Fascism, Liberalism and Europeanism in the Political Thought of Bertrand de Jouvenel and Alfred Fabre-Luce

Knegt, Daniel

Published by Amsterdam University Press

Knegt, Daniel.
Fascism, Liberalism and Europeanism in the Political Thought of Bertrand de Jouvenel and Alfred Fabre-Luce.
Amsterdam University Press, 2017.
Project MUSE. muse.jhu.edu/book/66502.

For additional information about this book
https://muse.jhu.edu/book/66502

For content related to this chapter
https://muse.jhu.edu/related_content?type=book&id=2345782
On 10 May 1940, eight months of Phony War gave way to just six weeks of Blitzkrieg, during which Germany achieved a quick victory over the Benelux countries and France. Advancing through the Ardennes, the German army avoided the heavily fortified Maginot Line along France’s eastern border and managed to cut off French and British forces stationed in Belgium from their main army corps. While large numbers of British troops could do no more than evacuate at Dunkirk, abandoning large amounts of materiel, the German army quickly advanced into northern France. The approaching German armies caused six to eight million French citizens to flee southwards, making it even harder for the French military to regroup. By this time, the failing French general Maurice Gamelin had been replaced by Maxime Weygand as supreme commander. Paying frequent visits to frontline troops and trying to restore morale, but also calling off a counter-offensive strategy proposed by his predecessor, Weygand unsuccessfully attempted to reorganise French defence lines. On 10 June, Paris was declared an open city, while the French government established itself in Bordeaux. To Fabre-Luce and Jouvenel, who had been just too young to fight for France in the First World War, the Battle of France offered the first opportunity to defend their country against foreign invasion. Although both were mobilised during early stages of the Phony War, they saw no combat. Jouvenel spent a few months in Alsace as ‘the oldest and by far the clumsiest soldier’ in his battalion, before being wounded in an accident and sent home. Fabre-Luce served in Paris at the ‘Second Passive Defence Regiment’, charged with demonstrating the use of gas masks to protect the city’s population from an attack that never came.¹

Prime Minister Paul Reynaud, who had succeeded Daladier in March, quickly lost faith that the German advance could be stopped. Bringing Marshall Pétain into his government as well as Charles de Gaulle (as undersecretary of state), who had distinguished himself on the battlefield, he tried to reach a decision on what had to be done. When it became clear that the army staff and most of his government not only opposed the British proposition to unite Britain and France for the duration of the conflict but also refused to retreat to French North Africa and continue fighting from

¹ Jouvenel, Un Voyeur, 364; Fabre-Luce, Vingt-Cinq Années de Liberté II, 10.
the empire, Reynaud resigned. He was succeeded by Pétain, who had already stated that it was ‘useless’ to fight on. Pétain had been part of Doumergue’s national union government in 1934, after which he worked as ambassador in Franco’s Spain. The ageing marshal had generally kept himself at a certain distance from French politics, sometimes raising his voice to warn against ‘moral degeneration’ and the supposed danger of the left. Even so, from 1935, Pétain’s name was repeatedly mentioned as a possible authoritarian leader for France.2 His status as a First World War hero combined with his charismatic, grandfatherly aura to create an image of a trustworthy ‘saviour’ that France could call upon in times of trouble. Pétain now rose to the occasion. His first step as a prime minister was to announce on French radio that he had asked for an armistice.3

Since Pétain had announced the end of hostilities almost a week before the armistice was signed, large numbers of French soldiers laid down their weapons and let themselves be taken prisoner by the Germans. More than 1.5 million of them were deported to Germany and locked up in POW camps or sent into forced labour in German agriculture or industry. Instead of the quick release they were counting on, by the terms of the armistice Germany continued to consider the French soldiers as prisoners of war until the eventual signing of a peace treaty.4 This massive cull of prisoners gave Hitler an extremely powerful bargaining instrument during future dealings with France, as he could make the partial release of prisoners dependent on the collaborative attitude of the French government. During the occupation years, Pétain could buy the release of several hundreds of thousands of prisoners at the price of increasing subservience to Germany and implication in its crimes.

Under the armistice conditions, France saw three-fifths of its territory occupied by German troops and it had to pay high reparations to support the German occupation regime. The French franc was fixed at an artificially low exchange rate vis-à-vis the reichsmark, assuring strong buying power for all Germans stationed in France. Though not mentioned in the armistice, Alsace-Lorraine was annexed to Germany while France’s northwestern territories around Lille and Dunkirk were provisionally transferred to the German military administration of Belgium, raising fears of a further partitioning of France. In an exact reflection of the Versailles treaty of 1919, the French army was confined to a maximum of 100,000 men, with

---

2 See Hervé, C’est Pétain qu’il Nous Faut!; Burrin, La France à l’Heure Allemande, 15.
3 Von der Goltz & Gildea, ‘Flawed Saviours’, 446; Fischer, Le Mythe Pétain, 201.
4 For example, see Pierre Andreu’s personal account in idem, Le Rouge et le Blanc, 156.
the sole task of maintaining order. The French fleet – undamaged at the
time and still a force to reckon with – was ordered back to its home ports
for disarmament while remaining under French authority. Fearing that
this last clause would not be upheld and seeking additional guarantees
against the French navy falling into German hands, the UK acted militarily
against its former ally. In the Algerian port of Mers-el-Kébir, after the French
admiral Marcel-Bruno Gensoul had refuted an ultimatum to join British or
American ports, the British bombed the French fleet, killing 1,297 French
servicemen. The Mers-el-Kébir attack provoked an outburst of anti-British
sentiment in France and became a propaganda success for the Germans.5
‘In one day’, Fabre-Luce wrote, ‘England killed more French marines than
Germany during the entire war’.6

Pétain was allowed to govern the French colonial empire, which survived
intact, as well as France's remaining southeastern two-fifths, establishing
his government in the tranquil Auvergne spa of Vichy, a town rich in hotels
and casinos. Assisted by the resentful right-wing politician Pierre Laval,
who would become his recurrent prime minister, Pétain soon asked for
special powers and announced a reform of political institutions. On 10 July,
a favourable vote by a joint meeting of the French Parliament and Senate
granted him the authority to declare a new constitution, effectively voting
the Third Republic out of existence. The next day, Pétain declared himself
head of state and assumed full legislative powers. His government soon
replaced the republican system with an authoritarian one (dubbed ‘État
Français’) and announced a 'National Revolution'. Besides implying a clear
break with the Third Republic, the exact meaning of this revolution was
vague enough to reflect the political aspirations of a plethora of different
groups in French society. Especially during the first years of its exist-
ence, Vichy France could count on support from traditional nationalists,
Catholics, political conservatives and agrarians as well as non-conformists,
technocrats, neosocialists and fascists.7

The shock of such a quick and crushing defeat favoured Pétain's projects,
for many people held the country's politicians, and often the entire republi-
can system, responsible for France’s ruin. Jouvenel recalled that, during his
last days of military activity, his group of soldiers had been assigned the task
of guarding a road in central France. When a governmental convoy passed,
carrying various politicians on their way to Vichy, one of his fellow soldiers

5 Jackson, *The Dark Years*, 126.
6 Fabre-Luce, *Journal de la France I* (1940), 361.
raised his bayonet and pretended to shoot Édouard Herriot.\(^8\) Herriot’s status as long-time prime minister and leader of the Parti Radical (as well as his notorious corpulence) made him an ideal target of all the grievances the French had against the system that had fallen into disgrace. Pétain himself was eager to encourage feelings of hatred and revenge towards the Third Republic and its representatives. He created a Supreme Court of Justice and gave it the sole task of judging republican personalities such as Blum, Daladier and Reynaud, who were accused of weakening national defence and provoking the war with Germany. The accusation was limited to the period between 1936 and 1940, clearly making it a trial directed against the Popular Front and subsequent Daladier governments. Pétain was careful to distinguish between these ‘guilty’ politicians and his own leadership, which supposedly could not be blamed for the defeat. In a radio speech on 25 June 1940, he famously declared: ‘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.’\(^9\)

The text of this speech, in which a supposedly honest Pétain distanced himself from the ‘lies’ of France's republican politicians and announced Vichy’s cult of the soil as the very expression of the French fatherland, was written by Emmanuel Berl. Berl was an unlikely candidate to celebrate any conservative earthly idyll, to say the least. Of Jewish origin and a decorated veteran from the First World War, he was a long-time friend of Fabre-Luce and Jouvenel. During the 1920s, he had been a bohemian anti-bourgeois intellectual, close to the surrealists and partner-in-crime of Drieu la Rochelle, with whom he experimented with opium and frequented brothels. In 1927, Berl and Drieu had created the famous avant-gardist review Les Derniers Jours, the leading idea of which was, according to Drieu, that European culture was doomed and that, in general, ‘everything is fucked’\(^10\). Shortly before, Berl had also made plans with Fabre-Luce to start a political and philosophical weekly that failed to materialise due to lack of funds.\(^11\) During the 1930s, Berl turned to political journalism and became chief editor of the prominent left-wing weekly Marianne, to which Jouvenel contributed until 1936. During the 1930s Berl, unlike Jouvenel and Fabre-Luce, remained on the French left and supported the Popular Front, but he became equally

---

\(^8\) Jouvenel, *Un Voyageur*, 367.  
\(^10\) [‘Tout est foutu’]. Morlino, *Emmanuel Berl*, 72, 77, 93.  
interested in neosocialism and radical pacifism. France’s defeat found him receptive to the Pétain myth, admiring the old marshal’s leadership and becoming his official speech writer. However, Berl soon became disillusioned with Vichy and spent most of the war years at a certain distance from politics. He retreated to Argentat in the Corrèze region, where he worked on a history of Europe. Jouvenel joined him there in 1942.12

Support for the Vichy regime was not so short-lived in the cases of Jouvenel and Fabre-Luce. War, defeat and occupation marked the beginning of a period during which intellectual activity could have direct consequences for one’s own position or sometimes even life. More than in peaceful republican times, life under occupation and dictatorship was modelled by one’s political position towards the authorities. Opinion and choice mattered more than ever. For intellectuals tired of gratuitous opinionating in insignificant journals and repetitive discussions with other intellectuals, this new situation had its charms. Fabre-Luce almost rejoiced in the observation that ‘From now on, everyone will have to suffer the consequences of his actions. We are entering a true world.’13 Nevertheless, Jouvenel and Fabre-Luce had not been masters of prudence in the past, and continuing on the same foot implied high risks for themselves and for their families. Jouvenel generally refrained from publishing in the Paris-based or Vichy-based press, while Fabre-Luce only published articles during the first two years of occupation, making it harder to track the evolution of their ideas on a day-to-day level. This lack of articles is partially compensated by Jouvenel and Fabre-Luce’s increased wartime production of books, many of which had direct political significance. Especially Fabre-Luce’s chronicle-like book series *Journal de la France* (1940-1944) make it easy to follow the directions of his political ideas through the war years. Jouvenel was almost as productive. In two studies of French interwar diplomacy and especially in *Après la Défaite*, which was written during the summer of 1940 under the immediate shock of the defeat, he reflected extensively on France’s current situation and the history of its downfall.14

Before going into the details of Fabre-Luce and Jouvenel’s wartime thoughts, it is necessary to first explore certain aspects of their later interventions with regard to their own publications from these years. A

---

12 Morlino, Emmanuel Berl, 159, 324, 344.
13 Fabre-Luce, *Journal de la France* I (1940), 309.
14 Fabre-Luce, *Journal de la France* I (1940); idem, ed., *Anthologie de la la Nouvelle Europe*; idem, *Journal de la France* II (1942); idem, *Journal de la France IV* (1944); idem, *Journal de la France* (1946); Jouvenel, *De Versailles à Locarno*; idem, *Après la Défaite*; idem, *La Décomposition de l’Europe Libérale*. 
substantial problem consists of post-war attempts by both intellectuals to cover up, thwart and rewrite parts of their own intellectual history. Apart from the cases of selective memory and retroactive justification that are typical for war memoirs that were written decades later, Fabre-Luce in particular has played a more active role in attempting to modify his own past through new editions of his wartime books. Both in the 1946 and 1969 reprints of his collected *Journal de la France* books, the text was substantially altered to present the author as a neutral observer rather than the convinced collaborationist, anti-Semite and fascist intellectual he was. A systematic comparison between the post-war reprints and his four original *Journal de la France* books (from 1940, 1942, 1943 and 1944) reveals countless cases in which statements against Gaullism or in favour of collaboration, National Socialism and Vichy have been rewritten so as to appear neutral or even critical of the German and Vichy-French authorities. From each of these books, one or several entire chapters have disappeared in later editions. In the first of these – tellingly called ‘Hitlérisme Français’ (1940) – Fabre-Luce argued that Nazism had French philosophical roots and regretted that French fascists had not been able to seize power during the 1930s, expressing the hope that the shock of defeat would help spread fascist ideology in France. He also stated that his country had too long ignored its ‘Jewish problem’, giving free rein to ‘Léon Blum and the Jewification of ministerial cabinets’.

The second chapter that has gone missing in later editions, ‘Regard sur Vichy’ (1942), deals with Fabre-Luce’s opinion of Pétain and his regime. Despite criticising Vichy’s conservatism, its bureaucracy and its race laws – while stating that France should have dealt with its ‘Jewish problem’ in a more elegant way – Fabre-Luce was overwhelmingly positive about the National Revolution. He especially appreciated the personality of the marshal who incarnated ‘the continuity of the fatherland’; the attempts at national resurrection through work, family and education; and the clear choice in

17 For a typical example about London-based Gaullism, compare the two versions of the same text from the chapter ‘Double France’ in: Fabre-Luce, *Journal de la France II* (1942), 36; idem, *Journal de la France* (1969), 301. See also Fabre-Luce’s enthusiastic celebration of Operation Barbarossa as a civilizing crusade in the chapter ‘Troisième Hiver’ of *Journal de la France II* (1942), 266, as well the absence of these lines in *Journal de la France* (1969), 431.
18 [‘Léon Blum et l’enjuivement des cabinets des ministres’], Fabre-Luce, *Journal de la France I* (1940), 229.
favour of collaboration with Germany for the sake of building a united and
organised European 'Empire'. The third volume of Journal de la France (1943)
is a specific case. Despite later priding himself on having been imprisoned
by the Gestapo for bypassing censorship and for his critical stance towards
Vichy and collaboration in the book, Fabre-Luce still found it necessary to
erase no less than two chapters from later editions. And understandably so:
in the chapter ‘Spectateurs’, he praised Hitler as the greatest man of his times
and the only political leader who had understood that ‘biology is the centre
of the political sciences’ – though he had regrettably ‘gone too far’ in his
anti-Semitism. A few pages later, Fabre-Luce attacked Churchill for delivering
Europe to communism and for refusing to compromise in reaching a peace
agreement with Hitler that would have permitted a joint crusade against
Bolshevism. He found Roosevelt worse still: essentially a marionette in the
hands of a team of Jews who used him to ‘manipulate the American people’.

In the new preface to the 1946 edition, Fabre-Luce admitted to making
textual changes, but he claimed that the omitted parts were either ‘purely
polemical’ or related to his prediction of German defeat and his protests
against persecutions of Jews. These lines ‘had their value during the Occupa-
tion, but today they would appear as flattery’ for the author – a surprising
reading of his omitted ‘Regard sur Vichy’ chapter, to say the least. In 1969,
Fabre-Luce even dared to suggest that he had kept the text unaltered. He
admitted that, from a post-1945 perspective, his longing for peace – born out
of the traumatic experience during the First World War of having seen some
his older high-school classmates leave for the front and never return – had
led to certain ‘excesses’ of his judgment. But ‘I have maintained them for
my text to keep its full documentary value’. Not a single historian seems
to have dealt with Fabre-Luce’s later reshaping of his wartime positions.
Some have even let themselves be misled more explicitly by his claims.
Julian Jackson, only citing the 1946 edition of Journal de la France, wrote
that one had to ‘scratch the surface of Fabre-Luce’s polish’ to grasp his
collaborative mentality. This would not have been necessary had he used

19 Fabre-Luce, Journal de la France II (1942), 293, 300, 306.
20 Fabre-Luce, Journal de la France III (1943), 225, 228, 235, 236. The fourth volume (1944)
also contained a chapter that disappeared from later editions. In ‘Le Genie de la Monarchie’,
Fabre-Luce called for the institution of a ‘new monarchy’ in France, different from Maurras and
the Action Française and more willing to incorporate ‘the lessons of Nazism’ while at the same
time protecting the French from ‘totalitarianism’. Fabre-Luce, Journal de la France IV (1944), 51.
For a longer treatment of Fabre-Luce and Jouvenel’s monarchist reflex, see the next chapter.
21 Fabre-Luce, Journal de la France (1946), 11.
the original versions. The same goes for Dietrich Orlow and for Anthony Beavor, who used the same reworked 1946 edition and called Fabre-Luce a ‘Pétainist’ who wrote ‘an anti-Nazi book’. The care with which Fabre-Luce tried to reshape his past can only be understood within the light of his situation after the war. The liberation of France found him ostracised as a collaborator, excluded from French publishing houses and persecuted for ‘collusion with the enemy’ but also admired by many fellow Pétainists and former collaborators, who recognised him as one of their most prominent and courageous spokespersons. Apart from the direct legal reasons to cover up certain elements of his own recent past, Fabre-Luce was also aware of the possible advantages that his position implied. This resulted in a double strategy. On the one hand, he presented himself as a maverick freethinker who had accepted imprisonment by both the Germans and the Gaullists as the price to pay for his complete independence from all kinds of political power. On the other hand, he was very careful not to reveal every aspect of his collaborationism, anti-Semitism and admiration of Nazi Germany, while making excellent use of selective citation from his books. A typical example of this strategy is a citation from the second volume of Journal de la France that figured prominently in Fabre-Luce’s trial defence, in which he condemned collaboration as a ‘black stock market, where crooks are selling a fake France to the Germans’. Understandably, Fabre-Luce omitted to say that this indictment was only aimed at collaborators motivated by opportunism. The original text continued by contrasting these base profiteers with real ‘Europeans’ who had chosen to support collaboration out of the idealistic conviction that the defeat could be ‘surmounted’ by the construction of a united Europe under German leadership. Fabre-Luce did not fail to imply that he ranked himself among this second group. The same strategy was applied with regard to Fabre-Luce’s condemnations of the deportation and

