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Femme, Famille, France:
Vichy and the Politics of Gender, 1940-1944

Miranda J. Pollard

Submitted to the Department of Modern History,
Trinity College Dublin,
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.
1989.
Title: "Title of Thesis"

Introduction

Activity and the Politics of Congress, 1790-1809

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Department of History
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For the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
1991
To Sandra
This thesis investigated the significance of gender in the policy and propaganda of the Vichy government, from 1940 through to 1944. Despite the proliferation of literature on all aspects of Vichy and the Occupation, women are conspicuously absent. This study documents and explores how women were imagined and spoken to in Vichyian discourses, how gender was used to construct the very meaning of order, within the family and within the state. By reconstructing the texts of Travail, Famille, Patrie, from this perspective we can better understand the dynamics of the Mouvement National, how Vichy appropriated and sought to restrict sexuality and sexual identity, suggesting the femininity, public and private aspects of the various propaganda and legislative initiatives in the realms of education, work, equality and welfare, allowing us to see not only discrete (and previously undocumented) discriminations against half the national community. It reveals too a systematic understanding of gendered conceptions of age, family, work and authority, affecting all French women and men. Indeed, this thesis argues that these initiatives constituted a profoundly recent and specifically French anti-feminism, not that the discourses of La Femme au foyer had ramifications beyond the negative policy prohibitions of those years, “ideals and visions” given us a unique glimpse of the significance of gender in French society and politics, before and after Vichy.
SUMMARY

This thesis investigates the significance of gender in the policy and propaganda of the Vichy government, from 1940 through to 1944. Despite the proliferation of literature on all aspects of Vichy and the Occupation, women are conspicuously absent. This study documents and explores how women were imagined and spoken to in Pétainist discourse, how gender was used to construct the very meaning of order, within the family and within the State. By re-reading the texts of Travail, Famille, Patrie, from this perspective we can better understand the dynamics of the Révolution Nationale, how Vichy appropriated and sought to recast sexuality and social identity, masculinity and femininity, public and private space. An analysis of various propaganda and legislative initiatives in the realms of education, work, sexuality and welfare, allows us to see not only discrete (and previously undocumented) discriminations against half the national community. It reveals too a systematic endorsement of gendered conceptions of home, family, work and authority, affecting all French women and men. Indeed this thesis argues that these initiatives constituted a profoundly resonant and specifically French antifeminism, and that the discourse of la femme au foyer had ramifications beyond the negative policy prohibitions of these years. "Women and Vichy" gives us a unique glimpse of the significance of gender in French society and politics, before and after Vichy.
Declaration

This thesis is entirely the result of my own research and has not been submitted to any other university.

Miranda J. Pollard
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<td>Ligue Ouvrière Chrétienne</td>
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<td>OPG</td>
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INTRODUCTION
WOMEN AND VICHY

This thesis is an investigation of the Vichy government’s attempts to alter the role and status of women, within the family and within French society. Historians have characterized the conservative nature of Vichy’s attitudes by referring to its Travail, Famille, Patrie programme. The purpose of this study is to examine the régime’s apparent antifeminism and its presumed preference for women "barefoot and pregnant in the kitchen".1

In this approach, gender and sexuality are key elements, used not only to illuminate an essential facet of domestic policy but also to test well-established interpretations of Vichy itself, its paternalism, authoritarianism and illiberalism. This involves both recognising a female historical presence and outlining a prescriptive set of images. Above all, by analysing policy and propaganda in the all-important areas of education, work, welfare and sexuality, this thesis sketches out the ideological and material terrain across which women’s existence can be better defined and understood at this crucial juncture in contemporary French history.

Given the proliferation of literature on all aspects of French life in this period, 1940-1944, it is surprising that women have been 'left out': no comprehensive account exists either of women's experience of the Occupation or of women's cherished place in Vichy's vision of a new France.²

Recently studies of Women and Resistance³ have confronted one dimension of this historical absence, and will increasingly force a reappraisal of the culture and forms of Resistance itself.⁴ Such work is necessary but problematic. It must avoid constructing a counter-mythology of Resistance heroinism, which emphasises only the very exceptional and individualistic in female participation. Alternatively, approaches underlining the enhanced value in Resistance of traditional domestic responsibilities of "providing and


serving", or of supposedly innate qualities like "feminine ingenuity",\(^5\) risk validating women’s participation within the bounds of unquestioned sexual divisions and against standards of apparently changeless feminity.

Although feminist historians have rightly highlighted women’s contribution to Resistance, it is perhaps appropriate that attention should also turn to the majority -- those who "simply" endured rather than resisted. There is a total absence of a collective overview either of women’s perceptions of Vichy or indeed of the government’s attitudes to women. This absence is the responsibility of historians who too often presume a gender-less neutrality, which in fact subsumes women’s experiences into those of father, husband or son across class and rural/urban divides. The only exceptions to this occur when historical irony is too startling to miss. Vichy’s celebration of the family and la femme au foyer conflicted dramatically with its failure to mitigate the daily sufferings and deprivations of all families and households, and especially of women, whose traditional responsibilities were more onerous than ever in these terrible years. But ironic juxtaposition of aspiration and reality is an inadequate substitute for analysis. This thesis seeks, instead, to provide a coherent

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explanation and historical critique of women’s place in Vichy’s political agenda.

Unlike previous accounts this approach presumes and explores the centrality of gender in the history of Vichy. As Joan Scott has argued

Political history has, in a sense, been enacted on the field of gender. It is a field that seems fixed yet whose meaning is contested and in flux. If we treat the opposition between male and female as problematic rather than known, as something contextually defined, repeatedly constructed, then we must constantly ask not only what is at stake in proclamations or debates that invoke gender to explain or justify their positions but also how implicit understandings of gender are being invoked and reinscribed. What is the relationship between women and the power of the State? 6

The relationship between women and the power of the Etat Francais is a potentially vast topic. The parameters of this present work should therefore be clearly defined. It does not include a discussion of women individually, either in collusion or collaboration with the régime, although such a study could be an interesting counter-reclamation to women and Resistance. 7 Nor does it include an analysis of women’s perceptions of the Occupation or of Vichy itself, a fascinating but much broader task. 8 Instead this thesis


focusses on the articulation and endorsement of a specific gender discourse at Vichy. The notion of discourse reveals not only the idealised representation of women, female sexuality and social relationships, but their projections directly or symbolically throughout the range of Vichy policy, legislation and propaganda. This research is concerned to establish the ideological fabric of French society at a critical political moment and does not stem from an abstract fascination with "women" as subject. Feminists are rightly wary of historical analyses that portray women as hapless victim, passive subject of individual or socio-political manipulation. But this wariness should not hold back a close examination of how gender ideologies were historically articulated and constructed and how ultimately these were submitted to, contested or reshaped.

Work on Women and Fascism has pointed to the significance of gender as a dynamic component of reactionary ideologies, thus providing a conceptual point of departure for this thesis. Discriminatory policies against women in Italy

9 The appropriateness of the very category of women is usefully examined in D.Riley, "Am I That Name? Feminism and the Category of Women" in History Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1988

and Germany have been documented by historians. By politicising women’s maternal and domestic responsibilities in such an extreme way, Fascist antifeminism successfully circumscribed their social and political status. Such antifeminism was neither arbitrary nor coincidental. It represented a potent element of Fascism’s appeal to resolve social conflict, in this case that caused by the apparent weakening or recasting of sexual divisions in the private and public spheres. Additionally antifeminism paralleled and fed upon the more conspicuous extremes of Fascist nationalism and racialism. Appropriating and defining female sexuality was obviously central to constructing "family", "people", "nation" and "race" in Fascist ideology. Did something comparable happen under Vichy’s Révolution Nationale?

Differences and contrasts are immediately apparent. Tim Mason has stated that:

In respect of its attitudes and policies towards women, National Socialism was the most repressive and reactionary of all modern political movements.12

Certainly any enquiry into Vichy and women lacks such a firm premise. Firstly, although Vichy’s policies had direct implications for them, women were rarely addressed as explicit and independant subject in the same way as in


12 Mason, op.cit., p75
Fascist discourse. Indeed "Vichy, Women and the Family" suggests itself more readily as a topic. This indicates not only the significance of gender but also the necessity of analysing the family as a key instrument of French social policy, as well as analysing the more subtle, privatised ways in which antifeminism can be realised i.e. via the family itself, long held by feminists to the prime location of women’s oppression.

Secondly, following Paxton and Rémond, the basis for this present work is that Vichy cannot usefully be designated 'Fascist'. (Although, incidentally, it is interesting to note that Bourderon, in his search for Fascist credentials for Vichy, makes no attempt to integrate the régime’s antifeminist policies.) Nonetheless the potential significance of gender politics or antifeminism as an indicator of counter-revolutionary ideology has yet to be explored. Certainly Vichy, in respect of its valorisation of motherhood and fecundity and its promotion of separate spheres shared a common orientation with its Fascist neighbours which was far from being "a tragic and ludicrous


Another comparative contrast centres on Vichy’s short life-span, the limited latitude of action by which it was constrained and the consequent artificiality of much of what it created or articulated. Above all, Vichy’s policies for women were not usually discernible as such. They must be viewed through a natalist-familialist lens, which reveals a longer term socio-political discourse, shaping and constructing gender. The significance of this discourse has been overlooked. But so too has the importance of Vichy’s views of women, because they were seemingly as ephemeral or short-lived as the régime itself. Additionally artificiality is accentuated by the banal and tautological style of much of Vichy’s femme au foyer propaganda.

Against this, it should be emphasised that the significance of the Révolution Nationale is not proportionate to its short duration, the limited degree of the government’s effectiveness nor to the subsequent transparency of its rhetoric. Ultimate failure and the next "counter-revolution" at the Liberation cannot entirely negate the Vichy phenomenon. From the standpoint of the Defeat, the fall of the Third Republic and the presumed imminence of an Axis victory in Europe in 1940, Vichy’s programme had a dramatic, if unreal, purity. The bulk of this thesis centres on the aspirations and intentions of the régime, as

15 Rémond, op.cit., p.317.
they concerned women, at that critical moment, as well as exposing the contradictions and constraints imposed by the extraordinary circumstances of the Occupation.

First, however, it is necessary to examine the source and context for Vichy’s programme. How was it that the Révolution Nationale had famille as the central element of its substitute triptych? And how was it that this symbolic elevation of the family had as a corollary the mobilisation of very specific images of femininity and gender? Undoubtedly answers must be sought in political and social developments, and patterns of discourse on women and the family, well before the cataclysmic defeat of 1940.
CHAPTER 1

WOMEN, NATALISM AND FAMILIALISM
FROM THE THIRD REPUBLIC TO VICHY

War and Population: "Trop Peu d‘Enfants"

The swiftness and totality of the Defeat in 1940 caused contemporaries to expound a great variety of explanations for national failure.¹ Maréchal Pétain voiced a common presumption that France had been defeated because she had "trop peu d‘enfants, trop peu d‘armes, trop peu d‘alliés".² In putting demography first, Pétain was referring to the immediate situation, to the belief that the French army had been overwhelmed by sheer force of numbers. But he was also emphasising long-term causality. Defeat had been brought about because of a Third Republic social malaise, depopulation, which had given Germany decisive military advantage.³ This was not just a cynical deflection of

¹ For the mood following defeat, see R.O. Paxton, Vichy France: Old Guard and New Order, 1940-1944. (New York, 1972)


³ The debate on the causes of the military defeat is an extensive one which now tends to dismiss the notion of numerical inferiority as a decisive factor. See, inter alia, S.M. Osgood, The Fall of France: 1940. (Boston,
attention from the inadequacies of French military strategy, for which Pétain might bear his share of responsibility. It was an analysis that sprang directly from interwar anxieties and prognostications. Paul Reynaud had proclaimed in 1937:

There is a single factor which dominates everything: the demographic factor. Forty-one million Frenchmen face sixty-seven million Germans and forty-three million Italians. As far as numbers are concerned we are beaten.

Nor did this prediction do more than link up with Clemenceau’s warning, in 1919, that the Treaty of Versailles would be useless if France turned her back on large families. That France had indeed turned her back on large families was a well-advertised belief of the Right in the interwar years. Defeat provided the opportunity to discover the harsh consequences of such a choice and it threw population decline into dramatic focus.

It was no coincidence then that Vichy specifically embraced the notion of national regeneration through support for familles nombreuses, a support which is a striking theme of the regime’s policies and propaganda. This espousal of population growth and family renovation had various


5 J.O. Chambre, Débats, 26 janvier 1937.

6 J.O. Sénat, Débats, 11 octobre 1919.
consequences for women which will be examined in Chapters 3 - 6. This chapter will first investigate how natalism and familialism developed during the interwar years and how a discourse on women was constituted within this development. This analysis seeks to explain how the events of 1940 then provided a unique opportunity not only for the amplification of natalist-familialism but for the exclusive sanctioning and legitimation of its discourse on women.

It should be emphasised at the outset that both natalism and familialism did centrally concern women: the former as a preoccupation with population growth that assumed or aspired to State control of fertility and reproduction, the latter an advocacy of social stability that was based on the legitimate, patriarchal family unit and required the maintenance of *la femme au foyer*. These twin ideological impulses provide the all-important parameters for this thesis. Charting this development highlights the remarkable continuity of a socio-political discourse from the Third Republic to Vichy. It reveals also the degree to which Vichy’s images of women were a crucial component of the Révolution Nationale’s agenda for a new France in a new European order.

**The Politics of Family**

Although consciousness of the significance of population
and family can be traced throughout the modern period,\(^7\) the critical point for their emergence in a jointly-identified and coherent form was immediately after the First World War.\(^8\) The huge losses of the war would obviously have crystalised natalist anxieties in themselves. France lost 1.4 million — two young Frenchmen in every ten. A further 3 million were wounded, of whom 3/4 million were classified as invalids.\(^9\) A demographic decline, which had been the subject of pronatalist "patriotic" concern since 1870,\(^10\) was dramatically exacerbated. There was now not only the immediate losses of the war but there was the recurring threat of the "hollow cohorts" caused by the absence of a generation who might have married and had children. Reconstruction inevitably involved, as Clemenceau warned, a commitment to repopulation. But crucially, it was the language and proposals of prewar natalism and familialism which dominated the political debate and became part of a


self-legitimating nationalist discourse.\textsuperscript{11}

It was a specific set of remedies that predominated: suppression of birth control, particularly abortion, institution of birth premiums and allowances for those with charges de famille, electoral reform to favour male heads of households, improvement of services for working mothers in factories -- all remedies that focussed on the creation of "une France propre" \textsuperscript{12}, a morally pure and conspicuously patriarchal society.

The setting-up of the Conseil Supérieur de la Natalité (1920) and the founding of the Fédération Nationale des Associations Familiales de France (1921) marked the natalist and family movement's accession to official prominence.\textsuperscript{13}

But it is, above all, the passing of the law of 20th July 1920 which serves as an ideological departure point.\textsuperscript{14} It indicated the arrival of a narrowly-defined militancy in State policy. In its exclusive targeting of birth control and abortion, this law initiated a long period of repressive legislation, which, although not successful in its primary

\textsuperscript{11} For the pre-1914 background, see K. Offen, "Depopulation, Nationalism and Feminism in Fin-de Siècle France", American Historical Review 89 (June 1984): 648-676.

\textsuperscript{12} Congrès de la Natalité, Nancy, 1919. Resolution No.1.

\textsuperscript{13} The connection of natalism to familialism should be emphasised. While familialists explicitly embraced natalism in defence of familles nombreuses, natalists exclusively envisaged population growth within the legitimate nuclear family.

\textsuperscript{14} For the 1920 law, see Glass, op.cit., p.159ff.
objective of raising the birth rate, was successful in 'pushing out' alternative individualist, neo-Malthusian or feminist counter-currents.

Of course this is not intended to suggest that natalist-familialist programmes were then, simply or consistently, translated into legislative action. Tomlinson charts the difficulties encountered by natalists in the 1920s in persuading politicians to act on their commitment to family and population growth. In reality, the presumptions of laissez faire economics and an over-riding preoccupation with the stability of the franc negated the practical effect of a dominant consensus.

And yet the underlying strength of this consensus should not be overlooked. Although it is impossible to quantify a climate of opinion, it can be demonstrated that natalist-familialist ideas enjoyed widespread acceptance, although their more militant advocates were always few. At the political level within the Chamber, the "groupe de la famille et de la natalité" numbered 354 in 1928. Outside parliament organisational strength included membership of the Alliance Nationale Contre la Dépopulation, (40,000 in 1930) and "representation" of 2 million in the Fédération Nationale

15 Tomlinson, op.cit., chapters 6 - 7.
16 ibid.
17 ibid. The Alliance Nationale Contre la Dépopulation will hereafter be referred to as Alliance Nationale or the ANCD.
des Associations de Familles Nombreuses de France 18, as well as the network of 62 regional associations and 11 local Fédérations de FamillesNombreuses.19

The phenomena of influence and performance are neither simple nor coherent. (How does one assess the impact of the Roman Catholic Church, for example, in legitimating the natalist-familialist discourse?).20 Certainly the family movement was not a monolithic power bloc, which just progressed from marginality to power, reflecting social and demographic trends. Memberships and objectives, as is well-documented by Talmy, were varied and changing.21 Indeed he highlights the importance of internal conflicts and low recruitment in restricting the ultimate 'success' of the family movement. These conflicts derived from profoundly differing outlooks. Talmy focusses on five principal currents: (1) the Alliance Nationale, who emphasised the importance of devoir social and patriotism in any natalist relèvement 22 but who looked to material incentives to

18 Glass, op.cit., p.159 (date unclear).

19 Spengler, op.cit., p.128.

20 Interestingly, Talmy suggests that the Church in fact clung to old-fashioned notions of the patriarchal, hierarchical family and underestimated the importance of the family in its 'rechristianisation' programme, Talmy, op.cit., pp.250-251.

21 Talmy, op.cit., p.246.

22 Tomlinson, op.cit., and especially for the ANCD's attitudes to women, pp.170-171.
effect change, (2) the Ligues de Familles Nombreuse who defined the problem as a moral one and who emphasised the legitimate nuclear family’s role in a spiritual rénovation, (3) the more intransigent and conservative Catholic associations, the minority who tended, according to Talmy, to give the entire family movement a reactionary image, (4) the Confédération Générale de Familles who recruited among jeunes foyers, emphasising mutualité and civic responsibility, and (5) the Ligue Ouvrière Chrétienne who, from 1936 on, supplied the more dynamic militants familiaux (along with the CGF) from outside the ranks of the Catholic bourgeoisie. These different currents and mutual antagonisms must be remembered in any assessment of the family movement’s apparently disappointing performance in the interwar years. Such assessments have tended, however, to underplay the broader significance, or influence, of natalist-familialism.

In this perspective 1932, for example, marked a manifest success when, with the extension of the compulsory family allowance system, the natalist-familialist discourse came firmly within the orbit of State policy. The material benefits for the average unskilled worker, with four or more children, were substantial enough, (Glass estimated a 15-20% increase in income) but the significant fact was that the allocations were no longer just the arbitrary payments of occasional philanthropic employers.

The thinking behind Adolphe Landry’s initiative for
government regulation of the system was clear:

Despite the reluctance of many employers to implement it, the 1932 law did mark an important stage in the progressive taking-on by the State of "family wage" principles. Although natalism was a prime motive, the system as it had developed from the mid-nineteenth century on, was significant for its stress on compensation to the married male worker with charges de famille. The recognition of this type of wage differential principle, as alluded to by Landry, is critical not only because it underlay the extension of the family allowance system up to and beyond the Code de la Famille (1939), but also because it represented a conscious anti-individualist shift in social thinking.


24 Spengler states that by 1936 only half the employers liable to the 1932 law had complied, op.cit., p.243. For Spengler's criticism of general pronatalist measures in the 1930s, pp.254-255.

Wage differentials, as such emerged, for example, as an element in the debate on women’s right to work, a debate which illustrated how antifeminism might intersect with natalist-familialism. The Union Féminine Civique et Sociale in their campaign for "le retour de la mère au foyer" publicised Quadrogesimo Anno which succinctly stated their case:

C’est à la maison avant tout où dans les dépendances de la maison parmi les occupations domestiques, qu’est le travail des mères de famille. C’est donc par un abus néfaste et qu’il faut à tout prix faire disparaître, que les mères de famille, à cause de la modicité du salaire paternel sont contraintes de chercher loin de la maison une occupation rémunératrice, négligeant les devoirs tout particuliers qui leur incombent, avant tout l’éducation des enfants.26

Hostility to working (married) women’s work, however misplaced or ironic it seems in retrospect, must be seriously addressed as central to the sharpening of gender ideologies and the reaffirmation of the sexual division of labour in the 1930s.27 It combined on the one hand antifeminism - the presumption that women were somehow causing or worsening

26 Pius XI, Quadrogesimo Anno, May 1931, quoted in Talmy, op.cit., p.199. See also H. Rollet, André Butillard et le Féminisme Chrétien. (Paris, 1960) p.110, for the UFCS campaign and the Ligue de la Mère au Foyer’s petition to Rome. This campaign had of course an international dimension, see UFCS Congrès International (Le Travail Industriel de la Mère et le Foyer Ouvrier) June 1933.

unemployment\textsuperscript{28} (regardless of the reality that the female proportion of the economically active population had actually fallen, were single, widowed or divorced)\textsuperscript{29} – with, on the other hand, anxious paternalism – the concern that married women were, wilfully or not, neglecting their proper responsibilities as mothers and homemakers. (Of course the connection between women’s employment and dénatalité had still to be proved...)\textsuperscript{30}

Arguably it was the social paternalism directed at ouvrières that gave legitimacy and resonance to the mère au foyer campaigns. The UFCS denied socialist feminist objections that their vision was "la mère enfermée dans le cercle étroit de la famille, dans l’horizon du pot-au-feu du mari et du pot de chambre des enfants".\textsuperscript{31} Instead they asserted:

Evidemment il ne s’agit pas qu’avec la mère la misère s’installe au foyer mais bien au contraire qu’une

\textsuperscript{28} "L’envahissement de toutes les professions par les femmes mariées est une des plus graves causes du chômage", F. Boverat, \textit{L’Effondrement de la Natalité}. (ANCD, 1936).


\textsuperscript{30} The link between married women’s work and dénatalité is made by: M. Huber, H. Bunle and F. Boverat \textit{La Population de la France, Son Evolution et Ses Perspectives}. (Paris, 2nd. ed., 1943), 61:

- le travail de la femme hors de son foyer rend plus difficile la naissance et les soins à donner à de nombreux enfants....

and M. Lafeuille, Vice-Président, CFTC \textit{Note Nationale de France} p.90, UFCS Congrès International. (1933)

\textsuperscript{31} Quoted by H. Rollet, op.cit., p.107.
Arguing that 80% of married women were working not from choice but from necessity, the UFCS claimed that a compensatory payment (allocation de la mère au foyer) would serve the interests of women, family and nation by a more just regulation of private and public spheres. The campaign eventually produced an obligatory allocation de la mère au foyer for urban areas, as part of the Code de la Famille.

The primacy of the woman’s place in the home was of course a familiar 'doctrine', especially amongst Catholics. A typical statement of the catholic viewpoint maintained:

Si la famille a besoin de la femme, il semble que la femme soit faite pour la famille. La vocation normale de la femme, sa fonction sociale c’est de donner et d’entretenir la vie....La femme qui s’éloigne du foyer pour travailler au dehors trahit ainsi sa vocation. Elle entraine de plus comme tous les fois qu’un désordre est apporté à l’harmonie naturelle des choses, des inconvénients de

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32 UFCS La Femme Dans la Vie Sociale, avril 1934, p.3.
33 UFCS, Enquête, 1930, cited by Talmy, op.cit., p.199. Of 30,000 women consulted in 79 departments, 80% were described as working by necessity. A JOCF, Enquête, by Dupeyrat and Lhotte (1937) also chronicled the harsh realities and lack of choice in women’s double work burden. See also, F. Clark The Position of Women in Contemporary France. (London, 1937), pp.190-191.
34 See also UFCS Congrès International (1933) Compte-rendu. It should be emphasised, given Vichy’s later policy initiatives, that the UFCS did not seek a legal ban on married women’s work. (See Chapter 4).
35 For discussion of the Code, see below.
toute nature.36 (my emphasis)

What is crucial however is that such femme au foyer arguments, emphasising the 'naturalness' of domestic labour and clearly-delineated separate spheres, were so strenuously amplified at this time. They interacted with fears about mass unemployment and the female invasion of traditionally male sectors37 to elevate a family-centred discourse across the political spectrum.38 While it was positively expressed on the Right, in natural/vocational terms, as outlined above, it was more subtly or negatively expressed on the Left. Women should have the "means to choose to work or to stay at home".39 Feminists were conscious of a hostile discourse and retrenchment even under the Popular Front. In a letter to Léon Blum, in 1937, the Conseil National des Femmes complained that: "la campagne contre le travail féminin ne

36 Semaine Sociale, Nancy 1927: La Femme dans la Société, reported in R. Coirard, L'Apports des Catholiques Sociaux à la Politique Familiale Francaise. (thèse en Droit, Aix, 1943), pp. 139-140. Both Encyclicals Casti Connubii and Quadrogesime Anno were widely publicised in France. cf. Talmy, op.cit., p.255. See also E. Baudouin, La Mère au Foyer, Ouvrière du Progrès Humain. (UFCS, 1938), M. Caunès, Des Mesures Juridiques Propres à Faciliter la Présence de la Mère au Foyer Ouvrier. (thèse en Droit, Paris, 1938).


38 Paradoxically, the Left received no credit for either specific measures or general agreement on the importance of the family.

semble pas s'être arrêtée, même dans les milieux gouvernementaux". Highlighting the maintenance of restrictive public service recruitment quotas against women, as well as the government's failure to take into account the specific situation of women workers in the private and commercial sectors, they demanded:

- que soient rapportées toutes mesures n'assurant pas aux deux sexes mêmes possibilités d'accès aux carrières administratives et mêmes possibilités d'avancement.
- que le principe "à travail égal, salaire égal" pour les deux sexes soit inscrit dorénavant dans tous les contrats collectifs.

With such trends in mind, femme au foyer campaigns were clearly decisive. They not only dictated the direction of welfarist policy but formed also the framework of resistance to change socially and politically. It is necessary therefore to view their impact multi-dimensionally, in other words, beyond their success or failure in encouraging women

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41 ibid. The rapid expansion of female labour in the tertiary sector was the critical backdrop to these developments. (cf. Vallentin, op.cit.) The Conseil National letter to Blum concluded:

Lorsque les elections législatives de 1936 ont assuré le succès du Front Populaire un grand espoir est né dans le coeur de toutes les Françaises...Elles étaient persuadées qu'un gouvernement soutenu par les couches profondes des masses populaires tiendrait à l'honneur de tirer les femmes de l'état d'infériorité dans lequel elles ont été maintenues jusqu'ici. Elles ont attendu patiemment des réformes, elles s'étonnent maintenant de ne voir apparaître aucun commencement de réalisation. Plus grand a été l'espoir, plus grand serait la déception.
to give up employment. Additionally detailed studies of different sectors where female labour was significant, will provide us with a more nuanced view of how seemingly conflicting ideologies could in reality be accommodated. For example research on the metallurgical industries shows that employers subscribed to conservative views about women's social role as did the State in its struggle against dénatalité. But at the same time private and state-sponsored schemes made increasing provision for working mothers with crèches, garderies, chambres d'allaitement and primes de naissance.

Another important area for investigation on the formulation of gender ideologies is that of the 'exodus' from the land in the interwar years. To what extent was it really a 'feminine phenomenon'? More pertinently perhaps, to what extent were tirades against women forsaking agriculture merely further confirmation of anxieties about

42 It is obviously impossible to quantify this impact, especially with regard to women's consciousness. Undoubtedly there was ambivalence, reticence or guilt. cf. Faure and Chevignard "Systeme de Valeurs et Références dans la Presse Féminine". La France et les Français, 1938-1939. (FNSP, 1977).


changes in traditional 'women's work'? Both rural/urban migration and the decline in the significance of the agricultural sector in the interwar years, however, gave weight to idealisations of la paysanne and the retour à la terre, two images which Vichy was explicitly to embrace and which provided ideological antidotes to the 'new' dénaturée woman and her urban lifestyle in the thirties.

Beyond the realm of work, two more straightforwardly political debates took place in this period which are both illustrative of the grip of a familialist discourse over individualist and feminist arguments.

**Suffrage and Family**

The first was a campaign initiated by the family movement in favour of a cherished aspiration, that of greater organic/unitary representation in French politics. Of course the idea of a vote familial was not new, but it was revived in the early 1930s at a time when the democratic system was being called into question and constitutional

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45 Sullerot, op.cit., p.421; Guelaud-Leridon, op.cit., p.25.

46 The trial of Violette Nozière and specifically her assertion, "je voulais vivre ma vie", was, as Sullerot notes, an occasion for indulging these anxieties. For a contemporary, outsider's account, see Janet Flanner, Paris Was Yesterday, 1925-1939. (Penguin, 1979).

47 A. Toulemon Le Suffrage Familial ou le Vote des Femmes. (Paris, 1934); Talmy, op.cit., pp.39-47.
changes invoked. At the same time the struggle for female suffrage appeared definitively blocked by Senate intransigency.48

An earlier round of the vote familial debate had established its patriarchal premise:

le père de la famille exerce le droit de suffrage pour lui-même et pour toutes les personnes légalement placées sous son autorité civile, c'est à dire pour sa femme légitime et pour ses enfants mineurs des deux sexes, légitimes ou naturels reconnus.
(Art.2. Proposition de Roulleaux-Dugage, 1916.)49

The later debate although confused by family movement divisions on the desirable form of a family vote, was marked by a new sense of urgency. In the wake of the 6 February 1934 riots an appeal was made to Doumerque supporting the vote familial:

Si l'idée de la patrie s'est obscurcie, c'est qu'on a imprudemment laissé s'obscurcir les notions qui en sont les composantes: patriarcat, patrimoine, et dont l'affaiblissement à toujours et à toutes les époques de l'histoire marque un affaiblissement parallèle de l'autorité de l'Etat.50

The founding of the Ligue pour le Vote Familial by Andre Touleman in the following year gave familialists a common programme and offered a remedy to 'diminishing patriotism'.


49 Quoted by Talmy, op.cit., p.40. Roulleaux-Dugage's proposal was more 'liberal' than that of L. Marin, who envisaged in an alternative proposition in 1914 that fathers should have extra representation for male children only!

50 Quoted in Talmy, p.214.
At its first conference, in February 1935 the Ligue called for:

au nom de tous les pères et mères de famille, voulant que l'Etat repose et soit organisé sur sa base naturelle...la représentation équitable de la famille dont l'intérêt et l'avenir se confondent avec la vie même du pays.\(^{51}\)

The UFCS, the Ligue Féminine de la Fédération Républicaine, the Conseil National des Femmes Françaises and the Union National pour le Vote des Femmes Françaises all supported the vote familial campaign as a useful modification of universal male suffrage. But support amongst natalists and familialists for female suffrage was by no means wholehearted or assured.\(^{52}\) In fact this issue was central to the vote familial floundering in a welter of competing parliamentary proposals. But although the vote familial was not achieved,\(^{53}\) this campaign did provide a vociferous family-centred critique of parliamentary democracy obscuring parallel, individualist demands for female suffrage.\(^{54}\)

\(^{51}\) ibid., 215.

\(^{52}\) A. Toulemon, op.cit.; Boverat, President of the ANCD, was adamantly opposed to female suffrage. Tomlinson, op.cit., p.165.

\(^{53}\) Talmy, op.cit., p.217.

\(^{54}\) The radical use of "family" by extreme Right organisations, like the Croix de Feu and the Jeunesses Patriotes, in their attacks on "la gueuse" is a significant but distinct trend. See R. Soucy, "Fascism: the Jeunesses Patriotes" J.C.H. vol. 16, 1981.
Women and Rights

The parliamentary debate on the civil capacity of the married woman involved another and more direct articulation of views on women and the family. On the one hand the legal status of a married woman under the Civil Code (a situation not significantly altered by the law of 13th July 1907)\(^{55}\) was recognised as conflicting with her apparent social emancipation. Proposals to allow a wife the right to choose a profession, to obtain a passport and a carte d'identité, to sign a contract, accept an inheritance or open a bank account were broadly agreed upon. According to René Renoult (Rapporteur de la Commission de Législation Civile et Criminelle) they were:

de nature à redonner légalement à la femme mariée une situation que n'avait pas voulu lui accorder le Code de 1804, mais qui est en parfait concordance avec les moeurs actuelles, avec la place qui, grâce aux qualités intellectuelles et morales de la femme, à son activité, au développement de sa personnalité, aux études qu'un très grand nombre d'entre elles ont faites, correspond à la situation qu'elle a conquise dans la société moderne.\(^{56}\)

On the other hand, however, there was resistance to the notion that "l'abandon de l'incapacité de la femme mariée...la restauration des droits impréscriptibles"\(^{57}\)


\(^{57}\) Renoult, ibid.
should involve disruption of the fundamental hierarchy of the family. Georges Pernot, Senator and President of the Fédération des Associations de Familles Nombreuses de France asserted:

que la tradition de la famille française, c'est le respect de l'autorité du père de famille...il faut maintenir....la tradition qui fait la force et la stabilité de nos foyers.58

In place of the defunct Art.213 of the Code which read "le mari doit protection à la femme et la femme obéissance à son mari" Pernot put forward an amendment stating "le mari, chef de famille...a le choix de la résidence du ménage...etc."59

This specific version of reform had been vigorously pursued by the UFCS since 1930.60 Referring to the Projet Renoult, the UFCS argued:

Il cherche la plus grande autonomie possible des personnes alors que nous cherchons une unité familiale plus forte avec le respect des droits de la personne humaine. Il supprime donc du Code tout idée de hiérarchie nécessaire, de coordination par l'autorité...Nous ne pouvons pas admettre l'indépendance totale de l'épouse, telle que la manifeste par exemple le libre choix d'une profession, choix pouvant même entraîné un domicile privé, alors que normalement l'épouse, la mère, ne devrait pas travailler

58 Sénat, Séance du 8 décembre 1936, p.1565. Pernot, a fervent Catholic, was also honorary President of Toulemon's Ligue pour le Vote Familial. He served later on the Haut Comité de la Population and was to become Ministre de la Famille in the last government of the Third Republic. See below and Chapter 2.

59 Sénat, 8 décembre 1936.

au dehors et que l’époux, le père, devrait pourvoir aux besoins du ménage.61

This Catholic feminist vision was inspired by the Encyclical Casti Connubii (1930) which had inveighed against female emancipation as detrimental to ‘the good of the family’. Other secular feminists argued that Pernot’s amendment negated the entire drift of Renoult’s proposals.62 A counter-proposal put forward by the Radical-Socialist Alexandre Bachelet attacked Pernot’s initiative:

M. Pernot était logique avec lui-même, avec ses idées...L’idée religieuse est fervente de la hiérarchie, gardienne de l’ordre et des principes moraux...Mais l’idée démocratique repose sur d’autres principes...elle tend vers l’égalité.63

In this instance anti-egalitarian and familialist arguments won out. Pernot argued that "dans toute la société qu’elle soit il faut un pouvoir de décision". Within the domestic sphere, juridical arbitration was impractical so decision making had to be left to the husband/father. Furthermore he argued, if fathers still had legal responsibility for their wife and children, they had to retain ultimate authority.

61 ibid., p.12.

62 Conseil National des Femmes. Letter to Blum (1937) (already cited) which maintained that Pernot’s proposal would:

sert de base au droit de véto que l’on veut permettre au mari d’opposer aux actes que la femme voudrait accomplir en vertu de sa capacité civile.

63 Sénat, Séance du 19 mars 1937. J.O. 20 mars 1937. Pernot acknowledged that his philosophy was not a secular one, even that St. Paul "...c’est bien le rédacteur inattendu de (son) amendement"!, p.252.
The law of 18th February 1938 was important in contemporary legal terms in that it removed the civil incapacity of the wife (Art.215). The husband could still oppose the wife having a separate profession. However she could have recourse to a tribunal if this opposition was not justified by either l'intérêt du ménage ou de la famille (Art.216) (my emphasis). Similarly the husband as chef de famille chose the common domicile but the wife could appeal against "une fixation abusive de la résidence du ménage" (Art.213). What the debate demonstrated was the dominance of a patriarchal and familial discourse and the rigidity of the ideological parameters within which changes in women’s status could be recognised.

The above account deals with some shifts and consolidations within a French familialist discourse but it is crucial to remember that it in turn received legitimation and ideological buttressing from the strengthening of pronatalism.

Crisis and Consensus

There is no doubt that the mid-thirties was a crucial period for pronatalism. Against a backdrop of fears and

hopes for social or political revolution, a curious 'apolitical' consensus about dénatalité emerged. In part this was due to anxieties aroused by the debate on the extension of military service (1935)\textsuperscript{65} and in part related to the fervent propagandising of the Alliance Nationale (Boverat produced sixty reports between 1931-1939 on depopulation).\textsuperscript{66}

But it was not confined to the nationalist Right. The Parti Communiste Francais, for example, adopted in this period a strongly patriotic line into which a new interest in natalist-familialism was injected. In July 1936, all seventy-two PCF deputies in the Chamber joined the "groupe de la famille et de la natalité". Maurice Thorez spoke about dénatalité at the 1936 Party Conference:

Si ce phénomène inquiétant persistait nous serions dans quelques décades un peuple affaible, diminué. C'est une question très angoissante qui doit retenir l'attention d'un parti comme le nôtre....qui a l'ambition de conduire notre peuple vers un avenir radieux de prospérité.\textsuperscript{67}

Ironically, of course, neither natalists nor the family movement were prepared to capitalise upon, or even acknowledge, such support from their traditional opponents.\textsuperscript{68}


\textsuperscript{66} Tomlinson, op.cit., p.175.

\textsuperscript{67} ibid., p.239. Tomlinson associates this change in PCF policy on dénatalité with policy changes within the USSR on women and the family.

\textsuperscript{68} The Left was opposed to specific proposals (the vote familial, restrictions on divorce...) as well as to the leadership of the family movement, predominantly Catholic and bourgeois. Talmy, op.cit., p.250.
The Popular Front arguably did more in material terms to help *familles nombreuses* than any previous government. But its policies, and especially the Matignon Accords, were consistently attacked as antithetical to national, familialist interests.\(^{69}\) Within the polarisation and intense partisanship of life under the Popular Front, familialist and natalist issues were significant ones. But it was, above all, on the Right that these issues were seized upon with renewed patriotic vigour.

Depopulation neurosis served as a mirror for projections of French decline, dramatically conflating several parallel facts and fantasies about the disintegration of the family, the 'new' role of women and the failure of national virility.\(^{70}\) The acute reinvigoration of the natalist debate was aided by the publication of census results and novel 'scientific' population forecasts.\(^{71}\) But it was the conjuncture of long-term, subterranean anxiety with

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\(^{69}\) For evidence of constant lobbying by the ANCD and antipathy to the Matignon Accords, AN: F60 606. Lefèvre-Dibon, President of the ANCD maintained in a letter to Blum (8 décembre 1936):

Malgré les augmentations du salaire la situation de la famille s'aggrave; elle est pire qu'au début de 1936. AN: F60 606; cf. Tomlinson, p.239.

\(^{70}\) These themes are conspicuous in contemporary tracts and brochures published by the Alliance Nationale.

\(^{71}\) D.V. Glass, op.cit., p.151 on increased "scientific" analysis and the role of Alfred Sauvy in ANCD propaganda. Talmy, op.cit., pp.220-221, also mentions the part played by Ludovic Naudeau's series of articles in *Illustration* (1930-1931) and his book *La France Se Regarde* (1931).
perceptions of immediate threat, instability and disorientation which gave this debate ideological impact. Internally, for example, natalist propaganda played on racist fears about France being undermined, which was especially significant in the context of class tensions and high foreign immigration in the thirties. (Immigration numbered 3 million or 6.1% of the total active population in 1936.) Externally, the increasing threat posed by Nazi militarism since the rearmament of the Rhineland, as well as a deepening sense of diplomatic isolation, was expressed in terms of national demographic vulnerability.

The actual situation which provided the material for natalist and familialist arguments should be kept in mind. Although the net rates of reproduction of France, Germany and England were not dissimilar, in 1938, 65 out of 90 French départements had an excess of deaths over births. Between 1890 and 1940, the population of France had risen from 38 million to 41 million, while that of Germany had risen from 49 million to 69 million. In France there was an overall


74 Boverat made this natalist-foreign policy connection in a letter to Blum, 3 avril 1936: Hitler n’aurait pas fait entrer ses troupes en Rhénanie si la natalité française était restée suffisante. AN: F60 606.
continuation of the decline in the birth rate, from 21.5 in 1920 to 14.8 per 1,000 in 1939. This decline was particularly marked in the 1930s, both because the 'hollow cohorts' of 1914-1918 caused a drop in the marriage rate and because the long-term birth-rate decline had been further accentuated by the economic crisis. From 1935 to 1945, deaths exceeded births in every year. Although there was a declining death rate, infant mortality rates remained high (66 per 1,000 in 1935-1937). Above all, emphasising a loss of national vitality, France had a large proportion of over-60s (14.7% in 1936).

Average family size was small - one or two children - with childless families occupying the third largest category. There was a decline in the number of families having four or more children. Typically small families were common to salaried workers, especially professional families, domestics and public servants. But interestingly in contrast to European trends, agricultural employers' families were smaller than those of industrial employers.75

The geographical distribution of population was also an important factor. In 1911, 55% of the French population lived in communes of 2,000 or less; in 1936, this proportion

had dropped to 48%. This rural-exodus seemed to confirm the pernicious features of an increasingly urbanised and individualistic society, the leaving behind of solid peasant values which were nostalgically regretted by 'ruralist' politicians and writers.\textsuperscript{76} The result of these trends was presumed to be the inevitable demise of France, whose population one pessimistic prognostication indicated, would drop to 29 million in 1985.\textsuperscript{77} The impetus given to pre-war defeatism by such analyses should not be overlooked.\textsuperscript{78} But it is, above all, essential to examine their immediate effect on social policy and Third Republic politics. The period 1938-1939 was crucial: it saw the definitive adoption by the State of a mainstream natalist-familialist programme.

\textbf{1938: The Agenda Defined}

The Senate intervention by Pernot on 8th February 1938 marked a decisive departure point in this process. It

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{76} cf. inter alia Jean Giraudoux \textit{Pleins Pouvoirs} (Paris, 1939); D. Halevy \textit{Visites au Paysans du Centre} (Paris, 1935).
\item \textsuperscript{77} A. Sauvy's calculations, quoted in Spengler, \textit{op.cit.}, p.293.
\item \textsuperscript{78} For how defeatism and consciousness of d\'natalit\'e pushed Reynaud to pursue a military strategy of "material", see Tomlinson, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.244-247 & p.280. Reynaud, who was a member of the ANCD since 1913, was to become Minister for Finances in the Daladier government which enacted the \textit{Code de la Famille}, 1939.
\end{itemize}
provided an eloquent synthesis of natalist-familialist proposals and perspectives, a choc psychologique, which resulted in what Talmy called "un sursaut de la conscience nationale devant le danger qui menace le pays".  

Maintaining that his speech on the future of the French family was above partisan quarrels, having "ni de près ni de loin et à aucun degré un caractère politique", Pernot delivered an impassioned plea for urgent government action in favour of familles nombreuses.  

He rejected both defeatist passivity at the demographic crisis and "la politique à la petite semaine". The vote familial, reform of the tax code, improved housing, priority in public service recruitment for familles nombreuses members and finally the creation of "un climat moral", were all familiar remedies in Pernot's schema. But he had two prime targets: one the halting of the rural exodus (which he believed had


80 Pernot's entire speech is reproduced in "Interpellation de M. Georges Pernot devant le Sénat, le 8 janvier 1938". Documents, Pour la Vie, mars 1957, pp.88-103. The Senate intervention was made possible with the cooperation of the President Camille Chautemps, himself a member of a family association. Talmy, op.cit., p.225.

81 Revealing a common social hygienist presumption, Pernot stated:

une politique de logement... c'est plus nécessaire aujourd'hui qu'hier parce qu'en raison des loisirs, il faudrait que les ouvriers revinissent d'avantage chez eux. On ne revient pas au taudis; on va au cabaret. Si vous voulez éviter les progrès nouveaux de l'alcoolisme qui, en effet, est une des causes de la dénatalité, il faut que vous fassiez une vigoureuse politique du logement...
been exacerbated by the introduction of the 40-hour week), the other the return of women to the home. He deemed the former more practical than a policy of actual retour à la terre and urged the creation of marriage loans as well as the formation of rural elites. Then drawing attention to the fact that 8 million women were working, he deplored women’s apparent "abandon du foyer familial", which, after the rural exodus, was the principal cause of depopulation. The payment of une allocation de la mère au foyer would not only help the family, it would reduce unemployment. He then drew attention to the disproportionate contribution made by large families to national defence and emphasised that those who assured the life of the country should at least be given justice. Concluding on a note of urgency and bipartisanship, Pernot pleaded:

Si le gouvernement veut entreprendre cette politique avec courage, il aura derrière lui l’unanimité du Parlement et l’unanimité du pays, car tous...nous avons la conviction profonde qu’on n’obtiendra le salut de la nation que par le retour aux antiques vertus du foyer. (my emphasis)

This speech was critical in several respects. It gave a forceful summary of the natalist-familialist programme, which graphically drew together all the interwar presumptions and prejudices about women’s proper social place. It also demonstrated the backward-looking tendencies of conservative

82 The theme of l’impôt du sang will be discussed in Chapter 5.

83 Pernot speech, Sénat, 8 janvier 1938.
thought, into which this programme fitted (the desire for "le retour aux antiques vertus") which were to reemerge so dramatically in 1940. Above all in the immediate context it provided the 'philosophical' framework for official sponsorship of natalist-familialist policies.

In fact 1938 saw major changes in the system of allocations familiales, reflecting the influence of both Adolphe Landry and Georges Pernot: the introduction of une allocation de la mère au foyer, the extension of the allocations familiales to the agricultural sector and professions liberales as well as a general coordination and increase (equivalent to 142%) in basic rates.84

Specifically, following Pernot's speech and constant lobbying by Boverat,85 through two changes of government (Chautemps/Blum), the challenge to produce a coherent policy was taken up.

Natalism and Familialism à la française: the Code de la Famille.

A commission was appointed in November 1938 which led the following February 1939 to the creation of the Haut Comité de


85 AN: F60 605.
The novelty and importance of this Comité was twofold: it worked within the Présidence du Conseil directly and it was composed of a small number of experts, including Landry, Pernot and Boverat. Urgency and consensus were evident. This group met for the first time in March 1939. In June 1939 it submitted its report, which was adopted without debate by the Daladier government in a decree law of 29 July 1939 "rélatif à la famille et à la natalité française", better known as the Code de la Famille.

This was a key event for natalist-familialism and the Code’s timing as well as the nature of its passing need to be underlined. Firstly, apart from Landry and Pernot’s political initiatives, there was a new and more vigorous propaganda campaign in 1938-1939 which hammered home to the public the analyses and proposals of the Alliance Nationale and the family movement. This campaign included a series of government-sponsored radio broadcasts ("Vers une politique de

86 J.O. 24 fevrier 1939.

87 The other members were P. Serre, M. Roujon and J. Doublet - the latter was Daladier’s secretary and later a leading figure at Vichy and in the ANCD.
natalité"\textsuperscript{88}), a new wave of \textit{Alliance Nationale} brochures, leaflets and lobbying, cinema propaganda (like the film \textit{Vitalité} or the Pathé Journal insert "le Danger de la Dépopulation S.O.S.") and the printing of two special postage stamps à surtaxe for the ANCD.\textsuperscript{89}

It is difficult to assess the extent to which the French public were positively receptive to natalist-familialist perspectives in this period or that there was "unanimity" on these issues, as Pernot had claimed. At the least, government adoption of such perspectives gave an important sense of national direction and coherent, apolitical management. Arguably the Code was a crucial attempt to assert a sense of purpose at a moment when France found herself drifting.

The crucial point seems that natalist-familialist measures (the specific policies of Boverat, Landry and Pernot) had

\textsuperscript{88} AN: F60 606. (Landry gave a radio broadcast in March 1939, "La RÉvolution Démographique").

\textsuperscript{89} This activity appears entirely to have been generated by the indefatigable Boverat. Some of his 1938 ANCD brochures were "La Conscription Anglaise Peut Seul Empêcher l'Allemagne d'Ecraser l'Europe", "Enrayer le Dénatalité est Parfaitment Possible", "Les Injustices et les Absurdités de Notre Régime Fiscal Précipitent la Dénatalité". AN: F60 607.

The campaign was continued throughout 1939 with the distribution, for example, of 230,000 copies of the brochure "Comment Nous Vaincrons la Dénatalité" - 100,000 of which were sent out via the Ministère de l'Education Nationale. cf. \textit{Revue de l'ANCD}, janvier 1939, no.317, p.15. For the postage stamps, "une excellent instrument de propagande", cf. \textit{Revue no.320}, avril 1939, p.26. The sale of these stamps raised 1,169,862 francs. \textit{Procès Verbal du Conseil d'Administration du 4 février 1941}, ANCD.
gained wider currency throughout the 1930s but had not been officially sponsored by government. They were adopted then by Decree-Law in 1938-1939. Why had they suddenly become imperative? Was it just the worsening demographic situation, post 1936, which gave a vociferous lobby sudden access to political authority? It seems that the answer lies in the conjuncture of events outlined earlier in the chapter plus the impetus given by the nightmare of both imminent war and domestic political crisis. Promoting the family and the nation/race was a panacea, "crisis-management" of a kind. But the elevation of the specific proposals of an essentially right-wing, traditionalist group at this time into government policy was only made possible by the abdication of political responsibility by the Centre (of which the Decree-Laws were a symptom) and the disunity and weakness of the Left (for whom the failure of the November 1936 general strike illustrated the inability of trade unions to defend the gains of the Popular Front). In other words, it was not that natalist-familialism was suddenly all-seductive but rather it arrived faute de mieux in an ideologically-prepared, politically-receptive arena. (Of course the natalist sympathies of both Reynaud and Daladier were also significant.) A speech by Daladier to the Radical Party conference in 1938 certainly went further than acknowledging a demographic situation or anticipating a simple introduction of new social policy:
C'est parce que nous pensons à la grandeur future de la France et au salut de la liberté du monde que nous trouvons la force de franchir les difficultés actuelles. Un pays désert ne peut être un pays libre. Il est une route ouverte à toutes les invasions, une proie ouverte à toutes les convoites. Nous suivrons donc une politique de la natalité qui permettra à la France de rester ce qu'elle fut dans le siècle passé. Des mesures vont être prises pour soutenir la famille nombreuse. Nous publiérons...un Code de Défense de la Famille Française.90

This curious mixture of defeatism, resolution and admonition was evident also in the Rapport, prefacing the actual text of the Code. The prosperity of a previously-populous France ("une France, forte, heureuse et libre") was contrasted with the current "voie miserable", of dénatalité where France "se ruine, peu à peu". The economic, social, even artistic and intellectual decline of France was highlighted but the central threat was spelled out, a glum recognition of Lebensraum logic:

Au nombre des incalculables conséquences de la faiblesse de la natalité française figure au premier plan d'aggravation du peril extérieur, à la menace que sur nos frontières métropolitaines et impériales font peser des peuples dont l'accroissement en nombre favorise l'ambition, comment peut répondre un pays dont la population travailleuse et combattante tend à se réduire?91

Against this threat, the familiar natalist-familialist remedy was invoked as prime political responsibility:

il nous est apparu que les pouvoirs publics failliraient à leur mission s'ils ne se préoccupaient pas de soutenir les familles nombreuses du point de vue matériel et de

90 Quoted by Talmy, op.cit., p.244.

91 Rapport, Décret Relatif à la Famille et à la Natalité Française, 29 juillet 1939. J.O. 30 juillet 1939, 6ff.
protéger la cellule familiale du point de vue moral.92

In terms of material support, the Code kept or extended the existing *allocations familiales* but set out the principle underlying the system: equal assistance to all families, of whatever class, but assistance that in the future favoured families of at least three children, rather than, as had been the case, assistance for each child from the first. (The natalist emphasis, -- assistance to large families -- was thus clearly given priority over any notion of wealth redistribution in favour of all poorer families).93 This was Republican 'equality' and natalist-familialism blended:

L'organisation financière, c'est à dire le taux des allocations et le financement des dépenses qui en résul tent, reposent sur la notion de l'égalité devant les nécessités économiques imposées à la vie familiale, et sur l'idée de solidarité professionnelle et nationale.94

The *allocations familiales* increased progressively with each child (from the second) and were calculated as a proportion of the average departmental monthly salary with a rural/urban differential built in.95 The principle of contribution and

92 ibid.

93 This point required emphasis. The fundamentally conservative values of French natalist thinking was clear: large families should be encouraged, even where financial assistance was not needed. (A specific vision of "equality"). This did not stem from a eugenicist fear of encouragement of working-class (racially 'inferior') repopulation, in my view, but from a class hostility to income redistribution.

94 Rapport, Decret....p.6, col.3.

95 ibid., p.7.
payment through the caisses de compensation was retained but the State guaranteed a "compensation nationale" where there might otherwise be a shortfall i.e. for certain categories of independent workers and for agriculture. Natalist equity was reiterated:

Les enfants constituent la part la plus importante du patrimoine national; il est donc juste que chaque individu participe aux frais de leur entretien.96

The Code’s material support for familles nombreuses focussed on three measures: allocation de la mère au foyer, prêt au jeune mariage and contrat à salaire différé. The first, initiated by the decree of 12 November 1938, remained a partial compensation for the loss of a second income and was still applicable only in urban areas, where the 'threat' of women’s work was deemed greatest. The other two measures demonstrated the ruralist preference of natalist thinking, deriving from "intérêt profond que nous attachons au maintien du traditionnel équilibre de la France".97

Intended as a brake against migration from countryside to towns, this initiative was to dissuade those who would "quitter les durs labours des champs, moins rémunérés, pour aller jouer des agréments supposés de la ville..."98

96 ibid., p.7, col.1. The State undertook to spend 1,450 million francs (p.8) to finance the Code - this revenue raised principally by taxation but, reflecting also the priorities of the Code, increased inheritance tax for childless celibates over 30, decreased interest payment for families of three children or more, p.8.

97 ibid., p.7, col.3.

98 ibid.
peasant marriage loan, designed to favour le retour à la terre et (de) l’accroissement de la famille, provided loans for the purchase of livestock/equipment; the capital sum, amounting to a maximum of 20,000 francs, had to be repaid within ten years but was reduced by each birth and could be cancelled in toto after the fifth child. The contrat à salaire différé was a complicated attempt to apply le Play’s principles and breach the Napoleonic writ of equal inheritance which was deemed to have led to farming couples deliberately limiting their family size.

These measures under Vichy will be discussed again in Chapter 6. While it is impossible to assess with precision the reality of material incentives in encouraging population growth or in halting rural depopulation, it is worth emphasising the adoption of such a programme (even if its specific initiatives were not original) by Daladier’s government and the vision of Republican France which it promoted.

The Code reproduced a familiar model too of positive/negative (material/moral) assistance to the family. The ideological priorities of the Code are even clearer in its moral, regulatory section. The government believed "le goût de la famille....ne peut naître et croître pour une grande part que dans une atmosphère moral propice". The creation of a proper atmosphere involved disparate measures:

99 ibid.
an intensified campaign against abortion, greater protection for maternity, changes in the adoption law, a campaign against pornography and alcoholism and finally the introduction of demographic instruction. In all these measures the preoccupations of interwar natalist-familialism were paramount, looking to "l'aggravation de la repression des vices et la lutte contre les fléaux sociaux qui constituent autant de danger pour la race". Both in its proposals as well as in its acknowledged omissions, on immigration and housing, the "mosaïque de mesures très diverses" revealed a coherent ideological framework.

While most later commentators have emphasised its (neutral) social welfarist nature, others, like Talmy have been unequivocal on its significance:

Ces mesures ont un caractère si soudain et prennent une telle ampleur, qu'elles font figure de révolution. C'était bien d'une révolution qu'il s'agissait en l'occurrence: après cent cinquante années d'individualisme, la famille était reconnue comme entité naturelle et juridique et fondement d'un ordre nouveau.

Although there was some scepticism and opposition on the Left, contemporaries on the whole welcomed the code, with

100 ibid.


102 Talmy, op.cit., p.218. cf.other treatments: Glass, op.cit.; Camp, op.cit.

103 L'Humanité (4/8/39) complains about the insufficiency of the Code's measures not their objectives: - il n'apporte pas le plan constructif nécessaire pour remédier à l'angoissante situation démographique de notre pays.
different interest groups claiming credit for various sections or urging further specific reforms.\textsuperscript{104}

The main concern of its promoters was not to preach the "revolutionary" significance of the measures, so much as to press for their implementation. The Code's success in creating "une armature solide où la famille peut s'épanouir" depended ultimately not just on repression or incentives but on "le libre concours des nombreuses bonnes volontés sur le sol national".\textsuperscript{105} Circumstances were hardly propitious. The long-dreaded declaration of war and military mobilisation in September 1939 dramatically overshadowed social policy initiatives. The Code was not immediately shelved. By a series of décrets and arrêtés and administrative circulars,\textsuperscript{106} various measures were implemented in the autumn of 1939-spring 1940. The Alliance Nationale kept up its propaganda support for the legislation - with a special issue of its Revue in August 1939 and with brochures like those sent to mayors in February 1940, "Aidez à appliquer le Code

\textsuperscript{104} G. Wright cites agrarian support from both the Right-wing UNSA and the Communists, for example, Rural Revolution in France, p.74.

\textsuperscript{105} Rapport..., p.8. The ambivalence of natalists and family movement militants about the State's role (control v responsibility) will be dealt with below but it clearly had its roots in the Third Republic.

\textsuperscript{106} Watson, op.cit., p.275. AN F60 605, some texts and projects F60 498.
de la Famille". Nonetheless, despite this continuity of activity, the agenda of natalist-familialism was dramatically affected by the events of 1939-1940 and the transformation of the socio-political situation in France. It is crucial to examine this period in some detail.

The following section is concerned therefore with several aspects of this transformation: the specificity of women’s experience of the drôle de guerre, war and its aftermath, as well as the complex relationship and politicisation of private and public spheres which accompanied these events.

Women and War: 1939

The most obvious immediate impact of war was the mobilisation of five million men between the ages of twenty and forty-nine, of whom 2.7 million were called up into the army. The corollary of this military mobilisation was an economic mobilisation where armaments production would be stepped up and male labour replaced:

Pour combler les déficits des usines de guerres, il devra d’ici peu de temps être fait un large appel à la main-d’oeuvre féminine, comme cela s’est produit pendant la

107 Revue de l’ANCD aout 1939, no.324 - No. spécial consacré au décret-loi du 29 juillet 1939...(30,000 ex.) "Aidez à appliquer le Code de la Famille" (55,000 ex.) AN: F60 606. Details of ANCD in Procès-Verbaux, 1940-1941.

In fact, employers in the metallurgical industries had been conscious for some time of the necessity of looking to women in greater numbers to sustain and increase war-time production. The Union des Industries Métallurgiques et Minières (UIMM) had raised the question of female substitution "en cas de conflit" in circulars throughout June, July and August. Concerned with establishing the availability of extra female labour, as well as the new jobs that might be undertaken additional to those already being performed by women in the metals industry, the UIMM noted "L'emploi de cette main-d'oeuvre féminine va soulever de nombreux problèmes: sélection, formation professionnelle, logement, hygiène".

For employers, as well as for the government, the requirements of wartime production were paramount. The 'problems' associated with women's work were technical and logistical. Natalist-familialist considerations - the hostility to le travail féminin, the campaigns for better services and protection for working mothers - were secondary, if not irrelevant. France had to prepare herself in terms of men and material to meet the enemy, and women were the

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looked-to 'reserve army', to be mobilised at will.\textsuperscript{111} The government at first issued "recommendations" on the employment of women - suggesting priorité d'embauchage for the wives of mobilised soldiers and the unemployed.\textsuperscript{112} The Ministère du Travail set up advanced training centres, organised a register of available labour and envisaged both a compulsory census and requisitioning of individual women workers.\textsuperscript{113} Explicitly citing the example of Albert Thomas in 1916, compulsory quotas were then introduced, prefaced by the familiar argument about this process of substitution:

l'utilisation de la main-d'oeuvre féminine est un des moyens de resoudre le problème des effectifs industriels en temps de guerre...(elle) constitue une ressource abondante qui offre l'avantage de se trouver déjà sur le territoire national. Ses qualités lui permettant de s'adapter rapidement à des travaux nouveaux.\textsuperscript{114}

The government lamented the slowness of the substitution

\textsuperscript{111} The supposed mobilisation of German women was noted in an article on "Travail des Femmes en Allemagne": des femmes ont été engagées dans des industries qui jusqu'à ici n'employaient que des hommes...on commence d'ailleurs à faire appel même aux femmes ayant des enfants, notamment dans l'industrie des métaux. AN: Fonds 39 AS 988; \textit{La Journée Industrielle}, 4/5/39.

\textsuperscript{112} Lettre au Président de la Confédération Générale du Patronat Français, reported in \textit{L'Usine}, 18/1/40. (\textit{Le Populaire}, 27/1/40; \textit{Le Peuple}, 25/1/40) AN: Fonds 39 AS 988.

\textsuperscript{113} \textit{Décret-loi du 28 février 1940} (J.O. du 1 mars 1940) relative à la main-d'oeuvre féminine...

