REFEREED GENERAL ARTICLE

Women and Nonviolent Resistance to WWII Nazism

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Women were major players in the Resistance to Nazi occupation. Their role was downplayed in the post-war period, but this is changing with more studies being published, led by women historians. This article aims to help reverse the historiographical gender imbalance and add to the small body of literature on non-violent resistance to Nazism. It gives an overview of the many non-violent ways in which women resisted, before focusing on the activities of several key women. It considers how these fit within the pantheon of non-violent tactics, including symbolic actions, overt non-cooperation and covert tactics. It will then focus on four types of covert tactics in particular, commencing with the gathering and communicating of intelligence. A subsequent article will explore resistance through media; smuggling and hiding people; and sabotage, and examine some of the effects of these tactics in order to determine how successful they were.

KEY WORDS: Non-violent action, women, Resistance, Nazism

Historian Pat Morrisey observes how much harder it is to recover the stories of women than of men (2021: 286). Stories of women who resisted Nazism[1] are in a minority compared with the vast array of books celebrating the military deeds of men in the Allied Forces. In the case of Virginia Hall:

> The fact that a young woman who had lost her leg broke through the tightest of constrictions and overcame prejudice and even hostility to help the Allies win the Second World War is astonishing. The fact that a female guerrilla leader of her stature remains so little known is incredible (Purnell 2020: 3).

This imbalance, however, is starting to change, largely led by women historians such as Margaret Rossiter *Women in the Resistance*, Anne Nelson *Red Orchestra and Codename Suzette*, Michele Huppert's *Malou: French Resistance Fighter*, Clare Mulley's *The Spy Who Loved: The Secrets and Lives of Christine Granville*, Sophie Polderman's *Seducing and Killing Nazis* as well as memoires by Resistance members such as Agnès Humbert (*Resistance*). Among the many reasons why such histories are important is the fact that women were major players in the Resistance, although post-war they often downplayed their roles, shunned publicity, and avoided or were excluded from public platforms. Nevertheless, women in resistance movements survived in greater numbers than men, and so became the 'indispensable vectors and guardians of memory. … They mobilised to keep alive the memory of all those who did not return and fought against the dangers of forgetting' (Blanc 2008: 295).

This article describes some of the resistance activities in which women engaged in France and other western European countries, focussing on several key women from a variety of backgrounds and political persuasions, such as left-wing Parisian art historian Agnès Humbert; Nancy Wake, an anti-communist Australian married to a Frenchman; Belgian-born Parisian Suzanne Spaak; French woman Ruth Kneppel who went by the codename of Malou; and upper class Pole Christine Granville (born Krystyna Skarbek).

While most histories of the struggle against the Nazi forces focus on violent and militaristic resistance, resulting in the widespread misconception that Nazism was only overcome through violence, this article focusses on the nonviolent activities of these women, while acknowledging the complex, nuanced connections between nonviolent and violent actions. The aims of the article are two-fold: to help reverse the historiographic gender imbalance by highlighting some important stories of women activists, and to add to the small body of literature about nonviolence in resistance to Nazism, which includes Semelin (1993) and previous articles in this journal, such as Stratford (1987), Martin (1987, 1990), Summy (2000) and Branagan (2014).

There were many nonviolent ways in which women acted in this period. The article will give an overview of

some of these, and how they fit within the pantheon of nonviolent tactics, including symbolic actions, overt non-cooperation and covert tactics. It will then focus on four types of covert tactics. Gathering and communicating intelligence are explored in this article. Resistance through media; smuggling and hiding people; and sabotage will be examined in a subsequent article. It will also explore some of the effects of these tactics in order to determine how successful they were.

Why examine the role of women in resistance to Nazism?

Women have played a pivotal role in numerous nonviolent movements throughout the world, from Poland's *Solidarnosc* movement to contemporary climate activism, but tend to be under-recognised for their foresight, political nous and courage (Branagan 2021: 3-19). Resistance to Nazism was little different – women were closely involved from the first moments of resistance, often playing vital roles. As Resistance member Germaine Tillion recalls:

> France in 1940 was unbelievable. There were no men left. It was women who started the resistance. Women didn't have the vote, they didn't have bank accounts, they didn't have jobs. Yet we women were capable of resisting (cited in Humbert [1946] 2008: 309).

