Psychoanalysis and Child-Rearing in Twentieth-Century France: The Career of Françoise Dolto

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Abstract

This thesis is a critical introduction to the ideas and public influence of French child psychoanalyst Françoise Dolto (1908-88). In the late twentieth century Dolto was a figure of significant cultural importance in France, seen as the country's leading authority on child psychology. The thesis approaches her career from the perspective of social and cultural history. It historicises Dolto's resonance with wider French society, explains the intellectual genealogy of her ideas, and explores the societal implications of her fame. It constitutes a substantial contribution both to the history of psychoanalysis 'beyond the couch', and to the socio-cultural history of twentieth-century France.

The thesis covers a relatively long historical period, and a wide range of topics including child-rearing, education, autism, radical psychiatry and broadcasting history. This span is justified by the length and breadth of Dolto's career and by the consistency in her ideas over time. The thesis contends that fundamental tenets of Dolto's thinking were rooted in the intellectual and political climate of interwar France – specifically debates over the social roles of women, children and the family in the 1930s. Dolto's stances were 'permissive' in that they opposed intransigent authoritarianism in child-rearing, education and religion; and patriarchal in that Dolto upheld paternal primacy and *familles nombreuses*, and often argued against extending women's rights.

The thesis proceeds in two parts. Part I, 'Becoming Dolto', focuses on the intellectual, personal and historical background to her emergence as a public figure. It situates Dolto as a product of the interwar *haute bourgeoisie* and of intellectual trends towards holism and technocracy associated with the anti-Republican Right of the 1930s-1940s. Part II, 'Taking Psychoanalysis Public', explores the settings in which Dolto popularised her ideas and her impact on popular opinion and state institutions. It mines the archive of letters to Dolto's radio programmes to show how her ideas interacted with the concerns of the 1970s French public. It demonstrates her impact on contemporary children's centres and on the treatment of autism in France into the twenty-first century.

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Dedication

To the memory of

Professor Chris Johnson, who helped and encouraged me to pursue a research career;

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RIP.

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Abbreviations

AFD	Archives Françoise Dolto.
CCB	Centre Claude Bernard.
CdE	*Les Chemins de l'éducation* (book by Dolto).
CMPP	Centre Médico Psycho-Pédagogique.
EdP	École des Parents.
EFP	École Freudienne de Paris.
EME	*Les Étapes majeures de l'enfance* (book by Dolto).
EP	*L'Évolution psychiatrique.*
FFEPH	Fondation Française pour l'Étude des Problèmes Humains
LAEP	Lieux d'Accueil Enfants-Parents.
LdJ	*Lettres de jeunesse* – vol. 1 of Dolto's published correspondence.
MFPF	Mouvement Français pour le Planning Familial.
MRP	Mouvement Républicain Populaire.
MV	Maison Verte.
ORTF	Office de Radiodiffusion-Télévision Française.
RFP	*Revue française de psychanalyse*.
RTF	Radio-Télévision Française.
RTL	Radio Télévision Luxembourg.
SFP	Société Française de Psychanalyse.
SPP	Société Psychanalytique de Paris.
STO	Service du Travail Obligatoire.
VdC	*Une vie de correspondances* – vol. 2 of Dolto's published correspondence.

Introduction

I. 'Doltomania'

From the mid-1970s into the early twenty-first century, Françoise Dolto was a household name in France. Her name became synonymous with an approach to parenting, to family relationships and to education that held currency with a significant proportion of the French population. Across France, hundreds of public institutions were named after her, from schools, crèches, children's centres, and youth clubs to clinics, medical centres and hospital wings (see fig. 1).[1] Roads in Strasbourg and on the campus of Université Paris Diderot were named in her honour. In the 2008 film *Entre les murs*, Laurent Cantet and François Bégaudeau's examination of the French Republican education system, the fictional school is named 'Collège Françoise Dolto' – not because it necessarily subscribes to Dolto's views on pedagogy, but probably because that name is one of the most ordinary, unremarkable names possible for a French school; several of the adolescent cast attended a school with that name.[2]

Dolto's influence is not just seen on buildings. Several of her books achieved six-figure sales; the first volume of *Lorsque l'enfant paraît* alone had sold 300,000 copies by 1990.[3] Generalist bookshops, such as the FNAC in central Paris, continue to accord her a couple of shelves-worth of space (see fig. 2). The likelihood that Dolto's books were disproportionately purchased by parents and grandparents, who in turn discussed them with other families, indicates that a sizeable proportion of French children born in the last quarter of the twentieth century were raised in an ideational atmosphere of which her ideas were part. It has been possible for commentators to speak of a 'Dolto generation', in much the same way that postwar American children could be

[1] The number of institutions named for Dolto, according to records maintained by the Association Françoise Dolto, reached 230 by 1999. More recent examples include a new collège near Eurodisney in 2013 and a care unit at a Gentilly hospital in 2014.
[2] On the critique of republican education in *Entre les murs* see Leon Sachs, 'Finding "l'école républicaine" in the Damnedest of Places: François Bégaudeau's "Entre les murs"', *Yale French Studies*, 111 (2007), 73-88.
[3] 'Dolto parle encore à nos enfants', *L'Express*, 12/01/1990, 56.

referred to as ‘Spock babies’ thanks to the influence of Benjamin Spock’s *Baby and Child Care*, first published in 1946.[4]

By 1992, Dolto’s ideas were sufficiently prevalent among middle-class French parents that Guy Baret could write a successful book, *Allô maman Dolto,* poking fun at ‘doltomaniaques’ – defined as mothers (in particular) who tried to outdo each other in their enthusiastic application of Dolto’s parenting advice. Baret argued that middle-class women were coming under extensive peer pressure to read and apply Dolto’s ideas: ‘on doltomanise pour faire comme tout le monde … entre femmes, entre mères, c’est un élément d’intégration sociale, c’est la doltomania mondaine’.[5] A 1994 theatrical adaptation by Sophie Duprès was a nationwide success. It was even staged for the French community in London in 2006 and was still being performed in Lyon in 2015.[6] Baret followed up on *Allô maman Dolto* in 2003 with a book mocking some of Dolto’s ideas and exploring the anxieties of parents who tried to implement them – with the telling title *Comment rater l’éducation de votre enfant avec Françoise Dolto*. Dolto thus clearly provided a parenting model to which large numbers of parents thought they should aspire, if they did not always take it fully seriously.

[4] See e.g. Didier Pleux, *Génération Dolto* (Paris, 2008). Pleux claims France is now producing its second ‘Dolto generation’ – people raised in the 1970s and 1980s, and now themselves parents, continue to use her as a reference point. As for Spock: first published in New York in 1946, *The Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care* sold around 50 million copies by the end of the century – the best-selling book in America, apart from the Bible, over that period. Thomas Maier, *Dr. Spock: An American Life* (New York, 2003), 462.

[5] Guy Baret, *Allô maman Dolto: Halte a la doltomania!* (Paris, 1992). (Paris, 1992). Quote from *Comment rater l’éducation de votre enfant avec Françoise Dolto, suivi de Allô maman Dolto* (Paris, 2003), 198.

[6] A bill for the 2006 London performances can be viewed at http://www.franceinlondon.com/en-Events-in-London-1392-Allo-Maman-Dolto-Plays-Opera-.html, accessed 12/04/2016; and for the 2015 Lyon performance, http://www.lenombrildumonde.com/prog/allo-maman-dolto.html, accessed 19/01/2017.



Fig. 1 – One of the hundreds of French schools named for Dolto. Image from *Ouest France*, 12/03/2008, http://www.saint-brieuc.maville.com/actu/actudet_-Des-rats-decouverts-a-l-ecole-maternelle-_-586102_actu.Htm, accessed 19/06/2017.

Dolto was also a pioneer for the diffusion of psychological and psychotherapeutic 'expertise' via the mass media in France. Dominique Mehl argues that *Lorsque l'enfant paraît* – Dolto's radio show on France Inter from 1976-78 – established the 'code' by which all subsequent French media psychologists would operate.[7] Dolto demonstrated that psychoanalysts and psychotherapists could entice the general public to engage with their ideas by responding to ordinary people's practical, everyday difficulties, rather than discussing abstract theoretical concepts. On the radio, Dolto responded to questions sent in by members of the public, offering relatively general considerations and principles intended to indicate to people confronting similar problems how they might arrive at their own solutions. She refrained from pathologising cases or offering diagnoses, looking instead for what was common or general in a particular case, and avoided references to Freud or other psychoanalytic theorists. She presented herself as someone who could listen, understand, and use clinical experience and theoretical expertise to help

[7] Dominique Mehl, *La Bonne Parole: Quand les psys plaident dans les médias* (Paris, 2003), 35-6.

people who felt at their wits' end. Her personal charisma was a crucial part of her appeal. She empathised with the powerful emotions experienced by parents and children, and tried to channel them towards positive, productive outcomes. Her public persona was maternal (or, as many thought, grandmotherly) and reassuring. 'On a l'impression d'écouter sa grand-mère ... mais une grand-mère spécialisée dans la psychanalyse et les problèmes des enfants' was how one amazon.fr reviewer summed up her appeal in 2014.[8] This combination provided the template for the model with which in subsequent years, 'les psys [français] ont résolument conquis les médias'.[9]

Dolto was both a contributor to and beneficiary of the process by which from the mid-to-late 1960s onwards, psychoanalysis in France dramatically increased in popularity and importance for government policy and the wider culture. This differed from the situation in the USA and other European countries, where the cultural influence of psychoanalysis mostly peaked in the 1950s and early 1960s. Dagmar Herzog's recent survey of psychoanalysis after the Second World War dates the 'golden age' of American psychoanalysis to 1949-69. It declined thereafter, in the context of an anti-authoritarian cultural climate, the rise of feminism and gay rights, and an explosion of behavioural therapies and pop self-help.[10] In France, by contrast, psychoanalysis rose alongside anti-authoritarian currents and often in alliance with them. This too was a factor in how Dolto presented herself to the French public. The combination of psychoanalysis with anti-authoritarian politics was associated in particular with groups around Jacques Lacan, who for Dolto was a professional friend and an ally in the French psychoanalytic movement's splits in the 1950s and 1960s. Dolto's ability to communicate with ordinary people regarding everyday problems brought Freudian concepts to a different kind of audience from that attracted by Lacan. Where Lacan's seminars were attended by students, intellectuals, philosophers, writers, artists, priests and his own analysands, Dolto's targeted people whose profession involved day-to-day care

[8] Comment by 'Phan' on Dolto and Inès Angelino, *Quand les parents se séparent* (Paris, 1988), dated 25/05/2014, https://www.amazon.fr/Quand-parents-s%C3%A9parent-Francoise-Dolto/dp/2757844504, accessed 05/06/2017.
[9] Mehl, *La Bonne Parole*, 11.
[10] Dagmar Herzog, *Cold War Freud: Psychoanalysis in an Age of Catastrophes* (Cambridge, 2017), 5.

or supervision of children: nurses, teachers, care workers, psychologists. The audience for her radio programmes consisted to a significant degree of stay-at-home mothers. Where Lacan's language was challenging and packed with Freudian, philosophical and literary references, Dolto for the most part used everyday terms. As she put it, rather than speak to audiences in a 'jargon incompréhensible … j'ai pu leur parler simplement avec des mots qu'ils ont compris – et cela à tous les niveaux de culture'.[11] Though Lacan and Dolto have been spoken of as the 'parental couple' of French psychoanalysis, her importance has not generally been reflected in academic discussion, especially in the English-speaking world, where only Lacan has entered the canon of psychoanalytic thinkers.[12]

When Dolto died in 1988, there was a feeling of a significant cultural loss, as if France had been deprived of what in the UK might be referred to as a 'national treasure'. *Paris Match*'s obituary ran to six pages.[13] Messages of condolence came in from across the political spectrum – from President Mitterrand, Jack Lang, Anne-Aymone Giscard d'Estaing (wife of the former president and founder of the Fondation d'Enfance), the ministers for health, sport and youth, to George Marchais, leader of the French Communist Party – not to mention the president of LEGO, which had awarded Dolto the LEGO Prize in 1987.[14] There was a feeling that although Dolto had died, her ideas would remain of lasting relevance – 'Françoise Dolto: Elle parle encore à nos enfants' announced a front page of *L'Express* in January 1990.[15] Dolto appeared on the cover of *Le Nouvel Observateur* in September 1992, accompanied by an eleven-page feature, and on the front page of *L'Express* again in April 1993.[16] Publishers sought to capitalise on the continued interest by reissuing many of Dolto's works and producing a stream of posthumous publications, including

[11] Françoise Dolto, *Une vie de correspondances 1938-1988*, ed. Muriel Djéribi-Valentin (Paris, 2005), letter 665, 848, Dolto to Aida Saks, 03/02/1987, here referring to the TV programme *Apostrophes* dedicated to Dolto in January 1987. Subsequent footnotes refer to this volume as *VdC*.
[12] Françoise Hivernel, '"The Parental Couple": Françoise Dolto and Jacques Lacan: Contributions to the Mirror Stage', *British Journal of Psychotherapy*, 29/4 (2013) 505-18.
[13] *Paris Match*, 2050, September 1988.
[14] Archives Françoise Dolto (hereafter AFD), Box 'Obsèques'. Letters addressed to Catherine Dolto, dated 27/08/1988 - 03/09/1988.
[15] 'Dolto parle encore à nos enfants', *L'Express*, 12/01/1990, 56.
[16] *Le Nouvel Observateur* 1452, 09/1992; *L'Express*, 8/04/1993.

two volumes of correspondence. Conferences were held at UNESCO in Paris to mark the tenth and twentieth anniversaries of her death; the thirtieth in 2018 may well be marked by the publication of her collected works, currently being prepared by Gallimard.



Fig. 2 – Dolto shelves in FNAC bookstore, Paris, 2015. Author's photo.

Outside France (and the francophone regions of Belgium and Switzerland, where her broadcasts were also picked up), Dolto attracted a much smaller, though not inconsiderable, level of attention: one or more of her books have been translated into English, German, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, Greek, Russian, Swedish, Dutch, Hungarian, Polish, Finnish, Japanese and Mandarin. Parenting and psychological magazines in several countries have run features on Dolto.[17] Children's centres along the lines of the Maison Verte, as created by Dolto and others in Paris in 1979 (see chapter 6), have been established in Italy, Québec, Argentina, Brazil, Poland, Spain, Russia, the USA, Israel and Armenia. For the most part, however, Dolto remains little known in the English-speaking world.

[17] For example, the Swedish magazine *Psykolog* featured Dolto on its cover in 1998. *Psykolog*, 12/13, 15/06/1998.

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This thesis begins from the proposition that the phenomenon of Dolto's popularity requires explanation. What did Dolto think, and why were those ideas so popular in France in the 1970s and after? What is the history and genealogy of her ideas? Who did they appeal to? How did they interact with contemporary social, intellectual and political developments? What were the social networks and ideological constellations in which Dolto operated?

I will argue that Dolto's distinctive intellectual position is characterised by a combination of 'permissive' child-rearing theory (a term I problematise in chapter 4) and a promotion of normative nuclear families based on paternal authority and an opposition to women's rights and economic roles. Dolto's claim to be radical, revolutionary and ahead of her time, widely believed and repeated in France, largely rests on her promotion of 'permissiveness' – that is, her advocacy of discovery-based educational theory and the idea that children should be spoken to as fully human family members from birth. Widespread acceptance of that claim allowed Dolto to advance her belief in the importance of the patriarchal family model, which she could do more or less subtly and insidiously in relation to the idea that children's mental health problems or learning disabilities resulted from disturbances in family dynamics or communication – what her psychoanalyst René Laforgue termed 'névroses familiales'.

The thesis examines how this combination of ideas was deployed at various points in the twentieth century. In doing so, it will touch on a number of overlapping histories: that of psychoanalysis as a movement and idea; the history of attitudes to childhood, parenting and education; the history of attitudes to medical and educational authority in the context of the radical politics of the 1960s and 1970s; that of French Catholicism in the context of liberalising social attitudes to sexuality; and the history of the French media and of children's literature. Analysing Dolto's career will offer new perspectives on broader trends in the history of psychoanalysis. In several

countries, psychoanalysis after 1945 moved 'beyond the couch' – that is, it began to have social, political and intellectual impacts well beyond private clinical sessions between analysts and analysands. Dolto played a very substantial role in this process in France, and this thesis proposes to tell this story in detail for the first time. Studying Dolto's ideas and trajectory will add new elements to historians' understanding of twentieth-century French social history, especially the politics of the family, gender and sexuality. This thesis will indicate how psychoanalysis became a new way to mediate a form of patriarchal family politics to the wider French public. It will show how the theme of family politics became intertwined with educational and psychiatric policy, including those relating to autism, with lasting impacts. In the process, the thesis will introduce significant new primary source material: Dolto's numerous published texts and voluminous correspondence; material from her personal archive, including the letters sent to *Lorsque l'enfant paraît* and some clinical case files; material from the magazines and journals in which Dolto published, including two previously unknown articles by Dolto in a Pétainist magazine in 1941; and material concerning the Maison Verte children's centres that Dolto and colleagues established from 1979.

The study will thus be of significance to those interested in the history of psychoanalysis and especially in its wider social implications, and to students of twentieth-century French social and intellectual history. Portions of the thesis will interest gender historians, particularly those exploring the history of prominent professional women and women in the media; historians of childhood and education in France; historians of bourgeois values in the early twentieth century and their manifestation in girls' upbringing; historians of the antipsychiatry movement, and of autism and learning disabilities; and historians of the French radio and French celebrities. More generally, the thesis will be relevant to students of intellectual and 'cultural' biography (see below) and of the circulation of ideas between popular and elite milieux.

The remainder of this introduction will provide a concise overview of Dolto's biography and principal ideas, an outline of the thesis structure, and a discussion of the relevant sources and historiography.

II. Biographical overview

Françoise Dolto was born Françoise Marette, in 1908 in Paris. The Marettes were a wealthy family based in the well-heeled 16th arrondissement. Dolto's father Henry, a former *polytechnicien*, ran a steel factory in Burgundy. He had risen to this position by demonstrating his usefulness to the factory's owner, Arthur Demmler, and marrying his daughter Suzanne (see chapter 2). The family – especially on Suzanne's side – was conservative and monarchist, with aristocratic aspirations and sympathies for Action Française. Françoise was the fourth of six children, and the second daughter. Her older sister Jacqueline died of cancer in 1920, a trauma which served to accentuate the psychological pressure placed by Suzanne on Françoise, as the sole surviving daughter, to live up to the ideal of 'une honnête fille, droite et pure'.[18]

Françoise was educated at a private Catholic school in the 16th arrondissement, Cours Sainte-Clothilde, where most learning was in fact done at home, with attendance required only twice per week. She then attended the public Lycée Molière, where – against the will of her mother, but with the support of her father – she completed her baccalauréat in 1925. Her parents then obliged her to wait until 1932 to begin studying for a medical degree, hoping that she would find a husband in the meantime. In 1931-32 she became engaged to Édouard Delebecque, a young classicist considered suitable by her parents, but whom she had no true desire to marry. The breakdown of the arrangement in early 1934 triggered a family crisis. Henry consequently arranged for Françoise to see René Laforgue, a founder member (in 1926) of the Société Psychanalytique de Paris (SPP) and the most socially eminent psychoanalyst in Paris. The Marettes hoped that the analysis would swiftly result in Françoise becoming 'une vraie femme', and add feminine 'charme' to her intellectual and personal qualities.[19] Instead, the analysis lasted three years and resulted in an increasingly self-assured Françoise distancing herself from her family and seeking to qualify as an analyst herself. She was mentored in

[18] Suzanne to Françoise, 19/09/1922, in Dolto, *Lettres de jeunesse, correspondance 1913-1938*, ed. Colette Percheminier (Paris, 2003), 123-4. This volume is hereafter referred to as *LdJ*.
[19] Henry to Françoise, 24/07/1934, *LdJ*, 384.

this process by Édouard Pichon, a psychoanalyst, doctor, grammarian, educational theorist and Action Française supporter. Accepted as a full member of the SPP in summer 1939, when she also completed her medical degree, she opened a medical practice as a 'généraliste et pédiatre' on 1 September 1939, two days before the declaration of war.

After fleeing to the west and then the south of France during the exodus of June 1940, Dolto spent most of the war in Paris, retaining contact with the few psychoanalysts who remained in the city. From 1940 she added to her private practice a regular clinic at Hôpital Trousseau, a children's hospital in the working-class east of Paris, which she maintained until 1978. Dolto was initially sympathetic to the ideals of the Pétain régime (see chapter 3). In 1942, she married Boris Dolto (1899-1981), a naturalised French physiotherapist born in Crimea, which he had fled as part of a defeated White Army in 1919. The couple had three children between 1943 and 1946; the eldest later became famous as the pop star Carlos. In 1943, Dolto worked for the Fondation Française pour l'Étude des Problèmes Humains (FFEPH), led by the eugenicist thinker Alexis Carrel. At some point, probably during 1943, her sympathies switched towards the Resistance. Two of her brothers joined Resistance groups and were later rewarded with significant postwar roles by Charles De Gaulle: her older brother Pierre as a general, and air transport commander during the Suez crisis; her younger brother Jacques as Ministre de la Poste et Télécommunications from 1962-67. In 1944, Dolto discussed working for the Socialist municipality at Suresnes. In 1946 she wrote a regular column for the Communist-affiliated *Femmes françaises*. After the war, Dolto wrote for the Catholic-intellectual journals *Psyché* and *Études carmélitaines*, which were seeking to reconcile psychoanalysis and Catholicism. In the 1950s she wrote for popular magazines aimed at parents, such as *L'École des parents* and *L'Enfant et nous*. She advocated a psychoanalytically-informed approach to child-rearing on state radio, most notably in a 1950 series on *La Tribune de Paris* on sex education.

In 1953, she was part of a group of psychoanalysts who broke away from the SPP to create the Société Française de Psychanalyse (SFP), following disputes

over the freedom of analysts to depart from Freudian orthodoxy, and the training of future analysts. Dolto became an important figure in the new society, initially as its treasurer. She began to take on trainees, and from the late 1950s ran a fortnightly seminar for trainee analysts and therapists. She continued to write on religious psychology, and also produced a lengthy text on feminine sexuality for the SFP's 1960 conference in Amsterdam, at the request of Lacan, whom Dolto had known since the 1930s and who was becoming increasingly dominant in the SFP.[20] When in the early 1960s the SFP sought accession to the International Psychoanalytic Association, Dolto, along with Lacan, was refused admission. She joined Lacan in the École Freudienne de Paris (EFP), from its creation in 1964 until Lacan, opposed by Dolto, dissolved it in 1980.

Dolto's public profile began to grow substantially after 1968. In 1968-69 she held a phone-in agony aunt-style radio show on the private radio station Europe 1, under the pseudonym 'Docteur X'. In 1971, Éditions du Seuil, following the success of Lacan's *Ecrits*, published two books by Dolto – reissuing her 1939 thesis *Psychanalyse et pédiatrie*, and a book-length case study, *Le Cas Dominique*. Her major public breakthrough came in 1976, when she was given a daily fifteen-minute afternoon slot on state radio station France Inter. *Lorsque l'enfant paraît*, as her programme was called, ran for two years, generated a substantial correspondence, and created a strong appetite for further Dolto publications. Subsequently, Dolto appeared on various television programmes, including an hour-long 1987 interview with Bernard Pivot on the prestigious show *Apostrophes* – then France's foremost programme dedicated to books and ideas.[21] Having retired from psychoanalytic practice in 1978, she published a dozen further books, often collections based on older articles, seminars and notes, in the 1980s. More followed posthumously.

Throughout her career Dolto sought to shape public policy and to institute new urban spaces dedicated to children and children's psychotherapy. In 1946 she

[20] This was later published as *Sexualité féminine* (Paris, 1982).
[21] Previous *Apostrophes* interviewees included Simone de Beauvoir, Vladimir Nabokov, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, Susan Sontag, Umberto Eco and Roman Polanski.

helped to found the Centre Psycho-Pédagogique Claude Bernard in Paris, the first example of a psychoanalytically-informed children's centre, and in 1961 joined another, the Centre Médico Psycho-Pédagogique Étienne Marcel. In 1973 she helped to design a private school, La Neuville. Most significantly, she led the creation of the 'Maison Verte' children's centre in Paris, which opened in 1979. Staffed by a mixture of psychoanalysts and childcare professionals, the (largely state-funded) Maison Verte model was imitated across France and beyond.[22] Dolto was consulted by government ministers of both of France's major political tendencies, including Simone Weil, Jacques Lang, Monique Pelletier and Alain Juppé. In the 1980s, the Mitterrand administration sought her input in formulating policies to respond to developments in reproductive technology. In her last years she lobbied for improved facilities for deaf and deaf-mute children. She died in August 1988, a couple of months short of her 80th birthday.

III. Dolto's ideas

Dolto's lengthy bibliography includes original theoretical and clinical works, edited extracts from her broadcasts and seminars, a psychoanalytic reading of the Christian gospels, autobiographical texts and correspondence. Almost all of these publications appeared after 1971, many posthumously. Most were compiled from earlier material, such as texts of public speeches and newspaper, magazine and journal articles and interviews from the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s. There is considerable overlap and repetition of ideas across the different works. The editors of the collections of essays and articles published in the 1990s, such as *Les Étapes majeures de l'enfance* and *Les Chemins de l'éducation* (both 1994) attempted a thematic rather than chronological arrangement, meaning that these books contain pieces written up to 40 years apart. The forthcoming Collected Works is likely to take a chronological approach, which should make the evolution of Dolto's thinking easier to track.

[22] See ch. 6.

Dolto's style was often accessible and engaging, with extensive reference to case studies or anecdotes from her clinical work, though there are also some denser, jargon-heavy sections of her theoretical works. She was a good storyteller. Her accounts of case studies, featuring dialogue, suspense and plot twists, can have the feel of a novel or detective story. She was not naturally a systemic or systematic thinker, and did not have the philosophical training common to almost all canonical twentieth-century French intellectuals. Theorising did not come easily to her; in 1969 she confided to a friend that while 'en contrôles et en analyse individuelle ça marche très bien et ça passe, c'est en théorisation [que j'ai du mal] ... Tout ce que j'écris me semble trop elliptique.'[23] She had a tendency to re-work and re-elaborate ideas, addressing the same subjects on many different occasions and in different ways. She rarely used footnotes or references to other authors, relying on her clinical or life experience for supporting evidence. Many of Dolto's most popular books, including the autobiographical texts, consist of edited transcripts from interviews. The conversational form was where she felt the most at home; one of her theoretical works, *Solitude*, is written as an imagined dialogue.[24]

For these reasons, producing a concise summary of Dolto's ideas is not straightforward. Nonetheless it is possible to identify certain key ideas that underpinned her approach. While these will be explored in greater detail in the course of the thesis, the following brief exposition will help the reader to understand the kind of thinker Dolto was.

Perhaps most fundamentally, Dolto believed in psychogenesis – the idea that both physical and mental illnesses very frequently have psychological causes. For her, this went well beyond the symptoms made famous by Sigmund Freud's writings – such as tics, fits, or numb limbs – to encompass conditions like autism, anorexia, asthma, pneumonia and tuberculosis. While Dolto as a qualified medical doctor was well aware of (for example) germ theory, she believed that a person's psychological state had a significant bearing on

[23] Dolto to Ursula Huber, 30/11/1969, *VdC*, 451.
[24] Dolto, *Solitude* (Paris, 1982).

whether they became ill or not; the presence of a microbe was for her a necessary but not sufficient condition for the development of disease. She felt that the psychological component of illness was frequently missed by doctors. In the context of paediatric medicine, her specialism, she argued that doctors were too willing to prescribe calming medication for children with digestive or sleep problems. For Dolto, such disturbances were typically to be attributed to family circumstances and especially to the relationships between young children and their immediate carers. They could be resolved without drugs 'en amenant [les enfants] à s'exprimer et en décodant le sens de ce qu'ils énoncent'.[25] During her spell as a hospital extern in the 1930s,

> je voyais que la plupart des maladies d'enfants étaient compliquées … quelquefois provoquées, d'événements psychologiques … [par exemple] j'apprenais qu'il y avait eu une scène où le père et la mère s'étaient disputés, et c'est à ce moment-là que l'enfant a fait sa crise, ou que tout d'un coup la fièvre était montée.[26]

For Dolto, doctors who looked only for purely physical or biological explanations were missing half the story, and the more important half at that. Physical symptoms needed to be understood in the context of the family history – not just the medical history of the child, but the longer-term history of the family over several generations. Dolto believed that neuroses could be (culturally, not genetically) passed from one generation to the next, and that the ultimate explanation for a given symptom may lie somewhere deep in the history of the family and especially in earlier traumatic events.

These ideas informed many of Dolto's subsequent stances. If untreated, children's 'symptômes de mal-vivance' could become full-blown neuroses, or even psychoses.[27] From this perspective, taking steps to improve young children's psychological health, and the quality of their family relationships,

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[25] Dolto, *L'Image inconsciente du corps* (Paris, 1984), 327.
[26] *Apostrophes*: *Françoise Dolto*, TF1, 02/01/1987.
[27] Dolto, '"La Maison Verte. Un lieu de rencontre et de loisirs pour les tout-petits avec leurs parents". Conférence au Congrès de l'ANPASE, Bordeaux, avril 1980', in Marie-Hélène Malandrin (ed.), *Une psychanalyste dans la cité: l'aventure de la Maison Verte* (Paris, 2009), 215.

was vital to public and social hygiene. Parents should be taught how to avoid causing long-term psychological damage to their children. The state should support interventions to this end. In broader terms, Dolto was promoting the idea of (early) childhood determinism, the idea that one's character, psychological makeup and life chances as an adult depend on experiences in the first years of life. In Dolto's version, this had potentially alarming implications: it appeared from her case histories that serious consequences could flow from apparently innocuous events and actions, such as toilet training occurring too soon, normal care patterns being interrupted, or children sharing the parental bed.[28] Only by ensuring that psychoanalytic understanding reached all parents could such triggers of later problems be avoided or neutralised.

Dolto believed in the power of language to structure a child's personality and to have profound effects at an unconscious level: 'le langage, en paroles, est ce qu'il y a de plus germinant, de plus inséminant, dans le coeur et dans la symbolique de l'être humain'.[29] For her it was language that made a person human: 'c'est la parole qui est fondatrice de l'être humain'.[30] Both physical and psychological ailments could be traced to previous instances of linguistic communication, or to forms of nonverbal communication interpreted linguistically in the child's unconscious. Hence her dictum, 'tout est langage'. Physical symptoms should be understood as linguistic in themselves, expressions of feelings that could not easily be verbalised. For example, a young child that refuses to eat or vomits up its food may in fact be expressing its 'rejection' not of the food itself, but of something else entirely – perhaps its mother's attitude or anxiety around the subject of food, or of an ongoing family argument.[31]

Language for Dolto had qualities that verged on the mystical and telepathic: children could understand language in the womb, from conception, and a

[28] See e.g. Dolto, *Tout est langage* (Paris, 1987), 23-4; *L'Image inconsciente du corps*, 238-43, 296.
[29] Dolto, *Tout est langage*, 50.
[30] Fabienne d'Ortoli and Michel Amram, *L'École avec Françoise Dolto: le rôle du désir dans l'éducation* (Paris, 1990), 31.
[31] Dolto, *Tout est langage*, 84.

mother's unconscious could communicate with her child's unconscious. Parents should proceed from the assumption that children on some level understood everything that concerned or affected them – words, tones of voice, dispositions, attitudes, and touch.[32] It followed that children should always be told the truth, regardless of their age, concerning difficult family situations such as divorce or the death of a family member: 'la vérité … permet au sujet de s'en construire et de s'en humaniser'.[33]

Telling the truth showed respect for children as autonomous, fully human subjects, which, Dolto argued, adults too seldom did. Parents treat children, she wrote, 'comme les princes gouvernent les peuples'.[34] Adults had historically been afraid to liberate children's natural energies; they should not seek to impose schedules or agendas onto children. This idea informed her approach to education: Dolto thought children should be given much more freedom than was generally accorded in France's national education system.[35] Whether in the home, school, or other institution (such as a children's home or psychiatric hospital), children should be given a substantial say and treated as partners and equals, rather than the subjects of a system over which they had no control. It is in this sense, and in her liberal stance on sex education and adolescent sexual awakenings, that Dolto can be thought of as a 'permissive' thinker, bearing comparison with, for example, Benjamin Spock.

Dolto sometimes spoke of children as if of a persecuted minority, in language that echoed that of other civil rights and anti-authoritarian movements of the 1960s and 1970s. She argued that children are equal in rights to adults from birth, and that France should issue its own declaration of the rights of the child.[36] Chapter 4 will show that this idea needs to be placed in the context of, and arguably seen as a response to, feminist advances and the calling into question of 'traditional' patriarchal family structures. Asserting the rights of

[32] *Apostrophes: Françoise Dolto*.
[33] Dolto, *Tout est langage*, 17.
[34] Dolto, *La Cause des enfants* (Paris, 1985), 9, 13.
[35] See chapter 6.
[36] In 1972, Dolto argued this in a meeting with lawyers from the group 'Droit et démocratie'. The UN Declaration of the Rights of the Child had been issued in 1959. AFD, Box 39, 'Droits des enfants/juges d'enfants', fiche A, 'Droit et démocratie', compte rendu dated 13/3/1972.

children could be a way for defenders of the 'traditional' family to push back against increased rights for women, and particularly the growing trend for mothers to work outside the home.[37] Dolto argued for a sharp distinction of gender roles between parents, and for the psychological importance, for children, of living under a tangible, ever-present paternal authority. For her, the intervention of a father figure was required to effect a clear psychological separation between mother and child and prevent the development of a perverse, 'fusional' or 'dyadic' relationship which, if unbroken, could lead to severe disorders. Dolto here incorporated Jacques Lacan's concept of the importance of the father function or 'nom du père' in structuring children's psyches.

Finally, Dolto's approach to questions of gender, sexuality and the family were also conditioned by her Christianity. Having been raised a Catholic, Dolto later re-read the gospels through the prism of Freudian ideas, arguing for a fundamental compatibility between the projects of Jesus and Freud. Dolto argued that Jesus had intuitively understood the insights into human psychology provided by Freud.[38] The implications of this idea are discussed in chapter 3.

[37] An argument advanced in Sandrine Garcia, *Mères sous influence: de la cause des femmes à la cause des enfants* (Paris, 2011).
[38] See Dolto and Gérard Sévérin, *L'Evangile au risque de la psychanalyse*, 2 vols (Paris, 1977, 1978); *La Foi au risque de la psychanalyse* (Paris, 1981).

IV. Beyond the biographical illusion?

During Dolto's 1987 appearance on *Apostrophes*, her interviewer Bernard Pivot posed a deceptively simple question: 'Comment devient-on Françoise Dolto?' Dolto, who had recently published the autobiographical book *Enfances*, chose to answer by talking about her childhood, and her difficult relationship with her mother following her sister's death. This was consistent with her view that the psychological events of childhood are a determining factor in a person's subsequent life.

Dolto's psychoanalytic theorising and her narratives about her early life were mutually reinforcing; the events of her life were offered as evidence in support of her theory of the psyche. For example, she recounted in *Enfances* that during free association sessions of her psychoanalysis with René Laforgue, she had uttered the phrase 'rue Vineuse', without understanding its significance. Laforgue suggested that she ask her mother what this name might mean. Suzanne recalled that as a baby, Françoise had an Irish au pair who regularly took her to a hotel on that street where, apparently, the young woman would take cocaine with friends while dressed in clothes and jewellery 'borrowed' from Suzanne. This behaviour was eventually discovered and the au pair sacked. Shortly thereafter, the six-month-old Françoise fell seriously ill with a broncho-pneumonial infection. Dolto saw this correlation as supporting evidence for two pillars of her thinking: that serious illnesses can be provoked by emotional reactions (in this case, grief at the sudden absence of her nursemaid) and the tendency of the unconscious to preserve linguistic traces of such traumas over long periods of time.[39]

The same year (1986) that *Enfances* appeared, Pierre Bourdieu published his famous article criticising the practice of (auto-)biography, 'L'illusion biographique'.[40] For Bourdieu, the illusion consists in seeing the events of a person's life as a coherent set, connected by a narrative thread that supplies them with retrospective meaning when recounted in a historical or literary

[39] See Dolto, *Enfances* (Paris, 1986), 62-4.
[40] Pierre Bourdieu, 'L'illusion biographique', *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*, 62-63 (1986), 69-72.

récit. Biographical narratives begin from the unsound assumption that a life story ought to make sense; that a life, indeed, should *be* a story:

> Le récit, qu'il soit biographique ou autobiographique … propose des événements qui, sans être tous et toujours déroulés dans leur stricte succession chronologique … tendent ou prétendent à s'organiser en séquences ordonnées selon des relations intelligibles, [ce qui présuppose] le *postulat du sens de l'existence* racontée (et, implicitement, de toute existence).[41]

Bourdieu argued that this illusion could often be identified in language that assumed a causal or structuring relationship, begging the question of the causality: phrases like 'dès lors', 'depuis son plus jeune âge', 'j'ai toujours aimé la musique'. As Annick Ohayon points out, Dolto in her autobiographical texts was a veritable 'championne' at this kind of explanatory trope.[42] She produced neat stories which, taken at face value, cause the reader to marvel at the myriad workings of the unconscious, but which quietly leave to one side other possible explanatory factors, especially socio-economic ones. For example, she liked to tell a story according to which she had prefigured her career aged eight, when she had told her family that she wished to become a 'médecin d'éducation'. She did not know what this meant exactly, she explained, but she knew that 'il faut que ça existe … les docteurs ne savaient pas que les enfants pouvaient être dérangées pour des choses qui étaient en eux, et qui n'étaient pas des microbes'.[43] This story has the effect of drawing back the explanation for her future career and theoretical orientation into her childhood, as something she had effectively 'always' known. Dolto thus implicitly minimised the contribution of other potential external social, cultural, political and historical factors that went into shaping her ideas and career choices. She also, perhaps, was encouraging any future biographers to treat her childhood experiences as being key to her future career. The

[41] Bourdieu, 'L'illusion biographique', 69.
[42] Annick Ohayon, 'Françoise Dolto, le sacre de l'enfant', *Sciences humaines*, 199 (December 2008), 20.
[43] Dolto, *Autoportrait d'une psychanalyste: 1934-1988* (Paris, 1989), 52-54.

psychological focus of her autobiographical narratives was indeed reproduced in the first full-length study of her life, by Jean-François de Sauverzac.[44]

My study makes substantial use of Dolto's autobiographies, personal archive and correspondence, but I have sought to avoid writing the kind of biography that I suspect she had in mind. Dolto had a general preference for explanations that operated in terms of family dynamics rather than those rooted in biology, sociology or history; various examples will appear in the course of this thesis. One that illustrates the problems with this approach is Dolto's discussion of wartime juvenile delinquency in the opening pages of *Tout est langage* (1987), one of her most popular books. Dolto attributed this delinquency to the absence of one and a half million men from French society as prisoners of war in Germany – as, indeed, Vichy officials had done at the time. In Dolto's version, the causal relationship operated as follows: children understood that one became a prisoner because one had committed a crime. Thus, children of POWs were disconcerted to see that their mothers seemed relatively happy to discover that their fathers were in prison (as preferable to death in battle). The children unconsciously concluded that committing crime was a means to obtaining social value in the eyes of their mother; hence their delinquency.[45] However, the idea of a causal relationship between prisoner fathers and juvenile delinquents has been comprehensively demolished by historians, especially Sarah Fishman, who demonstrated that poverty, not the freedom or captivity of fathers, was the major causal factor in wartime delinquency.[46] Dolto's explanation is thus left looking like a narrative rationalisation of a myth, and a Vichyite myth to boot.

With this in mind, this thesis aims to situate Dolto's ideas, life and popularity within relevant historical and ideological contexts, recalling Bourdieu's contention that 'on ne peut comprendre une trajectoire [d'un individu] … qu'à

[44] Jean-Françoise de Sauverzac, *Françoise Dolto: Itinéraire d'une psychanalyste: essai* (Paris, 1995). Daniela Lumbroso, *Françoise Dolto: La Vie d'une femme libre* (Paris, 2007) is less psychoanalytic in orientation, but is journalistic and draws only on Dolto's own narratives as sources.
[45] Dolto, *Tout est langage*, 21-23.
[46] Sarah Fishman, *The Battle for Children: World War II, Youth Crime, and Juvenile Justice in Twentieth-Century France* (Cambridge, MA, 2002).

condition d'avoir préalablement construit les états successifs du champ dans lequel elle s'est déroulée, donc l'ensemble des relations objectives qui ont uni l'agent considéré à l'ensemble des autres agents engagés dans le même champ.'[47] It is not a full-blown biography of Dolto in the sense of a complete or definitive account of her life; my concern is with her ideas and their interactions with social attitudes. Dolto's personal or emotional life only feature insofar as it is relevant to this. But, like Siân Reynolds in her joint biography of Monsieur and Madame Roland – an important demonstration of how biography can contribute to social and cultural history alongside political and intellectual history – I pay considerable attention to Dolto's 'hinterland' and her 'social and cultural baggage'.[48] Thus fully half of the thesis focuses on the 1930s and 1940s, despite Dolto's fame occurring significantly later than this.

Following Malachi Hacohen, I have sought to treat Dolto – an individual – as a site upon which discourses interact, sometimes producing new combinations and formulations which go on to have effects and trajectories of their own.[49] If the broadly chronological structure may permit accusations that I have succumbed to a 'simplified linear interpretation of events', I have borne Bourdieu's critique in mind in attempting to be wary of too-neat stories and short-cuts, and in showcasing sources that puncture the narratives already in circulation about Dolto – for example, her articles in *Vrai*, discussed in chapter 3, or the Harlin Quist episode in chapter 6.[50] I approach Dolto primarily as an actor in what may be called ideational history – that is, the history of ideas as they circulate between popular audiences and those in positions of intellectual and cultural leadership. For this reason, I place greater emphasis on Dolto's public pronouncements than on her clinical career. A different kind of biography could in theory be constituted on the basis of interviews with former

[47] Bourdieu, 'L'illusion biographique', 72.
[48] Siân Reynolds, *Marriage and Revolution: Monsieur and Madame Roland* (Oxford, 2012), 5.
[49] Malachi Hacohen, *Karl Popper, the Formative Years, 1902-1945: Politics and Philosophy in Interwar Vienna* (Cambridge, 2000). See also Hacohen's article 'Rediscovering Intellectual Biography – and Its Limits', *History of Political Economy*, 39 (2007), 9-29.
[50] Reynolds, *Marriage and Revolution*, 8, citing John Tosh, *The Pursuit of History: Aims, Methods and New Directions in the Study of Modern History* (Harlow, 1999), 75-76.

patients, most of whom are still alive. My thesis is primarily concerned, rather, with the origins, dissemination and social implications of Dolto's ideas.

V. Sources and research trends

The main source of archive material for this thesis is Dolto's personal archive, maintained on rue Cujas in central Paris by the Association Archives et Documentation Françoise Dolto until summer 2016, when it moved to the Archives Nationales.[51] In particular, the archive of listeners' letters sent in to *Lorsque l'enfant paraît*, discussed in chapter 6, has not previously been exploited. Dolto's archive is relatively unusual in that much of it has already been published in some form, thanks both to her and her testator's dedication to curating it, and to the keenness of Éditions Gallimard, in particular, to satisfy the apparent demand for new Dolto publications. Thus, two large volumes of her personal correspondence have been published, as has a collection of personal material in the 2008 publication *Archives de l'intime*.[52] Extracts from her radio programmes have been published both in book and audio CD form. Many of Dolto's oldest writings were reissued in the anthologies published in the 1990s. Nonetheless, as well as making use of the published resources, I add insights from previously unpublished materials, including unpublished correspondence and case histories. Beyond Dolto's archive, my primary source base consists primarily of other published texts.

Cultural historians were relatively slow to stake a claim to the study of psychoanalysis as it were from the outside, as a phenomenon in twentieth-century intellectual, political and popular culture. The historiography of psychoanalysis was long dominated by biographies of Freud and other pioneering psychoanalysts, often written by people with more psychoanalytic than historical training, or by critics of psychoanalysis trying to show that Freud's claims rested on shaky foundations. Henri Ellenberger's magisterial *The Discovery of the Unconscious* (1970), which placed Freud's work in a broad context of early twentieth-century dynamic psychiatry, was an important

[51] It will be held at the Marais rather than the Pierrefitte-sur-Seine site, respecting Dolto's wish that it should not leave Paris intra-muros.
[52] Yann Potin (ed.), *Françoise Dolto, archives de l'intime* (Paris, 2008).

exception to this. So was, for the French case, Sherry Turkle's *Psychoanalytic Politics* (1978), which attempted to set the rise of Jacques Lacan in its cultural context (and was written just before Dolto became nationally famous).[53] In the last twenty years, however, cultural history has begun to grapple with psychoanalysis in new ways. Recent English-language histories of psychoanalysis explore the impact of psychoanalysis beyond a narrowly clinical setting, linking internal debates within psychoanalysis to broader social and political questions.[54] Notable works in this vein include Dagmar Herzog's *Cold War Freud* (2017), which looks at various instances of the impact of psychoanalysis in the postwar decades; Shapira's *The War Inside* (2013), a study of psychoanalysis in various social and institutional settings in 1940s Britain; and George Makari's *Revolution in Mind* (2008) which placed Freud's ideas in their social and intellectual context more thoroughly than previous biographies.[55] There have also been significant edited collections along similar conceptual lines: Matt Ffytche and Daniel Pick's *Psychoanalysis in the Age of Totalitarianism* (2016), Mariano Ben Plotkin and Joy Damousi's *Psychoanalysis and Politics: Histories of Psychoanalysis Under Conditions of Restricted Political Freedom* (2012) and *The Transnational Unconscious* (2009), and Warwick Anderson, Deborah Jenson, and Richard C. Keller's *Unconscious Dominions: Psychoanalysis, Colonial Trauma, and Global Sovereignties* (2011).[56]

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[53] Henri Ellenberger, *The Discovery of the Unconscious: the History and Evolution of Dynamic Psychiatry* (London, 1970); Sherry Turkle, *Psychoanalytic Politics: Freud's French Revolution* (New York, 1992 (1978)).

[54] Michal Shapira, *The War Inside: Psychoanalysis, Total War, and the Making of the Democratic Self in Postwar Britain* (New York, 2013), 1.

[55] Herzog, *Cold War Freud*; George Makari, *Revolution in Mind: The Creation of Psychoanalysis* (New York, 2008). Other useful works for contextualising psychoanalytic thinking include Mathew Thomson, *Psychological Subjects: Identity, Culture, and Health in Twentieth-Century Britain* (Oxford, 2006); Eli Zaretsky, *Secrets of the Soul: A Social and Cultural History of Psychoanalysis* (New York, 2005); Graham Richards, 'Britain on the Couch: The Popularization of Psychoanalysis in Britain 1918—1940', *Science in Context*, 13/2 (2000), 183-230, and Nathan Hale, *The Rise and Crisis of Psychoanalysis in the United States: Freud and the Americans, 1917-1985* (New York, 1995).

[56] Matt Ffytche and Daniel Pick (eds), *Psychoanalysis in the Age of Totalitarianism* (Abingdon, 2016); Mariano Ben Plotkin and Joy Damousi (eds), *Psychoanalysis and Politics: Histories of Psychoanalysis Under Conditions of Restricted Political Freedom* (New York, 2012); *The Transnational Unconscious: Essays in the History of Psychoanalysis and Transnationalism* (Basingstoke, 2009); Warwick Anderson, Deborah Jenson, and Richard C. Keller (eds) *Unconscious Dominions: Psychoanalysis, Colonial Trauma, and Global Sovereignties* (Durham, 2011).

This thesis, though biographical in nature, aligns with and draws from this cultural-historical approach; it is intended as a contribution to the insights about the relationship between psychoanalytic ideas and social trends that these authors identified. As Herzog writes, in the mid-to-late twentieth century, 'psychoanalytic thinking came to inflect virtually all other thought-systems'.[57] This can certainly be said of France from the 1960s onwards. Few academic historians have addressed psychoanalysis as a phenomenon in French social history, however, despite extensive interest in Lacan and other psychoanalytic theorists in literature and critical theory departments.[58] For some time Elisabeth Roudinesco's two-volume history, *La Bataille de cent ans* (1982; 1986), extensively researched and drawing on personal relationships with many participants, represented something approaching a definitive history – one very much written from the 'inside'.[59] Claudine and Pierre Geissmann added a history of child psychoanalysis, primarily aimed at a psychoanalytic audience, in 1992.[60] More recently, Annick Ohayon's *L'Impossible Rencontre: psychologie et psychanalyse en France, 1919-1969* (1999) offered more critical distance while bringing psychoanalysis into the wider history of psychology.[61] The work of Alain de Mijolla, SPP analyst and official historian, has put many more documents, mostly from SPP archives, into the public domain.[62] Agnès Desmazières has written an important history of the relationship between psychoanalysis and the Catholic Church.[63]

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[57] Herzog, *Cold War Freud*, 1.

[58] This does not, of course, mean that such work is not useful for placing psychoanalysis in intellectual context. In this regard I would especially cite Carolyn Dean's *The Self and Its Pleasures: Bataille, Lacan, and the History of the Decentered Subject* (Ithaca, 1992), which examines gender politics in Pichon and Laforgue.

[59] Elisabeth Roudinesco, *La Bataille de cent ans: histoire de la psychanalyse en France* (Paris, 1982/1986). The second volume appeared in English as *Jacques Lacan & Co.: a History of Psychoanalysis in France, 1925-1985*, trans. Jeffrey Mehlman (Chicago, 1990).

[60] Claudine and Pierre Geissmann, *Histoire de la psychanalyse de l'enfant: mouvements, idées, perspectives* (Paris, 1992), translated by the Melanie Klein Trust as *A History of Child Psychoanalysis* (London, 1998).

[61] Annick Ohayon, *L'Impossible Rencontre: psychologie et psychanalyse en France, 1919-1969* (Paris, 2006 (1999)).

[62] Alain de Mijolla, *Freud et la France: 1885-1945* (Paris, 2010); *La France et Freud Tome 1 1946-1953: Une pénible renaissance* (Paris, 2012); *La France et Freud Tome 2: D'une scission à l'autre 1954-1964* (Paris, 2012).

[63] Agnès Desmazières, *L'Inconscient au paradis: comment les catholiques ont reçu la psychanalyse, 1920-1965* (Paris, 2011).

Among Anglophone historians, Camille Robcis, with *The Law of Kinship* (2013) and related articles, emphasised the social and political dimensions of psychoanalysis in France, especially regarding the politics of the family.[64] Robcis describes Dolto, along with her colleagues Georges Mauco and André Berge, as a 'bridge figure', whose importance lay in her ability to render structuralist and psychoanalytic concepts intelligible for ordinary people – and politicians. Robcis was the first Anglophone academic to consider Dolto as a significant actor in French social history. A 2009 English-language introduction to Dolto by a group of UK-based psychoanalysts, despite featuring an introduction by Juliet Mitchell, does not seem to have spread awareness of Dolto beyond a small coterie of British psychoanalysts, and did not tackle her from the historical perspective I am outlining here.[65] Robcis treats Dolto as a populariser of a vision of the family derived, via Lacan, from the structuralist anthropology of Claude Lévi-Strauss. She argues that the legacy of this conception of the family is perceptible in, for example, the discourse of opponents of the parenting of children by homosexual couples. While I agree with much of the analysis Robcis advances, her presentation of Dolto's ideas as essentially derivative of Lévi-Strauss is misleading: structuralism was not the ultimate origin of Dolto's ideas, and will not loom large in my analysis.

In emphasising Dolto's long-term influence on French family policy, especially 1990s debates over bioethics and civil partnerships, Robcis complements the work of Dominique Mehl, who studied Dolto's role as a pioneer of psychoanalysis in the French media, and Sandrine Garcia, who studied Dolto alongside the postwar family planning and women's rights movements.[66] Taking a Bourdieusian sociological perspective, Garcia analysed the rhetorical strategies used by Dolto and her followers, arguing that they used

[64] Camille Robcis, *The Law of Kinship: Anthropology, Psychoanalysis, and the Family in France* (Ithaca, 2013); 'French Sexual Politics from Human Rights to the Anthropological Function of the Law', *French Historical Studies*, 33/1 (2010), 129-56; 'Lévi-Strauss's Structuralist Social Contract', *Yale French Studies*, 123 (2013), 145-65.
[65] Guy Hall, Françoise Hivernel, and Siân Morgan (eds), *Theory and Practice in Child Psychoanalysis: An Introduction to the Work of Francoise Dolto* (London, 2009). These authors also published related articles on Dolto in the *British Journal of Psychotherapy*. See bibliography.
[66] Mehl, *La Bonne Parole*; Garcia, *Mères sous influence.*

psychoanalytic discourse and the idea of children's rights to perpetuate the Vichy-era vision of the 'éternel féminin'.[67]

The image of Dolto that emerges from such criticism is a rather negative one, as a purveyor of regressive gendered attitudes. This, however, remains some way apart from her popular reputation in France. In recent years, a number of books introducing and praising Dolto's ideas and her effect on French society have continued to appear.[68] TF1 in 2008 ran a somewhat hagiographical feature-length dramatisation of Dolto's treatment of two adolescent boys in the late 1940s, starring Josiane Balasko.[69] Against this, Didier Pleux, a cognitive-behavioural therapist, has attempted to diminish her popular standing with two sharply critical books and various media interventions, suggesting that Dolto's theories are 'dépassés et bien souvent inadaptés, voire toxiques'.[70] Pleux's attacks on Dolto's legacy form part of a broader anti-Freudian trend in the 2000s. Pleux was a contributor to the 2005 *Livre noir de la psychanalyse*, a collection of texts taking aim at both the epistemological foundations of psychoanalytic knowledge and the Freudian legacy in France. Put together by a group of cognitive therapists, it included texts by veteran American critics of psychoanalysis such as Frederick Crews, Frank Cioffi and Frank Sulloway, whose works had not previously been widely read in France. Several of the contributions named Dolto in their denunciations.[71] The *Livre noir* provoked a strong reaction from supporters of psychoanalysis, notably Jacques-Alain Miller and Elisabeth Roudinesco, Lacan's son-in-law/editor and biographer

[67] Garcia cites the well-known book by Francine Muel-Dreyfus, *Vichy et l'éternel féminin: contribution à une sociologie politique de l'ordre des corps* (Paris, 1996).
[68] A non-exhaustive list (all published in Paris): Gérard Guillerault, *Françoise Dolto: la foi dans le désir* (2012); Claude Schauder (ed.) *Lire Dolto aujourd'hui* (2004); Edwige Antier, *Dolto en héritage: tout comprendre, pas tout permettre* (2005); Sophie Chérer, *Ma Dolto* (2008); Michel-Henri Ledoux, *Dictionnaire raisonné de l'œuvre de F. Dolto* (2006).
[69] Serge Le Péron, *Françoise Dolto, le désir de vivre*, TF1, 20/10/2008.
[70] Pleux, *Génération Dolto*; 10. Also Didier Pleux, *Françoise Dolto, la déraison pure* (Paris, 2013). Media interventions include Pleux, 'Critiquer Dolto est-il une preuve d'autoritarisme?', *Le Monde*, 11/11/2008; and participation in the radio broadcast '50 ans de psychanalyse sur France Inter – Françoise Dolto', *France Inter*, 4/12/2013, http://www.franceinter.fr/player/reecouter?play=783584, accessed 23/06/2017.
[71] Jacques van Rillaer, 'Psychanalyse populaire et psychanalyse pour initiés', in Catherine Meyer and Mikkel Borsch-Jacobsen (eds), *Le Livre noir de la psychanalyse: vivre, penser et aller mieux sans Freud* (Paris, 2010 (2005)), 283-93; Jean Cottraux, 'Chronique d'une génération: comment la psychanalyse a pris le pouvoir en France', 294-318; Violaine Guéritault, 'Les mères, forcément coupables', 544-73; Didier Pleux, 'Éducation et psychanalyse', 574-623.

respectively.[72] To this extent, then, Dolto's reputation is caught up in an ongoing cultural battle – France's own 'Freud War' – over the scientific respectability and political implications of the broader Freudian and Lacanian legacies.[73]

To avoid getting too caught up in such debates, I ground my study in social history and especially the relatively extensive English-language literature on the history of gender and the family in twentieth-century France. My approach to postwar France is thus shaped by the work of historians such as Sarah Fishman, Rebecca Pulju, Claire Duchen, Susan Weiner, Nicole Rudolph, Kristin Ross, and Julian Jackson.[74] For the interwar and war years I have particularly drawn on work by Jackie Clarke, Siân Reynolds, Karen Adler, Philip Nord, Laura Lee Downs, Mary Louise Roberts, Joan Tumblety, Miranda Pollard, Hanna Diamond, and William Schneider.[75] These historians share an attempt to trace the social conditioning of gender and family roles through everyday life and intellectual culture, illustrating the interplay between politics, ideas, and ordinary lives. This thesis offers the extended case study of Dolto as a contribution to this literature. In this sense, to borrow the subtitle of David

[72] Jacques-Alain Miller, *L'Anti-livre noir de la psychanalyse* (Paris, 2006); Elisabeth Roudinesco and Pierre Delion, *Pourquoi tant de haine?: anatomie du livre noir de la psychanalyse* (Paris, 2005).
[73] John Forrester, *Dispatches from the Freud Wars: Psychoanalysis and its Passions* (Cambridge, MA, 1997).
[74] Sarah Fishman, *From Vichy to the Sexual Revolution: Gender and Family Life in Postwar France* (Oxford, 2017); Claire Duchen, *Women's Rights and Women's Lives in France, 1944-1968* (London, 1994); Rebecca Pulju, *Women and Mass Consumer Society in Postwar France* (Cambridge, 2011); Susan Weiner, *Enfants Terribles: Youth and Femininity in the Mass Media in France, 1945-1968* (Baltimore, 2001); Nicole Rudolph, *At Home in Postwar France: Modern Mass Housing and the Right to Comfort* (New York, 2015); Kristin Ross, *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies: Decolonization and the Reordering of French Culture* (Cambridge, MA, 1995); Julian Jackson, *Living in Arcadia: Homosexuality, Politics, and Morality in France from the Liberation to AIDS* (Chicago, 2009).
[75] Jackie Clarke, *France in the Age of Organization: Factory, Home and Nation from the 1920s to Vichy* (New York, 2011); Siân Reynolds, *France between the Wars: Gender and Politics* (London, 1996); Karen Adler, *Jews and Gender in Liberation France* (Cambridge, 2003); Philip Nord, *France's New Deal: From the Thirties to the Postwar Era* (Princeton, 2010); Laura Lee Downs, *Childhood in the Promised Land: Working-Class Movements and the Colonies de Vacances in France, 1880-1960* (Durham, 2002); Mary Louise Roberts, *Civilization without Sexes: Reconstructing Gender in Postwar France, 1917-1927* (Chicago, 1994); Joan Tumblety, *Remaking the Male Body: Masculinity and the Uses of Physical Culture in Interwar and Vichy France* (Oxford, 2012); Miranda Pollard, *Reign of Virtue: Mobilizing Gender in Vichy France* (Chicago, 1998); Hanna Diamond, *Women and the Second World War in France, 1939-48: Choices and Constrain*ts (Harlow, 1999); William Schneider, *Quality and Quantity: The Quest for Biological Regeneration in Twentieth-Century France* (Cambridge, 1990).

Looseley's study of Edith Piaf, my work is a 'cultural history', rather than a biography, of Dolto.[76] In part, however, it also an intellectual history, building on the work of intellectual historians such as François Dosse and Julian Bourg.[77] If my conclusions are not radically different from those of Garcia and Robcis – I, too, see Dolto as ultimately working in the service of conservative and patriarchal discourses, belying her progressive reputation in France – this thesis gives a much more extensive account of her interactions with the French public and of the lasting impact of her ideas; moreover its biographical frame means it is better placed to demonstrate ideological continuities over decades.

VI. Thesis structure

This project has a wide chronological scope – taking in Dolto's eighty-year life-span, and looking beyond those boundaries for roots and legacies. It proceeds essentially chronologically, without attempting to tell a complete linear story. The first two chapters focus on the interwar decades, when Dolto's key ideas and dispositions were formed. Chapters 3 and 4 concentrate on the 1940s and 1950s, while the final chapters centre on the 1960s and especially the 1970s as the time of her most important public interventions.

The thesis is divided into two parts. Part I, 'Becoming Dolto', looks at where Dolto's ideas originated and at her attempts to articulate them in the early part of her career. It seeks, in short, to offer a thoroughly historically-grounded answer to Pivot's question: how did Françoise in fact become 'Dolto'? It begins not with Dolto but with the history of psychoanalysis in France prior to the Second World War, examining the political, social and ideological nature of the movement at the time of Dolto's entry. Chapter 1 situates early French-resident psychoanalysts with respect to the politics of science and medicine in the later Third Republic, and the politics of the family in the era of natalism. It

[76] David Looseley, *Edith Piaf: A Cultural History* (Liverpool, 2015).
[77] François Dosse, *Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari: Intersecting Lives*. trans. Deborah Glassman (New York, 2011 (2007)); *Le Pari biographique: écrire une vie* (Paris, 2005); Julian Bourg, *From Revolution to Ethics: May 1968 and Contemporary French Thought* (Montreal, 2007).

shows that while the early SPP was politically diverse, those who mentored Dolto were very much from its Catholic, French-nationalist wing. These mentors, notably Édouard Pichon, also introduced Dolto to liberal thinkers on education such as John Dewey, Maria Montessori or Friedrich Froebel. The chapter argues that Dolto's later attitudes towards family structure and what might be thought of as 'permissive' education can be traced back to these influences.

Chapter 2 focuses on Dolto's family and social environment during her youth, and especially the Marettes' gendered cultural and political values. Much like her contemporaries Simone de Beauvoir and Élisabeth Lacoin (Beauvoir's 'Zaza'), Dolto struggled to escape the cultural expectations placed on young women in bourgeois families in interwar France and assert her right to an independent, intellectual vocation. She came under enormous psychological pressure, particularly from her mother, to conform to the ideal of a demure, decorative, virginal young lady, enforced by barring her access to higher education for a number of years. I argue that her eventual break with her family background, though hard-won, was less than complete (and less comprehensive than Dolto later suggested). Dolto was also unfortunate insofar as Laforgue and Pichon, her main allies in her struggle with her family, also espoused anti-feminist ideas. Her restricted access to formal education made it unlikely that she would be able fully to challenge social and intellectual misogyny in the manner of a Beauvoir.

Chapter 3 explores how Dolto began her career in the context of war, occupation and liberation. I argue that her early ideas can be considered in the context of what I term 'technocratic holism'. Like many other products of the late Third Republic, Dolto opposed political 'decadence' while believing in the potential of holistic medicine and humanist Catholicism to bring about a 'redressement' of France. This stance informed her decision to accept a role within Carrel's FFEPH in 1943, as well as her choice – revealed here for the first time – to write for the firmly Vichyite magazine *Vrai* in 1941. Subsequently, Dolto found that her holistic, psychoanalytic approach to parenting could also sit quite easily in the political context of Liberation; I give

the example of her columns for the Communist-run paper *Femmes françaises*. Chapter 3 also examines Dolto's Christianity, setting this in the context of broader developments in French Catholicism after 1945 and of contemporary developments in French psychoanalysis. It shows how, in the late 1940s and early 1950s, the two came together in discussions of themes of sexuality and guilt. Dolto's Freudian readings of the Christian gospels, though not published until the 1970s, should be understood as a product of this period. Dolto, like several friends and colleagues at the journal *Psyché*, sought to bring about a rapprochement between psychoanalysis and the Catholic Church, and her attempts found favour with the Vatican. The chapter concludes by showing that the 1953 split within French psychoanalysis may have had religious undertones. Catholic members of the movement were more likely to break away from the 'orthodox' Freudian SPP and support 'lay' (i.e. non-medical) variants of psychoanalysis that drew on other healing traditions.

Part II focuses on Dolto as a public figure. Chapter 4 examines her interactions with the French public in the 1950s. It centres on the questions of 'permissiveness' and patriarchy, demonstrating how Dolto advocated the former without calling the latter into question. For example, Dolto in a famous 1950 series of radio debates defended the principle of sex education, but argued that this should chiefly consist of teaching children to incarnate a patriarchal conception of their gender. The chapter places her ideas in these decades in the context of contemporary social change, especially the battle for increased reproductive rights for women, which Dolto opposed.

Chapter 5 looks at Dolto's ideas in relation to autism. Autism treatment in France in the late twentieth century came to be dominated by psychoanalytic concepts; I argue that Dolto played a significant role in this process. The chapter places autism in the context of the radical psychiatry movement of the 1960s and 1970s, and explores Dolto's relationship with Maud Mannoni in this light. It proceeds to an examination of Dolto's book-length case study, *Le Cas Dominique*, arguing that Dominique can plausibly be understood as autistic. I demonstrate that in this and in other cases, Dolto's interpretation of autistic behaviour took place through the prism of her understanding of gender and

family politics, resulting in Dolto characterising autism as the result of defective or toxic mothers. These (mis)conceptions continued to inform autism treatment in France into the twenty-first century.

The final chapter looks at Dolto as a national media broadcaster and popular child-rearing expert, from around 1968 onwards. In particular it analyses her radio career, contextualising this in terms of comparable contemporary media figures, especially Ménie Grégoire. Drawing on a mixture of published and archive material for *S.O.S. Psychanalyste!* and *Lorsque l'enfant paraît*, it asks what kinds of people engaged with Dolto, and studies the issues they raised. Why did large numbers of people find Dolto's advice helpful? What objections were raised and how common were they? The chapter looks also at Dolto's interventions regarding education, situating these in the context of contemporary political debates over public schooling. The last section of the chapter analyses the Maison Verte children's centres, arguing that the success of these centres, whose creation and ethos were inspired by Dolto, demonstrates the widespread percolation of psychoanalytic thinking into everyday life and institutions in France.

What kind of woman could become a psychoanalyst in 1930s France? What kind of ideas did that involve accepting? How did those ideas then go on to have a major influence in postwar France, continuing even into the twenty-first century?

Part I. Becoming Dolto

Chapter 1 – The Politics and Psychology of the Family in Interwar France

Dolto's career effectively began in 1934 with her psychoanalysis by René Laforgue. Her analysis concentrated on her relationship to her family and especially her mother, for reasons that will become clear in chapter 2. The present chapter outlines the ideological backdrop against which that analysis took place, focusing on attitudes towards the family and women's roles in French politics and society, and the early history of psychoanalysis in France.

The chapter addresses four key questions. First, how was the family discussed in interwar French politics and society, and how did state policy respond to predominant discursive trends? Second, how was the theme of the family dealt with by leading interwar psychologists? How did their views interact with those of political actors? Third, what was the status of psychoanalysis – as a professional movement and in broader cultural terms – in France in the 1930s? And fourth, how did psychoanalysts – especially those with whom Dolto would come into the most extensive contact – conceptualise the family, women's role, and the relationship between these and the formation of neurosis?

My treatment of these questions supplies some new readings of the psychoanalytic journals of the period, but overall relies less on original research than on a new synthesis of two areas of historiography. First, I exploit the extensive body of scholarship, chiefly from the 1990s, on the history of natalism and familialism, gender politics and family policies in interwar France.[1] Historians have demonstrated that children, the family, sexuality and

[1] Schneider, *Quality and Quantity*, focuses on population and the history of the eugenics movement. Susan Pedersen, *Family, Dependence, and the Origins of the Welfare State: Britain*

women's place in society were prominent topics in interwar French politics and the Vichy and Liberation periods. State interventions supported the consensus position that France needed a higher birth rate, if not always in the ways pronatalist campaigners advocated. The interwar years saw the creation of family allowances, maternity pay, a state-funded healthcare system, the introduction of 'puériculture' to the national curriculum, and ongoing debates about women's suffrage and workplace presence. Despite the lack of women's citizenship – owing to the blocking of women's suffrage bills by the Radical-dominated Senate – and the discursive emphasis on their role as mothers, educational and professional opportunities for women were slowly expanding.

The second area of historiography that I draw on concerns interwar psychoanalysis, and especially its relationship to femininity and feminism.[2] This relationship was complex: psychoanalysis provided encouragement to women's emancipation, both in some of its theoretical conceptions and by welcoming women into its ranks in a higher proportion than other professions of the era. Yet psychoanalysis was also a source of anti-feminist views of women and the family. The way that psychoanalysts thought about child psychology and children's mental health problems was shaped by these attitudes. The development of theories such as penis envy and, in the French context, of 'family neuroses' thus needs to be seen in the context of broader social questions.

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and France, 1914-1945 (Cambridge, 1993), places the growth of the welfare state in the context of labour and gender politics. Roberts, *Civilization without Sexes*, examines the preoccupation with female identity and woman's proper role after WWI. Reynolds, *France between the Wars* shows how women were able to obtain increased agency despite their political exclusion. Paul Smith, *Feminism and the Third Republic: Women's Political and Civil Rights in France 1918-1945* (Oxford, 1996) explores how feminist movements responded to political developments concerning suffrage and reform of the Civil Code. Pollard, *Reign of Virtue* describes interwar natalism and familialism from the perspective of later Vichy policy. Françoise Thébaud and Christine Bard describe the anti-feminist backlash after WWI in 'Les effets antiféministes de la grande guerre' in Christine Bard (ed.), *Un siècle d'antiféminisme* (Paris, 1999), 149-68. Kristen Stromberg Childers, *Fathers, Families, and the State in France, 1914-1945* (Ithaca, 2003) focuses on fatherhood, showing the strength, but also limits, of interwar paternalism.

[2] Zaretsky, *Secrets of the Soul*, especially chs 2 and 8; Mari Jo Buhle, *Feminism and its Discontents: A Century of Struggle with Psychoanalysis* (Cambridge, MA, 1998); Susan Quinn, *A Mind of Her Own: The Life of Karen Horney* (London, 1988), ch. 11; Makari, *Revolution in Mind*, ch. 3; Dean, *The Self and its Pleasures*, ch. 2.

The chapter concludes with analysis of the influence of the two psychoanalysts who held the most significance for Dolto's professional development: Laforgue, her analyst, and Édouard Pichon, her thesis supervisor. These two figures illustrate the complexity suggested in the previous paragraph. Both had been psychoanalysed by a woman, Eugénie Sokolnicka. They headed a professional organisation with a relatively strong female presence in the context of the period, and helped some women, including Dolto, to free themselves from restrictive conceptions of femininity and women's roles. Yet they simultaneously promoted anti-feminist and strongly gendered conceptions of the family and of the etiology of neurosis.

The argument that the chapter ultimately builds is that Dolto's later ideas, popularised in the 1970s and 1980s, are substantially traceable to political and intellectual debates of interwar France. Notions that Dolto presented as having been developed in her postwar clinic, or as abiding truths about the psyche that she had uncovered, can be shown to be grounded in the particularities of this historical moment.

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Discourses stressing the need to increase the French birth rate went back to the mid-nineteenth century, and increased following the shock of France's defeat in 1870. Losses in the First World War – proportionally the highest of any nation – provided extra impetus in the 1920s. Social dislocations provoked by the war, particularly the increased employment of women, ensured that debates about gender became intertwined with attempts to address the war's meaning.[3] As Mary Louise Roberts argued, some postwar Frenchmen conflated the unprecedented wartime economic opportunities with a generalised sense of cultural malaise, and felt a need to 'purge moral and gender anxieties as well as military and economic ones'.[4] The war was thought to have caused increases in prostitution and crimes committed by women.[5] Female 'deviance', as

[3] Roberts, *Civilization without Sexes*, 9.
[4] Roberts, *Civilization without Sexes*, 214.
[5] See Dean, *The Self and its Pleasures*, 59-84.

manifested through the figures of the 'New Woman' and the *garçonne*, was equated to national decline and a generalised loss of virility. The cause of national revival could thus be linked to persuading or pressuring women to reassume their 'natural' role of wife and mother. Across the West, the war diminished the belief in progress. This affected the women's emancipation movement, which became less vibrant than before the war. Feminism was increasingly defined in popular discourse in terms promoted by its enemies, that is, as 'masculinism'; 'feminists' were now understood as women who aspired to model themselves on men.[6]

The Bloc National administrations (1919-23) took various symbolic steps to encourage more births, such as the institution of the *Fête des mères* in 1920, medals for mothers of five or more children, and punitive restrictions on contraception and abortion. Belief in the need to increase the birth rate was shared across the political spectrum, though secularist republican 'natalists' argued with Catholic conservative 'familialists' over the best way to achieve the goal. 'Familialists' – i.e. promoters of large, devout, and patriarchal families – such as Fernand Boverat, leader of the Alliance Nationale Contre la Dépopulation, argued for financial incentives such as wealth redistribution from childless citizens to large families, and state allowances for married women so that they need not seek paid work.[7] 'Natalists' – who wanted more births without being as prescriptive as to the kinds of families they should be born into – argued for measures to promote children's welfare, support working mothers and reduce infant mortality.