\textsuperscript{114} \textit{Circulaire du 29 mars 1940} relative aux instructions sur l'emploi obligatoire de la main-d'oeuvre féminine dans les industries de guerre. (J.O. du 30 mars 1940).
process arising from the difficulty of modifying equipment/machinery and the lack of qualified specialists. Nonetheless Pomaret noted that in February 1940, 570,000 women were employed in the war industries and that efforts were being made to increase this number.\textsuperscript{115} The UIMM too monitored this increase in female employment. A survey of its members assessed that the prewar level of 10-12\% female labour in the metal industries had risen sharply to 20\%, this estimate varying according to sector. (For example, aircraft construction varied at different factories from 5 to 21\%).\textsuperscript{116}

Using women in skilled work did not pose a special problem:

Dans l'ensemble les efforts fait tout d'abord ont tendu à employer des femmes comme manoeuvres ou manoeuvres spécialisées. Mais plusieurs expériences ont déjà été faites pour adapter la main-d'œuvre féminine à des emplois non seulement de manoeuvres ou de manoeuvres spécialisées mais de réglues et même à des fonctions d'encadrement.\textsuperscript{117}

The special nature of female labour was present in employers' minds but its advantages were explicitly acknowledged: "la main-d'œuvre féminine donne entière satisfaction aux directions qui l'utilisent au tenant compte de ses aptitudes particulières". One company reported: "on peut affirmer

\textsuperscript{115} Communiqué du Ministre du Travail, (8/4/40), F60 628.

\textsuperscript{116} Emploi et Conditions d'Emploi des Femmes dans les Usines de Metaux, 7 avril 1940, p.2. UIMM 69 54 13 ED/MM. Some regions like the Eure (37\%) had especially high proportions.

\textsuperscript{117} ibid., p.6.
que la production de la main-d'oeuvre féminine est très supérieure à celle de la main-d'oeuvre masculine" 118

The requirements of a wartime economy threw into sharp relief, yet again, the tensions and vulnerabilities of women's position, as well as the interrelatedness of private and public spheres. Subject of a hostile discourse throughout the thirties, women's work outside the home, for example, was now encouraged. War meant mobilising female labour. The conversion or silence of previous opponents of travail féminin did not go unnoticed by contemporary feminists. The Tribune des Femmes Socialistes referring specifically to the ANCD noted this pragmatic reversal:

Ceux qui naguère encore vitupéraient la femme qui travaille, l'accusant de désérer foyer et d'arracher à l'homme la pain de la bouche, paraissent aujourd'hui sans voix et oublient, fort heureusement, de déclarer 'contraire à l'intérêt national' la relève nécessaire des hommes par les femmes jusqu'à dans les travaux les plus malsains et les plus rudes.119

But this general paradox and the reality of women's experience of the drôle de guerre itself, have been ignored by historians.120 Images of female bourgeois philanthropy and ennui have found their way into memoirs: rose-planting

118 ibid., pp.7-8.
119 Le Populaire, 17 avril 1940.
120 See, for example, H. Michel, La Drôle de Guerre, (Paris, 1971); A. Rossi-Landi, La Drôle de Guerre (Colin/FNSP, 1971).
on the Maginot Line or glamorous distraction at the Ritz.\textsuperscript{121}

But for the majority of women 1939-1940 brought a crushing reweighting of the 'double burden', which has gone undocumented. Mobilisation meant not only the anxiety of separation from husbands or fathers and the dreadful spectre of war, it often meant the absence of a proper income and the assumption of de facto chef de famille responsibilities. With the military allowance at 16 francs per day, for a wife and two children,\textsuperscript{122} many women were dependent on employment openings in the\textit{usines de guerre} to balance the family budget. For others it was a relief from prewar unemployment.\textsuperscript{123} Although wages varied, the average working week in these factories was at least 60 hours (6 days of 10 hours).\textsuperscript{124} In the early stages the government considered part-time work as a just regulation of women's employment and domestic labour responsibilities. Pomaret's recommendations to employers suggested:

\textsuperscript{121} The rose-planting is remembered by Pierre Mendès-France in Ophuls' film \textit{Le Chagrin et la Pitié} (script Moreau, 1980), p.33. A. Horne, \textit{(To Lose a Battle}, p.235) the spring of 1940 is recalled:

The Ritz as usual was crowded with lovely ladies wearing simple dresses or the smart uniforms of the Union des Femmes de France Service.

\textsuperscript{122} A. Horne, ibid., p.137.

\textsuperscript{123} \textit{L'Usine}, 27 juillet 1939, reported unemployment in the metals industry at 20,000, of whom 536 were 'femmes manoeuvres spécialisées'.

\textsuperscript{124} \textit{Emploi et Conditions d'Emploi des Femmes}, Annexe à la note du 7 avril 1940, p.2.
Le demi-temps entendu à six heures par jour peut permettre, en bien des cas, aux femmes de gagner un salaire suffisant pour alimenter le foyer familial en leur laissant le temps indispensable pour s'occuper du ménage et des soins de leur enfants.  

The government were not unaware of the hardship of long shifts and inadequate rest. Natalist thinking too suggested caution --a 48-hour week -- in the hierarchy of national endeavour:

Si les besoins de la production et de la Défense Nationale exigent un effort exceptionnel de toutes les classes de la population, il n’en reste moins nécessaire dans l’intérêt supérieur de la race française que les femmes ne soient pas maintenues au travail au delà de la durée qu’elles ne pourraient dépasser sans danger.

Confronted with the possibility of attack or invasion however, the abstract demands of the race or the dangers to women’s health were soon lost sight of; the government’s ambivalence remained:

....les femmes et les enfants supportent difficilement un régime de travail comportant une durée hebdominaire de 60 heures...la sous commission....a emis le voeu que la durée du travail des femmes et des enfants soit limitée en principe à 50 heures par semaine.... Toutefois, il est indispensable que les mesures seront prises, n'aient en aucune façon comme conséquence un ralentissement de la production. C’est pourquoi la diminution éventuelle de la durée du travail des femmes et des enfants doit être subordonnée avec possibilités de recrutement d’un personnel de remplacement pour chaque région considérée.

125 Pomerat recommendations.
126 ibid.
127 Circulaire du Ministre du Travail aux Inspecteurs Divisionnaires du Travail et de la Main-d’Oeuvre relative à la reduction de la limitation de la durée du travail des femmes et des enfants.
Certainly the employers’ latitude of action was immense. They could plead the difficulty of recruitment or organisation to avoid implementing shorter shifts. Given both the overriding imperative of war production and the relative impotence of the trade-union movement after 1938, little protection existed for workers.128 For this analysis it is significant too that natalist-familialist arguments had little impact.

This does not mean, of course, that the familiar anxieties and presumptions about population and family had retreated or disappeared elsewhere in public discourse. In fact the declaration of war was not just an apparent confirmation of the dire prognostications of natalists like Boverat (...that dénatalité would lead to war...)129, it actually brought closer the possibility of renewed slaughter, mass casualties and destruction. The abiding nightmare of 1914-1918 had been made even more vivid by the image of ‘modern’ war in Spain and, more recently, in Poland. No wonder that the public appreciated Daladier’s ‘non-belliciste’ prosecution of the war, his boast that "nous sommes avaries du sang français".130 The illusion of a war without fighting

129 Boverat cf. above.
130 In December Daladier compared the French situation of 1939 favourably with that of 1914, because France had lost 1,600 men instead of 415,000 for the corresponding period of hostilities. cf. A. Werth, The Twilight of France. (London, 1942), p.348.
remained a seductive one. The drôle de guerre meant adapting to the daily disruption and insecurity of war without war itself. Of course there was the gradual recreation of the "Front" and its ambivalent relationship to civilian society, marked by the familiar acrimony over "affectés spéciaux" and the sacrifices of the peasantry. And there was the practical reminder of war, firstly with evacuations, gas-masks and sirens, then in days without meat, alcohol or *patisserie*, as well as the more pervasive presence of government propaganda and press and postal censorship. However, as long as there was no 'real' war, people struggled to maintain as normal and comfortable an existence as possible.\textsuperscript{131} In this process home, family and foyer provided a real and symbolic apolitical continuity, a refuge from external threat.\textsuperscript{132}

**Exode and Defeat**

The events of May-June 1940 changed everything. Despite heavily-censored press coverage, it was obvious that at last

\textsuperscript{131} On these aspects of the drôle de guerre, see H. Amouroux, *Grand Histoire des Français sous l'Occupation* vol.1; H. Michel, op.cit.

\textsuperscript{132} The obvious exceptions to this process were families for whom war was actually 'brought home' within France i.e. PCF militants, victims of an 'internal war' after the signing of the Nazi-Soviet Pact, August 1939, and foreign refugees who were excluded from claiming France as home. H. Amouroux, op.cit.; and the vivid account by A. Koestler, *Scum of the Earth*. 
war had begun with the invasion of Holland, Belgium and Luxembourg on May 10th. Nothing however could have prepared the French for the devastating speed of the German advance into France and the total collapse of their armies. Suddenly the Front was by-passed or evaporated, Blitzkrieg reached into civilian society and destroyed the illusion of private refuge from war. Initial evacuations of war zones began in an orderly way but the capitulation of Belgium and the flood of refugees sweeping south transformed the situation.

General Weygand, 20 kilometres from Béthune observed:

les routes étaient déjà encombrées de refugiés belges et français trainant avec eux tout ce qu’ils avaient pu retirer à la hâte de leurs maisons et charger sur des véhicules aux mode de traction les plus divers, emmenant pêle-mêle femmes, enfants, et bestiaux. Plus nous avancions vers l’est, plus le flot des refugiés devenait compact, plus il était mélangé de soldats belges tournant le dos au front, plus nous fut offert ce spectacle de désordre et de panique qui me rappelait fâcheusement nos premiers revers de 1914.\(^{133}\)

Perhaps these refugees were quicker than Weygand to perceive that war in 1940 was not a simple repeat of 1914. Certainly the imperative of flight and escape took over as millions of people in the north and east packed-up and left home in panic. Contemporary accounts and photographs convey graphically the terror of a prolonged collective nightmare in those hot days and weeks of a summer like no other:

...cratères creusés dans les rues par les bombes, maisons effondrées ou qui flambent, câbles électriques coupés encombrant la chaussée, une foule qui tente de fuir ces


Unsure of their destination, unprepared for this abrupt exodus, millions of people nonetheless set out on foot, carts, on bicycle or in cars trekking to get behind an imagined new Front to avoid the reality of the conquest of their homes and towns.135 Given estimates of 8-10 million refugees on the roads in May-June 1940 it is obvious that the phenomenon of the exode was an extraordinarily powerful one. Demoralisation, confusion and fear touched those who watched and 'welcomed' this "human tidal wave", as well as its exhausted participants.

The experience of the exode is an integral part of the dramatic transformation of the French political situation in the summer of 1940 and one in which gender has again been ignored. On the one hand there is an image of inappropriate or deviant female behaviour that is threaded through contemporary accounts of this nightmarish migration: women taking advantage of their sexuality:

134 ibid., p.114.
135 ibid.
des femmes se vendaient derrière les haies pour 5 l. d'essence... Beaucoup de femmes dans les voitures militaires, beaucoup d'uniformes dans les voitures civiles.136

And on the other hand, there is a feminine quality found in interpretations of the collective hysteria and panic of the Exode. Horne, referring to "spy-mania" notes, for example:

Like the tricoteuses of the Revolution and the harpies thrown up by the Commune, women seem to have led the mob...."137

But there is a far greater significance to be taken from this period of the French collapse. As Kedward remarks:

This mass exodus resembled a migration of people unknown in Europe since the Dark Ages and it was dominantly an experience of women, old people and children.138

And this experience was of critical importance. Women were not only extraordinarily visible and conspicuous, they were uniquely affected. For millions of refugees cast out from their homes, exhausted and confused, the war had meant abandonment not only of homes and possessions but of stability and order. These people both directly and painfully experienced defeat, as well as providing a collective symbol of rout and demoralisation for the rest of the population:

136 ibid., p.368.

137 A. Horne, op.cit., p.514. Irrationality of all sorts was undoubtedly present during the Exode - heightened anti-semitism was one of its more obvious manifestations - but it remains to be proved that women were any more susceptible than men.

Le lamentable calvaire des femmes, des veillards, des enfants... dans la quête vaine d'un refuge, illustre la tragique impréparation matérielle et morale de la France à la guerre ou plutôt l'impréparation à la guerre moderne.  

No wonder that Pétain’s sudden assumption of supreme political authority struck a profound response. Without considering the political, military or diplomatic consequences, these refugees wanted an end to confusion and displacement. Pétain offered not simply a recognition of their suffering but a reassuring simplicity and certitude that the ordeal was in fact over:

En ces heures dououreuses, je pense aux malheureux refugiés qui, dans un dénuement extrême, sillonnent nos routes. Je leur exprime ma compassion et ma sollicitude. C’est le coeur serré que je vous dis aujourd’hui qu’il faut cesser le combat.

The priority was to stop the fighting and to return home. As Kedward points out, this process and Pétain’s appropriation of an apolitical consensus was not as naive as was made to appear later. Local authorities dealing with the refugee crisis could work for a "local victory". Certainly the desire to return home was an overwhelming and potent one. In the face of a terrifyingly-rapid military collapse and exodus, this desire was not simply a longing to return to material security, one’s own house and possessions, although

140 Pétain, Appel du 17 juin 1940.
of course it incorporated this. Crucially it was also, in
the light of the total disintegration of all formal and
familiar political structures, in the shattering of all
forms of civil authority, a desire to retreat into private
space, "de rentrer chez soi".142 In the midst of this
collective trauma home became a longed-for refuge from the
nightmare of war, flight, suffering and confusion. Because
of this experience the familial arena was uniquely sanctified
and familial relationships specially focussed upon. (The
latter was hardly surprising given the uncertainty
surrounding demobilisation and the fate of P.O.W.s, as well
as the reuniting of children and relatives lost or separated
during May and June.143 A Vichy official was later to
comment wistfully:

Jamais la puissance des liens familiaux n’a mieux pris
conscience d’elle-même. Jamais les humbles joies
familiales n’ont été ressenties si intensément que dans
cette adversité.144

Undoubtedly this process had its political dimension,
without there being any predetermined relationship. As

Gérard Miller observed:

142 Kedward, Resistance in Vichy France, p15.

143 P.O.W.s numbered approximately 1,850,000 (Michel,
   op.cit., p.194). For an indication of the whereabouts and
   numbers of refugees still stranded in the southern zone in
   August 1940, see Vidalenc, op.cit., p.425, who gives two and
   a half million as a "nette sous-estimation".

   (CGF Brochure, OPG, s.d.)
L’exode n’est pas l’effet simple, mécanique de la débâcle. Et le gouvernement de Vichy n’est pas ce voleur furtif qui profite de l’inattention générale pour se faufiler au pouvoir. Il y a de débâcle à exode une conséquence moins nécessaire qu’on ne croit. Il y a entre exode et pétainisme un rapport plus intime qu’il ne semble... En juin 1940, c’est le discours pétainiste qui emporte sur les autres. Ce sont les agents de ce discours qui réussissent en France à mettre leur marque sur l’exode, à le faire signifier, à s’en approprier le sens.145

The extraordinarily paternalist orientation of this discourse was obvious from the outset. The New Order was articulated from within this experience of defeat and exode. In the immediate aftermath of defeat, Pétain declared:

L’armistice est conclu, le combat a pris fin. En ce jour de deuil national ma pensée va à tous les morts, à tous ceux que la guerre a meurris dans leur chair et dans leurs affections. Leur sacrifice a maintenu haut et pur le drapeau de la France...
C’est vers l’avenir que désormais nous devons tourner nos efforts. Un ordre nouveau commence. Vous serez bientôt rendus à vos foyers. Certains auront à le reconstruire. Vous avez souffert. Vous souffrirez encore. Beaucoup d’entre vous ne retrouveront pas leur métier ou leur maison. Votre vie sera dure. Ce n’est pas moi qui vous bornerai par des paroles trompeuses. Je hais les mensonges qui vous ont fait tant de mal. La terre, elle, ne ment pas. Elle demeure votre recours. Elle est la patrie elle-même. Un champ qui tombe en friche, c’est une portion de la France qui meurt. Une jachère de nouveau emblavée, c’est une portion de la France qui renait. N’espérez pas trop de l’État qui ne peut donner que ce qu’il reçoit. Comptez pour le présent sur vous-mêmes et pour l’avenir sur les enfants que vous aurez élevés dans le sentiment du devoir.146

This speech was not only announcing the fact of the Armistice, nor was it just a characteristically pessimistic

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and pithy outline of Pétain's moralising, ruralist faith. Linked into an acknowledgement of the personal and family dimensions of national suffering was an invitation to collective repentence and penance:

Nous avons à restaurer la France. Montrez-là au monde qui l'observe à l'adversaire qui l'occupe dans tout son calme, tout son labeur et toute sa dignité. Notre défaite est venue de nos relâchements. L'esprit de jouissance détruit ce que l'esprit de sacrifice a édifié. C'est à un redressement intellectuel et moral que, d'abord, je vous confie.147

The ritualised suicide of the Third Republic and the voting of full powers to Pétain in Vichy on July 10th confirmed too the structural paternalism of the new régime within which the proposed rénovation might be organised. The relationship between Pétain's unexpected accession to autocratic power and the "mood of national self-recrimination" which he articulated was a complex one. Certainly the latter provided the backdrop for Vichy's political programme and the generating of a moral crusade against the institutions and mores of the "ancien régime". But both were related to older tensions and conflicts which burst forth in the peculiarly-traumatic circumstances of Defeat and Occupation. There was a real desire for change and revenge amongst certain groups and individuals, people excited by the potential offered by this anti-democratic and

147 ibid.
untrammelled regime. But this desire for change from above also interacted with the post-Defeat and Exode "je m'en foutisme" -- the apparent apoliticisme and retreat of the population back into 'ordinary' life which had created a political space for a different but curiously-familiar paternalist programme. The following section deals with this programme. Specifically it discusses Vichy’s rediscovery and reworking of the natalist-familialist discourse and its political use of the gender-dynamic which this discourse clearly held within it.

**Travail, Famille, Patrie**

In an important speech of July 11th 1940, Pétain outlined the government’s intentions for the administration, as well as the new state’s political philosophy. Focussing on work, "la ressource suprême de la patrie", he rejected the detrimental excesses of both capitalism and socialism and promised an authoritarian and hierarchical programme which would restore French prosperity. The future was clear:

Votre travail sera défendu. Votre famille aura le respect et la protection de la nation. La France rajeunie veut que l’enfant remplisse vos coeurs de l’espoir qui vivifie et non plus de la crainte qui dessèche. Elle vous rendra, pour son éducation et son avenir, la confiance que

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L'ancien régime n'a connu, en effet, que l'individu en face de l'État-Providence: l'ordre nouveau est fondé sur le groupement naturel: famille, commune et corporation et plus ces groupements sont forts plus l'État l'est aussi.152

This social philosophy, clearly revealing the influence of

150 Pétain, Actes et Ecrits, p.457. Pétain had seemingly taken the phrase "les antiques vertus qui font les peuples forts" directly from Georges Pernot's 1938 Senate speech. See above.

151 The formula is usually attributed to R. Alibert.

FAMILLE

LES FAMILLES FRANÇAISES RESTENT LES DÉPOSITAIRES D'UN LONG PASSÉ D'HONNEUR
new familialism:

Construire un état sur la Famille pour un avenir durable, c’est supposer dans la Famille une force stable, une valeur d’expansion, un équilibre une richesse éducative, une vertu sociale, une aptitude à comprendre et à satisfaire les nécessités nationales, une sécurité morale et un élan spirituel qui en font véritablement un élément unique et indispensable de rénovation.\textsuperscript{155}

In this context, enthusiasts like William Garcin, a family association militant, argued that Vichy’s new constitution should give explicit recognition to the family. In “La Révolution sociale par la Famille”, he proposed a 9-point definition which he had already had adopted by the Légion Française des Combattants, acknowledging that:

La famille fondée sur le mariage est la base essentielle de l’Etat Français, lequel s’engage à la protéger dans son existence, sa durée, ses intérêts moraux et matériels.\textsuperscript{156}

This idea of constitutional sanctification of the family was based both on the earlier work of Professor Rouast and on the model of the Irish Free State’s 1937 Constitution, so warmly approved of by Garcin. It was paralleled by renewed demands for familial representation within the political system, either through the family association or through the institution of the vote familial.\textsuperscript{157}

\begin{itemize}
\item[155] ibid., p.5.
\item[156] W. Garcin, Révolution Sociale Par la Famille. Fédération des Associations de Famille (Service Techniques de la Propagande, Vichy, 1943), pp.18-21.
\item[157] See, for example, Délibérations du Centre National de Coordination et d’Action et Mouvements Familiaux de Zone Occupée, AN: AG II 497 cc79B. Also, W. Garcin ‘Note sur la Famille dans le Droit Public’ (30 avril 1941), AN II 605 CM 19.
\end{itemize}
Le Play, gave the family a crucial public and socio-political dimension. It was not just the key area in which individual human fulfilment might be realised, although this plays an important part in later pro-family propaganda. Even more significant was Vichy’s espousal of the family as the prime unit of social organisation. The stable and fecund French family underpinned all social order; its advocacy and maintenance therefore formed a fundamental element of social policy:

le droit des familles est en effet antérieur et supérieur à celui des individus. La famille est la cellule essentielle; elle est l’assise même de l’édifice sociale; c’est sur elle qu’il faut bâtir, s’il fléchit, tout est perdu; tant qu’elle tient, tout peut être sauvé.153

Thus legitimated, the family became a uniquely-privileged part of Pétainist discourse.

Philippe Renaudin, Commissaire Général à la Famille, later referred to the adoption of ‘family’ as being not merely a miraculous consequence of the defeat which provided "à un pays mourant une nouvelle ligne de vie", but noted:

Dès avant la guerre plus ou moins consciemment un remords et une inquiétude nationale avaient amené la France à se pencher sur la famille, à regarder avec angoisse le déclin des forces familiales.154

While there was, therefore, a recognised line of continuity, there was also an official adoption of a quite exceptional


154 Philippe Renaudin, La Famille dans la Nation (Conférence du 16 juin 1943 à la Sorbonne) (CGF/OPG, 1943), p.4. On Renaudin, see Chapter 2.
The promotion of family was not, of course, related solely to issues of political and social stability. Intimately connected to this was a view of the family as the exclusive unit within which population regeneration would be achieved, a view already promoted during the Third Republic, as has been discussed above. But natalism was given a fresh impetus and urgency in 1940. War had brought death (100,000 casualties in the six week débâcle) as well as an open-ended disruption of family life in the case of millions of refugees and P.O.W.s. There was initially a direct natalist assessment of defeat to be asserted. As Landry, Vice-President of the still-active ANCD argued:

la chute de la natalité française a contribué plus que toute autre chose à la catastrophe nationale.\textsuperscript{158}

This viewpoint, although not unexpected from the ANCD, was given its ultimate sanction in Pétain’s speech of 20 June 1940:

Le \textsc{ler mai 1917} nous avions encore 3,280,000 hommes aux armées, malgré trois ans de combat meurtrier. À la vieille de la bataille actuelle, nous en avions 500,000 de moins. En mai 1918, nous avions 85 divisions britaniques; en mai 1940, il n’y en avait que 10. En 1918, nous avions avec nous les 58 divisions italiennes et les 42 divisions américaines.

L’infériorité de notre matériel a été plus grande encore que celle de nos effectifs. L’aviation française a livré à un contre six ses combats.

Moins forts qu’il y a vingt-deux ans, nous avions aussi moins d’amis. Trop peu d’enfants, trop peu d’armes, trop

\textsuperscript{158} Procès-Verbal du Conseil d’Administration du 4 février 1941, ANCD.
peu d’alliés, voilà les causes de notre défaite.\textsuperscript{159}Whatever the military or political accuracy of this argument, it did revive and stimulate a natalist discourse. Furthermore while the will to national recovery could not channel itself, in Armistice-regulated France,\textsuperscript{160} in the area of arms or diplomacy, population growth was an apparently realisable objective. An official Note d’Information of 1941 expressed this aspiration, a shift towards appropriating and politicising the domestic arena:

\textit{Travail, Famille, Patrie...C’est sur le terme central de cette trilogie que l’on peut faire porter actuellement avec le plus de liberté l’effort principal. Derrière la porte de chaque foyer français, la France continue de vivre, même en zone occupée, même en zone interdite. Encore faut-il que, dans chaque maison, vive une famille française digne de ce nom.}

Voici, en effet, qu’en 1941 l’action pour la natalité par la Famille est engagée et menée par le Gouvernement lui-même. Dans cette action, il n’hésite pas à engager toute son autorité et tous ses moyens, avec résolution et confiance, parce qu’il place la Famille au centre même de tout un programme de rénovation nationale.\textsuperscript{161}

The shock of defeat had given special resonance to Vichy’s

\textsuperscript{159} Appel du 20 juin 1940, Pétain, \textit{Actes et Ecrits}, p.449. The notion of numerical inferiority and inevitable defeat was a pervasive one. A journalist in the collaborationist \textit{Les Nouveaux Temps} (11 février 1942) even argued that Daladier should have been prosecuted at Riom for the "crime de sottise" of having sent the French soldier to be outnumbered, one against three "dans l’intérêt des juifs et de la Cité": ..."il manquait à ce professeur d’histoire les premiers éléments de l’arithmétique et du bon sens."

\textsuperscript{160} For the Armistice terms, see H. Michel, \textit{Vichy, Année 40} (Laffont, 1966), pp.71-97.

\textsuperscript{161} \textit{Note d’Information: La Campagne de Propagande en Faveur de la Famille}. CGF, Secrétariat d’Etat à la Famille. pp.2,8. AN: AG II 498.
natalism. Serge Huard, Secrétaire d’État à la Famille et à la Santé, portrayed the situation in melodramatic style:

Si la France veut son salut, elle doit engager et gagner la bataille de la vie. Le problème numéro 1 de la reconstruction française, c’est le problème de nombre et de la qualité des Français. <Etre ou ne pas être>. Devant nous se pose tragiquement le terrible dilemme d’Hamlet. Le problème français, c’est une question de vie ou de mort...Plus que jamais une politique nataliste et familialiste s’impose. 162

The notion of a "suicide collectif"163 was constantly reiterated to jolt the conscience of the French public. A concerted propaganda campaign spelled out the threat, echoing (and exaggerating) the arguments of interwar propaganda:

La France se meurt parce qu’elle n’a pas assez d’enfants, parce qu’elle n’a plus de familles nombreuses. Dans 40 ans, au rythme actuel de notre dénatalité, il n’y aurait plus que 9 millions de Français...Cette dénatalité...est à la base de notre ruine morale et physique.164

Gender, Politics and the Renaissance Française

This 'educating' of the public consciousness to natalist-familialist perspectives and the inextricable association of the two ideological currents, is well-illustrated by the Concours-Référendum sur les Causes de la Dénatalité Française held, in 1941, under the patronage of Maréchal Pétain, in

162 "Une entrétien avec le Dr. Serge Huard" Vrai, No.1, 15 octobre 1941.

163 P. Haury, L’Instituteur et son Rôle dans la Restauration de la Famille Française. (CGF, 1941)

164 Jeunesse No.47, 23 novembre 1941. See Albums de Propagande Familiale, 1941. AN: AG II 498 cc 79 bis.
which the public were invited to assist the authorities:

à alerter l’opinion, à redresser le jugement public, afin que la France entière se préoccupe d’assurer la renaissance de la famille, qui sera la renaissance de la France, condition de notre avenir meilleur.\textsuperscript{165}

The format of pre-selected axioms not only advertised but also endorsed the natalist-familialist idiom of Vichy’s "new" politics. Indeed, the list of reasons for depopulation, from which the entrants were required to choose the three most important, revealed the moral presumptions of natalist-familialism. It also highlights the centrality of gender in this discourse. Behind each "cause" is an explicit or implicit assumption of male/female responsibility, a clash of duty and desire:

1. Les jeunes ménages préfèrent le cinéma ou l’auto.
2. Divorce possible sans enfants, difficile avec enfants.
3. Absence ou insuffisance de religion.
4. Réduction de train de vie lorsqu’il y a des enfants.
5. Les femmes coquettes redoutent de perdre leur ligne.
7. Abandon des campagnes.
8. Difficulté de loger une famille nombreuse.
9. Les enfants coûtent trop cher.
10. Crainte de partage d’héritage et de morcellement des terres.
11. Crainte de chômage.

\textsuperscript{165} Prospectus, Concours-Référendum National sur les Causes de la Dénatalité Française. (1941)
12. Mauvais état de santé des gens qui se marient.
15. Crainte de ne pouvoir bien éléver plusieurs enfants.166

The prospectus for this competition had an enormous circulation, independently and in the press. It carried the heading:

DEMAIN, QUE SERA LA FRANCE
UNE NATION
GRANDE, RAYONNANTE ET PROSPERE
ou
UN PETIT PAYS
ETEINT, RATATINE, SANS AVENIR

Generating popular interest did not rely solely on widespread distribution but also on sizeable prize-money. Given the current political climate as well as the moral bias of the sponsors (who included the Commissariat Général à la Famille and the Centre National de Coordination et d'Action des Mouvements Familiaux), it is perhaps unsurprising that at the top of the poll with 225,523 votes came "absence ou insuffisance de religion", followed by options 13 and 6.167

This was certainly a shift away from the majority view of economic/material causes evident in the IFOP Sondage on dénatalité of April 1939.168

166 ibid.
167 Revue de l'ANCD No. 346, aout 1942, p.144. See also AFIP bulletins for July 1942, AN: 72 AJ 1854.
168 52% of those polled on dénatalité in 1939, in one of France’s first sondages, opted for a "conditions de vie" explanation. Cf: Christel Peyrefitte "Les premiers
The Concours-Référendum prizes were awarded in July 1942. 50,000 francs went to the winner, Madame Lorey (- advertised as a mother of five), 25,000 francs to each of the three next runners-up, 20,000 francs amongst a further six individuals and between 3,000 and 100 francs went to each of a further 990 entrants. Lefevbre-Dibon, President of the ANCD, expressed satisfaction with the vote of the 500,000 participants and especially with the three 'winning' responses:

...elles montrent à la fois le bon sens et la compréhension du public...En outre il importe de noter que la plupart de ces réponses furent féminines et que depuis l'appel du Maréchal Pétain qui entend honorer et glorifier la famille, les Français sont penchés avec plus d'intérêt que jamais sur le problème de la natalité.169

Whether French women were really (more) interested in this problem cannot be proved.170 What is certain is that women figured prominently in the natalist-familialist schema for renovation.

Appropriating Women and Home

The Concours-Référendum suggested some ways that dénatalité


170 It is interesting to speculate on this high female turnout. Peyrefitte notes that in the 1939 sondage women were probably not interviewed, which he also associates with the low non-response rate. Peyrefitte, op.cit., n.17.
might have been women's specific responsibility. Had women opted against motherhood because of coquetry, -- fear of losing their figures (5) -- or because they worked outside the home (6) or because they were scared of child-bearing (14)? Whatever the reason, the way was now clear under Vichy for women to recognise their duty, to renounce their previous irresponsibility or inertia:

C'est en vertu de sa maternité même que la mère est l'ouvrière privilégiée du redressement national. Contre ce mortel ennemi du pays, la dénatalité, doit se dresser la mère française; seule, sa fécondité peut assurer le salut de la race.171

Enthusiasts spoke of women being "requisitioned" in the home or of fulfilling their "service nationale" through motherhood.172 Propaganda, like the tract Maman, reiterated the official view of women's ultimate social purpose:

La femme coquette
sans enfant
n'a pas sa place dans la Cité
C'est une inutile173

Again women were not being mobilised simply for reproduction but for a particular role within the private sphere:

171 Un Fléau National: la Dénatalité. Brochure pouvant servir pour plan aux conférences, G.2. (1942) AN: F41 291. These texts and the politics of maternity are discussed at greater length in Chapter 5.

172 L'Education des Filles, Association des Parents des Ecoles Libres (APEL), brochure (1941); De Penfentenyo, Manuel de Pere de Famille. Preface par Maréchal Pétain. (1941)

173 Maman, (1941). 400,000 copies of this tract were circulated amongst the female employees of the public service, insurance companies, banks and shops. AN: AG II 498 cc 79 bis.
De la famille, la mère est l'assise fondamentale parce qu'elle est... créatrice, éducatrice, consolatrice, la conseillère et guide du foyer...

La famille repose essentiellement sur la mère
Or la Cité repose sur la famille
D'où le rôle de la mère dans la Cité

The natalist-familialist imperative of the Révolution Nationale depended too on women's recognition of their own 'natural' destiny:

Plus que jamais le moment est venu pour la femme de songer profondément aux véritables immuables qui, seules, donnent un sens à l'exigence naturelle de notre existence de femme

Indeed there was a quasi-mysticism in the delight of some women authors for this domestic vocation:

Croyez-le bien, filles de France, nous sommes faites pour les tâches obscures et si belles du foyer et elles sont faites pour nous et notre plus beau collier sera formé par la chaîne des petits bras d'enfants noués à notre cou

Lucien Romier, historian and close associate of Maréchal Pétain, articulated clearly the special relationship of French women to "la vie d'intérieur", the gendering of "separate spheres":

De toutes les femmes de l'univers civilisé, la Française, quand elle demeure fidèle au type traditionnel, est celle

174 Un Fléau National: la Dénatalité...(G.1)
Qui défend le plus obstinément l'ancienne suprématie des influences du foyer sur les influences de l'extérieur et qui protège le mieux la vie privée de l'homme contre sa vie publique.\textsuperscript{177}

Claiming that French women rejected "anglo-saxon feminism" as an abdication of their personal rights, Romier asserted the familiar view of women's real authority and superior status:

\begin{quote}
Aucun homme de France, ayant femme, ne prétend sincèrement être maître chez lui. Il n'y a d'intérieur français que par les soins de la femme, selon ses goûts et sous son autorité.\textsuperscript{178}
\end{quote}

In a seemingly-depoliticised New Order the role of women mobilised in the home was to be a crucial motor of national regeneration. Recalling an old proverb, one author summed up this notion:

\begin{quote}
"Si chacun balayait le devant de sa porte, la rue serait vite propre". Appliquons cela à la société et disons-si chaque femme soignait, purifiait et refaisait sa maison, comme la patrie deviendrait belle.\textsuperscript{179}
\end{quote}

Indeed this proverb perfectly encapsulated the introverted and "privatized" nature of Vichy's proposed rénovation, focussed on internal order and (gendered) virtue. France was staying at home to clean up, while Nazi Germany reconstructed the world outside.

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{177} L. Romier, "La Femme et la Vie d'Intérieur", La Terre Française, (1 novembre 1941). Romier was Ministre d'État and Délégué Permanent du Maréchal auprès du Conseil National.

\textsuperscript{178} ibid.

\textsuperscript{179} A. du Palais, op.cit., p.11.
\end{flushright}
French natalist-familialism, articulated so vigorously in 1940, clearly had deep roots in the Third Republic. This chapter has traced the interwar development of discourses of dénatalité and famille and how they depended on specific constructions of private and public order, of sexual and political hierarchy and of internal and external crisis. The events of 1940 caused an extraordinary "legitimation", a unique historical proof of the truth of these discourses, as well as allowing for their immediate, political appropriation. These common perceptions of ordre, famille, foyer and autorité gave sense and meaning to Vichy’s proposed rénovation in 1940. The politics of gender, so implicit in the history of Third Republic natalist-familialism, came center stage in 1940. Antifeminism took on a different shape under Vichy.
It is an ironic comment on the political despair and the nature of the transition from the Third Republic to Vichy that, in Paul Reynaud's last cabinet reshuffle a new ministry -- of the Family -- was created. On June 6, 1940, Georges Pernot, advocate of familles nombreuses, natalist renovation and "les antiques vertus", became the first Minister of the Family, for a brief and dramatic ten days. There is, unsurprisingly, no record of his response to this sudden appointment. But his retrospective comments in 1945 interestingly sidestep the question of political succession:

C'est le 6 juin 1940. C'est-à-dire à la veille des journées les plus critiques de la guerre, que M. Paul Reynaud a crée le Ministère de la Famille. À l'heure où tout paraissait compromis, c'est vers la Famille que le chef du Gouvernement a porté ses regards. Aujourd'hui, avec le recul du temps, ce geste apparaît tout à la fois comme un symbole et comme un heureux présage. C'est par le relèvement de la famille et par la fécondité des foyers que la France retrouvera sa grandeur, sa force et son prestige.¹

¹. G. Pernot. "D'où vient, où va le mouvement familial?" Pour La Vie, No.1, juillet 1945.
The irony is that Vichy, despite its conspicuous pro-family rhetoric, progressively demoted the Ministry of the Family, and Georges Pernot, although active in support of his and the régime’s natalist-familialist agenda, was not included again in the inner circles of political power. Meanwhile, the relèvement de la famille was discursively "kidnapped" by Vichy.

This chapter examines the structures and personnel of Vichy’s femme au foyer agenda, focussing on both the governmental agencies concerned with famille and the non-governmental organizations supporting Vichy’s natalist-familialist policies and propaganda. This examination involves a two-sided "take": assessing the institutional underpinning of Vichy’s family politics, the significance of the Secrétariat and Commissariat Général à la Famille, for example, as well as decoding the language of gender in the Révolution Nationale, specifically its structural paternalism. This chapter focuses both on how Vichy sought

2. Pernot was perhaps overly identified with the discredited Third Republic. This ancien combattant, Légion d’Honneur and Capitain, had been successively a conseiller municipal, député and sénateur, holding several cabinet posts prior to 1940 -- Travaux Publics, Justice, Blocus -- and was twice a French representative to the League of Nations. He voted for full constitutional powers on July 10, 1940. Pernot remained active in 1940-1944. He presided over the founding of the Centre National d’Action Familiale in Lyon on 27 octobre 1940. This was the umbrella organization which became the semi-official Centre de Coordination et d’Action de Mouvement Familial(CCAMF), which is discussed below. Pernot was its President in the southern zone. The ANCD and the CCAMF shared an office in Lyon.
to promote its much-vaunted familialist program (who was mobilized, what resources were available) and what "authority" was invested in family and gender in the "new" political culture of the Etat Français.

The institutional "balance-sheet" is a simple reminder of the exceptional character of Vichy itself and the nature of its administration. From 1940-1941, family affairs were controlled by a Ministry (of Jeunesse, Famille, Santé), a Secrétariat Général (of Famille and Santé) variously answering to the Minister of the Interior or War, then finally from September 1941 a Commissariat Général à la Famille directly under the Vice Président du Conseil. The responsibilities of each changed fairly frequently, at least initially, but the "core" personnel were a comparatively small and consistent group.3

In respect of family, as we shall see, there was not an explicit, preexistent area to be purged ("assainir") as happened in education or in the Prefectures, for example.4 The cadres had to be chosen and structures created to meet Vichy's agenda. The impression is one of haphazardness: the

3 For details see A.Coutrot "La Politique Familiale" in Le Gouvernement de Vichy, 1940-1942 (FNSP,1972) and AN: F60 1021.

first Minister of State for the Family and Anciens Combattants (subsequently the Family and Youth) was Jean Yabarnégaray, a right-wing militant and Basque sportsman.5

For some this choice was disappointing. As an internal memo noted:

La nomination la plus critiquée est celle de M. Yabarnégaray. Si du point vue sportif cette nomination est acceptable par contre la désignation comme défenseur des droits et de la dignité de la Famille Française d’un homme dont la vie privée n’a cessé d’être discutable apparaît comme une erreur, certains disent une provocation.6

But, in the first three months of Vichy, neither Yabarnégaray nor his administration nor family association militants had the opportunity for concrete reforms or major policy initiatives. Defending the rights and dignities of "the French family" was primarily about establishing its discursive privileges, while at the same time the fate of

5. See R.O. Paxton Vichy France: Old Guard and New Order (Norton, 1975) p. 162. Yabarnégaray was named Minister for Ancien Combattants in the June 16 appointments. The loi du 15 juillet 1940 gives a "tableau des emplois de secrétaires généraux" including a Ministre de la Justice et de la Famille under which is the Secrétaire Général de la Jeunesse and the Secrétaire Général de la Famille et de la Santé (J.O. Juin-Juillet-Aout, 1940) p. 283. Yabarnégaray’s Secrétaire Général was Comte d’Harcourt, Vice-president of the Anciens Combattants (for the Air Force), later Directeur of Civil Aviation and on the board of Air France.

6. Note d’Information Personelle du 3 septembre 1940, addressée à Monsieur le Maréchal de France, Chef de l’Etat, via Secrétariat de l’Intérieur. AN: F60 502. It was especially ironic that in the climate of moral order it helped create so many of Vichy’s leaders should lack credibility for "personal" reasons: Abel Bonnard is the most notorious but the private lives of Weygand and Pétain himself were also open to question.
individuals -- especially refugees, P.O.W.s and the unemployed -- and families, remained unclear.

In the administration, as in the country at large, the dominant theme was confusion and disarray. The cabinet at Vichy itself did not operate as a "normal" government. As Aron put it, "the Ministers were more like head clerks, as Louis XIV's were." 7 Ministries shuffled among overcrowded hotel rooms in Vichy, fonctionnaires reassembled in their offices in Paris and in the provinces, and various independent organizations -- such as the Alliance Nationale and the Union Féminine Civique et Sociale (UFCS) -- fretted about resettlement in the southern zone or coordination amongst its membership, given the restrictions on travel and postal services.8 It is important, therefore, to reiterate how all politics (and especially family politics) were framed within a dominant paternalism.

**Paternalism**

These partisans of the Rénovation Nationale, were drawn together by the voice and person of Pétain and the representation of one humbled, abject national family. As has been documented, this was not an imposition from above. Innumerable radio messages, photographs, renamings of streets


8. See *Compte-Rendu de l’ANCD*
and monuments, provincial "tours," classroom recitations and church sermons were all components of a daily construction of Pétainism, in which men and women of all classes "collaborated" (at least in the south) in the summer of 1940. Popular representations such as the song Maréchal, Nous Voilà should not be simply dismissed as "foolish" or "naive." They reflected but also shaped a political culture however short-lived. This catchy tune captured the interactive enthusiasm of Pétainism. It is an excellent text of Vichy’s paternalism: of its boyish "innocence" (a graphic contrast to Fascist ardor and virility) and its reflexive gendering of the Révolution Nationale:

Maréchal, Nous Voilà
Devant toi, le sauvet de la France
Nous jurons, nous, tes gars,
De servir et de suivre tes pas.

The "hero of Verdun" is celebrated here for the gift of "[sa] vie, [sa] genie et [sa] foi" and the hope of redemption ("la

9. On Pétains’s trips to the Provinces, see AN: AGII 438. Pétain’s chief hagiographer, René Benjamin, captures the extraordinary devotion displayed on these tours. See, for example, Le Marechal et Son Peuple. A child Pétain kisses suddenly becomes "protégée pour la vie, vouée au bonheur et à la gloire" in one particularly revealing moment, p. 102. According to Crémieux-Brilhac and Bensimon, three quarters of the population listened to Pétain on radio, with half listening "often." "Les Propagandes radiographiques et l’opinion publique en France de 1940 à 1944" Revue d’Histoire de la Deuxième Guerre Mondiale, No. 101, janvier 1976. See also G. Miller, op.cit.


patrie renaitra") but it is "le salut commun" that Pétain embodies and for which his "enfants" reply "Oui, présent."

The language of the father-figure must be acknowledged and integrated into our political analysis. Pétain himself understood its resonance and its limitations. He encouraged the formal dedications of children, for example in the over two million Christmas drawings of 1940; he became the actual godfather to many children (this usually involved a small financial gift). He spoke in fatherly fashion to different constituencies: women, children, peasants and Ancien Combattants. But he also discouraged the overzealous renaming of streets, the identification that obliterated other local men:

Le Maréchal ... ne veut pas voir disparaître des villes ou villages le nom d'hommes qui ont pu à faits divers illustrer leur petite patrie.13

Pétain also modified this political relationship. Notably, after Montoire, he announced that he had accepted the principle of collaboration with Hitler and added,

Je vous ai tenu jusqu'ici le langage d'un père. Je vous tiens aujourd'hui le langage d'un chef.14

Referring to this comment on the language of father/chef, other militant familialists at Vichy made an explicit connection:

12. On "parrainage" see AN: FIA 3657.
13. On renaming streets AN: FIA 3678 no. 3756.
Souvenons-nous avec émotion (ce) que le Maréchal nous a dit... il s’est souvenu que le chef lorsqu’il est juste, se comporte comme un père. Puisque cette grande vérité rendre aux Français le bon sens politique qui leur manque!  

Garcin and David also linked this political common sense to family structures:

Il ne faut pas oublier le rôle capital du chef de famille. De nos jours nous parlons beaucoup des mères et sans doute elles jouent un rôle essentiel, mais un foyer sans père, ce n’est pas un foyer, en tout cas pas un foyer heureux ni viable.

The exclusion of women from all these representations of authority (and from the actual exercise of political office) will be dealt with later. What is at issue here is the language of gender, the implicit operations of masculine/feminine oppositions, which construct the practice of political paternalism. This language is not simply a mirror of this regime, but is instead a range of symbolic and material articulations of Pétainism, which shifts in form and impact. Political "order" is constructed and reproduced around "natural" rights and hierarchies. These are intrinsically gendered. The power of "the Father" (le chef) operates against and enforces the impotence or absence of "the Other" (la femme). What is new under Vichy is the

15. "La Famille" par W. Garcin et H. David, Cahiers de Formation Politique, No. 6, 1941, p. 25.

16. ibid., p.6. The perception of male authority as being threatened in the home is one that was articulated (as we have seen in Chapter 1), in the 1938 debate on married women’s rights. The link between the crisis of patriarchal authority in the public and private arenas is one that we shall return to. It was at the heart of Vichy’s politics.
explicitness of this paternalism, and its direct relationship to the politics of rénovation, which were both antیدemocratic and anti-feminist.

Although it all functioned to uphold and legitimise the political hierarchy, Pétain's "fathering" was expressed in different ways: he was the concerned parent of P.O.W.'s, the kindly grandfather of the young, the austere chef of Montoire, the relentless disciplinarian of the national family above appeals for PCF hostages, for example, and also, of course, the empathetic male/chef de famille, who could appreciate women's support. As Pétain wrote to a French woman enthusiastic about the Révolution Nationale:

S'il m'arrivait dans la lourde tâche que j'ai assumée d'avoir besoin de réconfort, je le trouverai dans les témoignages de femmes, de mères, de Françaises comme vous.17

Although it is doubtful that women were more seduced by Pétainism than were men, they did stand in a different relationship to its paternalism. One woman, for example, in Marseilles, reacted enthusiastically to the appeal of Pétain whom she considered "le père de tous les Français." Her letter is a good example of the "personal" being consciously politicised:

Fille d'une commerçant catholique français, j'appartiens à la bourgeoisie moyenne, je tiens au passage à nous signaler que père fait parti de votre Légion; j'ai vingt deux ans et je me sens tout à fait disposé à fonder un foyer basé sur la famille; je n'ai pas trouvé jusqu'ici la personne respondent à mon idéal pourtant si simple, j'ai

17. Lettre de 7 août 1940, AN: AG II 459 cc 34.
d’ailleurs peu de relations; je sais aussi que je suis encore jeune mais je voudrais vite commencer pour travailler de toutes mes forces à refaire une belle France!

Monsieur, le Maréchal, je vous serai très obligé de me dire ce qu’il faudrait faire en pareil cas; et vous prie de m’excuser de vous raconter des histoires qui sont celles de nombreuses jeunes filles de chez nous ... je sais que vous me comprenez: vous êtes si paternel, Monsieur le Maréchal.18

This file also contains a letter from "a Limoges widow" suggesting to Pétain that he create a marriage agency to encourage "familles nouvelles":

Puisque nous avons, par vous, le gouvernement que nous attendions depuis si longtemps, nos voeux ont des chances d’être enfin avancés.19

French susceptibility to the appeal of Pétain, whether explained in terms of psycho/political analyses or not, clearly had direct political repercussions. Familialists, for example, who had welcomed the Maréchal’s régime, were constrained by their filial loyalty into an unusual suspension of criticism when confronted by Vichy’s blatant inertia:

Le Maréchal, Chef de l’État Français, a reçu le Président (de l’ANCD). Le dernier lui a exposé la situation critique des familles.... Il lui a fait remarquer que trop souvent des mères de famille n’arrivent pas à s’approvisionner et se priver pour

18 Letter from Madeleine André, 29 avril 41. AN: AG II 605 cm E.
Pétain’s actual sexual interest in women is one that is often dealt with in a (male) humorous way. See, for example, the account of Pétain "ogling the breasts of a well-endowed young lady" at his trial, in M.Dank, The French Against the French, (N.Y.,1974), p.295.

19 AN: AGII 605 cm.
nourrir leurs enfants. Le Maréchal, très au courant de la question, lui a exposé ses inquiétudes à ce sujet.20

Pétain’s distant sympathy hardly compensated for the vulnerability of women or the hardship of French families but it somehow deflected the anger of family association militants. It underscored the passivity of ruler and ruled alike in the face of Occupation; there was not an all-powerful father but a caring one with "diminished responsibility".

Pétain, whether he appeared in person at rallies and receptions, in full-length or head-only portraits in the press and propaganda, or (disembodied) on the radio, was omnipresent in 1940. His image mediated French politics in a specific (male) gendered way and framed the agenda for familialist action. This was not the civilian, man-in-the-street bourgeois masculinity of Third Republican politicians (and Premiers). Pétain represented a more distant, more austere, military masculinity; age and uniform, prestige and reputation, served to reinforce the singularity of Pétain as father/hero.

Behind and beside Pétain, other diverse paternalisms were present in iconography and practice at Vichy, especially in the arena of family policy, where gender politics were (most) directly negotiated. An analysis of the bureaucratic

20. Re Duval-Arnould audience with Pétain, Compte Rendu de l’ANCD, février, 1942, p. 98. See also Chapter 6 below on Pétain and the "welfare" of families.
The SEFS was not a department at the center of Vichy’s concerns, despite Pétain’s insistence to the contrary. Judging by its political/administrative status, as well as its budgetary powers, the Commissariat ranked well down on the government’s agenda. This section will examine its proponents’ struggle to assert its significance and to fight for greater resources and influence within and outside Vichy. It also deals with the reaction of those activists who believed in Vichy’s rénovation, who sought to participate in policy and were quick to discern the gulf between rhetoric and reality in Vichy’s familialist/natalist program. The compressed chronology of Vichy’s demise -- in terms of its "revolutionary" ambitions -- is a fascinating indicator of the nature of domestic politics in this period; between the exuberance of the summer of 1940 and the tragic chaos of 1944 there were many months of chilling realism and faltering expectations. What was the fate of family politics in this period?

The administrative realignments of 1940-1941 illustrate the ongoing struggle for greater political influence. In September 1940 Ybarnégaray’s Ministry was "dismembered" -- in
the words of the ANCD Revue -- and divided between two Secrétariats, of Jeunesse, placed under the Ministère de l'Education, and Famille et Santé, placed under the Ministère de l'Intérieur. This was a marked "demotion" of familialist concerns. The critical area of allocations familiales was lost to the Ministère du Travail (at that time under René Belin). The new dependence on the Ministère de l'Intérieur was hardly a felicitous shift either, given that this department combined at different times so many portfolios, and that its overriding political agenda centered on police activities and negotiating the Occupation and Collaboration with the Germans. In the period that included Montoire, Laval's dismissal and a froideur between Berlin and Vichy, family politics did not get much attention on anyone's agenda, at least in Intérieur. Dr. Serge Huard, appointed Secrétaire Général à la Famille et à la Santé regrouped his administration in three Directions, of Santé, Assistance and Famille. While Huard took responsibility for Santé and Assistance, Famille was directed by Pierre Lafond (Paris) and M. de Beaumont (at Vichy) and was, after their departure, without a Directeur for two and a half months.

In February 1941, Jacques Chevalier became Secrétaire d'Etat à la Famille et à la Santé, moving from Education

21 Revue de l'ANCD, No. 343, Mai 1942, p.82.

22 Allocations Familiales will be dealt with in Chapter 6 on Welfare.
Nationale to replace Huard, who continued to direct Santé as Secrétaire Général, in Paris. Raymond Grasset, Président of the Légion in the Puy de Dôme and a prominent doctor, took over as Secrétaire d'État of Santé, for which he remained responsible until the Liberation.

Chevalier was a well-known philosopher, Dean of the Faculté at Grenoble, whose contribution in the Education ministry had been conspicuous clericalism. Despite his lack of experience, Chevalier made several appointments which met with the approval of familialists: as chef de cabinet he chose Léon Husson (a philosophy professor at Montpellier and father of six); as Directeur de Cabinet he chose Paul Haury (Vice-Président of the ANCD, Inspecteur Général de l'Instruction Publique and author of "Enseignement Démographique" ... ); Philippe Renaudin, Maître des Requêtes au Conseil d'État, became Directeur de la Famille, with Maurice Bertrand as his "adjoint" in Paris. These men, who survived Chevalier's departure in August 1941, were at the center of the administration of family politics until the Liberation.

Chevalier himself tried to strengthen the administrative and legal base of family politics. The loi du 24 février 1941 created a Secrétaire Général de la Famille and a Direction de la Famille, under the Secrétaire d'État à la Famille et à la Santé. But it was the loi du 12 avril 1941 that seemed to give the greatest potential for a government-
wide role for the SEFS and to mark the unique significance of family politics:

ART.3. Le Secrétariat d’État à la Famille et à la Santé est chargé de mettre en œuvre la politique familiale du Gouvernement. A cet effet il coordonne l’action des départements intéressés, il provoque de leur part toutes les mesures propres, tant à assurer à la famille française la protection dont elle doit bénéficier, qu’à lui faire jouer le rôle qui lui incombe dans la vie nationale; il suit l’exécution des mesures ainsi arrêtées.

ART.4. Tous les services publics sont tenus de fournir au secrétaire d’État à la Famille et à la Santé ... tous les renseignements nécessaires pour permettre au dit secrétaire d’exercer sa mission telle qu’elle est définie à l’article 3.

Aucune disposition législative ou réglementaire touchant aux questions familiales ne peut être mise en vigueur sans avoir été soumise à l’examen préalable du Secrétaire d’État à la Famille et à la Santé.

The actual effectiveness of this legislation can be gauged from some later disputes (see chapter 5 on loi du jardinier, for example) but it contains the clearest statement of the Vichy familialists’ possibilities for political influence throughout the realm of social policy. The role of coordination and prior consultation/approval on all legislation affecting the family would certainly have been a powerful one, if implemented. But a closer look at the text indicates a classic bureaucratic forestalling on real reform: there are no built-in resources to ensure implementation, no penalties for non-compliance by other departments, no report-back mechanisms to monitor its efficacy as legislation. Clearly this law is creating more worthy aspirations and false expectations in the rénovation nationale. Other initiatives in 1941 seemed to illustrate this pattern too.
In June 1941, the Comité Consultatif de la Famille Française was created. Composed of fourteen members representing different ministries, ten representatives of the family movement and twenty to forty members chosen for their special competence, this Comité was nominated for three years. Seven of its members, of whom five were appointed by the Secrétaire d'Etat, formed a "section permanente" to advise the Comité and the Secrétaire d'Etat. The creation of this Comité had been previously recommended (see above, Huard report) but at least one family association claimed credit for direct intervention. One can only speculate about Pétain's immediate response to an interview with M. de Butler, Secrétaire Général of the Association Nationale de Familles Françaises [de Six Enfants et Plus] on 7 February 1941, in which de Butler suggested a Conseil Supérieur de la Famille. De Butler had no doubts:

Le Maréchal, visiblement séduit par cette idée, prend des notes: "Je soumettrai la question au prochain Conseil des Ministres", dit-il. La Radio du 16 février nous a appris qu'il avait tenu sa promesse dans un délai très court.  

23 Despite the apparent abstraction of Vichy's domestic policies from the external "New Order", it is worth remembering the "coincidence" of events and politics. June 1941 saw Vichy's second Statut des Juifs, as well as the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union.  

24 "Défendons Nos Foyers," No.1, 25 aout 1941, Bulletin de l'Association Nationale de Familles Françaises. Compte Rendu d'entretien avec Maréchal Pétain. AN: AG II 654.305. This organization was particularly elitist and right-wing (and did not hesitate to attack other activists, like Boverat). Its committee members included two Counts, a Lieutenant-Colonel, a Marquis and a Vicomte, as well as Achille Glorieux, a Roubaix industrialist and father of ten,
Whatever the actual legislative route, the belief in the efficacy of direct contact with Pétain is further evidence of the idiosyncrasy and paternalism of Vichy’s politics. This pet scheme of the familialists was indeed acted upon.

Again the brief of this official Comité was a potentially significant one: "Le comité délibère sur toutes les questions touchant aux intérêts matériels et moraux de la famille qui lui sont soumises par le gouvernement". Although Coutrot sees a direct precedent in the previous Haut Comité de la Population and the Conseil Supérieur de la Natalité, it is clear that Vichy’s new larger committee was to have a more "representative" and publically consultative function.25 Its members were partisans of the Révolution Nationale: technocrats, doctors, lawyers and prominent Third Republic familiaux, like Georges Pernot. However this committee did not fulfill its familialist political destiny with great success: only two full sessions were ever held (in October 1941 and June 1942) and the seven sub-commissions met infrequently.26

The absence of a clear agenda and the imprisonment of the Comité’s vice-president, Vice-Admiral de Penfentenyo, hindered its progress, but again one must remember both the lack of specific resources and the constraints of the general

from a prominent "familialist" family.

25 Coutrot, op.cit., p.249.

26 AN: AG 605 cm 19c.
political agenda. Despite its corporatist pretensions such "representative" committees were not likely to achieve much at Vichy. The Comité was created, in line with the proposal of Huard and others, but it lacked impact. Its major act, the Loi Gounot, will be examined below.

The other innovation of the summer of 1941 was the official assimilation of all family associations into one organization, the Centre de Coordination et d’Action des Mouvements Familiaux (CCAMF), a move assisted by the presence of Paul Haury as liaison between the SEFS and the family associations. Haury was the first president of the CCAMF in the Occupied Zone and a longtime activist in the ANCD. The new organization’s mandate (again significantly vague) was "la représentation des familles françaises, jusqu’à la publication des textes qui organisent légalement cette représentation". The reaction and activities of the family association to this initiative and the drift of Vichy’s family policies requires detailed attention (see below).

By the summer of 1941, Paul Haury was writing a critical and disillusioned commentary on the comparative paucity of his department’s resources allocated in the budget published in the Journal Officiel of July:

On constate en effet que le Secrétariat à la Famille

27 Haury won an ANCD essay prize, funded by the Michelin brothers, in 1922 for a paper on depopulation. He was agrégé d’histoire, a lycée professor in Lyon, author of Pour Que La France Vive (1927) and co-author, with Boverat, of Le Danger de la Depopulation.
et à la Santé dispose d’une somme avoisinant 6.250.000 francs, inférieure à celles, non seulement de tous les autres Secrétariats mais même aux dépenses du Commissariat Général à l’Éducation Générale .... on est bien obligé de constater qu’il y a une disproportion flagrante entre l’importance de la double tâche qui incombe au Secrétariat d’État -- tâche proprement vitale pour le pays -- et les moyens d’action dont il est doté et qui sont relativement aux autres services publics, à la vérité, dérisoires.28

Already, in January of 1941, restraints on the Secrétariat and the resultant failures had become obvious in the public eye and had given rise to direct criticism, even reaching Pétain’s office:

D’innombrables lettres adressées au Maréchal de France, Chef de L’État, et de nombreuses visites reçues par le Secrétariat Général de Chef de l’État ont apporté et apportent chaque jour des doléances et des critiques acerbes sur les diverses mesures prises à l’égard de la Famille: elles manifestent d’une façon impressionnante la déception provoquée dans tous les milieux par l’application jusqu’ici adoptées.29

The structural limitations of the Secrétariat symbolised the marginalisation of the familialist agenda in the Révolution Nationale for these external critics and disillusioned partisans:

La suppression du Ministère de la Famille a été vivement ressentie dans tous les milieux et interprété comme un recul de la politique familiale du Gouvernement: l’absence de mesures vraiment efficaces en faveur de la famille n’a pu que confirmer cette interprétation. La situation de la Direction de la Famille est comparée à

28 Note de M. Paul Haury, Directeur du Cabinet du SEFS, avec tableau annexe, AN: AG II 605 cm 19a. Haury also wrote to Pétain on behalf of the ANCD, requesting the retention of the Ministère de la Famille. Compte Rendu de l’ANCD, p. 81.

29 Note sur la politique de la Famille, 13 janvier 1941; AN: AG II 605 cm 19a.
This piece was followed by a negative account of the budget of January 1941 -- again with *Famille* being apportioned derisory amounts for propaganda. What is significant in this official report is the explicit recognition of administrative marginalization so early in Vichy’s Révolution.

Given that this was an autocratic regime it is hard to gauge the real extent of public disillusionment with family politics. But it seems safe to assume that it is not just bureaucratic jealousies that fuel this criticism. The language and propositions of these accounts clearly reflect the concerns of family association militants. The status of the Secrétariat may not have filled the minds of the average citizen in occupied or unoccupied France but it did cause alarm amongst the more fervent supporters of Travail, Famille, Patrie.

This report makes several recommendations, based on the

30 ibid, p3.

