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# Revisiting the Vel d'Hiv Roundup through the Camera Lens

AUDREY BRUNETAX

The visual void surrounding the 1942 Vel d'Hiv roundup has become an obsession in France rather than a point of departure for reflection on narrative and visual silence in the face of the Holocaust. This study highlights the shifting paradigms around which French television has constructed narratives about the Vel d'Hiv roundup. Whereas scholars have analyzed the politics behind its commemorations in the context of broader debates on national identity and anti-Semitism, this article rethinks this event in terms of postwar televised mythologies, de/constructions, representations and national discourses.

## INTRODUCTION

From its creation in the early twentieth century to its demolition in 1959, the Parisian Vélodrome d'Hiver (popularly known as the Vel d'Hiv) earned its reputation through its famous sport rallies and cycling competitions, which made this site a symbol of French popular culture and tradition. Nothing predestined this space, devoted to leisure, sport and political activities, to become a site of mourning, shame and obsession in postwar France.

The events that occurred on the site in July 1942 would dramatically change its aura in later years. On July 16 and 17, 1942, the French police carried out a mass arrest of more than 13,000 Jews in Paris and its suburbs. Jewish families were herded into the Vel d'Hiv stadium, housed there in inhuman conditions until July 22 and eventually transported to the French internment camps in the Loiret, where the French gendarmes wrested children from their parents before their deportation to Auschwitz.<sup>1</sup> The French state apparatus played a major role in both the planning and

the implementation of this mass arrest. The Vel d'Hiv roundup targeted children and women for the very first time. The Vichy Regime spared no one and even insisted on deporting more than 4,000 children under the age of sixteen, most of whom were French by parental declaration at birth. From among all the deportees, fewer than 100 returned, none of them children.

The Vel d'Hiv arena burned down in 1959, burying with it the memory of thousands of Jewish men, women and children. Effaced from the Parisian urban landscape, the space located on Rue Nélaton in the 15th arrondissement has evolved today, ironically, into an annex of the French Ministry of the Interior. Like a palimpsest of memory, multiple layers have covered the velodrome's earlier form. Nevertheless, a small square of lawn and a commemorative plaque have been added to remind the passersby that thousands of Jews were rounded up in the French capital and interned in the arena during the Occupation. Relegated to a tiny space on the Boulevard de Grenelle, a busy street along which runs an elevated Parisian metro line, this amnesic site of memory seems desecrated and forgotten in the hustle and bustle of urban life that does not allow passersby to stop and ponder in peace, let alone honor the memory of the dead. Swallowed up by the gigantic buildings surrounding it, the small patch of green fails to attract people's attention.

A block away stands the official monument of the Vel d'Hiv, erected in 1994, a figurative (yet overly simplistic) sculpture by Walter Spitzer that offers an easy kind of remembering: Jews are represented with their luggage on the curved concrete plank of a cycle track. Scattered in space, these diffuse elements of the Parisian landscape, may, as Peter Carrier notes, have "the collective quality of a monument in so far as they remind us of a single event of the past, are used as a backdrop for annual national commemorations, and triggered explosive public debates," yet they are not "the result of a calculated decision to erect a monument ... but rather an accidental accumulation of minor commemorative events since 1946, and more intensively during the thirteen years between 1982 and 1995."<sup>2</sup> The incidental character of both sites defeats the purpose of an active and voluntary recollection of the past through physical traces, for the latter have lost their meaning and become rather sites of politically charged rituals.

Every July, commemorations revive the Vel d'Hiv sites for a day and delegate to these traces the responsibility of recalling the event to mind,

yet they fall into oblivion the rest of the year. Monuments and memorials are necessary but sometimes act negatively by proposing to do the memory work for us and by serving a political agenda. In so doing, they risk reducing us to passive, numb and forgetful spectators while reducing the victims to abstract entities in commemorative speeches. What is the role of the visual in these memorial trends? Can images succeed where official rituals fail? Have images, be they real or artificial, offered a new *vision* of the Vel d’Hiv roundup in the last two decades?

#### A VISUAL VOID, A VISUAL ABSENCE

What is left from this tragic event, aside from archival documents and memorial sites, is a black and white photograph of the façade of the Vel d’Hiv on the day of the roundup, which was found in 1990 by the historian and lawyer Serge Klarsfeld in the France-Soir photo archives at the Bibliothèque Historique de la Ville de Paris. The photograph, which has been extensively reproduced, shows the police cars and buses used for the transportation of Jewish families from the local grouping centers to the Vélodrome d’Hiver.<sup>3</sup> Prior to its discovery, a series of photographs from inside the velodrome had been used as the visual reference of the roundup. However, in 1983, after a close analysis, Klarsfeld established the real identity of those photos’ subjects: what appeared to be Jewish men and women inside the Vel d’Hiv in July 1942 were, in fact, collaborators who had been gathered into the arena in August 1944.

Despite the discovery of this visible trace, Klarsfeld seems haunted by the lack of other visual proof as if an isolated piece of evidence prevents us from grasping the intricacies of the roundup: “but there is no photo of arrested Jews and of the ride through Paris, no photo of the interior of the Vel d’Hiv, no photo of the transfer of families at the Austerlitz station, no photo at the arrival in the Loiret camps, no photo of the children’s return to the Drancy camp. In conclusion, there was no photo.”<sup>4</sup> The phenomenology of the one surviving photograph and its palimpsestic quality—its layers of meaning, the conditions of its discovery, its form and its archeology—are thus overlooked, as if finding further visual evidence matters more than the uniqueness of this image.

In his incessant quest to find more photographic evidence on the Vel d'Hiv, Klarsfeld deplors the absence of other visual traces of the internment of Jews in and outside the stadium, yet does not seem to realize the potentialities of what Georges Didi-Huberman terms an "image-lacune."<sup>5</sup> As Sven-Erik Rose explains:

photographs provide a few fragmentary shreds, nothing more—but these scraps are nonetheless crucial and worthy of our attention. Against the frozen and reductive logic of the fetishistic image, which falsely delivers "everything," and its counterpart, the non-image or counter-image, which evokes *le néant* in all its negative totality, Didi-Huberman proposes the "image-lacune," which he understands as fragmentary, incomplete, *and* urgently necessary.<sup>6</sup>

Can the sole photograph of the Vel d'Hiv convey everything or *nothing* about the event? Is the fragmentary texture of the photograph legible enough to grasp the intricacies of what occurred? Can other images replace what appears to be off-frame in the 1990 photograph? Given the overabundance of artificial and recreated images of the Vel d'Hiv in the past decade, there seems to be a tacit rejection of the invisible and incomplete shreds inherent in the Vel d'Hiv photograph and a fear of fragmentation when dealing with the largest roundup of the German Occupation. The visual supersedes the archival knowledge of the historical event.

