

Maquis Should Shoulder Portion of Blame for Deaths at Oradour

Persecuted Revisionist tries to bring history into accord with the facts regarding infamous 'war crime'

ONE OF THE MANY WILD ATROCITY TALES from World War II is the claim that, on June 10, 1944, a Waffen SS unit of the Das Reich Division carried out a mass civilian massacre in the village of Oradour-sur-Glane in France. According to the official account, 643 civilians were murdered as collective punishment for local Resistance activities.

French Revisionist historian Vincent Reynouard, who devoted years to studying the event, has challenged this version with facts. While acknowledging that the population was indeed rounded up by the Germans, Reynouard argues that the massacre was actually triggered by a panic following the explosion of a Resistance ammunition cache in a church.

In this exclusive interview, Reynouard explains what really happened. This interview was conducted by French-Canadian historian Rémi Tremblay and contains much detailed information not included in several short articles TBR has published on the subject in past issues including November/December 2001 and September/October 2006, both of which were relatively brief translations of articles from honest German news outlets.

TBR: Can you tell us what really happened on June 10, 1944?

Vincent Reynouard: I do not dispute the tragedy itself. On June 10, 1944, in Oradour-sur-Glane, more than 600 people died under horrific circumstances (643 according to the most recent claims). The men were shot by Waffen SS troops; the women and children were killed when an explosion ripped through the church.

Prior to this, the Waffen SS had surrounded the village, rounded up the inhabitants in the main square, and separated the population—the men on one side, the women and children on the other. They then herded the men in small groups into six barns and garages. As for the women and

children, they were locked inside the Catholic church of St. Martin.

What I challenge is the motive attributed to the Waffen SS. Official history accuses them of having come to this village with the specific mission of destroying it and massacring its inhabitants. After separating the population, obeying some mysterious signal, proponents of the official thesis have never been able to agree whether it was a revolver shot, a burst of automatic fire, the explosion of a grenade, or a burst amplified by a loudspeaker; the Waffen SS men are said to have machine-gunned the men confined in the barns and garages.

This deed accomplished, they allegedly sought to massacre the women



HELMUT KÄMPFE

Executed by Maquis operatives.

and children using a mysterious "crate" brought into the church. Supporters of the massacre theory have never made it clear if this was some kind of an asphyxiating device, an explosive ordnance, or both. Here again, confusion reigns.

When the device malfunctioned, the Waffen SS men are said to have entered the church, machine-gunned the survivors, and then set the sacred place on fire.

TBR: How can these divergences be explained when the case was



The ruins of Oradour-sur-Glane, which are now an open-air museum with an exhibit center dedicated to perpetuating the myth that German troops arrived at the town for the purpose of massacring its inhabitants.

investigated and even tried in 1953 after several years of judicial inquiry?

Reynouard: Quite simply because these are poorly constructed lies. After several years of investigation, I maintain that in Oradour-sur-Glane the events unfolded differently.

Around 4 p.m., the attic spaces and the church bell tower were the site of a series of explosions.¹ A clandestine ammunition depot set up by the local Maquis had just exploded. Passing through the oculus of the bell tower vault, the burning gases swept through the nave of the church, violently hurling stones, chairs, and benches at great speed. The women and children caught in their path were torn apart amid screams of pain and terror.

In the barns and garages, the men panicked and tried to get out. Fearing being overwhelmed in this heavily Maquis-controlled region, the Waffen SS opened fire and cut down the un-

fortunate victims trying to flee.²

TBR: In your view, the mysterious “signal” and the mysterious “crate” were used to conceal the explosions that occurred in the attic spaces and the bell tower.

Reynouard: Yes, it was imperative to accuse the Waffen SS of having cold-bloodedly massacred the women and children. This lie served two purposes: to galvanize the population against the German occupiers and to absolve the Resistance of any responsibility in this tragedy.

TBR: But why did the SS come to Oradour-sur-Glane on June 10, 1944?

Reynouard: They had come to free one of their own, Helmut Kämpfe, an officer who had been abducted the previous day by Maquisards. Kämpfe had disappeared about 20 miles from Oradour-sur-Glane. His car was found with the engine still running by a column of German soldiers who

had been following him.

