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| <b>Institution:</b> Cardiff University  |  |  |
| <b>Unit of Assessment:</b> Modern Languages and Linguistics (26)  |  |  |
| <b>Title of case study:</b> Reshaping museum and media narratives about the Second World War in France  |  |  |
| <b>Period when the underpinning research was undertaken:</b> 2004 - 2020  |  |  |
| <b>Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:</b>  |  |  |
| <b>Name(s):</b><br>Hanna Diamond<br>Claire Gorrara  | <b>Role(s) (e.g. job title):</b><br>Professor<br>Professor | <b>Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:</b><br>02/09/2014 – present<br>01/08/1994 – present |
| <b>Period when the claimed impact occurred:</b> 2015 - 2020   |  |  |
| <b>Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014?</b> No   |  |  |
| <b>1. Summary of the impact</b> (indicative maximum 100 words)  |  |  |
| <p>France's history during the Second World War is complex and contentious. Dominant narratives determine how the period is remembered but these can be selective and over-simplified. Cardiff research, focusing on the development of historical narratives that emphasise the complexities of the war and better reflect individual lived experiences, generated new ways of thinking about how this past is remembered and communicated. This changed curatorial practices and cultural productions, including exhibitions at the Musée de la Libération de Paris, by encouraging beneficiaries to integrate an everyday-life approach and draw on related source materials.</p>  |  |  |
| <b>2. Underpinning research</b> (indicative maximum 500 words)  |  |  |
| <p>Narratives surrounding the Occupation and Liberation of France during the Second World War illustrate the problems in oversimplifying representations of complex events. This period saw the birth of a national narrative emphasising the population's active role in its own liberation to the detriment of that played by Allied forces. Cardiff research showed how presentations of this narrative, to the exclusion of others, influenced public understanding of events. This highlighted the need for different sources, enabling a more comprehensive account of how people experienced this period during the war.</p> <p>Diamond's research focuses on civilian experiences in France. She draws on source materials to reconstruct the nature of people's everyday lives, facilitating enhanced understanding of memory cultures around how the conflict has been remembered and represented. Her historical approach is complemented by Gorrara's expertise that is more explicitly focused on cultural production and engagement with narratives and memories as well as visual cultures of war.</p> |  |  |
| <b>2.1 Memory politics</b>  |  |  |
| <p>Prior to her appointment at Cardiff, Diamond collaborated with Gorrara on co-authored work contributing to debates about how the Second World War is remembered in France. They engaged with this through work on representations of Resistance activities, and problems relating to sources. This research included:</p>  |  |  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• analysis of allegations made in the 1990s suggesting that Raymond Aubrac (who, along with his wife Lucie, was a celebrated member of the Resistance) may have turned informer and betrayed Resistance leader Jean Moulin who was put to death at the hands of the Gestapo in 1943 [3.1].</li> <li>• a study of Julia Pirotte's press photography of the 1944 Liberation in Marseille, which i) showed that Pirotte's work has been appropriated at different historical junctures to tell very different war stories and ii) emphasised that visual narratives are always informed by both the historical and political contexts of their production and by the viewing conditions of their reproduction. For example, depicting a community fighting for its own liberation erases Allied troops from the visual narrative [3.2].</li> </ul>  |  |  |

This attention to the memory politics surrounding the period was crucial in guiding Diamond's subsequent impact advisory work with museum professionals outlined in Section 4.

## 2.2 Seeking sources – visual narratives and personal testimonies

Following her move to Cardiff, Diamond continued to research the importance of photographic representations of the Second World War as historical sources, and how press presentation of a dominant visual narrative to the exclusion of others informed public understanding of events [3.2, 3.3, 3.4]. This work revealed how:

- traditional visual narratives of the French exodus following France's defeat in 1940 focused on officially endorsed propaganda photography whereas images taken by freelance photographers provide a more nuanced understanding of how individuals experienced these traumatic events [3.3];
- the photographs of liberation events in 1944 that circulated at the time reflected local circumstances. Whereas coverage in Paris was marked by scenes of combat and barricades, local press in Marseille and Toulouse was dominated by crowd photography conveying messages around civilian involvement in liberation in ways designed to aid post-war community reconstruction in these locations [3.2, 3.4].