31 ibid, p.4: The amounts involved were: Famille 800,000; Jeunesse 10 millions; Sports 20 millions.
demands of family associations, including the creation of a Conseil Supérieur de la Famille, the immediate promulgation of a constitutional act recognising the family and an increase in allocations familiales for "les familles nombreuses qui souffrent plus que les autres de l'augmentation de la coût de la vie." 32 In March of 1941 another official "note" on the importance of the Secrétariat d'Etat à la Famille remarks that whatever the "theory" it is imperative,

-- de constituer un organisme d'études des causes de la décadence démographique française, aussi bien que des causes de relèvement à l'étranger
-- de donner des pouvoirs suffisants au Secrétaire d'Etat pour qu'il puisse assurer une véritable politique familiale
-- d'assurer au Secrétaire d'Etat à la Famille une masse de valeur économique d'un ordre comparable à celle que les pays étrangers mettent en oeuvre, c'est à dire un minimum de 6 à 10 milliards par an.33

Here Huard tries to establish his department's demands in a reasoned way and in a comparative context, but his tone betrays a certain pessimism and lack of influence.

**Constitutional Change**

It is also important to look in some detail at the preoccupation with symbolic and structural représentation in this early phase of family politics. The language and

32 p.5

33 Note sur l'importance du Secrétariat à la Famille . . . Vichy, 10 mars 41. AN: AG 605 cm 19a.
frequency of official correspondence indicate that familialists took seriously the notion of reconstructing the body politic around *Famille*, of giving legal/constitutional acknowledgement to the "new" society and of "reinvesting" authority in this social unit. William Garcin, head of the Legislative Bureau of the *Direction de la Famille* (at Vichy) was chiefly responsible for a series of proposals which brought together the theories and aspirations of familialists inside and outside the government. In a note of January 1941, Garcin urged the government to "affirmer le caractère familial de la Révolution Nationale (Travail, Famille, Patrie) par un acte constitutionnel fixant les principes de la politique familiale annoncé par les messages du Chef de l’État."  

Included was a model for "Acte Constitutionnel No. 6 relatif à la Famille Française":

Nous, Maréchal de France, Chef de l’État Français, vu la loi du 10 juillet 1940

Décrétons:

Art 1 -- l’État reconnaît que la Famille constituée par le mariage et la filiation légitime est le fondement de l’édifice social. Il doit la préserver contre toute cause physique ou morale de destruction ou d’affaiblissement.  
Art 2 -- l’État reconnaît que la Famille a des droits antérieurs et supérieurs aux siens propres: entretien et éducation des enfants, constitution et conservation du patrimoine familial.  
Art 3 -- l’État assure la participation de la Famille au

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34 Garcin, Mesures à Prendre Immédiatement Pour la Famille Française. AN: AG II 605 cm 19a.

35 This was the usual "monarchical" formula for legislation in the *Etat Français*. 
The familiarity and banality of language -- the same phrases of le Play and Pétain are constantly invoked -- should not blind us to the political significance of these suggested initiatives. Constitutional change was "in the air," and these proposals distilled the quintessential assumptions of familialism: the sanctity of the "legitimate" heterosexual, nuclear family; the primacy of this family's rights and representation, especially over property and education; the exclusivity of the "French" family. If "le peuple est une hiérarchie des familles", as Pétain maintained, then it was critical to establish constitutionally the nature of family and hierarchy.

Partisans of the Etat Français -- and administrators like Garcin -- based their work on the premise of permanence (which of course begs the larger question of Vichy's "raison d'être" and dependence on an Armistice and on an eventual German victory) and actively sought a statutory declaration of principle. In early 1941, at least, whatever the immediate shortcomings of the administrative structures and bureaucratic hierarchies involved, family could be constitutionally validated as a central value of the new

36 AN: AG II 605 19cm A.

37 Pétain, Discours du 9 juillet 1941.
regime, a key symbol of organic unity and national rénovation. Garcin and the SEFS believed they were building a new familialist state.

The apparent naïveté of such beliefs, and their blind sectarianism, need to be historically contextualised and not simply dismissed as the delusions of a small clique of fanatics who happened to speak at Vichy. They were aware of the political and legal ramifications of their proposals and also invoked contemporary models of constitutional familialism. In a "Note sur la Famille dans le Droit Public" (30 avril 1941), Garcin pointed to a recent European model:

> il convient de définir la famille, de lui donner une structure propre, de reconnaître ses droits dans un article constitutionnel.

> Proposons comme base l'article actuellement inséré dans la Constitution de l’Eire:

> "L’Etat reconnaît la Famille, comme étant l’unité primaire et fondamentale du groupe de la Société et possédant comme institution morale des droits inaliénables, antécédents et supérieurs à toute loi positive.

> L’Etat garantit la Famille dans sa constitution et son autorité, comme étant la base nécessaire de l’ordre social et étant indispensable au bien de la Nation et de l’Etat." 38

It is significant that Garcin saw this 1937 act of a Catholic nationalist State (still in force in the Irish Republic) as apt for Vichy. The paternalist view of women and the family is succinct and explicit: "En particulier, l’Etat reconnaît que, par sa vie au sein du foyer, la femme donne à l’Etat un

38 AN: AG II 605.
support sans lequel le bien commun ne peut être achevé." 39

This emphasises again the seriousness and relative credibility of Vichy’s familialism, at least for its own enthusiasts. Of course all of the models of family politics invoked -- Ireland, Spain, Portugal -- clearly indicated the direction of the desired transformation: catholic, corporatist, ultra-conservative.40 Familialist "silences" (about Fascist Germany and Italy) contrast sharply with insistences about French society. The political cultures of Ireland, Spain and Portugal --like Vichy France -- were also conservative and nationalist, with family being conspicuously vaunted.

Jacques Chevalier gave an interesting glimpse of the gendering function of families in a 1941 radio address:
"C’est la famille qui apprend à l’homme son métier." Then, commenting on his role at SEFS and that of his audience, he added:

Notre tâche est double. Nous aurons à vouloir et à prendre des mesures précises, concrètes, efficaces pour permettre aux familles de pouvoir contribuer par nos encouragements et notre appui au relèvement et à la

39 AN: AG II 605. Garcin expands these arguments in a later publication in 1943, "Révolution Sociale Par la Famille." AN: AG II 654.305. Ireland had been represented at the UFCS International Congress in 1933 and conservative catholics clearly maintained links. Cf. R.Coirard L’Apport des Catholiques Sociaux

40 Georges Hardin, Secrétaire Général du CCAMF, "Rapport sur la Famille dans le droit constitutionnel depuis cent cinquante ans", AN: AGII 497 cc B. See also "Note du 13 janvier 1941" p.4. Place de la Famille dans la Constitution, AN: AG II 605 cm 19 B.
restauration du foyer. Mais comme l'a dit le Chef de l'Etat, il s'agit de mesures à longue portée dont les bienfaits ne deviendront sensibles qu'avec le temps. 41

Again emphasising the less material dimensions of Vichy's familialism, Chevalier continued,

Nous avons d'abord à créer un climat nouveau en faisant pénétrer dans notre pays cet esprit familial qui a fait à travers les siècles son honneur et sa force. 42

This "climat nouveau" was critical for familialist discourse and requires further analysis. Indeed these rapports and allocutions give us a unique view of the philosophical base of Vichy's family politics, as well as evidence of the commitment of its officials to the rénovation nationale. The specific proposals, as well as the language used, reveal the nature of this rénovation, situating this aspect of Vichy government clearly within the realm of "an integral Catholic moral order". 43

Consider the Charte Constitutionnelle (edited by Garcin) which was to be a parallel to the Charte du Travail:

I. Le bien de la personne humaine est la fin suprême de toute société. La famille est la première manifestation sociale de la personne humaine. Elle est donc le premier des groupes humains, la cellule sociale fondamentale et à ce titre, elle a des droits antérieurs à ceux de l'Etat. II. La famille fondée sur le mariage est la base de l'Etat Français. La famille et l'Etat ont des droits et des devoirs réciproques. La famille est une unité naturelle, civile, économique sociale et politique. III. La famille est une unité naturelle; l'organisation

41 Allocution de Jacques Chevalier addressée aux familles de France, 14 avril 1941, AN: 72 AJ 1854.
42 ibid.
43 Paxton, op.cit., p.140.
de la famille est fondée sur la nature des choses qui doit être respectée par le législateur.

Aucune loi ne pourra ni compromettre la stabilité et la durée de la famille, ni ruiner la cohésion existante entre les membres d'une même famille.

IV. La famille est considérée comme point de vue juridique comme une personne morale. Elle a le droit de défendre sa dignité, sa cohésion et sa durée. Elle peut jouir d'un droit spécial de propriété assurant le pérennité du patrimoine familial.

V. La famille a le devoir d'éduquer les enfants qui sont issus d'elle. Elle a le devoir et le droit de diriger, de contrôler l'instruction donnée à ces enfants et d'y collaborer.

La famille a le devoir de préparer les futurs citoyens de l'État à leurs fonctions. L'État doit former les enfants dans le respect et l'amour de la famille.

VI. La famille est une unité économique essentielle. Le Chef de famille doit être assuré tant pour lui que pour chacun des siens d'un niveau de vie comparable à celui d'un célibataire occupant une situation économique ou social analogue. Il doit jouer à qualité égale, d'une priorité d'embauchage.

La famille doit être spécialement représentée dans les organismes corporatifs du travail.

VII. Unité sociale primordiale et centre de besoins sociaux, la famille a droit à la protection de l'État qui l'encourage et l'honore. L'État français assure aux familles de conditions de vie permettant leur épanouissement. Il doit notamment leur donner la possibilité d'occuper un logement décent.

L'État Français protège la famille contre les fléaux sociaux notamment l'alcoolisme et la prostitution. L'État prend les mesures nécessaires pour assurer l'hygiène des familles.

VIII. Unité politique, la famille doit être représentée dans tous les organes de la vie publique et à tous les degrés de son organisation hiérarchisée. Des groupements de famille formant des organismes reconnus par l'État ont des fonctions sociales et des prérogatives qui leur sont propres.44 (my emphasis)

Clearly the influence of conservative thinkers like Frédéric le Play was critical in underpinning this anti-individualist, anti-1789 Declaration of the Rights of the

44 AN: AGII 605 cm 19a
Family. The emphasis on "natural law" as well as the private/moral sphere and, as has been noted, rights over education are classic principles of the Catholic Right. But this articulation of a new social organicism is interesting because it points to the breadth and ambitiousness of the Right's familialism -- their aim a thoroughgoing juridical revolution -- as well as indicating the theoretical impetus for several specific projects of the administration, like legislation on priority of hiring for *chefs de famille*, on alcoholism, on divorce, as well as the work on representation of the family in public affairs. Given that this familialism was so ambitiously and consistently articulated within the government in 1940-1941, one must take seriously the form it took (and how it interacted with the discourse of Vichy politics generally) even though, as we know with hindsight, these projects did not materialize into the dreamed of revolution.

The banal coherence of the vision of the familiaux comes across clearly in this initial period of enthusiasm. Just a year after the Defeat, a Délégué Général of the *Centre*

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45 Le Play's influence was acknowledged. See, for example, "Principes d'une Législation Familiale", 15 novembre 1940, AN: AGII 497 cc 79b.

46 In the following year, the Délégués Régionaux in the zone occupée organised several meetings, such as those in Angers, Lille and Orleans, between familiaux, academics and "les milieux juridiques", on themes such as "La Famille: Personne Morale". CGF, Bulletin de Liaison, No.9, 15 mars 1943, pp25-34. AN: AGII 497 cc 79 B.
National de Coordination et d'Action des Mouvements Familiaux in the occupied zone wrote,

Le nouvel État français est né de la défaite pour relever la France de la défaite ... l'ancien régime y avait conduit la France en laissant partout triompher, au lieu de la Famille et du Travail, l'individualisme et la recherche excessive du bien-être.

La France montrera au monde que le moment est venu en s'appuyant à la fois sur les préceptes chrétiens et les lois naturelles, de rétablir l'ordre politique et social sur la communauté de travail et la communauté de la famille.

Leclercq proposed the inclusion of a "préalable" on the Rights of the Family in the new constitution recognising inter alia that,

la méconnaissance des droits et des devoirs de la famille a mené la France à la défaite et a failli entrainer la destruction même de la nation française ... la stabilité et la fécondité de la famille sont indispensables à l'avenir de la Patrie et de l'Empire .... nul n'est un bon citoyen s'il ne remplit fidèlement ses devoirs familiaux.47

This report served as a discussion text for the Centre National de Coordination et d'Action des Mouvements Familiaux's own deliberations, "Pour que la famille ait dans la Constitution la place qui lui revient", which were sent to the constitutional commission of the Comité Consultatif de la Famille Française.

While the connection of defeat and individualism is familiar, like that of natalism and a stronger France, the reference to familialism and the future of the Patrie and the

47 Rapport de M. Paul Leclercq, 8 aout 1941, AN: AGII 497 cc 79.
Empire is a reminder that political time and space intrude idiosyncratically into the familialist discourse. The French family is unilinearly linked to the Empire at this time, through the wished-for numerical and racial superiority over "les indigènes". It is not linked through projects for family rénovation (or the extension of allocations, for example) outside Metropolitan France. Nor does invoking a stronger France -- and Empire -- resonate with the realpolitik of Occupation and a continuing war. The discourse on family, like the performance of the SEFS (at least in 1940-41), is not an artificial, marginal or chimerical phenomenon, however. Its significance is clearly in the way it makes us think about the operation of politics at this time. Familialism -- like Vichy overall -- was real but isolated, self-referential and abstracted, in a way that befits a regime whose power was highly contingent and fragmented.

These attempts to redefine French political culture ("Nul n’est un bon citoyen ...") give us too a fascinating insight into the familialist imagination, which we can further follow up in the realm of policy and propaganda pursued in Vichy’s second year.

The Commissariat Général à la Famille

September 1941 marks a high point (at least in expectations) for family politics, with the conversion of the
Direction de la Famille into the Commissariat Général à la Famille. This new structure was intended to give a higher profile to family affairs. A preparatory document set out the justification:

La Direction de la Famille ne joue pas actuellement le rôle qui devrait être le sien, c’est à dire un rôle moteur dans la mise en oeuvre d’une véritable politique de la famille. Les raisons de cet état de choses tiennent essentiellement à la nature particulière des questions familiales.

Ces questions, en effet, ressortissent, à tous les Départements Ministériels. Presque toujours les solutions qu’elles réclament se présentent sous la forme de dispositions accessoires ou de dispositions d’exception qu’il est nécessaire d’insérer dans des textes dont l’objet principal est étranger aux préoccupations familiales.

Le haut fonctionnaire responsable de la Famille doit donc pouvoir intervenir dans tous les domaines. Il lui fait, dans ce but:

1. être tenu au courant de l’ensemble de l’activité ministérielle, de manière que son intervention puisse avoir lieu au temps utile
2. jouir d’une autorité suffisante pour faire prévaloir, ou tout au moins faire entendre son point de vue. Le gouvernement étant ainsi à même de se prononcer en connaissance de cause.

En revanche il a besoin d’aucun service administratif d’exécution ...
la solution qui paraît s’imposer est la suppression de l’actuelle Direction ... et la création à la Présidence du Conseil d’un Commissariat Général à la Famille

Tel est semble-t-il le seul moyen de mettre en oeuvre d’une manière cohérente et efficace la politique familiale voulue par le Maréchal

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48 For an organizational schema of the CGF see Coutrot, op.cit. p.250. The Paris office of the CGF was at Rue Tilsitt in the 17e. For a complete list of its administrative staff, see Guide Périodique de l’Administration Française (Editions Droit Social, 1942).

49 Note sur un projet de loi tendant à la création d’un Commissariat Général à la Famille, AN: F60 606.
The simplicity of this proposed initiative may have been a key reason for its success. The only "personnel" required were the already-existing Délégués Régionaux and a small number of "collaborateurs" at Vichy. Presumably it was budgetary "realism" that prompted this minimalist strategy, but the failure of familiaux to get a real hearing in the cabinet may also have pushed them to gamble on such a slender administrative role in return for direct reporting/access to the Président du Conseil. Whatever the reasoning, clearly much depended on the personal authority and status of the Commissaire Général himself. Of the three men short-listed for the post, Philippe Renaudin -- the inside candidate -- was chosen. Appointed Directeur de la Famille by Chevalier, Renaudin had been Maître des Requêtes au Conseil d'État. He was lauded in the newspapers as

formé aux disciplines juridiques, ancien combattant, père de famille nombreuse; un homme réfléchi, un patriote ardent, un apôtre plein de foi conscient de la grandeur de sa tâche et résolu à l'accomplir sans relâche.

50 Loi de 18 septembre 1940; Décret du 12 décembre 1940; For a list of the Délégués see Guide Périodique, p.34.

51 The others were M. Bonvoisin, a member of the Comité Central des Allocations Familiales for fifteen years and a member of the ANCD, and M. Franck, a Délégué à l'Inspection Régionale à la Famille. AN: F60 606.

52 La Vie Industrielle, 25 novembre 1941 Approval for Renaudin was not unanimous. A telephone conversation that was "intercepted" in September 1941, reports André Lavagne, of Pétain's cabinet, as saying "Je suis seul à dire que Renaudin est nul et inert. Ils ne font rien là-dedans, alors que les gens ont l'impression que le Maréchal ne fait rien pour la famille."

Lavagne, when confronted, denied this statement and by
Although the CGF remained autonomous and Renaudin appointed his own équipe (who remained up to and after the Liberation), it was not until May 1942 that the CGF came directly under Amiral Platon, depending at first on Dr. Huard and then Dr. Raymond Grasset, his successor. Renaudin worked energetically on a major propaganda campaign in the fall of 1941, again accepting the imperative of creating a political/moral context as the sine qua non of a broader material renovation.

According to Renaudin, familialism depended on worthy cadres:

Il ne s’agit pas, pour ceux qui ont la charge de redonner à la France le goût de la Famille, de gérer simplement des services administratifs. Il s’agit d’accomplir une oeuvre de redressement révolutionnaire. Il leur faut aider l’élite et les masses à prendre conscience de la nécessité vitale qu’il y a pour la France à retrouver et à pratiquer dans toute sa grandeur, le sentiment familial.

The backward-looking nature, ("redonner/ redressement/ retrouver") of Vichy’s mission is revealed too in an analogy which captures the contradictions of family politics -- combining secular revolutionary and religious missionary fervour:

Cette oeuvre qui nous incombe est à la fois une oeuvre de

December 1941 was writing effusively to Boverat,
"M. Renaudin...de tous mes collègues, c’est un de ceux que j’admire le plus, au point de vue moral et au point de vue intellectuel."

53 Loi du 18 mai, 1942; Huard quit the SEFS upon Laval’s return to the government.

54 La Vie Industrielle, 25 novembre 1941.
salut public ... -- sauver la patrie de danger de mort -- et une œuvre d’apostolat ... au sens (d’) un saint Vincent de Paul qui, dans la France du début du XVIIe siècle, ravagée par les guerres de religion, entreprit de refaire un Clergé, c’est-à-dire une élite pour réformer les moeurs.55

But again the actual political mandate of this administrative agency is significantly vague:

Le CGF est d’abord un organe d’études et de législation; il peut soit prendre lui-même l’initiative d’élaborer des textes à caractère familial, soit veiller à ce que le point de vue familial n’échappe pas aux études poursuivies par d’autres administrations.

En fait le CGF non seulement prépare les lois qui touchent directement et spécialement aux intérêts de la Famille mais il a encore le pouvoir de viser toutes les lois établies par les autres ministères quand celles-ci ont des incidences familiales. Pouvoir étendu et nécessaire qui doit permettre au CGF d’imprégner toute notre législation d’un caractère familial.56 (my emphasis)

This familialist fantasy (of total legislative "impregnation") surely speaks to the impotence of SEFS/CGF in political terms. Precisely because it was denied direct influence, a real budget or ministry, the CGF was left to "imagine" the entire political terrain as fertile, accessible ....

Taking seriously the role of "animateur," the CGF launched a vigorous propaganda campaign to raise public consciousness about the family. This campaign -- supposedly undertaken at the personal initiative of Pétain -- was partly funded by

55 ibid. Perhaps the analogy reveals an appropriate reality of ruthless internal war and purge, not usually highlighted by Vichy familiaux.

56 ibid.
money raised by the *loi du 28 juin 1941* and organized through the *Office de Publicité Générale*, in conjunction with the *Centre de Coordination et d’Action des Mouvements Familiaux* and the *Secours National*. It was perhaps the most successful public intervention and activity of Vichy’s family policy, certainly one of its more coherent and conspicuous initiatives. For this reason and because Vichy’s familialist ideology has not been properly contextualised, it is worth looking in some detail at the language of the 1941 "compagne de propaganda en faveur de la famille".

This campaign was in response to a double necessity according to the CGF:

--- Nécessité à restaurer la Famille française, dont la désagréation est à l’origine de notre décadence et de notre défaite
--- Nécessité, pour y parvenir, de transformer le climat français et l’état d’esprit de nos concitoyens en employant tous les moyens d’expression que la propagande met aujourd’hui à la disposition de ceux qui ont la charge de diriger l’État.57

Behind the banality and apparent neutrality of this statement lay some significant political assertions. Firstly, even in late 1941, the axiom that social decadence caused the Defeat retained its currency. Secondly, the political crisis linked to the "disaggregation" of the family was to be resolved by a "restoration" of the family. This notion has remained such a reflexive posture of the Right that it is hard to reconstruct

57 Note d’Information. Secrétariat d’État à la Famille et la Santé. CGF. AN: AG II 498.
its specific impact and shape in 1941. What was this "French" family? What were the actual indicators of its "disaggregation"? And, finally, where was the model historical French family that was stronger, larger, more cohesive, that it was necessary to "restore"? This privileging of a discourse of "family" with its intrinsic gender politics (and selective use of French history) was an intensely political process (a recurring construction) that permeated and framed the state's activities, establishing a "commonsensical" political idiom and set of values (the home as haven/refuge, the family unit and the sexual division of labor as "natural," etc.) that justified and delineated appropriate social policy.

This discourse can be directly related to the political moment of 1940 and to the crises of the previous decades, as we have seen in Chapter 1. But there is nothing inevitable about its appearance nor its shape. The contemporary discourse on women and family was markedly different in other countries. But even contemporary commentators tended to downplay or "homogenise" antifeminisms, reducing the French, Italian and German variants to "Kinder, Kirche und Kuche" when, in fact, they were culturally and politically

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distinct.\textsuperscript{59}

On the other hand, it is important to recognise that the ideology of family (even when or especially) when activated, turned on practices of affirmation, delineation and exclusion that had direct material consequences. The promotion of an idealised French family in a massive propaganda campaign did not just validate or valorise a preexistent phenomenon or set of policies that are easily distinguishable (the famille nombreuse or allocations familiales etc). It also disguised a parallel process of "de-legitimation", creating its own "new" moral order in which some families are not real families, or some people are not really French. The fate of Jewish families must be seen in the context.\textsuperscript{60} There are many critical "silences" in Vichy's family discourse:

\textit{...pour travailler efficacement à la RENAISSANCE FRANCAISE, il faut tout reprendre par la base et reconstituer le tissu même de la Patrie en remettant la Famille en honneur et en suscitant à travers la France des centaines de milliers de FOYERS INDESTRUCTIBLES, où le culte de nos traditions nationales s'allierait à cet esprit d'entreprise et d'audace qu'on rencontre généralement au sein des familles nombreuses. Faisons appel de la défaite de nos armes, en restaurant la fécondité et les vertus familiales de la race.}

A l'heure où il est nécessaire d'offrir à la Communauté nationale une MYSTIQUE et où l'occupation des deux tiers du territoire métropolitain interdit de proposer à l'opinion une mystique politique, il apparaît que la restauration des véritables VALEURS FAMILIALES est la

\textsuperscript{59} For example, Thomas Kernan, France on Berlin Time, (Lippincott: New York, 1941) p145: "The Vichy Government is preaching a French version of "Kinder, Kirche, Küche")."

\textsuperscript{60} Paxton and Marrus, \textit{Vichy France and the Jews}; S. Klarsfeld, \textit{Vichy-Auschwitz}. 
tâche essentielle qui s'impose à la Propaganda Française.61

The "mystique familiale" does not just substitute for the "mystique politique" though. It enfolds and reshapes it, directing it toward the "private sphere":

TRAVAIL, FAMILLE, PATRIE ... C'est sur le terme central de cette trilogie que l'on peut faire porter actuellement avec le plus de liberté l'effort principal. Derrière la porte de chaque foyer français, la France continue de vivre, même en zone occupée, même en zone interdite. Encore faut-il que, dans chaque maison, vive une famille française digne de ce nom.62

To reach the still-living France "au foyer" and to promote French families worthy of the name, it was necessary to use every medium: press, radio, cinema,63 public exhibitions, street posters and local meetings. The Commissariat Général, from October 1941 to February 1942, directed a five-stage campaign in which it dictated the principal themes:

* la dénatalité française
* la politique familiale de l'Etat français
* les familles nombreuses
* la famille dans la nation
* l'enfant, espoir de la France.64

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62 ibid.,p.2.(This text was discussed in Chapter 1,p70)

63 There is no systematic account of women or family in the iconography of Vichy/Occupation cinema, but it receives brief mention in E.Strebel, "Vichy Cinema and Propaganda" in Film and Propaganda of World War II (ed) K.M.Short (Univeristy of Tennessee Press, 1983). See also Jeanie Semple, "Ambiguities in the Film Le Ciel est à vous" in Roderick Kedward and Roger Austin (eds.)Vichy France and the Resistance: Culture and Ideology (London: Croom Helm, 1985) p123-132.

64 Note d'Information, p.4.
The themes were to be systematically taken up: "Il s'agit d'une action massive, ordonnée, cohérente, obsédente, convaincante, réglée dans ses moindres détails et poursuivie pendant des années".\textsuperscript{65}

Given the limitations imposed by the Occupation, the importance of "cadres" in this national process was explicitly recognised:

un contact direct et personnel sera établi par le CGF avec les hautes personnalités administratives, les diverses autorités et les cadres dirigeants des diverses régions françaises.\textsuperscript{66}

While this is, at one level, a simple reflection of the political preferences of the Révolution Nationale for "cadres", at another level it is a clear indicator of the belief (which we will see again later) in "moral elites," select groups of "chefs" or professionals, who can lead, instruct, inspire and elevate "les masses". The operation of family politics further underlines the class specificity of Vichy. Not (as Kedward remarks) that Vichy operated one dimensionally for the exclusive benefit of the "ruling/capitalist" class (although its social/economic policies clearly benefitted them) but more generally that this anti-democratic regime consistently reinforced the authority of (bourgeois) cadres and saw itself paternalistically "acting upon" the "classes populaires." In family politics, as in the

\textsuperscript{65} ibid, p.4.

\textsuperscript{66} ibid, p.6.
Révolution Nationale generally, class struggle might be denied but class differences were accentuated by the politics of moral order.

A glimpse of how the working-class is imagined reveals this class element of Vichy paternalism:

Si le sentiment familial-suivant le témoignage de tous ceux qui travaillent actuellement à la rééducation des milieux populaires est resté vivant jusque dans les classes les plus déshéritées de la population, ce sentiment est devenu instinctif: il n'engendre plus la vertu de sacrifice, de dévouement et de conquête; il est simplement comme le souvenir persistant, au fond des hommes de notre peuple, de traditions plusieurs fois séculaires.67

This offers a telling view of the remoteness of CGF bureaucrats, absorbed in their own analysis of social degeneracy to the point where the material life of families becomes invisible. When does the CGF speak of the actual sacrifice or devotion of any family in the winter of 1941?

Again we have to go beyond the appalling irony of that time -- Vichy propagandises on the primacy of the family while the POWs stay in Germany, the Relève breaks up other families, the crisis of ravitaillement deepens, Jews are arrested and deported, hostages are shot.... We must contextualise propaganda and policy as intrinsic elements of a familialist ideology whose internal logic may indeed dictate these apparent contradictions. Family politics are never neutral. At Vichy the discourse on the family was institutionally underdeveloped, in terms of budget and

67 ibid.
bureaucracy. But its political resonance and authority were almost limitless. The regime invoked "family" and a "natural order" to underpin its political agenda. Familialism legitimized Vichy, "depoliticised" its Révolution Nationale and served to disguise different complex oppressions against Jews, foreigners, women, homosexuals, as well as complex cynicisms, such as the export of French labor. The specific articulations in policy in education, work, sexuality and welfare will be examined in chapters 3 - 6. Here it is important to follow through the language, iconography and structures that "radiated" familialism from Vichy and Paris through both zones. What were the images that predominated in the four month long propaganda campaign?

Perhaps one of the most obvious themes was the timeless virtues of both the family and maternal love. The latter particularly is abstracted and honored. The front page of La Terre Française for November 1, 1941 gives a graphic example. On the one side is Morisot's Le Berceau with its "thème éternelle," illustrating the serenity, watchfulness and devotion of the mother with her sleeping child. On the other side is Bulles de Savon with the sexless, "timeless" charm of mother/child intimacy. Both come under "Réalités" and frame articles on "La Femme et La Vie d'Intérieur" and "La Famille et ses liens surnaturels." The whole page is rounded off by an interview with the (handsome) smiling Dr. Huard, Secrétaire d'Etat à la Famille et à la Santé, whose paternal
message centers on the rural family and depopulation of the countryside.68

This message, though adapted to the readership of La Terre, is the standard one: a national renaissance relies on a familial renaissance, which the government is promoting. The same simple propaganda messages are reworked depending on the specific targeted clientele but interchangeable phrases and themes are reiterated constantly.69 These fit broadly into a conceptual time-frame involving past, present and future dimensions within which views of population decline, women’s role, the Empire etc. are discussed.

From the past comes the perspectives of decline and degeneracy, the teleological explanations:

En réalité, 150 ans après la révolution économique et politique qui a marqué la fin de notre XVIIIe siècle, le libéralisme avait développé chez nous toutes ses conséquences. Le peuple français avait cessé d’être une communauté de familles pour devenir une cohue d’individus poursuivant ... les jouissances matérielles que notre civilisation leur offrait à profusion.

C’est là, dans cette déviation du sentiment familial par tout un système économique et politique, qu’était la véritable cause de la dénatalité et de la faiblesses française.70

La cour de Riom jugera ... des responsabilités personnelles et immédiates dans notre défaite ... mais il

68 La Terre Française, 1 novembre 1941. Romier’s article is discussed below, Chapter 5, at greater length. On this theme generally, see E. Badinter, L’Amour En Plus. Paris: Flammarion, 1980.

69 For an identical article by Huard, for example, addressed to the communes, see La France Municipal, 31 octobre, 1941.

70 Le Journal de Normandie, 27 octobre 1941.
n'a jamais été question de ceux qui, surtout au lendemain de notre épuissante victoire de 1918, n'ont pas compris que notre insuffisante natalité allait le vouer à l'effacement progressif du nombre des grandes puissances.  

And looking into the future brings panic and a sense of impending doom. Indeed, the status of the family, and familles nombreuses especially, called into question the very existence of a future France: "Il n'y aura de France qu'autant qu'il y aura des Francais. Il n'y aura d'Empire qu'autant qu'il y a des Francais à y envoyer." If the future created a sense of urgency, it was also true that there was a deliberate vagueness about its political contours. It is hard to gauge, for example, where exactly this stronger, repopulated, family-centered France and Empire fitted in the Nazi New Order. Indeed Germany was rarely mentioned. Occasionally there were favorable reviews of German family policy which further depoliticised the subject: "Les résultats de cette action (en Allemagne) ont été prodigieux tant au point de vue de la quantité que de la qualité des enfants nés de tous ces efforts démographiques et raciaux". But generally the explicit eugenicist and racist language of Nazi policy was eschewed in favor of indigenous familialism. The articles that mention Germany are usually

71 Mémorial, 12 novembre 1941.
72 Le Figaro, 15 octobre 1941. (My emphasis.)
73 Vrai, No.3, 15 novembre 1941, P.Allard "Ce que l'Allemagne a fait".
in the collaborationist press. The SEFS/CGF avoids all mention of Germany.

Indeed, as if the future was too one-dimensional the emphasis was strategically located in the present, although the tenor was consistently vague:

Aujourd'hui le Maréchal a donné à la France nouvelle un mot d'ordre triple: "Famille, Travail, Patrie." Famille, d'abord! Il s'agit de créer un milieu favorable à la famille. Mieux: il est nécessaire de susciter chez les jeunes une véritable religion de la famille. Que les Français retrouvent avec le goût de danger, celui de l'audace et du risque, indispensable à celui qui fond un foyer.74

It is interesting that "danger," "audace" and "risque" were qualities seen as indispensable to starting a family and building a home. These are male-identified qualities but it is, in this account, the "femme au foyer" whose participation and mobilisation were required: "Il n'y a d'"intérieur" français que par les soins de la femme, selon ses goûts et sous son autorité" (Romier).75

The CGF was careful to include women within the targeted audience, specifically encouraging women's magazines to print editorials, such as that in Le Petit Echo de la Mode:

Le Jardin des Ames: Voulez-Vous Que la France Vive? Chères Lectrices, au coeur si français, il n'est pas sûr qu'elle vive, notre France ... Pourquoi n'y aurait-il plus de France? La réponse est simple: parce qu'il n'y aura plus

74 L'Atelier, 1 novembre 1941.
75 La Terre Française, 1 novembre 1941. See above.
This echoed Huard’s interview on dénatalité in Vrai in which he spoke of Hamlet’s and France’s dilemma, "Etre ou ne pas être." Again the collaborationist press took a more active view:

Nous en avons assez de passer pour d’éternelles "cocottes," des femmes faciles, ou pis encore, pour des "bonnes raccommodatrices de chaussettes." Dans tous les pays d’Europe on nous admire comme "poupée". Nous devons réagir, nous grouper et livrer notre corps aux efforts physiques, afin que nous ayons la robustesse et la puissance de nos amies étrangères et que nos puissances donner à la nation nouvelle des enfants sains.

This call to womanly vigor and physical activity was also an indictment:

Oui, Femmes de France, voila ce que vous étiez et êtes encore, au moment où notre pays meurtri a besoin de vous plus que jamais. Venez aux sports, vous n’aurez plus de temps de médire car vous vous rendez compte que vous, plus qu’aucune autre, avez besoin d’être reformée, tant au point de vue physique qu’au point de vue moral.

Other articles, in the guise of presenting "le point de vue féminin", blamed feminism and individualism for depopulation and then waxed lyrical on the joys of maternity,

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76 See Note d’Information on the inclusion of women’s magazines. For women’s magazines during the whole period of the Occupation, see C. Constantini, "La Presse Féminine d’Occupation". Thèse, Paris: Université de droit, d’économie et de sciences politiques, 1980.

77 Above, Chapter I.

78 L’Appel, 6 novembre 1941. This paper’s activist tone is evident also in its advertisements for "La Campagne Catholique Contre le Bolchévisme" and "La Ligue Française" and in its anti-Semitic propaganda.

79 ibid.
"acquiescement libre et joyeux du corps de l'âme, contribution de la créature au plan divin qui la dépasse, lumière de beauté et de poésie illuminant la médiocrité quotidienne." 80

Beyond the sentimental "biologizing" of maternalism that often underlies these propaganda pieces, it may be true that the CGF-inspired campaign did touch some subjective experience of "la médiocrité quotidienne". These texts cannot be read simply as conspiratorial manipulations of male and female "false consciousness". Women perhaps derived some satisfaction from the presence and valorization of their labour(s) in official propaganda, a rare if overblown acknowledgement of motherhood. 81 Only the feminists of the PCF actively resisted the family discourse of the government and contested the meaning of family, support and home, which Vichy had appropriated. 82 It is certainly impossible to assess response or "success" directly. We can only guess at the general public reaction and speculate that this particular propaganda campaign enjoyed at worst a neutral reception. Although it is extravagant to claim that Vichy's family policy or this propaganda was a "success" (on the basis that, for example, the birth rate rose from 1942 on),

80 L'Illustration, 8 novembre 1941. Marcelle Tinayre, "Le Problème de la Natalité: Le point de vue féminin.

81 Kedward, op.cit.

82 P. Schwartz
it is possible to assess the 1941 campaign in its own terms.

Judging by the extensive press coverage and the numerous parallel projects, the CGF did get family and population on the agenda publically. At the cinema there were news inserts, like *Jardin Sans Fleur*, *Vivre* and *Alert*, there were radio programs like *France-Famille* and a whole series of posters and brochures like *La Maternité Embellit* and *L’Instituteur et Son Rôle dans la Restauration de la Famille Française*. The latter, actually a lengthy pamphlet with a preface by Paul Haury, was distributed through the Inspecteurs de l’Académie, with 150,000 copies printed in its first edition. A major element of the propaganda campaign, *L’Instituteur* received favorable reviews in the press for the SEFS:

Cette brochure constitue un véritable chef d’oeuvre du genre: papier et typographie de luxe, illustrations en couleurs. Le Commissariat Général à la Famille a jugé avec raison que l’Art est un agent puissant de propagande; il a tenu à le mobiliser au service d’une cause qui est essentielle.

As well as these publications, there were official posters distributed to local authorities. One such was the tricolored triptych: [Illustrats.2,3,4 over]

**TOI QUI VEUT REBATIR LA FRANCE**

83 It served as a model for other pamphlets on the role of the Pharmacien, Etudiant etc. AN: AG II 498 cc 79 bis. These brochures were also distributed by the ANCD to the *Chantiers de la Jeunesse* and the *Centres de la Jeunesse* for local "conférences". *Revue* de l’ANCD, No.339, janvier 1942.

84 *La Patriote des Pyrénées*, 15 novembre 1941. This brochure is discussed again in Chapter 3.
126

Donne lui d'abord des enfants

DONNER LA VIE
Engendre la joie

LA FAMILLE
Fruit du passé
Germe de l'Avenir

This was printed, with German permission, for both zones, in
different sizes and printings, numbering about 400,000.85

Other posters, addressed to the Prefectures, mairies,
libraries and hospitals, in editions of 25,000 to 30,000
each, were "informational" propaganda, setting out in details
the material advantages and current entitlements of different
familial constituencies. These included Jeune, Tu Dois
Savoir, Chefs de Famille, Voici Vos Droits, Paysan, Père de
Famille, Voici Vos Droits?, Jeune Paysan, Tu Dois Savoir.86

The tone of these posters is simple, direct and paternal,
with a presumed male audience (despite the obvious absence of
so many rural chefs de famille, women do not replace the
symbolic male authority) and the iconography is static and
banal. Again time and space are framed, still, not intruded
upon by the harsher realities represented in other
contemporary propaganda.87

85 AN: AG II 498 cc 79 b.

86 These posters and the benefits they advertised will be
discussed in Chapter 6 (Welfare).

87 It is important to contrast the iconography of this
familialist propaganda with other contemporary propaganda,
such as the frequent Avis Au Population warnings from the
Germans about "terrorism" or the propaganda inviting French
workers to go to Germany.
TOI QUI VEUX REBÂTIR LA FRANCE...

...DONNE LUI D'ABORD

ENFANTS

SECRÉTARIAT D'ÉTAT À LA FAMILLE ET À LA SANTÉ. COMMISSARIAT GÉNÉRAL À L'AÉFAMILLE.
DONNER LA VIE...

...ENGENDRE

LA JOIE

SECRETARIAT D'ÉTAT À LA FAMILLE ET À LA SANTÉ. COMMISSARIAT GÉNÉRAL À LA FAMILLE.
LA FAMILLE

FRUIT DU PASSÉ, GERME DE L’AVENIR
This timeless quality, as well as a conspicuous sexlessness, is evident too in a series of cartoons produced as part of this campaign. One dimensional characters enact the familialist scripts assigned them. These images are "destinés à contre-balancer le ridicule attaché aux familles nombreuses" but they convey a male/gendered relationship to family that in fact often emphasizes distance and parodies familial relations.

1. Tu Préfère un Petit Frère?
2. Pourquoi il a l’air triste?
3. Comment voulez-vous que je vous réconcile?88

Perhaps the greatest success of the CGF, in terms of promoting its own axioms and perspectives to a large audience was the Concours-Référendum, which produced half a million replies (and, therefore, presumably an even larger number of passive/non-participatory readers). The Concours was widely advertised, demonstrating the productive potential of the relationship between the SEFS and the family movement, represented in the CCAMF.89 The winning answer -- that depopulation was caused by "absence ou insuffisance de religion" -- tells us that the public understood (if not necessarily was convinced by) the government’s discourse in all its "missionary" fervour. The CGF did succeed in the

88 AN: AG II 498 cc 79. [Illustrat.5 over]

89 For a full discussion see above, Chapter 1, p.57.
— Pourquoi qu'il a l'air triste le monsieur ?
— C'est parce qu'il n'a pas de petits enfants pour se promener avec lui comme moi avec vous.

— Si j'avais su ce que c'était que vieillir célibataire !

GOSSE D'AUJOURD'HUI
— Qu'est-ce que tu aimes mieux ? Un cheval mécanique ou un chemin de fer électrique ?
— J'aime mieux six petits frères.

— Comment voulez-vous que je vous réconcilie ?
propaganda campaign in establishing its own institutional profile and getting its political agenda on the family publicised. Although it cannot be quantified, consciousness of the government’s family discourse (and of some specific proposals) was heightened.\(^90\) This campaign was perhaps the highest point of Vichy’s family crusade. What was the reaction of the CGF’s allies?

According to the ANCD, the CGF’s propaganda had unquestionably succeeded "à mettre la question de la Famille à l’ordre du jour, à attirer sur elle l’attention et les réflexions du public". But this paradoxically raised an important "inquiétude":

Inquiétude, parce que ces réalisations partielles restent très inférieures à celles qu’attendent les éléments les meilleures et les plus méritants de la nation, dont les espoirs ont été suscités, d’abord par les déclarations du Maréchal et les principes qu’il a posés, ensuite par la propagande même du Commissariat Général à la Famille. Tout ce papier commande des actes. La meilleure propagande pour une administration publique, c’est son fonctionnement même, ce sont des résultats.\(^91\) (my emphasis)

Concern about paper was not an idle one in the France of 1942. Georges Pernot, as President of the Fédération d’Association des Familles Nombreuses de France, wrote to Renaudin in November 1941, complaining about the failure to supply his organization with sufficient paper to print the

\(^{90}\) The subject of assessing public opinion is notoriously difficult but nowhere more so than in Vichy France. cf. R.Austin; Crémieux-Brilhac & Simon.

\(^{91}\) Revue de l’ANCD, No.343, mai 1942, p.89.
proposed 60,000 copies of the special propaganda issue of "Familles de France". Pernot remarked bitterly

Alors que tant de journaux, dont le moins qu'on puisse dire est qu'ils ne favorisent en rien la politique préconisée par le Maréchal, se voient attribuer une quantité considérable de papier, vous estimez... qu'il est injustifiable qu'un organe qui a pour but unique le développement de la politique familiale se voit dans l'impossibilité de faire l'oeuvre de propagande.92

On the other hand, a confidential report in January 1942, complained that despite the paper shortage there were so many posters on city walls that no one read them any longer and the government needed "une politique rationelle de l'affichage".93

Government and Association Cooperation

This raises several practical points about the viability of propaganda campaigns and the government and family associations' material latitude of action under the Occupation. It certainly underscores the real success of the 1941-1942 propaganda campaign in getting family politics publicised as widely as it did, given the paucity of resources and the difficulty of communications. But what of the criticism that unfavorably juxtaposed political word and action under Vichy?

92 Letter AN: AGII 605 cm 19 e.
Si l'on s'en tient aux discours et aux écrits, point de doute: la politique familiale du Gouvernement est tellement à l'ordre du jour que les ministres rivalisent presque à qui s'en fera l'interprète...la Presse fait à la Famille une place de choix...
Mais, dans la pratique, nous sommes loin de compte.94

Lefèvre-Dibon, President of the ANCD, enumerated certain failures: the anti-familial character of many sections of the Administration and bureaucracy, the slowness of legislative reforms ("une lenteur telle qu'on se demande si ces retards sont fortuits ou voulus"), the lack of increased material benefits. But his analysis was still sympathetic:

Nous ne mettons ici en doute ni la bonne volonté, ni le labeur, ni la ténacité des hommes, qui, autour du Dr. Huard et du Commissaire Général à la Famille, travaillent à traduire en actes la politique familiale voulue par le Maréchal. Nous mesurons simplement, à la lenteur des résultats, l'importance des obstacles qui entrent ou paralysent leur action. Nous leur devons un concours d'autant plus énergique... seul le succès de leurs efforts rendra possible ce relèvement de la France qu'il ne suffit pas de désirer comme un but mais dont il faut d'abord vouloir les moyens.95

Most familialists accepted the "bonne volonté" of the new state a priori: "Notre association n'avant plus à combattre un Etat hostile mais à collaborer avec un Etat soucieux de faire aux familles nombreuses la situation morale et matérielle à laquelle elles ont droit".96 The absence of any critique of collaboration -- indeed of any reference to the...
Germans or the war -- is an extraordinary reflection of how blindly partisan familialists could be in their "apolitical" loyalty to Vichy. This suspension of normal political perspective and the mobilisation of such "good will" toward the State was critical. It made possible joint action between the family movement and the government and it underwrote the projects of those inside and outside government.

In the operation and continuation of the propaganda campaign, for example, it is apparent that the active participation and cooperation of the family movement gave the CGF the necessary cadres, resources and audience for a national and localised campaign. Throughout 1942-43 different constituencies were reached, thanks to the alliance of CGF Délégués Régionaux, CCAMF member organizations, the Secours National etc. The ANCD produced brochures like "Advantages Réservés aux Familles Françaises" (of which the SEFS bought 36,500 copies, costing 86,000 francs, to be distributed by the Présidents). This demonstrated the new, official profile of that organization, as well as the CGF's reliance on preexistent structures/materials and familialist collaboration. But what was the price of this collaboration between the government and the family movement?

97 In 1942 there were 23 Délégués Régionaux and 37 Délégués Adjoints.

98 According to the ANCD, it was owed 100,000 francs by the SEFS and Instruction Publique. Compte-Rendu de l'ANCD, p.96.
Ideologically some, at least, were skeptical of too close an identification. At the Assemblée Générale of the ANCD in Lyon (7 February 1942), one delegate was reported to have complained that:

l'Alliance ne conserve pas assez la neutralité qui lui impose ses statuts dans certains de ses articles approuvant la nouvelle trilogie des mots Travail, Famille, Patrie, lancée par le chef de l'État. Il regrette les trois anciens mots Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité dont il exalte la beauté. M. Landry reconnaît que les uns et les autres ont leurs valeurs. Le Président ... estime que ce n'est pas faire de la politique que d'approuver le Chef de l'État pour lequel la question famille est une des principales préoccupations qui a su donner dans le pays une compulsion à l'esprit familial qui nous manquait tant et qui enfin a failli prendre les très importants mesures que l'on sait en faveur de la famille. Après échange de vues, la majorité des membres présents aprouvent le Président.99 (my emphasis)

The notion of what it is to "faire de la politique" is central to this present study which argues for the political implications of all gendered policies, as well as to the interpretations of "collaboration" with Vichy and to the interpretation of the apoliticism of familialism itself. Here it is important to focus not on the ideological dimensions of Vichy's familialism per se but -- somewhat schematically -- on its structural underpinnings and to ask in this context what came of the alliance of CGF and family /natalist associations.

Firstly, although the family movement accepted the "goodwill" of the CGF and Pétain, it did not hesitate to lobby and argue with ministers and bureaucrats at all levels.

99 Compte-Rendu de l’ANCD, p.100.
and in all departments, continuously invoking the Maréchal’s devotion to the family. From reduced train fares to rotten eggs, from P.O.W.s to enseignement ménager, local and national representatives of the family movement targeted the administration with criticisms and suggestions. Clearly there were raised expectations among those partisans of the Révolution Nationale: the regime of the Maréchal should deliver more than la gueuse.

Secondly, the formal incorporation of these familiaux -- their political representation -- was to be accomplished through the Loi Gounot. Coutrot has called this law "une des innovations les plus importants et les plus originales de Vichy en matière de législation familiale." Renaudin instructed the Délégués Régionaux on the "portée primordiale de la loi" and told them "Laissez les initiatives privées se développer et intervenez ensuite en arbitre ou pour agréer". The laissez-faire principles of Vichy’s family politics were most evident in this law which sought to mobilize, affiliate and regulate (without dictating to or taking over) the various family associations. Conferring the status "de droit semi-public" on this "Association de

100 For the affair of the rotten eggs and the complaints of the local Ligue des Familles Nombreuses, see Le Petit Parisien, 15 avril 1942, AN: 72 AJ 1846. On the ANCD, see Compte Rendu, pp.84-85; for diverse lobbying, see AN: AGII 605 cm 19a.

101 A. Coutrot, op.cit., p.251.

102 Bulletin de Liaison, no.9, 15 mars 1943.
Familles", the law envisaged that this body would advise "les Pouvoirs Publics" on all matters pertaining to the family, nominate representatives to all local and national committees, assemblies and public organizations, develop "l'esprit familial" in families themselves and amongst the public, collaborate with the professions on issues affecting the family, fight public immorality and "les fléaux sociaux", defend and promote the family and support the Centre de Coordination.  

It was a mission entirely in line with the desires of familiaux and the structures of Vichy's politics, corporatist/vocational, hierarchical and "apolitical" (where neither "l'esprit familial" nor "les fléaux sociaux" are problematised). For the ANCD it was an answer to the absence of solid, familialist/natalist "roots":

Tel est le danger pour la politique familiale: qu'il n'y ait là que des idées, des velléités, des institutions plus ou moins solides, mais sans racines suffisantes et à la merci d'un changement d'équipe gouvernementale.

L'essential est donc actuellement de faire prendre racine à l'organisation familiale.... Il faut -- en haut, des cadres gouvernementaux d'où émane l'autorité et qui aient en mains les pouvoirs nécessaires, non seulement pour prendre les mesures qui s'imposent mais pour les faire appliquer -- en bas, une organisation fortement enracinée dans tous les milieux et capable de donner à la politique familiale du Gouvernement un solide point d'appui dans le réalité.

The Loi Gounot in effect presented the diverse family

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104 Revue de l'ANCD p.113, no.345, juillet 1942.
organizations with optional affiliation into a local and a regional Association, which were in turn grouped into a National Federation. Membership was open to French, "legitimate" families. Election to the comités directeurs of each association was to be by "suffrage familial", with half the places being reserved for chefs de famille of three or more children.

This law was the work of one of the sub-commissions of the Comité Consultatif, whose members included Paul Robert, Louis Salleron of the Corporation Paysanne, Commandant Sautriau of the Cabinet Civil, vice Amiral de Penfentenyo, abbé Viollet of the Confédération Générale de la Famille, and Emmanuel Gounot, the commission’s Rapporteur after whom the Statute

105 There were serious disagreements among familiaux about what constituted the appropriate model family unit, whether it should be exclusively the large family -- and if this meant 3, 4, or 5 and more children -- and whether other families should be allowed representation. Duval Arnould, President of the ANCD and La Plus Grande Famille, argued for 5 children to be the official "norm". AN: AGII 605 cm 19a. One familialist, a retired naval captain, complained to a SEFS chargé de mission that Abbé Viollet’s organization (the Confédération Générale de la Famille) wanted to allow all households to be represented: "cette grande association...de tendance socialiste et même communiste chrétien, fait du mauvais travail". (23 mars 1943) AN: AGII 605 cm 19a. It seems too that left-wing family organizations found it more difficult to get "access" at Vichy. See Renaudin’s report, AN: AGII 497 cc 79b.

106 The "avant-projet" specified that the authority of the chef was to be exercised by "le père, ou, en cas de décès, d'absence ou de déchéance du père, par la mère." AN: AGII 605 cm 19c.
This group comprised Catholic familiaux and jurists whose concern was to see the family not just represented politically but formally recognised as a public institution. The delay in the law's appearance and ratification was not due to this group but instead to interdepartmental slowness and the opposition of the Ministère des Finances.

The discussions of the Centre National de Coordination had focussed on the relationship of existing family associations to the new association "de droit semi-public", the question of membership dues, the autonomy of individual family associations and the liberty of action of each local organization after the law's enactment. The Statut had been presented to the Comité Consultatif de la Famille, and approved on 22 October 1941, and it was one of the major frustrations of its supporters that it took over twelve months to appear in the Journal Officiel. It took another twelve months before the administrative regulations regarding the law went into effect. By August 1944, only three departmental Unions had been created. Although annulled at the Liberation, the Loi Gounot reemerged in the

107 Gounot was "ancien batonnier de l'Ordre des avocats à la Cour d'Appel de Lyons" and President of the Ligue des Familles Nombreuses de Lyon, as well as a Professor in the Semaines Sociales. He later became the President of the Union des Familles du Rhone.

108 Compte-Rendu de l'ANCD, p.96.

109 This was the work of Rouast (see above).
Ordonnance du 3 mars 1945 which established the Union National des Associations Familiales (UNAF) "de représenter officiellement l’ensemble des familles françaises auprès des pouvoirs publics".110

Despite its apparently slim results, the Loi Gounot was an important symbolic achievement for proponents of Vichy’s family politics. It allowed for a structural alliance between government and grass-roots that incorporated "family" officially into the public agenda. It provided a mechanism for direct consultation and representation. Daniel Parker, Secrétaire Générale of the Confédération Générale de la Famille, expressed the satisfaction of familiaux:

La Révolution Nationale que poursuit la France nouvelle ne nous a donné, jusqu’ici, que peu de réalisations comparables à celle dont la loi du 29 décembre ...qui constitue la charte du mouvement familial français.

Les associations familiales...voient aujourd’hui le succès couronner pleinement leurs efforts, puisqu’aussi bien, possédant maintenant l’investiture légale de l’État, qui leur reconnaît un rôle officiel (représentation des familles, capacité juridique et droit de gérer certains services) elles peuvent désormais établir la liaison entre l’État et les familles et mettre ainsi au service de la rénovation française toutes les énergies profondes de la vie familiale.111

When one considers the panoply of organizations vying for influence in this realm -- from the ANCD, the family associations, like the Confédération Générale de la Famille

110 The revision of the Loi Gounot in 1944-45 was undertaken by Robert Prigent, Renaudin’s successor; the "réunion d’études" included Georges Pernot and other familiaux. See Pernot "La Politique Familiale en France", op.cit.

Ordonnance du 3 mars 1945 which established the Union National des Associations Familiales (UNAF) "de représenter officiellement l’ensemble des familles françaises auprès des pouvoirs publics".\textsuperscript{110}

Despite its apparently slim results, the Loi Gounot was an important symbolic achievement for proponents of Vichy’s family politics. It allowed for a structural alliance between government and grass-roots that incorporated "family" officially into the public agenda. It provided a mechanism for direct consultation and representation. Daniel Parker, Secrétaire Générale of the Confédération Générale de la Famille, expressed the satisfaction of familiaux:

La Révolution Nationale que poursuit la France nouvelle ne nous a donné, jusqu’ici, que peu de réalisations comparables à celle dont la loi du 29 décembre ...qui constitue la charte du mouvement familial français. Les associations familiales..voient aujourd’hui le succès couronner pleinement leurs efforts, puisqu’aussi bien, possédant maintenant l’investiture légale de l’État, qui leur reconnaît un rôle officiel (représentation des familles, capacité juridique et droit de gérer certains services) elles peuvent désormais établir la liaison entre l’État et les familles et mettre ainsi au service de la rénovation française toutes les énergies profondes de la vie familiale.\textsuperscript{111}

When one considers the panoply of organizations vying for influence in this realm -- from the ANCD, the family associations, like the Confédération Générale de la Famille

\textsuperscript{110} The revision of the Loi Gounot in 1944-45 was undertaken by Robert Prigent, Renaudin’s successor; the "réunion d’études" included Georges Pernot and other familiaux. See Pernot "La Politique Familiale en France", op.cit.

\textsuperscript{111} AFIP (13 janvier 1943). AN: 72 AJ 1854.
and La Plus Grande Famille, the UFCS and the Catholic organizations like the LOC and the JOC (as well as their female counterparts), to the education-focussed groups, like APEL, Lettres, Arts et Famille and Ecole des Parents -- one realizes the difficulties involved in formulating any unitary strategy or in devising a unified framework. Each organization wanted autonomy with direct influence, the benefits of state patronage without the dangers of state control, as they saw it. The Loi Gounot, like the other initiatives of the SEFS, recognised and accommodated these desires. Renaudin specifically denied any attempt at "étaticisation".\textsuperscript{112} The limitation of resources, as well as the general orientation of Vichy politics, had anyhow dictated this path.

VI Conclusion

In reviewing the personnel of family politics at Vichy, the "agents" of a discourse whose contours we will explore further in the next chapters, it is imperative to remember that there was no separate ministry of Women’s Affairs and no separate sections within the SEFS run by or for women. Women did not have a voice themselves at Vichy, as Nazi women did

\textsuperscript{112} Bulletin de Liason, No.9, mars 1943. AN: AGII 497 cc B.
in Germany, for example.\textsuperscript{113} Women were to be represented through male citizens, the chefs de famille. Of course Vichy had not specifically disenfranchised women. Women did not vote under the Third Republic and only under the Popular Front had they enjoyed token ministerial participation. Vichy effectively annulled all male political participation/elections. But women’s exclusion was both perpetuated and deepened. The operation of family politics, so intimately connected with a femme au foyer agenda as we shall see, underscores this exclusion. Within the paternalistic universe of the SEFS, the ANCD and the family movement, women did not appear or speak.\textsuperscript{114} Their interests were presumed and constructed as identical. They were not in the CGF and they were not among the committee members or luminaries who lobbied government or were interviewed by the Chef de l’Etat. Of course they were present -- as secretaries for example -- or as wives; they also comprised a large section of the grass-roots of the family movement (and the churches). But their voices were not heard and they did not represent themselves.\textsuperscript{115} The personnel of Vichy’s

\textsuperscript{113}See C. Koonz, Mothers in the Fatherland, (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1987).

\textsuperscript{114}Mme. André Michelin was apparently the sole woman involved in the higher echelons of the ANCD. See Compte Rendu, p.80.

\textsuperscript{115}The UFCS was a notable exception but their imput at Vichy was minimal. See N. Black, Social Feminism Cornell University Press, 1989.
It is difficult to assess the structures of the Révolution Nationale in this area. This chapter has dealt with the shape and aspirations of the relevant department and its relationship with its closest supporters. But the discourse on the family and gender was a multi-dimensional one, which hooked into the social politics of the regime generally, as well as being one which drew support from institutions like the church. It therefore had levels of "invisible" or unquantifiable structural support, which must be added to the balance-sheet. The ideological resonance of the famous statement on Travail, Famille, Patrie ("Ces trois mots sont les nôtres")\(^{116}\) must be matched with the practical help given by the Roman Catholic Church -- in the propaganda campaign, for example.

Occasions like the Fête des Mères showed the diversity of support available to the Commissariat Général à la Famille, from the church to the Secours National to the various family associations. Clearly, too, the family movement enjoyed a privileged role (and access). It was officially "enlisted". In terms of structures and personnel there was a significant overlap from 1940 through to 1944, a more positively-viewed collaboration than had ever existed before. Although, as we have seen, the budgetary resources available to the SEFS were

\(^{116}\) Archbishop Gerlier as quoted in J. Duquesne Les Catholiques Français Sous l’Occupation, p.44.
meagre -- especially relative to the supposed primacy of the family -- the potential for innovation and reform was significant. The following chapters will discuss how the discourse of familial order, reproduced and legitimated by the structures and personnel described here, played itself out in policy.
CHAPTER 3

ENGENDERING CHANGE: EDUCATION

Gender and Education

17 juin 1940. Voici, c’est fini. Un vieil homme qui n’a même plus la voix d’un homme, mais parle comme une vieille femme, nous a signifié à midi trente que cette nuit il avait demandé la paix. Je pense à toute la jeunesse. Il était cruel de la voir partir à la guerre. Mais est-il moins cruel de la contraindre à vivre dans un pays déshonoré?¹

In a dramatic evocation of political demasculinization and national submission, this Guehenno quotation vividly presents the dilemma of interpreting Vichy and youth, the invisible gendering of subject:

il était cruel de la voir partir à la guerre. Mais est-il moins cruel de la contraindre à vivre dans un pays déshonoré?

Young women and girls, of course, did not go off to the war — it came home to them — and their existence in a "dishonoured" country was differently experienced. (Dishonour itself is a highly gendered term.) But reading contemporary accounts of the period and subsequent historical interpretations, one might be inclined to accept a vision of

the social reality of youth and education as genderless/male and to "read" female experience as a silent, subsumable, lesser category. How is the history of young women's education in this period to be read and written?

W.D. Hall, sensitive to previous omissions, writes:

....Vichy took the traditional and Catholic line. The academically gifted girl should be steered towards a classical rather than a scientific training. Girls should be educated to become wives and mothers, the "organizers and preservers of the home". Courses should be provided for them in housecraft, child care and family legislation; there should be some artistic education; all subjects should have strong moral overtones. By contrast, as the "providers", men should have an education based upon the cult of the will and the reason. Such views were held even by otherwise enlightened Catholics, although we are not far removed from the Nazi ideology of Kinder, Kirche and Küche.²

But this acknowledgement of gender difference begs more questions than it answers. Halls does not pursue the significance of this proximity to Nazi ideology, nor the operations of gender in the youth and education policies he documents in the rest of this book. Does looking at women/gender more closely disrupt or confirm his overall analysis?