Following the defeat of the Bloc National, the natalist vision was the more likely to be translated into policy. A campaign to institute the so-called 'family vote' – awarding additional votes to fathers of large families – failed. The most important welfare state measures introduced were maternity pay, in 1930, and a compulsory family allowance system in 1932. As Kristen Stromberg Childers has argued, these measures somewhat undermined the familialist

[6] Buhle, *Feminism*, 57.
[7] Fernand Boverat, 'Il faut faire naître', *Revue de l'Alliance Nationale pour l'Accroissement de la Population Française* 143 (1924), 163-71. See Pedersen, *Origins of the Welfare State*, 367.

stance, since they implicitly assumed that fathers as heads of families could not be relied on to provide for every child's needs.[8] Measures were also introduced to protect children from violent or abusive parents, again undermining the absolute authority of fathers. Family allowances were often paid to mothers directly even when tied to the father's job; many employers thought women were more likely to spend them wisely. Left-leaning municipalities created workplace crèches, to the disapproval of familialists who preferred women to stay at home.[9]

Natalism had a brief crisis of confidence around 1932, when fears rose that in the context of economic depression and unemployment France might in fact have too many people. However, with the Nazi rise to power in Germany, and especially as war became a real possibility in 1938, population re-emerged as a major political issue. Working women were pressed to return to the home; in 1935, married women were excluded from certain civil service jobs. After the hiatus of the Popular Front, such measures resumed under Daladier, culminating in the July 1939 Code de la Famille. Drafted by the Haut comité de la famille which included Boverat – and no women – the Code replaced child benefits with an *allocation de mère au foyer* that only mothers not working outside the home could receive. Couples were offered rewards for producing children within two years of marriage; punishments for promoting contraception and abortion were reinforced.[10]

There was thus clear discursive and political pressure on interwar French women to stay at home and have children, backed at times (1919-23, 1934-36 and 1938-39) by state policy. However, these policies had limited effects. By and large, the birth rate did not increase. In the 1920s only one family in thirteen had six children or more, whereas the number of couples with fewer than two children was higher, proportionally, than it would be in the 1990s.[11] One-child families were common among working-class and lower middle-class

[8] Childers, *Fathers, Families, and the State*, 7,19.
[9] Reynolds, *France between the Wars*, 32-6.
[10] See Smith, *Feminism and the Third Republic*, 246-50.
[11] Martine Sevegrand, *Les Enfants du bon Dieu: les catholiques français et la procréation au XX siècle* (Paris, 1995), 20.

families. The continued discursive pressure on women to bear more children indeed indicates that other forces were pressing in a different direction. Reduced infant mortality meant that couples could be confident that each child would survive. Limiting family size – concentrating financial and educational resources on one child – maximised the prospect of social mobility. Another reason for small families, at least in Paris, was lack of space. Most Parisians only had access to cramped, dark, poorly maintained housing. Inflation and government measures kept rents down, but disincentivised spending on new buildings and upkeep.[12] Families lived in small two-room apartments, sleeping in folding beds and cots, using curtains and screens to afford a semblance of privacy, cooking in minuscule kitchens and washing in courtyards.[13]

In practice, then, the impact of the discursive consensus behind raising the birth rate was limited. The paternalist grip was weakening, and women were slowly being drawn more into public life. The interwar feminist movement also obtained some limited but significant victories, such as the inclusion of full civil capacity for married women in the 1938 Civil Code.

This political backdrop provides context for contemporaneous debates around childhood in medical and psychological circles. Perhaps the most obvious overlap is with the concept of *puériculture*, or the science of child-rearing, as promoted by the obstetrician and eugenicist Adolphe Pinard, who conceived of it as a more subtle and effective way to raise the birth rate.[14] Pinard's focus on health and social care for mothers and children, drawing on post-Pasteurian improvements in hygiene and epidemiology, helped *puériculture* gain wide acceptance; the feminist Clotilde de Mulon, for example, deployed the notion in campaigns to combat infant mortality.[15] Nonetheless, *puériculture* was very clearly gendered: the new knowledge was aimed at mothers and schoolgirls first and foremost. In the 1920s, by which time Pinard sat in the National

[12] Sarah Maza, *Violette Nozière: A Story of Murder in 1930s Pari*s (Berkeley, 2011), 20-4. Maza's study of a working-class girl, who scandalised France by poisoning her parents in 1933 aged 18, contains much useful background material on living conditions and gender relations in 1930s Paris.
[13] Maza, *Violette Nozière*, 21-4, for images of the Nozières' cramped 12th-arrondissement flat.
[14] Reynolds, *France between the Wars*, 22.
[15] Smith, *Feminism and the Third Republic*, 222-3.

Assembly as a (Radical) deputy, his ideas were given official sanction. The teaching of *puériculture* to all schoolgirls (not schoolboys) became mandatory in 1923. Twice a month they were to be taught lessons in feeding, bathing and diapering infants. Thus *puériculture* served to reinforce the idea that girls were to be prepared for futures in which motherhood would be their main or only occupation.

Child psychiatry in the interwar period focused on 'abnormal', 'deviant', 'delinquent' and 'backward' children. This partly resulted from its origins as an outgrowth of the broader nineteenth-century interest in criminality and heredity: developmental psychology was interesting for its potential to explain what caused some children to become criminal adults. The Société libre pour l'étude de l'enfant, created in 1900, was led by Alfred Binet, whose pioneering intelligence tests were designed to identify 'backward' children likely to encounter severe difficulties at school.[16] The academic study of abnormal children was developed by Georges Heuyer, who, following his 1914 thesis on the subject, went on to dominate the study of juvenile delinquency for decades.[17] Heuyer's neo-Lamarckian belief in the inheritance of acquired characteristics, common to early twentieth-century French scientists, led him to the argument that violent behaviour, alcoholism and divorce resulted from hereditary or constitutional defects, as did children's delinquency.[18] He defined 'abnormal' children as those who, 'sous l'influence de tares morbides, le plus souvent héréditaires, présentent des défectuosités constitutionnelles, d'ordre intellectuel et moral, qui les empêchent de s'adapter spontanément au milieu familial et social.'[19] Heuyer argued for the psychiatric screening of all children, in order to identify potential delinquents. From the 1920s, he published or supervised numerous studies which apparently demonstrated a clear association between delinquency and 'abnormal' families.[20] His growing

[16] Alfred Binet and Théodore Simon, *Les Enfants anormaux: guide pour l'admission des enfants anormaux dans les classes de perfectionnement* (Paris, 1907).
[17] Georges Heuyer, *Enfants anormaux et délinquants juvéniles. Nécessité de l'examen psychiatrique des écoliers* (Paris, 1914, reissued 1929).
[18] Fishman, *Battle for Children*, 136.
[19] Cited in Ohayon, *L'Impossible Rencontre*, 178.
[20] Examples include Guy Néron, *L'Enfant vagabond* (Paris, 1952 – reissue of a 1928 thesis supervised by Heuyer); Heuyer, *Délinquance et criminalité de l'enfance* (Paris, 1935); Heuyer, 'Enquête sur la délinquance juvénile: Étude de 400 dossiers', *Pour l'enfance 'coupable'*, 43

reputation saw him appointed to a newly-created chair in clinical child neuropsychiatry at the Salpêtrière in 1925.[21] The theoretical approach that Heuyer embodied, focusing on 'abnormal' or 'backward' children, shaped the conditions under which early child psychoanalysts such as Dolto worked. Her first child analysands were patients at a clinic for 'enfants anormaux et arriérés' at the Hôpital Bretonneau, near Montmartre, in 1938.

In the rival academic domain of psychology, however, Heuyer's understanding of child development was contested. Its leading lights, Jean Piaget and Henri Wallon, proposed models of psychological development in which children's brains passed through several stages on the way to fully adult cognition. By taking rational adult cognition as the standard, Piaget's model moved away from the focus on abnormality and delinquency promoted by Heuyer; Piaget said he 'preferred the study of normality'.[22] Wallon, whose political beliefs lay on the Marxist left, argued against Heuyer's neo-Lamarckian belief in hereditary or 'constitutional' factors.[23] Wallon insisted that the causes of children's mental 'turbulence' lay in the material, family and social environment.[24] Put crudely, the division between Heuyer and Wallon was the difference between seeing children's psychological disturbances as the result of immoral behaviour, or as the result of material poverty. What both had in common, however, was a belief that a person's character was largely determined long before adulthood.

Psychoanalysis, of course, offered further models of the psyche, with the concepts of the id/ego/superego split, oral/anal/genital stages of psychosexual development, and, after 1920, the pleasure and death drives. Piaget moved away from psychoanalysis after an initial phase of interest, but Wallon wrote

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and 44 (1942). Sarah Fishman demonstrated the sampling biases and inference errors pervading these studies in *Battle for Children*, ch. 4.

[21] Didier-Jacques Duché, *Histoire de la psychiatrie de l'enfant* (Paris, 1990), 340-2.

[22] Cited in Richard I. Evans, *Jean Piaget: The Man and his Ideas*, trans. Eleanor Duckworth (New York, 1973), 106.

[23] Wallon, a member of the SFIO from 1931, was banned from teaching under Vichy. He joined the Communist Party in 1942, when Heuyer was studying delinquency under Vichy auspices. For Wallon's integration of Marxist dialectic into his approach to psychology see Wallon, 'Psychologie et matérialisme dialectique', *Enfance*, 16/1 (1963), 31-4.

[24] Henri Wallon, *L'Enfant turbulent. Étude sur les retards et les anomalies du développement moteur et mental* (Paris, 1925).

about it positively in the 1930s. His 1931 work on how children create their self-image, including using mirrors, would be taken up (though not always acknowledged) by Jacques Lacan.[25] However Wallon did not use his academic patronage to offer significant opportunities to psychoanalysts. Heuyer, by contrast, was a vital early supporter of psychoanalysis in French medicine. He brought Eugénie Sokolnicka, the first Freud-trained psychoanalyst to practise in France, into his clinic at Hôpital Sainte-Anne in 1922-23, and subsequently awarded posts to other psychoanalysts including Pierre Mâle, Jean Dublineau, and Jenny Aubry.[26] Such opportunities were rare and therefore very valuable to the psychoanalytic cause in France.

Heuyer has direct connections to Dolto's story. At the Salpêtrière from 1925, he engaged as his (seemingly unpaid) assistant Sophie Morgenstern (1875-1940), who became France's first dedicated child psychoanalyst.[27] Using the access to children with psychological difficulties accorded by Heuyer's patronage, Morgenstern began using children's drawings as a tool in their psychotherapy, as a way of accessing their unconscious thoughts. Morgenstern detailed her methods in a 1937 book supervised by Heuyer, *La Psychanalyse infantile.*[28] Morgenstern's technique – with the addition of modelling clay as well as drawings – became a cornerstone of Dolto's own clinical methodology.

A second connection is that Dolto herself spent a medical externship in Heuyer's child psychiatry clinic at Hôpital Vaugirard in 1936-37, as part of her paediatric training.[29] Dolto later spoke of her 'horrified' disapproval of Heuyer's methods:

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[25] Wallon, 'Comment se développe chez l'enfant la notion du corps propre', *Journal de Psychologie* (1931), 705-48. See Roudinesco, *Jacques Lacan*, 69-71.
[26] Ohayon, *L'Impossible Rencontre*, 174.
[27] Geissmann, *History of Child Psychoanalysis*, 150.
[28] Sophie Morgenstern, *La Psychanalyse infantile: symbolisme et valeur clinique des créations imaginatives chez l'enfant* (Paris, 1937).
[29] As Siân Reynolds notes, 'externships' were easier to find than 'internships'. The latter 'were long jealously guarded by closing them to women. A disproportionate number of women doctors were obliged to seek posts in the expanding public health sector between the wars: in local clinics, or working for the Assistance Publique. They needed strength of purpose to persevere in the profession, whereas male medical students, following a family tradition, might be no more vocation-driven than Charles Bovary.' *France between the Wars*, 96.

> Pour moi, le pédiatre se devait d'être en empathie avec l'enfant dont il s'occupait, au lieu de lui dire: 'Tu n'as même pas de peine alors que tu as fugué! Tu vois que ta mère a failli en devenir folle et tu t'en fous!' Et, comme ces propos rendaient le jeune adolescent furieux, Heuyer ajoutait: 'Inintimidable!' Puis, il écrivait dans le dossier: "Enfant inintimidable. Mère: grosse débile. Maison de correction." Ça me semblait épouvantable![30]

A similar portrait was given by another of Heuyer's future-psychoanalyst pupils, Serge Leclaire, who described Heuyer's consultations as peremptory to the point of caricature.[31] Dolto's horror was at the way Heuyer's attitude apparently led him to see children as specimens first and human beings second. If Heuyer considered psychoanalysis a potentially helpful technique, it did not appear to modify his fundamentally 'constitutionalist' orientation. This ran counter to two components of Dolto's ethical stance: Freudian and Christian. Sigmund Freud's earlier writings had downplayed constitutional factors and emphasised the special and fragile character of each person's inner life; his *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* argued that degeneration had become a meaningless term.[32] Dolto took seriously the implication that even the youngest of children had a rich, unique mental life. She eventually integrated this into a humanist Catholicism, as chapter 3 will explore.

Nonetheless, some elements of her later thinking about the psyche retained Heuyerian echoes. Though Dolto did not subscribe to Heuyer's constitutional hereditism, she believed in the power of psychic inheritance transmitted via the unconscious. She wrote, in the 1980s, of a 'solidarité génétique' and an 'inconscient transgénérationnel', arguing that 'des événements qui sont arrivés dans la famille d'un être humain, avant même qu'il ne naisse, pendant qu'il est foetus ... sont capables d'induire une psychose chez cet être en gestation'.[33] Heuyer would not have disagreed; his Lamarckian logic, according to which

[30] Dolto, *Autoportrait*, 142.
[31] Ohayon, *L'Impossible Rencontre*, 184.
[32] Sigmund Freud, 'Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality' (1905) in James Strachey (ed.), *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Vol. 7 (1901-1905): A Case of Hysteria, Three Essays on Sexuality and Other Works* (London, 1953), 123-245, here 138.
[33] Dolto, *Cause des enfants*, 373-4.

life events and behaviours could leave genetic traces, allowed for a certain elision between genetic and familial etiologies.

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Psychoanalysis began relatively late in France compared with other Western countries. Sigmund Freud wrote in 1914 that, 'among European countries France has hitherto shown itself the least disposed to welcome psycho-analysis'.[34] By that date, psychoanalytic associations existed in Budapest, London, Berlin, Munich, Zurich and New York as well as Vienna – but one would not be founded in Paris until 1926. The translation of Freud's work into French began in the early 1920s, lagging ten years or so behind equivalent English versions.[35]

Historians have offered varying explanations for why this should be so. Sherry Turkle put it down to the 'stability and security [of] French bourgeois society: '[at a time when] the American middle class was trying to make its peace with new self-doubts and insecurities, French bourgeois society was more secure than ever about its sense of itself as the model and matrix for French society as a whole ... the Gallic version of "civilised" morality was not in crisis at the turn of the century'.[36] This argument is unconvincing, since it can more plausibly be argued that French bourgeois society at the turn of the twentieth century – the time of the Dreyfus Affair – was riven with *in*security regarding such issues as the consequences of industrialisation, urbanisation, immigration, crime, degeneration and morality. Mark Micale has argued that 'one way in which French society [around 1900] dealt with change that was dizzying in its pace and disconcerting in its effects was to constitute the change itself as

[34] Sigmund Freud, 'On the History of the Psycho-Analytic Movement' (1914), *Standard Edition* Vol XIV, 31.
[35] Sigmund Freud, *Cinq leçons sur la psychanalyse*, trans. Yves Le Lay (Paris, 1921); *Introduction à la Psychanalyse*, trans. Samuel Jankélévitch (Paris, 1921); *Psychopathologie de la vie quotidienne*, trans. Samuel Jankélévitch (Paris, 1922); *Trois essais sur la théorie de la sexualité*, trans. Blanche Reverchon-Jouve (Paris, 1923); *La Science des rêves*, trans. Ignace Meyerson (Paris, 1926).
[36] Turkle, *Psychoanalytic Politics*, 31-4.

pathological, that is, to formulate the very idea of psychological traumatics'.[37] From the 1880s onwards, interest in psychical phenomena and depth psychology was widespread among French scientists, novelists, philosophers and popular writers, as among their American counterparts. Famous French students of the boundaries of consciousness included Jean-Martin Charcot, Pierre Janet, Charles Richet, Hippolyte Bernheim, Ambrose Liébault, Emile Zola, Henri Bergson, Léon Daudet, and Gustave Le Bon. Elisabeth Roudinesco has thus suggested that the lack of French interest in Freud could be explained precisely in the ubiquity of French discourse on the unconscious, such that Freud initially appeared to be saying little that was new or different.[38] Freud appeared to many French reviewers as an inferior or derivative (not to mention Germanic and Jewish) equivalent to (in particular) Janet, with a bizarre and unjustified insistence on sexuality as the cause of neurological disturbances.[39] Other pre-First World War authors who read Freud more sympathetically, such as Bergson, Marcel Foucault, or Théodule Ribot, tried to make his ideas fit into their own schemata, rather than acclaiming them as radically distinctive.[40]

Roudinesco is surely correct to suggest that the existence of what she has termed an 'inconscient à la française' slowed receptivity to Freud in France.[41] However another reason, not given sufficient weight by either Roudinesco or Turkle, was that French doctors and scientists were sceptical of the scientific merit of Freud's theories. Charles Blondel, a professor of psychology, contended (in 1924) that Freud had not demonstrated that his claimed 'cures' were not simply evidence of regression to the mean: 'ce n'est pas guérir un trouble morbide que d'en venir à bout en un an et demi, quand, laissé à lui-

[37] Mark S. Micale, 'Jean-Martin Charcot and Les Névroses Traumatiques: From Medicine to Culture in French Trauma Theory of the Late Nineteenth Century', in M.S. Micale and P.F. Lerner (eds), *Traumatic Pasts: History, Psychiatry, and Trauma in the Modern Age, 1870-1930* (Cambridge, 2001), 115-39.
[38] Roudinesco, *Bataille* 1, 214-21.
[39] See for example A. Cullère, 'De l'excitation sexuelle dans les psychopathies anxieuses', *Archives de neurologie*, 19/110, (1905) 81-99; Évariste Marandon de Montyel, 'Obsessions et vie sexuelle', *Archives de neurologie*, 18 (1904), 289-304. Both of these writers state that Freud's 'obsession' with genital causes cannot be reconciled with their own clinical experience.
[40] See Jacqueline Carroy, Annick Ohayon, Régine Plas, *Histoire de la psychologie en France XIXe-XXe siècles* (Paris, 2006), 110-11.
[41] Roudinesco, *Bataille* 1, 213.

même, il aurait persisté 18 mois.'[42] Biologist Yves Delage argued in 1914 that Freud's tendency to offer circumstantial or conjectural evidence for the effectiveness of his techniques was not good enough: 'S'il était permis de se contenter de demi-preuves de ce genre, cela donnerait beau jeu à nombre de croyances à l'appui desquelles on en trouve d'innombrables, comme la télépathie, la suggestion à distance, la lévitation, la matérialisation, etc.'[43]

Such criticism can be partly explained in terms of the importance of scientific values in the early Third Republic. As Robert Fox has argued, the Republic made the development of science central to its mission to contest rising German hegemony, develop France's imperial power, and catch up with other great powers economically.[44] Intellectuals such as Ernest Renan attributed the 1870 defeat to Prussia to French scientific and technological shortcomings: better application of scientific methods would thus offer hope for regeneration.[45] The development of the 'human' and 'social' sciences would help the Republic combat its ideological – i.e. religious and monarchical – opponents.[46] Doctors were an important part of this, at the forefront of campaigns to counter priestly and popular 'backwardness'. As Jack Ellis has shown, they were consistently overrepresented on municipal councils and in the National Assembly before the First World War.[47] The Republican state granted official recognition and patronage to scientists whose work aligned with its goals; to obtain this, scientists had to demonstrate their empirical credentials. Le Bon was refused funding for his 1880s research into 'primitive civilisations', despite its ostensible compatibility with imperialist policy,

[42] Charles Blondel, *La Psychanalyse* (Paris, 1924), cited in Ohayon, *L'Impossible Rencontre*, 98.
[43] Yves Delage, 'La psychanalyse: le système de Freud et de son école,' *L'Année biologique*, 19 (1914), xxxi.
[44] Robert Fox, *The Savant and the State: Science and Cultural Politics in Nineteenth-century France* (Baltimore, 2012).
[45] Robert Nye, *The Origins of Crowd Psychology: Gustave Le Bon and the Crisis of Mass Democracy in the Third Republic* (London, 1975), 20ff.
[46] M. Brady Brower, 'Science, Seduction, and the Lure of Reality in Third Republic France', *History of the Present*, 1 (2011), 170-93. On science's place in Third Republic ideals see Sanford Elwitt, *The Making of the Third Republic: Class and Politics in France, 1868-1884* (Baton Rouge, 1975) and Philip G. Nord, *The Republican Moment: Struggles for Democracy in Nineteenth-Century France* (Cambridge, MA, 1995).
[47] Jack D. Ellis, *The Physician-legislators of France: Medicine and Politics in the Early Third Republic, 1870-1914* (Cambridge, 1990).

because anthropological specialists had criticised Le Bon's reliance on racist and phrenological assumptions.[48]

Republican science implied a mixture of methodological, national and gender norms. Rationality was understood as a trait of masculinity; religion, superstition, and romantic sensibility were associated to femininity.[49] Positivist, anti-clerical values shaped the emergence of psychiatry and psychology at the turn of the twentieth century.[50] The leading French psychologists around 1900, such as Georges Dumas, Édouard Toulouse, and Binet, have been described as a 'petite élite de savants républicains': a secular, universalist, male, socially homogenous set who believed that science and social progress went together.[51] Theirs was a psychology conducted from laboratories: controlled, sanitised, measurable, rational environments.

Freud did not fit this template. Beneath the early French criticism of his work cited above can be sensed a suspicion that Freud's deficient empiricism might indicate a lack of compatibility with positivist Republican ideals. His concepts drew on his clinical work and could not easily be tested empirically. Freud was also known in France as a former associate of Charcot, whose theoretical edifice of hysteria, built up through the observation (or, as his critics alleged, inadvertent manipulation) of patients at the Salpêtrière, had been rejected as unscientific by 1908. As with Charcot, many of Freud's early patients were women, and some early feminists found succour in his ideas (see below) – which did not help Freud's masculine-rational credentials. Early twentieth-century French psychiatrists had supplanted hysteria with the concept of 'pithiatism' – the idea that hysteria-like symptoms were caused by 'suggestion' or by the reactivation of pre-existing conditions.[52]

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[48] Nye, *Origins of Crowd Psychology*, 47-8.
[49] Brower, 'Science and the Lure of Reality', 175-6. Judith Surkis, *Sexing the Citizen: Morality and Masculinity in France, 1870-1920* (Ithaca, 2006), 2.
[50] Ellis, *Physician-legislators*, 215; see also Jan Goldstein, *Console and Classify: The French Psychiatric Profession in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1987) on how these values affected approaches to insanity before 1900.
[51] Ohayon, *L'Impossible Rencontre*, 18.
[52] Mark S. Micale, 'On the "Disappearance" of Hysteria: A Study in the Clinical Deconstruction of a Diagnosis', *Isis*, 84 (1993), 496-526, here 517.

It took the First World War to alter these perceptions. In the context of the Union Sacrée, doctors ceased to be anti-clerical foot soldiers, while the ubiquity of shell-shock (perhaps 200,000 French cases) made the pithiatist model of trauma hard to sustain. Doctors who upheld it came into conflict with their patients and the wider public, sometimes in open court.[53] The war led to a surge of interest in spiritualism, including among doctors and scientists, driven by the desire to reconnect with the dead and missing.[54] By its end, intellectuals, artists and surrealists, suspected that the positivist quest for objectivity had ignored whole areas of human behaviour and experience. In this context, Freud's ideas held new appeal, but it was literary intellectuals, rather than physicians, who led the way. Romain Rolland, André Gide, and Jacques Rivière were among those to show an early interest, as were surrealists Louis Aragon and André Breton.[55] By 1922, with anti-German animosities receding, journals such as *Europe* and the *Revue européenne*, aiming to move ideas across borders, were appearing, and Freud's 'Germanic' heritage became less of a barrier.[56] That year a play with Freudian themes, Henri-René Lenormand's *Le Mangeur de rêves*, was staged in Geneva and Paris.[57] The *Nouvelle Revue Française* ran articles on Freud and reviewed Blanche Reverchon-Jouve's 1923 translation of his *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality.*[58] Psychoanalysis was well on the way by the mid-1920s to becoming the 'climate of opinion' of Auden's famous description, though acquiring medical respectability would take somewhat longer.

This background helps to explain why the earliest members of the first French Freudian society, the Société Psychanalytique de Paris (SPP) founded in 1926, were not generally drawn from the ranks of French Republican medicine or

[53] Marc Roudebush, 'A Patient Fights Back: Neurology in the Court of Public Opinion in France during the First World War', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 35 (2000), 29-38.
[54] See Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: Great War in European Cultural History* (Cambridge, 1995).
[55] David Steel, 'Les débuts de la psychanalyse dans les lettres françaises: 1914-1922. Apollinaire, Cendrars, "Le Mercure de France", "La Revue de l'Époque", Morand, Bourget, Lenormand', *Revue d'Histoire Littéraire de la France*, 79/1 (1979), 62-89. On surrealism and psychoanalysis see the early chapters of Roudinesco, *Jacques Lacan.*
[56] See Ohayon, *L'Impossible Rencontre*, ch. 3.
[57] A playbill can be viewed at http://www.tce-archives.fr/document/73-le-mangeur-de-reves, accessed 20/06/2017.
[58] Ramon Fernandez, 'Trois essais sur la théorie de la sexualité, par Sigmund Freud', *La Nouvelle Revue Française*, 120 (1923), 91-5.

academic psychology; in most cases, they were not French, not doctors, or not Republicans. Of the earliest dozen or so psychoanalysts in France, Eugénie Sokolnicka, Rudolph Loewenstein and Sophie Morgenstern were Jews of Polish origin; Raymond de Saussure and Charles Odier were Swiss; Laforgue, from Alsace, had been a German doctor on the Eastern Front. Marie Bonaparte, despite her surname and royal marriage (to a Greek prince), was Republican in her political outlook, but had no medical training; she became France's leading advocate of lay analysis. Édouard Pichon, Adrien Borel, Henri Codet, Angelo Hesnard, and Laforgue, all physicians, were politically on the nationalist and anti-Republican Right – Pichon emphatically so as a member of Action Française. As if to confirm Yves Delage's worst suspicions, several founder members were interested in esoteric or mystical forms of knowledge, such as homeopathy, theosophy, paracelsianism, and in Allendy's case, alchemy. There were several influential women in the early SPP – Sokolnicka, Morgenstern, Françoise Minkowska, and above all Marie Bonaparte, who played a major role in developing the organisation. These women were a minority, but a proportionally much larger one than within medicine or other professions.

Freud's historically poor reputation in France also helps explain why the early French advocates of psychoanalysis took a defensive posture towards medical opinion. Where Freud had hoped to establish psychoanalysis as a 'common foundation' underpinning the whole of the human sciences, the *Évolution psychiatrique* group and journal – set up by Laforgue, Hesnard, Pichon, Codet, Allendy and others – presented it modestly, as merely a useful technique: 'un sérieux apport à la médecine mentale ... [mais] destiné à se fondre dans la psychiatrie; je dis plus: dans la médecine'.[59] They were not 'bringing them the plague', in the possibly apocryphal phrase attributed to Freud on reaching the USA in 1909. Pichon wrote that 'comme toute discipline, [la psychanalyse] a des bornes ... elle n'entame ni le problème moral, ni le problème religieux, ni

[59] Édouard Pichon, 'La psychanalyse dans l'art médical', *L'Évolution psychiatrique*, 3 (1932), 77-103, here 103. On Freud's efforts to establish psychoanalysis as a foundation for diverse knowledge disciplines see Sarah Winter, *Freud and the Institution of Psychoanalytic Knowledge* (Stanford, 1999).

le problème esthétique.'[60] The first edition of *L'Évolution psychiatrique* (EP) admitted that 'la valeur exacte, au point de vue de la science expérimentale, de cette nouvelle méthode … [est] très contestée'.[61] It hoped that submitting psychoanalysis to 'notre esprit français de sincérité et de mesure' would lead to its 'perfectionnement, et s'il a lieu, de son redressement'.

The EP group aimed to win acceptance of psychoanalytic methods within scientific medicine, and acquire opportunities to employ psychoanalysis in state hospitals as well as private clinics. It therefore courted medical patrons. The pre-1926 history of psychoanalysis in France (such as it was) recounted by *L'Évolution psychiatrique* accorded a prominent role to Georges Heuyer, who as discussed above allowed psychoanalysis to be used in his neuropathology clinic.[62] A second potential patron was Henri Claude, a psychiatrist who assumed the chair of the Clinique des maladies mentales at Hôpital Sainte-Anne in 1922. Like Heuyer, Claude was open to incorporating psychoanalytic techniques in his clinic, without thereby adopting Freud's theoretical edifice.[63] He was adamant that psychoanalysis could only be practised by qualified doctors, preferably neuropsychiatrists.[64] Claude offered internships to budding psychoanalysts, including Jacques Lacan and Daniel Lagache. Under his auspices, a special issue of the *Journal Médical Français* was devoted to psychoanalysis in 1933, allowing EP members to reach a much larger medical audience than they could through their own journal.

The desire to keep figures like Claude on board encouraged EP members to stress the limitations of psychoanalysis and its ultimate subservience to medicine. This created a long-lasting faultline in the SPP over the value and validity of lay analysis and the application of psychoanalytic concepts beyond medicine – ultimately contributing to a split in the SPP in 1953 (see chapter 3).

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[60] Pichon, 'Extension du domaine de la psychanalyse', *L'Évolution psychiatrique*, 2 (1927), 217-28.
[61] 'Avant propos', *L'Évolution psychiatrique*, 1 (1925), 7-9 – unsigned editorial, probably written by Laforgue and Hesnard.
[62] 'A propos de l'historique du mouvement psychanalytique en France', *L'Évolution psychiatrique*, 2 (1927) 245-6.
[63] Roudinesco, *Bataille* 1, 285.
[64] Henri Claude, 'Quelques considérations sur la psychanalyse', *Journal Médical Français*, 22/4 (1933), 107-8.

When the *Revue française de psychanalyse* (RFP) was created in 1927, several EP members unsuccessfully objected to Marie Bonaparte's proposal that the journal should feature Freud's name on the cover.[65] Bonaparte, a former analysand of Freud, advocated the application of psychoanalysis to diverse fields such as crime, literature and anthropology. She was however forced to concede that the RFP, which she helped finance and which targeted a broader audience than *L'Évolution psychiatrique*, be divided into a 'medical' section and a 'non-medical' or 'applied' part. Despite this concession, Hesnard and Pichon publicly criticised the RFP in 1930 on the grounds that its 'scholastic' approach served 'as a magnifying lens for the defects of the Freudian theories'; they attacked Bonaparte in particular for 'finding excuses to quote Freudian texts' rather than carrying out 'research of a positive nature'.[66] Some EP members cited Pierre Janet at least as frequently and positively as they cited Freud, especially Pichon, who had married Janet's daughter in 1927.[67]

The tensions between the two tendencies should not be over-emphasised: the small size of the SPP – expanding from twelve members in 1926 to forty-four in 1939 – helped protect against a schism, and the two sides collaborated effectively on conferences, training and publishing ventures. While the EP group focused on winning over the medical establishment, Bonaparte concentrated on developing French psychoanalysis as an independent discipline. In 1934, thanks largely to her efforts and financing, the SPP set up a training institute for new analysts, and offered a number of 'bourses psychanalytiques' to promising candidates.[68] In the same year, at Pichon's suggestion, it set up an Association Professionnelle des Psychanalystes, which was intended to provide a means of protection and professional accreditation for lay analysts, and to spell out the role of lay members and how they should

[65] On Marie Bonaparte's place in the SPP see Roudinesco, *Bataille* 1, 328; Célia Bertin, *Marie Bonaparte, A Life* (New York, 1982), chs 7-8.
[66] Angelo Hesnard, Édouard Pichon, Georges Politzer, 'Psychoanalysis in France: Preliminary Note on the Historical Survey of the French Psychoanalytic Movement', *Psychoanalytic Review*, 17 (1930), 426-8.
[67] See Annick Ohayon, 'Édouard Pichon, psychanalyste français', in Michel Arrivé, Valelia Muni Toke and Claudine Normand (eds), *De la grammaire à l'inconscient: Dans les traces de Damourette et Pichon*: *actes du colloque de Cerisy-la-Salle du 1er au 11 août 2009* (Limoges, 2009), 141-8.
[68] See Mijolla, *Freud et la France*, 607; Roudinesco, *Bataille* 1, 361.

co-operate with medical practitioners.[69] It also undertook further translations of texts by Sigmund, and also Anna, Freud.

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By the 1930s, psychiatrists, psychologists and psychoanalysts rarely attended each others' conferences. Their approaches were diverging fundamentally. The one issue that could bring them together was child psychology. The Conférence Internationale de Psychiatrie de l'Enfant held in Paris in 1937 and instigated by Heuyer, was attended by several SPP members including Pichon, Laforgue, Lagache, Lacan and Morgenstern, as well as some leading names in French psychology including Wallon, Dumas, Toulouse, and Henri Piéron.[70] This indicates the importance of child and family psychology in the interwar political and intellectual context.

French psychoanalysts' approach to these topics was conditioned not only by that context but also by the status of these subjects in psychoanalytic theory. By the 1930s, the way that psychoanalysts thought about the family and women's place in it already had a complex history. For Eli Zaretsky – who sees psychoanalysis as the ideological accompaniment to the 'second industrial revolution' of 1880-1920, in the same way that Max Weber saw Calvinism as the 'spirit' of an earlier phase of capitalism – the 'original historical telos [of psychoanalysis] was *defamilialization,* the freeing of individuals from unconscious images of authority originally rooted in the family'.[71] For Zaretsky, the logic behind the growth of psychoanalysis was the goal 'of a personal life distinct from and even outside of the family', which also 'found social expression in such phenomena as the "new" (or independent) woman'.[72] Mari Jo Buhle has shown that feminists before the First World War indeed considered Freudianism to be 'a handmaiden to women's sexual

[69] See Mijolla, *Freud et la France*, 608, 614.
[70] Ohayon, *L'Impossible Rencontre*, 197; Duché, *Histoire de la psychiatrie de l'enfant,* 342; Mijolla, *Freud et La France*, 708.
[71] Zaretsky, *Secrets*, 5. Zaretsky further argues (p. 8) that psychoanalysis 'supplied the inner motivations for a socioeconomic transformation that could not have won committed followers on its own terms'. Zaretsky developed this thinking in *Political Freud: A History* (New York, 2015).
[72] Zaretsky, *Secrets*, 5.

emancipation'.[73] The reason for their enthusiasm was that Freud had argued, notably in the *Three Essays*, that both women and men possessed a strong sexual instinct, and that sexual satisfaction was an important element of the mental health of both sexes. Nervous illness was often traceable to the restrictions of the 'civilised sexual morality' as embodied in Victorian family structures.[74] Freud also declined to argue that intellectual work caused nervous illness in women, instead stating that it was 'a protection against falling ill of neurasthenia'.[75]

By the 1920s, however, Freud had made the concepts of penis envy and 'genital transference' (transference of affect from clitoris to vagina) central to his understanding of women's sexuality. In line with the prevailing postwar anti-feminist atmosphere, various psychoanalysts posited a link between aberrant psychosexual development and feminism – perhaps most stridently, Karl Abraham with his 1920 text, praised by Freud, 'Manifestations of the Female Castration Complex'.[76] Abraham (and Freud) assumed women's anatomical inferiority to men, and that any resentment exhibited by women towards men most likely resulted from unresolved jealousy about this. Ultimately, this meant that the therapeutic goals were not the same for both sexes; men were to be helped to develop their sexual and professional capacities, women to resign themselves to their natural inferiority.[77] This did not go unchallenged; indeed it gave rise to what Buhle calls 'the great debate' over female sexuality within psychoanalysis, with Karen Horney, in particular, dissenting from the Freud/Abraham position.[78] As with the nature/nurture debate between Heuyer and Wallon, the dispute had political overtones: was women's inferiority innate and thus natural or, as Horney argued, culturally produced? As Zaretsky notes, the psychoanalytic emphasis on 'the autonomy

[73] Buhle, *Feminism*, 22.
[74] Sigmund Freud, '"Civilized" Sexual Morality and Modern Nervous Illness' (1908), *Standard Edition* vol. 9, 181-204.
[75] Freud, 'Sexuality in the Aetiology of the Neuroses' (1898), *Standard Edition* vol. 3, 263-86, quote 272. I am drawing here on Quinn, *Karen Horney*, 206.
[76] Karl Abraham, 'Manifestations of the Female Castration Complex', *The International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, 3/1 (1922), 1-29. See Quinn, *Karen Horney*, 208-10; Buhle, *Feminism*, 66ff.
[77] Buhle, *Feminism*, 80.
[78] Buhle, *Feminism*, 74.

of intrapsychic reality increasingly connoted an *a*political and *anti*-political outlook', or in some cases 'a conservative familialism, one that was often linked to racism and nationalism'.[79]

This was the period in which the SPP was formed. This context helps explain the theorising of the early French analysts on the family and women's sexuality – in particular the concept of the *névrose familiale*, the idea that children's neuroses were often a result of the neuroses of other family members. This is important for understanding Dolto's thinking, as will become clear in subsequent chapters. Abraham's 1920 paper had ended with an assertion that the damaging effects of the female castration complex were far-reaching. 'Women whose ideas and feelings are influenced and governed by the castration complex to an important degree … transplant like effect of this complex onto their children', Abraham wrote.[80] For example, a mother may disparage female sexuality to her daughters or pass on her aversion to men. Since the mother has more influence on children's early development than the father, her castration complex can be 'a dangerous enemy' of their development. Therefore, 'if we succeed in freeing such a person from … the burdens of her castration complex, then we obviate the neuroses of children, to a great extent'.[81]

René Laforgue's idea of the 'névrose familiale' can be read in this light. He advanced it in the first edition of the RFP, writing that 'on peut comprendre qu'une névrose peut se transmettre par tradition familiale exactement de la même façon que la civilisation'.[82] He returned to the subject with a longer article in 1936. Laforgue observed that children's neuroses could frequently be solved by treating the psychological problems of one or both parents, sometimes, without it being necessary to work with the child at all.[83] In general, though, the responsibility for a 'family complex' lay with or could be traced back to women, specifically the 'influence qu'une mère déséquilibrée a

[79] Zaretsky, *Secrets of the Soul*, 208.
[80] Abraham, 'Female Castration Complex', 27.
[81] Abraham, 'Female Castration Complex', 28-9.
[82] René Laforgue, 'Schizophrénie et schizonoïa', *Revue française de psychanalyse* (hereafter *RFP*), 1/1 (1927), 6-23.
[83] Laforgue, 'La névrose familiale', *RFP* 9/3 (1936), 327-60, here 328.

sur son enfant'.[84] The definition of 'unbalanced' women, for Laforgue as for Abraham, included feminists, and any women who were not comfortable with the role of wife and mother. In 1935, he argued that 'l'origine de nombre de symptômes névrotiques familiaux doit être recherchée dans la frigidité'.[85] In Laforgue's conception, frigidity, defined as the lack of appropriate release of women's sexual energies, could lead to those energies being expressed either in 'une certaine virilité' – that pushed women to try and rival men, by example by seeking to succeed professionally – or in an overly strong attachment to a child.[86] Such women may unconsciously seek out and marry an effeminate intellectual or repressed homosexual, producing children who would be confused as to their gender.[87] For an analyst faced with such women, Laforgue argued, 'le seul moyen d'agir, c'est de les guérir du besoin de fuite devant la sexualité normale: vous verrez alors, dans certains cas favorables, disparaître comme par enchantement toutes les complications'.[88] Reconciling women to 'normal' sexuality would bring both medical and social benefits; their symptoms would disappear, as if by magic.

Édouard Pichon likewise engaged with psychoanalysis partly in view of its ability, as he saw it, to cure deviant sexuality. He argued in 1934 that one of the key attractions of psychoanalysis was that it allowed the treatment of certain conditions that had previously appeared intractable – for example, homosexuality.[89] Drawing on his other career as a grammarian, Pichon claimed that the existence of linguistic genders constituted evidence that the polarisation of sexual roles was a fundamental aspect of society.[90] Pichon did not, as Abraham and Laforgue had, see the origins of existing social structures in biology, but rather as rooted in ancient civilisational patterns, as attested by

[84] Laforgue, 'Schizophrénie et schizonoïa', 11.
[85] Laforgue, 'A propos de la frigidité de la femme', *RFP*, 8/2 (1935), 217-26; here 222. This *RFP* volume was devoted to female sexuality; there was no companion volume on male sexuality.
[86] Laforgue, 'La névrose familiale', 344.
[87] Laforgue, 'La névrose familiale', 328-9, 344.
[88] Laforgue, 'La névrose familiale', 341.
[89] Speech by Pichon at the inauguration of the institut de Psychanalyse, 1934. 'Comptes rendus', *RFP*, 7/1 (1934), 141.
[90] Pichon, 'La polarisation masculin-féminin', *L'Évolution psychiatrique*, 4/3 (1934), 59-96. Pichon co-authored with Jacques Damourette a seven-volume treatise on French grammar, *Des Mots à la pensée: essai de grammaire de la langue française* (Paris, 1911-40).

both psychotherapy and linguistic evidence.[91] Nonetheless, the conclusion was the same. Those who were 'in revolt' against such structures – feminists, *garçonnes*, homosexuals – 'sont en réalité en état de malaise vis-à-vis d'eux-mêmes; ce sont des névrosés. En les ramenant aux conceptions [amoureuses normales], *nous les guérissons*.'[92]

Pichon's ideas were linked to his nationalist, Catholic and racist politics. Pichon once described himself, in a letter to Charles Maurras, as 'foncièrement catholique, en tant que le catholicisme, facteur d'ordre social, familial et national s'opposerait à l'esprit judaïque ou protestant'.[93] He founded an association, les Michelots, 'visant à franciser les noms juifs', referred to Sigmund Freud, for example, as 'Sigismond'.[94] Rudolph Loewenstein, Jacques Lacan's analyst, had Pichon in mind when, describing the welcome he received in Paris as a Polish Jew in 1925, he referred to 'la xénophobie, l'antisémitisme et un chauvinisme prononcé chez certains'.[95]

Within the SPP, Pichon's personal charm appears to have compensated for his sometimes objectionable politics.[96] In other areas, such as educational theory, Pichon could be innovative, even progressive. His bestselling 1936 child-rearing manual, *Le Développement psychique de l'enfant et de l'adolescent* was an eclectic mix.[97] It combined ideas from both Sigmund and Anna Freud with concepts taken from Binet, Janet, Wallon, Piaget; Pichon's own linguistic, religious and political principles; and the educational philosophies of Maria Montessori, John Dewey and Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Pichon turned the result into practical societal recommendations. The book remained in print well after the Second World War, with a third edition published in 1953.

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[91] Pichon, 'Le rôle du sexe dans la civilisation occidentale', *RFP*, 10/1 (1938), 23-37.
[92] Pichon, 'Le rôle du sexe dans la civilisation occidentale', 26. Pichon's emphasis.
[93] Cited in Roudinesco, *Bataille* 1, 299.
[94] Ohayon, 'Édouard Pichon', 145.
[95] Ohayon, 'Édouard Pichon', 143.
[96] 'On n'arrive pas à le détester, car malgré les idées épouvantables qu'il professe, il est charmant.' Ohayon, 'Édouard Pichon', 144.
[97] Pichon, *Le Développement psychique de l'enfant et de l'adolescent. Évolution normale, pathologie, traitement. Manuel d'étude* (Paris, 1936). According to Roudinesco, *Bataille* 1, 299-300, the book enjoyed 'fantastique succès'. See also Ohayon, *L'Impossible Rencontre*, 118-9.

Citing Dewey, Pichon advocated treating children as fully human from the youngest age: 'l'enfant est, en lui-même et pour lui-même, un être complet ... en état de vibrer pleinement avec la vie en en ressentant joies et chagrins.'[98] Recalling Dolto's criticism of Heuyer cited above, it is clear that her ideas were much more in sync with those of Pichon – a further point in common was that Pichon cited Sophie Morgenstern in advocating the use of drawings and play in child psychotherapy. Nor was Pichon in favour of absolute patriarchal authority, condemning 'les autoritarismes paternels systématiquement rigoureux, les giflages et les fesseries, les éducations sans tendresse, les exils non indispensables dans des internats'.[99] His vision of child-rearing had more in common with that of Pinard's *puériculture*: parents should be taught to value their children and see child-rearing as a serious subject that required some study and training. Pichon stressed the importance of linguistic communication between parents and young children: 'il est extrêmement dangereux de traiter les bébés comme de petites choses inconscientes ... Il faut *beaucoup parler* aux enfants en bas âge, pour leur faire comprendre la nature du langage.'[100] Like many of Pichon's ideas, this was later adopted wholeheartedly by Dolto. By 1938, following the end of her analysis with Laforgue, Dolto appears to have become something of a protégé of Pichon. She worked under him at the Bretonneau hospital while writing her thesis, *Psychanalyse et pédiatrie* (discussed further in chapters 2 and 3), and most of the child cases discussed in her thesis were referred by Pichon. Shortly before his death in January 1940, he supplied a preface for the published version.[101]

Pichon's educational permissiveness – discussed further in chapter 4 – had limits, however. 'Une éducation absolument libre, comme il semble qu'ait cru la réaliser Mme Montessori, ne serait pas du tout une éducation', he wrote.[102] The norms that Pichon had in mind related in particular to family structure. He appealed 'aux pouvoirs publics de renoncer à saper systématiquement la dignité, la solidité et la valeur pratique du mariage comme ils le font en France

[98] Pichon, *Développement psychique*, 25.
[99] Pichon, *Développement psychique*, 260-1.
[100] Pichon, *Développement psychique*, 63-8, 277-9. Pichon's emphasis.
[101] Pichon, preface to Françoise Marette, *Psychanalyse et pédiatrie: le complexe de castration étude générale – cas cliniques* (Paris, 1940).
[102] Pichon, *Développement psychique*, 261-2. Pichon's emphasis.

depuis le début de la troisième République'.[103] Parental separation, widowhood, divorce, remarriage, illegitimacy were all asserted to be dangerous or psychic equilibrium and happiness of the subject:

> L'enfant ne se développe psychiquement de façon parfaite que dans un ménage légitime, uni par un solide amour, formant vis-à-vis de sa progéniture un bloc indissoluble, et dont les deux éléments fondateurs aient la bonne fortune de vivre jusqu'à ce que l'enfant considéré soit devenu adulte. De plus, il est souhaitable que l'enfant ne soit pas unique.[104]

Pichon condemned the idea of married women working, praised scout movements, and advised parents to shave the heads of young boys so that they did not look like girls. A clear separation between genders and gender roles was psychologically healthy for individuals and for the nation as a whole. Fathers should not intervene too much in day to day child-rearing, lest they 'usurpent ainsi … un rôle maternel … cette faute peut perturber le développement du complexe d'Oedipe de leurs enfants'.[105]

Yet for all that, the anti-feminism of psychoanalytic theory in the 1920s and 1930s was not always quite borne out in practice. The composition of the international movement went from two hundred and twenty-one men and thirty-nine women in 1919 to two hundred and nineteen men and ninety-two women in 1929 – women thus accounting for all of the growth.[106] Psychoanalysis was much more open to women than other professions – forty per cent of psychoanalysts in Germany were women in 1933, compared to one point three per cent of lawyers.[107] Women such as Marie Bonaparte, Melanie Klein, Sabina Spielrein, Karen Horney and Helene Deutsch were able to wield considerable influence within the movement. They pushed Freud to explain female sexuality further, but, finding his efforts lacking in explanatory power, led psychoanalysis as a whole into exploring pre-Oedipal child-mother relations, edging fathers out of the picture. The other side to that, however, was

[103] Pichon, *Développement psychique*, 34.
[104] Pichon, *Développement psychique*, 33.
[105] Pichon, *Développement psychique*, 309.
[106] Zaretsky, *Secrets*, 195.
[107] Zaretsky, *Secrets*, 195.

that, as Zaretsky writes, 'often women were not simply analysts unmodified. Rather they specialised in child analysis or "applied analysis", that is, education or social work, spheres that were coded as feminine.'[108] This certainly applied to Sophie Morgenstern, and later to Dolto. It applied less to Marie Bonaparte and Eugénie Sokolnicka, but they, as lay analysts, were sidelined from the medical contexts in which French analysis was trying to get established.

Dolto, a woman setting out towards a career as an analyst in the mid-1930s, thus joined a world of ambiguity and ambivalence in which the discursive insistence on women remaining as housewives and mothers did not quite tally with the increasing opportunities becoming available to them in practice. Or, to put it another way, a world in which doors that appeared to be open in fact led down constrained paths littered with obstacles. This was true in French medicine, where women were training in unprecedented numbers in the 1930s, yet still only made up a tiny proportion of doctors – six hundred out of over 25,000 in 1934.[109] For some, this was still too many – no longer a 'petite élite de savants républicains', the profession was shifting rightwards in its political composition, a move Ellis attributes to a desire to secure the profession's rights 'against a more socially active state that seemed to threaten the doctor's autonomy'.[110] Forty-five per cent of doctors elected to the National Assembly in 1936 sat on the extreme right, seeking to protect their professional position against women and in particular, immigrants, especially Jewish ones.[111]

It was also true, to a lesser degree, of psychoanalysis, at least in the version that Dolto encountered. Women had more opportunities there, but only if they oriented themselves towards 'female' specialisms like child psychoanalysis. Women in medicine were likewise more likely to find positions in paediatrics than other specialisms – a fact which further demonstrates the historical

[108] Zaretsky, *Secrets*, 196.
[109] Reynolds, *France between the Wars*, 96.
[110] Ellis, *Physician-legislators*, 242-3.
[111] See Donna Evleth, 'The Ordre des Medecins and the Jews in Vichy France, 1940-1944', *French History*, 20/2 (2006), 204-24. On the socioeconomic context to 1930s antisemitism see Vicki Caron, *Uneasy Asylum: France and the Jewish Refugee Crisis, 1933-42* (Stanford, 1999).

constraints that contextualise Dolto's contention (see Introduction) that she had effectively 'always' known that she had wanted to be a 'médecin d'éducation'. Psychoanalysis was the means by which Dolto liberated herself from the life laid out for her by her family, as chapter 2 will show. It was where she encountered ideas about sexuality and education that seemed radically new and freeing by comparison to the restrictive conceptions she grew up with. But in the hands of Laforgue and Pichon, her mentors, it was also a tool for medicalising and suppressing deviance from patriarchal norms, for advancing an anti-feminist or even misogynist rhetoric that often assumed the mother's responsibility for the psychological distress of their children. Within paediatrics, the Catholic-psychoanalytic humanism of Pichon's approach appeared to Dolto to be a distinct advance on the 'constitutionalist' detachment of a Georges Heuyer. It was also a way to resist the Marxist stance of psychologists like Wallon, who wanted to move the focus of state policy and discursive attention away from family psychology onto socio-economic conditions. Dolto, as later chapters will illustrate, never really moved away from the Laforgue-Pichon approach, believing she had discovered timeless truths in stances which, as will now be clear, were fundamentally rooted in the circumstances of the interwar period.

Chapter 2 – A Bourgeois Upbringing and its Gendered Constraints

> Si la mère n'est pas névrosée et laisse sa fille s'émanciper normalement, les choses se passent bien. Si la mère au contraire sape la confiance en elle que la fille a besoin d'avoir, l'empêche par exemple de s'habiller à son idée, de choisir les distractions, les occupations culturelles … les sentiments de culpabilité inconscients à l'égard de sa mère amènent la fillette à présenter un complexe de castration vaginale pathologique.
>
> …
>
> En grandissant, [l'enfant] pourra se permettre le choix d'un mode de vie parfois entièrement différent de celui qu'a choisi l'adulte éducateur. Dans ces divergences de vue, toujours pénibles pour lui, il sera encore soutenu par la certitude que sa réussite et son bonheur dans la voie qu'il a choisie ... apportent à celui-ci la joie profonde de voir l'oeuvre de sa vie menée à bien jusqu'au bout et capable à son tour de fécondité.
>
> Dolto, 1939.[1]

This chapter looks at Dolto's social origins in the Parisian haute bourgeoisie and the ideological environment in which she was raised. Such a study serves both a biographical and a wider historical purpose. The biographical aim is to understand Dolto's intellectual orientation at the time of her entry into the psychoanalytic milieu discussed in chapter 1, and provide additional context for her later views, especially as regards gender. In part, the chapter tells the story of Dolto's break with her family's social and political views and her successful pursuit of a professional career in defiance of her family's wishes. But it also shows that this break was not complete, and that Dolto as a mature adult assumed her social position as a product of the interwar Parisian, Catholic, right-wing upper bourgeoisie. Her views on children, families, education, sexuality and gender, and medical etiology and practice were partly formed in this context. They were also shaped by the anti-feminist ideas that

[1] Dolto, *Psychanalyse et pédiatrie* (Paris, 1971), 109, 62.

she encountered from French psychoanalysts, as described in the previous chapter. The final part of this chapter will indicate how Dolto adopted many of those ideas.

The broader historical aim of the chapter is to advance Dolto's case study as a contribution to the study of gender and childhood in interwar France, and especially of the particular pressures placed on young women of upper-class backgrounds. Dolto's story, documented through her memoirs, correspondence and family archives, provides an interesting counterpoint to the better-known narrative of a comparable upbringing by Simone de Beauvoir, which is also the main source for the childhood of her friend Zaza (Elisabeth Lacoin), whose background had perhaps even more in common with Dolto's.[2] My account will draw on Beauvoir's memoirs as well as the work of Isabelle Grellet and Caroline Kruse comparing the experiences of Dolto, Zaza and Beauvoir.[3] For a wider perspective, I also draw on Eric Mension-Rigau's sociological study, *L'Enfance au château,* based on interviews conducted in the 1980s with members of the French upper classes born between 1900 and 1930.[4] This work – informed, like Grellet and Kruse, by Bourdieusian sociology – is useful for its attentiveness to the mechanisms by which cultural and social capital are transmitted via social codes, behaviours and dispositions.

The chapter goes beyond the work of Grellet and Kruse in keeping one eye turned towards Dolto's future career, and in setting her psychoanalysis with Laforgue – her means of escape from the family 'prison' – within the same framework of a gendered upbringing.[5] It demonstrates that questions of gender and femininity in 1930s society were central to Dolto's initial encounter with psychoanalysis – at her father's instigation – in 1934. Insisting on the gendered nature of Dolto's upbringing, the chapter argues that certain aspects of her early life can be usefully understood through Judith Butler's conceptions of gender. Butler sees gender as a 'performative accomplishment [through] which

[2] Simone de Beauvoir, *Mémoires d'une jeune fille rangée* (Paris, 1958).
[3] Isabelle Grellet and Caroline Kruse, *Des jeunes filles exemplaires: Dolto, Beauvoir et Zaza* (Paris, 2004).
[4] Eric Mension-Rigau, *L'Enfance au château: l'éducation familiale des élites françaises au vingtième siècle* (Paris, 1990).
[5] Dolto, *Enfances*, 70.

the mundane social audience, including the actors themselves, come to believe and to perform in the mode of belief' and gender identity as something that is 'instituted through a stylised repetition of acts'.[6] As will be seen, various behaviours demanded of the young Françoise required her performatively to enact a specific and constrained understanding of female identity.

In terms of primary sources, the chapter draws heavily on Dolto's correspondence up to 1939 and on two published autobiographical accounts, *Enfances* (1986) and *Autoportrait d'une psychanalyste* (1989, hereafter '*Autoportrait*'), which were compiled from interviews with Dolto rather than 'written' by her in the conventional sense.[7] *Autoportrait* was finalised after her death and thus was not revised or corrected by Dolto. I also refer to a third narrative, pieced together from recorded conversations between Dolto and her husband Boris in 1979-80, entitled 'Traversée du siècle'. Extracts were published in a 2008 volume, *Archives de l'intime*, compiled by Yann Potin with cooperation from Dolto's estate.[8] This book also includes further material from the private family archive, to which I did not have full access during my research.

As indicated in the Introduction, Dolto's autobiographical narratives are problematic as historical sources. There is some reason to distrust Dolto's recollection of specific details: *Autoportrait* includes Dolto's childhood 'memory' of encountering Guy de Maupassant, even though Maupassant died fifteen years before her birth.[9] A more fundamental issue, which also affects Jean-François de Sauverzac's biography, is Dolto's tendency to read the events of her childhood through the prism of psychoanalytical theory, and indeed deploy them as supporting evidence for that theory. For example, her memoirs confidently ascribe her family members' illnesses to psychological causes. Without wishing to deny that psychological factors can affect the human immune system, the rhetorical value of these accounts in supporting Dolto's

[6] Judith Butler, 'Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory', *Theatre Journal*, 40 (1988), 519-31.
[7] Dolto, *Enfances* (Paris, 1986); *Autoportrait d'une psychanalyste: 1934-1988* (Paris, 1989).
[8] Yann Potin (ed.), *Françoise Dolto, Archives de l'intime* (Paris, 2008).
[9] Maupassant spent his last years in an asylum run by Dr Antoine-Émile Blanche, located across the road from Dolto's childhood home. Dolto, *Autoportrait*, 61-3.

theories must be borne in mind. Just as Sigmund Freud's case histories have been described as instances of the 'social construction of the psychoanalytic mode of knowledge', Dolto's autobiographies are marked by an intention to encourage her 1980s audience to reflect upon the workings of their own unconscious.[10] Her life story takes on the role of an exemplary tale, an illustration of the explanatory power and therapeutic value of psychoanalysis.

Within this rhetorical construction, Dolto presents her achievement in becoming a psychoanalyst as heroic, in ways that can be misleading. She describes herself as living in poverty in the late 1930s as a medical student: 'ma mère voulait que mon père me coupe les vivres ... [il] ne l'a pas fait, mais j'avais le strict minimum. Ça a été vraiment très dur'.[11] A 1939 accounts note from her father published in *Archives de l'intime* puts this into context. It states that in addition to the 'avance d'hoirie de 150,000 francs qu'elle a reçue [en 1936], la rente de 9,000 francs que je lui sers étant évidemment très insuffisante ... je lui ai à cet effet remis 68,050 francs'.[12] At a time when the average worker's annual salary was around 25,000 francs (the Vichy government, in 1941, paid pensions only to people with assets under 9,000 francs) Dolto was clearly some way from the breadline.[13] She may also have been in receipt of a bursary from the training institute of the SPP.[14] Her poverty, in other words, was relative to the bourgeois luxury of her childhood, not absolute.

Camille Robcis has written of Dolto's 'resistance to history', meaning her tendency to emphasise the importance of intrapsychic and unconscious explanations and underplay historical context.[15] Dolto's narratives frame her youth as a case study in timeless psychological issues of childhood, rather than the product of specific historical circumstances. 'Comment ça se fait que les

[10] Frank Sulloway, 'Reassessing Freud's Case Histories: The Social Construction of Psychoanalysis', *Isis*, 82 (1991), 245-75, here 261.
[11] *Enfances*, 98.
[12] Potin (ed.) *Archives de l'intime*, 122. According to the INSEE currency calculator at https://www.insee.fr/fr/information/2417794, 150,000 francs in 1936 equates to 108,008 Euros at 2016 values.
[13] Elise Feller, 'Retirement in France in the Early Twentieth Century: From Suspicion to the "French Model"', *Proceedings of the Western Society for French History*, 33 (2005), 325-39.
[14] *Autoportrait*, 156.
[15] Robcis, *Law of Kinship*, e.g. 136-7.

grandes personnes ne comprennent pas les enfants?' she asks on the opening page of *Enfances.*[16] Sauverzac's biography, heavily influenced by Dolto's thinking, likewise tends towards explanations in terms of unconscious associations. For example, Sauverzac links Dolto's youthful interest in Joan of Arc with the death of her paternal grandfather in a fire (in 1880), and attributes significance to the accent of her analyst, René Laforgue, who spoke French with a similar Germanic inflection to her mother's family.[17] In effect, Sauverzac often falls into Bourdieu's 'biographical illusion'. He fails to note that a passionate interest in Joan of Arc was utterly conventional for someone of Dolto's background at this time, or to interrogate the gendered assumptions behind the fact that 'un professeur du cours Sainte-Clotilde la poussait vers la couture', simply putting this down to the fact that 'elle était très habile de ses mains'.[18] In short, a much more historical reading of Dolto's early life is required than that which Sauverzac provides.

The correspondence, meanwhile, is by its nature fragmentary. The best-documented periods are those where the young Françoise was apart from her parents, such as summer holidays, and there is therefore relatively little material on day-to-day life in Paris. Her correspondence with her family was subject to very strict, if invisible, formal and tonal constraints. For female members of Dolto's social caste, letter-writing was a highly stylised, performative activity in which social considerations were paramount – 'un ouvrage de dame, un exercice de style soumis à des conventions minutieuses'.[19] The act of writing a letter respecting the expected conventions was an indication of submission to social norms. During periods of separation, letters enabled parents to exercise a form of surveillance and control at a distance. Girls were required to report on every aspect of their activity and their letters to family members were not treated as private, but passed around and discussed. Mothers could open letters addressed to their daughters, especially from correspondents of whom they disapproved.[20] All of this means

[16] *Enfances*, 9.
[17] Sauverzac, *Françoise Dolto,* 30.
[18] Sauverzac, *Françoise Dolto,* 74.
[19] Grellet and Kruse, *Jeunes Filles exemplaires*, 19-20, 40-42.
[20] Grellet and Kruse, *Jeunes Filles exemplaires*, 45-6.

that letters cannot be taken as an authentic expression of 'true' feelings, but rather as calculated moves in the management of family relationships. Much has to be read between the lines.

This chapter therefore seeks to use the available materials about Dolto's childhood to tell a nuanced, historical story, quite apart from the narrative of heroic triumph she presented, and emphasising in particular the social, class and especially gender pressures on her early life. It is divided into three sections. The first situates the Marette family in terms of its wealth, size, social position, religion, politics and cultural capital. The second section further highlights the gender- and class-consciousness which formed a major part of Françoise's upbringing and that of young women like her, examining how they were expected to perform their femininity in such areas as language, education and the acquisition of skills. The final part explores the context to her psychoanalysis, beginning in 1934. I ask what, in the context of Françoise's upbringing, her analysis was intended to achieve, and demonstrate that while her analysis assisted her to obtain independence, it also involved her acceptance of a psychoanalytic discourse that tended to pathologise professional women.

The Marette family's social and cultural values can be summarised in a few key words and phrases. It was a *famille nombreuse* from the Parisian haute bourgeoisie, whose wealth derived from industry rather than agriculture. It was performatively or socially Catholic – as opposed to especially pious or devout – and politically on the monarchist (far) Right. The family exhibited the customs and values of the aristocratic upper classes, and valued art and musical ability highly. It sought its social and economic reproduction and betterment in the next generation. This implied directing male children into professions of economic and social value, while requiring female children to learn a mixture of decorative and practical skills and demeanours in preparation for marriage. These values were those of a section of the wealthier anti-Dreyfusard bourgeoisie and aristocracy of the late nineteenth century and Belle Époque. They connected also to France's military and imperial project – the Marettes

had great respect for the empire builder Marshal Lyautey, and their eldest son joined the colonial army in Morocco.

In the interwar years, these values came under pressure in various ways: economic pressure from inflation and market crises, and social pressure as a result of changing economic structures and social mores. In chapter 1, I evoked Eli Zaretksy's contention that both psychoanalysis and feminism were ideational accompaniments to the second industrial revolution and a new form of corporate capitalism and consumerism in the period 1880-1920. There was a cultural break between people who embraced the new forms and those who clung to older forms of social morality attached to earlier economic structures. For bourgeois women, this meant that more opportunities became available to pursue careers and take part in public life, but also that formidable cultural barriers remained in their way. Dolto, like Beauvoir and Zaza, is a case study in this transitional moment. She challenged her family's values through her desire for a professional career; prioritising this over marriage and motherhood provoked an at-times vitriolic reaction from her parents. Such a desire indicated to her parents that Françoise was immoral, selfish, or perhaps mentally disturbed. They consulted a psychoanalyst at least partly in the hope that she could be cured of this disturbance and brought back into the family fold. But instead, Françoise seized upon psychoanalysis and incorporated it into her career plan.

*

Born in November 1908, Dolto was the daughter of Henry Marette, an engineer and factory director, and Suzanne, *née* Demmler, the daughter of a wealthy industrialist.

Suzanne (1879-1962), came from a southern German Protestant family that moved to France in the 1850s. Her father (Dolto's maternal grandfather), Arthur Demmler (1844-1912) grew up speaking German, but fought for France in 1870. He went on to attend the École Polytechnique, and eventually acquired a factory in the metallurgy centre of Montbard, in Burgundy. The

success of this factory during the industrial expansion of the late nineteenth century brought Demmler considerable wealth. So did his marriage, to Henriette Secrétan, daughter of copper magnate and art collector Eugène, who supplied Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi with the copper used in the Statue of Liberty. In her teenage years Suzanne, the eldest of three Demmler children, worked as her father's secretary. This job required her to sit unseen behind a thin screen in Demmler's office and take notes on the meetings and conversations that her father had with other men, as well as accompany him on business trips.[21]

Henry Marette was born in 1874, the son of an architect who died in a railway fire in 1880. Thereafter Henry boarded at the Lycée Michelet, on the outskirts of Paris, until progressing to the École Polytechnique and qualifying as an engineer – in which capacity he was hired by Demmler to work for the Montbard business, named Metal Déployé.

The marriage of Henry Marette and Suzanne Demmler in 1901 was designed to cement the close relationship that formed between Arthur and Henry. According to Dolto, the turning point was a dramatic incident in a Montbard hotel room. A wardrobe fell on Arthur, pinning and crushing his leg. Henry rescued his stricken boss and made himself indispensable to the factory's operation during Demmler's convalescence.[22] The two became friends. Arthur came to see Henry as a natural successor, and Henry was a regular diner at the Demmler household. The match, in other words, was between Henry and Arthur, not Henry and Suzanne. Suzanne, indeed, was reluctant. Her ideal future husband would have been a blond, blue-eyed, artistic Protestant; she had a youthful infatuation with a musician matching that description.[23] Henry was a brown-haired, brown-eyed Catholic engineer with a head for figures. Nevertheless, Suzanne acquiesced in her father's plan, and went along with what ultimately proved a generally happy marriage.[24]

[21] *Autoportrait*, 83.
[22] *Autoportrait*, 84.
[23] *Autoportrait*, 83-5.
[24] *Autoportrait*, 85.

This episode illustrates the lack of agency accorded to women of this class in this period, and puts into context Suzanne's attitudes in raising her two daughters, Françoise and her older sister Jacqueline, born 1902. Suzanne – whose later behaviour, I argue below, suggests an aptitude and suppressed ambition for a medical career – had sacrificed her personal inclinations in favour of duty to her father, forbearance, and family interest. She had her first child at twenty-three. She expected her daughters to make the same sacrifice. Her secretarial experience, especially the physical separation she was required to maintain from businessmen, probably reinforced her view of the world as strictly divided into male and female spheres.

Another duty expected of and carried out by Suzanne was the production of a large family. Françoise was her fourth child out of a total of seven – the seventh, Jacques, was born in 1922 in response to the traumatic death of Jacqueline of cancer in 1920, leaving Françoise as the only daughter in a family of five brothers. As a *famille nombreuse* the Marettes were part of a small minority of French families – one family in thirteen had six or more children – but a politically significant one in the interwar pronatalist climate.[25] In 1913 they moved to a large ten-room apartment on the fifth floor of a new building at 2 rue Colonel Bonnet, in Passy in the 16th arrondissement of Paris, with views of the Sacré-Coeur and the Seine at Point-du-Jour.[26] Unusually for Paris in the period – though not for Passy – the building had electric lighting, central heating, a lift, and hot and cold running water. Above the Marettes lived the CEO of a clothing company with a store on Avenue de l'Opéra; in the flat below lived a countess, 'une femme superbe ... habillée comme on habille les princesses ... avec des dentelles, des perles'.[27] Every summer the family decamped to the channel coast resort of Deauville, one of the *stations balnéaires* which had been attracting the aristocratic, industrial and cultural élite since the days of the Second Empire, and whose atmosphere of studied

[25] Sevegrand, *Enfants du bon Dieu*, 20.
[26] *Autoportrait*, 59.
[27] *Autoportrait*, 66-8.

casualness and careful attention to social distinctions was described by Marcel Proust.[28]

Given the generally cramped housing on offer in interwar Paris, having a large family was in practice an indicator of wealth. It also tended to correlate with adherence to a certain world view; even within the *haute bourgeoisie*, large families were far from ubiquitous. The key predictor of family size among the upper classes was religious affiliation. Catholic families had higher birth rates than Protestant ones, and birth rates were higher in strongly Catholic areas such as Brittany, the Vendée, the Pas de Calais and Moselle. According to a 1914 study of 1,200 families from the bourgeoisie and nobility, family size for 'familles croyantes' averaged 6.19 children, as opposed to an average of 2.73 for 'familles incroyantes'.[29] This average indicates that while large families were a rarity in French society overall, they were the expected norm in upper-class Catholic families.

