What French Women Wore to the Resistance: Fashion, War, and Gender Transformation, 1940–1945

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Abstract: In studying French women resistors, scholars have largely fought the erasure of their contributions from the record. I revisit résistante *stories as narratives about clothing that mark the specificity of female resistance as well as changes in gender identity. First, I explore how women weaponized their clothing. During the war they used their dresses, underwear, and jackets to hide Resistance documents, carry bombs, and escape enemy notice. Such resistance continued to occur after women partisans were deported to Ravensbrück, a Nazi detention camp for female political prisoners. Here again clothing became an instrument of resistance. Second, I show how the sartorial choices of résistantes provide crucial evidence of their changing selves. How these women chose to clothe their bodies can help us trace how they changed as a result of their wartime activism. Résistantes' shifting views of their clothing registered profound alienation and confusion about their gendered selves.*

In August 1944, eighteen-year-old Simone Ségouin became a darling of the press. Known by her *nom de guerre*, Nicole Minet, Ségouin was a member of the French Resistance who helped capture twenty-five German prisoners of war in the town of Chartres not far from Paris. Photographed and interviewed by the French and American press, including *LIFE* magazine, Ségouin served as a symbol of the Liberation (see Figure 1).[1]

By the sheer fact of her gender and youth, Ségouin signaled the unprompted heroism of the Liberation. Her presence implied that despite a lack of military training, even women had joined the fight. In fact, Ségouin's presence should not have been surprising given that women formed "a considerable presence" in all Resistance networks.[2] Nevertheless, she became a proud allegory of a spontaneous fighting France.

Ségouin also represents a novel way of performing the female body for the French public. At first glance, her self-presentation—as a woman with a gun—signals the disruptive effects of the war on gender norms. The unwritten but deep-seated rule of war—that it is fought *for* women, not *by* women—had been broken. Ségouin's presence signaled the failure of French men to protect their women. In that sense, her presence was a source of humiliation as well as pride. Ségouin had become a "man" in the shameful absence of men.

Or had she? A second glance at Ségouin's embodiment of a combat role complicates that conclusion. Her appearance defies easy gender assignment. The shorts were

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Figure 1.
Simone Ségouin, the 18-year-old French Resistance Fighter, at the Liberation, 1944. Rare Historical Photographs.

short and accentuated her tanned, lean legs. Her blouses were fashionable, her hat was dashing, and her waist decorated with either a coquettish bow or a gallant red sash. The most subversive element of her image lay not in the fact that Ségouin sported a machine gun but that she did so with unmistakable panache. Ségouin used her clothes to present as female even as the machine gun signaled a shift in conventional identifications of gender.

Like other résistantes, she was left to invent her own visual appearance. As historian Elisabeth Terrenoire put it, "women resistors were combatants without uniforms."[3] Even in the summer of 1944, male partisans forbade their female comrades from dressing in uniforms available through the Allied army.[4] This prohibition was an attempt to deny women the status of official combatants. During the occupation, of course, résistantes engaging in clandestine activities could hardly afford to announce their politics through their clothing. At the Liberation, however, it was a different matter. Ségouin combined blue shorts and a blouse with a bright red Republican sash in order to proclaim her tricolor loyalties (the colors of the French flag). Crucially, her outfit resembled that of an eighteenth-century revolutionary. Ségouin aligned herself with the French revolutionary tradition, borrowing its legitimacy for her own actions. She presents a subversive spectacle of transformed femininity, at once playful and patriotic, coquettish and serious.

In this article, I follow Ségouin's lead to explore the politics of what *partisanes* (female partisans) wore in the Resistance. France's defeat at the hands of Germany had

come quickly in June 1940, leading to the creation of a right-wing collaborationist state. The Nazis divided the French nation into two zones roughly split between north and south. In the south, a government in the spa town of Vichy maintained nominal sovereignty in cooperation with Hitler. The Nazis occupied northern and coastal France, and then the entire nation in November 1942. Although the French Resistance movement was slow in developing, it gained great strength in the later years. Resistance networks grew enormously in 1943, when many men began hiding in the woods to escape Nazi slave labor. By D-Day in 1944, US general Dwight Eisenhower estimated the strength of the Resistance to be equal to fifteen military divisions.[5]

Women were part of Resistance movements in most European nations.[6] Soviet, Greek, and Yugoslavian female partisans generally wore uniforms, but British, French, German, and Italian women worked clandestinely and chose their own clothing. Their secret operations included spying, couriering messages, gathering and reporting intelligence, and performing acts of sabotage. French women résistantes were both single and married. They came from all religious faiths, social classes, and regions.[7]

In focusing on what résistantes wore, I acknowledge the exceptionally strong links in modern France between female identity and fashion. Even in the war's difficult circumstances, these women shared a persistent concern with personal aesthetics. How does one know résistante fashion was more than a trivial, peripheral matter? Even the casual reader of these women's memoirs will be struck by the detailed lists of garments suffusing their narratives. They remembered *what they had on* with remarkable frequency and precision. When Nancy Wake parachuted into France with the Special Operations Executive (SOE), for example, she recalled that "over civilian clothes, silk-stockinged and high-heeled, I wore overalls, carried revolvers in the pockets, and topped the lot with a bulky camel-haired coat, webbing harness, parachute and tin hat. Even more incongruous was the matronly handbag, full of cash and secret instructions for D-Day."[8] Evelyne Sullerot remembered that when she joined the Resistance, she took a skirt made from a bedspread, a blouse, sandals, and one pair of underwear. That was what she wore for two months.[9] On the day Lucie Aubrac met the notorious Gestapo chief Klaus Barbie, she recalled wearing "a very pretty checkered rayon suit, big white porcelain daisy earrings, and a tiny pillbox hat with a little veil."[10]

Such lists emerged from a rich inventory of meanings attached to clothing both before and during the war. The uniform emerges as a key issue. If Ségouin wore shorts to the Liberation, that was because she was forbidden from having an Allied uniform. Because the résistantes were refused an official uniform, they were left to extemporize. Denied official recognition as soldiers, they also struggled to understand themselves in conventional gender terms. In response, they extemporized gendered selves as well as military dress.

In uncovering stories of résistantes, scholars have fought the erasure of their contributions from the record by both contemporaries and historians. Their narratives champion women's place in the history of the Resistance. Such work provided a detailed account of the many women who risked their lives in acts of sabotage and rescue. It

also gave historians a profound appreciation for the work of the so-called anonymous résistantes, women who opened their homes to partisans, fed and housed them, and otherwise ensured their safety.[11] My approach builds on this work by exploring the politics of the résistantes' clothed bodies. For sources, I have relied mostly on memoirs and oral testimonies. While such sources can be idiosyncratic and biased, they serve my purpose here, which is to probe how résistantes used clothing to carry out subversive acts and to signal personal transformation in their roles as warriors.

After tracing the rich prewar meanings of clothing in France, I explore how these women used dress to play at conventional femininity. In order to carry out subversive activities, the résistantes mimicked conventional gender norms.[12] They flirted, seduced, and pretended to be helpless while carrying out activities. In short, they redeployed conventional femininity as a weapon of war. In this battle, clothing took on new political stakes. Résistantes played a highly dangerous game; many were executed or imprisoned by the Nazis. Nevertheless, an elegantly dressed woman could flirt her way through a document check, bring a bomb onto a train, or carry messages by bicycle. In other words, she could do things no young man could get away with at that time.