With one and a half million French male soldiers held prisoner, women stepped into the resistance void, assuming a variety of roles new to them, which they held until men returned and the old patriarchal structures reasserted themselves: 'the debacle of defeat brought about a partial and temporary redistribution of roles, before deeply rooted social conventions gained the upper hand once more' (Blanc 2008: 294).

As Blanc notes, male Resistance veterans and historians tend to pay ritual tribute to the devotion, sacrifice and martyrdom of women, but then 'women are all too often relegated to a position of secondary importance' (2008: 291). The lack of visibility of women in WW2 aided their effectiveness as covert resisters but was one reason, post-war, for gaining less recognition than men: women made up 15-20% of the resistance and 15% of political deportations to concentration camps, but of 1,036 resistance heroes honoured by de Gaulle with the Order of Liberation, only six were women (Huppert 2021: 62).

Another issue contributing to an imbalanced view is that women such as Agnès Humbert consistently underrated her contribution: 'This self-deprecating approach betrays the deeply-ingrained attitudes towards the place of women in a society dominated by men' (Blanc 2008: 292). Describing herself as merely the group's typist, she was in fact 'a prominent figure constantly at the forefront of events' (ibid).

Tactics used

Gene Sharp (1973) compiled a list of 198 methods of nonviolent action – recently extended by Michael Beer (2021) to include 148 additional tactics. These can be broadly categorised into three main types: protest and persuasion, noncooperation, and nonviolent intervention. Women used all three types in their resistance to Nazism.

Tactics can also be broadly separated into ones which are overt and those which are covert. Overt tactics are usually the only type used in principled, revolutionary nonviolence as advocated and practised by Gandhi, Martin Luther King and many women before and since (Burrowes 1996), whereas covert tactics (along with overt ones) are used when necessary by practitioners of pragmatic/strategic, reformist nonviolence. While the former rely on fearless self-sacrifice, there have been feminist critiques that such an approach adds to the burden of women (McGuinness 2002, Starhawk 2006), while a mainstream view is that overt action within highly repressive systems is usually unrealistic, leads to unnecessary suffering and loss of life, and achieves little. In such circumstances, covert action is regarded as justifiable, enabling practitioners to resist as well as survive.

A final distinction to make here is between concentrated actions, such as people gathering for a protest march, and dispersed or decentralised actions, such as stay-at-home strikes, and distributing underground newspapers (Schock 2015; Martin 2016). Again, dispersed actions are generally deemed more prudent within ruthless regimes. Summy suggests that, in a repressive system:

> the strategist wants to focus on methods of evasion and disengagement and to initiate a series of subtle and covert actions. Although a concentrated and provocative action might initially be warranted in order to attract attention to the issue and test the resolve of the opponent, common sense would dictate, in most instances, that actions be dispersed and unobtrusive, and the power sources of the opponent be gradually whittled away (1995: 177).

Most women who resisted Nazism engaged in a range of tactics, including both nonviolent and violent ones. An egregious example was Australian journalist Nancy Wake, who abandoned an easy life married to wealthy French industrialist Henry Fiocca to work as a wartime ambulance driver. Her resistance work began through helping prisoners of war on a small scale by feeding

them, and she gradually became involved in setting up safe houses and hiding and smuggling out of France downed airmen, escaped prisoners, Jewish people and other evaders. She became a courier with the O'Leary Line, delivered civilian clothing, documents and money, organised the escape of escape network coordinator Ian Garrow, and was herself rescued from prison after arrest, beatings and interrogation. When the pressure of this dangerous work became too intense, she escaped to England, where she trained as a Special Operations Executive (SOE) operative. She was parachuted back into France and supplied weapons to and trained large contingents of *Maquis* resistance groups, who engaged in sabotage and fighting German troops (Fitzsimons 2002; Kealey 2021; Braddon [1956] 2019). Thus she engaged in nonviolent escape work which saved many people from prison and death, as well as facilitating both sabotage of property (discussed in the subsequent article) and military attacks on Nazi troops. Those military attacks may have saved lives through shortening the war, but they could not be considered nonviolent.