Although the Vel d'Hiv photograph serves a moral, historical and memorial imperative, it is at the same time relegated to the level of a mere archival object, the only one that can visually document the roundup, but one that nonetheless fails to deliver everything. This fetishistic image haunts the present with its absence while destabilizing the viewer, who cannot *see* the event in the frame. The incompleteness of the Vel d'Hiv photograph, however, calls for an imaginative act that goes beyond the visual realm. The invisible enhances the ineffable and grapples with an incommensurable abstraction that finds its place outside the frame. The photograph is not simply a palpable object but a moment in time, a connection to a long-gone past, and a silent lacuna bearing witness to a tragedy.

Klarsfeld's anxiety and demand for visual historical evidence reflect a symptomatic fear of fragmentation and absence in the face of atrocities: a tangible object (in this case a photograph) superficially validates and consolidates the historical event in the collective memory, whereas visual

silence is thought to endanger its very existence and, indeed, remembrance itself. As Sylvie Lindeperg notes, “This imperative [to find additional visual evidence] addressed a moral injunction and memorial stakes: this photograph seemed precious to [Klarsfeld], not so much for its documentary value but rather for its double capacity to adjust the ‘seeing’ to ‘the knowing,’ and to invest ontologically the gesture of the photograph with an ethical and redemptory function.”<sup>7</sup> According to this logic, written archives do not suffice to document the totality of the event, hence the necessity of filling in the visual lacuna by a bombardment of images and/or eclectic *mise-en-scènes* in the media. Throughout the years, this tendency has become more acute and has taken its toll on the representation of the Vel d’Hiv in French television and cinema as the artificiality of manipulated images has engendered a new visual and mythological archive of the tragedy.

Rather than capturing the whole event, this abundance of re-created images does the memory work for the viewers, while artificially filling in the silences inherent in this roundup. Indeed, the visual void surrounding this event has become an obsession rather than a point of departure for a reflection on narrative and visual silence in the face of the Holocaust. The Vel d’Hiv photograph exemplifies a central issue at the core of Holocaust representation: How can a historical event without specific visual contours be represented on screen? Has French television managed to circumvent the absence of images of this roundup by allowing the victims to come to the fore and regain some agency in French TV broadcasts? Or has it, on the contrary, trivialized the tragedy of July 1942 by superimposing artificial images and sensationalistic and truncated narratives upon the survivors’ voices? Is French television on the verge of memorial obsession and saturation when dealing with “Holocaust” material?

This essay will evaluate the visual presence of the Vel d’Hiv roundup in the public sphere, especially in French television since the 1990s, while showing how the French state has reinforced and stabilized the Vel d’Hiv memory in the grand national narrative through the media, making it a *lieu de mémoire* and a point of reference on the Shoah in France. Although we might ascribe to the media responsibility for the sensationalization of the Vel d’Hiv and distortion of historical facts through hyperrealism, television provides key information about the place of the roundup on screen and in national memory, especially through visual, spatial and discursive elements. A closer look at the recurrent tropes and visual motifs emerging

from the televised and cinematic renderings of the Vel d'Hiv highlights the sociopolitical needs and interests at play in those narratives. News broadcasts and TV shows retrieve and absorb the unified discourse that is put forth by the government. Thus, whereas scholars have presented the empirical data regarding this tragedy and have analyzed the politics behind the commemorations of the Vel d'Hiv in the context of broader debates on national identity and anti-Semitism, this study rethinks this event in terms of postwar televised mythologies,<sup>8</sup> de/constructions, representations and national discourses.

#### THE 1990S: THE VEL D'HIV AS AN EMBLEM OF THE HOLOCAUST IN FRANCE

In postwar France, the fate of thousands of Jews during the Occupation was omitted from the official national discourse, as this issue reflected one of the most negative aspects of the Dark Years. The Vel d'Hiv roundup thus exemplifies a memorial trend that tends to hide the reality of the Occupation and the French role in the deportations. Nonetheless, the memory of the Vel d'Hiv was not completely absent: Jewish organizations and victims gathered every year at the velodrome site to commemorate the roundup. Despite the fact that the memory of the event was generally confined to the private sphere of the Jewish community and had not yet impacted the collective memory and the state's official discourse, references to the roundup can be found in French public television and radio in this period.

A search through the archives of the Institut National de l'Audiovisuel (INA) shows that as early as July 17, 1957, and July 16, 1958, the commemorations of the Vel d'Hiv roundup were mentioned in public television news broadcasts. In the 1960s, French TV referred to the event both in news segments (July 13, 1961; July 16, 1965; October 30, 1968) and TV shows like *Caméra Trois* (April 4, 1967) and *Lectures pour tous* (September 8, 1965), which included a piece on the Vel d'Hiv roundup either through the voice of a survivor or through the presentation of Claude Lévy's book, *La Grande Rafle du Vél d'Hiv*, published in 1967. French radio France Inter also covered the Vel d'Hiv roundup in items dedicated to Lévy's study (*Inter-actualités*, May 10, 1967) and to the release of Michel Mitrani's film *Les Guichets du Louvre* (*Inter-actualités*, August 30, 1974). The 1970s marked a turning point in the visual and

cinematic representation of the Vel d'Hiv with the release of Mitrani's film and Joseph Losey's *Monsieur Klein* (1976). Throughout the 1970s, and even more so in the 1980s, the national news referred to the roundup in items on war criminals, anti-Semitism, the Vel d'Hiv commemorations or the cinematic renderings of the event.<sup>9</sup>

Its presence in the public arena therefore has a long history, in contradiction to the frequent comment regarding the media's complete neglect of the roundup prior to the 1980s. From the first brief mentions on TV in the 1950s–60s to the excessive media coverage in later years, this emblematic event has penetrated the grand national narrative to become *the* reference with regards to Vichy France and the Holocaust.

A new awareness of the roundup emerged in the 1990s. In 1992, the polemic that followed President François Mitterand's refusal to acknowledge France's complicity in and responsibility for the persecution, deportation and mass murder of its Jewish population led to legislative endeavors. In 1993 a parliamentary bill introduced a National Day of Commemoration of the Racist and Anti-Semitic Persecutions and paved the way for the erection and inauguration of a national monument in 1994. In 1995, a breakthrough appeased the petitioners, Le Comité Vel d'Hiv, who were urging the president to make a verbal gesture, demanding symbolic reparation: in his speech at the Vel d'Hiv commemorative site, Jacques Chirac was the first French president to explicitly recognize France's complicity and active role in the Holocaust. Newscasts abounded with items that presented survivors' memories, thus providing a platform for a re-visioning (in the visual and narrative sense) of the details of the infamous roundup.

The debates and ongoing dialogue among historians, survivors and journalists on French television went beyond the yearly rituals and brought the commemorations of July 1992 and 1995 into public consciousness as the media picked up on the trend and extensively covered the Vel d'Hiv and its political implications.<sup>10</sup> French television invested the memory site with new meanings through a variety of visual narratives in news sections and TV programming, hence countering the tendency to forget and undermining the master narrative. One could conclude, like French historian Annette Wieviorka, that "Maybe memory exists only if it is present in the public space in a quasi-permanent way through agitation and conflicts, and that a memory that is no longer conflictual is a memory that has lost, after all, its vitality."<sup>11</sup> This sort of remembering (*remémoration*)

engages the viewers in an active process that requires the actualization and the reappropriation of the Vel d'Hiv memory. The early 1990s exemplify this trend through the TV screen.