Although Suzanne had been raised as a Protestant, the Marettes regarded themselves as Catholic. There were, however, different ways of being Catholic. It is worth exploring a little how the Marettes' orientation translated into religious practice, and what they may have stood to gain through such an identification. Everything that Dolto says about her family's religious stance suggests that, for them, religion and being seen to be religious was first and foremost a social gambit. Her grandfather Arthur Demmler – the German-born, Protestant factory owner – saw marriage to a Catholic woman as an essential step towards being accepted as fully French. 'Dans son esprit, être français c'était être pour les Droits de l'Homme de 1789 et catholique. Sans ça, on n'est pas français!'[30] In effect, Demmler was not just seeking acceptance as French but acceptance into a particular strand of French society. As Arno Mayer argued, during the nineteenth century the emerging industrial elites gradually fused with the existing aristocracy by adopting and imitating its values and practices, such as philanthropy, as a way of conferring social legitimacy on

[28] In particular in Marcel Proust, *À l'ombre des jeunes filles en fleurs* (Paris, 1919).
[29] Sevegrand, *Enfants du bon Dieu*, 20.
[30] *Autoportrait*, 44-5.

their wealth.[31] In Third Republic France, polarised around questions of secularisation and clerical influence, outward adherence to Catholicism could serve to underline one's alignment with aristocratic values and anti-Dreyfusard politics. Mension-Rigau argues that acceptance in aristocratic circles required exalting 'le sens de l'honneur et du bien, l'amour de Dieu, le respect de la terre et de la patrie'.[32] These conventions were adopted by 'la bourgeoisie conquérante en manque éperdu de capital symbolique et à la recherche affolée de légitimité sociale'. The suspicion that Demmler's Catholicism was primarily for external consumption is underlined by his decision to bring up Suzanne as a Protestant.[33] As an adult, Suzanne, likewise, 'performed' Catholicism without renouncing her Protestant upbringing. She and her family attended mass weekly at Notre-Dame-de-Grâce de Passy, but Dolto's memoirs suggest that they saw this as the enactment of a social obligation rather than an act of deep piety: 'C'était un principe. Il fallait aller à la messe le dimanche. On faisait le minimum rituel ... On arrivait à midi dix et on partait à midi vingt, en famille et en trombe.'[34]

The Marettes were a 'Catholic' family in a social and political sense more than in a devotional one; outward Catholicism marked their identification with aristocratic social practices and monarchist politics. Between the wars the Marettes, especially Suzanne and her mother Henriette Demmler, sympathised with *Action Française.*[35] Henry had a more liberal-conservative outlook on social questions, which Dolto attributed to his more modest social origins (he had a socialist brother-in-law, which caused some family friction), but also identified as a monarchist.[36] Their preferred newspaper was the conservative and patriotic society daily, *L'Écho de Paris*.[37] Henriette in particular upheld aristocratic values, employing 'un vrai valet de chambre' – a feature that served to distinguish the aristocracy, who did not deign to be served at table by

[31] Arno Mayer, *The Persistence of the Old Regime: Europe to the Great War* (London, 1981). On philanthropy see Elisabeth Macknight, 'Faiths, Fortunes and Feminine Duty: Charity in Parisian High Society 1880–1914', *The Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 58 (2007), 482-506.
[32] Mension-Rigau, *L'Enfance au château*, 187.
[33] *Autoportrait*, 45.
[34] *Enfances*, 43-4.
[35] See Françoise to Henriette Demmler, 03/04/26, *LdJ*, 165, praising an article by Maurras on the death of the Orléanist pretender, Prince Philippe.
[36] *Autoportrait*, 88-9.
[37] *Enfances*, 73.

a female servant, from the less wealthy bourgeoisie, who could only afford a *bonne*.[38] The level of formality in the Demmler household can be gauged from the fact that their valet de chambre and cuisinière successfully concealed their relationship from the family for their entire thirty years' service, marrying only upon their retirement.[39] The Marettes themselves employed four full-time staff: a cuisinière, valet de chambre, a nanny for the youngest children and a live-in governess (*institutrice*) for the older children. Part-time employees included a *lingère* and various private tutors.

Upper-class families exercised considerable control and surveillance over their children, in order to prevent them from mixing with the 'wrong sort' and ensure that they were not exposed to competing notions of morality or social etiquette. Most schooling took place at home, and holidays were spent with relatives. 'Des camarades de collège venaient rarement et beaucoup plus tard,' recalled a man born in 1921 interviewed by Mension-Rigau. Friendships had to be carefully vetted in advance: 'dès que nous parlions d'inviter quelqu'un, même une enfant qui était avec nous chez les Soeurs de l'Assomption ... on nous disait: "qu'est-ce que cela? qui est il? que font ses parents?"'[40] Before Simone de Beauvoir was allowed to be friends with Zaza (Elisabeth Lacoin, named as Mabille in Beauvoir's text), 'mon père et ma mère s'interrogèrent longtemps sur les différentes branches des diverses familles Mabille dont ils avaient entendu parler'.[41] The Marettes were possibly even more extreme. Françoise had a close relationship with her German governess Elisabeth Weilandt, known as 'Mademoiselle'. This sort of complicity was common, since children and servants often shared the difficulty of adhering to the imposed rhythms of aristocratic life, and children, especially girls, had little other opportunity for friendships beyond the family.[42] Beyond 'Mademoiselle', Françoise had few childhood friends. She later claimed that she did not so much as eat a meal outside her mother or grandmother's presence before the

[38] *Enfances*, 44; Mension-Rigau, *L'Enfance au château*, 101.
[39] *Enfances*, 45.
[40] Mension-Rigau, *L'Enfance au château*, 78.
[41] Beauvoir, *Jeune fille rangée*, 121.
[42] Mension-Rigau, *L'Enfance au château*, 110-1, on complicity between children and servants.

age of twenty-five.[43] To visit a friend's house for tea was 'une chose extraordinaire'. All social activities had to take place within the family confines:

> Nous n'avions pas le droit d'avoir des amis, d'ailleurs, sous prétexte que nous étions déjà assez nombreux en famille. Sur la plage, nous n'avions pas le droit de jouer avec d'autres enfants ... Quant à la gymnastique, il y avait un professeur, homme ou femme, qui venait à la maison une fois par semaine.[44]

Any unsupervised activity was potentially suspect; unaccompanied journeys were to be avoided. 'Ma mère s'inquiétait des rencontres possibles, dans les transports en commun'.[45] Françoise hardly ever travelled alone before the age of twenty-one.

School was no escape. From 1914-1924 Françoise attended the Cours Sainte-Clotilde, a private, Catholic establishment close to the family apartment in Passy, as an 'élève libre'. This meant that she only attended a few hours of class per week, with the rest of the work to be done at home. The classes themselves were attended by mothers and governesses, who sat in the back, sewing. The main activity was reciting 'des leçons de la semaine pour prouver qu'on avait travaillé à la maison'.[46] The centre of learning, as far as Françoise was concerned, was the home, not the school.

In aristocratic families, girls' education centred on subjects that conferred cultural capital – such as art and music – over the academic subjects prioritised by the (Republican) Éducation Nationale.[47] Cultural capital was accumulated by reading, learning foreign languages and musical instruments, attending lectures, exhibitions, theatrical productions and concerts. The extract from the Marettes' 'jardin de préférences' – questionnaires that they periodically filled in for their own entertainment – indicates the range of cultural learning that the Marettes acquired in art, history, literature and music (see fig. 3). Suzanne and

[43] *Enfances*, 70.
[44] *Enfances*, 72.
[45] *Enfances*, 72.
[46] *Enfances*, 70.
[47] See Mension-Rigau, *L'Enfance au château*, ch. 7, 'La formation du goût', 143ff.

Henry contributed to their children's acquisition of cultural capital in complementary, gendered ways: Suzanne encouraged interest in music, painting, ceramics and sewing, while Henry promoted wide reading and scientific understanding. The Marette children were all expected to learn an instrument.[48] Any aptitude showed by Françoise in an 'approved' art or skill was rapidly encouraged: 'J'ai appris aussi à faire de la couture [et] j'ai demandé un jour d'avoir un vrai professeur pour apprendre la coupe. Immédiatement, ma mère a trouvé un professeur qui est venu une fois par quinzaine à la maison.'[49] This encouraging attitude towards learning skills that were seen as appropriate for her class and gender contrasted sharply to the attitude that Françoise encountered when it came to formal schooling and her desire to pursue medical studies, as will be seen below.

At a time when scientific subjects were gradually replacing *lettres* and classics as the recipients of the highest prestige, Henry's scientific knowledge and interest opened up for Françoise an important additional dimension of learning. Henry took a strong interest in new ideas and publications, both scientific and literary; Dolto claims he bought 'tout ce qui paraissait', to the tune of twenty books a week.[50] His library featured numerous books 'de la bibliothèque contemporaine orange qui présentait toutes les nouveautés scientifiques'.[51] He took his children, including Françoise, to public lectures at the Trocadéro Palace, a short walk from the family apartment. These were notable for their 'vulgarisation de domaines jusque-là réservés aux élites: la physique, la chimie. Il y avait aussi des conférences sur le fond des mers, sur les séismes, etc.'[52] The young Françoise was particularly struck by a demonstration of wireless telegraphy given by radio pioneer Édouard Branly, and, helped by her father and illustrated publications with titles like *Le Sans-Fil*, participated in the contemporary craze for building crystal set radios (*postes à galène*), which picked up broadcasts from the Eiffel Tower.[53] Most significantly for Dolto's

[48] *Enfances*, 76.
[49] *Enfances*, 77.
[50] *Autoportrait*, 119.
[51] *Autoportrait*, 119.
[52] *Autoportrait*, 50.
[53] *Autoportrait*, 50; *Enfances*, 73-4. For examples of the kind of publication she used, see http://postagalene.free.fr/fichiers/Le_Sans-Filiste_Debrouillard.pdf (accessed 27/01/2017).

future career, Henry's bookshelves by 1924 included books on and by Freud, probably translations of the Clark lectures and the *Psychopathology of Everyday Life*, and a 1924 explainer by Angelo Hesnard.[54] Françoise encountered these books as a teenager, and used them in a school presentation.

Nom et date	**H. Marette**	**Suzanne Marette**	**Françoise Marette**	**Françoise Marette**
	Jan. 1926	Jan. 1926	Jan. 1926	Nov. 1928
Opinion politique	Monarchiste	Royaliste	Royaliste	Royaliste
Philosophe	Tristan Bernard	Marc Aurèle	Marc Aurèle	Pascal
Musicien	Wagner	Wagner Beethoven	Wagner et Beethoven	Wagner
Peintre	Rembrandt	Ingres Carrière	Delacroix	Fouquet Rembrandt
Sculpteur	Praxitèle	Praxitèle – Rodin	Rodin	Landowsky
Oeuvre préférée (litt. art)	Eugénie Grandet	Parsifal L'Oiseau bleu	Cyrano	Victoire de Samothrace, La Jeanne d'Arc de Réal del Sarte, Requiem de Berlioz
Grand homme préféré	Napoléon	Pasteur Napoléon	Napoléon	Lacordaire
Couleur préférée	bleu	jaune	jaune	bleu
Distraction	théâtre	musique	peinture	lecture
Sport préféré	alpinisme	montagne	alpinisme	tennis
Quel pays étranger vous attire le plus?	France	tous	la Palestine et la Grèce	le Canada, la Palestine
A quel siècle auriez-vous préféré vivre?	le mien	aucun	fin XVIIIe, commencement XIXe	Moyen Age

Fig. 3 – 'Le jardin des préférences' – Adapted from Potin (ed.), ***Archives de l'intime,*** **88**.

[54] *Autoportrait*, 120-1, though the account in *Enfances*, 80, does not fully concur. Angelo Hesnard, *La Psychanalyse: théorie sexuelle de Freud* (Paris, 1924). See ch. 1, n. 35, for details on early Freud translations.

Unlike Simone de Beauvoir, whose parents carefully scrutinised and censored her reading material, Dolto's father 'm'autorisait à lire toute sa bibliothèque'.[55] Suzanne, for her part, encouraged Françoise to read the novels of Colette Yver, such as *Princesses de science* (1907) which showed how intellectual women ('cervelines') tended to end up dried and withered, incapable of love.[56] But this encouragement was not accompanied by a corresponding restriction; 'mes parents n'ont jamais limité mes lectures', Dolto recalled, with one exception: '"Zola, c'est du pot de chambre"'.[57] Otherwise, 'je pouvais lire tout ce que mon père achetait'.[58] Henry even owned a copy of Victor Margueritte's *La Garçonne* (1922), which caused a scandal because of the sexual promiscuity and relative gender nonconformity of its lead character – Françoise read it, but 'je n'y avais rien compris'.[59] Henry's library opened Françoise's horizons to a wider world of knowledge and helped her perceive the direction of social, scientific, and technological change, even if she could not yet see how she could be a part of this.

Despite this free access to reading material, as a girl and later a young woman from an upper-class 'Catholic' family, Françoise's behaviour faced important constraints and imperatives with regard to linguistic habits, career expectations, and social activities. The weight of these constraints and expectations in such families fell disproportionately heavily on daughters compared to sons.

The Marettes moved in what Mension-Rigau calls 'un espace social extraordinairement pacifié qui impose de tarir les impulsions et les émotions'.[60] Key terms in the Marettes' vocabulary acted to enforce desired behaviours. 'Correct' demeanours were signalled by terms such as 'poli', 'propre', 'élégant', and 'chic' – the latter is particularly in evidence in Dolto's

[55] Beauvoir, *Jeune Fille rangée*, 109-10; Dolto, *Enfances*, 80-1.
[56] *Autoportrait*, 128; Grellet and Kruse, *Jeunes Filles exemplaires*, 23. Colette Yver, *Princesses de science* (Paris, 1907).
[57] *Autoportrait*, 76.
[58] *Enfances*, 80-1.
[59] *Enfances*, 80-1. Victor Margueritte, *La Garçonne* (Paris, 1922). On the *garçonne* as a trope see Roberts, *Civilization without Sexes*, part I.
[60] Mension-Rigau, *L'Enfance au château*, 157.

correspondence. These terms emphasised self-control and refinement; they covered myriad behaviours. They were class markers: one had to be 'chic' to distinguish oneself from those who were 'ordinaire' or, worse, 'vulgaire'.[61] They were also ways of upholding gendered norms. Simone de Beauvoir recalled that,

> une dame 'comme il faut' ne devait ni se décolleter abondamment, ni porter des jupes courtes, ni teindre ses cheveux, ni les couper, ni se maquiller, ni se vautrer sur un divan, ni embrasser son mari dans les couloirs du métro: si elle transgressait ces règles, elle avait mauvais genre.[62]

The most egregious marker of 'mauvais genre' was divorce. Dolto recalled that her parents referred to divorced women as 'pas tout à fait comme il faut':

> Il y avait, parmi les amis de mes parents, une femme que son mari trompait et a quittée, elle avait deux fils à la même école que mes frères et elle s'ennuyait terriblement. Elle venait voir mes parents qui étaient gentils avec elle, mais ils ne la recevaient qu'après dix heures du soir. Il ne fallait pas que les gens sachent qu'on recevait une femme seule ... Ils la voyaient, mais il ne fallait tout de même pas que, par réputation, on les croie des gens 'pas bien'.[63]

This vignette illustrates the powerful shame attached to divorce – powerful and contagious, since the Marettes feared reputational contamination from mere association – and the unfair way that this shame was pinned on the divorced woman regardless of fault. These short, cutting phrases – 'comme il faut', 'pas bien', 'mauvais genre', 'chic' – carried substantial force. They encapsulated and policed class and gender expectations, backed by the threat of ostracism.

The Marettes paid a great deal of attention to ensuring that their children would have careers befitting their social station. Their eldest son, Pierre (b.1903) was encouraged towards an army career from an early age, and his success in this delighted Suzanne, who wrote of him affectionately as 'mon officier' in her

[61] See *Enfances*, 58.
[62] Beauvoir, *Jeune Fille rangée*, 108-9.
[63] *Enfances*, 53.

letters.[64] Pierre attended the St Cyr officers' academy in the 1920s, before being posted to Morocco in 1927, where French forces were continuing to 'pacify' the country following the Rif War.[65] There he met and married the daughter of a colonel: a good career move, but, as he wrote to Françoise, a decision taken with the family's interests in mind: 'j'ai longuement réfléchi la chose, voyant si la jeune personne cadrait bien avec mes idées, ma façon de penser et surtout avec notre famille'.[66] Pierre's career also aligned him with Suzanne's political outlook in the 1920s: *Action Française* sympathies were widespread in the colonial officer class.[67] Pierre's own opinions can be gauged from a letter to Françoise from 1927, in which he wrote casually of his wish to torture Republican politicians:

> Il est regrettable que l'on ne puisse faire une sale blague à Poinca. [Raymond Poincaré, premier ministre], Bartho. [Louis Barthou, ministre de la justice] et autres, des petits supplices chinois ... Exemple: un bain forcé dans la Seine à l'aide d'une crapaudine, ou bien les mettre en plein soleil et leur faire boire de l'eau salée. Comme ce serait bon![68]

The second son, Jean (b.1906), was groomed for a career in the family business. He attended the École Centrale Paris engineering school, from where he would be well placed to assume the technical direction of the firm. The third son, Philippe (b.1913), was pushed by his father towards attending the École des Hautes Etudes Commerciales, which would give him the necessary training to take on the administrative and managerial direction of the company. It appears, in other words, as if Dolto's eldest three brothers had their destinies predetermined by Suzanne and Henry: the first son for the army, acquiring prestige for the family through his officer's stripes and fulfilling the duty of *familles nombreuses* to furnish the nation with soldiers; the second and third

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[64] Suzanne to Françoise 05/08/1925, *LdJ*, 156-7. At the birth of Jacques in 1922 Suzanne – who had been hoping for a daughter to compensate for Jacqueline's death – consoled herself with the thought that 'c'est très utile pour le pays'. Suzanne to Françoise, 23/09/1922, *LdJ*, 128.

[65] On the (French) politics of the Rif War see David H. Slavin, 'The French Left and the Rif War, 1924-25: Racism and the Limits of Internationalism', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 26 (1991), 5-32.

[66] Pierre Marette to Françoise, 31/12/1929, *LdJ*, 228.

[67] Eugen Weber, *Action Française: Royalism and Reaction in Twentieth-Century France* (Stanford, 1962), 193.

[68] Pierre to Françoise, 22/07/1927, *LdJ*, 182.

sons directed towards maintaining the family business. The younger sons André (b.1915) and Jacques (b.1922) were given more freedom to determine their own destiny. André ultimately became a lawyer and manager, while Jacques went into politics, becoming a minister in the Gaullist administration of the 1960s and a member of parliament until the 1980s.

As for their daughters – Françoise wrote the following to her mother in September 1922:

> Je me marierai et je resterai avec toi, je te donnerai beaucoup de petits enfants ... Je choisirai un mari qui veuille avoir beaucoup d'enfants et ne pas s'éloigner de toi. Au contraire, tu te prépares un avenir très agréable ou mieux, le plus familial possible. Maintenant j'ai presque 14 ans. Plus que deux ans d'études et après je resterai avec toi. En somme tu vois, tout est bien.[69]

The central elements of a daughter's education, as far as Suzanne and her peers were concerned, may be summarised as the absolute and proactive maintenance of sexual innocence and purity; learning the rituals underpinning family and social life; including learning to look after babies in preparation for a 'career' in motherhood; a limited amount of academic education, to be swiftly set aside in favour of cultivating extracurricular, decorative talents. In Suzanne's words, 'continue à bien m'aimer, à travailler [aux cours] pour en être vite débarrassée pour moi qui n'aime guère cela et fais des progrès en couture, en tennis, en douceur pour les verreries et pour les nouveaux-nés qui sont fragiles.'[70]

The maintenance of sexual purity was particularly essential. The early twentieth century, even more than the nineteenth, represented the peak of the tendency of aristocratic families to erect a taboo over any and all discussion of sexuality – 'a high point for stories about babies being born under a cabbage-patch leaf or brought by a stork', according to Colin Heywood.[71] Suzanne

[69] Françoise to Suzanne, 26/09/1922, *LdJ*, 130. On the context to this letter, see section on Jacqueline below.
[70] Suzanne to Françoise 27/09/1922, *LdJ*, 132.
[71] Mension-Rigau, *L'Enfance au château,* 251-2; Colin Heywood, *Growing up in France: from the Ancien Régime to the Third Republic* (Cambridge, 2007), 269; Heywood, 'Innocence and

required her daughter to be 'une honnête fille, droite et pure'.[72] She warned Françoise in strong terms against discussing anything connected with sexuality with her male cousin – or indeed anyone else:

> Quand tu seras grande, sur le point de te marier et d'avoir des enfants, j'expliquerai certaines choses que tu n'as aucun besoin de savoir maintenant et que tu ne dois pas chercher à savoir … Ce n'est pas chic, pas propre, et je veux avoir une fille nette, propre, une vraie *jeune fille* qui puisse être fière de son âme bien blanche, et même en être jalouse, c'est-à-dire ne permettre à personne de la salir.[73]

Such insistence tended to alienate girls from their sexuality and transmit a large degree of anxiety regarding it. 'Il fallait que le corps fût en soi un objet dangereux pour que toute allusion, austère ou frivole, à son existence, semblât périlleuse', wrote Beauvoir.[74] Zaza, similarly, 'comprit précocement que Mme Mabille avait haï dès la première nuit et à jamais les étreintes conjugales. Elle étendit à toute la famille de son père la répugnance que celui-ci lui inspirait.'[75]

An important custom for women in maintaining their family's social capital was that of hosting 'jours de réception' – keeping regular 'days' on which one received guests. As a young child, Françoise was initiated into the practice by her maternal grandmother, who gave her grandchildren a practice 'day' each.[76] Since hosting one was essential to upholding aristocratic pretensions – readers of Beauvoir's memoirs will recall her mother's determination to continue hosting in spite of the family's straitened circumstances – there were naturally very many.[77] Dolto recalled that prior to the outbreak of the First World War, 'ma vie était réglée par le fait qu'il y avait des jours ... Si bien que les jours étaient marqués par "C'est le jour de…"'[78] Dolto remembered that for each of

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Experience: Sexuality among Young People in Modern France, c. 1750-1950', *French History*, 21 (2007), 44-64.

[72] Suzanne to Françoise, 20/09/1922, *LdJ*, 125.

[73] Suzanne to Françoise, 19-20/9/1922, *LdJ*, 124-5. Suzanne's emphasis.

[74] Beauvoir, *Jeune Fille rangée*, 115.

[75] Beauvoir, *Jeune Fille rangée*, 153.

[76] *Enfances*, 43.

[77] Beauvoir, *Jeune fille rangée*, 98ff.

[78] *Enfances*, 43.

her mother's 'days', 'il fallait se mettre chic pour quatre ou cinq heures et aller faire la révérence devant chaque dame'.[79]

At times, the burden of such social obligations more or less eliminated free time and private life, which were in any case in short supply. Upper-class women were always busy; laziness and idleness equated to degeneracy. 'La hantise de l'oisiveté apparaît en effet comme une constante dans la vie des petites filles', Grellet and Kruse write.[80] Mension-Rigau's interviewees described their childhoods as hyper-regulated: 'le découpage du temps est l'objet d'une sévère minutie et ne laisse guère de place à l'improvisation'.[81] When Simone de Beauvoir complained that 'sortie de mon lit, il n'y avait pas un coin qui fût mien ... il m'était pénible de ne jamais pouvoir m'isoler', it was only partly a comment on the smallness of her family's new apartment.[82] Her mother never wasted a second, always reading, or knitting, or preparing the next social event. Simone's sister Hélène later commented that 'on ne nous accordait pas le minimum d'une vie personnelle auquel tout être a droit'.[83] All time was to be spent either in society or in structured, useful activity – 'pas de chômage autorisé', as Françoise wrote to a friend.[84] Aged seven, Zaza could iron neatly, play piano and violin, and make cakes; at eleven, she apologised in a letter to her parents for her laziness in staying in bed until 7.45 a.m.[85] Later, she once went so far as to gash her own leg with an axe so as to have a pretext to escape the constant demands of social events and excursions.[86]

The Marettes' regular sojourns at Deauville brought other obligations. As Suzanne made clear in letters to Françoise, the frequent family games of tennis served a serious purpose, not only for improving Françoise's physique ('profite du tennis autant que possible, que je te retrouve mince et souple') but also for the social possibilities:

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[79] *Enfances*, 43.
[80] Grellet and Kruse, *Jeunes Filles exemplaires*, 32-3.
[81] Mension-Rigau, *L'Enfance au château*, 251.
[82] Beauvoir, *Jeune fille rangée*, 129.
[83] Hélène de Beauvoir, *Souvenirs*, ed. Marcelle Routier (Paris, 1987), cited in Grellet and Kruse, *Jeunes Filles exemplaires*, 65.
[84] Agnès Dognin to Françoise, 19/04/1931, quoting a previous letter from Françoise. *LdJ*, 262.
[85] Grellet and Kruse, *Jeunes Filles exemplaires*, 33, citing Zaza's correspondence.
[86] Beauvoir, *Jeune Fille rangée*, 330.

> Je serais contente que tu arrives à bien jouer ... Jean voudrait bien jouer avec toi, et plus tard, ce serait bon et agréable pour vous deux de faire des parties mixtes ... Cela fait des réunions toutes différentes pour les jeunes gens, et bien plus familiales ... En cela, tu peux m'aider ... Tu serais bien contente plus tard si Jean épousait une jeune fille gentille qui serait presque de ton âge … et qui serait une amie pour toi.[87]

Throughout the 1920s, Françoise's letters from Deauville detail her progress both in tennis and in losing (or failing to lose) weight; both were clearly important elements in readying her for future marriage, and thus important subjects of family discussion. Given the restrictions on mixing with the opposite sex, tennis represented a rare 'approved' opportunity for meetings, albeit codified and controlled. Grellet and Kruse write that tennis had become, in this period, a 'sport d'agrément comme un savoir-vivre ou un langage que l'on pratique dans la bonne société'.[88] It was playing tennis in Morocco in 1929 that Françoise's brother Pierre met his future fiancée (the colonel's daughter), which can only have underlined its importance to Françoise. Zaza, too, excelled at tennis, and wrote similar letters to her parents charting her progress; Mme Lacoin likewise saw it as a source of potential suitors, but could not tolerate Zaza playing 'avec des jeunes gens de la Sorbonne dont elle ne [connaît] même pas les familles'.[89]

Dolto, Beauvoir and Zaza thus had in common their attempts to navigate the almost impossibly codified, confusing social world of *haut bourgeois* childhood. Furthermore, they also resembled one another in each experiencing an event that effectively brought their childhood to a premature end, eventually prompting them to question and challenge that world to a greater extent than most of their contemporaries. For Beauvoir, this was her family's move to a smaller, cheaper apartment; for Zaza, an enforced breakup with her teenage boyfriend André.

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[87] Suzanne to Françoise 15/09/1922 and 19/09/1922, *LdJ*, 121-3.
[88] Grellet and Kruse, *Jeunes Filles exemplaires*, 122.
[89] Letter from Zaza to Simone de Beauvoir, 1928, cited in Grellet and Kruse, *Jeunes Filles exemplaires*, 123.

For Françoise, this event was the death from cancer in September 1920 of her eighteen-year-old sister Jacqueline, and the effect that this had on her mother Suzanne. It was not just the fact of the death itself, but what Jacqueline represented. Tall, blonde, sociable, and with 'aucun goût pour les études', Jacqueline 'aimait rire, danser, se parer [et] avait beaucoup de succès masculins' – her parents had already received several marriage proposals.[90] She was, in short, both very different to the short, stocky, studious Françoise, and exactly the kind of daughter Suzanne wanted. In the aftermath of her death, Françoise felt under enormous pressure to somehow compensate for the loss and live up to the model of the ideal daughter. This context lies behind Françoise's letter to Suzanne quoted above, written around the second anniversary of Jacqueline's death, and thus at a time when Françoise was particularly anxious to reassure and comfort her.

Jacqueline's death threw Suzanne into a violent depression, whose effects were felt by the whole family. She reproached Françoise, who had been taking her first communion at the time, for failing to save her sister – 'tu vois, tu n'as pas su prier'.[91] On the advice of a doctor, Henry and Suzanne decided to have another child to replace Jacqueline – but this 'failed' in that it resulted in the birth of a boy, Jacques – in September 1922. The extent of Suzanne's grief may be judged by the reactions of Françoise's brothers. 'Je t'assure que je serai pour toi la même chose qu'une fille. J'essayerai de te remplacer autant que je le pourrai Jacqueline', wrote the sixteen-year-old Jean to his mother after the birth of Jacques.[92] Some years later, Jean would marry a woman named Jacqueline.[93] When Pierre married in 1929, he told Françoise that 'mon désir le plus cher est que [ma fiancée] remplace autant que possible à la maison notre pauvre Jacq.'[94] If the brothers felt the effects of Suzanne's grief strongly, the impact on Françoise, as the sole surviving daughter, was much more powerful. As her adolescence progressed, Françoise felt an increasing sense of dislocation, if one she could not yet articulate, between her own wishes and

[90] *Enfances*, 106.
[91] *Enfances*, 52.
[92] Jean Marette to Suzanne, 26/09/1922, *LdJ*, 131.
[93] Grellet and Kruse, *Jeunes Filles exemplaires*, 92.
[94] Pierre to Françoise, 31/12/29, *LdJ*, 228.

aptitudes, and her mother's demands. An awareness of her inability to live up to the ideal held out for her, combined with a lingering feeling of responsibility for not preventing Jacqueline's death, gave rise to a strong sense of guilt that she would not be able to address until her psychoanalysis.

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A crucial difference between Dolto and Beauvoir in their teenage years was that the Beauvoirs, not having the financial means to assure dowries for their daughters, decided that they should continue with their studies. Simone could thus take the *baccalauréat* and progress onto a degree programme at the Sorbonne. The superior wealth of the Marettes meant that Françoise was not accorded the same opportunity. For her, obtaining the right to take the final part of the *baccalauréat*, in 1925, was a hard-won concession. It was only possible in the first place because of a 1924 decree allowing girls to sit for the *baccalauréat* and *agrégation* on more or less equal terms with boys.[95] For Françoise to sit for the 'bac' required her to leave the Cours Sainte Clothilde, which did not teach the second half of the *baccalauréat*, necessary for university entry. She enrolled instead at the state-run Lycée Molière. This was still within walking distance of the family apartment, and Françoise attended a girls-only 'classe de philosophie', but for someone as previously closeted as Françoise, it was still a significant departure. The lycée, with its vastly different routines and methods from those she was used to, was a shock, with lasting effects on Dolto's views on education, as discussed in chapter 6.[96] It represented Françoise's first step beyond the limits set down for a young woman of her class.

Suzanne, with the ghost of Jacqueline in the background, worried that 'une fille qui a son bac n'est plus mariable', and one of the brothers declared that 'je n'épouserai jamais une fille qui a son bac'.[97] It was only possible for Françoise to complete it because Henry supported his daughter's wish to do so over these objections. Dolto claimed that her mother tried at the last minute to collude

[95] See Reynolds, *France Between the Wars*, 48-9.
[96] See Dolto, *Cause des enfants*, 399-400.
[97] *Autoportrait*, 124-5.

with the lycée management to prevent Françoise's *baccalauréat* dossier being correctly submitted, only to be thwarted by Henry.[98] However, following this experience, Henry would not push his support for his daughter's studies any further. Dolto suggests that from his perspective, it was a good idea for Françoise to take the 'bac' as an insurance policy, in case of hard times in later life – 'on ne sait jamais' – but this did not apply to higher education.[99] When Françoise expressed a desire to train as a doctor, Henry's response was: 'plus tard, plus tard, n'en parle pas, tu sens bien que ça met ta mère en colère'.[100] Medicine was undesirable for various reasons. It was still a 'male' career – the most famous female French doctor to that point was Madeleine Pelletier, a cross-dressing feminist and hardly an acceptable role model for the Marettes.[101] As seen in chapter 1, medicine in the interwar period retained some historical Republican connotations. Action Française promoted homeopathy, and the Marette family doctor was a homeopath.[102]

A compromise was agreed. Françoise would be allowed to commence medical studies at age twenty-five if she still wished to do so; her parents almost certainly supposed she would marry in the meantime. Françoise was thus obliged, from age seventeen, to spend a number of somewhat aimless years stuck within the world of the family, denied a purposeful outlet for her academic ability. She occupied her time in various 'approved' ways: doing housework, looking after her young brother Jacques, learning 'decorative' skills in art, crafts, ceramics and music – and reading. In the summers she played tennis in Deauville and took trips with her grandmother – to Lourdes, the Western Front battlefields, and the recovered province of Alsace ('A Colmar je me suis déplu: ce n'est guère français').[103]

[98] *Autoportrait*, 124-5 and 'Traversée du siècle' in Potin (ed.), *Archives de l'intime*, 118. The Lycée's collusion may be explained by their desire to retain their pupil, and especially the associated fees, for another year.
[99] *Enfances*, 78.
[100] Dolto, 'Traversée du siècle' in Potin (ed.), *Archives de l'intime*, 118.
[101] On Pelletier see Joan Wallach Scott, *Only Paradoxes to Offer: French Feminists and the Rights of Man* (Cambridge, MA, 1996), ch. 5.
[102] *Autoportrait*, 114.
[103] Françoise to her parents, 06/08/1928. *LdJ*, 201.

Françoise also appears to have become more passionately religious during these years. She read books on the saints and maintained a lengthy correspondence discussing religious experience with a childhood friend, Agnès Dognin, who was in the process of becoming a nun.[104] Aged twenty, she wrote to her former governess that 'mon coeur est tellement rempli de Dieu que je ne sais vraiment pas si jamais un homme, ne fût-ce qu'un instant, arrivera à prendre la première place'.[105] In one sense, Françoise's religiosity was conventional, accepted, approved – notably by her maternal grandmother. But it was also part of her standoff with her parents over her future. Françoise was determined to keep open the possibility of an independent career; marriage was the most likely means by which this would be prevented; hence, making God the centre of her emotional life, to the exclusion of men, was a form of defence. This seems also to have been part of her friend Agnès's calculations. Initially sent to the convent by her parents to gain experience, in preparation for life as a devoted housewife, Agnès subsequently returned there for good, against her parents' will. She wrote to Françoise of finding in the convent 'une solitude précieuse … nous ne voyons *personne*', a statement which should be placed in the context of the extreme lack of privacy accorded to women of her class.[106]

Despite the pressure placed on her, Françoise did not waver in her pursuit of a career. She did not only consider medicine; she also explored potential practical applications of her artistic abilities, learning how to design advertising posters, and attempting to take a Certificat d'Aptitude Professionnelle in sewing – only to be rebuffed by Suzanne, who conceived very differently of the value of this skill.[107] Françoise later attributed her persistence in seeking professional skills to her observation of widowed women during and after the First World War. She drew the lesson that in spite of appearances, married bourgeois women were only ever one step away from ruin:

[104] Agnès Dognin to Françoise, e.g. 14/09/1929, *LdJ*, 224-6. Dolto's side of the correspondence is lost.
[105] Françoise to 'Mademoiselle', 11/11/1928, *LdJ*, 205-6.
[106] Agnès to Françoise, 30/08/1928, *LdJ*, 203. See Grellet and Kruse, *Jeunes Filles exemplaires*, 148-52.
[107] *Enfances*, 77-9; 'Traversée du siècle' in Potin (ed.) *Archives de l'intime*, 120-1.

> J'avais vu les décrépitudes des veuves bourgeoises qui n'avaient pas de métier, à la différence des travailleurs manuels ou des commerçants qui n'étaient pas dans l'obligation de changer le[ur] mode de vie ... c'était affreux de voir, dans ces beaux quartiers, des femmes habillées comme l'était ma mère, qui mendiaient ... Ça m'avait beaucoup frappée et je m'étais dit: 'Il me faut un métier'.[108]

The war taught Françoise that a woman should not have absolute confidence in the structures of patriarchal bourgeois society to provide material security, a lesson presumably reinforced by the episode of the divorced woman cited above. But perhaps her resolution can also be partly attributed to a sense that social attitudes were starting to change. Despite all the obstacles in their path, Dolto and Beauvoir were growing up at a time when it was beginning to be possible, though still very difficult, for women to enter the liberal professions – certainly easier than for the true pioneers of earlier decades such as Madeleine Brès, who in 1875 became the first French woman to obtain a medical degree.[109] Numbers of women in higher education were increasing, though this was still hardly well-trodden terrain: Beauvoir was only the ninth woman to receive a degree from the Sorbonne, while Dolto, despite the family-imposed delay, was probably among the first thousand French women doctors.[110] All the same, chinks of light were appearing.

The First World War also provided the young Françoise with a model of women taking on important, albeit gendered, medical roles. Suzanne played a significant part in the voluntary effort to care for the casualties sent for treatment in Deauville from August 1914 onwards. Assisted by the family *institutrice*, she took charge of a forty-bed ward in the Hôtel Royal, where, as Dolto later wrote, 'beaucoup de dames s'étaient offertes pour être infirmières

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[108] *Autoportrait*, 54-5.
[109] See Valérie Bochenek and Jean Louis Debré, *Ces femmes qui ont réveillé la France* (Paris, 2012), 139-43.
[110] Based on figures cited in Antoine Prost, *Histoire de l'enseignement en France, 1800-1967* (Paris, 1968), 243, and Juliette Rennes, 'The French Republic and Women's Access to Professional Work: Issues and Controversies in France from the 1870s to the 1930s', *Gender & History*, 23 (2011), 341-66. See also Julie Fette, *Exclusions: Practicing Prejudice in French Law and Medicine, 1920–1945* (Ithaca, 2012).

bénévoles. C'était très bien, toutes ces dames déguisées en infirmières.'[111] Nursing had long been associated with religious organisations, but this was changing following the anti-clerical legislation of 1902, which implied the exclusion of religious orders from nursing.[112] The idea of granting it professional status was successfully resisted, until 1922, by male doctors not keen being rivalled and questioned by scientifically knowledgeable and well-trained women. The resulting gap was filled by upper-class charity and voluntarism via the Red Cross and similar organisations. In the run up to the First World War, volunteering as a nurse became a way for bourgeois women to demonstrate commitment to the national cause, an answer to the question of how they should contribute to national defence; by 1912-13, the Red Cross was 'all the rage' in women's Catholic Social Action groups.[113] As Margaret Darrow has argued, nursing offered an alternative mission to women dissatisfied with the idea of patriotic motherhood as a wartime ideal.[114] Like charity work, it performed a dual social and ideological role, 'a dynamic field of social networking [which] helped to entrench class and gender distinctions'.[115] There was a wave of volunteering for the Red Cross in the first days of the war, when 'the memoirs and journals of well-to-do women and girls express[ed] an almost universal desire to found hospitals or to nurse war wounded'.[116]

Given this context, Suzanne's participation in the voluntary nursing efforts of the aristocratic women at Deauville is not surprising: just one more performative enactment of social status. However, most Deauville volunteers had returned to Paris by the end of the summer; like the poet and journalist Lucie Delarue-Mardrus, they found that after the initial excitement waned they lacked the serious commitment and staying power required.[117] By contrast,

[111] *Enfances*, 29. On Deauville in the First World War see Yves Aublet, *Dans la tourmente de la Grande guerre: 1914-1918: Deauville, Trouville et le canto*n (Cabourg, 2001).
[112] On nursing after 1900 see Margaret Darrow, *French Women and the First World War: War Stories of the Home Front* (Oxford, 2000); Katrin Schultheiss, *Bodies and Souls: Politics and the Professionalization of Nursing in France, 1880-1922* (Cambridge, MA, 2001).
[113] Darrow, *French Women*, 40.
[114] Darrow, *French Women*, 39.
[115] Macknight, 'Faiths, Fortunes and Feminine Duty', 489.
[116] Darrow, *French Women*, 71-2.
[117] Darrow, *French Women*, 72.

Suzanne stayed on for the best part of a year, well beyond the minimum required by societal opinion, stopping only when she became pregnant in 1915. This suggests that the work gave Suzanne a sense of professional fulfilment. Dolto comments that 'elle aurait sûrement voulu faire médecine dans sa jeunesse'.[118] Françoise's later ambition to pursue a medical career thus did not come from nowhere; her mother had, in fact, legitimised it as an ambition. During her psychoanalysis, Françoise considered abandoning her medical degree on the grounds that 'ce goût m'était venu de maman … Quand elle était jeune fille cela ne semblait pas admissible encore et que c'était son grand regret.'[119]

In the 1920s, professionalisation notwithstanding, nursing remained an acceptable occupation for an unmarried upper-class woman, seen as a good preparation for marriage, and with ongoing associations with charity and religious devotion. The *infirmière* was portrayed much more positively in press and popular imagery than the schoolteacher, who was seen as likely to end up sad and celibate.[120] With its irregular hours, nursing was difficult to combine with married life, nor was it seen as a subversive appropriation of a male career – 'un métier de femme, sans danger: on ne faisait pas le trottoir et on gagnait bien sa vie en étant infirmière!' was Suzanne's view, as later summarised by Françoise.[121] Thus, while still discouraging her from training as a doctor, Suzanne was happy for Françoise to take a nursing qualification under the auspices of the Red Cross, in 1929-30. Françoise enjoyed the course and took pride in her ability to make a strong bandage – a skill which, in a time before statutory sick leave, could enable a worker to remain working rather than lose a day's pay by staying home.[122] After the course she continued to administer bandages on a voluntary basis in the evenings.

In November 1931, Françoise won her waiting game. Her parents now allowed her, earlier than agreed, to begin studying for a medical degree, starting with a

[118] *Autoportrait*, 127.
[119] Françoise to Henry 15/06/1938, *LdJ*, 535.
[120] Grellet and Kruse, *Jeunes Filles exemplaires*, 184.
[121] *Autoportrait*, 115.
[122] *Autoportrait*, 115-8.

foundation year. This was because her brother Philippe, having shown little aptitude or interest in business administration, had won permission to switch to medicine. He could thus, in Suzanne's eyes, act as Françoise's chaperone, despite being five years younger.[123] The fact that Philippe – once he had managed to admit his feelings to Henry, who intimidated him – was able to switch immediately, whereas Françoise had had to wait several years, further highlights the gendered nature of the barriers she faced. Philippe, however, remained unhappy. Plagued by acne, his confidence suffered from his evident academic inferiority to his sister – scarcely surprising in view of her extra years of reading and nursing experience, but not commensurate with notions of inherent male superiority.[124] He entered psychotherapy with René Laforgue in November 1932, a choice with significant consequences for Françoise.

In summer 1931, Françoise had spent two weeks at the Provençal residence of the Marettes' family friends, the Delebecques. They had connections at the highest levels of Action Française – during Française's sojourn, Léon Daudet came to lunch and Charles Maurras sent flowers.[125] They had two daughters close in age to Françoise, and a son, Édouard, two years her junior. The children shared interests in music, literature and art – one daughter, Christiane, was about to begin a *licence* in Italian at the Sorbonne. Édouard was taking the *agrégation* in classics.

Françoise, given her social isolation, was delighted to have made such friends, and was keen to continue the friendship. She enrolled, briefly, with Christiane in Italian at the Sorbonne (dropping out when the unexpected opportunity to begin medicine arose in November) and attended museums and concerts with the Delebecques on Sundays. She became particularly close to Édouard, with whom she developed what she later described as a close but platonic relationship: 'une amitié amoureuse … affectueux comme des camarades, ou un frère et une soeur'.[126] According to Dolto's memoirs – there is nothing

[123] Dolto, 'Traversée du siècle' in Potin (ed.), *Archives de l'intime*, 122; *Enfances*, 92.
[124] *Autoportrait*, 114. The family doctor attributed Philippe's acne to his unhappiness at his career direction.
[125] Françoise to Suzanne, 22/09/1931. *LdJ*, 279-80.
[126] *Enfances*, 89.

relevant in the correspondence – what happened next was that 'les mères avaient parlé entre elles. Ce qui fait qu'un jour, ma mère me dit: "En tout cas, je ne te permettrai de retourner chez les D. que si c'est clair entre vous." Je dis: "Clair, quoi? – Que vous êtes fiancés"'.[127]

Dolto, claims, in effect, to have agreed to this without taking it entirely seriously – 'pourvu qu'on puisse se voir, on peut bien s'appeler fiancés!'[128] She quickly disabused Édouard of any misconceptions of what this implied: 'On est fiancés, on a le temps. Moi, je veux d'abord faire médecine, on se mariera après. Donc, il n'y a pas de raison de s'embrasser.'[129] They made an arrangement in which marriage became a decidedly distant prospect, to take place only after Françoise's medical degree and Édouard's *agrégation* and military service. This was not what the two families had in mind – nor, ultimately, Édouard, who asked her to abandon medicine for him. She refused. The uneasy arrangement persisted for two years, coming to a crisis only in February 1934 when relations were decisively, acrimoniously broken off. There were major family arguments; Dolto says she was accused both by Suzanne and Édouard's sisters of being a 'salope' and 'inhumaine'.[130] Not fully understanding what she had done wrong, Françoise fell into a deep depression. Within a week, she had her first session with Laforgue.

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In her memoirs, Dolto does not explain the choice of Laforgue other than to say that he had already treated her brother Philippe, on the recommendation of their mutual acquaintance Marc Schlumberger. It is worth, however, pausing on who chose Laforgue as Dolto's analyst, and what they were hoping to achieve by doing so.

A July 1934 letter from Françoise to Henry clearly suggests that the initiative was her father's: 'si je ne t'avais pas eu pour m'obliger à me faire soigner ... je

[127] *Autoportrait*, 111.
[128] *Autoportrait*, 111.
[129] *Autoportrait*, 111.
[130] *Enfances*, 89-90.

n'aurais jamais eu de moi-même le courage d'entreprendre la moindre chose (encore moins la Psychanalyse) pour sortir de ma détresse', she wrote.[131] It was also Henry who was paying. Laforgue, as the head of the SPP and the best-known psychoanalyst in France, charged the highest fees of any analyst in Paris – the equivalent of 232 Euros per session at 2016 prices – though he did offer a fifty per cent discount to medical students, presumably out of a desire to see psychoanalysis spread through the medical profession.[132]

What was Henry paying for exactly? Laforgue, as shown in chapter 1, specialised in 'névroses familiales', which in practice often meant assigning responsibility for 'family complexes' to women and especially to 'mères déséquilibrées'. If Henry knew this, then perhaps he suspected that Françoise's difficulties had a lot to do with her relationship to Suzanne, and the latter's depression and grief at the death of Jacqueline. But Laforgue also subscribed to the idea, derived from Freud and Karl Abraham, that women who attempted to succeed professionally were doing so because they were insufficiently reconciled to the natural inferiority of their sex, and seeking compensation in 'masculine' activity. If Henry knew *this*, then perhaps he hoped that Laforgue would be able to cure Françoise of her unnatural desires and bring her back to a 'healthy' conception of femininity.

The evidence of the correspondence supports the second explanation. In July 1934, Françoise made explicit the connection of her treatment to making her more 'feminine': 'Mon plus grand désir maintenant c'est de conduire jusqu'au bout ce très pénible traitement parce que je sais que ce sera la meilleure façon de te remercier en devenant une femme – au sens plein du mot – dont tu pourras être fier.'[133] Her father replied that 'je compte avec toi que ce traitement ... t'aidera à transformer ta nature et que tu seras comme tu le dis une vraie femme'.[134] A few days later, a letter from her mother added that she too hoped that the treatment would bring 'l'amélioration souhaitée', which can

[131] Françoise to Henry 22/07/1934, *LdJ*, 382.
[132] *Autoportrait*, 312-3, n. 54. According to Philippe Marette, Laforgue charged 300 francs per hour in the 1930s. Adjusted for inflation, this is equivalent to the notoriously high prices – 500-600 francs per session – charged by Jacques Lacan in 1980.
[133] Françoise to Henry, 22/07/1934. *LdJ*, 382.
[134] Henry to Françoise, 24/07/1934, *LdJ*, 384.

again be taken as a reference to femininity.[135] Clearly, Henry and Suzanne did not initially see Laforgue as someone who might put dangerous ideas into their daughter's head, but as someone who could reconcile her to her 'true' femininity. Suzanne hoped that the treatment would lead to a reconciliation with Édouard Delebecque.[136]

In the event, the analysis transformed Françoise in ways that her parents did not foresee. Laforgue, I suggest, had essentially two narratives to offer Françoise to explain her distress: a 'névrose familiale' narrative that would place her problems in the context of family history and above all her mother's psychology; and a theory of 'unresolved penis envy' which would explain Françoise's continued desire for a professional career in terms of her inability to accept her feminine condition. The first narrative implied detaching her from her family's interpretation of her problem; the second implied reinforcing it.

Laforgue most probably made interpretations along both lines, but the 'névrose familiale' explanation clearly held the most transformative potential. Françoise in 1934 was wracked with guilt about the breakdown of her engagement and her broader failure to be the model daughter her mother wanted, the model incarnated in Jacqueline, whose death Françoise's prayers had failed to prevent. Laforgue was able, as Dolto later wrote, to 'me dégager de ma culpabilité, au moins assez pour que je sorte du trouble dépressif visible'.[137] She spent early sessions 'en pleurant toutes les larmes de mon corps de la culpabilité que j'éprouvais'.[138] Her analysis ultimately helped her come to the understanding that it was her mother who was the real neurotic and that 'ma propre névrose [était] entièrement calquée sur celle de maman', as she wrote to her father in 1938.[139] She quickly realised that 'il fallait d'abord me libérer de ma mère'.[140]

[135] Françoise to Suzanne, 26/07/1934. *LdJ*, 384-6.
[136] *Enfances*, 95.
[137] *Enfances*, 95.
[138] *Enfances*, 94.
[139] Françoise to Henry 15/06/1938, *LdJ*, 534.
[140] *Enfances*, 95.

Françoise might have left analysis after a year, her depression and lassitude having lifted. Instead, she decided to continue, 'parce que ça m'intéressait' and with a view to becoming an analyst herself.[141] Psychoanalysis provided her with a toolkit for thinking beyond concepts such as 'duty'; a different way of looking at the world and social relationships. Once this became clear to Henry and Suzanne in 1936 they stopped paying (at least directly), and Françoise accordingly cut her sessions from three to one per week.[142] She moved out of the family home in November 1936, to an apartment in rue Dupuytren in the Latin Quarter, but in 1937 moved back to Passy, renting an apartment neighbouring Laforgue's in Square Henry-Paté. No less valuably, Laforgue provided Françoise with a new social circle. He brought his analysands together in a 'club des piqués', inviting them to his residence at La Roquebrussanne in Provence. Françoise travelled there in September 1935 on her first truly independent trip. Among those she met were Alain Cuny, later a well-known actor, who became a lifelong friend. Laforgue also introduced her to his training analysands such as André Berge and Georges Mauco, with whom Dolto would work closely in the future.

Françoise thus acquired new conceptual tools, but also some of Laforgue's assumptions that accompanied them. As shown in chapter 1, the idea of the 'névrose familiale' came with the suggestion of a toxic or pathogenic mother. Extrapolating from this and doubtless from her own experience, Dolto came to assume a pathogenic mother as a common cause of children's psychological distress, requiring the intervention of strong-willed fathers to prevent neuroses from developing. This was an idea, as chapter 5 will argue, that she would later over-apply with regard to autism.

By the time she wrote her thesis in 1938-39, Dolto also subscribed to the theory of penis envy. Discovering her lack of a penis, Dolto wrote, the girl 'se sent défavorisée et … impute le fait de sa mutilation sexuelle à la mère'.[143] To

[141] *Enfances*, 96. In *Autoportrait*, 138, Dolto states that she did not consider herself fully analysed until she could sit through hours of consultations with patients without once thinking of herself.
[142] *Autoportrait*, 312 n. 54.
[143] Dolto, *Psychanalyse et pédiatrie*, 102.

begin with, 'elle commence par essayer de nier l'infériorité en valorisant "le bouton"' – but is continually reminded of the fact of her 'castration phallique'. In 'normal' development, this occurrence is helpful as it gives the girl a feeling of security and enables the transfer of libido towards the vagina, whereas the boy continues to fear future castration. The girl can now abandon clitoral masturbation; however, 'le désinvestissement de la zone érogène phallique ne peut se faire sans compensation'.[144] The young girl therefore takes an interest in hairstyles, clothes, ribbons, jewellery – 'dont on se pare pour compenser inconsciemment le phallus abandonné'. She begins to find herself beautiful, and regains self-confidence. Thus the resolution of penis envy allows the girl to orient herself towards the opposite sex – 'c'est par envie du pénis que la fille va vers les hommes'.[145] In normal development, the girl now manages to 'invest' the vagina with libido (replacing the clitoris as the site of this investment). In this case, all is well: 'on assiste à un développement affectif et culturel épanoui'.[146] The only potential pitfall is if the mother is neurotic, which may lead to a 'complexe de castration vaginale pathologique' as in the epigrammatic quote to this chapter.

If, however, the vaginal zone never becomes invested with libido, serious problems arise. Women who fail to invest the vagina manifest vaginal frigidity and a 'complexe de virilité' as outlined by Freud: a 'névrose de caractère' featuring 'une envie agressive pour ceux qui "ont plus" qu'elles' – i.e. men.[147] If the clitoris has remained invested, the girl reacts with a 'fuite en avant dans une lutte ambitieuse, rivalise avec les garçons dans les mêmes sports, les mêmes activités, les mêmes études qu'eux'.[148] A 'régression libidinale' draws her towards 'masculine' careers and/or lesbianism. If such girls go on to marry, they will become 'des femmes frigides victimes revendicatrices [et] des mères castratrices, engendreuses de névroses familiales'.[149] If the girl, instead of reorienting towards the mother, remains emotionally fixated onto the father, she cannot resist phallic castration anxiety: 'le complexe de virilité est alors

[144] *Psychanalyse et pédiatrie*, 104.
[145] *Psychanalyse et pédiatrie*, 105
[146] *Psychanalyse et pédiatrie*, 106.
[147] *Psychanalyse et pédiatrie*, 113.
[148] *Psychanalyse et pédiatrie*, 114.
[149] *Psychanalyse et pédiatrie*, 114, n. 1.

extrêmement fort'. Her 'sentiments d'infériorité [et] culpabilité inconsciente vis-à-vis des hommes, qui résulte de son envie à jamais insatisfaite de les égaler réellement sur tous les plans', will be a constant cause of anxiety and jealousy.[150] Such women often end up in analysis but make bad analysands, since they continue to blame their problems on men and view their treatment as 'un nouveau moyen de puissance phallique.'[151]

These passages illustrate the paradox of Dolto's liberation in these years. She had successfully 'rivalisé avec les garçons' and pursued a 'masculine' career, and one way in which she had done this was by adopting a discourse which argued that these things were undesirable and markers of psychological ill-health. She accepted the disproportionately 'female' specialism of paediatrics and did not enter the *concours* for more prestigious medical positions 'parce que je ne voulais pas prendre la place de quelqu'un'.[152] She now accepted, in other words, that it would be unfeminine and a manifestation of neurosis to seek to rival men for the highest roles. It appears as if the form of psychoanalysis she encountered offered her a compromise: it would help her to overcome her family's resistance to her having any kind of independent career, at the price of guiding that career down more acceptably 'feminine' paths. Dolto never took the additional step, taken by Beauvoir in *Le Deuxième Sexe*, of also questioning the gendered assumptions built into Freudian theory, of asking whether the psychoanalytic concept of 'normal' sexual development might not represent 'un ersatz de la morale', as Beauvoir wrote.[153]

These sections of *Psychanalyse et pédiatrie* can be read alongside a lengthy letter Françoise wrote to her father in 1938, asserting her independence in the aftermath of another family argument. By summer 1938, Françoise's psychoanalysis was over. Having respected Laforgue's injunction not to commence an intimate romantic or sexual relationship during her analysis – though she became close to Charles Odier, a founder of the SPP, in 1936 – she began to experiment in that direction. Having not yet qualified as a doctor or

[150] *Psychanalyse et pédiatrie*, 117.
[151] *Psychanalyse et pédiatrie*, 118.
[152] *Autoportrait*, 153.
[153] Simone de Beauvoir, *Le Deuxième Sexe I: Les faits et les mythes* (Paris, 1949), 93.

psychoanalyst, she remained financially dependent on Henry, who continued to support her, and sought to mediate in the ongoing tension between his wife and daughter. In June, he wrote Françoise a letter reproaching her for having slammed a door on Suzanne, so as to exclude her from a conversation about money. He told Françoise her attitude was 'insolite' and 'profondément cruel'.[154]

Françoise's reply showed her definitive psychological separation from the ideological environment of her upbringing, and her new understanding of her childhood years. Aged thirty, she now wanted her father to recognise her as a worthy adult: 'si je suis "ton" enfant, je ne suis plus "une" enfant … je suis une femme qui te fait honneur'.[155] Contrary to her mother's insinuations, 'Il n'y a rien dans ma vie qui ne puisse honorer mes parents, mes amis, mon milieu et il n'y a jamais rien eu'. She had persisted with medicine because 'il fallait continuer mes études afin de sortir de cette atmosphère lourde, où chaque mot dit était interprété et chaque geste'. Following her *baccalauréat*, 'j'ai perdu 10 ans de ma vie et sans avoir eu de vraie jeunesse'.

The thirty-year-old Françoise also reflected on her status as a woman, and specifically, an unmarried, professionally-qualified one:

> il n'y a rien que les gens aiment moins que de ne pas savoir classer quelqu'un dans une catégorie. Femme célibataire? alors femme facile qui couche avec qui bon lui semble. Jeune fille? alors sans expérience, ni maturité d'esprit et encore moins de responsabilité. Je ne suis ni l'une ni l'autre … en vivant seule sans être sauvage … médecin sans être ni féministe, ni apôtre, ni affranchie, ni intellectuelle, ni révoltée, mais simplement femme et qui plus est – ne reniant pas même mon milieu, la bourgeoisie, auquel je me sens liée tout naturellement.

In this passage, Françoise attributed her difficulties in carving out a suitable social niche for herself to external *idées reçues*. She can thus be seen, in the late 1930s, as attempting to work out how to be the kind of woman she wanted to be – professional, independent, bourgeois – without thereby allowing herself

[154] Henry to Françoise, 03/06/1938. *LdJ*, 526.
[155] This and subsequent quotes from Françoise to Henry, 15/06/1938. *LdJ*, 528-39.

to be placed in one of the categories – 'femme facile', 'jeune fille', 'féministe' – that a patriarchal society had constructed to entrap 'deviant' women within its circular logic. Elsewhere in the letter, she applied penis envy theory to herself. In asserting her right to study medicine, 'le but essentiel que je visais inconsciemment était d'égaler les garçons en prenant un métier d'homme ... En découvrant la femme en moi, et en abdiquant ces revendications masculines intérieures, l'intérêt pour les diplômes et les triomphes d'examens disparaît.' This did not mean that she was about to renounce her career ambitions or refrain from completing her degree. She would only marry a man who respected her independent professional vocation. She had, however, consented to 'feminise' her career and not push for the highest levels of professional recognition.

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Young women like Dolto, Beauvoir and Zaza were part of a transitional generation – 'née trop tôt dans un monde trop vieux', as Dolto put it.[156] They were growing up just as the Republican education system was being more fully opened up to girls, part of the first cohorts of young women to have a realistic chance of obtaining the *baccalauréat* and *agrégation* and becoming what Juliette Rennes terms 'agents and protagonists' of French public institutions.[157] But these new openings were not easily pursued. There was still a conflict, in public policy and popular discourse, between the universalism informing the opening up of education to girls, and the idea of fundamental gender difference which saw young women in education as 'les vierges, futures mères des hommes', as the teacher training motto of the École normale supérieure de Sèvres put it in the 1920s.[158] Dolto, Beauvoir and their contemporaries grew up in a polity that was starting to offer new opportunities to them, while simultaneously embedding them in a discourse that asserted with conviction that such opportunities must not be exploited, or at least only under very limited conditions.

[156] *Autoportrai*t, 54.
[157] Rennes, 'The French Republic and Women's Access to Professional Work', 344-6.
[158] Grellet and Kruse, *Jeunes filles exemplaires*, 68.

For those like Dolto whose families espoused an aristocratic, anti-Republican, anti-universalist value system that assigned women full-time 'decorative' and social roles as well as maternal and householding duties, pursuing professional qualifications implied the refusal of an entire way of life. As Grellet and Kruse put it, 'si elles ne remplissent plus leur rôle, tout un art de vivre est remis en question'.[159] The visceral determination of Suzanne Marette and Mme Lacoin to retain their daughters within a constrained social world, appears connected to an awareness of themselves as guardians of a society in danger of slipping away. Dolto and Zaza were unusual for young women of their class and time in their resistance to such pressure, in their desire to push at the boundaries of what they could achieve, in sensing that the world beyond the family enclosure was beginning to change. They did so despite a lack of models to follow or clarity as to the kinds of life they might build, and despite dire warnings about losing their social status and reputation. They went through periods of lassitude and uncertainty, where neither following the family-approved model, nor pursuing an ill-defined alternative, seemed possible.

Young women who succeeded during this period of transition were exceptional by definition, and aware of themselves as such. As Siân Reynolds notes, such women – and Dolto would be a prime example – tended to put their success down to 'their own perseverance and merit, rather than change in public perception of the need for more gender balance, let alone feminism'.[160] In Dolto's case, the psychoanalytic ideas that she used to break away from her parents' conceptual universe were themselves imbued with anti-feminist assumptions. Dolto saw herself as an exception to these – or rather, she thought that undergoing psychoanalysis had enabled her to escape the destiny that they otherwise implied. She did not see her own example as evidence against the validity of anti-feminist concepts, which indeed she went on to reproduce in subsequent decades, as later chapters will make clear.

Psychoanalysis, especially in the form presented to her by Laforgue and Pichon, offered Françoise a way out of the closeted world constructed by her

[159] Grellet and Kruse, *Jeunes filles exemplaires*, 15-6.
[160] Reynolds, *France between the Wars*, 98.

family. Her therapy and her reading of psychoanalytic theory helped her to take a critical distance from her upbringing, to place diagnostic labels on patterns of thought that she could now identify with psychological suffering. It helped to crystallise her rupture with the restricted vision of her family and milieu with regard to women's lives; she felt a corresponding sense of liberation and believed that the ideas she now adopted were, by comparison, radical. Furthermore, psychoanalysis provided a new social circle and allowed her to access a career without obliging her to question other elements of her youthful identity, such as nationalism, anti-Republicanism, or Catholicism. But the other side of the bargain was that she bought into an anti-feminist understanding of the concept of penis envy, and shaped her career accordingly. Had her analyst been Karen Horney, rather than René Laforgue, the outcome might have been very different. But penis envy went largely unchallenged in 1930s France.

Françoise thus won her battle with her parents, in that she obtained the professional career and financial independence that she had long desired. But the price she paid was acceptance of anti-feminist and sometimes outright misogynist positions that became a built-in component of the advice and the theories that she would offer to the French public in future decades. Before this aspect of her career could begin, however, the Second World War intervened. How Dolto navigated the years of occupation and liberation will be the focus of the next chapter.

Chapter 3 – Humanism, Holism and Guilt: Dolto, Psychoanalysis and Catholicism from Occupation to Liberation, 1939-53

The years between 1939 and 1953 were ones of enormous upheaval in France. Following the destructive and divisive experience of war, occupation, and liberation, France by the early 1950s was caught up in Cold War geopolitics, while rapidly modernising its economy and fighting to retain its empire. Women had become full citizens; a baby boom was under way; the extreme right had become discredited. While the 1950s remained an age of social conservatism, signs of changes in attitudes to families, children and gender were appearing.[1] France was becoming a more 'psychologised' society with greater awareness of psychotherapy. Simone de Beauvoir, Sigmund Freud and Alfred Kinsey were key reference points for incipient changes in social attitudes (see chapter 4).

This followed a war and occupation in which 600,000 French soldiers and civilians died. A further 1.6 million French soldiers spent the war as prisoners, and 650,000 French people undertook forced labour (Service du Travail Obligatoire – STO) in Germany. Some 75,000 French-resident Jews were murdered in the Holocaust; thousands more spent time in concentration camps or in hiding. The postwar recovery was initially slow to filter through to households, as the population faced continued hardships and cold winters; the Communist Party consistently polled above thirty per cent.

The war disrupted France's institutions, including all of those with significance for Dolto. The French psychoanalytic movement largely dissolved, with many members forced into exile. The Vichy regime promoted a strongly patriarchal vision of the family and gender roles, further excluding women from the professions. Its corporatist policies led to the formation of the Ordre des Médecins; doctors faced increased state oversight. The Catholic Church

[1] See Fishman, *Vichy to the Sexual Revolution*, introduction.

assumed greater public prominence, promoting the themes of guilt, expiation and internal renewal.

These themes, and others characteristic of Vichy, can be seen in Dolto's thinking in these years, as this chapter shows. In the 1940s she began to reevaluate the foundations of her faith, prompted also by her marriage in 1942 to Boris Dolto, who was brought up in the Orthodox Christian church. At the Liberation, (Françoise) Dolto explored cooperation with figures on the political left, at one point even referring to herself as a Trotskyist.[2] However, the hardening of Cold War dividing lines in 1947-48 found Dolto and her closest colleagues very much on the capitalist, Catholic side. Psychoanalysis came under strong attack from French communists in 1949, and in the 1950s was widely perceived as a bourgeois discipline. The French psychoanalytic movement became divided anew: different experiences of war compounded existing disagreements about who should practise psychoanalysis and what exactly it was for, culminating in the split of 1953.

The first fifteen years of Dolto's career were thus transitional and disruptive for her, for the psychoanalytic movement and for France in general. During them, she made various forays into working in public institutions and attempting to find a popular audience for her ideas. During the occupation, Dolto was one of a handful of psychoanalysts to remain in Paris. She continued to see patients, in her capacity as a generalist medical doctor, and to incorporate Freudian ideas into her practice. Beyond this, she looked for ways to take her psychoanalytically-informed, holistic brand of medicine into the public realm, which meant working within Vichy structures. This has raised questions about her political loyalties and whether there might be dark secrets hiding in her background, questions I address below.

This chapter proceeds in three parts. The first introduces a further element of 1930s intellectual context: the tendency to think holistically about 'Man' as a physical, psychological and spiritual being. I refer to this as 'technocratic

[2] René Spitz to Dolto, 13/09/1946. *VdC*, 157.

holism' because of the way in which scientists and engineers thought in terms of public policy solutions to 'human problems' that took into account the totality of Man's being. I relate this to intellectual developments within Catholicism, and especially to the 'integral humanism' of Jacques Maritain, which also considered Man holistically, and helped bring about a rapprochement between Catholicism and psychoanalysis. The second part examines Dolto's activities between 1940 and 1946. It covers the *exode* and Dolto's initial positive reaction to the Pétainist programme, viewing this through the prism of 'holism' in the above sense. It shows how Dolto tried to put such views into practice in the context of the National Revolution, via her activities at Hôpital Trousseau and the Fondation Carrel (officially the Fondation Française pour l'Étude des Problèmes Humains, hereafter FFEPH). I also analyse Dolto's previously unknown writings for the Pétainist magazine *Vrai*, before going on to look at how she adapted her approach in the Liberation period. I investigate her contacts with the socialist municipality at Suresnes, and her column for the Liberation-era, Communist-run publication *Femmes françaises*.

The final part focuses on French psychoanalysis in the period 1946-53 and its relationship to religion. After the war, some Catholic clergy became interested in psychoanalysis. Their wish to combine religion and analysis was shared by many Catholic psychoanalysts, including Dolto. With the Jewish analysts exiled in 1940, these Catholic figures dominated French psychoanalysis in the interval before the movement's prewar institutions were rebuilt after 1948. The journals *Psyché* and *Études carmélitaines* were central to promoting the new synthesis between Catholicism and psychoanalysis; Dolto wrote for both. The Catholic analysts were among those to split from the SPP and its Jewish leader Sacha Nacht in 1953. That split had complex causes, but I will show that underlying politico-religious tensions, linked to choices made under the occupation, were one factor. The chapter also considers the theme of guilt, and how Dolto's approach to it can be related both to her childhood experiences and to difficult moral questions involved in responding to defeat, occupation, collaboration and the Holocaust.

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'Technocratic holism' is a term I am coining to refer to a particular way of thinking about man and society in 1930s and 1940s France. Philip Nord and others have written of a 'technocratic turn' dating to Édouard Daladier's administration of 1938, in which 'experts' of various stripes began to play a greater role in the state and social institutions, foreshadowing both the authoritarianism of Vichy and the democratic statism of the Liberation period.[3] Such technocrats represented the more socially and economically liberal elements of the Vichy regime, those who looked forward to an idealised future rather than backwards to a nostalgia-tinged, pre-industrial past, and who were generally responsible for those laws and policies carried forward from Vichy into the Fourth Republic.[4]

I am adding the term 'holism' because the rationalism advocated by 1930s technocrats aimed to take the whole of human physiology, psychology and spirituality into account. Technocrats believed in utilising the human sciences in the service of optimal corporate organisation and efficiency. They thought that 'human problems' should be tackled in ways that acknowledged their psychological, biological and social complexity. Combining a scientific disposition with a spiritual (usually Catholic) outlook, they were open to esoteric disciplines on the fringes of established science and medicine, such as graphology, characteriology, or acupuncture. They viewed 'Man' holistically, as a complex, mysterious and ill-understood organism. Exemplary texts of this trend include Nobel laureate Alexis Carrel's bestseller *L'Homme, cet inconnu* and engineer Jean Coutrot's *De Quoi Vivre*.[5] Carrel, Nobel laureate for medicine in 1912, worked from the premise that 'l'homme est un tout indivisible d'une extrême complexité – il est impossible d'avoir de lui une

[3] Nord, *France's New Deal*, ch. 1; Clarke, *Age of Organization*, introduction. Fishman in *Battle for Children* shows how 'experts' came to dominate discussions of child delinquency and juvenile crime. Hanna Diamond in *Women and the Second World War* charts the growing belief that motherhood and childcare should be closely supervised by experts. Schneider, *Quality and Quantity* details the impact of eugenics experts on family and health policy.
[4] Robert O. Paxton, *Vichy France; Old Guard and New Order, 1940-1944* (New York, 1972), 139-45 and part 3, 'The Collaborators'.
[5] Alexis Carrel, *L'Homme, cet inconnu* (Paris, 1935); Jean Coutrot, *De quoi vivre* (Paris, 1935).

conception simple ... l'homme que connaissent les spécialistes n'est donc pas l'homme concret, l'homme réel'.[6] Thus Carrel and Coutrot approached the psychology of work from the perspective of workers' whole lives, rather than the discrete task-based psychology of Frederick W. Taylor and his French popularisers in the 1910s, Henry Le Chatelier and Henri Fayol.[7] Carrel proposed a mixture of eugenics, natalism and education as the solution to endemic social problems which, he argued, had caused France's degeneration, manifest in a 'diminution du calibre intellectuel et moral chez ceux qui portent la responsabilité de la direction des affaires politiques, économiques et sociales'.[8] Though hostile to the Nazis, Carrel admired far-right leaders such as Jacques Doriot and Colonel de la Rocque, and expressed hostility to the Third Republic. He converted to Catholicism in 1938.[9]

The interwar drive for technical organisation and modernisation arose first in engineering, but as Jackie Clarke has shown, was soon extended to areas such as medicine and household management, as in Paulette Bernège's housewives' manuals.[10] In medicine, holism meant conceiving of the human body and mind as a complex, interrelated system. Medical holists criticised the perceived over-specialisation of their profession. They were sympathetic to homeopathy, esoterism and eugenics as approaches which promised a more complete understanding of mind-body interactions.[11] Joan Tumblety has shown that similarly holistic thinking underpinned the 'physical culture' movement of the interwar period. Physical culturists were no mere bodybuilders. They thought they were pushing at the limitations of 'empirical' medicine, invoking physiological, spiritual, even 'psychic' principles to help them understand the 'whole man' and, ultimately, 'regenerate the race'.[12] As this example suggests, holism could be inflected by eugenicist, neo-Lamarckian notions of racial

[6] Carrel, *L'Homme, cet inconnu*, 20.
[7] On Le Chatelier and Fayol see Clarke, *Age of Organisation*, 14ff.
[8] Carrel, *L'Homme, cet inconnu*, 33.
[9] Ohayon, *L'Impossible Rencontre*, 258
[10] Clarke, *Age of Organisation*, 70ff; Paulette Bernège, (e.g.) *Le Ménage simplifié ou la vie en rose* (Paris, 1935).
[11] Clarke, *Age of Organisation*, 10.
[12] Tumblety, *Remaking the Male Body*, 6-7.

degeneration. Carrel certainly thought in terms of eugenics, although Coutrot's vision was more optimistic.

Freudian psychoanalysis – widely discussed in intellectual circles from the early 1920s – had some natural affinities with holistic approaches, and indeed helped to inform them. Sigmund Freud's writings suggested that the whole of a person's history and the entirety of their psychical life were relevant to their current state of health. Physical symptoms existed in the context of mental representations and were often explicable in terms of them. Coutrot, the demographer Alfred Sauvy and their associates at X-Crise – a 'cercle de reflexion' composed of former *polytechniciens* – read Freud along with Henri Bergson and other theorists of unconscious and irrational thought. 'Man is not made of reason alone', Coutrot argued. 'All that he has within him in terms of sensibility also profoundly conditions his existence and obeys quite different laws'.[13] In 1949, Simone de Beauvoir wrote that the major contribution of psychoanalysis had been to 'considérer qu'aucun facteur n'intervient dans la vie psychique sans avoir revêtu un sens humain; ce n'est pas le corps-objet décrit par les savants qui existe concrètement, mais le corps vécu par le sujet.'[14] This was the sense in which Freud's writings coincided with the inclinations of the 1930s holists.