Another who engaged in a variety of nonviolent and violent activities was Ruth Altmann (later Ruth Kneppel), who posed as an Algerian Christian named Malou and joined the 'Prosper' *Maquis* group, where she transported food, intelligence and coded messages to political prisoners and operatives hiding in forests, engaged in reconnaissance, and prepared political prisoners for jailbreak. She also smuggled arms and, after the Allied invasion of France on 6 June 1944, facilitated sabotage of rail systems, electrical facilities and phone cables, and the disruption of German convoys (Huppert 2021: 67).

Nonviolence and violence

Many of these women expressed grave misgivings about violence, and experienced moral dilemmas. Wake said 'I hate war and violence but, if they come, then I don't see why we women should just wave our men a proud goodbye and then knit them balaclavas' (cited in Braddon [1956] 2019: 283). Teenaged resister Simone Segouin, when asked if she had ever killed anyone, responded:

> On July 14, 1944, I took part in an ambush with two comrades. Two German soldiers went by on a bike, and the three of us fired at the same time, so I don't know who exactly killed him. You shouldn't have to kill someone like that. It's true, the Germans were our enemies, it was the war, but I don't draw any pride from it (Girl with a Gun – Simone Segouin n.d.).

Agnès Humbert summarised some of the qualms felt by women in the resistance, as she contemplated the move from propaganda to smuggling maps and military intelligence:

> Because of my meddling there will be widows, inconsolable mothers, fatherless children. Spirits, great minds perhaps, snuffed out before they have a chance to make their contribution to the world. … French people, living peaceful lives – will be killed and wounded, children maimed. Where are my lofty humanitarian ideals now? Have I taken leave of my senses? (Humbert [1946] 2008: 28).

Like many, however, she concluded that resistance required violence: '[T]o stop it happening we have to kill. Kill like wild beasts, kill to survive. Kill by stealth, kill by treachery, kill with premeditation, kill the innocent. … What a filthy business' (ibid). Although she was aware of Gandhi, sang a seventeenth century pacifist song while in a German labour prison, and post-war joined the Friends of Peace (Blanc 2008: 308), advocating for no more war and for swords to be beaten into ploughshares, she believed that, during the war, barbarism was needed to prevail over barbarism: 'That is the great tragedy' (Humbert [1946] 2008: 194).

On the other hand, the pacifist ideals of French philosopher Simone Weil were strengthened by her short experience fighting with anarchists in the Spanish Civil War, observing how 'the waging of war dictated totalitarianism even when its original impulse was libertarian', and deploring the '[c]onscription, the execution of deserters and a pyramidal military command-structure amounting to dictatorship' (Oldfield 1989: 75).

Another extraordinary woman pacifist was SOE wireless operator Nora Inayat Khan, descended from Indian Muslim royalty, and who would be executed on September 13, 1944 in the Dachau concentration camp (Prahl 2019). She too had struggled with the moral dilemma of war, as her brother Vilayat later explained:

> Nora and I had been brought up with the policy of Gandhi's nonviolence, and at the outbreak of war we discussed what we would do. She said, 'Well, I must do something, but I don't want to kill anyone.' So I said, 'Well, if we are going to join the war, we have to involve ourselves in the most dangerous positions, which would mean no killing.' Then, when we eventually go to England, I volunteered for minesweeping and she volunteered for SOE, and so I have always had a feeling of guilt because of what I said that day (Helm 2008).

While Khan's work may have had violent consequences, others such as Suzanne Spaak engaged only in nonviolent

work, aiming to save Jewish people from the Holocaust. Arrested and condemned to death, Spaak wrote from prison in 1944 that 'I hold that human life is sacred' and she deeply regretted the death sentence, for which she felt responsible, of fellow resister Jacques Grou-Radenez (Nelson 2017: 218).

Who resisted?