This chapter is not intended as a comprehensive account of the provision of education for girls, privately or by the State, in the period 1940-1944. My objective here is different. Recent studies have highlighted the central importance for Vichy of its schemes to mould and mobilise French youth. The significance of educational reform for the

². ibid., p.43.
Révolution Nationale -- whatever the uneveness and vicissitudes of implementation -- is now firmly established. But one dimension that is entirely lacking relates to female education, which merits investigation not just because females constitute half the population per se, but because women were a distinct subject of Vichy’s policy. On the one hand, Vichy’s "new" educational orientation and priorities did, by themselves, have certain consequences for girls being educated. On the other hand the ideological imperative of "la femme au foyer" was bound to affect the status and nature of female education. Above all, in revising the meaning of education Vichy needed to reconstitute gender boundaries, to "recreate" French youth. This discourse on gender and education needs to be mapped onto the actual educational record of the regime and the social realities of the Occupation period, for us to understand the impact of this rénovation on young people.

The initial, if superficial, view might be that girls' education, as such, does not feature significantly in the government’s plans. But Vichy’s rather one dimensional and bland discourse on girls education must be sought beyond the primary substance of its address to "futurs chefs", the

virile cadres of the hoped for rénovation nationale. The apparent absence of a female subject is misleading. In an active/masculine - passive/feminine dichotomy, it is not surprising that Vichy’s moral regeneration was to be spearheaded by young boys, formally socialised in the quasi-militaristic Chantiers or Compagnons for a later public role.4 But this still allows a role for young girls, although one beyond the passionate and engaged concerns of those like La Porte du Theuil, Lamirand, Borotra and Weygand.5 It is nonetheless an important, parallel project and one not simply reducible to the regime’s desire to see women "barefoot and pregnant in the kitchen".6

Before considering the specific educational reforms implemented by Vichy affecting girls education, it is essential to assess the discourses of education, change, and social order articulated in 1940. As in other areas (eg. employment) it can be seen that the trauma and defeat of 1940 provided the opportunity for an explicit restatement of ultra-conservative aspirations for national redressement, which were themselves based on an antifeminist, anti-individualist and authoritarian premise. There was an

4. As G. Miller remarks, the only female presence in the Chantiers was that of the occasional asistante sociale, "à la fois une soeur et une mère", La Pousse-au-Jour du Maréchal Pétain, op.cit., p.149.

5. Lamirand’s belief that young girls were a subject of Vichy’s plans for youth will be discussed below.

6 Paxton, op. cit., p. 168.
upsurge of bitter moralizing and hostile attacks on the educational system of the Third Republic and a veritable crusade against the personnel of that system, held directly responsible for the catastrophe of defeat. It is often overlooked that women formed a sizeable constituency among teachers, at all levels. Not only were they peculiarly subject to "moral" and political criticism, these professional women, institutrices, professeurs and agrégées, were, paradoxically, to be prime agents of a discourse that insisted on "la femme au foyer".

Certainly Vichy intended to mobilize and reform youth in its campaign of national redressement. Pétain made the connection explicit in 1940:

Dans l’ordre nouveau que nous instituons, la famille sera honorée, protégée, aidée; l’instruction de la jeunesse et son éducation marcheront de pair; partout où elle grandira, au foyer, à l’école, aux champs, à l’atelier, sa santé et sa vigueur seront l’objet de la sollicitude la plus attentive; et nous n’épargnerons aucun effort pour préparer à la patrie les hommes et les femmes de travail et de devoir dont elle a besoin. Lorsque nos jeunes gens, lorsque nos filles entreront dans la vie, nous ne les abuserons pas de grands mots et d’espérances illusoires; nous leur apprendrons à ouvrir les yeux tout grand sur la réalité.

This chapter deals with how education involved forming men

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7 cf Austin, Halls, Long.

8 This targeting of women should be related both to their status in small town and rural communities as well as their pre-war activism -- and often the enduring memory of First World War teachers’ pacifism, symbolised by women such as Hélène Brion.

and women for "la patrie", and how this imperative of
gendered destinies, the focus on differentiated
"hommes/femmes" and "travail/devoir", fitted within Pétainism
and was articulated in policy. Certainly there was a banal
coherence to Vichy's educational vision, a partisan
inscription of "new" realities stripped of illusion, focussed
on difference and moral opposites. Pétain announced this
refusal of 'neutrality':

La vie...ne prétendra plus à la neutralité. La vie n'est
pas neutre; elle consiste à prendre parti hardiment. Il
n'y a pas de neutralité possible entre le vrai et le
faux...le bon et le mal.

Perhaps unsurprisingly this moral agenda and the promise
of educational reform early on attracted the attention of
other conservative protagonists, like Lefebvre-Dibon, who
made familiar connections between decline, individualism and
pleasure, with a broad prescription for regeneration:

Mais il ne sera pas suffisant de favoriser
l'épanouissement de la famille, si l'on n'attaque
directement les causes profondes de la consomption qui
mine la France. C'est la base même de l'éducation qu'il
s'agit de renouveler, car l'expérience n'a que trop montré
où mène un individualisme sans frein, et c'est seulement
par la jeunesse que les nations peuvent se régénérer.
C'est dans cette jeunesse, et par une éducation orientée,
non vers le désir de jouir, mais vers la volonté de créer,
que doit renaitre le sens de la vie et de la famille,
inséparable du sentiment de la patrie.10

10. P. Lefebvre-Dibon, "Une Lettre au Maréchal Pétain",
31 juillet 1940, reprinted in Revue de l'ANCD, octobre 1940.
As President of the ANCD, Lefebvre-Dibon's interest in
connecting the natalist-familialist and educational agendas
was clear. Nonetheless his renunciation of education - that
which has failed - "orientée vers le désir de jouir" is an
evocative one.
Nor is it surprising, given the pervasive linking of pleasure, moral decline and national defeat that women were regarded as culpable in specific ways and that women’s education was specifically identified within these critiques of the past. Daniel Parker, Secrétaire-Général of the Confédération Général des Familles quoted an éducateur:

On eut la génération de la facilité au lieu de la génération de l’élan. On eut dans le monde des jeunes filles, la génération à la Marie-Claire: au lieu de se passionner pour les grandes tâches et d’avoir la soif de servir, un grand nombre ne songeait qu’à leur ligne, à leurs ongles, à leurs cils, à leurs mains ou doigts de pieds. Aucune lecture forte, le dernier roman à la mode. Trop de cinéma, trop d’auto. Se distraire, s’amuser, attendre le mariage en baguenaudant, sans action saine sur sa vie. Tel est le reproche qu’un éducateur adresse, à juste titre, à un trop grand nombre de jeunes filles d’avant-guerre.¹¹

Deriving from a recognition of this specific culpability/moral failing, as well as from a profound belief in the sacred/creative necessity of sexual difference, Vichy ideologues were hostile to egalitarian trends in education, evoking the arguments of earlier debates against female emancipation and often articulating a misogynist attack on women’s intellectual pretensions. The Vichy emphasis on education as formation was all-pervasive. Unlike the Third Republic the primary orientation was now to be vocational --

the belief in the necessity of education or socialisation for future social roles. This again accentuated class, regional and gender differences. In a gender-divided perspective this belief signified blatant antipathy to women’s non-domestic, non-reproductive ambitions, academic or professional. But it also meant education itself fulfilled a new function and depended on new definitions.

These definitions grew out of educational/ideological assumptions well established, especially in conservative Catholic and right-wing circles before 1940. But Vichy is the unique moment of their revival and adoption. While the regime’s apparent failure to translate this revival into change begs questions to be dealt with later in this paper, here it is necessary to elaborate on this discourse of education.

The preface to an official propaganda brochure entitled Aux Educatrices makes quite clear how gender functions in the educational agenda of the new France. The proper education of girls will ensure the safety and welfare of the private sphere. Indeed gender here constructs the home and domestic/social harmony. Home is "haven in a heartless world", area of shelter, comfort and reproduction:

C'est un effet autour de la préparation de la vie au foyer que doit être centré l'éducation d'une jeune fille. Ce

12. The question of race is again left aside here but there is no doubt that in Algeria, for example, education was a function of colonization and socialization for specific destinies too.
foyer cellule vivante de la patrie, sûr abri des enfants, bonheur à la mesure du coeur des hommes, ce foyer où tout nait, se préserve, se développe, c'est à elles qu'il appartient d'en défendre l'intégrité et douceur contre les ennemis du dehors et du dédans.13

The author, Madeleine Danielou, was in fact active in the promotion of a certain type of classical "feminine culture" and not antipathetic to female education as such. In 1908 she founded the Ecole Normale Libre, "pour former les cadres laïcs d’un nouvel enseignement confessionel féminin", early evidence of her unwillingness to leave the field to republican/feminist personnel.14 But, as the above quote makes obvious, she argued for certain legitimate parameters on female education for the recognition of women’s distinct destinies. Future life in the foyer determined the education to be available.

The notion of distinct and different was enthusiastically embraced, disguising antifeminism in the language of "respect", where descriptive virtues are played off against each other:

Tu conçois dès lors toute l’importance de la bonne éducation des filles. Elles aussi il faut les élever, très haut! Il faut en faire des femmes vigoureuses et saines, simples et modestes, franches et discrètes, ayant un caractère égal et gai, d’une très haute valeur morale...

13 Aux Educatrices (Commissariat Général à la Famille, Office de Publicité Général, 1942) Preface by M. Danielou (pages unnumbered).

Il faut aussi en faire de bonnes ménagères, propres, ordonnées, économées.15

Other proponents of "l’école libre" supported this distinction, of separate but "equal" and the need for an education geared to a positive ("propres, ordonnées, économées") role in the private sphere. Fenelon was quoted with approval by the Association des Parents des Ecoles Libres (APEL) amongst their "principes fondamentaux" on girls education:

Les occupations des femmes qui ne sont qu'assez moins importantes au public que celles des hommes, puisqu’elles ont une maison à régler, un mari à rendre heureux, des enfants à bien élever.16

Underlying many of these sermons on duty and virtue is indeed a determination to restate and reinscribe patriarchal privileges; women’s duty is to make their husbands happy, to restore familial hierarchy. There is a nostalgic insistence on imagined former, better-regulated days. The ideology of la femme au foyer needs to be decoded for these unifying themes and this particular element of reinscription connected to the social disruptions and supposed disaggregation of the 1930s. Vichy’s educational policies did not arrive out of the blue, in other words. They must surely be related to the social upheavals of the 1930’s, to images of the ‘New Woman’, at work and at leisure; to presumptions of women’s

15 Vice-amiral de Penfentenyo, Manuel de Père de Famille (Flammarion, 1941), p.113.

16 L’Éducation des Filles (Association des Parents des Ecoles Libres, APEL, 1941).
abandonment of the domestic sphere.

In re-establishing the significance and primacy of this domestic role for women, the specific requirements of the current "national interest" were reaffirmed:

La place de la femme est au centre et au cœur du foyer. Si elle ne l'occupe pas, en sera fini de cette rénovation nationale à laquelle on nous convie ... Dans la crise on requisitionne les citoyens. La crise existe. Elle est grave. Elle ne sera conjurée que par la requisition des épouses et des mères, requisition non pas forcée, mais plutôt appel volontaire et délibérément accueilli. L'éducation de la jeune fille doit constituer une préparation lointaine mais effective, à l'indispensable fonction conjugale et maternelle. Cela sans peine de mort pour le pays.17

It is clear that intentions regarding girls education were neither entirely separate, nor were they identical to general educational preoccupations. They were a distinct and integral element of plans for a new socialisation of youth, a mobilisation of youth defined by gender.

It is useful to review these general preoccupations afresh, therefore, from the basis of gender perceptions. The starting-point is Vichy's attack on the ancien régime's education as "une sorte d'affadissement intellectuel et moral".18 It became a cliché that "la formation est beaucoup plus importante que l'instruction".19 Indeed the tendency to "bourrage", encyclopaedic fact-cramming, was

17 ibid., p. 7.
18 Pétain, Principes de la Renovation Nationale, p. 32.
19 cf. Aux Educatrices and L'Education des Filles.
constantly criticised. 20 The new education (here focussed on French men) would be about values; its general aim a moral prescription:

Un homme vrai, altruiste, courageux est un homme sinon achevé et héroïque du moins tel qu'il doit être pour la plupart des tâches humaines. C'est à le former que l'éducation doit tendre. Il est son but et non les matières des programmes, ni les succès aux examens.21

This humanist prescription is significant not only for the way it inscribes gender into educational values but for its apparently benign reorientation away from academic competition and narrow schooling. The assertion of such values was not a neutral process, however.

A specific view of educational reform, directly related to the defeat, was given priority from the start. Education was to be privileged and previous perversions denounced:

L'éducation nationale de la formation de la jeunesse seront au premier rang de ses (Pétain's) soucis. Conscient des dangers moraux que la perversions intellectuelle et morale de certains a fait courir à une heure décisive, il favorisera de tout son pouvoir les institutions propres à développer la natalité et à protéger la famille. 22

Laval's association of education with "natalité" and "famille" may not have been as curious as it seems. The latter were antithetical to the supposed products of Third

20 Principes de la Renovation Nationale, p.34. Rivaud and Gillouin, for example, were both exponents of education over 'mere instruction'. Cf. Long, op.cit., p.68; Halls, op.cit., p.11.


22 Pierre Laval quoted by Long, op.cit., p. 82.
Republic education, the individualism and decadence symbolised by the popularity of Gide, for example. But, more importantly, the association confirmed a functionalist bias:

Sur le plan de l’école, comme partout ailleurs, s’appliquera la devise de la Révolution Nationale, mettre tous les Français à leur place, au service de la France.

Certainly gender perceptions became accentuated. The trend of Third Republic policies towards equal, undifferentiated education was hotly condemned:

Bien que la vocation de la femme ne soit pas celle de l’homme, la culture scolaire donnée aux filles ne se distingue pas actuellement de celle dispensée aux garçons. Il y a là une erreur pédagogique source de graves mécomptes. Il est urgent d’y remédier.

The partisan moral tenor of these recriminations should not lead one to belittle or discount the intentions of the reformers. In rejecting the "progress" of republican regimes, these ideologues sought a thorough-going institutionalisation of their views, so that girls might be socialised by the educational system for their primary societal function of wife and mother:

Garçons et filles reçoivent depuis plus d’un demi-siècle un enseignement toujours plus semblable. Ecoles primaires ou secondaires ne tenaient plus compte de la différence des sexes et elles appliquaient des programmes à peu près indentiques, avec une indifférence absolue à la fin dernière de cette formation.

23 Halls, op.cit., p. 163.
24 Principes de la Renovation Nationale, p.34.
26 Aux Educatrices, p.3.
Ever eager for rapid reform, the ANCD, through Paul Haury, had urged the Minister in August 1940, to initiate a reform of "l’enseignement féminin sur des bases plus conformes au rôle que la femme doit jouer dans une société qui va durer." 27 Haury went on to organize meetings with other educationalists and members of the ANCD, who were thought sympathetic to his plans on female education -- plans that he had set out in his 1934 publication, *Votre Bonheur Jeunes Filles*. 28

The necessity and shape of proper formation for women was clear to such protagonists. Indeed formation thwarted from its natural course -- to underwrite women’s maternal functions and domestic labour -- had more far-reaching consequences than even the failure to prepare women properly for the foyer. The same instruction, it was argued, would lead to the same qualifications, the same qualifications ("des titres et des diplômes.... n’oublions pas le vieux complexe d’infériorité dont souffert encore les femmes d’aujourd’hui") would incite girls, who had no need, to "encombrer les carrières masculines". 29 The logical outcome of undifferentiated education for the labour market was therefore seen to be:


29 *Aux Educatrices.*
l'invasion égoïste des jeunes filles qui vouluent se faire une situation seulement pour être indépendantes et se payer des toilettes coûteuses.\textsuperscript{30}

The weight and impact of such arguments must be addressed elsewhere (in the chapter on employment). Here it is important to assess the nature and consequences of this bourgeois vocational and functionalist outlook for the one area of education.

Some attacks on women’s professional or academic ambitions wavered between paternalism and misogyny. One particularly insidious attack warned fathers against the costly delusion of seeking to provide a career and "independence" for their daughters:

Je n’offenserai personne en disant que ce sont des créatures fragiles: on ferait mieux de préserver leurs nerfs. C’est grâce à leur nerfs qu’elles s’assimilent si bien, qu’elles devancent si merveilleusement les garçons; mais c’est les mêmes nerfs, prématurément usés, qu’elles mèneront des vies de folles, en rendant fous lesdits garçons. Et les études auront accéléré la folie.\textsuperscript{31}

The author, René Benjamin, was a "courtier" at Vichy, a member of the Académie Française and author of numerous eulogies to Pétain. His popularizing misogyny is especially directed against women professionals, not against the general schooling of women. For example, he concluded that he had heard -- from a well-informed source -- that three hundred

\textsuperscript{30} ibid.

\textsuperscript{31} R. Benjamin, Vérités et rêveries sur l’Education (1941). Benjamin continues "Si vous avez une fille, au lieu de lui faire une thèse, préparez-la donc à sa tâche, qui est d’aider un homme et de l’affiner." p.188.
qualified female lawyers "font le trottoir a Paris".\(^{32}\) In the context of German occupation such warnings carried even greater menace. And this particular injunction obviously gained currency -- Sullerot remembers, in her adolescent naivety, hearing the same story, "un mensonge parfaitement fabriqué mais bien calculé pour jeter le discrédit sur l'instruction des femmes".\(^{33}\) Of course the antipathy may, in fact, have been more specifically directed against the increased intrusion of women into the conservative, powerful and traditionally male legal profession, a trend which had been particularly evident since the 1920s.\(^{34}\) But it is also important to note that this banal antipathy (to women intellectuals), so evident in the 1920s, had found a new political privilege in the 1940s. Abel Bonnard who had, for example, railed against women "bacchantes de la connaissance" in his *Eloge de l'Ignorance* (1926) was now in the position to define priorities, to reorient French education.\(^{35}\)

This antipathy was often diffused into a more "reasonable" desire to see the "appropriate" professionalisation of female labour:

\(^{32}\) ibid., p.186.


\(^{34}\) Verdeau, op. cit., pp.89-90.

\(^{35}\) See Long, op.cit., p.244.
L’accent devra être mis sur la préparation aux carrières plus spécialement féminines de manière à ne pas faire systématiquement de la femme la concurrente et la rivale de l’homme, de manière aussi à utiliser toutes les ressources particulières et irremplaçables de la féminité pour l’intérêt général . . . d’ailleurs la manière d’enseigner les filles doit être aussi différente de celle d’enseigner les garçons que les deux sexes présentent de particularités spéciales et bien tranchées.\textsuperscript{36}

An analysis of Vichy’s attempts to use "toutes les ressources particulières et irremplaçables de la féminité pour l’intérêt général" obviously underlies this entire thesis. But the related assumption -- that a differentiated manner of teaching was necessary -- can be looked at here.

It was indeed a pervasive assumption, originating well before Vichy, that girls should be taught differently and separately. Prost speaks of "une spécificité féminine propre aux classes dirigeantes" in the development of private education in the nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{37} He also quotes Monsignor Dupanloup opposing Ferry’s plans for an extension of girl’s education. The language echoes the same tenacious defence of separate spheres:

Les jeunes filles sont élevées pour la vie privée dans la vie privée; je demande qu’elles ne soient pas conduites aux cours, aux examens, aux diplômes, aux distributions qui préparent l’homme à la vie publique.\textsuperscript{38}

Of course what was partly at issue here was the control of education, and an ancient struggle between Church and State.

\textsuperscript{36} L’Éducation des Filles, p.8.


\textsuperscript{38} ibid., p. 268.
But although the Church lost this particular "contest", from the Loi Camille See through to the assimilation of male and female enseignement in 1924, it did of course assert its own ideology in private education.39

With Vichy, the starkly antithetical views of Church and State in education, especially in this area, had disappeared.40 One example is co-education. However limited or temporary in practice, the State had made provision for coeducation -- principally as a pragmatic measure.41 The Church’s stance was unequivocal however. The Encyclical Divini Illius Magistri (1929) had condemned this "promiscuous herding together of males and females on a completely equal footing" as "harmful to Christian teaching".42 APEL revived the debate. Its "enquête" had as its first demand "une éducation séparée de celle des garçons ... non sans raisons des plus graves".43 Vichy itself departed from Republican precedent and issued a ban on coeducation in 1941. 44

Opposition to coeducation had at its core fear of sexual


41 Mayeur, op.cit., p. 435.

42 Divini Illius Magistre (The Christian Education of Youth), p. 32.

43 "L'Education des Filles", p. 20.

44 Halls, op.cit., p. 43; and on the hierarchy’s attitude to all "mixed" social gatherings, p.174.
promiscuity and dissolute behavior, a recurrent theme in private educational texts. Order must be maintained through separateness: sexual difference must be marked and subject to constraints. Abel Bonnard elaborated on this theme in his address to French Youth, on Joan of Arc Day, 1942:

Jeunes hommes d’une France renouvelée, vous devez montrer un respect constant aux Jeunes Filles qui sont le nouveau Printemps de la France. Laissez à notre triste et laid désordre d’hier, laissez à une société finie cette promiscuité malpropre où s’avilissait trop souvent la jeunesse de chez nous. Que règne désormais entre les Jeunes Gens et les Jeunes Filles de notre France cette camaraderie franche et gaie sans prudées et sans équivoques, qui exclut toutes familiarités interlopes et qui ne permet pas d’autre amour que celui qui unira loyalement des époux. 45

It is hard to gauge the meaning of Bonnard’s speech. Designating him as a "pederast" (Long, p.238) and a "misogynist bachelor" preaching "moral rules beyond his power to follow" (Halls, p.175), historians seem to suggest that Bonnard’s homosexuality renders this text inauthentic. But a more careful reading would seem necessary, one that acknowledges that even homosexuals may have a complicated relationship to the discourses of gender and the "heterosexual plot". Perhaps Bonnard, on the feast day of France’s national female hero, was subconsciously or unselfconsciously promoting a view of class and gender clarity, even of homoerotic sexual order, in which "toutes familiarités interlopes" were banished and the loyal

heterosexual union was postponed to the future. In this vision, young women are safely distanced, respected; "le Nouveau Printemps" evokes growth (reproduction) but also order, difference from the "désordre d’hier".

**Education for Women**

But such lofty themes were not invoked in another area, that of the curriculum, where Vichy took the initiative. Vichy extended *Enseignement ménager*, a practical training for domestic duties, into a compulsory subject:

> Il est très utile de faire aimer aux petites filles tous ces travaux féminins pour lesquelles elles sont particulièrement douées et qui s’accordent secrètement à leurs goûts! 46

*Enseignement ménager* was not a "new" subject in girls education; sewing, for example, had been established as a necessary and different component of female education from the start.47 Third Republic textbooks dealing with domestic science, like *Ecole de Bonheur* (1938) and *La Femme Au Foyer* (1943), were simply enlarged -- not replaced -- under Vichy.48 *Enseignement ménager* courses had been provided previously in private and public schools, by *caisses de

46 * Aux Educatrices*, p.10.


compensations and professional organisations and by colleges such as the Institut Social Familial et Ménager (Paris). But reformers felt that whereas adequate training for household responsibilities had previously been provided at home, "l'esprit de famille" had so weakened that "éducation ménagère" had suffered. (Or alternatively commentators saw "formation ménagère" -- "la vraie formation technique de la femme" -- as being given a necessary specialist and technical supplement by cours at school.) Paradoxically therefore, the state had to assume this familial task. Enseignement ménager was made a compulsory subject, although without examination, for secondary and technical schools by the loi du 18 mars 1942. The objective was clearly stated in the Journal Officiel:

L'Enseignement ménager ne vise...à former ni des cuisinières, ni des couturières, ni des répasseuses, ni des infirmières professionnelles. Il veut simplement préparer les fillettes à leurs futurs devoirs de ménage et de mères de famille, en leur donnant les moyens de les bien accomplir, avec goût et compétence. Mais il ne s'agit pas de se borner simplement à faire acquérir aux élèves une série de tours de main et de recettes empiriques. Il faut encore que les techniques, que les habitudes créées se justifient et s'expliquent dans l'esprit des élèves. Que l'on montre l'application des leçons théoriques enseignées précédemment, que l'on fasse sentir aux fillettes combien les travaux du foyer requièrent du jugement, de bon sens, de finesse, tout ce que l'on peut y apporter de science, de coeur et de dévouement, c'est le meilleur moyen de les rehausser à leur yeux, de en faire comprendre non seulement tout l'intérêt, mais aussi toute la noblesse.

49 AN: Fonds 39 AS 402.
50 de Pentenfenyo, Manuel du Père de Famille, p.115.
51 Journal Officiel, 21 mars 1942.
This text is a classic statement of the principles of "domestic science" as it had developed in the United States and Europe since the late nineteenth century. It is not about professional training but about defining and structuring domestic labour itself, about transmitting to women proper, that is rationalized, methods and work patterns for activities -- housework and mothering -- which are beyond the public gaze. Learning these methods and work patterns, however, is far more important than the acquisition of mere technical skills. It gives double meaning to the activities of the home (intérêt/noblesse), it endows them with social value. Enseignement ménager indeed raises the value of domestic labour, even as it defines it, by a curious linking of feminine intuitive qualities (bon sens/finesse/coeur/dévouement) and female responsibilities (futurs devoirs) in a practical, technical training. Vichy's elevation of enseignement ménager to a compulsory school subject for girls must be firmly placed within the context of both a new social/political order where the foyer is recreated and woman's place therein re-valued and an uneasy transition between late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century social anxieties about the unruliness, disease-laden, unfit, unsupervised arena of the home which must be improved and a (post-war) focus on the domestic economy as an area of

52 See B. Ehrenreich and D. English, For Her Own Good: 150 Years of the Experts Advice to Women (Anchor, 1978), Chapter V.
choice and consumption. In both cases the woman is a potential delinquent, in need of guidance, training, work-discipline. In Vichy France, the home itself must be recreated as women's workplace, the site of her ministering to the needs of husband and children. The importance of the home, and the work that is done there, is also being redefined, even as Vichy is (politically and economically) being forced to appropriate the "private sphere" more and more. Compulsory enseignement ménager was an important element, therefore, of Vichy's new femme au foyer plans and its overall political agenda.

After its statement of the objective of the new enseignement ménager laws, the Journal Officiel text continued with detailed instructions about its implementation, what subjects were to be included, and when and how it was to be taught. A "certificat de scolarité" would be issued, the syllabus allowing one hour per week for seven years for secondary schools, one hundred hours per annum for three years in technical schools.53 Perhaps what is most remarkable here is not the fact of this law's introduction -- which given the educational climate was not unexpected -- but the manner in which it is set out. Here we have a detailed curricular reform, articulated with philosophical weight and seriousness, mapped out with other guidelines on the Nouveau plan d'Etudes for 1942. It clearly

53 J.O., 15 avril 1942.
represents the considered efforts of some Education Ministry bureaucrat. An initiative that was being integrated within the Ministry’s agenda, it fitted directly into the new formation to be given, unproblematically using the language of separate spheres, as if it were both possible and eminently desirable in 1942 to institute compulsory domestic training for motherhood and housework.

Immediately problems arose. Ironically, the extension of enseignement ménager to the State sphere was not without its critics, who opposed the "influence douteuse . . . d’instituteurs dont nous avons connu les effets".54 (Having led the "purge" against teachers, the government was being hoisted with its own petard.) As a CGF brochure warned:

Ne comptez pas pour vous suppléer dans cette tâche (de former les enfants) sur les établissements d’éducation auxquels vous confiez vos enfants, vous risquez une sévère désillusion.55

This indicates to some degree the interministerial wrangling that also surrounded this initiative, with Famille hoping to gain jurisdiction, in an area that concerned both Education and Travail.56

Whatever the doubts, the plans for a practical and


56 AN: AGII 654. 304. See also Halls, op.cit., p.39.
theoretical domestic training were ambitious. The programme was to be a rigorous "apprentissage" covering all aspects of work in the home. The training involved indicated the variety of skills any housewife and mother should have and conjured up the endlessly busy routines of domestic labour:

de l'entretien de la maison, de la confection des vêtements simples et du linge, du blanchissage et du repassage, de l'entretien des vêtements et du linge et leur réparation, de la cuisine, de la psychologie et de la morale familiale; l'initiation au droit usuel féminin, des éléments de comptabilité ménagère et l'enseignement théorique et pratique de la puériculture, de l'hygiène corporelle et de l'hygiène domestique.57

At this time the State was also attempting to provide a similar domestic training for unemployed women, underlining the consistency of its presumptions that women's place was "au foyer". In (German-annexed) Lorraine, for example, the textile industry, in conjunction with the Délégation de la Jeunesse, looked to centres de formation ménagère for the unemployed young women of the Vosges,

permettant aux jeunes filles et aux femmes obligées de rester à leur ménage au lieu de travailler à l'usine, de profiter mieux de ce retour en les rendant productif en économies ménagères et en meilleure exploitation des ressources familiales.58

Elsewhere the problem was similarly linked. On the request of the Commissariat à la Lutte Contre le Chômage, the Institut Social Familial et Ménager arranged three to six month courses, noting:

57 J.O. 15 avril 1942.

58 Note Au Sujet de la Situation de l'Industrie Textile de l'Est (19 juillet 1941) AN: F IA 3676, p.3.
Le chômage féminin augmentant dans les notables proportions, il a paru nécessaire de pouvoir offrir aux chômeuses, au-delà du 21 ans, l’occasion d’être initiées aux travaux ménagers afin de les aider à reprendre plus facilement toute leur place au foyer familial.  

Applicants were required to have "une instruction générale" (Brevet Élémentaire ou Supérieur: Baccalauréat) and to pass a practical and theoretical entrance test. The latter comprised:

question morale et sociale portant sur le rôle de la mère dans la famille, ses qualités, son importance, la nécessité de l’éducation familiale et ménagère. La conscience, le devoir, le travail . . .

The aim of the course (and the rationale for the high standard of entrance requirement) was to provide a "formation rapide" for potential Auxiliaires d’Enseignement Ménager. But AFIP reported in August 1942 that a delay in the application of the law had been extended from six months to one year, "afin de permettre le recensement des Etablissements publics et privés qui dans chaque département dispensent cet enseignement". In September 1942, Bonnard published new guidelines about enseignement ménager in the Journal Officiel, including an easing of regulations affecting those qualified to teach and establishing an eleven member commission within the Education Ministry to oversee

59 AN: Fonds 39 AS 402. This dossier also includes information, contracts etc. for the Ministère du Travail’s subsidy for enseignement ménager courses for firms with female personnel working under forty hours per week, a measure to prevent those women being laid off.

60 ibid.
the application of the law. This Commission included representatives from enseignement technique and instruction publique, as well as from the Commissariat Général à la Famille. Again one is impressed with the weight and detail of bureaucratic attention to this reform but left wondering about the degree to which it was faltering, only six months after its introduction.\textsuperscript{61} Indeed if the premise was that "Plus encore que dans d'autres domaines, une léçon théorique n'a d'intérêt que si elle est souvent coupée d'exercices pratiques d'application", then the practical side -- provision of instructors, materials and space -- was a priority. Again Vichy failed itself. The shortage of properly-qualified personnel in the period following the introduction of the law is attested to by several arrêtés, dispensing with the formal requirements for monitrices and professeurs.\textsuperscript{62}

Indeed, Vichy's initiative was largely paralysed due to shortages of both personnel and material. The latter was particularly ironic: the productive utilisation of food and clothing was already the overriding concern of the female population by this time. Conferences on enseignement ménager, including panels on "lutte contre les restrictions", or recipe competitions, to find "une recette ingénieuse et originale déjà expérimentée, tenant rigoureusement compte de

\textsuperscript{61} Journal Officiel, 6 septembre 1942.

\textsuperscript{62} Inter alia: J.O. 6.9.42; J.O. 13.4.43.
restrictions", were further reminders of pragmatism and an inescapable material reality.\textsuperscript{63}

Whatever its shortcomings, much was hoped for from this one initiative, or at least the regime continued to invoke its potential significance, as with so many other of its projects.\textsuperscript{64} Abel Bonnard, although noting that financial restraints had restricted the impact of the \textit{loi du 18 mars 1942}, waxed lyrical to Renaudin, \textit{Commissaire Générale à la Famille}:

\begin{quote}
J’attribue personellement la plus grande importance à ce project: l’enseignement ménager en effet est destiné à rendre celles qui l’auront reçu parfaitement aptes à remplir leur rôle d’épouses et de mères et capables de porter dans la vie familiale les pratiques qui la rendent non seulement mieux ordonnée ... mais aussi plus douce et plus noble. A l’encontre de l’enseignement d’hier, devenu si abstrait et si indifférent qu’il s’appliquait également à des filles et à des garçons sans convenir réellement aux unes ni aux autres, celui-ci, au contraire deviendra cette préparation à une fonction et à une vie que tout véritable enseignement doit être.\textsuperscript{65} (3 juin 1944)
\end{quote}

This text is revealing, in what it says and how the argument is built. While subjective authority frames the statement (j’attribue personellement....) endowing it with significance, the theme -- the value of \textit{enseignement ménager} -- is played out through contrasts: women will be brought to ("rendre .... aptes a") better fulfil ("remplir") their role of \textit{wives and mothers} (the conjunction is obligatory) by

\textsuperscript{63} see AN: Fonds 39 AS 402.

\textsuperscript{64} \textit{Aux Educatrices}, p.10.

\textsuperscript{65} Bonnard to Renaudin, 3 juin 1944. AN: F17 13347. (The original and its envelope remain in the file.)
bringing new taught techniques ("pratiques") to the "vie familiale". Family life will thus be made better technically but also mystically/morally (douce et noble). There is a clash of modern (scientific, instructional, practical) and pre-modern (affective), male and female.

Bonnard's second set of contrasts on gender and education put past/present, abstract/concrete, androgyny/sexual difference in play to arrive at the meaning of teaching, itself a contest between "préparation à une function" (duty) and "préparation à une vie" (desire). Enseignement ménager becomes the bridge that connects and makes reachable an authentic education and promises (gender) secure boundaries.

It is indeed extraordinary that in June 1944 Bonnard could be spending time contemplating the shape of proper education for the future. Although this letter was probably never dispatched, it does indicate the preoccupation of Bonnard and his administration with continuing the process of reform. On the other hand, despite its ideological coherence, the reform had faltered. The pattern seems familiar: the regime introduced an initiative that reflected its priorities, was intended to generate change, but the measures involved for its success were lacking and indeed invited total scepticism about the authority and intentions of the regime. The timing was critical. The language and symbols of the Révolution Nationale dominated in 1940, the enseignement ménager initiative belonged within this agenda; the administrative
delays and failure followed quickly in 1941-42, the actual reform became more piecemeal and fragmented, "realism" undermined the rénovation. It is hard to read this initiative, therefore. Although enseignement ménager was not uniformly or widely imposed as a new compulsory subject in schools, Vichy's espousal of the subject was significant. It connected education to "reality" and, writing an apparently benign and useful domestic training more firmly into girls' schooling, it gave an apparent new legitimacy to the skills and labour of le foyer.

Education and Demography

While not as explicitly as enseignement ménager, other curricular initiatives fitted with Vichy's gendered visions and had repercussions for the general education available to girls. For example, enseignement démographique was given a new impetus under Vichy. This both brought the natalist campaign into the classroom, (often with unforeseen humour) "pour que l'enfant put dès son jeune age, connaitre le danger de mort qui menace notre pays" and it opened another channel through which the supposedly apolitical message of gender politics could be transmitted. The programme followed

66 J. Carcopino Instructions Relatives à l’Enseignement Démographique, J.O. 22 mars 19. Sullerot, op.cit., p. 946, recalls the amusement caused in class by a directive containing the phrase "Il faut que les garçons et filles apprennent au collège les joies de la paternité et de la maternité"
well-established principles:

-- La dépopulation française
-- Conséquences de la dénatalité
-- Nécessité de créer une famille nombreuse."

This was a banal echo of the propaganda campaigns waged by the CGF and the Alliance National Contre la Dépopulation. Indeed this was an area in which the ANCD claimed to have achieved a measure of success for its two decades of activism and lobbying. The initiative seemed tame enough when it came. By the Arrêté du 11 mars 1942 concernant l’enseignement démographique dans les écoles primaires and a further instruction (J.O. du 22 mars 1942), lessons on demography were added to the curriculum. Reform entailed additional lessons as well as adding "textes de lecture" of "messages du Maréchal ou extraits de messages relatifs à la famille et à la dénatalité.""

The ANCD had urged the minister to act quickly on the provisions of the Code de la Famille which had allowed for enseignement démographique at all levels of education, public and private. instead they got this limited measure in

67 ibid.
68 J.O. du 22 mars 1942, p.1127. Carcopino’s detailed instructions on method and objective again emphasise the relative seriousness and on-going bureaucratization of even trivial reform at Vichy, i.e. these texts are written and published as though the Révolution Nationale was indeed viable and in the business of continuing educational administration, and these reforms are an integral and considered curriculum innovation.
69 For an account of ANCD lobbying and the legal provisions, see Revue de l’ANCD, No.343, avril 1942, pp.65-69.
installments. In 1943 Carcopino sent a circular making enseignement démographique obligatory in all lycées and colleges and underlining its scientific base and political importance:

les problèmes démographiques ont fait l’objet d’études scientifiques dont l’essentiel est entré peu à peu dans le domaine public et donc les conclusions peuvent faire l’objet d’un enseignement. Ces problèmes s’appartiennent étroitement à des questions de morale collective et de morale individuelle qui conditionnent le relèvement de la France....et sur lesquelles se fonde la politique familiale du gouvernement.70

The ANCD’s role was critical in lobbying for these initiatives and in informing the national consciousness. They circulated and supported the publication of Commissariat Général à la Famille brochures to schools and universities.71 These included L’Université Devant la Famille, L’Ecole et la Famille and Aux Educateurs. L’Université Devant la Famille, written by Haury, then Inspector General, was circulated to all teachers in secondary schools and universities; it carried a preface by Gilbert Gidel, Recteur of the University of Paris, and a warm imprimatur from Philippe Renaudin, the Commissaire Général à la Famille, who emphasized that as far as the renaissance familiale was concerned, it was indispensable d’associer particulièrement les Membres de

70 Circulaire No. 43146, Ministère de l’Education Nationale aux Recteurs, 5 juin 1943. AN: F 17 17502. Carcopino’s circular also includes a programme, hours and a brief bibliogrpahy, including CGF publications.

71 See Revue No.357 juillet 1943, p.97. "Le couronnement d’une campagne: L’Organisation de l’enseignement démographique et familial".
l’Enseignement Secondaire qui forment l’esprit des jeunes générations appelées demain aux responsabilités des classes dirigeantes.\textsuperscript{72}

Influencing "cadres" and "classes dirigeantes" was the explicit objective of ANCD reformers. Some brochures, like Aux Educatrices, were remodelled specifically for women teachers, "toutes celles...qui sont appelées à modeler des âmes de jeunes filles".\textsuperscript{73}

Haury in his preface to L’Ecole et la Famille, highlighted the new moral role required of teachers and its rationale:

On a cru longtemps que, s’il appartenait à l’école d’instruire les intelligences, l’éducation des coeurs et des volontés ne pouvait se faire qu’à la maison. Cela n’est vrai que d’une infime minorité de privilégiés. Et l’une des constatations les plus navrantes de l’heure présente est précisément celle de la carence de trop de familles, elles-mêmes minées par l’égoïsme, ce ver rongeur.

Si bien que c’est à vous, maîtres et institutrices qui revient la tâche délicate de reveleer à trop d’enfants, qui ne le soupçonnent pas, tout ce qu’ont d’anormal -- et de guérissable, si l’on sait vouloir -- les maux engendrés par l’effroyable désordre moral qui règne dans certains milieux et aussi ce que peuvent être les douceurs et les foies d’une familiale fondée sur le mutuel don de soi, l’entr’aide reciproque, la bonne humeur née de l’épanouissement normal des affections naturelles.

Women and men teachers, although often under suspicion themselves in the ‘désordre moral’, had an opportunity through enseignement démographique for leadership, for compensating for the moral deficiencies of the public and private spheres.

Fernand Boverat’s influence was also seen through his

\textsuperscript{72} L’Université Devant La Famille (OPG, Paris, 1942).

\textsuperscript{73} Aux Educatrices
publication L’Enseignement de la Démographie et la Morale Familiale: La Révision des Manuels Scolaires (ANCD, Lyon, 1942). His earlier, La Race Blanche En Danger de Mort (1933) was among recommended texts for enseignement démographique, reviving cliched, common and blatantly racist analyses of population statistics.74

Enseignement démographique amplified the message of the Révolution Nationale. Unlike enseignement ménager it spoke to both boys and girls, it reproduced a knowledge of French national decline, of ‘désordre social’, in which gender was clearly constructed and in which women’s status, patriotic and social duties were conspicuously and differentially delineated.75

Physical Education

The introduction of Education Général et Sportive gave the opportunity to preach authoritarian morality and also to develop a physical education system clearly differentiated for boys and girls. Vichy’s intentions were predictable if somewhat vague:

74 See Halls, op.cit., p.47.

75 The degree of this amplification is questionable of course. The Ministère de l’Éducation included amongst its films four copies of "Jardins Sans Fleurs" (AN: F17 13378). On the other hand not only financial restraints but also measures to protect school children, preventing gatherings for film shows, increasingly nullified initiatives.
Au cours de l'heure hebdomadaire d'action morale il s'efforcera de développer chez les élèves de nobles sentiments. (Le maître) traitera des thèmes relatifs à la morale individuelle, à la morale collective, à la famille (avec des indications démographiques) à la nation, à l'Europe, à l'humanité.\textsuperscript{76}

In the promotion of physical education, female frailty was highlighted by the reduced number of hours allotted to girls and by the type of exercise recommended.\textsuperscript{77}

Pour les jeunes filles dont l'éducation comportera une formation spéciale d'enseignement ménager et de puericulture, remplaçant les travaux manuels et le scoutisme, la durée des activités d'éducation générale...sera réduite à six heures. Une part importante sera faite dans l'éducation physique générale aux exercices rhythmiques.\textsuperscript{78}

Rhythmic exercises, basketball and swimming were all thought especially suitable.\textsuperscript{79}

Again these developments often reflected pre-1940 commonsensical assumptions -- that physical education in girls schools should be concerned with "developing agility and grace rather than strength".\textsuperscript{80} Sexual difference was already

\textsuperscript{76} Circulaire du 17 octobre 1942 à Ministère Les Recteurs et Inspecteurs d'Académie Instituant le Maître Principal de Classe.

\textsuperscript{77} AN: F17 13363.

\textsuperscript{78} Circulaire No.1325 du 28 juillet 1941 (J.O. 2,3 septembre 1941)


\textsuperscript{80} P. Hirsch, p.158. See also F. Clarke, The Position of Women in France, 1937.
a sine qua non of physical education. Maria Hirsch, who founded the first girl guide company in Paris and was active in the 1930s as a "Cheftaine et Commissaire" for the Scouts and Colonies de Vacances, produced a guidebook for youth leaders. She advised:

Que peut faire faire à ses filles la monitrice? Tout ce qui touche à la maison et à l’enfant. Pour la fillette de 12 à 15 ans...il faut éviter la fatigue exagérée. En général c’est l'éveil de l’instinct maternel avec toutes ses délicatesses et le sens des responsabilités.81

These developments in physical education also reflected social and cultural realities -- like the low level of participation by girls in sports generally.82

Football, rugby, boxing, pelota and shooting, which were among the national sports to be encouraged not as spectator but as amateur participant sports, were all activities that would give discipline and training to young men. Sport was supposedly an area of rénovation that was above and beyond politics. As Borotra claimed (in 1970):

En ce qui concerne le Commissariat Général à l’Education Générale et aux Sports, l’idéologie n’a vraiment joué aucun rôle dans notre action et cela est normal car le sport est et doit rester une activité essentiellement apolitique.

Cependant, après juin 1940, le sport ne pouvait plus être seulement un moyen privilégié de détente et de contrat humain, il devait devenir cette activité exceptionnelle qui aiderait chacun à atteindre, puis à conserver, le plein

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82 R. Holt, Sport and Society in Modern France. (Hamden, Conn., 1980).
épanouissement physique, intellectuel et moral dont tout Français, dans les temps tragiques que traversait le pays, devait se sentir comptable envers celui-ci.\footnote{J. Borotra, "Extraits des Debats" (Quelques Aspects de la Politique de la Jeunesse), \textit{Le Gouvernement de Vichy 1940-1944} (FNSP, 1972), p.285.}

Whether sports is ever "apolitical" is unlikely. But within Vichy the underlying politics of sport as reform, the creation of "cette activité exceptionnelle" requires analysis, no less than the gender presumptions of its advocates.

Borotra perhaps missed this point in discussing "politics":

\begin{quote}
Nous instituâmes le "serment de l’athlète" à la rédaction duquel le Maréchal prit un intérêt personnel. Le Jeune Français (ou la jeune Française) y promettait sur l’honneur de pratiquer le sport avec désintéressement, discipline et loyauté, pour devenir meilleur et mieux servir sa Patrie. Le sport avait à jouer ce rôle, non seulement dans les dizaines de milliers d’associations sportives...mais bien entendu aussi et avant tout à l’école qui devait désormais former non seulement des intelligences, mais des corps, des caractères, en un mot: \textit{des hommes} [my emphasis].\footnote{Borotra, ibid.} \footnote{Borotra was deported by the Germans in 1943. He remained active in the promotion of sports through the 1960s as well as an apologist for Pétain’s reforms. Paxton, \textit{op.cit.}, p.344.}
\end{quote}

Vichy continued to promote the development of \textit{la Patrie} and men through sport, even after Borotra’s departure.\footnote{Borotra was deported by the Germans in 1943. He remained active in the promotion of sports through the 1960s as well as an apologist for Pétain’s reforms. Paxton, \textit{op.cit.}, p.344.}

But all French women were not passive or inert. While exceptional women like Suzanne Lenglen continued to define the image and singularity of French female sporting success,
more subtle changes were in progress. More women were participating in sport. In Paris in 1941, 26,544 (28%) young women took the Brevet Sportif National. Boys and girls had access to new swimming pools and sports fields. Did French young people play and swim and indulge themselves in sporting diversions under Vichy? The question seems to parallel the preoccupation with whether French people did (or should have) sung and danced during the Occupation. The answer requires demystifying both leisure and politics, while remembering the extraordinary hardships of these years.

Economic constraints predominated — Vichy could not afford the ambitious physical, moral and sporting rénovation it dreamed of. Facilities were lacking as were trained personnel. The Germans were also not interested in supporting this rénovation. And young people suffering from...

86 Lenglen, who had died in 1938, was, of course, a close associate and friend of Borotra and "a goddess" to the French public. See L. Engelmann, The Goddess and the American Girl: the Story of Suzanne Lenglen and Helen Wills (Oxford University Press, 1988). She defined the image of female "grace and agility". Lenglen herself said:

I dislike violent sport. I always sought to create an elegance of movement, a general equilibrium in a gesture, rather than to set any records. I never had much physical resistance; I won my matches on courage and nerves of steel.


87 Mavit, op.cit., p.97; Halls, op.cit., p.192.
88 Austin, op.cit., p.167.
89 Halls, op.cit., p.201 ff.
terrible fatigue and deprivation of food were not ideal candidates for this agenda. In October 1941, the hours allotted to Education Générale et Sportive in secondary schools were reduced because of "des dangers que les restrictions actuelles font courir à la jeunesse". One teacher wrote to the Minister about the "anomie chez les élèves qui vient d'abord d'une fatigue physique réelle". Even before the drastic impact of the Service du Travail Obligatoire (STO) was felt, therefore, this moral and physical educational reform was severely limited. The government's initiative again was stifled by circumstances.

Cadres

Beyond the schools, of course, the elevation of sport and the idea of rénovation through physical culture (although ironically borrowed from the Popular Front era), was a major element in Vichy's policy for youth. As a counterpoint to military humiliation, this physical culture explicitly played up notions of nationalism and virilité and found its clearest expression in the quasi-militaristic outdoor activities of the Chantiers and the Compagnons. It is worth emphasizing

90 AN: F17 13363.
92 Halls, op.cit.; Mavit, op.cit.
93 ibid.
that the **Chantiers** was an official institution intended to organize French male youth in lieu of military service. The law on the Chantiers applied to "Tout citoyen français du sexe masculin". The propaganda image of the Gallic warrior/**Chantiers** recruit was a French man. That the culture of the **Chantiers'** camps was male is not therefore surprising. But the exclusion of women from the **Chantiers** represents not just the creation of another realm of male bonding/camaraderie; it signifies the absence of interest in recruiting French girls/women. Vichy's primary focus for education and regeneration was male youth. Female youth movements continued to function, but none operated with the official political sanction or support of such groups as the **Chantiers**. Lamirand's recent insistence on the "parallel" development of female and male youth movements disguises an inequality of mission. Asked if the government had a "préoccupation spéciale" with female youth, Lamirand maintained:

> pas spéciale; mais elles n'étaient pas oubliées. Elles n'étaient pas -- disons -- au deuxième rang, n'est-ce pas?

> Vous savez qu'il ya a un scoutisme féminin et bien nous avions également des mouvements civiques féminins.

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94 *J.O.* des 8, 9 et 13 février 1941.


96 General de la Porte du Theil, like Bonnard, (see page 27) believed men should show more respect to women, although "many women forfeited it through their own fault". Halls, op.cit., p.300.
C'était dans le cadre des écoles, par exemple, les écoles primaires, les lycées et les facultés. Nous avions les groupements de jeunes filles que nous animions et auxquels on donnait des moyens pour se développer.

Ca s'appelait centres de jeunes filles. C'était parallèle à l'ensemble de mouvements de garçons. Il y avait des mouvements comme le scoutisme qui naturellement avaient leurs jeunes filles mais les autres laïques... ils se sont crées et développés à ce moment-là.97

The literature of the youth movement addressed itself almost exclusively to male youth too, extolling natural manly qualities, "goût de l'action, de l'aventure, de la beauté, de l'amitié."98 Again sexual divisions were legitimated by reference to specific vocations and destinies. Preparation for motherhood and self-sacrifice involved a quite different "feminine" education:

97 Lamirand was in charge of youth programmes from September 1940-February 1943. Paxton, op.cit., pp.162-163. Questions concerning Vichy's policies towards young women were kindly posed on my behalf by Mme. Bonazzi, Directeur de la Section Contemporaine, Archives Nationales, in an interview with Georges Lamirand, 26 March 1984. AN: 2 AV 31.

Nous demandons pour la femme une Education Physique vraiment féminine.
Le garçon doit être en état de devenir soldat.
La jeune fille doit être apte à devenir un jour mère . . .

. . . Faut-il leur donner la même éducation? Le garçon doit être élevé spécialement pour la force, la fermeté, le courage et les autres qualités viriles. Tandis que la jeune fille doit spécialement être préparée à la maternité, à la douceur, à la grâce et au don de soi.99

Given the pervasiveness of such ideas under Vichy, it is not surprising that timetables, examinations and curricular content also 'recognized' sex/gender differences: girls were given simpler, briefer lessons in chemistry and physics; their maths and philosophy classes were designed to include "puériculture"; they were excluded from certain agrégations, and separately classified and given less weighty tasks in others.100 These manifestations of sexism in the educational system seem relatively banal. However, they give us clues about the real disparities in opportunity and training, and how Vichy's antifeminism seemed to play on "reality", the supposed reality of different aptitudes and vocations.

More research needs to be done into the activities and experience of young French women at this time, whether in the Ecole de Cadres (Ecull), the Auberges de la Jeunesse, the Maisons de Jeunes or in the Catholic and Protestant youth

The author of the preface to this CGEGS brochure, Dr. Legrand-Lambling, also wrote "Indications et contre-indications à la pratique des activités physiques des jeunes filles". Revue Médicale d'Education Physique, juillet 1942.

100 AN: F17 17502.
sections. Only then will we really understand the extent to which French youth were organized and how boys and girls lived their "leisure" and schooling under Vichy. In the meantime we are left with the aspirations and strictures of ideologues and reformers, whose moral vision surely clashed with the actual education and leisure experienced, through all the vicissitudes of 1940-1944.

**Women as Educators**

So far this discussion has concerned itself with the shape of education for girls. But in Vichy's broader visions, women were not only recipients of education. Crucially, as mothers, they were also providers. Pétain himself emphasised this:

Mères de notre France, votre tâche est la plus rude. Elle est aussi la plus belle. Vous êtes avant l'Etat, les dispensatrices de l'Education. Vous seules savez donner à tous ce goût du travail, ce sens de la discipline, de la modestie, du respect qui fait les hommes sains et les peuples forts. Vous êtes les inspiratrices de notre civilisation chrétienne.102

Invoking struggle, Pétain outlines in this direct and pithy address the unique and elevated qualities of motherhood -- to give that which makes men whole/healthy and a people strong: a taste for work, a sense of discipline, modesty and

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101 Halls, op.cit., p.149.

respect. To fulfill this noble, self-sacrificing and ultimately passive educative role is presumably women's ultimate gratification.  

It is essential to highlight this notion of women as primary agents in the socialisation of French youth, as the providers of education above and beyond the public sphere. Vichy "educationalists" were inclined to emphasize the dual biological-metaphysical dimensions of women's reproductive/educative potential:

( sa ) fonction naturelle est de créer physiquement la vie mais elle a une autre aussi sublime, celle de façonner et d'élever l'âme de ses enfants, d'en faire des hommes.  

One activist, connecting the failure of familial 'formation' "dans la crise des consciences qui amena notre défaite", urged women themselves to be more aware of their responsibilities:

l'atmosphère familial est en éducation un problème essentiel, le problème de base . . .

C'est à la mère qu'incombe la tâche à la fois pacificatrice et constructive, la recherche de la stabilité de l'entente; il convient évidemment que chaque membre de la famille accorde son violon, mais c'est à elle, chef de l'orchestre de la symphonie familiale ... à dégager la génie créateur de chacun.

103 Pétain's praise for mothers as the inspiration of Christian civilization provides an interesting contrast to Montherlant's condemnation of the decadence of Christianity as a "feminine" religion!


This responsibility was unique and onerous; as in the domestic "orchestra" there was an imbalance -- the 'chef’s' "faults" were more serious than the player’s "weaknesses":

parce que tu es la gardienne permanente du foyer et parce que les fautes commises par la femme ont des conséquences plus graves encore que les faiblesses des hommes.106

Indeed defining the domestic role for 'woman', "la première éducatrice",107 left contemporary commentators with conceptual difficulties about hierarchy and authority. As Paul Haury remarked:

Sans monter jusqu’aux sommets, n’est-ce pas une vérité d’expérience courante que cette souveraineté de la femme dans le domaine de la vie et des moeurs? La valeur d’un homme ressort de ce qu’il fait, parfois de ce qu’il sait; celle d’une femme, de sa manière d’être.108 (my emphasis)

In a public radio address for Mother’s Day, Haury had made an explicit "educational" link between the schools and "la source de l’éducation et de la vie même de l’enfant, qui est la mère".109 But the link also gave rise to (patriarchal) anxieties about authority. Mother and father did not compete:

Il y a deux fonctions distinctes et complémentaires, celle de l’homme, celle de la femme, celle du chef de famille et celle de l’épouse et mère, de la maîtresse de maison.

106 Vice Amiral de Penfentenyo, op.cit., p.35.
107 Education des Filles, p.6.
Il n'y a pas deux chefs de famille ce qui diviserait la famille. Il n'y a non plus un chef de famille et un sous-chef de famille. Les responsabilités de l'homme et de la femme sont d'ordre différent, comme sont différentes les qualités qu'ils mettent l'un et l'autre au service de la famille.

Tandis que si l'on distingue fonction de décision et fonction de conseil, fonction d'autorité et fonction d'éducation, la tête et le coeur, on se rend compte que l'un ne remplace pas l'autre et que le concours de l'homme et de la femme est indispensable dans la famille.110

This harmonious complementarity, indeed the binary structure of virtues and responsibilities, was extended to the pedagogy of the domestic sphere:

Chacun sait que le mari ou le père normalement donne des ordres et peu de raisons. Il n'enseigne pas. C'est la femme qui enseigne.111

The woman was presumed to inculcate notions of discipline and morality into the child.112 But if the significance of the woman's educative role in the home was agreed upon, the corollary -- dismay at and criticism of the absent or remiss mother -- was also made evident: "Dès que la mère manque ...tout manque!"113 The repercussions for the education of children caused by married women's work were explicitly highlighted.114


111 Lucien Romier, quoted by P. Merle, La Nature Feminine, p. 45.

112 E. Mendre, Pour Se Préparer à Bien Élever les Enfants. (Lyon, JACF), p. 7.

113 Aux Educatrices, p. 8.

Indeed a crisis in familial authority was one of the concerns of Catholics interested in educational reform, for which "cercles d’études" were proposed as a remedy. The hidden agenda was about sexual division and hierarchy, about the consequences of moral weakness:

The "educational" role of the family could not be over-estimated. Again it was Paul Haury who provided an eloquent case for proper "socialization":

But the "école de la famille" depended on the mother and it was also recognised that if even if constantly present, the mother had to be educated herself for her role. This was the more important given the scepticism of some about the degree of ‘real’ education provided by the schools.  


117 Le Chef et la Famille.
preparedness of the mother for both her domestic and educative "métier" was widely commented upon, often in a way that reinforced notions of female dilettantism:

Un horticulteur se renseigne d’avantage pour éléver ses tulipes. Et cette jeune femme saura bien feuilleter trente-six catalogues ou revues de mode pour bâtir son costume. L’enfant lui pousse tout seul comme chacun sait.118

Women had, therefore, to be properly instructed to be a good mother. But paradoxically the privileging of women’s educational mission au foyer also rested on an essentialist construction of femininity and motherhood, a belief that women were biologically and morally predestined for this role: "En tant que femme vous y êtes aptes a priori".119

The significance of gender politics was doubly enforced therefore: only women could be mothers, only mothers could be the first and real educators of men and women. The private and public world, social order itself, depended on her assuming this role. Was it fanciful of conservatives to extend the political influence of this maternal/educative influence?

L’honneur de la mère française c’est d’être la première et la principale éducatrice de ses enfants... peut-être faut-il voir dans cet attachement prolongé de la mère française pour ses enfants...l’un des principaux obstacles rencontrés chez nous à l’envahissement du


119 ibid., p.29. Also Aux Educatrices,p.8.
communisme.  

Of course the introduction of compulsory enseignement ménager was intended to counter any ill-preparedness, as we have seen above, and so was the general reorientation of girls' education away from academic instruction and exam-competitiveness.

But if women as mothers were the prime educators, what about women, single and married, who were increasingly the "salaried educators"? Vichy's discourse on female education must be analyzed from this point of view too. As Madeleine Danielou reminded readers:

C'est une pensée très haute et très juste qui a inspiré au Commissariat Général à la Famille de s'adresser aux éducatrices. Jamais des jeunes filles n'apporteront trop de capacités, d'art et d'amour à une oeuvre si complexe, si accordée au meilleur d'elles mêmes, si utile à leur patrie- - jamais des éducatrices ne leur inspireront une trop haute idée de leur rôle.

Nor was it only the familialists and protagonists of Catholic education who were concerned by the role of women teachers. Rivaud, Minister of Education in 1940, condemned those


121 Aux Eductrices.

122 L'Éducation des Filles, p.4.


124 Preface, Aux Eductrices.
responsible for declining educational standards, including,

les jeunes agrégées de nos collèges féminins [qui] apportent une ardeur presque sadique à ce travail de destruction. Certaines se plaisent à dévoyer crûment un auditoire innocent. Elles commentent Gide, Marcel Proust, les romans les plus audacieux, elles donnent des avis troublant sur le freudisme, la sexualité, l’union libre. Elles aggravent l’impudeur par la pédanterie.125

It is hard to gauge how widespread such liberal/modernist teaching actually was. One suspects that the "progressive" lycées of Paris, whose teachers and students so shocked rightwing commentators, were far from typical, and that under Vichy’s dictates and the German Occupation the latitude for classroom radicalism was severely limited.126 It would require a thorough investigation of memoirs/oral history to establish the experience of women teachers and students in this period.

However, judging by Vichy’s official discourse and propaganda the moral role was clearly delineated. Women teachers were to have a unique, almost metaphysical connectedness with adolescents:

Les éducatrices ont là un rôle primordial: par leurs conseils, par leur avertissements, leurs leçons qu’on écoutera les yeux brillants, le coeur rapide.127

125 Rivaud, Revue des Deux Mondes, 1.11.43, p.9. (Quoted by J.A. Long, op.cit., p.72)

126 Simone de Beauvoir describes her feelings about this period in The Prime of Life (Penguin, 1984),p.465: "Henceforth the family would be the sovereign unit, the reign of virtue was at hand, and God would be spoken of respectfully in the schools...the same violent prejudice and stupidity that had darkened my childhood...now extended over the entire country, an official and repressive blanket."

127 Aux Educatrices.
But women teachers' intimacy with students could also be a target of sanctions in the new atmosphere of moral uprightness that Vichy had created. Simone de Beauvoir recalled the sanctions against her for a supposed lesbian relationship with a student, Natalie Sorokine. Teachers were subject to a greater degree of moral and political surveillance under Vichy, at the same time as their responsibilities and virtues were officially lauded. Despite Pucheu's condemnation of "ces pratiques [qui] créent une atmosphère insupportable de suspicion", Prefects' reports include many accounts of dénonciations of women teachers, some "purement calomnieuse", others which led to "élèvement de fonctions", because of either political activity or 'improper' behaviour. Apart from this surveillance, women teachers were made unsure of their eligibility to continue teaching -- or studying -- if married, especially under Carcopino. At the Ecole Normale des Jeunes Filles, Paris, faculty and student candidates for the agrégation petitioned for exemptions from the loi du 10


130 Circulaire du 2 janvier 1942 aux Préfets. AN: FIA 3680; on dénonciations - Préfet de la Somme (3 decembre 1941), Préfet du Nord (4 octobre 1941), Préfet de la Seine et Marne (4 novembre 1941), AN: F 17 13376,
octobre 1940 against married women's work.\textsuperscript{131} The anxiety and instability caused by the introduction of such reforms, like the threat of quotas in the universities and professional training schools, operated differentially for women, who were often more conspicuous and more vulnerable. This vulnerability was highlighted, of course by the actual, punitive exclusions of Jewish women students and teachers from French education, about which we have inadequate information.\textsuperscript{132} They graphically remind us though that Vichy indeed constructed its subjects of education, "les jeunes filles", and wrote Jewish and foreign women out of the script of youth rénovation. The discourse of female education operating in neutral or universalist categories of respect, duty and fulfillment disguised a callous disregard for many women's lives.