Technocratic holists were often also Catholics. Technocratic holism resonated with, and existed in the context of, moves to bring Catholicism into greater dialogue with the human sciences. Coutrot, for example, read and was in contact with Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, an unorthodox Jesuit priest, philosopher, and paleontologist. A Catholic version of holism was influentially articulated by philosopher Jacques Maritain, whose 'humanisme intégral' stressed the importance of recognising the whole person in its material and spiritual dimensions.[15] Maritain was at the forefront of thinking through how Catholicism could respond to the 'second ralliement' to the Republic following Pope Pius XI's condemnation of Action Française in 1926 – a serious setback

[13] Cited in Clarke, *Age of Organisation*, 107-8.
[14] Beauvoir, *Deuxième Sexe* I, 78.
[15] Jacques Maritain, *Humanisme intégral: problèmes temporels et spirituels d'une nouvelle chrétienté* (Paris, 1936).

to the royalist vision of 'la politique d'abord', in which a Catholic resurgence would follow the conservative reconquest of the state. Maritain proposed a 'primauté du spirituel' to distance Catholicism from monarchism, allying it instead to utopian projects for a 'nouvelle chrétienté'.[16] The decade after 1926 was a time of Catholic intellectual renewal that one historian calls 'une phase d'innovation sans précédent depuis longtemps', in which new journals such as *Esprit* (founded 1932) and *Sept* (1934) appeared.[17] Religious orders played a significant role in this renewal – notably the Carmelite order and its journal *Études carmélitaines*, edited from 1932 by Père Bruno de Jésus-Marie, an intellectual follower of Maritain.

This intellectual shift helped to stimulate Catholic interest in psychoanalysis. Father Bruno, researching mysticism, made use of Freud in seeking a natural, non-pathological, non-stigmatising explanation for mystical phenomena.[18] In 1936 another of Maritain's followers, philosopher Roland Dalbiez, contributed significantly to disseminating psychoanalytic ideas among Catholic intellectuals and promoted dialogue between Freudianism and Catholic philosophy with his book *La Méthode psychanalytique et la doctrine freudienne*.[19] Dalbiez distinguished Freud's method, seen as valuable, from his 'doctrine', seen as riddled with errors. He was influenced by the approach of *L'Évolution psychiatrique*, which had advocated a similar separation in a medical context, as shown in chapter 1 – indeed Henri Claude, patron of *L'Évolution psychiatrique*, wrote the preface to Dalbiez's book. Dalbiez demonstrated how Catholics could welcome psychoanalysis as a therapeutic technique while leaving Freud's metapsychology to one side, thereby opening the way to a Catholic form of psychoanalytic practice.[20] From 1935, Bruno organised 'Journées de psychologie religieuse', and encouraged psychoanalysts to attend and publish in *Études carmélitaines*. Far from seeing psychoanalysis as a limited scientific technique, Bruno encouraged its

[16] Jacques Maritain, *Primauté du spirituel* (Paris, 1927).
[17] Étienne Fouilloux, *Une église en quête de liberté: La pensée catholique française entre modernisme et Vatican II 1914-1962* (Paris, 1998), 85.
[18] See Desmazières, *L'Inconscient au paradis*, 63ff.
[19] Roland Dalbiez, *La Méthode psychanalytique et la doctrine freudienne* (Paris, 1936). On the reception of this see Mijolla, *Freud et La France, 1885-1945*, 682.
[20] Desmazières, *L'Inconscient au paradis*, 70-1.

application to religious questions. If this was an unusual position in 1935, it was one that became much more common by the later 1940s, as will become clear below. Subsequent Catholic writers took the further step of applying psychoanalytic insights to the psychology of religion itself.

The twin trends of technical holism and Catholic 'integral' humanism were important elements of the intellectual context in which Dolto began her career. The Dolto of *Psychanalyse et pédiatrie* – which appeared as a book in 1940, with a preface by Pichon – was a holist in her approach to medicine.[21] She thought it essential for doctors to understand psychological as well as physiological functioning; otherwise, they would be in the situation of 'un chirurgien qui, devant un abcès chaud, tenterait de cacher la tuméfaction et l'enduirait de topiques analgésiques au lieu de vider l'abcès'.[22] Psychology lay at the origin of physical symptoms, and thus should be made much more central to medical training and treatment. Dolto also valorised general practice medicine over hospital-based specialisms, seeing generalists as those who would benefit most from applying Freudian theory. Her case studies were patients who would typically present to a family doctor rather than a specialised psychiatrist. It was generalists who faced 'ces cas, plus moraux que psychiques, devant lesquels la thérapeutique habituelle reste inefficace'.[23] Dolto's reference to 'cas moraux' brought in a suggestion that spiritual and social factors, not only psychiatric and medical ones, were often in play.

In line with her holistic stance, Dolto in 1939 did not envisage becoming a specialised psychoanalyst. The *cabinet médical* that she opened on 1 September 1939 announced her as a 'généraliste et pédiatre', not an analyst, though she clearly intended to utilise Freudian concepts in her clinic. Her role model at this point was the polymath Édouard Pichon, rather than the specialist analyst René Laforgue, or the child analyst Sophie Morgenstern.

[21] Dolto invested some 11,023 francs in its publication by compte d'auteur, per a bill sent by publisher Amédée Legrand on 26/10/1940. *VdC*, 65.
[22] Dolto, *Psychanalyse et pédiatrie*, 12.
[23] *Psychanalyse et pédiatrie*, 11.

In *Psychanalyse et pédiatrie*, Dolto did not venture thoughts on religion or spirituality; the thesis was a more narrowly psychoanalytic text, outlining major concepts of Freudian theory and demonstrating how generalists might apply them to children. Nonetheless, she sent a copy to Paul Jury, the first French priest to undergo psychoanalysis and now practising a kind of 'wild' psychoanalysis, often with children, in his priest's cassock.[24] Over the next fifteen years, Dolto's Christianity and her understanding of psychoanalysis became much more closely related. Dolto became clearly identified with the Catholic branch of French psychoanalysis – at times, in explicit opposition to a 'Jewish' one. The Second World War was an inescapable part of the context for this.

The war represented an immediate rupture in Dolto's career plans. From October 1939 until June 1940 she was requisitioned, like many female doctors, to make 'sanitary visits' to classes of refugee children in the Paris region.[25] In June 1940, she joined the *exode*, returning to Paris in August. Thereafter, she remained in Paris – one of the handful of psychoanalysts, along with John Leuba, Marc Schlumberger, Georges Parcheminey and Juliette Favez-Boutonnier, to do so.[26] With the Nazi invasion, the SPP ceased to function. Its archives were evacuated and production of the *Revue française de psychanalyse* was suspended. The Occupation authorities placed Freud's books on the 'liste Otto' of banned works from September 1940.[27] Marie Bonaparte made her way to Greece and ultimately South Africa; Rudolph Loewenstein, Raymond de Saussure and others left for the USA; Sophie Morgenstern committed suicide. Dolto took on some of their analysands.[28]

In June 1940, like millions of Parisians, Dolto left Paris for the provinces. Since, as *exode* historian Hanna Diamond points out, female testimonies of the

[24] Dolto to Paul Jury, 11/07/1939, *VdC*, 16. On Jury, see Desmazières, *L'Inconscient au paradis*, 93-5.
[25] Mijolla, *Freud et la France 1885-1945*, 783.
[26] On French psychoanalysis 1940-44 see Ohayon, *L'Impossible Rencontre*, 229-71; Mijolla, *Freud et la France, 1885-1945*; also Alain de Mijolla, 'La psychanalyse en France (1893-1965)', in Roland Jaccard (ed.), *Histoire de la psychanalyse* 1 (Paris, 1982), 9-105; Roudinesco, *Jacques Lacan*, 152-70.
[27] Ohayon, *L'Impossible Rencontre*, 242.
[28] *Autoportrait*, 156.

episode are thin on the ground, I will briefly describe her experience, but it was far from typical, since her wealth and access to a functioning car enabled her largely to escape the suffering.[29]

Françoise was still in Paris when the government left for Bordeaux on 10 June 1940, four days before the capital fell. She wrote to her friend and sometime lover Hubert Jausion expressing residual confidence in final victory, but decided to leave the following day.[30] She headed by car to Brittany, where she stayed with a friend, and visited Suzanne at Le Croisic on the coast west of Nantes. On 17 June, the day Pétain announced his intention to seek an armistice, two family members were turned back from crossing the Loire by French troops. Passing through already-occupied Nantes, Françoise managed to cross on the 19th, thanks to her medical card. She drove to her aunt's house in Bordeaux, hoping that the south-west would remain unoccupied. Finding this hope dashed, and not enjoying the company of her stuffy aunt ('elle répand un halo d'opacité hostile et un rayonnement "laid moralement" qui me fait pitié pour elle') on 28 June she moved on to friends in Puichéric, in the Aude, where she remained for several weeks, enjoying the Mediterranean climate.[31]

Dolto therefore did not share the hardships of those who took to the roads, often on foot, in a forlorn attempt to outrun the Nazis. She did however experience the general feeling of dislocation, and the widely-reported sense of the *exode* as a forced extended holiday, one that enabled a renewed relationship with the French countryside. Historians have noted the importance of the *exode* in taking urban French people out of their habitual routines, reconnecting them with France's rural heritage; for Richard Cobb, 'the *exode* was for many a voyage of discovery of a wealth and freshness that no travel agent could achieve'.[32] While this was not true for those without the means to escape the worst of the suffering, Françoise's letters from Puichéric in July 1940 illustrate its relevance to her experience. She felt a new, deep, spiritual

[29] Hanna Diamond, *Fleeing Hitler: France 1940* (Oxford, 2007), 6.
[30] Françoise to Hubert Jausion, 10/06/1940. *VdC*, 39.
[31] Françoise to Henry Marette, 21/07/1940. *VdC*, 54.
[32] Richard Cobb, *A Historian's Appreciation of Modern French Literature* (Oxford, 1980), 53. See also Diamond, *Fleeing Hitler*, 160.

connection to the landscape: 'Je vois que j'aime la campagne. Je l'ai toujours cru. Mais je n'étais pas détachée. Actuellement je suis entièrement détachée de tout – cadre, habitudes – et les seules valeurs spirituelles demeurent.'[33] This renewed relationship with rural France spoke to her sense of national identity. She employed agricultural metaphors to refer to the country itself: 'Un pays n'est pas comme un individu (c'est d'ailleurs le tort de nos dirigeants de ne l'avoir pas compris). Il ne meurt pas tant qu'il a des hommes sur son sol, nés de lui et se nourrissant de ses produits. La vie d'un pays ressemble plus à la vie végétale qu'à la vie humaine. Ca renaît périodiquement.'[34]

Dolto's language here resonated with that of Pétain, who three weeks earlier had contended that 'La terre ne ment pas. Elle demeure votre recours, elle est la Patrie elle-même'.[35] Vichy would soon launch, as part of the Révolution Nationale, policies aimed at fostering a 'retour à la terre'. Françoise returned to Paris, but remained convinced of the redemptive, therapeutic value of work on the land. Her surviving case records from the Occupation show that she advised her patients to spend lots of time in fresh air, for example by joining an 'artisanat rural' or a 'milieu normal collectif' in the countryside. One patient, referred in 1942 for 'retard affectif, apparence de débilité mentale, mutisme, inactivité' and diagnosed by Dolto as suffering from a 'reflet de névrose maternelle, et choc affectif inhibiteur' became, with her encouragement, a gardener.[36] A fourteen-year-old boy, referred to her in 1941 for 'vols, onanisme, mutisme', was encouraged to give up intellectual work and attend 'une école de plein air'.[37]

Writing to her father from Puichéric in 1940, Françoise further stated her

> foi dans le redressement de la France dans la ligne amorcée par Pétain. [Avant la guerre] j'aimais la France mais je méprisais sa politique et ceux qu'on respectait officiellement et cela me cachait à quel point j'aimais la France.

[33] Françoise to Henry, 21/07/1940. *VdC*, 54-5.
[34] Françoise to Henry, 21/07/1940.
[35] Philippe Pétain, 'Appel du 25 juin 1940' in J.C. Barbous (ed.), *Philippe Pétain: Discours aux Français: 17 juin 1940 – 20 août 1944* (Paris, 1989), 63-6.
[36] AFD, Box 'Cas 2', case of 'Serge F.', treated 1942-44. Typed summary by Dolto.
[37] AFD, Box 'Cas 2', case of 'Roland F.', treated from 1941. Typed summary by Dolto.

> Maintenant je la crois très malade. Peut-être mortellement atteinte ... mais on peut essayer de faire quelque chose et de contribuer à son redressement et c'est merveilleux d'avoir l'âge que j'ai car je verrai peut-être ce redressement.[38]

Didier Pleux has speculated that, in view of such statements, the subsequent correspondence, which for the rest of the war years is relatively thin, may have been censored by the editors to hide more clearly collaborationist material.[39] I did not find any evidence in the Dolto archives to support this. The relative lack of correspondence can be more easily explained by the fact that the family took fewer holidays during the war, and therefore were apart less often. Dolto's Pétainist sympathies are not surprising in view of her family's political and social views and Françoise's incomplete break with them, as discussed in chapter 2. Pétain's explanations for France's defeat resonated with people who had been brought up to distrust the Republic. Françoise's brother Jean, who fought as an officer in the 1940 campaign and was awarded the Croix de Guerre during the retreat, felt that 'le pays était terriblement contaminé, l'armée aussi et nous payons très cher toutes les faiblesses de ces années dernières et de combien de mensonges avons-nous été jusqu'au bout abreuvés'.[40] Suzanne wrote on 28 July 1940 that 'j'ai une confiance absolue dans le patriotisme et la volonté du Maréchal qui fera tout pour amorcer un redressement de notre pauvre pays dans des idées assez modernes mais sauvegardant toutes les traditions françaises. Sa tâche est abominable, son abnégation devrait lui attirer la reconnaissance et l'aide de tous les Français.'[41]

The fact that support for Pétainism was utterly conventional for people of Dolto's background in 1940 does not mean, as some of her supporters have suggested, that her views can be explained in terms of her 'youth' and 'naivety' at the time.[42] Françoise was thirty-one in 1940, a qualified doctor and published author whose thesis established a therapeutic approach that served her well for four decades. She was fully able to assert independence from her

[38] Françoise to Henry, 21/07/1940.
[39] Didier Pleux, *Françoise Dolto*, 109ff.
[40] Jean Marette to Françoise, 15/07/1940. *VdC*, 48.
[41] Suzanne to Françoise, 28/07/1940. *VdC*, 59-60.
[42] For example in the 2013 *France Inter* broadcast '50 ans de psychanalyse sur France Inter – Françoise Dolto' previously cited.

family's views where this was important to her, as chapter 2 demonstrated. Her Pétainism in 1940 must therefore be seen as sincere and mature. It also aligned easily with her medical holist views. As Suzanne's comment about 'des idées assez modernes' indicates, in sweeping away the Republic, the National Revolution offered opportunities to technicians, engineers and social reformers, many of whom were appointed to influential positions.[43] In Paris and Vichy, technocrats seized the chance to implement schemes long-stalled in the impasses of Third Republican politics, such as the integration of Parisian public transport, achieved in 1942 with the creation of the RATP. The *polytechnicien* and railway engineer Jean Berthelot became Minister of Communications; another *polytechnicien,* Jean Bichelonne, served at the Ministry of Industrial Production, alongside Pierre Pucheu from the steel industry's *comité des forges*. These were people to whom Henry Marette, himself a *polytechnicien* and director of a steel factory, could relate. Montbard was in the Occupied Zone, and Métal Déployé, the Marette business, appears to have rapidly adjusted itself to working for the Germans.[44]

It seemed likely that social policy, too, would be open to technocratic reform schemes and Pétainist regeneration. The prospect caused Françoise to rethink her career goals. 'Je ne sais si je pourrai continuer dans la voie que j'ai choisie', she wrote to Henry. 'J'aimerais assez m'occuper de l'éducation, puisque enfin elle va être dirigée dans une voie qui me paraît pleine de promesses.'[45] 'Education' did not necessarily mean 'schooling'; when Pétain spoke of education he did so in terms of the transmission of morality more than of knowledge.[46] Throughout her career Dolto used the term 'éducation' similarly broadly (or holistically) to mean something closer to 'upbringing'; her posthumous book, *Les Chemins de l'éducation* is concerned with parenting and medico-psychological treatment, not schools. Her desire to become involved with 'éducation' in 1940 therefore suggests an intention to engage with how children were raised by parents, the state and society in general. Nonetheless,

[43] See Clarke, *Age of Organization*, 128ff.
[44] At least, this is suggested by Henry to Françoise, 22/7/1940, *VdC,* 56. By this date, Henry had returned to Paris from Montbard 'où tout se remet en ordre'.
[45] Françoise to Henry, 21/07/1940.
[46] Paxton, *Old Guard and New Order*, 37.

Pétain's arrival implied that the school system would cease to be a repository of Republican idealism and pacifism. Vichy required primary teachers to have a classical education, thus changing their social composition. Teaching unions were abolished; teacher training schools disbanded; Jews and freemasons were banned from teaching. Religious orders returned to schools. The crucifix went up on the walls along with Pétain's picture. There was a revival of physical education and sport. The Ministry of Education, considered a stronghold of Radical Republicanism, was downgraded, with the more socially conservative Ministries of Family and Health, and Justice, accorded a greater role.[47] From Dolto's perspective, all this hinted at the possibility that, since education was being withdrawn from the control of secular, universalist, positivist republicanism, it would therefore become more open to her Freudian, Catholic, spiritual thinking. There might also be new opportunities for broadly 'educational' institutions beyond the school, such as Vichy's new Centres de Protection Maternelle Infantile.[48]

Dolto's acceptance in September 1940 of a part-time role as *chargée de consultations* at Hôpital Trousseau, a children's hospital in the working-class 12th arrondissement of eastern Paris, can perhaps be understood in this context. Françoise initially arrived at Trousseau as a doctor in the department for 'troubles fonctionnels ambulatoires'.[49] This replaced her job assisting Pichon at Bretonneau, Pichon having died in January 1940. In 1941, noticing that the neuro-psychiatry department was overwhelmed, she began unofficially to help out by taking child patients into psychotherapy. She saw patients in a 'vestiaire' measuring 4 x 2.25 metres, which colleagues referred to as 'un petit confessional' because of its resemblance to the Catholic model.[50] She turned this into a semi-official, long-term role at the hospital – apparently unpaid, if tolerated – lasting until 1978.

[47] Fishman, *Battle for Children*, 8.
[48] On the PMI centres see Paul Dutton, *Differential Diagnoses: A Comparative History of Health Care Problems and Solutions in the United States and France* (Ithaca, 2007), 101.
[49] Patrice Josset, *Hôpital d'enfants Armand-Trousseau* (Paris, 1999), 32-3.
[50] Cited in Catherine Dolto, 'Intervention au Colloque pour les 100 ans de l'Hôpital Trousseau', (2001) http://www.dolto.fr/archives/siteWeb/english/docs_a_garder/trouscat.htm, accessed 06/04/2017.

On one level, this was an opportunistic way to incorporate psychoanalysis into Occupied France's public health system. This is the sense in which Françoise's daughter Catherine later spoke of the clinic taking place 'dans la clandestinité administrative la plus totale, en toute illégalité' – thus rhetorically equating it to an act of resistance.[51] But equally, Dolto's actions may be placed in the context of her summer 1940 statements on the 'redressement de la France dans la ligne amorcée par Pétain'. By applying her brand of holistic medicine and psychological education in a state setting with working-class patients, Françoise may well have felt that she was working to improve the physical, mental and moral health of the French race – an act borne out of the spirit of the National Revolution, rather than the Resistance. As she stated in a much later interview, 'faire de la psychanalyse, c'est être au service des gens qui vivent dans le même temps que moi, dans la même ethnie que moi'.[52] This interpretation is consistent with her other actions in the Occupation years.

In social policy, the major beneficiary of Vichy's willingness to embrace reformers and modernisers was Alexis Carrel. France's defeat and Vichy's rhetoric of renewal seemed to vindicate Carrel's reactionary worldview and proposals for remaking society; the religious metaphors pervading Pétainism chimed with his 'spiritualisation' of politics.[53] Carrel became an ideological reference point for Vichy and its institutions. Following a meeting between Carrel and Pétain, the FFEPH became operational from summer 1942.[54] This was to be a wide-ranging social policy unit, with a research function deliberately rivalling, or indeed displacing, universities. Carrel and his followers consciously rejected the theoretical frameworks developed by the social sciences.

[51] Catherine Dolto, 'Intervention au Colloque'.
[52] Dolto, 'Françoise Dolto: Ma vie et la psychanalyse', in Antoine Hess, *Les Analystes parlent*, (Paris, 1981), 100.
[53] Andrés Horacio Reggiani, *God's Eugenicist: Alexis Carrel and the Sociobiology of Decline* (New York, 2007), 104.
[54] Alain Drouard, *Alexis Carrel (1873-1944): de la mémoire à l'histoire* (Paris, 1995), 206. See also Drouard, *Une inconnue des sciences sociales: la Fondation Alexis Carrel, 1941-1945* (Paris, 1992); Schneider, *Quality and Quantity*, 272ff; Ohayon, *L'Impossible Rencontre*, 256-62.

In 1942, Dolto was invited to participate in the FFEPH, specifically in its Centre de la Mère et de l'Enfant, located at 173 Boulevard St Germain. She met Carrel in September 1942 and began work at the Fondation in December, on a salary of 5,000 francs per month.[55] This centre was to research the biological and psychological factors affecting pregnancy, birth, parenting, and child development. Dolto was assigned to the 'équipe de Psycho-biologie – hygiene mentale', housed alongside the 'équipe développement de l'adolescence' and the 'équipe biologie de la lignée'.[56] However, the Centre never really got off the ground, owing to management disputes and Carrel's poor health.

It is not clear how much, if anything, Dolto contributed before resigning in November 1943. During the year of her employment she continued to see private patients, worked at Trousseau, and gave birth to her first child. Alain Drouard's history divides the FFEPH's staff of 250-300 into a small group of true believers in the Fondation's aims, and a majority for whom participation represented a passing phase, a job and salary in uncertain times – even, for some, cover for resistance activities.[57] Drouard places Dolto in the second group, whose members later tended to deny or downplay their participation in an indisputably Vichyite body, 'par opportunisme et souci de leur carrière'.[58] Certainly, Dolto did not say much about it in her memoirs. It is clear that she was not one of those engaged in resistance activities – asked about this in 1988, she replied 'mais, je ne pouvais pas! J'avais un enfant'.[59] Probably the FFEPH represented for Dolto a source of income, and a potential opportunity to shape social policy in line with her holistic, Freudian orientation. But it also indicates that, well into 1943, she did not see that orientation as incompatible with the Vichy project.

[55] Suzanne and Henry to Françoise, 06/10/1942, *VdC*, 99-100, and n. 21; Ohayon, *L'Impossible Rencontre*, 261. A compte-rendu from the FFEPH's Comité de direction, dated 24/11/1942 records Dolto's employment (reproduced in Drouard, *Une inconnue*, 429). Her salary was roughly average for doctors hired by the Fondation.
[56] Drouard, *Alexis Carrel*, 211-4; *Une inconnue*, 262-9, 429.
[57] Drouard, *Alexis Carrel*, 210.
[58] Drouard, *Alexis Carrel*, 210.
[59] *Autoportrait*, 182.

My research has uncovered that the FFEPH episode was not the first time that Dolto had taken part in a semi-official endeavour motivated by Vichyite ideology. In 1941, she published in a Vichyite magazine, *Vrai*, a forty-eight-page fortnightly 'revue d'actualité féminine sociale et artistique' that appeared from October 1941. *Vrai* was published in Paris, where the Nazis strictly controlled the press. It was moderately priced, at six Francs.[60] The target audience was middle-class women with a degree of leisure time. The magazine contained extracts from novels, book reviews, games and quizzes, and articles on fashion, style and art. There were 'make-do-and-mend' features explaining how canny housewives could circumvent wartime restrictions, such as by making jam without jars.[61] Advertisements included promotions for Linguaphone's language-learning materials, a 'cours de dessin publicitaire' at a Parisian art school, and Charles Trenet's music.[62] It had a glossy style, with plenty of pictures and illustrations.

Vrai was not presented as a political publication, but was clearly Vichyite in its themes and imagery, with prominent early articles aligned with the social priorities of Pétainism. The cover of the first issue featured a full-page photo of a smiling baby with the caption 'La Natalité, problème no.1', introducing an interview with Vichy politician Serge Huard, Secrétaire d'État à la famille et à la santé. Every subsequent issue carried a pronatalist article and/or deplored the '600,000 petits français assassinés chaque année' via abortion.[63] Discussions of older children emphasised physical outdoor activity and celebrated young, 'Aryan', muscular, naked or semi-naked bodies ('Jeunesse nue' was the title of an article in issue 2).[64] The magazine promoted beauty as an important marker of the quality of children's bodies – quality, in *Vrai*'s version of pronatalism, being as important as quantity. 'Que nos enfants soient BEAUX!' was the subtitle of one pronatalist article accompanied by a picture of smiling children in swimsuits.[65] Other classic Vichy themes given

[60] For comparison, the official price of a litre of milk was 4F60. See Fabrice Grenard, *La France du marché noir (1940-1949)* (Paris, 2008).
[61] 'Des conserves sans boîtes', *Vrai*, 3, 15/11/1941, 34-5.
[62] *Vrai*, 3, 15/11/1941, 2; *Vrai*, 2, 01/11/1941, 37.
[63] *Vrai*, 1, 15/10/1941, 20-3.
[64] *Vrai*, 2, 01/11/1941, 6-7.
[65] *Vrai*, 3, 15/11/1941, 21-3.

conspicuous treatment included prisoners of war – heavily featured in the run up to Christmas 1941 – and the peasantry (‘Paysans de Landerneau, Le Maréchal est content de vous!’). Women were praised for replacing absent POWs on the land: ‘quel éloge faudra-t-il donner à la femme restée seule aux champs, celle qui lutte contre les difficultés de toutes sortes, pendant la captivité de son mari?’[66] Other articles reminded women of their ultimate subservience to their husbands. A feature on famous historical couples – including the Chateaubriands, Lord Byron and Isabella Milbanke, Jules Michelet and Athénaïs Mialaret – was entitled ‘La gloire de l’homme rend-elle sa femme HEUREUSE’.[67] This was a statement, not a question.

Soon after *Vrai* first appeared, Dolto was thinking about contributing to it. She asked a friend, the Sorbonne Indianologist Louis Renou, for his opinion of the publication; he replied on 3 November 1941 that ‘cela ne se présente pas mal’.[68] In the third issue, appearing on 15 November, an article appeared by ‘F.M.’, Dolto’s maiden initials; the Ordre des Médecins forbade doctors to write for commercial publications under their own name. Entitled ‘Ayez votre Médecin de Famille!’, it appeared a few pages behind the obligatory pronatalist feature.

The article argued for a holistic medicine, fully cognisant of the psychological component of physical illness. ‘F.M.’ deplored the ‘mystique du spécialiste' by which patients demanded to see, say, a stomach specialist for a stomach complaint, rather than being able to trust in a ‘médecin de famille’ whose fuller knowledge of the patient and the family history could put such a symptom in its proper, psychological, context.

> Grisé par les découvertes pastoriennes, on perd de vue que les microbes ne sont que les agents déclencheurs d'infections et qu'il leur faut rencontrer un état de santé vulnérable pour se montrer actifs ... Contrairement à ce que semblent croire beaucoup de gens, l'élément psychologique profond joue un rôle extrêmement important dans l'apparition et dans le mode d'évolution de la

[66] *Vrai*, 2, 01/11/1941.
[67] *Vrai*, 2, 01/11/1941, 24-5.
[68] Louis Renou to Dolto, 03/11/1941. *VdC*, 83.

> plupart, sinon dans toutes les maladies ... Il y a un climat moral qui favorise l'éclosion de maladies ... La maladie n'est pas un accident.[69]

This insistence on psychogenic etiologies was characteristic of Dolto's holism. She attacked 'l'habitude de considérer la maladie ou les malaises ... comme des entités à part, des accidents étrangers à la personnalité'. As in *Psychanalyse et pédiatrie*, she stressed the merits of the family doctor. The traditional *médecin de famille* had deep understanding of the patient's temperament, rhythms, family and social environment – the 'climat moral'. In her vision, the caring local doctor's holistic approach would effectively overlap with the pastoral care of a priest – a great improvement on sterile, mechanical, rationalist republican specialists. To this extent, 'F.M.' appeared more aligned with the nostalgic and traditionalist, as opposed to technocratic, components of Vichy. She presented an idealised vision of a rural, balanced, personal France unsullied by industrial civilisation. She used this idea to set up a criticism of Vichy's statist, bureaucratic tendencies as manifested in the removal of strict privacy controls on the *carnet de santé*, worrying about the consequences for patient confidentiality. The *carnet*, introduced in 1939 and which parents were required to maintain, was a compulsory record of vaccinations, growth milestones, and illnesses.[70] For 'F.M.', its existence was a symptom of 'la disparition du médecin de famille'. The solution lay in renewing the patient-doctor relationship, not in state bureaucracy. This anti-bureaucratic discourse, combined with an idealised nostalgic vision of a pre-modern France, remained an element of Dolto's thinking in much later writings.

The article ended by announcing a new regular feature, consisting of

> des conseils aux parents en vue de faire une santé morale et physique à leurs enfants. Dans la vie quotidienne, beaucoup de problèmes se posent au sujet des enfants et qui demanderaient des solutions pratiques. Comment agir dans tels cas ...?

[69] 'F.M.', 'Ayez votre médecin de famille', *Vrai*, 3, 15/11/1941, 28-9.
[70] Dutton, *Differential Diagnoses*, 101. On the *carnet de santé*: Schneider, *Quality and Quantity*, 268-70, 287-91.

This is striking for its resemblance to the concept of *Lorsque l'enfant paraît*, the radio programme which would make Dolto famous some thirty-five years later (see chapter 6). The next edition of *Vrai*, dated 1 December 1941, began to fulfil the promise with a column by 'M.' (Dolto once more) entitled 'Nos enfants ... Savez-vous leur parler?' This consisted of a set of hypothetical parenting scenarios, with an outline of a 'wrong' and 'right' way to respond in each case. The general principle of the advice was that:

> Pour avoir la confiance d'un enfant et la garder toujours, il vous suffit de n'avoir jamais profité de votre supériorité pour triompher de lui. Il ne faut pas "raisonner l'enfant", tout au moins avant 7 ou 8 ans. Il faut agir "raisonnablement" à son égard.

'M.' exhorted mothers (not parents in general, as the gendered French makes clear) not to shout, get angry, or humiliate their children: 'restez toujours calme. Soyez d'abord compatissante'.

> **SI VOUS ÊTES MÉCONTENTE DE VOTRE ENFANT**,
>
> NE DITES JAMAIS
>
> - Je vais acheter un autre enfant! Les gendarmes vont t'emmener.
>
> PARCE QUE
>
> Ce n'est pas vrai. Vous donnez l'exemple du mensonge.
>
> AGISSEZ RAISONNABLEMENT
>
> - Ne criez jamais plus fort que l'enfant qui fait un caprice. Taisez-vous, restez indifférente. Allez dans une autre pièce, attendez que l'enfant se calme ... Dès qu'il se sera tu, ou qu'il pleurera avec de vraies larmes, une gronderie affectueuse suivie d'un baiser si l'enfant le demande ...
>
> NE DITES JAMAIS
>
> - Regarde, tout le monde se moque de toi. Qu'est-ce que les gens vont penser?
>
> PARCE QUE

> Il ne faut jamais humilier un enfant surtout s'il est naturellement orgueilleux ... Votre réflexion incite l'enfant à s'occuper de l'effet qu'il produit sur l'entourage, vous lui donnez l'exemple de la vanité.
>
> AGISSEZ RAISONNABLEMENT
> – Ne grondez jamais un enfant en public. Ne lui dites rien quand il est en plein caprice. Attendez, pour agir, que ce soit fini.[71]

The construction of this article, with its didactic headings, is more rigid than Dolto's later style, but the advice is recognisably hers: a focus on immediate, everyday situations; an attempt to provide direct, clear advice; drawing on Freudian concepts without naming them or employing jargon. There was also a permissive angle to her advice, a theme I discuss further in chapter 4. Parents were encouraged to refrain from violent and impulsive punishment, and to treat children as intelligent, rational, desiring beings.

Despite being advertised as the first in a series, this article was the last that Dolto published in *Vrai*. This may be linked to the magazine's struggle for backing: from December 1941 the magazine got progressively shorter, appeared less often, and disappeared altogether in April 1942. It reappeared from June 1943 until July 1944, with a heavier emphasis on prisoners' wives, war widows and cultural articles, and without participation from Dolto or other doctors. Dolto's advice column was instead eventually continued in a publication with a very different political standpoint, in the markedly different political circumstances of January 1946.

Femmes françaises was the fortnightly paper of the Union des Femmes Françaises (UFF), a Communist-dominated body created in 1944 in which Jeannette Vermeersch, a Communist deputy recently returned from spending the war in Moscow, was prominent. The UFF attempted to bring together women from across the tripartite Resistance alliance with Christian Democrats and Socialists. *Femmes françaises*, edited by Edith Thomas, appeared from

[71] 'M.', 'Nos enfants...Savez-vous leur parler?', *Vrai*, 4, 01/12/1941, 23.

September 1944.[72] Initially consisting of a few pages of dense type, it soon switched to a broadsheet format, with pictures and more of a 'magazine' feel. The opening pages were generally dominated by political content. The editorial line sympathised with the USSR to the point of repeating its propaganda ('il n'y a pas de "camps secrets" en URSS'), valorised leftist movements like the Viet Minh or the Spanish resistance, and commemorated the anniversaries of Stalingrad and Lenin's death.[73] The second half of the paper appeared somewhat disconnected from the political activism and international focus of the news coverage. It was devoted to lifestyle matters, with columns including 'Parlons Cuisine, par Tante Angèle' and numerous features on fashion.

This section of *Femmes françaises* in fact had considerable overlaps with *Vrai*, especially on the subjects of children and parenting. These formed part of the UFF's political campaigning: headlines in April 1946 bemoaned the high level of infant mortality and promoted the 'semaine internationale d'aide à l'enfance victime de la guerre'.[74] Dr Alexandre Roudinesco used his regular column to campaign for the state to distribute free milk to children. More often, however, the subject cropped up in the second, lifestyle-focused section. From October 1944 there was a column of 'conseils aux mères' by Dr Ida Valentine, in addition to a 'Page de l'enfant'. And while the front half of the paper frequently underlined the importance of women's participation in politics, the back half was not at all feminist in tone. While attacking the 'cynicism' of Vichy family policy, *Femmes françaises* remained, as Karen Adler has shown, 'reluctant to allow women to exercise functions other than the maternal'.[75] Its articles encouraged women to practise 'l'élégance et l'art de la coquetterie' and 'les soins de la nuque', and asked 'vous avez grossi, madame – POURQUOI?'[76] *Femmes françaises* also shared *Vrai*'s interest in active, muscular bodies, carrying photographs and illustrations accompanying articles

[72] On Edith Thomas see Claire Gorrara, 'Crises of Witnessing: Edith Thomas and the War Years', *Modern & Contemporary France*, 4/3 (1996), 361-3; Dorothy Kaufmann, 'Uncovering a Woman's Life: Edith Thomas (Novelist, Historian, *Résistante*)', *The French Review*, 67/1 (1993), 61-72.
[73] *Femmes françaises*, 25/01/1946, 10 for the quote on Soviet camps.
[74] 'Des enfants naissent...mais ils meurent', *Femmes françaises*, 20/04/1946; '180 millions d'enfants en péril!', *Femmes françaises*, 06/04/1946.
[75] Adler, *Jews and Gender*, 40-66, here 52.
[76] *Femmes françaises*, 19/01/1946; 2/12/1945; 16/03/1946.

on sport, dance and outdoor activity that resembled those used in Vichy and Nazi publications.[77] Like other contemporary Communist publications, it shared the belief that femininity was linked to the nation's health and hygiene, and that well-regulated bodies were integral to well-planned societies – here echoing the Vichyite 'physical culturists'.[78]

Dolto had a regular column in *Femmes françaises* from January 1946 to March 1947, initially bylined 'Dr Marguerite Fradeau', but subsequently under her own name. Her first articles shared a page with a feature discussing how physical culture could be practised by women in the home – happily, it transpired, housework and physical culture could turn out to be one and the same thing.[79] As in *Vrai*, she made no mention of Freud; her first article made clear that 'nous ne ferons pas de théories, nous nous efforcerons toujours d'être pratiques'.[80] Her second column, on 25 January 1946, 'Que dire à nos enfants, comment agir avec eux?' was a repackaging of her *Vrai* article from 1 December 1941, frequently verbatim.

> Devant un caprice, ne dites jamais: "Je vais acheter un autre enfant" ou "Les gendarmes vont t'emmener", parce que ce n'est pas vrai et que vous donnez donc à votre enfant l'exemple du mensonge…
>
> NE DITES JAMAIS
> "Regarde, tout le monde se moque de toi" ou "qu'est-ce que les gens vont penser" …
>
> *Parce que* vous donnez, par cette réflexion, l'exemple de la vanité...

[77] For example, 'Sport et la danse', *Femmes françaises*, 24/08/1945; 'Le devoir envers la jeunesse', *Femmes françaises*, 18/01/1946.
[78] See Jay Damousi, 'Representations of the Body and Sexuality in Communist Iconography, 1920–1955', *Australian Feminist Studies*, 12 (1997), 59-75; Vassil Girginov, 'Totalitarian Sport: Towards an Understanding of its Logic, Practice and Legacy', *Totalitarian Movements and Political Religions*, 5 (2004), 25-58.
[79] See 'Culture physique avec matériel "maison"', *Femmes françaises*, 15/02/1946: 'Entretien de la beauté et entretien du ménage vont de pair ... [Le lavage des murs et des carreaux] vous permettra d'excellents mouvement d'élongation du buste, vous affinera la taille, et par le mouvement d'élévation du bras en avant, assouplira l'articulation de l'épaule et redressera les omoplates.'
[80] 'Dr Marguerite Fradeau', 'Introduction à une page d'éducation', *Femmes françaises*, 18/01/1946, 14. The 1946 *Femmes françaises* columns are reprinted in Dolto *Les Chemins de l'éducation* (Paris, 1994), 137-202.



nos enfants

...Savez-vous leur parler ?

Pour avoir la confiance d'un enfant et la garder toujours, il vous suffit de n'avoir jamais profité de votre supériorité pour triompher de lui.

Il ne faut pas " raisonner l'enfant ", tout au moins avant 7 ou 8 ans. Il faut agir " raisonnablement " à son égard.

SI VOUS ÊTES MÉCONTENTE DE VOTRE ENFANT,

NE DITES JAMAIS :

— Je vais acheter un autre enfant ! Les gendarmes vont t'emmener.

PARCE QUE :

Ce n'est pas vrai. Vous donnez l'exemple du mensonge.

AGISSEZ RAISONNABLEMENT. — Ne criez jamais plus fort que l'enfant qui fait un caprice. Taisez-vous, restez indifférente. Allez dans une autre pièce, attendez que l'enfant se calme. Si l'enfant est hors de lui, passez-lui sans colère de l'eau tiède sur la figure. Dès qu'il se sera tu, ou qu'il pleurera avec de vraies larmes, une gronderie affectueuse suivie d'un baiser si l'enfant le demande. Si c'est un caractère boudeur, ou un peu vindicatif, oubliez immédiatement la gronderie, vaquez à vos occupations et quelques minutes après, allez près de lui en souriant comme si vous aviez pris sa bouderie pour une petite malice et dites-lui en lui tendant les bras : " Alors, on embrasse maman ? "

NE DITES JAMAIS :

— Regarde, tout le monde se moque de toi. Qu'est-ce que les gens vont penser ?

PARCE QUE :

Il ne faut jamais humilier un enfant surtout s'il est naturellement orgueilleux. Son orgueil est une arme qu'il ne faut pas émousser, il faut nous en servir pour le conduire à la fierté de lui-même pour lui-même, à se former un idéal intérieur plus solide que tous les " qu'en dira-t-on ". Votre réflexion incite l'enfant à s'occuper de l'effet qu'il produit sur l'entourage, vous lui donnez l'exemple de la vanité.

AGISSEZ RAISONNABLEMENT. — Ne grondez jamais un enfant en public. Ne lui dites jamais rien quand il est en plein caprice. Attendez, pour agir, que ce soit fini. Ne dites jamais : " Tu me fais honte ", dites-lui : " Je voudrais tant être toujours fière de toi. "

NE DITES JAMAIS :

— Je le dirai à papa.
— Je le dirai à tes petits amis.
— Je le dirai à ta mémé qui t'aime tant.

PARCE QUE :

Il faut laisser les absents tranquilles ; ce qui se passe entre vous et votre enfant vous concerne tous les deux. Si vous parlez d'en référer ou de vous plaindre, vous amoindrissez votre prestige. Vous lui donnerez surtout un mauvais exemple. Vous éveillez une hostilité supplémentaire, car l'enfant sent que vous voulez vous venger, dans ses autres affections, de l'incident affectif qu'il a eu avec vous et vous lui enseignez la jalousie, la rancœur, en même temps que vous lui apprenez à " cafarder ".

SI VOTRE ENFANT S'EST FAIT MAL EN DÉSOBÉISSANT,

NE DITES JAMAIS :

— C'est bien fait, tu n'avais qu'à obéir, je t'avais défendu de toucher à cela.

PARCE QUE :

Il (ou elle) souffre. Paul (ou Colette) sait bien qu'il a désobéi.

Vous l'humiliez et vous avez l'air d'être indifférente à sa souffrance (si ce n'est de vous en réjouir). Vous triomphez de votre supériorité d'adulte capable de toucher le feu. Vous lui donnez l'exemple de l'égotisme, de la vanité, de la cruauté.

Vous sapez encore l'esprit d'initiative et la confiance en lui qu'il faut au contraire développer chez l'enfant, mais en l'étayant de prudence et d'esprit d'observation.

AGISSEZ RAISONNABLEMENT. — Restez toujours calme devant les accidents. Soyez d'abord compatissante. Soignez-le sans le gronder.

— Tu vois, mon chéri, on croit que maman défend des choses pour rien, maintenant tu sais qu'il ne faut pas toucher aux choses quand maman le défend. Et, puisque son intention était de vous imiter en touchant aux objets dangereux, pendant que vous êtes en train de lui faire son petit pansement, promettez-lui de lui montrer sous peu (ou faites-le dès que son pansement sera terminé si vous en avez le temps) les précautions que prennent les adultes pour toucher à ces objets dangereux. Vous lui montrerez ainsi qu'il ne s'est pas brûlé parce qu'il est " bête " ou parce qu'il est petit, mais parce qu'il n'a pas encore acquis la technique ni la force suffisantes. Vous développerez ainsi son sens d'observation et sa désobéissance lui aura servi tout en le rapprochant de vous.

M.

Fig. 4 – Dolto's column in *Vrai*, 01/12/1941...


LA MÈRE...
...ET L'ENFANT
QUE DIRE A NOS ENFANTS ?
COMMENT AGIR AVEC EUX ?
A propos de la désobéissance et à propos des caprices . . .
Nos vendeuses à l'honneur
Docteur Marguerite FRADEAU

Fig. 5 ... and the same text revised for *Femmes françaises*, 25/01/1946.

What does the fact that Dolto wrote for a Communist-run publication in 1946-47 say about how her politics had changed? The Marettes, like much of the French population, switched from Pétainism to Gaullism in 1942-43. Françoise's brother Pierre, the former colonial officer in Morocco, lost his army post with the dissolution of the Armistice Army in November 1942. With his father's assistance – Henry arranged a sinecure in a steel factory, thus exempting Pierre from STO – in 1943 he joined the Alliance resistance network of former army officers.[81] Her youngest brother Jacques did depart for the STO in Mannheim in 1943, taking with him a transmitter destined for the German Resistance.[82] Both brothers went on to have important careers under De Gaulle in subsequent decades: Pierre became a general, and Jacques a minister.

These developments add context to Dolto's resignation from the FFEPH in November 1943. So does her marriage, in February 1942, to Boris Dolto (1899-1981), a doctor and masseur, head of the École française d'orthopédie et de masso-kinésithérapie. Boris was (after 1929) naturalised French, but had

[81] Dolto to Nicole Marette, 08/06/1943, *VdC*, 110, and n. 12. Steel workers were exempt from STO under an agreement between Jean Bichelonne and Albert Speer classing steel as a protected industry. Resisters could thus be sheltered by friendly factory managers. Luc-André Brunet details creative measures taken by steel bosses to prevent underemployed workers being poached by the Germans in *Forging Europe: Industrial Organisation in France, 1940-1952* (London, 2017).
[82] See Suzanne to Françoise 12/08/1943, *VdC*, 113-4, and n. 22.

been born into the liberal intelligentsia of Crimea. He had arrived in France in 1922 via North Africa, where his White Army artillery unit had decamped in 1920 during the Russian Civil War.[83] In the 1920s he worked as a mechanic for Peugeot and for Renault at Billancourt, before obtaining his medical degree in 1934. He was mobilised as an army doctor in 1939, and survived a serious road accident during his service.

As a doctor, physiotherapist, and Orthodox Christian, Boris shared Françoise's holistic approach to medicine. In seeking out innovative contributions, he came across *Psychanalyse et pédiatrie*. Their common openness to esoteric forms of holistic therapy facilitated their meeting, in 1941, at sessions of 'directed waking dream therapy' (*rêve éveillé dirigé*) organised by Robert Desoille, the technique's founder.[84] Boris was a jovial and popular figure, intellectually and spiritually curious, fond of good company and a good drink. Françoise was attracted to his generosity, maturity and ability to take the role of listener, giving her respite from her customary position as an analyst and with male friends, such as Alain Cuny, Louis Renou and Louis Boulonnois (see below), with each of whom she took on something of a maternal role:

> Nous n'avons parlé que de moi hier soir. Vous m'avez écouté, et vous m'avez parlé avec la sollicitude d'un grand frère. D'ordinaire c'est à moi qu'est dévolu ce rôle et je reçois le reproche d'être égoïste quand je pouvais souhaiter que l'on me rende un peu de ce que je donne.[85]

Their relationship progressed swiftly. Boris was invited by the Marettes for Christmas 1941 ('vous remplacerez notre fils aîné, l'aviateur d'Agadir!') and they married on 12 February 1942 at the mairie of the 5th arrondissement, the mairie of the 16th unwilling, in 1942, to sacralise the marriage of a 'foreigner'.[86] An *allocution* was pronounced at the Eglise Catholique Russe de Paris. The couple moved to an apartment on Rue Saint-Jacques, declining one

[83] See Françoise Dolto's 1988 preface to Boris Dolto, *Le Corps entre les mains*, (Paris, 2006 (1976)).
[84] The technique interested psychoanalysts because it promised access to the unconscious thoughts of patients unable to recount their dreams. See Robert Desoille and Georges Mauco, 'La technique du rêve éveillé et ses applications', *Psyché*, 4 (1947), 150-8.
[85] Françoise to Boris, 03/08/1941 (draft), reproduced in Potin (ed.) *Archives de l'intime*, 156.
[86] Suzanne to Boris, 22/12/1941, *VdC*, 85.

in rue Chanoinesse too obviously hastily vacated, presumably by arrested Jews.[87]

The marriage widened Dolto's social circle to include masseurs, mechanics and Orthodox Christians. Their son Carlos, born in 1943, later remembered his childhood as a chaotic whirl of comings and goings, parties, dinners and visitors of all kinds from priests and Sikh gurus to poets, actors, analysts and musicians.[88] Being of Russian (albeit anti-Communist) origin, Boris came under some suspicion: Françoise later claimed that the Gestapo once forced him to strip to prove he was not Jewish.[89]

In 1943-44, Boris offered his services as a doctor to a resistance group, and resisters thus sometimes came to the Dolto apartment for treatment or shelter.[90] However, they were reluctant to stay the night:

> Quand ils venaient, parfois, pour passer la nuit, au dernier moment ils se ravisaient: 'Écoutez, ça vous est égal, hein? J'ai bien dîné, je suis peut-être ingrat mais je m'en vais.' Je disais: "Vous n'avez pas confiance en nous?" ... J'étais humiliée parce que les résistants ne se sentaient pas tellement en confiance chez nous.[91]

This passage is intriguing. Was their reluctance perhaps partly informed by knowledge of Françoise's earlier Vichy connections, casting doubt on the couple's reliability? Might this explain her memory of feeling humiliated?

In any case, it was not a barrier to her working closely with Vichy's opponents after the war, as a further episode from 1944-45 indicates. Henri Sellier, Popular Front health minister, was also the Socialist mayor of Suresnes, a western suburb of Paris. In the interwar years, Sellier, his administrator and town clerk Louis Boulonnois, and medical hygienist Robert-Henri Hazemann had implemented innovative social programmes in Suresnes, including nursery

[87] *Autoportrait*, 179.
[88] Jean-Chrysostome Dolto, *Je m'appelle Carlos* (Paris, 1996), 26.
[89] *Autoportrait*, 182-3.
[90] *Autoportrait*, 182.
[91] *Autoportrait*, 181.

schools, crèches, vocational education schemes, a clinic-dispensary, an open-air school for children susceptible to tuberculosis, and a 2,500-dwelling *cité-jardin*.[92] The Suresnes social care system was underpinned by *infirmières visiteuses*, nurses who functioned as points of contact between families and the social services, and *assistantes scolaires*, based in school infirmaries, who were in effect 'multi-purpose social workers … the key conduits for Sellier's network of social services'.[93]

In 1941 Sellier was sacked as mayor; he and Boulonnois were imprisoned for three weeks at the internment camp at Royallieu-Compiègne. Sellier died in 1943. With the Liberation, Boulonnois set about re-establishing social services. In November 1944, he contacted Dolto, asking her to become involved. He was aware of Dolto's thesis, and was interested in psychoanalysis, having in 1938 attempted to introduce some psychoanalytic ideas into Suresnes schools. Dolto agreed to 'assurer la consultation de l'Office Public d'Hygiène Sociale à Suresnes en neuro-psychiatrie'.[94] Boulonnois and Dolto's relationship subsequently developed to the point where Boulonnois wrote, a year later, of her acting 'comme maman et comme analyste' towards him.[95] However, like Dolto's wartime initiatives, the Suresnes project proved abortive, as Suresnes elected a Communist-dominated municipal council in April 1945, displacing Boulonnois and the Socialists.

For Boulonnois, Dolto's humanist-holistic ideas made her an appealing figure, and this clearly overrode previous political differences. Indeed, the Suresnes experiments may be seen as a socialist variant on technocratic holism. The municipality tried to engineer the environments in which its residents lived, worked, and were educated, in an effort to optimise their physical and mental condition. Laura Lee Downs has written that the Suresnes leaders aimed for 'ever greater technocratic control of the population' and that Sellier's reforms were 'undergirded by the neo-Lamarckian conviction that a reform of human

[92] See Downs, *Childhood*, ch. 3; Reynolds, *France between the Wars*, ch. 6.
[93] Downs, *Childhood*, 125-6; Reynolds, *France between the Wars*, 142-4.
[94] Louis Boulonnois to Dolto, 21/11/1944, *VdC*, 137.
[95] Boulonnois to Dolto, 24/10/1945, *VdC*, 143. Boulonnois had undergone an (apparently unproductive) analysis with Jacques Lacan in 1937.

material could be realised through systematic improvements in hygiene, housing, and education'.[96] There was a clear overlap between the roles of *infirmière visiteuse* and *assistante scolaire* at Suresnes and that of the 'médecin de famille' as imagined by Dolto. The Suresnes municipality also encouraged children to form a connection with rural France, via its *colonie de vacances* in the Nièvre. It is not hard to see why Dolto, once she had thrown off her 1930s prejudices against the republican parties, would be attracted to participating in such schemes.

Like the continuities between *Vrai* and *Femmes françaises*, Suresnes indicates the extent to which people across the political spectrum shared interests in children, the family and 'holistic' social engineering. It also shows that there were many directions in which Dolto's career might have gone, in the fluid political context of Liberation. She did not need to change anything fundamental about her approach to medicine and parenting in order to be able to write for a Communist-backed paper in 1946. Dolto seems to have approached the Liberation years in the same spirit as she initially saw the downfall of the Third Republic: as an opportunity to renew and remake France, in her case by applying psychoanalytic thinking to ensure future generations of French adults would suffer fewer neuroses. For Catholics not ideologically wedded to Vichy, the overlaps between 1940-41 and 1944-47 were considerable: both were opportunities for national and spiritual renewal, in an atmosphere of common rejection of Third Republic decadence – and both tinged with a sense of guilt, as will become clear in the next section.

The ideological fluidity of the Liberation years did not last: from 1947, the hardening of the Cold War accelerated the dissipation of Resistance unity. For Dolto, this meant in practice an end to her association with figures on the Left, and participating in the efforts of Catholic psychoanalysts to combine psychoanalysis with religion.

*

[96] Downs, *Childhood*, 128, 131.

In his Easter 1947 pastoral letter, the Archbishop of Paris, Cardinal Suhard, argued that the Catholic Church needed to make radical choices, in the context of a coming global revolution brought about by scientific and technological progress.[97] Suhard argued for a new synthesis of 'tradition et Progrès, transcendance et incarnation' to be achieved by Catholic scientists, sociologists, historians, psychologists, and philosophers. Such intellectuals should cooperate fully with all those, believers or not, engaged in 'pure' research.[98]

In the later 1940s and early 1950s, French Catholics frequently debated modernity, science and progress alongside the question of the appropriate role of sexuality in a Christian life, asking whether the new psychological sciences should be consulted. The issue of psychotherapy's relationship with religion was problematic: it represented a potential intrusion into the Church's historic territory, a challenge to the priest's competency in the care of souls. In the 1930s, Édouard Pichon and Roland Dalbiez had sought to fend off the question by separating psychoanalytic technique from Freudian 'doctrine' or 'philosophy', utilising the former while preventing the latter from encroaching onto medical or religious domains.[99] But by the later 1940s, this border was no longer being effectively policed.

In 1942, Père Bruno, the Carmelite monk who favoured a rapprochement between Catholicism and psychoanalysis, published a biography of Madame Acarie (1566-1618, also known as 'la belle Acarie'), his order's founder. The biography was partly intended as a demonstration of Bruno's ideas on combining psychology and religion.[100] But its main theme was marital sexuality. Bruno proposed Acarie's marriage as 'une forme accomplie de la perfection conjugale'.[101] Bruno discussed the compatibility between mystical

[97] See Colin W. Nettelbeck, 'The Eldest Daughter and the Trente glorieuses: Catholicism and National Identity in Postwar France', *Modern & Contemporary France*, 6/4 (1998), 445-62, here 451.
[98] Emmanuel Célestin (Cardinal Suhard), *Essor ou déclin de l'Église: Lettre pastorale, Carême de l'an de grâce 1947* (Paris, 1962), 151-2.
[99] See Desmazières, *L'Inconscient au paradis*, 50ff.
[100] Bruno de Jésus-Marie, *La Belle Acarie, bienheureuse Marie de l'Incarnation* (Paris, 1942), ix.
[101] Bruno, *Belle Acarie*, vi, 191.

union and sexual activity, arguing that marital sex could be a way of universalising mystical experience.[102] Bruno's valorisation of sexual ecstasy, albeit confined to marriage, provoked opposition from conservative clerics, but was nonetheless 'un important succès de librairie'.[103]

It seems very likely that Dolto read *La Belle Acarie*: her correspondence shows that by the 1950s, Bruno had become a close friend.[104] In 1957, they travelled to Zurich together to meet Carl Jung (see fig. 6). Bruno's ideas fed into her re-evaluation of her Christianity, already underway in the light of her marriage to the Orthodox Christian Boris. Their first child was named after the Orthodox Church Father St John Chrysostom (*c*.349-407). Like Bruno, John Chrysostom advocated the enjoyment of guilt-free sexuality within marriage, arguing that sexual desire and pleasure were worthy and justified even if no children resulted.[105] The Doltos had two further children: Grégoire, in 1944 and Catherine, in 1946.

At the Liberation, the Catholic church in France was faced with a need to re-evaluate its political orientation. Having largely supported the Vichy regime in 1940-41, the church leadership felt under pressure to demonstrate a greater openness to modernity. Cardinal Suhard's 1947 circular can be seen in this context. At a time when the dominant Catholic political movement was the Mouvement Républicain Populaire (MRP), a Christian democrat party born of the non-Marxist resistance, postwar Catholic theology progressed in a broadly 'democratic' direction. Theologians undertook a 'retour aux sources'; Biblical exegesis flourished, such that the Bible became, for the first time, a bestseller.[106] Theology also moved towards 'Christocentrism' – placing Jesus, rather than Mary, at the centre of worship. This had a political dimension, as the Marian cult was stronger among the intransigent/*intégriste* branches of French Catholicism. Biblical exegesis and Christocentrism thus accompanied

[102] Bruno, *Belle Acarie*, 487.
[103] Desmazières, *L'Inconscient au paradis*, 68.
[104] Bruno to Dolto, 01/01/1953, *VdC*, 224.
[105] St John Chrysostom, 'Homily 12', in *On Marriage and Family Life*, trans. Catherine P. Roth and David Anderson (New York, 2003), 76. I am indebted to Maroula Perisanidi for this reference.
[106] Fouilloux, *Église en quête de liberté*, 220ff.

the political shift to the centrist humanism of the MRP; increased Catholic openness to psychoanalysis can be seen as part of the same trend. These moves provoked opposition among Catholic intransigents, who often in practice overlapped with unrepentant Vichy supporters.



Fig. 6 – Carl Jung, Père Bruno and Dolto, Zurich, 1957. *VdC*, 279.

After 1945, there was considerable international interest in a potential synthesis between psychotherapy and religion. An American rabbi, Joshua Loth Liebman, had a bestseller in 1946 with *Peace of Mind*, a quality which, Liebman argued, could be found 'in the mighty confluence of dynamic

psychology and prophetic religion'.[107] Liebman suggested that while 'religion, at its best, is the announcer of the supreme ideals by which men must live and through which our finite species finds its ultimate significance', it was 'rooted in an antiquated psychology'. In 'this psychological age', religion must not reject psychoanalysis, which was 'the newest and sharpest tool that God has given men for the examination of the human mind and its complex motives'.[108]

Liebman was taking part in what W.W. Meissner has called 'a more meaningful conversation between analysts and religionists', advanced by such works as R.S. Lee's *Freud and Christianity* and Erich Fromm's *Psychoanalysis and Religion*.[109] In France, Catholic clergy and laity showed a much greater level of interest in psychoanalysis than before the war.[110] As well as Bruno, Catholics who engaged included the priests Marc Oraison and Paul Jury; the dominican Albert Plé, founder of the *Supplément de la vie spirituelle*, and the Jesuit Louis Beirnaert. As with Bruno, the theme of sexuality was central to this new interest. Jury's posthumously published *Journal d'un prêtre* drew attention to the secret sexual inner life of priests and the suffering caused by the insistence on celibacy.[111] Oraison's *Vie chrétienne et problèmes de la sexualité* argued that since psychoanalysis had attributed much of human behaviour, especially sexuality, to the unconscious acts that the Church considered 'against nature', such as masturbation, homosexuality, or fetishism, could not be considered mortal sins.[112] These works were the psychoanalytic end of a broader Catholic sexology literature, of which the most successful was Paul Chanson's *Art d'aimer et la continence conjugale*.[113] The Kinsey reports, whose impact in France should not be underestimated, provided a backdrop to

[107] Joshua Loth Liebman, *Peace of Mind* (New York, 1946), 27. The book topped the *New York Times* bestseller list for fifty-eight (non-consecutive) weeks. See Herzog, *Cold War Freud*, 37.
[108] Liebman, *Peace of Mind*, 21-3.
[109] R.S. Lee, *Freud and Christianity* (London, 1948); Erich Fromm, *Psychoanalysis and Religion* (New Haven, 1950). See W.W. Meissner, 'Psychoanalysis and Catholicism—Dialogues in Transformation', *Psychoanalytic Inquiry*, 28/5 (2008), 580-9.
[110] Desmazières, *L'Inconscient au paradis*, 92.
[111] Paul Jury, *Journal d'un prêtre* (Paris, 1956).
[112] Marc Oraison, *Vie chrétienne et problèmes de la sexualité* (Paris, 1952).
[113] Paul Chanson, *Art d'aimer et la continence conjugale* (Paris, 1950). See Desmazières, *L'Inconscient au paradis*, 145-6.

this, by underlining the hitherto unsuspected rarity of full sexual 'continence'.[114]

The engagement of French Catholics with psychoanalysis was easier because of the strong Catholic presence in the early postwar French psychoanalytic movement. After Liberation, the SPP was slow to reconstitute. Some Jewish members never returned from exile, and the RFP resumed publication only in 1948. In the interim, the main forum for psychoanalytic thought was *Psyché*, a journal that sought to combine psychoanalysis, Catholicism, and medical holism. Largely funded by René Laforgue, *Psyché* grew out of an organisation founded at Liberation entitled the Centre d'Étude des Sciences de l'Homme. This clearly recalled Carrel's FFEPH; indeed early editions of *Psyché* made numerous references to Carrel.[115] The Centre's leader was Maryse Choisy (1903-79), in her youth a radical investigative journalist, who converted to Catholicism in the 1930s under the guidance of Teilhard de Chardin.[116] Psychoanalysed by Laforgue in 1944, Choisy used her connections with Teilhard, Jury, Bernaiert and others to encourage priests to study psychoanalysis. Over the next decade, Choisy worked assiduously for the conciliation of psychoanalysis and Catholicism.[117]

Psyché was a broad-ranging journal, with a prestigious editorial board including Pierre Janet, Teilhard, the Sorbonne historian Gustave Cohen, Paul Masson-Oursel of the École des Hautes Études Orientales, and Prince Louis de Broglie of the Académie Française. Primarily, however, it set itself up at the interface between spirituality – primarily Catholic – and psychoanalysis. The opening editorial made clear its disagreement with those who believed that 'nous n'avons plus besoin de religion, puisque nous avons la psychanalyse'.[118] The analysts who contributed to *Psyché,* including Dolto, André Berge,

[114] See Fishman, *Vichy to the Sexual Revolution*, 52-4; Judith Coffin, 'Beauvoir, Kinsey, and Mid-Century Sex', *French Politics Culture and Society*, 28/2 (2010), 18-37.
[115] See Mijolla, *La France et Freud 1946-1953*, 11-14; Ohayon, *L'Impossible Rencontre*, 323-35; Roudinesco, *Jacques Lacan*, 192-205.
[116] See Ohayon, *L'Impossible Rencontre*, 324ff.
[117] In 1953, Choisy organised a 'congrès de psychothérapie catholique' in Rome, during which Pope Pius XII acknowledged psychoanalysis as a valid method for exploring human identity. Choisy also published *Le Chrétien devant la psychanalyse* (Paris, 1955).
[118] 'Où en sommes-nous', *Psyché*, 1 (1946), 2-6.

Georges Mauco, Angelo Hesnard, Adrien Borel, and Georges Parcheminey, were almost all Catholics, and most were Laforgue's former analysands.[119] *Psyché* was thus an intervention within psychoanalysis in favour of its Catholic strand, and within Catholicism in favour of opening out to other branches of knowledge. This brought it some opposition: the *intégriste* periodical *La Pensée Catholique*, founded in 1946, attacked Choisy and *Psyché* for engaging with evolutionary theory and psychoanalysis.[120]

Dolto, Choisy, Laforgue and Parcheminey also contributed to Bruno's *Études carmélitaines*, which likewise promoted interaction between Catholicism and psychoanalysis. One issue of *Études carmélitaines* was devoted to what Catholic directors of conscience might learn from psychology and psychoanalysis.[121] Another centred on the question of sexual 'continence', following a Congrès de psychologie religieuse organised by Bruno in 1950.[122]

Dolto's writings on religious psychology, including, I suggest, those published in the 1970s and 1980s, were shaped by this context, as well as by her experience of religion during her youth. As a Catholic psychoanalyst with an interest in holistic medicine, she was positioned at the centre of postwar efforts to synthesise psychoanalysis and religion. Dolto consistently opposed Catholic intransigence and any prioritisation of performativity over spirituality, or any suggestion that the letter of religious doctrine mattered more than the spirit. What counted was not 'le fait matériel de l'observance', but 'le niveau affectif du sujet qui s'y soumet, ses motivations et les raisons inconscientes'.[123] Writing in *Études carmélitaines*, she sought to distinguish 'true' religious feelings and attitudes towards questions of sin, guilt, or celibacy from 'false' versions. When written in psychologised language, this mapped onto an

[119] Dolto's articles were: 'Hypothèse nouvelle concernant les réactions dites de jalousie à la naissance d'un puîné', *Psyché*, 7, 9 and 10 (1947); 'Les sensations coenesthésiques d'aise ou de malaise, origine des sentiments de culpabilité', *Psyché*, 18 and 19 (1948); 'Rapport sur l'interprétation psychanalytique des dessins au cours des traitements psychothérapiques,' *Psyché* 17 (1948).
[120] See Desmazières, *L'Inconscient au paradis*, 141ff.
[121] *Direction spirituelle et psychologie: Etudes carmélitaines* (1951).
[122] *Mystique et continence. Travaux scientifiques du VII^e congrès international d'Avon: Études carmélitaines* (1952/1).
[123] Dolto, 'Mystique et continence', *Études carmélitaines* (1952/1), 209-19, reproduced in Dolto, *La Difficulté de vivre* (Paris, 1986), 251-67 (quote 266).

opposition between neurotic (false) attitudes and non-neurotic 'true' ones. For example, on the question of priestly celibacy, Dolto considered that a conscious, maturely-sought chastity – 'une continence recherchée' – was healthy, unlike 'une continence acceptée de façon masochiste, par obéissance à un maître'.[124] For Dolto, it did not much matter whether or not priests were celibate; the important thing was that celibacy, if adopted, should be chosen from a position of psychological maturity, such that sexuality was sublimated rather than repressed.

Behind the issue of continence, Dolto argued, lay 'le thème général de la culpabilité sentimentale', since feelings of guilt could induce priests to be celibate out of a neurotic or masochistic sense of duty, rather than as the result of a psychologically-mature adult decision.[125] Guilt, indeed, was a recurring theme of Dolto's writings in this period. 'True' feelings of guilt, she claimed, stemmed from love and confidence, whereas 'false' guilt, provoked by the unrealistic expectations of authority figures, 'est source de dépression, de manque de confiance en soi et dans la vie'.[126] A true sense of sin could only be experienced by a religious conscience liberated from feelings of false guilt.[127] One must liberate oneself from the 'sentiment inconscient de culpabilité' in order to develop a mature religious conscience and a 'true' understanding of sin. Accordingly, doctors and educators should be alert to early symptoms of guilt in young children: 'C'est seulement par des études cliniques de l'embryogénie des états inconscients de bien-être et de malaise ... que nous comprendrons les éléments psychosomatiques ... qui sont à l'oeuvre dans le sentiment inconscient de culpabilité'.[128] Dolto thus distinguished between an essentially immature religious sense – one imbued in children by their parents or social environment at an early age – and a fully realised adult spirituality, free of neurotic elements. If parents used the name of Jesus to enforce desired

[124] 'Mystique et continence', 265.
[125] 'Mystique et continence', 267.
[126] Dolto, 'Comment on crée chez l'enfant une fausse culpabilité', *Etudes carmélitaines*, (1949/2); reproduced in *La Difficulté de vivre*, 267.
[127] Dolto, 'La psychanalyse chez les enfants atteints des troubles du comportement', in *Ve Congrès international des Médecins Catholiques, Paris 6-9 juillet 1951* (Paris, 1952), 71-89. Copy in AFD, Box 5: Psychanalyse et pédagogie, fiche A7. See Desmazières, *L'Inconscient au paradis*, 122-5.
[128] Dolto, 'Les sensations coenesthésiques d'aise ou de malaise', 21.

behaviours, they were abusing their authority, since this only instilled a 'false' sense of religion:

> Si on dit à l'enfant … que Jésus pense comme les parents, ce Jésus – secours suprême … devient une image de gendarme civilisé, comptable des actes, et non pas l'ami, le consolateur … Nous ne devrions jamais faire passer pour un interdit religieux, qui, transgressé entraînerait faute de morale, ce qui n'est qu'un usage, une affaire d'étiquette mondaine ou de conformisme social.[129]

For similar reasons, in 1949 Dolto refused an invitation to write a column for a new Catholic magazine aimed at war widows, *Offertoire.* The column would have discussed widows' difficulties in bringing up children in the absence of the natural father. Dolto objected on the grounds that 'l'esprit de votre revue est tout entier consacré à l'oblation du veuvage'.[130] She informed the editor that her entire publication was misconceived:

> Le titre même ainsi que tous les articles impliquent l'installation pour le reste du temps à vivre d'une veuve dans une situation de fait à la mort du conjoint ... J'ai vu qu'il était même recommandé aux veuves la fidélité post mortem au mari comme si celui-ci les attendait au seuil de la mort, jaloux'.

Dolto would not endorse a publication that seemed to emphasise duty to dead men over widows' right to lead full and fecund lives. As will be recalled from chapter 2, there was a biographical background to these statements. Guilt, specifically guilt induced by excessive external pressure to conform, was a major theme of Dolto's own analysis. Later, she identified intransigent Catholicism with the restrictive, performative aspects of her upbringing. By forcing young children to perform catechism and other rituals before they were sufficiently intellectually mature, Dolto wrote (in 1985), 'l'Eglise catholique a culpabilisé inutilement toutes les générations de notre siècle'.[131] Adults too, like the war widows targeted by *Offertoire*, should not be held back by guilt from moving on with their lives. Neither parents, nor the Church on behalf of dead husbands, had the right to make complaints along the lines of: 'Quand je

[129] Dolto, 'Comment on crée chez l'enfant une fausse culpabilité', 280.
[130] Dolto to Mme François Jacquemin, 20/12/1949, *VdC*, 182-3.
[131] Dolto, *Cause des enfants*, 41.

pense à tous les sacrifices que j'ai faits pour toi … maintenant tu me laisses … tu vas dans un autre pays…'[132] Their attempt to provoke guilt should be resisted. 'Ne sois pas lié par la reconnaissance à manifester à celui qui t'a secouru.'[133] When in 1958 her daughter Catherine came home with a 'questionnaire individuel' issued by the local parish, Dolto extensively annotated it. Under the question 'est-ce que je cherche à faire plaisir à ceux qui m'entourent?', she wrote 'perversion du sens du sacré qui est création et non plaisir'. Under 'est-ce que j'aime la netteté de mon imagination et de mes pensées?', she wrote 'angoisse des projets de rencontres sexuelles'. She proposed replacement questions which moved the focus from duty to spirituality, such as 'est-ce que je continue à approfondir le sens de ma religion?'[134]

This biographical background sat in a wider historical context that conditioned the discussion of guilt in French Catholic circles after the war. Guilt was a staple of Pétainist discourse, asserting France's culpability for its 1940 defeat as a kind of divine retribution for its alleged decadence. After occupation, collaboration, liberation, and discovery of the Holocaust, the subject became much more ambiguous. How much guilt should French Catholics who had supported Vichy feel, and what exactly should they feel guilty for? How severely should collaborators be punished, and for how long should they be ostracised?

This question affected psychoanalysis, and Dolto's professional entourage, directly. In 1946 John Leuba, as head of the SPP, argued that the society needed to 'faire une épuration avant de reprendre nos activités'.[135] Leuba's principal target was Laforgue who, in the wake of the German victory in 1940 had attempted to work with the occupiers. He made contact with Matthias Goering, cousin of Hermann and head of the Nazi-approved *Deutsche allgemeine ärztliche Gesellschaft für Psychotherapie.* Laforgue told Goering that he (Laforgue) could reconstitute the SPP under his leadership, and issue

[132] Dolto and Sévérin, *L'Évangile au risque* 1, 151.
[133] Dolto and Sévérin, *L'Évangile au risque* 1, 155.
[134] AFD, box 47 ('Religion – La Foi'), fiche 4.
[135] Quoted in Ohayon, *L'Impossible Rencontre*, 247.