Indeed, the memory of the Vel d'Hiv did not fall into oblivion as long as interest in the commemorations lingered beyond the event itself and triggered the media's attention. Televised shows and news broadcasts did not negate but rather complemented the memory work attempted through the commemorations both by channeling public discussion and by opening the door to a new visualization of the event through the survivors' perspective. A relationship between the media and processes of remembrance was thus established. The presence of the Vel d'Hiv through documentaries aired on prime-time television made "the past intelligible" while "endow[ing] medial representations with the aura of authenticity ... and play[ing] a decisive role in stabilizing the memory of historical events into *lieux de mémoire*."<sup>12</sup> The media could reach out to the public, bring a distant event closer to the viewers and influence their images of the past with new visuals in the present.

The INA television archives contain an enormous amount of news coverage on the 1992 commemorations, which posits this roundup as the symbolic point of reference for the Holocaust in France. As Henry Rousso has noted:

In 1992, François Mitterrand created a new commemorative day on the Sunday that follows the anniversary of the July roundups. From then on, this event became the symbol of the complicity of Vichy in the Final Solution.... That being said, before the 1990s, the Vel d'Hiv was not "forgotten": some books and films mentioned the roundup, such as Claude Lévy's study, Joseph Joffo's testimony *Un sac de billes*, or [the film] *Monsieur Klein*. Jewish organizations gathered at the Vel d'Hiv, surprisingly officials were sometimes present: the event was somewhat inscribed in the collective consciousness, but it did not have the dimension it has taken over the last twenty years.<sup>13</sup>

In this memorial context, on June 10, 1992, FR3 (public television) broadcast a special edition of the popular TV program *La Marche du siècle* entitled "Il y a 50 ans, La Rafle du Vel d'Hiv: Des survivants racontent."<sup>14</sup> The magazine *Télérama* publicized the show on the front page of one of its June issues, leaving no doubt about the French police's complicity and

responsibility in the roundup: “Fifty years ago... On July 16, 1942, the French police assembled 12,884 Jews in the Vel d’Hiv. With *La Marche du Siècle*, FR3.”<sup>15</sup> A six-page article, including the one and only photograph of the event, scrupulously detailed the different steps that led to the French deportations of Jews in July 1942, hence “forcing open the doors of our memory.”<sup>16</sup> This public exposure prior to the broadcast prepared the terrain for a new visualization and narrativization of the Vel d’Hiv roundup in a public forum.

Aired live on prime-time television, the show was divided into two distinct parts: the first section consisted of a documentary made especially for the program by William Karel and Blanche Finger, entitled *La Rafle du Vél d’Hiv... 50 ans après, Opération Vent Printanier*, from which emerged the voices of twelve Vel d’Hiv survivors and witnesses;<sup>17</sup> it was immediately followed by a discussion involving survivors and the historians Henry Roussio and Robert Paxton, whose presence seemed to validate and support the survivors’ testimonies.

From the very first frame of this TV program, the camera immediately sets the tone. The superimposition of the title “Il y a 50 ans, La Rafle du Vel d’Hiv” on a close-up of the infamous photograph of the Auschwitz gate suggests the tragedy. Text and image join to frame the story of the Vel d’Hiv, a story of death and destruction, within the larger context of the Holocaust. The apposition of this allegorical symbol of the Holocaust—the Auschwitz gate—in the background of the set reminds the viewers of the outcome of the roundup, which is then seen as an integral part of the European extermination of Jews. One may wonder why the TV producers did not choose to project the one and only photograph of the Vel d’Hiv roundup that had been identified in 1990. The “image-lacune” of the façade of the velodrome might not yet have reached the French collective consciousness and might not have meant much to the viewers. The iconic image of the Auschwitz gate, however, bore great significance.

To anchor the story of the roundup metaphorically in the contemporaneity of the program, the camera slowly zooms out, opening up the visual field to include the audience and the host in the same shot. Resonating with the iconic photograph projected in the background, the camera singles out in a close-up the numbers tattooed on a French survivor’s forearm. The correlation between Auschwitz, France and the

deportations is thus established through the victim's body, which makes the transition from the historical to the personal.

After the introduction of some of the guests in close-ups, the viewers are confronted with the reality of this tragic event through Finger and Karel's documentary, which follows the chronology of the roundup, from its conception to its implementation, retracing the victims' lives in Occupied France, the wearing of the yellow star, the discrimination against the Jews, the morning of the roundup, the internment in the Vel d'Hiv, the French internment camps, and their fate after the war. A sense of urgency transpires from the outset as a voice-over urges the necessity of listening to the victims' stories. The camera moves on to reveal the identity of the victims. However, these are not the adult survivors in the first frames, but instead their childhood photographs from before the war. A photo of the child at the time of the roundup is matched against the image of the adult at the time of the interview. This conflation of past and present reveals the connection between two temporalities as well as the obsession with an ever-present past that lingers on indefinitely.

This documentary presents twelve narrators in a narrative that encompasses a multivocal heterogeneity of perspectives and forms. The victims' stories are interspersed with archival documents and photographs contextualized by an impersonal voice-over, that of Sami Frey, who dispenses a cold analysis of historical facts in a linear, causal and didactic narrative. The public sphere of the archive invades the private sphere of the testimony and, inversely, the personal interferes with the historical. The same dialectical structure is evident in the follow-up discussion on the TV set as the victims' and the historians' narratives collide to unveil the fate of the former.

The documentary's montage constantly brings together a variety of disparate images. The oscillation between the close-ups of survivors' faces and the historical narrativization accomplished by the voice-over seeks to create a vision of the Vel d'Hiv roundup. Moreover, the close-ups of the survivors' faces create a proximity with the viewers. The public space of the show gives a platform to survivors and accords validity to their individual experiences: the ordinary/private overlaps with the extraordinary/public. As Annette Wieviorka has noted, referring to the burgeoning of various forms of recorded survivor testimony from the 1980s: "Speaking individually has become the main vector for the survivors' memory."<sup>18</sup>

Survivor testimony is also central to the documentary *Les Enfants du Vel d'Hiv* (1992), directed and co-written by filmmaker Maurice Frydland<sup>19</sup> and Vel d'Hiv survivor and actor Michel Muller, which was aired on France 2 on June 10, 1993. This film presents memories of the Vel d'Hiv roundup through the voices and silences of four survivors, the Muller siblings.<sup>20</sup> The singularity of this film lies in the minimalist, yet powerful *mise-en-scène* through which the survivors partially reenact what happened to them in July 1942. Filmed against interior and exterior backdrops, the four interviewees untangle their scattered memories of July 1942 in a dialogue, therefore undertaking an anamnesis, both an active recollection of the past and a recovery of lost memory.