If a partisan's strategy was to weaponize her femininity, the Nazis aimed to deny their sex altogether. At Ravensbrück, the German prison for the largest portion of résistantes, the Nazis used clothing (or its absence) to desexualize women. The body of a female prisoner lost its female markings. Her hair and pubic hair were shaved; her personal clothing and jewelry were stolen. She stopped menstruating and gained a sexless, skeletal frame.

After the Liberation, women like Ségouin strove to create respectable, if not "official," dress for war-making. The war continued for nine months after the Liberation of Paris. The French army was reconstituted to fight with the Allies, and members of the Resistance became a separate partisan force. Women's sartorial decisions revolved around a conundrum faced by many female combatants across Europe: how could they assume the subject position of the soldier, a highly traditional masculine role, while remaining conventionally female? How, in other words, could they be soldiers and women at the same time? Ségouin managed by appearing chic while sporting a German MP 40 machine gun. How did other résistantes shape themselves into that contradictory mold? What was the role of dress in such a reshaping effort? Answering these questions gives us clues as to how women rethought themselves *as women* in a martial context.

Women, Fashion, and Politics

To appreciate the full meaning of wartime partisan dress, we must review the prewar links between fashion and femininity.[13] Fashion played a unique role in French cultural life during the interwar era. Among other things, it signified French cultural preeminence. What women wore in Paris dictated, to a great extent, what women wore throughout Europe and the world. Nevertheless, the meaning of fashion changed

dramatically at the start of the war. Dress, like body weight, became a measure of collaboration with the occupying powers. Women who continued wearing fashionable clothes raised suspicions, either that they were buying on the black market or that they were somehow connected to German structures of power.[14] More austere dress signaled deprivation, which earned a woman respectability. Thus, fashion became suffused with the politics of collaboration.

Also politicized were clothes worn by the occupiers. The French nicknamed the Germans by the color of their uniforms: they became the detestable *vert de gris* (the gray-green ones). Their polished boots symbolized German sadism and control; they inspired fear and hatred among the French.[15] German women, in particular, were dismissed as frumpy *souris grises* (gray mice). Their uniform itself became a sign of oppression. Resistor Nancy Wake remembered her visit to Paris after the beginning of the occupation: "I did not like what I saw, as I had known a different Paris. It depressed me to see the German uniforms."[16]

French civilians focused on the German uniform to express hostility toward their occupiers. Visual beauty expressed French national identity. Ugly dress and appearance served to "other" the enemy and helped solidify a tenuous boundary between occupier and occupied. State restrictions placed upon clothing and fabric in 1941 did little to dampen the desire for stylish dress. French women had to somehow navigate between German frumpiness and inappropriately frivolous fashion. In record numbers they subscribed to fashion magazines such as *Marie-Claire* and *Le petit echo de la mode*.[17] The strong links between the female body and clothing were bound by the notion of *coquetterie*, a distinctly French trait combining stylishness and flirtation. To be a coquette was to use an elegant appearance for the purposes of seduction, to uphold, in other words, both gender and national identities. According to historian Dominique Veillon, French women's refusal to succumb to sartorial adversity can be interpreted as a "safeguarding of identity" and a way of "saving appearances" in a period of national shame.[18] Coquetterie became a matter of French pride.

French women who entered the British Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS) provide an example of such *coquetterie française*. The ATS was the women's branch of the British Army during the war. About seventy French women in England initially became part of the ATS as the *Corps féminin des volontaires françaises* (Female corps of French Volunteers). Unfortunately, the words "corps féminin" could also be translated as "female body." The organization became the butt of so many jokes that it was renamed *Corps des volontaires françaises* (Corps of French Volunteers). The change suggests a male preoccupation with the female sexualized body, a fixation that, in turn, signals how difficult it was for corps women to gain respect as military personnel. Given that fact, *how* these women dressed their bodies became an imperative concern. Dress came to bear the burden of establishing female military credibility. It coded the female body within a military aesthetic at once masculine and asexual.

For French ATS members (women who still did not vote in 1941), the uniform also established a female civic identity. Raymonde Teyssier-Jore, a native of New Cale-

donia who sailed to England to join the ATS, vividly remembered the first time she put on her uniform. "The khaki color was not flattering on me. But I was so very proud! Proud as well of the little tricolor ribbon surrounding the left epaulette of my jacket, which distinguished us from the English women. Proud finally to write to my family that evening that I was finally a soldier!"[19] Teyssier-Jore's joy stemmed from her deep investment in the uniform as conferring the status of patriot and soldier. Even if the khaki color did not flatter her, the uniform answered her craving for legitimacy and love of *la patrie* (the nation). Like Ségouin, she found particular power in Republican imagery.

Not every member of the corps was so gratified. As in the case of the German "gray mice," these women asserted their Frenchness by contrasting themselves with a dowdy foreigner, this time the British. When other French members received their uniforms, they denounced the hat as "horrible," a hideous thing only the British could fabricate. So loudly did the women complain that they were issued a *calot*, or smart navy cap, instead. According to Jeanne Bohec, the calot had "an allure which was more French."[20] The women also refused to wear the gas mask. Throwing it aside, they kept only the case, which they converted into a chic purse for their makeup and the hairnets they were supposed to wear in the cafeteria (as soon as the officers left the room, the hairnets came off.) Because there was not much time in the morning to put on makeup, some women did it at night before they went to bed. They personalized their uniform by padding the shoulders of the jacket and tightening it at the breast and the waist. They also shortened and took in the skirt, wore their own blouses under their jackets, and donned silk stockings instead of the cotton ones they were issued.[21] Their female superiors were supposed to forbid such changes but instead looked the other way. As one of them put it, "feminine coquetterie was innate for French women."[22]

Because coquetterie and the normative female body so strongly defined each other, and because fashion was central to both, résistantes talked frequently of the clothes they wore during the war years. "For sure I would have liked to have been elegant," admitted partisan Denise Foucard, whose mother was a couturier. She recalled landmark moments in her life by the clothes she wore. For a graduation, for example, her parents bought her a new blue dress, the particulars of which she could still recall sixty-five years later. The gift "was a true event," she remembered.[23] These clothes became invested with personal meaning, denoting crucial moments and transformations. These sartorial investments reveal a great deal about the war experience of women activists.

Coquetterie as a Strategy of War

Even as elegant dresses and shoes became scarce and expensive, coquetterie persisted as an unrealized ideal. "With my men's pants prickling my legs," lamented Elizabeth Rioux-Quintenelle, "I resembled an old sack more than the coquettish nurse I would have hoped to be at twenty-years-old."[24] Wartime dress was often a source of despair. Agnes Humbert quailed at her new "convict" dress at the Anrath prison, a dress she

remembered with remarkable detail: "a patchwork of different black fabrics, with embroidery in the form of a few machine darns."[25] Rosemonde Pujol conceded that she was "relatively well-dressed" because she sewed, but that her shoes were a disaster, "broken and re-soled with god-knows-what."[26] On the train back to Paris one night after trying to make herself "as elegant as I could given my shabby wardrobe in these miserable times," Annie Guehenno "became witless and stupid for several hours."[27]

To grieve nice clothing was also to grieve a former self. For women in danger, feminine clothing reopened the door to a comforting familiar. Marie-Madeleine Fourcade, who directed one of the most extensive underground networks in France, was once delighted when, hiding in Spain, she was able to replace her "threadbare clothes" with a "charming black silk dress, wonderful shoes with cork soles . . . and a whole range of skirts, sweaters and lingerie." The clothes made her "feel myself again."[28] On another occasion, Fourcade was able to make her blue suit "reasonably spruce," and it "gave me courage and . . . a stout heart."[29] Annie Guehenno remembered a beautiful summer day in the Loire on her way to a rendezvous. "I had on a beautiful light silk dress in vibrant colors, and I felt joyful and carefree . . . I was filled with a sort of hope without object."[30]

