, however, is James Fenimore Cooper's *The Spy*, published in 1823. Cooper was the American consul in Lyon from 1826 to 1833, which seems to contribute to the reception of his book in France. Bleton, "Ce qu'espionnier veut dire".

<sup>238</sup> Bleton, *La Cristallisation de l'ombre*, 39-40.

spy and the French *franc-tireur* were “ordinary citizens” who chose their missions as means to fight for their homeland against foreign threats. The ease with which the Germans succeeded at eliding this distinction during the Franco-Prussian War shocked and offended French sensibilities, though in the decades following, the French would recognize the importance of such potential, and encourage the adoption of tactics to fight the “secret war.” Moreover, the message coming out of a number of these books was that appearances could be wholly different from reality, and therefore encouraged readers to question the façades before them.

Without a doubt, the early examples of espionage literature picked up on xenophobic and racist strands of French public opinion, with antagonists reflecting the dominant fears in French society, represented by the “triple threat” of Prussia, Jews, and the Communist International.<sup>239</sup> Many of these texts took up the theme of *revanche*, where the honorable French protagonist managed one way or another to defeat the devious spy who had been scheming to inflict harm on the French way of life. These novels allowed French men and women to play out their fantasies of revenge against their presumed oppressors, as in fiction, unlike reality, the French “good guy” always won. In Charles Guyon’s patriotic *L’Espion*, for example, the antagonist was the foreigner Samuel Furtz who settled in a village in the east of France before the war, charmed the inhabitants and proposed marriage to the daughter of one of the community members, before leaving the village to rejoin his compatriots and reenter France during the Franco-Prussian War as a German

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<sup>239</sup> Ibid., 35. Michael Miller dedicates a few pages of his book to summaries of the spy adventure tales penned by Captain Danrit, (who happened to be the nephew of General Boulanger), which he describes as “identifiable for their strands of late-nineteenth-century right-wing imagery about imperial rivals and dangers and enemies at home... situat[ing] the spy almost entirely in a context of alarmism and political demonology, particularly that of the nationalist right.” Miller, *Shanghai on the Métro*, 28.



officer. When the father took justice into his own hands by killing the spy Furtz near the novel's end, he proclaimed, "*Je suis vengé,*" doubtlessly claiming revenge not only for himself, but for the entire village, and for France.<sup>240</sup>

By the mid-1880s, however, the hero in French spy fiction was not exclusively the counterspy, or another individual fighting a foreign spy menace, but the French citizen taking on the dubious role in the effort to promote his or her national welfare. In 1884, for example, the writer and pilot Wilfrid de Fonvielle published a book for youth entitled *L'Espion aérien* in which he provided a fictionalized account of his own glorious exploits flying a balloon during the Siege of Paris in efforts to overcome the siege.<sup>241</sup> Another account, "Mémoires d'un espion militaire" – published first as an anonymous series in the *Vie populaire illustrée* and later as a book by Georges Le Faure – claimed to be memoirs of a secret agent, using his power as a spy for good, spouting such lines as, "Patriotism, Sir, must be served by all means possible."<sup>242</sup> The first person narration allowed readers to associate with the fictional protagonist, thus providing the "recollections of a spy in the reader's camp, proud of his function," to offer a counterpoint to images of spies as purely dishonorable.<sup>243</sup>

The shifting diplomatic situation at the end of the nineteenth century also had an effect on the production of contemporary spy literature. The Franco-Russian

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<sup>240</sup> Bleton, *La Cristallisation de l'ombre*, 51.

<sup>241</sup> The book was reedited around 1890 under the title *Falempin ou l'Espion aérien roman patriotique du siège de Paris*, containing several illustrations as well. *Ibid.*, 41.

<sup>242</sup> Bleton, "Ce qu'espionnier veut dire". Interestingly, the narrator also makes a comparison between the job of spy and the job of politician, asserting that at least the former is willing to risk his life for his country, thus launching a jibe at the latter.

<sup>243</sup> The *feuilleton* was published in 1895-96, and the book, called *30 ans d'espionnage. Mémoires authentiques d'un agent du service secret*, was published in 1905. Bleton, *La Cristallisation de l'ombre*, 58-59.

alliance of 1893 served to alleviate some of the focus on Alsace-Lorraine, just as imperial rivalries were heating up. Thus, Bleton explains that in the 1890s, espionage literature fell somewhere “between *revanchisme* and imperialism, maintaining a *revanchiste* ideology, but one reflecting a world enlarged by colonial conquests.”<sup>244</sup> Spy stories emerging in this period were therefore set in North Africa, and featured a number of exotic elements while spies battled for imperial supremacy. Another novel by Georges Le Faure set itself apart within this genre of fiction by incorporating actual current events into its plot. In *Nicolas Pépoff, Aventures extraordinaires d’un explorateur*, the protagonist Pépoff and the French agent André Maucombe work in Africa amidst the tensions between colonial powers France, Russia, England, and Italy trying to dominate the region. The novel makes the case for French agents to intervene in the game of diplomatic allegiances in order to assert itself on the international plain. Moreover, La Faure’s characters epitomize the moral quandary faced by French men and women considering espionage at the turn of the century. His protagonists are engaged in an activity that Bleton describes as producing “a conflict between ethical rules and practical rules.” Nonetheless, Bleton notes that espionage in this book is portrayed as “ethically dubious, but at the same time, for agents on the right side, justified by the virtue of the goal.”<sup>245</sup>

Spy fiction thus had the potential both to admonish readers to be wary of appearances – not an uncommon theme among thinkers at the *fin-de-siècle* – and to turn ordinary citizens into heroes. Espionage stories also played into gender roles,

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<sup>244</sup> Ibid., 56.

<sup>245</sup> Ibid., 65.

often using the femme fatale as the character using her wiles to deceive the protagonists.<sup>246</sup> Nonetheless, the rise in female readership after 1870 contributed to a shift in literary themes, and by 1899, authors were beginning to portray women in the “*espionne-pour-la-bonne-cause*” genre as well.<sup>247</sup> As the nineteenth century gave way to the twentieth, readers became more and more engaged with tales of espionage, so that titles began to increasingly bear explicit references to spies, and a number of books saw frequent republishing.<sup>248</sup> The majority of the focus, notes Bleton, remained on attempts to learn military secrets and steal military technology.

In spite of the publication of a number of books featuring espionage and spies as central themes, spy fiction in France was not especially abundant prior to WWI, especially compared with Great Britain, where the genre saw an important flourish. As Wesley Wark notes, the British hold on espionage fiction “was a tribute to the power of the London publishing industry, to Britain’s status as a world power, and, just as important, to the popular fears that attached themselves to a nation beginning to suffer from imperial overstretch.”<sup>249</sup> Novels such as Erskine Childers *The Riddle of the Sands* and William Le Queux’s *Spies of the Kaiser* reflected and encouraged British fears of an impending invasion of the isles by German spies, making their protagonists gallant adventurers fighting for individual and national regeneration. Certain British spy novels, including Rudyard Kipling’s *Kim*, Joseph

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<sup>246</sup> This notion was reflected in real life, as in the popular account of the trial of Ernst de Cisse and Baroness Kaula. See Chapter 6.

<sup>247</sup> *L’Espionne impériale* by Hughes Rebell (1899).

<sup>248</sup> Bleton, *La Cristallisation de l’ombre*, 77.

<sup>249</sup> Wesley K. Wark, “The Spy Thriller,” in *Mystery and Suspense Writers: The Literature of Crime, Detection, and Espionage*, ed. Robin W. Winks and Maureen Corrigan (New York: Scribner’s Sons, 1998), 1199.

Conrad's *The Secret Agent*, and the tales of Sherlock Holmes penned by Arthur Conan Doyle, made their way across the Channel in translation, allowing French readers to follow the adventures of spies and the detectives who chased them.<sup>250</sup> In France, Bleton notes, as espionage became more of a cultural familiarity, authors included spy fiction as a secondary theme within other genres. One example of this was the decision by the authors of the famous detective series *Fantômas* to dedicate an episode to the question of military espionage. In *L'Agent Secret*, French readers were confronted with the weakness of the Deuxième Bureau, and the potential of spies to disrupt France's domestic security.<sup>251</sup>

One possible reason that French authors did not produce espionage literature to the same extent as their British colleagues could be the fact that in France, real life provided readers with enough drama. The accounts of arrests and spy threats described above found considerable readership, and *causes célèbres* from the Dreyfus Affair to the Ullmo Affair to the tale of General de Cissey and his mistress the Baroness Kaula engaged the French public for months and even years.<sup>252</sup> In fact, these events appeared almost like reality playing out spy fiction that had already been written.

In addition to entertaining, spy fiction gave readers access to an otherwise hidden world. After the Franco-Prussian War, the nation required a boost in national honor and an improved social discourse that would indicate that the government of the Third Republic had plans to reverse French fortunes. Because

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<sup>250</sup> In *Kim*, "Kipling depicted espionage as a form of patriotic adventure that put a premium on disguise, cleverness, and individual heroics." Ibid.

<sup>251</sup> Souvestre and Allain, *A Nest of Spies*.