The camera accompanies the siblings throughout their journey, one that allows them to regain some agency in the face of trauma. Having been nonentities during the Occupation, the survivors recuperate their subjectivity through the communicative act that reestablishes a dialogical relation with the Other—the cameraman, the filmmaker, the family members and, indirectly, the viewers. As Pierre Alban Delannoy suggests: “to make the witness emerge is to make us ‘hear’ his/her voice, to receive the testimony, to receive his/her words.”<sup>21</sup> Their words are intensified by silence, and silence is intensified by their words. Similarly, presence and absence come together to give shape and meaning to the survivors’ memories. Their immersion in the absent/silent landscape triggers the memories and calls for the work of remembering. While the camera follows the Mullers’ movements in the city or in the countryside, a topography of memory slowly emerges. The physical presence of the survivors, the substance of their testimony and the emergence of ghostly sites in the camera frame allow for a reappropriation of the space and of the self. This minimalist, poetic and fragmented approach to the past addresses the particularity and singularity of the mass arrest. Didi-Huberman’s comments about Claude Lanzmann’s *Shoah* are equally applicable to *Les Enfants du Vel d'Hiv*: the remnants of the past—in other words empty spaces, silent faces and street names—visually construct the film narrative. The velodrome and the camps are *here* forever *despite everything*:

In [Lanzmann’s] film the destroyed sites maintain, despite everything, despite themselves, the indestructible memory of their agency in the destruction to which history led them and of which, in this

film, they will remain the site forever. Like the railroad tracks, the sign telling travelers that they have arrived at Treblinka is still *there*. Treblinka is still *there*. And this means that the destruction is still *there*, or rather—this is the work of the film—that it is *here* forever, close enough for us to touch, looking out at us from the depths, even as the place seems to present itself to us only as a completely “exterior” thing.<sup>22</sup>

*Les Enfants* displays a profound connection between past and present through what Walter Benjamin calls a *dialectical image*—an image that “produces a collision between what is Now and what is Past, without transforming the past into a myth or reassuring the present.”<sup>23</sup>

What is framed out and parenthetical becomes the epicenter of the image on screen, thus metaphorically re-embodiment a site that has long disappeared. In so doing, the visual narrative fulfills a heuristic function as we are implicitly asked to actively use our imagination and go beyond what we see in order to make sense of the survivors’ story. In the interstices of silence and absence lie imaginary sites—in other words, the Vel d’Hiv and the French internment camps—that *speak* to us through the visualization of emptiness (empty fields in the Loiret, empty streets in Paris). These non-sites are interrogated through the camera eye in counterpoint with the bodily presence of the Muller siblings.

The victims are not anonymously constructed and depersonalized in a group but rather considered as individuals whose voices and faces emerge on screen. The close-ups create a sense of human connection with the victim, bringing the historical into the private. *Les Enfants* does not overpower the viewers with a calculated emotional experience, but engages the audience in a dialectical and dynamic process. We, the viewers, thus become part of the witnessing act. Through the articulation of their stories on public television, the Mullers regain a voice and recover some agency.

The images on film and the non-sites of memory that we *see* on screen become legible when they, paradoxically, leave an open space, a breach, a fragment and a lacuna. What is absent and silent becomes the substance of the narrative. Despite the use of archival documents—family photographs, the front page of a newspaper, official Vichy ordinances—the narrative remains succinct and asks us to fill in the blanks. In one particular scene, the actor/survivor Michel articulates the reality of the decrees that

singled out and ostracized the Jewish community during the Occupation. Michel is positioned at a teacher's desk in a classroom—similar to a theatrical space—with a copy of the Statute on Jews in his hands. While he enumerates the sanctions taken against the Jews in German-occupied France, the camera, from a long shot to a medium shot, slowly zooms in to reduce our visual field and direct our gaze toward the main actor, suggesting both the inescapability of the laws and the scapegoating of innocent victims. These camera movements also operate a transition from the general to the particular, from the historical to the personal.

The framing and the composition of this shot echo, thematically and stylistically, another scene in the Beaune-La-Rolande train station where Michel's and Annette's bodies and voices become the media through which H/history takes form: as they stand alone in front of the station—their isolation is heightened by both the absence of other people in the vicinity and the silent site—Michel reads a list of names, mostly those of young deportees. For each and every victim, Michel reveals his or her name, date of birth and current status as “absent” in a staged performance: the identity of those who perished and vanished materializes through Michel's physical presence and voice. When the actor/survivor pronounces his sister's name, date of birth and status, as well as his own, the word “absent” switches to the adjective “present,” which is verbalized by the siblings themselves in front of the camera. Both Michel and Annette return to the community of the living, removing themselves from the dead in the voicing of their identity and survival. Performance in former sites of persecution and destruction becomes the vector for reality and authenticity: the archives are staged through both a vocal and visual dramatization.

As these two cinematic and televised renderings of the Vel d'Hiv experience show, “the duty to remember” the survivor's voice, face and story forms the paradigm around which TV producers shaped their programs in the 1990s. In the following decade, however, new elements came into play and provoked a shift in visual representation.

#### THE YEAR 2000 AND AFTER: “HOLOCAUST KITSCH”?

The re-imaging/reimagining of the roundup has led, in recent years, to a new and soothing mythology about France's role in the Holocaust,

which accords with current sociopolitical interests and needs. In the past decade, French television has relentlessly and increasingly tried to create a multiplicity of images, be they real or artificial, to fill in the visual void surrounding the Vel d'Hiv roundup, thus implicitly positing these new narrative/cinematic forms (and sometimes new mythologies) as the new "archives."

Whereas TV programming from the 1990s emphasized the survivors' voices and faces, giving a concrete and human contour to the Vel d'Hiv roundup in France, more recent TV shows reflect an obsession, not so much with the survivors as with the visual representation of their experiences, as if hyperrealist images and commercial scenarios have now superseded the victims' voices. Although Vel d'Hiv survivors are paramount to the construction of most TV shows on the Vel d'Hiv, their physical presence and stories have been somewhat undermined in recent televised representations. What Annette Wiewiorka termed "the era of the witness" has dissolved into the era of sensationalism and hyper-mediatization, which has notably transformed the relationship to the past.<sup>24</sup> The fear of "nothing" (the quasi-absence of visual evidence) has led to an overdose of "everything."

Both the new media and traditional screens, like television and cinema, have become the reservoirs for our images of the largest roundup of the Occupation, thus constructing in some way a new Vel d'Hiv imaginary. As we saw in the previous examples, reconstruction of the past is based upon information derived from the present. French television has become both the vector of transmission of the Vel d'Hiv memory and the reflector of its instrumentalization and commodification in the public sphere. A new narrative has emerged both to condemn the role of the state (the French police and administration) in the persecutions and deportations of Jews during the Occupation and to mitigate France's guilt by reiterating and emphasizing the role of "les Justes" (the Righteous among the Nations). As Nancy Wood explains:

while the emanation of individual memory is primarily subject to the laws of the unconscious, public memory—whatever its unconscious vicissitudes—testifies to a will or desire on the part of some social group or disposition of power to select and organize representations of the past so that these will be embraced by individuals as their own.