It must be emphasized that administratively the impact of reform was very unevenly felt. Young French women's education was not radically transformed under Vichy. And differences of class and region still mattered enormously, dictating the "real" receptivity to change. (It is hard to imagine the rénovation having changed the education available to the children of Peyrane, for example.\textsuperscript{133})

\textsuperscript{131} Archives of the ENSJF, now held at Boulevard Jourdan, Paris. For a full discussion of the impact of the loi du 11 octobre 1940, see Chapter 4.

\textsuperscript{132} Marrus and Paxton, op.cit., pp.124-125. Were girls' schools also affected as the boarding-school in Louis Malle's recent film Au Revoir les Enfants?

Apart from the schools, the hopes for a rénovation nationale spearheaded by French youth also floundered. Halls and Austin have documented the increasing disillusionment among young people and teachers, especially after 1942. Neither in the schools nor in the Chantiers could hope be sustained in the face of daily reality. Enthusiasm for youth organizations and activities was undermined, despite Vichy's claims for its "jeunes gens".

The health of French schoolchildren was a topic of concern to families and educators in these years. Anaemia, tuberculosis, polio and general exhaustion were widespread. Were girls worse off? Reports of a major increase in venereal disease must be treated cautiously. The Préfet du Nord claimed that demoralisation had led to laziness, theft and homosexuality among boys and, among girls, increased clandestine prostitution,

si intense et si grave qu'un Service Spécial de Vénérologie a été créé dans les hôpitaux de Lille pour les jeunes filles de 14 à 16 ans.\textsuperscript{134}

He also asserted that in Hazebrouch and Estaires there were one hundred and forty-one young girls pregnant by German soldiers.

Whatever the impact of venereal disease, prostitution or teenage pregnancy, the effect of the shortages of food and consequent vitamin deficiencies of young girls must be

\textsuperscript{134} Rapport du Préfet du Nord, 4 octobre 1941. AN: F17 13376.
remembered, especially in a culture where women, at least in rural/working class areas, traditionally serve themselves less and often eat after the men of the family.

Curfews and the increasing intervention of political violence also took their toll. Many young women became involved in resistance activities. The Préfet de Paris reported for example:

les éléments les plus agissants de la propagande gaulliste sont très souvent des femmes ou de très jeunes gens.

He added disdainfully:

l'inscription de V., Croix de Lorraine...un peu puéril utilisé surtout par des enfants ou des lycéens et principalement des jeunes filles.135

The film Coup de Foudre provides an interesting alternative text, a reminder of just how dramatically and differently two young women’s lives could be affected, one losing her freedom and identity in a refugee camp for foreigners, the other having her student fiancé shot (and her Art School career ended) in a Milice rafle.136 Perhaps more than anything else the threat of ever-greater extensions of the STO undermined the confidence and enthusiasm of French young people for their future.137

135 Préfet de Paris a Secrétaire d’État de l’Intérieur. 3 juillet 1941. AN: F60 502.

136 Diane Kurys’ film, Coup de Foudre (USA: Entre Nous), based on a true story, uses these events to frame and construct its narrative of two post-war/1950’s French women’s lives (and lesbian relationship).

137 Halls, op.cit., Chap.XIV, p.357ff.
The Failure of Reform

Vichy’s plans for re-orienting young girls’ destinies, for educating them for motherhood and housework, were unrealistic. The Ministry of Education and the Commissariat Général à la Famille might introduce courses, change regulations, reemphasize old values and lobby teachers and parents to realize their responsibilities to the new France. But the regime lacked the resources or the personnel to implement its agenda; the teaching cadres of the Third Republic did not rally to Vichy; students (and parents) struggled to maintain as normal a life as possible, to continue their education despite political changes and external events. Instead of being mobilized for the new France, young people sought refuge in the status quo. Between 1940-1944, there was no educational revolution.

How then do we assess the education policies of Vichy towards women? Clearly the curricular initiatives discussed above, principally enseignement ménager and enseignement démographique, fitted with the discourse of la femme au foyer. They represented not so much a new departure in educational philosophy as a re-emphasis, a strengthening of traditional (Catholic) views of the social order and the sexual division of labor. The more neutral pedagogy of the Republic was replaced by a strident moralism and
vocationalism, directly related to Vichy's nationalist and antifeminist ideology. There are many hidden paradoxes to this new educational emphasis, as far as women were concerned.

First, as noted above (p190), women themselves were the teachers who were expected to promote an education for other women's futures au foyer. Second, Vichy's insistence on preparing young girls for life at home, as mothers, banished from the workplace, might have fitted well with the Nazi view of a New European Order, in which France would be "pastoralized", as well as serving the dreams of a better-ordered, more patriarchal and more populous France. But in the real world of the war, the dominant needs of the economy were for more workers, skilled and unskilled, and women were too valuable a resource to be dismissed or to be left sheltered "au foyer". Given the absence of the P.O.W. s too, women had to assume greater familial and work responsibilities. The increased demands made on French female labor -- which will be dealt with in the next chapter -- definitively undermined Vichy's dream of education for motherhood and domesticity.

But this dream of "préparation à la vie du foyer" was surely always a limited vision, a product of the anxieties of Catholics, natalists and familialists, a specifically conservative bourgeois view of education. Indeed Vichy's discourse on female education tells us more about the ills of
the 1930s which these reformers wanted addressed than it does about an innovative or revolutionary educational philosophy.

Vichy was not going to improve the status of schooling or training for French women but it did seek, through fragmented reforms and a variety of propaganda/rhetorical injunctions, to establish new ideological parameters for their education. The politics of gender is firmly embedded in these attempted reforms and in the language of educational rénovation. As subjects and providers of education, women were differently constructed in Vichy’s discourse. This is perhaps the real significance of educational policy under Vichy. Circulaires, tracts, laws and brochures, youth organizations and school activities produced and sustained meaning about cadres, elites, "jeunes gens" and "jeunes filles", about "la patrie", "obéissance", "le devoir". This process of producing meanings about class and gender identities, of how the social world should be understood, was central to the Révolution Nationale.

The Révolution Nationale produced a variety of critiques of the economy and class relations which ranged from anti-industrialist "utopian", neo-syndicalist to French corporatist. In 1940-1941, at least, these critiques often attacked laissez-faire capitalism. In an address at Commentry on May 1, 1941, Pétain spoke of the struggles and aspirations of French workers:

Ils veulent d'abord s'évader de l'anonymat où ils ont été jusqu'ici trop souvent confinés. Ne pas vendre leur travail comme une marchandise; ne pas être traités comme des machines. Mais comme des êtres vivants, pensants, souffrants; avoir avec leurs chefs des relations d'homme à homme. Ils veulent ensuite échapper à l'incertitude du lendemain, être protégés contre les aléas du chômage, trouver dans leur métier une sécurité ou pour mieux dire, une propriété. Avoir la possibilité d'y avancer jusqu'à la limite de leurs aptitudes. Ils veulent en outre participer, dans une mesure raisonnable, aux progrès de l'entreprise à laquelle ils sont associés, avoir une sauvegarde efficace contre les misères qui les guettent, lorsque survient la maladie ou lorsqu'arrive la vieillesse; pouvoir élever leurs enfants et les mettre en état, selon leurs capacités, de gagner honorablement leur vie.1

This account diagnoses the dreadful effects of French capitalism for "workers" -- alienation, anomie, insecurity -- all social ills which Vichy's corporatism would supposedly cure. But the familiar assumptions inherent in this critique require close scrutiny. The "communauté du travail" which was being constructed was predicated not just on the resolution of the class struggle, the idealist identification of the "professional" interests of workers and employers, but on the consolidation of masculine labour, on the erasure of gender. In this Pétainist vision workers must be men; living, thinking, suffering men; connected to their bosses, homme à homme. The dream of dignity, security, belonging and upward mobility was for male workers; its intrinsic paternalism was constituted by the protection of male bosses. The argument was built around the need for workers ("ils") to preserve and protect their subjective manhood, as individuals and as heads of families. But the silent threat was actually one of quintessential female disempowerment: to be anonymous, to sell their work as commodity, to be treated like machines, to be always insecure/dependent. The ravages of capitalism involved de-masculinization. But Pétainist corporatism offered order in the reinscription of gender boundaries and in class unity, a "oneness" which erased the "other", dissolving conflict.

Although this "language of class" was not specifically a creation of Pétainism or corporatism, looking at the
articulation of gendered concepts of class and labour in 1940-44 must be the starting-point for any discussion of Vichy’s policies on women’s employment. It is impossible to understand the initiatives on le travail féminin without a close reading of the désir d’imprégnner d’un esprit social et novateur les grands règles de l’organisation française du travail.2

The Révolution Nationale promised a reorganization of social relations and the economy, to create des institutions aptes à engendrer une atmosphère plus propice à la justice pour tous et à la prosperité pour chacun.3

What institution might be best suited to creating a more propitious atmosphere for justice and prosperity? Within the discourse of the Révolution Nationale certain strategies and vocabularies were available: of home, house and family. Vichy abolished strikes and unions in its corporatist pursuit of a new representation of work and a new intra-professional, intra-industrial identity. This involved, as the Charte du Travail made explicit, relocating and redefining the interests of all workers, even to the extent of creating new physical space. The language itself conveyed this new spatial/political reordering:

La pierre angulaire de la Charte réside dans la création

2 Loi du 4 octobre relative à l’organisation sociale des professions (Charte du Travail), (1941). AN: AGII 499.

3 ibid.
And this protective pseudo-egalitarianism was constructed from a corporatism that was both paternal and familial, enveloping male workers in a new bond that neutralised the individual/collective identifications of the class struggle:

partout où des hommes de bonne foi se réunissaient pour une explication loyale et franche, les oppositions s’atténuent, les malentendus se dissipent, l’accord s’établit, dans l’estime d’abord, dans l’amitié ensuite.\(^5\)

The language of family thus endowed economic relations with a mystical, almost altruistic spirit, ("cet élément spirituel"), conjuring up a more secure, cooperative and less conflict-ridden work environment (i.e. like the home).\(^6\)

Syndicats had the mission to "discipliner les libres réactions" and their role was strictly confined "au domaine de leur profession". But if the unions were thus symbolically disempowered by identification with the disciplinarian/educative function within the family (i.e. the mother), the family itself generated its own/new authority

\(^4\) ibid.

\(^5\) ibid.

and legitimacy:

Dotée de sa charte sociale, la famille professionnelle apparaîtra comme un corps vivant. Elle respectera les lois de l'État. L'État la respectera. ....seul le souci de ménager les étapes et de construire avec fruit n'a permis jusqu'ici de réaliser les corporations que partiellement. ....la charte du travail définit déjà les liens sociaux. Elle repose de surcroît, sur une division de nôtre activité économique en grandes familles professionnelles....7 [my emphasis]

Indeed the world of economic relations, profit, production and the class struggle was transformed by this familial-corporatist vision into "un ordre nouveau", which closely resembled the hierarchical presumptions of a patriarchal domestic arena. Values and relationships unfolded and were assured by a familiar/familial dialectic:

La primauté de la nation et du bien commun professionnel sur les intérêts particuliers. La collaboration confiante, loyale et permanente de tous les membres de la profession en vue de réaliser la paix sociale et la prospérité des entreprises. Le respect d'une hiérarchie fondée sur le travail, le talent et le mérite. Le développement progressif des réalisations sociales destinées à satisfaire les intérêts et les aspirations légitimes des travailleurs.8

The tensions, chaos, and diversity of the past were thus to be erased in a new relationship that evokes something closer to "consent" and conjugal fidelity than class struggle, wrapping up conflict in new vows for the future:

La paix sociale est le but suprême. Les institutions du passé ne peuvent être maintenues que dans la mesure où elles expriment le génie libre et divers de la nation. L'avenir est encore riche, chez nous, d'idées, d'efforts,

7 Charte du Travail.

8 ibid.
de sacrifices. C'est vers cet avenir que nous nous tournons résolument, sûrs de l'assentiment des patrons, des ouvriers, des techniciens, des artisans, désormais convaincus que l'intérêt personnel ne trouvera sa sauvegarde que dans l'intérêt collectif.9

In this discourse, legislation, policy and propaganda on the unions, employers, corporation paysanne, artisanal and commercial employment, as well as women’s work, can be fitted together, not seen as discrete and arbitrary initiatives but as an overall attempt to reorient and reanimate French society.

Given the gains of the Popular Front and the social/economic dislocations of the 1930s, it is not surprising that a defensively bourgeois regime would aspire to a ‘radical’ restructuring of the economy, as national workplace and arena of production; to impose order and harmony, to prevent the strikes and disruptions that had not only embittered social relations but had, it was firmly believed, led to catastrophe, -- not just in falling industrial and military production but in its undermining of national morale. Vichy promised a ‘new order’. The shape of this new order must be fully excavated for what it tells us about Vichy and about the contours of rightwing French politics. The literature on Vichy's labour policies and aspects of the French economy in this period has begun this

9 ibid.
'excavation'.

This chapter both "inserts" women, an entirely neglected constituency of the French workforce/economy, and problematizes gender in Vichy's discourse on travail, to arrive at a fuller analysis of the Révolution Nationale. This analysis in turn gives us a more comprehensive reading of the shifts and paradoxes of Vichy's policies and the exigencies of German Occupation. Women's work in France between 1940-1944 presents a complicated picture, neither fitting neatly into the model of 'Rosie-the-Riveter' home-front mobilisation nor, despite Vichy's femme au foyer rhetoric, post-war, post-defeat demobilisation.

War, Defeat, Occupation, the absence of the P.O.W.s and the S.T.O. caused shifts in the nature and availability of women's paid employment, as well as having an impact on the amount and type of women's unpaid, domestic labour. But we must set alongside these shifts the longterm patterns of women's participation in the French labour force and the


Adrian Jones, "Illusions of Sovereignty," Social History 11,1,1986.

11 M. Honey, Creating Rosie the Riveter: Class, Gender and Propaganda During World War II (Amherst, 1984); L.J. Rupp, Mobilizing Women for War: German and American Propaganda, 1939-1945 (Princeton, 1978).
efforts of Vichy to change and re-order that participation, the discourses of foyer and famille, travail and patrie.

As we have seen (Chapter I), women's work had been the subject of intensive debate in the 1930s, among employers, trade unionists, pro-natalists and especially 'social feminists', like the UFCS. While the theme of "le retour de la femme au foyer" predominated, the reality of women's diverse and massive participation in the French labour force remained unchanged. Women represented over a third of the labour force (1936: 36%), and at least a third of these women were married. It was not the entry of women, married or single, into the labour force that attracted attention but instead the changes in the type of work being undertaken by women and the fact that women seemed better sheltered from the rigours of the Depression and unemployment. Similarly, women still continued to represent a large section of the agricultural workforce but were characterized as deserting the land in search of "softer" urban employment and lifestyles. While there was an increase in the number of women in the tertiary sector -- especially marked in the civil service and teaching -- it must be emphasised that women also formed a sizeable proportion of the skilled and unskilled industrial workforce, for example, representing 18% of the metals industry in 1939, and 12-13% of the Renault workforce.12

12 Laura Lee Downs, op.cit.
The 1930s attacks on women’s employment must be seen in the context of economic crisis and unemployment and in the shifts in the nature of women’s employment, rather than as a direct result of increased female labour force participation. Women had, in fact, neither deserted the land nor the foyer, although they were often berated for both and for ‘stealing’ men’s jobs. As Downs has persuasively argued for the metals industry, employers hired and kept on women to do work defined as "women’s work" (production line: repetitive, intricate, monotonous) and did not necessarily replace men with this cheaper pool of ‘reserve’ labour. Nonetheless the image of the "new" working woman flourished, constructed from the conspicuous breakthroughs being made in public consciousness, primarily by professional women: the doctors, lawyers and professors. It is, again, the pervasiveness of ideas about women’s work (rather than statistical reality) that fuelled antifeminist discourses and contributed to Vichy’s femme au foyer politics.

Indeed, it is especially difficult, given the circumstances of the drôle de guerre, the Defeat and Occupation, to arrive at any definitive account of women’s employment between 1939-1945.13 What is at issue here is the

13 One is obliged to speculate on specific events and emphasise underlying trends. Statistics are notably lacking and these (and historical accounts of the period) tend not to give breakdowns by gender anyhow. See J. Fourastié, ‘La Population Active Française’, Revue d’Histoire de la Deuxième Guerre Mondiale, No.57, Janvier 1965, pp.5-18.
changes that the Révolution Nationale involved and specifically the initiatives taken in 1940-1941 to dictate the shape of women’s work in the New France.

At the time of the invasion of France, military production was still gearing up for war and progressively taking on more male and female labour. The extraordinary shock of the defeat and the massive dislocation caused by the German advances and the exode paralyzed the French economy in June 1940.

The government had to act quickly to restore ‘order’ (and its legitimacy) and to oversee the transition from war to Armistice-regulated neutrality. The immediate problems were demobilizing the army, reopening businesses, controlling the flow of capital and raw materials, managing the labour ‘market’ -- such as it was in those chaotic weeks -- and negotiating economic terms with the Occupying army.

The first Vichy ‘cabinet’ of July 1940 arrived at its task with a preordained vision of labour hierarchies and divisions and of how ‘demobilization’ might be effected. This vision of demobilization was shared to some extent by veterans of the First World War and syndicalists of the 1930s, by ideologues and technocrats. It viewed social justice on a scale of value relating to gender, age and type of work.

The government indicated its priorities clearly in establishing an order of dismissals: first, agricultural workers; second, women. Women workers who had temporarily
sustained wartime industrial production were to be made redundant to make work available for demobilised soldiers. Women were to be returned to the foyer as agricultural workers would be returned to the land. A telegram addressed to employers via the Prefects urged firms:

En vue libérer emplois pour autres catégories travailleurs, licencier progressivement:
1. ouvriers venus de l’agriculture.
2. femmes sauf veuves de guerre, femmes soldats non encore démobilisés, femmes soutien famille, femmes célibataires privés ressources et femmes employées dans industries dont main-d’œuvre est traditionnellement féminine.\(^\text{14}\)

The principles contained in this recommendation underlay later legislation. The premise was that certain jobs could be vacated and men substituted for women. This idea operated regardless of the fact that women had not simply "taken" men’s jobs, even in wartime industries, and that men, even if immediately demobilized, would not be substituted into these jobs anyhow. But clearly women’s participation in the labour market was contingent. Their access to employment was mitigated by the needs of male workers. The foyer was constructed as a place to which they could be ‘returned’, and in which they ideally belonged. Certain exceptions were made -- where women substituted for the male breadwinner (as widows or heads of households) or where they effectively provided no "competition" (in ‘female’ industries.) Given the circumstances, this telegram indicated only a hierarchy

\(^{14}\) Telegram, (7 juillet 1940), AN: F60 633.
of redundancies and left much to the discretion of individual employers. Nobody could predict how the economy would reorder itself.

René Belin, Ministre de la Production Industrielle et au Travail, elaborated on government preoccupations in September, articulating anxiety about (male) unemployment but also a startling clarity about social equity and the role of the State in legislating for hierarchies of need:

Le ralentissement actuel de l'activité économique et le chômage qui en résulte exigent que tous les efforts soient accomplis en vue d'assurer une répartition aussi équitable que possible des possibilités de travail entre les travailleurs. L'essentiel est d'assurer des moyens d'existence minimum au plus grand nombre des familles. L'on ne peut espérer atteindre ce résultat que si les salaires disponibles sont répartis entre toutes les familles ouvrières . . . Les vieux travailleurs bénéficiaires d'une retraite d'un montant, en principe, au moins équivalent à l'allocation du chômage doivent être éliminés des entreprises. Il en va de même des femmes mariées dont la subsistance est suffisamment assurée par la rémunération du mari. Enfin parmi les enfants susceptibles d'être employés, il convient encore de donner la préférence à ceux qui appartiennent à des familles nombreuses.... 15

This was a static view of the economy, a preordained "cake" that must be handed out in fair slices to families. It was not surprising that Belin, former Secrétaire-Adjoint of the CGT, proposed regulation and equity, nor was it surprising he operated on the patriarchal premise of a family wage system, where ideally old people and women were provided for by the male breadwinner. What was interesting was the conjuncture

of these views, the economic uncertainty of the summer of 1940 and the social agenda of the Révolution Nationale.\textsuperscript{16}

Having established the diminished entitlement to employment of married women, Belin again emphasised discretion and responsibility on the part of the employer:

Chaque cas pose un problème particulier qui doit être résolu en fonction de ses données propres. Mais chaque employeur doit savoir qu’en conservant un travailleur dont le salaire n’est pas indispensable à la subsistance de sa famille, il réduit à la misère une autre famille ouvrière.\textsuperscript{17}

Passing on this injunction, the Prefect of Seine-et-Oise, in his letter to Mayors, noted:

Il importe que chaque employeur par sa bonne volonté évite de contraindre le gouvernement à édicter des règles obligatoires et coopère avec lui aux efforts qu’il accomplit pour lutter contre le chômage et assurer le maximum de justice social.\textsuperscript{18}

Despite the presumption of "bonne volonté" and cooperation on the part of employers, a new alliance in determining what was equitable, the definition of social justice was still unclear. Problems over dismissals obviously arose and Belin was obliged to return to the recommendations of July and September in October, whilst underlining that "un projet de loi réglémentant l’emploi de la main-d’oeuvre féminine est

\textsuperscript{16} According to Belin, in his Mémoires, the objective of "la politique de la femme au foyer" was merely "d’obtenir un retour au statu quo ante". See R. Belin, Du Secrétariat de la CGT au Gouvernement de Vichy. Paris, 1978, p.156.

\textsuperscript{17} ibid.

\textsuperscript{18} Préfet de Seine-et-Oise, Circulaire No. 100, 16 octobre 1940. AN: F60 628.
actuellement en préparation". He argued that these measures be applied:

avec le souci d'éviter tout arbitraire et de tenir compte des problèmes particuliers posés pour chaque cas.

Or, mon Département est saisi journellement d'un grand nombre de réclamations émanant soit d'organisations ouvrières, soit des intéressées elles-mêmes, et signalant des cas de licenciements effectués sans qu'il ait été tenu compte des recommandations ... C'est ainsi que j'ai été saisi de réclamations indignant que des ouvrières ayant receuilli des cotisations syndicales avaient été licenciées parmi les premières quelle que soit leur situation de famille.

D'autre part mon attention a été appelé sur de nombreux cas de femmes prisonniers qui auraient été privées récemment de leur emploi.

De tels licenciements sont absolument contraires aux mesures préconçues....

Having categorized female labour as "other", Vichy was obviously unable to prevent arbitrary actions by employers. Indeed the July recommendations had left open the door for discrimination against union activists, as well as undermining the differential needs of working class and P.O.W. wives, for example. Some employers obviously exploited the situation to shed surplus female labour, irrespective of whether jobs would be thus vacated. An insurance company employee was dismissed in accordance with the government’s recommendations but the company prefaced the dismissal notice with reference to "les événements actuels, la chute considérable du chiffre d’affaires et la diminution

19 Belin to Inspecteurs Divisionnaires du Travail et Préfets, 26 octobre 1940. AN: Fonds 39 AS 976.
très sensible du travail au siège".  

Justifying dismissal the company claimed:

En application des recommendations du gouvernement en date du 6.07.40 qui ont fait l'objet de l'arrêté préfectoral du 17.07.40, toutes les femmes mariées ou vivant maritalement faisant partie du Personnel de la Compagnie seront licenciées à la date du 1.10.40.  

The company gave their own interpretation to official recommendations and allowed of only two exempting factors for married women below the grade of sous-chef de service: if they were wives of prisoners or mothers of three or more children. Married women whose husbands were unemployed were offered the possibility of temporary rehiring for themselves or, if his aptitudes allowed, their husbands, and women who married were permitted to continue in employment for one year following their marriage. The inclusion of unmarried women, "vivant maritalement", gives us an interesting glimpse into the ordinariness of civil law marriage/cohabitation, as well as the assumptions of heterosexual culture and law.

Some branches of industry were hesitant about applying the recommendations. A general meeting of the Groupement des Industries Métallurgique et Connexes de la Région Parisienne (GIMM) sought clarification of the July recommendations "d'une part sur la situation des femmes non-mariées, mais vivant maritalement, d'autre part sur la définition des


21 ibid.
emplois traditionnellement confiés à des femmes".22 This request, although for the Occupied Zone, is of especial interest as it refers to an industry which was not an "occupation féminine", and yet where women constituted a substantial section of the workforce before and during the war.23 Private employers on the ground understood the complexity of women's employment (and benefitted from female labour) and resisted the government's blanket categorizations, 're-reading' women's contingent status.

Another obvious stumbling block for employers was establishing when a married woman's salary should be deemed "un revenu indispensable".24 Belin evidently hoped to protect 'needy' female employees from arbitrary dismissal not only by reemphasising the exemptions for certain categories,25 but by requesting


23 Downs, op.cit.;

24 Query to this effect from Société Anonyme des Ligues Télégraphiques et Téléphoniques, who also noted that no list of traditionally female employment existed. 28 septembre 1940. AN: Fonds 39 AS 976.

25 Circulaire du 26 octobre 1940 relative à l'emploi de la main-d'œuvre féminine, Belin to Inspecteurs Divisionnaires:

il doit être tenu compte dans chaque cas des conditions particulières de l'intéressé: charges de famille, durée du travail pratiquée, le cas échéant, par le mari, et de façon plus générale, situation de celui-ci. Il y aura lieu notamment d'inviter les chefs d'établissements à maintenir dans leur emploi les femmes dont le mari est prisonnier. En ce qui concerne les célibataires, les
"préalablement aux mesures de licenciement que (les employeurs) se proposent de prendre, la liste de personnel que ces mesures viseraient".  

The project "en préparation" to which Belin had referred was in fact Vichy's first step to regulate female employment on a permanent basis and had been signed on 11 October 1940 (published in the Journal Officiel on 27 October). Other legislation —such as the loi relative à l'embauchage des pères de famille du 8 octobre 1940, loi du 13 septembre 1940 relative à l'emploi des démobilisés et loi du 27 aout 1940 relative à la protection de la main-d'oeuvre nationale —combined with the recommendations on female employment of July and September, indicated the government's intentions to protect French male heads of families from the rigours of

licenciements ne doivent pas porter sur celles qui sont privées de ressources, non plus que sur les jeunes filles, enfants de familles nombreuses, dont le salaire est nécessaire, bien que le père ou la mère travaille, pour participer aux charges de la famille.

26 It is unclear if these lists were actually submitted; I found no reference to them at the A.N. A G.I.M.M. Information Bulletin, No. 18 (4 décembre 1940), reminded its members that this list

n'est demandée que lorsque l'effectif à licencier est d'une certaine importance. Il n'y a pas lieu d'y procéder pour les licenciements individuels qui constituent rupture normale du contrat.

See also, AN: Fonds 39 AS 976.

27 See above, (circulaire 26 octobre 1940).

28 Interestingly, widows of two children were equated with fathers of three, for the purposes of this law.
demobilisation and unemployment. The law of 11 October also acted in this sense, its declared objective being "de lutter contre le chômage" (Art. 1). However it was a major initiative in Vichy's broader policy of encouraging "le retour de la mère au foyer", no longer just recommending a hierarchy of discrimination in the private sector but legislating for active discrimination in its own sphere of the public sector. In this respect the law merits detailed examination.

**The Loi du 11 octobre on Women's Work**

The first provision was a ban on recruitment of married women into the public service at any level (central, local, colonial) or into any government controlled enterprise. (Art. 2) There was no indication of the duration of this ban, introduced "provisoirement". The possibility, rather than the automatic right, of dispensation from this ban existed for two categories of married women only, those who had already passed a recruitment exam or were employed on a temporary contract and those whose husband was not in a position to support the household. Article 3 demonstrated the government's objective of permanently limiting women's employment by the state, and introduced the principle of a quota, 29 to be published by each ministry within three

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29 The quota was a favourite device of Vichy's, used against Jews in the professions, for example. The only subsequent publication of a quota that I have come across for
months. The quota was of all female employees, married or single.

The next article included the first positive innovation: a marriage incentive. A special leave of absence was granted to female employees under the age of twenty-eight intending to get married. A maximum grant of 10,000 francs (depending on the length of service) would be made if the marriage took place within two years, but more significantly, if the woman guaranteed not to take up any employment subsequently.

The following articles (5,6) elaborated on the terms of this grant and special leave. In the event of the marriage being dissolved, the employee could apply for her former position -- provided a divorce had not been granted 'against' her and a place was available within the relevant department quota. The grant would have to be repaid in full if the woman engaged in any "travail salarié" after marriage (excluding agricultural work) except in the case where the husband had insufficient means to provide for the household.

The concluding articles of this law were more negative and had broader implications for those married women already well established in public service employment. The possibility was created for married women, whose husbands' means were considered adequate, to be put on unpaid leave. (Mothers of three children or more were excluded.) Women put on this

this law was for Secrétaire d'Etat aux Communications, (J.O. 26 avril 1941). Percentages varied according to grade.
unpaid leave could then claim their relevant pension rights. Women over fifty who had pension entitlements were to be obliged to take early retirement (Art.8). Only a proportion of the vacancies (to be fixed by arrêté) thus created would be filled. Article 10 allowed of no 'immoral' loopholes.

Women living "notoirement en état de concubinage" were also made subject to the preceding articles. (Interestingly Vichy did not use the more neutral, employers' formula of "vivant maritalement".)

The concluding article was a reminder of Vichy's overall perceptions of women's work. Married women whose work was of a nature (part-time, in close proximity to their home) to be compatible with fulfilment of their household responsibilities, would not be subject to the law's provisions. The list of such acceptable employment had yet to be determined, but presumably farm work, home-work and various forms of "feminine" professional work, like social work and puériculture, were to remain acceptable.

The law of 11 October 1940 is central to any interpretation of Vichy's discourse on women or work. Here, the government clearly sought to discriminate between men and women employed in the public service, in terms of recruitment, promotion and retirement, and to promote equity through such gendered categorizations of the labour market. The ideal of the dependent married woman at home was paramount but certain other key assumptions were evident.
Economic activity before marriage was acceptable, as was work which did not interfere with the woman’s primary duties of housewife and mother. In this context it is especially interesting to note that women’s agricultural labour was deemed acceptable, following a traditional definition of ‘women’s work’.

Similarly the concession to mothers of three or more children was a paradoxical acceptance that these mothers had fulfilled their national natalist obligations 30 but as providers for familles nombreuses might require a supplementary income. Undoubtedly the most telling exemption was the continuing one of wives whose husbands were not "en mesure de subvenir aux besoins du ménage". This ambiguous formula was to give rise to subsequent difficulties of interpretation. It certainly represented a tacit admission that many women were not egoistically depriving a male breadwinner of a job, but often providing an essential supplement to a husband’s inadequate wage. Many female employees were themselves acting as family breadwinner -- widows, divorcees and prisoners’ wives, for example.31

This law was certainly an important step in the direction of ‘returning’ women to the home. Significantly too, further legislation to regulate the employment of all women, married

30 Three children was the usual minimum number quoted necessary for French ‘regeneration’.

31 On POW families, see S. Fishman, op. cit.
or not, was promised (Art. 13). The autumn of 1940 was a period of intense political activity for Vichy, the defining moment of the Révolution Nationale. By including women's employment in its legislative initiatives (however piecemeal or ill-defined this specific law), the government had indicated its desire not just to combat unemployment, but to regulate the economy and to institutionalise woman's place in the home and family.

However it is evident that while the ideological impetus for change came from certain quarters, like the CGF, the actual elaboration of texts was often made elsewhere, reflecting not only the lack of a unified approach but more interestingly a real divergence of priorities. It is pertinent here to note the observations of the CGF on the law of 11 October 1940 which claimed that "la Direction de la Famille n'a pas été consultée sur ce texte, qui l'intéresse cependant au plus haut point" and contained certain specific objections written by Lavagne.32 He claimed too that Article 5 was blatantly pushed through without the assent of his department: "Cet article qui permet la réintégration en cas de dissolution du mariage, est une véritable invite au divorce". Clearly there were different approaches to the family and work, one more moral and doctrinal, the other more technocratic. The CGF saw a close "fit" between the

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32 Lavagne was Auditeur au Conseil d'Etat, Chargé de Mission au Secrétaire d'Etat à la Famille et à la Santé. CGF, Observations, octobre 1940. AN: F60 628.
regulation of the economy and the regulation of female sexuality, highlighting their potential disjunctures around divorce and prostitution, while Belin’s department concerned itself with a more welfarist division of limited employment opportunities.

Lavagne also argued that Article 6 went outside the scope of the law on the public service. As it stood it would:

- Met à la charge des caisses de compensation des dépenses absolument imprévisibles.
- entraîne la mise à pied de milliers de femmes et jeunes filles, qui aura pour conséquence un abaissement considérable de la moralité (prostitution etc.).

More importantly it involved regulation of women’s employment in the private sector, a projet-loi for which was being completed by the Direction de la Famille. The text of this projet-loi, described as "souple et pratique", was circulated to the relevant departments and it was intended as an ambitious extension of the limitation on married women’s rights:

Art. 1: Le travail de la femme mariée tel qu’il est défini à l’Article 5 ci-après est interdit lorsque le salaire, le revenu professionnel ou ces bénéfices industriels, commerciaux ou artisanaux du mari sont suffisants et stables.

"Suffisants" and "stables" were defined as when "leur montant net est au moins égal à une fois et demie le montant du salaire moyen départemental" and "un emploi permanent perçu

33 Projet-loi concernant l’exercice d’un emploi salarié privé par les femmes mariées. Secrétaire Générale à la Famille et à la Santé, Direction de la Famille, octobre 1940 (AGII 497).
depuis quatre mois". The work forbidden to a married woman was:

l’exercice d’un emploi salarié qui la retient hors de son foyer pour un temps supérieur à la moitié de la durée du travail hebdomaire résultant de la règle générale fixée par la loi.

Individual exemptions might be granted by the Direction de la Famille but the general principle of the dependence of the married woman and her primary domestic responsibilities is repeated.

The world imagined by the CGF was one where all French women, urban and rural dwellers, married and single, would work exclusively in the home, raise children and create a happy family life. Their time and energy would be devoted to their men and their children. It was an imaginary world where (bad) women who had "chosen" to leave the home (from boredom, egoism...) would be obliged to return there. (Good) women who had been forced to leave their home (through poverty or loss of a male provider) would be compensated and allowed return home, thanks to the allocation de la mère au foyer. Indeed this stringent law was to be morally validated by the provision of the "allocation de la mère au foyer" (Art. 14) for which, significantly, one’s children had to hold French nationality.34

The extraordinary diversity of women’s work, employment and economic needs was effectively wiped out by the binary

34 See Chapter 6 on Welfare.
logic of this moral *imaginaire*, by the recategorisation of society that *le retour de la femme au foyer* required. Although the *projet-loi* was never finally promulgated, it is obvious that the CGF, at least, attached much importance to it. A note from the *Bureau de Législation*, written by Garcin, in 1941, gets to the heart of the matter, prescribing maternal work and paternal support:

La mère qui travaille ne peut pas s’occuper de son foyer. Le salaire du père doit être suffisant pour nourrir la famille. Il importe à l’heure actuelle de *dégager* le marché du travail.35

Apart from this classic denial of domestic labour [the mother who "works"], the CGF’s insistence that women must busy themselves at home and that men must feed their family involved not just a validation of the male family wage but also a construction of the woman-centred *foyer*. It was this double process that would free up and clear out (*dégager*) the labour market. In fact, the private sector project being formulated made it necessary to envisage multiple strategies for this "*dégagement*", material aid, sanctions, education:

(a) enlever le taux de la prime de la mère au foyer, de manière à ce que le salaire du père soit suffisant et qu’on puisse licencier la femme mariée qui travaille.
(b) n’interdire le travail qu’au cas où le mari gagne le minimum de salaire.
(c) créer des oeuvres et des associations qui auront pour but exclusif d’apprendre à la mère à s’intéresser à son foyer. (ligue de la mère au foyer, enseignement ménager.)

The latter point highlights the significance and links of

35 AN: AGII 497. Garcin was also author of *Révolution Sociale par la Famille* in which the Irish constitution (1937) was held up as a model. See Chapter 2.
women's "education" and women's work which was discussed in Chapter 3. However, it was around the previous points -- that of the economic viability of the average household, where the woman was usually obliged to work -- that the employment debate was concentrated. An essential starting point was to ascertain at what point the woman was 'obliged' to work. The definition of a "salaire vital" was demanded:

la fixation d'un traitement du salaire minimum à partir duquel un chef de famille est censé pouvoir subvenir, sans autre appoint, aux besoins de son ménage ... pour éviter une diversité d'interprétation qui ne manquerait pas de soulever de vives récriminations ....

A lengthy circulaire (to all ministries) from Bouthillier, Minister of Finance, on the specific application of the 11th October law, elaborated on this problem:

Il ne peut être dérogé, par arrêté, à cette interdiction (d'embauchage) qu'en faveur des femmes mariées dont le mari n'est pas en mesure de subvenir aux besoins du ménage et qui ne disposent pas elles-mêmes de ressources suffisantes. C'est au Secrétaire d'Etat responsable qu'il appartiendra d'apprécier dans chaque cas d'espèce, si cette double condition doit être considérée comme remplie. Pourront en particulier bénéficier de la dérogation ainsi prévues, les femmes susvisées dont le mari sera atteint

36 The notion of female neglect of their domestic responsibilities was widespread. J. Gaudouin, for example, in La France au Travail (6 janvier 1941) writing in praise of the government's initiatives, commented:

La désertion du foyer a eu des conséquences les plus fâcheuses - chômage, diminution de la natalité, surveillance moins attentive des enfants, relâchement de l'esprit familial. Il est donc souhaitable qu'interviennent bientôt les lois qui puissent permettre à la femme de consacrer à son ménage et à ses enfants tous les soins qui leur sont nécessaires.

37 Secrétaire d'Etat à la Marine à Secrétaire d'Etat à l'Intérieur, (17 février 1941). AN: F60 628.
Again categorization was critical. While exemptions might be considered for women whose husbands could not provide for them, and who had no resources themselves, the constituency of those with two salaries was especially targeted. Indeed, as we shall see below, the fact that a (small) number of married public servant employees brought in two incomes seemed to have generated a virulent animosity. Were they a specific problem, a peculiar threat to the sanctity of famille/foyer, or were these married teachers and postal workers simply conspicuous targets of local envy?39 Much seemed to derive from the "inspiration" of the local administrations.

The large area of individual ministerial discretion obviously lead to difficulties in application. But the lack of special consideration generally for familles nombreuses, for example, reflected a significant rift in orientation

38 Circulaire, Ministère des Finances (Direction du Budget) n.d. (mars 1941?). AN: F60 628.

between Finances and Famille. This was further illustrated by Bouthillier’s introduction, which echoed Belin’s "distributive", "equitable" priorities:

La loi du 11 octobre 1940 doit être considérée comme une mesure de circonstance, destinée à assurer en raison de la crise actuelle du chômage, une répartition plus équitable des places disponibles, en limitant la possibilité pour les deux membres d’un ménage, d’occuper chacun un emploi. Elle se propose d’autre part, de restreindre l’utilisation du travail féminin dans les administrations en vue de faciliter le reclassement des démobilisés et des jeunes gens sans emploi. Cette loi ne peut donc être considérée comme constituant une charte définitive du travail féminin et ses dispositions pourront, suivant l’évolution de la situation économique et du marché du travail, être assouplies ou renforcées.40

This pragmatic approach was toned down by Bouthillier in his concluding comments, which sought to mitigate the obvious antifeminism of the law and to emphasise its patriotic familialism:41

Je dois, en terminant, vous rappeler l’importance d’ordre social et familial que le gouvernement attache à ce que des dispositions relatives au travail féminin soient appliquées avec énergie et discernement. Vous voudriez bien, en particulier, appeler l’attention des services relèvant de votre autorité sur la caractère de la nouvelle législation qui ne doit pas être considérée comme constituant une brimade à l’égard des personnels féminins et en particulier des femmes mariées employées dans les Administration mais comme une mesure de justice et de salut public imposée par des circonstances dans l’intérêt de la famille, de la jeunesse et de l’ordre social.42

Bouthillier’s advice was significant for its shifting

40 AN: F60 628.

41 An official address to married women, made on radio by M. Guerdon (Travail) also underlined the ‘temporary’ nature of the new regulations. (7 novembre 1940). AN: F60 628.

42 AN: F60 628.
language of justice and expediency, order and circumstances, and for its invocation of the *salut public*, the appeal for a consensual interpretation of the law. This apologia was unlikely to satisfy more committed proponents of the Révolution Nationale. A letter from Darlan complained that the *circulaire* was long overdue.

le retard apporté à la publication de cette circulaire tient depuis plusieurs mois en échec l’application d’une des lois les plus importantes parmi celles qui ont été élaborées par le gouvernement du Maréchal.  

Women’s work might be conspicuously on the Pétainist agenda but Darlan was not letting any official ‘parallel’ interpretation run. The discourse of work and family required, in his view, the hegemony of *l’aspect social*. He sent a direct rejoinder to the circulaire objecting to Bouthillier’s setting out of the law:

En ce qui concerne l’objet de la loi j’estime qu’il y aurait intérêt à faire ressortir *l’aspect social* que présente incontestablement la loi du 11 octobre 1940 au moins dans une partie de ses dispositions. Les idées que vous rappelez à cet égard à la fin de la circulaire gagneraient, semble-t-il, à être mises en lumière dès le début.

But it was precisely the desire to appropriate this discourse that caused familialists to be vigilant. Another reply to the circular, this time from the Secrétaire d’État à la Famille, argued predictably for special consideration for

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43 *Vice-Présidence du Conseil à Ministre Economique Nationale et Finances (7 mars 1941) AN: F60 628.*

44 *Vice-Présidence du Conseil à Ministre Economique Nationale et Finances (21 mars 1941) AN: F60 628.*
familles nombreuses, in a natalist shift of emphasis:

Il arrivera en effet surtout pour les emplois publics modestes que le traitement du père même avec l'aide des Allocations Familiales soit insuffisant à faire vivre une famille nombreuse surtout dans les circonstances actuelles et avec la hausse considérable du coût de la vie. L'interdiction d'embauchage tant que les Allocations familiales n'auront pas été sérieusement augmentées représentent une brimade pour les familles nombreuses et un encouragement à la stérilité volontaire.\textsuperscript{45}

In 1940 the Vichy government had introduced certain principles regarding women's employment, attempting to establish a hierarchy of entitlement to work, and underwriting the ideal of \textit{la femme au foyer}. By early 1941 the application of these principles had given rise to enormous difficulties. The number of conceivably 'valid' exemptions threatened to confound the entire initiative. Widows, prisoners' wives, mothers of familles nombreuses, hapless single women and those obliged to take early retirement -- all appealed for special considerations. In the circumstances of occupied France their arguments, of sheer economic necessity, had considerable weight.

Indeed, far from contributing to social justice, the new regulations limiting women's employment were hitting at the heart of family welfare. By October 1943, salaries were barely 50% of their 1939 level, while retail prices had doubled. Sauvy has calculated the level of revenue versus

\textsuperscript{45} Secrétaire d'Etat à la Famille et à la Santé à Ministère de l'Economie Nationale et de Finance, (18 mars 1941). Another request for special consideration - for veuves de guerre - made by X. Vallat, Secrétaire Général des Anciens Combattants, was refused (8 avril 1941). AN: F60 628.
'needs' for October 1941, for households where the husband alone was employed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Revenu</th>
<th>Besoins</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Célibataire</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ménage sans enfant</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ménage un enfant</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>210</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ménage deux enfants</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>260</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ménage trois enfants</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>310</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ménage quatre enfants</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>360</td>
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Sauvy estimated the range of revenues, where the household had two salaries, to be from 100 to 235.46 In the context of a wages freeze and soaring prices (and the overriding crisis of 'ravitaillement'), it was clearly impossible for most households to cope on a single income.

The new law was not welcomed universally, even among the most fervent supporters of the discourse of la femme au foyer. Eve Baudouin, Conseillère Générale of the UPCS, was interviewed in December 1941 about the reaction of her organization. She distinguished between the ideological and material aspects of this initiative, between sanctions and encouragement:

Nous n’avions pas souhaité qu’une réglementation contraigne la femme à rester dans son foyer. Nous voyons trop quels sont les inconvénients pour l’équilibre de certain budgets, quelle menace arbitraire dans les dérogations accordées ou refusées, quels dangers même pour la moralité publique, dont le moindre ne serait pas l’encouragement donné à l’union libre, risque d’être engendrés par des mesures aussi draconiennes.47


47 *L’Oeuvre*, 4 décembre 1941.
However it was changes in the 'labour market' which, as much as the necessity of far-ranging exemptions or unfavourable public reactions, completely undermined the attempts to move towards an overall ban on women’s employment. In October 1940, when the law had been introduced, there were over one million "démendeurs d’emploi". By the end of 1941, this number had been reduced to 195,000.48 In March 1941, Germany had made their first appeal for French workers.49 The pressure was on to find foreign workers, especially skilled workers, to maintain German war production or to substitute for German agricultural labour. Foreign workers and P.O.W.s employed in the Reich on October 1, 1941 already numbered three and a half million.50 Ultimately there was a chronic disjuncture between Vichy’s imagining of le retour de la femme au foyer, the introverted world of the Révolution Nationale, where time seemed to have stopped, and the voracious desires of the Nazi conquering State, where other discourses and categorizations of women workers were hegemonic. But in 1941, it was Vichy’s own imaginings of a new order that were failing, undermined

48 ibid., p.173. Of course, given the extraordinary circumstances of 1940-44, the term "labour market" is rather inappropriate.

49 Circulaire du 29 mars 1941 au sujet du recrutement d’ouvriers appelés à travailler en Allemagne, adressé par le Secrétaire d’État au Travail aux Préfets.

by contradictory definitions of "work", "need" and "women". Who was la femme au foyer? Throughout 1941, there is evidence that the government, although remaining attached to its principles, was obliged to rescind or neutralise its previous provisions and reconsider its definitions.

In April 1941, the Secrétaire d’Etat au Travail issued a statement "sur le chômage féminin" 51. This seems to conflict curiously with the previous preoccupation to remove women progressively from the labour market and the promise to introduce a law regulating the employment in the public sector of married and single women.

... étant donné que le chômage féminin reste proportionnellement plus important que le chômage masculin, il apparaît opportun de mettre à profit la circonstance favorable pour entreprendre une action appropriée correspondant à celle qui a permis de supprimer presque totalement le chômage masculin dans un certain nombre de départements.

This concern for female employment was articulated, however, within the previous discourse on women and work. This circular also recommended a hierarchy amongst unemployed women of "les plus dignes d’intérêt" and special treatment for "les demandeuses d’emploi dont les ressources sont les plus précaires". Significant too was the encouragement for employment in traditionally or predominantly female

51 Circulaire du 2 avril 1941 sur le chômage féminin adressé par le Secrétaire d’Etat au Travail à Ministre les Inspecteurs Divisionnaires du Travail et de la main-d’oeuvre. AN: F60 628.
industries. Again divergences of interest were evident at Vichy.

For example, the increase in female unemployment prompted some to urge greater regulation of married women’s employment. A note from the Préfet de la Côte d’Or expresses disillusionment with the government’s implementation of measures, (not the principle underlying them) and concern for the fate of single unemployed women:

L’augmentation du chômage féminin paraît imposer de plus en plus la réglementation du travail de la femme mariée. Si dès le mois d’octobre dernier, il a été question de donner satisfaction à un sentiment unanime réclamant la rentrée au foyer de la femme dont le mari travaille, depuis lors aucune mesure pratique n’a été prise dans l’administration départementale. Or, par suite du chômage partiel des industries et du commerce, de nombreuses jeunes filles se trouvent actuellement à la rue. Il faut leur donner une place si l’on ne veut qu’elles tombent très bas ou n’acceptent de s’expatrier.

This report clearly differentiated the categories of married and unmarried female workers. The consequences of young women’s unemployment were constructed as opposing sides of a single threat of depravity/disinheritance: prostitution ("tomber très bas") or working abroad ("s’expatrier") -- and both involved selling French female labour to the Germans.

A general revision of the loi du 11 octobre was being planned by Belin’s department. The complexity of proposals and counter-proposals suggest that regulating female

52 It should be noted that a special department existed at the Ministère du Travail for "main d’oeuvre féminine".

53 Extrait du rapport de Préfet de la Cote d’Or (11 juin 1941). AN: FIA 3699.
employment at all had become an intractable problem for the administration.

A meeting was held in May 1941, under Belin’s presidency, at which representatives of various departments were present (Finances, Budget, Travaux Publics, P.T.T., Communications, Travail, Enseignement). They made a detailed examination of the loi du 11 octobre, the principal proposals of which were:

Art.1. suppression de cet article...les mesures à envisager pour la réglementation du travail féminin perdent leur caractère de lutte contre le chômage et deviennent inspirées par des considérations d’organisation du travail dans les services administratifs.

Art.2. suppression -- l’embauchage des femmes mariées reste autorisé, sous réserve de l’application de la règle des cumuls qui reste à réglementer.

Art.3. de 30 ans (au lieu de 28).

Art.5. sans observations.

Art.6.

Art.7. Il est décidé que la formule "mari en mesure de subvenir aux besoins du ménage" doit être précisée par arrêté.

Art.8. la mise à la retraite d’office, des femmes à 50 ans jusqu’à 31 juillet 1941 soulévé des graves critiques. Avant de résoudre la question posée par cet article, il est décidé que cette question serait posée au conseil des ministres, afin de savoir si l’âge de la retraite des femmes pourrait être fixé à 55 ans.

Art.11. listes à établir des travaux à mi-temps qui pourraient être confiés au personnel féminin.

Art.13. supprimé en raison de l’impossibilité d’établir un réglementation.

This revision proposed a virtual abandonment of the government’s previous objective, settling on a mere regulation of certain aspects of female employment in the

54 Procès-verbal de la conférence (10 mai 1941) au sujet de la révision de la loi du 11 octobre 1940 sur le travail féminin. AN: F60 628.
public service and conceding the impossibility of an
initiative for the private sector. Belin’s covering note to
Darlan including a copy of the procès-verbal emphasised the
advent of unfavourable circumstances noted by the meeting:

Il a reconnu en effet que cette loi qui répondait alors à
certaines préoccupations sociales, ne semblait plus
opportune dans les circonstances économiques présentes.

Belin’s "realism" sidestepped the issue of categorization
(which femme, which foyer?) by putting the matter in the past
tense, a strategy of another historical ("plus opportunes")
moment, although only seven months before, ("cette loi qui
répondait alors") and by marginalising the discourse itself
("certaines préoccupations sociales").

It is at this point that the divergencies, if not
antipathies, in the 'Cabinet' become apparent. The proposed
revision, which was to be argued out throughout 1941-42, was
totally at odds with the preoccupations of Darlan, the Vice
Président du Conseil, and Renaudin, the Sécretaire d'Etat à
la Famille, neither of whom had been consulted.

Darlan notes this difference of orientation:

D’après le procès-verbal, ce régime ne s’inspirerait plus
des mêmes principes que la loi du 11 octobre...il ne
tendrait pas à éliminer les femmes des emplois publics
dans toute la mesure compatible avec les nécessités du
service. Au contraire, le recrutement des femmes dans les
emplois publics serait largement permis sous la seule

55 Ministère du Travail à Vice-Président du Conseil (24
mai 1941) No.4119. AN: F60 628.

56 Vice-Présidence du Conseil, Note (12 juin 1941).
AN: F60 628.
réserves d’une réglementation des cumuls de traitement au cas où le mari et la femme seraient tous deux fonctionnaires.  

His reply to Belin contained "les plus expresses réserves". Referring to the proposed definition of "mari en mesure de subvenir aux besoins...", he argued that according to the Code Civil (Articles 203, 212-214) it was the duty of the husband to provide for the household. Therefore:

Ce n’est que dans cas exceptionnels...que le mari pourra être considéré comme n’étant pas en mesure de subvenir aux besoins du ménage; il faut admettre la présomption qu’il l’est -- c’est à la femme, sollicitant son maintien ou son admission dans l’Administration qu’il appartiendra de rapporter, le cas échéant, toutes preuves à l’appui de sa prétention... 

In a startling and explicit statement of women’s hapless status in patriarchy, Darlan asserted that a wife’s dependence on her husband was "une part de risque normal du mariage". He also argued that:

le traitement d’un fonctionnaire étant en principe suffisant pour son entretien, celui de son conjoint et de leurs enfants, il est anormal qu’un ménage de fonctionnaires accapare deux traitements pour faire face aux mêmes charges que d’autres ménages où la femme se consacre à son intérieure et à l’éducation de ses enfants. La solution ne peut être que de réduire le traitement de la femme d’un tiers, par exemple, de son montant normal et ne s’attacher à ce traitement aucune des indemnités (charges de famille, logement etc.) déjà perçues par le mari. 

Darlan was thus unsympathetic to Belin’s revision and wanted

57 ibid.


59 ibid., pp.2-3.
a real financial restraint imposed on the working married woman. This rift of views, which was ultimately to confound any revision, developed throughout 1941. The arguments continually illustrate very different conceptions of Vichy's "politique familiale".

Belin stuck with this projet-loi, which again he justified on the grounds that unemployment had ceased to be a serious problem. He argued that what was now required was merely "la limitation du nombre des agents du sexe féminin employés dans les services public". In fact he spoke of "les légitimes intérêts des femmes mariées....actuellement en fonction" and the need to avoid "des mesures trop rigoureuses (qui) auraient le caractère de sanctions prises à l'encontre de seules femmes mariées fonctionnaires". He proposed a percentage, to be fixed by the Conseil d'Etat, for each grade and service. This percentage should be fixed in such a way as to allow female fonctionnaires the possibility of promotion to senior grades. In his criticism of Darlan's proposed prélèvement on the woman's salary, Belin reveals both his syndicalist past and egalitarianism, but couched in the values of Vichy moralisme:

...le fait à travail égal, de donner à une femme mariée une rémunération moins élevée qu'à une femme célibataire ou à un homme, risque d'aller à l'encontre même du but de la loi et d'encourager le concubinage. De toute façon, l'adoption d'une telle mesure serait à mon avis très préjudiciable au rendement dans les administration

60 Letter, Ministre du Travail à Vice-Président du Conseil (21 juillet 1941). AN: F60 628.
The tone of correspondence from Chevalier, Secrétaire d'État à la Famille et à la Santé was quite different. His department was putting forward a separate projet-loi to replace the loi du 11 octobre and he insisted on its familialist credentials:

Ce projet....s'inspire du désir de développer et de protéger la famille. La protection de la famille voudrait que la femme restât au foyer; mais c'est un voeu qui ne peut être réalisé que dans certaines conditions matérielles. Lorsque la femme n'a pas de moyens suffisants d'existence, la situation de famille peut, au contraire, exiger qu'elle gagne sa vie et celle des siens; tel est notamment le cas pour toutes les femmes qui ont charge de famille lorsqu'il n'entre au foyer aucun revenu du travail: femmes veuves, divorcées, abandonnées, épouses dont le mari ne peut subvenir aux besoins du ménage, etc; tel est également le cas des célibataires notamment lorsqu'elles ont à leur charge des personnes de leur famille. Pour toutes ces femmes, le travail est une nécessité vitale pour elles-même et pour les leurs.

À l'inverse il est des femmes que leur situation dispense de travailler; c'est le cas général de celles qui sont mariées, lorsque le mari travaille et peut, avec son gain augmenté des allocations familiales, subvenir à l'entretien de la famille. En travaillant de leur côté elles manquent à leur devoir qui est de rester au foyer; elles prennent une place qui serait mieux occupée par d'autres et elles provoquent ces cumuls de rémunérations dans un même ménage qui sont toujours blâmables et absolument injustifiables lorsqu'il n'y a pas d'enfants.

Again categories -- of need and moral worth -- were critical. On the one hand, the notion that, for some women, employment was "une nécessité vitale", was being more strongly argued now (in mid-1941). On the other hand, the discourse of duty

61 ibid.

62 Secrétaire d'État à la Famille et à Santé (Chevalier) à Ministre du Travail (30 juillet 1941). AN: F60 628.
versus indulgence, and the paramount demands of *le foyer*, remained inescapable for "le cas général". Again the apparent 'provocation' provided by married women fonctionnaires' employment fuelled this moralistic diatribe.\(^63\)

Chevalier argued that no general ban should be enacted as it would not be able to take into account the essential factor of family circumstances, such as number of dependents. His proposals included a percentage quota for recruitment, the hiring of married women who had 'charges de famille' (followed by single women fulfilling the same conditions), the dismissal of women over 55 who had no 'charges de famille' or whose homes had another income, the payment of *allocations familiales* where necessary to supplement pension entitlements and the inclusion of 'concubines' as well as married women. The contentious proposal however remained:

\[\text{la poursuite des cumuls par un prélèvement sur la rémunération de la femme lorsqu'il entre au foyer un autre revenu professionnel stable et suffisant et lorsque les charges de famille ne sont pas élevées. Une clause de sauvegarde permettrait d'autre part de ne jamais supprimer complètement la rémunération de la femme.}\(^64\)

\(^63\) Interestingly, Georges Pernot, as head of *Fédération des Associations des Familles Nombreuses de France*, wrote to Sautriau (Cabinet Civile) complaining about the treatment of married women fonctionnaires "mères de familles" (8 octobre 1941): "Il est vraiment inconcevable que ceux des fonctionnaires dont la situation est vraiment le plus digne d'intérêt soient précisément les moins bien traités". AN: AGII 605 CM 19e.

\(^64\) Chevalier (30 juillet 1941) pp.2-3. AN: F60 628.
A letter from Darlan offered a synthesis of the principal proposals in question but on the issue of the prélèvement remained firmly on the side of Famille:

Les deux projets sont en opposition sur la question du cumul du traitement de la femme avec les autres ressources entrant à son foyer.... Je me range entièrement à l’avis de Ministre le Secrétaire d’Etat à la Famille et à la Santé, avis qui est aussi celui de Ministre Secrétaire d’Etat à l’Aviation, à savoir qu’il importe d’organiser un prélèvement sur le traitement de la femme fonctionnaire dont le mari travaille....

C’est essentiellement l’intérêt de la famille et la nécessité d’assurer le retour de la mère au foyer qui exigent que la politique du gouvernement à l’égard du travail féminin s’oppose à ce que des foyers privilégiés bénéficient d’un cumul illimité du traitement de la femme avec les ressources du mari...

Or, la protection de la famille par le retour de la femme au foyer doit constituer, ainsi que vous le reconnaissez, l’objet même de la nouvelle loi. Il convient de noter d’ailleurs qu’un régime du travail féminin caractérisé par un prélèvement sur le traitement de la femme en cas de cumul constituerait encore une attenuation très notable du régime de la loi du 11 octobre 1940, puisque celle-ci prévoyait la mise d’office sans solde de toute femme dont le mari subvenait aux charges du ménage.65

Darlan believed that this prélèvement, which he accepted would put the married public service employee in a position of relative disadvantage to her private sector counterpart, would merely offset many of the benefits the former enjoyed. Moreover, the State would be setting an example. An extension of this initiative to the private sector (which Belin deemed impossible) had to be envisaged in any revision. Two proposals existed for the organisation of this prélèvement. The first, that of the CGF, would take into

65 Vice-Président du Conseil à Ministre du Travail (5 août 1941). AN: F60 628.
account the total income and the number of dependents in the household. The second, that of Aviation, envisaged a progressive scale of payment which took neither the husband’s income nor the charges de famille into account. Darlan supported the latter proposal, and showed a certain scepticism about the possible workings of the first. He deemed Famille’s proposal impracticable because it would have to be revised periodically according to variations in charges de familles; it would be impossible to gauge the total revenue (professional and personal) of a household and the husband might be encouraged not to seek an increased income. Preferring the direct prélèvement Darlan did, however, allow for two rates -- the higher for married women without children. The prélèvement would not be applied to women whose salaries constituted "la seule rémunération professionelle stable et suffisante". Nor would it be applied to women who had three or more children. The revenue derived from this prélèvement would be used for measures helping the family.66

Darlan’s detailed and persistent attention to this issue would not be especially remarkable except for the context. In August 1941, at the height of the war and against the background of escalating German demands, here was the Premier Ministre pursuing a commitment to reform of public service recruitment and pay-scales. Such reforming zeal may have

66 ibid, pp.3-4.
seemed 'inopportun'. But it reminds us how the commitment to (re)constructing the economy, employment and labour relations was maintained through (and despite) the intrusions of "external" reality. The regulation of women’s work mattered not just to grassroots familiaux and pronatalists, but at the highest level of government. Of course, at this level, there was not one 'voice'.