<sup>252</sup> For Ullmo, see Datta; for de Cissey / Kaula affair, see Chapter 6.

the true picture of intelligence remained discrete by its nature, the function of repairing wounded pride fell to a new genre of fiction. As Bleton notes,

“These novels furnished at least some sense to the defeat, interpreting it in the logic of a secret war; the new literary theme of Prussian espionage permitted mourning, along with a new ideological theme intimately tied with *fin de siècle* melancholy and revenge. Beyond their functional relevance, these novels privileged a mode of understanding the world: the secret is at the base of espionage, and the (literary) truth presents itself as revelation.”<sup>253</sup>

The appearance of a new genre of literature in France reflected a popular understanding of the novelty of spies and counterspies as part of the modern world. Moreover, the homogeneity of discourse surrounding espionage in both fact and fiction demonstrates the crystallization of a new concept in the French social imagination. The overlap between fiction and reality appeared in the press, in memoirs, and in police and army notes, with comparisons made between real-life spies and the tales of Shakespeare, Balzac, Stendhal, Cervantes, and Sherlock Holmes.<sup>254</sup> Where the “truth” about spies and their missions remained obscured to the majority of the population, novels emerged to help to “reveal” their stories. Just like real life, with notions of honor and patriotism shifting to permit an embrace of undercover activity, fictional accounts begin to demonstrate the emergence of the heroic spy and detective, willing to risk his life and even his dignity for the good of the country.<sup>255</sup> As intelligence and intelligence agencies continued to develop in the

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<sup>253</sup> Bleton, *La Cristallisation de l'ombre*, 42-43.

<sup>254</sup> See police note dated September 30, 1897, AN F<sup>7</sup> 12644-5; army note from Tunis in book “Mission Sandherr,” SHD 2H1, “Les drames de la police secrete,” *Le Rappel*, November 10, 1904. In his diary of the Dreyfus Affair, Maurice Paléologue describes the unfolding of the affair as follows: “On my way back to the Foreign Ministry through the freezing evening mist I wondered whether I had not been watching a scene from Shakespeare.” Paléologue, *My Secret Diary*, 63.

<sup>255</sup> Alain Dewerpe writes that “fiction has as a function the mobilization of the public in favor of the nation’s clandestine group.” Dewerpe, *Espion*, 290.

decades following, the spy character would grow to be increasingly more popular, fighting for national honor where once he had only destroyed it.<sup>256</sup>

### *Conclusion*

Although the “reality” of intelligence work in Europe at the end of the nineteenth century was for the most part shrouded in secrecy, the French population at the time found itself caught up in what has been described as “spy fever.” Reacting to an unexpected loss to its rival to the east, the French public constructed the image of the party responsible for the blow. While many blamed the defeat on Napoleon III and his army, a number of writers and propagandists turned to the victors, and attributed the French loss to the Germans’ cunning, yet dishonorable use of spies. The French were humiliated, shamed and dishonored by German trickery, and reacted by turning this shared sentiment into vitriol, contempt, and xenophobia. Using emotionally charged discourse, the French population painted a picture of the German citizen as sneaky, treacherous, and by nature willing to employ the most ignominious tactics to advance his or her national cause.

At the same time, Prussia’s actions did much to substantiate the need for France to utilize intelligence as well. With the identification of an enemy, an altered system of morals is introduced, aimed towards defense that excuses certain

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<sup>256</sup> By WWI, the idea that spies could be heroes certainly seems to have taken hold. Following the war, scores of memoirs and biographies were published detailing the accounts of how spies had risked their lives to help the Allied cause. As Michael Miller comments, “But what heroes these spies! A man who dumped bodies into the Meuse and bragged about thirty-eight murders to his credit. A woman whose exploits began with the surrender of her body to a Prussian. It is difficult to imagine such people as the stuff of heroism or honor before 1914. After the war that was not the case.” Miller, *Shanghai on the Métro*, 205. I disagree, however, with his categorization that such accounts could not be found in the years prior to the war.

behaviors which otherwise would not be viewed as permissible. As the historian Alain Dewerpe explains in his anthropology of the spy, the theory goes: “We were attacked, thus we must defend ourselves. ... To legitimate the crime of the State, one must show that its worth is bigger and justifies protection from a larger and more unjust violence.”<sup>257</sup> When considering the morality of espionage at the end of the nineteenth century, therefore, two new factors came into play: the desire for revenge, and the need for defense. Ultimately, it would be the state – represented by the army – that would be able to harness these demands, and in accepting the ends (defense), the French people would begin to accept the means (espionage).

Whereas objectively the decision to develop intelligence by both France and Germany appears quite similar, it is again an identification of emotions that allow us to see how the French public could justify this hypocrisy. The annexation of Alsace and Lorraine was a major blow to collective French esteem, and the desire for revenge in hastening the provinces’ return contributed to a number of social and political movements in France in the half-century prior to WWI. This loss, experienced not just as dishonor, but also as a loss to be mourned by the nation, could justify espionage and help to overcome some of the less flattering aspects of the practice. The *revanchist* mentality also helps to explain why spying could be viewed as acceptable and honorable for the French, while remaining treacherous and dishonorable when practiced by Germans. In the French emotional landscape, Germany had taken something that belonged to France, and therefore France was entitled to its return, by whatever means necessary. The Germans, to the contrary, only spied to take what did not rightfully belong to them, whether land, or glory.

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<sup>257</sup> Dewerpe, *Espion*, 184.

The presumed purity of intentions would allow the French to spy in the name of the nation.

The shift in views of espionage accompanied an understanding of the realities of modern warfare, which encompassed an expanded notion of the concept of belligerents, as well as the emergence of a space between war and peace. The understanding that the spy could be honorable when acting as a patriot fit precisely into this new definition of war. Moreover, the shift demonstrates that while the army had the main hand in bringing espionage within the umbrella of the state, by imbuing spying and secrecy with honor and a sense of patriotism, the practice became acceptable and accessible to anyone with the skills, ability or desire to defend the Republic. Emotions prescribed and dictated the rhetoric used to characterize both German agents and French patriots. By joining together as emotional communities, the French public was able to form views about spies and spying that fit in with their understanding of contemporary European dynamics. In this way, the citizens of the Third Republic began to understand that in certain situations, the ends justified the means.



## EPILOGUE

*Partout où nécessité fait loi*

–Motto of the DGSE, France's external intelligence agency

On July 28, 1914, in support of her ally Russia, France declared war on Germany. The war that all of the European protagonists believed would be short and decisive ended up dragging out for four long years, resulting in over nine million casualties and disrupting the lives of many millions more. This was the first war in which intelligence figured prominently, with armies and their secret services making use of the intelligence practices, technologies, and skills that had surfaced in the prior half century. Intelligence would develop faster and further at this time, as Peter Jackson writes, "The experience of the first 'total war' from 1914 through 1918 changed the practice of intelligence assessment forever."<sup>1</sup> Intelligence agencies entered the war in a primitive, but developing, state and came out of it far more honed and professional.<sup>2</sup>

Intelligence had played a role in the lead up to the war as well. As demonstrated in these chapters, the French army's intelligence division had worked to gather significant information on the state and size of Germany's armed forces. Military historians have shown that on both sides in the years prior to the war, the intelligence about opponents' military capabilities was fairly accurate.<sup>3</sup> Nonetheless, barriers to the optimization of intelligence in its infancy would

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<sup>1</sup> Jackson and Siegel, *Intelligence and Statecraft*, 26.

<sup>2</sup> Over the course of the war, the French intelligence services gained a near mastery of the skill of POW interrogation, along with a better understanding of the use of radio to send and intercept messages. Leaders also created an "espionage school" run in a wing of the Invalides by two Sorbonne professors. Porch, *French Secret Services*, 88-90.

<sup>3</sup> May, *Knowing One's Enemies*, 11-233; Ulrich Trumppener, "War Premeditated? German Intelligence Operations in July 1914," *Central European History* 9, no. 1 (1976).

contribute to the costly destruction that the war would bring. One problem stemmed from the way that the French military leadership treated the intelligence presented to them, with Commander-in-Chief Joseph Joffre and his colleagues choosing only to take intelligence reports seriously when they reflected previously conceived ideas.<sup>4</sup> It was this neglect that caused the army hierarchy to ignore evidence that Germany planned to attack via a circuit through Belgium. Secondly, a European-wide problem was the tendency of military intelligence to focus on issues of military build-up as opposed to intelligence that accurately portrayed foreign intentions. Such an emphasis had as result “the militarization of diplomacy before the First World War,” leading to warfare over dialogue as a means to solve international disputes.<sup>5</sup> Had intelligence functioned differently, it is possible that a war could have been avoided altogether.

Intelligence served many purposes during World War I, with both sides employing spies and various means of reconnaissance. The French worked in conjunction with their British allies to establish networks of observers and informers in occupied Belgium. The Belgian networks employed local men and women, along with volunteers from Britain and France, who watched trains and reported on findings that allowed the Allied leadership a clear picture of German supply patterns and troop movements.<sup>6</sup> A number of women were among those who spied for the Allies in Belgium, able to offer assistance to the war effort that

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<sup>4</sup> Tanenbaum, “French Estimates,” and Andrew, “France and the German Menace.”

<sup>5</sup> Jackson and Siegel, *Intelligence and Statecraft*, 26. See also Stevenson, “Militarization and Diplomacy.”

<sup>6</sup> Proctor, *Female Intelligence*, 75-98; Jeffrey T. Richelson, *A Century of Spies: Intelligence in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 21-24.

they could not on the battlefronts. Women spied for the Central Powers as well, the most famous being Mata Hari, and the most notorious being the Fraulein Doktor.<sup>7</sup>

Intelligence agents and analysts during the First World War had to continually adapt to new and changing circumstances. The First World War saw the use of sabotage and subversion as regular intelligence activities.<sup>8</sup> Additionally, both sides made use of new technology to gain an appreciation of enemy projects. Among the features of changed warfare in WWI included the use of aircraft and aerial photography. The ability to capture images of enemy positions from above was critical for strategic planning, and allowed the Allies important advantages in the Battle of the Marne and other campaigns.<sup>9</sup> New means of communication via radio afforded the opportunity for intelligence teams to intercept dispatches, though soldiers also needed to be trained not to send messages in plain text or to use the telephone. The combination of these techniques allowed the Allies to assess the placement and movements of German troops in Europe on land and in the seas. Even when communications were coded, members of the French cryptography team and the British Room 40 were able to decipher an important number of German messages. The British capture and decoding of the Zimmerman telegram in 1917, for example, played an important role in convincing America to finally join the war on the side of the Allies.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Proctor, *Female Intelligence*, 123-137. For a more spurious contemporary account of Germany's use of female spies see Emile Massard, *Les espionnes à Paris. La vérité sur Mata-Hari*. (Paris: Albin Michel, 1922).