If particular representations of the past have permeated the public domain, it is because they embody an intentionality—social, political, institutional and so on—that promotes or authorizes their entry.<sup>25</sup>

The last decade saw the institutionalization of the Holocaust, and of the Vel d’Hiv, which influenced the way in which the roundup has been visualized in the public space. The year 2000 marked the creation of the Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Shoah and a shift in memorial politics. The name of the national day of remembrance, established in 1993, was modified to include and honor the Righteous among the Nations, now becoming the “Journée nationale à la mémoire des victimes de crimes racistes et antisémites de l’État français et d’hommage aux ‘Justes’ de France.” This revision set the memorial agenda for the conceptualization and narrativization of the Vel d’Hiv on screen.

In 2002, on its sixtieth anniversary, the Vel d’Hiv roundup visually became the main vector for a campaign against anti-Semitism. In the Gare St. Lazare in Paris, an exhibit “retracing the events of the Vel d’Hiv” showed the faces of hundreds of children from France deported to the camps, among whom were the Vel d’Hiv victims.<sup>26</sup> Posters of a Jewish girl’s identity card from the war years were placed at key sites throughout Paris—bus stops, train stations and buses—to raise awareness about the rise of anti-Semitism in contemporary France. Although the initiatives came from private Jewish organizations, they were reported in the national news, thus consolidating the place held by the Vel d’Hiv in the grand national narrative: the past tragedy became an emblem of any form of racism and anti-Semitism in contemporary France.

Thus, when in 2005 President Jacques Chirac inaugurated the Mémorial de la Shoah, the correlation between this major public event and the Vel d’Hiv was established in the visual narrative of news broadcasts as if to show the similarities and overlap between the emblematic roundup, the Holocaust and the realities of 2005.<sup>27</sup> In 2007, the presidential inauguration of a plaque to honor the Righteous among the Nations in a grandiose ceremony at the Panthéon reinforced their place in the national narrative while giving visibility to their story. In 2011, the Musée Mémorial des enfants du Vel d’Hiv, which was partly funded by the Fondation pour la Mémoire de la Shoah, the state, the region and the Loiret department, opened in Orléans, giving visual contours to an event lacking photographic

evidence. Finally, the seventieth anniversary of the roundup in 2012 gave rise to another panoply of events around Paris that sought to *show* the extent of the catastrophe by exposing and displaying archival documents, artifacts and visuals.

These disparate examples attest to the new way of memorializing the Shoah in various official ceremonies, state-funded memorials and exhibits in recent years. Paradoxically, the scarcity of visual evidence gave rise to feature films, TV productions, plays, news broadcasts, exhibits and museums whose goal was to *show* the Vel d'Hiv roundup—which was regarded as epitomizing in itself the horrors of the Occupation—while reintegrating the “good” French into the picture. What remains constant is the desire to visually document and delineate an event whose visual traces lie in a single photograph. These endeavors convey a sense of visual urgency in the absence of a substantial imagery of the roundup. This trend is reflected in French television with the constant display of soothing national narratives replete with an overabundance (and saturation) of images. Recent TV shows seem to be invested with a pedagogical and historical mission and have a tendency to trivialize and oversimplify the complexity of the Vel d'Hiv, hence following the trend initiated by the state's official memorial politics.

For example, the TV program *La Rafle du Vél d'Hiv, 16 et 17 juillet 1942*, directed by Gilles Nadeau and created for the sixtieth anniversary of the roundup, was aired on France 5 six times over a span of four years, from 2002 to 2005.<sup>28</sup> Constructed chronologically, the show retraces the different stages of the roundup, from the persecutions of Jews in France to the deportations. Archival footage, interviews of survivors and comments from historians punctuate the narration, while delineating the causes and consequences of the roundup.<sup>29</sup> From the very beginning, Serge Klarsfeld appears as the authoritative figure and reiterates the fact that the tragedy of the Vel d'Hiv has not been visually documented, hence there is a visual lacuna. The absence of photographs, however, does not pose a problem as Nadeau fills the screen with earlier images of the velodrome, archival photographs and archival footage. Every historical fact is scrutinized by an expert and corroborated by a wealth of images to leave no room for ambiguity. The show gives the viewers a history lesson and purports to encompass all the intricacies of the event.

The representational saturation and hyperrealism inherent in the various post-2000 programs reduce the Vel d'Hiv to a marketable and

consumerist televised form with no critical edge. French television employs an array of formal conventions in order to give the spectator the sense of experiencing, not a particular narrative construction of reality, but its authentic reproduction by juxtaposing past and present images in a “kitsch” form, and by constantly inserting visuals on the set as if “seeing” everything were paramount to the ability to understand the facts.<sup>30</sup> Writing about Roselyne Bosch’s feature film *La Rafle* (2010), Sylvie Lindeperg astutely identifies it as constituting “the exemplary symptom of the difficulty for our image-driven (*iconophages*) societies to admit that an event was and is without visual contours, as if this was a major obstacle to its transmission.”<sup>31</sup>

This obsession with images manifested itself in an over-dramatization of the Vel d’Hiv in an episode of the TV show *Les Détectives de l’Histoire* entitled “Rafle du Vel d’Hiv: La France coupable?” which was aired twice on France 5 on March 12 and December 1, 2007. The first broadcast was advertised in *Télérama*: “Zealous French. July 16 and 17, 1942: 13,000 Jews are herded into the Vélodrome d’Hiver in Paris. They will be exterminated in Auschwitz. Is France guilty?”<sup>32</sup> The juxtaposition of this short synopsis with a black and white photograph of a bus with hundreds of Jews standing behind it misled the viewers by giving artificial visual contours to the roundup. Instead of inserting the only visual trace of the roundup—the façade of the Vel d’Hiv in July 1942—the editors selected an image that would speak more directly to the viewers and force visualization: key elements emerge from the photo—a Parisian bus, a mass of deportees—but project a false interpretation of the words that appear on the page. The straightforwardness of the image from another roundup replaces the visual void of the Vel d’Hiv photograph. This presentation perfectly accords with the content and form of *Les Détectives*.

Indeed, the manipulation and combination of both cinematic and archival images in a simplified, detailed and pseudo-didactic narrative creates a false proximity with the past and transforms the memory of the Vel d’Hiv into a mere product of sensationalism. The *mise-en-scène* strangely recalls that of the popular American crime series, *CSI*, where detectives spend a great amount of time dissecting the truth in darkly lit labs, while using computer screens and high-tech tools to lay out the facts and eventually find the killer. The final answer is revealed at the end of the show through a dramatic *mise-en-scène*. Similarly, French journalists—Laurent

Joffrin, Corinne Levaillant, Eric Lemasson and Peggy Olmi—take on the role of detectives whose mission is to dissect visual and written documents on Vichy France and the Vel d'Hiv in pseudo-scientific arguments. The format of the program leaves no room for ambiguity: the construction of a sensationalist narrative claims to encompass the whole historical event.