Darlan’s proposals did not meet with Belin’s agreement and he continued to express his hostility to such 'sanctions' against married women fonctionnaires. He pointed out that this measure would affect principally teachers and post-office workers, where combined salaries were "généralement peu important". Belin’s preference was for a broader measure:

J’insiste encore tout particulièremment pour que le soin de rétablir l’égualité des charges entre les ménages sans enfant et les familles nombreuses soit confié à des disposition d’ordre fiscal qui viseraient tous les français et pas seulement les femmes, fonctionnaires de l’administration.67

And, confronting Darlan with his own argument, Belin continued:

au surplus, en n’appliquant aucun prélèvement à la mère de 3 enfants, votre projet va à l’encontre d’un des buts essentiels de notre loi qui est d’encourager le retour au foyer de la mère de famille.68

The discussion about possible revisions dragged on but


68 ibid.
Belin's opposition to the *prélèvement* prevailed. By October a new text, comparatively watered-down, was nearing completion.\(^69\) Since the *loi du 11 octobre 1940*, the recruitment of women into the public service had been practically suspended causing particular hardship to young women, who often had elderly relatives to support or came from large families.\(^70\) It was agreed that "un droit de priorité" would be established for future recruitment, benefiting women with *charges de famille*. The upper age limit for those employees leaving to get married would be raised from 28 to 30, allowing for delayed marriages "du fait de la captivité de nombreux jeunes gens". The retirement age of 55 would only affect those without dependents or another stable and adequate income. Interestingly, this new revision allowed for appeals against the *loi du 11 octobre* if made within three months.\(^71\) It was also decided that un *projet loi* would be completed by the Ministère du Travail and the Directeur du Budget (Finance).\(^72\)

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\(^69\) Note relative au travail féminin à la suite des consultations des différentes administrations (Vice-Président du Conseil, Travail, Famille) (10 octobre 1941). AN: F60 628.

\(^70\) ibid., p.3.

\(^71\) Ministre de Travail. Note - Modifications essentielles, Articles 14 & 15. AN: F60 628.

\(^72\) Procès-verbal (30 octobre 1941) Ministre Economique Nationale et Finances. AN: F60 628.
It is obvious that by this stage (late 1941) the momentum for a major new initiative on women's employment had been lost. The interministerial wranglings over even a minimalist revision demonstrate not just a divergence of views over the supposed rénovation nationale but also a certain administrative inertia and political haphazardness.

A letter from Education Nationale, objecting to the proposed revisions illustrates this haphazardness:

La loi du 11 octobre 1940 a eu pour mon Département des conséquences fâcheuses. J'ai dû pour m'y conformer, mettre à la retraite une très grande nombre de femmes qui avaient dépassé 50 ans. J'ai dû pour éviter le reproche d'arbitraire, fixer dans une circulaire du 27 mars des règles précises qui ont été appliquées sans défaillances. De toute part, cependant, des récriminations se sont élevées et j'estime que ce n'est pas au moment où elles sont à peu près calmées qu'il convient de réouvrir le débat.73

Elaborating on his "réserves les plus formelles", Carcopino points to the near impossibility of reinstating employees and concludes sanguinely:

En tout état de chose, si la loi du 11 octobre 1940 était critiquable, (je n'ai laissé pour ma part de signaler les

73 Secrétaire d'État à l'Education Nationale à Ministre du Travail (30 octobre 1941). AN: F60 628.

In a letter of May 1942 to Lagardelle (Travail), Cathala (Finances) recognised "le fait que certaines administrations ont largement appliqué la loi...alors que d'autres n'ont pas crû devoir en tenir compte ou n'en ont pas eu la possibilité, a crée de nombreuses inégalités et soulève un certain mécontentement".

A letter too from the Secrétaire d'État à l'Aviation to the Secrétaire Générale Chef du Gouvernement (14 août 1942) complained that as he had continued to apply the dispositions of the law strictly, his departement now found itself "en état d'infériorité à l'égard des autres départements ministériels qui ne les respectent pas aussi rigoureusement". AN: F60 628.
difficultés que présentait, pour mon Département, sa mise en application) il ne fallait pas attendre un an pour la réviser. On ne revient pas impunément sur des décisions qui ont été prises, que les intéressés ont admises ou tout au moins subies. On ne peut défaire ce qui a été fait même à tort sans encourir un reproche d'inconséquence plus grave peut-être que celui d'injustice.\textsuperscript{74}

This bureaucratic logic and rationalization is critical. Carcopino was not arguing that Vichy’s regulation of women’s work had benefitted "the family", the labour market or the world of education but simply that, right or wrong, it had been applied and should not be reversed. A closer look at the impact of the loi du 11 octobre on teachers reveals that many women were adversely affected and that resistance to administrative sanctions involved re-appropriating the discourse of social justice, \textit{famille} and women’s (contingent) rights to work.

The Directrice of the \textit{Ecole Normale Supérieure des Jeunes Filles} (ENSNJF) at Sèvres argued, for example, against the new law:

\begin{quote}
\textit{d’une manière générale, j’attache une grande importance...à la collaboration de mères de famille, particulièrement aptes à guider les jeunes filles de vingt ans et de célibataires devouées entièrement à la vie intellectuelle de la Maison. Je suis donc partisan du maintien des femmes mariées dans les services de l’État.} \textsuperscript{75}
\end{quote}

While debate continued about the right of married women even

\textsuperscript{74} Secrétaire d’État à l’Éducation Nationale àa Ministre du Travail (30 octobre 1941). AN: F60 628.

\textsuperscript{75} Directrice de l’ENSNJF, Sèvres, à Ministre Secrétaire d’État à l’Éducation Nationale, (30 mai 1941). Archives de l’ENSNJF. This letter continues with further arguments about the benefits of married women’s work.
to sit for the agregation, married women teachers were being retired early or refused hiring. Prefects' reports, in late 1941 -- early 1942, spoke of "pertubations dans le service" and worried about personnel shortages. One Prefect, in November 1941, remarked anodyne that eighty institutrices "ont cessées leur fonctions", following the application of the law of 11 October. The Education Ministry kept requesting lists of those affected by the law (up until early 1944!) and was supplied with requests for dérogations. It is worth emphasising that, despite the lack of unanimity at Vichy, the discourse of la femme au foyer had direct, punitive effects on the lives of many women. Apart from the dismissals, early retirements and lack of recruitment (for which definitive statistics are lacking), women were daily living the anxieties of their contingent status as public service workers, at the very moment when alternative employment had disappeared and material existence was so arduous.

Of course Education may have been the most vigilant and

76 This argument - crystalised around the right of access of Jewish students - centred on the notion of the agregation as establishing a right to teaching employment, versus the concept that it was merely "la sanction de certaines études supérieures poursuivies au delà de la licence". Archives de l’ENJSF: (Vœux de Facultés de Paris).

77 AN: F17 13376. Orne/Seine et Marne.


79 See Chapter 6 on Welfare.
activist proponent of this law, which -- like Vichy’s legislation generally -- did not operate identically or evenly across zones or occupations. A letter from Intérieur demonstrates an astonishing lack of liaison among ministries.

L’application de la loi du 11 octobre 1940 provoque des difficultés incessantes qui suscitent, de la part des Présidents, de multiples demandes de renseignements. Je ne puis, en ce qui me concerne, donner entièrement satisfaction à ces Hauts Fonctionnaires, n’étant pas tenu moi-même au courant de l’élaboration du travail législatif en la matière.

Une commission interministérielle a été réunie à partir du mois du juin 1941 auprès du Secrétaire d’État au Travail. Il semble que cette commission ait procédé à l’élaboration d’un texte nouveau, destiné à remplacer la loi précitée. Mais je n’ai jamais été tenu au courant du résultat des travaux de cet organisme.80

The minister requests further information "afin de permettre à mes services d’adopter une parfaite unité de vues en la matière et de pratiquer une jurisprudence constante".

The administrative confusion continued. The debate reemerged in May 1942 with the Ministers for Finances and Travail agreeing on a simple 'abrogation' of the law of 11 October 1940 which had become "inopportun".81 In fact Lagardelle again indicated the primacy of labour requirements and pragmatism over the 'retour de la mère au foyer' programme:

La loi du 11 octobre 1940 a été mise en vigueur à un moment où les risques du chômage rendaient nécessaires toutes mesures proposées à résorber l’excédent de main-


81 Ministre de Finances à Ministre du Travail (4 mai 1942). AN: F60 628.
d’oeuvre. La situation est actuellement inverse: aux risques du chômage se sont substituées pour les administrations publiques et les collectivités locales de sérieuses difficultés de recrutement.  

Platon, in a review of the revision proposals, agreed that the law had only been partially implemented and was no longer appropriate because of the difficulties of recruitment. He also referred to "external" considerations, the labour policies of "les autorités allemandes". Although circumstances had made a thorough reform impossible, Platon believed the principle of regulation of women’s employment had been maintained, at least for the public service. The loi du 14 septembre 1941 (le Statut des Fonctionnaires) had again enshrined the 'otherness' of female employment.

Les femmes ont accès aux emplois publics dans la mesure ou leur présence dans l’administration est justifiée par l’intérêt du service. Des lois particulières et les réglements propre à chaque administration fixent les limites dans lesquelles cet accès est autorisé. (Art.26)

For Platon this Statut compensated somewhat for the failure of the loi du 11 octobre and its revision. He noted that "La Famille se résigne à condition qu’il soit entendu que l’abrogation est une mesure de circonstance et que la question sera reprise". The notion of a suspension of the law’s provisions was therefore preferred to a simple abrogation -- "que les principes de...la politique familiale

82 Ministre du Travail à Secrétaire Generale auprès du Chef du Gouvernement (29 mai 1941). AN: F60 628.

83 Note relative au travail féminin (9 juillet 1942), Vice-Président du Conseil. AN: F60 628.
In July, Lagardelle sent a circulaire to Préfets and Inspecteurs Divisionnaires du Travail advising them of the lifting of all previous restrictions on women’s employment in the private sector. A shortage of labour had replaced a previous unemployment problem...

Rien ne doit donc plus s’opposer à l’emploi des femmes mariées, même de celles dont le mari peut subvenir aux besoins du ménage, pour autant que cet emploi correspondra à une augmentation des effectifs occupés et n’entrainera pas le licenciement d’autres travailleurs.85

This was followed by the loi du 12 septembre 1942 relative au travail féminin,86 which simply stated: "Les dispositions des articles 1er à 3 et 7 à 14 de la loi du 11 octobre 1940 relative au travail féminin sont suspendus". A communiqué to the press emphasised the inappropriateness of previous restrictions and their consequent suspension.87 The sole remaining initiative was the marriage loan, whose age limit remained 28 years, for which recipients had still to undertake not to work after marriage.88

A report in Paris-Soir (16 July 1942) explained the fate

84 ibid., p.4.


86 Circulaire du Secrétaire d’Etat au Travail, (24 juillet 1942) GIMM, Informations No.143.


88 Communiquée à la presse, Secrétair d’Etat au Travail (3 novembre 1942). AN: F60 628.
of the Révolution Nationale in this arena:

Parmi les slogans qui ont fait fortune hier, celui de la femme au foyer figurait en bonne place. Excellent dans le principe puisqu'il est normal qu'une mère de famille puisse se consacrer à ses enfants et à son intérieur dans la mesure où le chef de famille peut assurer la subsistance de tous. Aujourd'hui la situation a évolué; le chômage massif qui était justifié dans une certaine mesure la mystique de la femme au foyer a disparu; mieux encore on manque de la main-d'œuvre qualifiée dans tous les domaines.

Ainsi il y a lieu de changer d'optique et d'encourager aujourd'hui le travail féminin. Cela ne préjuge en rien de la politique qui pourra être adoptée lorsque les circonstances seront redevenues normales; mais l'expérience acquise en cette matière depuis plusieurs mois devra en tout cas inciter le législateur à n'attaquer ce problème qu'avec le plus grand prudence.89

It is interesting to note how time ("hier"/"aujourd'hui") and pragmatism ("la situation") shifted ("changer d'optique") the discourses of la femme au foyer and le travail. Economic imperatives ("chômage"/"manque main-d'oeuvre") changed the actual calls made on le travail féminin but the "normal" ideal remained the woman-mother at home. In this perspective, women form an infinitely available and manipulable source of labour, a 'reserve army' that could be mobilised au travail or au foyer, depending on national needs. Familial needs were subsumed within the broader operations of production, male employment, the male-family wage, not focussed on the woman or the home.

No wonder then that this Paris-Soir account dismissed, through its conventional explanation of events, the

89 Paris-Soir, 16 juillet 1942. For other reports, see AN: 72 AJ 1856.
importance of Vichy's Révolution Nationale. La femme au foyer is reduced to a "slogan", ("excellent dans le principe") but ultimately an injudicious "mystique" that indicated that "le plus grand prudence" was necessary in the future. This account -- in mid-1942 -- no longer allowed for the fact that Vichy had tried to change the "normal", to reorder radically the national and familial agenda, to rewrite the accepted discourses of foyer and travail. It was as though the government had merely overreacted to unemployment and that 'reality' now dictated different policies.90 The shape of that reality hardly needed specifying in 1942.

Platon had drawn his colleagues' attention to the constraints on further regulating women's employment, making explicit a new conflict of interests:

"Their" labour "policy" was, by 1942, a systematic process of exploitation, involving both a massive transfer of French

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90 Historians have also tended to interpret Vichy's initiatives in terms of pragmatism. See Paxton, op. cit., p.167; R. Aron, The Vichy Régime, 1940-44. (transl.) London: Putnam, 1958, p.160.

91 Note relative au travail féminin (9 juillet 1942), Vice-Président du Conseil. AN: F60 628.
labour to Germany and an intensified use of labour in France itself. In September 1941, there were 72,475 French workers in Germany; by the autumn of 1942, these numbered 1,341,000. By 1943, French male workers represented 26.3% of male foreign labour in Germany, constituting the largest single ethnic group there.92 Within France, Milward argues, Germany was probably employing, for her own economic purposes, over half the French labour force, by 1943.93 France had become an integral part of the German war economy. Vichy had lost control over French economic life and, through Laval and Bichelonne, sought simply to maximise their rights to 'manage' their own exploitation. The Révolution Nationale was defunct. The discourse of Travail had been appropriated (along with French sovereignty). Not surprisingly, women's labour was subject to new regulations and new demands.

When Laval made his (in)famous statement on the Relève in June 1942, ("Je souhaite la victoire de l'Allemagne") he was wishing for the arrival of a New Order above and beyond any desire for the Révolution Nationale. The discourses of Pétainism became subordinate to the politics of the moment. Among its compromises, collaboration involved a different agenda on le travail féminin. In July 1942, previous restrictions on women's employment were dropped; in August,

92 A.S. Milward, op.cit., p.12. Over the period 1940-1944 as a whole payments to Germany were 49% of total public expenditure. (p.272)
93 ibid., p.137.
the Ministry of the Intérieur was reminding Prefects of the importance of the Relève and claiming that various administrations had wrongfully discouraged women and workers' families from signing up;\textsuperscript{94} in September, in the first labour laws, a census of all women aged 18-35 was ordered; in the same month the \textit{loi du 11 octobre} was suspended. With the introduction of the STO in February 1943, it was clear that the French labour force was being "recategorized": male and female, young and old, eligible or not for "requisitioning". Divisions were now being made not between private/foyer and public/travail but between in/patrie and out/Allemagne. The New Order required reconceptualizing the community of workers in terms of essential and expendable, those to be protected and those to be traded.\textsuperscript{95} Gender politics was never absent from this process.

Already by October 1941, 14,525 French women had left to find employment in Germany, leaving behind the discourse of \textit{la femme au foyer}.\textsuperscript{96} Given unemployment, the wage freeze and (black market) prices in France, the promises of German recruitment agencies (- of wages of up to 1RM per hour and six to twelve month contracts) must have seemed particularly

\textsuperscript{94} Circulaire, 17 août 1942. AN: F IA 3680.

\textsuperscript{95} For how this process ultimately dissolved Vichy's authority see, H.R. Kedward, "The Culture of the Outlaw" in R. Austin & H.R. Kedward, eds., \textit{Vichy France and the Resistance: Culture and Ideology}. (Croom Helm, 1985).

\textsuperscript{96} See Homze tables [Illustrat.6 over]
## GERMANY'S ALLIES AS A SOURCE OF LABOR

### TABLE IV

**Foreign Workers from Western Occupied, Allied, and Neutral Nations Employed in the Reich as of October 1, 1941**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A. from Western Occupied Nations:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>25,319</td>
<td>3,576</td>
<td>28,895</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holland</td>
<td>80,653</td>
<td>12,342</td>
<td>92,995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>106,833</td>
<td>14,669</td>
<td>121,501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>34,042</td>
<td>14,525</td>
<td>48,567</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>620</td>
<td>384</td>
<td>1,004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxembourg</td>
<td>2,299</td>
<td>451</td>
<td>2,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>249,765</td>
<td>45,947</td>
<td>295,712</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B. from Germany's Allies:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>219,972</td>
<td>21,695</td>
<td>241,667</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovakia</td>
<td>53,993</td>
<td>26,044</td>
<td>80,037</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>14,352</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>14,578</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>25,390</td>
<td>9,600</td>
<td>34,990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>341</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>443</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rumania</td>
<td>5,056</td>
<td>1,330</td>
<td>6,386</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>348,984</td>
<td>58,997</td>
<td>407,981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C. from Neutral Nations:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>606</td>
<td>402</td>
<td>1,008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>11,668</td>
<td>5,302</td>
<td>16,970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>1,089</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>1,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkey</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>1,308</td>
<td>543</td>
<td>1,851</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland and the</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom*</td>
<td>491</td>
<td>432</td>
<td>923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All others</td>
<td>12,161</td>
<td>4,848</td>
<td>17,009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>27,665</td>
<td>11,899</td>
<td>39,564</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## SPREADING THE NET

### TABLE IX

**Number, Origin, and Sex of Civilian Foreign Workers Employed in the Reich as of November 15, 1943**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Origin</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>188,659</td>
<td>31,962</td>
<td>220,621</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>620,819</td>
<td>43,787</td>
<td>664,606</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>105,076</td>
<td>15,141</td>
<td>120,217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croatia</td>
<td>40,361</td>
<td>19,653</td>
<td>60,014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remainder of Yugoslavia</td>
<td>33,954</td>
<td>11,530</td>
<td>45,484</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holland</td>
<td>244,777</td>
<td>19,000</td>
<td>264,777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>19,685</td>
<td>7,571</td>
<td>27,256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-1939 Russia</td>
<td>843,211</td>
<td>935,240</td>
<td>1,778,451</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baltic States</td>
<td>21,978</td>
<td>10,880</td>
<td>32,858</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General-Government</td>
<td>709,181</td>
<td>342,746</td>
<td>1,051,927</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bohemia-Moravia</td>
<td>242,748</td>
<td>42,554</td>
<td>285,302</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Areas placed under Reich’s protection after 1939</td>
<td>375,490</td>
<td>183,982</td>
<td>559,472</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>207,815</td>
<td>84,101</td>
<td>291,916</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>3,662,754</td>
<td>1,749,047</td>
<td>5,411,801</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## THE FINAL PHASE: 1944

### TABLE XII

**Distribution of Foreign Workers in the Reich According to Sex and Origin**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Civilian Men</th>
<th>POW's</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>% of Total Men</th>
<th>Total Women</th>
<th>% of Total Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>605</td>
<td>739</td>
<td>1344</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soviet Union</td>
<td>817</td>
<td>496</td>
<td>1313</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>899</td>
<td>52.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>1094</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>1123</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>527</td>
<td>30.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgium</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bohemia-Moravia</td>
<td>244</td>
<td></td>
<td>244</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holland</td>
<td>226</td>
<td></td>
<td>226</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serbia</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>103</td>
<td></td>
<td>103</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>357</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>3631</td>
<td>1465</td>
<td>5096</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>1714</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
attractive. Housing, food and cigarette rations and work training were all described in glowing terms in the German-sponsored propaganda. Women were encouraged to join or follow their husbands in signing up. By 1944, the number of French women working in the Reich was 44,000, a small proportion of the total foreign women workers (who were predominantly Polish and Soviet) but a sizeable 'migrant' community. Whether these women were 'recreating' their foyer/famille in the company of their men, where it could be materially sustained, or hoping to find temporary respite from unemployment cannot be judged. Clearly, in Germany, they were subject to another discourse, that of the seductive and promiscuous femme française. As the Stuttgart Labour Office complained, "it is not an exaggeration to say that you rather rarely find a decent French woman". Despite their apparent unsuitability, however, French women workers were increasingly looked to, in Germany and in France.

In Quimper in 1943, some ten French women were obliged to sign a contract to work in the Essen area. This "moment"

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97 See, for example, Images de la Vie de Ceux qui sont Partis (1943).

98 Homze, Table XII, (p.195).

99 Quoted by Homze, op.cit., p.56. Apart from such complaints of 'sexual license', French women workers ranked very low in German employers' estimations. See Homze, op.cit., p.242.

100 Reported in J. Duquesne, Les Catholiques Français Sous l'Occupation (Paris, 1966), p.312. The hierarchy did not publish its protest to Pétain. (There is no evidence on
marks not only a particular -- and seemingly trivial -- failure of Vichy’s sovereignty (and the emergence of conflict with the Church) but Vichy’s definitive loss of power over the discourses of la femme au foyer and le travail.

The law of 1 February 1944 (making all French men, aged 16-60, and all French women, aged 18-45, liable for labour requisition) made the threat explicit. The Church’s vehement denunciation came from within the discourse of la femme au foyer:

cette mobilisation....porte une atteinte grave à la vie des familles et a l’avenir de notre pays, à la dignité et à la délicatesse morale des femmes et des jeunes filles, à leur vocation providentielle.101

Vichy was thus confronted, in its own language and terms, with the dangers of the new mobilisation of le travail féminin.

A follow-up to the February law stated that all women without children "peuvent être appelées à accomplir tous travaux que le gouvernement jugera utile à l'intérêt supérieur de l'Etat". The German authorities were quick to remind Vichy of the operative categories in this mobilisation:

il faut distinguer pour le service obligatoire des femmes trois mesures différentes qui seront à exécuter simultanément:
(1)mutation des femmes qui ont déjà un contrat de travail
(2)embauchage des femmes qui se mettent volontairement à la disposition du service du travail

the extent of the coercion of female labour generally.)

101 ibid., p.313.
(3) Recensement et embauchage des femmes qui ne travaillent pas du tout ou qui travaillent très peu, c’est à dire moins de 30 heures par semaine.  

The Ministère du Travail, now under Déat, "translated" these provisions for local administrations using the language of circumstances which denied the very notion of foyer/famille in favour of changing categories of workers:

La situation de l’économie française nécessite tous les jours la mise au travail de nouvelles catégories de la population. Le chômage étant complètement résorbé, la main-d’oeuvre masculine n’étant plus suffisante pour faire face à tous les problèmes de l’Economie Nationale, il est nécessaire de recourir à la mise au travail des femmes.  

This was the nadir of the Révolution Nationale’s programme for women. Subject to a halting discourse on le retour au foyer, women were now to be treated as "une nouvelle catégorie", to be requisitioned to replace and to supplement male workers.  

Hidden within the imperative "de recourir à la mise au travail des femmes" were many complexities: of the social, economic and political "ordering" of women. Vichy had tried to construct a world where women were married, had children and stayed at home, supported by their husbands, to preside over a domestic arena that would fit into and underwrite the larger public sphere in which men worked. This vision


103 Circulaire, (17 mars 1944). AN: F9 3092. (Thanks to Sarah Fishman for this reference).
required not simply sanctions against the employment of women but a denial of the material reality of women (and men's) lives, an erasure of class and need. This erasure was accomplished by the abstraction and recategorisation of "women". They became an homogenised unit, visible only through their access to patriarchal support and their relation to the "besoins du ménage". Au foyer their labour would give new meaning to "le travail féminin", making it reproductive and domestic; no longer threatening but regenerative for French society.

Vichy had taken up the discourse of la femme au foyer (which conservative groups had articulated throughout the thirties) and appropriated it for their own rénovation, a more thorough, more punitive, program than groups like the UFCS had advocated. Briefly, in 1940, it seemed that this political strategy was built around a popular consensus. Quickly, however, the reality of these new categorizations became apparent. The war did not end, the prisoners did not return, the economy was not 'normal' and families struggled simply to survive, dependent on the productive labour of all its members: grandparents, cousins, children and mothers. Travail took on new meanings for everyone, but especially women and women who were mothers. While employers continued to follow their own interests, the prescriptive discourse of retour de la femme au foyer allowed of a new latitude for treating women workers as 'secondary' employees; in the
public sector women were confronted with the need to claim eligibility and to defend their very rights to employment. This attempt to institutionalize a restrictive discourse on women’s work exacerbated women’s already contingent status in the labour force. (If Vichy had survived and "succeeded", it is unlikely that women would really have been removed from the labour force but more probable that their terms of access to work would have been more oppressive, their dependence on employers’ "good will" greater, their opportunities more restricted etc...). But the material reality of production and capitalism never made the complete or even partial reversal of women’s employment patterns likely. In France of 1940-41, however, which even partisans of la femme au foyer quickly realised, no change was possible. The foyer depended on a women’s earnings and the State was not in a position, even if a consensus existed, to compensate wholly for these earnings in order to construct its imagined new world.

The significance of Vichy’s discourses on travail, femme, foyer was not only about specific policies that failed, however. (Nor just about the impact of the Occupation -- although the Germans’ demand for labour definitively sealed the fate of Vichy’s own labour policies.) Instead we must read these discourses as critical strategies to re-represent "women", to re-order French society and to construct an imaginaire -- of home -- where work was not labour or employment. This reading gives us insights into the crucial
representations of gender politics underlying Travail, Famille and Patrie.
CHAPTER 5

ENGENDERING CHANGE: SEXUALITY

From the beginning, Vichy’s politics were "sexual," directly addressed to a renunciation of pleasure and jouissance and to a strict regulation of desire. Pétainism appropriated the French body politic through an appropriation of the bodies of men and women, through a denial and repression of sexuality that constructed the very nature of public and domestic order. Vichy’s strident moralism spoke about -- in order to obliterate -- the ferment and apparent disorder of previous decades, especially the promiscuous laissez-aller of the interwar years.

Depuis la victoire, l’esprit de jouissance l’a emporté sur l’esprit de sacrifice. On a revendiqué plus qu’on n’a servi. On a voulu épargner l’effort; on rencontre aujourd’hui le malheur.¹

Vichy’s discourse on sexuality revolved around duty and sacrifice, in contrast to pleasure and desire. It was articulated through various political-juridical initiatives on abortion, divorce, homosexuality, illegitimacy,

¹ Pétain, Appel du 20 juin 1940; quoted by Miller, op.cit., p.33.
motherhood, adultery and pornography -- a range of sexual issues that historians of the period have not yet problematized. This chapter will begin this "problematization" and examine these propaganda and legislative initiatives not just as discrete acts of patriarchal "repression" but as elements of a discourse of sexuality significant for what was spoken and how it was

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2 Vichy's discourse on sexuality and politics has not only been neglected by historians of this period but has been overlooked by commentators on the earlier debates over sexuality and depopulation. It might be useful to reconsider the periodization involved, which cuts off Vichy from Third Republican discourses, and to reconnect a history of sexuality that moves from the mid-nineteenth century into the mid-twentieth. On the background, see Karen Offen, "Depopulation, Nationalism and Feminism in Fin-de-Siècle France". American Historical Review 89 (June 1984): pp.648-76; R. Tomlinson, The Politics of Dénatalité, Ph.d. thesis, University of Cambridge, 1981; A. MacLaren Sexuality and Social Order: The Debate Over the Fertility of Women and Workers in France, 1770-1920 (London, 1983). A useful parallel survey for Britain is J. Weeks, Sex, Politics and Society (London, 1981). Foucault himself alluded to how Pétainism represented a new, oppressive moment for legislation on sexuality: "Sexual Morality and the Law" (interview) in Michel Foucault, Politics, Philosophy, Culture: Interviews and Other Writings, 1977-1984, Lawrence D. Kritzman (ed.), (New York, 1988), p.271. This chapter deals therefore with not the panoply of "technologies" of sexuality but a particular political discourse.

3 According to Foucault, problematization is "the totality of discursive or non-discursive practices that introduces something into the play of true and false and constitutes it as an object for thought (whether in the form of moral reflection, scientific knowledge, political analysis etc)." Foucault, "The Concern for Truth," in Kritzman, op.cit., p.255. See also Foucault, The History of Sexuality, Volume One: An Introduction (Pelican, 1981).
spoken. Recent literature on fascism and sexuality alerts us to the significant relationship between discourses of gender, order and political power (and reminds us that we must question the "natural" or predictable regulation of sexuality that seems to accompany ultra-authoritarian régimes). Is it possible to see in Vichy's discourse an inscription of a new (sexual) order, perhaps a "heterosexual contract", that was intensely political and overtly oppressive? Or was Vichy merely a more emphatic "moment" in the familiar history of French natalist-familialism?

Given the dominance of a natalist-familialist discourse it

4 The sources for this analysis include, therefore, the range of official legislative, policy and propaganda texts articulating and supporting Vichy's sexual politics.


What is of interest here is the way these discourses were articulated in policy and propaganda and how they self-referentially constructed a politics of sexuality.

is not surprising that the core of a female sexual identity was formed by maternity and homemaking. Certainly natalism was newly privileged in 1940. Pétain’s assertion of the causes of defeat as "Trop peu d’enfants, trop peu d’armes, trop peu d’alliés," put the population problem at the head of the political agenda. In fact, through blaming depopulation, as I have argued in Chapter 1, Pétain removed responsibility for the defeat from the arena of immediate military strategy or preparedness -- where his role might be scrutinized -- to the long-distant social ills of Republican France. The cataclysm of defeat was thus explained partially and first by an absence of French men/soldiers, by a problem -- dénatalité -- whose presence in political discourse had long been a useful rallying-point against sexual radicals, feminists, libertarians and those considered "unpatriotic." 1940 was seemingly a dramatic repeat of 1870, a fulfillment of the worst prophecies of men like Béranger, Bertillon and Boverat, who had claimed that dénatalité definitively undermined France, putting Germany in (an irrevocably) superior position. Defeat in 1940 had been, in this view, tragically, fatalistically, awaiting the French.

But natalism in 1940 was newly privileged both because of the Defeat itself (the prophecy come true) and because of the actual, overwhelming German presence. A lack of national

7 As Miller comments about Pétain’s formula: "On ne lui demande pas une analyse, mais de faire entendue une voix convaincue, conviante, analeptique". Miller, op.cit., p.33.
virilité was now not a distant threat but a daily-inflicted reproach. The German Occupation signalled the failure of French virilité and its continued absence. The regulation of sexuality under Vichy thus came out of the natalism of the Third Republic but it also reflected a new, more urgent discourse signifying French men's conspicuous failure and lack, contrasted with the success and presence of German men: natalism took on new meanings from the humiliation of Defeat and the Occupation.

But the natalist discourse in 1940 focussed primarily not on men and male sexuality but on women, taking up and revitalizing the concerns with female reproduction of previous decades. This was not only -- as we shall see -- because women were always already the subject of repressive regulation, but also because French men were doubly hidden, by their removal to P.O.W. camps as well as their social/political demasculinization in 1940. Women were "there" symbolically and actually to be exhorted and

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8 There was no mistaking the contrast of virilité and defeat in the German newreels of May 1940, where the healthy Aryan vigour of the Wehrmacht was set against French exhaustion and shabbiness. As the clip of captured Senegalese soldiers from Le Chagrin et La Pitié reminds us too, race and sexuality could be powerfully linked: black men, dressed in French military uniforms, dancing, were enough to signify French degeneracy (to French and German audiences alike): "une honte pour la race blanche". Marcel Ophuls, Le Chagrin et la Pitié, I: L'Effondrement.
controlled, in a way that men were not. And this process of exhortation and control was vital to Vichy’s rénovation.

Nowhere was the process more conspicuous than in the Fête des Mères. French women were spoken of and spoken to not just in the familiar lexicon of natalist-familialism but in a political language that newly constructed and privileged maternity and homemaking. These womanly responsibilities were, under Vichy, endowed with both personal and national significance. As Pucheu advised Préfets,

Cette journée . . . doit d’une part être l’occasion de manifestations publiques où seront officiellement honorées les Mères françaises, auxquelles sera ainsi rendu l’hommage que méritent leur dévouement et l’importance de leur mission. Elle doit d’autre part, inspirer dans chaque foyer de France des fêtes intimes des témoignages spontanés de reconnaissance et d’affection de la part des enfants à l’égard de leur mère.

In this discourse France depended on women being mothers/wives/homemakers, committed to their domestic role, rearing children and creating a home for their family.

Vichy took a low-key event of the Republican calendar, created in 1926, and turned it into the national fête. The government organised and encouraged townhall goûters, radio and newspaper homilies, medal presentations, school

9 Does this phenomenon not illustrate another way in which the notion of public and private fails to capture the interactions of all civil existence?

10 Pucheu, Circulaire aux Préfets (7 avril 1942). AN: FIA 3680.
festivities and church services to honour French mothers and French motherhood.\textsuperscript{11} It was a process which required a (passive) female presence -- to be fêted, toasted and eulogized -- but which depended on a male "gaze", on the public recognition of mothers by men.\textsuperscript{12} A poster of Vichy's first \textit{Fête des Mères} talked intimately to men, encouraging reflection and emphasizing mother/son connectedness:

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{l}
As-tu réfléchi à ce que \hfill\\
LA VIE DE TA MERE \hfill\\
représente \hfill\\
DE DEVOUEMENTS quotidiens \hfill\\
de discrets SACRIFICES \hfill\\
de vrai et pur AMOUR. \hfill\\
Tu es resté pour elle UN PETIT ENFANT \hfill\\
même si \hfill\\
Tu es DEVENU UN HOMME \ldots \\
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

In an extraordinary "politicizing" of this (personal) mother/son relationship, Vichy offered a publically endorsed means of reversing masculine neglect, an institutional channel for (at least in one day, in one gesture) reciprocity:

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{l}
N'as tu pas oublié bien souvent de lui montrer \hfill\\
Que tu comprenais ses conseils \hfill\\
Que tu appréciais ses efforts \hfill\\
Que tu profitais de sa tendresse \hfill\\
En nous demandant à tous de célébrer \hfill\\
LA FETE DES MERES \hfill\\
Le Maréchal nous donne le moyen de \hfill\\
REPARER CET OUBLI \hfill\\
Que chacun de nous, le 25 mai prochain, imagine pour sa mère un "GESTE DE GENTILESSE" un geste qui lui fasse
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

\textsuperscript{11} For 1942, for example, see AN: 72 AJ 1854.

\textsuperscript{12} E. Ann Kaplan, "Is the Gaze Male?" \textit{Women and Film: Both Sides of the Camera}. London: Methuen, 1983.
mesurer notre connaissance et lui apport entre tout de soucis, un peu de réconfort.13

It was Pétain, "father of the nation", who could rectify the national neglect of mothers by calling erring unthinking sons to attention and giving French men an opportunity to remember and reflect. Rhetorically, in fact, like Pétain, French mothers had made "le don de soi."14 Men and children were being invited to celebrate this sacrifice and the debt it incurred. As Carcopino reminded teachers,

Il faut que la célébration de cette journée conserve son sens véritable: rappeller à l'enfant tout ce qu’il doit à sa mère. Je vous demande donc d’attirer l’attention de vos élèves sur tout ce que la vie de leur mère représente de dévouement, de sacrifices, d’amour dans l’accomplissement de labeur quotidien au service de la famille.15

Duty and sacrifice were paramount virtues. Pétain’s address for the 1941 Fête des Mères seemed to conflate the imagery of Christ (carrying the heaviest cross) and Mary (the suffering mother who will hear all supplicants) to celebrate French mothers:

Et voici qu’aujourd’hui, dans nos deuils, dans nos misères, vous portez la plus lourde croix.

Mères de France, entendez ce long cri d’amour qui monte

13 Fête des Mères, 25 mai 1941. AN: F41 291. On distribution of posters to schools, the Compagnons, the Chantiers etc. see AN: F41 273.


vers vous. Mères de nos tués, mères de nos cités qui donneriez votre vie pour arracher vos enfants à la faim, mères de nos campagnes qui, seules à la ferme, faites germer les moissons, mères glorieuses, mères angoissées, je vous exprime aujourd'hui toute la reconnaissance de la France.  

In this litany a constituency of women was created, characterized and elevated by unique suffering, not just of childbirth and childrearing but of pain and loss. These were both older mothers -- of prisoners or war-dead -- who were experiencing loss and grief, and younger mothers who were experiencing particular hardships, such as coping on their own, managing households. They were mothers who had given to France and those who were still giving, through a process of female fertility and regeneration ("donner la vie/ faire germer les moissons").

This Fête was not about consumerism nor even primarily about fecundity. What Pétain offered was both this new cross-generational identification of a special constituency of women and an entirely new, if sombre, public appreciation (reconnaissance) of motherhood itself. It was not simply that those who were mothers could individually enjoy this public appreciation. Everyone could identify with recognizing the value of mothers ("l’amour en plus"). This was a way of "maternalizing" or "naturalizing" social relations, of re-


17 For Germany, see Karin Hausin, "Mother’s Day in the Weimar Republic" in R. Bridenthal, A.Grossmann and M.Kaplan (eds.) When Biology Became Destiny, (New York, 1984).
presenting existence to all citizens through the image of the primordial bond with the mother. Each person could relate to France's grandeur and simultaneously acknowledge their own mother in the constituency of the caring, suffering, sacrificing and hardworking, "mères glorieuses, mères angoissées". The Fête was designed to privilege the sacrifice and duty of an "apolitical" constituency, to celebrate a "natural" and "universal" category (motherhood) that had resonance for all French men and women, in order to reorient, to "familialize" public values and political life.18 A specific reading of gender and family was being used to depoliticize civil relations and establish new hierarchies -- of private virtue and duty and (female) self-sacrifice. It didn't simply "put women in their place"; it announced to men too the values and culture of a new France. And while a new maternalism enfolded politics, mothers were themselves surrounded by a new mystique:

La Fête des Mères s'est déroulée...dans des conditions très brillantes. Aussi bien dans les grandes villes que dans les plus petits villages, des manifestations touchantes ont eu lieu donnant libre cours aux sentiments de respect, d'admiration et d'amour dont doivent être entourées celles qui sont l'espoir de continuité de la Patrie.19

Women gained a new status and recognition and the state


19 Synthèse des Rapports des Prefets de la Zone Libre, mai 1942. AN : F60 504
gained a new subject for national celebration. In a national community where all past politics was internally suspect and where all national commemorations were externally monitored if not prohibited, the Fête des Mères could be substituted for the usual holidays of 11 November, 14 July and Joan of Arc Day. And Marianne could be replaced by a new universal female. Indeed at the heart of Fête des Mères propaganda was a new politics of femininity.

Woman became mother; this woman was pure, clean, wholesome, blonde (or not too dark), simply dressed -- in conspicuous contrast to the "fast", seductive, dark New Woman. Vichy’s ideal woman -- as in Illustrations 7, 8 over -- was portrayed not glamorously dressed but in a housecoat; not surrounded by men or in public space but, significantly, with children and with other mothers, in a world apart, of domestic order and innocence. The static imagery was perhaps reassuring -- when the reality was that women rarely enjoyed quiet, space, calm -- not to mention praise and appreciation. The view into such a symbolic world was seductive and was taken up in propaganda. With her children (neat, bearing gifts, smiling) we spy on her from the doorway between worlds (in/out; male/female;).

20 For the German authorities’ monitoring of Fêtes: AN:F7 14897; FIA 3678.

Fête des mères à la maternité-modèle de Bourg-en-Bresse, mai 1941
Affiche de Philh. 1943.
COMMISSARIA

GÉNÉRAL A LA FAMILLE

JOURNÉE DES MÈRES

DIMANCHE 30 MAI 1943
Much of Vichy’s propaganda captures this still, framed calm -- encapsulating the femininity of the new publicité de la mode but replacing its eroticism with a (sexless) maternalism. (Vichy had propaganda artists at its disposal who were well-versed in the portrayal of "timeless" femininity, like Colin and Phili.) Indeed the framing of such femininity arguably cancels both the anxieties of fashion and health consciousness so evident in contemporary advertising.

Parallel to this institutionalization of maternity through the Fête des Mères was the popularizing of "maternalism" through written texts. A classic example of this propaganda construction of femininity (and its overlap with advertising imagery) is "La Plus Belle Femme du Monde," a brochure produced by the Office de Publicité Générale with the support of the magazine Votre Beauté. The text contained advice and encouragement for would-be mothers, wrapped up in the glowing enthusiasm of secular pronatalist-familialism. In the preface Lucien Francois, editor of Votre Beauté, explained the nature of womanhood:

Dire que la plus belle des femmes est une mère, c’est une manière de parler. On pourrait de même affirmer que la plus intelligente et la plus sensible est celle qui a plusieurs enfants. La vérité est que la maternité épanouit, développe, révèle les qualités physiques de la femme, en même temps qu’elle permet à son psychisme d’atteindre sa suprême harmonie en accord avec sa mission...
particulière.23

This introduction lead the (female) reader into the text by "commonsensical" assumptions, by a consensus on the benefits of motherhood and by a "humble" tone of (male) wisdom:

L'enfant joue pour la femme le rôle de révélateur. Des médecins seront plus qualifiés que moi pour expliquer de quelle façon la grossesse en régulant le mécanisme ovarien, provoque la guérison de la physique des petites misères qui menacent la beauté féminine. C'est là une évidence que personne ne discute plus. Ce que l'on sait moins, c'est que les caractéristiques intellectuelles et morales de la femme ont besoin de l'enfant -- et ce qui mieux est des enfants -- pour émerger du domaine obscur où, jusqu'à l'adolescence, elles somnolent.24

Childbearing, therefore, according to lay and professional (male) opinion, would "cure" and improve women. But most importantly, it would bring women to maturity and fulfillment. As if to allay suspicions of male bias, the next three paragraphs all begin with "Mieux que l'homme, la femme . . .", a setting out of essentialist thinking on femininity:

[la femme] a le sens du concret
 . . . a cette supériorité naturelle
 . . . va droit au but et saisit le réel
 . . . est apte à distinguer le vrai du faux.

The argument for maternity, the construction of "la plus belle femme du monde", was built up in developmental stages -- physiological, intellectual, moral -- celebrating female virtue and difference ["l'altérocentrisme qui est la pierre relève de l'âme féminine"]. But its conclusion was unambiguous and wrote biology, destiny and sexual politics

23 ibid
24 ibid.
into a hidden threat:

Une femme sans enfants peut être belle et intelligente: elle n’est jamais une vrai femme. C’est un rosier qui ne fleurit pas. C’est moralement, intellectuellement et physiquement, un chef-d’oeuvre inachevé.

The threat was inauthenticity, the failure to be a "vrai femme". The image of a rose tree that does not/ cannot bloom conjured up stunted femininity, a graphic perversion of natural growth. The politics of this text are apparent in its elaboration of female nature every bit as much as in the more conspicuous reminder of national duty in the concluding pages. Here femininity and beauty have been redefined in a new patriotic relationship:

Il n’est pas de beau pays sans belles familles, de belles familles sans belles femmes, de belles femmes sans beaux enfants.

In these discursive paradigms, women were inextricably enmeshed in a social network of virtue and duty, of beauty and femininity, which constituted "le vrai." Le vrai operated in contradistinction not just to the untrue but to deceit, confusion; it was order and reality, calm and reassuring (like the symbolic mother), opposed to disorder and anarchy, threatening and destabilizing (like the intruder/ invader/ occupier). Women’s presence and the fixing of their identity was crucial to Vichy’s appropriation of order in 1940 and to the operation of its political discourse through to 1944. Gender constructed the meaning of normality and order, in the domestic sphere and in the public world, giving people a (common)sense of having a hold on the world, in a world that
in reality was frightfully unstable.

Only through this perspective can we make sense of the incessant concern of Vichy’s propagandists with female nature, reproduction and with defining women’s sexuality. This concern found negative and positive expressions in propaganda, in both an unequivocal denigration of female childlessness

La femme coquette sans enfant n’a pas sa place dans la Cité. C’est une inutile....  

and in a repeated insistence on the benefits of maternity for individual women

Avoir des enfants embellit la femme ....  

The injunctions in La Vie En Fleur were created from biological language reinscribing "nature" and femininity into sexual order. The logic of this outlook, the combining of personal and political good order, and well-being, was most blatantly expressed in a work called Beauté, Santé, Maternité (1941), dedicated to Pétain. Using Pétain’s analysis of the Defeat ("Trop peu d’enfants . . .") as a point of departure, the author reveals the conjunction of interests of the State and those of woman:

25 Commissariat Général a la Famille (C.G.F.) Tract: Maman.

26 La Maternité Embellit AN: AG II 498
The themes of these slogans are developed in two articles in the C.G.F. brochure ‘La Vie en Fleur’ (1943). They are "La Maternité embellit la femme" by Dr. Marie-Louise Jammet, Ancien Chef de Clinique et Assistante des Hôpitaux, and "La Maternité donne à la femme son équilibre" by Mme. Masson, Présidente du Syndicat des Sages-Femmes du Département de la Seine.
Après ces paroles du Chef . . . tous comprendront que l'intérêt personnel de la femme, sa beauté physique, sa santé, son équilibre mental et surtout sa conscience morale sont devenus un facteur démographique de premier ordre . . . L'individu devra comprendre que ses intérêts sont communs avec ceux de l'Etat; en même temps que la femme française reconnaîtra ses intérêts féminins et renaitra à une nouvelle jeunesse par la maternité, elle servira la société, accomplira les fonctions sociales qu'on attend d'elle.27

But in this passage women have been effectively removed as social actors from having any choice in the reproductive process. Pétain has spoken, therefore, "tous comprendront", "l'individu devra comprendre" and "la femme française reconnaîtra". The word of the father obliterated individual women and constructed a new "French woman" who would (necessarily) understand the duties "qu'on attend d'elle".

This view of female sexuality as exclusively defined by reproduction underlies the majority of natalist utterances. It found particularly graphic articulation in a work by Vice-Admiral de Penfentenyo, entitled Manuel de Père de Famille, which had a preface by Maréchal Pétain:

Au point de vue nationale, la femme joue également un rôle considérable . . . La Service Nationale de la femme dure toute son existence au foyer et c'est par ses maternités qu'elle paie l'impôt du sang!28

Here was an imprisoned officer -- and father of a famille

27 Dr. Totis, Santé, Beauté, Maternité (1941):169. This work is dedicated to Pétain.

28 p. 112, Manuel de Père de Famille (1941). Written by de Penfentenyo, "Père de 14 enfants", while he was a prisoner in Germany. He was later released and appointed President of Vichy's Comité Consultatif de la Famille Française. (See Chapter 2.)
nombreuse -- invoking the vexed question of wartime obligations. To imagine that women could do national service in the home, service that would not be for two or three years but for life, and that women could pay their impôt du sang through childbirth, was to turn inside-out the very distinctions between the categories of civil/military, public/private, non-combattant/combattant on which traditional notions of gender and social order depended.29 This linguistic leap was perhaps only possible because of the very extraordinary circumstances of occupied France -- where the categories of war/peace, home/front and family/nation had become so blurred.

Under Vichy, female sexuality could be the privileged arena for a new mobilisation, a non-military, maternalizing "call-up" in which "woman" became a non-combattant worker:

C'est un vertu de sa maternité même que la mère est l'ouvrière privilégiée du redressement national.30

This call-up sometimes explicitly addressed women, as in the illustrated appeal:

Toi qui veut rebâtir la France


30 "Un Fléau National: la Dénatalité" Brochant pouvant servir pour plan aux conférences, 1942. (Services techniques de la propagande, Vichy) AN: F41 291. Of course it was no coincidence that the army (and military redressement) were not available options. The civil sphere -- for women in the home and men in the Chantiers and Légion -- had to be mobilized in lieu of military mobilization.
More frequently it appeared as a neutral, third-person confirmation of a supposedly natural biological mandate, in which reproduction and female sexuality were continuously identified and the social destiny of the woman constructed. The same metaphors predominated:

Il n'y a rien de plus triste qu'un jardin sans fleurs.
qu'une femme sans enfant.  

This equation of femininity with maternity and the creation of a clearly delimited sexual identity, was amplified in support of the government's family policy. A special issue of Votre Beauté, titled Femme, Famille, France, reminded its female readership:

Le rôle de la femme est primordial dans la groupe humaine. En choisissant la devise de la France dont il rêve, le Maréchal a pensé à vous, filles, soeurs, mères ou épouses.

Another article in this issue, on "La Femme dans la France de Demain", reiterated the message. Quoting Pierre Merle that "l’âme féminine tout entière est maternelle", Lucien Francois repeated his belief that,

C'est de la fonction maternelle et des virtus dont elle
dispose pour le bien remplir, que découle l'influence intellectuelle, artistique et sociale de la femme.\textsuperscript{34}

The iconography of female sexuality in this period reinforced the message of these written texts. The cover of the brochure \textit{La Vie En Fleur} has a window opened in toward us. Outside, framed by the window, is a full radiant sun and a single sturdy branch of blossom with many blooms, pushing its way upward to the sunlight. Growth, femininity, hope and reassurance beam at us from this image, inviting us to gaze further into the world of natural wonder. In another section, \textit{En Fondant Une Famille} the woman looks fondly into her lifted-up baby's eyes, the baby looks to the father who seems to gaze admiringly back to his wife, while the two other cheerful children confront us, the excluded viewer, completing the circle of familial connection. The woman is most in the rear, while the vitality of the young is brought forward, underlining the message that it is indeed through them that she has achieved her personhood, her destiny.

While it is obviously untrue that these discourses of sexuality and maternity were original or peculiar to the \textit{Révolution Nationale}, the significance of their amplification and official "sponsorship" at this time has been ignored by historians. Such an ideological construction of female sexuality did not only reflect and complement the natalist priorities of Vichy. It constituted an important

\textsuperscript{34} ibid., p. 24.
underwriting of social hierarchies, which traditionalists insisted were natural, and which were used to reinscribe the privileges of a fundamentally conservative and paternalist status quo, which had seemed so under threat in the 1930s.

Most importantly, these discourses elaborated and built the very representation of order in the Vichy state. Appropriating and regulating sexuality was at the heart of Vichy’s politics. Not that Vichy was racist and misogynistic in the Nazi model, crushing within it the threat of a feminizing desire. Rather Vichy’s politics depended on denying the very presence of desire and creating a reality -- le vrai et le pur -- devoid of sexual tension. This was achieved by the playing out of a reconstructed masculinity/femininity, not the creation of hegemonic virility but the privileging of the more banal myth of sexual difference and co-dependence, separateness and interconnectedness, a reality of complementarity and cooperation, not conflict and struggle. In this system male sexuality could be contained and disciplined (especially through the communities of men in the Chantiers and the Légion where fraternal duty reigned); female sexuality had to be disciplined through celebration and assertion -- of health, duty and fulfillment. (The language of moral fulfillment had to displace the language of sexual fulfillment -- jouissance.) It was a discursive strategy aimed at women that could readily be internalized, above all in a Catholic culture where family and home had
deep resonances and where the Defeat had placed a new moral responsibility on its citizens.

Vichy's discourse of sexuality was not only celebratory or persuasive. It encompassed more coercive forms of regulation too. This is especially evident in the arena of female fertility where contraception and abortion became special loci of control.

Although the advocates of birth control in France had been defeated by a natalist counter-offensive after the First World War, marked by the 1920 law and confirmed by the Code de la Famille (1939), Vichy stepped up official vigilance against the use and advocacy of contraception. One ANCD/CGF brochure, Les Dangers des Pratiques Anticonceptionnelles, portrayed a startlingly clear image of "natural" female sexuality. Apart from the risk that contraception contributed "à faire naître un trop grand nombre d'êtres chétifs ou déficients . . . ", there was the much more insidious threat, which echoed the biologism of other propaganda:

Les découverts scientifiques des dernières décades ont prouvé que la femme ne peut écarter systématiquement la conception sans risque de porter atteinte à son organisme. Ceci ne saurait surprendre si l'on songe que la maternité est une fonction naturelle et si l'on réfléchit à

l'importance capitale de la reproduction dans la vie organique de tout les êtres vivants, qu'il s'agisse des végétaux, des animaux ou des hommes.36

Again women have been erased from the text in an organic linking of plants and men ("des hommes") in which reproduction is key (not childbearing per se), and which seems not to involve female sexuality. Life itself seems to represent capital in the playing out of "l'importance capitale". This represented not only a negative attack on any form of birth control but an all-pervasive definition of feminine destiny. A reproductive view of female sexuality was given an even more thorough-going, medical sanction, again within the language of "épanouissement":

La maternité seule donne à la femme la plenitude de son épanouissement. Le Professeur Pinard, un des grands maîtres de l'obstétrique, aimait à dire qu'il faut à une femme en général, quatre grossesses au cours de son existence pour avoir un santé normale... Des recherches récentes tendent, en outre, à prouver que l'absorption pour l'organisme féminin du liquide séminal stimule le fonctionnement de ses glandes endocrines et accroit ainsi sa vitalité. Ainsi s'expliquerait la transformation physique que subissaient bien des jeunes filles au lendemain de leur mariage, même avant leur première grossesse. Or cette absorption presque tous les procédés anticonceptionnels la suppriment.37

Women were thus written into a curiously passive and heterosexual biological destiny, where "blossomings", physical transformations, occurred only after (the soil of) the female body had taken in the watering (of semen).

36 "Les Dangers des Pratiques Anticonceptionnelles" ANCD/C.G.F. tract, 1944, pp. 1-2. AN: F41 291 (On the Alliance National, see Chapters 1 and 2).

37 ibid, p. 4.
Contraception becomes, therefore, not simply a barrier to reproduction but a sinister obstacle to fulfillment.

It is impossible to measure the actual impact of such tracts recommending unlimited procreativity. Did these combined psychological and physiological arguments convince women to desist from using birth control? The implausible and narrow natalist demands of such propaganda must have undermined their potential impact:

L’essentiel est de rappeler sans cesse que toutes ces pratiques, même le méthode Ogino, même l’abstention des relations conjugales, sont condamnable quand elles ont pour but d’éviter à un ménage de Français bien portants de mettre au monde l’un des trois enfants qui constituent le minimum du au pays et à la société.38

It is unlikely that such efforts to affect fertility control were successful. Against the most common method of contraception, coitus interruptus, the government could exercise little control. Indeed, it seems that, lacking power over contraception and recognizing the significance of abortion as a definitive form of birth control, Vichy came to targeting abortion as a central element of its regulation of female sexuality.

Certainly one of the most dramatic legislative innovations of the Vichy regime was the introduction in February, 1942, of the "300 Law", which equated abortion with treason, both activities "de nature à nuire au peuple français".39

38 ibid. That this natalist imperative was addressed to "Français bien portants" needs to be underlined.

A government note on "juridictions spéciales" explained the context within which abortion was now to be judged:

Les circonstances particulièrement graves nées de l'armistice ont imposé au Gouvernement Français la création de juridictions nouvelles destinées à réprimer d'une façon particulièrement sévère les agissements de nature à porter atteinte aux intérêts vitaux de la nation.40

As we have seen, reproduction and maternity had already been written into a discourse of vital national interests. The Tribunal d'État, created in September 1941, had a broad mandate:

de réprimer tous actes, menées ou activités de nature à troubler l'ordre, la paix intérieure, la tranquillité publique, les relations internationales ou, d'une manière générale à nuire au peuple français.41

This anodyne language ("troubler", "paix", "tranquillité") disguised and downplayed the lethal mission of the Tribunal, which was intended "à protéger efficacement la communauté nationale". Its especial target was PCF resisters, those who would disrupt the peaceful discourse of collaboration with the Nazi occupier, those who would refuse (Vichy's) "order". It was an exceptional jurisdiction designed for wartime repression, although its operation depended on denying the very fact of war. Putting the "300 Law" within this arena was at once declaring war on those who would disrupt the discourse of sexual order, whilst denying that this repression was anything but a necessary upholding of the

40 AN: AG II 521.

41 ibid.
status quo.

Professional abortionists, against whom the law was primarily directed, became liable to penalties ranging from prison, hard labour, to the death penalty. The guillotining of a woman under this law indicates the significant severity of this measure and not just the harsh penal climate of the Occupation. Vichy's commitment to the repression of abortion was an integral part of its natalist preoccupations, but it also signified another important attempt to increase the control by the State of fertility and of female sexual activity. (Control was to be exercised both as a juridical strategy, in this new labelling of abortion -- as individually deviant and dangerous to the collectivity -- as well as through a punitive strike promoting a new level of the clandestine and taboo, affecting actual access. In both cases control operated inside the discourses of sexuality, duty and national welfare.)

In this respect two crucial questions arise: to what extent was the 300 Law symptomatic of a break with the past and how did repression of abortion achieve the singular focus that it did under Vichy?

The widespread use of abortion in France as a means of fertility control has been demonstrated elsewhere.

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42 The last woman condemned to death in the Third Republic had had her sentence commuted.

43 D.V. Glass, Population Policies and Movements (Oxford, 1940); C. Watson, op.cit.
McLaren has shown, for the late nineteenth century, that taking into account the risks of failure associated with coitus interruptus, recourse to abortion was a frequent necessity -- and, arguably, an assertion of sexual autonomy -- for women.44 Given the general acceptability of abortion, knowledge about techniques amongst women and collusive support from husbands and lovers, it is not surprising that abortion became a prime target for natalists. (The hardening of religious antipathy to abortion and its moral identification with infanticide obviously provides an important parallel aspect of sexual regulation.)

As we have seen above, the huge losses of the First World War gave both impetus and opportunity to natalism. Despite the neo-Malthusian movement, the passing of the 1920 law prohibiting birth control marked not just the success of a natalist counter-attack, but also the taking on by the State of important new responsibility for the regulation of sexuality and fertility.

Demographically, the 1920 law did not achieve its desired effect and the birth-rate continued to decline in the inter-war years. The analyses and proposed remedies were numerous.45 But combined with campaigns against married women's work and for increased provision of incentive and

45 see Chapter 1
maintenance benefits, natalist-familialists' hopes for demographic regeneration centered on intensified fertility regulation by the State. Natalists in the Haut Comité de la Population set the terms in the Code de la Famille (1939) which, as has been indicated above, was crucial in providing Vichy with a legislative and ideological platform concerning abortion.

Although penalties remained unchanged for first-time offenders, the women themselves and their professional accomplices, habitual offenders became liable to prison sentences of 5 - 10 years and of fines ranging from 5 - 10,000 francs. The bénéfice de sursis was removed from the abortionist and the suspension of the right to practice was extended to surgeons, midwives, pharmacists and medical students found guilty. Although the concept of therapeutic abortion was introduced, the terms were very narrow. The collaboration of the medical profession was also sought. They were urged to report post-operative cases; the biological diagnosis of pregnancy was made more difficult. Some initiatives like the creation of "un corps de police spécialisé dans la chasse aux avorteurs" reflected not just the specific influence of militants like Ferdinand Boverat, but the hardening of a new, criminalising mood toward

46 On definitions of therapeutic abortion, see M. Duvoir and G. Hauser, La Législation Nouvelle de l'Avortement (Extraits de la Presse Médicale): (1941).
abortion. The amplification in 1939 of a regulatory discourse amongst this political elite was crucial to producing the 300 Law in 1942.

One report, drawn up by the Centre de Documentation Familial de la Fédération des Associations de Familles Nombreuses de France, was indicative not just of militancy but of the construction of a supposedly populist base.

Signalons que de différents points du pays s'élèvent des voix demandant, d'une part, l'aggravation des peines contre les avorteurs et d'autre part l'obligation pour tous les médecins de déclarer l'avortement sans pouvoir se retoucher derrière le secret professionnel.

Some commentators were aware of the difficulties inherent in a "repopulation" programme and the constraints on State interventions. The Secretary of the Haut Comité de la Population, Jacques Doublet, wrote to a family association militant and self-advertised father of 10 children, M. Glorieux Toulemon, "...toutes ces matières de population sont très délicates et je pense que l'État doit s'effacer le plus possible devant l'activité privée." Other protagonists of repression, most notably Boverat, were not nearly as reticent. In fact Boverat was obsessed by the positive demographic growth that could result from a

47 F. Boverat, "Le Péril de la Dénatalité et de la Repression de l'Avortement" Exposé Fait le 7 janvier, 1939 à la 1er Brigade de Police Mobile. AN F60 607.


49 Letter, 3 mai 1939. AN: F60 607.
total, efficacious clamp-down on abortion. As Vice-President of the Conseil Supérieur de la Natalité in 1936, he had pointed to the success of Fascist régimes in this sphere:

En Allemagne, dès que le gouvernement Hitlérien a commencé à envoyer les avorteurs dans les camps de concentration, le nombre des avortements a fortement diminué.50

He continued to lobby subsequent governments about the necessity of catching up with German and Italian birth-rates through an anti-abortion campaign. In September, 1939, he sought a propaganda grant from the Haut Comité de la Population so that he could send 30,000 French curés relevant ANCD documentation, to enable them to preach sermons dissuading women from seeking abortions. Boverat estimated that this pressure could produce an increase of 100,000 births in the following twelve months.51

The outbreak of war, it was feared, would lead to an increase in the number of women seeking to terminate their pregnancies. In the spring of 1940, George Pernot, Vice-President of the Haut Comité de la Population and shortly to be Ministre de la Famille, calculated an annual rate of 400,000 abortions.52 In a later note, "Sur la politique

50 F. Boverat, "L'Effondrement de la Natalité" - dedicated copy sent to Léon Blum, 1936. AN: F60 606. As we shall see below the ANCD maintained a hardline attitude on punishing abortionists.

51 Letter, F. Boverat to J. Doublet, September, 1939. AN: F60 606. This illustrates again the significance of the Church as ally and propaganda intermediary.