<sup>8</sup> Richelson, *A Century of Spies*, 27-30; Miller, *Shanghai on the Métro*, 47. The memoirs of agents show how haphazard and improvisatory the methods were at this period. See, e.g. Joseph Crozier (pseud. of Pierre Desgranges), *In the Enemy's Country*, trans. Forrest Wilson (London: Hutchinson, 1930).

<sup>9</sup> Richelson, *A Century of Spies*, 31-37.

<sup>10</sup> The Zimmerman telegram was a telegram sent from the German foreign minister, Arthur Zimmerman, to the German minister Henirich von Eckhardt in Mexico, via the ambassador in

Views of spies within society and appreciation for their necessity continued to shift during the long, anxiety-filled years of war. The idea that spies could act out of patriotism, shown to have emerged during the periods of tension at the turn of the century, was solidified during the war. With millions of soldiers risking their safety on the front lines, both military strategists and the public understood that gaining possession of particular information had the potential to sway battles and save lives. Those individuals willing to lie and deceive for the good of the nation could be considered heroes, displaying courage and bravery in the face of the enemy.<sup>11</sup> In the years after the war, many of these spies and agents wrote memoirs describing their adventures and accomplishments, and some who died for the cause – such as Edith Cavell and Gabrielle Petit – subsequently had memorial statues erected in their honor.<sup>12</sup> As a result, many WWI spies would have a longer lasting place in historical memory than the officers who they served.

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Washington, Johann von Bernstorff. The message contained an offer to Mexico of German assistance including money and attempts to restore U.S. land to Mexico, providing that if America entered the war, Mexico would subsequently join on the side of Germany. The British had figured out how to intercept correspondence between Berlin and Washington and therefore begun to decode the message in January 1917. They were able to decipher it in a couple weeks, and eventually passed the message onto the Americans, helping to sway public sentiment in the U.S. against Germany and in favor of entering the war. See Barbara Tuchman, *The Zimmerman Telegram* (London: Constable, 1959).

<sup>11</sup> See Miller, *Shanghai on the Métro*, 188-205.

<sup>12</sup> Some examples of WWI spy memoirs and biographies include: Paul Durand, *Agents secrets: l'affaire Fauquenot-Birckel* (Paris: Payot, 1937); Captain L. Lacaze, *Aventures d'un agent secret français 1914-1918* (Paris: Payot, 1934); Louise Thuliez, *Condemned to Death* (London: Methuen, 1934); Jean Violan, *Dans l'air et dans la boue. Mes missions de guerre* (Paris: Librairie des Champs-Élysées, 1933); J. Tillet, *Dans les coulisses de la guerre: espionnage, contre-espionnage* (Paris: Imprimerie du réveil économique, 1933); Marthe Richard, *I Spied for France*, trans. Gerald Griffin (London: John Long, 1935); Jeanne de Beir, *In the Eagle's Claws* (Bruges, [n.p.], 1928); Mathilde Lebrun, *Mes treize missions* (Paris: Fayard, [1920]). Note, of course, that as Michael Miller writes, "None of these books could be read as God's truth without a serious dose of credulity. All were written by practiced dissemblers and characters of dubious repute." Miller, *Shanghai*, 196. For photos of the statues commemorating Cavell and Petit, see Proctor, *Female Intelligence*, 108-109, 118. For details on the roles that these women played during WWI, see Chapter 6.

On the home front, however, the fear of spies and the connection between espionage and other contemporary anxieties only grew. Those who had warned of spies and the need to strengthen French intelligence during the years prior to the war declared themselves vindicated.<sup>13</sup> The wave of patriotism that accompanied France's entry into the war in 1914 also resulted in increased xenophobia and spy fever at home.<sup>14</sup> Politicians and journalists on the right used such sentiment – which had been bred during the peaceful years between 1870 and 1914 – to attack their political adversaries. Individuals like Léon Daudet, Henry Bérenger and Georges Clemenceau denounced Interior Minister Louis Malvy and his supporters for failing to rein in German espionage along with other subversive plots against the French nation. In the eyes of the right, Malvy had been responsible for the choice not to institute the Carnet B in the early years of the war, therefore allowing German spies to run rampant. Daudet, right-wing director of the *Action Française*, also led a campaign against the politician Joseph Caillaux, connecting him with adventurers and accused traitors such as Paul Bolo-Pasha and Manual Almereyda.<sup>15</sup> All three were convicted of treason during the war, with Bolo and Almereyda executed for helping to spread pro-German propaganda. Though Caillaux's life

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<sup>13</sup> See, e.g. Georges Ladoux, *Les chasseurs d'espions* (Paris: Librairie des Champs-Élysées, 1932); Pierre Bouchardon, *Souvenirs* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1953). Ladoux is critical of the inadequacies of the intelligence services prior to the First World War and warns in this text about their state even following WWI.

<sup>14</sup> D.L. L. Parry writes that during the first months of the war, many individuals were attacked as spies, and shops believed to be run by Germans were sacked. D. L. L. Parry, "Clemenceau, Caillaux and the Political Use of Intelligence," *Intelligence and National Security*. 9, no. 3 (1994): 474.

<sup>15</sup> Interestingly, Daudet would show support for espionage practice for those who deceived in favor of France. For example, he wrote an "acerbic preface" to Mathilde Lebrun's memoirs, attempting "to redress alleged injustices suffered by French intelligence agents." Lebrun was the widow of a non-commissioned officer, who claimed to have risked her life at least thirteen times by penetrating into Germany to collect intelligence. Lebrun, *Mes treize missions*. Citations from Martyn Cornick and Peter Morris, *The French Secret Services*, International Organizations Series: Selective, Critical, Annotated Bibliographies (New Brunswick (USA) and London: Transaction Publishers, 1993), 29.

was spared, his political career suffered, and his reputation of being on the wrong side of the espionage battle resulted in his loss in November 1917 elections, which brought Clemenceau to power as Prime Minister. Between 1914 and 1918, treason, which had surfaced as a heinous crime in espionage trials during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, came to be defined as opposition to war. Intelligence was in turn directed towards the enterprise of locating traitors, and in this case, enabled the triumph of the right over the left.<sup>16</sup>

The decades following World War I saw several reorganizations of the French intelligence community. To recall, the rupture of the Dreyfus Affair had been the first time that professional intelligence came under real scrutiny, and had resulted in the removal of counterespionage duties from the army's services. Officially, with Gallifet's 1899 decree, counterespionage had become the province of the Sûreté, though by the first decade of the twentieth century, police and military personnel were again both involved in this practice. In 1907, Clemenceau as Interior Minister had created his *Brigades du Tigre*, a force under the direction of police chief Célestin Hennion comprised of mobile bands of police agents, as well as *police judiciaire*, which along with the army's intelligence section, made up the French domestic secret service.<sup>17</sup> Thus, as has been demonstrated, during the first half of the Third Republic, both espionage and counterespionage were practiced by

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<sup>16</sup> Parry shows that much of the information that was used to demonize Malvy, Caillaux, and their colleagues must have come from members of the intelligence services at the Grand Quartier Général (GQG), the Sûreté Générale (SG) and the Gouvernement Militaire de Paris. Parry, "Clemenceau, Caillaux." The army's intelligence wing also facilitated a program of internal spying on French soldiers during the war. Spearheaded by Marshal Pétain after becoming Commander-in-Chief of the French army in 1917, the program tracked morale among troops from month-to-month. Adam Zientek, "Rum and Blood: Morale and Discipline in the French and British Armies on the Western Front, 1914-1918," (Ph.D. diss., Stanford, 2012), 473.

<sup>17</sup> The *police judiciaire* undertook a variety of actions under the direction and supervision of the judiciary, including the pursuit and arrest of suspects, interrogation, gathering of evidence and delivery of search warrants.

a variety of actors without a specific delineation of duties. This continued through a number of permutations throughout the twentieth century.

Espionage and counterespionage became more distinct from each other in the interwar years.<sup>18</sup> From the middle of World War I through the 1920s, the *Service de Renseignements* connected to the Deuxième Bureau of the army was divided into a *Section de Recherche* (SR) charged with military intelligence and a separate *Section de Centralisation du Renseignement* (SCR) charged with counterespionage.<sup>19</sup>

Throughout the 1930s, the French state developed a series of branches dedicated to the collection and analysis of intelligence, for the most part tasking the army with external collection of information and the police with domestic counter-intelligence.<sup>20</sup> The services changed form again with the fall of France and the erection of the Vichy government in 1940, with some “official” intelligence and counterintelligence allowed by the Nazis, and others working clandestinely with the Allies or the Resistance.<sup>21</sup> Of the latter, it was Charles de Gaulle’s *Bureau Central*

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<sup>18</sup> One should note that the distinction between espionage and counterespionage was always much hazier in the French case than in the Anglo-Saxon case. Douglas Porch explains this as follows: “Theorists of intelligence who take Anglo-Saxon models as the norm, tend to include counterintelligence in the category of police work or even repression, rather than that of intelligence. This does not make sense in the French case, where the line between internal and external enemies has not always been easy to draw, and where taking a position on a foreign issue can place one in a very delicate position domestically.” Porch, *French Secret Services*, 469.

<sup>19</sup> Navarre, *Service de renseignements*, 23. The army’s intelligence service maintained three principal posts, in Aix-la-Chapelle, in Mainz, and in Strasbourg. They also had important posts in Brussels and in Nice, occupied with Italy. In addition, the SR maintained outposts across Europe, in Bucharest, Istanbul, Vienna, Belgrade, Copenhagen, Amsterdam, Prague, Riga, Beirut, and in a dozen consulates across the world. These would all have to be disbanded in the years just prior to WWII.