23 Jackson, The Dark Years, 207.
24 Orlow, The Lure of Fascism in Western Europe, 173; Beavor & Cooper, Paris After the Liberation, 93, 511. Though the issue is less important for his Jouvenel biography, Olivier Dard may have made the same mistake about Fabre-Luce, since he only cites the 1969 edition: Dard, Bertrand de Jouvenel, 483.
25 For a more detailed treatment of Fabre-Luce and Jouvenel’s post-war position, see the next chapter.
27 Fabre-Luce, Journal de la France II (1942), 31; Raymond Aron made the same observation in his war diaries: Raymond Aron, Chroniques de Guerre, 537.
persecution of Jews, without mentioning the anti-Semitic parts of especially his 1940 *Journal de la France* book.\textsuperscript{28}

An additional nuisance for Fabre-Luce was that several of his wartime publications had sold very well and were still widespread after 1944. Together with the long anti-Semitic pamphlet *Les Décombres* by the French fascist Lucien Rebatet (1903-1972), the first two volumes of *Journal de la France* rank as France's greatest bestsellers from the occupation years. They received permission by German and French censorship to appear both in the ‘free’ (Vichy) zone and in the zone under German occupation, and the first editions were sold out almost immediately. During the first two years alone, despite a troubling lack of paper, the first volume went through 45 reprints, while there have been at least 52 print runs of the second volume.\textsuperscript{29} The books also did not fail to provoke reactions from readers. Fabre-Luce received countless letters from diverse personalities ranking from Joseph Caillaux to Jean de Pange and from Bernard Faÿ to Jean Montigny, who generally congratulated him with his analysis but sometimes criticised his collaborationist stance. Together with *La Victoire* (1924), the first two volumes of *Journal de la France* are not only the most successful of Fabre-Luce’s books but probably also the ones with the largest impact on French society.\textsuperscript{30} The situation was slightly less complicated for Fabre-Luce regarding the third and the fourth volume of *Journal de la France*. The third book had only appeared in a single print run, half of which was confiscated unsold from Parisian bookshops by the Germans after they found out he had bypassed censorship by using a false authorisation number. Fabre-Luce’s subsequent arrest and imprisonment, as well as the fame of his first two books, assured the book of a large audience, and there are indications the surviving copies were passed on between readers, but the book had only been on sale for a week and therefore the number of copies on the market was very limited. The fourth volume, published by Fabre-Luce personally without an editor around the time of the liberation of Paris, probably had an even smaller reach. Most post-war readers interested in the last two volumes of *Journal de la France* had only the substantially modified 1946 reprint to refer themselves to.\textsuperscript{31}

\textsuperscript{28} ‘Aide-Mémoire Personnel’, Fonds AFL, 472 AP 1. For a treatment of Fabre-Luce’s anti-Semitism, see the next section of this chapter.

\textsuperscript{29} Loiseaux, *La Littérature de la Défaite et de la Collaboration*, 81; Fabre-Luce, *Vingt-Cinq Années de Liberté II*, 68, 88.

\textsuperscript{30} Letters included in Fonds AFL, 472 AP 2.

\textsuperscript{31} Fabre-Luce, *Vingt-Cinq Années de Liberté II*, 135, 164, 194; idem, ‘Projet de Défense’, Fonds AFL, 472 AP 1. Fabre-Luce claimed that a thousand copies of the third book had been sold.
This permitted Fabre-Luce, if he was unable to entirely deny the content of the first two *Journal de la France* books, to at least claim that by the end of 1942 he had completely distanced himself from anti-Semitism, collaboration and fascism, his imprisonment serving as convincing proof of this new attitude. Although a change did occur, this claim fails to do justice to Fabre-Luce’s very dubious position in 1943, but this will be discussed in a later paragraph in this chapter. The lasting notoriety of *Journal de la France* obliged Fabre-Luce to uphold his double strategy consistently every single time his wartime activities were invoked, possibly to the point of believing it himself. A 1978 episode of the French television programme *L’Homme en Question*, during which a panel including René Rémond, Marie-Pierre de Brissac and Alexandre Sanguinetti confronted Fabre-Luce with his collaborationism and his anti-Semitism, saw him repeating basically the same arguments from his 1940s trial, underlined with the same selective self-quotations.\(^{32}\)

---

Tracing the Origins of Defeat

On 14 June 1940, the victorious German army paraded in Paris. German newsreels show German troops assembled at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at the Arc de Triomphe, holding a small ceremony in honour of the defeated enemy ‘who fought bravely’, after which endless columns of Wehrmacht soldiers march off through the tree-lined Avenue Foch, Paris’ widest and most prestigious street. From the windows of his own apartment at number 56, Fabre-Luce would have had a good view of the spectacle. But like most of the capital's population, he had not waited for the Germans to arrive, instead joining the southward exodus and following the French government towards Bordeaux, leaving the Germans to celebrate their victory in a largely empty city. Fabre-Luce spent most of the summer in Trévoux, which ended up in the unoccupied zone, regularly travelling to Vichy to witness key events such as the final vote of Parliament and Senate on 10 July. He returned to Paris at the end of the summer, only to find that the Gestapo had established its general headquarters at number 84, Avenue Foch, just two blocks away from his place – a presence that led witty Parisians to rebaptise the street ‘avenue boche’ (‘Kraut avenue’). Like Fabre-Luce, Jouvenel, whose release from military service in the unoccupied zone probably saved him from war captivity, was also quick to establish connections at Vichy. He acquired a diplomatic pass that permitted him to cross the demarcation line and return to Paris in July.

While Fabre-Luce and Jouvenel had long since envisaged the eventuality of an overthrow of the Third Republic, the swiftness of the defeat took both intellectuals by surprise and left them free to draw their own, far-reaching conclusions. At a practical level, the defeat released them from any obligations they had during the war, providing them with ample time to meditate on their country’s situation while in the relative security of the unoccupied zone. Thanks to their family’s wealth, they were able to survive without having to rely on professional engagements, though Jouvenel did suffer some financial difficulties during the war. Fabre-Luce and Jouvenel engaged in fundamental reflections on France, its history and its place in Europe. They were convinced that the war was over and that a durable new European

Footnote:
33 Footage from Die Deutsche Wochenschau (22 June 1940), widely available on www.youtube.com but often posted and commented upon by people with Nazi sympathies (retrieved 25 April 2013).
34 Fabre-Luce, Journal de la France I (1940), 398; idem, Vingt-Cinq Années de Liberté II, 41, 132.
35 Jouvenel, Un Voyageur, 380.
36 Ibid., 390.
order had established itself, of which a victorious Germany was naturally entitled to be the organising authority. This German new order was not just the result of an accidental military victory the kind of which Europe had seen many times but was the result of more fundamental developments in history, philosophy and economy. This section will first treat Jouvenel and Fabre-Luce’s explanations of the underlying causes of the downfall of France, after which the next section will address their understanding of German superiority and their attitude towards a German-dominated Europe.

Obviously, Jouvenel and Fabre-Luce were not the only French intellectuals at the time who felt the need to meditate on the underlying causes and consequences of their nation’s downfall, but the general mood of their writings stood out. Instead of fear and pessimism, their texts generally reflect ambition, optimism and a certain fascination with the vast new opportunities offered by the complete collapse of the traditional structures of French and European politics as they had known them since their adolescence. This sudden tabula rasa tapped their 1930s longing for a radical new beginning and their wish to dismantle the structure and symbols of the Third Republic from the bottom up. Fabre-Luce described the misery of the masses of refugees flocking the roads leading southward from Paris as a ‘picturesque’ punishment for French decadence. Amusedly, he noticed that an entire insane asylum was on the run, too. ‘Oh no, they have not forgotten them; France loves her madmen, multiplies them through alcohol, fattens them at the cost of taxpayers’ money, it is the only curve that is on the rise in our demographics.’

Despite their obvious differences, this attitude brings Jouvenel and Fabre-Luce closer to the schadenfreude of Charles Maurras, who famously spoke of a ‘divine surprise’, than to Marc Bloch’s equally famous defence of republican and democratic values.

Jouvenel and Fabre-Luce not only considered the defeat a victory of fascism over liberalism but also that of one generation over another. Jouvenel regretted that interwar France had not seen the coming to power of his own generation, which he associated with dynamism, ‘physical virtues’ and a willingness to dedicate oneself to a political myth. In his mind, admiration for Nazism could fit with the generational discourse from his *Notre Temps* and *La Lutte des Jeunes* days. Fascism became synonymous with a ‘youth

37 Fabre-Luce, *Journal de la France I* (1940), 336.
38 Bloch, *L’Étrange Défaite*; Judt, “‘We Have Discovered History’”, 155. Maurras ‘divine surprise’ was cited approvingly by Fabre-Luce as a first sign of national recovery: Fabre-Luce, *Journal de la France II* (1942), 50.
revolution’, a generational revolt against capitalism and parliamentarianism which had succeeded in Italy and Germany, while in France and Britain, political leaders had been able to temporarily stabilise bourgeois society before its downfall in 1940.\textsuperscript{39} This also led Jouvenel to associate liberal democracy with an older bourgeois generation, rooted in the comforts of an easy life and the lazy preference of security over heroism and improvisation. The wave of democratisation that had followed the end of the First World War acquired the characteristics of a ‘bourgeois revolution’ with restorative accents. Outside Bolshevik Russia, the revolutionary experiments of Béla Kun, Kurt Eisner and Karl Liebknecht soon had to make way for the establishment of parliamentary systems: ‘everywhere, the bourgeoisie has to take the lead. For it belongs to her to rule Europe.’\textsuperscript{40}

By acting as the guardians of this bourgeois order, France and Britain had unwittingly mobilised Central Europe’s young generations against them during the huge generational struggle that, in Jouvenel’s interpretation, the interwar period had become. This youth had embraced a new way of life marked by ideals of speed, technology, straightforwardness and risk. Only Lenin, Kemal, Mussolini and Hitler had been able to understand the revolutionary implications of this generation and mobilise its energy, acquiring a huge advantage vis-à-vis the democratic nations.\textsuperscript{41} This is where Jouvenel saw the ‘genesis of fascism’ and the origin of German victory over France:

A brutal reaction against a way of living, feeling and thinking that is no longer adapted to the new times. There is a revolution of the machine and a revolution of the body. Those who understand these two revolutions, putting young athletes in fast trucks, will triumph over those who have refused to understand and who can only mobilise pedestrians wearing ridiculous caps and a heavy gear.\textsuperscript{42}

This perceived superiority of German athletes over French pedestrians led Jouvenel to another psychological and possibly very personal explanation of defeat. After rejecting the thesis of a ‘fifth column’ that had helped the Germans during their invasion, he stated that the real fifth column had

\textsuperscript{39} ‘Une Révolution de la Jeunesse’ is the title of one of his chapters: Jouvenel, \textit{Après la Défaite}, 34, 39; idem, \textit{La Décomposition de l’Europe Libérale}, 323.
\textsuperscript{40} Jouvenel, \textit{Après la Défaite}, 13.
\textsuperscript{41} Jouvenel, \textit{La Décomposition de l’Europe Libérale}, 432; idem, \textit{Après la Défaite}, 36.
\textsuperscript{42} Jouvenel, \textit{Après la Défaite}, 37. Fabre-Luce shared Jouvenel’s observation of the physical superiority of the German youth: Fabre-Luce, \textit{Journal de la France II} (1942), 178.
been ‘something subtler’: ‘some kind of curiosity in the very minds of the soldiers [...] about the customs and beliefs of the enemy’.43

In his epilogue, Jouvenel specified that things had not needed to go this way. A fascist youth revolution might have also succeeded in France in the aftermath of the February 1934 riots, if it had been possible to unite the left-wing and the right-wing youth much in the way his own La Lutte des Jeunes had attempted to do.44 Fabre-Luce agreed, while also providing a surprisingly accurate analysis of the weaknesses of fascism in 1930s France. He stated that French fascism had failed not because of Doriot or any other leader but rather due to the ‘lack of ambition’ in the country, the success of foreign fascisms and the fear they inspired, as well as the relatively moderate course of the Popular Front under Léon Blum. While regretting that France had been unable to mobilise the energy of its ‘young fascists’, Fabre-Luce rejoiced in the observation that these had kept themselves safe from the ‘emasculating’ influences of republican politics. Now their time had come: ‘their youth, suppressed for too long, will burst free. It will be the life juice of France. But one terrible question arises: in the meantime, won’t France already have received from abroad the doctrine of renovation that they want to bring to her?’45

Seen from a defeated France, twentieth-century history started to look very different. Before the outbreak of the war, Jouvenel was already working on a large diplomatic history of post-1919 Europe, but the defeat provided him with a title – D’Une Guerre à l’Autre – and a narrative strongly coloured by notions of decline and decadence. The first volume, subtitled De Versailles à Locarno (1940), was dedicated to the 1920s during which France had been the predominant European power, although ‘neither its position at the outer end of Europe nor its shrinking population entitled it to be the master and organiser of the continent’.46 An interventionist foreign policy would have been necessary to maintain this unnatural position of dominance, but France had retreated behind its purely defensive Maginot Line. According to Jouvenel, the ‘experience of history’ showed that this was a suicidal strategy: ‘If it [the nation] ceases to intervene, it ceases to dominate. If it ceases to dominate, it loses its allies it owed its position of mastery to. If it loses its allies, it finds itself weak in front of invasion.’47

43 Jouvenel, Après la Défaite, 45.
44 Ibid., 244.
45 Fabre-Luce, Journal de la France I (1940), 223.
46 Jouvenel, De Versailles à Locarno, 409.
47 Ibid., 411.
In the second volume, originally meant to bear the name ‘De Briand à Hitler’ but finally called *La Décomposition de l’Europe Libérale* (1941), Jouvenel extended his analysis to the period between 1926 and 1933, interpreting it as the time of ‘the big retreat’ of French diplomatic and economic power. Like Fabre-Luce, he defended the idealist Europeanism of Briand and Coudenhove-Kalergi and blamed the liberal bourgeoisie in charge of French politics. This ‘classe égoïste et mesquine’ had failed miserably at its two main tasks: to maintain French preponderance and to construct a united Europe. This position led Jouvenel to an elitist critique of French parliamentary democracy: while the mental horizon of the common people was clearly too limited to understand matters of international and European politics, the same had been true of most French politicians. The Third Republic was led by ‘a class of lawyers and teachers with mediocre provincial backgrounds’ who only came in contact with foreign countries ‘superficially’ and at an old age, understanding nothing of their language, habits and history. Jouvenel contrasted this republican political class with the inborn cosmopolitanism of the higher echelons of society, which happened to correspond perfectly to his own family background: ‘une aristocratie qui voyage, qui reçoit chez elle de notables étrangers, que des alliances matrimoniales, des lectures, de fréquentes correspondances, tiennent en contact permanent avec les autre pays!’ It was ‘the great drama of post-war Europe’ that the democracies had replaced this aristocracy ‘at the moment it was most necessary’ with incapable middle-class politicians who were electorally bound by ‘the control of classes naturally ignorant of everything happening beyond the frontiers’.

Jouvenel not only found fault with his own country’s politicians, as his writings also took on an anti-British tone. He held the ‘Anglo-Americans’ responsible for the ‘big retreat’ of French power through their insistence on disarmament. The British, led by their ‘mercantile spirit’, had naïvely believed that the natural ‘will to power’ of communities could be diverted from the political to the economic realm, replacing ‘the Age of War’ with ‘the Age of Competition’. This had a devastating influence on France’s capacity

---

48 Cited as the upcoming second volume on the title page of Jouvenel’s *Après la Défaite*. Two more volumes covering the period after 1933 were planned but never published. See Jouvenel, *Napoléon et l’Économie Dirigée*, VI.

49 *Jouvenel, La Décomposition de l’Europe Libérale*, I, IV, 78, 277; Fabre-Luce, *Journal de la France* I (1940), 329.

50 *Jouvenel, La Décomposition de l’Europe Libérale*, 439.

51 Ibid., 440.
to resist: ‘Le maréchal Foch a abdiqué en faveur de J.-P. Morgan.’

This attempt to tame a violent natural order via economic competition was paired with an equally naïve and bourgeois belief in the importance of written treaties. As an example of this mentality, Jouvenel evoked the character Shylock from the Shakespearean comedy *The Merchant of Venice*. Shylock, a Jewish moneylender, insisted on receiving one pound of flesh from his rival Antonio’s body, to which he was entitled by the terms of a signed contract, even though this would mean Antonio’s death. Interestingly, Fabre-Luce also used the Shylock metaphor at around the same time, applying it to Winston Churchill, who in June 1940 had not wanted to release France from the duties of its British alliance, even though the war with Germany had already been lost. This attitude, according to Fabre-Luce, was typical of British dealings with France: “The English have never looked at the South with anything else but contempt. In their eyes the French are half Italians, a quarter Negroes. They have ruled over them for some years with a skill acquired through long imperial practice, with the same economy of violence that ensures a larger power.”

Through his cruelty, evil and greed, Shylock epitomised some of the most prominent topoi of classical anti-Semitism. Regardless of the fact that the original play also allows for more sympathetic interpretations of Shylock and Jews, modern anti-Semites did not fail to exploit these elements, including Nazi Germany which may have produced around fifty stage productions of *The Merchant of Venice*. In his comparison, Fabre-Luce used these negative images of the Jew and made them overlap with anti-British stereotypes: like the Jews, the British were also a greedy, mercantile race hungry for ways to exploit and subtly dominate others. Furthermore, both the Jews and the British had selfishly incited France to go to war with Germany, making France shed its blood while they watched from a safe distance. Had not the British hastily evacuated at Dunkirk, abandoning its ally to the German onslaught?

The last-ditch proposal for a Franco-British union had been nothing less than

---

52 Ibid., V, 64.
54 Fabre-Luce, *Journal de la France I* (1940), 359.
56 Fabre-Luce, *Journal de la France I* (1940), 351.
a ‘rape attempt’, a badly concealed form of French ‘serfdom’ that fortunately went too far even for the most ‘devoutly’ pro-British politicians in the French government. When Churchill suggested that France cede its fleet to Britain as a warranty against future hostilities, Fabre-Luce felt ‘the weight of the iron hand that was for a long time hidden underneath a velvet glove’.