52 G. Pernot, "La Lutte Contre l'Avortement, 1939-1940" AN: F60 606.
familiale", Pernot urged a more vigorous campaign against abortion, "qui fait en France des ravages terribles."\textsuperscript{53}

Even in the last days of the Third Republic, therefore, there was a changed climate of opinion among natalists. This was reflected not only in the strict terms of the Code de la Famille, but also in their extension by decrees of court. For example, as Watson pointed out, in Toulouse and Poitiers (well before the 300 Law) courts laid down that women could be punished for attempting abortions on themselves, whether successful or not, and, additionally, women could be punished even if not actually pregnant when attempting such "manouevres" — thus restoring the legality of the so-called "délit impossible".\textsuperscript{54} In general, however, the drift was towards discouraging women and towards punishing their professional accomplices. The bénéfice de sursis was widely granted to women "victims" in 1940 (suspension of sentence for first-time offenders pleading extenuating circumstances) although it was not available to professional abortionists.

Vichy continued this trend. Although its propaganda emphasised the culpability of the woman, its legislation struck against the professional abortionist. Vichy used the Code de la Famille as a departure-point, abandoned the apparent reticence of its proponents and moved to implement

\textsuperscript{53} G. Pernot, La Note Sur la Politique Familiale (1940) AN: AGII 459 H.

\textsuperscript{54} C. Watson, op. cit., p.
repression. Undoubtedly the urgency given to natalist perspectives after the Defeat of 1940 caused this decisive move. But the intensified control of female fertility also "fitted" with Vichy's familialist imperative. Although the predominant theme of the anti-abortion discourse was a natalist one, the broader significance of this discourse for the regulation of female sexuality must be remembered. Indeed the ways in which female sexual identity was constructed and female sexualities excluded within this natalist-familialist discourse is obviously crucial. The following analysis of Vichy's anti-abortion policy and propaganda indicates the degree of this exclusion, as well as accounting for the extreme and particular shape of the policy itself.

A "bilan d'action" from the Secrétariat Général de la Santé (1940-1941) gives such a clear sense of the mood at Vichy and the evolution of policy, that it is worth quoting in full. Under the rubric "Hygiène Social: Lutte contre L'Avortement Criminel", fundamental principles were articulated:

Poursuivant sa lutte contre les fléaux sociaux qui menacent la race aussi bien que contre ceux qui menacent l'individu, le Secrétariat Général de la Santé a préparé un projet de loi organisant sur des bases complètement nouvelles la lutte contre l'avortement criminel. Les caractéristiques de ce projet sont les suivantes:

1. pénalités modérés contre la femme coupable de s'être procurée à elle-même l'avortement ou de s'être confiée à l'avorteur.

2. pénalisation de l'avorteur ou de complice avec
institution d'une distinction capitale: -ou le complice est intéressé par l'évolution de la grossesse; l'avortement demeure pour lui un délit et est puni conformément à l'ancienne législation. -ou bien il s'agit d'un avorteur professionnel faisant de cette pratique un véritable métier; l'avortement est pour lui un crime qui est puni de travaux forcés ou de la déportation (il n'y a eu effet que à craindre dans ce cas la sensibilité des jurés).

3. obligation pour tout médecin, constatant un cas d'avortement provoqué dans sa clientèle ou son service d'hôpital de se porter dénonciateur auprès du Conseil Départemental de l'Ordre des Médecins.

4. excuse absolutoire à l'avortée dénonciatrice.

5. enquête du Conseil de l'Ordre des Médecins ayant pour but de vérifier la vérité de la dénonciation de la femme. Si des preuves suffisantes peuvent être réunies la Conseil saisit la justice et peut se porter partie civile.

En outre le projet reprendra les dispositions déjà existantes dans la législation antérieure mais qui ont été renforcées et refondues en un ensemble cohérent de façon à grouper en un seul texte la totalité des dispositions réglementaires en cette matière, un texte législatif unique, clair, ordonné, qui puisse être en quelque sorte le véritable Code de la Répression de l'Avortement Criminel.55

The language of this report reveals new categorizations in process, of the criminal (abortionist), the victim (foolhardy woman) and the wise (Ordre des Médecins). The subject was to be rewritten through this process too, to constitute a Code rather than discrete texts.

The medical profession’s importance in any anti-abortion campaign had been previously highlighted. On the one hand, it was felt that many doctors (and para-medicals) might

55 Bilan d'action du Secrétaire Générale de la Santé, de juillet 1940 à juin 1941, pp. 16-17. AN: AGII 459h.
themselves be illicitly performing abortions. On the other hand, and more significantly, the collusion of doctors and hospital staff in treating post-operative abortion cases was a critical factor in covering up the extent of the problem, as well as an incentive to women to feel safer having recourse to abortion illegally -- given the availability of medical care as a fall-back. That the legislative plans outlined above represented a new initiative -- and posed a direct attack on professional ethics -- was recognised by officials. The text of this report was submitted to the Conseil Supérieur de l’Ordre de Médecins, before being sent to Pétain, showing sensitivity not just to this new organisation’s privileged position, but also to the necessity of obtaining its effective "collaboration".56

56 AN: AGII 459 H. The Ordre des Médecins provided a parallel set of discourses on social order and knowledge which are not directly at issue here. Created in 1940 (J.O. 26 octobre 1940) through a language of moralité, compétence professionnelle, intérêts légitimes, this medical organization constituted "une véritable famille" and imposed "une certaine limitation à une liberté trop souvent anarchique." (Bulletin de l’Ordre des Médecins, No.1, avril 1941). Concerning abortion, the Ordre showed clear anxiety about infringements of "le secret professionnel", boasting its successful intervention on the 300 Law, for example: "Il a faller l’autorité morale du Conseil pour que ne soit pas adoptée par le gouvernement une loi imposant l’obligation de dénoncer "tout soupçon d’avortement"." (Bulletin de l’Ordre des Médecins, No.6, 1942)

Obviously this demonstrates the interaction of discursive strategies/ power over women’s bodies. The state and the medical profession vied for authority to determine who must speak and when; the Ordre did not disrupt or confront the repression being exercised. (The sensitivity of the Ordre to such historical questioning was revealed by their refusal of archival access for this research.)
While the government formulated its plan, antipathy to abortion, expressed again in straight natalist terms, was being articulated unofficially. For example, in an article entitled "L'avortement prive chaque année notre pays de cinq cent mille naissances", one journalist speculated on whether the "effondrement de notre natalité correspond à une intention diffuse du peuple français de se laisser mourir par extinction lente." He focussed on abortion, "cette maladie bourgeoise", as a problem "délicat," against which "les efforts du législateur ne seront jamais assez soutenus". Reproducing the familiar argument that abortion was a phenomenon of the urban bourgeoisie that had filtered down through all social classes, giving "un gain facile" to certain criminals -- whose numbers in turn expanded by "un jeu singulier de la loi de l'offre et de la demande" -- this journalist condemned these "faiseuses d’anges", whose advertisements had become increasingly brazen. Forming part of an apparent fashion since the beginning of the century in haut bourgeois circles for voluntary sterilizations, he argued that abortion had become an easy option for women. Again desire was at the heart of the problem, its various manifestations denounced:

Le goût de luxe, celui de l’aisance et de la jouissance égoïste, le désir de ne point encombrer la vie d’un être...  

57 Oliver Brien, "L’avortement prive chaque année notre pays de cinq cent mille naissances", Aujourd’hui, (8 juin 1941).  
58 ibid.
Hoping for "une profonde révolution . . . dans les esprits comme dans les moeurs et les lois garantissant la vie de la famille", this author maintained that, despite the efforts of the Code de la Famille, nothing really effective had been attempted and commented:

Nous croyons savoir qu'un projet intéressant est actuellement entre les mains du gouvernement qui doit réprimer mieux que par le passé les pratiques abortives. Mais nous pensons qu'il est préférable de ne pas édicter de loi plutôt que d'en faire d'inopérantes. C'est en multipliant les lois inutiles qu'on ridicule certain a été jeté sur le terme lui-même.59

We can read into this text an anxiety about abortion (as symptom) and order (a failing system) at the very moment (June 1941) when [as we have seen in chapters 2-4] skepticism about the Révolution Nationale was increasing. Suggestions for effective implementation included, in an interesting parallel to Boverat's earlier suggestion, the creation of "une police féminine", to pursue the midwives and doctors who perpetuated this "criminal industry" and he recommended that all medical instruments and substances likely to be used in terminations should be available by prescription only.

The notion of a special police force retained its currency.60 In a well publicised work dedicated to Pétain, L'Avortement: Fléau National, Dr. J.E. Roy strove for an

59 ibid.

60 An interesting fact given that France was surely "over-policed" in this period with German soldiers, Gestapo, miliciens, gendarmes. One might imagine civilians would have been wary of extending the apparatus of the law.
"academic", neutral presentation of the abortion "problem." Simone de Beauvoir called this book a "monumental instance of bad faith," an example of "masculine sadism." But this decontextualizes Roy's work and denies the political complexity of antifeminism. *L'Avortement: Fléau National* must be situated within the discourses of sexuality and anti-desire that Vichy generated:

"Vivre sa vie," sans contrainte, sans sacrifices d'aucun sorte, sans autre soucis que ceux, inévitable que le Destin impose: tel était dans des dernières générations l'idéal d'un trop grand nombre de Français. (p.9)

Nos malheurs ouvriront-ils des yeux qui ne voulaient pas voir la profondeur de notre déchéance? Si telle est une de leur conséquences (et malgré les souffrances de l'heure présente), ils auront été salutaires en provoquant un sursaut d'énergie pendant qu'il en est temps encore. (p.10)

This recrimination, followed by the processes of repentance

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61 J.E. Roy, *L'Avortement: Fléau National* (Publications de l'Université de Poitiers, No. 4, 1944), p. 12, also makes this suggestion about extra women police. Roy's acknowledgements are a fascinating illustration of the natalist-familialist "network" and the (repressive) consensus that could be mobilized around abortion. Roy thanks Grasset, Renaudin, Bertrand, Lefebvre-Dibon, Borie, Bunle, Bonvoisin, the embassies of Germany and Italy, theologians of the Catholic and Protestant churches, among others. The book received numerous enthusiastic endorsements -- from Cardinals, ministers, familiaux -- and was distributed by the ANCD, CGF and family movements. In a brief review, the ANCD noted that Dr. Roy "est le chef de la plus belle famille médicale de France (17 enfants)". The ANCD endorsed the book and gave financial support for its publication. See Revue de l'ANCD No.360, octobre 1943.


63 ibid. The notion of "vivre ma vie" summed up the apparent egoism of the interwar generation of women; see Chapter 1
("malheurs", "ouvrir des yeux", "déchéance", "souffrances", "sursaut d'énergie") leads us into a litany of sexual "dérèglement" which labels and constructs the very nature of perversity. Abortion is no longer a single deviant act but belongs on the continuum of wilful desire. Population and family analyses were played out into anxieties about control (over the "natural", the body, class):

Les causes de l'avortement criminel sont multiples. En premier lieu, il faut citer, l'affaiblissement du sentiment religieux... L'influence de l'individualisme s'est manifestée sur nos moeurs et notre législation dans un sens antifamilial et antinataliste. Le relâchement du lien conjugal, l'adultère, la séduction, l'union libre, le divorce coexistent avec un dérèglement sexuel qui ne s'accommode pas de sa conséquence naturelle: la naissance de l'enfant. L'égoïsme limite le nombre des enfants, gêne pour le plaisir. Il en est de même d'une certaine vanité qui n'accepte que l'enfant unique pour l'élever à une situation supérieure à celle des parents. (p.373)

In this process it is not only women's culpability (and vulnerability) that is significant but the ways in which an antifeminist discourse on abortion gathers momentum (juridically/ politically/ socially).

Indeed it seems that "women" have been written out of this discourse altogether. Their bodies become the objects for control and persuasion, a terrain where a higher morality struggles against base desire, duty against "pleasure."

Lefebvre-Dibon articulated this repressive natalist logic quite clearly, with regard to the liberalisation of abortion laws in the U.S.S.R.: "On a fait entrer dans les cerveaux féminins la notion du droit à l'avortement: il sera
difficile de l’en faire sortir."  

Greater repression and sexual regulation were presented as national necessity, and opposed, therefore, to women’s individual and egocentric perversity. Other official propaganda gave meaning to this apparent erasure of women, sex and politics.

The Concours-Référendum, with curious reticence, omitted any specific reference to abortion. But tracts and brochures of the CGF did profile abortion, reflecting Renaudin’s belief that "supposons-le éliminé, la question de la dépopulation cesserait de se poser à la France."  

In the preface to "Le Pharmacien et la Dénatalité", Dr. Aublant, Conseiller d’Etat and Secrétaire Général de la Santé, sought to enlist the support of chemists "pour empêcher que continue le massacre de la race française":

Le Pharmacien qui écoute et reçoit des confidences, que dépend professionellement les produits, appareils et medicaments dont l’usage est susceptible de barrer à l’enfant . . . la route de la vie, c’est à dire de les assassiner avec préméditation, peut, d’un mot, d’un conseil, d’un geste, neutraliser la préméditation, arrêter l’assassinat.

Women have thus appeared as assassins on whom one can exert influence. This text conveyed naive assumptions about female  

64 Lefevbre-Dibon, La Lutte Contre l’Avortement Criminel (ANCD, 1943) p9.

65 On the Concours Référendum see above, Chapter 2.

66 Renaudin, Commissaire Général à la Famille, in a dedicatory letter prefacing Lefebvre-Dibon’s La Lutte... (1943)

67 Dr. Aublant, Préface, Le Pharmacien et la Dénatalité, par un pharmacien pour le CGF. (s.d.)
susceptibility to professional guidance. But it demonstrated the government’s view of the professional’s dual role: as "confidente" of the public and anti-abortion propagandist and, on the other hand, as controller and overseer of availability of abortifacient drugs and instruments.

A similar tract addressed to midwives emphasised the confidences and intimacy with women that these professionals might have to accomplish a "double sauvetage...une mère et un enfant qui ne compteront pas parmi les 30,000 femmes et les 500,000 enfants tués chaque année par l’avortement". This quaint, feminine intimacy was expected to yield situations in which midwives could persuade mothers-to-be ...

avec une calme et souriante conviction les nécessités physiologiques et morales du complet épanouissement de l’organisme féminin dans la maternité. Pour avoir vu, tant et tant de fois des désastres des pratiques anticonceptionnelles et les suites dramatiques de l’avortement elles sauront éclairer aussi bien les jeunes nullipares que les mères de famille parfois nombreuse qui s’affolent ou qu’on affole jusqu’à souhaiter et demander l’assassinat de l’enfant qu’elles portent contre leur gré, oublieuses ou ignorantes de la culpabilité de l’avortement et des dangers (-morts, interventions mutilantes, stérilité définitive, infirmité) qu’il leur fait courir personnellement.

This propaganda, couched in such (soothingly) repetitive language, equated abortion with infanticide, that is with

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68 see also L’Instituteur et son rôle (chapter 3), which asked, "qui peut mieux que l’institutrice éclairer les consciences obscures de ces femmes . . . à savoir que l’avortement . . . est un infanticide." AN: AGII 498.

69 Midwives, because of the nature of their profession, and given high unemployment in the profession, were particularly a target of natalist concern. cf. J.E. Roy, op.cit., pp.11-12.
murder, and promoted the idea of the malleability of women with unwanted pregnancies. Making abortion murder was a crucial linguistic strategy which did not just reflect a social and religious taboo. It underlined the moral and criminal perversity of the abortion act, criminalizing and alienating the woman concerned. The guilt, remorse and doubt thus generated contributed to making women a target of propaganda and persuasion. More importantly, such propaganda legitimated natalism, constructed new categories of power (around professionals, profiteers, "victims" etc) and set the scene for intensified and more coercive regulation of female sexuality.

The combination of these themes was evident in one particularly evocative illustration in La Vie en Fleur, a CGF brochure (1943). Here was a different version of female intimacy and collusion. The older women are not well-meaning professionals but manipulative trouble-makers, man-hating and child-hating. Their meanness is evoked not just in their "mauvais conseils" but through their ugliness -- they are fat, double-chinned, mean-mouthed and pointy-nosed! Slashing through the enfolding contours of sinister female connectedness is the straight lethal line of the huge kitchen knife, descending toward the baby. From the tip of the knife issues forth the message, "300,000 abortions per year", suggesting -- across the heart of the child -- the murderous violation of innocent life. Women's bodies are represented --
ugly or gullible -- detached from both the (genderless) hand and knife, and the fully formed baby. Abortion becomes a crime that women are accomplices to, rather than direct agents in: the crime is brutal, bloody and entails almost limitless (300,000) repetitions.\textsuperscript{70}

Other forceful images, like those in Boverat’s \textit{Le Massacre des Innocents}, reiterated this message, combining sensationalism (FRANCAIS . . . SI VOUS N’ARRETEZ PAS LE MASSACRE DES INNOCENTS, CE SANG REJAILLER\^A SUR VOUS), sentimentality (VOICI CE QUE POURRAIENT DEVENIR . . . ) and "technical" information (COMMENT ON LES TUE).\textsuperscript{71} The woman’s crime is here explicitly ranked alongside other types of murder and the inevitable moral slide, which abortion represents, is indicated. Above all, the woman’s culpability and the criminal nature of the abortionist’s activities are established. The context of war and defeat complicate these criminal resonances. If abortion kills "our" people, then women become a sort of "fifth column," undermining France from within. The "bloodiness" of antiabortion imagery contrasts with the naivety of other

\textsuperscript{70} Dr. Besson, "Les Conséquences..." in \textit{La Vie en Fleur} (C.G.F., 1943). The assertion of 300,000 abortions must itself be questioned. There is a discrepancy even in the figures used in official propaganda, as we shall see, from 500,000 to 300,000 to 600,000. Wesley Camp in his discussion of the problem opts for D.V. Glass’s figure of one abortion for every two live births in 1940. Camp, op.cit., pp.113-114.

\textsuperscript{71} F. Boverat, \textit{Le Massacre des Innocents}, title page, p.5 (ANCD, 1939; 2nd.ed., CGF, 1944)
natalist-familialist propaganda, invoking militant/combattant identifications.

Although it is impossible to measure the direct impact of such propaganda, either in terms of the dissuasion or "education" of women themselves or the supposedly influential third parties (midwives, chemists, etc.), it is obvious that the marked amplification of this particular discourse under Vichy also produced intensified legal and police repression. The following section will deal with the formal, juridical shape of this more direct aspect of regulation.

The important initiatives contained in the Code de la Famille, affecting the repression of abortion, have been noted. It marked "l'évolution de la législation vers une conception de l'avortement crime social." But Vichy took a dramatic further step. The "300 Law" signified the government's belief that "la lutte contre l'avortement criminel . . . est l'une des pierres angulaires de notre relèvement national." Abortionists were liable to exceptional measures -- internment, hearing before the Tribunal d'Etat, whose judgment could not be appealed -- and exceptional penalties - death, forced labour for life, deportation, prison and/or fine (ART 1). The public advertisement of guilt also emphasised the exceptional and

72 ibid.
73 Dr. R. Grasset, Secrétaire d'Etat à la Santé, Préface to J.E. Roy’s, op.cit.
exemplary nature of justice under this law. (ART 3)

This measure was recognised as exceptional by the government. Dr. Serge Huard, Secrétaire d'Etat à la Famille et à la Santé, at a press conference to explain this new measure, emphasised the necessity of repression using the familiar moral and natalist vocabulary:

Depuis des années la France est ravagé par un fléau dont les conséquences désastreuses sont trop peu connues: l'avortement. Chaque année ce fléau supprime . . . 4 à 600,000 Français: ce même chiffre de 600,000 était avant la guerre celui des naissances. Ainsi chaque fois qu'il nait un enfant, un enfant aussi est supprimé. Voila les faits. L'avortement s'éveil dans toutes les classes sociales, chez les femmes mariées comme chez les filles mères. En fait, c'est un assassinat, puisque c'est la suppression d'un être déjà vivant; pénalement on a fait un délit pour en rendre la poursuite plus efficace: socialement, c'est un crime et un fléau. La tuberculose tue 60,000 Français par an, le cancer 40,000, l'avortement fait disparaître chaque année 0.5 million d'enfants vivants. La guerre est moins meurtrière.74

Although his comments were framed in belligerent assertions -- defending France against assassination, crime, war-like losses -- Huard was careful to reassure public opinion about the limits on these measures: the law was directed exclusively, not against women but against professional abortionists, "ceux qui tirent de leur industrie criminelle des profits scandaleux."75 Resonating with black-marketeering -- playing on popular wrath against those

74 "Dr. Serge Huard, CGF, commente devant la presse la nouvelle législation sur l'avortement." (6 mars 1942), AFIP.

75 ibid.
"profiting" from others' misfortune -- Huard's comments may indeed have struck a chord with some women's actual experience of backstreet abortionists.

The concern with upholding the categories of victim and profiteer and the idea of justice, was articulated in a circular from Intérieur to Prefects in March 1942:

La loi est uniquement dirigée contre les avorteurs et avorteuses professionels; elle n'atteint pas les femmes qui sont les victimes, volontaires ou non, de ces pratiques. Le but de la loi est de permettre une répression efficace et rapide adaptée à l'importance du danger couru par la société sans que cette répression soit entrainée par l'existence de faire la preuve en justice ou par les délais nécessairement longs de l'action pénale. Votre rôle consiste à rechercher activement les médecins, pharmaciens, sages-femmes, faiseuses-d'anges ou tous autres qui, soit habituellement, soit même occasionnellement, mais dans un but lucratif auront pratiqué ou favorisé l'avortement que leurs victimes soient enceintes ou seulement supposées telles. Il s'agit d'interner des individus nuisibles à la société . . . La loi du 15 février 1942, sévère dans ces dispositions, doit être appliquée avec justice, mais aussi avec sévérité; cette application doit aboutir, non seulement à mettre les avorteurs hors d'état de continuer leur criminelle industrie, mais encore à arrêter par l'exemple ceux qui seraient tentés de les imiter. Vous contribuerez par votre action énergique à écarter de la France un péril mortel.76

How energetic the action taken by the Prefects was is hard to gauge. But Renaudin, Commissaire Général à la Famille, reporting on the application of the "300 Law", noted with satisfaction some early results which included: (7 Oct., 1942) a nurse in Arachon (Gironde) condemned to 20 years of forced labour and a 120,000 franc fine; a midwife given 10

76 Circulaire No. 58 du 17 mars, 1942, Paris, de Secrétaire d'État à l'Intérieur et à la Famille et à la Santé aux Préfets.
years prison and a 120,000 franc fine in the same case; (16 Nov., 1942) a midwife at Montauban given 10 years forced labour; (17 Dec., 1942) a midwife at Trilport (Seine et Marne) given forced labour for life.77 Renaudin reminded Prefects that the Commissariat awaited "un compte-rendu des résultats de leur action", specifically the number of cases, the sources of information, outcome, number of professionals (doctors, etc.) involved, resulting in suspensions and sanctions.78

Madame Giraud (née Louise Lamperière) was executed, in the prison at La Rocquette, on the 29 July 1943. This case was soberly reported in the press. Aujourd’hui, for example, carried a small report:

**UNE FAISEUSE D’ANGES EST CONDAMNE A MORT:** Pendant deux audiences, tenues à huis clos . . . Le Tribunal d’Etat . . . a jugé Marie-Louise Giraud, blanchisseuse à Cherbourg, coupable d’avoir "délivré" prématurément vingt-six clientes moyennant des rétributions s’élèvant au total à 13,910 francs. Trois "rabbateuses" la castomancienne Augustine Cosnefroy, soixante-huit ans; Jeanne Truffert, quarante-deux ans et Eulalie Hélène, quarante-neuf ans, ont été jugées en même temps que la blanchisseuse criminelle.

Le Colonel Farge, commissaire du gouvernement raquit avec la plus grande énergie, puis Mrrs. Constant, Hanoteau et Chevreuil, ce dernier du barreau de Cherbourg, présentèrent la défense des accusées.

Après délibérations Le Tribunal d’Etat a décidé de se montrer impitoyable pour la faiseuse d’anges. Celle-ci a été condamnée à mort. En considération de son âge la veuve Cosnefroy n’a été condamnée qu’à dix ans de prison.

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77 Renaudin, Fléaux Sociaux: L’Avortement: Application de la loi du 15 février, 1942 AN: AGII 497 cc B.

78 ibid
et à 6,000 francs d'amende. Jeanne Truffert et Eulalie Hélène sont respectivement condamnées à huit ans et cinq ans de travaux forcés, ainsi qu'à 6,000 francs d'amende.79

This case is the most dramatic demonstration of Vichy's determination to root out abortion. Mme. Giraud was guillotined as "an example" for having performed (twenty-six) abortions, when such an activity was deemed to represent a threat to "the material security of the State". It indicates, in an often-neglected area, the juridical severity of this regime (guillotining a woman, sending many others to forced labour etc).80

The Alliance Nationale, noting that before the war no woman had been executed, "quelle que put être l'horreur de leurs crimes", welcomed the Tribunal's action:

Si regrettable que puisse être le recours à la peine capitale, on peut estimer qu'il était légitime dans le cas d'une criminelle invétéérée comme la femme Giraud. Il faut espérer que son execution, faisant suite à la condamnation aux travaux forcés, par le Tribunal d'Etat, de bon nombre d'avorteurs et d'avorteuses, fera hésiter ceux et celles qui seraient encore tentés de suivre son exemple, et contribuera ainsi à réduire le nombre des avortements qui, pour le plus grand malheur de la France, est encore extrêmement élevé.81

79 Aujourd'hui, 17 novembre 1942.

80 I did not receive authorisation to consult the dossiers of the Tribunal d'Etat relating to abortion cases. From the inventaire that I was given permission to consult, however, it seems that the majority (33) of the forty cases listed involved women, and that these cases were heard predominantly in 1942-1943, in the Rennes jurisdiction.

81 Revue de l'ANCD, No.359, septembre 1943, p.143.
Vichy directed its policy against professional abortionists (and it is worth noting from the above account that it was women who were being punished under the "300 Law"). But the significance of this law went far beyond the number of cases heard before the Tribunal. This law represented new punitive categorizations operating against women, and the formalizing of a repressive discourse on sexuality. The way abortion was politically and juridically framed under Vichy therefore tells us about sexual politics and social order, as well as about how women's bodies were imagined.

Of course neither the 300 Law itself (nor the discourse surrounding it) eradicated abortion, nor the need for abortion. Women with unwanted pregnancies -- and the hardship and deprivation of the Occupation merit emphasis -- had to suffer more risks than previously in seeking and undergoing clandestine abortions.82 Threatened by higher-priced abortionists, as well as by medical profession and State surveillance, it is highly probable that women more strenuously attempted self-induced abortion, with its attendant health risks, before resorting to "professionals". This combined pressure may have persuaded some women to carry through their pregnancies. (Though it surely did not

82 Chabrol's Une Affaire des Femmes (1988) is an interesting, if problematic, treatment of Mme. Giraud's story, and sexual politics and abortion under Vichy. The narrative's use of "la femme au foyer" is particularly evocative.
translate itself into a direct increase in the birth rate.)\textsuperscript{83} Certainly the criminal sanctions and repressive atmosphere must have weighed heavily in dictating women's choices, more heavily than the positive natalist admonitions about national and racial regeneration. The "success" of Vichy's anti-abortion campaign cannot be reliably estimated, but it undoubtedly marked a new departure in the State's attempt to define and control female fertility. The 300 Law marked the apogee of a politicisation and criminalisation of abortion.\textsuperscript{84}

Against the notion of straight \textit{repression} of female sexuality (as accounted for above regarding fertility), must be set the notion of intensified \textit{delineation} of legitimate sexual behaviour. The attack on fertility control which Vichy so vigorously adopted did not happen in a natalist-ideological vacuum. Instead it formed an integral part of the \textsc{Révolution Nationale}'s vision of a properly-ordered society. It was not a question of simply encouraging unlimited female procreativity, but of setting legitimate boundaries, channels and objectives for sexual activity. Hence Vichy's discourse on sexuality must be analysed

\textsuperscript{83} cf. C. Watson, op.cit. Even demographic historians shy away from quantifying the exact contribution of abortion repression in the post-1942 upturn in the French birth rate. The impact of repression for women themselves is not considered.

\textsuperscript{84} Although the framework of anti-birth control policy was retained after the Liberation, the 300 Law itself was dropped.
alongside its discourse on the family (discussed in Chapter One). More specifically, for our purposes here, its preoccupation with marriage must be looked at, especially for the ways in which heterosexuality and social order were constructed and institutionalized.

Marriage was a privileged institution because it provided a key element of social bonding and stability, but also because it constituted the exclusive legal and moral unit, within which human reproduction was encouraged and legitimated. Vichy’s conservative (and fundamentally Roman Catholic) view of marriage, was of crucial significance for shaping sexual identities and practices. It also clearly differentiated Vichy from fascist regimes:

Le but supérieur, essentiel, premier du mariage, celui qui ne peut être que par le mariage et ne doit l'être que dans le mariage légitime, c'est la propagation de la vie par la naissance des enfants et par leur éducation . . . Toute la physique physiologie masculine et féminine révèle cette impérieuse finalité . . . 85

Here "natural" heterosexual destiny was given its legitimate context and reproduction linked inexorably to marriage.

The indefatigable Ferdinand Boverat again provided the

85 "La Famille et La Vie" Documents Equipes et Cadres, (Vichy, 1943) The Roman Catholic view was propagated, for example in the Doctrine Sociale de l’Union Féminine Civique et Sociale (formulée par Cardinal Verdier, 1937) which explicitly professes:

"3e que la famille chrétienne, c'est à dire la famille basée sur l'indissolubilité matrimoniale et vivifiée par la pratique des vertus chrétiennes, est à la fois la vraie cellule de l'organisme sociale et le foyer providentiel ou se prépare le bon citoyen."
clearest articulation of the consequences of this logic for female sexuality. In a brochure called "Conseils aux jeunes pour être heureux", Boverat advised:

Le mariage, nécessaire à l'homme, est plus indispensable encore à la femme . . . Vous voyez, jeunes filles à quel point vous avez intérêt à fonder un foyer; du fait que vous vous marieriez ou non dépendra dans la plus grande mesure le succès de votre existence, car c'est de votre mariage que résultera généralement non seulement votre bonheur mais la possibilité pour vous d'avoir une vie utile.86

Vichy celebrated this link of social utility through marriage and procreativity. In an enormously popular calendar for 1941,87 the months of mai-juin carried the photographs of proud parents holding their offspring, with the slogans: HEUREUSES LES FAMILLES UNIS PAR CE LIEN VIVANT, LE VRAI FRUIT DE L'AMOUR: L'ENFANT".88 This conception of marriage was complemented by the explicitly familialist one:

L'idée de base de toute la propagande familiale . . . c'est que la véritable cellule sociale n'est pas l'individu considéré isolément mais la famille. Par conséquent, le mariage, dont la solidité assure celle du pays, n'est pas un contrat comme les autres, mais une institution. Au mariage-contrat, tel que le concevait l'individualisme ancien, l'on opposera pour la remettre en honneur, l'idée du MARIAGE-INSTITUTION, par lequel l'homme fonde une famille, s'engage dans une adventure qui le dépasse . . . C'est dans la mesure même où cette conception du MARIAGE-INSTITUTION pénètre nos moeurs et dans toute notre législation que France retrouvera sa

86 p. 5, Brochure "Conseils aux jeunes pour être heureux", sent by Boverat to Lavagne, 27 mai, 1942. (Lavagne was Chef du Cabinet Civil at Vichy.) AN: AGII 497 cc 79 c.

87 Distribution amounted to 250,000 copies -- presumably because of the several portraits of Pétain included.

88 Calendrier 1941. AN: F41 291.
Clearly the reestablishment of patriarchal prerogatives was critical within this new institutional process -- the man would build a family and initiate "une adventure". France would only be great when those prerogatives were recognized.

The threat posed by "alien" views of marriage was also presented in contrast. In a brochure produced by the Comité d’Action Anti-Bolchévique in 1941, the views of Pius XI on communism were recalled:

Une telle doctrine fait du mariage et de la famille une institution purement conventionnelle et civile . . . Elle n’admet aucun lien spécial de la femme avec la famille et le foyer.90

Indeed, in an effort to reverse Republican traditions and to sanctify the Révolution Nationale’s specific view of marriage and the family, there were repeated proposals for Vichy’s new constitution to include a firm statement "Que la famille fondée sur le mariage constitue la cellule essentielle de l’édifice social."91 Given this orientation, it is not


90 p. 4, Christianisme et Bolchévisme par abée Guichard (with Cardinal Baudrillart’s Imprimatur) Edité par le Comité d’Action Antibolchévique (1941) AN: F41 302.

91 p. 4, Rapport sur la Nouvelle Constitution, par M. Paul Leclerq, Délégué Général de Centre Nationale de Coordination et d’Action des Mouvement Familiaux (zone occupé) 1941. AN: AGII 497. Also W. Garcin’s Révolution Sociale par la Famille, op.cit.. For protection of the family’s "intégrité" by divorce reform, see - Principes de la Rénovation National, La Doctrine et l’Action du Maréchal, p. 28. Cf. Chapter 2 above.
surprising that Vichy moved to "protect" the institution of marriage and the family in a direct way.92

The view that under the Third Republic "l'institution de la famille est en jeu,"93 because of divorce, was widespread. It might have been expected, therefore, given its natalist and familialist preoccupations, that Vichy would have abolished the right to divorce.94 But on this issue perhaps tradition was too well-entrenched. Commenting on Vichy's legislation which merely introduced limitations on availability rather than abolition, Marseille-Soir noted pragmatically:

Le divorce est maintenu comme institution ayant sa place dans notre droit civil. Mais il est rendu plus difficile. Il n'était ni possible ni peut-être souhaitable de supprimer une institution qui a résisté à l'épreuve du temps, et que, d'ailleurs, l'antiquité Romaine elle-même

92 There were indirect ways of upholding the "solemnity" of marriage. An instruction from the Préfet de Seine on this subject requested that the rooms in which civil marriages were celebrated be appropriately dignified and decorated: "Vous donneriez ainsi à ceux que vous unissez le sentiment que vous mesurez l'importance de la décision qu'ils prennent en fondant une famille et que vous tenez à honorer les espoirs qu'elle représente pour la Patrie." Quoted in Le Petit Parisien, 9 février 1942.

93 Françaises, Que Ferons-Nous? (1943), p.17. It is a commonplace of right wing thinking that the family is endangered.

The fact that Naquet's law of 1884 was held responsible for familial disintegration provided an occasion for antisemitism . . . "La loi Naquet fut moins l'oeuvre perfide d'un juif ennemi de la civilisation chrétienne qu'elle ne fut la consécration d'un état de fait . . ." "La loi sur le divorce: Réformer les moeurs plutôt que le Code", Guy Crozet, Le Temps, avril 1941.

94 Familiaux lobbied hard in 1940-41 for a complete abolition of divorce. AN: AG II 605 cm 19 e.
A major innovation in Vichy's approach was delay, which was intended to favour reconciliation:

ART 2 (233) Aucune demande en divorce ne sera reçue pendant un délai de trois ans à dater du jour de la célébration du mariage (238) Avant d’autoriser la demandeur à citer le juge peut suivant les circonstances et sauf à ordonner les mesures provisoires nécessaires, ajourner les parties à une date qui n’excédéra pas une année. Le délai pourra être renouvelée sans toutefois que sa durée totale puisse dépasser deux années.  

Apart from striking against anyone encouraging others to seek divorce (ART 5), this legislation sought to reverse the drift towards mutual consent or divorce for mere incompatibility -- which was deemed to have characterised the 1930’s. It stated categorically:

ART 1 (232) Les juges ne peuvent prononcer le divorce à la demande de l’un des époux que pour excés, sévices ou injures de l’un envers l’autre lorsque les faits constituent une violation grave ou renouvelée des devoirs et obligations resultant du mariage et rendent intolérable le maintien de la vie conjugale.  

Vichy also "equalised" the right of spouses to seek a divorce on the grounds of adultery by the other spouse, thereby abolishing a legal bias in favour of male adultery. (Under

95 "La Reforme du Divorce" (H.J.) Marseille-Soir, 27 avril, 1941. (One can’t really imagine this pragmatic logic being applied to abortion which had similarly resisted "l’épreuve du temps" and had been known in classical antiquity!) For press reaction, see AN: 72 AJ 1854.


the Code Civil, it had only been when husbands maintained their "concubine" in the "maison commune" that wives had grounds for divorce, whereas husbands could accuse wives of simple adultery.\textsuperscript{98} Adultery was explicit grounds for divorce.\textsuperscript{99}

Adultery occupies an important place in Vichy's discourse on sexuality. In the peculiar circumstances of the Occupation, with 1.8 million P.O.W.'s in Germany, for example, a more severe policy on adultery indicated another arena for the intensification of sexual regulation and surveillance. In July 1942, A.F.I.P. reported a case indicating the effect of such legislation:

Un Couple adulte\`ere s\`ev\`erement condamn\`e par le Tribunal correctionnel - Auch: Le Tribunal Correctionnel d'Auch a condamn\`e \`a trois mois de prison sans sursis pour l'adult\`er\`e la femme Louis Amma, m\'enag\'ere \`a Montault-les-Crereaux (Gers) dans le mari est actuellement prisonnier. Son complice, le nomm\'e Alban Lacarge a \'et\'e condamn\'e \`a quatre mois \`egalement sans sursis. Le mari abandonn\'e qui s'\'etait port\'e partie civile par l'interm\'ediaire de son avou\'e et de son avocat, a obtenu mille francs de dommage-int\'er\'et\'es. On sait que par sa r\'ecente circulaire du 27 avril, le garde des Sceaux a inv\'it\'e les magistrats \`a r\'eprimer avec vigueur le danger social que constitue l'adult\'er\'e.\textsuperscript{100}


\textsuperscript{99} Paxton, op.cit., p.167, is incorrect in stating that "Adultery was not an explicit grounds for divorce." The Code Civil (ART 230) was amended to read:

Le mari pourra demander le divorce pour cause d'adult\`er\`e de sa femme. La femme pourra demander le divorce pour cause d'adult\`er\`e de son mari. (ART 1)

\textsuperscript{100} AFIP, 1 juillet 1942. AN: 72 AJ 1835.
Prisoner of war wives were peculiarly subject to punitive surveillance. The state in effect constituted itself as local patriarchal authority to protect the woman, the family and the absent husband’s honour.  

The notion that adultery constituted a "danger social", which invited vigorous repression, was intimately linked both to sanctioning "proper" sexual activity within marriage and to upholding explicit boundaries between the licit and the illicit. It is all the more startling, therefore, that in the key area of illegitimacy Vichy introduced a major legislative initiative which seemed to undermine the entire structure of such regulation. Was the "Loi du 14 septembre 1941 sur la légitimation des enfants adulterins" a remarkable contradiction of Vichy’s familialist orientation? It modified existing legislation (Code Civil, 2, ART. 331) apparently to satisfy Pétain’s "whim" to regularise the situation of his own gardener -- hence its name "Loi du Jardinier":

Les enfants adulterins sont légitimes dans les cas suivants par le mariage subséquent de leurs père et mère, lorsque ceux-ci les reconnaissent au moment de la célébration du mariage dans les formes déterminées . . .
1. Les enfants nés du commerce adulterin de la mère lorsqu’ils sont désavoués par le mari ou ses héritiers;
2. Les enfants nés du commerce adulterin de la mère, lorsqu’ils sont reçus conçus à une époque ou la mère avait un domicile distinct . . . toutefois la reconnaissance et la légitimation pourront être annulées

The law carried the signature of only Pétain and Barthélemy. The latter, as Garde des Sceaux, contested the need to submit "his" projet-loi as a mere "modification" of the Code Civil, for the approval of the Commissariat General à la Famille. But there is evidence that not only was he well aware of opposition within "Cabinet" to his initiative -- he pushed this measure through in Renaudin's absence -- but that the whimsical impulse for the law was recognised by officials responsible for actually framing the law for Barthélemy. In a fascinating "interception" the view of a "fonctionnaire de Ministère de la Justice" is quoted directly:

J'ai dû préparer un texte sur la légitimation des enfants aduléris. Le jardinier d'un grand chef vénéré sera ainsi l'occasion et la prétexte d'une grande réforme juridique.

What is remarkable is that such a "whimsical impulse" should have succeeded in the face of vociferous opposition, especially given that it was quite explicitly counter to the moral imperatives seemingly so clearly-established at Vichy.


103 Barthélemy, Note pour la Marechale. (12 septembre 1941). AN: AGII 487 cc 79 B.

104 ibid.

Serge Huard, Secrétaire d'Etat à la Famille et à la Santé, made his department's opposition clear from the start:

Le législateur n'a pas voulu qu'un même homme put avoir simultanément des enfants légitimes de plusieurs mères différentes - c'est consacrer indirectement la polygamie. Cette raison reste valable; elle est même plus forte que jamais, au moment où l'on cherche à rétablir les institutions stables et les valeurs morales. En permettant de légitimer l'illegitime, on rapproche les deux situations, on obscurcit la distinction entre ce qui est légitime et ce qui ne l'est pas; on porte donc atteint à l'institution du mariage, base de la famille et de la société.106

The occasion was used to provide an explicit statement of the "pure" familialism at Vichy:

L'intérêt des enfants mérite certainement d'être prise en considération mais il ne saurait l'importer sur la nécessité de sauvegarder le mariage et de conserver à cette institution morale et sociale toute son autorité. S'il est vrai que la légitimation ne réhabilite pas l'adultère, elle efface une de ces conséquences les plus redoutables en assimilant les enfants adultes en aux enfants légitimes; dans cette mesure elle le favorise. Le Secrétaire d'Etat à la Famille et à la Santé a le désir de protéger le mariage, l'épouse et l'enfant légitimes; la protection de l'enfant adultere, victime innocente, si souhaitable soit-elle, ne doit pas aller contre la première. Au surplus c'est en rendant au mariage et à la famille toute leur dignité qu'on enlevera au problème des enfants adultes une partie de sa gravité.107

Again conflicting categories ("adultère"/ "légitime"; "victime innocente", "enfant"/ "homme", "adultère"; "famille", "dignité/ polygamie" . . . ) build the imperative: "le désir de protéger." The claims of wife, legitimate child

106 Huard concludes this statement to Barthélemy: "Je regrette dans ces conditions de ne pouvoir revêtir de contreseeing le projet que vous avez bien voulu me soumettre". 13 septembre 1941, Vichy. AN: AGII 497 cc 79 B.

107 ibid.
and marriage are inscribed through stability and order against the apparently rival claims of victimized children.

But Barthélemy, in a detailed defence before his critics, took on this construction, asserting the historical logic of his initiative -- enumerating the numerous changes in French civil law on "illegitimacy". Within the discourses of "l'intérêt social" and the family, he argued a technocratic, legalistic case:

La morale reprouve l’adultère, mais la législation n’a pas pour effet de le réhabiliter. C’est le divorce et le mariage de l’époux coupable avec son complice, -- et non point la légitimation --, qui effacent l’adultère et le regularisent. Or . . . notre législation permet à l’époux adulte, après divorce, d’épouser son complice. La légitimation fait seulement disparaître les conséquences déplorables de l’adultère à l’égard des enfants qui en sont les innocentes victimes.

. . . l’unique objet de la loi du 14 septembre 1941 qui a fait disparaître de notre législation une inconscience et une injustice. Et l’intérêt social se confond ici avec celui des enfants, car la société n’a certes rien à gagner à ce que des enfants demeurent comme des reprobés en dehors de la cellule familiale reconstituée.108

Barthélemy, having taken the discourse to its limits, remarked -- as though law and power/politics could be separated, "la controverse est d’ordre idéologique plutôt que juridique."109 These arguments did not take the heat out of the opposition’s rage.

André Lavagne, head of Pétain’s Cabinet Civil refused his
approval for the new law and focused on Barthélemy's role in this "cynical" initiative, which he associated with Pétain's wife's whims:

La Maréchale s'intéressant au cas personnel de son jardinier et, sans doute peu au courant des grands principes juridiques, a demandé à M. le Garde des Sceaux un projet de loi permettant à son jardinier de faire légitimer ses enfants adultérins. La Chancellerie a alors préparé un projet de loi . . . permettant maintenant la légitimation des enfants adultérins du mari dans tous les cas même s'il existe des enfants légitimes. Léon Blum et le Front Populaire eux-mêmes n'avaient pas osé aller jusqu'à la . . . le Garde des Sceaux . . . et le Directeur des Affaires Civiles . . . ont l'un et l'autre rivalisé de servilité pour rédiger ce projet et abuser la confiance du Maréchal. La Chancellerie . . . toujours sans mettre au courant le Maréchal ni la Maréchale de la portée réelle du texte envisagé pour un cas personnel. . . . Renvoyant une simple pelure du texte signé par le Garde des Sceaux a demandé au Maréchal de le signer à son tour." [My emphasis.]

The Garde des Sceaux is stripped of his defence in this attack. By reference to the bête noire of all right-thinking Vichyois (Léon Blum), Lavagne seeks to put Barthélemy and this new law beyond further discussion. The fact that the initiative supposedly came from Pétain's wife -- a woman, who cannot be expected to understand the significance of the initiative -- simply underlines Barthélemy's cynicism.

For supporters of the Revolution Nationale's "purer" vision, this initiative on illegitimacy came as a shock. A letter to the Directeur-Général from some prominent members of the Légion Française des Combattants in January 1942 sought to draw attention to:

les conséquences choquantes de cette loi singulière dont on n’aperçoit pas vraiment la nécessité. Elle apporte un encouragement précieux à l’adultère, elle consacre officiellement la polygamie dans notre organisation familiale, puisqu’un père pourra avoir très régulièrement des enfants du même âge nés de deux unions parallèles . . . blanchie après coup. Il est infiniment douloureux de constater qu’à une heure où la rénovation de la famille est à l’ordre du jour, le gouvernement de la Révolution Nationale a pris une mesure . . . qui va à l’encontre de toute la politique familiale. D’une part le divorce est limité et pourtant on incite le père à rompre l’union régulière pour légitimer des enfants adulterins . . . C’est là un paradoxe navrant. ¹¹¹

The Union Féminine Civique et Sociale also sought a revocation of the law and expressed its hostility to "une de nos lois les plus funestes au point de vue moral et familial."¹¹² The passing of the law on illegitimacy is a significant reminder that right wing discourses on the family and sexuality could accommodate apparent contradictions in priorities and values which, nonetheless, did not disrupt the overall buttressing of regulation. The process of categorization and surveillance around marriage, heterosexuality and family was continuously operative and strengthened.

¹¹¹ Letter from E. Roux, Président de l’Union Départementale du Rhône et A. Brun, Professeur à la Faculté de Droit, Président du Comité Economique et Professionelle, Légion Française des Combattants, Légionnaires et Amis, Lyon, (9 janvier 1941) to Directeur National, Vichy, via Vice-Président du Conseil. AN: AGII 497 cc 79 B. Ironically, the authors of this letter suspect that the law was passed as . . . :
"Une loi de circonstance, destinée à donner satisfaction à un haut personnage ce qui serait inadmissible."

From this perspective the other seeming aberration within Vichy's moral order -- its policy on prostitution -- becomes more clearly a discursive device, a complementary (not contradictory) aspect of sexual regulation.\textsuperscript{113} Heterosexuality and masculinity were being constructed even as their negative "drives" were catered for.

The subject of prostitution itself, especially during the Occupation, requires far more detailed treatment than this particular analysis will allow. The image of sexual profiteering and collaboration which is often conjured up in accounts of women's experience of the Occupation -- as well as the real scapegoating of "horizontal collaborations" at the Liberation\textsuperscript{114} -- is one that obscures analysis of the broader sexual ideologies of prostitution. (Why was it, for example that women's sexual collaboration was seen as uniquely reprehensible?)

In the area of prostitution it might have been expected that Vichy would again use the legislative projects of the Third Republic as a "point of departure" in effecting its own rénovation. Certainly the 1936 Sellier proposals might have seemed a useful and obvious model of abolitionist policy


\textsuperscript{114} Monique Titaux at the Institut d'Histoire du Temps Present, Paris, is working on the subject of "les femmes tondues a la Liberation" from this perspective.
which Vichy could have adopted. The increase, during the war and Occupation, of the number of women -- and, significantly, of married women -- involved in prostitution, quite apart from the moral dictates of the Révolution Nationale, would seem to have invited a more strenuous effort at abolition. But Vichy instead moved "de la tolérance à la reconnaissance officielle des maisons". By the arrêté of 24 décembre 1940, maisons de tolérance received official recognition, a first step towards their assimilation into an authorised commerce. This move was paralleled by increased "surveillance sanitaire" and enforcement of compulsory registration and treatment. Not only did the "tenanciers" seem to have a monopoly -- prostitution was forbidden outside the maisons de tolérance -- but their control of prostitutes was assisted by these new regulations:

Aucune prostituée ne pourra changer de maison de prostitution sans aviser le service du contrôle sanitaire et la police, et sans en avoir obtenu l'autorisation (ART


117 Of course in practice street prostitution flourished during the Occupation and usually offered a more lucrative business. cf. Corbin. Van der Meersch comments on this "monopole": "Voir les cinquante ou soixante mille prostituées libres de Paris obligées de rejoindre les deux milles prisonniers du bordel." op.cit., p.111.
16). Toute prostituée surveillée ayant manqué à une visite sanitaire . . . sera signalée à la police, pour être recherchée et amenée de force à la visite sanitaire (ART 19.)

Was it latent natalism that prompted ART 22: "Il est interdit à toute prostituée enceinte de se livrer à la prostitution à partir du quatrième mois de la grossesse"?

A notorious omission of this arrêté, (which, it is essential to note, originated in the office of Peyrouton, Ministre de l'Intérieur), was any reference to the minimum age of women working in these officially-recognised maisons de tolérance. ("Une inexplicable omission - tellement inexplicable qu'elle semble bien volontaire."118)

Again, supporters of the purer vision of the Révolution Nationale were scandalised by Peyrouton's initiative and lobbied for its reversal (without success until after the Liberation). The Ligue Française pour le Relèvement de la Moralité Publique, under its President, Paul Gemahling, Professeur à l'Université de Strasbourg, were particularly vocal against the "organisation et production officielle" which Vichy's "néo-réglementarisme" seemed to favour.119

Given Vichy's vitriolic attacks on the abuses of the Third

118 Van der Meersch, op.cit., p. 113. Van der Meersch's book was given an enthusiastic review after the Liberation in the ANCD Revue (Vitalité Française, No. 373, nov-dec 1945). The author was made Président d'Honneur de Comite de l'ANCD de Roubaix in the same year.

Republic and democracy, the cynical observations of some, like van der Meersch, were particularly pertinent:

Ainsi le 24 décembre, 1941, sous un pouvoir nouveau, qui rêvait de remoraliser la France, le têlier remportait la suprême victoire et démontrait insolemment la toute-puissance de l’or et de la corruption, qui survivent à tous les régimes.\textsuperscript{120}

Certainly the usual premise for such regulation (as opposed to abolition) of prostitution was that it represented "un mal inévitable" which it was better to recognise and to control.\textsuperscript{121} But having seen the thoroughness of Vichy’s attempts to repress abortion, for example, one must question the regime’s reluctance to tackle other "inevitable" social ills.

Publicly Vichy did not directly address the question of prostitution, although occasionally it was highlighted in the press: "La prostitution reste encore un des fléaux les plus dangereux de notre race."\textsuperscript{122} The increased incidence of venereal disease was linked to prostitution and the German Occupation. The dangers represented by the spread of venereal disease were emphasised in one Prefect’s report which

\textsuperscript{120} van der Meersch, op.cit., p. 114.

\textsuperscript{121} Even the \textit{Projet Guignabaudet} being worked on in the "Direction de la Famille" aimed at "reglementer la prostitution - Elle souhaite voir confinées des maisons de tolérance: contrôlées, reglemntées mais bien déterminées." Note sur l’importance d’une législation familiale, 21 dec., 1940. AN: F 60 606. (So it was not just a question of another CGF v. Ministries rift.) What was crucial was the demands of vested interest, as suggested by van der Meersch, and decisively the demands of the Germans. See below.

\textsuperscript{122} \textit{La Mairie Rurale}, no. 19, 1 nov., 1941 AN: AGII 498
bemoaned "l'extension croissante des maladies vénériennes. C'est une conséquence inévitable de la guerre et de l'occupation. Mais les effets en sont angoissants sur l'avenir de la jeunesse et de l'enfance." While the French worried about the impact of V.D. on future generations, the Germans issued dire warnings about controlling and monitoring prostitutes. The military authorities were especially concerned by "clandestine" prostitution outside Paris and urged greater vigilance on the French side:

L'activité de la Police Française notamment de la police municipale n'a donné dans ce domaine . . . aucun résultat satisfaisant.

By June 1942 the French Interior Ministry was cooperating with health authorities to clamp down on "clandestine prostitution":

une répression plus efficace et plus sévère . . . pourrait à mon avis être assurée [par] . . . une inscription d'office sur les registres spéciaux de police de toute personne de sexe féminin qui a contaminé un individu à condition, bien entendu, que cette contamination résulte d'une relation sexuelle intervenue à la suite de transactions véniales.

Indépendent de son caractère coercif cette mesure aurait l'advantage de présenter également au regard de la personne qui en ferait l'objet, celui d'une sanction morale.

123 Rapport, Préfet du Var, 19 juin, 1943, AN: F1A 3701.
124 AN: AG II 497 cc 79 D (Santé)
Again the actual lives of women who were obliged (or chose) to work as prostitutes in brothels or as "femmes isolées" does not impinge on the discourse of sexuality under Vichy. Prostitution appears as an abstraction and repressive regulation operates effectively, because of the de-humanization of women. Men do not figure as sexual agents or beneficiaries of prostitution. For example, one rather coy natalist tract was directed at future fathers:

FUTURS PERES DE FAMILLE, VOUS AVEZ A PREPARER LES CHEFS EN VOUS GARDANT VOUS MEMES

FORTS
SAINS
PURS 129

The accompanying illustration to this tract showed young men resisting the vices of both alcohol and prostitution,

126 Ministère de l’Intérieur (Lado) à Secrétaire d’État à la Santé (Grasset), 13 juin 1942. It is interesting that female prostitution is exclusively the subject.

127 On the nineteenth century origins of the term "femmes isolées", see Joan Wallach Scott, Gender and the Politics of History, (New York, 1988) pp.142-143

128 Nor are men mentioned as purchasers of pornography, another recurrent anxiety of administrators and familiaux, intensified because of the Occupation. See AN: F14 3678. On prostitution as a "female" offence generally, see Carol Smart, Women, Crime and Criminology: A Feminist Critique (London, 1976) p77.

129 Tract, Pères de Familles, AN: AGII 497 cc 79 D.
demonstrating their capacity to be "chefs".

Constructing and enforcing heterosexuality, even allowing for its (male) deviant manifestations, was at the heart of Vichy's discourse, as we have seen. It was no coincidence that homosexuality appeared in the legislation that this discourse produced, articulated in the familiar language of innocence (youth) and nature (preordained sexual practice). "Corruption" and "passions" fuelled the need for the parallel protection of women and children against those,

Quiconque aura soit pour satisfaire les passions d'autrui excite, favorise ou facilite habituellement la débauche ou la corruption de la jeunesse de l'un ou de l'autre sexe au-dessous de l'âge de vingt et un ans, soit pour satisfaire ses propres passions commis un ou plusieurs actes impudiques ou contre nature avec un mineur de son sexe âgé de moins de vingt et un ans.130

This text wrote homosexuality into "acts" (rather than identity) and defined its legal majority (21 years) higher than for heterosexuals. But it did not criminalize all homosexual activity, perhaps because, as Girard suggests,

pour les adultes il est trop tard; on peut les abandonner à la médecine, la psychiatrie, la psychoanalyse, qui vont tenter de les "guérir," mais la simple répression s'avère inefficace. En revanche, c'est dans l'enfance qu'il faut

130 Loi du 6 août 1942 (amendment to Art. 334 of the Code pénal). A recent discussion of this law claims that the "law significantly applied equally to pederasts and to lesbians". But this begs the question of the relationship between pederasty and lesbianism, or between Vichy's discourse on male and female sexuality. Antony Copley Sexual Moralities in France, 1780-1980: New Ideas on the Family, Divorce and Homosexuality. London, 1989, p.203.
But one can also see in this initiative a relative lack of concern about "deviant" male sexuality. Because it was seen as dealing with individual, unnatural acts this regulation operated within the system of protecting youth and repressing desire. Homosexuality did not seriously threaten the privileges of heterosexual natalist or familialist discourse.\textsuperscript{132}

Throughout this chapter we have seen how desire and pleasure were erased and how Vichy's discourse of sexuality was articulated in texts on motherhood, marriage, abortion, etc. These texts collectively produced and sustained the very meaning of (hetero)sexuality and the "space" allowed for female sexuality. This regulation was more complex and multidimensional than a "repressive" reading would allow. "Woman" was not simply constructed according to Miller's dichotomous image, "vierge comme Jeanne d'Arc . . . ou lapine";\textsuperscript{133} law, policy and propaganda spoke of women in diverse ways, enclosing the female body within the discourses of duty,


\textsuperscript{132} Historians have generally failed to make connections between specific forms of homosexual repression, sexual regulation and right wing politics. On Nazi repression see, Richard Plant, \textit{The Pink Triangle: The Nazi War Against Homosexuals}, (New York, 1986).

\textsuperscript{133} G. Miller, \textit{op.cit.}, p.159.
sacrifice, nature, patriotism -- a host of terms that defined sexuality and built it into the structures of a new political order.
CHAPTER 6

HONOURING THE FAMILY: WELFARE

Historians might be tempted to accept Vichy’s espousal of and support for the family at face-value. Family policy could be seen as not "political" in the way that educational or labour policies are, for example. And indeed there is an immense reserve of popular political capital to be called upon around support for the family. It is no coincidence that Pétain referred to family in his trial defence in 1945:

Malgré d’immenses difficultés, aucun pouvoir n’a, plus que le mien, honoré la famille, et, pour empêcher la lutte des classes, cherché à garantir les conditions du travail à l’usine et à la terre.

La France libérée peut changer les mots et les vocables. Elle construit, mais elle ne pourra construire utilement que sur les bases que j’ai jetées.1

This defence, by linking an honoring of the family with a prevention of the class struggle, provides a clue to the political dynamics of Vichy and to the intimate connections between discourses of family, class and material life. Vichy’s family policy is deemed to be above politics. It

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somehow represented -- alone in the policy arena -- a set of initiatives, a neutral welfarism that transcended the political conflicts of 1940-1944. Vichy struggled to support the family despite the unfavourable circumstances of the Occupation and its successes and failures are usually measured solely against the externally-imposed restrictions on the French economy of this period.

But such an interpretation fails to question the actual political significance of family policy. Nor does it question the ways in which family policy defines and upholds a specific "family", prioritizing certain forms of social intervention. Vichy had a specific family agenda -- a political agenda -- and this needs to be analyzed in the context both of its own Révolution Nationale and of French family policy generally.

This chapter explores the material support Vichy provided for families, how it "honoured" family existence and spoke to familial needs. What did Vichy mean when it spoke of honouring the family? How was class understood in the various provisions that constituted family policy? How did the well-being of families -- and the very notion of "family"

This chapter investigates these questions and the relationship between gender, policies and politics, between famille, politiquer and politiser.

**Family and Economy**

Philippe Renaudin, the Commissaire Général à la Famille, in a long speech on "La Famille dans la Nation" (given at the Sorbonne in June 1943) made connections between political and material support for the family. He presumed the unprecedented nature of Vichy’s familial mission.

> C'est une oeuvre primordiale économiquement urgente, historiquement et politiquement nécessaire au point d'être vitale, humainement bonne, que de restaurer la famille française. À une mission aussi noble et aussi vaste, qui n'a pas de précédent, comment procéder?

"Assurer la vie" is a significantly ambivalent phrase, conjuring up the need to literally reproduce — to feed and support — the family, as well as to guarantee its longterm reproduction; to assure family life from day to day and over decades. It means that the first step ("le premier pas") could be variously interpreted as involving immediate material support and/or more nebulous political support.

Vichy’s welfarist discourse encompassed and thrived on such
ambivalence. This declaration also assumes the meaning of "the French family", it must be first "restored" -- as though its ideal form is agreed upon -- and then it must be protected from a hostile environment. In this view family policy becomes a defensive strategy against an individualist system, a system that is insufficiently patriarchal - familial. "Normal" and "natural" are invoked to underscore the foyer's inviolability and proper hierarchy:

Au foyer ouvert et qui se peuple, le père doit apporter la subsistance, car la nature n'appelle pas la mère au dehors... C'est sur le travail du chef de famille que, dans les conditions économiques normales, dans un régime social sain, repose la vie du foyer. Tout le problème du salaire se voit aussi posé, en même qu'il trouve sa solution.

Le juste salaire est celui qui permet au chef de famille d'assurer son existence et celle des siens sans déchoir lorsque son foyer s'agrandit.

Crierait-on à l'hérésie économique? Mais le problème ne s'isole pas du problème économique et du problème sociale; il les domine, comme la fin domine les moyens. La formule "A travail égal, salaire égal" exprime une vérité tout contingente, une norme de production et de calcul des prix. Sa justice apparente, ou plutôt son égalitarisme masque mal une condamnation à mort de la famille nombreuse. À la vérité elle a vécu le jour où est né le régime des allocations familiales.3

The Alliance Nationale professed a similar "doctrine" of "egalitarianism":

Cette doctrine réclame la suppression de l'inégalité qui résulte, à revenu égal, de la diversité des situations de famille. Le travailleur qui a une femme et des enfants est réduit, ainsi que les siens, à un niveau de vie très inférieur à celui dont jouit son camarade célibataire. Il devrait vivre mieux, puisque pour sa part, il assure,

3 Renaudin, La Famille dans la Nation. (Commissariat Général à la Famille, 1944) BDIC: G fol 1262.
This doctrine revolves around the differential value of men -- chefs de famille or célibataires -- and their natalist utility/value, claiming a new economic ordering of society on the basis of such differentials. It takes literally Pétain’s injunction that "la France est une hiérarchie de familles", engaging directly in Vichy’s debunking of égalité.