During the investigation conducted in an attempt to locate him, the name Oradour-sur-Glane came up twice, presented as that of a village harboring a local Resistance center.

On the morning of June 10, a friend of Kämpfe, SS officer Otto Diekmann, whose company was stationed in Saint-Junien, informed his superiors that two French civilians had told him that a German officer was being held in Oradour-sur-Glane. He was to be executed that evening. Diekmann insisted on entering the village with his men in order to free the prisoner who, in all likelihood, was Kämpfe.

Col. Stadler authorized him to do so, assigning him the following mission: a) destroy the Maquis command post; b) search the village in an attempt to find the prisoner; and c) if Helmut Kämpfe was not found, take hostages in order to negotiate an exchange.

Such was the mission of the Waffen SS who came to Oradour-sur-Glane. There was no question of massacring the population there.³ But the police operation turned into a massacre when the clandestine ammunition depot exploded.

TBR: Who, in your view, caused the explosion of the clandestine ammunition depot?

Reynouard: On this specific point, we are reduced to hypotheses supported by scattered testimonies and a few material findings. I devote the ninth chapter of my book *Oradour: The Cry of the Victims* to this issue. In my opinion, Maquisards who had been unable to flee upon the arrival of the Waffen SS had taken refuge in the attic spaces of the church, near their arsenal. Denounced by a villager, they sought to create a general panic that would allow them to escape through a side door of the church.

This exit led to the presbytery gardens and from there to the surrounding countryside, since the church stood on the edge of the village. They therefore set fire to the depot located under the roof. They believed that the explosions would not spread to the bell tower, which was separated from the attic by a thick wall fitted with a small door. On the other hand, the detonations would produce an intense noise and blow off the roofs of the buildings, thereby triggering general panic.

Alas, the explosions did spread to the bell tower. As the vault was fitted with an oculus, a portion of the burning gases was able to pass through it and sweep across the nave. Hence the ensuing tragedy.

Added to this is the fact that, in their hasty flight out of the church, some Maquisards ran into the dense crowd of women and children. Cries then rang out, alerting the Waffen SS posted near the sacred place. When they opened the main door, they came face to face with the Maquisards, which led to exchanges of gunfire.⁴

TBR: To support your thesis, you highlight several material elements that are incompatible with the official version of the massacre and the burn-



SS Obersturmbannführer Adolf Rudolf Reinhold "Otto" Diekmann, battalion commander of the Das Reich SS Division infantry regiment and the ranking officer present at Oradour.

ing of the church. What are the main points that do not align?

Reynouard: They are numerous:

First, the photographs taken shortly after the tragedy show no traces of soot around the openings of the bell tower. Yet, in the event of a fire, a roof made of beams, joists, and tiles never burns up in just a few minutes. Consequently, for a longer or shorter period of time, flames and smoke escape through available openings, depositing soot on surrounding surfaces.

Second, the church's two bells melted during the tragedy, except for part of the base of each (known as the "striking ring"). Yet, as I cite in my book, a bell does not melt in a fire (I show many examples of bells that survived "ordinary" flames); and the partial melting shows that certain parts of the bells were brought to a temperature high enough to melt while

other parts remained intact, including the decorative motifs. This indicates that the destructive phenomenon was sufficiently violent and rapid to prevent the heat from diffusing throughout the alloy. This is compatible with an explosion, not with a prolonged fire.

Thirdly, the roof of the bell tower was topped by a cross (the ridge cross) with a thin brass sphere at its base. If the roof had burned for several dozen minutes, the sphere would have melted. Yet it is intact, though dented, and bears a clear mark, as if struck by an object the shape of a parallelepiped. This trace appeared when, violently projected upward by the blast of the explosion, the sphere struck the horizontal arm of the cross.

Fourthly, inside the church were two wooden objects: an altar in the side chapel dedicated to St. Joseph and a confessional in the Chapel of the Virgin. In the case of a generalized fire, thermal radiation would have raised the wood to its ignition temperature, destroying both objects. Yet the altar and the lightweight wooden confessional survived and bear no traces of burning.