<sup>20</sup> Some of the agencies included the *Bureau central de Renseignements* (BCR) in the army and the *Surveillance du Territoire* (ST) and the *Direction Générale de la Sûreté nationale*, as counterespionage branches within the police.

<sup>21</sup> In 1940, the French government had established the Cinquième Bureau to perform counterespionage activities, under the leadership of Colonel Louis Rivet. It was divided into two sections: one gathered intelligence (the *Service de Renseignements*, or SR) while the other dealt with the centralization of intelligence (*Section de Centralisation du Renseignement*, or SCR). After the defeat, the SR was secretly reconstituted as the “Kléber network,” and the SCR was split into the TR

*de Renseignement et d'Action* (BCRA) created in 1942 and commanded by Colonel Passy that would survive the war. In 1946, this organization, which had been reorganized several times in the course of the war and Resistance, was rebaptized the *Service de Documentation Extérieure et de Contre-Espionage* (SDECE), which would remain charged with external intelligence operations until 1982.<sup>22</sup>

As of 2013, the French intelligence community comprises a number of various agencies for the most part with ties generally to the War or Interior Ministries. Just below the President of the Republic sits a council called the *Conseil National du Renseignement*, charged with the coordination of numerous intelligence gathering and assessing groups. Within the rubric of military defense is France's main agency collecting foreign intelligence, the *Direction Générale de la Sécurité Extérieure* (DGSE), along with the agency responsible for gathering *renseignement* of military interest, the *Direction du Renseignement Militaire* (DRM), and a service dedicated to protection of personnel, information, and materiel, the *Direction de la Protection et de la Sécurité de la Défense* (DPSD). On the domestic side, the agency charged with counterespionage and directly responsible to the Minister of the Interior is the *Direction Centrale du Renseignement Intérieur* (DCRI). The Prefecture of Paris also has its own counterespionage service, the *Direction du Renseignement de la Préfecture de Police de Paris*.

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network (*Travaux Ruraux*), a secret Vichy counterespionage network, headed by Paul Paillole, and the Bureau for Anti-National Affairs (*Bureau(x) des Menées Antinationales*, or BMA), which was initially tolerated by the Nazis because its official role was the repression of Communist, Gaullist, and Allied activity, though it also secretly worked against the Germans. Kitson, *Hunt for Nazi Spies*, 43-56.

<sup>22</sup> In 1943 in Algiers, de Gaulle's BCRA fused with the Free French SR and CE (counterespionage) networks to create the *Direction Générale des Services Spéciaux* (DGSS) under the direction of Jacques Soustelle. This then became the *Direction Générale des Études et Recherches* (DGER) before becoming the SDECE in 1946. Roger Faligot and Pascal Krop, *La Piscine: The French Secret Service since 1944*, trans. W.D. Halls (Oxford: B. Blackwell, 1989), 11-25. The SDECE was replaced by the DGSE in 1982.



Modern-day French intelligence services employ thousands of French citizens, both military and civilian, though the proportion of the former to the latter has been decreasing in recent years. Its operations include industrial espionage, testing nuclear power plants, hostage rescue missions, and certainly much more. The external agency (the DGSE) maintains spies who don't appear on the government's lists of civil servants, referred to as "honorable correspondents."<sup>23</sup> This designation, which emerged sometime in the middle of the twentieth century, testifies to the progression of views of spies over the course of the period of the professionalization of intelligence.

Over the course of the past century, the French intelligence community has had its share of successes and failures. French agents were instrumental in helping to break Germany's *Enigma* code in the early stages of WWII and Charles de Gaulle's BRCA helped the Allies in devising plots that would allow for a victory over the Nazis.<sup>24</sup> On the other hand, military intelligence had come up empty in predicting major German offensives in both WWI and WWII and failed to foresee Giap's ability to overwhelm Dien Bien Phu in 1954.<sup>25</sup> Intelligence had been active in French Indo-China in the early 1950s, especially the Action Branch (*Service Action*)

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<sup>23</sup> Navarre, *Service de renseignements*, 52; Glen Segell, "The French Intelligence Services," in *Geheimdienste in Europa*, ed. Thomas Jäger and Anna Daun (VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 2009), 37.

<sup>24</sup> On Enigma see Jean Stengers, "Enigma, the French, the Poles and the British, 1931-1940," in Andrew and Dilks, *Missing Dimension*. On cooperation between Free French and Allied intelligence forces and their role in Operation Overlord (D-Day) see Fabrizio Calvi, *OSS. La guerre secrète en France: Les services spéciaux américains, la Résistance et la Gestapo* (Paris: Hachette, 1991). Historians of French intelligence during the World War II period also note that military intelligence had adequately predicted Hitler's moves at the end of the 1930s, but that they went unheeded due to external circumstance. Peter Jackson, *France and the Nazi Menace: Intelligence and Policy Making, 1933-1939* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

<sup>25</sup> Porch considers the greatest failures of French intelligence to be "the strategic surprises of the Schlieffen Plan of 1914 and the 1940s Ardennes breakthrough," and the failure at Dien Bien Phu. Porch, *French Secret Services*, 470.

of the SDECE, a military arm which orchestrated stock operations and commando feats.<sup>26</sup> The Action Branch also played a role in the Algerian War, carrying out a bloody undercover war against the FLN.<sup>27</sup>

During the Fifth Republic, members of the French intelligence community exposed the vulnerability of de Gaulle's power in the 1960s with the agency's involvement in the capture and "disappearance" of an exiled Moroccan activist, Mehdi Ben Barka in October 1965. Though the case was never solved, reports spread that the French intelligence service (at that time known as the SDECE), along with prominent Moroccan leaders, was behind the capture and likely murder of Ben Barka.<sup>28</sup> The ensuing investigation infuriated and embarrassed General de Gaulle, who was viewed as unable to keep the state's secret services in line, while over half of the French public declared the affair to be "important" and considered the kidnapping evidence of the existence of a Gaullist police state.<sup>29</sup> In the wake of the affair, de Gaulle shifted the structure of the intelligence services by making

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<sup>26</sup> Colonel Roger Trinquier, *Les maquis d'Indochine: 1952-1954* (Paris: Editions Albatros, 1976). Charles de Gaulle put the Action branch "to sleep" after the Ben Barka affair. Porch, *French Secret Services*, 421.

<sup>27</sup> See, e.g. Erwan Bergot, *Le dossier rouge: services secrets contre F.L.N.* (Paris: Grasset, 1976). Bergot writes of targeting ships suspected of carrying arms for the FLN and scheming to assassinate various leaders of the Algerian nationalist movement in Switzerland, Germany, and Spain. The Action Branch also worked against another makeshift intelligence agency, the *Organisation de l'armée secrète*, a group founded by a number of generals who remained hostile to the idea of Algerian independence in the early 1960s. The OAS carried out a number of bloody secret actions and supposedly sought to assassinate Charles de Gaulle.

<sup>28</sup> According to sources, the Ben Barka case has never been officially resolved. Douglas Porch pins the disappearance and murder on two policemen attached to the Prefecture's *Renseignements Généraux*, who detained Ben Barka after his kidnapping from the Boulevard Saint Germain in broad daylight. He was then driven to the home of Georges Boucheseiche, a notorious gangster, in a Paris suburb where he was supposedly tortured in the presence of the Moroccan Interior Minister, General Mohammed Oufkir. In the investigation that followed, connections were made to the head of the Service 7, a special branch of the SDECE, and other members of the French intelligence services. De Gaulle however considered the kidnapping a conspiracy launched by the CIA, or Mossad, or both. Porch, *French Secret Services*, 417-421. Paul Jankowski wrote that "the complicity of the Republic's secret police had become an open secret." Jankowski, *Shades of Indignation*, 158.

<sup>29</sup> Jankowski, *Shades of Indignation*, 157-158.

them responsible to the War Ministry, rather than the Prime Minister, thus removing much of the autonomy that the founders of French intelligence had valued nearly a century prior.

The most notorious covert action undertaken by French intelligence in the contemporary era was the sinking of the ship *Rainbow Warrior*, off the coast of New Zealand in 1985. The *Rainbow Warrior* was a Greenpeace vessel on a mission to protest French testing of nuclear bombs in the South Pacific. In July 1985, the DGSE launched an operation called *Opération Satanique*, where two French intelligence officers attached explosives to the ship causing it to sink. Although the French government immediately denied any knowledge of the bombing, New Zealand police eventually discovered that the perpetrators had been French intelligence agents, and over the years it emerged that the bombing had been a French plot, going up as far as then-President François Mitterand. Although the head of the DGSE Admiral Pierre Lacoste was fired in the aftermath, for the most part, those individuals and agencies concerned went without major sanctions.

With hindsight, historians of the French intelligence community have been able to draw conclusions about the particular character of French intelligence over the course of its roughly 150-year history. As this dissertation has emphasized, the culture of the military had a particular effect on the development of intelligence work at the end of the nineteenth century. This held true in the decades that followed, and for better or worse, French intelligence continued to be shaped by military values. Certainly, a number of intelligence failures have been attributed to military culture. For example, writes Robert Young, the French intelligence community was unable to convince the military and political leadership of the threat of Hitler's intentions in 1938 and 1939, in part, because of the reigning

*mentalité* in the military that discouraged challenges to established orthodoxy.<sup>30</sup> The head of the Deuxième Bureau at the time asserted that intelligence work requires intellectual independence, yet his practitioners were not always able to act along these lines. Young writes that, “one might well wonder how easy it would be to preserve free thought and expression within a military institution based on hierarchy, discipline, obedience, and attitudes *en grande tenue*.”<sup>31</sup> Indeed, the difficulty in breaking from established norms and preconceptions would plague French intelligence throughout its history.