For partisans, the desire to feel and appear elegant was a requirement for the job. "For a liaison agent," Cécile Ouzoulias-Romagon argued, "elegant apparel was equivalent to working clothes."[31] "Even in this period of scarcity we had to force ourselves to dress elegantly," Ouzoulias-Romagon remembered.[32] "I kept a coquette's interest in my appearance, a fact which served me so often," agreed partisan Denise Foucard. Without her looks and her youth, she believed she would have perished. Once she flirted her way through a control point after being forced to swallow a coded message. She was then forced to give the police "a quick kiss with subversive paper breath" in order to get by the control.[33] The police, Ouzoulias-Romagon explained, "always hesitated to behave in a finicky manner towards a well-dressed woman."[34] Célia Bertin swore that she was not suspected of being a "terrorist" (the German word for members of the Resistance) in Paris simply because she wore elegant hats and high heels.[35] Perhaps most famously, Lucie Aubrac used her clothes to disguise herself to the Gestapo as an upper-class woman wrongfully made pregnant by a terrorist. In fact, the terrorist was her partisan husband whom she then managed to spring from prison.[36]

By using feminine wiles in a strategic manner, the partisans managed to both uphold and subvert gender norms. These women kept up appearances not to win a husband but to win a war. On the one hand, they conformed to German expectations that French women were decorative, erotic objects. On the other hand, however, they were mimicking, not inhabiting, conventional gender norms. Flirting was a subversive disguise, a means of subterfuge and survival. Madeleine Braun, who often carried a bouquet of flowers to fool the Gestapo, said it best: "behind the official smiles necessary to security, the words 'treason,' 'impossible to continue in these conditions,' 'why pursue an action you don't think will succeed,' as well as others, some even harsher, replaced the words of love that those who observed us believed that we were speaking."[37]

Particularly for young résistantes, body type, clothing, hair, and makeup provided an innocuous presentation of femininity that enabled certain activities. Annie Kriegel remembered leaving Grenoble on a mission when the city was completely surrounded by German police posts. No young man would be able to get beyond this police belt, she argued, but she had no problem given "my innocence in the manner of a young girl."[38] "A woman is able to get through relatively unnoticed," agreed Simone Bertrand, referring to those agents who escorted Allied flyers to the south of France.[39] "Who would suspect a schoolgirl with limpid eyes?" asked Cécile Jouan about the partisane Dédée.[40] Gisèle Guillemot believed she had the same advantage with her "young manner and schoolgirl appearance."[41] Another woman doing liaison work in Paris was never suspected, she claimed, because "I have an air so incredibly young and innocent!"[42] Marie Chamming remembered being approached by two Germans for her papers. But then they changed their minds: "Ah you, Mademoiselle, not worth the time. Too young, too little." For her part, Chamming was ecstatic: "I had always suffered from being a '*modèle réduite*' (a woman of small stature). Now at least it would do me some good!"[43]

As the war went on, résistantes increasingly manipulated their appearance for political ends. Baby carriages hid ammunition; market baskets concealed anti-Nazi tracts.[44] Denise Foucard was carrying a suitcase full of bullet chargers when she faced a police search at the railway station; luckily she had flirted on the train with a man who not only offered to carry her heavy load but also, most likely because he was a collaborator, received a pass at the gate.[45] Damira Asperti claimed to have passed police control dozens of times with her suitcase full of ammunition.[46] Wanted by the Gestapo, Nancy Wake once avoided arrest by putting on a dress so out of date "they did not give me a second look, even their first glance was rather disdainful. I did not blame them. I did not look very fetching."[47] Wake's tactic signals a new kind of sartorial play: here the *absence* of coquetterie was the winning ticket.

Helplessness was another conceit. One day Ouzoulias-Romagon and her mother were transporting Allied parachutes on their bicycles from the train station. When they reached the station stairs, they saw two German policemen watching them from the top. "It was Mama who saved the situation," remembered Ouzoulias-Romagon, "pretending not to be able to carry everything up the stairs at the same time that she threw a pleading smile at the two policemen." The result: the two Germans helped mother and daughter carry enemy parachutes up the stairs.[48] They were not the only two Nazis to carry contraband for a woman. The Jewish résistante Marthe Cohn carried family valuables around Paris in a suitcase in order to avoid confiscation. Once she was approached by two Germans soldiers. She froze until one of them offered to carry her suitcase as it was "way too heavy for a beautiful woman like you."[49]

Given the new stakes of a résistante's appearance, her clothing gained a political charge. Catherine Roux bought a large English brooch to close her coat, "out of loyalty to our allies." When she was arrested, she hid it in her clothing. "I don't know how many times I thought of this pin," she remembered, "during the unbearable hours of interrogation."[50] A jewel became a show of patriotism and then an instrument of

suicide. Clothing became a weapon that hid subversive papers. When Catherine Roux was arrested, she had documents in her purse, her pockets, her gloves, and her beret; they included the insurrection plans for D-Day.[51] Fourcade praised the merits of silk as particularly effective for hiding documents.[52] When Ouzoulias-Romagon was stopped by the police, her clothes burst with incriminating evidence. "In the right pocket of my suit was a letter which I was to hand over to Hélène for Professor Marcel Prenant. Even worse, in a silky pouch between my girdle and my skin, was an entire set of papers which I was to give Mireille to pass on to the regional authorities." Because she was pregnant, the police did not find her large belly suspicious. Nor did they notice any difference in size when she managed to get to the bathroom to destroy them.[53] Cécile Jouan's mission was transporting small arms on a train. To prevent discovery, she put small bombs in her coat sleeves, then held them in place by raising her arms to her neck, pretending to shiver from cold.[54] Lise Lesèvre hid her most important papers in what she called a "feminine jumble" in her purse, including a knitting pattern. When she was arrested, the Nazis managed to miss the incriminating papers, instead preoccupying themselves with the knitting instructions for a sock heel. Unable to read them, they concluded the pattern was a cipher written in secret code.[55]

Ravensbrück and the Female Body

Clothing served a different political purpose for the résistantes arrested by the Gestapo. Intuitively, the Nazis sensed that a woman's gender identity could act as a source of strength and power. If the résistantes played up their femininity to subvert the Gestapo, Nazi camp officials punished them by stealing it away.