This fact invalidates the fire hypothesis and confirms that of a sudden explosion with burning gases sweeping through the nave without reaching the side chapels.

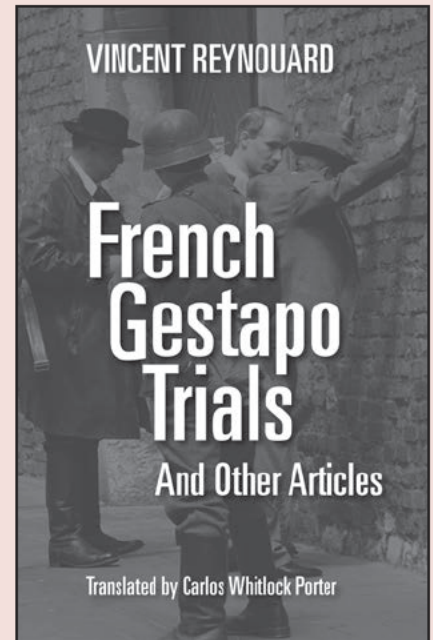
Lastly, the bodies of the women and children removed from the church and then photographed are not carbonized but torn apart. A carbonized body most often resembles a smooth bronze statue: clothing, limb extremities, hair, and facial features have disappeared. In Oradour-sur-Glane, the men who were shot and then burned display this characteristic appearance.

By contrast, the remains of the women and children still bear their shoes, clothing, and even stockings (for the women). The extremities of the limbs are intact, and facial features and hair remain visible. At most, they are superficially burned. These are not bodies that remained for hours in flames. They are bodies caught in explosions involving blast waves and the projection of debris.

French Gestapo Trials and Other Articles

A Revisionist history book by Vincent Reynouard

By Vincent Reynouard. Translated by Carlos Porter. Is everything we have been told about the “evil” Gestapo—the German secret police of the Third Reich—nothing but lies and overexaggerated atrocity yarns? Is the reputation of the Gestapo as a murderous collection of torturers and thugs false? Vincent Reynouard has taken the time to compare the accusations made against the Gestapo at the Nuremberg Tribunals by the Allies with the postwar French trials of the same personnel, involving the same cases, the same victims and the same eyewitnesses. What he found was that the evidence and accusations presented by the French and Allies against the Germans were not the same. The accusations made at Nuremberg in these cases were grossly embellished, proving the Nuremberg Trials were a complete sham. Softcover, 236 pages, #734, \$18 minus 10% for TBR subscribers plus \$5 S&H inside the U.S. from TBR, P.O. Box 550, White Plains, MD 20695. Call 1-877-773-9077 toll free to charge, Mon.-Thu. 9-5 ET or visit us online at www.BarnesReview.com to order. (Outside U.S. email Sales@BarnesReview.org for international S&H.)



Material observations invariably lead to the conclusion that powerful explosions devastated the site.⁵ I would add that one of the first men to enter the devastated church, Jean Pallier, noted in his report: “bodies were found that death had caught in a normal posture.”⁶ Added to this is the report of Dr. Bapt, who commanded the rescue teams. It states: “These are the remains of women and children taken by surprise by death and burned on the spot.”⁷ This is proof that the destructive phenomenon was sudden.

TBR: Granted, but some claim that the Waffen SS first attempted to blow up the church in order to kill, in a single stroke, the women and children who were inside. Is that not the true origin of the explosions you mention?

Reynouard: That thesis is absurd: the walls of the church were very thick, about three feet thick, because it was a fortified building. One author, Frank Delage, wrote: “The most solid structure was naturally the church, built of blocks and rubble stone of

granite [...] perfectly laid and bonded by an almost indestructible cement.”⁸

To attempt to destroy such a building in order to kill those inside borders on madness.

But there is more. This thesis is not new. It began circulating as early as 1945. On July 7, 1947, the woman presented as the sole survivor of the church, Marguerite Rouffanche, was questioned about the explosion she should have heard while she was waiting inside the church.

Here is her answer: “During the entire time I remained in the church, I neither saw nor heard any explosion.”

I was the first to publish this interrogation, for it definitively demolishes this absurd thesis according to which the Waffen SS attempted to bring down the church with explosives.