Similarly, Fabre-Luce saw a column of rich Jews at Hendaye hastily trying to cross the frontier into Spain. They were ‘an anti-France’ that had never truly been part of the nation. Meditating on Hitler and the Jews, Fabre-Luce observed: ‘When Hitler started his propaganda, they [the Jews] first revolted against the monstrous description he made of them. But after a while, they realised with fear that they were beginning to resemble it.’ It was ‘only natural’ that menaced Jews had looked for soldiers to defend them, but by doing so, they had become ‘frauds and warmongers’ responsible for plunging France into an avoidable war. According to Fabre-Luce, the best-integrated Jews had been able to hide these character traits during peacetime, but the war was now revealing the size and importance of the ‘Jewish world’ in France. He argued that this world not only consisted of the Jews themselves but also of those they had ‘corrupted or seduced’:

This painter has a Jewish lover, this stock market trader would be ruined by racism, this polyglot journalist does not dare to offend the American Jews. [...] Don’t listen to their discourses, just look at them: somewhere on their bodies, you will find the claw of Israel. During these days of panic, basic passions conduct the world, and there are no stronger passions than the fear or the desire of a pogrom.

In this light, it is astonishing that Fabre-Luce did not approve of the French government’s anti-Semitic persecutions and race laws. In October 1940, Vichy France introduced its Jewish Statute, a series of anti-Semitic legislation that was gradually extended during the following years, excluding Jews from ever more professions, from access to public facilities and from their entitlement to ordinary citizens’ rights. Three months earlier, a de-naturalisation law had already robbed recently naturalised foreign Jews of their French citizenship, while all foreign Jews residing in France could be immediately arrested and locked into concentration camps. Of this last group, more than 3,000 died from cold, malnutrition and illness even before

57 Ibid., 359.
58 Ibid., 383.
59 Ibid., 384.
Hitler’s Final Solution had started. All of these measures were introduced on the initiative of the Vichy authorities without direct German pressure, albeit with an ‘emulative zeal’ to imitate Nazi anti-Semitic legislation.⁶⁰

Despite the many displays of anti-Semitism in the first volume of Journal de la France, which antedated most Vichy anti-Jewish legislation,⁶¹ Fabre-Luce remained relatively vague on what kind of solution he advised France to adopt with regard to its ‘Jewish question’. He admitted that many great French thinkers from the past had been Jews, ‘but it is not less true that an overabundance of Jews in the essential machinery of the state almost always causes trouble’. Instead of persecuting them, which he dismissed as a servile imitation of ‘a foreign nationalism’, he stated that ‘just the vigilance of public opinion would be enough’. Thus, it would have sufficed to despise and distrust the Jews instead of arresting them.⁶² The second volume was published in the summer of 1942, after trains had already begun deporting Jews from France to the extermination camps. Despite attacking the Gaullists as led by ‘Jewish propagandists’ (which was a badly concealed personal attack against his future friend Raymond Aron) and accusing the Jews of having tried to run the world through some kind of ‘Judeo-Masonic’ world government, Fabre-Luce’s anti-Semitic outbursts were slightly less frequent.⁶³ In the final chapter, in which he drew a provisional conclusion on Vichy, he approved of the denaturalisation of foreigners and repeated that a ‘Jewish problem’ existed in France. ‘But we have witnessed the birth of a Jewish Statute that contains useless infringements on humanity, property, veterans’ rights – and the world is astonished to learn that it is a work of French genius.’⁶⁴

And besides, not all Jews were bad. Fabre-Luce praised his friend Emmanuel Berl as ‘almost the only Jew’ who had been against the war in 1939 and who had stayed in France at the time of defeat, ‘hoping that a small zone will remain in which it is allowed to be both a Jew and a pacifist’.⁶⁵ In an obituary included in the second volume of Journal de la France, Fabre-Luce also did not fail to pay his respect to the Jewish philosopher Henri Bergson, who

---

⁶¹ Only the denaturalisation law had been introduced at the moment the book was published.
⁶² Fabre-Luce, Journal de la France I (1940), 227, 229.
⁶³ Fabre-Luce, Journal de la France II (1942), 36, 173.
⁶⁴ Ibid., 300.
⁶⁵ Fabre-Luce, Journal de la France I (1940), 373. In a strikingly similar manner, Marcel Déat also accused the Jews of having plunged France into war with Germany, with the same ‘honourable exception’ of Emmanuel Berl, who had remained faithful to his pacifist principles. Cited in Amzalak, Fascists and Honorable Men, 143.
had died of bronchitis at the beginning of 1941. He also included a fragment of one of Bergson’s texts (on the unnatural character of democracy) in his *Anthologie de la Nouvelle Europe* (1942). Like many intellectuals of his generation, Fabre-Luce was a long-time admirer of the spiritualist philosopher, who had pitched intuition and *élan vital* against the supposed shallowness of scientific rationalism. Fabre-Luce had read Bergson’s *Les Deux Sources de la Morale et de la Religion* and solicited to interview him for *L’Assaut* in 1937, although Bergson declined while expressing his sympathy for Fabre-Luce’s articles. When the Vichy regime offered to exempt Bergson from the Jewish Statutes because of his merits for France, he refused, preferring to step down from all his academic honours. Although Bergson admitted that the development of his thought had brought him close to Catholicism, he chose not to convert since he did not want to turn his back on the Jewish people in its hour of suffering. While already ill, Bergson even had himself carried to the police commissariat to register as a Jew. Fabre-Luce recognised the ‘grandeur’ of these decisions, but he could not keep himself from criticising Bergon’s choice for Judaism in the same breath. Bergson neglected that Judaism had been ‘opposed’ to Christianity ever since the days of Saint Paul. In the end, Fabre-Luce wondered, was Bergson’s mystical universalism anything other than ‘an attempt at revanche by a people that has not been able to win its unity on the national level and now hopes to achieve it on a global level by dominating the thought of all other peoples’?

By the time the third volume of *Journal de la France* appeared, in July 1943, some 50,000 French and foreign Jews had already been deported from France. While the French population had initially reacted largely with approval or indifference to the anti-Jewish Vichy legislation, the start of the Holocaust in France did not fail to provoke an outcry amongst the French population about the treatment inflicted on the Jews. In July 1942, during the notorious Vel’ d’Hiv’ round-up, 13,000 mostly foreign or stateless Jews were arrested in the Paris area, 7,000 of whom were subsequently held in the Vélodrome d’Hiver cycling stadium for three to six days with no food and hardly any drinking water. Almost all the arrested Jews, more than a third of whom were children, ended up in French transition camps, from where they were deported to Auschwitz during August. Less than a hundred of them

67 Henri Bergson to Fabre-Luce (10 July 1937), Fonds AFL, 472 AP 6; Reading notes from 1932 included in Fonds AFL, 472 AP 10 dr. 2.
69 Julian Jackson notes that ‘Vichy’s anti-Semitism in 1940-1 was the aspect of the National Revolution which seems to have aroused the least opposition’: Jackson, *The Dark Years*, 380.
would survive the death camps. During the round-up, many non-Jewish Parisians witnessed children being separated from their parents, public displays of despair and misery on the part of the victims and brutality on the part of the German and French officers. The raid would have been impossible without the assistance of 9,000 French policemen, who carried out the arrests and were involved in every stage of the operation. As a result of this and other round-ups, during the summer of 1942, a turning point occurred in public opinion, which became more sensitive to the treatment of the Jews. There was a considerable rise in support for clandestine rescue organisations, and individuals, including some influential members of the Catholic Church, did not fail to publicly oppose Vichy’s involvement in the arrests, cruel treatment and deportations of Jews.

Despite these developments, Fabre-Luce struck an only slightly different tone in his 1943 volume. In a discussion of the main tenets of Hitler’s politics, he stated that anti-Semitism had originally been ‘an admirable political instrument’ since it had forged the unity of the German people ‘at the expense of a very small minority’ suitable for the role of the scapegoat. But the whole enterprise had ‘gone beyond its limits’, not because of Hitler but due to the influence of ‘subordinates’ and blackmailers who wanted to profit from the Jews’ misery. The paradoxical result was that ‘the Jew of Europe, yesterday a parasite of nations, has today become a symbol of human suffering that one bows before’. This phrase was cited by Fabre-Luce as an argument for acquittal during his collaboration trial, and in that function it might have served as a convincing manifestation of empathy from an author who was willing to risk imprisonment for openly proclaiming his convictions. Read within its entire paragraph, however, its alleged humanness suddenly appears less solid. Fabre-Luce continued by discussing the reactions of various people to the fate of the Jews: Christians wondered whether the Jewish ‘pariah’ was not an instrument of God for testing their charity, opportunistic anti-Semites started to fear a coming ‘revenge of Israel’ that would make them ‘succeed’ the Jews in the concentration camps. Generally, Fabre-Luce concluded:

Christ and Nemesis join hands to create around the persecuted Jew a kind of respectful fear. The emigrated profiteer [i.e. the emigrated Jew] capitalises on that. He uses the sufferings of his fellows to become, ever

71 Fabre-Luce, Journal de la France III (1943), 225.
more, the cement of the Allied coalition. And one can wonder whether the provisional result of the ‘liquidation of the Jews’ is not an increase of their influence and harmfulness in the entire universe.72

This text raises several significant questions. Was Fabre-Luce, generally well-informed about the events of his times and well-connected to several Paris-based German officers, aware of how literally this ‘liquidation of the Jews’ had to be taken in mid-1943?73 And was his criticism of the Holocaust really grounded on humanitarian considerations? The last sentences seem to suggest that Fabre-Luce opposed the Holocaust primarily because of its ineffectiveness and counterproductivity: instead of ridding the world of the Jews, which might have been a good thing, its ‘provisional result’ would be a ‘universe’ in which the surviving Jews would be pulling the strings even more than they had done before the war. Seen in this light, even the seemingly sympathetic sentence about the Jew as a ‘symbol of human suffering’ now looks like a rather neutral observation of the changing image of the Jew in French public opinion. It also suggests Fabre-Luce believed the Nazi propaganda myth that emigrated Jews were leading the Allied coalition and making it serve their interests.

Nevertheless, whether out of recognition of Fabre-Luce’s half-hearted condemnation of the Jewish Statute or out of despair (or simply because he was deemed well-connected to the German authorities), some French Jews considered him a possible source of help. In September 1942, Fabre-Luce received a letter from Jacques Ber, a Jewish Frenchman who expressed his surprise that the second volume of Journal de la France contained ‘barely a word about the Jewish question’. While stating that Fabre-Luce had ‘profoundly honoured’ himself by condemning the Jewish Statutes, Ber wondered how well-informed he was about their actual impact on Jewish life in France:

cette que je peux vous dire, moi, Juif, c’est que nous sommes devenues des morts vivants, tout nous est interdit: Restaurants, cafés, bars, théâtres,

72 Ibid., 226.
73 It is not unthinkable that – despite claiming in his memoirs that he first heard about the death camps in May 1945 – Fabre-Luce received at least some information through Ernst Jünger or his other German contacts. A perpetrators’ study by Ahlrich Meyer establishes that, though the exact system of the extermination camps was only known to a small number of officials, there was little doubt among the Germans based in France what fate awaited the Jews who were deported to the east. Jünger’s war diaries suggest that in late 1942, during a short visit to the eastern front, he heard about the use of ‘poison gas tunnels, through which the trains filled with Jews pass’. In April 1943 Jünger noted that mass executions of Jews were no longer in use, ‘since we [“man”] have passed to gassing the victims’. Jünger, Strahlungen, 199, 246; Meyer, Täter im Verhör, 282; Fabre-Luce, Vingt-Cinq Années de Liberté II, 234.
cinéma, concerts, téléphones, marchés, foires, piscines, plages, Musées, bibliothèques, champs de courses, campings, parcs, squares, ... Les aryens, même ceux qui sont contre nous, reconnaissent combien tout cela est atroce et exagéré! Et, le but de cette lettre, Monsieur, est de vous demander de faire comprendre cela aux autorités d’occupation, parce que, ceux qui ne sont pas Juifs, ont l’angoissante intuition (vraie ou fausse?) que leur tour à eux, français, pourrait bien arriver! Et je suis persuadé, que toutes ces persécutions ont, absolument, tué ‘l’esprit de collaboration’.74

Half a year later, Fabre-Luce received a letter from Madeleine Fajon, a Jewish Frenchwoman whose husband, a French-Romanian Jew, had been deported ‘to Silesia’. After thanking Fabre-Luce for his ‘courageous’ criticism of the Jewish Statutes and listing the military awards (the Croix de guerre, the Légion d’honneur) that her husband, ‘a patriotic Frenchman’, had received, she begged Fabre-Luce to help her acquire ‘special authorisation’ to send her husband clothes and food. She had not heard from him for a long time and was worried about his health.75 The Fabre-Luce papers do not contain answers to these letters.

Fabre-Luce’s brand of anti-Semitism is absent from Jouvenel’s writings. Partially of Jewish origin himself through his mother’s family, Jouvenel would have counted as a ‘half-Jew’ according to Nazi race laws. Even so, he was not entirely devoid of remarks echoing anti-Jewish clichés. Before the war, during the spring of 1939, Jouvenel had visited Palestine, where he was shocked by the sight of ‘filthy’ orthodox Jews praying at the Wailing Wall. He contrasted these wretched worshippers with the positive impressions he gained from a visit to a kibbutz: ‘in the same country where Jews with corkscrew curls keep the habits of the ghetto, young Jewish pioneers are living an exhilarating adventure’. He was delighted to see a ‘nervous and gesticulating race’ finally work the earth and acquire ‘the sure malicious smile of the earthly people’. But this idyll was disturbed by the realisation that the kibbutzim were unable to finance themselves and depended on money provided by Jewish communities abroad: ‘for each young couple joyously working the fertilised earth in the sunshine, there is a fat-bellied Jew sitting at the desk of a shop or a bank piling up pieces of money. One redeems the other... The race is going to change’.76

74 Jacques Ber to Fabre-Luce (14 September 1942), Fonds AFL, 472 AP 6.
75 Madeleine Fajon to Fabre-Luce (1 March 1943), Fonds AFL, 472 AP 2.
76 Long article written for Candide, May/June 1939, included in the folder ‘Candide’, Fonds BdJ, Don 90 39 (12), folder 11.
Jouvenel’s wartime publications bear witness to what could at most be called a philo-anti-Semitism that saw him legitimise particular people’s hatred of the Jews without directly agreeing with it personally. Jouvenel mentioned how successful the Nazi party had been in winning the support of German shopkeepers ruined by the arrival of a ‘Jewish warehouse’ in their quarter and industrialists beaten by big business ‘supported by Jewish banks’. He also explained how during the days of hyper-inflation, to be able to eat, the Viennese high society had had to prostitute itself or auction off all its valuable furniture to ‘a certain number of bandits, who were often Jewish’.77 This unwillingness to oppose anti-Semitism is possibly reflected in Jouvenel’s notorious interview of Hitler in 1936. Among the many reactions that the interview provoked in the French press, the Jewish review Univers Israëlite criticised Jouvenel’s uncritical attitude in the following words:

It is not ours to comment on the interview that Chancellor Hitler has accorded to Mr. Bertrand de Jouvenel, representing Paris-Midi. But was the Führer aware that his spokesperson was not a ‘pure’ Aryan? What to think of a journalist who is able to repress in his heart – for realistic reasons – all the emotions certainly shared by some of his relatives? Instead of a theatrical prostration, one reference to racist persecutions, even a single word would have been an act of courage worthy of France.78

Jouvenel was not blind. He did notice the very visible manifestations of Nazi anti-Semitism when he was a guest at the 1938 Nuremberg party rally, but they seemingly failed to have a large impact on him. In a long article written for Gringoire, he mentioned the demonic caricatures of ‘the Jew’ on the propaganda posters and the threatening warning signs painted on the Jewish shop windows of a city that had repeatedly seen pogroms and anti-Jewish violence since the Middle Ages. But ‘like the other Frenchmen attending the congress’, he noticed these signs ‘while passing by, without giving them all my attention’, occupied as he was by the question of whether the Germans would risk another world war. In the resulting article, these observations were almost entirely buried in Jouvenel’s fascination with the

77 Jouvenel, La Décomposition de l’Europe Libérale, 409; idem, Après la Défaite, 19.
78 [‘un acte de courage... bien français’]. Article from Univers Israëlite (13 March 1936), included in folder ‘1-8’, Fonds BdJ, Don 90 39 (12).
‘religious’ force of Nazi mass ceremonies and the ‘immense constructive effort’ that he saw as the essence of National Socialism.79

Jouvenel’s family origins did not remain unknown to the Nazis for long and, in late 1937, Abetz had come under attack in Germany for being a ‘judeophile’ and for having confronted the Führer without prior notice with a journalist who was a ‘half-Jew’. He defended himself by arguing that Jouvenel, despite his ‘weak, inconsistent’ character, was a ‘stylistically highly talented writer’ whose Hitler interview had been ‘a huge political success in France’. Moreover, Abetz stressed that Jouvenel had a bad relationship with his Jewish mother, while his outer looks were such that even Hitler had complimented him on his ‘fabulous race’.80

‘On the Threshold of a New World’81

As we have seen, in their reaction to France’s defeat, Fabre-Luce and Jouvenel fell back upon the metaphysical directions of their political thought that had revealed themselves during the late 1930s. This was even more the case in their search for the underlying causes of the German victory. The continental, imperialist and pro-German accents that their Europeanism had gained also made them prone to identify with the idea of a new Europe under Hitler’s leadership. Germany should lead Europe not because of its military superiority, they explained, but because it had developed the historical, material and spiritual means to do so. From a kind of a longue-durée perspective, Fabre-Luce and Jouvenel attempted to provide National Socialism with the historical and philosophical roots of a major revolution in human history, equal or even superior to the French Revolution of 1789.82

According to Jouvenel, the ‘German Revolution’ and its victory over France were the lasting outcome of centuries of preparation that had shaped a particular German conception of Europe. He distinguished between historical, political, economic and social conceptions. In his explanation of the historical dimensions, Jouvenel engaged in an extended treatment of German historiography since the late eighteenth century, paying special attention to the perverse role France had supposedly played in Germany since

79 Bertrand de Jouvenel, ‘Nuremberg’, Gringoire (9 September 1938), included in idem, La Dernière Année, 16, 24.
80 Cited in Ray, Annäherung an Frankreich im Dienste Hitlers?, 234.
81 [‘Au seuil d’un monde nouveau’]. Fabre-Luce, Journal de la France I (1940), 404.
82 Fabre-Luce, Anthologie de la Nouvelle Europe, XXVII; idem, Journal de la France I (1940), 404; Jouvenel, Après la Défaite, 166.
the Peace of Westphalia (1648). For more than a millennium, the Holy Roman Empire had embodied the ideal of universal monarchy and the defence of Christendom against attacks from Huns and Turks, while the French kings had been essentially particularistic, assuming the role of ‘the dissociative element in Europe’.