Partisanes caught by the Gestapo were held first in local prisons where they were interrogated and often tortured. After a time they were deported east. Roughly a third were sent to Ravensbrück in Germany. Opened in 1939 in the northern city of Fürstenburg, Ravensbrück was an all-female camp confining female resisters, "asocials," prostitutes, Gypsies, and Jews. During the war the camp held some 132,000 female prisoners, mostly Poles and Russians, but also 8,000 French women.[56] French partisan women began arriving in Ravensbrück in large numbers in February 1944. They were called the *vingt-sept-mille* (twenty-seven thousand) because their tattooed numbers ran from 27030 to 27988.[57]

In their elaborate network of camps and prisons, the Nazis tried, above all, to dehumanize the inmates: to make them *into* the beasts or rodents the Nazis already claimed them to be. Their tactics were multiple: forbidding prisoners to clean themselves, starving them slowly, and identifying them with tattooed numbers. A further tactic, important to our purposes here, was the effort to erase the gendered body—and with it, the gendered self. Of his wartime experience, former Auschwitz inmate Primo Levi wrote:

> You who live secure/in your warm houses . . .
> Consider if this is a man,
> who labors in the mud . . .
> who dies at a yes or a no.
> Consider if this is a woman, with no hair and no name
> With no strength left to remember.[58]

A male inmate, Levi claimed, could not be a man if he was not allowed dignified labor. Neither could a female inmate be a woman once her hair was removed and her starved body, reduced to a skeletal frame, ceased to menstruate.[59]

Like other inmates at Ravensbrück, the French women witnessed their bodies being stripped of their gendered markings. Within minutes of arriving, their heads and pubic area were shaved. "The ultimate symbol of our femininity, trampled by German boots," recalled Yvette Lundy, speaking of her hair on the floor.[60] Clothing and belongings were snatched away. "While I was undressing, I watched the complete pillage of my luggage," remembered Denise Dufournier, "eau de Cologne, underwear, leather belts, it was all stolen instantly . . . and I found myself, in the space of a few minutes, quite naked with a bar of soap and a toothbrush in my hands."[61] As Catherine Roux put it,

> I no longer wear clothes
> I no longer have shoes
> I no longer have purse, briefcase, pen
> I no longer have a name.[62]

The Nazis used nakedness, the absence of clothes, to dehumanize the women. When Madeleine Aylmer-Roubenne arrived at the camp, she was undressed on the spot. The SS (*Schutzstaffel*) took photographs and laughed, in her words, "for the pleasure."[63] "We were naked in front of the SS," remembered Yvette Lundy, "worse than naked, desperately naked, stripped of all our dignity. This nakedness lays bare your soul; we are nothing more than a pitiable body offered up to the shifty eyes of the SS."[64] Lundy's body was transformed from an erotic object, once useful for her Resistance activities, to a spectacle of pity and shame. "Nudity was part of our training, an act of vengeance," noted Anne Fernier.[65] The camp search spared no part of their bodies. "We were visited in all our orifices," recalled Lundy. "With great brutality, their fingers reached between our thighs in order to search our most intimate places."[66] Women's most intimate parts, once erotic objects of desire, became sites of brutality. If female seduction had been a source of the résistantes' power, sexual humiliation was now their undoing.[67]

The Ravensbrück uniform evidenced the degradation of the female body. The guards issued each woman a long, cotton-striped dress and jacket, a white headscarf, socks, and clogs.[68] The outfit amounted to a cruel joke: at last, the résistantes were receiving their uniforms. The one pair of underwear issued to each inmate was cleaned once a month.[69] In the summer women could clean their pair more frequently, but in the winter it was too cold and damp. In general, the uniform was filthy and harbored

lice. Prisoners were also forced to paint large crosses on their shirt back and sew on their number and a red triangle (for political prisoners).[70] In this way, clothing produced an inmate's nonidentity. As Gisèle Guillemot put it, a woman became "nothing more than a number on the edge of a fabric."[71] "Your identity at Ravensbrück," noted Bluette Morat, "was no longer your name upon arrest (whether true or false), but a number imprinted on white calico and ridiculously stuck on your sleeve."[72] Like their clothing, women were reduced to *stücke*, or things.[73] Because the guards ignored the fact of women's menses, their pants were frequently stained with blood. "You could be selected for less," lamented Aylmer-Roubenne, referring to the decision to send a prisoner to her death.[74] Guillemot remembers how, when she tried to tear off parts of her dress to adjust its size, the camp official laughed and told her not to do so as she could use the fabric for sanitary purposes.[75]

Clothing, then, denoted the camps' squalor as well as its humiliation. At the same time, even in the highly regulated environment of Ravensbrück, the Nazis could not master the complex range of meanings attached to female dress. To resist their dehumanization, the French women imprisoned at Ravensbrück once again engaged the uniquely French power of coquetterie. The French women quickly earned a reputation for making "chic" bows and headpieces out of their rags.[76] A guard once reproved Lise Lesèvre for wearing a blue lavender band around her head. "You are too elegant" she was scolded.[77] Inmates mocked the French for their fashionable clothing, including an Hermès scarf one woman wore upon arrival. For Dufournier, however, such garments seemed like a "breath of France . . . slipped into our midst."[78] Clothing brought memories of home and beauty.

In the freakish light of the camp, coquetterie became a joke soliciting bitter sarcasm. "*Ravissant*!" was how Rosine Crémieux judged her "prison costume"—a rust-colored, torn shirtdress.[79] The "fashion column" in the camp newspaper noted that "stripes are very much in fashion this year, as is jewelry in iron wires and filings."[80] In January 1944, the artist Jeanne L'Herminier arrived at the camp. At the risk of her life, she obtained pencil and paper and sketched her fellow inmates in the French block. The latter requested pictures of themselves in "Parisian poses."[81] The result was a macabre version of the 1940s pin-up.[82]

L'Herminier stylized the prison uniform by belting the waist and giving it a fashionable length (see Figure 2). She mimicked figures in French fashion magazines down to the smallest details: wavy hairstyle, tiny waist, and coquettish pose. But then there was the featureless face, a hallmark of L'Herminier's sketches, which was puzzling given she did these sketches at the request of individuals. The blank face perhaps served to protect the women's identities or to critique the camp's harsh anonymity.

Inasmuch as coquetterie operated to enhance "femininity," it was doomed to mockery in a place like Ravensbrück. In the summer of 1943, the clothing of those exterminated at Auschwitz began to arrive by the truckful. "Death regurgitated so many clothes, there were too many clothes," remembered the French Jew Marceline Loridan-Ivens.[83] As the camp became increasingly overcrowded, the clothing of the

Figure 2.
Jeanne L'Herminier, 1944. This image was originally accessed via an online exhibition at Médiathèque André Malraux, Strasbourg, 2011, which is no longer available.

dead replaced prison uniforms. It became common to wear clothes too big or too small for one's body as well as mismatched shoes. The effect once again sadly mimicked conventional femininity. The clothing was stored in a hidden shed, along with thousands of other objects, including jewelry, watches, and shoes from all over Europe. The French prisoners called it "Galeries Lafayette" after Paris's most elegant department store."[84] A "Galeries Lafayette" stocked with the pillaged property of dead Jews: farce had triumphed again.

Nevertheless, these clothes provided an opportunity for resistance. The shed engendered solidarity among the inmates. Shopping at Galeries Lafayette included

"shoplifting" coats, sweaters, and socks by stuffing them under a dress or in a shoe. In this context, clothing meant warmth and survival. Such items were shared with others back in the French block or bartered for food.[85] Geneviève de Gaulle-Anthonioz wore a large piece of white cloth and a sweater under her uniform thanks to Galeries Lafayette; the items had been "liberated" by her friend Bérengère. While suffering the agonies of solitary confinement on Christmas Day 1944, de Gaulle-Anthonioz received a package from the other French women in the camp, smuggled into her cell while the SS guards were drunk and sleeping. Among its many treasures was a "neatly-folded light brown shawl made of soft wool, which I immediately wrap around myself as if I were folding myself in their warm and gentle friendship."[86] In the winter of 1944, Hungarian Jewish women arrived and were given nothing but summer dresses and evening clothes. Dufournier remembered that some French women took pity on their suffering and threw socks or sweaters near their tent.[87]

Clothing and the Changing Self

Partisanes who remained free back home, particularly those who engaged in martial activities, also struggled with conventional identifications of gender. As a résistante learned how to shoot a rifle, fabricate a bomb, or sabotage a railway line, she began to rethink her roles and competencies.[88] By virtue of these new skills, as well as the new dangers she undertook and the male company she kept, the partisans often underwent a dramatic change in how they understood themselves *as women*. Women such as Ségouin, who took on combat roles at the end of the war, struggled to be both female and martial, womanly and soldierly. What exactly did it mean, they asked, to be a woman soldier?