Women's resistance ranged from actions adopted en masse as a gender, to the work of women's groups and individuals. An example of the former was a fashion war that patriotic French women waged against the wives and mistresses of the occupying German officers, while for lonely single officers the French women were 'objects of envy and despair to the Germans', making them 'feel lonelier than any other army has ever felt before. … Theirs was an attitude of magnificent defiance and convinced superiority. … [They] took no pains at all to disguise their pleasure in [Nazi] defeats' (Braddon [1956] 2019: 67-8).

Individuals who resisted came from many nationalities and all walks of life, from working class nurses and poor Spanish mountain guides to aristocrats like Countess Elisabeth de la Bourdonnaye (known as Dexia), her widowed daughter Bertranne, whose in-laws unsuccessfully pressured her not to shelter men in her home (Rossiter 1986: 97-8), and the courier Catherine Dior, sister of Christian Dior, sent to Ravensbrück where she barely survived the war (Nelson 2017: 224). Hoteliers allowed their premises to be used as 'mailboxes' (Humbert [1946] 2008: 117). Brothel owners sheltered resisters, and concierges warned them of the presence of the Gestapo and police. Lawyers, seamstresses, students, doctors, nurses, social workers, nuns, godmothers, garage owners – all contributed to the struggle in minor or major ways.

Even young girls aided the resistance. Mme Sainson in Nice housed as many as thirty evaders at a time, and during a search of the house her twelve-year-old daughter hid a radio transmitter – discovery of which would have led to their execution – in a box of rubbish and took it past Gestapo agents to the rubbish tip outside (Stanton and Cox n.d.; Braddon [1956] 2019: 89). In Paris, Suzanne Spaak's fifteen-year-old daughter Pilette and the Oratoire's Girl Scouts troop acted as children's escorts in the La Clairière operation to hide and smuggle to safety dozens of Jewish children (Nelson 2017: 149).

Symbolic actions

Let us start by examining tactics which were overt and clearly nonviolent – symbolic actions. These are a form of protest and persuasion which aim to make public statements of dissent or identity as well as expressions of conscience and conviction. Examples ranged from the extremely subtle, such as Dutch people wearing carnations (the symbol of Prince Bernhard) on 29 June 1940 to show their anti-German attitudes (Poldermans 2019: 157), to more overt and dangerous symbols of disapproval of Nazi edicts, such as the Oratoire group denouncing the imposition of yellow stars on Jewish people (Nelson 2017: 142), and young Parisians wearing hand-lettered stars that read 'Catholique', 'Swing' or 'Goy' or the letters JUIF for 'jeunesse universitaire intellectuelle française' (French university intellectual youth). About forty of the latter protesters were arrested and imprisoned in Drancy; on release, many joined the organised Resistance (Nelson 2017: 66).

When incarcerated, resisters engaged in symbolic acts such as observing an hour's silence followed by the singing of the Marseillaise (Humbert [1946] 2008: 68). Even when on trial and facing execution, Humbert's group used humour as a 'weapon of subversion' and defiance, infuriating their prosecutor but impressing the judge (Blanc 2008: 294-9).

In Germany, women were imprisoned for openly speaking out against Hitler (Humbert [1946] 2008: 195-6), while the ninety-one-year-old grandmother of the more famous resister Dietrich Bonhoeffer took the lead in open resistance when she defied the first anti-Jewish boycott and strode past a cordon of brown-shirted Nazis to enter the Jewish-owned KaDeWe department store (Nelson 2009: 84). At the University of Munich, where the White Rose resistance group began, female students outraged by a sexist speech by the Gauleiter of Bavaria attempted to walk out but were stopped and arrested by Gestapo guards. The male students revolted and took the stage, holding the leader of the Nazi student organisation hostage until the women were freed (Ginder 2001).

Effects of symbolic actions

Although symbolism may seem insignificant against the ruthless warmongering Nazis, the detailed memoire of Agnès Humbert shows the uplifting effect of such actions while she was imprisoned. The hammer and sickle trail created in the sky by a (presumably Russian) pilot 'created such joy' (Humbert [1946] 2008: 131), while a fist symbol shared with a sympathetic leftist factory policeman indicated solidarity: 'Sometimes actions speak louder than words. I spend the whole shift singing, a weight lifted from my heart' (Humbert [1946] 2008: 171). Humbert was deeply moved by songs, with the Internationale raising the spirits of the slave workers, and the Komintern song sung by Red Army soldiers at the factory being 'so beautiful that I wanted to cry' (Humbert [1946] 2008: 176-7, 211). Music also engendered solidarity and the courage to endure:

> [N]one of us will ever before have experienced the solidarity that cocoons us here … [T]hrough

> our muffled singing of the Marseillaise, we know that we are all in this together, and that in unity lies strength (Humbert [1946] 2008: 62).