L'Évolution psychiatrique under German sponsorship. The Jewish members would naturally be excluded; Laforgue went so far as to give Goering a list of names considered 'un danger pour le rapprochement de nos deux peuples'.[136] Laforgue probably hoped to obtain a university post and permission to publish his new book on great men and the 'psychopathology of failure'.[137] Neither hope was granted, though he was admitted to the Nazi-run International Society for Psychotherapy in 1941. In 1942 Laforgue retreated to his estate at La Roquebrussanne in the Unoccupied Zone – where Dolto had joined the 'club des piqués' before the war – where he provided some assistance to Resistance groups, while remaining in contact with Goering.[138]

Not all of these details were known in 1946, but enough were for Laforgue to be brought before a *tribunal d'épuration*. Dolto, called as a witness, delivered what Roudinesco describes as 'a ringing speech of homage to Laforgue'.[139] The tribunal – unaware of the Laforgue-Goering correspondence – acquitted Laforgue for lack of evidence. He retained his place in the Ordre des Médecins and the SPP, but the trial permanently tarnished his reputation. It was in the wake of this that Laforgue 'became increasingly inclined to direct his attention to spiritual concerns' and helped Choisy to found *Psyché*.[140]

Laforgue's former analysand Georges Mauco also had a tarnished wartime record, discussed further in chapter 4 in the context of the Centre Claude Bernard. So too did Père Bruno who, according to Agnès Desmazières, had 'frequenté des collaborateurs notoires' and published an article in collaborationist paper *La Gerbe*.[141] His relationship with Jacques Maritain,

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[136] Alain de Mijolla and Elisabeth Roudinesco, who exposed Laforgue's collaboration in the 1980s, absolved him of antisemitism. Annick Ohayon, having found Laforgue's diary, disagrees. See Ohayon, *L'Impossible Rencontre*, 243-9; Mijolla, 'La psychanalyse en France'; Roudinesco, *Jacques Lacan*, 156-63; Roudinesco, 'René Laforgue et la collaboration manquée'; Mijolla, *Freud et la France, 1885-1945*, 781-2.
[137] René Laforgue, *Psychopathologie de l'échec (Napoleon, Robespierre, Rousseau*) (Paris, 1950).
[138] Roudinesco, *Jacques Lacan*, 159; Ohayon, *L'Impossible Rencontre*, 245.
[139] Roudinesco, *Jacques Lacan*, 161.
[140] Roudinesco, *Jacques Lacan*, 162.
[141] Desmazières, *L'Inconscient au paradis*, 91. On *La Gerbe* see Richard Golsan, 'Ideology, cultural politics and literary collaboration at *La Gerbe*', *Journal of European Studies*, 23/89-90 (1993), 27-47.

who opposed Vichy, suffered as a result. French psychoanalysts were not disproportionately likely to have been collaborators or Nazi-sympathisers; the SPP also contained two important resisters in Paul Schiff and Sacha Nacht (discussed below). But Dolto was much closer to Laforgue, Bruno and Mauco – and she, of course, had also supported the National Revolution, if not collaboration.

I suggest that these issues provide context for Dolto's thinking about guilt after the war, and I propose to read her writings on religion in this light. Her 1948 text on guilt for *Psyché* indeed positioned itself as a modest contribution to a line of work being pioneered by Laforgue:

> Le docteur Laforgue a parlé de l'apaisement que les religions, et surtout la religion catholique, peuvent apporter au sentiment de culpabilité inconsciente … Je voudrais, en tant que psychanalyste d'enfants, apporter ma modeste part à cette étude.[142]

L'Évangile au risque de la psychanalyse and *La Foi au risque de la psychanalyse*, published between 1977 and 1981, were, I contend, based on reflections that began in this 1940s-1950s period. Her correspondence reveals that in 1943 she was working on a reinterpretation of St John's gospel, and her introduction to the first volume of *L'Évangile au risque...* suggests that her religious thinking developed in the early part of her career, in the context of the theological 'retour aux sources'.[143] In these short, conversational books Dolto interpreted the gospels through the prism of psychoanalytic theory, arguing for a fundamental compatibility between Freud and Jesus.

Rereading the gospels as an adult, Dolto discovered in them a 'message de joie et d'amour ... [ce qui était] en contradiction totale avec ... cette éducation dite chrétienne, reçue par tant de nos patients, [qui est] ennemie de la vie et de la charité'.[144] The gospels now appeared to her as a 'psychodrame' in which 'rien

[142] Dolto, 'Les sensations coenesthésiques d'aise ou de malaise', 18.
[143] Louis Renou to Dolto, 22/10/1943, *VdC*, 20. '[Après que] je suis devenue médecin et psychanalyse … La Bible, les Évangiles se sont mis à me questionner et moi à réagir à leur lecture'. Dolto and Sévérin, *L'Évangile au risque* 1, 12.
[144] *L'Évangile au risque* 1, 10.

du message du Christ n'était en contradiction avec les découvertes freudiennes'.[145] Dolto claimed stories from the gospels as exemplars of psychoanalytic theory. For example, she described the story of the boy Jesus at the Temple (Luke 2: 41-52) as a tale in which 'Jésus castre ses parents de leur possessivité … comme chaque enfant doit le faire'.[146]

A key part of Jesus' message, Dolto argued, was the liberation of humans from traditional sources of guilt and obligation. In her reading of the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector (Luke 18: 9-14) she contrasted the Pharisee's loyalty to the law ('I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get') with the tax collector's awareness of 'la justice et l'amour de Dieu'.[147] She assimilated the Pharisee to those 'militants de syndicats, de partis, de religions, d'idéologies [qui] savent qu'ils détiennent la vérité ou du moins savent ce que les autres doivent penser et comment ils doivent vivre'. For Dolto, the message of this parable was that 'il faut dépasser ces états affectifs et ces sentiments d'indignité, de culpabilité'. Living according to the letter of the law, out of a sense of duty, is 'malheureux'. Similarly, her reading of the parable of the prodigal son was that 'c'est trop souvent autour des sentiments de culpabilité que s'ordonne ou s'organise la cohésion des familles … c'est tout le contraire que Jésus enseigne'.[148]

The keystone of the *Évangile au risque*… project was the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10: 25-37); it was after discussing this at a dinner with editor Jean-Pierre Delarge that the idea for the larger project took shape.[149] Dolto's reading of the Samaritan parable, is also, I suggest, the most revealing of her attitudes to guilt. As a child, Dolto claimed, the parable was interpreted to her by priests as follows: 'Jésus nous demande d'aimer notre prochain, de nous occuper de toutes les détresses, de donner de notre temps, de notre vie pour les

[145] *L'Évangile au risque* 1, 13.
[146] *L'Évangile au risque* 1, 35.
[147] Dolto and Sévérin, *L'Évangile au risque* 2, 103-17.
[148] Dolto and Sévérin, *La Foi au risque*, 40.
[149] *L'Évangile au risque* 1, 10-11. Dolto's reading of the parable begins p. 145.

malheureux. Ne soyons pas égoïstes, tels ce prêtre et ce lévite qui voient et passent outre.'[150]

This interpretation stressed that obligations of charity were not limited by social barriers; the human duty to help a neighbour in distress applied regardless of class or ethnic difference. Dolto turned this interpretation on its head. In her reading, the definition of 'prochain' is subjective and relative. The priest and Levite are not the 'prochain' for the injured man because, as men of God, they have nothing in common with him. Dolto emphasised that Jesus does not blame them for not stopping. However the Samaritan, Dolto imagines, was 'un homme "matériel", pratique … un commerçant sans doute!' As such, he would be regularly threatened by bandits and thus aware that the injured man could just as easily be him. Therefore he stops to do what he can to help without significantly inconveniencing himself – a bandage for his wounds, a lift to the nearest inn, enough money to last a couple of days. But those who did not stop need not feel guilty about this. For Dolto the moral of the parable was:

> Quand tu as, comme ce Samaritain, un peu de temps et la possibilité matérielle, ne tourne pas le dos à qui tu vois dans la peine.
>
> Quand tu n'es pas occupé à autre chose et que tu as un surplus de vitalité, donne à celui qui, sur ton chemin, est dans le besoin, si tu le peux. Mais n'en fais pas davantage. Ne te détourne pas de ton travail. Ne te détourne pas de ton chemin.[151]

In the context of postwar guilt, this theology was rather convenient for those with mixed wartime records. It denied that people who resisted the Occupation, who saved the lives of Jews and Resisters, were morally superior to those who did not – they simply happened to be in a position where they could act as the 'prochain'. And those who did not turn away from their work, from their 'chemin', were morally justified in doing so.

[150] *L'Évangile au risque* 1, 146.
[151] *L'Évangile au risque* 1, 155.

Some support for my interpretation may be found in *Autoportrait*, in which Dolto – shortly before her death – stated that the Jews 'ont été le Christ pendant la guerre. Le Christ sur la croix, ce sont les Juifs. Les Juifs incarnent le Christ sans même le savoir. Ils ne savent pas qu'ils sont christiques, ils l'incarnent.'[152] If the purpose of Christ's suffering on the cross is to provide Christians with a model and a knowledge that redemption awaits them in heaven, then the Jews killed by Nazis seemed to Dolto to fulfil a similar purpose. And if the Jews' suffering served a spiritual purpose, then perhaps there was less reason to feel guilty about not acting to prevent it.

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In 1949, the French Communist Party condemned psychoanalysis as an 'idéologie réactionnaire'.[153] Its attack framed psychoanalysis as bourgeois, conservative, American and capitalist – 'une technique d'adaptation à la société bourgeoise'.[154] It accused psychoanalysis of attempting to neutralise potential rebellion against the capitalist order by medicalising it: 'Des psychanalystes authentiques tendent à présenter comme morbides les conduites humaines qui visent à transformer l'ordre social.'[155] Freudian techniques could only offer a partial liberation from psychological afflictions, since they could not reveal the 'sources profondes' – i.e. the socio-economic relations – that underpinned them.[156]

This attack needs to be seen in the context of postwar Soviet antisemitism as well as escalating Cold War tensions between the Soviet Union, which favoured Pavlovian psychology and after 1930 held psychoanalysis in official disfavour, and the United States. New York had become the leading global centre of psychoanalysis, thanks in large part to the wave of Jewish analysts

[152] *Autoportrait*, 186.
[153] Bonnafé et al., 'La psychanalyse, idéologie réactionnaire', *La Nouvelle Critique*, 7 (1949), reproduced in Jacques-Alain Miller (ed.), *La Scission de 1953 – La communauté psychanalytique en France I* (Paris, 1976), 17-28, here 20. See also Roudinesco, *Jacques Lacan*, 178-89.
[154] Bonnafé et al., 'La psychanalyse, idéologie réactionnaire', in Miller (ed.), *La Scission de 1953*, 20.
[155] Bonnafé et al., 'La psychanalyse, idéologie réactionnaire', 17.
[156] Bonnafé et al., 'La psychanalyse, idéologie réactionnaire', 22.

fleeing Hitler – including Rudolph Loewenstein, the analyst of three leading postwar French psychoanalysts: Jacques Lacan, Daniel Lagache and Sacha Nacht. That wave also included Nacht's second analyst, Heinz Hartmann, president of the International Psychoanalytic Association (IPA) between 1953 and 1957 – later known as one of the founders of the 'ego psychology' and vigorously attacked by Lacan and his followers in the 1950s.

From 1949, French communists sympathetic to psychoanalysis were required to renounce that sympathy, or at least affirm the primacy of their communism. On the other hand, some Catholic intransigents now softened their hostility to psychoanalysis, realising that the *Psyché* group, at least, was decidedly anti-Communist.[157] In 1951, Dolto even got a favourable review in the Vatican journal *L'Osservatore Romano*, which described her presentation to an international congress of Catholic doctors, on 'la formation de la conscience morale de l'enfant', as 'brillante et profonde'.[158]

From 1948, the re-formed SPP was led by Nacht, a Romanian-born Jewish doctor and ex-Resister. Nacht had worked from 1942-43 in the 'Brick' network of the *Forces françaises combattantes*. Arrested by the Gestapo in 1943, he escaped from a concentration camp and became a *médecin capitaine* in the Liberation army.[159] Nacht's vision for the SPP was very different from the spiritual-holistic direction of *Psyché*. Nacht saw psychoanalysis as first and foremost a branch of medicine. He wanted to restrict its practice to qualified physicians and to integrate French psychoanalysis more closely with state medical structures and the IPA. *Psyché*, by contrast, sought to open up psychoanalysis to 'lay' (i.e. non-medical) practitioners and forge links with the Catholic church and holistic therapies.

These differences contributed to the SPP's split in 1953. In December 1951, the Ordre des Médecins brought a case for illegal practice of medicine against a non-medical American child psychoanalyst, Margaret Clark-Williams who,

[157] Desmazières, *L'Inconscient au paradis*, 144.
[158] See Desmazières, *L'Inconscient au paradis*, 122-3.
[159] Ohayon, *L'Impossible Rencontre*, 248-9.

since 1946, had worked at the Centre Claude Bernard, a 'centre psycho-pédagogique' (see chapter 5), and who joined the SPP in 1950. Clark-Williams testified that she practised 're-education therapy' and was thus a pedagogue, not a psychoanalyst: if no psychoanalysis had taken place, no medical supervision was necessary. The problem with this argument was that it implicitly recognised that psychoanalysis *did* require medical supervision – but Clark-Williams' supporters, including Marie Bonaparte and Maryse Choisy, wanted to use the trial to defend the principle of lay analysis. In 1953, an appeal court imposed a symbolic fine and threw the affair back to the SPP, citing its recommendation that trainee analysts should be medically qualified.[160]

The Society was dividing into those who supported accommodation with the medical authorities, such as Nacht and Georges Heuyer, and those, including Dolto, Lagache and Lacan, who upheld non-medical analysis. This division overlapped with a battle for control of the SPP's Training Institute, now being re-established following its 1940 dissolution. Whoever controlled this would effectively decide how psychoanalysis would be taught to postwar students and analysands. Here, the divide was between supporters of 'orthodox' psychoanalytic training – i.e. respecting the IPA's norms, derived from Sigmund Freud, such as the 45-50 minute analytic 'hour' – and those who felt analysts should be free to innovate. Particularly contentious were the methods employed by Lacan, already clearly a rising star of the movement. A training institute run by Lacan, with his infamous 'short sessions' and idiosyncratic theorising, would be very different to one run by the 'orthodox' Nacht.

Dolto was prominent among the 'dissidents', defined as those who supported both Lacan and non-medical analysis. Partisans of a synthesis between Catholicism and psychoanalysis aligned behind non-medical analysis, partly because priests undertaking analytical training would be unlikely to possess a medical degree. For similar reasons, the women in the SPP also mostly opposed Nacht – women with medical degrees were still rare, and thus

[160] On the Clark-Williams trial see Roudinesco, *Jacques Lacan*, 209-12; Mijolla, *La France et Freud 1946-1953*, entries for 1950, 1952, 1953.

restricting psychoanalysis to doctors would exclude most women from the profession. The Ordre des Médecins – conservative and corporatist – seemed especially keen to target non-medical female analysts like Clark-Williams.[161] Lagache and Juliette Favez-Boutonier, academic professors of psychology, opposed Nacht because they did not wish to see psychoanalysis restricted to a medical discipline. On methodology, Catholic trainees likewise supported Lacan – his training might have been, as Marie Bonaparte said, 'à la va-vite', but it therefore cost less.[162] In total, fifty-one out of eighty-five trainee analysts supported Lacan over Nacht, whose authoritarian management style also contributed to the numbers opposing him.

The faultlines were thus not straightforward. The *Psyché* group, the 'Laforguians', the theorists of guilt – including Dolto, Mauco, Angelo Hesnard, André Berge – were united against Nacht. In a letter to the fifty-one trainees, Dolto denounced Nacht's 'direction paternaliste coercitive' and argued that he and his supporters appeared 'plus religieux traditionaliste que scientifique, plus craintif de perdre des droits d'exclusivité … que de se mettre au service des hommes vivants, mouvant dans le monde mouvant'.[163] In private correspondence, Dolto further attacked Nacht as a 'gorille gangster' and 'un camarade apeuré animalement rusé' and denounced (in a section removed in the published correspondence) 'la bande des Juifs communistes' running the SPP.[164] This last comment in particular indicates that Dolto's religious and political views cannot be easily separated from her professional positions. Both flowed from a broader, holistic, humanist, Catholic outlook.

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This episode of the 1953 split brings together several themes. Though by this point Dolto identified as a child psychoanalyst rather than a generalist, holism

[161] See Roudinesco, *Jacques Lacan*, 208.
[162] Marie Bonaparte to Rudolph Loewenstein, 05/02/1953, cited in Ohayon, *L'Impossible Rencontre*, 371. On training costs, see Desmazières, *L'Inconscient au paradis*, 95.
[163] Dolto 'au docteur Jenny Roudinesco et aux analystes en formation', 27/05/1953, *VdC*, 227-8.
[164] Dolto to Lacan, 16/05/1953, *VdC*, 224, and Dolto to Arturo Prat, 30/05/1953, *VdC*, 229. See Roudinesco's comments in Catherine Robin and Dorothée Werner, 'Françoise Dolto a-t-elle tout faux?', *Elle*, 11/10/2013.

remained an important part of her thinking. She still saw her mission as being to bring together medical and psychoanalytic insights to assist children's healthy development, and to encourage others to do the same. As in 1940 and indeed the rest of her career, she thought of this as something that would contribute to the 'redressement de la France' and the benefit of the French 'ethnie'. She was more concerned with the sincerity of practitioners' desire to help others than with formal qualifications or bureaucratic restrictions. She believed in the power of human connections to solve 'human problems', to borrow the term favoured by Carrel and Coutrot in the 1930s.

A committed Christian, Dolto wanted to help bring Catholicism and psychoanalysis together. In addition to her sincere conviction in their compatibility, this was a way of opposing an intransigent strain of Catholicism that she associated with the conformist, guilt-inducing pressures of her youth. But the project to 'Christianise' psychoanalysis had other, political and moral connotations. Forging a Catholic psychoanalysis would help defuse any lingering antisemitic prejudice against analysis as a 'Jewish science'. It may also be seen as an act of appropriation, denying any Jewish specificity to Freudian ideas. In *L'Évangile au risque…*, Dolto treated Freud as a second Jesus, meaning a teacher whose message resonated beyond (or against) Judaism into human universality. She stressed the point with analyses of gospel passages (Mark 7: 24-31, Matthew 15: 21-28, John 4: 1-42) describing Jesus' passage from Jewish teacher to universal healer. Freud, she implied, belonged in the same Christian tradition. Furthermore, Jesus belonged in a Freudian tradition. The gospels were a 'psychodrame' – the word famously used by Raymond Aron to downplay the social factors underlying the May 1968 events.[165] Dolto's Jesus performed acts of individual psychological healing with few social implications. He did not demand that Christians go enormously out of their way to help others, or that they should feel guilt for failing to do so – a comforting idea not just for those with undistinguished wartime records, but also for those who, either in the current Cold War context or during her upbringing in bourgeois Passy, did not support radical wealth

[165] Raymond Aron, *La Révolution introuvable. Réflexions sur les événements de Mai* (Paris, 1968). Dolto, *L'Évangile au risque* 1, 14.

redistribution.

Nacht's determination to shape psychoanalysis in a very different way – to medicalise and (worse, from Dolto's point of view) standardise it – affected Dolto viscerally, because it appeared to call into question the validity of her professional identity. It risked taking psychoanalysis – or at least, Dolto's version of it – back to the interwar situation where it existed on the margins of a secular, male, paternalist Republican medical establishment sceptical of its scientific validity. Faced with this, Dolto became a 'dissident' – as the Marettes had been 'dissidents' with regard to the Third Republic. She wanted more liberty to innovate and to bring psychoanalysis and religion into public life. Perhaps also, though Dolto would not have readily admitted it, she wanted liberty for women to pursue professional careers.

Growing up in the 1920s and 1930s, 'dissidence' for Dolto meant opposition to gendered republican positivism, expressed through a Catholic holism that could adapt to a variety of political circumstances, including the National Revolution. In the 1960s, radical (anti-)psychiatrists and Lacanian psychoanalysis would suggest how dissidence could be approached from a different direction; Dolto, as chapter 5 will show, embraced many of the tenets of radical psychiatry. This, and her advocacy of 'permissive' child-rearing approaches, helped her to build a reputation as a progressive, liberal thinker, obscuring her past associations with Pétainism.

Not everyone, however, was prepared to forget her past stances. When, after 1960, the Société Française de Psychanalyse (SFP – the organisation created by the 1953 'dissidents') sought integration into the International Psychoanalytic Association, the IPA made its accession conditional on the exclusion of Lacan and Dolto, or at least on preventing them from training new analysts. It was predictable that Lacan would be singled out: from the point of view of the IPA, attempting to maintain an international set of standards for analytic practice, Lacan had long been the enfant terrible of the French movement. His short sessions, theoretical innovations, and charismatic cultivation of a personal following were anathema to the IPA's conservative

position.[166] Dolto's exclusion was more of a surprise. Roudinesco speculatively attributed it to British analyst Donald Winnicott's somewhat gendered judgement that Dolto 'had too much intuition and not enough method to be a training analyst'.[167] However, documents unearthed by Alain de Mijolla strongly suggest an alternative explanation. The SPP had sent a dossier to the IPA, very likely written by Nacht, which was particularly hostile towards Dolto, accusing her of 'des pratiques thaumaturgiques', running short sessions, maintaining improper contact with patients, and becoming 'éloignée de toute technique régulière'.[168] In addition to Dolto, the document attacked René Laforgue (noting his wartime collaboration) and Angelo Hesnard, the most senior surviving member of the pre-war SPP's right-wing nationalist tendency. Both, along with Dolto and Lacan, were excluded from the IPA: political scalps, perhaps, obtained by Nacht in exchange for acquiescence in the readmission of the rest of the SFP. If this was Nacht's revenge for Dolto's actions in 1953, in the short term it hit home: Dolto was deeply disconcerted to be excluded from the international movement, as her letters show. In the longer run, their exclusion – cleverly termed an 'excommunication' by Lacan, thus recognising the religious dimension of the split while casting himself as a latter-day Spinoza – could feed a myth of Lacan and Dolto as radical, pioneering outsiders – thereby helping them to create new orthodoxies of their own.[169]

[166] See Pierre Turquet (head of the IPA's enquiry commission into the SFP), 'Report on a visit to the Société Française de Psychanalyse, 21/06/1960 with some statistical material', reproduced in Mijolla, *La France et Freud 1954-1964*, 275-9.
[167] Roudinesco, *Jacques Lacan*, 319.
[168] Mijolla, *La France et Freud 1954-1964*, 319ff.
[169] Lacan, *Le Séminaire de Jacques Lacan, livre XI – Les quatre concepts fondamentaux de la psychanalyse, 1964*, ed. Jacques-Alain Miller (Paris, 1973).

Part II. Taking Psychoanalysis Public, 1945-88

Chapter 4 – The Family Politics of Psychoanalysis, 1945-68

The first three chapters of this thesis have explored the ideological and political environment that produced Dolto as a clinician, shaping the views that she promoted in subsequent decades. The second half of the thesis focuses on Dolto's relationship with the French public, and her interactions with ordinary parents and children. Chapter 5 looks at autism, focusing on how Dolto collaborated with radical critics of somatic psychiatry to popularise a psychoanalytic conception of autism that emphasised the role of 'pathogenic' mothers. Chapter 6 examines Dolto as a national cultural figure from the late 1960s through to the 1980s, focusing on her radio programmes and the Maison Verte. The current chapter looks at the 1945-65 period – before Dolto's elevation to national fame, but years in which she pursued various ways of influencing public attitudes by interacting with wider audiences beyond her clinic and the psychoanalytic movement. It takes as its three major examples Dolto's 1940s and 1950s speeches at the École des Parents; her work at the Centre Claude Bernard (CCB), and her early radio appearances, especially a series of broadcasts on sex education on *La Tribune de Paris* in 1950.

Dolto consistently sought to popularise psychoanalytic thinking and promote its use in parenting, medicine, education and wider public culture. Her public engagement took numerous forms: magazine articles, press interviews, public lectures, radio broadcasting, books and TV appearances. These final chapters will take all of these into account while also considering Dolto's ability to shape French society less directly, by participating in (and later creating) institutions that gave psychoanalysts and psychoanalytically-informed educators access to large numbers of young children. Chapter 6 demonstrates that this reached its height with the Maison Verte, an idea launched in the 1970s by Dolto and colleagues, leveraging the fame of Dolto's radio broadcasts to obtain state financial backing. The Maison Verte initiative can be seen as a successor to an earlier set of institutions, Centres Médico-Psycho-

Pédagogiques (CMPPs), in which Dolto participated from the 1940s, as the current chapter describes. These centres, like Dolto's own thinking, were influenced by interwar and Vichyite Catholic-patriarchal views of the family, combined with a psychoanalytic concept of childhood determinism and Laforguian ideas of psychogenic families.

This second part of the thesis maintains a contextual awareness of the changing status of psychoanalysis within French intellectual and popular culture, and of the evolution of French social attitudes and government policies towards the family. If Dolto's popular success cannot be understood independently of the enormous intellectual influence of psychoanalysis in France after 1960, Sandrine Garcia correctly argues it should also be understood in the context of advances in women's rights: Dolto's two phases of national broadcasting followed the 1967 legalisation of contraception and the 1975 law legalising abortion respectively.[1] The appeal of Dolto's emphasis on the rights of children, as opposed to mothers, in her later career, can usefully be understood as part of attempts by advocates of 'traditional' family structures to respond to these changes. This idea will be developed towards the end of this chapter.

I. 'Psychologisation', 'permissiveness', education and women

If the interwar period was when psychoanalysis began to occupy a central place in intellectual and popular culture, the postwar decades were the years in which, in many western countries, this translated into impacts on public policy; psychoanalysis, in effect, became integrated into welfare states.[2] The public-facing aspects of Dolto's career can be taken as a case study in the dissemination of psychoanalytic ideas 'beyond the couch', in Michal Shapira's phrase – that is, outside the clinical setting and into the everyday world of parents, teachers, nurses, educators, and social workers.[3] Shapira demonstrated that psychoanalytic ideas resonated with judges and civil servants in 1940s

[1] Garcia, *Mères sous influence,* introduction.
[2] See Zaretsky, *Political Freud*, ch. 1.
[3] Shapira, *War Inside*, 1.

Britain, thus 'transforming both public policy and the individual experiences of citizens of diverse backgrounds'.[4] By influencing social work and the treatment of criminals and 'juvenile delinquents', psychoanalysts 'helped produce new expectations for selfhood, citizenship, mental health, and the emergent social democracy'.[5] Eli Zaretsky argues that a key term in this phase in psychoanalytic history is 'maturity': 'from its [new] place in the established order, psychoanalysis stood for a new ethic of "responsibility," and "adulthood"'.[6] This idea tallies with Dolto's approach to religious psychology, as shown in chapter 3. The 'maturity ethic' also, Zaretsky argues, connoted a 'rejection of radical politics and the insistence that freedom resided primarily in the private realm' – an insistence characteristic of 1950s ego psychology.[7] In the French context, this arguably found expression in the holistic, Catholic anti-Communism of *Psyché*.

The postwar period was one in which magazines and other aspects of popular culture regularly foregrounded psychological thinking, helping to create a form of 'psychologised society' in which, as Sarah Fishman writes, 'the habit of seeing others, children, spouses, and the self, in psychological terms spread'.[8] I want to consider this 'psychologisation' of western society in relation to what Mathew Thomson, in his history of psychological thinking in Britain, called the move from a 'Victorian culture of character' to the 'permissiveness of our age'.[9] In this chapter I use the term 'permissiveness' to suggest the general twentieth-century move towards the validation and social discussion of individual human emotion – what Antoine Prost termed 'la légitimation des sentiments et de leur expression' – as well as the loosening of formal or practical restrictions on sexual and social behaviour.[10] 'Permissiveness' certainly suggests the rising status of women in society, and a change in sexual

[4] Michal Shapira, 'Psychoanalytic Criminology, Childhood and the Democratic Self', in Ffytche and Pick (eds), *Psychoanalysis in the Age of Totalitarianism*, 73-86.
[5] Shapira, *War Inside*, 1.
[6] Zaretsky, *Political Freud*, 30.
[7] Zaretsky, *Political Freud*, 29-32.
[8] Fishman, *Vichy to the Sexual Revolution*, xxiv.
[9] Thomson, *Psychological Subjects*, 10. Thomson develops this argument in *Lost Freedom: The Landscape of the Child and the British Post-war Settlement* (Oxford, 2013).
[10] Antoine Prost, *Éducation, société et politiques: une histoire de l'enseignement en France de 1945 à nos jours* (Paris, 1997), 20-1. See also Alan Petigny, *The Permissive Society: America, 1941-1965* (New York, 2009).

mores, in comparison to nineteenth-century attitudes, but I contend that there was also a 'psychologising' aspect to it. In terms of child-rearing, 'permissiveness' suggests parenting styles in which children were not only faced with fewer authoritarian restrictions but were freer to follow their desires and interests. A subject such as sex education, discussed below, could unite these differents aspects of the term.

However, the term 'permissiveness' is not unproblematic. It has been used as a term of abuse and contains the suggestion of allowing *excessive* freedom. Michel Foucault taught historians to be suspicious of whether apparent liberalisations in morality, especially sexual morality, might instead indicate the presence of 'a new regime of discourses'.[11] Zaretsky prefers to write of the emergence of an 'ethic of personal life' as a moral and aesthetic accompaniment to capitalist economic development.[12] This 'personal ethic' encompasses liberal theories of education and child-rearing, often drawing inspiration from psychoanalysis, as well as women's increased independence and young people's attraction to sexual experimentation and artistic modernism. In Zaretsky's terms, the conflict between Dolto and her parents described in chapter 2 was a conflict between moralities associated with different phases of capitalism. Whereas the Marettes upheld 'traditional, familial, and kinship-based authority' associated with nineteenth-century capitalism, people like Dolto 'gave up their orientation to self-denial and thrift, and entered into the sexualized "dreamworlds" of mass consumption on behalf of a new orientation to … personal life'.[13] Following Foucault and Zaretsky here, 'permissiveness' may be said to contain within it a sense of the social and economic pressures felt by western populations in the later twentieth century to adhere to new forms of social and economic behaviour associated with a distinct form of capitalism, one that prioritised individualist consumerism and treated the individual body and psyche as sites to be targeted by capital. For brevity's sake, I will continue to refer to 'permissiveness' in the sense

[11] Michel Foucault, *The Will to Knowledge. The History of Sexuality 1*, trans. Robert Hurley (London, 1998), 27.
[12] Zaretsky, *Political Freud*, 11.
[13] Zaretsky, *Political Freud*, 18, 11.

described above, but I will retain the inverted commas in acknowledgement of these problematic aspects.

Zaretsky sees the 'personal ethic' and 'maturity ethic' as distinct phases in the history of psychoanalysis. However in practice, 'psychologisation' and 'permissiveness' went together. They fused above all over questions of children, child development and education, as changes in the socio-economic role of the family created a need for new sources of advice and information. From the interwar period, but especially after 1945, this need was variously filled by doctors, schools, clinics, child-rearing literature, and the media, often drawing on psychoanalysis. The use of psychoanalytic ideas to encourage democratic parenting practices was, for example, a central strand of Benjamin Spock's approach to child-rearing in *Baby and Child Care*, published in New York in 1946.[14] The psychoanalytic, 'permissive' vision of child-rearing displaced older approaches, as part of a more general reaction against writers such as Truby King or John B. Watson who emphasised discipline, obedience and hygiene. The psychoanalytic approach proceeded from the idea that babies are fully human subjects with delicate psyches, requiring both attentive nurturing and a significant degree of freedom to develop according to their internal rhythms and desires. For a thinker like Susan Isaacs in Britain, as for Édouard Pichon in France, such ideas evolved into a liberal approach to education, drawing on child-centred pedagogies as advocated by John Dewey, Maria Montessori, Célestin Freinet, or Friedrich Froebel.[15]

It is worth dwelling briefly on Isaacs (1885-1948), an interwar pioneer in converting psychoanalysis 'into a tamer, practical, common sense for popular consumption'.[16] A schoolteacher psychoanalysed by Otto Rank and Joan Riviere, Isaacs from 1924 to 1929 ran the Malting House School, where she developed what she conceived of as a scientific, child-centred, discovery-based

[14] I explore the comparison between Dolto and Spock in Richard Bates, 'Democratic Babies? Françoise Dolto, Benjamin Spock and the Ideology of Postwar Parenting Advice', *Journal of Political Ideologies* (forthcoming).
[15] On Isaacs see Philip J. Graham, *Susan Isaacs: A Life Freeing the Minds of Children* (London, 2009); Thomson, *Psychological Subjects*, ch. 4; Jenny Willan, 'Susan Isaacs (1885–1948): Her Life, Work and Legacy', *Gender and Education*, 23/2 (2011), 201-10.
[16] Thomson, *Psychological Subjects*, 135-6.

pedagogy.[17] The school was a contemporary of A.S. Neill's Summerhill (founded 1921). Summerhill drew less on psychoanalysis, but did adapt ideas such as the desirability of cathartic emotional release.[18] Summerhill, however, went further than Isaacs in democratising the dynamics of school organisation. It was run via democratic meetings open to pupils, who were not formally obliged to attend lessons. These traits made Summerhill interesting to antipsychiatric and other countercultural reformers of the 1960s and 1970s, including Dolto and especially Maud Mannoni, during the creation of the Bonneuil-sur-Marne experimental school (see chapter 5).[19]

Isaacs in the 1920s and 1930s demonstrated the potential breadth of a career based on promoting an essentially psychoanalytic conception of children's minds. *The Nursery Years*, her 75-page 1929 manual on child psychology, sold 100,000 copies.[20] From 1929-36, she had a column on 'Childhood problems' under the pseudonym 'Ursula Wise' in *Nursery World*, a magazine aimed at nannies. From 1933, Isaacs ran courses in child development at the University of London, targeted at early-years educators. Her career demonstrated that a psychoanalytic education could lead to a diverse career, informing interventions in areas ranging from medicine to schools, higher education and the popular press. As chapter 1 showed, Pichon, Dolto's supervisor, similarly sought to use psychoanalysis to combine medicine with education and to find a popular audience for this synthesis. His 1936 child-rearing manual advocated a 'permissive' approach to child-rearing and education, with references to Dewey and Montessori as well as Freud, and integrated Catholicism, normative gender constructions, and French nationalism into this vision.

Dolto thus had role models for popularising psychoanalysis in conjunction with a 'permissive' vision of child-rearing. In view of the widely-held idea that Dolto essentially pioneered the combination of psychoanalysis, education and

[17] Graham, *Susan Isaacs*, 98. On Malting House: Graham, 'Susan Isaacs and the Malting House School', *Journal of Child Psychotherapy*, 34/1 (2008), 5-22.
[18] Richard Bailey's biography, *A.S. Neill* (London, 2013) provides a useful overview of the extensive literature on Neill and Summerhill.
[19] See Garcia, *Mères sous influence*, ch. 8.
[20] Susan Isaacs, *The Nursery Years* (London, 1929). Later editions carried the subtitle 'The mind of the child from birth to six years'. '100,000 copies' – Graham, *Susan Isaacs*, 202.

a career in the mass media, the fact that Isaacs effectively brought together the same elements in the 1930s, albeit without the element of the broadcast media, is quite striking.[21] However whereas Isaacs was a socialist and tutored at the Workers' Educational Association, the dominant political orientation of French 'permissiveness' from the 1930s to the 1950s was that of the holistic-technocratic-Catholic Right, as described in chapter 3 and as embodied, after the war, in *Psyché*. As the example of the École des Parents illustrates, 'permissiveness' could complement the gender-normative, patriarchal conception of the family advocated by interwar familialist conservatives and, after 1940, promoters of the National Revolution. Georges Mauco and André Berge, like Dolto analysands of René Laforgue, similarly combined psychoanalysis, 'permissive' educational theory with patriarchal gender normativity.

II. The École des Parents

A Parisian institute in which parents could receive training and marriage counselling, the École des Parents (EdP) illustrates how psychoanalysis and 'permissiveness' were being explored simultaneously by people on the Catholic right in interwar and postwar France. Run by Catholic intellectuals and pro-family campaigners, it was set up in 1929 by the bourgeois Catholic Marguerite Lebrun, better known as Madame Vérine, in the context of interwar pronatalist and pro-family efforts to improve the quantity and quality of France's population.[22] It can also be interpreted as an attempt to reclaim educational space for Catholicism and for the Catholic view of the family from the perceived individualism of the Republican state.[23] Supported by interwar family lobbying groups such as the Alliance Nationale pour l'Accroissement

[21] See for example Mehl, *La Bonne Parole*, ch. 1, 'Lorsque Dolto paraît'.
[22] Annick Ohayon, 'L'École des parents ou l'éducation des enfants éclairée par la psychologie (1929-1946)', *Bulletin de psychologie*, 449 (2000), 635-42; Muel-Dreyfus, *Vichy et l'éternel féminin*, 181-4.
[23] On the links between pronatalism and colonialism see Margaret Cook Andersen, *Regeneration through Empire: French Pronatalists and Colonial Settlement in the Third Republic* (Lincoln, 2015).

de la Population Française, with a board comprising social Catholics, educators, parents and priests, the EdP aimed to teach parents how to inculcate moral and social values in their children.[24] In doing so, as Annick Ohayon has shown, it became a pioneer of psychosociology and an early site for the popularisation of psychoanalysis.[25] Many contributors to the EdP also wrote for the magazine *La Psychologie et la Vie* (1927-39). Pichon, André Berge, and other psychoanalysts gave talks at the École in the 1930s. Berge, later also president of the French Montessori society, took on a leadership role as Vérine's deputy.

Vérine's own Catholic familialism blended with educational 'permissiveness'. Vérine emphasised the importance of according children space for inquisitiveness, play and expression. Her 1928 book *La Mère initiatrice* argued that, rather than focus on control, repression and punishment, mothers should encourage children's curiosity, and answer their questions (including sexual ones) frankly.[26] At the same time, Vérine believed that the French family had become debased and that this helped explain France's geopolitical woes. This conviction hardened after 1940, when Vérine and other EdP leaders enthusiastically signed up to the National Revolution. Vérine was the only woman to write a section in the manifesto *France 1941: La Révolution nationale constructive.* Vérine's text exalted the patriarchal family: 'la femme, épouse et mère, est faite pour l'homme, pour le foyer, pour l'enfant. Tant que toutes les jeunes épousées de France ne comprendront pas, ne vivront pas cette vérité de nature, rien ne se construira dans la cité.'[27]

After Vérine's death in 1946, the EdP reorganised, losing its confessional character and links to the political Right. It tried to widen its popular audience by launching a magazine, with a print run of 10,000 copies.[28] Under the patronage from 1949 of Georges Heuyer, its emphasis became less moralist,

[24] Robcis, *Law of Kinship*, 119.
[25] Ohayon, 'L'École des parents'; *L'Impossible Rencontre*, 184-9.
[26] Mme Vérine (Marguerite Lebrun), *La Mère initiatrice* (Paris, 1929).
[27] Vérine, 'La Famille', in André Bellessort and Raymond Postal (eds), *France 1941: La Révolution nationale constructive, un bilan et un programme* (Paris, 1941), 197. See Muel-Dreyfus, *Vichy et l'éternel féminin*, 181-4.
[28] Ohayon, *L'Impossible Rencontre*, 189.

and more medical and technical. Diffusing psychological ideas remained an important aspect of its activity; psychiatrists, psychologists and psychoanalysts of different theoretical persuasions became involved. These changes did not necessarily mean that the École's attitude to women and gender had changed. In 1946 André Berge, still EdP vice-president, argued in *Psyché* that the roles women had recently assumed in the workplace, politics and warfare had unbalanced families. Drawing on penis envy theory, Berge claimed that 'aveuglée par la découverte de ses nouvelles possibilités, la femme est parfois tentée de rejeter les anciennes … si la femme renie l'Amour pour s'adonner aux âpres joies de la lutte, c'est l'équilibre de la vie qu'elle compromet'.[29] Berge thus continued to romanticise women's exclusively maternal role after the war, notwithstanding the Vichy interlude, and to justify it using psychoanalytic concepts.

Dolto spoke at the EdP at least six times between 1950 and 1954. Her talks covered topics such as parental separation, the only child, the appropriate role of grandparents, and children's sleep.[30] In them, Dolto seized on everyday parenting questions as an opportunity to disseminate psychoanalytic ideas, explaining concepts like 'neurosis', 'complex' and 'castration' in ordinary language and emphasising their relevance to everyday life. Thus in one text she defined a neurosis as 'le fait de se sentir impuissant, d'être réellement incapable de sortir d'une situation inextricable où l'on est complètement enlisé'.[31] This definition left out some arguably central elements of Freud's concept – such as the conflict between different psychical entities or the return of the repressed – instead applying the word to the commonplace feeling of being blocked or trapped. Dolto effectively invited her audience to incorporate such terms into their everyday language, away from their original specialist

[29] André Berge, 'La crise de la condition féminine et ses répercussions sur la Famille et la Société', *Psyché*, 1 (1946), 51-60.
[30] Dolto, 'Les Parents séparés', *L'École des parents* (March 1950), reprinted in Dolto, *Chemins de l'éducation* (hereafter '*CdE'*), 281-303; 'L'Enfant unique', *L'École des parents* (April 1950), reprinted in *CdE*, 103-17; 'Les grands-parents', *L'École des parents* (December 1950), *CdE*, 233-50; 'Les troubles du sommeil' *L'École des parents* (04/1952), reproduced in Dolto, *Les Étapes majeures de l'enfance* (Paris, 1994, hereafter *EME*), 138-61; 'L'influence des animaux et des plantes', *L'École des parents* (1953), *EME*, 349-73; 'L'Âge des parents', *L'École des parents* (02/1954), *CdE*, 211-32.
[31] 'Les Parents séparés', 289.

context. Her talks promoted the assumption that psychological knowledge could help parents ensure their children did not end up in situations 'lourdes de conséquences' for their future psychological constitution.[32] They suggested that many apparently minor aspects of a child's psychological life, such as their relationship to animals and plants, could in fact be very significant. The clear implication was that parents should be very attentive to, and seek to optimise, their children's psychological states – an idea that necessitated close, emotionally sophisticated parent-child relationships.

Dolto also used the forum to propagate the importance of a strongly gendered division of family labour, which she presented as a nugget of wisdom gleaned from her psychoanalytic clinic. Psychological insight, she argued, gave rise to moral and political imperatives – ones which hardly contradicted the familialist exhortations of Mme Vérine. For example, at the beginning of her talk on the only child, Dolto hastened to affirm that 'cela ne rend pas malade d'être enfant unique!' – but the rest of her text contained several more or less severe warnings about the psychological dangers of being an only child.[33] An only child struggles to develop both physically and emotionally. As products of a 'ménage qui a refusé d'engendrer d'autres vies', such children are unable to see their parents in their proper capacity as 'géniteurs'.[34] They have difficulty in developing manual dexterity and take refuge in intellectual pursuits; they succeed at school but not in social situations: 'les grands obsédés sont très souvent des enfants uniques chez lesquels l'impuissance musculaire a entraîné une fuite exagérée dans le mental'.[35] Her arguments call to mind not just interwar pronatalism, but also the Pétainist promotion of competitive sport and physical activity: only children are said to 'supporte[r] très mal les épreuves de compétition' and have no team spirit.[36] Growing up surrounded by other children was, for Dolto, vital for a child's 'cohesion'; parents who really cared about their child's psychological well-being would therefore ensure that siblings were provided. Maud Mannoni, who met Dolto in 1947, testified to the

[32] 'Les Parents séparés', 282.
[33] 'L'Enfant unique', 103.
[34] 'L'Enfant unique', 114.
[35] 'L'Enfant unique', 113.
[36] 'L'Enfant unique', 115.

pressure that Dolto put on her personally to marry and procreate: 'Ses opinions sur la famille, conservatrices, impliquent qu'on se marie pour avoir des enfants: je lui en fais donc … un, mais je ne pourrai me résoudre à lui en faire trois.'[37]

On parental separation, similarly, Dolto did not speak out against divorce directly, finding it to be less generative of psychological conflicts than situations where parents maintained a false appearance of unity: 'Il y a moins de névroses, et de névroses graves, chez des enfants qui se trouvent en face d'une situation claire, tranchée – où l'on ne passe pas sa vie à "faire semblant"'.[38] Nonetheless, she also argued that divorce risked causing juvenile delinquency, since adolescents could operate an unconscious linguistic slippage from the 'delinquency' of their parents' act in getting divorced, to carrying out 'delinquent' petty crime themselves.[39]

For Dolto, what mattered was that, regardless of the family structure, the parents or people *in loco parentis* incarnated appropriate psychological role models that children could (spontaneously, unconsciously) internalise. This required men and women to embody clearly distinguished masculine and female roles: 'le père et la mère organisent … par leur façon d'être ... tout ce qui chez l'enfant est notion vivante de "masculin" et de "féminin"'.[40] A male presence in the household was essential to provide male children with a figure to identify with, and to 'oriente[r] le développement' of female children.[41] Both parents needed actively to model, not just a strongly gendered separation of male and female spheres, but also the idea of a 'complementary fecundity':

> Comment, dans un foyer où le père et la mère ont renoncé à tenir leur rôle et leur place de complémentarité féconde dans un but commun, l'enfant peut-il, sans éprouver une impression de menace pour sa propre cohésion et sa vitalité, chercher à s'identifier à des 'images' mutilées, incomplètes de l'adulte?[42]

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[37] Maud Mannoni, *Ce qui manque à la vérité pour être dite* (Paris, 1988), 28.
[38] 'Les Parents séparés', 283.
[39] 'Les Parents séparés', 292-3.
[40] 'Les Parents séparés', 283.
[41] 'Les Parents séparés', 285-6.
[42] 'Les Parents séparés', 283.

Dolto's talks at the EdP thus show her seeking to spread psychoanalytic thinking, and to communicate the importance of being aware of multifarious aspects of children's psychological and emotional lives – implicitly promoting the idea of close, attentive parenting relationships. She did so while working within, or at least neglecting to challenge, conceptions of the ideal family that differed little from those of the French interwar right or Vichy: a strong and physically vigorous male presence at the head of a plentiful crop of physically robust, non-intellectual offspring. A study of the Centre Claude Bernard will show how these ideas were translated into her clinical practice in the same period.

III. The Centre Claude Bernard

The Centre Claude Bernard (CCB), formed in 1946, was a new psychoanalytically-oriented children's clinic, whose ideology and personnel overlapped with those of the École des Parents. A publicly-funded 'centre psycho-pédagogique' (later amended to 'centre médico-psycho-pédagogique, or CMPP, to placate a medical establishment suspicious of lay encroachment), the CCB aimed to make psychoanalytic therapy available to families of modest means.[43] It was created by Georges Mauco along with fellow analysts Berge, Dolto, and Juliette Boutonnier. Marc Schlumberger, who had studied medicine alongside Dolto and worked at Summerhill, was also involved. Parents could book an appointment with a (medically-qualified) psychoanalyst to discuss children's problems of character or behaviour. As Mauco explained in *Psyché*, these might include 'timidité, émotivité, énurésis, anxiété, tics, nervosisme, petite délinquance, anomalies du comportement sexuel, etc'.[44] The centre offered children, adolescents and their parents the benefits of psychoanalytic, medical and psychological expertise, communicated in a friendly setting, carefully designed not to feel like a hospital. It benefited from the extension of

[43] On the Centre Claude Bernard see Robcis, *Law of Kinship*, 114-27; Geissmann, *Child Psychoanalysis*, 298-301; Ohayon, *L'Impossible Rencontre*, 290-2; Mijolla, *La France et Freud 1946-53*, 14-16.
[44] Georges Mauco, 'Consultations psycho-pédagogiques', *Psyché*, 3 (1947) 47-53.

state-supported health insurance in 1945-46, which enabled the Assistance Publique to reimburse the cost of specialist consultations to families unable to afford private treatment.

The CCB was primarily Mauco's idea – at least, its creation was only possible because of his political connections.[45] A psychoanalyst and demographer, Mauco gained a public profile in the 1930s for his doctoral thesis on immigration and assimilation, informed by a racist, Lamarcko-Jungian understanding of the collective unconscious and acquired characteristics of groups. His thesis, which ranked different races and nationalities according to their perceived assimilability to French society, had been welcomed across the political spectrum as a scientific contribution to the problem of how French society could respond to immigration.[46] During the Occupation Mauco joined the fascist Parti Populaire Français and wrote for *L'Ethnie française*, edited by extreme antisemite Georges Montandon – combining psychoanalysis with racism by postulating the existence of a 'névrose juive'.[47] At the Liberation Mauco went through an *épuration* procedure, but De Gaulle nonetheless appointed him secretary to the Haut Comité Consultatif de la Population et de la Famille, advising on how many and which displaced persons and immigrants France should accept.[48] Thereafter Mauco – who had trained as a teacher in the 1920s – reinvented himself as an expert on child psychology and education, apparently successfully concealing his wartime activities and antisemitism from colleagues and the young psychologists and analysts that he trained and directed, as leader of the CCB until 1971. In 1982, Dolto wrote a

[45] Geissmann, *Child Psychoanalysis*, 299.
[46] Mauco, *Les Étrangers en France: leur rôle dans l'activité économique* (Paris, 1932). On Mauco see Adler, *Jews and Gender*; Greg Burgess, 'The Demographers' Moment: Georges Mauco, Immigration and Racial Selection in Liberation France, 1945-46', *French History and Civilization*, 4 (2011), 167-77; Patrick Weil, 'Georges Mauco, expert en immigration: ethnoracisme pratique et antisémitisme fielleux', in Pierre-André Taguieff (ed.), *L'Antisémitisme de plume, 1940-1944: études et documents* (Paris, 1999), 267-76.
[47] See Elisabeth Roudinesco, 'Georges Mauco (1899-1988): un psychanalyste au service de Vichy. De l'antisémitisme à la psychopédagogie', *L'Infini*, 51 (1995), 69-84.
[48] See Tara Zahra, *The Lost Children: Reconstructing Europe's Families After World War II* (Cambridge, MA, 2011), ch. 5; Adler, *Jews and Gender*, ch. 5.

preface to Mauco's autobiography, *Vécu*, which highlighted his moral qualities and claimed that Mauco 'avait su résister à la barbarie nazie'.[49]

The CCB's early analysts were all analysands of Laforgue, trained in his ideas of family neuroses, and focused on the immediate nuclear family as the site of etiology. Most were from Catholic, bourgeois backgrounds. The patients' parents, judging from Dolto's archive, were generally from lower-middle-class families: artisans, small businessmen, with living standards that she describes in one case as 'médiocres'.[50] Dolto's surviving records of the early CCB period are not extensive – she appears to have ceased working formally with the centre after 1949 – but sufficient to indicate the kinds of problem treated and the orientation of her responses. In effect, the CCB categorised as 'médico-psychologique' various situations in which a child's behaviour presented cause for concern to a parent, teacher or doctor. It then undertook their treatment by doctor-psychoanalysts, frequently at public expense. Many children were referred on the basis of their behaviour at school. Patients sent to Dolto at Claude Bernard were variously described in referral documents as 'obsessionnel et anxieux', 'très opposée à tout le monde', or suffering from 'troubles du caractère', 'nullité scolaire', or 'perturbations caractérielles confirmées par tous les tests'.[51]

Dolto's diagnostic comments on these patients show her working to (re)construct the unconscious intra-familial conflicts and psychosexual tensions that she was convinced lay at the heart of almost every case. For one boy – referred on the grounds that he was 'distrait, entêté. Manque d'attention en classe. Craintif, timide, hypersensible' – Dolto diagnosed a 'complexe de castration vécu sur le plan anal. Comportement schizophrénique. Grave névrose maternelle et paternelle'.[52] Unsurprisingly, the themes of her EdP texts recur in her contemporary case notes. For example, we see the unconscious

[49] Dolto, preface to Georges Mauco, *Vécu 1899-1982: histoire de l'apparition de la psychanalyse en France* (Paris, 1982).
[50] AFD, 'Cas 5'. Résumé of case of 'Muriel', treated 1955.
[51] AFD, 'Cas 5'. Cases of: 'Jeannette', treated 1949, 'Résumé de Séances: 1, 2, 3 juin'; 'Rémi', treated 1953, 'Feuille de renseignements scolaires'; 'Muriel', treated 1955.
[52] AFD, 'Cas 4'. Case of 'Claude', treated 1951. Typed summary document, undated.

transmission by parents of models of virility and femininity: 'on voit l'essai du complexe de virilité mal réussi … reviviscence de la frustration pénienne (complexe de virilité primaire de la mère)'.[53] The importance of a strong paternal figure is prominent: 'son père est beaucoup trop doux pour lui … c'est un homme faible qui a une mentalité de "victime"'.[54] Her diagnostic conclusion for a nine-year-old daughter of a lycée teacher, treated for lack of motivation and 'attitude caractérielle', ran as follows: 'Parents obsédés. Inversion affective du couple + mère âgée. Psychothérapie psychanalytique urgente ++'.[55]

While Dolto did not ignore the wider social context surrounding her child patients such as participation in religious or scout groups, or in one case the 'difficultés de nationalité' encountered by a parent of Italian origin, her case notes always looked to the family dynamic as the ultimate source of the problem. She frequently described that dynamic in terms that disapproved of any deviation from her ideal of a fecund, vigorous family with a solid, virile fatherly presence. This is visible even in the case of her most famous CCB patient, the future novelist Georges Perec, treated in 1949. Perec, then thirteen, was living with an aunt and uncle following the deaths of his father (in fighting in 1940) and mother (in Auschwitz). Dolto told Perec's aunt that while Georges' difficulties were mainly down to the war, they were also partly caused by being part of a family of strong women and weak men, and the relative professional success of his aunt in comparison to his father.[56]

It was not that Dolto was oblivious to wider contexts beyond the family or insensitive to the psychological impact of what Perec would later call 'l'Histoire avec sa grande hache'.[57] But in her final analyses and public

[53] AFD, 'Cas 5'. Case of 'Jeannette'. Summary of a treatment session, dated 30/11/1949.
[54] AFD, 'Cas 1'. Case of 'Serge', treated 1942-44. From a 14-page typed summary dated 1946.
[55] AFD, 'Cas 1'. Case of 'Avrille', treated 1948. 'Feuille de synthèse' dated 17/11/1948.
[56] David Bellos, *Georges Perec: A Life in Words* (London, 1995), 370. The notes from this case are not preserved in Dolto's archive, nor did Perec discuss his analysis with Dolto in print. According to Bellos (p. 96), Dolto treated Perec after his cousin showed some of Georges' drawings to André Berge, who suggested Dolto as an expert interpreter of children's drawings. Perec had drawn an imaginary island, 'W', which became the basis for *W ou le souvenir de l'enfance* (Paris, 1975), written during Perec's later analysis with J.-B. Pontalis.
[57] Perec, *W ou le souvenir de l'enfance*, 17.

statements, such factors tended to fade into the background, while family dynamics came to the fore. Dolto very rarely mentioned the impact of the Second World War in causing childhood trauma, for example, even though her case records prove that she saw numerous examples. When she did discuss it, she did so only in the context of its effects on family dynamics – such as the supposed link between prisoner-of-war fathers and juvenile delinquency – rather than as a traumatising factor in its own right. By contrast, she repeatedly wrote and spoke publicly about the harmful effects of growing up in a family in which patriarchal gender norms were not respected, for which the formula of 'strong mother, weak father' could stand as a kind of shorthand. Chapter 5 will return to this theme in the context of autistic children.

From the 1960s, some 400 CMPPs on the CCB model spread throughout France, aided by changes in legislation in 1963-4. Dolto worked at the CMPP at Étienne Marcel, central Paris, from its creation in 1961 (the setting for the 'Dominique' case discussed in chapter 5). The Centre Claude Bernard thus became the template for a national institution that acted as a significant vector for the diffusion of psychoanalytic concepts in wider French society. The CMPPs later indirectly gave rise to another such institution, the Lieux d'Accueil Enfants-Parents, described in chapter 6.

The CCB initially wore its psychoanalytic orientation somewhat lightly, for fear of triggering what Mauco termed 'anxious or aggressive opposition to psychoanalysis' in the medical establishment.[58] By the 1960s, however, many CMPPs were openly psychoanalytic in orientation. Some were expressly set up with the aim of improving awareness of psychoanalysis among the general public and young psychiatrists. Researching in the mid-1970s, Sherry Turkle found that CMPPs had been the principal site in which her working-class interviewees had encountered psychoanalysis. This, Turkle suggested, perhaps explained the relatively negative impression of psychoanalysis provided by working-class interviewees in comparison to middle-class or intellectual respondents. Poor families often found that, via the CMPP system, they would

[58] Cited in Geissmann, *Child Psychoanalysis*, 300.

be assigned (not choose) an analyst only after passing through a series of offices and a battery of tests. For them, 'the sense of personal humiliation associated with public health facilities interfered with any sense of psychoanalysis as liberating'.[59] Turkle's research, conducted just before Dolto's breakthrough into popular consciousness with *Lorsque l'enfant paraît*, suggests why use of the mass media was important to the continued advance of psychoanalysis into French culture. Medico-psychological institutes and clinics operating on top-down lines and within bureaucratic constraints were limited in their ability to implant psychoanalytic thinking into popular child-rearing practices. Achieving that would require charismatic advocates able to connect with a broad section of the French public.

IV. Sex(ed) education

The growth of the CMPPs nonetheless indicates the advances that psychology and psychoanalysis had made since the war into French state policy, medicine and academia. From 1947, it became possible to take an undergraduate degree in psychology, created at the Sorbonne by Daniel Lagache, a psychoanalyst trained by Rudolph Loewenstein in the 1930s. The degree programme focused on social, applied and child psychology; Michel Foucault was one of the first people to obtain the degree, in 1949.[60] Lagache's prominence as the figurehead of academic psychology provoked a rivalry with Jacques Lacan, the rising star of the psychoanalytic movement, who worried that Lagache might make psychoanalysis subservient to psychology. Annick Ohayon describes the rivalry between the two in the 1950s as a power struggle, and suggests that some of Lacan's attacks on 'ego' or 'American' psychoanalysis can be read as coded power plays against Lagache.[61]

Dolto tried not to take sides in the rivalry; her inclination was to look outside, to popularise psychoanalysis, rather than to acquire power within the

[59] Turkle, *Psychoanalytic Politics*, 321, n. 15.
[60] See Ohayon, *L'Impossible Rencontre*, 277-90.
[61] Ohayon, *L'Impossible Rencontre*, 379.

movement. A desire to engage with the mass media and a popular audience was a consistent feature of her career. As early as autumn 1939 she wrote to the Service de la Radiodiffusion at the Ministère des Postes with an (ultimately abortive) proposal for some kind of radio broadcast, probably aimed at parents and children in response to the psychological difficulties caused by the outbreak of war.[62] As chapter 3 showed, Dolto then sought to engage with a popular audience via *Vrai* and *Femmes françaises*, prior to her activities at the École des Parents and the CCB.

It is not clear when Dolto first spoke on radio. The earliest evidence is a letter from her husband in February 1947 praising her contribution to a broadcast, but giving no details as to the station or programme.[63] More definitively, on 6 February 1948 Dolto appeared on national radio on the *Tribune de Paris* programme, as a participant in a debate on 'la recrudescence de la délinquance juvénile'.[64] Dolto was introduced simply as a 'médecin', appearing alongside a scout leader and the children's author Paul Faucher (editor of the *Albums du père Castor*). She spoke on *La Tribune de Paris* again in December 1949, advising parents on which toys would make the most psychologically-beneficial Christmas presents for children. She recommended Guignol puppets, which allowed children to verbalise otherwise forbidden words and ideas and, in general, toys that children could be allowed to break and smash, since aggressive actions were part of the discovery process of play.[65] In effect, she deployed her medical and psychoanalytic authority to support a child-centred, discovery-based pedagogical approach.

More substantially, in 1950 *La Tribune de Paris* invited Dolto to take part in a series of five debates on sex education, broadcast on five successive Tuesday evenings at 11 p.m., a slot selected so that children would be in bed, or 's'ils ne

[62] J. Duhamel of the 'Service de la radiodiffusion', to Dolto, 25/10/1939, *VdC*, 25. Dolto's original proposal is lost. The reply was encouraging, but warned Dolto she would need the approval of the Ministère de l'Hygiène Publique to proceed.
[63] Boris to Françoise, 11/02/1947, AFD, Box 'correspondence Françoise-Boris'.
[64] See *VdC*, 190, n. 5.
[65] *VdC*, 190, n. 5.

le sont pas, peut-être n'y aura-t-il rien à leur apprendre'.[66] These broadcasts are worth discussing in detail. They indicate the extent of 'psychologisation' in France in 1950, and the state of the debate over, and level of interest in, 'permissive' education at the time. They also demonstrate how Dolto used such opportunities to communicate the importance of strongly gendered divisions of labour and family role models.

Joining Dolto, now presented as a 'doctoresse' and psychoanalyst, and the moderator Raymond Thévenin on these broadcasts were a psychiatrist, Joseph Logre; Père Charles Larère, a Catholic spokesman on sex education; and Louis François, Inspecteur général de l'instruction publique, who had represented France at UNESCO and chaired a government committee on sex education in schools. The broadcasts attracted significant public interest, sufficient for *Marie France* to publish extracts in a series of summer editions, and for *Elle* magazine, read by approximately one in six French women by 1955, to publish the entire transcript over five issues.[67] *Elle* presented the broadcast as of interest to young parents seeking enlightenment on child psychology and sexuality, helping them to answer questions such as:

> Comment faire de cet enfant, l'homme ou la femme harmonieux et équilibrés que vous souhaitez qu'il soit? Comment en un mot lui donner cette éducation que vous, ses parents, n'avez sans doute jamais reçue et dont vous ressentez pour lui la gênante, la pressante nécessité?[68]

The terms 'harmonieux' and 'équilibré' indicate the influence of psychological ideas in *Elle*'s presentation, as well as the presence of parental anxieties about raising 'unbalanced' children, and the belief in the crucial, unseen importance of childhood experience and learning in shaping future adults.

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[66] Suzanne Catelain, secrétaire générale de *La Tribune de Paris*, cited in Mijolla, *La France et Freud 1946-53,* 159-60.
[67] *Elle* 253-7, October-November 1950. 'One in six' – Ross, *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies*, 209, n. 14.
[68] 'Comment instruire les enfants de la question sexuelle', *Elle* 253, 02/10/1950, 14-16, here 14.

If *Elle*'s framing of the debate is suggestive of an already highly 'psychologised' society, the transcripts also demonstrate that the subject of sex education encapsulated the cultural move towards 'permissive' attitudes. Much of the tension in the *Tribune de Paris* discussions came from the fundamental opposition between the stances of Dolto and Louis François. Dolto advised parents to be direct and frank, to disarm sexuality of its shameful or dirty connotations. François preferred 'un langage plus imagé et même plus poétique'. He maintained that the sexual instinct was something to fear: 'l'instinct sexuel est un instinct redoutable qui, laissé sans contrainte, risque d'entraîner à toutes sortes de perversions et de ruiner l'équilibre mental de l'individu'.[69] He argued that children under the age of seven or eight were largely ignorant of sex; there was no need to disturb their imaginative world with frank discussions. Dolto countered that children should be told the truth, frankly and honestly; this would help them avoid developing anxieties around sexuality. A large part of the appeal of the broadcast, I suggest, lay in its staging of this opposition at a time when cultural attitudes were in flux; people in France were divided but on the whole moving towards more 'permissive' positions. Dolto kept letters from listeners praising her stance as 'franche et nette', in contrast to the unworldly 'innocence' of François.[70]

However, there is a danger of overstating the contrast: all four participants agreed on the necessity of some sexual education. Logre, the psychiatrist, noted how 'la non-éducation sexuelle suffisante et rationnelle pratiquée par les parents m'est très souvent apparue comme une cause de déséquilibre soit chez l'enfant, soit surtout chez l'adulte', while even François conceded that 'ne pas aborder de front le problème de l'éducation sexuelle, c'est se résigner à laisser délibérément dans l'ombre l'aspect peut-être le plus important de tout le développement physique et mental'.[71] Larère cited Pius XI's 1929 encyclical on Christian education, 'qui demandait expressément aux parents chrétiens que cette éducation fût faite en temps opportun ... je me tourne vers le docteur Dolto-Marette pour qu'elle nous dise vers quel âge on peut commencer cette

[69] 'Ce qu'il faut dire à vos jeunes enfants', *Elle* 254, 9/10/50, 38-40.
[70] 'Françoise E.' to Dolto, 31/05/1950. *VdC*, 195.
[71] 'Ce qu'il faut dire à vos jeunes enfants', 38.

éducation'.[72] This was a somewhat creative reading of the papal text, which in fact condemned 'the error of those who with dangerous assurance and under an ugly term propagate a so-called sex-education, falsely imagining they can forearm youths against the dangers of sensuality'.[73] Larère's theological flexibility, and deference to Dolto's pedagogical authority, suggests the willingness of parts of the postwar priesthood to accommodate psychological expertise – and Dolto, as chapter 3 showed, was keen to offer reassurance on the compatibility of Freud with Jesus.

Dolto continually and successfully turned the focus of the discussions away from adolescence and onto early childhood. This rhetorical move brought the debate into her domain of expertise, ensuring her centrality to proceedings. It also accentuated the contrast between Dolto, as a woman and mother, and the other, male, participants. 'Vous êtes un homme, donc un père … il est donc naturel que vous ne sachiez pas répondre', Dolto told François at one point. 'Je m'adresse plus spécialement aux mamans'.[74] Dolto asserted authority over the debate by exploiting and reinforcing the assumption that it was 'natural' for mothers to be better acquainted with children than were fathers.

Importantly, focusing the discussion on early childhood allowed Dolto subtly to change the key question from 'how to talk about sex' with older children to 'how to be sexed' for young children – that is, to how children learn the gendered roles they would perform later in life:

> L'éducation commence au berceau, non pas, bien sûr, l'éducation sexuelle à la vie de reproduction, mais l'éducation sexuée, celle qui apprend aux enfants à devenir comme papa, pour un garçon, comme maman, pour une fille … l'éducation a pour but de préserver, chez les petits, cette intuition du *grand* et de la *grande* qu'ils doivent devenir.[75]

[72] 'Comment instruire les enfants de la question sexuelle', 15.
[73] Pope Pius XI, *Divini Illius Magistri,* 31/12/1929, online at http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xi_enc_31121929_divini-illius-magistri.html, accessed 09/05/2017.
[74] 'Ce qu'il faut dire à vos jeunes enfants', 40.
[75] 'Comment instruire les enfants de la question sexuelle', 14-15.

Dolto thus switched the focus from sex acts to sex roles, conflating the question of telling children the facts of life with that of preparing them for the gendered norms expected of their adulthood. This move discouraged wider conversations about schools, or the place of sex in society, and directed the audience's attention towards the family as the primary educational site. Correspondence she received following the broadcasts indicates that this message was well received by at least some parents. For example, 'Rolande B.' wrote to thank Dolto for her on-air advice, informing her that 'ma petite fille âgée de six ans ½ a été mise au courant selon vos propres termes et tout cela lui a semblé naturel … En même temps, elle a pris conscience de son rôle de future femme, de maman, et petit à petit saura se préparer à ses devoirs.'[76] In effect, Dolto's encouragement of sex education turned out to be part of an argument for a constrained version of 'permissiveness' that gave more freedom and rights to children while leaving intact the importance of conventional gender roles and family structures.

V. 'Permissiveness' and women's rights

Claire Duchen's history of women's postwar lives and rights showed that the 'dominant atmosphere regarding "women's place" and "women's role"' in these years was a 'generally hostile context' towards women who sought to amend the 'traditional' roles.[77] After 1945, new anxieties arose regarding the 'femme moderne' and her potential to dominate her husband and children. Nonetheless, Sarah Fishman argues that the often – to twenty-first-century eyes – striking misogyny and traditionalism of 1950s discursive output should not obscure the considerable differences with Occupation-era views.[78] Whereas Vichy celebrated the sacrifices and self-abnegation of motherhood, 1950s and 1960s mothers, 'while still primarily viewed as focused on their families and homes, were advised to strive for equilibrium in their lives, to save a part of

[76] Rolande B. to Dolto, 29/11/50, *VdC*, 199.
[77] Duchen, *Women's Rights*, ch. 6, quote 165-6.
[78] Fishman, *Vichy to the Sexual Revolution*, introduction.

themselves'.[79] Fathers, though still clearly seen as the heads of families, began to appear less as 'absolute or distant rulers' and more as figures playing important dynamic, collaborative roles in everyday family life. Fathers could now be censured either for excessive authoritarianism, or for indifference and distance – a **'**dramatic shift from Vichy-era expectations, when the notion of the father as a distant authority figure, not terribly involved in the day-to-say life of the family, would hardly have been considered a problem'.[80] Fishman thus suggests that historians to some extent need to look past the conventional surface-level misogyny of 1950s discourse on the family and instead ask what, from a contemporary perspective, was new or progressive within it. In particular, the interest shown in the works of Simone de Beauvoir, Alfred Kinsey and Sigmund Freud in the early 1950s suggests a population beginning to think about the psychology of gender and sexuality in ways that were not possible a decade earlier.[81]

Dolto's texts from this period are part of the discursive shift that Fishman identifies. Dolto's attempts to influence parenting and education along 'permissive' lines were inseparable from her views on the constitution of and power balance within families. Dolto upheld a vision of the family centred on the authority of fathers, and mothers' subservience to fathers' desires and children's needs, as chapters 5 and 6 will further show. She claimed that families in which the father's authority was too weak, and the dominance of the mother too strong, were liable to provoke mental disturbance in children, especially boys. In doing this, she was to some extent echoing a conventional wisdom of the time: Fishman has shown that concerns about dominant and domineering mothers were widespread in 1950s juvenile court reports.[82] Dolto emphasised the need for fathers to be an active presence in families, and for

[79] Fishman, *Vichy to the Sexual Revolution*, xxiv.
[80] Fishman, *Vichy to the Sexual Revolution*, 20.
[81] Although it is often thought that *The Second Sex* somewhat disappeared from view until its rediscovery by Anglophone feminists in the 1960s, Fishman argues that 'echoes of a Beauvoirian approach began to appear regularly in the popular press throughout the 1950s'. Fishman, *Vichy to the Sexual Revolution*, 31. Judith Coffin has shown that Beauvoir received thousands of letters from readers over the course of the decade who found in *The Second Sex* 'a language that was at once shocking or disconcerting and also resonant'. Judith Coffin, 'Sex, Love, and Letters: Writing Simone de Beauvoir, 1949-1963', *American Historical Review* (October 2010), 1061-88, here 1062.
[82] Fishman, *Vichy to the Sexual Revolution*, 82-3.

parents to be more attentive to the psychological effects their actions could have on their children. In this way, Dolto contributed to the establishment of new cultural visions of the family and new ideas about the self in the 1950s, which focused much more on individual fulfilment than the notions of self-sacrifice predominant under Vichy.[83]

Fishman's perspective here is more insightful than that of Camille Robcis, who sees the interventions of Dolto, Mauco and Berge in the 1950s as part of a popularisation of a new 'structuralist social contract' ultimately derived from Claude Lévi-Strauss and Jacques Lacan.[84] There is in fact little evidence to suggest that Dolto and her colleagues were particularly influenced by Lévi-Strauss; Laforgue, their analyst, is a much more obvious shared inspiration. The biological essentialism they espoused in these years was not new, nor was it confined to the Parisian structuralist intellectual orbit, as the historiography of postwar American psychoanalysis demonstrates.[85] Dolto, Berge and Mauco rather thought of themselves, in the 1950s, as progressing Vichy-era thinking about women and the family – many of whose assumptions they shared – in a 'permissive' direction, informed by psychoanalysis. In this sense, they were part of the formation of new cultural attitudes identified by Fishman, in the context of the 'psychologisation' of French society. Dolto encouraged 1950s social attitudes to move away from Vichy-era hierarchies and authoritarianism, towards more attentive parenting, more respect and indulgence for children, more child-centred pedagogies, more freedom for women to consider their own sexuality and needs and be less self-sacrificing. Dolto's own increasingly successful career, after all, embodied this.