Ironically, Jouvenel observed, it was precisely the Holy Roman Empire’s liquidation by Napoleon that had paved the way for the transformation of German nationalism from the imperial myth into its modern variant, without it losing its European aspirations. This is where the political conception of Europe came in, which Jouvenel saw grounded in the specificities of German unification, including the long-cherished desire of ‘vital space’ in the East. He explained that, if Germany wanted to aspire to world power and compete with the United States, it had no choice but to appropriate large territories in Eastern Europe for itself, expel the non-German populations there and ‘settle pure Germans in their place’.

Private notes from 1940 show just how well-read Jouvenel was in German völkisch and Nazi texts about these topics, including the genocidal implications of a colonial policy oriented at the creation of Lebensraum in Eastern Europe. After citing texts by Rudolf Kötzschke and Paul Rohrbach and quoting from Mein Kampf, Jouvenel concluded: ‘the more merciless the vae victis, the greater the security of the peace that follows it; in antiquity, defeated peoples were destroyed completely. Today, this is materially impossible, but one can imagine conditions that come very close to total destruction.’

Jouvenel’s reading notes from this period reveal his admiration for the direction of the German economy under Hjalmar Schacht and Hermann Goering, his fascination with the prospect of German control over ‘almost 180 million people’ and continental Europe’s entire metal, mechanic and electrical industry, and a combination of fascination and horror regarding the consequences of Nazi colonialism. He mentioned that within the Nazi party, theorists were discussing what to do with non-German ‘aliens’ living within the Greater German Reich. Some proposed erecting “reserves” similar to the ones given in North America to the Redskins, while others stated that these ‘aliens’ could live next to the Germans ‘not as citizens but as “foreign nationals” [“ressortissants”]’. His correct estimation of the importance of Lebensraum within National Socialist ideology

83 Jouvenel, Après la Défaite, 142.
84 Ibid., 149, 157, 211.
85 Untitled notes included in folder ‘Allemagne’, Fonds BdJ, Don 90 39 (23).
86 For a longer treatment of these ideas, see Mazower, Hitler’s Empire, 180, 199. Mazower does not cite Jouvenel.
also led Jouvenel to a far-fetched interpretation of Hitler’s Führer title: ‘He proclaimed himself “conductor” in remembrance of the age of migration, the times during which “conductors” of the Germanic race led the Goths from the icy shores of Sweden to the warm beaches of the North Sea and the Vandals from the Pomeranian birch forests to the olive groves of Tunisia.’

Jouvenel situated the German economic conception of Europe in its readiness to go beyond the outdated ‘orthodoxy’ of free trade and develop a policy of autarky. During the 1930s, Germany had superseded France as the privileged trading partner of Central and Eastern Europe, as it could guarantee the purchase of a fixed quantity of primary commodities in exchange for the sale of an equally fixed quantity of end products. Combined with military conquest, Jouvenel envisioned ‘the constitution of a large autarchic sector, stretching from the Rhine to the Pacific’. He was fascinated by the similarity between this situation and the Continental System from the Napoleonic Age. Like Napoleon, Hitler was in control of a European empire pitched against Britain dependent on its colonies, while the two blocks tried to exhaust each other commercially. In 1942, Jouvenel published a lengthy study of the Continental System titled *Napoléon et l’Économie Dirigée* in which he also observed that the blockade had contributed significantly to the development of German metallurgy, which was sheltered from British competition during its vulnerable start-up years. The German Zollverein later played the same role, erecting tariff walls that allowed German industry to prosper, while France, swayed by free-trade ideas that only benefited Britain, lagged behind. Fabre-Luce also alluded to this Napoleonic comparison, writing in February 1941: ‘these years 1802-1807 offer curious analogies with the days we are living. The Boulogne Camp, the Continental System, the Empire of Europe: all these topics have been reopened in 1940.’

Finally, in his treatment of the German social conception of Europe, Jouvenel returned to his view of National Socialism as essentially a superior form of socialism. His elaboration came strikingly close to Zeev Sternhell’s ideal type of fascism as the anti-Marxist revision of socialism. Jouvenel criticised Marxism for having completely ignored the psychological aspects of the social question. The nineteenth-century proletariat suffered not only from material poverty but also from isolation and fragmentation, both in the

---

87 Untitled notes included in folder ‘Allemagne’, Fonds BdJ, Don 90 39 (23).
city and inside the factory, where it was not allowed to organise itself or even to gather. While utopian socialism and anarcho-syndicalism did address this problem, Jouvenel regretted that Marxism had taken over large sections of the workers' movement during the late nineteenth century. He cited Georges Sorel, who criticised the Marxists for having ‘bureaucratised’ the socialist movement, creating a separate class of representatives and professional politicians. ‘Come the revolution, these personnel will replace the capitalists and direct the factories in their place. For the workers, not much will have changed.’ Like anarcho-syndicalism, fascism instead offered to forge workers together in ‘a moral body’, creating a bond between them and their work that permitted them to feel pleasure and accomplishment through it. ‘What determines the success of communist and fascist parties more than that they have permitted modern man to escape from his isolation?90

French and British traditions of utilitarianism and individualism had led both countries to ignore man’s psychological need for collective belonging, while in Germany traditions survived that provided people with frameworks that went beyond the individual level. From the ‘intuitive transcendence’ of Germanic tribes worshipping their dead via the medieval guilds (which were only abolished in Germany in 1869) to the many clubs and organisations of early-twentieth-century Germany, Jouvenel saw these collective traditions as an important element in the German victory of 1940. The Third Reich had merely extended this organisational structure and given it an even more prominent place in society. Jouvenel even considered this framework to be a possible check on totalitarianism: ‘In our recent admiration for the totalitarian state, we still have not understood that the absolutism of the state is corrected by the constitution of small collectivities that satisfy the human instinct of loyalism, creating feelings that profit the state but that the state itself is unable to generate.’91

According to Jouvenel, one more aspect made National Socialism a superior form of socialism: state control over national resources. As an example, he stated that, although France had more automobiles, all German vehicles were used by the army, while in France, hundreds of thousands of private vehicles filled with people fleeing the German offensive had blocked the roads, making it even harder for the ill-equipped French army to resist. ‘In totalitarian regimes’, Jouvenel concluded, ‘the national strength is not only built on public but also on private resources. In this way, the fascist regime accomplishes the “conscription of fortunes” that is written in the socialist

90 Jouvenel, Après la Défaite, 191.
91 Ibid., 195.
programme.’ Jouvenel found consolation in this observation, since this meant that the defeat was less one of France by Germany but rather ‘that of a system that incompletely mobilised the resources of our fatherland, by a system that fully used the adversary’s potential.’92 This underlined the revolutionary novelty of the Third Reich. Foreshadowing what would become the main analysis of his post-liberation magnum opus, *Du Pouvoir*, Jouvenel came to another analogy with the Napoleonic age centred on the growing power of the state. The victories of the Corsican general had been based on the mobilisation of people, resources and money on a scale that early modern Europe’s dynastic rulers had never seen. Hitler’s victory was built on a revolutionary extension of the same principle: a state that controls all the national resources, including business and industry.93

Fabre-Luce agreed with Jouvenel (and Sternhell) that National Socialism was an ‘anti-Marxist socialism’, which he saw as part of an international fascist revolution directed against both Marxism and ‘reactionary’ capitalism. He named Mussolini’s Italy, Portugal’s Salazar, Franco’s Spain and Pétain’s France as other manifestations of this revolution.94 The fascist revolution matched the French Revolution in another aspect: it had so strongly transformed society and politics that no restoration could undo it anymore. Just as Napoleon had ‘digested’ the French Revolution, repressing its chaotic consequences while making its revolutionary achievements an integral part of his imperial European project, Hitler had ‘digested’ socialism.95 Although Napoleon eventually lost control of the territories he had conquered and raised Europe’s national sentiments against him, Fabre-Luce was unconvinced that the same would happen with Hitler’s empire. After all, Hitler had the party at his disposal, an ‘instrument of inner cohesion’ that Napoleon lacked, as well as an air force that was ‘an effective weapon against maritime powers’. If Germany were to prove itself able to recognise the New Europe’s ‘authentic national forces’ and collaborate with them loyally, ‘one can say that Napoleon’s dream has finally come true’.96 The probability of this destiny was enlarged by the genius of Hitler, whom Fabre-Luce described as a formidable brain ‘that easily dominates the large spaces of history’. A reading of Hermann Rausching’s anti-Nazi book *Hitler Speaks* only confirmed for him Hitler’s quality as an ‘Übermensch’ whom France’s democratic leaders

92 Ibid., 218.
93 Ibid., 216.
94 Fabre-Luce, *Anthologie de la Nouvelle Europe*, XXV, XXVII.
95 Fabre-Luce, *Journal de la France II* (1942), 84; idem, ‘L’Avènement de l’Empire’ (book review), 376.
96 Fabre-Luce, ‘Neue Einsichten in die Französische Geschichte’, 323.
could never defeat. Fabre-Luce made Hitler even more superhuman, comparing him to ‘Jupiter’ frowningly looking down from his Alpine Olympus upon the petty rivalries and conflicts of Vichy France.

Among the German authors cited by Jouvenel, a plethora of romantics, nationalists, conservatives and racial theorists figure, including Friedrich Schiller, Georg Wilhelm Hegel, Johan Gottlieb Fichte, Karl Haushofer, Ernst Hasse, Friedrich Naumann and Friedrich Lange. Despite obvious disagreements between these authors, Jouvenel still saw them united in the service of the German state. Unlike French intellectuals, Jouvenel explained, German scientists and intellectuals were acutely conscious of their national duties. Like the Jesuits, German intelligence was an Order, working for the greater glory of the fatherland. Fabre-Luce also explored the philosophical and historical basis of the Nazi victory while placing a stronger accent on the European character of the New Order and its origins. In 1942, this resulted in the publication of *Anthologie de la Nouvelle Europe*, essentially an eclectic collection of texts that Fabre-Luce found had contributed to the emergence of a ‘New Europe’ along National Socialist lines.

This anthology included predominantly French and German authors, garnished with two Italians (Machiavelli and Mussolini), two British (Thomas Carlyle and D. H. Lawrence) and one Spaniard (Miguel de Unamuno). Nationalist, conservative, fascist and racist authors such as Maurras, Gobineau, Haushofer, Barrès, Alfred Rosenberg, Nietzsche, Bergson, Oswald Spengler, Drieu and Ernst Jünger figured alongside Paul Valéry, Goethe, Caillaux and even the young communist novelist Paul Nizan. Fabre-Luce had some of the German authors that were still unknown in France translated into French by the Dutch literary translator Dolf Verspoor. In a long preliminary essay, Fabre-Luce admitted that there was substantial disagreement between the included authors, ‘but as I assembled the texts, the authors started to dialogue. [...] What I saw being born in front of my eyes, in its solidarity and diversity, was Europe itself.’

A letter to Jünger in which Fabre-Luce requested permission to include an extract from his personal war account *Das Wäldchen* in his anthology probably laid the basis for the long-lasting friendship between him and the Paris-based Wehrmacht captain.

97 ['Surhomme'], Fabre-Luce, *Journal de la France I* (1940), 196, 225.
98 Fabre-Luce, *Journal de la France II* (1942), 283.
100 Fabre-Luce, *Anthologie de la Nouvelle Europe*, II.
101 Ibid., II, XLV. Fabre-Luce accidentally called him ‘Delf Verspoor’.
102 Fabre-Luce to Ernst Jünger (25 December 1941), Ernst Jünger Nachlass, Deutsches Literaturarchiv Marbach, Hs.1994.0009.
The major aim of Fabre-Luce’s anthology was to prove that French literature and philosophy had made an essential contribution to the New Europe that had been born in 1940. At the end of his essay, Fabre-Luce observed that British authors were almost absent from his anthology because the country had only marginally contributed to the intellectual genesis of the new Europe. ‘If one recognises this fact, one has to conclude that the Franco-German couple is the dominating element of the European synthesis.”

Separate chapters were dedicated, amongst others, to ‘the respect of force and aristocratism’, ‘biological politics’, ‘towards a new religion’, ‘anti-Marxist socialism’, ‘national revolution’, ‘collaboration’ and ‘Europe’. Fabre-Luce honoured Gobineau and Sorel as the ‘spiritual fathers’ of Hitler and Mussolini. He stated that French idealism was in dire need of some ‘inconvenient truths’, citing Blaise Pascal that ‘historically, law is nothing but the justification of force’. With his work on the force of political myths, Sorel had contributed to the elaboration of the *Führerprinzip* and to the struggle against ‘intellectual devirilisation’, since ‘ideas degenerate when they are no longer nourished by heroism’. Goethe, Carlyle and Napoleon had proven that a natural elite consisting of *Übermenschen* needed to lead the masses, establishing a kind of feudal bond: ‘Between disciple and master, between man and superman, the bond of vassal and lord is sublimated and recreated.’ Nietzsche and Pierre-Joseph Proudhon had inspired National Socialist doctrine in their attack on religion for having burdened man with the ‘Jewish’ notion of sin and for having established a religious hierarchy separated from political power. Fabre-Luce considered ‘the decline of Christianity’ and ‘the conscription of religious energies in the service of the nation’ one of the most important elements of the new fascist Europe. He concluded that ‘the essential signification of the fascist revolutions is maybe of having resituated to the leader the religious character that Christianity took away from him.’

Fabre-Luce also ventured into racial theory, social Darwinism and eugenics. While Ernest Renan had already dreamt of ‘humanity creating out of itself a race of gods’, racial science was about to bring this ideal within arm’s reach. Gobineau, Houston Stewart Chamberlain and Barrès had laid the basis for biological thought, which Hitler and the French biologists Jean Rostand and René Quinon elaborated into a programme of genetic improvement of man by means of selection. With Quinon, Fabre-Luce stated that war was ‘as much a necessary instrument of selection as reproduction itself. One is the

103 Fabre-Luce, *Anthologie de la Nouvelle Europe*, XLIII.
104 Ibid., III, V, XI.
105 Ibid., XII, XVIII.
task of females, the other must be the task of males.’ Hitler had introduced state policy based on eugenic principles, making procreation ‘for some an obligation, for others a shameful act that has to be forbidden’. In two letters, Fabre-Luce asked Rostand for supplementary information on the practical use of eugenics on humans and the possible use of X-rays to provoke mutations. Despite Rostand’s relatively discouraging reply – he wrote that the only useful application of human eugenics was to encourage reproduction of individuals disposing of ‘exceptional qualities’ – Fabre-Luce concluded that Rostand basically agreed with Hitler. Although Rostand had stated that the mixing of races was not negative, Fabre-Luce still found that it disrupted social order and that ‘the results of crossbreeding are often disastrous’.

According to Fabre-Luce, Rostand also fully approved of the Nazi law of 14 July 1933 on the sterilisation of ‘idiots’, which indicated ‘a more profound agreement’ between Hitler and the French biologist. The German sterilisation law made Fabre-Luce doubt the viability of democratic states, since these still allowed people to reproduce who otherwise would have been ‘ruthlessly eliminated’. This led to a ‘progressive weakening of the species. Our “civilisation” finishes by turning against itself. It is unable to transform our individual acquisitions into biological progress.’ On the contrary: a ‘counter-selection’ was taking place against which legitimate action needed to be undertaken. Hitler was the only person powerful and free enough to organise this, which made him a powerful ally ‘against democratic and Christian humanitarianism’. Although less willing to go into details, Jouvenel thought along the same lines. He called for the new science of ‘biopolitics’ to replace the traditional French republican politics, addressing ‘men’ instead of parties, institutions and electorates. The first task of the biopolitician was to ‘redress the weakening tendencies of the French race’, which Jouvenel found ‘in a state of inferiority vis-à-vis its contemporaries in other countries’ both in terms of numbers and physical fitness. After this stronger French race had been ‘forged’, these human cattle had to be oriented towards the work ‘that it is most fit for’.

In addition to biopolitics, Jouvenel was aiming for a more fundamental transformation of French science and politics. He stated that the whole fabric of republican science, which he felt was contaminated by the idealistic

106 Ibid., VII, XIV,
107 Two letters of Rostand to Fabre-Luce (18 March 1940 and date unknown), Fonds AFL, 472 AP 6; Fabre-Luce, Journal de la France I (1940), 227.
108 Fabre-Luce, Journal de la France I (1940), 228.
109 Jouvenel, Après la Défaite, 232; Loiseaux, La Littérature de la Défaite, 314.
formalism of the law faculties where the country’s political elite was trained, had to be replaced by ‘new political sciences’ rooted in concrete facts and inspired by recent progress in racial biology, geopolitics and psychology. He called for the establishment of ‘biopolitics, geopolitics and psychopolitics’ as three distinct new disciplines within French academia, ‘with their professors and their chairs’.\textsuperscript{110} While biopolitics had to address the quality of the French race, he presented geopolitics as the continuation of the thought of Richelieu that had been lost in France, while in Germany Karl Haushofer had inspired a whole new science on the basis of the study of the political value of soil, natural resources and coastlines. Jouvenel’s interest in Haushofer’s ideas preceded the war. Already in May 1939, Jouvenel had cited Haushofer abundantly and even borrowed maps from Haushofer’s monthly \textit{Geopolitik}, while stressing the importance of geopolitical thought behind each of Hitler’s political moves.\textsuperscript{111} During the interwar period, France’s failure to seize geopolitical occasions such as the construction of a channel between the Rhine and the Rhone, which would have laid the basis for a true Franco-German ‘community of interests’, illustrated how much France needed to learn from Germany.\textsuperscript{112} Psychopoliticians had to study the ‘national temperament’ as well as the unknown needs and desires of the masses to be able to better lead them, ‘exiting their strengths and healing their weaknesses’. So long as a great leader had not revealed itself, at least an ‘intellectual elite’ could prepare the ground by studying great men from the past and establishing ‘a solid base of political knowledge’ rooted in these three disciplines.\textsuperscript{113}

\section*{New Rulers, Old Acquaintances}

Besides these philosophical and historical reflections, the war years also confronted Jouvenel and Fabre-Luce with concrete political choices. In the context of Vichy, the presence of Germans in Paris, collaborationism and – especially after 1942 – the Resistance, questions of adherence, association and abstention became paramount to French intellectual life. As we have seen, the general direction of Fabre-Luce and Jouvenel’s thought was unequivocal in its admiration for Nazi Germany, its certainty of the

\textsuperscript{110} Jouvenel, \textit{Après la Défaite}, 229.
\textsuperscript{111} Jouvenel, ‘Le Secret de Hitler’.
\textsuperscript{112} Jouvenel, \textit{Après la Défaite}, 234.
\textsuperscript{113} Ibid., 237.
inferiority of France and its political system, and its wish to give France a new regime and a new doctrine inspired by the fascist example (without necessarily being an exact copy of the German or Italian model). There was, however, a certain difference in the conclusions the two intellectuals drew from these reflections. Due to fragmentary information, incomplete archives and untrustworthy post-war accounts, it is impossible to provide a complete overview of the activities and contacts of the two intellectuals during the war years, but at least some conclusions can be drawn.