This reference to the challenge in separating “a genuine search for truth and the lesser search merely to confirm it” that Young identifies with regard to the military’s intelligence service during the 1930s is reflected in Douglas Porch’s analysis of French intelligence throughout the twentieth century. Porch argues that France’s secret services, with their base in the military, have manifested an absence of strong analysis, in part because the military environment disregards the work of critical thinking reserved for “intellectuals.”<sup>32</sup> Although the tendency for an intelligence product to reflect the perceptions and preconceived notions of its producers is common among intelligence practitioners, Porch writes that, “in France, [problems] have been made particularly acute because the environment in which the secret services operate has reflected the idiosyncratic, at times even

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<sup>30</sup> Robert J. Young, “French Military Intelligence and Nazi Germany, 1938-1939,” in May, *Knowing One’s Enemies*.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 297. Young traces the intelligence product coming out of Germany and neighboring areas in 1938 and 1939 to demonstrate that French leaders had certainly been provided with enough evidence to suggest Hitler’s upcoming war plans. Nonetheless, he asserts that there was a profound difference “between knowledge and understanding,” so that while the information was there, a number of barriers such as *mentalité* and intellectual ambiance, deference to hierarchy, uniformity of training and beliefs, and the legacy of WWI prevented the military high command from reacting to the intelligence in a way that might have mitigated the damage of the German invasion.

<sup>32</sup> Porch, *French Secret Services*, 476.

irrational, priorities and visions of French policy makers and strategists, as well as the fundamental problems caused by French weakness.”<sup>33</sup> As Porch and others have demonstrated, the military mindset in France also resulted in intelligence officers’ tendency to defer to authority and to present army and political leadership with the kind of information that they seemed already primed to hear. This “go with the flow” mentality meant that intelligence personnel might be more likely to tailor their information to their audience, rather than assessing it independently from political or military goals.

Another particularity of French intelligence is the degree to which it has participated in what Martyn Cornick and Peter Morris refer to as the “Franco-French” war.<sup>34</sup> The French services emerged at a time following a century of political volatility where the fear of internal subversion was omnipresent among each regime’s political and military leadership. The concern with domestic dissent remained in France throughout the twentieth century with the rise of Communist parties, the Resistance, and a number of opposition movements at home and in North Africa. Such suspicions often resulted in intelligence personnel spying on French citizens, especially political leaders, which in turn made the public distrustful of the interest in which intelligence services were acting.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 471.

<sup>34</sup> Cornick and Morris, *French Secret Services*, xi.

<sup>35</sup> An early example of this was the Clemenceau Caillaux/Malvy incident described above. Another well-known example of the French intelligence services’ spying on citizens involved the famous bugging of the offices of the satirical left-wing journal *le Canard enchaîné* in 1973. The agents were supposedly after the source of a leak to the paper regarding an investigation linking a prominent Gaullist deputy with a drug deal. Porch, *French Secret Services*, 426-430. Most recently, in October 2011, DCRI chief Bernard Squarcini was accused of spying on journalists. Squarcini was reputed to have obtained *Le Monde* reporter Gérard Davet’s phone records in order to uncover a contact in the justice department who had leaked information pertaining to a legal investigation of L’Oréal heir Liliane Bettencourt. “French Intelligence Chief Accused of Spying on Journalist,” *The Guardian*, October 18, 2011.

In line with the public attitude delineated in this dissertation, however, in large part the public has not demanded major changes following intelligence scandals. In turn, intelligence has continued to operate without significant parliamentary or institutional oversight; and as a result, secret services “too often fall back on the principle that the requirement to defend French interests justifies almost any means.”<sup>36</sup> After all, the motto adopted by the DGSE is “*Partout où nécessité fait loi*,” speaking directly to the imperative of *raison d'état* as an explanation for the use of secretive practices.<sup>37</sup> An example of this was the Rainbow Warrior affair, which had limited political consequences for its perpetrators, demonstrating, as Cornick and Morris point out, “the low expectations of public morality that the French have of their political leaders and institutions.”<sup>38</sup> I argue, moreover, that these low expectations were formed through a tacit consensus regarding the kind of actions believed necessary to protect national sovereignty. As in the early years, the acceptance of this behavior abroad was often matched by a tolerance for domestic surveillance as well. Indeed, as Douglas Porch confirms, the endurance of secret societies and *raison d'état* which this dissertation showed emerging during the early Third Republic, continued throughout the twentieth century, writing that “the French have come to accept domestic spying as an unavoidable fact of life.”<sup>39</sup>

Lastly, historians studying French intelligence in the modern era have shown the continuity of the goal of protecting French autonomy. This goal was

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<sup>36</sup> Porch, *French Secret Services*, 482.

<sup>37</sup> Segell, “French Intelligence,” 39. This motto can be roughly translated as “Everywhere that necessity makes law,” or “Wherever necessity knows no law.”

<sup>38</sup> Cornick and Morris, *French Secret Services*, xiii.

<sup>39</sup> Porch, *French Secret Services*, 483.

demonstrated during the period covered herein by the use of spies to insist on French territorial integrity in Alsace-Lorraine and in North Africa. Simon Kitson has emphasized this determination to maintain autonomy as one of the main motivating factors of the French counterespionage forces during the Vichy period.<sup>40</sup> He argues that despite agreements to the contrary, Nazi Germany sent spies into free French territory during WWII and that the French counterespionage forces hunted and prosecuted these agents as they would spies of an enemy nation. Using a study of intelligence to problematize the notion of collaboration, Kitson writes that his examination of espionage and counterespionage demonstrates that “the French government was caught between the often-conflicting desires of asserting its own independence from the Germans whilst still promoting a policy of active cooperation.”<sup>41</sup> Morris and Cornick confirm the lasting power of the quest for French autonomy and integrity, writing that, “what the ‘Greenpeace Affair’ and similar actions also show is that the work of the intelligence services contributes to that aggressive sense of independence which continues to inform France’s perception of her international role.”<sup>42</sup> Throughout the twentieth century, France has continued to work to restore the nation to “Great Power” status, with the intelligence services attempting to play a primary role in this pursuit.

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Although the characteristics described above are particular to the French services, in many senses, they are also universal. The role of intelligence and intelligence agencies has had and continues to have an important impact on

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<sup>40</sup> Kitson, *Hunt for Nazi Spies*.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

<sup>42</sup> Cornick and Morris, *French Secret Services*, xiii.

American society as well. Issues concerning transparency and national security within a democratic polity continue to arise, and sacrificing the former for the latter has been an ongoing issue in the United States since the attacks of September 11, 2001. Increased access to telephone, e-mail, and financial records without a court order under the Patriot Act has gone on without much protest, as have infringements on personal liberty at airports and other public venues. In spite of promises for transparency elicited from government in the 1970s in the wake of the Watergate scandal, political opacity, particularly as concerns “national security” and “national secrets” remains elusive.<sup>43</sup>

The Wikileaks scandal of 2010-2011 has served to put these issues of transparency versus security into the forefront, and the debate continues whether Bradley Manning, the man accused of facilitating the publication of classified material, is a hero for liberal rights or a traitor to be condemned for espionage. The legislation under which the U.S. government wants to condemn Manning is the 1917 Espionage Act, the American equivalent of the French espionage law passed in 1886 under General Boulanger. The Espionage Act is a product of the First World War, passed during Woodrow Wilson’s Presidency shortly after the U.S. made the decision to enter into the war. In the century since its passing, it has been used to condemn spies and accused spies including Julius and Ethyl Rosenberg, Jonathan Pollard, Aldrich Ames, and Pentagon Papers whistle-blower Daniel Ellsberg. Remarkably, it has also been at the center of six cases prosecuted under the Obama administration, none of which concern actual “spies” in the sense of Ames or the

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<sup>43</sup> In 1975, a commission known as the Church Committee after its chair, Frank Church, met to investigate violations of the law by U.S. intelligence agencies after revelations of FBI, CIA, and White House involvement in the Watergate Affair. Their investigations revealed a number of questionable practices employed by the CIA and FBI both at home and abroad during the Cold War, and resulted in the creation of infrastructure to assure more oversight and accountability.



Rosenbergs. Despite the fact that the current president came to power promising a new day for government transparency and openness, numerous journalists and conscience-minded military and civilians have found themselves facing attack under the espionage legislation, for theoretically threatening American national security.<sup>44</sup> As a lawyer for one of the individuals targeted for secret sharing said to the *New York Times* this year, “The Obama administration has been quite hypocritical about its promise of openness, transparency and accountability. All presidents hate leaks, but pursuing whistle-blowers as spies is heavy-handed and beyond the scope of the law.”<sup>45</sup> Indeed, the late former Senator and sociologist Daniel Patrick Moynihan asserted that the 1917 Espionage Act allowed for the perpetuation of a “culture of secrecy,” and credited this culture with the expansion of bureaucratic powers on the basis of an increasing scope of what is considered “secret.”<sup>46</sup> Thus, the issues that plagued Eugene Turpin, Frederic Auguste, and

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<sup>44</sup> In an article about former National Security Agency (NSA) employee Thomas A. Drake, accused under the 1917 Espionage Act for discussing surveillance technology with a reporter from the *Baltimore Sun*, the *New Yorker Magazine* writes, “When President Barack Obama took office, in 2009, he championed the cause of government transparency, and spoke admiringly of whistle-blowers, whom he described as ‘often the best source of information about waste, fraud, and abuse in government.’ But the Obama Administration has pursued leak prosecutions with a surprising relentlessness. Including the Drake case, it has been using the Espionage Act to press criminal charges in five alleged instances of national-security leaks—more such prosecutions than have occurred in all previous Administrations combined. The Drake case is one of two that Obama’s Justice Department has carried over from the Bush years.” Jane Mayer, “The Secret Sharer,” *The New Yorker*, May 23, 2011. The most recent case to arise using the Espionage Act to target former government employees is the case of John Kirakou. Kirakou is a former CIA officer charged with leaking information to journalists about other intelligence officers. He had previously spoken out about the CIA’s use of torture against prisoners, and critics of the Obama administration’s acts in this instance point out that while none of the agents actually involved in ghastly methods of interrogation have been prosecuted, Kirakou will be spending several years in jail. See, Charlie Savage, “Ex-C.I.A. Officer Charged in Information Leak,” *New York Times*, January 23, 2012.