This familial hierarchy required a new radical economic agenda, nothing less than a redistribution of income:

Si l’on voulait aller, sans aucun retard, au but visé, il faudrait diminuer la part des favorisés d’aujourd’hui, en vue d’augmenter celle des charges de famille. Une telle redistribution n’étant guère réalisable, il y a lieu du moins quand des occasions se présentent d’augmenter le revenu des travailleurs, de faire profiter de ces occasions, exclusivement, les travailleurs chargés de famille, ceci aussi longtemps que n’aura pas été obtenue la péréquation nécessaire.5

This familialist "péréquation" involved an obliteration of other differences -- of class and gender, for example. It sought a restructuring of society according to household size, dominated by the needs of chefs de famille to be compensated/rewarded for their familial-natalist status, to stand equally with other men of their social class who were not fathers.

Allocations Familiales


5 ibid.
Vichy seemed to promise such privileges in 1940. Familiaux looked forward to a new order, one that not only recognized the national value of families but actually transferred income and benefits accordingly. The concept of "salaire familial" was at the heart of their expectations, the fulcrum for a comprehensive and redistributive family policy. One initiative in this arena was the traitement familial, which is discussed below. But the broadest application was in the allocations familiales. These were seen as part of a continuum of support building up to a more just regulation of salaries. Professor Rouast had defined the terms:

\[ \text{les allocations familiales ne constituent pas un sursalaire que le travail des intéressés ne saurait justifier parce qu'il n'est plus productif que celui des autres ouvriers, mais quelles sont dues en vertu de la justice sociale, qui veut que le travailleur puisse faire vivre sa famille, qu'il ne soit pas victime d'avoir fait son devoir envers le pays, en lui donnant des enfants.} \]

Those responsible for the administration of the allocations familiales under Vichy themselves often took this broader view of "justice sociale" and of incremental moves towards a family wage. Georges Bonvoisin, Directeur Général of the Comité Central des Allocations Familiales, suggested a new agenda in his 1941 annual report:

\[ \text{Le moment est venu de faire un nouveau pas...pour que le} \]

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He recommended reestablishing the allocation au premier enfant, the extension of the allocation de salaire unique (for the wife in the first two years of marriage) and the creation of a housing allowance for familles nombreuses. In his view, the system could be simplified by creating un seul barème majorant le salaire unique d’une prestation, débutant au mariage et croissant avec le nombre des enfants. In this perspective, the Code de la Famille (1939) was a point of departure, not an end in itself. Familiaux, at the time and later, mostly welcomed this continuity. As Ceccaldi remarked:

On aurait pu craindre....que ce texte ne tombât bientôt dans l'indifférence ou l'oubli. Au contraire....il a donné le signal de départ d'une politique d'ensemble, poursuivie et amplifiée, malgré les vicissitudes de la guerre et de l'occupation....Le régime de Vichy met à son actif.

The range of benefits and allowances which the Code introduced were for the most part continued without change by Vichy. A report in 1944 from the Conseil Supérieur de l'Economie Industrielle et Commerciale captured the central

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8 ibid.
9 Ceccaldi, op.cit., p.17.
10 On the Code, see Chapter One above. For a general account, see C. Watson, "Population Policy in France: Family Allowances and Other Benefits" Population Studies, July 1954.
role that *allocations familiales* had to play:

Les allocations familiales viennent au premier rang parmi tous les éléments d'une politique familiale, au raison des sommes considérables que cette institution permet de repartir - (20 milliards environ pour 1944) - et de l'effet psychologique produit par une mesure désormais passée dans les moeurs, dans laquelle le public voit l'une des principales marques de sollicitude données par les Pouvoirs Publics à la famille.\(^\text{11}\)

Indeed the scale of payments had increased progressively in the period after the *Code* (1939-1941), despite a drop in the actual number of employers, waged workers and eligible families, totalling 10 milliards in 1941. From 1939 to 1941 there was a 48% increase in the number of *allocations* paid out:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1939</th>
<th>1940</th>
<th>1941</th>
<th>écarts total 1939 à 1941</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Employeurs</strong></td>
<td>450,000</td>
<td>423,000</td>
<td>368,000</td>
<td>- 18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Salaries</strong></td>
<td>5,400,000</td>
<td>4,482,000</td>
<td>3,632,000</td>
<td>- 31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Familles</strong></td>
<td>1,640,000</td>
<td>1,508,000</td>
<td>814,752</td>
<td>- 50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Enfants</strong></td>
<td>2,900,000</td>
<td>2,755,000</td>
<td>1,818,300</td>
<td>- 38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Allocats</strong></td>
<td>2,100,000,000</td>
<td>3,255,000,000</td>
<td>2,831,850,000</td>
<td>+ 48%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The drop in the total number of eligible families was due to


\(^{12}\) Bonvoisin, p.5.
the cancellation of allowances to one child families. In 1940, two child families numbered 439,272; in 1944, two child families numbered 541,455 (or 32.75% of the total).  

During 1940-1942, Vichy intended the provisions of the Code to cover unemployment, home work, long-term illness, old-age pension and widows of salariés, as well as increasing the eligibility of agricultural workers.  

By 1943 there were 227 caisses patronales, divided into national (7), departmental or interdepartmental (210), professional (104), or interprofessional (123) sections. The breakdown of payments for 1943, totalling 6,482,000,000, was as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ALLOCATIONS FAMILIALES</th>
<th>45.50</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SALAIRE UNIQUE</td>
<td>51.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sans enfants</td>
<td>.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRIMES A LA PREMIER</td>
<td>1.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAISSANCE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PECULE DE RETOUR</td>
<td>.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A LA TERRE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>6.482,000,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The form and structure of the Third Republic’s family policy


14 Watson, op.cit., p.275.

was kept therefore. There was no overturning of welfare, no revolutionary new schemes for family support.

Vichy's most important modifications of the allocations familiales system were a general increase in base rates (the salaire moyen départemental) and the introduction of the allocation de salaire unique. The salaire moyen départemental was calculated according to place of residence, not employment, and Vichy introduced a further breakdown by urban zone. Allocations represented a percentage of this average salary, ranging from 10% for the second child to 90% for the fifth child, with the principal increase at the third child (to mark the natalist "norm").

(1941) % DU SALAIRE DEPARTMENTAL
(communes ayant plus de 2000 habitants)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Allocations Familiales</th>
<th>Salaire Unique</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 enfant</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 enfants</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 enfants</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 enfants</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 enfants</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Local studies give the most accurate accounts of real wages and the significance of the allocations. Sweets, for example, provides information for a variety of occupations in

16 AFIP (14 avril 1941). AN: 72 AJ 1854.
Clermont-Ferrand where we know that in 1941 the average departmental wage was 1150 francs per month. At this time, a female office worker was earning 1300-1600 francs and a saleswoman 1250 francs per month, well below the average male wage. Familiaux complained that the salaire moyen was usually fixed at less than the minimum salary. A percentage of this salaire was therefore very small 'compensation'. Clearly allocations familiales provided a very partial transfer of resources to families. Vichy was far from implementing a real "salaire familial".

Allocation de Salaire Unique

Nowhere was this more obvious than with its much-vaunted allocation de salaire unique. This allowance made available to all families where there was only one income 10-30% of the average departmental wage, depending on the age and number of children in the household. The sole income could be that of the father or mother, "quelle que soit la profession ou la qualité de l'emploi qui les occupe". It replaced the allocation de la mère au foyer to allow for an


18 Loi du 29 mars 1941. (J.O. du 11 avril 1941).
employed mother to receive the benefit, in the case that her husband might be incapacitated, a prisoner or that she might be divorced. This allocation was aimed at all industrial, commercial and agricultural wage earners and salaried employees. It excluded employers, small landowners, self-employed and homeworkers. Eligibility could be extended, if there was more than one child in the family, for children over fifteen, pursuing an apprenticeship or further studies up until the age of twenty. Vichy also recognized the anomalous situation created by the war when due to the absence of the P.O.W.s, not all marriages could readily produce children. By the loi du 17 novembre 1941 this allocation was extended to "jeunes ménages sans enfant" for the first two years of marriage. It was also possible to claim the allocation de salaire unique on top of the allocations familiales (or militaires).

By 1942, it was also accepted that the "second conjoint" claiming the allowance could earn a part-time income or work at home, provided it did not amount to more than one third of the average departmental wage or keep them out of the home more than one half-day each day.19 There was much negotiation about varieties of domestic "income". For example a cabinetmaker in Bourg who owned one cow and two goats was disqualified from claiming this allowance on the

19 Ministre du Travail à Directeur de la Compagnie des Fer de la Campagne. (27 aout 1942) AN: F 22 1515.
grounds that he had two "revenus professionels". The CGF intervened to argue that this disqualification was unjust as this father of four's resources had "ni le caractère ni l'importance de véritables revenus professionels".

(Actually the value of dairy products varied greatly during the Occupation). But a point of principle was involved:

De plus, il convient, dans les circonstances actuelles, d'encourager les familles de salariés qui s'efforcent en exploitant un petit terrain et en élevant quelques têtes de bétail de subvenir à leurs propres besoins.

Enfin il serait particulièrement injuste de traiter moins favorablement lesdites familles que celles où la femme travaille quelques heures par jour moyennant une faible rétribution et qui peuvent prétendre au salaire unique bien que le mari exerce une profession distincte.20

The Ministry of Travail supported this view too. But the Caisses de Compensation de l'Ain replied that, as the "resources" procured by one cow exceeded a third of the average wage, payment of the allocation de salaire unique should remain suspended. In their estimation, a woman with one or more cows was "earning" over the odds:

il est....évident qu'une femme de 5 ou 6 vaches constitue un revenu professionnel constant et élevé.21

Nonetheless, the Caisse requested the opinion of the Ministry, "indiquant notamment le nombre de têtes de bétail au-delà duquel l'allocation....ne serait plus due".22

22 ibid.
This small incident, while humorous for its assessment of the comparative revenues of cows and women, reveals several important themes: a "welfare" bureaucracy struggling to maintain categories of entitlement (in the face of a population crossing divides of rural/urban, waged/unwaged and domestic/non-domestic labour); the CGF supporting its familialist vision through welfare -- its ideal of the craftsman and farmer/wife; the fact that, although minimal, the allocation de salaire unique represented a source of income worth petitioning for; the fact that it was actually difficult to determine the value of dairy/livestock during the Occupation - and at least to some officials they represented a very enviable source of income!23 But above all in this dispute we see how the identity of the ideal family is transmitted and recreated, we get a glimpse into welfare’s construction of "woman" within the family economy. She is the "other", the dependent worker at home who has no autonomous economic or social identity. It is therefore not simply the terms of the law which are significant but the process of negotiating eligibility and objectives that constructed the meaning of women, family and "justice sociale".

23 Rural women did not consider that they "worked", even when they were actually managing family farms in the absence of their POW husband. These women's sole resources were "cows, corn, beans, vines". See Sarah Fishman The Wives of Prisoners of War, 1940-1945. Ph.D. thesis, Harvard University, 1987.
This particular allocation had been a standard feature of previous systems and was enshrined in the Code de la Famille. Its primary objective was natalist - rewarding women for staying at home to have children. Vichy's appropriation of this allocation was important, however.

The meaning of welfare

Vichy did not introduce a new or more comprehensive allowance to offset its prohibitions on married women's work. They did not provide a real compensatory payment to replace a second income, even to a limited constituency of mothers. They modified an existing allowance - of important symbolic as much as material value - to recognize the peculiar circumstances of the Defeat and Occupation. The answer is not that they simply lacked the means: the output of the Caisses in 1940-1944 increased considerably and Vichy could have acted to prioritize one form of welfare over any other. Nor was it that Vichy was unaware of the acerbic criticism and disappointment of its natalist (and child-bearing) constituencies. It was obvious that the allocation would not bring about the "retour de la femme au foyer". At one level the answer is that welfare was precisely about such regulatory, symbolic gestures not about actual incentives or real material compensations. Vichy,

24 See Chapter 4 on the loi du 11 octobre 1940.
despite its revolutionary familialist rhetoric, did not innovate or legislate new systems. But instead of seeing this as a particularly ironic failing it is perhaps more useful to analyze the political complexities of Vichy’s simply maintaining the provisions of the Code de la Famille and sustaining its femme au foyer discourse. In this interpretation, Vichy’s familialism did not "fail" because it was not ideologically and materially symmetrical. Rather its material form articulated -- and "adequately" supported its political discourses of foyer and famille and justice sociale, at least in 1940-1942. When Pétain was confronted with the material demands of familiaux, he could point to the government’s lack of resources at the same time as he invoked his own support for the family.25 Pétain had said after all, in June 1940, "N’espérez pas trop de l’Etat".26 But welfare

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25 Défendons Nos Foyers, No.1, aout 1941, reported in full its Secretary-General’s interview with Maréchal Pétain of February 1941. Vicomte de Butler had described the misery of familles nombreuses, praised the Révolution Nationale’s doctrine but said bluntly: "Il faut vous le dire, Monsieur le Maréchal, les familles nombreuses attendent dans une pauvreté croissante la réalisation des réformes annoncées par vos paroles". According to this report Pétain, "ému de la situation", replied, "combien il voudrait faire justice aux familles mais demande-t-il, quel moyen pratique proposons-nous pour trouver les ressources nécessaires à l’accomplissement des réformes proposées? Le budget est tellement surchargé qu’on ne peut songer à lui reclamer un effort supplémentaire".

Undaunted, these familiaux left this interview, "enthusiasmés et ravis par l’acceuil si compréhensif du chef de grand coeur, du Sauveur de la Patrie qui sera également le sauveur de la Famille Française". AN: AGII 654.305.

26 See Chapter 1, p63
gave Vichy another critical political terrain, regardless of the scale or local effectiveness of benefits.

Across this terrain we see complicated political constructions, for example about what constitutes a family and how familial hierarchy functions. Gender is the key dynamic.

**Women and Children**

In the allocation de salaire unique women were neither subject nor object; they were not spoken of. Neutral language erased the identity of the "second conjoint". In propaganda men received the cash payments due under the law. They were chef de famille - on a par with the chef/patron for this brief instant (the gesture of receiving resembles a fraternal handshake) - but they also acted on their own initiative "de son propre chef". Their authority was built on a double absence: that of the mother (dependent other) and the child (the real subject). Indeed it is the identity of the child that determined the father’s ability to receive: "Cette allocation est réservée aux familles dont les enfants ont la nationalité française".

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27 See illustrations below in the section on Rights and Welfare.

28 Article 1, Loi du 29 mars 1941. For an account of the application of allocations familiales in Algeria, "un régime....nettement distinct", see Francois Villey, *Le Complément familial du salaire, étude des allocations*
Vichy's ability to disaggregate parts of the family unit like this was no trivial aberration. "French" children could be "counted"; their parents' status was in many respects irrelevant. The fate of Jewish families -- where children were similarly disaggregated -- provides a graphic reminder of the impact of such nationalist-familialist logic. Whether in the Caisses or in the Commissariat Général aux Questions Juives, there was not a self-evident or inviolable unit, "the family", despite Vichy's rhetoric to the contrary.

Apart from the value of Frenchness and the meaning of family, this allocation also raised the negotiation of income and family viability. Class disappeared in this system, where eligibility was determined by number of (French) children, not by income. Limited though the compensation was, payments were spread thinner across all income levels. Within the discourse of familiaux were two trends, one towards equalizing the rights of all families with children with all célibataires and childless families of equivalent status, the other trend toward improving the standard of


29 For example, the mémoire of the nine-year old French girl whose non-French mother was deported while she was left in detention with her younger brother. S. Klarsfeld, Vichy-Auschwitz, vol.1, Appendix.

30 When public opinion was hostile to the separation of Jewish parents and children, Laval arranged for families to be deported together. cf Marrus and Paxton, op.cit., p.263.
living of working-class and lower income familles nombreuses.\textsuperscript{31}

Family, salary and responsibility

The public service was one area where Vichy took an initiative toward a partial "sursalaire familial", a step within the first trend of "equalizing" revenue. In this measure we see not only different priorities within the familialist agenda but an explicit switch to support for certain chefs de famille, a reevaluation of authority and responsibility. Again gender constructs the family and underlies the very notions of familial and social order being employed. (Even where women are chef de famille the construction of authority depends on operations of male-ness).

In October 1941, a further legislative report on the statut des fonctionnaires included two projects: one for a "traitement familial", a proportional salary supplement for public servants who were fathers of three or more children; the second, a residential salary supplement, whose amount depended on number of children and place of residence. This traitement operated independently of and in addition to the

allocations familiales. A fonctionnaire, father of six children, on a salary of 3000 francs per month, who received about 1100 francs in allocations familiales, would now receive a supplement of 1350 francs, bringing his total income to 5450. As the newsletter of the Association Nationale des Familles Françaises de Six Enfants ou Plus pointed out, this represented 681 francs per person, an increase on 512 francs 50, but

une somme évidemment encore très insuffisant pour assurer le logement et l'entretien d'un être humain.32

According to Darlan and Bouthillier, the signatories to this law, the principles underlying these initiatives "forment la charte de toute société organisée: honorer la famille, maintenir la hiérarchie, assurer la hiérarchie".33 The aim was clear:

proportionner la rémunération à l'importance de la famille qu'elle fait vivre, marquer largement par une rémunération supplémentaire ce que l'État attend des fonctionnaires investis de responsabilités spéciales. 34

Fathers working for the State were invested -- and were being reinvested -- with special responsibilities. Vichy's originality in this welfarist initiative was quite explicitly articulated:

32 Défendons Nos Foyers, No.2, novembre 1941. A general increase in allocations familiales was demanded to "complete" this reform of public service salaries.

33 Rapport du loi du 31 octobre 1941, J.O. du 1 novembre 1941.

34 ibid.
l'effort de la loi s'exerce surtout en faveur des foyers nombreux qui reçoivent une aide substantielle sous une forme absolument nouvelle. Il constitue une première application des principes affirmés dans le statut des fonctionnaires.  

The entire text evokes a crisis of "authority" and proclaims Vichy's "new" values:

Il nous paraît en effet que dans l'évolution de notre législation et de nos coutumes administratives, la prééminence du chef a été méconnue. Trop souvent la véritable notion de l'autorité, étroitement liée à celle de la responsabilité, a été sacrifiée à la vaine poursuite de l'égalitarisme social.  

Contemporary commentators also saw this initiative as an important familialist breakthrough:

Le supplément familial du traitement marque la première réalisation en France d'un régime vraiment familial de rémunération qui prend en considération non plus l'individu, mais le groupe familial auquel il appartient et dont il ne saurait être isolé.

Indeed we should read this text as a new familialist and paternalist offensive, aimed at the family and the (public service) workplace. It is no coincidence that women, single and married, were increasing their representation in an expanding public service. Their presumed "invasion" of the labour market must surely be connected to this

\[\text{35 ibid.}\]
\[\text{36 ibid.}\]
\[\text{37 Francoise Villey, op.cit., p.236.}\]
\[\text{38 By 1946, 42.3\% of working women were in the tertiary sector (Dyer, op.cit., p.227) but it is worth remembering that, at this time, teaching and the Post Office, areas especially open to women, accounted for half of all civil servants. Dupeux, op.cit., p.20.}\]
"méconnaissance du chef"?

If "authority" gave a discursive unity to such discussions, there was no general agreement about the efficacy or appropriateness of the "traitement familial" itself. The Commissariat Général à la Famille supported the initiative in its aim

à restituer aux fonctionnaires chargés de famille son rang dans la hiérarchie en faisant varier le traitement de base de telle sorte que le fonctionnaire chargé de famille ait un standing égal à celui de son collègue de même grade célibataire. Il est un élément essentiel de la politique de restauration du pays par la famille....bien que les effets doivent ne s'en faire sentir que dans l'avenir.

On ne peut songer à ne pas l'appliquer ni même à l'ajourner. 39

To put off the reform was precisely what Finances had in mind. Bouthillier had opposed this traitement in favour of a general salary increase for all fonctionnaires. (The Statut itself had troubled political origins.40) General Huntziger denounced the traitement initiative for his own constituency: "les avantages de carrières doivent être réservés au seul mérite professionnel". Although Huntziger could not imagine such familial privilege operating among the military, he also questioned its efficacy and general thrust:

j'estime que le principe même du projet de loi est

39 Commissariat Général à la Famille, Note sur l'application du statut des fonctionnaires (octobre 1941). AN: F60 606. It is interesting that the CGF emphasized the long-term effects of this reform.

particulièrement dangereux. Il n’est qu’un palliatif qui aura pour effet de masquer la véritable aspect de la question et de retarder la mise en œuvre de la seule solution logique: un effort financier réel en faveur de la famille.

Qualités professionnelles et charges familiales sont deux questions absolument indépendantes qui doivent être traitées chacune dans leur cadre. 41

Again there was a split between visions of the immediate and long-term material interests of the family, between a mere "palliatif" and "un effort....réel". There was no consensus on what honoring the family should entail materially.

Fernand Boverat took a hostile -- perhaps idiosyncratic -- line on the "traitement familial", echoing Huntziger’s belief that two separate and distinct questions were at stake: salaries and allocations familiales. He derided the notion of a salaire familial, "une notion simpliste qui a été écartée depuis longtemps par tous ceux qui ont approfondi quelque peu le problème de la famille et de la natalité". 42

In its defence, Lavagne claimed that the statut derived from somewhat different principles than the Code de la Famille:

On a cru devoir se dégager de la conception un peu mathématique qui proportionait l’effort financier de la collectivité à l’entretien matériel des enfants et au nombre de bouches à nourrir; on a estimé préférable de tenir compte de considérations sociales et de dégager la notion familiale des préoccupations natalistes immédiate: on est plutôt parti de l’idée que la famille est à

41 Huntziger to Ministre de l’Economie Nationale et Finances (1 septembre 1941) AN: F60 606.

honoré, en soi, dans la permanence et la continuité de cette institution et non pas seulement dans la courte période où elle permet de faire naître et d'élever des enfants.  

This emphasised again the notion of the family as a sexless/gender-less unit that produced children but which could be honored (in symbolic and material terms). Women did not figure in these discussions. The concept of family welfare disguised the hegemony of the chef de famille, whose authority was being strengthened and whose prerogatives were being sustained.

Platon in a report on "questions familiales" in June 1942 for the conseil de cabinet clung to these notions, while complaining about the delay in applying the traitement familial.

La part de rémunération correspondant à la qualification professionnelle, appréciable quand elle profite à un individu isolé, devient infime lorsqu'elle se répartit entre toutes les têtes d'une famille nombreuse. Autrement dit, à un même échelon de la hiérarchie, le niveau d'existence d'un chef de famille s'effondre par rapport à celui du ménage sans enfants et c'est là une cause essentielle du malthusianisme des élites.  

In Défendons Nos Foyers, the review of the Association Nationale des Familles Françaises de Six Enfants et Plus, the traitement familial was welcomed as

une réforme qui ne peut manquer d'avoir un profond retentissement. Elle constitue en effet une éclatante

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43 Lavagne to Boverat (13 novembre 1941). Ironically, after this formal defence, Lavagne then eschewed any involvement in the statut's preparation. AN: F60 606.

44 Vice Amiral Platon to Ministres et Secrétaires d'Etat. (4 juin 1942) AN: AG II 497 cc B.
victoire de l'esprit familial sur l'individualisme. Boverat's criticism of the traitement was vilified, especially his assertion that it was "peut-être malaise d'infliger une 'pénalité' à des fonctionnaires du sexe féminin qui, parfois, sont dans l'impossibilité de se marier malgré tout le désir qu'elles peuvent en avoir". The reviewer in Defendons Nos Foyers replied:

est-ce pénaliser un célibataire que de ne pas lui donner le traitement prévu pour assurer l'existence de quatre personnes? Pourquoi accorder quatre rations à ce célibataire fut-il [sic] du sexe féminin?

Measuring Welfare

The mention of "rations" was no empty allusion in 1941. Indeed it is imperative to remember the preoccupation with rationing and shortages, and the obsession with mathematical configurations of need, supplies, duration, sharing. Families were imagined precisely as mouths to feed and bodies to clothe and keep warm. The language of rations,

45 Défendons Nos Foyers, No.2, novembre 1941. For details on benefits under the traitement, p.1.

46 ibid. Boverat's concern for unmarried women fonctionnaires evoked the presence of large numbers of 'spinsters'/fonctionnaires, not as an economic threat - in the way that male célibataires or married women workers figure in other discussions - but sympathetically as a separate category of (sexually) 'dispossessed'. The heterosexist and natalist presumptions about "tout le désir" and this concern with "unmarriable" women are clear.

47 ibid. The author claimed that Boverat's recent views deserved "une exposition au pilori".
allocations, income reflected this obsession with measuring and matching "rights" and "needs"; dividing and subtracting was a way of thinking, more urgent than ever for families and more pervasive and vivid than usual for administrators. Establishing the prerogatives of chef de famille or the 'normal' family size or the average departmental income was part of this process. "Measuring", was not simply a symptom of bureaucratic preferences but was a construction of "justice sociale", a way of counting and distributing benefits, whether material or moral. It is important to consider the variety of welfare initiatives that publically acknowledged and fuelled these constructions.

The Carte De Priorité

If the traitement familial had within it the potential of a major step towards income redistribution (in favour of Vichy's familial vision), other initiatives more clearly underline the symbolic weight of Vichy's welfarism. In everyday terms, no issue was more pressing than food; how and where to procure any food was a dramatic daily obsession for most women and families. Despite constant modifications of the rationing system Vichy seemed unable to control food supplies. The crise de ravitaillement had a direct negative impact on the health and well-being of children, adolescents, mothers and old people.
One of the highly-publicized initiatives in this realm was the *Carte de Priorité* introduced in August 1940 for mothers of young children, if they were mothers of French families or if all their children had French nationality. These women could claim priority in line in all government and public service offices, on public transport and most important of all, in all shops.

It is not difficult to imagine the hostility met by women with *cartes de priorité* when they tried to assert their right to go ahead in food queues. (Anyone who has witnessed French shoppers' bad-tempers normally won't have to go far to conjure up the rage and frustration that must have boiled over outside shops where there was little or no food in stock, when everything was rationed and exorbitantly expensive.) Losing one's place in line could be critical, involving returning home empty-handed or standing again for hours to await new deliveries.

In October 1940, one report complained that the post office and SNCF were not yet operating the *cartes de priorité* and elsewhere

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48 Loi du 14 août 1940; loi du 18 juin 1941. Arrêté du 18 septembre 1941. Eligible mothers were those with four legitimate children under 16 or three under 14 or two under 4 years of age; or pregnant women (after the fourth month) or breastfeeding mothers.

49 In Lacombe Lucien - Lucien's aggressive intervention in the food queue captures the intensity of gender boundaries involved in shopping, as well as the violence provoked in their transgression.
Mothers of *familles nombreuses* obviously had very different experiences of asserting their privilege, depending on region, urban/rural setting, their place in the community, their prior relationship with shopkeepers, etc. Similarly some women benefited from networks established in their local family association or church group, for help with shopping and childcare.  

It was reported in the autumn of 1940 that the *cartes* had been "biens acceuillies". There were numerous requests for other family members to be appointed as "deputy" in cases where "la mère peut être malade ou obligée de demeurer à la maison". But a propaganda tract produced by the *Commissariat Général à la Famille* in support of the *cartes de priorité* allows us to guess at the resistance of those without this privilege. The CGF addressed itself to "commerçants" seeking to enlist their support and agreement on the necessity of the *carte* -

50 Extrait du Rapport du Général de la Laurencie du 26 octobre 1940. AN: F 60 606.

51 For example, the *Mouvement populaire des familles*, founded in 1941, distributed food parcels, helped with childcare and organized for children to be sent to the country. They operated a "service de l’aide à domicile à la mère de famille". See *L’Action Familiale Ouvrière et la Politique de Vichy*, op.cit., p.298.

52 AN: AG II 605 cm 19 E. According to one report, about half the number eligible applied. AN F IA 3676.
Shopkeepers became agents of the discourse of rénovation; they were a knowing and authoritative elite required to persuade the public that

La France de Demain
doit passer
La Première

The future -- in the shape of the pregnant mother and young children -- is invoked to set up a new order of privilege, not around military honors but civilian/reproductive responsibilities. The difference is underlined by the facsimile of the carte which is surrounded by four images of the working mother: breastfeeding, cooking, serving, washing; all are old duties with new national significance. The familiar quotation from Pétain ("la Famille, c'est l'assise même de l'édifice social") endorses this new hierarchy of value. The accompanying illustrations make graphic the task facing the shopkeepers telling the hostile queues about respecting the carte. Dramatic black signs lead us into the other, non-commercial world of domestic struggle, conjuring up the dangers awaiting mothers kept waiting too long - the four children about to fall, or hurt themselves in the kitchen; the exhaustion of the "future mère"; the tears of the baby waiting to be fed. The shopkeepers must not only know, explain and make graphic the reasons ("pensez", "imaginez", "entendez") for respecting
DITES AUX IMPATIENTS, AUX EGOÏSTES, AUX "ROUSPÊTENT TOUJOURS"

"VOUS N'AVEZ PAS ENCORE COMPRIS QUE C'EST D'ABORD AUX ENFANTS QU'IL FAUT PENSER?"

LA "PRIORITÉ" N'EST PAS UN PASSE-DROIT
C'EST UNE NÉCESSITÉ

... la Famille... c'est l'âme même de l'édifice social c'est sur elle qu'il faut bâtir si elle fléchit tout est perdu, tant qu'elle tiennent, tout peut être sauve" Maurice Pétain

COMMERÇANTS
Vous qui savez...

COMMERCANTS
VOTRE RÔLE EST IMMENSE
REMPLISSEZ-LE AVEC AUTORITÉ
VOUS AIDEREZ AU RELÈVEMENT
DE LA FRANCE

SECRETARIAT D'ÉTAT
ALAFAMILLE ET ALASANTE
DIRECTION DE LA FAMILLE

LA FRANCE DE DEMAIN
DOIT PASSER
LA PREMIÈRE
the cardholders. Perhaps hardest of all in the circumstances they must tell their clients "de s’effacer avec bonne humeur à la française". Children, in this propaganda, represent the good, the healthy and the morally innocent, in contrast to the "impatients, égoïstes, résolvent toujours". Mothers are curiously on the margins (of the carte facsimile, of the kitchen graphic). Other women figure as sympathetic commerçantes or hostile shoppers, negotiating between them the terms of natalist privilege.

The politics of food buying (and supply) is missing from this propaganda. The carte de priorité itself, while apparently a supportive administrative measure, actually failed to help truly needy mothers. It did not distinguish in terms of class privilege between wealthy mothers of familles nombreuses (who had access to the black market or had servants to care for their children) and working class mothers, who had to balance employment and household duties in impossible circumstances. Motherhood is reduced instead to a generic status. Perhaps it is not surprising that the carte was not received with (French) good humour, especially given the government’s general impotence about food supplies and housewives’ anxieties. There was plenty of irrational hostility to mothers of large families also.

53 It is not clear why anybody should be good humoured in these circumstances.

54 Boverat, Le Niveau D’Existence, p.17.
VOUS QUI FAITES LA QUEUE
NE VOUS FÂCHEZ PAS CONTRE LES "PRIORITÉS"

PENSEZ AU DANGER QU'IL Y A À LAISSER LES ENFANTS SEULS

ENTENDEZ PLEURER LE BÉBÉ QUE DOIT ALLAITER SA MAMAN

IMAGINEZ LA FATIGUE ACCABLANTE DE LA FUTURE MÈRE

EFFACEZ-VOUS AVEC BONNE HUMEUR...
à la française.
In September 1940 an official note "sur les rassemblements à la porte des magasins pendant les heures de vente", railed against shocking "abuses...gaspillage, paresse de commerçants, perte de temps" and complained about "l'injustice"

les femmes qui ont des heures fixes de travail sont absolument empêchées de faire les achats des denrées les plus nécessaires à la vie. Les oisives sont favorisées.55

The political effect of all this queuing and frustration did not go unnoticed either:

les conversations pendant les attentes prolongées sont presque toujours des critiques acerbes à l'égard du pouvoir.56

Occasionally there were "manifestations des ménagères", attributed (often correctly) to Communist organizers. Women gathered in front of the Prefecture, for example, "pour exposer leurs doléances au sujet de ravitaillement".57 The most dramatic of the manifestations - on the Rue de Buci on Mother’s Day 1942 - explicitly challenged Vichy’s discourse of family and motherhood confronting the authorities with the

55 AN: F 60 502.
56 ibid.
57 Rapport Mensuel de février 1942, Préfet de la Savoie. AN: F 60 503.
rage and frustration of local women.\textsuperscript{58} But the everyday experience of the queuing and food shortages must be remembered for its impact on a predominantly female public.

According to one report on women workers in 1944, the work week varied from 66 hours for some industrial workers, 50 hours for cleaners and sanitation workers and 48 hours for office workers. Other workers, whose employment was affected by shortages of energy and raw materials, averaged 30-40 hours, for example sales assistants and seamstresses. This report calculated that a woman industrial worker in the Paris region was out of her home for 71 hours a week, or about twelve hours every day of a six day week.\textsuperscript{59} The net effect for women was not just the difficulty of getting to the shops, at a time when food might be available, or the instability of income and hardship on the job, but an overwhelming physical fatigue, an exhausting crisis of survival. The grandiose aspirations of the R\textsuperscript{e}volution Nationale, the politics of la femme au foyer and la famille honor\textsuperscript{e}e, contrasted bleakly with this daily-repeated crisis.

The Prefect of the Loire remarked (in March 1942):

\begin{quote}
que le souci à peu près unique d’assurer l’approvisionnement familial conduit le public à ne juger la politique du Gouvernement que sur la plus ou moins
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{58} Paula Schwartz deals with this manifestation and its bloody aftermath in her research on Women in the French Communist Resistance Ph.D., in progress, Institute for French Studies, New York University.

\textsuperscript{59} For a detailed account of employment conditions, see FST-Enquête, op.cit., pp.2-3.
grande facilité à obtenir les produits indispensables à la subsistance de chaque foyer.\textsuperscript{60}

The gravity of the situation locally was reported back to Vichy by those responsible for family policies. Maurice Denis, Délégué Régional à la Famille sent a letter to his boss, Chevalier (which was marked urgent and forwarded to Commandant Sautriaux) about the situation of Lyonnaise families in April 1941:

Une famille de cinq personnes (2 & 3 enfants) ne peut subsister actuellement que s’il entre dans le foyer un salaire mensuel d’environ 1,000 francs auquel s’ajoutent 660 francs d’allocations familiales et prime du salaire unique.

Or il y a actuellement à Lyon plus de quinze mille ouvriers dont le salaire ne dépasse pas 600 francs par mois et il y a en au moins autant dont le salaire est de 800 francs par mois. L’immense majorité des ouvriers de la région lyonnaise ne gagne pas plus de 1,000 francs par mois. La conséquence est la suivante: les mères de famille n’ont pas les moyens matériels pour acheter de la viande ni des légumes. Les pommes de terre n’existent pratiquement plus depuis plusieurs mois à Lyon. Les rutabagas et les topinambours ont disparus depuis plusieurs semaines. Les seuls légumes que l’on trouve sont à des prix inabordables: les petites pois à 20 francs le kilo minimum, les choux-fleurs minuscules à 5 francs pièce etc. Il ne reste comme aliments possibles que le pain et les pâtes alimentaires, l’un et l’autre rationnés.

La conséquence c’est que très rapidement (avant le 15 du mois) les cartes sont épuisées et les mères de famille n’ont plus rien à donner à leurs enfants.\textsuperscript{61}

This account reminds us of the pathetic plight of so many

\textsuperscript{60} Rapport Mensuel du mars 1942 de Préfet de la Loire, AN: F 60 503.

\textsuperscript{61} AN: AG II 605 cm 19 E.
families during the Occupation. The Revue of the ANCD spoke of the impending "catastrophe" for familles nombreuses in the Spring of 1942, giving detailed tables on the income, needs, rations and nutritional requirements of children, adolescents, women, men and old people. Income surveys clearly pointed to "la grande influence de salaire féminin":

Lorsque la femme ne travaille pas, non seulement la famille, même en faisant abstraction de toutes dépenses autres que l'alimentation, n'a pas le revenu suffisant pour acquérir le minimum vital, mais il lui arrive souvent n'avoir pas le temps d'aller sur les marchés libres pour acquérir les compléments aux rations qui lui sont nécessaires. L'inégalité est donc très sensible entre les familles où la mère travaille et celles où la mère ne travaille pas.

Ironically this text returns to "égalité", this time to invoke differentials about families with "working" women, not simply between célibataires and familles nombreuses. The notion of redistributive policies -- of establishing a "salaire familial" -- has disappeared (by early 1942). This ANCD piece concentrated on daily essentials, urging the government to increase rations and to extend the ticket system, specially for urban familles nombreuses. The very image of "la femme au foyer" in such discussions has become a tragic parody -- no longer the symbolic centerpiece of a social revolution but the real victim of ever-increasing

63 Revue de l'ANCD, avril 1942, pp.35-40.
64 ibid., p.38.
material hardships; the woman whose presence in the home simultaneously sustains and threatens family welfare. The "good" mother should remain at home, but if she did her family's chances of survival were actually diminished.

Sauvy gives some indication of the difference a woman's income could make to family survival, matched against food consumption and expenditure. These stark statistics alone, however, fail to capture the terrible struggle of most women "caregivers", mothers or not, who somehow had to find food, clothing, shoes and fuel for their families, throughout this period. Malnutrition, ill health and extreme physical fatigue was a fact of life for most women and children, especially in urban areas, or in areas like the Midi, where food shortages were particularly acute.65

Rights and Welfare

If Vichy had lost the power to support the family in the most elemental material way -- by ensuring the right to eat -- what other initiatives did it undertake to "honour" families and provide for their welfare? It is not coincidental that its initiatives and benefits were counted and measured publically in its propaganda. The CGF graphically insisted on the quantity of benefits available

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65 On children's health, see Halls, op,.cit., pp.208-211; on the particular struggles of POW wives, see Fishman, op.cit., pp.161-76. For Sauvy tables, see Illustrat.13 over.
**Tableau V : Rapport de la dépense alimentaire d’une famille **
(pour couvrir ses besoins) à son revenu (mensuel)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Revenu net</th>
<th>Dépenses alimentaires</th>
<th>Rapport de la dépense au revenu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>La femme travaille</td>
<td>La femme ne travaille pas</td>
<td>La femme travaille</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Célibataire</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>1 620</td>
<td>840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ménage sans enfant</td>
<td>2 820</td>
<td>1 645</td>
<td>1 560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ménage 1 enfant de 10 ans</td>
<td>2 850</td>
<td>1 810</td>
<td>1 800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ménage 6 et 10 ans</td>
<td>3 020</td>
<td>1 810</td>
<td>1 920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ménage 2 enfants de 10 et 14 ans</td>
<td>3 020</td>
<td>2 190</td>
<td>2 390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ménage de 3 enfants 6, 10 et 14 ans</td>
<td>3 365</td>
<td>2 585</td>
<td>2 760</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Tableau VI : Consommation (apparente) de divers aliments, par habitant et par an**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pommes de terre</th>
<th>Viande</th>
<th>Lait</th>
<th>Légumes secs</th>
<th>Sucre</th>
<th>Café</th>
<th>Tabac</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kg</td>
<td>kg</td>
<td>litres</td>
<td>kg</td>
<td>kg</td>
<td>kg</td>
<td>kg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938</td>
<td>415</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>241</td>
<td>6,9</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>4,4</td>
<td>1,24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939</td>
<td>343</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>243</td>
<td>5,6</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3,9</td>
<td>1,32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>253</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>188</td>
<td>5,9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3,4</td>
<td>1,26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>4,4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0,9</td>
<td>1,06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>3,9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0,6</td>
<td>0,72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1943</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>3,5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0,2</td>
<td>0,61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1944</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>3,6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0,1</td>
<td>0,50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>3,4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1,2</td>
<td>0,74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>La femme travaille</th>
<th>La femme ne travaille pas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Célibataire</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>52 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ménage sans enfant</td>
<td>55 %</td>
<td>95 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 enfant de 10 ans</td>
<td>63 %</td>
<td>100 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 enfants de 6 et 10 ans</td>
<td>64 %</td>
<td>88 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>de 10 et 14 ans</td>
<td>91 %</td>
<td>126 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 enfants de 6, 10 et 14 ans</td>
<td>82 %</td>
<td>107 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. L’enfant de moins de 6 ans « rapporte » à la famille, grâce à ses rations; il en a été tenu compte dans le calcul. Mais il n’a pas été tenu compte des difficultés que peut avoir une femme à travailler au-dehors, lorsqu’elle a un jeune enfant.

**Calories et Protéines**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Calories</th>
<th>Protéines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 an</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 ans</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 à 64 ans</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70 ans et plus</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(to chefs de famille) and thereby side-stepped the government's responsibility for the qualitative changes in family existence. The various posters advertising "droits" are worth examining in detail for their portrayal of "family", as well as for the information on specific benefits. In Paysan, Père de Famille, [Illustrat.14 over] there are six cartoon-like images, each representing an available advantage. Each image is symmetrical and static, framed with a short 'legend' evoking the simplicity of children's text-books (and indeed these peasant "viewers" are being pedagogically instructed in the paternal lessons of State beneficence). One moves from "Lesson" 1 (the allocations familiales) through property rights (2), taxes (3), prizes for familles nombreuses (4), back to inheritance (5,6): from the family diner to family death. In each picture the (male) peasant is key: serving food, surveying his property, addressing the notaire, etc. What constitutes the peasant family is conspicuously clear: a wife, land and numerous children. The family is summoned up amid images of simplicity -- of dress, table and furnishing -- which nonetheless do not feature animals, farm activity or agricultural labour of any sort, at the moment when lack of livestock, machinery and fertilizers had made farming increasingly difficult and old-fashioned. This omission is rectified in the more ornate and energetic illustration for the younger generation, Jeune Paysan, Tu Dois Savoir. Here
SÉCRÉTARIAT D'ÉTAT À LA FAMILLE ET À LA SANTÉ
COMMISSARIAT GÉNÉRAL À LA FAMILLE

PAYSAN, PÈRE DE FAMILLE
VOICI VOS DROITS

1. Les allocations familiales vous permettent d'élever vos enfants :
   10% du salaire moyen à partir du 2ème enfant, 20% au 3ème, 30% au 4ème.

2. Vous pouvez faire déclarer votre domaine Bien de famille insaisissable et demander l'indivision au profit d'un de vos enfants.

3. Les impôts sur les bénéfices agricoles sont réduits selon le nombre des enfants : à partir du 3ème, exonération totale.

4. De nombreux prix annuels ont été créés pour les grandes familles paysannes :
   90 prix de 20.000 fr. pour familles de 9 enfants,
   100 prix de 10.000 fr. pour familles de 5 enfants.

5. Si vous héritez, les droits de succession à payer seront réduits de 75% : si vous avez 3 enfants, de 100% à partir du 4ème.


S'ADRESSERA À:
la MAIRIE,
la PRÉFECTURE,
au Délégué régional à la Famille,
the young peasant moves from dependence on his parents (1) through setting up house (2), land acquisition (3), parenthood (4) and being the sole breadwinner (5) to being the working father of three children (6).

Chef de Famille and Jeune, Tu Dois Savoir [Illustrat.15] follow the same format. The former, interestingly with the most legends, includes the salaire unique, allocations familiales, traitement familial, as well as the rail travel reductions for familles nombreuses. In this poster's pedagogic progression the final frame is reserved for a family "portrait", husband and wife, linking arms, surrounded by their five young children, are reminded:

L'ETAT A FAIT BEAUCOUP pour vous, il fera encore DAVANTAGE, MAIS, pour que la FRANCE RENAISSSE, il faut en réclamant VOS DROITS, PENSER à VOS DEVOIRS, et apporter votre concours aux ASSOCIATIONS FAMILIALES.66

Gratitude for the State's generosity must translate itself -- so that France will be "reborn" -- into support for family associations; rights must cause reflection about duties. Welfare eligibility is being advertised but the fundamental message is about paternal authority and the connection between State and family. These posters are addressed to men; whether rural or urban, the subject is the male worker/chef de famille. The significance of this construction of welfare/authority should be underlined. The

Jeune, tu dois savoir:

1. POUR CONSTRUIRE TON FOYER : L'ÉTAT pourra t'avancer l'argent à faible intérêt et longue durée de remboursement.

2. Les MAISONS MATERNELLES accueillent les femmes enceintes (si tu es assuré social), la femme touche une indemnité pour accouchement, des primes d'allaitement, et si elle est salariée des indemnités de repos.

3. Tu as droit à UNE PRIME de 2,000 fr. au moins pour la naissance de ton PREMIER enfant, s'il naît dans les 2 années après ton mariage.

4. Si ta femme travaille, elle a droit, en cas de grossesse à un Repos de 12 semaines, soit 6 avant et 6 après la naissance, sans rupture de contrat de travail.

5. Si tu exerces une profession et que tu aies des enfants, tu as droit aux ALLOCATIONS FAMILIALES à partir du 2ème enfant.

6. Si l'entre ou un salaire à ton ménage tu as droit à l'ALLOCATION de SALAIRE UNIQUE.

Si tu es agriculteur,

1. Et que tu travailles chez tes parents, fais enrôner tes salaires différés sur un livret de travail. Tu les toucheras un jour.

2. Si tu veux améliorer les bâtiments de ta ferme et rendre ainsi plus confortable ta vie de famille, l'ÉTAT peut t'aider en te accordant une subvention ou un prêt.

Adressez-vous :
À VOTRE MAIRIE
OU À VOTRE PRÉFECTURE
OU À M. LE DÉLÉGUÉ RÉGIONAL À LA FAMILLE
chef is responsible, knowledgeable, eligible. The woman is a wife, a dependent, a mother with children, a passive agent in the familial story. Within the informational welfare agenda is inscribed an array of presumptions: about the domestic economy, gender, class and sexuality. Women who are chefs de famille can insert themselves into these narratives only by appropriating the role of male protagonist, something that Vichy had to allow for in reality too.67 Other "readers", célibataires or not, were excluded, left outside the texts of Vichy’s welfarism.

Images like the male breadwinner and the nuclear family sought to construct and reproduce a popular understanding of family and gender which, in fact, was in marked and growing conflict with social reality per se. In fact, in France of 1940-1944, as we have seen, women were heads of urban and rural households, were in employment, were ‘working mothers’, were living inside and outside families more conspicuously than ever. Perhaps it was the very nature of Vichy’s welfare propaganda -- evoking prosperity, stable hierarchies and sexual boundaries -- that reassured. The stable calm of such representations gave meanings to "family" that reality could not in 1940-1944.

Under the rubric of Vichy’s family policy, a range of initiatives benefitting women and the family are habitually

67 On how POW wives experienced this, see Sarah Fishman, op.cit; on the legal eligibility of women as chef de famille, see Y. Helleu, op.cit.
listed. These include items more obviously connected to health and social hygiene (like anti-alcoholism; anti-tuberculosis; pre-marital certificates etc) than to welfare, and the list often includes other familial initiatives (on spousal authority, desertion or childhood delinquency) that do not "fit" in the welfare agenda. Historians do not problematize the natalist-familialist values which make this list conceptually possible nor do they question the constructions of gender on which these initiatives rely. Rather Vichy is "credited" with certain "improvements" in the social policy arena, as though such initiatives constituted a neutral "honouring" of the family.

This discussion, through analyzing a selection of Vichy's initiatives, has highlighted the profoundly political nature of all welfare and underscored how family policy can never be divorced from the constructions of family and politique which surround it. Particularly in the circumstances of 1940-1944 most French families did not benefit from Vichy's honouring of "family".
EPILOGUE

VICHY AND THE POLITICS OF GENDER

The disintegration of the Révolution Nationale

Despite the continuing activism of familiaux and the best efforts of the CGF, the hopes for a familial rénovation had faded by early 1942. The enthusiasm and aspirations of partisans of the Révolution Nationale had turned to disillusionment and apathy. Travail, Famille, Patrie had already taken on different meanings, only a year or two after its conspicuous celebration by Vichy. Indeed this slogan was now bursting with negative connotations: Travail conjured up possible labour deportation, certainly low wages and longer hours; Famille invoked separations, shortages, material and affective hardships; Patrie represented the ever-increasing conflict over identity -- whose France, whose country, whose authority?¹ The vision of a better regulated, more prosperous and populous France had vanished and with it the agenda of "la femme au foyer". Public opinion was moving away from Vichy.

Given the Relève, the S.T.O., the food shortages, the continued absence of the P.O.W.s and the increasing repression (against Jews, resisters and réfractaires), it is not surprising that men and women in both zones were stepping back from Pétainist politics. The Synthèses de Contrôle give us a sense, rather than a definitive portrait, of this shift in public opinion:

Partout on note une pessimisme grandissante à l'égard de la Révolution Nationale [23 juin 1942]; l'opinion s'exprime un malaise qui va croissant; on note un peu partout mécontentement et lassitude....l'éloignement de l'ésprit "Révolution Nationale". [25 août 1942]

La Révolution Nationale est de plus en plus considérée comme un échec dû en particulier aux défaillances de ceux qui devraient la faire vivre, à "l'esprit de combine" trop répandu et au fait que "le Gouvernement ayant réalisé l'unanimité contre lui en politique étrangère, son impopularité ne peut malheureusement pas manquer de s'étendre aux idées, POUR LA PLUPART EXCELLENTES, qu'il professe en politique intérieure". [10 août 1943].

The support, enthusiastic or tacit, that had fueled the early social initiatives of the Révolution, that had endorsed the domestic agenda of Pétainism, was by this time (1942-43) breaking apart. The internal contradictions of this agenda, as well as the external impact of a continuing war were being recognized. As the Allied campaign in Italy progressed, for example, public opinion revealed

Ce sentiment de plus en plus répandu que tout qui arrive ou se fait actuellement en France est à la fois précaire et provisoire. Il serait donc utile de s'en réjouir, de s'en inquiéter ou de s'en indigner...."Tout cela ne durera pas longtemps".

2 Synthèses de Contrôles. AN: AG II 461 cc 36 G.
(une) indifférence englobe la Révolution Nationale. [15 août 1943]. Pour la plupart unanimité... la Révolution Nationale est "définitivement enterrée". Quant à la Rénovation du Pays on s’en voit aucun signe. [10 novembre 1943].

The overwhelming mood at the end of 1943 was one of "lassitude générale, tristesse, anxiété quant à l'avenir".

After November 1942 (and the total occupation of France), the majority of people no longer believed in the Révolution Nationale, although familiaux continued to lobby Vichy and the Commissariat Général à la Famille continued to act as though its mission was still realizable. The Libération swept away the remnants of the Révolution and the memory of Travail, Famille, Patrie. But did it destroy the political agenda of home and family that Vichy had promoted so vigorously? Were women "liberated" in 1944-1945?

Women and the Libération

Women’s experience of the Allied Invasion, the German withdrawal, the Liberation and the purges is a story that remains unexplored. For women this was, too, an

3 ibid.

4 Rapport Statistique des renseignements receuillis dans les interceptions postales, télégraphiques et téléphoniques pendant le mois de décembre 1943. This report was compiled from nearly 400,000 "opinions", derived from over 4 million intercepted letters, telephone calls and telegrams. There were 55,000 allusions - by far the biggest on any single topic - to "lassitude générale, tristesse" etc. AN: AG II 461 cc 36 G.
extraordinarily harsh period, vivid with multiple tragedies and celebrations. There were the women who had slept with Germans whose heads were shaved -- a public sexualized humiliation. There were the extraordinary women heroes of the Resistance, both those who survived and those who were posthumously to enter the panthéon of (male/combattant) virtue. There were the less conspicuous heroes, those who had managed to survive, the returning deportees, resisters, Jewish women and foreigners whose libération resembled no other. And there were the women who simply waited, those whose P.O.W. husbands' and lovers' homecomings were fraught with anxiety, and those who were unsure if there would be a homecoming at all. Marguerite Duras' The War conveys brilliantly the horror of a war that emphatically did not end according to the schedule of public/historical memory. The experience of so many women in this period will remain untold and perhaps unimagined. Certainly for the majority,

5 French losses for the period, 1940-1945, totalled 900,000, of whom 290,000 died in Germany. See Dupeux, op.cit., p4

6 It is interesting that while mainstream cinema chronicles aspects of this period, often dazzlingly, as in the case of Louis Malle, it does so through unquestioned narrative form and gendered plots. Both Lacombe Lucien and Au Revoir, les Enfants, for example, use male protagonists to represent heroism and antiheroism, while women represent betrayal, frivolity, ignorance and amorality. Moreover plot and identity are constructed in the oppositions of masculinity/femininity, and such binary tropes, which these films repeatedly invoke. In contrast, "marginal" cinema, in taking up the experience of lesbians, for example, has more directly subverted the conventions of resistance and collaboration narratives, and disrupted the gender discourses
despite the elation of 'victory', the hardship continued. The Allied bombings and the German withdrawal brought war home again: more deaths, more injuries, more ruins. Food shortages and black market inequities persisted, too, well after the military campaigns ended.

These material and emotional histories need to be juxtaposed with the images of 'female liberation', usually one-dimensionally evoked by reference to the end of the war and the granting of the vote in 1944.7 Suffrage did represent a significant breakthrough in French women's political history.8 But women did not miraculously escape at that moment from the discursive paradigms and political practices which Vichy had appropriated and sanctified.

Family, Politics and the Libération

Coutrot has commented on the continuity of family politics of "history". See Novembermoon (Dir: Alexandra Von Grote, Germany 1983) and Le Joupon Rouge(Dir: G.Lefebvre, France, 1987).

7 Women's participation in the Resistance is usually taken as the reason ipso facto for the granting of female suffrage. See, for example, French Women Today (published by the French Press and Information Service, an agency of the Provisional Government of the French Republic). New York, 1944, p.6.

from Vichy through the Libération, a continuity of personnel and administrative structures: Robert Prigent took over as Commissaire Général à la Famille in August 1944, emphasizing his role as a successor to Renaudin, who himself was not incriminated for his activities at Vichy. His colleagues, Desmottes and de Véricourt, stayed on at the CGF: Renaudin rejoined the Conseil d'État.9

Reading the ANCD’s Revue for 1944-47 (renamed Vitalité Française), also confirms this sense of continuity. Boverat and Haury continued with their militant natalist-familialist editorials and articles. Their commentaries on government initiatives have a familiar tone: of concern and partisanship, urging the new government to promote "un climat favorable" as well as "compensation financière" for familles nombreuses.10

The legacy of Vichy’s family policy received mixed treatment at the hands of Provisional Government and Fourth Republic legislators. For example the structures of the Loi Gounot were transformed into the Union Nationale des Associations Familiales (UNAF), by the Ordonnance et Décret du 3 mars 1945.11 The Loi du 2 avril 1941, on divorce, was


10 See, for example, P. Haury "En attendant les 12 millions de beaux bébés commençons par créer l’atmosphère", Vitalité Française No.370, avril-juin 1945.

11 J.O. du 4 mars 1945.
modified by the Ordonnance du 12 avril 1945 to drop the prohibition on divorce in the first three years but its main elements were retained\textsuperscript{12}; the Loi du jardinier was annulled by the Ordonnance du 3 mai 1945.\textsuperscript{13} Welfare underwent a major reform in the "organisation de la sécurité sociale" by the Ordonnance du 4 octobre 1945.\textsuperscript{14} The administrative structures were also transformed. The Secrétariat Général à la Famille et à la Population (under Santé Publique) was changed into the Ministère de la Population by the Ordonnance du 19 octobre 1945.\textsuperscript{15} Personnel changed little too. The 'new' Haut Comité de la Population et de la Famille included Boverat, Doublet, Landry, Monsaignegeon and Prigent, although two women -- one representing La Plus Grande Famille, the other the CGT -- were now included.\textsuperscript{16} Overall there was a noticeable, if not explicit, adoption of Vichy family policy with modifications, which confirms Sauvy's judgement:

Malgré des discontinuités politiques mémorables, s'est affirmée une unité de vues dans le temps comme on en voit rarement, même au sein d'un même parti.\textsuperscript{17}

\textsuperscript{12} J.O. du 13 avril 1945.
\textsuperscript{13} J.O. du 4 mai 1945.
\textsuperscript{14} J.O. du 6 octobre 1945.
\textsuperscript{15} J.O. du 20 octobre 1945.
\textsuperscript{16} J.O. du 19 avril 1945.
\textsuperscript{17} Quoted by Coutrot, op.cit., p.263. Sauvy was appointed Secrétaire Général à la Famille et à la Population, in 1945.
Coutrot differentiates the moral and the technocratic elements of Vichy family policy, the former which was repudiated by Renaudin and Prigent in favour of a more secular agenda, the latter providing the basis for such political continuity. She quotes Prigent however as saying, after the Liberation:

politiquement la famille souffre d’avoir été durant quatre ans l’un des slogans de l’État défunct, un thème le plus facile d’ailleurs, de la propagande de son Chef.\textsuperscript{18}

It is hard to see how famille "suffered" by its Vichy identifications. On the Left and Right, the years after the Liberation saw a reworking -- not a repudiation -- of a curiously familiar natalist-familialism. In 1945, Maurice Thorez was writing in L’Humanité about children "L’enfance, notre plus doux espoir",\textsuperscript{19} and de Gaulle frequently resorted to the rhetoric of reconstruction and population growth:

De quelque façon que nous organisions notre travail national, nos rapports sociaux, notre régime politique, notre sécurité même, s’il est acquis que désormais le peuple français ne se multiplie pas, la France ne sera plus qu’une grande lumière qui s’éteint.\textsuperscript{20}

Sauvy himself assured familiaux in 1945

La famille n’est plus ni la grande oubliée ni la grande

\textsuperscript{18} Coutrot, op.cit., p.261.

\textsuperscript{19} The ANCD commented that the "faiblesses et lenteur des réalisations ont de quoi surprendre lorsqu’on constate la quasi unanimité des partis sur l’urgence de cette politique", Vitalité Française No.373, novembre-décembre 1945, p.68.

\textsuperscript{20} De Gaulle, quoted in Pour la Vie: Études Démographiques et Familiales. Editorial No.1, mai 1945.
muette. Un vent nouveau se lève. 21

What this seems to leave us with then is a rather comfortable sense of continuity. Family appears as an area that is not "political", in the partisan sense, and where certain "values" and "policy" remain unproblematically on the agenda. What this interpretation overlooks, however, is both what Vichy actually said and did and what this continuity across regimes represents. Historicizing gender and family politics, looking at "women and Vichy", provides some answers.

Gender, Politics and Vichy.

Vichy, however fragmented and mitigated its authority, did try to reorganize and reconceptualize Franch society. Gender was central to this process. *Travail, Famille, Patrie* depended on the political appropriation and assertion of sexual differences, whose meanings were presumed and celebrated in Pétainist discourse. Newly defined, "men" and "women" were to inhabit different social space, fulfil separate (but complementary) functions and expect different satisfactions from their existence. In 1940-1944, as we have seen, this agenda had certain legislative and propaganda consequences: restrictions on employment, different emphases

in education, repression of sexual autonomy, restricted access to welfare, as well as the constant celebrations of motherhood and home-making that marked the Vichy years. The Révolution Nationale relied on controlling "the home", "family" and "women"; the agenda of "la femme au foyer" offered a reassertion of patriarchal authority, a panacea for the ills of the 1930s, as well as a direct response to the trauma of Defeat and Occupation.

But it was not simply that (some) women were (more) oppressed by Vichy, its new policies and laws. (Although this was indeed the case and its neglect by historians certainly highlights the gender of "history"). Vichy's politics of gender addressed and affected women and men. It was predicated on (and fuelled by) an antifeminism that has been unexamined. This antifeminism was simultaneously extraordinary, in its explicit aim, and totally ordinary, in its assertion of popular/conventional "truths". The extraordinary dimension -- the element of rupture -- was the real promotion of restrictions on women's work, sexuality and education; (extraordinary both because of the ambitions of this régime and the context in which these ambitions were to be realized). The ordinary dimension --the element of continuity -- relates to the no less "real", to the absolute conventionality of "la femme au foyer" and the constructions of sexual difference on which it depended.

It is somewhat irrelevant to ask who really "believed"
Vichy's discourse of "la femme au foyer" (or who really profited by its agenda). 22 The language of antifeminism has a hold in French political discourse far beyond the circles of Vichy traditionalists, far more significant even than the legislative and propaganda initiatives of 1940-1944 would suggest. What Vichy's Travail, Famille, Patrie represented was an explicit articulation of this banal antifeminism, a systematic State endorsement of gendered conceptions of home, family, work, authority. In twentieth century French Republican régimes -- there are similar, if less systematic or explicit, antifeminisms in operation. They dictate not just resistance to feminism per se. But they also sustain the hegemony of discourses of famille and natalité; they define what "woman" might mean. Looking at "Women and Vichy" therefore allows us to understand better the process of reconceptualizing French society which the Révolution Nationale entailed, of how hierarchies of power were to be constructed, legitimated and sustained in 1940-1944. But in re-emphasising the discursive tension between rupture and continuity, "Women and Vichy" allows us also a glimpse of the significance of gender politics in French society, before and after Vichy.

22 On causality, see Joan Wallach Scott, Gender and The politics of History, p5.
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