For the most part, historians have understood such changes in terms of a gendered binary, that is, as a choice between remaining "feminine" or becoming more "masculine" in their behavior and appearance.[89] Such a framework oversimplifies the complicated way in which résistantes began to reshape their femininity. Take the example of Nancy Wake evaluating her clothing while awaiting a parachute drop. Underneath her bulky coat, overalls, and webbing harness, she wore silk stockings and high heels. The effect, in her own words, was "grotesque" and "incongruous." In other words, she saw herself as neither "masculine" nor "feminine" but instead something unintelligible, "incongruous," even "grotesque."[90] This "incongruity" was a hazard of the job. How did résistantes deal with it?

Women's sartorial choices can again suggest answers. What did women wear to engage in militant activities? What meaning did they give their clothing? How did these meanings shift over time? The memoirs of two partisans, Jeanne Bohec and Marie Chamming, engaged the personal politics of dress in particularly rich ways. Jeanne Bohec was a Breton chemist who began her service in the British ATS. In the same unit as Teyssier-Jore, she also complained about the ugly uniform hat as well as the mandatory gas mask, which she dismissed as "this horrible thing which makes us

look like martians."[91] After several months in the ATS, Bohec entered into military training for the BCRA (*Bureau central de renseignements et d'action*) or French intelligence, where she was the only woman. There she used her skills as a chemist to learn how to fire machine guns and make explosives. Bohec was then parachuted back into her native Brittany to teach other resistants how to handle explosives. When she saw her father, she found amusing his suggestion that she should now just stay home. "I could not help but laugh at the thought that the efforts made by the BCRA and the English would result solely in my resettling myself comfortably at home."[92] Bohec's amusement reveals her adoption of a new set of ambitions. Conventional domesticity seems ludicrous in light of her training and circumstances, which were exceptional even among résistantes.

In her memoir, Bohec describes in detail the wardrobe she prepared in London for her new mission in France, including a sweater, a skirt, and "a warm coat in thick navy blue wool found on Duke Street." She rejected the BCRA purse as too noticeable and instead crocheted one "with a more neutral appearance."[93] That Bohec cared enough about her wardrobe to enumerate it demonstrates a conventionally feminine interest in dress. At the same time, however, her description of her wardrobe reveals a change in attitude from her ATS days. Her concerns about dress have changed from the aesthetic to the practical. Above all, Bohec wanted to be warm, inconspicuous, and safe.

That shift, in turn, signals another: Bohec's BCRA training had given her a new knowledge of the body. She had learned "the sensible points of the body, where blows could render defenseless or even kill our adversary."[94] At the same time, she also invested her own body with new meanings. The BCRA, she writes, "gave us confidence in our potential and a combative spirit that would be essential to us."[95] If such training were considered as an embodied set of martial practices, Bohec had learned to make her body do new things. Moreover, she had gained the confidence to believe that her body *could* do such things. Her choice of clothing in returning to France suggests new bodily investments, which were to wage war and survive.

This transition becomes starker still nine months later, when spring weather forced Bohec to make a cotton dress and a synthetic glen plaid suit. As if to justify these additions, she explained: "dressing, sleeping, and eating also constitute part of a secret life."[96] Dressing had become for her a life function little different from sleeping or eating. When the suit became soiled and she was unable to find a dry cleaner, Bohec washed it by hand, rinsed it under a pump, and dried it in the sun. The results were predictably terrible. But Bohec claimed, "I didn't fret about it that much."[97] Bothering about clothing had become trivial to dwell on given the demands of the war.

With her new competencies and investments, Bohec was not able to see herself as defined by normative femininity. She no longer seemed to care about clothes or coquetterie. Out in the woods, she was unable to play the roles assigned to either women or men in the movement. She declared herself unable to "send myself back to do 'feminine' tasks. So I stayed by the side of the men who fought, not being able to do it myself."[98] Bohec's case demonstrates how partisanes underwent changes too

complex to be contained within a binary gender matrix. When normative femininity became undesirable—or perhaps just unattainable—she saw herself as *not* a woman but neither as a man. Having endured nine months of physical hardship, fear, and loss, Bohec had reduced life to its lowest denominators. She presented herself primarily as an instrument of war.

The case of another Breton résistante, Marie Chamming, further illustrates the complexities of gender transformation during the war. Like Bohec, Chamming found herself midwar without a clear identity map. Twenty-years-old when she joined the Resistance, Chamming first served in Paris intelligence producing false papers, then with resisters in Brittany. Like Bohec again, she remembered exactly what she packed upon joining the group in the summer of 1944: a change of underwear, a homemade shirt, a skirt in blue cotton, and a khaki raincoat.[99] Like Bohec, Chamming cared enough about clothing to remember what she wore. At the same time, the clothes themselves—functional rather than aesthetic—announced a new set of corporeal investments.

In the Resistance, Chamming endured isolation and anguish, both of which surface in her choice of dress. Unlike Bohec, Chamming received neither military training nor a uniform. Particularly young, petite, women struggled to gain official standing with their male comrades. "It's not possible!" cried the local Resistance agent when Bohec parachuted into France, "now they are sending them from the cradle!"[100] Chamming was not alone in her struggle to assert status with male colleagues. Nurses like Elizabeth Rioux-Quintenelle, who attended wounded partisans in a tiny village east of Grenoble, faced mockery from her comrades when she carried a gun, and scorn from the locals, who assumed she was a prostitute. Unable to don the male combat uniform, Rioux-Quintenelle was judged harshly on normative female grounds.[101]

Loneliness was Chamming's burden to bear. "Not in my place and infinitely alone" was how she described her time in the camp. Like Bohec once more, Chamming thought about herself in the negative terms of indeterminacy—as *not* in her place or *not* feminine. Unable to conform to normative femininity in her present circumstances and equally incapable of imagining herself as "manly," she felt only an excruciating isolation. She remembered it this way: "I put myself out to sea, alone in the storm. Yes, we were all alone, dispersed by the wind of the war."[102]

Chamming's storm plays out between two unreachable shores: the one she had left behind and the one she could not gain. Her fantasy life revolved around past life expectations: "My verdant years were passing, irreplacable, and sometimes a crazy desire seized me—to forget everything and leave, to go to surprise parties and big nights out, to love a man and get married."[103] Nostalgia surfaces particularly in the longing for feminine clothing. She remembered feeling ashamed of her jacket, which made it impossible for her to "*faire des élegances*" (to dress elegantly).[104] When a comrade gave her blue and red silk pieces from a parachute, she stuffed these "ravishing scarves" under her skirt for after the war. Once invited to a formal dinner, she lamented her lack of a formal dress and resigned herself to a change of shirt to look presentable.

To view Chamming's struggle as a transition from female to male subjectivity not only misses the complexity of the moment but also misses the point since neither gender pole is a viable option for her at that time. Set adrift, forced to navigate indeterminate waters, she moved forward by embracing multiple selves *at the same time.* August 1944 found her on dangerous liaison missions in German-occupied Brittany. The same month she fell in love with an SAS (the British Special Air Service) radio-parachutist named George and agreed to marry him. Wedding plans brought on more nostalgic fantasies: "I had always dreamed of the day when I would put on a dress which was unique and more beautiful than all the others. I saw myself as a princess, with a pinched-in waist and yards of fabric around the bottom. Geo[rge] would look at me like a queen."[105] Instead she resigned herself to buying a simple dress at the last moment.