In occupied Paris, several close friends of Fabre-Luce and Jouvenel rose to important positions within the world of collaboration. The key figure within the Paris collaboration network was Otto Abetz, who had triumphantly returned to Paris in the Wehrmacht’s wake as the German ambassador to occupied France. Until the end of the 1930s, he had been active in France via the Comité France-Allemagne and its periodical, maintaining contact with Jouvenel, Fabre-Luce, Drieu and other pacifist, fascist and Germanophile French intellectuals like Fernand de Brinon, Jacques Benoist-Méchin and Jean Fontenoy, many of whom were members of the PPF. Married since 1932 to Jean Luchaire’s personal secretary, Abetz also remained close to Luchaire and the *Notre Temps* group. From 1934, both the committee and Abetz were on the payroll of the Dienststelle Ribbentrop, the foreign policy department of the Nazi party which played a major foreign propaganda role in competition with the German foreign ministry. The CFA also received occasional subsidies from successive French governments, including the Popular Front. When Ribbentrop became foreign minister in 1938, he took Abetz with him to his new position. Abetz joined the SS in 1935 and the party in 1938. One year later, he was promoted to the rank of Sturmbannführer.

In early 1939, Abetz’s activities came under increased criticism in the French press, where he was denounced as a German spy (correctly, as it turns out) attempting to divide French public opinion and play France off against her British ally. As the pre-war international tensions approached boiling point, the press campaign against Abetz intensified. Luchaire and Jouvenel tried to defend their old friend by publicly testifying to Abetz’s ‘sincerity’ and stressing his long-standing activism for Franco-German reconciliation, but the French government evicted him in July 1939. A few months earlier,

115 Duroselle, ed., *La Décadence*, 208.
116 Conze et al., *Das Amt und die Vergangenheit*, 190.
117 Articles by Jouvenel and Luchaire included in *Documentation sur Otto Abetz, Dossiers de coupures de presse*, BNF, banque DOSS < FOL – LNs-232 (34). In his memoirs, Jouvenel claims that
Fabre-Luce had defended Abetz within the CFA, which was falling apart under the threat of war. After the German occupation of Prague, many influential members – including Louis Bertrand, Jules Romains and Émile Roche – wanted to leave the committee in protest against this open violation of the principle of self-determination. At a meeting on 22 March 1939, only Fabre-Luce and Fernand de Brinon spoke out in favour of continuing to work towards friendship between France and Germany. A majority of the members held the opposite opinion, as a result of which it was decided to suspend all activities and investigate the possibility of dissolving the committee.\(^{118}\)

One year after his eviction from France, Abetz was back in Paris in a new position of power. Officially, since there was no French authority in Paris, Abetz was the ambassador to the German military commander [Militärbefehlshaber in Frankreich] in Paris. His competence included Vichy, where his embassy held a branch office that he frequently visited.\(^{119}\) Like the Third Reich in general, the German occupation authorities in France gave a polyocratic impression, with representatives of leading Nazi personalities bitterly competing for overlapping responsibilities and the Führer’s favour. The highest authority in France was held by the Wehrmacht general Otto von Stülpnagel, later to be succeeded by his cousin Carl-Heinrich, who was responsible for security, supplying the German forces, maintaining order and exploiting the French economy. Officially under the authority of the military commander but in fact taking their instructions from Berlin, Goebbels’ Propaganda-Abteilung wanted to establish German control over the French spirit, while Himmler’s representative Helmut Knochen led an SS commando ready to fight and destroy Nazism’s ‘ideological enemies’ in France.\(^{120}\) As the pawn of Ribbentrop, Abetz could have become just one out of many rivaling German officials in Paris. But his ambition, maneuvering talent and connections in France, as well as the relative independence of the embassy from other institutions, gave him an important advantage over his rivals, at least during the first years of occupation.\(^{121}\)

he left the Comité France-Allemagne in the aftermath of the Munich crisis in 1938, but evidence suggests that he kept in close contact with Abetz and the committee during the following year. The day before Abetz’s eviction, he had been with Jouvenel and several members of the committee at a dinner party at the house of Horace de Carbuccia, the director of the right-wing weekly *Gringoire*. See Lambauer, *Otto Abetz et les Français*, 121; Jouvenel, *Un Voyageur*, 338.

\(^{118}\) Lambauer, *Otto Abetz et les Français*, 118.  
\(^{119}\) Conze et al., *Das Amt*, 227.  
\(^{121}\) Burrin, *La France à l’Heure Allemande*, 96.
Abetz, at the age of 37 the youngest active German ambassador, was assisted by a number of predominantly young officials with a good knowledge of France and the French. Most notably, his assistant Rudolf Schleier (41) ran affairs concerning veterans and prisoners of war, while Ernst Achenbach (31) led the political section of the embassy. Eager to establish control over cultural, press and radio affairs at the expense of the Propaganda-Abteilung, Abetz set up a German Institute in Paris with the mission to mobilise influential French intellectuals and cultural personalities in the enterprise of collaboration. Its director Karl Epting (35), who had headed the French branch of the German academic service before the war, promoted German culture in France through language courses, expositions and conferences.
while attempting to win over French intellectuals and socialites with lavish receptions at the Institute. Epting could count on the help of the well-known journalist Friedrich Sieburg, the former French correspondent of the Frankfurter Zeitung who had published the best-selling book Gott in Frankreich in 1929 – translated into French as Dieu Est-Il Français? – as well as the support of Friedrich Grimm, an international law expert from the University of Münster who gave frequent lectures at salons in support of collaboration. Apart from these human resources, Abetz’s embassy also had at its disposal a well-filled treasury of one billion French francs, directly taken from the ‘occupation costs’ that France had to pay by the terms of the armistice.122

During several meetings with Hitler, Abetz elaborated on his plans for France. It was in the German interest, he told the Führer, to reduce France to the status of a ‘satellite state’ ready to wilfully accept the ‘permanent weakening’ of its position in Europe. In order to effectively divide the French and to prevent them from ever uniting against their victor, Germany would have to simultaneously support rivalling parties and groups of various political colours. But it was not enough to divide and rule by force alone. Despite Hitler’s hesitations and against the hostility of Himmler and Goebbels, Abetz was convinced the French could be won over to the idea of collaboration and the acceptance of their own subservience to a German world order. He told Hitler that the Germans had to occasionally put up a friendly face and make vague promises regarding a future peace treaty that would guarantee the territorial integrity of the country. Abetz claimed that ‘the French masses’ already had a great admiration for Hitler and that, with the right propaganda, it would be easy to make them blame their misery on the right scapegoats: MPs, Freemasons, Jews, clergymen and others who were ‘responsible for the war’. The French elite and intelligentsia could be seduced by exposing them to German culture and especially by stressing ‘the European idea’. In Abetz’s words: ‘In exactly the same way as the idea of peace was usurped by National Socialist Germany and served to weaken French morale, without undermining the German fighting spirit, the European idea could be usurped by the Reich without harming the aspiration to continental primacy embedded by National Socialism in the German people.’123

Although Abetz disliked Pétain’s conservative entourage, within the Vichy government he established a good relationship with Laval, whom he supported after his removal from power and temporary house arrest by

122 Kupferman, Pierre Laval, 254; Burrin, La France à l’HeureAllemande, 98, 99.
123 Cited by Burrin, La France à l’Heure Allemande, 93, 101.
Pétain as the result of a Vichy intrigue in December 1940. But Abetz was careful to also develop alternative options by supporting several Paris-based collaboration movements, most predominantly Marcel Déat’s Rassemblement National-Populaire (RNP) and Doriot’s PPF. Abetz could more easily manipulate Pétain by creating the impression that the Germans might at any moment replace him by a government consisting of more radically pro-German collaborators. In his dealings with Laval, Déat and other collaborators, Abetz kept presenting himself as a Francophile and an admirer of French culture and lifestyle who wanted the best for France but needed to compete with anti-French hard-liners within the Nazi administration. This implied that Abetz, Laval and Déat had a common interest in sincerely working for Franco-German collaboration as a direct continuation of pre-war activities, albeit under different circumstances. Setbacks could be conveniently blamed by Abetz on the influence of other hostile currents within the Third Reich.

In the world of the Paris press, Abetz had just as few difficulties finding collaborators. Jean Luchaire, who had continued his *Notre Temps* until the end of the 1930s despite financial difficulties, was ambitious, unscrupulous and bankrupt enough to work for the Germans at any paid position in journalism. After a short-lived editorship of the newspaper *Le Matin*, Abetz appointed him as head of the French Press Corporation, the organisation all journalists in the occupied zone were required to join. Encouraged by Abetz, Luchaire also founded a new daily newspaper, *Les Nouveaux Temps*, which was meant to reflect the opinion of ‘the left’ of the world of collaboration. Together with Déat’s *L’Œuvre* and *La France au Travail* – both of which were also supported or even created on behalf of Abetz – *Les Nouveaux Temps* was supposed to counterbalance the weight of right-wing (i.e. Maurrassian or fascist) newspapers such as *Je Suis Partout*, *Au Pilori* and *La Gerbe* and to convince progressive Frenchmen to support collaboration. There are some indications that Abetz first wanted Jouvenel to assume its editorship, but he declined. Although both Fabre-Luce and Jouvenel generally refrained from contributing articles to their old friend’s collaborationist newspaper, they did allow Luchaire to publish promotional extracts of their first books appearing under occupation. The extracts of *Après la Défaite* and the first tome of *Journal de la France* appeared one after the other in January 1941.

125 Burrin, *La France à l’Heure Allemande*, 104.
After a six-month interruption, December 1940 saw the reappearance of the *Nouvelle Revue Française* (*NRF*), the flagship of the pre-war French intellectual and literary world. Founded in 1909 by André Gide, during the interwar period it had opened itself up to new literary currents, publishing contributions from upcoming authors like André Malraux, Louis Aragon, Drieu la Rochelle, Jean-Paul Sartre and Julien Benda. When Jean Paulhan resigned as its editor-in-chief, unwilling to run the periodical under occupation and German censorship, he was succeeded by Drieu who by this time had fully embraced the idea of a fascist Europe under German leadership. Abetz supported the return of the *NRF* under the condition that it would be headed by a man who could be trusted ideologically, and Drieu was his perfect candidate. Although at first, Drieu’s new *NRF* also published contributions by authors who did not share his enthusiasm for the German new order – Paulhan remained involved behind the scenes while Gide and Paul Valéry contributed to the first issues – it increasingly came to reflect his personal interpretation of collaboration and fascism as a revolutionary enterprise to free Europe from ‘Jewish’ decadence and communism. Despite his choice to collaborate unconditionally, Drieu retained a certain solidarity with authors who were ideologically his enemies. He used his contacts with the Germans to protect Malraux and Aragon from persecution and even arranged for Paulhan to be freed from prison after his arrest for Resistance activities.\(^{128}\)

Fabre-Luce held a prominent place in the first edition of Drieu’s *NRF*, and he continued to publish regularly in the periodical until the summer of 1942.\(^{129}\) His presence seems to have not only been due to his friendship with Drieu but also inspired by common points in their view of the European dimensions of collaboration. In a ‘Letter to an American’, Fabre-Luce advised an unnamed and possibly imaginary trans-Atlantic friend not to feel sorry for the French. First of all, occupied Paris was more beautiful than ever: the noise of cars had disappeared and one did not risk his life anymore when crossing the street. The city’s monuments had regained ‘a new majesty’ and a purity reminiscent of Baalbek or Angkor Wat rather than a modern city.

---

129 His last contribution appeared in July 1942: Alfred Fabre-Luce, ‘Lawrence d’Arabie, Le Colonel de Trente Ans qui Battit les Turcs’, *Nouvelle Revue Française* (July 1942), 17. Between December 1940 and July 1942, a total of eight contributions by Fabre-Luce can be found. In his memoirs, Fabre-Luce misleadingly claims that he only wrote one article for Drieu’s *NRF*, about Lawrence of Arabia, even implying his ‘British’ subject was subversive. See Fabre-Luce, *Vingt-Cinq Années de Liberté II*, 77.
And what, Fabre-Luce wondered, had the French really lost in the war? Their freedom? Addressing his friend directly, he asked:

Do you really believe that a man enslaved by alcohol, a man enslaved by gambling can become, by virtue of a ballot paper, a free man? This summer, we have abolished the apéritifs and regulated our stock exchange... Another race is beginning to take shape, one that will maybe later be able to fully enjoy its freedom, because it will be worthy of it.130

In Journal de la France II, Fabre-Luce elaborated on this comparison of a reborn authoritarian France and a ‘decadent’ United States. The Americans were wrong to think they were free, subjected as they were to ‘a Jewish press consortium’, puritan leagues and omnipresent advertising. And the French, who still enjoyed certain ‘zones of traditional freedom’ – echoing Fabre-Luce’s persistent view of fascism as less totalitarian than communism – had also discovered an entirely new kind of liberty: that of a young man in a youth camp who ‘learns to believe’. Altogether, these considerations made the French feel ‘less like slaves than our eventual “liberators”. Their victory would maybe bring us back the institutions that bred our decadence, but it would convert us in forced clients of their trusts.’131

Apart from bringing a necessary end to the nation’s alcoholic decadence, laying the basis for a new kind of freedom and improving road security in the capital, Fabre-Luce saw another merit of defeat. It had cut France off from Britain and the ocean and finally made it ‘look towards Europe’. ‘France is like a house of which the walls and windows have changed their place’. This new perspective allowed him to address his American friend ‘from continent to continent, in an equality that we have never known before, and you will not feel the same contempt that you had for our old Balkanised Europe’.132 Fabre-Luce supported the National Revolution under the condition that it would not neglect its international dimensions: ‘Isn’t it mostly a global revolution? From now on, France is an element of a larger assembly. It is not upon her to command, but to collaborate, to inspire and above all to be...’133 Two years later, citing Jacques Bainville, Fabre-Luce described France as a pivotal country that had always hesitated ‘between sea and land,

---

130 Alfred Fabre-Luce, ‘Lettre à un Américain’, Nouvelle Revue Française (December 1940), 65, 71. Italics in original.
131 Fabre-Luce, Journal de la France II (1942), 122, 123.
132 Fabre-Luce, ‘Lettre à un Américain’, 67, 72.
133 Fabre-Luce, Journal de la France I (1940), 404. Italics in original.
between England and Germany’. The French climate, ‘in which continental
drought and Atlantic humidity alternate’, reflected this attitude. Now, the
time had come to make a definitive choice for a continental European
empire: ‘It is a collective Rome that we must build. At this work, we will
not be subjects but collaborators; we can even become – as the result of
evolution – co-emperors.’
134 This choice was easier, as its alternative came
down to national slavery. Combining threat and reward, Fabre-Luce stated
that ‘the choice offered to us is simple. A new Europe is being built. We are
invited to participate in its construction. If we accept, we will become part
of the aristocracy of blood, we will enjoy its privileges. If we refuse, a place
of slaves will be prepared for us after the war.’
135 For Fabre-Luce, collaboration even became a kind of a final ersatz for
French international grandeur. He stated that France could take a leading
role in convincing other countries who held her in high esteem. After all, it
was from France that ‘during the last centuries, the big slogans of European
thought have started. The moral support of France is important to anyone
willing to launch new ones. […] If France “collaborates”, the whole of Europe
will collaborate. If she resists, there will only be slaves.’
136 Militarily, France
could even play such a decisive role as to end the war and save the world
from further bloodshed. By resolutely choosing the German side, France
could effectively bring the Mediterranean under Axis control, after which
the Allies would realise that a total victory was impossible and search for a
diplomatic solution. The peace could then take the form of ‘a ratification of
the state of affairs: Germany in Europe, the Anglo-Saxons on the other side
of the Ocean. France, by practicing collaboration, recognises its geographi-
cal and moral belonging to Europe.’
137

While both the British (through RAF bombings) and the Germans
(through forced labour) demanded sacrifices of the French, at least the
latter were ‘fighting for Europe. If he [the German] triumphs, he will bring
her [Europe] unity, security, economic organisation. Since he will bring us
all of that, he is entitled to our butter, to our horses, to our workers. He will
give it back to us a hundred times after the war.’ The British had, by contrast,
always played a destructive role, doing everything in their power to prevent
Europe from organising itself.
138 Singing the praises of the Europeanist wing

135 Ibid., 285.
136 Ibid., 68.
137 Ibid., 116.
138 Ibid., 13, 285.
of the collaboration, Fabre-Luce described what this new Europe should look like: ‘a large economic area in which peoples, formally partitioned, thrown back upon themselves and tired of endless quarrels, will find themselves back with an unknown feeling of security and the intoxication of space. [...] She [France] will not be enslaved, because Germany needs clients, not slaves. Machines will be the only slaves.’