TBR: Yet Rouffanche did testify about the massacre in the church. Does her testimony undermine any part of your research?

Reynouard: On the contrary. The general public believes that there

exists only one testimony by Rouffanche, dated November 30, 1944. In truth, in 1944 alone, this woman presented as the sole survivor of the church testified at least four times: first in late June, then in October 1944, and finally on November 16 and November 30, 1944. A study of her various statements reveals how the official narrative was constructed.

In her testimony recorded in June by Pierre Poitevin, Mrs. Rouffanche claimed that the “crate” brought by the Waffen SS did not explode; it merely emitted black, suffocating smoke: “It was a crate about the size and height of my bedside table,” she declared. “No one wanted to go near it, but it did not explode.”⁹

Why this account? Because in the weeks following the terrible tragedy, propagandists sought to conceal the explosions that had occurred in the church. Indeed, everyone would have understood that such explosions could only have come from a stockpile of munitions stored there, since, being

part of an armored division, the Waffen SS who came to Oradour did not possess explosives capable of devastating a church.

But at the end of October 1944, the vaults of the nave collapsed, demonstrating that on the day of the tragedy the building had been severely shaken. This is why, on November 16, 1944, Mrs. Rouffanche made a 180-degree turn: in her new testimony, she stated that the “crate” had been the site of a “small detonation.” However, a “small detonation” could not explain such a violent shaking of the structure.

Two weeks later, Mrs. Rouffanche was therefore invited to change her version once again. She would now claim that the device had been the site of a “powerful explosion.” Thus, in less than six months, the story shifted from a “crate” that did not explode to a device that exploded violently. The contradiction is glaring.

I would add that although Mrs. Rouffanche spoke of a “powerful explosion,” she did not mention any blast wave. In her deposition of November 30, 1944, one reads:

Fire was communicated to the device, in which a strong explosion suddenly occurred, from which thick, black, suffocating smoke was released. The women and children, half-asphyxiated and screaming in terror, rushed toward the parts of the church where the air was still breathable.

As can be seen, Mrs. Rouffanche added a “powerful explosion” to her initial account of a simple asphyxiating crate, but she did not adjust the rest of her narrative accordingly, omitting any mention of a blast wave that should have struck the crowd.

More serious still: according to the official version, the men were machine-gunned while the women and children waited anxiously inside the church. The latter should therefore have heard the crackle of machine-gun fire.

Yet Mrs. Rouffanche never mentioned the slightest sound of gunfire heard before the Waffen SS brought in the “crate.”

In her testimony of November 30, 1944, she stated:

Packed into the sacred place, we waited with growing anxiety for the end of the preparations we were witnessing. Around 4 p.m., soldiers ... placed in the nave, near the choir, a sort of crate.

There is no mention of any burst of gunfire whatsoever. This is totally at odds with the official story.

I will conclude by emphasizing that according to this narrative, Mrs. Rouffanche escaped the church by jumping through the central stained-glass window of the east facade. She would have made a jump of nearly 12 feet before landing on a sharply sloping surface that ended in a narrow para-

The official version of the events serves as an ideological weapon against the “far right.”

petless ledge overlooking a street another nine feet below. And Mrs. Rouffanche would have managed this amazing jump without injuring herself or rolling down the slope—and without landing on the pavement below.

As early as 1952, an author who was in no way a Revisionist wrote:

How, falling from the window onto the narrow ledge without a parapet ... did she not then fall from that ledge down to the road? ... Poor Marguerite does not know.¹⁰

And for good reason: for an untrained woman aged 46 at the time of the events, this is impossible. Since 1997, I have been calling for a reconstruction of Mrs. Rouffanche’s jump. My opponents have never accepted.

Far from undermining my theories, therefore, the testimonies of the woman presented as the sole survivor of the church confirm the falsity of

the official version—a version clumsily constructed in haste and shaped by subsequent events (such as the collapse of the vaults).

TBR: You mention former French President Vincent Auriol (who served in office from 1947 to 1954) in your book. Did he express doubts about the official narrative?