The events of late August elevated Chamming's storm to hurricane force. First, her fantasy wedding dress materialized. A lieutenant provided a white silk parachute and suggested she make a gown. When she draped the silk around her, George exclaimed, "what an incredible dress that would make for you!" "*Pourquoi pas*?" (why not?) she thought, and hired a seamstress to make the dress.[106] But then tragedy struck. Her beloved father, also in the Resistance, was shot dead by the Germans. Overcome with grief, Chamming decided she must marry George right away. Given the dangers facing the couple, she reasoned, she wanted to bear his child as soon as possible: "his race must continue, the race of men who have freely risked everything and which must not disappear, the race of my father."[107] Chamming's reasons for marriage here signal a radical departure from what had been a conventional dream life. She now fantasized about herself as a valiant mother of a warrior race. By displacing her grief and anger onto motherhood, she radically resituated it within a partisan framework of risk and self-sacrifice.

While Chamming had been able to meet the demands of both résistante and fiancée throughout August, her father's death disrupted the balance she had so carefully achieved. The first convulsions surfaced in the matter of her wedding gown, which she resolved not to wear to the wedding. But when she gave this news to the seamstress, she decided to at least try the dress on. "I turned around again and again in front of the mirror," she remembered. "No dress had ever flattered me so much, making me look thinner and taller."[108]

Her dressmaker promised to fasten the neck with a Croix de Lorraine, emblem of the Resistance. It was a shrewd offer, as it would have transformed the gown into a sort of military uniform, purifying it of self-indulgence. But Chamming could not be convinced to embody a bride, even a politicized one; her ambivalence, her sense of "not" being in her place, was again profound. While George wore his uniform to the ceremony, she donned the same clothes she had worn in the woods, including the white blouse, which, she remembered, "did not flatter me." Her "only elegance," as she put it, were silk stockings she received as a gift.[109] Refused a military uniform, Chamming disavowed yet another: the white gown every woman wore to the altar.

Figure 3.
Marie Chamming in the wedding dress she never wore, *J'avais choisi la tempête* (Paris: Editions France-Empire, 1997).

The rich texture of Chamming's transformation lies in its many entangled threads—normative fantasies and longings, new martial embodiments, faith in the partisan creed of self-sacrifice and austerity, a revisioning of motherhood, and refusal of matrimonial customs. Fantasy, trauma, and displacement shape her narrative more than any conscious psychic process. Furthermore, changes in Chamming's bodily self-presentation neither reflected nor produced masculinity. Gender subversion was the last thing on her mind. More than a symbol of a disavowed femininity, the unworn wedding dress became a site of mourning—for her father and the ever-receding shores of childhood (see Figure 3). It signaled the ruptures brought about by the war and Chamming's firm resolve to live in the present or the future rather than the past. Dress often played this nostalgic role in partisan memoirs. For example, when résistante Denise Foucard remembered the beautiful blue dress she had received as a girl, she felt an overwhelming feeling of loss. She said of the war: "I see as well so clearly this terrible period which put an end to my life of a young girl filled with dreams and hope."[110]

Chamming's self-fashioning was erratic and improvisational. Like Ségouin, her inability to wear a uniform deprived her of a masculine identification as a soldier. In

its absence, she was forced to improvise an unconventional self. Like Ségouin again, she resisted efforts to assign an easy gender identity. Neither conventionally feminine or masculine, she was simply *not in her place* and desperately alone. As such, Chamming's story demonstrates how, by tacking back and forth unproductively across a preconceived gender binary, historians have neglected the uncertainty, the isolation, and the creativity grounding gender transformation in a martial setting.

Memory and Clothing

During the war, clothing became invested with political as well as emotional meaning. The résistantes used it to make fun of the Nazis, flirt their way past a checkpoint, or carry a bomb to a railway station. For women partisans engaged in martial activities, clothing became a site of grief, a symbol of childhood dreams and expectations now apparently lost forever. For those women arrested and sent to camps such as Ravensbrück, clothing meant survival and solidarity, a means to stay warm and maintain human dignity. Camp "fashion" became the stuff of farce, suggesting grief for a femininity stolen altogether.

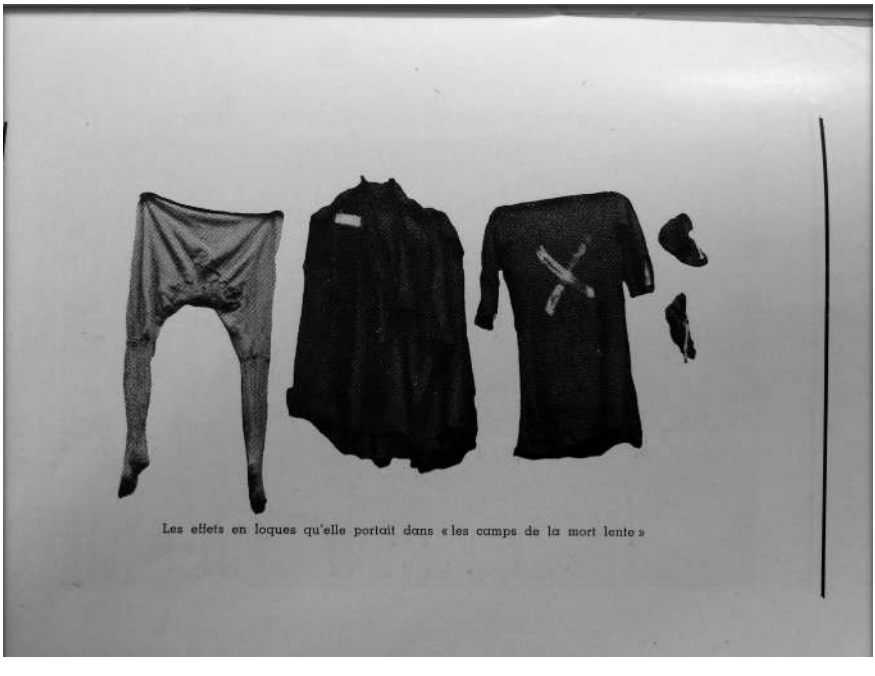

Figure 4.
Manon Cormier's clothing worn in the Nazi camp, *Une Bordelaise martyre de la Résistance* (Bordeaux: Imprimerie J. Bechade, s.d.).

Finally, clothing became imbedded in the memories of survivors. Like the other résistantes, Manon Cormier remembered in detail the clothes she wore at Ravensbrück. She rendered this horrific inventory in the form of a photograph taken after her return (see Figure 4).

Notable here is the way in which Cormier's clothing, particularly her tights, retain the shape of her body as if to hold its memory. Cormier's body and clothes were merged in unbearable suffering and cannot be separated.[111] Survivor Loridan-Ivens also invested clothing with the memory of anguish. Shortly after her return from Auschwitz, she recalled going to her brother's wedding. Almost everyone present had survived the camps, but no one spoke of it. The bride wore the traditional white gown. "The dressy clothes were nothing more than armor," she remembered. "I still carried the mountains of clothes that we'd sorted through on my back, and the stench of burnt flesh that would stay with me forever." After Liberation, it was suffering that tried to remain under "dressy clothes."[112] Like Manon's tights, Loridan-Ivens could not lose the memory of the war's agony. Her anguish could not be covered over, especially by a wedding gown.