Fabre-Luce’s interpretation of collaboration as a way to rid France of decadence, create a new race and new political institutions, and organise the continent under German leadership are strikingly similar to what motivated Drieu la Rochelle. A surviving letter from 1942 in Fabre-Luce’s personal papers suggests the two regularly exchanged letters during the war. Drieu illustrated this ideological closeness by dedicating an *NRF* article to Fabre-Luce in November 1942. In his description of Fabre-Luce as living proof that a rich man could have talent and as essentially ‘a liberal liberally open to the opposite of liberalism’, he mixed irony with sympathy.

Even as late as 1944, when the national socialist Europe he had wished for was falling apart in front of his eyes, Drieu still counted Fabre-Luce as on his side. Amidst the depressed avowal that he found himself ‘almost alone to think what I think and to say what I say’, he took comfort in knowing that at least ‘Giono, Montherlant, Céline, Jouhandeau, Chardonne, Fabre-Luce, Fernandez’ were still with him.

Apart from Drieu, Fabre-Luce was close to other collaborationist intellectuals like Jacques Chardonne, who was not primarily motivated by the same continental Europeanism but instead appreciated the German occupation for protecting an idealised rural France against the communist menace. Fabre-Luce had known Chardonne since 1924, but their friendship grew as a result of their shared wartime positions. Chardonne complimented Fabre-Luce on the first volume of *Journal de la France* and *Anthologie de la Nouvelle Europe*, which he admitted reading like ‘a Bible for this moment’. In 1941, Chardonne praised Fabre-Luce as ‘the most intelligent man of France’ – a quotation that was to have a long life. His wartime books also won Fabre-

139 Ibid., 31, 32.
140 Pierre Drieu la Rochelle to Fabre-Luce (March 1942), Fonds AFL, 472 AP 6.
143 Chardonne, *Chronique Privée de l’An 1934*, 200; idem, *Voir la Figure*, 31.
144 Two letters of Jacques Chardonne to Fabre-Luce (15 July 1942 and date unknown), Fonds AFL, 472 AP 2. A meeting with Chardonne is mentioned in Fabre-Luce’s notes from April 1924. Fonds AFL, 472 AP 10 dr. 1.
Luce the admiration of Régis de Vibraye, the advocate of Franco-German reconciliation; the Pétainist historian Daniel Halévy; and even Bernard Faÿ, a historian obsessed with Masonic conspiracies who became the head of the French National Library after the sacking of its Jewish director Julien Cain. Faÿ was so impressed by the first two volumes of *Journal de la France* that he was willing to revise his earlier negative judgment ‘when your book about *La Victoire* gave me such a fit of bad temper’. Fabre-Luce was also in touch with Georges Albertini, the former pacifist socialist who had embraced fascism and become the second man in Déat’s RNP. In a letter to Fabre-Luce, Albertini told him not to expect too much from Uriage, Vichy’s elite school that Fabre-Luce had enthusiastically described in *Journal de la France*. In a review, Albertini also praised Fabre-Luce’s *Anthologie de la Nouvelle Europe*, describing it as a book that laid the basis for a new European order.

As in the writings of other collaborationist intellectuals like Drieu, Marcel Jouhandeau and Henry de Montherlant, Fabre-Luce’s view of collaboration sometimes took on sexual or gendered connotations, with France playing the female role. He argued that, from a historical perspective, ‘occupations are voyages of peoples’ in which the ‘receiving’ party travelled as well, generally with positive results. Just like the West rediscovered Aristotle thanks to the Arab invasions and Switzerland owed its democratic law system to occupation by Napoleon’s armies, even France itself was ‘the product of a rape’: the one of Gaul by Rome. ‘The first sign of civilisation of our ancestors has been to let themselves be fertilised by a victor who enriched himself through their contribution’. Everywhere in occupied France, Fabre-Luce saw scenes reflecting this historical cross fertilisation: German officers enjoyed the hospitality of French families and made sure their men behaved correctly, while ‘in the darkness of side streets’ all kinds of ‘illegitimate love’ were consumed. During their conquest of France, the Germans had behaved like ‘respecting, almost timid conquerors’. When called to the eastern front, the German soldiers were sad to exchange a beautiful French village for the eastern plains, and the French farmers were almost as sad to see them leave. Citing a peasant, who may have been just as imaginary as the American friend he addressed his open letter to, Fabre-Luce stated:

---

146 Two letters of Bernard Faÿ to Fabre-Luce (20 July 1942 and 28 November 1942), Letters of Daniel Halévy (3 January 1941) and Régis de Vibraye (10 September 1942), Fonds AFL, 472 AP 2.
147 Georges Albertini to Fabre-Luce (16 September 1942); Albertini, review of *Anthologie de la Nouvelle Europe* (Fabre-Luce), *L’Atelier: Hebdomadaire du Travail Français* (4 April 1942), Fonds AFL, 472 AP 2; Fabre-Luce, *Journal de la France II* (1942), 175.
148 Jackson, *The Dark Years*, 211. Jouvenel’s writings were also not entirely devoid of these connotations. See Jouvenel, *Un Voyageur*, 370, 377.
“Ils faisaient marcher le commerce. Et puis, ils n’étaient pas méchants. C’est tout de même dommage qu’ils aillent se faire tuer.”

Strikingly, Fabre-Luce’s main problems with German censorship (before 1943) were caused by his anti-communist attitude. While he had been forced to delete a few lines in the first volume of *Journal de la France* out of respect for the Molotov-Von Ribbentrop Pact, the start of Operation Barbarossa freed Fabre-Luce from such considerations and gave an even stronger impetus to his collaborationism. Fabre-Luce interpreted the German offensive against the Soviet Union as a victory ‘of the field over the steppe [...]’, of the German over the Slav, of hierarchy over undistinguished community. If a soldier born on the banks of the Rhine crosses the Vistula, the border of *our* civilisation moves with him. It is from France too that he repels the danger of the horde. When Jacques Doriot left for the eastern front to fight in the ranks of the Légion des Volontaires Français (LVF), a special Waffen-SS division founded on his initiative, Fabre-Luce celebrated him as a rare case of ‘a statesman who completes his political figure and takes a decision for the future’. Fabre-Luce criticised the ‘lukewarm’ attitude of the Vichy government, which formally supported the LVF but did nothing to help it recruit members. Even in an *NRF* review of Montesquieu’s *Cahiers*, he was able to find arguments in favour of collaboration. Citing Montesquieu’s statement that under problematic circumstances, no mistake is more harmful than inaction, Fabre-Luce proudly concluded that in the twentieth century, Montesquieu ‘would not have been an attentiste’.

**Collaboration and Attentisme**

In contrast to Fabre-Luce, traces of *attentisme* (wait and see) can be found in the writings of Jouvenel. He did not publish in the *NRF* or in any other collaborationist newspaper, but he was involved with the founding of the new periodical *Le Fait* in the autumn of 1940. In his memoirs, Jouvenel claims he used this as a cover-up for intelligence activities, and there is some evidence for this. During his trips to Eastern and Central Europe in

---

149 Fabre-Luce, *Journal de la France II* (1942), 25, 26, 28.
150 Fabre-Luce, *Vingt-Cinq Années de Liberté II*, 68.
151 Fabre-Luce, *Journal de la France II* (1942), 266. Italics in original.
152 Ibid., 266.
154 Apart from the extracts from *Après la Défaite*, published in *Les Nouveaux Temps*. 
early 1939, Jouvenel had already been active as a voluntary correspondent of the French military Service de Renseignement, to which he reported his observations on the dispositions of political leaders and populations towards France and Germany.\footnote{Two reports written by Jouvenel during February-April 1939: (‘Notes sur une Tournée en Europe Centrale du 15 Février au 2 Mars 1938’ and untitled [April 1939], Fonds BdJ, Don 90 39 (52); Jouvenel, \textit{Un Voyageur}, 339, 385.}

On several occasions after the war, Jouvenel showed considerable frustration with the accusations of collaboration that were raised against him. In a letter written in 1946, in his memoirs and, most famously, during the lawsuit against Sternhell, Jouvenel claimed that he went to Paris, renewed contact with Abetz and moved around in French collaborationist circles – all at the explicit request of General Henri Navarre of the Service de Renseignement, whom he had met in Vichy in July 1940 and who asked him to find out what plans the Germans had with France and her empire.\footnote{Jouvenel, \textit{Un Voyageur}, 381; Assouline, ‘Enquête sur un Historien’, 100; Draft of a letter by Jouvenel to the lawyer of Bernard Faÿ (23 January 1946), Fonds BdJ, Don 96 01 (300).}

Dard has established the truth – ‘dans les grandes lignes’ – of these claims. Jouvenel was indeed in contact with Navarre, never published in \textit{Le Fait} despite being one of its founders, and the report which Jouvenel included in his memoirs – addressed to Navarre, Laval and Pétain – is probably authentic.\footnote{Dard, \textit{Bertrand de Jouvenel}, 180.} The report, drafted on 2 August 1940, neither supports nor rejects the prospect of Franco-German collaboration. Jouvenel wrote that the Germans did not believe France had truly rid itself of its republican politicians and wanted the country to establish a more genuinely fascist regime. If so, the Germans might be willing to do business with the French, though German dominance had to be acknowledged. In his memoirs, Jouvenel opportunistically titled the report ‘La collaboration impossible’, but it seems he was anything but sure about this when he wrote it.\footnote{Report included in Jouvenel, \textit{Un Voyageur}, 391-393.}

This ambivalent attitude towards full-scale collaboration is also reflected in the last chapter of \textit{Après la Défaite}. Jouvenel rejected the idea that France should propose a plan for a new Europe: ‘The initiative belongs to him who holds the authority. That’s not us. Is this the time for French intelligence to embrace the continent? Let it first discover France.’\footnote{Jouvenel, \textit{Après la Défaite}, 227.} A more elaborate version of this ambivalence can be found in a long letter that Jouvenel sent to Fabre-Luce on 1 February 1941, the first surviving part of their correspondence. Jouvenel included the unpublished manuscript of a
critical review of Fabre-Luce’s *Journal de la France I* that he had written at Drieu’s request, probably for the *NRF*. In response to a preceding letter by Fabre-Luce in which he had criticised Jouvenel’s reluctance to name and shame the political leaders of the Third Republic in *Après la Défaite*, Jouvenel wrote that he had expressly refrained from such attacks. While assuring his ‘dear Fabre-Luce’ of all his admiration for his style and his talent, Jouvenel remarked that in his book, ‘I would have wanted to find a complaint that is not there’. Jouvenel’s unpublished review specified these objections:

The defeat has inspired Fabre-Luce too much. A kind of joy enters his verve. He has, I know, foreseen this collapse. And his book proceeds, starting from spotless premises, like a brilliant demonstration. But, since the fatherland [*patrie*] is concerned, it seems that the pleasure of having been right should cede to sorrow at our subjection. And one does not feel that at all. We have to discover France as it has been made to be. That is a necessary thing. But in the act of tearing away the cloak, there is a bit too much impiety, to my taste.160

In his letter, Jouvenel was quick to stress that he had written the review in a vengeful mood, convinced that *Journal de la France* contained a negative description of himself, which was not the case. Now, he was ‘happy that this article does not appear’. He had also been told that Fabre-Luce had ‘a less simplistic view’ of the future than ‘our builders of Europe, amongst whom I hate to see my very dear Drieu’. Jouvenel ended his letter by expressing the wish to exchange private notes with Fabre-Luce in which they would ‘try to define what the comportment of France should be’. ‘Abandoned in the hands of Germany by the Paris collaborationists, reduced to the agricultural age by the absentees of Vichy, promised to the Anglo-Saxon Perseus by the BBC listeners, France needs us […] to rethink politics for her.’161 The Jouvenel papers, very incomplete concerning this period, do not contain a reply by Fabre-Luce. But the degree of familiarity suggests this was not the only letter they exchanged during the occupation, while they also moved in the same circles.

This is not all that can be said about Jouvenel’s wartime positions. Between 1940 and 1942, there is more agreement in the text between Fabre-Luce and Jouvenel than the letter suggests. As described in earlier

160 Review by Jouvenel of Fabre-Luce, *Journal de la France I* (1940), included in a letter by Jouvenel to Fabre-Luce (1 February 1941), Fonds AFL, 472 AP 2.
161 Jouvenel to Fabre-Luce (1 February 1941), Fonds AFL, 472 AP 2.
paragraphs, there were clear similarities in their analysis of defeat, their conviction of the inferiority of parliamentary democracy and their wish for France to be inspired by the fascist example. In an interesting historical metaphor, both Fabre-Luce and Jouvenel compared the German conquest of France to the Roman conquest of Greece during the second century BC. Like the Greek city-states of antiquity, France boasted a superior culture and civilisation, but its interior divisions and lack of military spirit had made it unable to oppose a serious resistance. Though the rivalling Greek city-states were no match for the Roman legions, they continued to prosper under Roman rule and passed on much of their culture, religion and science to their conquerors.162 Like Fabre-Luce, Jouvenel welcomed certain aspects of defeat and occupation. He observed that all over Europe, city-dwellers suffered from food shortages, while the farmers were better off, regaining their ‘old primacy’ through the disappearance of competition from colonial imports. Jouvenel rejoiced in the fact that by physically experiencing the consequences of defeat, the French citizens were finally forced to discover the importance of national solidarity. ‘Abundance has made Europe liberal, shortage will make Europe totalitarian.’163

Politically, scientifically and socially, France had much to learn from Hitler, Jouvenel suggested. He saw France ‘longing for new institutions’ and:

As after any large setback, we are automatically inclined to implant in our country those of the victor. Some complain we are not adopting them fast enough as they are. Others, to the contrary, excite our pride against any imitation of Germany: these people do not realise that it is our old repugnance to take the initiative for a French reform that is condemning us today to repeat foreign experiences. But the former are wrong too, since they neglect the psychological problem our leaders are facing.164

After all, Hitler had also built his success on foundations laid by his predecessors. Jouvenel suggested that, instead of plunging head-first into a German-led national socialist Europe, the French elite should first meditate on French identity, history and the ‘national temperament’ of the French people. Innovations inspired by foreign fascist regimes were welcome, even necessary, as long as they were compatible with the ‘psycho-political’ characteristics of the French people. He claimed that, during the autumn of

---

164 Ibid., 235.
1940, France found itself ‘in the eye of the storm’. In this ‘deceptive calm, as if enclosed between powerful walls of air’, a wise captain should navigate carefully. ‘The closing of France is essentially of intellectual order. The constitution of a coherent and compact national thought is necessary to guide our leaders, form our educators, inspire our press.’165

This emphasis on the national element seems to have been the major difference between Jouvenel and Fabre-Luce’s attitude to collaboration. While for Jouvenel a rediscovery of nationalism put a brake on his willingness to collaborate, Fabre-Luce fully welcomed collaboration as a way ‘not to confirm our defeat, but to surmount it’. He saw Europeanist collaboration as the task of an ‘elite’ that had embraced the future, while he associated nationalism with the backwardness of the common people that kept hating the Germans regardless of what happened, even if their misery was actually caused by the British. It was as impossible to bring these people back to reason as it was ‘to reason with a madman’. Gaullism constituted their irrational ‘compensating dream’, a ‘mythology’ the British eagerly supported ‘while starving us’.166 Fabre-Luce conceded that De Gaulle’s Free French included a few heroic men, but they had let themselves be exploited by the British national interest. And he mockingly wondered how their leaders could ever claim to represent the true France while in fact consisting of ‘a wayward general, a discredited admiral, Jewish propagandists – a general staff for which even the English themselves have little respect’.167

Fabre-Luce was as derisive about the Parisian ‘bourgeois’ who slipped into their basements during the evening to secretly listen to Radio London. He compared them to drug addicts needing their daily portion of morphine, naughty children disobeying their governess or a sect performing incomprehensible rituals.168 While such activities could be done away with by mockery, Fabre-Luce reacted much more strongly to the first cases of armed resistance, which began to occur after the German invasion of the Soviet Union. He condemned communist resisters as a ‘handful of terrorists’ who were trying to sabotage Franco-German relations. When the Germans carried out mass executions in reprisal, Fabre-Luce justified this decision by arguing that at least their victims were prisoners accused of other criminal acts.169 In 1943, Fabre-Luce continued to stress that the Resistance had very

165 Ibid., 236, 238.
166 Fabre-Luce, Journal de la France II (1942), 26, 32.
167 Ibid., 36.
168 Ibid., 146.
169 Ibid., 271.
little support among the population, most of all because its actions were insignificant and only led to German violence. Only communists and Jews were willing to ‘cynically sacrifice’ others of their kind for their ‘hatred of the invader’.170

Instead of resistance, Fabre-Luce favoured French participation in the war on the German side. Although he was against the dismissal of Prime Minister Laval in December 1940, he welcomed the visit that his successor, Admiral François Darlan, paid to Hitler in Berchtesgaden, during which Darlan offered the Germans the use of French airbases in Syria. He was also enthusiastic about the fact that Benoist-Méchin, Marion and Pierre Pucheu were joining Darlan’s government. All three had been members of the PPF before the war, which allowed Fabre-Luce to declare that Doriot’s party had been a good learning school for ‘a new generation of statesmen’ led by a ‘preference for direct action’ and a ‘contempt for old habits’, especially the one of ‘prostration for London’. These new faces were thoroughly ‘collaborationist’ and had already ‘inhaled the fascist atmosphere in their party’, which made them better able to understand German politics than those who still fell under the influence of ‘Cartesian logic’.171 When Vichy forces did battle in Syria against a British-Gaullist invasion during the summer of 1941, Fabre-Luce celebrated these events as a consecration – by ‘a plebiscite of sacrifice’ – of Pétain and collaboration: ‘On meurt pour Vichy!’ Through a ‘ceremony of blood’ similar to the cult of the dead the Nazis had built their solidarity on, France had dedicated itself to collaboration.172

While Fabre-Luce clearly struck a different tone than that of Jouvenel, can we then conclude that the latter was against collaboration? Some of his activities suggest the opposite. If Jouvenel was merely in Paris to collect information and to report to general Navarre, one wonders why he played an active role in bringing Abetz into contact with pro-German French politicians and intellectuals and why he bothered submitting articles to the collaboration press. It was Jouvenel who convinced Déat and Bergery to come to Paris and meet Abetz, Achenbach and Schleier at the German embassy on 20 August 1940 to talk about constituting an opposite power to a Vichy deemed too reactionary and insufficiently willing to collaborate.173 Similarly, he introduced Abetz to his long-time acquaintance Bernard Faÿ, the new director of the French National Library whom he had previously