Nevertheless, as the above examples show, Dolto's version of 'permissiveness' went together with a normative, patriarchal vision of gender roles. In the context of the early 1950s, Dolto's conventional conservatism on gender questions probably supported her credibility in debates over 'permissiveness'.

[83] Fishman, *Vichy to the Sexual Revolution*, 31.
[84] Robcis, *Law of Kinship*, ch. 3.
[85] See e.g. Hale, *Rise and Crisis*, chs 14-16; Martin Halliwell, *Therapeutic Revolutions: Medicine, Psychiatry, and American Culture, 1945-1970* (New Brunswick, 2013), introduction.

She clearly did not seek to upset the fundamental structure of the French family, and had she been more radical on such questions, would not have been accorded the same time and space to speak to the largely Catholic audiences of the École des Parents or *La Tribune de Paris*. However, as time went on, and Dolto's views essentially did not move from these early-1950s positions, her stance began to appear more noticeably conservative.

Some perspective can be gained by comparing Dolto's positions with those of groups that fought for women's rights in the 1950s and 1960s, such as the Mouvement Démocratique Féminin and the Mouvement Français pour le Planning Familial. The doctors and journalists who led the MFPF were frequently ex-Resisters, many from Protestant or Jewish backgrounds, which gave them a very different perspective from the Catholic Vichy-sympathisers in Dolto's circle. Some of them indeed saw the battle to defeat medical moralists and the Catholic Church as a continuation of the wartime struggle, since the Ordre des Médecins, which opposed family planning, remained dominated by conservative, xenophobic, anti-feminist currents. The women's rights movements were both evidence of, and contributors to, changing social attitudes between 1945 and 1968. While historians rightly emphasise the efforts of the women (and some men) who fought for change, Duchen could write that legal reforms on women's unequal legal position within marriage in 1965, and access to contraception in 1967, represented a belated 'sanctioning of already commonly-held attitudes and common practices'.[86]

Nonetheless, the family remained sufficiently central to socially-acceptable discussions of sexuality that the campaigns for these reforms were framed in terms of improving family life rather than escaping from it. The campaigners' key gambit was to replace the emphasis on large families, the 'famille nombreuse', with that of happy ones, 'maternité heureuse': rather than trying to maximise family sizes, the state should ensure that every birth was truly desired. Some psychoanalysts joined the cause, arguing that avoiding unwanted pregnancies would result in happier children: forcing women to

[86] Duchen, *Women's Rights*, 175.

sacrifice themselves to an unwanted child would probably result in negative psychological consequences for that child; clandestine abortions were surely traumatic.[87]

Dolto was not among them. Nor was she a supporter of the 1965 marriage law reform which granted married women control over their assets. The law disappointed women's rights advocates: the husband remained the legal head of the family, controlled shared assets, could choose where their family lived and veto their wife's employment choices.[88] Nonetheless, the law was opposed by politicians and commenters imbued with patriarchal assumptions about women's nature and roles. In a text written for (but not finally included in) Ménie Grégoire's book, *Le Métier de femme*, which appeared in 1965 as the reform was being debated, Dolto deployed the authority of psychoanalysis to reinforce the biological essentialism at the heart of such opposition:

> La psychanalyse a mis en lumière d'une façon irréfutable que, tout comme en biologie où pas une des cellules du corps d'une femme n'est semblable à une cellule du corps d'un homme, *pas un des états émotionnels, des actes et des pensées d'une femme n'est neutre.* Toute sa psychologie et tout son comportement se sont édifiés au féminin, selon des pulsions vivement sexuées ... L'homme et la femme sont à l'humanité ce que la main droite et la main gauche sont au corps industrieux ... [la femme] est par sa forme génitale passivement ouverte à l'avenir du temps qu'elle scande en ses entrailles.[89]

If the laws of states accorded civic rights disproportionately to men, this was, Dolto wrote, an unconscious compensation for the excessive strength of the 'real' power of women within the home:

> Si pendant si longtemps, dans notre civilisation de couples chrétiens détribalisés, qui a conquis le monde, les lois écrites semblaient dénier la liberté aux individus femmes, et donner des droits civiques seulement à l'homme, c'est

[87] Garcia, *Mères sous influence*, 91ff.
[88] Duchen, *Women's Rights*, 178.
[89] 'Texte pour le livre de chez Plon sur la femme demandé par Ménie Grégoire en 1967', AFD, Box 20 – 'La condition féminine' – fiche A1, 12. Dolto's emphasis. The 1967 date is probably an archiving error, since Grégoire's book appeared in 1965, and given the relevance of these extracts to the marriage law debate.

> parce que le *pouvoir réel de la femme tous les jours, au foyer, était inconsciemment reconnu comme trop fort.* C'est sans doute la raison du fait que, de tous temps, dans les sociétés humaines, l'autorité a été l'apanage des hommes.[90]

Dolto here stuck to the widespread 1950s claim that it was women, not men, who possessed the power to dominate their children, with potentially severe consequences for their psychological well-being. Such claims were not sufficient to clinch the argument; opponents of women's liberation were defeated in 1965, 1967 and above all in 1975, with the legalisation of abortion. But, as Sandrine Garcia argues, they did suggest a possible new strategy for social conservatives in the wake of these defeats. Dolto's emphasis on the 'cause des enfants' – the title of her 1985 book – sought to focus attention on the rights of children, in language which presented children as a neglected or persecuted minority. 'Les parents éduquent les enfants comme les princes gouvernent les peuples', she wrote. 'C'est un scandale pour l'adulte que l'être humain à l'état d'enfance soit son égal.'[91] In the context of post-1968 anti-authoritarianism, she claimed that parental authority was one more 'hiérarchie entre ceux qui commandent et ceux qui obéissent' in need of challenge.[92]

But Dolto's mission to create 'une société au service de l'enfance' had another aspect.[93] Building a society around the needs and desires of children presupposed that parents, specifically mothers, would be entirely at their children's disposal. As will be shown in chapter 6, Dolto's advice to individual parents required or assumed a style of parenting that would in practice make it impossible for women to work outside the home. Dolto, whose own childhood and parenting experience had featured numerous nannies and various other forms of 'help', rarely displayed much understanding of the difficulties faced by working mothers. Asked by a current affairs television programme in 1963 whether schools should open on Thursdays or Saturdays – the French public school system being in the process of switching from the latter to the former, in

[90] 'Texte pour le livre de chez Plon', 12. Dolto's emphasis.
[91] Dolto, *Cause des enfants*, 13.
[92] Garcia, *Mères sous influence*, 9.
[93] Dolto, *Cause des enfants*, part 3.

order to align with the standard working week – Dolto answered neither, since 'il est nécessaire de n'avoir rien à faire au moins une journée – mais rien! C'est à dire perdons du temps, regarder les choses, réfléchir, bricoler, coudre'.[94] The implications for working parents were not, should not be, a consideration. Nor did Dolto accept that the sexual revolution and the rise of feminism should lead to changes in the constitution of families or the roles played by each member. 'Ça ne m'étonne pas de donner l'impression d'être rétro', she said in 1977. 'Mais ce n'est ni rétro ni pas rétro, c'est éternel … cela est inconsciemment inscrit dans notre biologie à tous...ce n'est pas démodable parce qu'on ne changera pas de biologie'.[95]

Dolto's reputation in France as a progressive thinker in effect rests on her 'permissive' stances, relative to much of French society, in the decade or so after 1945, on her approach to the family in terms of intimate, active personal relationships rather than hierarchies based on obedience. As shown in this chapter, her thinking was part of a broad current that was finding a wide audience from 1945 onwards. Her daughter Catherine's claim that '[sa] façon … subversive … de penser l'enfance et la parentalité … à l'époque où elle fut énoncée fit scandale', was thus always an exaggeration, but it was probably most true of this period.[96] More accurately, it may be said that the innovative aspects of Dolto's thought and approach always coexisted with an inflexibly patriarchal view of sex difference and gender roles, with far-reaching, and far from progressive, consequences in subsequent decades.

[94] Jean-Pierre Chartier, *L'Avenir est à vous*, RTF, 16/09/1963.
[95] 'Le métier des parents', *Questionnaire*, TF1 04/12/1977, interview by Jean-Louis Servan-Schreiber. Transcript published in *CDE*, 7-44; here 34-7.
[96] Catherine Dolto, preface to *EME*, 16.

Chapter 5 – Autism, Antipsychiatry and the Pathogenic Family: Dolto and the Psychoanalytic Approach to Autism in France

Introduction: autism and the mother

In 2004, the European Committee of Social Rights, part of the Council of Europe, ruled that France's provisions for people with autism were inadequate. The committee upheld a complaint brought by an autism rights association, Autism Europe, concluding that France had failed to uphold the rights of children and young persons with disabilities to care, assistance, education and training enshrined in the European Social Charter.[1] Provisions for autistic children in France had such a bad reputation that thousands of parents were reported to be sending their children to specialist schools in Belgium.[2]

From the 1990s, a variety of associations of autists and parents of autistic children – Vaincre l'Autisme, Autisme France, Autistes sans frontières, Sésame Autisme – campaigned to change the way autism was treated in France. They argued that autistic children were less likely to be diagnosed (or diagnosed much later) in France than their counterparts in the USA and UK; that under thirty per cent of autistic children attended mainstream schools, compared to around eighty per cent in the UK (instead attending psychiatric hospitals or day hospitals); and that treatment methods based on behavioural psychology, such as TEACHH, PECS, and Applied Behaviour Analysis – were not generally available in France.[3] Instead, autistic children were approached through the prism of psychoanalytic concepts, to the detriment, the campaigners argued, of their life outcomes.

[1] Decision taken at a Ministers' Deputies' meeting, 14/01/2004. See Council of Europe website, https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?p=&Ref=CM/Notes/868/4.1&Language=lanEnglish&Ver=original&direct=true, accessed 03/08/16.

[2] Caroline Piquet, 'Ces enfants handicapés obligés de s'exiler de France pour aller à l'école', *Le Figaro*, 07/11/2014.

[3] Brigitte Chamak, 'Autism as Viewed by French Parents', in V.B. Patel, V.R. Preedy and C.R. Martin (eds), *Comprehensive Guide to Autism* (New York, 2014), 2533-43; Brigitte Chamak and Béatrice Bonniau, 'Changes in the Diagnosis of Autism: How Parents and Professionals Act and React in France', *Culture, Medicine, and Psychiatry*, 37/3 (2013), 405-26.

The concept of autism is a relatively recent one in the history of medicine, and its definition, etiology and diagnostic framing have been heavily contested, both within psychiatry and in the popular imagination, most recently by anti-vaccine campaigns drawing on Andrew Wakefield's fraudulent linking of autism to the MMR vaccine.[4] The term was coined in 1912 by the Swiss psychiatrist, Eugen Bleuler, who also invented the diagnosis of schizophrenia; many twentieth-century psychiatrists subsequently interpreted what would today be called autism as an early-onset or childhood form of schizophrenia. Two psychiatrists who separated autism from schizophrenia – Hans Asperger and Leo Kanner – are therefore considered the fathers of the autism diagnosis. According to Asperger (1906-80), based at the innovative Heilpädogigik Station Kinderklinik at the University of Vienna from 1932 onwards, 'autistischen Psychopathen' comprised a broad range of people, not only the 'high achievers' with whom he is often associated, and as probably having a genetic cause.[5] However, Asperger's clinic and papers were destroyed by bombing in 1944 – the Nazis having already murdered hundreds of the clinic's patients, and his work was largely unknown until the 1980s. Instead, the definition provided in 1943-44 by Kanner (1894-1981), a Ukrainian Jewish émigré based at Johns Hopkins University, became influential in the postwar decades. Kanner's conception of 'early infantile autism' defined the disease as rare, monolithic, and characterised by 'a will to self-isolation' and a fear of change or surprise, an 'anxiously obsessive desire for the maintenance of sameness'.[6]

Kanner, prominent within the profession as the author of a widely-used textbook, *Child Psychiatry*, initially suggested that autism was inborn, but later argued for a psychogenic etiology.[7] Steve Silberman suggests that Kanner's

[4] Fiona Godlee, Jane Smith and Harvey Marcovitch, 'Wakefield's article linking MMR vaccine and autism was fraudulent', *BMJ*, 342 (2011).
[5] Hans Asperger, 'Die "Autistischen Psychopathen" im Kindesalter', *Archiv für Psychiatrie und Nervenkrankheiten*, 117/1 (1944), 132-5; Steve Silberman, *Neurotribes: The Legacy of Autism and How to Think Smarter about People Who Think Differently* (London, 2015), 99.
[6] Silberman, *Neurotribes*, 182. Leo Kanner, 'Autistic Disturbances of Affective Contact', *Nervous Child*, 2 (1943), 217-50; Leo Kanner, 'Early Infantile Autism', *Journal of Pediatrics*, 25/3 (1944), 211-7.
[7] Leo Kanner, *Child Psychiatry* (Springfield, IL, 1935 – several subsequent editions).

ambivalence on autism's cause was strategic.[8] This was because of the increasing dominance, from the 1940s onwards, of psychoanalysis in American psychiatry, and its increased presence in American culture more generally, peaking between approximately 1945 and 1963.[9] In these decades, 'psychosocial' and psychosomatic explanations for illness were in vogue. Psychoanalysts began applying their insights in more and more domains such as asthma, schizophrenia, and 'borderline' conditions. Often, 'psychosocial' explanations of these conditions led back to the family, and specifically to pathogenic mothers. Franz Alexander wrote that asthmatics suffered from 'excessive, unresolved dependence' upon 'asthmatogenic' mothers.[10] Harry Stack Sullivan, Frieda Fromm-Reichmann, Theodore Lidz and others similarly described 'schizophrenogenic mothers'. Influenced by these writers – Lidz and Sullivan were Johns Hopkins colleagues – Kanner applied the same line of thinking to autism. At a time when a large majority of psychiatric residents described their orientation as Freudian or neo-Freudian, this was a 'politically expedient choice' on Kanner's part.[11] It was Kanner, not Bruno Bettelheim, with whom the term later became associated, who coined the phrase 'refrigerator mothers' to describe what he saw as the coldness and distance of mothers towards autistic children.[12]

This concept was challenged by Bernard Rimland, an independent researcher and parent of an autistic son, whose book *Infantile Autism* eventually led to the creation of the National Society for Autistic Children.[13] Bettelheim meanwhile published *The Empty Fortress* which synthesised Kanner's work with that of other theorists of toxic parenting, and popularised the 'refrigerator mother' idea.[14] Bettelheim added a striking image by drawing an analogy between

[8] Silberman, *Neurotribes*, 192.
[9] As argued by Hale, *Rise and Crisis*, 258.
[10] Franz Alexander, *Psychosomatic Medicine* (New York, 1950), 134-5, cited in Hale, *Rise and Crisis*, 260.
[11] Hale, *Rise and Crisis*, 253; Silberman, *Neurotribes*, 192.
[12] Leo Kanner, 'Emotional Interference with Intellectual Functioning', *American Journal of Mental Deficiency*, 56/4 (1952), 701-7.
[13] Bernard Rimland, *Infantile Autism: The Syndrome and its Implications for a Neural Theory of Behavior* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1964).
[14] Bruno Bettelheim, *The Empty Fortress: Infantile Autism and the Birth of Self* (New York, 1967). Bettelheim consulted such papers as: Louise Despert, 'Some Considerations Relating to the Genesis of Autistic Behavior in Children', *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 21

autistic children and concentration camp victims, implicitly placing parents in the role of camp guards who caused their children to 'withdraw from the world before their humanity ever really develops', just as victims of Nazi camps 'had lost their humanity in response to extreme situations'.[15] This implied that the best place for autistic children was in an institution, away from their toxic parents. Reversing this notion in the USA took years of action by activist groups, legislative change such as the 1975 Education for All Handicapped Children Act, and the development of behaviourist education techniques. It also required the waning of the influence of psychoanalysis in psychiatry, as crystallised in the removal of psychoanalytic terminology from the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM) in 1980. By the 1990s, aided by the achievements of the women's movement and by changing cultural perceptions of autism, accelerated by the film *Rain Man* (1988) and the rediscovery of Asperger's work, 'refrigerator mother' theory was waning. Changes in diagnostic criteria meant that many more children were diagnosed with autism or related conditions.

In France, things were different. There, the peak of psychoanalytic influence on psychiatry occurred not in the 1950s, but after 1968, with the rise of Jacques Lacan and the arrival of many of his former trainees in important psychiatric positions. French psychoanalytic psychiatrists resisted the revised diagnostic criteria contained in the DSM after 1980. Psychoanalytic conceptions of autism held considerable sway in France well into the twenty-first century. French psychiatrists typically defined autism in broadly psychoanalytic terms, as a severe psychosis characterized by the absence of language and/or difficulties in social interaction. Psychoanalysts tried to establish a causal link between the family environment, especially the mother, and the development of autistic disorders. Women who presented an autistic child for psychiatric assessment were frequently told that they were

(1951), 335-50; C.E. Goshen, 'Mental Retardation and Neurotic Maternal Attitudes', *Archives of General Psychiatry*, 9 (1963), 168-75; Leon Eisenberg, 'The Fathers of Autistic Children', *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 27 (1957), 715-24.

[15] Bettelheim, *Empty Fortress*, 7. The most balanced biography of Bettelheim is Nina Sutton, *Bettelheim, A Life and Legacy* (Boulder, 1997). More partisan works, favourable and unfavourable to Bettelheim respectively, are Theron Raines, *Rising to the Light: A Portrait of Bruno Bettelheim* (New York, 2002), and Richard Pollak, *The Creation of Dr. B: A Biography of Bruno Bettelheim* (New York, 1997).

responsible for their child's condition, or at least that the child's condition resulted from troubles in the mother-child relationship. One recalled being told that her son was autistic 'because he suffered separation issues from breast-feeding. This the analyst gleaned from watching him spin round objects (which reminded him of his mother's breasts) and chase after one that he had "lost" when it fell and rolled under a piece of furniture.'[16] Another received a psychiatric report explaining her son's autism in terms of 'des phobies sexuelles qui se liquéfiaient … C'était des textes de Lacan, et elle a mis Guillaume dedans. Ça ne ressemblait pas à Guillaume.'[17] The mother of a son born in 1988, asking what had caused his condition, was told 'maybe you didn't cuddle him enough'.[18]

Only seven per cent of parents of autistic children born in France between 1960 and 1990 reported being happy with the treatment their children received.[19] The parents' associations formed in the 1990s pressed the French state to redefine autism as a medical disability and a genetic condition, rather than one caused by family dynamics. They invited geneticists and neuroscientists to their meetings and called for further research into the condition.[20]

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This chapter examines Dolto's role in developing and popularising the psychoanalytic approach to autism in France. It will look in particular at Dolto's 1960s collaboration with Maud Mannoni, and her case study published as a popular book, *Le Cas Dominique* (1971). I argue that Dominique can plausibly be interpreted as autistic, and that Dolto's presentation of the case contributed to popularising the idea that autism, psychosis and 'backwardness' in children were caused by childhood trauma, and ultimately by poor

[16] Chantal Sicile-Kira, 'Autism and Education in France', *Huffington Post*, 14/06/2010, http://www. huffingtonpost.com/chantal-sicile-kira/autism-parenting-autism-a_b_607917.html, accessed 03/08/2016.
[17] From the documentary *Le Mur* (dir. Sophie Robert, France, 2011).
[18] From an interview conducted in 2005-6 by Chamak and Bonniau. 'Changes in the Diagnosis of Autism', 411ff.
[19] Chamak and Bonniau, 'Changes in the Diagnosis of Autism', 419.
[20] Chamak, 'Autism as Viewed by French Parents', 2533-4.

parenting. Just as Laforgue had suggested that the 'névrose familiale' was frequently caused by 'unnatural' family relations, in which the mother took on a strong role or sought professional advancement, so Dolto and Mannoni presented the pathogenic family as one in which mothers were overly dominant and fathers weak or absent. By providing engaging case studies, Dolto and Mannoni played a vital part in convincing French public opinion of the real existence of such families. The last part of the chapter will indicate continuities between these ideas as promoted by Dolto and Mannoni in the 1960s, and the attitudes of psychoanalysts towards autism into the twenty-first century.

The chapter also sets this history, and the increased influence of psychoanalysis in France in the same period, in the context of the 'antipsychiatry' or radical psychiatry movement.[21] From the 1950s onwards, radical psychiatrists attacked the carceral practices of asylums and mental hospitals, seeing the use of violent restraint and the unconsenting imposition of shock treatments, lobotomies and tranquilising medication as inhumane. This chapter will compare the relationship between antipsychiatry and psychoanalysis in France and the USA. In the USA, 'antipsychiatry' was in part also opposed to psychoanalysis, because of the more established position of psychoanalysis within US psychiatry by the 1950s, to the point where 'the terms psychiatrist and psychoanalyst became almost interchangeable'.[22] The American restriction on the practice of psychoanalysis to medical doctors made it harder for psychoanalysis to identify with a movement attacking medical psychiatry.[23] In the 1960s, American psychoanalysis lost its association with psychiatric reform. American 'antipsychiatry' provoked the

[21] The term 'antipsychiatry', coined by David Cooper in 1967, has long been recognised as unsatisfactory. The term covers a multiplicity of positions: in practice, many thinkers and practitioners associated with it argued for psychiatry's reform, not its abolition. Supposedly leading exponents, such as R.D. Laing, often refused the designation. For the purposes of this chapter, following John Foot's work on Franco Basaglia, I define 'antipsychiatry' as a radical movement within psychiatry, criticising theories and practices employed in psychiatry before the 1960s. The term suggests a critique of definitions and diagnoses of mental illness and of how the mentally ill were labelled, incarcerated and treated. See John Foot, *The Man who Closed the Asylums: Franco Basaglia and the Revolution in Mental Health Care* (London, 2015), ch. 2. For the British context, Nick Crossley, 'R.D. Laing and the British Anti-Psychiatry Movement: A Socio–Historical Analysis', *Social Science & Medicine*, 47/7 (1998), 877-89.

[22] Hale, *Rise and Crisis*, 289.

[23] Hale, *Rise and Crisis*, 302-3.

emergence of an empirical, somatically-focused psychiatry and the removal of psychoanalytic terms from the DSM. In France, thanks to ideological affinities and personal connections, radical psychiatry was closely linked to (Lacanian) psychoanalysis. In addition, the dismantling of France's asylum structure via the 'sectorisation' policy after 1958 offered opportunities to psychoanalysts working in the smaller-scale Centres Médico Psycho-Pédagogiques (CMPPs) that replaced them. This chapter will explore the connections between radical psychiatrists, psychoanalysts and far left politics, focusing on the connections between Félix Guattari, Jean Oury, Maud Mannoni, Jacques Lacan and Dolto. By presenting her work in conjunction with this nexus of radical thinkers, Dolto, I argue, was able to give a new lease of life to ideas ultimately derived from the anti-feminist views of her 1930s mentors.

I. Antipsychiatry

The beginning of the 1960s marks a turning point in the history of western psychiatry: the shift from a system based on the incarceration of the mentally ill in asylums and other institutions to one in which community-based treatment played a much greater role. The asylum population of the USA peaked between 1955 and 1961, at 560,000, and declined sharply thereafter.[24] In France, the rate of incarceration in psychiatric institutions peaked in 1961 at 244 per 100,000 people, declining to 193 per 100,000 by 1976.[25]

The decline was the result of a combination of two major changes, one clinical, the other cultural. The clinical change was that from the mid-1950s onwards psychiatrists, for the first time ever, were able to offer effective pharmacological remedies for some severe mental illnesses. New drugs such as chlorpromazine, imipramine, and lithium, used to treat schizophrenia,

[24] Jeffrey A. Lieberman with Ogi Ogas, *Shrinks: The Untold Story of Psychiatry* (London, 2015), 154, 192.
[25] France Meslé and Jacques Vallin, 'La population des établissements psychiatriques: évolution de la morbidité ou changement de stratégie médicale?', *Population*, 36/6 (1981), 1035-68. Because of France's growing population, and declining death rates in institutions, the total asylum population continued to rise after 1961.

depression, and mania respectively, enabled many patients previously considered unmanageable to return to the community and live relatively normal lives. Fifty million people worldwide had taken chlorpromazine by 1964.[26] The new drugs reduced psychiatrists' reliance on the crude, violent and often inhumane instruments of previous decades: straitjackets, cold packs, lobotomies, fever induction, insulin shock and electroconvulsive therapy employed without patient consent.

'Antipsychiatry' was the cultural shift. In 1961 three of the trend's foundational texts appeared. Thomas Szasz's *The Myth of Mental Illness* argued that the entire concept of mental illness was a category error. It labelled as physically disordered people who were in fact 'disabled by living'.[27] Erving Goffman's *Asylums* deplored conditions in asylums and other 'total institutions', drawing attention to patterns of interaction that dehumanised patients.[28] In France, Michel Foucault argued that the beginnings of confinement in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries represented a political decision to 'faire taire la folie'.[29] Such publications were accompanied by institutional experiments. In 1961, Franco Basaglia was appointed to run the asylum in Gorizia. Refusing to restrain his patients, he set about democratising the institution and creating a 'therapeutic community'.[30] His work eventually inspired the 1978 'Basaglia Law' that closed Italian asylums altogether. In Britain, R.D. Laing and David Cooper, as well as writing their own important books, ran institutional experiments such as the 'anti-hospitals' at Villa 21 and Kingsley Hall.[31] In these, as at Elliott Barker's Oak Ridge asylum in Ontario in the same period, the experience of undergoing mental distress was compared to a shamanic journey into the psyche, one that could provide valuable insights

[26] See Lieberman, *Shrinks*, 176-93.
[27] Thomas Szasz, *The Myth of Mental Illness: Foundations of a Theory of Personal Conduct* (New York, 1961).
[28] Erving Goffman, *Asylums. Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates* (Garden City, NY, 1961).
[29] Michel Foucault, *Histoire de la folie à l'âge classique. (Folie et déraison)* (Paris, 1961).
[30] Foot, *Man Who Closed the Asylums*, ch. 7.
[31] R.D. Laing, *The Divided Self: An Existential Study in Sanity and Madness* (London, 1960); *The Politics of the Family and Other Essays* (London, 1971); R.D. Laing and Aaron Esterson, *Sanity, Madness and the Family* (London, 1970 (1964)); David Cooper, *Psychiatry and Anti-Psychiatry* (London, 1967).

analogous to the experience provided by perception-altering drugs, which Laing and Barker also supplied to some patients.

During the 1960s, the antipsychiatric movement gathered momentum and became intertwined with other civil rights campaigns. One of the major arguments of Laing, Foucault and others was that madness could not be seen outside of its social context. Psychiatrists needed to move, in Laing's words, 'from a clinical to a social phenomenological perspective'.[32] Mental illness was a social construct; asylum inmates were victims of an arbitrary system of confinement. Basaglia and others pointed out the uncomfortable resemblances between asylum confinement and detention in a concentration camp. Asylum inmates were not ill, they were victims of social circumstance, in need of liberation and political empowerment, like other marginalised groups. The psychiatric establishment was an oppressive force of incarceration.

As indicated above, in the USA, psychoanalysis had achieved widespread cultural ascendancy and a degree of hegemony within medical psychiatry by the 1950s, such that the American Psychiatric Association (APA) and most major university psychiatry departments were run by psychoanalysts. This domination was never total, and did not exclude non-psychoanalytic forms of treatment, nor was American psychoanalysis in this period monolithic. Nonetheless, to a significant extent, psychoanalysis represented the normative edifice against which 'antipsychiatry' protested in the 1960s. Nathan Hale argues that psychoanalysis gradually 'became identified with the "establishment" in psychiatry and society, reconciled with conventional moral and religious values and sexual conventions'.[33]

In France, however, psychoanalysis – and especially its Lacanian, 'dissident' variant – was only beginning its cultural ascendancy in the 1960s, and not yet predominant within psychiatry. Despite the 1950s initiative of Dolto and her colleagues discussed in chapter 4, in 1955, *Femme* magazine could state that whereas in America psychoanalysis had firmly entered public consciousness,

[32] Laing and Esterson, *Sanity, Madness and the Family*, 11-12.
[33] Hale, *Rise and Crisis*, 277.

in France, 'la psychanalyse est encore considérée comme une science obscure'.[34] Therefore in France, 'dissident' psychoanalysis could be an ally, rather than a target, of radical psychiatry, since the 'antipsychiatric' critique of French mental health institutions attacked a system over which psychoanalysis had by and large not presided. Instead, the principal exponents of that critique were people who were either psychoanalysts themselves or had a strong interest in psychoanalysis. As Sherry Turkle has written, the distinctiveness of French antipsychiatry was that it was 'both "psychoanalytic" and deeply embedded in a Marxist tradition of political action'.[35]

This was possible because of Jacques Lacan's success in the 1950s in reinventing psychoanalysis as a left-wing and avant-garde system of thought. As chapter 3 showed, the 1953 and 1964 splits in the French psychoanalytic movement were in part disputes over whether psychoanalysis was fundamentally a medical discipline, and how much leeway analysts had to introduce innovations into their practice without approval from the international Freudian movement. The SFP (after 1953) and the École Freudienne de Paris (EFP), founded in 1964 following Lacan and Dolto's exclusion from the IPA, attracted analysts who found those ties constricting. Many were drawn to the charisma and ideas of Lacan, who was becoming the predominant intellectual force in French psychoanalysis. His 'Rome discourse' of September 1953 declared his intention to incorporate structuralist linguistic analysis.[36] He followed this up in 1955-56 with his announcement of a 'return to' – in reality a new, structuralist reading of – Freud. Lacan's seminars at Sainte-Anne began to attract wider attention, becoming what Annick Ohayon terms 'un haut lieu de stimulation intellectuelle'.[37] His influence grew not just because of his theorising, but because he had an unusually large number of analysands – aided by his controversial practice of short (typically 5-15 minute) consultations, and because a high proportion of his analyses were

[34] Cited in Mijolla, *La France et Freud 1954-1964*, 74.
[35] Sherry Turkle, 'French Anti-Psychiatry', in David Ingleby (ed.), *Critical Psychiatry: the Politics of Mental Health* (Harmondsworth, 1981), 150-83.
[36] Jacques Lacan, 'Fonction et champ de la parole et du langage en psychanalyse', in *Écrits* (Paris, 1966), 237-322.
[37] Ohayon, *L'Impossible Rencontre*, 384.

didactic or training analyses. His former analysands rapidly became a significant contingent within the overall psychoanalytic movement.

Lacan's renown developed by 1957 to the point that *L'Express* ran a front-page interview with him. The piece set out to demystify psychoanalysis, giving Lacan the opportunity to assuage fears that psychoanalysis was 'intimidant' or full of mysterious 'secrets'.[38] Lacan explained that the 'secrets' of psychoanalysis were not like those of physics and biology, but were 'd'un ordre langagier'. This held out the possibility to writers, philosophers, priests, literature students, political activists – all those whose expertise was 'd'un ordre langagier' – that their lack of medical or scientific training need not be an obstacle to unlocking the workings of the mind. Lacan stated that the 'science' of a psychoanalyst was 'une *lecture,* une *lecture du sens*'.[39] The ranks of the SFP, and especially of Lacan's analysands, swelled with people with a background in words and ideas, from surrealist artists to Jesuit priests. Lacan encouraged his philosophically- or literarily-inclined analysands to attend medical school, and his medically-qualified pupils to read Saussure, Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty.[40] The ease with which he moved between both worlds added to his air of mastery.

Some positions adopted by Lacan might have been specifically designed to counter the criticisms of psychoanalysis emanating from the far left. As shown in chapter 3, French Communists in 1949 had described psychoanalysis as 'une technique d'adaptation à la société bourgeoise' and a Cold War weapon of the USA 'contre les forces de démocratie et de paix'.[41] A key point of communist criticism was that psychoanalysis tended at best to distract people from the socio-economic causes of their distress by turning attention inward onto the family and, at worst, to suppress political dissent by medicalising it. Though the position softened somewhat after Stalin's death, Serge Moscovici found that sixty-five per cent of French Communist press articles on psychoanalysis in the early 1950s criticised or ridiculed the practice, compared to only twenty-

[38] 'Clefs pour la psychanalyse', *L'Express*, 310, 31/05/1957, 1.
[39] 'Clefs pour la psychanalyse', emphasis in original.
[40] Roudinesco, *Jacques Lacan*, 279.
[41] Bonnafé et al, 'La psychanalyse, idéologie réactionnaire', 17.

three per cent of comparable articles in the Catholic press.[42] A typical view of psychoanalysis among Moscovici's working-class interviewees was of 'un traitement à la mode des femmes du monde', that had, moreover, come to France as a result of American influence.[43]

In the SFP years (1953-64), Lacan repositioned psychoanalysis, partly by drawing dividing lines between his own approach and that being practised in New York, and launching vitriolic attacks on the latter. Lacan's attacks on the 'ego-psychology' of Heinz Hartmann, Rudolph Loewenstein, Ernst Kris and others elided into criticisms of the 'American way of life', notwithstanding that many 'ego-psychologists' were refugees from Europe.[44] Lacan's criticisms were understood by Parisian audiences in global political terms, as attacking American hegemony in general.[45] Lacan asserted his right to re-read Freud independently of the USA-based IPA, and to incorporate ideas derived from the Parisian intellectual scene, such as Alexandre Kojève's lectures on Hegel or Claude Lévi-Strauss's on anthropology. The clear implication was that his project could support a radical, French contestation of American capitalist dominance.

This aspect of Lacan's appeal became increasingly apparent in the 1960s. Lacan presented the EFP as an anti-authoritarian, anti-hierarchical, anti-capitalist body: 'la charge de direction ne constituera pas une chefferie dont le service rendu se capitaliserait pour l'accès à un grade supérieur'.[46] Needing a new location for his seminar, he found one at the École Normale Supérieure, thanks to Louis Althusser. Thereafter, the EFP went in a direction that Roudinesco describes as 'Maoist', inspired by the Chinese Cultural Revolution: 'a revolution at the base, which would be organised at the summit, under the doctrinal aegis of a "great helmsman"'.[47] Lacan's daughter Judith

[42] Serge Moscovici, *La Psychanalyse, son image et son public* (Paris, 1976 (1961)), 314.
[43] Moscovici, *La Psychanalyse*, 120, 81.
[44] Pamela King, *L'American way of life. Lacan et les débuts de L'Ego Psychology* (Paris, 2013).
[45] Marcelle Marini, *Jacques Lacan: The French Context*. trans. A. Tomiche (New Brunswick, 1992), 127. See also Eve Tavor Bannet, *Structuralism and the Logic of Dissent: Barthes, Foucault, Derrida, Lacan* (Basingstoke, 1989), 42ff.
[46] Jacques Lacan, 'Acte de fondation', *Autres écrits* (Paris, 2001), 229.
[47] Roudinesco, *Jacques Lacan*, 449.

and son-in-law and heir apparent Jacques-Alain Miller joined the Maoist *Gauche prolétarienne* in 1968. The alliance with Althusser deepened a trend, already in evidence from the 1950s, of interest in Lacan from young thinkers and psychiatrists on the radical far left – radical in the sense of advocating egalitarian transformations in social organisation while not being part of long-standing socialist political structures.

Several of the leading names of French anti- or radical psychiatry, especially Jean Oury, Félix Guattari and Maud Mannoni, had a personal connection with Lacan. The Lacan connection helps explain how Dolto, too, came into contact with thinkers whose orientation, on the face of it, was very different from the Catholic, holistic, anti-Communist direction of *Psyché* and *Études carmélitaines* that Dolto followed in the initial postwar years.

Jean Oury (1924-2014) was a psychiatrist, who in 1953 founded the famous private clinic at La Borde, near Cour-Cheverny in the Loire, following a spell at the Saint Alban clinic in Lozère.[48] Saint Alban's history as a pioneering site of psychiatric reform dated back to the Popular Front. Under the Occupation, it became a centre for Resistance as well as innovative psychiatry, sheltering the Catalan/Spanish Republican psychiatrist François Tosquelles, who removed the outer walls and prison-like bars and opened the front doors. After the war, Frantz Fanon worked there as an intern. Lucien Bonnafé, a Communist psychiatrist who later helped oversee 'sectorisation', and who campaigned for recognition of the 40,000 French mental health patients who died (mostly of starvation) during the Occupation, also passed through.[49] When Oury arrived in 1947, Saint Alban was known as a centre of psychiatric reform with politically (far) left inflections. 'Psychothérapie institutionnelle', the reform movement that originated there, can also be thought of in this way.

[48] Oury's early career has been well described by Julian Bourg and François Dosse; I will recount it only briefly here. Bourg, *Revolution to Ethics*, ch. 10; Dosse, *Intersecting Lives*, chs. 2-3. For a sense of how La Borde fits into the wider history of antipsychiatry in France, including the Fanon connection, see Jacques Postel and David F. Allen, 'History and Anti-Psychiatry in France', in Micale and Porter (eds), *Discovering the History of Psychiatry*, 384-414.

[49] See Pierre Bailly-Salin, 'The Mentally Ill Under Nazi Occupation in France', *International Journal of Mental Health*, 35/4 (2006-7), 11-25.

At La Borde, Oury was joined as co-director by Guattari, whose early career, before achieving national fame as the co-author with Gilles Deleuze of *Anti-Oedipus*, illustrates how the worlds of left-wing politics, radical psychiatry, and Lacanian psychoanalysis overlapped.[50] Guattari (1930-92) was from a right-wing family – his businessman father was a former member of the *Croix de feu* – but from the Liberation he was active in the anti-Stalinist left, organising protests against French colonialism in Vietnam and Algeria and visiting China in 1954.[51] His first contact with Oury was through the Auberge de Jeunesse movement. Oury's younger brother Fernand, an innovative pedagogue and educational reformer who was strongly influenced by the educational theories of Célestin Freinet, had taught Guattari at *lycée*. I will return to Fernand, and his connection to Dolto, in chapter 6.

Oury and Guattari turned La Borde into a humane, egalitarian community, in deliberate contrast to the repressive, carceral atmosphere of most asylums. La Borde's nurses did not wear white smocks but dressed indistinguishably from the patients. Spaces were permeable and patients free to move around. Patients ran group therapy sessions and creative projects, and were brought into the centre's decision-making processes. Guattari, in charge of work schedules, constantly assigned staff to work outside their specialist areas. All responsibilities were shared equally, every employee alternated between manual and intellectual labour, and all received the same salary. Oury, responsible for psychiatric treatment, looked for the 'truth' in patients' discourse, seeking out creative or transcendental dimensions to their speech and actions. While not denying the somatic basis of his patients' conditions, he was moving the focus onto social, environmental and linguistic elements.

Both Oury and Guattari were strongly influenced by Lacan. Oury was inspired by Lacan's 1947 text on psychic causality, and by 1951 was recommending Lacan's texts on the mirror stage, aggression, and the family to Guattari.[52] Guattari soon began attending Lacan's seminars – he later claimed to be the

[50] Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *L'Anti-Oedipe:capitalisme et schizophrénie* (Paris, 1972).
[51] Dosse, *Intersecting Lives*, 26.
[52] Dosse, *Intersecting Lives*, 36; Jacques Lacan, 'Propos sur la causalité psychique', *L'Évolution psychiatrique*, (1947), 123-65.

first non-physician to do so – and generally 'bugging everyone about Lacan'.[53] Oury entered analysis with Lacan in 1953 and stayed for the next twenty-seven years. Guattari, and most of La Borde's staff, soon followed. On Wednesday afternoons the clinic more or less emptied out, as the staff decamped to Paris for Lacan's seminar.[54] Lacan valued Oury and Guattari for their connection with an avant-garde psychiatric clinic, and for conversations that helped him think about psychosis. For a time, Lacan even considered giving Guattari a special position as his 'preferred interlocutor' – i.e. chosen heir – an idea that definitively ended with the publication of *Anti-Oedipus*.[55]

Via Lacan, the ideas behind 'psychothérapie institutionnelle' spread into the psychoanalytic movement. This is particularly evident in the writings of Maud Mannoni (1923-98). A product of the Belgian Psychoanalytic Society, Mannoni moved to Paris after the war where she came under Dolto's wing – 'Françoise Dolto m'a accueillie comme une fille de la famille', Mannoni later told *Libération*.[56] Dolto introduced her to her future husband, Octave Mannoni, a philosophy professor in Madagascar turned Lacanian analyst.[57] Maud observed Dolto's child psychotherapy consultations at Hôpital Trousseau and decided to specialise in this area. Her Belgian analyst wrote to Dolto in 1949 praising her training of Mannoni and methodology for child psychoanalysis.[58] Subsequently, Mannoni visited Donald Winnicott in London, doing a control analysis with him and a further personal analysis with Lacan. She visited Kingsley Hall and befriended R.D. Laing.[59] In 1969 she founded an experimental school in Bonneuil-sur-Marne, an outer Parisian suburb, aimed at children diagnosed as autistic, psychotic or 'retarded' (*arriéré*).

[53] Cited in Dosse, *Intersecting Lives*, 37.
[54] Dosse, *Intersecting Lives*, 70.
[55] Dosse, *Intersecting Lives*, 71.
[56] Antoine de Gaudemar, 'Maud Mannoni dans la nuit. La psychanalyste spécialiste des enfants est morte dimanche à 74 ans', *Libération*, 17/03/1998.
[57] Octave Mannoni's best-known work, *Psychologie de la colonisation* (Paris, 1950), drew on his colonial experience. It provoked sharp criticism from Aimé Césaire and Frantz Fanon for its racist assumptions. See François Vatin, 'Octave Mannoni (1899-1989) et sa *Psychologie de la colonisation*. Contextualisation et décontextualisation', *Revue du MAUSS*, 37/1 (2011), 137-78.
[58] Maurice Dugautiez to Dolto, 28/02/1949, *VdC*, 175.
[59] Roudinesco, *Jacques Lacan*, 491-4.

Mannoni is an important figure. Her writings synthesised antipsychiatry and psychoanalysis, exploring how psychoanalysis could harness the insights of the antipsychiatrists. She described the relationship most fully in her 1970 book *Le Psychiatre, son 'fou' et la psychanalyse*, but the direction of her thinking had already been clear in *L'Enfant arriéré et sa mère* (1964).[60] This appeared as the first book in Lacan's new 'Champ freudien' collection at Éditions du Seuil – Lacan's *Écrits* was the second – and Lacan recommended it to his seminar audience.[61] Mannoni later arranged for a translation of David Cooper's *Psychiatry and Anti-Psychiatry* to be published in the same collection.

L'Enfant arriéré et sa mère appeared in the same year as R.D. Laing and Aaron Esterson's *Sanity, Madness and the Family*. The two books overlapped in approach. Laing and Esterson spent many hours with the families of schizophrenic young women, trying to understand the family dynamics which gave rise to schizophrenia. Their thesis was not exactly that parents made their children schizophrenic, since they doubted that schizophrenia existed at all. Rather, they suggested that 'schizophrenia' was a label applied to a pattern of behaviour that could be considered an existential response to a certain kind of family environment. Mannoni attempted to do something similar for the problem of children with 'arriération' or learning difficulties – which, in practice, included a lot of children who would today be diagnosed as autistic.[62] The central argument of *L'Enfant arriéré et sa mère* and its 1965 follow-up, *Le Premier Rendez-vous avec le psychanalyste*, was that a child's *arriération* should not be treated in isolation from the family dynamic. This was a version of psychogenesis theory, but a nuanced one: Mannoni did not claim that all *arriération* had a psychological origin, but rather that the family environment and the psychological dynamic of the family could aggravate or perpetuate it.

In her words,

[60] Maud Mannoni, *Le Psychiatre, son 'fou' et la psychanalyse* (Paris, 1970); *L'Enfant arriéré et sa mère: étude psychanalytique* (Paris, 1964).
[61] Lacan, *Séminaire XI* – seminar of 10/06/1964. Jacques Lacan, *Écrits* (Paris, 1966).
[62] A.M. Sheridan Smith's 1973 English translation rendered 'arriération' more pejoratively as 'feeblemindedness' or 'retardation'. Maud Mannoni, *The Retarded Child and the Mother. A Psychoanalytic Study*. trans. Alan M. Sheridan Smith (London, 1973).

> An illness, however organic it may be, may assume in the Other (parent or doctor) a function and a status that result in an additional alienation on the part of the 'handicapped' child … it is not a question of denying the existence of mental retardation or psychosis, but rather of examining the way in which … we confront it in our society, aggravate it, and transform it into alienation.[63]

For Mannoni, an 'objective' measurement – a low IQ score, a poor exam mark or school report – should not be taken as a diagnosis in itself. Rather it was probably a symptom of something else, such as a disturbance in the mother-child relationship – something with a history, a meaning that could be uncovered by a perceptive observer: a mystery to be solved.[64]

Mannoni's case studies were however a good deal less detailed than Laing and Esterson's. They were based only on in-clinic observations, whereas the British researchers repeatedly visited their subjects' family homes. Mannoni nevertheless played detective, seeking the meaning of a child's illness in the parents' – especially the mother's – neuroses:

> Le climat favorisant l'éclosion psychotique, c'est avant même la naissance de l'enfant qu'il existe. Dès la conception, le sujet joue pour la mère un rôle très précis sur le plan fantasmatique; son destin est déjà tracé; il sera cet objet sans désirs propres dont le seul rôle sera de combler le vide maternel.[65]

The majority of her examples pointed to 'pathogenic parents' and psychogenic causes. Mannoni criticised most of the mothers of the nineteen patients described in *L'Enfant arriéré et sa mère.* Each of the following quotes refers to a different family:

> Tout le retard du premier développement correspondit en quelque sorte au voeu des parents.

> Janine semble avoir fait une évolution de débile – très bien, peut-être trop bien, acceptée par la famille.

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[63] Maud Mannoni, *The Retarded Child and the Mother*, trans. A.M. Sheridan Smith (London, 1973), xi-xii (quote from Mannoni's English-language preface to the translation).
[64] Mannoni, *L'Enfant arriéré*, 53.
[65] Mannoni, *L'Enfant arriéré*, 66.

> A l'anxiété de la mère, [Pierre] réagit par une opposition passive … il devint caractériel.
>
> La mère se présente d'une façon rigide, avec une absence totale d'affectivité … Ce qui domine, c'est son refus d'avoir des enfants. Or elle en a eu trois...
>
> Cet enfant non désiré est l'objet d'une hyper-sollicitude maternelle, à laquelle il réagit par des vomissements, des troubles caractériels, un refus scolaire.[66]

Thus the most likely key to the mystery of 'arriération', for Mannoni, was that it resulted 'en quelque sorte' from parental, and in all likelihood, maternal, behaviour.

Mannoni clearly acknowledged Dolto's influence on her thinking: 'Je dois à Françoise Dolto d'avoir pu bénéficier de son énorme expérience; la justesse de son sens clinique en psychanalyse s'est révélé décisive dans l'orientation de mes travaux.'[67] They did not agree in every particular: Mannoni put more emphasis solely on treating the child rather than seeking to change the mother's behaviour, whereas Dolto often hinted that it was really the mother, not the child, who should be in therapy. Dolto told *Les Temps modernes* in 1962 that 'notre travail consiste précisément à faire prendre conscience aux femmes de la fonction de symptôme que peut avoir pour elles leur enfant, à les faire sortir de la relation à deux'.[68] Mannoni also had a greater tendency to refer to Lacan's theories. But they approached children's mental disturbances in very similar ways.

Following Dolto's methodology – drawn in turn from Laforgue and the idea of the 'névrose familiale' – Mannoni argued that the analyst should also look beyond the parents to the preceding generation, since 'le noeud du drame existe déjà au niveau des grands-parents'.[69] Dolto's inquiries into her patients'

[66] Mannoni, *L'Enfant arriéré*, 112-22.
[67] Mannoni, *L'Enfant arriéré*, 15.
[68] Dolto, 'Les mères, entretien réalisé et réécrit par J-B Pontalis', *Les Temps modernes*, 01/1963. Reprinted in Dolto, *Les Chemins de l'éducation*, 59-75.
[69] Mannoni, *L'Enfant arriéré*, 66.

family histories were unusually thorough, encompassing grandparents, great-grandparents, aunts and cousins. In *Le Cas Dominique* (of which more shortly) she expressed her belief in the fundamental importance of this background in provoking psychoses, in a formulation which became somewhat famous: '*Il faut donc trois générations pour qu'apparaisse une psychose*: deux générations de grands-parents et parents névrosés dans la génétique du sujet, pour qu'il soit psychosé.'[70] Dolto wanted to know about any traumatic events experienced by any ancestor and believed that the impacts could be transmitted, via the unconscious, to the family's children.

Another way of looking at this technique on Dolto's part would be to say that by probing in such detail, Dolto elicited a wealth of material that could be incorporated into her ultimate explanation of the case. Dolto, like many psychoanalytic writers, enjoyed storytelling. Her case studies are generally very engaging to read. However, their literary quality also gives rise to a suspicion that she approached them as a kind of creative writing challenge. Her patients supplied narrative ingredients; her task was to unravel the mystery in an aesthetically- and psychoanalytically-satisfying way. The more details about the family history that Dolto obtained, the more chance she had of constructing a plausible narrative explaining the psychological disturbance in terms of that history. Silberman writes of Leo Kanner – another psychiatrist with a flair for dramatic narrative – that in his 'refrigerator mother' phase he 'turned the detailed notes that parents had provided to him … into a weapon'.[71] In Bourdieu's terms, it may be said that immersion in the culture of the *récit* made these writers prone to write case histories in ways which satisfied accepted storytelling conventions – perhaps specifically, in Dolto's case, those of detective fiction – and thus appeared plausible to readers, regardless of the degree to which they reflected the reality of their patients' conditions.

The story Dolto and Mannoni seemed keenest to tell in the 1960s was one in which deviation from normative patriarchal family dynamics led to children's

[70] Dolto, *Le Cas Dominique* (Paris, 1985 (1971)), 246 (original emphasis). In the press and in popular commentary, this is often shortened to 'il faut trois générations pour faire un psychotique'.
[71] Silberman, *Neurotribes*, 190.

mental disturbance. This is perhaps especially evident in *Le Premier Rendez-vous avec le psychanalyste* (1965), Mannoni's second book, to which Dolto contributed a forty-five-page preface. In particular, Dolto and Mannoni concurred over the importance of the familial triangle ('père-mère-enfant') and the critical position of the paternal signifier within that triptych. For both, the archetypal pathogenic family could be summarised by the labels applied by Mannoni to the book's first case study: 'mère dépressive'; 'homme résigné' or 'homme absent'; 'enfant-jouet' or 'enfant-objet'.[72] Depressed mothers and unimposing fathers created passive, disturbed children. A toxic environment was one in which the father was psychologically (not necessarily physically) absent from the child's upbringing, whether out of negligence or, more commonly in Dolto and Mannoni's case studies, an inability to withstand the mother's excessive desire for control. Bad fathers were ones who abandoned their child to a 'situation à deux avec sa mère' from which the 'Loi du Père' was lacking.[73] 'Toute substitution de la mère au rôle du père est pathogène', wrote Dolto.[74] The child risked becoming subjugated, a support or adjunct to the mother's emotional needs, lacking the ability to become truly autonomous or independent. 'Toute situation où l'enfant sert de prothèse à un de ses parents ... est pathogène, surtout s'il n'est pas verbalisé à l'enfant que cette situation est fausse.'[75]

Mannoni provided numerous examples of such situations. Her patient Nicolas was 'happé dans le monde maternel [et] vit en écho à la mère'.[76] The absence of the father of another patient, Bernadette, 'met l'enfant en danger d'être *dévorée*' by the mother.[77] Roger was 'happé dans le fantasme maternel. Sa maladie donne à la mère tous les droits; et au père, une culpabilité suffisante pour justifier son retrait.'[78] The (often depressed) mothers of these patients were presented as destructive figures, with dangerous desires that their children were powerless to resist. Only a father's resolute intervention could prevent

[72] Maud Mannoni, *Le Premier Rendez-vous avec le psychanalyste* (Paris, 1965), 56.
[73] Mannoni, *Premier Rendez-vous*, 61-3.
[74] Dolto, preface to Mannoni, *Premier Rendez-vous*, 22-3.
[75] Dolto, preface to Mannoni, *Premier Rendez-vous*, 23.
[76] Mannoni, *Premier Rendez-vous*, 65.
[77] Mannoni, *Premier Rendez-vous*, 67, original emphasis.
[78] Mannoni, *L'Enfant arriéré*, 70.

disaster. Mannoni represented mothers' desires as pathogenic, and fathers' ability to intercede and frustrate these – le 'non du père' of Lacan – as bringing autonomy and psychological health to the child.

This simplistic, recurrent pattern of family relations and causality of disturbance was largely absent from the work of Laing and Esterson, who presented their cases at greater length and with more complex discussion of wider socio-economic considerations. There are occasional echoes of the pathogenic family model in *Sanity, Madness and the Family* – in the case of the Field family, 'one notes the absence of Mr Field as an effective figure in Mrs Field's world' (despite his physical presence) and the mother's domineering demeanour has a 'disturbing' effect on her daughter.[79] But this is not a consistent pattern in the eleven cases in the book, nor is it glossed with psychoanalytic commentary, as by Mannoni and Dolto. Laing and Esterson deliberately pared their interpretative commentary down to a minimum, partly out of respect for the families described and partly because they were making a relatively basic general point: 'that the experience and behaviour of schizophrenics is much more socially intelligible than has come to be supposed'.[80] Dolto and Mannoni went further, proposing a more specific conclusion: that psychotic behaviour in children was explicable in terms of psychoanalytic theory and especially in terms of the Lacanian paternal signifier. They were channelling the antipsychiatric impulse in a specifically psychoanalytic, but also anti-feminist direction, which in fact differed little from that proposed by Laforgue and Pichon in the 1930s.

Their interpretation of autism – or autistic behaviour as part of child schizophrenia, in their terminology – had clear resemblances to that of Kanner and Bettelheim. Bettelheim's *The Empty Fortress* appeared in French translation in 1969, and his reputation spread considerably in 1974 when, during a TV strike, all three national channels broadcast a four-part documentary, *Portrait de Bruno Bettelheim*, on the same evening.[81] Dolto and

[79] Laing and Esterson, *Sanity, Madness*, ch. 6.
[80] Laing and Esterson, *Sanity, Madness*, 13.
[81] Nina Sutton, *Bettelheim*, x.

Mannoni's devouring, incestuous version of the psychogenetic mother diverged from Kanner and Bettelheim's cold, distant, inhuman figure. But the implications were similar. If the family environment was responsible for the child's disturbance, it followed that children stood a better chance of recovery when isolated from their families. Bettelheim admitted his patient Laurie to the Orthopedic School in Chicago after receiving written assurances from her mother 'that they would leave her with us until such time as we had either affected her rehabilitation or felt unable to help her any further'.[82] Mannoni's school at Bonneuil did not enforce parent-child separation so rigidly, but had facilities for children to stay overnight in case it should be judged necessary. At Bonneuil – presented to the French public via a documentary, *Vivre à Bonneuil*, on TF1 in 1975 – Mannoni and Fernand Deligny pioneered a new type of institution, the *hôpital de jour*, as a halfway house between an asylum and mainstream education.[83] Bonneuil had a model of communal organisation modelled to some extent on La Borde, where Deligny had also worked.[84] Psychoanalysis was central to its functioning. By the 1990s, most French children with autism or related disorders attended a *hôpital de jour* rather than a mainstream school, generally as the result of a referral by a psychoanalytically-trained psychiatrist.

II. Dominique

The cases presented in Mannoni's work were no more than fragmentary sketches – nineteen cases in twenty-five pages in *L'Enfant arriéré et sa mère*, thirty patients in sixty pages in *Le Premier Rendez-vous avec le psychanalyste*. In 1967, Dolto decided to present something much longer, giving a more representative impression of the reality of psychotherapeutic practice. She chose the case of a boy referred to as 'Dominique Bel', whom she had treated

[82] Bettelheim, *Empty Fortress*, 99.
[83] Jonathyne Briggs, 'Without Asylum: Critiques of Psychiatric Institutionalization in the 1970s', unpublished conference paper, https://www.academia.edu/23940708/Without_Asylum_Critiques_of_Psychiatric_Institutionalization_in_the_1970s, accessed 01/06/2016.
[84] On Deligny, see Damian Milton, 'Tracing the influence of Fernand Deligny on autism studies', *Disability & Society*, 31/2 (2016), 285-9.

for twelve sessions in 1962-63. She presented the case study at a two-day workshop on child psychosis at the EFP in October 1967, organised by Mannoni with participants including Lacan, Guattari, Jean and Fernand Oury, Tosquelles, Laing and Cooper. In creating this event, Mannoni set up a 'confrontation entre les conceptions structurales du groupe français et les conceptions existentielles du groupe anglais animé par David Cooper et Ronald Laing', around the issue of 'l'enfance aliénée'.[85] As well as presenting the Dominique case, Dolto took part in a round table with Tosquelles and Jean Oury on 'l'enfant, la psychose et l'Institution'.[86] Proceedings were published in two volumes (7-8) of *Recherches*, the journal of the Fédération des Groupes d'études et de recherches institutionnelles (FGERI). This was edited by Guattari, who had created the federation in 1965 to unite people bringing a radical left-wing perspective to various kinds of social work, including psychiatrists, psychoanalysts, educators, doctors, architects, researchers and students.[87]

The structure of Dolto's text followed that of Dominique's analysis, with a chapter for each consultation.[88] Most chapters were built around a verbatim transcript of part of the clinical session. These extracts of varying lengths – some very short, despite the sessions often lasting an hour or more – were accompanied by (often much longer) interpretative glosses from Dolto. When revised for publication as *Le Cas Dominique* by Seuil in 1971, these twelve chapters were followed by two chapters of interpretative commentary, plus an appendix on 'la théorie freudienne des instances de la psyché au cours de l'évolution de la sexualité, en relation à l'Oedipe'.

Dominique was a fourteen-year-old boy from the outer Parisian suburbs, referred to Dolto for advice on a school placement at her consultancy at the new CMPP at Étienne Marcel in central Paris – created in 1961 as part of the

[85] Mannoni, 'Introduction', *Recherches*, 8 (1968), 13.
[86] Dolto and Jean Oury, 'L'enfant, la psychose et l'Institution', *Recherches*, 8 (1968), 115-130.
[87] François Dosse notes that part of the rationale was also to form an organisation that could bid for public and private research work. In the 1970s, Guattari obtained significant government funding for research projects in health, training and public works. Dosse, *Intersecting Lives*, ch. 4.
[88] Dolto, 'Clinique psychanalytique', *Recherches*, 8 (1968), 155-242.

'sectorisation' of mental health treatment. The CMPP paid Dolto a salary. Patients' parents paid at the front desk; missed sessions were not charged. Dolto, who since 1955 had been running her own seminars on child psychoanalysis, opened up her Étienne Marcel consulting room to trainee psychoanalysts, allowing them to observe her work. Such observers could assist Dolto by taking detailed notes of consultations, which enabled the kind of transcripts published in *Dominique*.[89]

The preliminary facts of the case ran as follows. Dominique attended a special needs school, having repeatedly failed to pass the grades in mainstream schools. He was innumerate, forgetful, and distracted, living somewhat in his own world. His father described him as being 'd'une autre planète. Ce n'est pas quelqu'un comme nous'.[90] His mother reported that he made the family's home life impossible, but without being able to say exactly how. He had phobias, tics, and some strange and obsessive behaviours. He was 'tout à fait désorienté dans le temps et dans l'espace', and 'tellement distrait qu'il sortirait en pyjama … si on ne le lui faisait pas remarquer' (14). He liked drawing planes and cars – always the same ones – making models, and inventing stories that his family thought made little sense.

Until the age of two-and-a-half, Dominique's development had been normal. He was toilet trained early, and at age two began to attend a Montessori nursery school with his elder brother Paul-Marie. At this time his mother was pregnant with a third child. After his sister, Sylvie was born, Dominique had violent jealous reactions. He began to soil his clothes, resulting in his expulsion from the nursery. Aged six, after starting school – where he was 'extrêmement instable et sans contact avec les autres' – he was sent to a psychiatrist, who prescribed medication which seemed only to over-excite Dominique (19). Thereafter, he spent six months in psychoanalysis, focusing on his jealousy and sibling rivalry, to no discernible benefit. His two years

[89] Dolto referred obliquely to 'témoins' attending the sessions, avoiding stating it too clearly, perhaps because highlighting the presence of third parties would complicate the image of her two-way communication with Dominique in readers' minds.
[90] Dolto, *Dominique*, 40. To avoid numerous footnotes, I hereafter give page references from the 1985 edition in brackets in the main text.

spent in standard state schools had not taught him to read, nor had he made any friends; thereafter, he had spent some time living with his grandparents in a rural area near Perpignan, where he had apparently been happy, and learned to read.

The doctor who referred the adolescent Dominique to Dolto described him as 'un débile simple', and feared that 'depuis sa puberté, une évolution vers la schizophrénie' was occurring (13). But Dominique was not aggressive, and no one had seriously suggested confining him to an institution. 'C'était un enfant qui s'exprimait bien. Simplement, il n'était pas sociable' (20). In short, no one quite knew what to do with him. Dominique's father thought that his son's condition was inborn and that, unless corrective brain surgery became possible, there was nothing to be done. His mother was unsure, but reluctantly agreed to Dolto's suggestion of further psychoanalytic psychotherapy.

Before seeing Dominique, Dolto spent some time talking to his mother alone, in which she ran through the family history. Madame Bel had spent an unhappy childhood in Africa – her father was a colonial officer in French Equatorial Africa and the Congo. She had been educated by missionary nuns in a boarding school. The family returned to France during the Occupation, where Mme Bel (Dolto does not provide a first name) took a degree in German and became a German teacher. Dominique's father, Georges, was an engineer and the son of an army officer; Georges himself had been in the army in 1940 and taken prisoner, but had escaped. He too had had an unhappy childhood. He now worked for a small industrial export company with his business partner, who was in a failing marriage. The two men spent a lot of time away together on business trips; Georges always had a suitcase packed and ready. Probing further, Dolto discovered that Georges had had two younger brothers with tragic histories – one died aged eighteen months after swallowing a piece of a toy train (Georges therefore would not allow his children to play with train sets), the other disappeared on a trip to the mountains aged seventeen and never returned. All these elements would ultimately be incorporated into Dolto's explanation of Dominique's condition.

Almost as soon as he entered the room, Dolto provided Dominique with a clear interpretation of how she saw his case. Based on her conversation with Mme Bel, Dolto was already certain that Dominique's condition was not innate or inborn, but a result of how he had reacted to his family environment, a mask that he had assumed. 'Tu t'es déguisé en toqué pour ne pas être grondé', she told him. 'Tu t'es déguisé en fou ou en idiot et tu ne l'es pas' (33). Their first recorded interaction in the book ran as follows:

Dominique: Voilà, moi je ne suis pas comme tout le monde, quelquefois en m'éveillant, je pense que j'ai subi une histoire vraie.
Dolto: Qui t'a rendu pas vrai.
Dominique: Mais c'est ça! (33)

Primed by the theories that she and Mannoni had developed, Dolto was sure that the explanation for Dominique's condition would lie in family circumstances and, more specifically, in a 'mère dépressive/dévorante'; 'homme résigné/absent'; 'enfant-jouet/enfant-objet' pattern. Dolto's lack of doubt about this, from the outset and throughout, is striking. Other possibilities are not considered; Dolto was sure she knew the answer to the mystery of Dominique before she had started asking questions.

At the end of the first session (which the father did not attend), Dolto added an interpretation on Dominique's innumeracy: 'Je répète à Dominique devant sa mère que ce n'est pas parce que le père n'est pas souvent là qu'il ne compte pas (sic)' (34). The '(sic)' indicates the deliberate double meaning: Dolto was ascribing Dominique's innumeracy to an impression that he 'did not count', for his father, or that his father 'did not count' for his mother, because of his frequent absences. Dolto repeated this interpretation in a later session.

In the following sessions, occurring at intervals of a month or more, Dolto proceeded according to her standard methodology. Dominique drew pictures and made clay models, which she then asked him to explain, searching his language for clues about his psychic structures and anxieties. She ran tests that put Dominique's mental age at around five. In the second and third sessions

she refrained from substantive interpretations, but in the fourth, she began to make sexualised interpretations of Dominique's play, relating them back to the family drama. For example, here is Dominique playing with a Plasticine dog and mouse:

> *Tiens, on va lui apprendre à marcher! Mais, la souris où est-elle? Ah ben, c'est vrai, il l'a mangée, il n'en reste plus.* Il remet le chien debout et, à ce moment-là, il lui ôte la tête et lui allonge la queue jusqu'à terre. Pause ... *Ah et puis, on est parti d'un chien, eh ben, on va arriver à une vache*. (62)

And here is Dolto's gloss on this a few pages later:

> Il y a, projeté dans le chien, le fantasme de perdre la tête au moment de se mettre à marcher. Or, n'est-ce pas ce qui s'est passé dans la vie de Dominique? Marcher, c'est se mettre debout, posture phallique du corps … Ensuite, il y a ce passage du chien à la vache par la 'queue' (68).

This interpretation is for the reader only. To Dominique himself, Dolto suggests that there is transference at work: i.e. that he has a bit of a crush (*béguin*) on her; Dominique blushes, appears to accept, blushes, and says 'je veux pas! Ca, c'est pas bien! Je veux aimer que mes parents!' (63-4). This gives Dolto the opportunity to tell him 'la loi' – the law of incest: 'C'est bien d'avoir des béguins, ça n'ôte pas l'amour pour les parents, c'est pas pareil; et plus tard, après beaucoup de béguins comme ça, il arrive un béguin plus fort pour se fiancer et pour se marier et avoir des enfants' (64). Dolto, in other words, suspects that Dominique has never been clearly told this 'law', and that his psychological confusion is in some way the result of this ignorance. For the reader's benefit, she is beginning to lay the foundations for an interpretation according to which Dominique's woes are attributable to his family's deviance from patriarchal, heterosexual norms. This becomes increasingly clear as the case progresses.

After the account of the fourth session, Dolto provided a ten-page 'résumé du tableau clinique', in which she introduced two important elements based not directly on the clinical material, but on her own suppositions about

Dominique's early childhood. First, she notes Dominique's habit – not unusual in a teenage boy – of occasionally lowering his voice when admitting to something he feels is secretive or shameful. Dolto labels this 'la phobie d'être entendu et d'entendre' and ascribes it to 'la scène primitive entrevue et co-vécue'; since Dominique slept in his parents' bedroom until his sister's birth, he presumably witnessed their lovemaking (72). Dolto's confidence that Dominique's behaviour at age fourteen could be securely attributed to (her imagined reconstruction of) his psychical processes over a decade previously is remarkable, not least since, at other times, Dominique spontaneously brings up another possible source of shame around sexuality in his family: his mother's possible relations with German soldiers during the war: 'Quand elle rencontrait des Allemands, vous savez, maman. Eh bien, elle leur parlait. Et elle m'a raconté quand elle a été emmenée au poste. Qu'avait-elle fait? … Je crois qu'elle s'était attardée dans les rues le soir' (124).

Second, Dolto seizes on the mother's comment that Dominique, as a baby, had sometimes banged his head violently against the side of his cot, interpreting this as manipulative, masochistic behaviour: 'Sa mère, il la dominait (conformément à son prénom). Par sa volonté, à coup de conduites masochiques, il la maîtrisait; il faisait d'elle son esclave attentive et la séparait ainsi de son père' (75). This move allows Dolto to see Dominique's condition in the light of an unresolved Oedipus complex. But it also allows a further move, which becomes magnified in the rest of the text: by dominating the family in this way, Dominique became 'le phallus à maman' (78). Responsibility for the situation can now shift to the mother. Dominique is said to fear her 'contact dévorant, à une issue érotisée et dévorante d'un autrui dévorateur' (73). Dolto, in other words, is moving the case into pathogenic or schizophrenogenic mother territory, casting Mme Bel as devouring of her offspring.

In the fifth session, Dolto learns from Dominique's older brother Paul-Marie that Mme Bel is in the habit of taking her children into her bed at night, during her husband's absences, to keep her company. This discovery strongly reinforces Dolto's view of the mother's responsibility for 'perverting'

Dominique. She can now assert that ‘c’est l’inceste tentateur qui est la cause principale de la régression’ (98). It allows her to provide Dominique with what she believes to be the central interpretation of the case:

> Dans la loi de tous les hommes, partout sur la terre, même chez les Noirs qui vivent tout nus, il est défendu que les garçons couchent avec leur mère … La loi des humains, c'est que le sexe du fils ne doit jamais rencontrer le sexe de sa mère (95).

From this point, Dolto’s language towards the mother becomes increasingly severe. ‘Mme Bel impose à ses enfants ce statut de fétiches calorifères, objets partiels, poupées animales à sang chaud’ (105). Thus, Dolto now asserts, Mme Bel accorded Dominique the status of ‘enfant-jouet’ or ‘enfant-objet’ characteristic of the classic Dolto-Mannoni pathogenic family. Mme Bel refused to place limits on the pleasure she took with her children, condemning them to a fruitless future: ‘la mère … refuse la césure libératrice, impose le collage dans sa nudité mammifère à réchauffer … Elle se comporte inconsciemment comme le ferait une perverse homosexuelle passive, masochiste et pédéraste de ses propres enfants, tout en verbigérant vertueusement, sorte de Blanche-Neige innocente au milieu de ses nains dépendants et voués au célibat’ (189). This last comment occurs in the sections added for the 1971 Seuil publication, in which the role of the pathogenic mother is reinforced in comparison with the 1968 version. The further Dolto became removed from the case, the easier she found it to insist on an interpretation that conformed to her pre-existing theory. She did not repeat her view of the mother’s responsibility for causing Dominique’s regression to Mme Bel herself, beyond a gentle ‘savez-vous que ça gêne peut-être les enfants, les garçons surtout [de vous accompagner au lit]?’ (97).

Completing the picture of the pathogenic family, Dolto increasingly portrayed Georges Bel as reactive, absent and insufficiently manly. ‘Dominique a toujours été parasité par sa mère et par son frère aîné; fétichisé par sa mère en tant que réplique de son père à elle et porteur de pénis dont elle avait la propriété, consolation en absence du pénis de l'époux’ (144). There are some

more or less subtle hints at the homosexuality of both Georges and Paul-Marie – Paul-Marie's choice of 'l'éthique homosexuelle' or a 'structure homosexuelle passive' is his solution to the same family dynamic afflicting Dominique (152, 140). Georges is described as being 'maternant' towards his wife and insufficiently 'castrateur' or imposing of his will. 'Si nous voulions lui trouver un équivalent allégorique, il ferait penser à l'ascaris mâle, peu encombrant, nécessaire, camouflé et protégé par sa géante femelle, mâle que par sa fonction génitrice' (189). The father may have supplied the genetic material, but he is not a real man, since such a man would be strong enough to impose himself on his wife in such a way as to prevent her from perverting his children. As Dolto told *Les Temps modernes* in 1963 – perhaps with this case in mind? – 'en refusant d'être castrateur, il devient pervertissant, il livre sa femme aux prérogatives abusives de l'enfant'.[91]

For this reason, Dolto welcomed Georges' eventual decision to discontinue Dominique's treatment – taken on the grounds that, in Georges' view, the therapy was not working and that psychotherapy in general was in any case 'baratin', hot air – since this action at least placed Georges in the role of 'père castrateur', imposing his will on the family. In another comment revealing of the sexual politics underlying Dolto's theory of the pathogenic family, she also suggested that stopping the treatment was no bad thing since Dominique's analysis risked being so effective as to destabilise the family's equilibrium, which depended on the mother being restricted to the home to care for Dominique. Mme Bel 'a parlé de reprendre une place dans l'enseignement … elle désire s'intéresser à l'enseignement spécialisé' (166) – perhaps, like many parents of children with special needs, in the hope of finding better ways of helping such children than the state had hitherto provided. This development, however, concerned Dolto. 'Tout ceci me fait penser qu'il n'est pas si mauvais que le père se montre un peu opposant à un traitement qui risque de modifier trop vite la totale dépendance de sa femme à la famille et à la maison, et de la remettre elle aussi dans le circuit des relations sociales' (166).