Notes

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[1]For the French press, see *L'indépendant d'Eure et Loire*, August 26, 1944. The picture was posed for a group of photographers and appeared in several French newspapers. See http://rarehistoricalphotos.com/simone-segouin-18-year-old-french-resistance-fighter, accessed 20 September 2022. On photography and the Liberation, see Catherine Clark, "Capturing the Moment, Picturing History: Photographs of the Liberation of Paris," *American Historical Review*, 121, no. 3 (June 2016), 824–860.

[2]Margaret Collins Weitz, *Sisters in the Resistance: How Women Fought to Free France, 1940–1945* (New York: Wiley, 1995), 10.

[3]Elizabeth Terrenoire, *Combattantes sans uniforme: Les femmes dans la Résistance* (Paris: Bloud et Gay, 1946). Terrenoire was herself a resistant.

[4]Jeanne Bohec, *La Plastiqueuse* à *bicyclette* (Paris: Mercure de France, 1975), 223.

[5]H. R. Kedward, *Occupied France: Collaboration and Resistance, 1940–1044* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1985), 75.

[6]See, for example, Jelena Batinić, *Women and Yugoslav Partisans: A History of World War Two Resistance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015); Janet Hart, *New Voices in the Nation: Women and Greek Resistance, 1941–1964* (Ithica, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996); Maya Holtzman, "Crystal Clean People: The Soviet Partisan Movement and the Communist Union

of Youth during the Second World War" (PhD diss., University of Wisconsin, 2011); Annette Dumbach, *Sophie Scholl and the White Rose* (London: Oneworld, 2018); and Kate Vigurs, *Mission France: The True History of the Women of SOE* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2021).

[7]Margaret Rossiter, *Women in the Resistance* (New York: Praeger, 1986), 17–18.

[8]Nancy Wake, *The Autobiography of the Woman the Gestapo Called the White Mouse* (Melbourne: Macmillan, 1985), vi.

[9]Weitz, *Sisters in the Resistance*, 134.

[10]Lucie Aubrac, *Outwitting the Gestapo* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1993), 79.

[11]The historiography on the résistantes includes Weitz, *Sisters in the Resistance*; Rossiter, *Women in the Resistance*; Paula Schwartz, "Redefining Resistance: Women's Activism in Wartime France," in *Behind the Lines: Gender and the Two World Wars*, ed. Margaret Randolph Higonnet, Jane Jenson, Sonya Michael, and Margaret Collins Weitz (Hew Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1987), 141–153; Mechtild Gilzmer, Christine Levisse-Touzé, and Stefan Martens, *Les Femmes dans la Résistance en France* (Paris: Editions Tallandier, 2003); Laurence Thibault, *Les Femmes et la Résistance* (Paris: La documentation française, 2006); Corinna von List, *Résistantes* (Paris: Alma, 2012); and Claire Andrieu, "Women in the French Resistance. Revisiting the Historical Record," *French Politics, Culture and Society* 18, no. 1 (Spring 2000): 13–27. See also Andrew Orr, *Women and the French Army during the World Wars, 1914–1940* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017).

[12]On the relationship between mimicry and gender subversion, see Mary Louise Roberts, *Disruptive Acts: The New Woman in Fin-de-siècle France* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), chap. 3.

[13]In the secondary literature, see Mary Lynn Stewart, *Dressing Modern Frenchwomen: Marketing Haute Couture,1919–1939* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008); Dominique Veillon, *Fashion under the Occupation* (New York: Berg, 2020); and Mary Louise Roberts, "Samson and Delilah Revisited: The Politics of Fashion in 1920s France," *American Historical Review* 98, no. 3 (June 1993): 657–683.

[14]On this issue, see Lise Lesèvre, *Face à Barbie: Souvenirs-cauchemars de Montluc à Ravensbrück* (Paris: Nouvelles Editions du Pavillon, 1987), 69.

[15]See Marthe Cohn, *Moi, Marthe, juive et résistante* (Paris: Editions France Loisirs, 2002), 69.

[16]Wake, *The Autobiography of the Woman*, 65.

[17]Veillon, *Fashion under the Occupation*, 106.

[18]Veillon, *Fashion under the Occupation*, 108.

[19]Raymonde Teyssier-Jore, *Le "corps féminin"* (Paris: France Empire, 1975), 43–44. For another French woman who loved wearing her uniform, see "Fonds Germaine Lévy dite Gilberte Lamie (1905–2002), ARC 115, Institut historique du temps présent, Paris, France.

[20]Bohec, *La Plastiqueuse à bicyclette*, 48–50.

[21]Teyssier, *Le "corps féminin,"* 42–43; and Bohec, *La Plastiqueuse à bicyclette*, 31–34.

[22]Teyssier, *Le "corps féminin,"* 42–43.

[23]Denise Foucard, *Des rires qui cachent les larmes* (Le Kremlin-Bicêtre: Points sur les i, 2008), 21–22.

[24]Elizabeth Rioux-Quintenelle, *La guerre sans arme* (Grenoble: Editions de Belledonne, 1996), 94.

[25]Agnès Humbert, *Résistance: A Woman's Journey of Struggle and Defiance in Occupied France* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2008), 112.

[26]Rosemonde Pujol, *Nom de guerre: Colinette, 1941–1944* (Précy-sous-Thil: Editions de l'Armancon, 2002), 87–88.

[27]Annie Guehenno, *L'épreuve, récit* (Paris: Grasset, 1968), 59–60, 68–70.

[28]Marie-Madeleine Fourcade, *Noah's Ark: A Memoir of Struggle and Resistance* (New York: Dutton, 1974), 82.

[29]Fourcade, *Noah's Ark*, 175.

[30]Guehenno, *L'épreuve*, 59–60.

[31]Cécile Ouzoulias-Romagon, *J'étais agent de liaison des F.T.P.F.* (Paris: Editions Messidor, 1988), 122.

[32]Ouzoulias-Romagon, *J'étais agent de liaison*, 126.

[33]Foucard, *Des rires,* 26, 101–102.

[34]Ouzoulias-Romagon, *J'étais agent de liaison*, 36–37.

[35]Weitz, *Sisters in the Resistance*, 113.

[36]Aubrac, *Outwitting the Gestapo*, 79–83.

[37]Quoted in Marianne Monestier, *Elles étaient cent et mille* (Paris: Fayard, 1972), 10.

[38]Annie Kriegel, *Ce que j'ai cru comprendre* (Paris: Robert Laffont, 1991), 225.

[39]Simone Bertrand, ed., *Mille visages un seul combat: Les femmes dans la Résistance, témoignages recueillis* (Paris: Les éditeurs français réunis, 1965), 32.

[40]Cécile Jouan, *Comète: Histoire d'une ligne d'évasion* (Furnes, Belgium: Les éditions du Beffroi, 1948), 22.

[41]Gisèle Guillemot with Samuel Humiez, *Résistante: Mémoires d'une femme, de la Résistance à la déportation* (Neuilly-sur-Seine: M. Lafon, 2009), 41.

[42]Monestier, *Elles étaient cent et mille*, 97.

[43]Marie Chamming, *J'ai choisi la tempête* (Paris: Editions France-Empire, 1997), 31–32.

[44]Bertrand, *Mille visages*, 32–33. See also Weitz, *Sisters in the Resistance*, 70, 73, 81.

[45]Foucard, *Des rires*, 28–30.

[46]Damira Titonel Asperti, *Ecrire pour les autres mémoires d'une résistante: Les antifascistes italiens en Lot-et-Garonne sous l'Occupation* (Bordeaux: Presses Universitaires de Bordeaux, 1999), n.p.

