

## Secrets and Lies: Representing Everyday Life under the Occupation'

Having argued that Henri Lefebvre appeared not to have altered his understanding of the structures of the everyday from 1930s to 1950s, Michèle C. Cone commented: 'Let us not forget that during four years of Nazi occupation not a single day could be called banal; hence the return to a familiar and routine daily existence after World War II was naturally comforting.' (L Gumpert (ed.), *The Art of the Everyday: The Quotidian in French Culture*, New York University Press, 1997, p.29 n.1). We can contrast this with 'Paris sous l'Occupation' (*La France libre* no 49, 1944) where Sartre seeks to convey to a foreign audience the experience of the Occupation, yet feels thwarted precisely because of its undramatic, banal nature: 'l'Occupation a été *quotidienne* (...) nous avons vécu...'.

The aim of the paper is therefore to explore a series of related questions about constructions of everydayness in narratives of the Occupation, at the time and since.

What can one mean by 'the everyday' in the exceptional circumstances of the war and occupation? To what extent can one identify common tropes and themes in representing daily realities of the time? How far is this imbued with a historical consciousness in representing the banality of quiet domesticity as unrealisable? How far, in later narratives, can one identify the implicit narrator/sujet d'énonciation as historicised in the modalities of the 'here and now' under the Occupation. How far is the very history of the Occupation being inscribed in its everydayness?

The paper will, it is hoped, establish whether the 'mystery of the everyday', in Harootonian's phrase, is played out in the Occupation narratives' focus on fear, denunciation, betrayal, and deception, and whether we can trace the workings of history under its disordered surface.

Margaret Attack  
University of Leeds