Overt non-cooperation

Overt non-cooperation included Humbert's refusal in prison to stand for warders (Humbert [1946] 2008: 59), and the 'Rosenstrasse' group of German women, whose Jewish husbands had been arrested, demonstrating outside the Gestapo headquarters in Berlin, shouting for their husbands to be returned, despite the threat of being machine-gunned. Amazingly, they succeeded – at least in the short term – and thousands in Germany and France were released, showing that even the most brutal of regimes like to preserve an image of legitimacy (Summy 1995: 176).

An important finding of post-war interrogations of German generals was of the Nazis' inability to deal effectively with overt nonviolent resistance:

> They were experts in violence and had been trained to deal with opponents who used that method. But other forms of resistance baffled them – all the more in proportion as the methods were subtle and concealed. It was a relief to them when resistance became violent and when nonviolent forms were mixed with guerrilla action, thus making it easier to combine drastic repressive action against both at the same time (Summy 1995: 172).

Many resisters, when arrested, refused to implicate others or divulge any information, even under the most horrific torture (Humbert [1946] 2008: 101, 300; Nelson 2017: 69-75), with brave, selfless examples including young Dutch woman Hannie Schaft (Poldermans 2019: 94) and Violette Bushell (aka Szabo), regarded by SOE's Odette Churchill as 'the bravest of us all' (Minney 1971).

Christine Granville's most legendary exploit was securing, at huge risk to her own life, the release of Colonel Francois Cammaerts, head of the 10,000 troop *Maquis* in Rhone Valley, and two other agents who had been arrested by the Gestapo and were awaiting execution. Granville posed as a British agent sent to obtain their release and with the help of a two million franc bribe, persuaded the captors that, with a British invasion imminent, they would be shot if they executed the prisoners. A native Polish speaker, she also supported preparations for the Allied invasion of southern France, including the bold subversion of a strategic enemy garrison, staffed mainly by Polish soldiers (Mulley 2012: 236).

Covert tactics

Covert tactics included the forging of ration cards and ID (Nelson 2017: 126-7) and the use of passwords, pseudonyms, coded letters and creative lies (Humbert [1946] 2008: 33, 38, 52). Dutch resister Hannie Schaft stole identity cards from public places with unguarded cloakrooms or changing rooms, such as theatres, concert halls, cafes and swimming pools. She gave them to Jewish people or resistance organisations to aid forgery of these essential identity papers (Poldermans 2019: 17).

Subterfuge was also important. When Nancy Wake was forced to cycle over 500 kilometres in less than 72 hours to find a radio operator to stay in touch with her London headquarters, she ensured that her clothing and appearance were always neat and clean so as to appear to have only cycled a short distance. She also carried cosmetics and a string shopping bag filled with vegetables on her handle-bars (Fitzsimons 2002: 297-305). Spaak also changed her appearance and persona in order to conceal her activities, transforming from a drab dresser careless with her appearance to a 'grand dame' (Nelson 2017: 54).

Even simple gifts of food lifted the spirits, such as by the residents of Neukölln who slipped bread and potatoes to foreign workers as they passed the 'NCR' munitions plant (Nelson 2009: 221). Although this seems a minor action, Humbert describes the impact of a similar one where she was smuggled some sugar as 'a gesture of camaraderie that gave me so much pleasure' (Humbert [1946] 2008: 129).