During the TV show, everyone has a specific role: Laurent Joffrin leads the investigation, presents the facts, poses key questions to the investigators and resituates the case in its political, economic and social context. On the basis of reconstructions, each of the detective-journalists highlights one aspect of the case. Archival images and photographs illustrate their comments. The case is thus decrypted, analyzed and commented upon by the team of the “History Detectives.” At the end of the show, an expert comes to validate or invalidate the thesis proposed by the team and in order to solve the controversial case....<sup>33</sup>

In its synopsis of each of the programs in the series, France 5 uses a lexicon appropriate to a crime scene investigation.<sup>34</sup> This reduces history to an entertaining product organized around dramatic effects: “a breathless rhythm,” “police investigation,” “new investigation,” “case,” “solve,” “detective-journalists,” “reconstructions,” “investigators,” “presents the facts,” “a specialist,” and so forth. In publicizing this new show, France 5 reinforced the authenticity and truthfulness of *Les Détectives* by emphasizing the alleged novelty of the investigation, even though the program did not discover any new and groundbreaking material about the roundup and reiterated what had been said on French television in the previous two decades:<sup>35</sup>

What is France's responsibility in this case? Did the Vichy government obey the German demands without arguing, or did it anticipate them? Did the French know where these thousands of people were being sent? In 1942, was there knowledge of the death camps? The TV show “The History Detectives” will attempt to answer those questions on the basis of documents, written data, maps and newspapers. Laurent Joffrin, with the help of three journalists—Peggy Olmi, Corinne Vaillant and Eric Lemasson—conducts a *real* (*véritable*) investigation, illustrated by film excerpts and archival images. On

the set, Annette Wieviorka, a research director at the CNRS and a historian specializing in the genocide of Jews during World War II, delivers her analysis and speaks about collaboration and anti-Semitism in France.<sup>36</sup>

The investigation pieces together the fragments of the past in a mosaic of viewpoints that function as vectors for our understanding of the Occupation. In Muriel Hanot's words, "Television investigates the real, the present, to reveal the traces of the past and to go back to history, to a vision of history."<sup>37</sup> The documents are constantly projected onto multiple screens, laid out on large tables and exposed to us from different angles, thus providing a "vision of history." Lighting and sound also converge to mirror the atmosphere of a crime investigation lab. With each piece of the puzzle, the detectives engage in pseudo-analytical conversations whose ultimate goal is to answer the key question "The Vel d'Hiv roundup: Is France guilty?" The lexicon of crime investigation permeates the text.

A *mise-en-abyme* also places the viewers as observers of these fake recreations as we watch the detective-journalists who are themselves watching the screens positioned in every corner of the set—screens on which film footage, photographs, newsreels and archival documents are projected. This program overcomes the scarcity of photographic evidence on the Vel d'Hiv by filling the TV screen with all kinds of other images that can conjure up the tragedy. The 1942 black and white photograph of the Vel d'Hiv appears in several frames, yet seems to vanish in the visual confusion triggered by the overdose of images. The Vel d'Hiv is thus reified by being given cinematically delineated contours and shape. Nothing is left in silence. The viewers follow the rhythm imposed by the journalists. We are asked to pause and ponder as we dissect the images with which we are bombarded from the screen. Everything is orchestrated for us. Silence is artificially inserted into the narrative: "And, of course after, there is the unspeakable, the zykron B, the gas chamber, and finally the crematoria... everything these images tell us without having to add words. For that matter, if you don't mind, I will stop talking." The journalist speaks for the images instead of letting the images speak for themselves.

The detectives' final interpretation is reinforced by the presence, at the beginning and very end of the show, of Annette Wieviorka, who is introduced as "the expert" in the field. When Joffrin asks for her input on

Jacques Chirac's speech at the ceremony honoring the Righteous among the Nations in 2007, she responds:

Chirac honored those who made possible the survival of three-quarters of the Jews. This is the speech on "the Righteous" ... I attended this ceremony ... the Righteous ... are few in number. There are about 2,700 individuals in France who have been recognized as the Righteous among the Nations. But through these 2,700 individuals, the ceremony also paid tribute to a large part of civil society, which makes France, along with Denmark, the country where Jews had the highest survival rate. 75 percent of the Jews of France survived....

Her comment seems intended to mitigate the bad deeds committed by the French state and enumerated in the investigation, thereby attenuating France's guilt. Inserting the historian's simplified analysis into the final segment of the show allows for a somewhat less troubling version of the war years. Did "a large part" of the French deserve the honors at the Panthéon? Did 75 percent of the Jews of France survive because "a large part" of the French helped them? Although Wieviorka mentions the limited number of "les Justes," she does not draw a distinct line between France, the French, the Righteous among the Nations and the portion of Jews who survived. The amalgam creates some ambiguity. Ultimately, she seems to validate what has been said and shown to us: "The French state was undeniably guilty. But the French state does not represent the totality of the French. It [the Vichy government] was not a democratic state and I think that we cannot say that the French, as a whole, were guilty." There is no doubt that a small portion of the French helped the Jews and, for this very reason, deserve recognition. However, one could ask whether the mention of the Righteous among the Nations is relevant in this context or whether, instead, it creates a new form of positive, feel-good mythology. Placing these last comments at the conclusion of the show could be interpreted as a strategy to end on a happy note and to force the viewers to identify with the "good guys." After all, in the *CSI* American TV series, the "bad guys" are always punished. Paradoxically, the glaring absence remains without a doubt the survivor. The figures of the historian, the journalist, the president—Chirac is seen in video excerpts from 1995 and 2007—are present, but not the other voice, that of the victim.

Another TV show, *La Rafle du Vel d'Hiv: Une histoire française*, reflected the same mythologizing trend with a different twist. The program focused on Roselyne Bosch's film *La Rafle* and followed its thematic structure. Although the film became a box-office hit, it also elicited harsh critiques that questioned the validity of fictional representations of the Holocaust. It can be argued that *La Rafle* fails to reconcile historical truth and fiction. Indeed, Bosch's film turns into a spectacular and linear representation of the past. From beginning to end, the audience is offered no respite as the camera movements, the soundtrack, the rhythm (the successive shots) and lighting leave no room for silence, imagination and reflection. The viewers are thus placed at the heart of the action so that they can feel a sense of unease and chaos. However, this representational saturation creates a false proximity with the past.

Bosch sought to deliver "everything" by using special effects to reconstruct the interior of the Vel d'Hiv and the Loiret French internment camps. However, the attempt to make images encompass the totality of an event and follow a logical/causal sequence reduces them to superficial catalogs of History. The film erases the complexity of images by over-emphasizing the emotional and failing to add critical distance. Bosch creates her own "image-archive" of the event in the absence of visual evidence of the inside of the Vel d'Hiv at the time of the roundup, while superficially filling in the void. She thus constructs *La Rafle* as the first and only true visualization of the Vel d'Hiv roundup.