<sup>45</sup> David Carr, “Blurred Line Between Espionage and Truth,” *New York Times*, February 26, 2012. The article points out the hypocrisy between the administration’s praise of reporters abroad working to expose truth while it works hard “to stop aggressive journalism in the United States by using the Espionage Act to take whistle-blowers to court.”

<sup>46</sup> Moynihan, *Secrecy*, 154-166.

other journalists in France at the turn of the last century are very alive in our democratic society today.

Commenters observing this trend towards increased use of the Espionage Act to restrict speech invariably describe an environment of escalated fear in a world that has seen a rise in global terrorism.<sup>47</sup> As a result of media coverage and popular culture, certain groups – for example, Muslim Americans – have found themselves the object of popular vitriol. Although this particular target is relatively new in American society, the treatment of this group is all too reminiscent of both the period under study in this dissertation, and the Cold War period in the United States. Whether it was Germans in France at the turn of the twentieth century, or suspected Communist sympathizers during the 1950s, the ability of government institutions and the law to work in tandem with popular sentiment has resulted in the stereotyping of particular groups, often with consequences leading to denials of liberty.<sup>48</sup>

As this dissertation has shown, and as was unfortunately repeated in the U.S. in the middle of the century, as well as today, fear and perceived threats to national security and autonomy have powerful consequences. The construction of permanent edifices of secrecy, while theoretically providing protection for a

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<sup>47</sup> Thomas Drake, the accused former NSA officer described above, for example, noted that Obama has “accepted the fear and secrecy” pushed at him by the US intelligence community. Mayer, “The Secret Sharer.”

<sup>48</sup> Denials of liberty in the U.S. in the 1940s and 1950s as a result of what is known as the Red Scare and McCarthyism extended to thousands of Americans. Hundreds were imprisoned for their beliefs or supposed beliefs, and thousands more lost their jobs. Victims were subject to private and public loyalty-review boards, and often the subject was denied access to an attorney, or as was the case with the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC), the interviewer was often denied the opportunity to defend him or herself by cross-examining the accuser. See Ellen Schrecker, *Many are the Crimes: McCarthyism in America* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1998). Suspected homosexuality was also a common cause for being targeted and the denial of liberties, resulting in what historians refer to as the Lavender Scare. David K. Johnson, *The Lavender Scare: The Cold War Persecution of Gays and Lesbians in the Federal Government* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

government and its people, likely has caused more harm than it has prevented. From the Dreyfus Affair to the Bay of Pigs, from the *Rainbow Warrior* to the mistaken identification of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, intelligence services have intervened in national and global affairs with little to no parliamentary oversight. Moreover, the perceived presence of subversive elements either from within or without – a perception spread by intelligence agencies themselves, or at the least by the knowledge of their existence – has bred anxieties among a larger public.<sup>49</sup>

In France from 1870 to 1914, these anxieties led to a feeling of increased militarism and the notion that war was imminent. Such a premonition perhaps unified a fearful nation, but also allowed it to enter into an extremely costly war. In 1950s and 1960s America, similar fears of outside subversion resulted in the actual Cold War, a period when people across the globe had no choice but to anticipate the reality of open hostilities. We are currently witnessing another wave of fear and anxiety, with our political leaders and members of the popular media claiming that American society is “at war” with global terrorism. While it is certainly true that every society has enemies eager to see its destruction, the lesson to be learned is that fear has its costs too. While not every “cold war” results in “hot war,” as was the case in France in the early twentieth century, the threat of such possibility should be an encouragement to transparency, rather than its inverse, or the practice of shuttering and hiding the things that we know, that we do, and that we believe.

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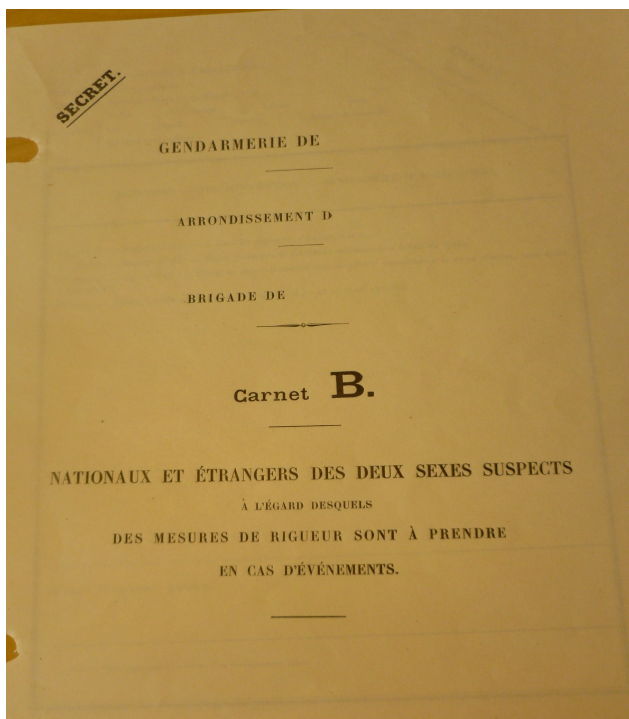
<sup>49</sup> For a good overview on the effect of anxieties and fear on the American psyche and the social and political consequences that it can bring, see Stearns, *American Fear*.



## Annex B

Carnet B for Louis Stocker.

Source: SHD 7N 674



NATIONALITÉ.	Allemand.
NÉ LE (A)...	18 janvier 1835, à Sultzach (Bavière).
PROFESSION.	Peintre paysagiste.
DOMICILE.	Varenes (Meuse), rue Blanche, n° 6.
SIGNALEMENT	Taille 1 <sup>m</sup> cent., visage . . . front . . . yeux . . .
	nez . . . bouche . . . menton . . . cheveux et sourcils . . .
Marques particulières :	

**STOCKER**  
(Louis)

MUTATIONS. — AVIS D'INSCRIPTION. — RENSEIGNEMENTS PARTICULIERS.

15 janvier. — Rapport n° 12. — A visité les approches d'un fort d'arrêt.

17 février. — Rapport n° 25. — Reçu fréquemment des lettres recommandées venant de Berlin.

24 février. — Avis n° 142. — Classé au carnet B suivant avis du général commandant le corps d'armée, avec ordre d'arrestation.

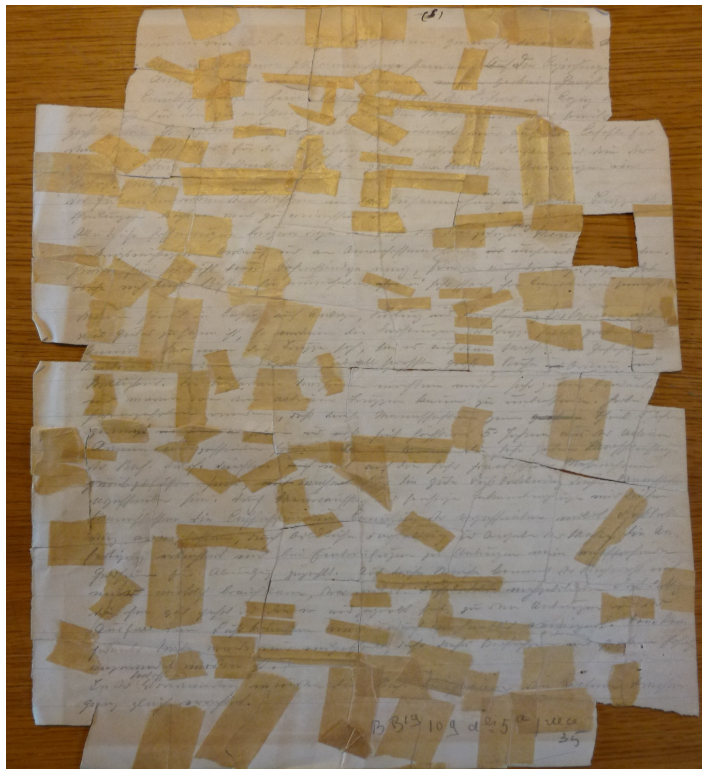
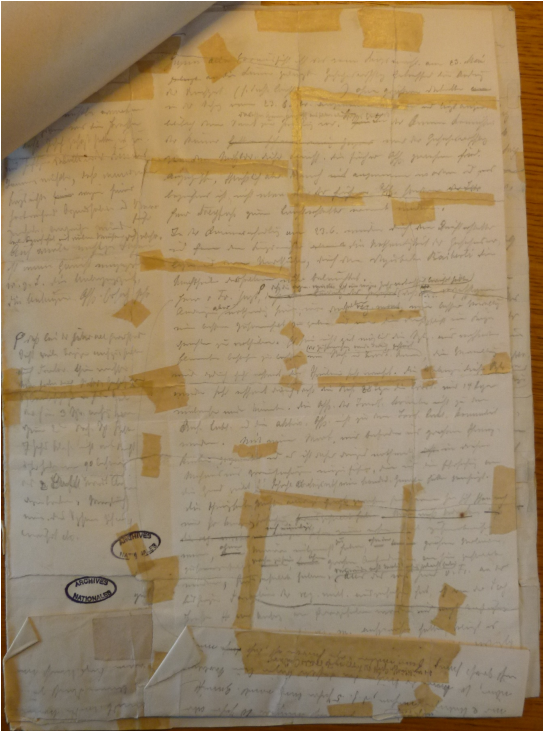
12 mars. — Quitte Verdun et va se fixer à Varenes. Il paraît se sentir surveillé.