Intelligence work and its impacts

The gathering and smuggling of intelligence was a covert nonviolent intervention activity (though sometimes with violent consequences) which numerous women engaged in. Malou, for example, reported on German conversations overheard on trains, bistros and streets, and intelligence gleaned from German transmissions monitored on clandestine radios, such as any activities or movements of troops. With her 'perfect knowledge of the German language', her information was 'always exact and often of the greatest importance' (Huppert 2021: 66). Often travelling unobtrusively by bicycle, and taking her three-year-old daughter Michele to further deflect suspicion, she memorised information such as the layout and surroundings of a town hall and drew up a plan so that *Maquis* members could raid it that night and 'liberate' ration tickets for hungry resisters (Huppert 2021: 59). Arrested and interrogated in 1943 by a local chief of police, she was fortunate that he was also an undercover Resistance fighter, who released her and her husband Fred (Huppert 2021: 55-6). Her commander later commented that '[s]he exemplified, whatever the

circumstance, audacity and sang-froid worthy of all commendation' (cited in Huppert 2021: 77).

Intelligence work that assisted the military and propaganda work of the Allies, as well as informing the publications and broadcasts of the underground media, will be more fully discussed in another article. Some of this work was ad hoc and relatively unorganised, as in the case of Malou and the Berlin-based Red Orchestra, although the latter had the advantage of high-level insiders. On a more official level was the work of Allied spies, although the UK networks were decimated by the unexpected defeat and occupation of France (Rossiter 1986: 113), and the US networks were fairly undeveloped early in the war. SOE agents were involved in espionage as well as sabotage and paramilitary arming, training and coordination, although this new form of warfare had to be developed virtually from scratch, informed only by the actions of Irish Republican terrorists (or freedom fighters, depending upon your perspective). Despite the advantages of women being less suspected in such roles, as demonstrated by Malou, SOE was initially reluctant to employ women, for misogynistic reasons as well as legal concerns that women were not recognised as combatants and would not be protected by international laws on war (Purnell 2020: 38).

Virginia Hall, who for years had unsuccessfully battled sexism in the US State Department, now faced sexism in SOE recruitment, along with concerns that she was not a British citizen, but finally, despite her prosthetic leg, she became the first SOE liaison officer of any gender because SOE had so few agents at the time. However, almost uniquely among SOE agents, she was not granted the recognition of an equivalent military rank (Purnell 2020: 34-9). Hall pioneered –

> a daredevil role of espionage, sabotage and subversion in an era when women barely featured in the prism of heroism, when their part in combat was confined to the supportive and palliative (Purnell 2020: 3).

It was 'a very modern form of warfare based on propaganda, deceit and the formation of an enemy within to topple a regime – techniques now increasingly familiar to us all' (Purnell 2020: 6) and which has many similarities to contemporary nonviolent strategies, such as those advocated by former US airforce officer Jack Duvall (Ackerman and Duvall 2000), and former US Defense Intelligence Agency analyst Robert Helvey, who mentored the 'Otpor!' student movement which initiated the overthrow of Serbia's autocratic president Slobodan Milošević (Engdahl 2017).

Following the lead of Hall and Granville, many other women signed up for the perilous work as SOE agents (see Escott 2012; Rossiter 1986: 113-144). Agnès Humbert also engaged in intelligence gathering and smuggling (Blanc 2008: 285; Humbert [1946] 2008: 27-30), aided by her networking, social skills and extraordinary ability to draw into the resistance multiple people from diverse groups. In Germany, Marta Wolter served as a link between workers and her theatre friends, rejoining John Sieg's Neukölln circle soon after her release from prison (Nelson 2009: 105). Hall had a similar facility to influence and connect people, 'winning over key French officials and extracting far more information from them than her [male] peers' (Purnell 2020: 46). She befriended Suzanne Bertillon, chief censor of the foreign press in Vichy's Ministry of Information, who refused to censor Virginia's articles (Hall's cover and mode of communication was a journalist) and even set up a network of ninety contacts across France, including farmers, mayors and industrialists, to provide Hall with information on industrial production, troop movements and a German submarine base under construction in Marseille, which was later destroyed by Allied bombs (ibid).