Reynouard: We know this from the interviews conducted with French former socialist and later collaborationist Georges Albertini. When Auriol, newly elected in 1947, visited Oradour, he noted the absence of soot in the church as well as the preservation of wooden fixtures. Five years later, as the trial of the former Waffen SS members was being prepared, he consulted the case file and realized that certain documents had been removed from it.

One of these was the report of an SS military judge, Judge Detlev Okrent, who had investigated the events at the time and whose conclusions contradicted the official thesis.¹¹

According to Morvan Duhamel in his confidential interviews with Georges Albertini:

Q: Why did the president of the republic request, immediately after the verdict of the military tribunal judging the Oradour case, the passage of a law granting amnesty to the convicted?

A: [T]his was obviously because of the Alsatians among the accused, whose conviction outraged Alsace and fueled anti-French sentiment there. People there must have known, because these young men would have told their families, that events had not unfolded exactly as presented in Bordeaux.¹²

Duhamel also revealed:

In particular, the women and children who were supposed to have perished in a fire in the church, whereas no trace of soot stained the walls and interior wooden elements were intact, as Vincent Auriol himself had observed during his visit to the site shortly after his election to the presidency of the Republic. ... Meticulous as he was, Auriol had moreover studied the file closely, and he told me that he

was surprised to find that certain documents had been removed at the last moment, such as the testimony of the German investigating judge appointed at the time.¹³

According to the Duhamel interviews with Albertini, shortly after the tragedy, the German authorities:

[A]ppointed an investigating judge, one Detlev Okrent, who questioned the members of the incriminated unit of the Das Reich Division.

One year before the Bordeaux trial, a French judicial commission went to question him in Germany, but his deposition, which did not conform to the version that had been given of the tragedy, was not mentioned before the court.¹⁴

This was the origin of the amnesty granted to the former Waffen SS members at the conclusion of their trial in January–February 1953. Although sentenced to prison terms, the Alsatians were immediately released. The Germans, for their part, had to wait a little longer.

As for the man sentenced to death, the Alsatian Georges Boos, he was released in 1959 and went into obscurity in Germany.

Several years ago, in response to questions from a *Paris Match* journalist, he confirmed that the Waffen SS men who came to Oradour-sur-Glane had no explosives, and therefore could not have blown up the church, and that during the 1953 trial, important questions had been left unanswered.¹⁵

TBR: You invoke the “guardians of memory” several times. Who are they, and what do they stand to gain from perpetuating a version of history that might be false?

Reynouard: Among the “guardians of memory” are descendants of the victims, local authorities, and, at a higher level, successive governments.

Their motives are varied. The acceptance of official history allows Oradour-sur-Glane to attract visitors and thus stimulate tourism dollars.

However, I believe this motive remains very marginal. It concerns only local tourism stakeholders and a hand-



A photo of the victims who died when a hidden cache of Maquis weapons exploded in the church in which they had been gathered.

ful of Oradour shopkeepers.

More significant is the reputation of the village. It is very difficult to admit that one has lied. But the principal motive remains political. The official version of the Oradour-sur-Glane tragedy serves as an ideological weapon against the “far right.”

This is nothing new. As early as July 1944, leaflets were distributed exploiting the version of the Oradour

tragedy. They were circulated by the Resistance in order to provoke (or reinforce) anti-Nazism.

At the great Nuremberg Trial (a political trial if ever there was one), Oradour-sur-Glane figured among the charges brought against the defeated Germans. In 1953, when the trial of the former Waffen SS men who had gone to Oradour opened, the presiding judge declared: “The real trial we are

A Central Figure in the Legend

Robert Hebras has been presented as one of the six men who survived the Waffen SS shootings. In 1992, he published a booklet titled *Oradour-sur-Glane: le drame heure par heure* ("Oradour-sur-Glane: The Tragedy, Hour by Hour").

On page 27, he claimed that a Waffen SS soldier had said to people arriving from Limoges by tramway near Oradour around 7:30 p.m. on the evening of the tragedy:

We are letting you go! You can say that you are lucky because [in the village] we massacred them all.

If a soldier had truly made such a statement, then the entire Revisionist argument would collapse. However, since Robert Hebras did not witness the scene himself, he must have obtained the information elsewhere. From where? From the testimony of a tramway passenger.