Personal testimony, both oral and written, was also key to Diamond's research. Using the Fleeing Hitler website (which she set up during the previous REF period to allow contributors to share accounts of their family stories of escape), she analysed (during this REF period) the possibilities offered by digital forums for building archives of wartime experience. Her analysis showed that people need to feel that the historical record reflects their own family experiences providing a sense of validation that their stories are a recognised part of it [3.5].

Cardiff's research provided the foundation for delivery of impact in collaboration with museums, as well as media and film professionals (facilitated by ESRC IAA awards (£30,500) supporting an extended research leave for Diamond in Paris). Drawing directly on the underpinning research she advised the Musée de la Libération de Paris on their new permanent exhibition and co-curated their first temporary exhibition [3.6].

### References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

[3.1] Diamond, H. and Gorrara, C., 'Occupation Memories: French History and the Aubrac affair in the 1990s' in W. Kidd & B.O. Murdoch (eds.) *The Commemorative Century*, Ashgate, 2004, pp.233-244. DOI.10.4324/9781315249186

[3.2] Diamond, H. and Gorrara, C., 'Framing War: Photography, Julia Pirotte and the Liberation of Marseille' in *Modern and Contemporary France*, 2012, pp.453-473, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09639489.2012.720434>

[3.3] Diamond, H., 'La France en 1940: images des réfugiées' In: Stefan Martens & Steffen Prauser (eds.) *La guerre de 40 se battre, subir, se souvenir*, Presses Universitaires de Septentrion, 2014, pp.195-211. ISBN 978-2-7574-0771-4

[3.4] Diamond, H., 'The Return of the Republic: Crowd photography and the Liberation in Toulouse 1944-45' *French Politics, Culture and Society*, 2019, pp.90-116, <http://dx.doi.org/10.3167/fpcs.2019.370106>

[3.5] Diamond, H., 'Preserving and displaying everyday life: Digital stories of escape from France during the Second World War' *Essays in French Literature and Culture*, No 54, November 2017, 59-80, <https://search.informit.org/doi/10.3316/INFORMIT.897915642502459>

[3.6] Diamond, H. and Zaidman, S., *Les Parisiens dans l'exode*, Paris Musée, February 2020, 120 pages. Available from HEI on request.

### 4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

As the last survivors of the Second World War disappear, public access to an accurate historical record is more important than ever. Cardiff research led to the development of

historical narratives that emphasise and preserve critical complexities and nuances of how people experienced these events.

#### 4.1 Shaping curatorial practice

In May 2015, Diamond was appointed to the *Conseil Scientifique* of the Musée de la Libération de Paris. She acted as an expert adviser for the reworking of its permanent exhibition, a project which brought three separate museums together onto one new site above a former resistance command post on Place Denfert Rochereau.

In a 2016 report for the museum on its old permanent exhibition, Diamond identified that displays lacked clarity, contained omissions, and overemphasised the myth that Paris was liberated by its own civilians. She recommended changes to address these issues. Dr Sylvie Zaidman, the museum's Director, stated: *"Her recommendations contributed to our decision making; they influenced our planning processes... Professor Diamond influenced a number of areas of the new museum, including the focus and choice of some of the objects to display, the formulation of panel text and the logistics of the layout"* [5.1]. These changes include:

##### a. Artefacts and mixed media

Cardiff research informed the selection of objects, photographs and films for the new exhibition. For example, Diamond's *"research into liberation photography and her expertise on women's experiences of the Second World war was integrated into the exhibits"* of a new installation on the Liberation of Paris [5.1]. This is seen in the inclusion of materials, including a film constructed by Diamond, which move beyond traditional triumphalist narratives of de Gaulle and the arrival of Free French forces in the city. These new materials provide a more comprehensive account of the period by including visual counter-narratives of head shaving and retribution against German prisoners. Zaidman confirmed: *"This exhibit changes the tone of grand narratives around the French national discourse of liberation"* [5.1].

##### b. Testimonies

The museum included testimony via the integration of quotes and oral interviews showing the trajectories of leaders and other key participants on Diamond's recommendation. Her work helped the museum to increase *"our reflection on how choices made by individuals can have a crucial impact on the wider course of history...In response to this, we decided to use testimony in room 4 to illustrate and explain the different choices made by [Moulin, Leclerc, de Gaulle and Pétain]"* [5.1]. Diamond's work included designing an AV installation using passages from personal accounts. Zaidman noted that *"this helps visitors to fully understand the different choices"* made by the leaders and that Diamond's installation in particular was noted as a museum highlight by the press [5.1, 5.2a].