[47]Wake, *The Autobiography of the Woman*, 132.

[48]Ouzoulias-Romagon, *J'étais agent de liaison*, 184.

[49]Cohn, *Moi, Marthe*, 69.

[50]Catherine Roux, *Triangle Rouge* (Paris: Editions France-Empire, 1968), 22, 24, 48. Roux did later try, but failed, to kill herself with the pin. It was eventually taken by the Gestapo. See also Weitz, *Sisters in the Resistance*, 141–142.

[51]Roux, *Triangle Rouge*, 21.

[52]Fourcade, *Noah's Ark*, 134.

[53]Ouzoulias-Romagon, *J'étais agent de liaison*, 36. See also pp. 2, 124.

[54]Jouan, *Comète,* 47.

[55]Lesèvre, *Face à Barbie,* 29, 54.

[56]Sarah Helm, *Ravensbrück: Life and Death in Hitler's Concentration Camp for Women* (New York: Doubleday, 2014), 361.

[57]Helm, *Ravensbrück*, 370.

[58]Primo Levi, "If This Is a Man," in *If This Is a Man and The Truce* (London: Random House, 1996), 17.

[59]Susan Gubar, "Empathic Identification in Anne Michaels's Fugitive Pieces: Masculinity and Poetry after Auschwitz," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 28, no. 1 (Autumn 2002): 249–276, 251–252. Atina Grossman also speaks of "the recovery of the gendered body" after the war. See her contribution in "Forum: Holocaust and the History of Gender and Sexuality," *German History* 36, no. 1 (December 2018): 78–100, 82.

[60]Yvette Lundy with Laurence Boisson-Barbarot, *Le fil de l'araignée: Itinéraire d'une résistante déporté marnaise* (L. Boisson-Barbarot: Collection Book et mystère, 2011), 88.

[61]Denise Dufournier, *La maison des mortes, Ravensbrück* (Paris: Julliard, 1982), 39.

[62]Roux, *Triangle Rouge*, 57–58.

[63]Madeleine Aylmer-Roubenne, *J'ai donné la vie dans un camp de la mort* (Paris: Editions Jean-Claude Lattès, 1997), 43.

[64]Lundy, *Le fil de l'araignée*, 88. See also Lesèvre, *Face à Barbie*, 51, on the humiliation of nakedness.

[65]Testimony of Anne Fernier, in *Ravensbrück*, ed. by Anne Fernier, Germaine Tillion, and Bluette Morat (Neuchâtel: Editions de la Baconnière, 1946), 89–96, 91.

[66]Lundy, *Le fil de l'araignée*, 88.

[67]See Marion Kaplan, "Did Gender Matter during the Holocaust?" *Jewish Social Studies* 24, no. 2 (Winter 2019): 37–56, 43–44.

[68]Helm, *Ravensbrück*, 25.

[69]Nanda Herbermann, *The Blessed Abyss: Inmate #6582 in Ravensbrück Concentration Camp for Women* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2000), 171.

[70]Lundy, *Le fil de l'araignée*, 88.

[71]Guillemot, *Résistante*, 135.

[72]Testimony of Bluette Morat, in *Ravensbrück*, 141–156,147.

[73]"Stücke" in German means "piece" or "the head of cattle." It was a common German designation for a prisoner. See Dufournier, *Maison des mortes*, 16; and Geneviève de Gaulle-Anthonioz, *Dawn of Hope* (New York: Arcade, 1999), 75.

[74]Aylmer-Roubenne, *J'ai donné la vie*, 44. If the women arrived or were made pregnant, they were immediately forced to abort.

[75]Guillemot, *Résistante*, 135.

[76]Helm, *Ravensbrück*, 365.

[77]Lesèvre, *Face à Barbie*, 85.

[78]Dufournier, *Maison des mortes*, 97.

[79]Rosine Cremieux with Pierre Sullivan, *La traine-sauvage* (Paris: Flammarion, 1999), 35.

[80]Lesèvre, *Face à Barbie*, 103.

[81]For more on L'Herminier, see the website of the Association des musées en Bourgogne-Franche-Comté, http://www.musees-franchecomte.com/index.php?p=882&art_id=2279, accessed July 22, 2015.

[82]On the image of the "pin-up" in the 1940s, see Maria Elena Buszek, *Pin-up Grrrls: Feminism, Sexuality, Popular Culture* (Chapel Hill, NC: Duke University Press, 2006), esp. chap. 5.

[83]Marceline Loridan-Ivens, *But You Did Not Come Back: A Memoir* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2016), 17.

[84]Dufournier, *Maison des mortes*, 75. At Bergen Belsen, the British liberators created a sign signaling where former inmates could get new clothing. They called the site "Harrod's" after the famous British department store. See Ulrike Weckel, "Does Gender Matter? Filmic Representations of the Liberated Nazi Concentration Camps, 1945–46," *Gender and History* 17, no. 3 (November 2005): 538–566, 555–556.

[85]Testimony of Marie-Elisa Nordmann, in *Ravensbrück*, 178–185, 183.

[86]de Gaulle-Anthonioz, *Dawn of Hope*, 35.

[87]Dufournier, *La maison des mortes*, 117.

[88]On this issue, see Wake, *The Autobiography of the Woman*, 105.

[89]The historiography concerning Marie-Madeline Fourcade typifies this approach. See Valerie Deacon, "Fitting in to the French Resistance: Marie-Madeleine Fourcade and Georges Loustaunau-Lacau at the Intersection of Politics and Gender," *Journal of Contemporary History* 50, no. 2: 259–273. In the case of Russian woman combatants, Anna Krylova used the term

non-oppositional binaries to explain how such women displayed both "male" and "female" traits while fighting on the front. The trouble with this approach is that it keeps the gender binary intact even while trying to conceptually "overcome" it.

[90]Wake, *The Autobiography of the Woman*, 65.

[91]Bohec, *La Plastiqueuse à bicyclette*, 33.

[92]Bohec, *La Plastiqueuse à bicyclette*, 125.

[93]Bohec, *La Plastiqueuse à bicyclette*, 99.

[94]Bohec, *La Plastiqueuse à bicyclette*, 82.

[95]Bohec, *La Plastiqueuse à bicyclette*, 82.

[96]Bohec, *La Plastiqueuse à bicyclette*, 132–133.

[97]Bohec, *La Plastiqueuse à bicyclette*, 138–139.

[98]Bohec, *La Plastiqueuse à bicyclette*, 226.

[99]Chamming, *J'ai choisi la tempête*, 119.

[100]Chamming, *J'ai choisi la tempête*, 31–32.

[101]Rioux-Quintenelle, *La guerre sans arme*, 60, 66.

[102]Chamming, *J'ai choisi la tempête*, 194.

[103]Chamming, *J'ai choisi la tempête*, 62.

[104]Chamming, *J'ai choisi la tempête*, 206–207.

[105]Chamming, *J'ai choisi la tempête*, 337.

[106]Chamming, *J'ai choisi la tempête*, 338.

[107]Chamming, *J'ai choisi la tempête*, 338, 353.

[108]Chamming, *J'ai choisi la tempête*, 355.

[109]Chamming, *J'ai choisi la tempête*, 361.

[110]Foucard, *Des rires*, 21–22.

[111]Manon Cormier, *Une bordelaise martyre de la Résistance* (Bordeaux: Imprimerie J. Bechade, n.d.), n.p.

[112]Loridan-Ivens, *But You Did Not Come Back*, 57.