Before its official release in March 2010, *La Rafle* benefited from extraordinary and extensive media coverage as well as much publicity that played a major role in the film's appeal.<sup>38</sup> A visual platform for discussions and debates brought the Vel d'Hiv to the fore on national television, paving the way to a symbolic and singular commemoration made accessible to everyone. Astrid Erll explains that "[a] tight network of other medial representation (and medially represented actions) prepare the ground for the movies, lead reception along certain paths, open up and channel public discussion, and thus endow films with their memorial meaning."<sup>39</sup> The two-hour talk-show *La Rafle du Vel d'Hiv: Une histoire française*, aired the night before the official release of the film, scored high ratings: 3.5 million viewers watched the film director and the cast, along with historians, survivors and journalists, discuss the uniqueness and relevance

of the film's representation of the roundup, while reviving former debates and controversies from the 1990s.

Although the show adopted a more formal and standard style than *Les Détectives*, it resorted to the same didactic structure and reassuring mythology. The discussions among actors, film director, historians and survivors on the TV set are interspersed with short segments introduced by catchy intertitles contextualized by a voice-over. In most of these separate blocks, video clips from *La Rafle* are used as the visual reference, as the historical authority in the field. For the purpose of the show, key excerpts from the film are paired up with brief interviews with Vel d'Hiv survivors in the present, and ultimately supersede the victim's voice, which thus comes as a mere supplement. The authoritative status of *La Rafle* within the show transforms the film into the new "archive." The voice-over in one of the segments points to this fact:

Finally today, the Vel d'Hiv roundup has its own film. Sixty-eight years after the facts, the shadows of the Vel d'Hiv, the faces forever lost behind the walls find a memorial of images in cinema. Why so late? Why so many years after the event? Because cinema is a mirror and, in the euphoria of the Liberation, the French wanted to see themselves as fearless, happy, heroic rather than collaborators.... Now, a new step has been made with *La Rafle*. Better late than never.

This comment misleads the viewers by making them believe that cinema is the archival truth. The artificial image thus serves as an ersatz for reality while taking on a memorial function, "a memorial of images," as if the sole photograph of the Vel d'Hiv does not suffice. The fear of a visual void arouses an opposite reaction, *le tout-montrer* (showing everything). To reinforce this point, Marie Drucker, the program's host, adds: "The only images of the interior of the Vel d'Hiv are those that you [Roselyne Bosch] have created in fiction."<sup>40</sup> The computerized re-creation of the Vel d'Hiv functions as the new archive of this event through hyperrealism. As Lindeperg has observed with reference to *La Rafle*, "The spectator is invited to feel the event 'as if he was there' and even better than if he had been there; the technical devices of the reconstruction rely on the ability of the cinematographic spectacle to be more real than reality by offering a 'surplus' of presence and reality."<sup>41</sup>

This TV program dedicated to the Vel d'Hiv, and more specifically to the feature film *La Rafle*, claimed to encompass the reality of the event even though it simplified and vulgarized the Vel d'Hiv into a mere product of consumerism. It also diminished the powerful documentaries and films on this very topic from the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s by implying that they addressed the realities of the roundup only indirectly and/or never showed the actual roundup and detention in the Vel d'Hiv stadium and the Loiret camps. Here again, as in *Les Détectives*, the program ended on a happy note with the story of the Righteous among the Nations.

## CONCLUSION

If the Vel d'Hiv plaque and sculpture exhibit only one side of the story, lack the malleability of other modes of expression and, last but not least, fail to actively engage the spectator in memory work, French television and cinema have replaced them over the years, fulfilling a memorial function. However, if the 1990s engaged the viewers in an active remembrance process through the visualization of the victim's voice and body on screen, works of recent years have sought to dissect and scrutinize the Vel d'Hiv through a pseudo-didactic lens that offers no alternative, no silence, no fragmentation. TV sensationalism has turned the act of remembrance into a commercial act by fiercely rejecting the unknown and the invisible. One may wonder if the return to the "site" via the agency of television, and especially hypervisuality, risks a posteriori effacing the event by blending it into the multitude of other images that bombard our TV screen every day.

## NOTES

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1. Childless couples and single people were taken directly to Drancy after the roundup without transiting through the Vel d'Hiv and French camps. Their deportation to the east followed soon after.

2. Peter Carrier, *Holocaust Monuments and National Memory Cultures in France and Germany since 1989: The Origins and Political Function of the Vél' d'Hiv' in Paris and the Holocaust Monument in Berlin* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2005), 53–54.

3. Sylvie Lindeperg, "Itinéraires: Le cinéma et la photographie à l'épreuve de l'histoire," *Cinémas: Journal of Film Studies* 14, no. 2–3 (2004): 207.

4. Klarsfeld was speaking on the TV show *Au Field de la Nuit*, a special program on "La Rafle du Vél d'Hiv" (92 min.), TF1, aired at 12:10 a.m. on March 1, 2010, which was dedicated to Roselyne Bosch's film *La Rafle* (2010). In addition to the director and Klarsfeld, actors Mélanie Laurent and Hugo Leverdez, survivors Michel Muller, Annette Muller and Joseph Weismann, policemen, teachers and students were invited to the set. Segments of the film were shown and presented as visual evidence of the roundup (and used as such).

5. Georges Didi-Huberman, *Images malgré tout* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 2003).

6. Sven-Erik Rose, "Auschwitz as Hermeneutic Rupture, Differend, and *Image malgré tout*: Jameson, Lyotard, Didi Huberman," in David Bathrick, Brad Prager and Michael D. Richardson, eds., *Vizualizing the Holocaust* (Rochester, NY: Camden House Press, 2008), 129–30. In this citation, Rose is referring to the well-known Auschwitz photographs of the Sonderkommandos.

7. Sylvie Lindeperg, "La Rafle, réflexions sur un succès d'aujourd'hui," *Vingtième Siècle*, no. 108 (Oct.–Dec. 2010): 168.

8. I have deliberately chosen this term for my analysis because a myth manipulates historical facts, establishes a new paradigm for looking at an event and mitigates the memory of controversial events. As will be discussed in the second part of the article, these new mythologies on the Vel d'Hiv do not deny France's responsibility in the deportations of Jews, but rather construct a misleading narrative around the Righteous among the Nations. In that sense, the word "mythology" is appropriate to embody the shift in the memorial paradigms of the 2000s.

9. On February 14, 1971, a segment of the news was dedicated to Kurt Lischka, a Nazi war criminal, described as being one of the organizers of the Vel d'Hiv roundup. On July 16, 1972, journalists commented on the Vel d'Hiv anniversary and commemorations: despite some historical errors, they emphasized the role of the police, comparing it to the Saint Bartholomew's Day massacre of Protestants in 1572. In the 1980s, the voice of Vel d'Hiv survivors was heard more often in news broadcasts and TV programs which emphasized more openly the responsibility of the French state in the roundups of Jews: *Les Gens d'Ici* (December 7,

1981, Antenne 2, 7:44 p.m.); *Histoire d'un Jour*—"16 juillet 1942: La Rafle du Vel d'Hiv" (May 25, 1986, FR3, 8:33 p.m.); national news segments in the 1980s explicitly mentioned the Vel d'Hiv and the role of René Bousquet, Darquier de Pellepoix, Jean Leguay, Pierre Laval and the French police in the planning and implementation of the roundup. No ambiguity remained. These comments were made within the context of commemorations and the trials of French collaborators. Institut National de l'Audiovisuel (INA).