##### c. Emphasis on exodus

Diamond championed the creation of a dedicated room devoted to the civilian experience of traumatic defeat in May-June 1940, including the mass exodus of three-quarters of the population of Paris. Zaidman confirmed that *"Professor Diamond's involvement led us to give the Exodus more prominence; an event that is normally overlooked in favour of the Occupation, Collaboration and Resistance"* [5.1]. Diamond's work later led to the museum's decision to dedicate its first temporary exhibition to '1940: Parisians in the Exodus', which was curated by Diamond and ran from February-December 2020 [see below for details on COVID-19 closure periods].

The museum had been *"considering a temporary exhibition for some time, but it was not until we were introduced to Hanna [Diamond] that we felt armed with the tools and expertise to produce an insightful and impactful first exhibition"* [5.1]. Zaidman further stated that Diamond's expertise *"was instrumental in the arrangement of the exhibition"* and *"as a result of Hanna's influence, our exhibition has increased public knowledge of the exodus and created new ways of thinking about France's Second World War experience"* [5.1].

#### d. Critical and public reception

The museum opened to acclaim in August 2019, the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Liberation. Julian Jackson, an authority on the period, highlighted in international art magazine *Apollo* the importance of civilian narratives, writing that the overarching narrative of Leclerc and Moulin “*is made much more vivid and concrete by being linked to the examples of specific individuals whose stories are picked out for us*” [5.2b].

*The Guardian*’s review of the Exodus exhibition also highlighted the impact of civilian artefacts and narratives: “*With posters, newspaper cuttings, photographs, children’s drawings, archive documents and artefacts, but above all with the remarkable accounts of those who lived through it, the exhibition - France’s first major exhibition on a long-overlooked subject – corrects the dominant narrative*” [5.3]. Acclaim for the exhibition meant that “*the museum has been widely applauded and gained excellent exposure for treating an innovative and important subject for the first time*” [5.1]. For example, the national broadsheet *Le Figaro* named it one of the top 10 exhibitions not to miss over the summer of 2020 as it brought the events to mind “*in a simple and accessible way*” [5.1].

Visitors have significantly increased at the new museum compared to the old site. In its first year, it attracted 80,000 visitors, the equivalent of eight years foot traffic in the old museum [5.1]. The Exodus exhibition attracted over 10,000 visitors during the three months it was open between February and September 2020 [due to restrictions related to the Covid-19 pandemic, it opened 27 February, closed 13 March, and re-opened 16 June] [5.1]. Zaidman confirmed that Diamond’s work “*was fundamental*” to the exhibition’s success “*and has led to clear benefits for the museum and Paris Musée by drawing in revenue and raising the profile of the museum but also for visitors and their families*” [5.1]. The museum closed for a further lockdown period on 30 October 2020 but will be hosting a virtual version of the exhibition.

Visitor feedback indicated that the museum is “*instructive, well crafted, thought-provoking, moving, enriching, pedagogical, well-presented*” [5.1]. Exhibition feedback indicated significant personal response to the subject matter and highlighted intergenerational links. Comments included expressing a desire “*to return with children [and] to transmit the memory of the exodus to future generations*” and “*I came to this exhibition to better understand my grandfather and now I do*” [5.4, 5.1]. Another visitor, herself a witness of the exodus, was “*happy to see so many young people there*” [5.4]. Visitors were also often moved to write down their own exodus stories, share family testimonies, offer witness accounts, and donate original documents [5.1, 5.4].

Zaidman confirmed that, overall, “*Diamond’s advice and her knowledge of oral and written testimony and her conviction that mobilising life stories would enable us to illustrate how history impacts on individuals has been particularly valuable*” and that Diamond “*helped us to elaborate a better offer for the public and to elaborate a much more comprehensive account of the period*” [5.1].

#### 4.2 Enhancing the historical accuracy of cultural productions

Diamond’s work also supported the co-production of new cultural artefacts, with media and film professionals benefiting from her expertise and her encouragement to use testimony in communicating a more accurate history of the wartime period.