The father's decision to end the treatment was perhaps also convenient insofar

[91] Dolto, 'Les mères', 75.

as it removed the pressure on Dolto to demonstrate sustained improvement in Dominique's condition. In effect, Dominique's parents were divided on the value of the treatment. Mme Bel reported that he had made significant progress at school, become more sociable and less distracted, and used more complex language. She praised Dolto – 'vous l'avez rendu sociable comme les autres' – while noting that 'le calcul reste le point noir', thus suggesting that Dolto's interpretations of 'compter pour quelqu'un' were not effective (168-9). Georges thought that Dominique's improvements were marginal and probably due to him getting older rather than any fundamental change; if they were to keep spending money on him, it would be better directed to specialised education and arithmetic lessons. Dolto claimed the case as only a partial cure: 'Dominique n'est guéri que de sa régression psychotique' (175). Only attaining financial independence, she argued, would free Dominique from his 'interdits de développement'. But there was always the option of a further psychoanalysis later in life.

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While a definitive retrospective diagnosis of Dominique is clearly not possible, the pattern of his behaviour, age of onset, and the father's constant belief in an organic cause, put the twenty-first-century reader in mind of autism or autism spectrum disorder – specifically 'regressive autism', in which children initially develop normally but begin to lose speech and motor skills between the age of fifteen and thirty months.[92] Interestingly, while genetic factors are today assumed to play a predominant role in causing the condition (or cluster of related conditions), some evidence supporting a link to maternal depression, or at least maternal use of antidepressants, has been proposed.[93]

Dolto's commentary twice refers to Dominique as autistic, first setting his 'réclusion autiste' in the context of his relationship with his older brother (80),

[92] Gerry A. Stefanatos, 'Regression in Autistic Spectrum Disorders', *Neuropsychology Review*, 18/4 (2008), 305-19.
[93] Dheeraj Rai, Brian K. Lee et al., 'Parental Depression, Maternal Antidepressant Use during Pregnancy, and Risk of Autism Spectrum Disorders: Population-based Case-control Study', *British Medical Journal*, 346 (2013).

and stating that at the time of his sister's birth 'il entre dans l'autisme' as a way of coping with the new family dynamic (188). But 'autistic' was not generally used as a diagnostic category in 1960s France. Children broadly fitting the modern diagnosis would be presented as schizophrenic, psychotic, retarded or, like Dominique, fall into the gaps between all three. Many were confined to institutions, and doctors had little to offer those less severely affected. Dolto, after all, was far from the first doctor to see Dominique, and none had offered a satisfactory diagnosis or treatment from the family's perspective. Psychoanalysis at least had the attraction of holding out hope: that the source of the distress could be identified, ameliorated, even cured, without the need to take the drastic step of institutionalisation. Dolto, as Jean-François de Sauverzac correctly argues, set herself 'contre une vision psychiatrique qui range l'autiste dans l'incurabilité'.[94] The case of Léon, an autistic child seen by Dolto in the 1940s, shows her arguing to keep such children out of institutions and in mainstream education.[95]

But parents of children like Dominique who went to see psychoanalysts also ran a risk that they would find themselves being blamed for their children's condition. My criticism of Dolto is not that she failed to diagnose Dominique correctly, but that her interpretation of the case was pre-conceived to fit into the archetypal explanation that she and Mannoni applied to so-called 'retarded' children. I would argue, based on a comparison of the 1968 and 1971 publications (Dolto's original case notes are lost) that this explanation is less present in the material from the sessions themselves, and more evident the further removed Dolto's commentary becomes from the clinical material. As well as the two interpretative chapters added for the 1971 publication, Dolto's more minor textual revisions serve to strengthen the case against Mme Bel: the example of Dominique hitting his head against the cot (71); the sentence 'la naissance de Sylvie a, en effet, modifié l'économie libidinale de la mère', thus putting the emphasis on changes in the mother rather than Dominique himself (66), and the question 'son traitement compte-t-il pour sa mère?' (103, with the association to Dominique's numeracy).

[94] Sauverzac, *Françoise Dolto*, 177.
[95] Dolto, *L'Image inconsciente du corps*, 288-328.

Le Cas Dominique thus reaffirmed the idea of the pathogenic mother – and beyond this, the notion that deviation from traditional patriarchal family structures was dangerous. Dolto was far from alone in asserting this, but her increasing influence in the French psychoanalytic movement, her alignment with star names in radical psychiatry, and literary skill in the writing up of the case, gave *Dominique* an unusual impact. Jacques Hochmann writes that the Dolto-Mannoni vision of 'la mère sous les traits d'une Médée meurtrière ... s'imposa à de nombreux professionnels, qui la relayèrent dans leurs équipes et la transmirent, sans preuves, d'une manière quasi terroriste aux familles'.[96] *Dominique* became a reference point in the training of child psychoanalysts, a key text on student reading lists. 'Il est aujourd'hui une sorte de paradigme', wrote Sauverzac in 1995.[97]

On its appearance in 1971, the book was favourably reviewed by *L'Express*, *Le Nouvel Observateur* and *Le Monde* as well as by regional and specialist literary papers, such as *Nouvelles littéraires* and *Magazine littéraire*.[98] *Témoignage Chrétien*'s reviewer wrote that 'cet ouvrage constituera assurément un livre de référence'.[99] *Sociologie Politique* noted that 'l'étonnant succès de librairie que connaît [*Dominique*] est sans doute un des plus remarquables de ces dernières années'.[100]

Reviewers understood the book as carrying a hopeful message. *Sociologie Politique* argued that Dolto 'nous fait comprendre comment les psychosomatiques, les psychotiques, les névrotiques, peuvent tous être psychanalysés et retrouver leur libido jusque-là indisponible pour la communication et la créativité'.[101] For *Témoignage Chrétien*, the book's message had a universal message applicable well beyond the world of

[96] Jacques Hochmann, 'La bataille de l'autisme. Réflexions sur un phénomène social contemporain', *PSN Psychiatrie Sciences Humaines Neurosciences*, 7/3 (2009), 99-111, here 105. Hochmann, himself an analyst, deplores that Mannoni and Bettelheim's work allowed psychoanalysis to become equated with parent-blaming.
[97] Sauverzac, *Françoise Dolto*, 265.
[98] Cuttings held at AFD, box 'Autour du cas Dominique'. The most detailed of these reviews was in *Le Monde*, 09/10/1971, 24, by Roland Jaccard.
[99] *Témoignage Chrétien*, 10/2/1972. Review by Jean-François Cornier.
[100] *Sociologie Politique*, 02/1972, 10.
[101] *Sociologie Politique*, 02/1972, 10.

psychoanalytic specialists: ‘il y a quelque chose de bouleversant – humainement – dans l'éveil à la vie, à l'identité de soi et à la reconnaissance des autres, d'un jeune garçon pour lequel l'univers psychotique tenait lieu d'enfer’.[102] This was not the only review to frame what Dolto had done in Christian terms. Jacques Brosse in *Nouvelles littéraires* described Dolto as having carried out ‘la résurrection d'une âme’.[103] This is a reminder that Dolto was not just writing for and in a medical context but also for a culturally Christian one, and that many of her readers approached the text from a Christian perspective.

Several of the reviews commented on the literary quality of Dolto’s *récit*. Philippe Nemo in *Le Nouvel Observateur* noted that ‘*Dominique* commence comme un roman policier, et c'est passionnant de la même façon. On nous donne, un à un, les éléments de l'enquête. Et on finira par démasquer les coupables. Car il y a bien un crime.’[104] Raymond Bellour in *Magazine littéraire* agreed that ‘il n'y a nul paradoxe à parler ici de récit’ and described the text as a ‘fiction vraie dont la vérité constitue tout à la fois le masque et la raison’. Bellour praised Dolto’s ‘grande acuité d'écrire [et] don de mise en scène’ and suggested that Dolto be considered for a literary prize.[105] This attests to the absorbing quality of Dolto’s narration, and the persuasiveness of her presentation of the case to many readers. Dolto had used her literary skill to reinforce her psychogenic message; her writing style fitted the conventions of novelistic storytelling, especially of crime and mystery fiction. The quality of Dolto’s writing helped seduce readers into accepting her revelation of the key to the mystery as she saw it – the pathogenic nature of Dominique’s family. The review in the liberal-Catholic *Chronique Sociale de France* shows how this message could be received. The *Chronique*’s reviewer emphasised that a crucial lesson of the book was that 'toute *substitution des rôles dans la famille est pathogène* … L'absence du père ou de la mère … ne doit pas provoquer le

[102] *Témoignage Chrétien*, 10/02/1972.
[103] *Nouvelles littéraires*, 31/01/1972, 13. Review by Jacques Brosse.
[104] *Le Nouvel Observateur*, 357 (09/1971). Review by Philippe Nemo.
[105] *Magazine littéraire*, (03/1972), 59-60. Review by Raymond Bellour.

cumul des fonctions paternelles et maternelles sur une *même personne*'.[106] Readers of the review could be forgiven for concluding that Dolto had effectively provided a scientific case against single parenting: 'Le masculin et le féminin ne peuvent être représentés et assumés par un seul représentant, soit masculin soit féminin. La négation de ce principe entraîne chez l'enfant des troubles et des désordres'. Such conclusions took Dolto's thinking out of the domain of psychiatry and into that of sexual politics, providing ammunition to opponents of deviation from nuclear, patriarchal families.

Some reviewers were concerned about the possible impact of Dolto's message. The Protestant paper *Réforme* was concerned that Dolto's insistence that children's mental illness resulted from aberrant parental behaviour risked provoking unhelpful feelings of guilt among parents: 'Ce n'est pas parce que nous sommes culpabilisés que nous serons de meilleurs parents, ni qui nous saurons éviter à nos enfants de devenir des adultes névrosés … est-il vraiment souhaitable de mettre entre les mains de tous les parents des données difficiles à comprendre et profondément culpabilisantes?'[107] *La Croix* suggested that Dolto's focus on the immediate family as the cause, and psychotherapy as the solution to psychosis, neglected the wider social context of mental illness. By blaming parents, Dolto 'libère notre société de la culpabilité qu'elle éprouve devant la maladie mentale'.[108]

However, these voices were a minority. For most reviewers, the attractions of Dolto's book outweighed such concerns. As most saw it, Dolto had successfully simplified a complex topic, bringing the etiology of mental illness into the domestic domain, one that ordinary people could both understand and control. Dolto offered her readers agency, the ability to take practical steps to prevent their child becoming psychotic, tools to tackle conditions that somatic medicine found intractable.

[106] *Chronique Sociale de France*, (07/1972), 76-79. Review by Jean-François Skrzypczak. Original emphasis.
[107] *Réforme*, 18/3/1972, 12-14. Review by Marianne Roland-Michel.
[108] *La Croix*, 01/02/1972. Review by Olivier Cotinaud.

Conclusion

In 2012, the role of psychoanalysis in French autism treatment became the subject of public controversy, via a legal dispute over Sophie Robert's documentary film *Le Mur: La psychanalyse à l'épreuve de l'autisme*, produced in conjunction with Autistes sans frontières.[109]

The film's standpoint was that the psychoanalytic approach to autism was ineffective. Its imposition by psychiatrists was harmful, since it denied children access to behavioural therapies with a better track record. The film presented two autistic children. Julien, fourteen, had spent his early childhood in a *hôpital de jour*. He was mute and completely dependent on others. Guillaume, eleven, had been diagnosed as autistic at age four. He had been treated with behavioural methods, after his parents rejected an initial psychoanalytic explanation of his condition. By eleven, Guillaume was successfully integrated into a mainstream school and performing well academically.

Robert interspersed footage of these children and their families with interviews with eleven psychoanalysts. Her questions prompted the analysts to make explicit the logical conclusions of their psychoanalytic approach to autism, and to reveal what Robert clearly regarded as the absurdity or offensiveness of those positions. The following exchanges give an indication of her approach, and of the degree to which the psychoanalysts' ideas resembled those of Mannoni and Dolto from the 1960s:

Yann Bogopolsky:	Le père est là pour dire l'interdit et en même temps pour protéger l'enfant … du désir incestueux de la mère.
Robert:	Toutes les mères ont des désirs incestueux?
Bogopolsky:	Oui, qu'elles en aient conscience ou pas.
Geneviève Loison:	Quand la mère considère la parole du père, l'enfant découvre la parole.

[109] *Le Mur* (dir. Sophie Robert, France, 2011).

Robert:	Si l'enfant ne parle pas, c'est que la mère déconsidère la parole du père?
Loison:	Bah on n'a pas beaucoup ici, c'est surtout en hôpital psychiatrique … les autistes profonds.
Aldo Naouri:	La plupart du temps, le symptôme de l'enfant n'est ni plus ni moins que le symptôme qui lui est imparti d'avoir par l'inconscient maternel principalement.[110]

Several of the analysts interviewed repeated the 'mère dépressive / père absent / enfant-objet' model of the pathogenic family. The Lacanian analysts in particular advanced the basic principle that, in at least some cases, autism had a psychogenic cause, relating above all to maternal attitudes.

Controversy arose when the three interviewees from the École de la Cause Freudienne (the successor organisation to the Lacanian EFP) sued Robert, alleging her editing of the footage had misrepresented their position. In January 2012, a Lille court accepted their case, and banned the film. Reporting of the judgement was largely sympathetic to Robert, interpreting it as an attack on freedom of expression, and an attempt by the psychoanalytic lobby to censor criticism and avoid ridicule.[111] Politically, the mood was turning against the analysts. The same month, prime minister François Fillon declared autism a 'Grande cause nationale' for 2012. A UMP deputy suggested a law forbidding psychoanalysts from treating autism. In 2014, an appeal court overturned the ban on *Le Mur*.[112] In April 2016, Ségolène Neuville, the socialist Secrétaire d'État chargée des Personnes handicapées et de la Lutte contre l'exclusion, stated on the French parliamentary TV channel that 'la psychanalyse ne fait pas partie des méthodes recommandées pour les enfants autistes … il n'est plus admissible que l'on culpabilise les mères'.[113] In a question to Neuville in the

[110] *Le Mur* (dir. Sophie Robert, France, 2011).
[111] Sophie Callat, 'Autisme: le documentaire "Le Mur" condamné par la justice', *Le Nouvel Observateur*, 26/01/2012, Peggy Sastre, 'Autisme: la psychanalyse touche-t-elle le fond?', *Slate*, 26/05/2012, http://www.slate.fr/tribune/56681, accessed 04/04/2017; Estelle Saget, 'Un documentaire sur l'autisme interdit', *L'Express*, 27/01/2012.
[112] Catherine Vincent, '"Le Mur, la psychanalyse à l'épreuve de l'autisme" à nouveau libre de diffusion', *Le Monde*, 16/01/2014.
[113] 'Ségolène Neuville: "La psychanalyse ne fait pas partie des méthodes recommandées pour les enfants autistes!"' (01/04/2016), LCP Assemblée nationale, http://www.lcp.fr/la-politique-

National Assembly, socialist deputy Gwendal Rouillard won applause for denouncing 'l'approche psychanalytique [à l'autisme], approche que je qualifie d'imposture morale, d'imposture intellectuelle, d'imposture médicale et d'imposture éthique'.[114]

Robert's film did not mention Dolto or Mannoni. In *Le Mur*, the history of the psychoanalytic view of autism is traced to Lacan, Bettelheim and, to a lesser degree, Donald Winnicott. But as this chapter has shown, any account of the French psychoanalytic view of autism that leaves out the role of Dolto and Mannoni is incomplete. Dolto certainly had an influence on Lacan's thinking, both directly and via their common relationship with Mannoni. Lacan, as shown above, praised Mannoni's work in his 1964 seminar. Discussing 'le désir de la mère' in his seminar of 1969-70, he appeared to borrow heavily from Dolto and Mannoni's idea of the devouring mother:

> Le rôle de la mère, c'est le désir de la mère. C'est capital. Le désir de la mère n'est pas quelque chose qu'on peut supporter comme ça ... Ça entraîne toujours des dégâts ... Un grand crocodile dans la bouche duquel vous êtes — c'est ça, la mère … On ne sait pas ce qui peut lui prendre tout d'un coup, de refermer son clapet. C'est ça, le désir de la mère.[115]

In *Le Mur*, analyst Geneviève Loison is shown employing a toy crocodile in her practice, to help assess whether children are in danger from 'la mère crocodile'.

Dolto, from 1955 onwards, trained hundreds of future child analysts and psychiatrists at Trousseau and Étienne Marcel, of which Mannoni was only the most famous. And from the 1970s onwards, Dolto had a substantial audience amongst the general public, surpassing that of any other French psychoanalyst. It seems logical to suggest that the success of *Dominique*, and especially the public status and reputation that Dolto subsequently secured thanks to *Lorsque*

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en-video/segolene-neuville-la-psychanalyse-ne-fait-pas- partie-des-methodes- recommandees, accessed 23/06/2017.

[114] Gwendal Rouillard, 'Question au Gouvernement – Autisme – 5 avril 2016', https://www.youtube.com/ watch?v=EO5OzhWSkl8, accessed 05/05/2017.

[115] Lacan, *Le Séminaire de Jacques Lacan, livre XVII – L'envers de la psychanalyse*, ed. Jacques-Alain Miller (Paris, 1991), 129.

l'enfant paraît, contributed to a greater public acceptance of the precepts of psychoanalysis, including towards autism. A much fuller history of French autism treatment than what I have been able to give here, and of how psychoanalysis came to have a significant hold over it, still needs to be written. But it does not seem unreasonable to suggest that Dolto's popularity is one reason why it took until the 1990s for the psychoanalytic approach to autism to be seriously challenged in France, decades after the same process had begun in the USA.

As for Dominique, by the 1970s he had become a potter, with long hair, and was apparently gay.[116] Georges and Mme Bel separated, around the time of Paul-Marie's marriage. Dominique later worked successfully for a time in Belgium, but according to Dolto, was eventually persuaded to return by his mother, who turned him into a 'boy à faire la lessive' – a destiny consistent with Dolto's original interpretation of the case. Mme Bel would presumably tell a different story. When *Le Cas Dominique* was published, she threatened to sue Dolto, but was talked out of it. Dolto subsequently – out of guilt, Sauverzac suggests – gave part of the book's profits to help fund Dominique's pottery training.[117]

Dolto, meanwhile, was about to become a national celebrity – the subject to which chapter 6 now turns.

[116] See Sauverzac, *Françoise Dolto*, 277-9.
[117] Sauverzac, *Françoise Dolto*, 278, n. 43.

Chapter 6 – Dolto and the French Public, 1968-88

This final chapter investigates Dolto's later career as a truly public figure, in particular her relationship with the French public via radio, the medium that made her a household name. The *Lorsque l'enfant paraît* broadcasts on France Inter in 1976-78 transformed Dolto's public profile, and occasioned her retirement as an analyst, since she felt that fame affected the transference relationship with patients. The broadcasts were the site of Dolto's most extensive interaction with large numbers of ordinary people. The recordings of them, and the letters sent to Dolto by listeners, can open a window not just onto how Dolto sought to use the media to disseminate certain messages, but also more broadly onto the concerns of French parents and young people in the 1970s.

The chapter contextualises these broadcasts in three main ways. First, it provides a brief historical summary of French radio broadcasting, and the directions it took following the events of May 1968. Second, it studies Dolto's earlier series of broadcasts, under the 'Docteur X' pseudonym, on Europe 1 in 1968-69. Third, it examines three figures of comparison, Clara Candiani, Madame Soleil, and especially Ménie Grégoire: female broadcasters who used the radio to create a sense of an intimate-yet-public community for discussions of personal issues. The comparison with Grégoire is instructive for the parallels with Dolto's background, views on gender and sexuality, and personal qualities enabling both women to broach intimate issues on air.

Dolto's radio appearances were decisive in consolidating her public persona and reputation. But they were not the only way that she influenced public opinion and shaped French society and institutions in these years. Dolto featured for the first time in *Who's Who in France* in 1975, before the France Inter broadcasts. Her invitation to appear on national radio, positioned as a venerable authority on child-rearing, must be seen as a result as well as a cause of her growing influence and reputation. Her profile had been raised in Parisian media circles by the 'Docteur X' broadcasts, by the publication of

Psychanalyse et pédiatrie and *Le Cas Dominique*, and by various appearances on television and in print media. Accordingly, the chapter briefly assesses some of her early-1970s interventions, especially an intriguing one concerning children's books.

The chapter considers the years after 1968 as ones in which radical social and institutional change seemed possible and, to many, desirable. For a figure like Dolto, such a cultural environment presented possibilities but also concerns – in particular, that traditional family structures might be a casualty. Her popularity can partly be attributed to her navigation of the post-1968 cultural currents: speaking the language of 'permissiveness' and of radicalism on some topics, while reassuring those anxious about the loss of traditional ways of life. It further develops themes introduced in previous chapters, notably education and sexuality, showing how Dolto's ideas played out on a public stage. In the 1970s, Dolto's approach to education began to be noticed by interested professionals and at government level. Part of this chapter will therefore examine Dolto's views in more detail, showing that her championing of liberal, innovative pedagogy contained substantial traces of interwar anti-Republican attitudes. The final part of the chapter will analyse the Maison Verte, the children's centre established by Dolto and others in 1979, and replicated across France thereafter. It shows that the Maison Verte must be counted as one of the largest institutional applications of psychoanalysis into the everyday lives of large numbers of children.

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A fundamental assumption underpinning Dolto's interventions was belief in infant or childhood determinism – the idea that early childhood experiences have a fundamental bearing on later life outcomes, especially the likelihood of experiencing future mental illness. Dolto was commonly associated with the phrase 'tout se joue avant trois ans' (or sometimes 'quatre ans'). This seems in fact to be a misattribution – I have not found the phrase in her writing – but nor

did she disavow the idea.[1] On television in 1987, she offered a qualified version, saying that the determination applied only to the basic 'structure' of the psyche:

> Tout se joue dans la base de la structure. Ça ne veut pas dire ce qu'il va en faire. Ce n'est ni bien ni mal. C'est l'agencement dynamique de base qui va se développer. Ça ne veut pas dire [que] tout se joue en bien en mal, en malheur en bonheur, pas du tout du tout! C'est en dynamique, en potentialités dynamiques.[2]

In practice, Dolto believed, and wanted others to understand, that children could be fundamentally shaped, especially negatively, by early experiences. She believed that this happened at an unconscious level, such that parents might not realise that a traumatic or foundational event had occurred. These beliefs led logically to many of her public policy positions. They implied that the state should invest much more heavily in resources for early years' education in order to save on later health costs. They suggested that psychoanalysts should act as cultural gatekeepers, protecting children from potential harmful influences. Politicians should consider psychoanalytic theory when designing social policy, and involve psychoanalysts in interventions aimed at children.

Since the 1990s, the idea of infant determinism has been heavily contested, certainly in anglophone academia.[3] While accepting that early childhood experience does shape adult psychology, critics have emphasised human resilience and adaptability and the predominant importance of recent – not archaic – experiences. In Noam Shpancer's words, 'if I want to know whether you'll be in jail sometime in the next five years, it will do me no good to find out about your tantrum habits at two-years-old, even if those were quite

[1] The phrase probably entered common parlance via Fitzhugh Dodson, *How to Parent* (New York, 1970), translated by Yvon Geffray as *Tout se joue avant six ans* (Paris, 1972).
[2] *Apostrophes*: *Françoise Dolto*, TF1, 02/01/1987.
[3] See for example Elizabeth Meins, 'Overrated: The Predictive Power of Attachment', *The Psychologist*, 30 (01/2017), 20-24; David Wastell and Sue White, 'Blinded by Neuroscience: Social Policy, the Family and the Infant Brain', *Families, Relationships and Societies*, 1/3 (2012), 397-414; Helene Guldberg, *Reclaiming Childhood: Freedom and Play in an Age of Fear* (Abingdon, 2009), ch. 8; John Bruer, *The Myth of the First Three Years: A New Understanding of Early Brain Development and Lifelong Learning* (New York, 1999); Jerome Kagan, *Three Seductive Ideas* (Cambridge, MA, 1998).

extraordinary ... I will do much better to check your high school records for tales of schoolyard misbehavior. I will do even better to check out the crowd you're hanging with right now.'[4] Other critics felt that asserting the overriding influence of early childhood – especially when confined to the domestic, family experiences emphasised by Dolto – can result in unjustified neglect of other factors such as class, education, social milieu and public policy. Jerome Kagan argued that infant determinism proved attractive to politicians precisely because of its ability to obscure more complex, intangible factors: it is easier to urge mothers to spend more time with their children and invest in children's centres than it is to tackle the root causes of social inequality.[5] Pierre Bourdieu also thought along these lines – hence why infant determinism is a component of Bourdieu's 'illusion biographique' discussed in the introduction.

In my readings of Dolto in this chapter, then, I seek not to refute the idea of childhood determinism but rather to remain alive to the factors that Dolto's exclusive emphasis on early childhood and the family may downplay. Dolto's views on parenting and perhaps especially education need to be situated with regard to the class, gender, and family politics of the era – a context that her insistence on universal, timeless, ultimately biological processes and relationships often obscures.

I. *S.O.S. Psychanalyste!*

The growing 'psychologisation' of society, evoked in chapter 4, interlinks with the history of the broadcast media. Maggie Andrews describes how the interwar emergence of radio 'dramatically changed men and women's experience of domesticity, offering education and reducing isolation through a shared listening experience and a sense of belonging to wider imagined

[4] Noam Shpancer, 'The Myth of Infant Determinism', *Psychology Today*, 26/09/2010, https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/insight-therapy/201009/the-myth-infant-determinism, accessed 12/01/2017.
[5] Kagan, *Three Seductive Ideas*, 91.

communities'.[6] Radio blurred the boundary between public and private, bringing world affairs and politics into the home and domestic affairs into public debate. It was a new platform from which expertise about everyday life could be disseminated, including psychological and psychoanalytic expertise as Donald Winnicott's wartime BBC broadcasts, for example, demonstrate.

France's relationship with radio was transformed by the country's Second World War experience. In the 1930s, the main attractions of French broadcasting were music and drama programmes; news, current affairs and discussion, especially on the somewhat ponderous public networks, were generally disappointing.[7] Under Vichy, public radio – later infamous for Philippe Henriot's pro-Nazi propaganda of the last months of the Occupation – undertook certain innovations. Vichy created the first dedicated programming aimed at young people, *Radio-Jeunesse*, which featured readings from Charles Péguy, poetry, and choral singing.[8] The most popular programme on the flagship station *Radio Nationale*, was a family-based soap, *L'Alphabet de la famille*, which followed the lives of a mother and three children (the father, a POW, was absent). Philip Nord argues that the show struck a chord through its 'emotional intimacy at a moment of national difficulty' and mixture of family feeling and nationalist sentiment.[9]

For Vichy's opponents, the Free French and BBC broadcasts from London created a different kind of emotional intimacy – a precious connection to the wider world beyond Vichy's moral universe. De Gaulle's war experience convinced him of radio's importance in shaping national politics, and the consequent need to bring it under close state management. The nationalised Radio-Télévision Française (RTF, later ORTF) had a mandate to promote social cohesion and French identity.[10] Its directors came under political

[6] Maggie Andrews, *Domesticating the Airwaves: Broadcasting, Domesticity and Femininity* (London, 2012), xi.
[7] Nord, *France's New Deal*, 241-53.
[8] Nord, *France's New Deal*, 304-5.
[9] Nord, *France's New Deal*, 305-6.
[10] See Jean Chalaby, 'One Nation, One State, One Television: Making Sense of De Gaulle's Broadcasting Policy', in Jessica Wardhaugh (ed.), *Paris and the Right in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, 2007), 86-103; Raymond Kuhn, *The Media in France* (London, 1995), 89ff.

pressure to equate the nation's interests with the government's, and to keep political debate within state-defined parameters.[11] *La Tribune de Paris*, which hosted the sex education debate discussed in chapter 4, was a direct successor to the Free French's *Les Français parlent aux français*, and carried a certain social and cultural weight as a result.[12]

In a (tacitly accepted) challenge to the state monopoly, the 'peripheral' stations Europe 1, Radio Monte-Carlo and Radio Luxembourg (later RTL) emerged, offering what Raymond Kuhn describes as 'less hidebound, more informal and unashamedly more commercial and populist' content.[13] In the 1960s, these stations were better placed to foster new communities, reflecting France's changing cultural landscape. For example the Europe 1 show *Salut les copains*, broadcast in the afternoons as teenagers were leaving school, functioned as the focal point for an imagined cross-class community of young musical 'copains' based on camaraderie and equality featuring new stars including Johnny Hallyday, Françoise Hardy, and Sylvie Vartan.[14] Dolto's son Jean-Chrysostome (1943-2008), now known as 'Carlos' and building a career as a singer and *bon viveur*, became an important part – and beneficiary – of this radio-based community. Carlos worked on *Salut les copains* from 1962 and then as an assistant and vocalist to Vartan and Hallyday, before releasing his first solo record in 1969. By the mid-1970s he was a fully-fledged pop star, with hits such as 'Tout nu et tout bronzé' (1973) 'Papayou' (1975) and 'Big Bisou' (1977), and a wedding featured in *Paris Match*.[15] While Carlos's success had no discernible impact on his mother's trajectory, it was a first-hand reminder of radio's potential to launch careers and bring about broader cultural change. Radio in the 1960s was still the leading broadcast medium; in 1961, only twenty per cent of French households had a television, but eighty per cent had a radio, rising to ninety-five per cent by the mid-1970s.[16]

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[11] Kuhn, *Media in France*, 90.
[12] Nord, *France's New Deal*, 353.
[13] Kuhn, *Media in France*, 93.
[14] Jonathyne Briggs, *Sounds French: Globalization, Cultural Communities, and Pop Music, 1958-1980* (New York, 2015), ch. 1; Chris Tinker, *Mixed Messages: Youth Magazine Discourse and Sociocultural Shifts in Salut les copains (1962-1976)* (Oxford, 2010)..
[15] *Paris Match* 1518, 30/06/1978.
[16] Kuhn, *Media in France*, 77-80.

French broadcasting was profoundly affected by the May 1968 events, not just by reporting them, but because the ORTF's own staff went on strike; many strikers were subsequently sacked.[17] In the longer term, Robert Prot argues that the cultural changes associated with 1968 led to public radio being conceived increasingly as 'une radio de service': more respondent to the needs of its audience, less of a governmental mouthpiece.[18] Programming aimed at young people and women was redesigned, for example through the new, ultimately short-lived stations Inter Variétés and Inter Jeunesse (1966-72). French public radio in the 1970s attempted to reconcile what politicians thought a state broadcaster should do – 'L'ORTF, qu'on le veuille ou non, c'est la voix de la France', President Pompidou affirmed in 1970 – with the idea that radio should be a service for its listeners. Dolto's *Lorsque l'enfant paraît* can be thought of as a successful attempt to reach this middle ground.

Dolto had already, in 1968-69, hosted a lesser-known programme on Europe 1, consisting of a weekly series of 'consultations sur les ondes' directed at parents and children who phoned or wrote in with 'emergency' psychological or personal problems. Some 187 transcripts from these broadcasts were later published as a book, under the title *S.O.S. Psychanalyste!*[19] The following paragraphs will analyse these extracts, seeking to understand who contacted Dolto in 1968-69, what types of issues they thought a doctor-psychoanalyst might help resolve, and the kinds of responses Dolto gave. As well as providing practical and 'common-sense' advice, Dolto used the show to promote her vision of the family, in particular stressing paternal authority, backed by her status as both a medical and a psychoanalytic authority.

Dolto's show was unusual in its focus on children's problems, and in the large proportion (over fifty per cent) of callers who were themselves aged under eighteen. It also differed from comparable programmes, such as those of Madame Soleil and Ménie Grégoire (discussed below), in that the responder

[17] Christian Brochand, *Histoire générale de la radio et de la télévision en France 2, 1944-1974* (Paris, 1994), 154-5.
[18] Robert Prot, *Précis d'histoire de la radio et de la télévision* (Paris, 2007), 181.
[19] 'Docteur X', *S.O.S. Psychanalyste! Des consultations sur les ondes*, preface and postface by Aïda Vasquez (Paris, 1976).

was a qualified medical professional – in theory an anonymous one, since Dolto went by the name 'Docteur X', though her identity was well known, certainly within medical and psychoanalytic circles.

The published extracts comprise eighty-three calls or letters from parents (and the occasional grandparent) and one hundred and four from children or adolescents. Of the parents, ninety per cent were female. The average age of the children they wished to discuss was five, with nearly half aged three or under; there was no bias towards a particular gender of child. The child/adolescent callers ranged in age from four to twenty one, with an average of just under twelve; half were aged between nine and twelve, and just over a quarter between thirteen and sixteen. Sixty per cent of the child/adolescent callers were girls. There is generally little in the extracts to indicate social class or occupation. However, in the late 1960s a telephone remained something of a luxury item in France: eighty per cent of the homes of senior managers and members of liberal professions contained one in 1967, but only two per cent of industrial working-class households.[20] Dolto's 1968-69 correspondents – eighty-seven per cent of whom contacted her by phone – thus cannot be taken as representative of France overall, but must be assumed to be heavily skewed towards the middle-classes and the liberal professions.

The child/adolescent callers most frequently (twenty-one per cent) wished to discuss a conflict with their parents, over subjects ranging from the right to read comics, or be allowed out with the opposite sex, to the issue of contact with a divorced parent. Next came difficulties with siblings (fifteen per cent), and problems at school (fourteen per cent). Other common sources of distress were friendships, inability to stop thumb sucking or nail biting, and issues with body image or weight. Two callers mentioned the recent events of May 1968 as causing familial conflicts: 'depuis, mes parents ne comprennent pas du tout que je sois devenue un peu autre et ils m'empêchent de participer à toute chose collective au lycée', complained one, while another *lycéen* reported that since the events his parents considered him 'comme un étranger' and falsely suspected him of involvement in (presumably revolutionary) 'comités' and

[20] Claire Duchen, *Women's Rights and Women's Lives*, 88.

'groupes'.[21] Dolto told these callers to talk things over with their parents, and show them that they still loved them despite any political differences. She welcomed the self-actualisation that the students appeared to have achieved through political involvement: 'il fallait cet événement social pour vous montrer que vous étiez plus mûre que vous ne le paraissiez, et même que vous ne le saviez.'[22]

Dolto's responses to the child callers were generally not obviously drawn from psychoanalytic theory; often her advice was simply to talk more and empathise with their parents, siblings or friends. She encouraged children to take personal responsibility for their circumstances and aim for greater behavioural maturity. She told one nine-year-old girl who still sucked her thumb to 'conquérir … votre propre maîtrise de vous-même' and not succumb to infantile temptations.[23] She told children to acknowledge their desires, and accept realities that they could not easily change. Girls worried about being overweight were told to 'accepter. Accepter, je dis … ça n'a aucune importance. Le moteur d'une femme, c'est son coeur.'[24] A girl complaining that her father was 'très rude avec moi' was told to accept this since 'vous avez choisi ce père-là pour naître.'[25] As this last example indicates, Dolto's ethic of accepting, growing up and getting on with things could slide into the upholding of paternal power and the reproduction of gender norms – the nine-year old thumb-sucker was advised to throw herself into housework, so as to 'vraiment acquérir les qualités d'une femme dans une maison'.[26] It could also imply an acceptance of abuse. Dolto believed, in effect, that children were generally 'plus ou moins complices' in parental abuse, including sexual abuse:

> L'éducateur … pourra justement faire comprendre [à une victime d'abus sexuels] que l'excitation dans laquelle était son père, peut-être sans l'avoir

[21] *S.O.S. Psychanalyste!*, 343-7, extracts 182-3.
[22] *S.O.S. Psychanalyste!*, 345, extract 183.
[23] *S.O.S. Psychanalyste!*, 143, extract 72.
[24] *S.O.S. Psychanalyste!*, 282-6, extracts 149-50.
[25] *S.O.S. Psychanalyste!*, 187, extract 101.
[26] *S.O.S. Psychanalyste!*, 147, extract 74.

> cherché, l'enfant en était complice. Parce que je crois que ces enfants sont plus ou moins complices de ce qui se passe.[27]

She also had little sympathy with victims of bullying: 'Quand un enfant raconte comment il a été agressé, il faut toujours complimenter l'agresseur. Il faut lui dire: "Il voulait rentrer en contact avec toi, et tu n'as pas été capable de répondre".'[28] Dolto felt it was generally the victims, not the perpetrators of bullying, who were manifesting 'réactions névrotiques' and may need psychotherapy. When a child was aggressive towards others, this was to be seen as 'une recherche de prise de contact avec eux et non pas comme quelque chose de méchant'. Those on the receiving end needed to accept this and learn how to respond better.

Dolto's promotion of patriarchal family roles and structures emerges more strongly from her advice to parental callers. The most frequent subjects of parental concern were jealousies and sibling rivalries, toilet training, phobias, separation anxiety, and issues concerning eating, sleeping or punishment. Several callers raised issues of a sexual nature, such as puberty, how to tell children the facts of life, or the question of parental nudity around children. The sample includes two single mothers who asked Dolto how to go about explaining their children's paternity without 'traumatising' them.[29] In general, Dolto's responses to the parents combined reassurance, plausible psychological insight, and 'permissive' attitudes tempered by emphasis on paternal authority. She reassured parents that certain concerns – such as whether children were disadvantaged by being left-handed, or that a three-year-old blamed his misbehaviour on his foot rather than taking responsibility upon himself – were nothing to be particularly worried about. An example of her 'permissive' attitudes was her response to the mother of a five-year-old girl who liked playing doctors with her male cousin – a game involving some evidently pleasurable physical and emotional intimacy. The mother wondered if she should put a stop to this, 'en disant que c'était laid, que c'était vilain'. Dolto

[27] Dolto and Andrée Ruffo, *Entretiens III: L'Enfant, le juge et la psychanalyste* (Paris, 1999), 81.
[28] Dolto, 'L'Agressivité chez le jeune enfant', *Pratique des mots* (December 1981), in *EME*, 245-8.
[29] *S.O.S. Psychanalyste!*, 117-22, extracts 57-8.

said she should leave them be. 'Pourquoi dites-vous que le corps est laid? … Ne vous tracassez pas de cette sexualité d'enfants qui s'éveille'.[30]

Psychoanalytic interpretations were more readily apparent in Dolto's responses to parents. A father concerned about his three-year-old son's aggression was told that 'c'est le moment où le petit garçon commence à se sentir un peu mâle, il voudrait garder sa maman pour lui tout seul et il essaie de vous évincer' – though she did not use the term 'Oedipus complex'.[31] Similarly, Dolto explained to a pregnant mother that her three-year-old daughter's jealousy towards the unborn baby was because the daughter would herself like to be having her daddy's baby.[32] Dolto presumably felt that it would be easier for her to communicate such ideas to the general public if she did not explain their origin in Freudian theory. But this also had the effect that her – sometimes quite idiosyncratic – interpretations of psychoanalytic concepts were presented as established medical knowledge. For example, on the subject of toilet training, she issued stark warnings about the risks of attempting to train a child 'trop tôt', meaning before 25-26 months. A younger child 'ne peut être propre que pour faire plaisir à sa mère, ce qu'il aura à payer plus tard par une dépendance sur un autre plan … un très gros défaut de personnalité … des difficultés pour écrire et pour lire … des complications pour parler bien'.[33] By attempting to toilet train a fourteen-month old child 'vous risquez beaucoup pour l'avenir de cet enfant'. Ideally, Dolto wanted mothers to enable children to become continent in their own time. But if they left it too late, Dolto might equally accuse them of enclosing the child in a 'relation fusionnelle', with all the consequences that could entail (see chapter 5). Dolto's insistence on perilous infant determinism in this domain diverged substantially from other psychoanalytically-informed parenting advisors; Benjamin Spock, for example, predicted no comparable terrors for children toilet trained before age two, and 'found that waiting for the child to take the initiative didn't work for some parents at all'.[34]

[30] *S.O.S. Psychanalyste!*, 55-6, extract 25.
[31] *S.O.S. Psychanalyste!*, 46, extract 18.
[32] *S.O.S. Psychanalyste!*, 47, extract 19.
[33] *S.O.S. Psychanalyste!*, 33-6, extracts 9-10.
[34] Spock, *Baby and Child Care*, 256.

Dolto used these broadcasts to accentuate paternal authority and the father's position in the family, emphasising the virtues of a strong male presence. 'Je crois que, s'il y a un père, il pourrait bien mettre de l'ordre là-dedans!' was her comment on one mother-daughter dispute.[35] Another woman was warned against referring to her son's father, from whom she was separated, as an 'individu sans scrupules'. Dolto emphasised that in the child's eyes it should be the mother who assumed responsibility for the split: 'c'est à vous qu'il faut donner tort et non pas à son géniteur'.[36] Dolto's belief in the Lacanian concept of the 'nom du père' – that is, of the father's role in orienting the child's psyche by supplying his name, and his limitation (his 'non') to the 'fusion' of the mother and child – was apparent, if not explicitly acknowledged. Dolto warned in the strongest possible terms against changing the son's surname to that of his mother's new partner: 'changer le nom d'un enfant à dix ans est l'équivalent, pour l'inconscient, d'une fracture de la colonne vertébrale'.[37] Occasionally, Dolto's beliefs in 'permissive' parenting and paternal authority came into conflict. Forced to choose, Dolto sided with paternal power. Thus a mother of two explained how 'j'essaie de les élever assez librement, c'est-à-dire je ne donne pas beaucoup de fessées et je les laisse évoluer dans tout l'appartement … Le résultat est le suivant: j'ai des enfants assez remuants, bruyants et qui n'ont pas peur de grand chose. J'en suis ravie.'[38] Her problem was that others disagreed: 'on me fait beaucoup de reproches' – 'on' being her mother, mother-in-law, and husband, who predicted that 'les pires ennuis' would result from her methods. Dolto agreed that, on the question of parenting principle, 'vous avez parfaitement raison' – but nonetheless urged her to give way on the grounds that '*votre mari est le maître à la maison*'.[39] The children should learn to respect his wishes; if he decided to confine them to one room rather than let them roam across the flat, the mother should not demur.

Dolto expected mothers to dedicate themselves extensively to their children; on several occasions, she appeared to suspect that a child's problems

[35] *S.O.S. Psychanalyste!*, 113, extract 55.
[36] *S.O.S. Psychanalyste!*, 120-1, extract 58 – underlined in the text.
[37] *S.O.S. Psychanalyste!*, 121 – underlined in the text.
[38] *S.O.S. Psychanalyste!*, 74-5, extract 34.
[39] *S.O.S. Psychanalyste!*, 113 – underlined in the text.

originated in insufficient maternal devotion of time and energy. One mother, requesting advice on how to reduce her young son's thumb-sucking, was told that the habit most likely derived from boredom: 'ce n'est pas de son frère qu'il a besoin, c'est de conversations avec Maman. Est-ce que vous le laissez jouer assez avec l'eau? Au moins une heure par jour, vous savez.'[40] A mother worried that despite her 'compétence en puériculture', her baby still cried a lot, was told that 'peut-être le fait d'avoir étudié la puériculture vous a ôté les réactions naturelles des mamans qui, en fait, devraient avoir les bébés dans les bras, presque sans arrêt'.[41]

This last comment illustrates Dolto's occasional tendency, touched on in previous chapters, to somewhat idealise the pre-industrial past, and deplore that book-based learning turned people away from 'natural' lived experience. In earlier times, 'la vie était psychologiquement bien plus saine, avant les découvertes pastoriennes et leur application dans l'hygiène des foyers.'[42] She regretted the invention of formula milk, for example, on the grounds that 'cela a produit toute une génération de civilisés ... qui n'ont plus la chaleur et l'odeur sécurisante du sein maternel'.[43] 'Civilised', for Dolto here, was a pejorative term. Societal and technological change had reduced children's opportunities for social interactions beyond the nuclear family; the twentieth-century child 'a un espace matériel élargi, mais un espace relationnel affectif réduit'.[44] Children should accordingly be brought into wide, diverse social networks and as much contact with the natural world as possible.

In the light of Dolto's biography, none of the views expressed in these 1968-69 broadcasts are especially surprising – they were the same ideas put forward in her clinic, writing and public speaking since the 1940s. All that had changed was the reach of the platform from which she delivered them – a reach that was to expand significantly in the next decade.

[40] *S.O.S. Psychanalyste!*, 21-2, extract 1.
[41] *S.O.S. Psychanalyste!*, 23, extract 2.
[42] Dolto, 'Repenser l'éducation des enfants: à propos du dressage à la propreté sphinctérienne' (1973), in *EME*, 260-310, here 267.
[43] Dolto, 'Repenser l'éducation des enfants', 267.
[44] Dolto, *Cause des enfants*, 34.

II. Ménie Grégoire

Before returning to Dolto and her radio career, I want briefly to evoke three figures of comparison, radio presenters who were her predecessors in important respects. This will help to situate Dolto within the French media landscape and to understand the cultural significance of her France Inter broadcasts. Clara Candiani, Madame Soleil, and especially Ménie Grégoire – who bears the closest resemblance to Dolto – all used radio to create communities of emotional intimacy, and to varying degrees introduced psychology (in Grégoire's case, psychoanalysis) into their conversations. They helped to establish the radio as a place where emotional distress and personal dilemmas could be shared with a reassuring mediator and a sympathetic public. They embodied the idea that airing such issues on the radio could lead to some form of public as well as personal benefit.

Clara Candiani (1902-96) was a pioneering female journalist – a reporter on *Le Figaro* from 1927 – and left-wing Catholic with a strong interest in social issues. Her husband was a founder of the Secours Catholique charity. From 1947 to 1982 she presented a six-minute weekly broadcast on France Inter entitled, with unmissable Free French echoes, *Les Français donnent aux Français*. The programme appealed to listeners to come to the aid of (French) people in need. It presented individual cases of distress, broadly selected according to the degree of hardship. The issues thereby showcased incorporated a wide range of social, emotional and psychological problems: elderly people living in isolation; adolescents with addictions; parents of disabled children; people struggling with unemployment, disability, or threatened with eviction. Candiani's show confronted its audience with the emotional, financial and psychological distress of fellow citizens and invited reflection on how such distress could be ameliorated. It generated a vast correspondence, receiving 40 letters per day in its peak years. The community and solidarity it appealed to were national, as befitting its place on the state broadcaster.

'Madame Soleil' (Germaine Moritz, 1913-96) was an astrologer who became a national celebrity thanks to her show on Europe 1 from 1970 to 1993. At her peak, to obtain a private consultation with Madame Soleil acquired a certain cachet; her clients from the business, arts and political worlds reportedly included François Mitterrand.[45] Her show's switchboard could receive thousands of calls per day. Madame Soleil acquired a reputation for psychological insight, as someone who could not merely read the stars but help resolve personal problems; listeners described her as 'très psychologue'.[46] Her show's success demonstrated a strong popular demand to have one's personal issues listened to respectfully, and a relative lack of concern for the scientific or academic credentials of the interlocutor so long as they were sincere and effective. One listener told Sherry Turkle in the 1970s that 'Soleil does an honest astrology, which I prefer to pseudo-psychoanalysis'.[47]



Fig. 7 – L-R, Clara Candiani, Madame Soleil, Ménie Grégoire.
Sources: 'La parole est à Clara Candiani', http://www.ina.fr/video/CPF86625862; 'Madame Soleil – Les secrets du bonheur', https://www.discogs.com/Madame-Soleil-Les-Secrets-Du-Bonheur/release/4777054; 'Portrait de Ménie Grégoire, l'ancêtre de la radioréalité, sur France Culture', http://www.telerama.fr/radio/portrait-de-menie-gregoire-l-ancetre-de-la-radiorealite-sur-france-culture,123027.php, all accessed 25/06/2017.

This last comment was a reference to Ménie Grégoire (1919-2014), a journalist and writer whose show *Allô Ménie*, in which Grégoire responded to listeners' personal problems and dilemmas, ran on RTL (which broadcast only in the northern half of France) from 1967 to 1981.[48] Potential participants sent in

[45] 'Madame Soleil, Astrologer, 83' [obituary], *New York Times*, 30/10/1996.
[46] Edgar Morin (ed.), *La Croyance astrologique moderne* (Paris, 1982), 165ff.
[47] Turkle, *Psychoanalytic Politics*, 207.
[48] On Ménie Grégoire see Claire Blandin, 'Médias: paroles d'experts / paroles de femmes', *Histoire@Politique. Politique, culture, société* 14 (2011), http://www.histoire-politique.fr/index.php?numero=14&rub =dossier&item=134, accessed 12/06/2017; Anne-

letters, which were sifted by the production team (Grégoire was not told the content in advance). Those selected would then speak to Ménie on the phone during the broadcast itself. The broadcast went out daily, usually from 3.00 to 3.30 p.m. In the show's peak years (1968-78), Grégoire's daily listenership was in the region of one point three million people – forty per cent of the national radio audience for that time slot. Researching public perceptions of psychoanalysis in the mid-1970s, Turkle found that 'everyone had an opinion on Ménie Grégoire'.[49] In 1973, Grégoire launched a second show, *Responsabilité sexuelle*, which concentrated on sexual problems. For this, Ménie was always joined by a male expert, usually a psychoanalyst, sexologist, or priest.[50] *Responsabilité sexuelle* was notable for the frankness with which Grégoire discussed sexual issues, such as inability to reach orgasm, using a directness of vocabulary not previously employed on air.

Contemporaries described *Allô Ménie* as sitting somewhere between the confessional and the psychoanalyst's couch – the latter because of Grégoire's frequent use of psychoanalytic terminology and concepts.[51] Though not an analyst herself, she had spent ten years in analysis – with René Laforgue.[52] Grégoire thus occupied an ambiguous position, somewhere short of expertise. She tried to create a close bond between herself and her audience – to share in, as well as transmit, her correspondents' distress. She referred to her audience as a 'communauté de coeurs', the programme as a kind of 'psychanalyse collective', herself as 'la confidente'.[53] Turkle argued that her goal was to

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Marie Sohn, 'Les individus-femmes entre négation du moi et narcissisme. Les auditrices de Ménie Grégoire (1967-1968)', in G. Dreyfus-Armand, R. Frank, M.-F. Lévy and M. Zancarini-Fournel (eds), *Les Années 68: le temps de la contestation* (Brussels, 2000), 179-97; Guy Robert, 'RTL: le divan radiophonique de Ménie Grégoire', *Cahiers d'histoire de la radiodiffusion*, 55 (1998), 88-154; Dominique Cardon, '"Chère Ménie…". Émotions et engagements de l'auditeur de Ménie Grégoire', *Réseaux*, 13/70 (1995), 41-78; Dominique Cardon and Smain Laacher, 'Les confidences des Françaises à Ménie Grégoire', *Sciences humaines*, 53 (1995), 10-15; Turkle, *Psychoanalytic Politics*, ch. 8.

[49] Turkle, *Psychoanalytic Politics*, 207.

[50] Dominique Cardon, 'Droit au plaisir et devoir d'orgasme dans l'émission de Ménie Grégoire', *Le Temps des Médias*, 1 (2003), 77-94.

[51] Pierre Haski, 'Mort de Ménie Grégoire: quand la France parlait de sexe à son micro', *Le Nouvel Observateur*, 16/08/2014.

[52] Catherine Mallaval, 'Ménie mémoire', *Libération*, 25/01/2001.

[53] Cardon, '"Chère Ménie"', 54; Blandine Schmidt, 'La radio de tous les maux', *Recherches en communication*, 37 (2012), 97-109, here 100.

'educate [her listeners] into a new way of talking about their problems'.[54] Over time, the letters Grégoire received became more detailed and emotionally revealing, as listeners responded to her expectations and placed trust in her 'community of hearts'.[55]

Grégoire's views on gender roles, sexuality, and the family were similar to Dolto's, and drawn from similar sources – though Grégoire expressed them more forcefully, as evidenced by a now-famous debate, held at the Salle Pleyel in Paris on 10 March 1971 and broadcast live on RTL, under the rubric 'L'homosexualité, ce douloureux problème'.[56] The panel of respondents included a priest, a psychoanalyst, and André Baudry, director of the 'homophilie' group Arcadie.[57] During the debate, Grégoire argued that 'il y a une norme de vie, il y a tout de même une négation de la vie ou des lois de la vie dans l'homosexualité ... vous savez bien que les femmes heureuses sont celles qui ont rencontré des hommes qui les ont satisfaites.' She was supported by the psychoanalyst and priest, who concurred that homosexuality was psychogenetic and a (curable) form of suffering. This discourse was strongly disputed by homosexual rights activists present, including Christine Delphy, Guy Hocquenghem and Pierre Hahn, who stressed that homosexuals were not 'suffering', or, if so, only because of societal repression. The activists eventually stormed the stage, with shouts of 'liberté!'; RTL cut the live feed.

This event came to be seen as a 'date fondatrice' in the history of the French homosexual rights movement.[58] John Mowitt's account emphasises the radiophonic aspect: the protesters' interruption of the transmission deliberately ruptured Grégoire's illusion of a tolerant, supportive community with an assertion of political contestation, a challenge to what could and could not be

[54] Turkle, *Psychoanalytic Politics*, 207.
[55] Turkle, *Psychoanalytic Politics*, 207.
[56] On this episode see John Mowitt, *Radio: Essays in Bad Reception* (Stanford, 2011), ch. 4.; Scott Gunther, *The Elastic Closet: A History of Homosexuality in France, 1942-present* (Basingstoke, 2008), ch. 2. An edited extract is available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SGHRtoi3en0& (accessed 31/05/2017). A transcript (with some inaccuracies) can be found at https://www.france.qrd.org/media/revue-h/001/probleme.html, accessed 05/01/2017.
[57] See Jackson, *Living in Arcadia*, ch. 7.
[58] Françoise d'Eaubonne quoted in Gunther, *Elastic Closet*, 48.

said on radio.[59] But it was also a rupture with psychoanalytic discourse, at least in Grégoire's familialist, Laforguian version. In this sense, the event can be placed alongside *Anti-Oedipus* as a moment where radical (sexual) politics and psychoanalysis diverged.

Between them Candiani, Madame Soleil and Grégoire established something of a template for French female radio hosts. All were middle-aged women with reassuring broadcasting personas, who interpreted their role as communicating the emotional and spiritual suffering of others. Candiani's show sits somewhat apart, with its nationalist, resistance heritage and emphasis on charity, but it can be seen as a bridge towards the fully 'psychologised' programmes of Grégoire. Grégoire demonstrated how radio could be used to apply psychoanalytic language and ideas to everyday experiences of ordinary people well 'beyond the couch' – though Madame Soleil's parallel success is a reminder that it was the quality and sincerity of the advice, more than its conceptual source, which appealed.

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Dolto was not on the airwaves between 1969 and 1976; her public interventions in this period were relatively limited. In 1972 she participated in a televised debate on a reform of France's inheritance laws, designed to place legitimate and illegitimate children on an equal footing.[60] Dolto supported the change, arguing that all children should bear their biological father's name to remove any conscious or unconscious doubts about their paternity – as shown above, Dolto believed a misstep in this area could cause serious psychological damage.[61] Dolto's very participation in this debate was an implicit assertion of psychoanalysts' right to intervene on legal and social questions, and indicative of widening acceptance of psychoanalytic expertise.

[59] Mowitt, *Radio*, 105ff.
[60] Étienne Mougeotte, 'La fin des bâtards?', *Procès*, TF1, 29/11/1972. See *VdC*, 497-507, and accompanying notes.
[61] Dolto to Franck Tissot, 07/01/1972, *VdC*, 504.

Another intriguing attempt on Dolto's part to assert psychoanalytic authority, this time in the cultural sphere, was her attack, in a 1972 *L'Express* interview, on the Franco-American children's publisher Harlin Quist. Dolto described Nicole Claveloux's illustrations to Richard Hughes' *Gertrude et la sirène*, a book in their collection *Le Livre du Cyclope*, as 'franchement dangereuse[s] … [car elles] expriment les fantasmes de la sexualité infantile orale et anale'.[62] The book tells the story of a wooden doll who, feeling ignored by her owner, goes off exploring and befriends a mermaid. The illustrations, by Nicole Claveloux, represented the book's characters as disembodied, floating in a surreal landscape. Dolto objected that:

> le corps des personnages est inexistant. Seules les jambes, les mains et les figures sont dessinées … les arbres sont minéralisés, les animaux végétalisés, et les hommes sont l'un ou l'autre au choix. Rien n'est si nocif pour un enfant que cette confusion des règnes. Il importe qu'un homme soit un homme, qu'un arbre soit un arbre.[63]

If the images might appear inoffensive to adult eyes, 'l'enfant, lui, y trouvera tout autre chose: l'écho du monde chaotique et terrifiant qui peuple ses cauchemars'. Dolto accused the publishers of using the book to revolutionary ends: 'c'est peut-être un moyen efficace d'attaquer dans sa descendance une société qu'on conteste'.

Dolto's criticisms were all the more devastating in this case because her opinion had been sought by the publishers, François Ruy-Vidal and Harlin Quist. Ruy-Vidal was interested in psychoanalysis and thought that by using innovative, polysemic, psychoanalytically-informed imagery he could 'débanaliser' children's literature – 'lui donne[r] une fonction poétique et psychologique susceptible de fonder une action pédagogique profonde'.[64]

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[62] 'Littérature enfantine, attention danger', *L'Express*, 11/12/1972, 139, interview by Janick Jossin. Richard Hughes, *Gertrude et la sirène* (Paris, 1971); a translation of *Gertrude and the Mermaid* (New York, 1971). I am grateful to Sophie Heywood for these references.
[63] 'Littérature enfantine, attention danger'.
[64] Cited in Michèle Piquard, 'François Ruy-Vidal et Harlin Quist, nouveaux concepteurs dans l'édition pour la jeunesse des années 1970. Étude de cas: Les Contes de Ionesco', *Communication et histoire: Écritures et espaces – temps pluriels, journées d'étude organisées les 9 et 10 mars 2001 par le Centre d'Histoire et des Récits de l'Information et des Médias-*

Dolto's public rejection – in the run-up to Christmas and thus affecting sales – left a lasting mark. In a 2003 letter to the editors of Dolto's correspondence, refusing permission for his exchanges with Dolto to be published, Ruy-Vidal wrote that her intervention had an immediate and sustained negative impact on his career. In the short term, his business partner forced him out of the company, accusing him of ruining its reputation; in the longer term, 'une sorte de rumeur s'établit selon laquelle puisque l'article s'intitulait "Attention danger!" j'étais dangereux et tous mes livres avec'.[65]

Why did Dolto make such strong criticisms of a book which, she later admitted, she had not even read?[66] In part, her attack was a further assertion of childhood determinism – here, the possibility of images causing unconscious trauma. This was something she had long believed; in a 1952 talk on sleep for the École des parents, she had argued that watching films – any films – caused children nightmares: 'Tous les films sont mauvais pour les enfants, même ceux que les parents croient bons. Et ce sont surtout les gros plans qui causent le plus de troubles … le conseil à donner est: pas de cinéma avant neuf ou dix ans'.[67] This rhetorical move furthered the notion that it was important to have experienced psychoanalysts on hand in public life in order to identify and warn against potential sources of trauma.

Réseaux en Europe, Université Paris III-La Sorbonne Nouvelle et le Centre d'Étude de l'Écriture (CEE), Université Paris 7-Denis Diderot, (Paris, 2002) 74-82, here 80.

[65] François Ruy-Vidal to Annie Trassaert/Éditions Gallimard, 22/04/2003, Archives de François Ruy-Vidal at Le Fonds patrimonial jeunesse Heure Joyeuse, Paris; Carton 15: Correspondances et échanges sur publications.

[66] 'Une histoire Dolto – table tournante organisé par R. Boquié et M. Bernand', *Postscriptum*, (2nd trimester, 1973), 20-21.

[67] Dolto, 'Les troubles du sommeil', *EME*, 157-8.

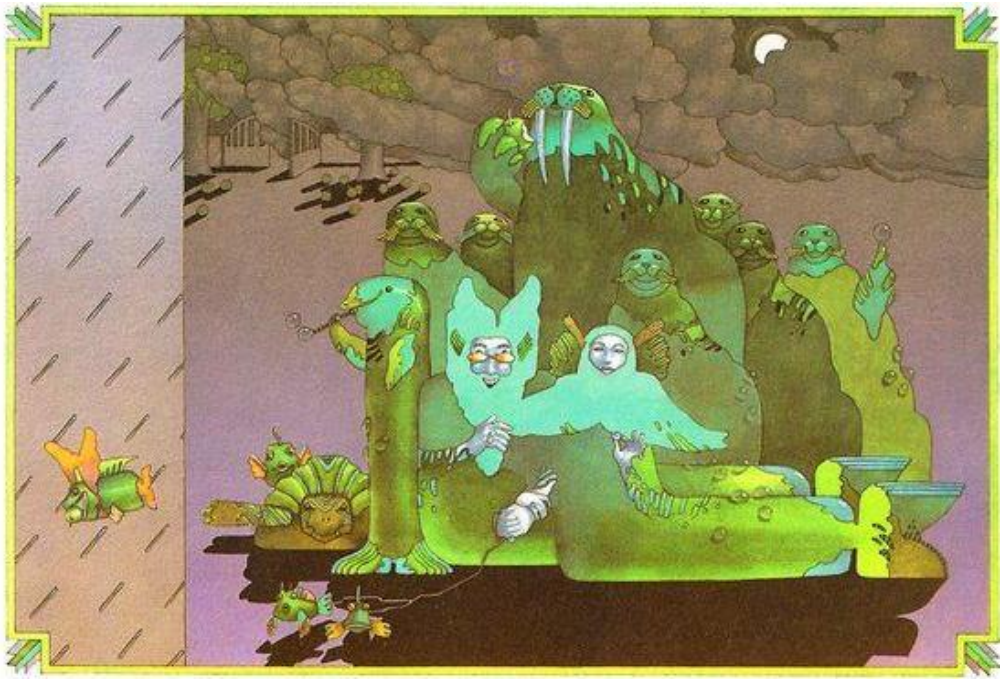


Fig. 8. Illustration by Nicole Claveloux for Richard Hughes, *Gertrude and the Mermaid* (New York, 1971), 24.

But in view of the language Dolto used ('il importe qu'un homme soit un homme … rien n'est si nocif que cette confusion'), a further factor was surely her view of the importance of maintaining strictly defined genders and gender roles. Was it simply the fluidity of the illustrations that threatened this? Or was Ruy-Vidal and Quist's rumoured gay relationship also a factor? Dolto's criticisms implied that the book was deliberately designed to sow gender confusion among children; her comment that the book was an attack on society and its 'descendance' makes most sense in this context. Dolto indeed believed that homosexuality was a psychical structure that could be provoked during early childhood via parental attitudes:

> Il n'y a rien de physiologique dans l'homosexualité. C'est une structure psychologique. Et cette structure psychologique, certains enfants y sont conduits dès qu'ils sont petits par une attitude hostile de leur père à leur féminité chez les garçons – comme à la masculinité chez les filles.[68]

Like Grégoire, Dolto thought that homosexuality should be tolerated – a father of a homosexual child should love him 'quel qu'il soit … ce n'est jamais en

[68] Dolto, *Lorsque l'enfant paraît 2* (Paris, 1978), 155.

méprisant un enfant qui semble devenir homosexuel ... qu'on l'aide'. She believed that it was possible to be 'homosexuel vrai … [où il n']est pas possible de faire autrement'. But she also thought that this was not the case for many people who believed themselves to be homosexual and that 'c'est soignable dans certains cas par la psychanalyse'. She thought that a child 'qui semble devenir homosexuel' could often be brought back to a heterosexual structure by emphasising the unhappy, childless future that awaited homosexuals – 'en lui disant qu'un homosexuel est malheureux parce qu'il ne peut pas avoir de descendance du fait que son désir sexuel n'est pas orienté vers l'autre sexe'.[69] In light of these beliefs, it seems very possible that the true 'danger' that Dolto saw in Ruy-Vidal's collections was that of encouraging children towards a homosexual 'structure psychologique'.

III. 'Utopian' education

In the 1960s and 1970s, the French education system underwent major change. Demographic growth brought capacity pressures: the number of pupils in primary education rose from 3.3 million in 1952-53 to 4.8 million in 1968, and in *écoles maternelles* from 1.3 million in 1959-60 to 2.6 million in 1976-77.[70] At secondary level, 2,354 new *collèges* were built between 1966 and 1975, with thousands of small or single-class schools closing.[71] Economic development and changing conceptions of adolescence created demands for teenagers to remain in education longer – families, no longer needing the wages of fifteen-year-olds, hoped that further study would lead to better careers. The school leaving age was raised to sixteen in 1959. The proportion of sixteen- and seventeen-year-olds taking the *baccalauréat* rose sharply.[72]

These transformations were accompanied by demands to overhaul pedagogical methods designed for an earlier age and smaller-scale institutions. Many teachers, parents and pupils believed that the public education system was too

[69] *Lorsque l'enfant paraît 2*, 156.
[70] Prost, *Éducation,* 156.
[71] Prost, *Éducation,* 160.
[72] Prost, *Éducation*, 157.

conservative, rigid, authoritarian, and focused only on the acquisition of knowledge through rote learning and *dictées* – 'instruction' – to the detriment of a holistic 'éducation' of mind and body. Antoine Prost demonstrated that support for 'democratic' pedagogical techniques such as discovery-based learning was growing before the May 1968 events, which provided further impetus.[73] Writing in 1976, W. D. Halls argued that while 'the guiding light of French education has been intellectualism', this was slowly changing; a 1969 circular from the Ministry of Education explained that 'education can no longer be limited to instruction through the acquisition of knowledge'.[74] New timetabling regulations in 1969 stipulated six hours of 'éducation physique et sportive' per week and six hours for 'activités d'éveil' – i.e. discovery-based learning – in history, geography, art and music.[75] Lycées, in particular, saw numerous cosmetic changes: tolerance of students smoking and wearing makeup; *tutoiement* of pupils by teachers, who began to dress less formally; the disappearance of punishment systems and formal signs of respect.

This background helps contextualise the approach to education that Dolto developed in the later part of her career – outlined especially in her 1985 book *La Cause des enfants*, though she also discussed education on the radio, as shown below. Dolto argued that the national education system had created 'bergeries' in which children's creativity was stifled: 'c'est absolument inhumain, un programme où tous les enfants doivent être homogènes, tous à un même niveau de connaissances … On élimine les talents, les inspirations, les désirs, parce qu'on a voulu faire entrer toute cette masse dans un système'.[76] She criticised the full timetables and extensive homework demanded by state lycées, contrasting them unfavourably with the long stretches of time left free for intellectual exploration during her own experience of private- and homeschooling.[77] The modern lycée 'semble être devenu l'endroit le plus ennuyeux qui soit … ce n'est même pas l'hôpital de jour … c'est peut-être la

[73] Prost, *Éducation*, 161.
[74] W.D. Halls, *Education, Culture and Politics in Modern France* (Oxford, 1976), 24.
[75] Prost, *Éducation,* 163.
[76] Dolto, *Cause des enfants*, 405-7.
[77] *Cause des enfants*, 399-400.

prison de jour'.[78] The entire Éducation Nationale edifice, 'hérité de Jules Ferry, devra fermer pour rebâtir autre chose'.[79]

Dolto's suggestion – which she described as 'utopique' – was that schools be reconceived as 'Maisons des jeunes' and given the additional roles of youth club and holiday camp. At 4.00 p.m. each day a team of activity leaders would arrive to manage the evening's entertainment and supervise homework; they would be charged with educational functions that, Dolto argued, the current system neglected: 'la formation du caractère, la maîtrise physique, la coordination et l'adresse manuelle, l'initiation, la mémoire et la maîtrise sensorielle'.[80] Children would have the right to sleep in school as and when they wished; schools would be adapted and staffed accordingly.[81] The academic side of education would become individualised: different children would begin studying certain subjects at different times, according to their desires and abilities. Schools would have examination centres to certify when a child had reached a certain level, much as music students might enter themselves for a grade exam. Children would be offered 'un programme à la carte. Une formation sur mesure … personnalisée'.[82] As at Summerhill, class attendance would be optional. Formal teaching qualifications would matter less, and teachers would be recruited more widely, to include industry experts without teaching diplomas. Meanwhile the education ministry would be folded into a larger 'Ministère de la Jeunesse et des Sports', 'chargé de former le corps et l'esprit'.[83] All of this, Dolto claimed, would end once and for all France's culture wars between the public-secular and private-religious educational models – though she did not spell out quite how. She did not mention the role, if any, that religion would play in her idealised system.

In 1975, Dolto was offered an opportunity to implement some of these ideas on a small scale. She was asked by three young educational idealists – Fabienne d'Ortoli, Michel Amram and Pascal Lemaître – to advise on the running of

[78] *Cause des enfants*, 424.
[79] *Cause des enfants*, 423.
[80] *Cause des enfants*, 405.
[81] *Cause des enfants*, 433.
[82] *Cause des enfants*, 406.
[83] *Cause des enfants*, 410.

their new private boarding school at La Neuville-du-Bosc in Normandy. They consulted Dolto on the recommendation of Fernand Oury, brother of Jean and former teacher of Félix Guattari, and who knew Dolto through the radical psychiatry circles described in chapter 5. Fernand believed that the state school system had become 'l'école caserne' – a phrase Dolto borrowed – in which 'l'instituteur est d'abord gardien d'enfants'.[84] D'Ortoli, Amram and their colleagues were interested in the pedagogy of Célestin Freinet and the impact of the educational environment. They wanted to 'créer un lieu où vivraient des enfants et des adultes qui, chacun, travailleraient à leur niveau, et pas forcément d'ailleurs aux matières traditionnelles'.[85] They envisaged their school as a refuge for children with mental health problems and learning disabilities; Dolto was therefore a potential source of recruits. Dolto was enthused by their approach and by the school's rural location, allowing for easy contact with nature and space to explore. She became a significant patron of La Neuville, referring several patients there and using her contacts and reputation to support the school in various ways, including by generating publicity.

In the 1970s, French governments rowed back on the liberalising measures introduced in the late 1960s. René Haby, Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale 1974-78, argued that pedagogical innovation had gone too far, withdrawing support for teacher training programmes that advocating innovative methods and removing power from democratically-constituted *conseils d'administration*, which involved parents and pupils in running schools.[86] Haby's eponymous 1975 reform created a standardised system of secondary education for all pupils aged eleven to sixteen, thereby deferring the age at which pupils were streamed according to aptitude.

Meanwhile, popular perceptions of private schools were becoming more favourable, and such schools were being used by a larger proportion of French

[84] Cited in d'Ortoli and Amram, *L'École avec Françoise Dolto*, 22.
[85] D'Ortoli and Amram, *L'École...,* 25.
[86] On Haby's reforms see André Robert, *L'École en France de 1945 à nos jours* (Grenoble, 2010), ch. 4; Samuel Matuszewski, 'A Genealogy of the French *Collège*: The Emergence of an Institution of Deleuzean Control', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Nottingham, 2017.

families. As Gabriel Langouet and Alain Leger have shown, many parents began to see private schools as a fallback option should their children encounter difficulties in public-sector schools; moreover, 'the private sector had more success in equalizing results and scholastic careers'.[87] Private schools frequently also espoused child-centred, active-learning pedagogies to a greater extent than public schools. These factors outweighed ideological or religious concerns in parental school choice – explaining the large public mobilisation against Alain Savary's 1984 project to integrate private schools fully into the state system.