Christine Granville was the first woman to work in the field as a special agent for the British, commencing just weeks after Britain's declaration of war. She amassed information on German troop, oil and freight movements, and passed on formulae for new gases being made by the Germans (Mulley 2012: 88). She gained detailed intelligence provided by Poles forced to work in German munitions factories and railway stations of 'ammunition factories in Germany and Poland, detailed plans of aerodromes, aircraft factories, the number of planes which existed in Poland, details of torpedoes, U-boats and a new torpedo invention' (Granville cited in Mulley 2012:91). Her reports were photographed into rolls of 35mm film, which she carried in her gloves, or transmitted using an Anglo-Russian dictionary with a special code, wavelengths and call signs hidden in its pages. In early 1941 she provided evidence of troop build-ups, tanks, ammunition stores and petrol depots being amassed along Russia's eastern borders; 'microfilm with the 'potential to change the entire direction of the war' (Mulley 2012:106). It provided strong and early evidence of large-scale German preparations to invade the Soviet Union, at that time still an ally. Britain's longest-serving female agent, Granville undertook missions in numerous theatres of the war throughout the conflict, including undercover operations in two different occupied countries where an agent's life expectancy was rarely more than a few months. She helped to return hundreds of Polish and international servicemen from POW camps in Hungary back to the frontline, including many of the pilots who flew in the Battle of Britain.

African-American entertainer Josephine Baker was another extraordinary character in intelligence and resistance. Having left the racism of the US south for the greater tolerance of France, she joined the French military intelligence agency Le Deuxième Bureau in 1939, using her fame to attend elite social gatherings in embassies and ministries in Europe and North Africa, collecting and smuggling information. She also housed evaders, entertained troops and raised money for the resistance, later receiving the *Croix de Guerre* and the *Rosette de la Résistance* and being made a *Chevalier of the Légion d'honneur* by General Charles de Gaulle (McGinness 2019).

Marie-Madeleine Fourcade led the French Resistance's largest spy ring, Alliance, defying both the Nazis and the French patriarchy that stifled women's advancement. She used society's conservative view of women to her advantage, masterminding an operation of hundreds of agents who gathered intelligence essential for defeating the Nazis. Her biographer, Lynne Olson, claimed that: '[n]o other Allied spy network in France had lasted as long or supplied as much crucial intelligence over the course of the conflict', yet Fourcade 'did not get the attention … she deserved' (cited in Tenorio 2019). Her sang-froid was in evidence when, captured by the Gestapo in 1944,

> She took off all her clothes and managed to squeeze out her slender body through the bars of her jail cell. She jumped down [with] her dress clenched in her teeth. … She crawled across the street on her hands and knees, put on the dress, and she escaped (ibid).

Conclusion

This article has provided an overview of nonviolence by women in resistance to WWII Nazism, an under-examined area of research. It explored how their actions often fitted within the pantheon of nonviolent tactics, and it described their fraught relationship with violence. After examining the wide variety of types of women who resisted, it discussed the broad categories of symbolic actions, overt non-cooperation and covert tactics, before focussing on one covert tactic in particular – gathering and communicating intelligence, an important part of international resistance to Nazism. Other covert nonviolent resistance through underground media, the smuggling and hiding of people, and sabotage will be examined in a subsequent article which will summarise the impacts of these actions.

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Notes:

1. Here Nazism is defined as the broad phenomenon of the dominance of German political, economic, social and cultural life by the Nazi Party between 1933 and 1945, and the export of this phenomenon through the invasion, occupation, annexation or collaboration of a range of European and North African countries, supported by some East Asian countries.

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Terminal

Flight's cancelled. Clipped the wings of a skittish population
separated families, holidays to Bali, and global markets

with one swift shut down lock down wind down
of our economic engines, no longer hoovering up air and fuel

or hapless birds that might easily send roaring sky monsters
and their many souls crashing into oceans of loss and curious

marine creatures. No more Flying Kangaroos outlined in blue
where neatly tucked stewards dish out nuts, napkins and

headphones to happy holidayers, bored businessmen
mothers dosing up toddlers on Phenergan. Now we drive past

rows of big metal birds grounded on the still and silent tarmac
noses down, waiting behind fortified fences, broken budgets

for laid off workers to hopefully return, and guide the raptors back
to skies where they are no longer lumbering beasts of dysfunction

but engineering marvels of the heavens delivering us to terminals
where one day we may rise again.

Kate Maxwell