Mesure à lui appliquer : À arrêter.

(\*) Donner l'âge approximatif, à défaut d'un renseignement précis.

## Annex C

Letters from the German Embassy torn up and taped back together.  
Source: AN BB<sup>19</sup> 101.



## Annex D

### **Loi tendant à établir des pénalités contre l'espionnage**

Article 1<sup>er</sup> – Sera puni d'un emprisonnement de deux ans à cinq ans et d'une amende de 1000 à 5000 francs :

- 1) Tout fonctionnaire public, agent ou préposé du gouvernement qui aura livré ou communiqué à une personne non qualifiée pour en prendre connaissance, ou qui aura divulgué en tout ou partie les plans, écrits ou documents secrets intéressant la défense du territoire ou la sûreté extérieure de l'État qui lui étaient confiés, ou dont il avait connaissance en raison de ses fonctions. – La révocation s'en suivra de plein droit ;
- 2) Tout individu qui aura livré ou communiqué à une personne non qualifiée pour en prendre connaissance, ou qui aura divulgué en tout ou partie les plans, écrits ou documents ci-dessus énoncés qui lui ont été confiés ou dont il aura eu connaissance soit officiellement, soit à raison de son état, de sa profession ou d'une mission dont il aura été chargé ;
- 3) Tout personne qui, se trouvant dans l'un des cas prévus par les deux paragraphes précédents, aura communiqué ou divulgué des renseignements tirés desdits plans, écrits ou documents.

Article 2 – Toute personne, autre que celles énoncées dans l'article précédent, qui, s'étant procuré lesdits plans, écrits ou documents, les aura livrés ou communiqués en tout ou partie à d'autres personnes, ou qui, en ayant eu connaissance, aura communiqué ou divulgué des renseignements qui y étaient contenus, sera punie d'un emprisonnement de un à cinq ans et d'une amende de 500 à 3,000 francs. – La publication ou la reproduction de ces plans, écrits ou documents, sera punie de la même peine.

Article 3 – La peine d'un emprisonnement de six mois à trois ans, et d'une amende de 300 à 3,000 francs sera appliquée à toute personne qui, sans qualité pour en prendre connaissance, se sera procuré lesdits plans, écrits ou documents.

Article 4 – Celui qui, par négligence ou par inobservation des règlements, aura laissé soustraire, enlever ou détruire les plans, écrits ou documents secrets qui lui étaient confiés, à raison de ses fonctions, de son état ou de sa profession, ou d'une mission dont il était chargé, sera puni d'un emprisonnement de trois mois à deux ans et d'une amende de 100 à 2,000 francs.

Article 5 – Sera puni d'un emprisonnement de un à cinq ans et d'une amende de mille à cinq mille francs :

- 1) Toute personne qui, à l'aide d'un déguisement ou d'un faux nom ou en dissimulant sa qualité, sa profession ou sa nationalité, se sera introduite dans une place forte, un poste, un navire de l'état ou dans un établissement militaire ou maritime.
- 2) Toute personne qui, déguisée ou sous un faux nom ou en dissimulant sa profession ou sa nationalité, aura levé des plans, reconnu de soient de

communication ou recueilli des renseignements intéressant la défense du territoire ou la sûreté extérieure de l'état

Article 6 – Celui qui, sans autorisation de l'autorité militaire ou maritime aura exécuté des levés en opération de topographie dans un rayon d'un myriamètre autour d'une place forte, d'un poste, ou d'un établissement militaire ou maritime, à partir des ouvrages avancés, sera puni d'un emprisonnement de un mois à un an et d'une amende de cent à mille francs.

Article 7 – La peine d'un emprisonnement de six jours à six mois et d'une amende de 16 à 1,000 francs sera appliqué à celui, qui, pour reconnaître un ouvrage de défense, aura franchi les barrières, palissades ou autres clôtures établies sur le terrain militaire, ou qui aura escaladé les revêtements ou talus des fortifications.

Article 8 – Toute tentative de l'un des délits prévus par les articles 1, 2, 3, et 5 de la présente loi sera considérée comme le délit lui-même.

Article 9 – Sera punie comme complice toute personne qui, connaissant les intentions des auteurs des délits prévus par la présente loi, leur aura fourni logement, lieu de retraite ou de réunion, ou qui aura sciemment recélé les objets en instruments ayant servi ou devoir servir à commettre ces délits.

Article 10 – Sera exempt de la peine qu'il aurait personnellement encourue le coupable qui, avant la consommation de l'un des délits prévus par la présente loi, ou avant toute poursuite commencée en aura donné connaissance aux autorités administratives ou de police judiciaire ou qui, même après les poursuites commencées, aura procuré l'arrestation des coupables ou de quelques-uns d'entre eux.

Article 11 – La poursuite de tous les délits prévus par la présente loi aura lieu devant le tribunal correctionnel et suivant les règles édictées par le Code d'instruction criminelle. Toutefois les militaires, marins, ou assimilés, demeureront soumis aux juridictions spéciales, dont ils relèvent, conformément aux Codes de justice militaire des armées de terre et de mer.

Article 12 – Indépendamment des peines édictées par la présente loi, le tribunal pourra prononcer pour une durée de cinq ans au moins et de dix ans au plus, l'interdiction de séjour prévue par l'art. 19 de la loi du 28 mai 1885.

Article 13 – L'article 463 du code pénal est applicable aux délits prévus par la présente loi.



## Law governing punishments for espionage

Article 1 – Will be punished with 2-5 years in prison and 1000-5000 francs fine:

- 1) Any functionary or government employee who gives to someone not qualified to see them, all or part of plans, writings or secret documents relevant to the defense of territory or external safety of the State which had been confided to them and which they had knowledge of as a result of their functions.
- 2) Anyone who does the above by reason of their qualification, profession, or the mission with which they were charged.

Article 2 – All those other than those designated in the first article, who, having procured said plans, writings or documents, would give or communicate all or part of them to other people, or who, in having knowledge of them had communicated or divulged the *renseignements* that they contained, would be punished with 1-5 years in prison and 500-3000 francs. The publication or reproduction of these plans, writings or documents, will be punished with the same penalty.

Article 3 – The punishment of imprisonment of 6 months to 3 years and 300-3000 francs for anyone who, without the capacity to have such knowledge, procures those writings, plans, or documents.

Article 4 – If by negligence or failure to comply with the rules, someone allowed plans, documents, etc, that were under their care by reason of their profession or mission to be taken or destroyed, they will be punished with 3 months to 2 years and a fine of 100-2000 francs.

Article 5 – Punished with 1-5 years prison and 1000-5000 francs anyone:

- 1) Falling into one of the above categories and have passed along the *renseignements* found in those documents.
- 2) Anyone who, with the help of a disguise or a false name or dissimulation of character, profession or nationality, enters a fortress, a post, a ship of the state or a military or maritime establishment.
- 3) Also using disguise to steal plans, communication or gathered *renseignements* relevant to the defense of the territory or external safety of the State.

Article 6 – Someone who without authorization was studying the topography within a particular radius of a *place forte*, military or naval establishment, will be punished with 1 month to a year and 100-1000 francs.

Article 7 – Anyone who crosses a barrier or palisade to get into a structure of defense, or climbed onto the top or side of such defenses will be punished with 6 days to 6 months prison and 16-100 francs.

Article 8 – All attempts at one of the crimes set forth by article 1, 2, 3 and 5 of the present law should be considered as the crimes themselves.

Article 9 – All persons knowledgeable of the intentions of the author of the crimes set forth by this law, or for providing them lodging, a place of retreat or meeting, or for getting together the objects or instruments having served or going to serve to commit this crime, will be punished as an accomplice.

Article 10 – A person will be exempt from punishment for the crime for which he is guilty if he provides the administrative authority or the judicial police with information about a crime whether it has not yet been committed, if the pursuit against it has not begun, or even after the pursuits have started, if it leads to the arrest of some or all of the guilty parties.

Article 11 – The pursuit of all crimes indicated by this present law will take place before the *tribunal correctionnel* according to the laws dictated by the *code d'instruction criminelle*. However, military, navy, or associated personnel remain under the special jurisdictions that apply to them, in conformity with the military and naval codes of justice.

Article 12 – Independent from the penalties established by the present law, the tribunal can pronounce, for a period of five years at least and ten years at the most, the interdiction of some or all civic rights according to article 12 of the *code pénal*, as well as the interdiction to travel set forth in article 19 of the law of May 28, 1885.

Article 13 – Article 463 of the *code pénal* is applicable to crimes set forth in the present law.

## Annex E

### Figures of results of court cases for espionage in France (1886-1914) and in Germany (1907-1914)

#### *Results of court cases for espionage (1886-1914)*

		<b>as %</b>
Condemnations	85	44.04
Mistrials	84	43.52
Procedures still ongoing	18	9.33
Acquittals	6	3.11
<b>Total</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>100</b>

#### *Proportions of French and foreign citizens among those condemned in espionage for France (1886-1914)*

<b>Nationality</b>		<b>%age</b>
French	53	54.08
Foreigners	39	39.8
Unknown	6	6.12
<b>Total</b>	<b>98</b>	

#### *Breakdown by nationality of foreigners condemned for espionage in France*

<b>Nationality</b>		<b>%</b>
German	22	56.41
Italian	8	20.51
Belgian	6	15.38
English	2	5.13
Swiss	1	2.57
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>100</b>

#### *Breakdown by gender of those condemned for espionage in France*

Men	89	89.89 %
Women	9	10.11 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Arrests and condemnations for espionage in Germany (1907-1914)*

	Arrests	Condemnations
1907	Inc.	3
1908	66	9
1909	47	6
1910	103	10
1911	119	14
1912	221	21
1913	346	21
1914	154	51
<b>Total</b>	<b>1056</b>	<b>135</b>

*Breakdown in nationality of those condemned for espionage in Germany (1907-1914)*

		%
German	107 (of which 31 Alsace-Lorrainers)	79.26
Russian	11	8.16
French	5	3.7
English	4	2.96
Austrian	3	2.22
Dutch	2	1.48
American	1	.74
Swiss	1	.74
Luxembourgish	1	.74
<b>Total</b>	<b>135</b>	

*Nationality of foreigners condemned for espionage in Germany (1907-1914)*

Nationality		%
Russian	11	
French (including A-L)	36	61.02
English	4	
Austrian	3	
Dutch	2	
American	1	
Swiss	1	
Luxembourgish	1	
<b>Total</b>	<b>59</b>	

Source: Sébastien Laurent, *Politiques de l'ombre*, pages 562-571; AN AN BB<sup>18</sup> 6080-6086.