10. Annette Wiewiorka, "Le Vél' d'Hiv': Histoire d'une commémoration," in Christian Coq and Jean-Pierre Bacot, eds., *Travail de mémoire 1914–1918: Une nécessité dans un siècle de violence* (Paris: Autrement, 1999), 164.

11. *Ibid.*, 165.

12. Astrid Erll, "Literature, Film, and the Mediality of Cultural Memory," in Astrid Erll and Ansgar Nünning, eds., *Cultural Memory Studies: An International and Interdisciplinary Handbook* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2008), 395.

13. Henry Rouso, interview by Annette Lévy-Willard, "La rafle du Vél d'Hiv est devenue emblématique de la Shoah," *Libération*, July 22, 2012. For a more detailed analysis, see Carrier, *Holocaust Monuments and National Memory Cultures*, 49.

14. Except for the program *Histoire d'un Jour*—"16 juillet 1942: La Rafle du Vel d'Hiv"—which covered the story of the Vel d'Hiv roundup in 83 minutes (May 25, 1986, FR3, 8:33 p.m.), this two-hour TV program was unique as it was devoted entirely to the roundup and gave survivors a chance to share their experience of the Vel d'Hiv with the viewers, live on prime-time television (it was aired at 8:36 p.m.) (INA).

15. *Télérama*, no. 2212, June 6–12, 1992.

16. *Ibid.*, 10. A synopsis of the program appeared in another section of the magazine.

17. The testimonies are by Maurice Rajsfus, Hélène Zytnicki, Joseph Weismann, Charlotte Schapira, Sarah Lichtsztejn, Rosette Schalit, Anna Radochitzky, Joseph Kogan, Henri Ostrowiecki, Leon Fellmann, Annette Monod, and Henri Russak.

18. Annette Wiewiorka, "1992: Réflexions sur une commémoration," *Annales. Economies, Sociétés, Civilisations*, 48, no. 3 (1993): 711.

19. A filmmaker, who lived through the Occupation, fled to the southwest of France with his parents and worked for Joris Ivens, cinema-auteur.

20. The main participants in the film are Michel Muller (also narrator/voice-over), Annette Muller, Henri Muller, Jean Muller, Manek Muller (the father) and Annette Leiris-Monod, who, as a Red Cross nurse, was sent to the Vel d'Hiv and the French internment camps, where she witnessed what happened to the Jews. She appears at the very end of the film.

21. Pierre Alban Delannoy, *Maus d'Art Spiegelman: Bande dessinée et Shoah* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2002), 129.

22. Georges Didi-Huberman, "The Site, Despite Everything," in Stuart Liebman, ed., *Claude Lanzmann's Shoah: Key Essays* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 115.

23. *Ibid.*, 121. Didi-Huberman summarizes Walter Benjamin's theory in his own words and applies it to his analysis of *Shoah*. References to Benjamin's *dialectical image* are taken from Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, trans. Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1999), 463.

24. Annette Wieviorka, *The Era of the Witness*, trans. Jared Stark (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006).

25. Nancy Wood, *Vectors of Memory: Legacies of Trauma in Postwar Europe* (Oxford: Berg, 1999), 2.

26. France 3, news edition 19/20, July 16, 2002 (INA).

27. France 3, news edition 19/20, January 25, 2005 (INA).

28. *La Rafle du Vél d'Hiv, 16 et 17 juillet 1942* (51 min.) was aired on France 5 on July 16, 2002 (2:31 p.m.); July 31, 2002 (9:49 a.m.); January 25, 2003 (7:20 a.m.); January 29, 2003 (4:04 a.m.); January 6, 2005 (8:05 p.m.); and January 13, 2005 (1:03 a.m.) (INA).

29. Maurice Rajfus, Rebecca Cukierman, Jo Nisenman, Rachel Jedinak, Annette Muller, Hélène Zytnicki, Jacques Grynberg share their memories and experience of the roundup. Throughout the documentary, writer and journalist Jacques Duquesne explains key moments in the German Occupation of France: the Vichy ordinances from 1940, the persecutions of Jews, the planning and implementation of the roundup, the shift in public opinion, the role of the church. The film ends with a hopeful note as Duquesne insists on the fact that "a lot of people helped [the Jews]." His comment comes right after the viewing of archival footage showing corpses from the camps. Sensationalism converges with Duquesne's soothing narrative.

30. In this context, the term "kitsch" implies the trivialization, simplification and imitation of historical facts and discourse so that the masses can relate to and understand what is being narrated; the vulgarization of history on French television is tied to mass consumption as well, especially in the case of *Les Détectives de l'Histoire* (which will be discussed below), which follows the structure of the popular American TV show *CSI*. As Jean Baudrillard notes: "To the aesthetics of beauty and originality, kitsch opposes its *aesthetics of simulation*." Jean Baudrillard, *The Consumer Society: Myths and Structures* (London: Sage, 1998), 111.

31. Lindeperg, "La Rafle," 168.

32. *Télérama*, no. 2982, March 7, 2007, 99.

33. “Résumé producteur” in the description of the TV program *Les Détectives de l’Histoire*, INA.

34. The INA archives contain 15 different episodes of this TV program between 2005 and 2007. They all address controversial topics from different periods and areas, such as “Qui a tué Kennedy?” (April 9, 2005); “Qui a voulu tuer Jean-Paul II?” (December 18, 2006); “Qui a tué Martin Luther King?” (April 16, 2007).

35. The issues constituting the core of *Les Détectives de l’Histoire* were presented by several TV programs as early as the 1980s. The program *Histoire d’un jour*—“16 juillet 1942: La rafle du Vél’ d’Hiv”—aired on FR3 on May 25, 1986 (8:35 p.m./83 min.)—followed a somewhat similar structure. See *Télérama*, no. 1897 (1986): 75. In the 1990s, TV shows and documentaries on this very topic were broadcast on public television. See *Télérama*, no. 2739 (2002) and no. 2767 (2003).

36. “Résumé producteur,” March 12, 2007 (INA) (emphasis added). Initially this synopsis appeared on the France 5 website.

37. Muriel Hanot, “Télévision et histoire: Enjeux et dépendances d’une rencontre conditionnée par les images d’archives,” *Recherches en communication* 14 (2000): 18.

38. Pedagogical material and brochures were developed for teachers and sent to 11,000 schools to be used as a point of departure for lessons on memory and Vichy France. Previews of the film were shown to history teachers in 27 cinemas throughout the country.

39. Erll, “Literature, Film, and the Mediality of Cultural Memory,” 396.

40. A similar attitude to the images in Bosch’s film was expressed in other programs devoted to her film. See, for example, n. 4 above.

41. Lindeperg, “La Rafle,” 168.