170 Fabre-Luce, Journal de la France III (1943), 247.
171 Fabre-Luce, Journal de la France II (1942), 113.
172 Ibid., 131.
173 Burrin, La Dérive Fasciste, 386.
met in Vichy.\textsuperscript{174} Around the same time, Jouvenel also dined with Abetz and three Belgian guests: Hendrik de Man, the ‘planist’ who had embraced collaboration, the extreme rightist journalist Pierre Daye, and Léon Degrelle. Abetz had taken them to Paris with several leaders of the Flemish movement, hoping to convince them to join hands and form a Belgian national government that would reflect ‘the aspirations of the young generation’. De Man believed Abetz had comparable plans for France via a joint government by Doriot, Déat and Bergery.\textsuperscript{175}

It also seems that Jouvenel’s refusal to publish in any newspaper ‘as long as the occupier stayed in France’ was not as categorical as he later claimed.\textsuperscript{176} Apart from the aforementioned unpublished review of \textit{Journal de la France} in the \textit{NRF}, there is some evidence that Jouvenel also submitted articles to the extreme-rightist weekly \textit{Gringoire}, which had established itself in southern France after the defeat. Its bourgeois affiliation, Anglophobia and anti-Semitism had quickly earned \textit{Gringoire} the reputation of being Vichy’s quasi-official mouthpiece.\textsuperscript{177} In November 1940, Jouvenel wrote a letter to its chief editor Horace de Carbuccia, whom he knew from the Comité France-Allemagne and from pre-war contributions to \textit{Gringoire}. He sent him an article ‘about a youth camp that I have seen on several occasions. Maybe it is of interest to you.’ Jouvenel also recommended Bernard Faÿ, whom he had met the day before and who ‘could write, on the base of unpublished documents, a truly sensational series of articles […]. I am sure this would interest you, and if he has your principle agreement, Bernard Faÿ will make them for you.’\textsuperscript{178}

These articles were probably meant to be part of Faÿ’s anti-Masonic campaigns. Faÿ, a historian of eighteenth-century French-American relations, had been a professor at Columbia University and the University of Iowa before joining the Collège de France in 1932 as one of France’s prime américanistes. During the late 1930s, Faÿ increasingly held anti-liberal and pro-German opinions, and he became obsessed with Masonic conspiracies, which he suspected in places as unlikely as the episcopate. Faÿ used his wartime position as director of the French National Library to seize the Masonic archives and to study them intensively to prove the alleged power and perfidy of the secret societies.\textsuperscript{179} Two weeks later, Jouvenel addressed

\textsuperscript{174} Compagnon, \textit{Le Cas Bernard Faÿ}, 183.
\textsuperscript{175} Jouvenel, \textit{Un Voyageur}, 395, Dard, \textit{Bertrand de Jouvenel}, 156.
\textsuperscript{176} Jouvenel, \textit{Un Voyageur}, 390.
\textsuperscript{177} Bellanger et al., eds., \textit{Histoire Générale de la Presse Française: Tôme IV}, 76.
\textsuperscript{178} Jouvenel to Horace de Carbuccia (27 November 1940), Fonds BdJ, Don 96 01 (295).
\textsuperscript{179} Compagnon, \textit{Le Cas Bernard Faÿ}, 129, 155; Jackson, \textit{The Dark Years}, 190.
another letter to Carbuccia in which he asked his advice on a subject for a possible article. Carbuccia had told him to limit himself to one paper, but with ‘so many things to say’, Jouvenel hesitated between a comparative analysis of France’s ‘great lost battles, Crécy, Poitiers, Azincourt, Padua, Waterloo, Sedan and the Somme’ and ‘a reminder about the French political divisions, considered as the factor of decadence of our country’. Jouvenel added a draft article on this second subject.180

Despite his impressively elaborate analysis of Jouvenel’s wartime activities and his private notes, Olivier Dard says surprisingly little about Jouvenel’s published works, especially Après la Défaite and La Décomposition de l’Europe Libérale. This omission allows him to suggest that Jouvenel had not anticipated or supported collaboration in any way. He also wrongly claims that Jouvenel restricted his attacks to the political system of the Third Republic and refrained from criticising ‘the Anglo-Saxon world’, apparently ignoring Jouvenel’s indictment of the British bourgeois ‘mercantile’ spirit as responsible for ruining France’s ‘will to power’ that figured prominently in La Décomposition.181 And, though conceding that Jouvenel’s critique of French parliamentary democracy may ‘smell badly’ to a present-day nose, Dard takes pains to stress there was nothing exceptional about it. He resorts to the Catholic writer and former résistant Jean-Marie Domenach, who remarked in 1983 during the Sternhell affair that anti-democratic and anti-republican feelings were widespread both among collaborators and those in the Resistance, to the point of constituting a ‘convergence of all that thinks and all that feels, amongst young Frenchmen. You can call that fascism... That may look provocative, but it’s wrong.”182 Although there is some truth to these claims – and it is indeed easy to mine the writings of Charles de Gaulle and other prominent members of the Resistance for harsh attacks on parliamentarianism – they seem to miss the point when the discussion is not about fascism but about Jouvenel’s attitude to collaboration.

Dard presents Jouvenel during the early 1940s as having two faces: a ‘visible’ one and a ‘hidden’ one, the visible being that of a ‘Germanophile intellectual’ and the hidden that of a secret agent and crypto-résistant.183 There is an obvious insinuation in this analysis, as it suggests that the ‘visible’ face was a mere façade, while Jouvenel’s real attitude was reflected

180 Jouvenel to Horace de Carbuccia (10 December 1940), Fonds BdJ, Don 96 01 (295). Neither of the two articles is included in Jouvenel’s papers.
181 Dard, Bertrand de Jouvenel, 175. See Jouvenel, La Décomposition de l’Europe Libérale, V, 64 or a larger treatment of this subject in the last section.
182 Cited in Dard, Bertrand de Jouvenel, 171.
183 Dard, Bertrand de Jouvenel, 145, 178.
by his hidden activities. Dard ignores the possibility that, at least during the early phases of occupation, there may have been little or no opposition between these two ‘faces’. Through his intelligence activities, Jouvenel served a regime that was set on a course of collaboration with the Germans, especially after Pétain’s notorious handshake with Hitler in Montoire on 22 October 1940. One week later, Pétain announced on radio that France was ‘entering the path of collaboration’.\textsuperscript{184} Despite all their petty internal rivalries – between Laval and Pétain, Laval and Darlan, Déat and Laval, Déat and Doriot, Doriot and Bergery – these leaders were all united in their willingness to do business with the Germans, albeit to different degrees and sometimes with different aims. Altogether, competition for power and for the Germans’ favour seems to have been a much stronger driving force behind these conflicts than existing political disagreements. Without too much exaggeration, one could state that Jouvenel was spying on Germans and Parisian collaborationists on behalf of collaboration.

When discussing the German translation of Après la Défaite, Dard suggests that the Germans ‘instrumentalised’ Jouvenel without any active participation from his side. Similarly, he claims that Jouvenel’s supposedly purely scientific study Napoléon et l’Économie Dirigée was the object of an ‘ideological recuperation at the service of continental unification against maritime England’.\textsuperscript{185} This interpretation accords very little agency to the man himself. If Jouvenel was a passive victim of ideological recuperation, why did his statements fit German propaganda so well that he was included – alongside Fabre-Luce, Bénoist-Méchin and Alphonse de Chateaubriant – on the Militärbefehlshaber’s list of eleven French authors to be translated and published in Germany?\textsuperscript{186} Why did he allow for this translation to occur in the first place? While all other French authors were banned from publication in Germany, the translation of Après la Défaite appeared in 1941, the same year as the French original. A Dutch translation was published in 1943 in the occupied Netherlands. German reviewers saw little difference between Jouvenel and Fabre-Luce, who held the privilege of being the only French author to have two books (the first two volumes of Journal de la France) published in German translation during the war.\textsuperscript{187} They generally interpreted the books according to Nazi doctrine as reflecting France’s

\textsuperscript{184} Jackson, The Dark Years, 173.
\textsuperscript{185} Dard, Bertrand de Jouvenel, 165, 167.
\textsuperscript{186} Loiseaux, La Littérature de la Défaite et de la Collaboration, 96.
\textsuperscript{187} Jouvenel, Nach der Niederlage; idem, Na de Nederlaag; Fabre-Luce, Französisches Tagebuch; idem, Nach dem Waffenstillstand.
decadence, its ‘Jewification’ and ‘negrification’, while constituting an encouragement for Germany to maintain a tough line towards France. Jouvenel and Fabre-Luce were seen to share their national decadence, although they were occasionally complimented for at least having grasped the superiority of National Socialism and France’s subservient position in a German Europe.  

In May 1942, the first volume of Journal de la France received a plainly negative review in the Berliner Monatshefte. The reviewer considered that Fabre-Luce, just like France as a whole, had apparently experienced its recent history while merely ‘hesitating, interpreting and observing’ instead of being fully ‘transported’ by the dramatic events of its downfall. In annexed Alsace, the Strassburger Neueste Nachrichten was more positive about the second volume, which was deemed to offer serious possibilities for a Franco-German ‘European conversation’. Alfred Püllmann, citing abundantly from Fabre-Luce’s statements in favour of European collaboration and France’s special role in convincing smaller nations to follow in its wake, was enthusiastic about his contribution to the spread of the right ‘imperial idea’. This idea would allow the constitution of a German-occidental [‘abendländisch’] empire in which ‘the defeated, who are often already collaborators, will one day become co-creators’ – a clear reference to Fabre-Luce’s term of ‘co-emperors’. Around the same time, Joachim Freyburg, a journalist writing for Goebbels’ intellectual weekly Das Reich, paid a visit to Fabre-Luce in Paris. He complimented Fabre-Luce as an excellent ‘chronicler of France’ but, describing the ‘mundane’ interior of his apartment, also ironized the fact that he could afford to calmly observe ‘the direction France is now taking, after its defeat, from the ever-safe place that his wealth allows him to occupy’.  

Fabre-Luce and Jouvenel were given a prominent place in Phönix oder Asche?, an anthology of French literary and political publications since the defeat published by Bernhard Payr, a close collaborator of Alfred Rosenberg. Payr praised Fabre-Luce for his ‘vivid and rich painting of the French politics of catastrophe’ that had led to his nation’s ruin. With his description of decadent bourgeois Parisian life in early 1940, Fabre-Luce had revealed ‘why a people whose social structure was already in full decomposition, could have impossibly won this war’. Payr was almost as positive about

188 Loiseaux, La Littérature de la Défaite et de la Collaboration, 97, 417.
190 Püllmann, ‘Frankreich als Beispiel’.
191 Cited in Geiger, L’Image de la France, 321.
Après la Défaite. After giving a fairly accurate description of the main lines of Jouvenel's book, he conceded that the author occasionally tended to ‘light relativisations’ but asserted that this must not obscure his ‘true insight in the essential elements of the French collapse and the victorious resurrection of Germany’. This made Jouvenel's work a ‘positive contribution to a clarification of positions before the beginning of a European new order’. In an article written for Das Reich, Payr was pessimistic about the extent to which the spirit of collaboration had caught on in France, which he saw confined to small circles of intellectuals who had often themselves not sufficiently understood the meaning of a national socialist Europe. He made a positive exception for two intellectuals, Fabre-Luce and Jouvenel, whom he credited as the only authors who showed a ‘feeling of European responsibility’.

The French reactions to Jouvenel's work were not very different. In the fascist collaborationist journal La Gerbe, Jouvenel's La Décomposition de l'Europe Libérale was positively reviewed by Ramon Fernandez, a former Marxist who had joined the PPF and sat on the party's political bureau with Jouvenel. The same book won him the admiration of the extreme-rightist writer Jean-Pierre Maxence. In December 1941, in an article published in the isolationist American newspaper Chicago Tribune, Bernard Faÿ painted a rosy picture of the intellectual climate in occupied Paris, ranking the ‘brilliant’ Jouvenel (Après la Défaite) and Fabre-Luce (Journal de la France) amongst the fine fleur of its unprecedented literary production. Faÿ’s article was part of a German-led press campaign to discourage the United States from intervening in the war. Published on the day of the attack on Pearl Harbour, which led to the United States declaring war on Germany four days later, these efforts were entirely ineffective.

Jouvenel’s third wartime book, Napoléon et l’Économie Dirigée, was also quick to win the admiration of collaborationists. While it is true that in its end result the book is a dry, academic study of the effects of the Continental System on French and European commerce, this may not have been Jouvenel’s idea from the start, when he began working on the topic in the spring of 1941. In the introduction, Jouvenel warns against establishing ‘apparent analogies’ between the book’s subject and the present day, but it is easily

192 Payr, Phönix Oder Asche?, 53, 55, 60.
193 Cited in Loiseaux, La Littérature de la Défaite et de la Collaboration, 305.
194 Jouvenel to Ramon Fernandez (27 February 1942), Fonds BdJ, Don 96 01 (300).
195 Jouvenel to Jean-Pierre Maxence (28 February 1942), Fonds BdJ, Don 96 01 (303).
conceivable that he was originally motivated by these very analogies.\footnote{197} It is also hardly surprising that this warning was largely ignored by reviews of the book in the collaborationist press, as Bruneteau rightly observed.\footnote{198} Jouvenel chose to publish his book at the Éditions de la Toison d’Or, a Belgian collaborationist editing house that was run by the Didier couple, contacts of Jouvenel who had been active in Europeanist circles before the war and who had also fallen under Abetz’s influence. The Didier couple, who had been interned in France as possible German spies during the German invasion, met Abetz in Paris in August 1940, after which they founded their editing house in Brussels, partially with money provided by Ribbentrop’s foreign ministry. As one of the prime publishers in the Belgian collaborationist world, the Toison d’Or published books by De Man, Friedrich Sieburg, Robert Brasillach, Fabre-Luce and Jouvenel.\footnote{199}

Little doubt remains, however, that Jouvenel’s willingness to support collaboration was short-lived and often mixed with a certain \textit{attentisme}. In December 1940, during a visit to Luchaire at the offices of the \textit{Nouveaux Temps}, he told Luchaire and Déat, who had railed against the ‘old fool’ Pétain, that France had only accepted collaboration because it was Pétain who undertook it. If the Germans were to force the marshal out, the French people would ‘unanimously’ follow him into resistance.\footnote{200} When Déat founded his RNP in February 1941, which he intended to make France’s fascist-style ‘single party’, Jouvenel warned him that it was impossible to unite the French people on a collaborationist agenda. ‘In Germany, they have assembled the people against France; here, you can only do it in the opposite direction. If that’s impossible, one has to wait.’ In March 1942, a German diplomat reported Jouvenel’s ‘pessimistic’ and ‘embittered’ attitude towards collaboration, even admitting that he no longer believed in it. Jouvenel called Luchaire and his crew a bunch of traitors, comparable to the Rhineland separatists in 1920s Germany.\footnote{201} In an April 1941 report written for his Vichy connections and entitled ‘France between Germany and the Anglo-Saxon World’, Jouvenel called for closer relations between Vichy France and the United States. Stronger ties with the US government would not only provide a partial solution to the problem of food shortages,

\footnote{197}{Jouvenel, \textit{Napoléon et l’Économie Dirigée}, XII.}
\footnote{198}{Bruneteau, \textit{‘L’Europe Nouvelle’ de Hitler}, 84.}
\footnote{199}{Xavier Dehan, ‘Jeune Europe, le Salon Didier et les Éditions de la Toison d’Or’, 225, 226, 234. Fabre-Luce published two books at Le Toison d’Or: Belgian editions of \textit{Journal de la France}.}
\footnote{200}{Dard, \textit{Bertrand de Jouvenel}, 157.}
\footnote{201}{Cited in: Burrin, \textit{Fascisme, Nazieme, Autoritarisme}, 237.}
it would also make France look less bad in the case of an ‘Anglo-Saxon’ victory against Germany. Jouvenel had low expectations of German offers to fight food shortages through the construction of a continental economic system in exchange for French participation in the war against England. Instead, he advised his government to use this German offer as a bargaining instrument with the Americans.202

In early 1943, Jouvenel started keeping a personal diary in which he recorded his reading notes but sometimes also ideas for his book on power, political reflections and comments on his personal life. On one of the first pages, Jouvenel reflected on a certain ‘contradiction’ in his political thought. On the one hand, he pleaded for strong state involvement to develop the nation’s industrial capacity as a means of increasing national power, while on the other hand he was becoming more and more critical of state power in general. This, he explained to himself, was because at the moment he became aware of these means of state power, ‘my country did not have the biological conditions anymore’ to apply them. ‘From this moment, it was clear to me that the French interest is to denounce this political competition in which the French community can no longer figure honourably.’ Almost surprisingly, Jouvenel concluded that at the heart of his contradictory opinions ‘there is an excess of national sentiment that I can only take notice of’.203

While only fragmented and often distorted information exists about the social whereabouts of Jouvenel and Fabre-Luce in occupied Paris, it seems that they were regular guests at the German embassy, the German Institute and collaborationist salons. According to Fabre-Luce’s memoirs, he saw Abetz only once and very briefly, during a reception at the embassy. He claimed he found the ambassador ‘arrogant’ and was ‘appalled’ with the behaviour of the other French guests, who hungrily stormed the buffet to stuff themselves with the exquisite food. Fabre-Luce quickly left, ‘without having eaten a sandwich or spoken a word with my host’.204 A photograph taken in June 1941 seems to contradict this claim. It shows Fabre-Luce standing almost next to Abetz during a reception given at the German Institute in honour of Winifred Wagner. While Fabre-Luce seems engaged in a pleasant conversation with the famous composer’s daughter-in-law, elegantly dressed in white, Abetz is standing just one metre away, talking to Jean-Louis Vaudoyer, a collaborationist writer who was director of the Comédie Française during the war. Other guests are the German star

\[203\] Journal de travail, cahier 1 [April 1943, exact date unknown], Fonds BdJ, Don 96 01 (37).
\[204\] Fabre-Luce, *Vingt-Cinq Années de Liberté II*, 69, 71.
conductor Herbert von Karajan and Karl Theo Zeitschel, responsible for ‘Jewish questions’ at the embassy. Altogether, the guests in this photograph were a typical cross section of the Paris collaborationist world. Fabre-Luce seems to have been an early guest at German events in Paris. In a personal account from 1941, Jacques Chardonne described his first visit to the German Institute to listen to a Franco-German concert. He admitted at first feeling uncomfortable about his presence amidst the invaders, but he was relieved at the sight of two prominent compatriots: the ‘infallible moralist’ Henry de Montherlant and Fabre-Luce, ‘the most intelligent man of France’. Vaudoyer and Abel Bonnard were also present at the concert.