Image 3. *Le Petit Journal*, supplément illustré dated May 28, 1911.



**Annex G**

Portrait of Adelaide Triebel, expelled from France for espionage in 1888.

*Source:* Archives départementales de la Meurthe-et-Moselle, 4M 163.



## Annex H

*Le Petit Journal*, supplément illustré dated November 10, 1907.

**Le Petit Journal**

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Dix-huitième Année DIMANCHE 10 NOVEMBRE 1907 Numéro 886

A BAS LES TRAITRES !  
Les actes d'Ullmo et de Berton ont soulevé l'indignation de la France entière

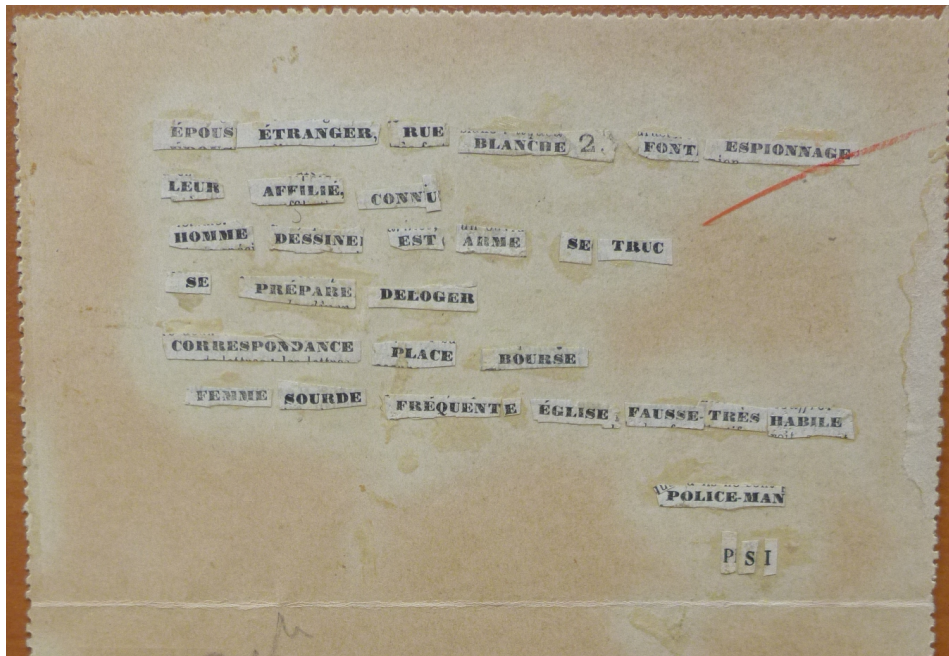
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**Annex I**

Anonymous postcard sent to the Paris Prefecture of Police denouncing “a foreign couple” living at 2, rue Blanche for espionage.

Source: APP BA 1334.



Annex J

Portrait of Guillaume Schnaebelé from the *Journal de Paris*, April 29 1887.



**Annex K**

Caricature of Captain Lux escaping from German prison from the *Courrier d'Alsace*.



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1M 870 – Police

1M 891 – Police

4M 100 – Sûreté Générale

4M 574

4M 784 – Expulsion Giletta de St. Joseph

4M 1338 – Police

4M 1357

4M 1359

4M 1377 – Police; relations with Germany and Austria

7M 645 – Fonds de l'office national des forets (Forest guards)

##### *2. Archives Départementales de Meurthe-et-Moselle (Nancy)*

4M 163 – Expulsion of foreigners, 1888-89

4M 170

4M 273 – Suspects for espionage, 1872-1899

4M 277

4M 278 – Espionage "français" and counter-espionage, 1886-1903

4M 180

2R 10 – Service de renseignements (SR), military

2R 10 bis 1 – SR

2U 1103 – Judicial pursuits

#### **B. Archives Nationales de France**

##### **Series F<sup>7</sup> – Police**

12526 – Decrees, expulsion of foreigners, correspondence

12553 – Misc politiques

12572 – Affaire Schnaebelé

12572B – Press on Schnaebelé

12581 – Surveillance of foreigners, espionage law

12584 – Surveillance of foreigners

12585 – « Contrôle » of foreigners

12587 – Notes on individual foreigners; Inscriptions on the Carnet B, 1904-1906

12626-12649 – Commissaires spéciaux, espionage and surveillance of foreigners, 1887-1917

12641 – Spies and informers

12642 – Military intelligence furnished by the commissaires spéciaux

12643 – "Circles"

12644-5 – Espionage

12646 – Notes, telegrams, etc. concerning public safety, surveillance of foreigners and the press 1916-17

12648 – Decrees; Commissaires spéciaux  
12828 – Fonds secrets, 1884-1907  
12829 – Chiffre Secret (secret codes), 1873-1910  
12925 – Cuers, Lajoux, notes on Dreyfus Affair  
12941 – Surveillance  
13435 – Argentina  
13966 – Espionage Law  
13969 – Bonnet Rouge and Almereyda  
14605 – Service Cryptographique de la Sûreté Générale, Espionage  
15933(2) – Bolo Pasha

Series BB<sup>18</sup> – Ministry of Justice, Pursuits for Espionage (1886 – 1914)

6080  
6081  
6082  
6083  
6084  
6085

Series BB<sup>19</sup> – Ministry of Justice, Cour de cassation

68 – Dreyfus Affair: Trial against Picquart  
73 – Dreyfus Affair: Dossier Bastian, Brücker  
84 – Dreyfus Affair: papers taken from du Paty de Clam  
101 – Dreyfus Affair: Papers taken from the Statistical Section  
109 – Dreyfus Affair, misc

C. Archives de la Préfecture de Police de Paris

BA 60 – Boulanger  
BA 311-336 – “Correspondences”  
BA 354 – Police decrees, etc.  
BA 394  
BA 913 – Correspondence with the Ministry of War: Espionage and “Affaires diverses”  
BA 916 – Affaire Jung  
BA 1116 – File Herbette  
BA 1285 – File Tomps  
BA 1332 – Espionage in France (1872-1887)  
BA 1333 – Espionage in France (1888-1895)  
BA 1334 – Espionage in France (1896-1909)  
BA 1746

DB 646

EA 9 – Lucie de Kaulla  
EA 59 – Dispatch of a French fleet to Kiel; Schnaebelé

D. Archives des Affaires Etrangères (Foreign Affairs Ministry)

Series C, Administrative, 4  
Series C, Administrative, 22  
Series C, Administrative, 179  
Series C, Administrative 180

Statistiques extérieures - carton 155

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PAP 164/2: Spuller  
PAP 85/1: Jules Hansen  
PAP 88/24: Jules Herbette

## Affaires Diverses Politiques

ADP Allemagne 32 (1887)  
ADP Allemagne 37  
ADP Allemagne 38 bis  
ADP Allemagne 45  
ADP Allemagne 50

## E. Service Historique de la Défense

### Services de renseignements in operation, North Africa

1H 238 – Tunisia  
2H 1 – Tunisia  
2H 35 – Tunisia  
3H 21 – Morocco  
3H 22 – Morocco

### Misc Services de renseignements

2I 322 – Services de renseignements of the 1<sup>er</sup> corps d'armée  
2I 323 – Services de renseignements of the 1<sup>er</sup> corps d'armée

La 36 – “Bureau des Reconnaissances,” Franco-Prussian War

### Fonds privés

1K 171 – Conrad Sandherr in Tunisia  
1K 214 – Jean-Baptiste Campenon  
1K 413 – Victor Duruy (attaché in Belgium)  
1KT 526 – Mémoires of General Charles Dupont  
1K 732 – Théodore Jung

### Le Dépôt de la Guerre

1M 1540  
1M 1541  
1M 1577  
1M 2021  
1M 2037  
1M 2137  
1M 2195  
1M 2197  
1M 2211  
1M 2256

1N 4 – Procès-verbaux du Conseil Supérieure de la Guerre, 1888-1890

### État-Major d'Armée (EMA)

5N 1 – Cabinet du Ministre  
5N 9 – Telegrams (1914)

7N 11 – Avant-guerre (D-F)  
9N 19 – Avant-guerre

## Deuxième Bureau

7N 21  
7N 25  
7N 657  
7N 660  
7N 662 – Attachés militaires  
7N 663 – Attachés militaires  
7N 664 – 2e Bureau, (1872-1887)  
7N 674 – 2e Bureau, Statistical section (1886-1899)  
7N 676 – 2e Bureau, Statistical section (1900-1914)  
7N 1107 – letters from attachés militaires in Berlin to 2e Bureau  
7N 1110 – Attaché militaire in Berlin (Pellé)  
7N 1137 – Attaché militaire from Austria-Hungary

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7NN 2780  
7NN 2431

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5Yf 73952 – François Vincent  
10Yd 340 – Émile Campionnet  
9Yd 170 – Paul Grisot  
7Yd 1616 – Jules Lewal  
5Yf 41489 – Abraham Samuel  
9Yd 37 – Georges Boulanger

2X 224

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