##### a. *Monkey Business: The Adventures of Curious George’s Creators*

Director Ema Ryan Yamakazi changed the planned approach to her film *Monkey Business: The Adventures of Curious George’s Creators* (2017) as a result of working with Diamond. The documentary charts the story of Hans and Margret Rey, Curious George’s creators, who fled Paris in June 1940 with the first drafts of their books starring the famous children’s character. Diamond pointed out to Yamakazi that the Reys’ personal anecdotes of their wartime experiences were positively framed for a children’s audience and did not accurately reflect the harsh reality. Yamakazi said: “*As a result of Diamond’s contributions both as a consultant and on-screen interview subject, my film was able to achieve a double-layer in storytelling: exploring how the Reys told their own story of their wartime escape, while providing the dramatic and realistic context of what the Reys had experienced. Looking back*



*on the process, Dr. Diamond's involvement became essential to the success of the film, as she not only led us to tell a historically accurate one, but also a dynamic one" [5.5].*

The documentary premiered at the 2017 LA Film Festival, has been screened at over 20 film festivals worldwide, and is available to watch in over 60 countries on digital platforms including iTunes and Amazon Prime.

#### **b. Witness to War**

Diamond's consultancy and her on-screen interviews for *Witness to War* (2017, US Discovery Channel) led the producers to change their two planned episodes about France. Steve Gilham, Director of Production for Like A Shot Entertainment confirmed that *"Diamond's expertise was vital to the development and planning of the series and improved its historical accuracy"* and that changes to the 12-part anthology series covering 1939-46 included [5.6]:

- redesigning two episodes to focus more on French events, including covering the experiences of refugees during the Fall of France in 1940. Gilham notes *"without her involvement, we would not have emphasised the experiences of French civilians as much in the first episode" [5.6];*
- shaping a later episode on the Liberation of Paris and its aftermath – *"This episode had mostly focussed on military history, but... After consulting with Diamond, we included themes of resistance, collaboration and liberation(s)...The inclusion of women's experiences were particularly something that she influenced" [5.6].*

The series is available on Amazon Prime TV and regularly shown on the Discovery Channel. Gillham said that *"although it is impossible to give exact viewing figures covering more than three years and many repeat showings, the total audience would be over a million" [5.6].*

#### **c. Joséphine's War**

For publication in US digital magazine *Truly Adventurous*, Diamond drafted a commissioned article, using autobiographical sources, on the wartime activities of the mixed-race international star and Resistance secret agent, Joséphine Baker. The magazine's editor, Greg Nicols, stated that *"Most of the Baker scholarship to date had dealt with important issues of identity and legacy, but there wasn't much out there about her activities during the Second World War" [5.7].*

The article formed the basis of a screenplay, *Joséphine's War*, by Hollywood screenwriter Kat Blasband Page, which focused on Baker's wartime work. Page confirmed that Diamond's *"invaluable research creates the entire backbone which the film narrative rests on"* and *"her research and advice is integral to the historical accuracy and the development of the script" [5.8].* Diamond is currently lined up to be historical consultant for the film, which has Oscar-winning producers, Sugar23, involved [5.8]. Nicols further added that Diamond's work *"has been invaluable to us as it has enabled us to secure the Hollywood deal"* and *"is also being used to attract in a high profile director and big name actors to star in the production" [5.7].*

#### **5. Sources to corroborate the impact** (indicative maximum of 10 references)

[5.1] Letter from Dr Sylvie Zaidman, Director of the Musée de la Libération de Paris

[5.2] Musée de la Libération de Paris: **a.** *Retours presse – Ouverture du Musée [Press feedback on museum opening]* September 2020 **b.** *Apollo International Art magazine*, September 2019

[5.3] Jon Henley, *The Guardian*, Press book of reviews of the Exodus exhibition

[5.4] Visitor feedback from the Exodus exhibition - Report on museum website

[5.5] Letter from Ema Ryan Yamakazi, Director of documentary 'Monkey Business'

[5.6] Letter from Steve Gillham, Director of Production, Like a Shot Entertainment

[5.7] Letter from Greg Nicols, Editor, Truly Adventurous

[5.8] Letter from Kat Blasband Page, screenwriter