Dolto was clearly on the side of pedagogical reform, and opposed to Haby's standardising – her likening of schools to prisons makes sense in the context of the new obligation for all eleven-to-sixteen year olds, regardless of desire or aptitude, to follow the same academic curriculum. Such criticisms came all the easier to Dolto because she had never had any ideological affinity with the Republican educational edifice. Her criticism of the state system was partly based on her experience of Lycée Molière in 1924-25 – and quite possibly from discussions of the relative merits of public and private schooling within her strongly anti-Republican family and social environment before 1940. Chapter 3 highlighted Dolto's enthusiasm for the direction in which education policy seemed to be heading in summer 1940; to some extent her 1970s criticisms echo condemnations of Third Republic schooling by the interwar Right. Her proposal to subsume the education ministry into a ministry for youth and sport, for example, echoes Vichy's awarding of control of education to the ministry of family and health. On her general approach, compare Philippe Pétain, writing in August 1940:

> Il y avait à la base de notre système éducatif une illusion profonde: c'était de croire qu'il suffit d'instruire les esprits pour former les cœurs et pour tremper les caractères … L'école française de demain enseignera avec le respect de la personne humaine, la famille, la société, la patrie … une place beaucoup plus

[87] Gabriel Langouet and Alain Leger, 'Public and Private Schooling in France: an Investigation into Family Choice', *Journal of Education Policy*, 15/1 (2000), 41-9.

> large y sera faite aux travaux manuels dont la valeur éducative est trop souvent méconnue.[88]

While Dolto's published vision avoided Vichy's overtly nationalist aspects, her private correspondence occasionally hinted at a concern for France's national and ethnic future if education were not reformed. In one 1970 letter she wrote of a 'sorte de septicémie généralisée des Français vus comme un organisme malade de névrose obsessionnelle', which she attributed to 'les institutions françaises [qui] ont formé des esprits mesquins et paresseux. Je ne vois pas comment notre ethnie, dans ses valeurs spécifiques, s'en sortira sans des bouleversements profonds'.[89]

This is not to say that Dolto's critique of the Éducation Nationale was without merit. The Popular Front, Vichy and De Gaulle's presidency have all been seen as missed opportunities to open up a system characterised by a narrowly intellectual definition of education.[90] The transformations of the 1960s and 1970s likewise fell short of many reformers' hopes. Nonetheless, it would clearly be misleading to read Dolto's views on education as resulting solely from her professional experience, without considering the context of her class background and her anti-Republican, Catholic heritage. She appeared particularly opposed to the social levelling effect of national education, drawing a disparaging comparison to the Chinese Maoist system.[91] Her antipathy to monopolistic state structures was long-standing, if strengthened by episodes such as the Clark-Williams affair (see chapter 3), which threatened state regulation of psychoanalysis, and by her husband Boris's periodic run-ins with the education ministry, which wanted to regulate the qualifications awarded by his École Française d'Orthopédie et de Masso-kinésithérapie.[92] In practice, Dolto's ideas – which would have been very expensive to implement on a national scale – stood the best chance of being enacted in well-funded private schools like La Neuville, without the need to 'faire entrer toute cette

[88] Pétain, 'L'éducation nationale', *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 15/8/1940.
[89] Dolto to Arturo Prat, October 1970, *VdC*, 476.
[90] Halls, *Education*, ch. 1.
[91] Dolto, *Cause des enfants*, 424.
[92] cf. Dolto to Ursula Huber, 17/08/1969, *VdC*, 448.

masse'. In view of this, there is a certain irony in the fact that her name is now attached to hundreds of state-sector schools across France.

IV. *Lorsque l'enfant paraît*

In the early 1970s, the French state placed renewed attention on nursery and primary schooling. Jacques Chirac's 1974 government created a new post of secretary of state for pre-school education, which was filled by a doctor, Annie Lesur. Some eighty-four per cent of French children aged between two and four attended *écoles maternelles* in the early 1970s (compared to eleven per cent attending nursery schools in Britain); the state aimed to enrol three million pupils by 1975 and recruit an additional 30,000 teachers.[93] *Maternelles* were seen as an important way of levelling opportunities for children of different social classes; early 1970s governments pushed them to extend their opening hours to twelve hours per day, to help working parents. To redress imbalances in provision, the government promoted the use of television and radio programmes as a supplement to formal nursery education in more remote areas of France.[94]

This context helps to explain the decision in 1976 by Pierre Wiehn (b.1934), director of France Inter from 1975 to 1981, and his programmes advisor Jean Chouquet (1926-2009), to invite Dolto to participate in a new broadcast series on the psychology and parenting of small children. Dolto's name had already come up in the context of the education ministry's efforts: in 1973 the ministry circulated a magazine interview with Dolto on sex education to all French school directors.[95] Her alignment with the government's aims concerning rural areas is confirmed by a 1977 televised interview, in which she mentioned her show's aspiration to 'combler … [la] très grande différence entre les gens des villes, où il y a un équipement pédagogique très nuancé, très varié, et un

[93] Halls, *Education,* 77-8.
[94] Halls, *Education,* 77-8.
[95] Dolto, 'L'Homme quittera son père et sa mère', *Parents et maîtres,* 81 (1973) 365-87; 'Circulaire no.73-299 du juillet 1973 aux Recteurs, aux Inspecteurs d'académie, aux Chefs d'établissement, aux Inspecteurs départementaux de l'éducation nationale', AFD, Box 29: Education/La famille, fiche A9.

équipement médico-psychologique, et les gens qui sont dans les campagnes … pour que tous se sentent soutenus et, en même temps, ne deviennent pas la proie de ceux qui savent'.[96] It is worth stressing the significance of this – Dolto's ideas were now to be distributed via the authority of the state broadcaster, still to some extent 'la voix de la France', with the explicit aim of ensuring some degree of universal national access to her parenting and pedagogical expertise. Moreover, her knowledge would protect her listeners from a presumably dangerous group – 'ceux qui savent' – purveyors of questionable expertise from which she was now exempt, since her own 'savoir' had been elevated to the status of national wisdom.

Lorsque l'enfant paraît differed in important respects from Dolto's earlier 'consultations' on Europe 1. Unlike in the earlier show, Dolto would not take phone calls, but only respond to letters, arguing that the act of writing a letter would itself help people to work out a solution to their problem. It was perhaps also in part a defensive measure. The peremptory nature of Dolto's phone conversations on Europe 1 had been criticised by the École des Parents and the Ordre des Médecins, which forbade her to publish the transcripts under her own name.[97] The new format gave Dolto more control: she could pre-select the themes and the specific letters to which she would respond. She hired her daughter and future executor Catherine (b.1946), a doctor and psychotherapist, to assist in the task of narrowing down the 100-150 letters received in a typical week to the handful discussed in each broadcast. Those chosen were sent a letter informing them of the day on which their question would be aired (see fig. 10).

Dolto's remarks were broadcast daily at 3.00 p.m. and lasted fifteen minutes.[98] This slot – the same one used by Ménie Grégoire – targeted mothers: timed to fit between the end of lunch and the return of children from school. On air, Dolto was accompanied by Jacques Pradel (b.1947), host of the daily afternoon

[96] 'Le Métier des parents', *Questionnaire*, TF1, 4/12/1977 – *CdE*, 11-13.
[97] See Dolto to Ursula Huber, 17/08/1969, *VdC*, 448-50. Dolto suspected that behind the criticism lay 'beaucoup de jalousies' and 'une cabale contre le poste Europe 1, contre lequel le gouvernement Pompidou en a, le trouvant trop de gauche'.
[98] In June 1978, towards the end of its run, the programme was moved to a morning slot.

show *Le Temps de vivre* within which Dolto's broadcast was incorporated. *Le Temps de vivre* was intended as 'une séquence calme, entrecoupée de rendez-vous de vulgarisation du savoir qui ne doivent pas dépasser dix minutes'; it had regular sections on history and classical music, but few female voices.[99]

Pradel went to Dolto's apartment on Rue Saint Jacques once a week to record a series of programmes. Like Grégoire on *Responsabilité sexuelle*, Dolto thought it important to have a male voice alongside hers, to represent the idea of a father and a mother: 'Je ne veux pas que les réponses viennent d'une autorité. Un enfant, ça s'élève à deux.'[100] Pradel, a recent recruit to the station, was Dolto's junior by forty years; he had a young child.



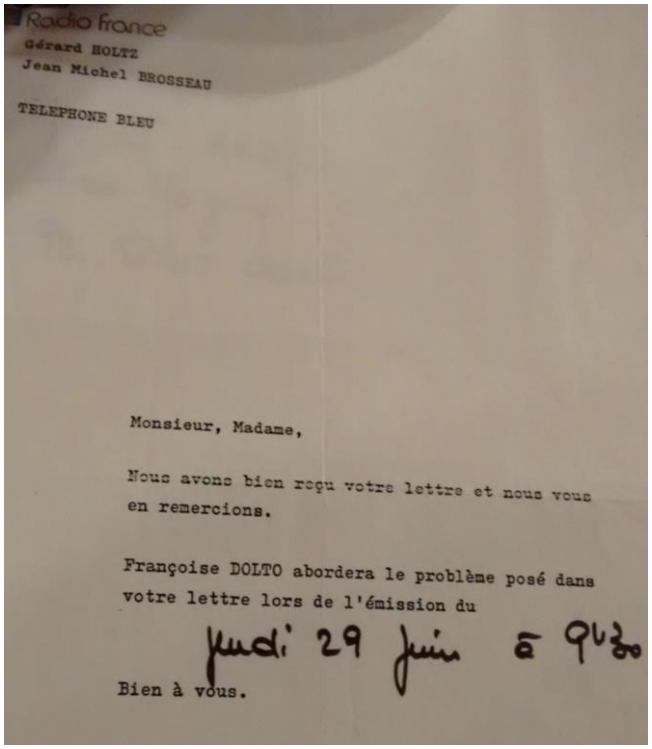
Fig. 9. Jacques Pradel, Catherine Dolto and Françoise Dolto going through listeners' letters. *VdC*, 568.

The letters were selected to be emblematic of, or an entry point into, common parenting issues. The example of a family in which the father – a pilot – was away for long periods, served to introduce the question of how families could

[99] Anne-Marie Gustave, 'Françoise Dolto, la voix qui sauve', *Télérama*, 6/11/2008.
[100] As recalled by Pradel, interviewed in Gustave, 'Françoise Dolto, la voix qui sauve'. See also Robcis, *Law of Kinship*, 129-34; Dolto, 'Françoise Dolto et la radio', *Psychiatrie Française*, 2 (1984), 160-3.

cope with a father's frequent absences.[101] Dolto's solution: ensure the continued symbolic presence of the father in the home and in the mother's speech; the father should maintain contact, for example by writing individually to each child; the whole family should make a minor celebration of his return.

On France Inter, Dolto's patriarchal vision of the family and of gender roles came to the fore somewhat less than in her previous broadcasts. Dolto allowed the show to be driven by listeners' concerns and mostly refrained from doctrinaire pronouncements or the appearance of moral judgement. A clear strength of the programme was the sincerity and seriousness with which Dolto treated the correspondents, making a readily apparent effort to engage empathetically and imaginatively with their problems and emotions. A large proportion of the letters not discussed on air later received a written reply. 'Je pense que le public sentait notre engagement', Catherine Dolto later commented.[102]


Radio France
Gérard HOLTZ
Jean Michel BROSSEAU

TELEPHONE BLEU

Monsieur, Madame,

Nous avons bien reçu votre lettre et nous vous en remercions.

Françoise DOLTO abordera le problème posé dans votre lettre lors de l'émission du

jeudi 29 juin à 9h30

Bien à vous.

Fig. 10. Letter from Radio France to a *Lorsque l'enfant paraît* listener. AFD, Box LLP 14, week 39, June 1978. (Author's photo).

[101] See Dolto, *Lorsque l'enfant paraît 1* (Paris, 1977), 34-6.
[102] Catherine Dolto, 'Anthologie radiophonique', sleeve notes to the CD audio release of *Lorsque l'enfant paraît, Intégrale de l'anthologie radiophonique 1976-1977* (Paris, 2009).

The discussion of specific scenarios showed how the principles that Dolto reiterated – 'dire la vérité', respect the independence and autonomy of each child, encourage children to grow and aim towards adulthood – could be applied in practice. She had precise suggestions for every difficult situation – what food to prepare for a child that would not eat, how to deal with an older child's jealousy at the birth of a sibling, how to explain divorce or parental separation. That these suggestions would not have been applicable to all cases was not important – her prescriptions indicated the kinds of practical outcomes her line of thinking could have, and encouraged parents to devise their own solutions in the same spirit.

The archive of letters – around six thousand were received over two years – make it clear that, for many listeners, Dolto was a revelation. 'J'apprécie très particulièrement votre bon sens, votre si grand amour des enfants', wrote one woman from Aix.[103] 'Je suis très vivement frappée par la clarté et la simplicité de ce que vous dites!' wrote a mother of two from Poitou-Charentes.[104] Other letters praised Dolto's 'chaleur', 'compréhension' and 'vaste intelligence ouverte sur tous ces problèmes essentiels'.[105] Some young children also liked the show: 'il faut que grand-mère écoute Dolto pour savoir comment il faut parler aux enfants', pronounced one four-year-old, whose amused mother wrote in to share the story.[106] In the first months, letters mostly came from mothers and were concerned with direct questions of child-rearing, such as toilet training, sibling rivalry, breastfeeding, or how to broach subjects such as sex or death. Over time, the number of letters received per week rose, as did their average length; letters also began to arrive from adolescents and adults regarding their own problems. Doctors, teachers, nurses, civil servants and other professionals wrote offering their perspectives on the topics raised. Dolto also received hundreds of requests: students seeking help with their essays; parents wanting suggestions of books to read or psychotherapists to consult; organisations hoping Dolto might attend their conferences.

[103] AFD, Box LLP 9, week 11, letter 61, November 1977.
[104] AFD, Box LLP 1, week 2, October 1976. (Letter not numbered).
[105] AFD, Box LLP 12, week 31, letter 98, July 1977; AFD Box 'LLP divers', letter 24.
[106] AFD, Box LLP 13, week 34, letter 17, April 1978.

Three-quarters of the letter-writers were female, and an even higher proportion of the parents; most male correspondents wrote in a professional capacity or from intellectual interest, not as fathers with a parenting dilemma. The letters arrived from all parts of France and sometimes beyond – around seven per cent came from abroad, mostly Germany, Belgium and Switzerland. The numbers from each French region were mostly in proportion to their populations, but with some exceptions. Wealthier regions such as those around Paris and Lyon, the Pays de la Loire, Midi-Pyrénées and Auvergne were over-represented; disproportionately few letters came from poorer regions such as Lorraine, Burgundy, Picardy and Languedoc. This pattern was repeated in letters from Paris – most Parisian correspondents lived in wealthy western districts, not the working-class areas of the north and east.

I have written elsewhere of how the concept of childhood determinism pervades much of this correspondence.[107] Many parents assumed that it was entirely possible that by committing inadvertent parenting mistakes they could permanently traumatise their offspring, and wrote for advice on how to avoid this fate – or whether they could repair already-inflicted damage. Mothers enquired about the potential long-term psychological repercussions of a difficult weaning, or allowing children to sleep in the parental bedroom.[108] There were numerous concerns about sex education, and about the possibility of prenatal trauma – perhaps prompted by Dolto's conviction on this point.[109] The very first letter received by the show concerned education, asking whether children who repeat a year of school 'sortent marqués à jamais' by the experience, and whether the parents might be to blame.[110] Such concerns could overlap with the debate over 'permissive' parenting, as in the case of a mother who blamed her liberal parenting style for her child's exclusion from school.[111]

[107] Richard Bates, 'Trauma and Anxiety in 1970s Parenting: Letters to Françoise Dolto, 1976-1978', *Journal of Medical Humanities*, forthcoming special issue on Trauma and Textuality.
[108] AFD, Box LLP 7, week 3, letter 2, September 1977; Box LLP 1, week 1, letter 10, October 1976.
[109] E.g. AFD, Box LLP 1, week 2, letter 15, October 1976; Box LLP 13, week 34, letter 90, April 1978; Box LLP 12, week 31, letter 28, April 1978; Box LLP 1, week 2, letter 4, October 1976.
[110] AFD, Box LLP 1, week 1, letter 1, September 1976.
[111] AFD, Box LLP 14, week 39, letter 6, June 1978.

Most striking, in view of my argument in chapter 5, is an example of a mother who blamed herself for the condition of her nine-year-old son, diagnosed autistic:

> Un jour [lorsqu'il avait deux ans] il n'avait pas été propre et il a reçu une fessée de moi en lui disant que maman ne l'aimait pas du tout ... [après] il a été d'une propreté exemplaire … [mais] peut-être est-ce une des causes de son grand retard! … J'ai toujours travaillé et notre petit dernier a été élevé dans la nervosité, la fatigue et l'anxiété! Je pense que cet enfant a souffert 'par ma faute' d'un manque de tendresse et de ce fait qu'il s'est replié sur lui-même. Je le regrette de tout mon coeur.[112]

Dolto responded, in a letter, that the mother should not blame herself because 'vous ne pouviez faire autrement – je crois que vous avez fait à chaque moment ce que vous pouviez faire'. She did not, however, challenge the mother's view of the etiology of the condition, and encouraged her to 'tenter encore une psychothérapie psychanalytique'.[113]

This letter was not broached on air. Nor were many of the letters – a small but not insignificant proportion – that contested Dolto's views. Whereas letters judged suitable for broadcast were marked, in Catherine Dolto's handwriting, 'à passer' or 'à passer absolument', critical letters were generally labelled 'à montrer à FD'. Objections fell into a few different categories. A number criticised Dolto's permissiveness, especially her liberal line on adolescent sexuality and masturbation. Such letters came from correspondents 'désirant faire respecter la morale en ce domaine comme elle l'est encore en d'autres heureusement pour l'honneur des français et françaises qui ne partagent nullement ces conceptions'.[114] Some expressed disappointment that Dolto did not align with official Catholic doctrine: 'j'étais porté à croire qu vous acceptiez la morale chrétienne. Je constate que je me suis trompé', wrote one Capuchin friar.[115]

[112] AFD, Box LLP 4, week 25, letter 44, March 1977.
[113] AFD, Box LLP 4, week 25, letter 44, March 1977. Copy of Dolto's response attached to the listener's letter.
[114] AFD, Box LLP 4, week 25, letter 5, March 1977.
[115] AFD, Box LLP 4, week 25, letter 17, March 1977.

There were also those who questioned Dolto's fundamental assumptions on etiology, childhood determinism, and the family. A Parisian single mother wrote attacking the implications of Dolto's infant determinism: '[selon vous] quoique je fasse, dès aujourd'hui, le développement psychosexuel de mon fils est également compromis, n'est-ce pas? "Tout est joué"? Je ne connais rien de plus désespérant, de moins stimulant, de moins "positif" que cet aspect de la psychanalyse.'[116] Several women criticised Dolto's view of gender roles and gendered parenting. 'Pourquoi faut-il que le petit garçon fasse ce que fait son père, pourquoi à partir d'un certain âge faut-il qu'il ait des relations privilégiées avec les hommes et pourquoi faut-il qu'il rejette, néglige et dédaigne les femmes? Pourquoi une femme dit-elle cela?' wrote an engineering student.[117] 'Une fois de plus, je suis ébahie de la façon dont vous traitez les filles dans votre émission', a woman from Lille wrote in June 1978. 'Vous avez tendance à magnifier le garçon dans sa force pour qu'il devienne un homme, et à renvoyer la fille à sa mère pour qu'elle développe sa féminité, comme on l'enseignait il y a 20-30 ans'.[118] A Lyon mother disparaged Dolto's preference for large families: 'vous semblez, en effet, prêcher pour la famille nombreuse ... ce que je trouve particulièrement déplacé à notre époque … un enfant unique peut avoir des relations sociales suffisantes!'[119]

These examples demonstrate that many listeners did not take Dolto's arguments on gender roles on trust, but engaged critically, comparing Dolto's pronouncements with their own experiences and ideas. The criticism of Dolto's views as outdated, though, remained rare in the overall correspondence – much less common than praise for Dolto's ideas as more enlightened than those of previous generations of parents and experts. Nonetheless, its presence shows that Dolto's ideas were mainstream, rather than radical, for the 1970s. Many listeners felt that they perpetuated

[116] AFD, Box 'LLP divers'; fiche 'FD ne répond pas "exprès"', letter dated 21/11/1978.
[117] AFD, Box LLP 4, week 25, letter 11, March 1977.
[118] AFD, Box LLP 15, week 43, letter 57, June 1978.
[119] AFD, Box LLP 11, week 20, letter 29, January 1978.

outdated stereotypes, a view that became more common in subsequent years.

Dolto's views on education also provoked challenges. A primary school head in Champagne thought that Dolto's notions of life in public-sector schools attacked a straw man of authoritarian education in order to burnish her 'permissive' credentials: 'vous devriez savoir qu'il n'existe plus que de classes traditionnelles où les enfants sont rivés à leurs bancs ... même dans des écoles qui ne sont pas des écoles Freinet, les enfants actuels sont heureux: ils bougent, s'activent, s'expriment'.[120] Other teachers were suspicious of Dolto's motives in criticising the Éducation Nationale: 'qui se cache, qui êtes vous, quelles sont vos qualités, vos diplômes universitaires pour critiquer puis lancer des appels solennels sur les ondes aux "responsables" de l'Éducation?', wrote one.[121] Another contested Dolto's suggestion that teachers should see themselves at the service of parents, rather than the state: 'il serait grave que les parents puissent croire que les enseignants étant leur employés ... vous retireriez à la communauté civile sa dimension véritablement politique.'[122] These teachers, perhaps not unreasonably, suspected that Dolto's views on education were linked to the politics of educational provision; that Dolto was using her psychoanalytic prestige and media platform to mount an attack on the entire public service ethos of Republican education.

Overall, the correspondence shows that for thousands of people, Dolto's broadcast was a site of intense engagement. It was variously a source of knowledge and counsel, solace, consolation – and contestation. Letter-writers took the opportunity to share problems, pour out emotions, and debate ideas. That intensity was communicated on air, through Pradel's habit of reading out sections of the letters, but little of the contestation that emerges from the archive was broadcast. This may in fact be part of the reason why the show ceased to air in 1978. France Inter raised objections to

[120] AFD, Box LLP 4, week 25, letter 50, March 1977.
[121] AFD, Box LLP 16, week 46, letter 19, July 1978.
[122] AFD, Box LLP 6, week 35, letter 4, May 1977.

Catherine's selection of the letters, but Françoise refused to continue without her. 'Elle voulait quelqu'un de très proche à ses côtés pour s'assurer qu'on ne lui sélectionnait pas des questions qui ne lui conviendraient pas', recalled Pradel in 2013.[123]

V. The Maison Verte

Dolto now threw her energies into a new venture: the Maison Verte. This would be a new kind of psychoanalytically-informed institution – a space for children to play and spend time, staffed by medical, psychoanalytic and educational professionals. In planning from 1975-76, the project came to fruition in 1979, assisted by public funds and exploiting the prestige Dolto acquired in the meantime.

The Maison Verte (MV) grew out of the Centres Médico-Psycho-Pédagogiques described in chapter 4, insofar as it was developed by a group of practitioners at the Étienne Marcel CMPP including Pierre Benoit, Colette Langignon and Bernard This – paediatricians and psychoanalysts trained by Dolto and sharing her orientation. In 1975, a working group on newborn babies formed at Étienne Marcel to explore ways to 'informer les médecins, sages-femmes, infirmières' of the group's approach to infant psychology.[124] As the MV idea took shape, it adopted a less explicitly medical purpose than the CMPPs. It became rather a centre for young children and their carers to attend, where children could play and meet others without being aware of any medical or psychotherapeutic oversight. That oversight would still be present, in the form of trained staff, but these professionals would intervene only occasionally, and would have no formal responsibility for the children's care.

[123] Éric Favereau, 'Dolto, comment te dire radio. Et si la psychanalyste n'avait pas parlé sur les ondes?', *Libération*, 11/07/2013.
[124] Dolto, Pierre Benoit, Colette Langignon, and Bernard This, 'Projet de Centre de l'enfance, 6 juillet 1977', in Malandrin (ed.), *Psychanalyste dans la cité*, 110-17, here 112.

The MV became the exemplar of what came to be referred to as Lieux d'Accueil Enfants-Parents (LAEPs), institutions which remain an important feature of the French state's provision for young children. In 2014, such spaces were defined as follows:

> Un lieu qui accueille de manière libre et sans pré-inscription, des jeunes enfants (0-5 ans) accompagnés d'un adulte référent, pour un temps déterminé. ... Les accueillants offrent un espace convivial de jeux et d'échanges … un espace de parole [et] de rencontre dans une perspective d'accompagnement à la fonction parentale, en dehors de toute visée thérapeutique.[125]

What is missing from this description is any acknowledgement of the centrality of psychoanalysis in the history, and in many cases the present, of such institutions. This section will make that centrality clear, arguing that the MV represents an unusually substantial implantation of psychoanalysis into a contemporary welfare state.

The MV project had specific medical, ideological and political goals. Its creators conceived of it not just as somewhere new for children to go, but as an answer to difficulties and anxieties around parenting to which they felt existing provisions – crèches, *haltes-garderies* and *écoles maternelles* – were an insufficient response. The MV was not quite the first LAEP: a somewhat similar initiative, without the psychoanalytic aspect, had been set up by the Institut de Recherche Appliqué pour l'Enfant et pour le Couple in Paris in 1976.[126] But the Maison Verte and its subsequent imitator institutions – sometimes referred to as 'les structures Dolto' – became the model for hundreds of LAEPs nationwide. As the Maison Verte's intellectual driving force and media figurehead, Dolto's name was, and remains, closely associated with LAEPs in general.[127]

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[125] Definition from the Caisse Nationale des Allocations Familiales, 2014. https://www.caf.fr/sites/default/files/caf/493/Laep2014Def.pdf, accessed 6/10/2016.
[126] Garcia, *Mères sous influence*, 292.
[127] E.g. the Caisses d'Allocations Familiales webpage for LAEPs cites Dolto as their originator: https://www.caf.fr/vies-de-famille/futur-parent/garde-d-enfant/les-lieux-d-accueil-enfants-parents, accessed 6/10/2016. The Allocations Familiales for the Yvelines region uses a Dolto quote as the epigraph to its introductory leaflet on LAEPs: https://www.caf.fr/sites/default/files/Liste-Laep.pdf, accessed 6/10/2016.

By July 1977 Dolto, Benoît, Langignon and This had substantially worked out the MV concept. They summarised it in terms resembling the 2014 definition above:

> Un lieu de rencontre et d'accueil pour tous les enfants, qui ne serait ni médical, ni pédagogique, ni psychothérapique, mais essentiellement attractif, vivant … lieu attractif de socialisation et d'éveil pour les enfants de zéro à 3 ans, mais aussi lieu d'accueil, d'écoute et d'échange pour parents et adultes.[128]

The MV would thus mainly be a site for play and socialisation – brightly coloured and filled with toys and play areas (see fig. 11). Yet though it was officially 'ni médical, ni pédagogique, ni psychothérapique', the centre's creators also understood it as a site of early intervention and identification of cases suitable for medico-psychological treatment, of surveillance of children's mental health:

> L'expérience nous montre qu'il n'est pas judicieux d'attendre que les parents viennent consulter dans les CMPP. Quand les troubles caractériels ou somatiques sont apparus, quand les difficultés scolaires se sont développées, il est souvent trop tard. Nous avons perdu un temps précieux. Il serait préférable d'intervenir quand flambent les premières jalousies, quand les premières séparations viennent angoisser l'enfant.[129]

From the creators' perspective, a drawback of the CMPP model was that only relatively advanced psychological problems – children whose parent or teacher had identified a need for expert intervention – were referred. Parents were unlikely to consult a psychoanalyst or CMPP when their child was in the early stages of a neurosis, either because they did not have the ability to recognise the warning signs, or – like Turkle's interviewees described in chapter 4 – did not have a great deal of trust in the system. Therefore, incipient psychological

[128] Dolto et al., 'Projet de Centre de l'enfance', 110.
[129] 'Projet de Centre de l'enfance', 110.

problems – what Dolto called 'micro-névroses' – could never be nipped in the bud.[130] Psychoanalysts had no means of staging early interventions.

The Maison Verte thus promised to be a preventative institution, whereas CMPPs had become 'rééducation' centres.[131] If psychoanalysts could be placed in regular contact with children in a relaxed setting designed for play, they could observe children's behaviour without needing to open a case file. They could identify and rectify psychological issues before they became fully-fledged neuroses. In order to improve the psychological health of the nation – perhaps especially that of working-class children, whose parents remained unlikely to consider psychoanalysis – analytically-trained paediatricians needed to get out of private clinics and CMPPs, and insert themselves into children's daily lives:

> Nous pensions que pour pallier ces troubles avant qu'ils ne s'aggravent, il nous fallait un lieu où les parents viendraient avec leur enfant, sans rien avoir à mettre en avant comme symptôme.[132]

> Pour ce faire, il convient de mettre en place une structure vivante qui permette de rencontrer les parents ou les assistantes maternelles, sur les lieux mêmes de leur vie sociale: il faut les aider dans leurs difficultés quotidiennes avec leurs enfants.[133]

Thus while in their public-facing pronouncements the MVs were 'non-medical' and 'non-psychological', they were in fact vehicles for advancing psychoanalytic thinking into everyday parenting – a way of building psychoanalytic oversight seamlessly into everyday experience, such that parents barely noticed its presence. They literally took psychoanalysts 'beyond the couch', embedding them in places that parents would want to attend for their own reasons, rather than waiting for referrals to clinics.

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[130] 'Conférence par Françoise Dolto au congrès de l'ANPASE, Bordeaux, Avril 1980', in Malandrin (ed.), *Psychanalyste dans la cité*, 209-10.
[131] 'Projet de Centre de l'enfance', 111.
[132] 'Conférence par Françoise Dolto', 215.
[133] 'Projet de Centre de l'enfance', 110-1.

Dolto's views on infant determinism, on trauma and its unconscious transmission from a very early age, were at the heart of the project. The new centre would aim to prevent 'la nocivité des traumatismes pré- et postnataux, qui pourraient, le plus souvent, être évités'.[134] Parents could, for example, be taught the importance of not toilet training their children too soon.[135] The centre would be a place where people could put words and meanings to symptoms: instead of being given medication, they would be encouraged to 'reconnaître la dimension spécifique humaine de ces parlêtres que nous sommes'.[136] The staff would treat the children as the most important people present, addressing the children directly and recording only the first name of the child – not the parent – who attended. This would also 'aider à la séparation avec les parents', preventing 'fusional' mother-child relationships by occupying 'une place de tiers' – thus performing a 'fonction paternelle'.[137] Dolto's belief in the reality of antenatal psychological trauma, potentially from the moment of conception, implied that the centres should try to attract pregnant women, from as early as possible in their pregnancy: 'Pour qu'une véritable prévention soit possible, nous avons vu qu'il convenait d'intervenir dès que l'enfant est conçu'.[138] Dolto believed that in the long run, there would be major public health benefits – and thus major cost savings – from such interventions.

In 1977, the working group formed an 'Association lieu de petite enfance et de parentalité' to manage the project. The next step was to obtain funding. The Association wrote to Bertrand Fragonard, a health ministry official, who – following a positive signal from the minister, Simone Veil – approved a grant of 250,000 francs in October 1978, with a further 250,000 to follow.[139] This

[134] 'Projet de Centre de l'enfance', 112-3.
[135] 'Réflexions de Françoise Dolto concernant le projet d'un Centre de petite enfance et de parentalité, 6 juillet 1977', in Malandrin (ed.), *Psychanalyste dans la cité*, 118-21.
[136] 'Projet de Centre de l'enfance', 112-3.
[137] Cited in Henriette Scheu and Nathalie Farioli, *Lieux d'Accueil Enfants Parents et socialisation(s)* (Strasbourg, 2010), 98.
[138] 'Projet de Centre de l'enfance', 114.
[139] See documents reproduced in Malandrin (ed.) *Psychanalyste dans la cité*, 123-32. The association also obtained a 60,000 franc grant from the Fondation de France, and 15,000 francs in contributions from local parents.

allowed the Maison Verte to open on 6 January 1979, at Place St Charles in the 15th arrondissement of Paris.

The Association's records show that in its first year, four hundred and fifty-five separate families attended the centre an average of eight times.[140] Seventy-three per cent lived in the 15th arrondissement. Eighty-three per cent of the parents/guardians attending were mothers and only twelve per cent fathers, though the latter figure was increasing – fathers appeared more likely to attend on subsequent, rather than initial visits. Of the children, eight per cent were under six months old, forty-six per cent aged six to eighteen months, forty-one per cent between eighteen months and four years, and only five per cent over four. Thus the centre mostly catered to the 0-3 age group that was too young for *écoles maternelles.* After initially opening in the mornings, it settled on a daily 2.00-7.00 p.m. timetable, plus two hours on Saturday mornings. Fifty-one per cent of children attending stayed between one and two hours, twenty per cent under an hour, and twenty-nine per cent over two hours.

Half of the staff consisted of the 'animation' team, which welcomed the children and led activities. The other half was divided equally between 'médecins analystes' – primarily Dolto, supported by This and Benoit – and 'analystes non-médecins' such as Langignon. The idea was that any one time there would be at least one 'personne d'accueil' and at least one psychoanalyst present. As Dolto wrote in 1979, the idea was that while the 'animateurs' were organising games and running group activities, the psychoanalyst 'est là et ne fait rien qu'être là' – but simply by being there, 'boit l'angoisse de ces mères, qui du jour au lendemain quand elles ont accouché n'intéressent plus personne'.[141] By acting as a sponge to soak up maternal anxiety, the psychoanalysts would prevent its – potentially pathogenic – transmission to children, thus improving public health in the long run. This, at least, was the basis on which the organisers invited 'les pouvoirs publics' to support the MV. The 1977 proposal document argued that 'les *effets de l'inconscient* ne cessent de se faire sentir dans la pathologie' and that 'la qualité de la relation parents-

[140] All figures in this paragraph from AFD, box 'Maison Verte I', fiche '1979'.
[141] Dolto to Suzanne Gasiglia, 14/08/1979, *VdC*, 641.

enfants est essentielle à l'avenir de notre pays'.[142] That significant public funding was obtained suggested that the state did not disagree.

From the mid-1980s, LAEPs on the MV model began to appear nationwide, supported by local and national public funds from bodies including the Allocations Familiales, the Fonds d'Action Sociale and the Fondation de France. Dolto's hope that private sector sponsorship might ultimately suffice – thus avoiding the 'dogmatisme éducationnel et la maladie administrative et bureaucratique qui guette tout ce qui est collectif' – was not realised.[143] However her ambition that 'ces centres d'accueil et de loisirs des petits … devraient exister dans chaque quartier des villes, et à chaque mairie des bourgs', was substantially fulfilled.[144] In 1985 the original Maison Verte received 8,003 visits from parents (double the 1979 figure), plus 677 from pregnant women, and was receiving enquiries from people interested in setting up similar centres.[145] That year the Ministère des Affaires Sociales et de la Solidarité Nationale made early childhood a priority area, launching a campaign titled 'Ouvrons la France aux Enfants'. A ministry circular argued that the MV 'doit servir d'exemple et être démultiplié partout'.[146] This followed a 1982 working group in the Ministry of Health on the 'Lutte contre les inégalités par la prévention et l'éducation familiale', to which Dolto contributed.[147] From the point of view of France's new Socialist government, LAEPs appeared a promising tool for improving the lives of mothers and children from poorer areas, who lacked places they could easily take their children. This social policy angle was reflected in proposals for imitator centres, such as the Maison de la Petite Enfance in Lille-Moulins, which sought to 'amener des parents de milieu défavorisé à prendre conscience des richesses potentielles de leurs jeunes enfants' and promised to offer 'stages de réinsertion sociale et professionnelle' to long-term unemployed people.[148] The

[142] 'Projet de Centre de l'enfance', 114, 117.
[143] 'Réflexions de Françoise Dolto', 120, also *Cause des enfants*, 520.
[144] 'Réflexions de Françoise Dolto', 118-121.
[145] Typed report dated April 1986, AFD, box 'Maison Verte II', fiche '1986'.
[146] Circular dated 11/6/1985.AFD, box 'Maison Verte II', fiche '1985'.
[147] Jean-François Nguyen, Médecin Inspecteur de la Santé, to Dolto, 26/02/1982**.** AFD, box 'Droits de l'enfant – la loi'.
[148] Letter from Lille-based association 'Action, Formation, Étude, Recherche', undated, to Dolto at the Maison Verte. AFD, box 'Maison Verte II'. fiche '1986'.

project for the 'Petite planète' centre in Pontivy, Morbihan, included a library of parenting guidance literature.[149] All of this was in keeping with Dolto's vision, which had seen a role for the MVs as civic centres – Dolto for example suggested that they might be a place for retired people to rediscover a sense of social purpose.[150]

The Maison Verte had a further spurt of popularity in 1987, after Dolto discussed it in her *Apostrophes* interview. Further centres on the MV model appeared; by 1996, a protected national fund was reserved for them within the Allocations Familiales budget.[151] By 2004 there were over two hundred MV-affiliated institutions in France – not to mention thirty-one in other countries.[152] Further growth in the 2000s saw the number of LAEPs funded by the Allocations Familiales (not all affiliated to the MV) reach eight hundred and fifty by 2010. A disproportionately large number were built in urban areas and 'quartiers défavorisés'. In 2010, most opened for two half-days a week – an average of eight hours per week – and the median annual budget was €15,387.[153] While each centre had its own character and local priorities, they were largely faithful to Dolto's original concept – including the psychoanalytic aspects. For example, La Maisonnée in Strasbourg 'a indiscutablement un effet de prévention des troubles de l'enfant ... les difficultés rencontrées au début de la vie [sont] abordées sans dramatisation'.[154] The team at La Marouette (Nantes), 'souligne l'indispensable fonction paternelle dans la structuration de l'enfant' while La Petite Planète (Morbihan) sought to 'éviter les graves perturbations que nous voyons dans les consultations spécialisées … un pari: parler ça soigne'.[155] And so on, across the country.

[149] 'Pontivy: La planète des tous-petits', *Le Télégramme de Brest*, 13/09/94, AFD, box 'Maison Verte III', fiche 91.
[150] 'Réflexions de Françoise Dolto', 118.
[151] Scheu and Farioli, *Lieux d'Accueil Enfants Parents*, 15.
[152] Including eleven in Switzerland, four in Belgium, three in Italy and Québec, two in Brazil and Russia, and one in New York. A Maison Verte UK opened in London in 2013.
[153] Scheu and Farioli, *Lieux d'Accueil Enfants Parents*, 20-2.
[154] From a review in *Le Journal des Psychologues* 45 (1987) 29-31, AFD, box 'Maison Verte II'.
[155] AFD, box 'Maison Verte III'. La Marouette: fiche 127, typed document, undated (1998); La Petite Planète: fiche 91, cutting from *Le Télégramme de Brest*, 13/9/1994.

What impacts did (and do) these centres have? There is relatively little empirical evidence; although state funding supports the centres, they have not been subject to centralised civil service management and evaluation – unlike, say, the UK's Sure Start programme.[156] The evidence needed to evaluate Dolto's claims of long-term public health benefits – such as a longitudinal study involving families using the centres – does not exist. Two qualitative reports on the MVs/LAEPs have however been compiled – the most recent in 2010, commissioned by a children's association in Strasbourg and based on surveys and interviews with parents and *accueillants*.[157]

This report found that the main benefit of the centres was 'socialisation'. They had become a first space for children to interact with strangers, secure in the presence of a parent/guardian (required at all times by the MVs) – 'une première approche avec les autres enfants, un premier contact qui facilitera l'intégration à la halte-garderie'.[158] According to one parent, the centres allow children to 'apprendre les règles de vie de base, se sociabiliser avec les personnes, développer leurs comportements, leurs réactions'.[159] Some parent comments supported the idea that the centres helped bring about 'separation' between mother and child:

> Il a vu qu'il pouvait être à plusieurs mètres de moi et vivre sa vie de petit garçon et jouer avec d'autres tout en étant en sécurité … j'ai appris aussi à être moins fusionnelle puisque j'ai pris de la distance, je partageais avec d'autres personnes le regard que j'avais sur mon enfant.[160]

Many mothers felt the centres reduced their sense of isolation: 'La rencontre avec d'autres mamans m'a permis de me sentir moins isolée'; '[je] prends plaisir à venir pour parler et ne pas se sentir seule dans le rôle de maman'.[161] Notably, the centres helped parents of immigrant background feel more

[156] See Naomi Eisenstadt, *Providing a Sure Start – How Government Discovered Early Childhood* (Bristol, 2011).
[157] Scheu and Farioli, *Lieux d'Accueil Enfants Parents* – commissioned by Association Le Furet; Gérard Neyrand, *Sur les pas de la Maison Verte. Des lieux d'accueil pour les enfants et leur parents* (Paris, 1995).
[158] Scheu and Farioli, *Lieux d'Accueil Enfants Parents*, 96.
[159] Scheu and Farioli, *Lieux d'Accueil Enfants Parents*, 97.
[160] Scheu and Farioli, *Lieux d'Accueil Enfants Parents*, 58.
[161] Scheu and Farioli, *Lieux d'Accueil Enfants Parents*, 103.

integrated in their local community: the centres were like a 'bain de langue française' helping them to feel 'plus ouverte sur la vie en France'.[162] The *accueillants*, too, spoke of the social benefits they gained from participating: 'je trouve que c'est d'une richesse … c'est extraordinaire de pouvoir échanger sur plein de choses, en particulier sur leurs enfants'.[163] They were often enthused to be able to transmit Dolto's wisdom to a wider audience: 'Je suis d'une génération qui a été bercée par Dolto … on a grandi en tant que mamans avec ça, on en est convaincue, on le sait, on peut le faire'.[164]

The study's authors argued, more nebulously, that the centres promoted certain 'democratic' attitudes: 'cette parole adressée à l'enfant … donne à entendre quelque chose d'un enfant comme interlocuteur et non comme objet'. The centres transmit 'un idéal de dialogue familial … ce modèle reflète les progrès de la démocratie familiale … par les valeurs démocratiques et égalitaires auxquelles [les centres] se réfèrent et le respect de l'altérité'.[165] Sandrine Garcia, an education academic who attended MVs as a parent and researcher, made a more negative evaluation, noting a gulf between 'les usages que les parents faisaient du lieu et la rhétorique de la prévention des "névroses relationnelles précoces"'.[166] The parents used the centre as a place to rest, talk or read while their children played; the psychoanalysts' interventions could be an unwelcome intrusion. Rather than simply observing and listening, Garcia felt that the analysts had 'des stratégies délibérées d'approche des parents, qui aboutissent, au bout d'un certain temps, à les conseiller … la parole n'est pas seulement entendue, elle est aussi sollicitée, parfois de manière très offensive'.[167] She discerned 'un rapport social paternaliste entre les mères et les accueillants, lequel peut autoriser un ton clairement prescriptif'. Some parents stated that the staff could be too judgemental, for example making pointed comments 'sur le fait que mon fils est resté accroché à moi, ce n'était pas un problème pour moi et je ne vois pas pourquoi on s'en mêlait'.[168] Despite

[162] Scheu and Farioli, *Lieux d'Accueil Enfants Parents*, 104-5.
[163] Scheu and Farioli, *Lieux d'Accueil Enfants Parents*, 114.
[164] Scheu and Farioli, *Lieux d'Accueil Enfants Parents*, 113.
[165] Scheu and Farioli, *Lieux d'Accueil Enfants Parents*, 120-3.
[166] Garcia, *Mères sous influence*, 299.
[167] Garcia, *Mères sous influence*, 294.
[168] Garcia, *Mères sous influence*, 294-7.

the concentration in 'quartiers défavorisés', Garcia found that the middle classes were overrepresented among MV users, something observed also in 1995 by Gérard Neyrand.[169] Garcia also reported that the staff dropped hints that it would be better for her child if she gave up full-time work: '"vous n'êtes pas à mi-temps … ce n'est pas trop fatigant?" L'interrogation avait aussi valeur de suggestion.'[170]

The impact of the MVs, like Dolto's overall legacy, is thus contested; parents clearly find much of value in the centres, without necessarily accepting the psychoanalytic rationale that inspired them. It is perhaps quite likely that, over time, the psychoanalytic element of the LAEPs will diminish. The 2010 report states that compared with the 1980s more attention is now focused on parental well-being and socialisation, rather than on the child's psychological structures, suggesting a slight move away from Dolto's initial vision.[171] Nonetheless, the Maison Verte and its imitator institutions are arguably the most successful large-scale project anywhere for taking psychoanalysis 'beyond the couch' in recent decades. The cultural sway of psychoanalysis in France is now waning, but the 'structures Dolto' may stand as the apogee of its transformation into 'common sense' and its implantation into the everyday lives of thousands of families. The MVs built the idea of infant determinism into the institutional fabric of the French welfare state. While other western countries have built comparable networks of children's centres, they do not have psychoanalysts on hand to 'boire l'angoisse des mères.' This aspect is unique to France, and Dolto and her ideas are at its heart.

[169] Neyrand, *Sur Les Pas de la Maison Verte*, 151.
[170] Garcia, *Mères sous influence*, 298.
[171] Scheu and Farioli, *Lieux d'Accueil Enfants Parents*, 23.



Fig. 11 – Images of Maison Verte interiors. Above, La Véranda, Échirolles (Isère). Below, La Maison Verte Carcajou, Sciez, Switzerland. Sources: 'La Véranda – Maison Verte', http://www.laveranda.eu/site/, accessed 19/06/2017; 'Concert au profit de l'association Carcajou', http://www.ville-de-sciez.com/Actualites/Fevrier-2013/News-Concert-Carcajou-Art240213.html, accessed 25/06/2017.

*

This chapter has shown how Dolto in multiple contexts relied on the idea of childhood determinism, exploiting this to further embed psychoanalysis in French everyday life. The notion informed her interventions on the radio and elsewhere on topics from the law on adoption to children's literature, education and the Maison Verte. If the consistent presence of this idea somewhat stands out in retrospect, for contemporaries, other aspects of Dolto's thinking were more salient: the injunction to treat children as fully human and respect their desires and autonomy, the 'permissiveness' of her thinking on sexuality and sex education, and her attentiveness to the needs of children within society.

John Gaffney and Diana Holmes have argued that 'stars' arise because they 'capture their era for us in a range of ways: the preoccupations, values, conflicts and contradictions of a particular culture, its "climate of feeling", are vividly expressed through its celebrities'.[172] Stars are a window into a culture – especially a culture in flux. They can both 'restate, often in new and modern forms, old identities and values, as well as calling a society towards newer, and perhaps confused, emergent values and value systems'.[173] In this vein, it may be helpful to think of Dolto in a similar fashion to David Looseley's recent biography of Edith Piaf, which approaches its subject as 'a rhetorical figure' whose identity as a popular singer fulfilled key symbolic functions.[174] Dolto helped to take psychoanalytic thinking and 'permissiveness' mainstream. Drawing on the precedents set by others, especially Ménie Grégoire, she created a template for how psychoanalysts could exercise influence in the French media, as Dominique Mehl has demonstrated.[175] She cemented the impression that authoritarian parenting based on automatic submission to elders and betters was out of date, and voiced a widespread desire to see child-centred and discovery-based pedagogies feed through fully into the school system. Since her self-professed radicalism did not extend to feminism or a calling into question of patriarchal structures, and as a maternal, reassuring,

[172] John Gaffney and Diana Holmes, *Stardom in Postwar France* (New York, 2007), 1.
[173] Gaffney and Holmes, *Stardom in Postwar France*, 1.
[174] Looseley, *Edith Piaf*, 16.
[175] Mehl, *La Bonne Parole* – see introduction.

Catholic female broadcaster, she did not threaten the gendered social order, making it easier for her to find a national forum to disseminate these ideas. In many ways, Dolto was an appropriate symbol of mid-1970s France: aware that the social upheavals during and since 1968 had to result in permanent change, yet nervous about the future in a world where everything operated at high speed and on large scales – nostalgic for a world in which men were men and trees were trees.

Conclusion – Dolto in the Twenty-First Century

In *2 Days in New York* (2012), Julie Delpy's sequel to her 2007 bilingual comedy *2 Days in Paris*, the character of Rose, played by Alexia Landeau, reveals that she wrote a thesis on Dolto. In the context of these films, this information however serves less to emphasise Dolto's continued relevance, and more to indicate how, at least for a certain audience, her ideas have come to seem both out of touch with modern life and peculiarly French.

The films derive comedy from cultural misunderstandings between Delpy's character Marion and her American boyfriend on the one hand, and Marion's stereotypically French friends and family, including her sister Rose, on the other. Yet the main conflict in the films is not national but cultural: the divide between worldly metropolitan characters with 'exemplary media-artistic careers' and others with narrower horizons.[1] Marion, an artist, gets into arguments with right-wing taxi drivers; her boyfriend Jack (a photographer) gives false directions to American tourists because 'they voted for Bush'.[2] The relationship between Marion and Rose is part of this cultural opposition. Rose, a child psychotherapist, is much less of a global citizen than Marion. Her character is empathetic but somewhat irrational, impetuous and unreliable, playing on the familiar comic trope of the shrink who might benefit from a little therapy of their own. Her sense of self-worth comes her self-proclaimed psychological perspicacity. In *2 Days in New York*, Rose takes Marion to task over her parenting, insinuating that Marion's son might become autistic because she is too 'taciturne' and has an unresolved 'problème de rage'.[3] This scene is presented in such a way as to suggest that Rose's views on psychology are not to be taken fully seriously; Delpy exploits them for comedic value and as a site of tension between the sisters. Rose's mother-blaming approach to autism comes across as comically unfounded, out of place in twenty-first-century families. In the context of the broader opposition between metropolitan and parochial mindsets running through the films, there is a sense in which

[1] Peter Bradshaw, '2 Days in Paris – Review', *The Guardian*, 31/08/2007.
[2] *2 Days in Paris* (dir. Julie Delpy, France, 2007).
[3] *2 Days in New York* (dir. Julie Delpy, France, 2012).

Rose's – Dolto's – approach to psychology appears as a particularly 'French' way of thinking, out of sync with modern cosmopolitan life.

This framing indicates a shift in how Dolto is perceived since her death. From being seen as a national or even universal figure, she is now more associated with a particular political outlook, one opposed to liberalising shifts in French family policy in the direction of increased rights for non-conventional families. This conclusion will give some brief examples, while also summarising the arguments made in the main body of the thesis.

Towards the end of her life, Dolto herself occasionally struggled to relate her ideas to unfamiliar cultural conditions. She made numerous foreign trips in the 1980s, and was mostly very warmly received, especially in Québec. However a 1983 trip to a conference in Fort-de-France, Martinique, proved 'déroutant'.[4] Most participants took an ethno-psychiatric perspective, analysing the effects of racial and colonial dominance on mental illness. 'Ce problème noir ici vous saute à la gorge alors qu'en France, Martinique c'est la France', Dolto commented. 'Le point de vue analytique est totalement absent … le sens du conflit personnel ou interne à la famille n'est pas dans leurs catégories'.[5] Dolto felt intimidated; she had not previously familiarised herself with the psychology of race and colonialism.[6] Notwithstanding Frantz Fanon's influence on the radical psychiatry of the 1960s with which she briefly associated, Dolto apparently remained unaware of his social-existential analysis of the psychology of racial domination.[7] That she now encountered it in a place where she was a genuine outsider and could not easily take control or assert authority – as she had done, for example, in the *Tribune de Paris* sex education broadcasts discussed in chapter 4 – made the experience even more disconcerting.

[4] Dolto to Frosso Carapanos, 09/04/1983, *VdC*, 750.
[5] Dolto to Frosso Carapanos, 09/04/1983.
[6] According to a conversation with a Martiniquais doctor, Michel Boussat. See *VdC*, 750, n. 26.
[7] Frantz Fanon, *Peau noire, masques blancs* (Paris, 1952).

However, this rare moment of dissonance did not cause Dolto to rethink her orientation. In 1984, Dolto spoke at a conference in Tunis on 'l'enfant, la famille et l'environnement' organised by the Institut National de Santé de l'Enfance. Her presentation, unlike that of the speakers who preceded and followed her, made no reference to local circumstances, instead relating the case of a French child whose suffering and cure were explained in terms of anxious maternal transmission:

> [Il] criait sans cesse et ne voulait pas dormir, pendant 16 semaines, alors que rien ne lui manquait, apparemment. Au bout de la seizième semaine, ses parents ont décidé de l'emmener chez un psychanalyste. Mais au moment de la visite, la maman s'est rappelée que sa mère à elle était morte à la suite d'un accident à 16 semaines de sa naissance et a fait part de cette réflexion à son mari à haute voix et en sanglotant devant son bébé. Ce dernier a cessé tout de suite de pleurer et la nuit venue.[8]

Dolto thus insisted, as she always had, on the universal importance of the close family environment and the power of the maternal unconscious. Her further conclusion, that 'l'équilibre psychique d'un enfant dépend aussi étroitement du passé ancestral et cela même à plus de deux générations d'intervalle', might easily have come from René Laforgue fifty years previously, and indeed echoed the hereditism of Georges Heuyer. Dolto's case study was a classic 'névrose familiale'.

This thesis has shown that Dolto's difficulty in thinking in terms of national, class or racial categories is ultimately linked to her inability, or unwillingness, fully to call into question her social position and ideas acquired in the 1930s. Pichon and Laforgue, her mentors during her struggle for independence from her family, did not encourage this kind of questioning, and instead helped orient Dolto towards penis envy theory, medical holism and 'permissiveness'. As chapters 1 and 2 showed, psychoanalysis offered Dolto a rare professional opportunity and a route out of the closeted social and ideological universe built

[8] 'Tunisie – Actualités', *Le Temps Tunisie*, 10/03/1984; 'Sciences et médecine', *La Presse de Tunisie*, 21/03/1984. 7. Cuttings held at AFD, box 'Étranger – Tunisie'. Dolto's talk followed one by Professor Béchir Hamza on Tunisian infant mortality, and preceded one on 'la place de l'enfant dans la société urbaine traditionnelle' by Leila Temime Blili.

by her family. But at the same time, her closest psychoanalytic colleagues came from the same social base as the Marette family: bourgeois, Catholic, Parisian, imperialist-nationalist. While willing to accept some women in their ranks, early French psychoanalysts upheld discourses implying that women's desire to work outside of the home, especially in professional careers, was evidence of pathology or mental imbalance. The narrow social and political base of the early SPP was initially obscured by the presence of foreign-born Jewish analysts, but was reinforced by the effects of the war. The 1953 split further separated the Catholic-nationalist analysts from their Jewish colleagues, as chapter 3 suggested. If Dolto had difficulty in thinking as it were beyond France, this is in large part to do with her deep roots in this social base and her lack of strong desire – as evidenced by the 1938 letter to her father quoted at the end of chapter 2 – to move beyond it.

*

This thesis began by asking what Dolto thought, and why her ideas were so popular from the 1970s onwards. It has shown that Dolto's intellectual approach, grounded in the French psychoanalysis of the 1930s, consisted of two fundamental dispositions: 'permissiveness', and a defence of the patriarchal, 'traditional' family characterised by strong paternal authority.

The ideological baggage that Dolto brought from her bourgeois upbringing in Passy, and which her analysis with Laforgue only partially challenged, included assumptions about the desirability of a strongly-gendered separation of male and female roles, the need for paternal control of families, and a form of French nationalism moulded by her family's imperialist militarism. These assumptions mixed with Freudian concepts, notably penis envy theory, in the SPP of the 1930s. There, Dolto also discovered the 'permissive' model of child-rearing, upon which her claims for the innovative nature of her thinking largely rest. She subsequently championed child-centred, discovery-based pedagogical methods, alongside the idea that adults should treat children with respect and tell them the truth regarding important subjects of family and identity. She opposed the visions of the family promoted by Vichy, and later

by intransigent Catholicism, insofar as they emphasised authority, duty and hierarchy. She instead advocated child-rearing based on respect and tolerance, and wanted fathers to be actively involved in their children's upbringing, rather than distant figures of authority. Thus in the late 1940s-1950s, her approach could plausibly be seen as progressive, as chapter 4 showed.

Nonetheless, Dolto consistently aligned herself with political forces that upheld essentially patriarchal family models: holism in the 1930s and 1940s; Pétainism during the Occupation; liberal, anti-Communist Catholicism in the later 1940s and 1950s; opposition to women's rights and feminism in the 1960s and 1970s; the 'cause des enfants' in the 1980s. The examples of Dolto, Pichon, Mme Vérine, André Berge and Georges Mauco show that both 'permissiveness', and variants of psychoanalysis, were compatible with anti-feminist, nationalist, racist-nationalist politics. Indeed, there is a sense in which 'permissiveness' in France represented an adaptation to changing family dynamics on the part of patriarchal-familialist politics, rather than an opposition to those politics. 'Permissiveness' gave familialists the appearance of being radical or progressive, and psychoanalytic childhood determinism provided a rationale, based on defending children's rights and protecting their fragile psyches, for restricting women's rights and employment opportunities.

No one factor alone explains Dolto's popularity. The combination of ideas just outlined held considerable appeal in the first decades after May 1968, at a time when many French people were willing to embrace less authoritarian models of child-rearing and education but were not prepared to accept the more radical postulates of feminism and gay rights. Dolto embodied and articulated this combination using her media platform, and made it directly relevant to the everyday concerns of ordinary people. She was insightful, good at telling stories, and reassuringly maternal. Her ideas gained credibility from her status as the most experienced child psychoanalyst in France and from the rising cultural prestige of psychoanalysis. In a period of rapid secularisation and social change, Dolto also benefited from the relative absence of other forms of personal guidance, and helped indeed to pioneer a new one.

Dolto's career shows that the history of psychoanalysis in France needs to be thought of in terms of its social impact on ordinary people's lives on a large scale, and as a phenomenon with implications for family politics, as well as an intellectual movement. It demonstrates that psychoanalytic ideas have become deeply embedded into important French institutions, from children's centres to the media. It shows that many ordinary people and professionals think about children, and about their parenting and educational practices, in broadly psychoanalytic terms.

Moreover, thanks to Dolto's mediation, many of the psychoanalytic concepts in circulation in France, especially as concerns children, are also inflected with older, patriarchal and Catholic ideas, in ways that are not necessarily immediately apparent. This is important, because it has allowed those ideas to assume a scientific and anti-authoritarian credibility that they might not otherwise have had. Dolto's success in obscuring the Catholic-patriarchal roots of her thinking, including perhaps from herself, helped to perpetuate those ideas in French politics, providing a degree of modern scientific cover for ideas which might otherwise have been more clearly identified as associated with outdated or discredited political programmes.

*

Dolto remains popular and widely read in the twenty-first century, as noted in the introduction. There clearly still exists in France a substantial body of readers who find Dolto's books enlightening, useful, reassuring, and stimulating. Her status is however contested; two categories of twenty-first-century critic can be identified. The first, such as Didier Pleux, Michel Onfray and the authors of the *Livre noir de la psychanalyse*, take issue principally with the Freudian foundations of her knowledge, which they see as unscientific and insufficiently anchored in empirical evidence.[9] Onfray perhaps summed this up when he referred to Dolto as 'la dame catéchiste de la psychanalyse'; Pleux

[9] See e.g. Jacques van Rillaer, 'Comment la psychanalyse s'est immunisée contre la critique', in Meyer and Borsch-Jacobsen (eds), *Livre noir de la psychanalyse*, 346-92, here 389.

would like to see psychoanalytic training and influence replaced by approaches based on cognitive-behavioural therapy.[10]

The second basis for criticism is political and cultural. Sandrine Garcia and Dominique Mehl are among those who see Dolto as advancing or underpinning bourgeois, Catholic-familialist, anti-feminist, homophobic interests. Much of this criticism in fact relates less to Dolto personally and more to the use subsequently made of her ideas, methods, and reputation by her successors, imitators, and disciples. Some critics have been irritated by a perceived attempt on the part of Dolto's most fervent devotees to 'sanctify' her, to present her as an ideal model or oracular figure. Guy Baret wrote ironically of 'la révélation doltoïenne' and 'sainte Françoise', a criticism echoed by Elisabeth Roudinesco who denounced the 'idolâtres [qui] ne cessent aujourd'hui de la sanctifier en donnant d'elle une image qui n'est pas à la hauteur de ce qu'elle fut'.[11] Didier Pleux and (privately) François Ruy-Vidal have made similar criticisms.[12] For Dominique Mehl, Dolto's major legacy was to inaugurate and legitimise for the French public a whole trend of 'intervention prescriptive, concrète, guidant les paroles et les consciences parentales dans leur moindre détail' by psychoanalysts in the media.[13] Mehl's comment here recalls Garcia's disdain for the 'manière très affecté de s'adresser aux enfants' of staff at the Maison Verte: 'le corps penché vers l'enfant, une voix extrêmement douce, attachant un soin particulier à articuler et à détacher les syllabes'.[14] Both Garcia and Baret have negatively associated Dolto's ideas with a certain kind of Parisian bourgeois condescension; Baret in his play *Allô maman Dolto* mocked 'Doltomaniaques' partly by giving their children absurdly pretentious double-barrelled names like 'Pierre-Sosthène' or 'Marie-Guenièvre'.

An example of the imitators and disciples these critics have in mind is Edwige Antier, who in 2005-6 published two books on Dolto under the title *Dolto en*

[10] Michel Onfray, preface to Pleux, *Françoise Dolto, la déraison pure* (Paris, 2013), 8.
[11] Baret, *Comment rater...*, 137; Roudinesco, 'La cause des enfants', *Le Monde*, 21/10/2008.
[12] In the letter quoted in ch. 6 above, Ruy-Vidal denounced the 'sanctification, béatification' of Dolto promoted, he felt, by her daughter Catherine.
[13] Mehl, *La Bonne parole*, 56.
[14] Garcia, *Mères sous influence*, 298.

héritage.[15] Antier's books followed from broadcasts on *France Inter*, entitled 'Enfances', consciously modelled on Dolto's thirty years earlier.[16] The subtitles of the two volumes – 'tout comprendre, pas tout permettre', and 'fille ou garçon: la naissance de l'identité sexuelle' indicate Antier's embrace of the two key strands of Dolto's approach: 'permissiveness' and traditional-patriarchal family values. Antier came to further public attention with regards to 'permissiveness' when in 2009, as a UMP deputy, she introduced a law that would have banned smacking; and concerning the defence of 'traditional' families when in 2005, in a direct echo of Dolto's intervention over *Gertrude et la sirène*, Antier took issue with the children's book *Jean a deux mamans* by Ophélie Texier, aimed at three-to-five year olds.[17] The book formed part of a collection by the publisher L'École des Loisirs, which presented different kinds of family situation to young children, including *Albert vit chez sa grand-mère* and *Barnabé a été adopté*. For Antier, *Jean a deux mamans* was 'n'importe quoi' because lesbian parenting was 'un fait marginal [qui] véhicule … des antivaleurs'; such a book should 'en aucun cas' be stocked in a municipal library. Drawing on psychoanalytic infant determinism theory, Antier argued that children should be protected from such material because 'à cet âge-là, la structuration du psychisme est en pleine construction du complexe d'Oedipe … lire ou raconter ce genre d'histoire bouleverse tout et peut nuire à la construction psychique'.[18]

In recent years, Dolto's ideas and legacy have frequently appeared aligned with conservative and Catholic positions on family and social policy. This was not necessarily the case during Dolto's lifetime; as chapter 6 showed, the Mitterrand administrations of the 1980s felt that they could use Dolto's ideas to advance socialist goals. This century, however, Dolto's thought seems primarily have given succour to political forces seeking to uphold the heteronormative family; and as such, become less representative of France as a whole. In 2012, during debates over the 'mariage pour tous', a number of

[15] Edwige Antier, *Dolto en héritage 1: tout comprendre, pas tout permettre* (Paris, 2005); *Dolto en héritage 2: fille ou garçon: la naissance de l'identité sexuelle* (Paris, 2006).
[16] Caroline Constant, 'Retrouver le chemin de son enfance', *L'Humanité*, 27/10/2004.
[17] Ophélie Texier, *Jean a deux mamans* (Paris, 2004).
[18] Delphine de Mallevoüe, 'L'homoparentalité racontée aux tout-petits' and 'Entretien avec Edwige Antier, pédiatre', *Le Figaro*, 9/9/2005.

psychoanalysts protested that allowing lesbian and gay couples to marry and raise children risked 'd'annuler la différence des sexes … La naissance de tous les enfants s'en trouvera bouleversée.'[19] While psychoanalysts in general were divided over the questions of gay marriage and 'homoparentalité', those who opposed them did so in terms reminiscent of Dolto's arguments, claiming that 'tous les enfants du monde ont droit aux différences parentales sexuées, leur conférant ainsi une origine psychique fondatrice'.[20] Adoption of children by gay couples 'amènerait à faire disparaître les père et mère du fondement de la vie familiale', according to Christian Flavigny, director of child and adolescent psychoanalysis at the Salpetrière hospital.[21] Several of those who intervened were working in areas that Dolto's work helped to establish, such as researching prenatal transference or promoting psychical health and preventive interventions.

Dolto's daughter Catherine, champion of her mother's legacy, was also cited by opponents of the gay marriage bill, such as the UMP's Hervé Mariton.[22] Subsequently, Catherine has spoken in support of elements of the agenda of La Manif Pour Tous – a political campaign group based around opposition to gay marriage and defence of the 'traditional family'. She has claimed for example that the legalisation of surrogate pregnancies – which La Manif Pour Tous vehemently opposes – will lead to 'barbarie' and 'violence', via unconscious psychological transmissions occurring during pregnancy.[23] La Manif Pour Tous, which has called for the teaching of gender theory to be abolished, represents a political constituency courted by François Fillon during the 2017 *présidentielles*, with a nod to Dolto's agenda when speaking of wishing to 'réécrire le droit de la filiation afin de protéger les droits de l'enfant'.[24]

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[19] Collective article, 'Touche pas à père et mère', *Le Monde*, 08/11/2012.
[20] 'Touche pas à père et mère'.
[21] Christian Flavigny, 'L'enfant bientôt privé de "père et mère"?', *Le Monde*, 08/11/2012.
[22] Hervé Mariton, 'Rapport UMP sur la famille durable: droit de réponse', 27/07/2011, http://leplus.nouvelobs.com/contribution/176776-rapport-ump-sur-la-famille-durable-mon-droit-de-reponse.html, accessed 05/06/2017.
[23] Catherine Dolto, 'GPA: Nous préparons la barbarie à venir', *La Manif Pour Tous 51*, 06/05/2015, http://la-manif-pour-tous-51.blogspot.co.uk/2015/05/cdolto-gpa-nous-preparons-la-barbarie.html, accessed 31/05/2017.
[24] '"Je veux faire pour les Français". Discours de François Fillon à Sable-sur-Sarthe 28 août 2016', https://www.fillon2017.fr/discours-sable/, accessed 31/05/2017.

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This thesis has shown the historical significance of Dolto's ideas and career far more thoroughly than has been done before, either in English or French. It has demonstrated her ongoing importance for contemporary French society, via the continued presence of her ideas in books, the actions of her successors, and her lasting impacts on public policy. It has introduced substantial new primary source material, from Dolto's archives and elsewhere. It has provided several case studies that can feed into wider histories, notably the study of interwar bourgeois upbringing in chapter 2, the reading of *Le Cas Dominique* in the context of autism in chapter 5, and the Maison Verte as a case study in the social impact of psychoanalysis in chapter 6. More widely, the thesis has shown the persistence of a combination of ideas developed in the 1930s: namely 'permissiveness' and the 'névrose familial'. It has argued that this combination should be associated with the political right as a form of patriarchal, familialist conservatism, notwithstanding Dolto's (and her supporters') insistence that it was radical, innovative, and progressive.

It has offered new perspectives on the history of psychoanalysis in France, relating both its origins and subsequent history to the politics of the family and to women's roles and rights, and demonstrating its impact on the everyday lives of large numbers of ordinary people. In addition, the thesis has provided an example of how biography can be part of social and intellectual history, showing how biography can be a way to trace the history of ideas and their interactions with various audiences over time. It has shown how Dolto's ideas were applied in her clinic, in books, in intellectual networks, and in the media, demonstrating how while always maintaining an intellectual identity and coherence, they had effects in areas including education, children's centres, medicine, psychiatry, children's publishing, and broadcasting.

There are several ways in which this thesis can lead on to future research; I will briefly indicate two possible avenues. First, the approach I have taken here, to situate Dolto as fully as possible in her social, historical and intellectual context beyond psychoanalysis, could inform a new history of

French psychoanalysis as a whole, one that is perhaps especially concerned with the social, cultural and political impact of psychoanalysis in France in recent decades. Thirty years after Roudinesco's invaluable but ultimately 'insider' history, it is time for a new assessment of psychoanalysis in France, using critical historical techniques and new knowledge developed in the interim. Such a history would provide for the more recent period an intellectual analysis comparable to that offered by Annick Ohayon's *L'Impossible Rencontre* for the 1919-69 period, while also taking account of psychoanalysis as a mass cultural phenomenon.

Second, my study of the archive of letters to *Lorsque l'enfant paraît* (in this thesis and elsewhere) has demonstrated the potential of this kind of source to provide insights into the personal concerns and social and intellectual debates taking place at a particular historical moment. Potential exists for a broader study, based on similar archive sources, of how well-known twentieth-century female celebrities became interlocutors for large numbers of people exploring issues relating to family and sexuality. The archives of letters to Simone de Beauvoir, Clara Candiani, Ménie Grégoire, and Édith Piaf – to cite only figures mentioned in this thesis – constitute a vast and unexplored treasure trove of information on the interaction between stardom and the history of emotions, popular psychology, family and sexuality in twentieth-century France.

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Not even Dolto's most vehement critics deny her capacity for psychological insight, for understanding the dynamics of individual families, and for imagining ways to alter those dynamics through specific actions, speech or attitudinal changes. During the research and writing of this thesis, I have spent considerable time in the company of young children, especially my nephew. Inevitably, when dealing with a new or unforeseen issue in looking after or simply being around young children, I have asked myself what Dolto would do or say in that situation. I remember one occasion in particular: shortly after my nephew's second birthday, he attended our family Christmas. He became very angry because he wanted all the presents in the room and didn't understand

why he was only being allowed to open some of them – after all, the last time there'd been presents they'd all been for him. What would Dolto do? 'Dire la vérité', I thought. So I picked him up and walked him around the room, pointing at the different piles of presents. 'These presents are for mummy, these presents are for grandma, these presents are for Uncle Richard. And *these* presents are for you. Because it's Christmas and *everyone* gets presents'. I went round the room several times like this.

It worked. This, in microcosm, is why Dolto still resonates: reading her can suggest ways of resolving little everyday situations that might not occur otherwise. And yet, there have been many occasions reading her when I have been grateful for my historical training and ability to place her ideas in historical context. Some of Dolto's readers and listeners have been less fortunate. How many mothers have needlessly blamed themselves for their child's learning disability? How many people grew up like the writer and LGBT activist Lionel Labosse (b. 1966) who, in his 2005 book on 'altersexualité', described his experience of reading Dolto during his adolescence? After citing some of Dolto's more homophobic statements, Labosse recalled how '[ma] mère était à l'époque une lectrice assidue de Dolto, et c'est dans ses bouquins que j'allais piocher en cachette quelque information sur ce qui m'arrivait, et évidemment, comme c'était imprimé, je croyais que c'était vrai … cette homophobie viscérale était d'autant plus insidieuse que Françoise Dolto était ressentie comme anticonformiste et briseuse d'idées reçues'.[25]

This thesis has shown above all that, for all their influence and usefulness, Dolto's ideas are not timeless, but strongly historically rooted, with an origin and a trajectory that can be traced over decades and related to political interests. Understanding this helps us to explain aspects of twentieth- and perhaps twenty-first-century France, and to preserve from Dolto's vast output only that which is of most value.

[25] Lionel Labosse, *Altersexualité, éducation & censure* (Saint-Denis, 2005), 114-5.

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L'Évolution psychiatrique
L'Express
Femmes françaises
Le Figaro
L'Humanité
Le Monde
Le Nouvel Observateur
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Works by Dolto

A. Books

The date given is of the first publication. All works published in Paris.

* indicates posthumous publication.
ǂ indicates a book not cited in this thesis.

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- *Le Cas Dominique* (1971).
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- *L'Image inconsciente du corps* (1984).
- *Solitude* (1982).
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2. Volumes of collected articles, interviews and other texts

Collected articles:

- *Au jeu du désir* (1981).
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Note: This list features only items cited in the thesis, listed in chronological order. It is by no means a comprehensive list of Dolto's texts. The forthcoming Collected Works *will offer a much fuller list.*

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