Fabre-Luce welcomed Germany’s cultural policy, which he found fairly tolerant, and actively enjoyed the victor’s cultural offensive. Just as the

205 Photograph included in the photo section of Paxton, et al., eds., Archives de la Vie Littéraire Sous l’Occupation.
206 Jacques Chardonne, Voir la Figure, 42, 46.
capital’s roads had been cleansed of noise and traffic jams, newfangled plays had disappeared from its theatres, making way for a new appreciation of the classics. The German victory had rid Parisian cultural life of boring receptions, snobbish fashions and innane publicity. France’s new position at the western end of a German-dominated continental empire also reoriented the literary and cinematographic taste of its population. Cut off from Hollywood and British literature, the French audience was now free to discover Ernst Jünger, Ernst Wiechert, Emil Jannings and Zarah Leander. In May 1941, Fabre-Luce attended a Mozart and Wagner concert of the Berliner Philharmoniker at the Paris Opera. He showed himself profoundly impressed by the conductor Von Karajan, whom he later met at the German Institute and hailed as a ‘magician who made frontiers fall’. Two months later, during an open-air Mozart concert in the garden of the Palais-Royal, Fabre-Luce experienced a similar Franco-German fraternisation through music: ‘The victor has come to charm the defeated. He has taught him how to make use of his city. […] What do the fortunes of politics matter?’ Fabre-Luce also visited the famous Arno Breker exhibition in Paris, one of the highlights of the cultural collaboration. In the more sceptical third volume of Journal de la France, he recognised the ‘authentic talent’ of Hitler’s favourite sculptor, who had specialised in gigantic nudes, but he questioned the viability of the ‘German renaissance’ that Breker was supposed to embody.

Fabre-Luce did not only read Jünger and include him in his Anthologie de la Nouvelle Europe, he also regularly met the Wehrmacht captain, who was comfortably based in Paris throughout most of the Second World War. As a famous writer and highly decorated veteran from the First World War, Jünger enjoyed certain privileges among the German officer corps. Largely free from military obligations, he was allowed to move around in Paris in civilian clothing and establish connections with the city’s high society. Jünger’s diaries and papers show meetings with Fabre-Luce as well as a correspondence stretching from 1941 into the late 1960s. Fabre-Luce remembered Jünger as ‘a superior spirit, able to surpass the nationalism that has animated his youth. For him, as for me, a united Europe was an inevitable fate, whatever the result of the war would be, restraining the

207 Fabre-Luce, Journal de la France II (1942), 140, 153. Fabre-Luce wrote ‘Wychert’ but probably meant the German writer Ernst Wiechert. Despite being a known opponent of Nazism and banned from publishing in Germany, Wiechert figured among the authors translated into French on behalf of Epting’s German Institute. See Geiger, L’Image de la France dans l’Allemagne Nazié, 251.
208 Fabre-Luce, Journal de la France II (1942), 154, 156.
209 Fabre-Luce, Journal de la France III (1943), 114.
victors and consoling the defeated.’ They met in May 1941 and speculated about Rudolf Hess’ flight to Scotland, a hotly debated subject at the time that was also discussed between Jouvenel and Abetz. In February 1942, Fabre-Luce invited Jünger for dinner at his apartment to personally hand him ‘one of the first copies of the Anthologie, in which I have included one of your most beautiful texts’. The dinner was also meant as an occasion for Jünger to meet Drieu la Rochelle, after an earlier attempt had failed when Drieu had forgotten to bring his laissez-passer needed for entry into the building of the German military administration. But Drieu failed to show up once again, for which he later apologised. Jünger recalled that they dined in Fabre-Luce’s wood-clad study, next to a large world map: ‘it was kept all white, like terra incognita, and only the places its visitor had seen, were depicted’. Fabre-Luce wrote Jünger to express his admiration for Gärten und Strassen, Jünger’s account of his personal trials and tribulations during the Fall of France, which he found as impressive as his earlier fantasy novel Auf den Marmorklippen. He appreciated Jünger’s talent for describing ‘the eternal through the transient’ and admitted counting the discovery of these two books ‘among my most important events of the year’.

Fabre-Luce also established warm relations with Sieburg and Epting, who brought him into contact with Carl Schmitt during one of the famous political theorist’s visits to Paris. He was frequently in touch with Gerhard Heller (1909–1982), who acted as the censor to the first volume of Journal de la France. A friend of Horst Wessel, Heller, like Abetz, had been involved in German youth organisations before joining the Nazi Party in 1934. Holding a university degree in Romanistik (Latin Studies) and having extensively studied and travelled in France during the 1930s, Heller was appointed literary censor at the Propaganda-Abteilung in 1940. In 1942, when censorship was transferred to Abetz’s German embassy, Heller became the head of its literature department, while also having a desk at Epting’s German Institute. Heller made only small cuts in Journal de la France I and told Fabre-Luce that he was welcome to ‘freely’ write a sequel to the book. But he was more reluctant about the second volume after Epting had criticised him for not having prevented Fabre-Luce from including a few pages by

210 Fabre-Luce, Vingt-Cinq Années de Liberté II, 106; Jouvenel, Un Voyageur, 427.
211 Fabre-Luce to Ernst Jünger (19 February 1942), Ernst Jünger Nachlass, Deutsches Literaturarchiv.
212 Jünger, Strahlungen, 101; Mitchell, The Devil’s Captain, 75. Jünger notes that ‘two professors of philosophy, who were brothers, and a man called Rouvier’ were also present at the dinner.
213 Fabre-Luce to Ernst Jünger (29 June 1942), Ernst Jünger Nachlass, Deutsches Literaturarchiv.
214 Compagnon, Le Cas Bernard Fajé, 146.
Bergson, a Jew, in his *Anthologie*. Not daring to assume responsibility for the publication of a book that included Fabre-Luce’s criticism of the Jewish Statute, Heller forwarded the book to Achenbach, who authorised it. 215 Like Jünger, Heller enjoyed the privilege of invitations to dinner at Fabre-Luce’s place, where he met Sieburg and the former minister Georges Bonnet. 216

Although Fabre-Luce continued to hail Heller as ‘indisputably Francophile and personally sympathetic’ during the 1960s, their relations suffered a sharp decline in the early 1980s as a result of the publication of Heller’s wartime memoirs. 217 By this time, Heller had become a well-known translator of French literature, especially of the works of Drieu, Céline and Patrick Modiano. He described his war years as a pleasant period of Franco-German fraternisation and amorous adventures with French people of both sexes (amongst whom figured Marcel Jouhandeau), during which he had always retained a genuine admiration for French literature and lifestyle, and secretly for the Resistance too. The book included a less-than-flattering description of Fabre-Luce, whom he placed alongside Benoist-Méchin (and implicitly also Céline) in a group of hard-core collaborators he had not wanted to be in contact with. Heller cited from Fabre-Luce’s ‘Letter to an American’ – including the sentence about ‘a new race’ that was beginning to take shape – and expressed his ‘shock’ that a French intellectual could truly believe in ‘a new Europe under the sign of the Nazis’. 218 Fabre-Luce reacted furiously, reminding Heller in a letter that he had been the one who invited him to one of the two notorious propaganda trips to Germany in the autumn of 1942. Fabre-Luce had declined the offer but ‘apparently, had I accepted, you would have now reproached it to me’. 219

It seems that Heller matched Fabre-Luce in the game of self-justifying historical falsification, especially when considering some other evidence. The wartime correspondence between Heller and Jünger suggests that both Germans considered their mission to be that of establishing German control over the French mind. During the winter of 1942-1943, while Jünger was spending a few months at the eastern front, Heller wrote him from Paris

215 Fabre-Luce, ‘La Deuxième Invasion du Lieutenant Heller’ (1981), unpublished article included in Fonds AFL, 472 AP 10 dr. 5. The presence of Bergson in the *Anthologie* was also the official reason why the German Institute deemed the book unfit to be published in a German translation. See Fabre-Luce, *Vingt-Cinq Années de Liberté II*, 79.
217 Fabre-Luce, *Vingt-Cinq Années de Liberté II*, 69.
218 Heller, *Un Allemand à Paris*, 46, 47, 150.
219 Fabre-Luce to Heller (7 April 1981), Fonds AFL, 472 AP 10 dr. 5.
that the Allied invasion of North Africa had had ‘a large effect’ on the French and even ‘on our friends’, making it ever harder ‘to walk the indicated path with them’. Jünger answered that he would soon be back in Paris, where he was hoping ‘to serve the fatherland well. The total mobilisation should now especially include the use of all spiritual reserves, a sharper consideration of everything that is necessary in the presence of threat.’ In June 1943, Heller wrote Jünger that things were getting worse: ‘at this time, one has to seriously pay attention that our last friends don’t also defect’. Less than three weeks later, Fabre-Luce published the third volume of his *Journal de la France*. Though the book can hardly be considered anti-German or pro-Resistance, Jünger and Heller must have disliked reading one of their ‘friends’ condemn the persecutions and deportations of Jews, envisage an Allied victory and openly announce that the politics of collaboration had failed the moment Germany occupied the ‘free’ zone. On 8 July, during an evening spent with Epting and the Déat couple, Jünger first heard about the book, which had caused ‘big annoyance’. He noted in his diaries: ‘I have the impression that this will lead to a police affair.’

The same evening, Fabre-Luce was arrested and detained in the Cherche-Midi prison in Paris. According to Fabre-Luce, he spent just over two months at the Cherche-Midi, where he shared his corridor with communists and black-marketers – some of whom were awaiting execution – before being transferred to a more comfortable cell in a Gestapo villa in Neuilly-sur-Seine. Fabre-Luce was reluctant to give much information as to how exactly he was treated, but in a later book he claimed he was beaten up by a German jailor, who took him for a Jew. Not all Germans treated him as badly, however. After the war, Fabre-Luce testified in defence of Karl Braun, the inspector of his Neuilly prison, claiming that Braun had helped him during his detention by pleading for his release and making it possible for his wife to visit him. Fabre-Luce was released after another month in Neuilly upon payment of a fine of 200,000 francs, but it seems things could have turned out much worse for him. The writer Maurice Martin du Gard, an acquaintance to whom Fabre-Luce had sent a dedicated copy of the third volume of *Journal de la France*.

---

223 Fabre-Luce, *Journal de la France III* (1943), 25, 29, 70.
225 Fabre-Luce, *Double Prison*, 159; Statement by Fabre-Luce in favour of Karl Braun, Fonds AFL, 472 AP 1.
226 Fabre-Luce, *Vingt-Cinq Années de Liberté II*, 135, 158, 163.
Fabre-Luce, heard the rumour that the Germans had been planning to send him ‘to a quarry in the General Government’, which he feared the frail-healthed intellectual would never have survived.\(^{227}\)

Other, more hostile readers either did not believe Fabre-Luce’s life was at risk or simply could not care less what happened to him. Under the headline ‘Trop Tard!’ the influential clandestine Resistance newspaper *Les Lettres Françaises* surmised that Fabre-Luce had apparently described the approaching German defeat with just enough accuracy ‘to obtain his arrest by the Gestapo. This kind of operations is exactly what we used to call, in the language of parliamentary customs, “to have oneself exculpated” [“se faire dédouaner”].’ After a few collaborationist citations from the first two volumes of *Journal de la France*, the (anonymous) author concluded: ‘Now, the ex-unifiers of Europe, the ex-Duce’s allies can put Mr. Fabre-Luce in prison or even give him hot feet. All that doesn’t matter to us. It’s just a settling of accounts between people from the underworld.’\(^{228}\) Similarly, a report drafted by Vichy’s intelligence service concluded that ‘left-wing and particularly communist circles’ were mocking Fabre-Luce’s new position. Calling the third volume of *Journal de la France* ‘a masterpiece of deceitfulness’, they stated that Fabre-Luce’s attempt to change sides would not win him any indulgence and that, ‘whatever he does now, his fate will be the same as that of all traitors’.\(^{229}\)

Both Heller and Jünger claimed to have played a role in Fabre-Luce’s release. Jünger wrote that he was happy to hear from Heller, on 4 August, that Fabre-Luce’s prison regime had been alleviated and that he would be entitled to a normal trial, ‘after the information on him that I gave to the Militärbefehlshaber.’\(^{230}\) Heller described a joint meeting of representatives of the Propaganda-Abteilung, the embassy, the German Institute and the Sicherheitsdienst (SD) to decide the fate of Fabre-Luce. Heller and an unnamed acquaintance who also attended the meeting were convinced that ‘all should be done to avoid that anything happens to Fabre-Luce’, but they did not dare raise their voice when SD-leader Helmut Knochen mentioned the ‘Nacht und Nebel’ treatment, which would have implied the complete disappearance and possible death of Fabre-Luce in a German concentration camp. Heller was relieved when it was decided to let him go

\(^{227}\) Martin du Gard, *Chronique de Vichy*, 379.

\(^{228}\) [author unknown], ‘Trop Tard!’, *Les Lettres Françaises* (September 1943), 6.

\(^{229}\) Report by Renseignements Généraux, 4\(^{th}\) section (22 November 1943), included in Dossier d’Épuration, AN, Z/6/285 dossier 8648.

'after a serious warning'.\textsuperscript{231} This relief may have been motivated by feelings of guilt. The historian Wolfgang Geiger has established that it was Heller who had reported Fabre-Luce as ‘anti-German’ on 5 July 1943 to consul general Wilhelm Knothe.\textsuperscript{232} During his post-war trial, Knochen himself mentioned the Fabre-Luce case as proof of his supposed leniency during the occupation: ‘my service did not insist on strict measures’.\textsuperscript{233}

Information on Jouvenel’s relations with Germans is even more fragmented, but there is evidence he was in close contact with Abetz and Eping, whom he found ‘interesting and friendly’. He also had a private dinner with Carl Schaefer, who functioned as the German commissary at the Banque de France.\textsuperscript{234} In early 1942, Jouvenel contacted the German Institute asking for permission to consult the confiscated archives of the French foreign ministry for a series of documents relevant to his study of Napoleon and the Continental System. Jouvenel remained loyal to Abetz long after the war was over. In 1954, when Abetz was released from his French prison, Jouvenel sent a cheque of 100 French francs to the couple in Düsseldorf to alleviate their financial difficulties.\textsuperscript{235} Even at an advanced age, Jouvenel continued to defend Abetz as a sincere lover of France who considered himself a Rhinelander and therefore ‘closer to the French spirit’ than to the ‘Prussian’ one. ‘I have known since a long time that Abetz is not an anti-Semite, and he also does not believe in the superiority of the Germanic race’.\textsuperscript{236} Whether Abetz believed in this superiority or not, it is a fact that he was deeply involved with the organisation and the execution of the Holocaust in France. On 17 June 1942, he met with Carl Oberg, the higher SS and police leader of France, to discuss the first wave of deportations. When Oberg asked him which Jews should be exempted ‘in the name of the political interests of the Reich’, Abetz named only three: Henri Bergson’s widow, the writer Colette (Jouvenel’s stepmother and erstwhile lover) and Jouvenel’s wife Marcelle Prat ‘in case it is proven she is really Jewish’.\textsuperscript{237}

\textsuperscript{231} Heller, \textit{Un Allemand à Paris}, 152, 174. Heller also claimed that Abetz played a role Fabre-Luce’s liberation, but this is improbable as he had been recalled to Berlin between November 1942 and December 1943.
\textsuperscript{232} Geiger, \textit{L’Image de la France dans l’Allemagne Nazie}, 320.
\textsuperscript{233} ‘Extrait des Déclarations du Dr. Knochen’, Dossier d’Épuration, AN, Z/6/285 dossier 8648.
\textsuperscript{234} Jouvenel, \textit{Un Voyageur}, 398; Dard, \textit{Bertrand de Jouvenel}, 152.
\textsuperscript{235} Jouvenel to Luc Braemer (6 February 1942), Fonds BdJ, Don 96 01 (302); Suzanne Abetz to Jouvenel (17 May 1954), Fonds BdJ, Don 96 01 (294).
\textsuperscript{236} Jouvenel, \textit{Un Voyageur}, 397.
\textsuperscript{237} Lambauer, \textit{Otto Abetz et les Français}, 549.
While Jouvenel seems to have already stopped reporting to the Vichy secret services in the course of 1941, in November 1942 the Allied landings in North Africa and the subsequent German-Italian occupation of the southern zone brought a definite end to his intelligence activities. Jouvenel returned to his native Corrèze, where he frequently met Malraux and Berl, who was busy working on a history of Europe. He also received the visit of Jean Jardin, Laval’s Chief of Staff. Jardin’s son Pascal, who was nine years old at the time, later recalled meeting

a huge man, as handsome as a Greek god. He was sleeping naked under an apple tree. The early spring sunshine was gilding his skin. It was the economist Bertrand de Jouvenel, future author of that citadel nine hundred pages long, *Du Pouvoir*. At the present time he was still something of a playboy, and since his mother was Jewish he had certain worries. He was a day-dreamer, incurably lost in the mazes of his thought.\(^{238}\)

It was at this time that Jouvenel probably also became involved in supporting local Resistance activities, mainly by trying to appease farmers angry about the theft of chickens by hungry résistants, and possibly also retrieving Allied airdrops and helping men hide from forced labour in Germany. When Martial Brigouleix, his former platoon leader from the Phony War and one of the leaders of the Corrèze Resistance, was arrested in May 1943, Jouvenel was sent to Paris to try to obtain his liberation via Abetz or Brinon.\(^{239}\) Failing to meet either of them, Jouvenel was instead arrested by the Gestapo and questioned about his activities in Poland during 1939. A series of arrests that took place at the same time brought an end to the Corrèze Resistance network.Released after two days but convinced that his release was meant to lead the Germans to other resisters, he chose to go in hiding, first in a Burgundian abbey and later abroad. On 21 September 1943 around noon, Jouvenel and his wife illegally crossed the Swiss border.\(^{240}\)

---


\(^{240}\) Jouvenel, *Un Voyageur*, 457.