But, in doing so, he repeated a serious fabrication. Indeed, here is the testimony as published in the official work of the Association Nationale des Familles des Martyrs d'Oradour-sur-Glane:

Another traveler who was part of the same convoy stated that an interpreter at that moment shouted: "We are letting you go! You can say that you are lucky!" (Pauchou and Masfrand, *Oradour: vision d'épouvante*, p. 84).

Robert Hebras's addition—"because we massacred them all"—appears nowhere. The author therefore committed a serious falsification in order to make his readers believe that, on the very day of the tragedy, a Waffen SS soldier had openly confessed everything.

In an attempt to preserve the official thesis, Robert Hebras committed another falsification. In her testimony of November 30, 1944, Marguerite Rouffanche declared:

Around 4 p.m., soldiers, about 20 years old, placed in the nave



ROBERT HEBRAS
Author of dishonest book.

near the choir a fairly large box from which cords protruded, leaving them trailing on the ground. These cords having been lit, the fire was transmitted to the device, in which a sudden and powerful explosion occurred.

Since the chronological plaque placed at the entrance to the village ruins states that the "signal" for the massacre was a "detonation" heard at 4 p.m., one logically concludes that everything began with the tragedy in the church.

This is why, in his booklet, survivor Robert Hebras was guilty of another incident of dishonesty. On page 25, he inserted the following passage into Mrs. Rouffanche's testimony:

Between 4 and 5 p.m., these people must have endured a dreadful ordeal, for the intense noise of gunfire, explosions, and the fire undoubtedly reached them. What must they have thought?

This short passage leads the uninformed reader to believe that the SS brought the box around 4 p.m. and then left it there for an hour before returning to light the cords. But this is false; Mrs. Rouffanche's testimony leaves no doubt on the matter: everything took place around 4 p.m. ♦

judging here is and remains that of Hitlerism."¹⁶

Since then, nothing has changed. The former president of the Oradour Memory Center, Richard Jezierski, described this museum as an "anti-fascist site."

In 2017, while facing Marine Le Pen in the second round of the presidential election, Emmanuel Macron visited Oradour in order to warn against nationalism and extremism. When elementary, middle, or high school students come on pilgrimage to Oradour, they are inculcated with an "engaged memory," intended to make them aware of the "dangers of fascism" and the "benefits of democracy."

The principal stake for the guardians of memory is therefore political—this is obvious.

That is why, when my critics tell me, "Your theses aim to rehabilitate Nazism, because you are a neo-Nazi," I reply: "Your theses aim to smear Nazism, because you are anti-Nazis."

Each camp has political objectives; what must distinguish us are the facts. The discussion must therefore focus on the facts, not on the real or supposed motivations driving one side or the other.

TBR: You were imprisoned in France and then in Scotland. Were your writings on Oradour-sur-Glane the source of your legal troubles?

Reynouard: It was primarily my writings and videos on the Holocaust that brought me into conflict with the justice system. It should be recalled that in France, the anti-Revisionist law dates back to July 1990. In its original version, it punished the "denial of crimes against humanity," as it was aimed above all at the work of French Prof. Robert Faurisson on the "homicidal gas chambers."

The Oradour-sur-Glane tragedy, however, is classified as a war crime, since no racial motive exists: the Waffen SS are said to have massacred an innocent French village not because the inhabitants were allegedly Jewish, but in order to intimidate the Resistance, which was harassing them. This is why, in France, challenging the

official history of Oradour-sur-Glane long remained lawful.

Everything changed in January 2017, when the anti-Revisionist law was extended to war crimes that have given rise to convictions by a French or international court.¹⁷ This is the case with Oradour. It goes without saying that this extension targeted me personally. The “lex Faurissonia” also became the “lex Reynouardia.”

That said, this new law has not yet been used extensively in relation to Oradour—but it undoubtedly will be.

I will conclude with an important remark. When the anti-Revisionist law was promulgated in 1990, its architects swore that its purpose was not to protect an “official history,” but to combat theses that conveyed anti-Semitism. Yet at Oradour-sur-Glane there was only one Jewish family—the Pinède family, whose three children in fact survived.

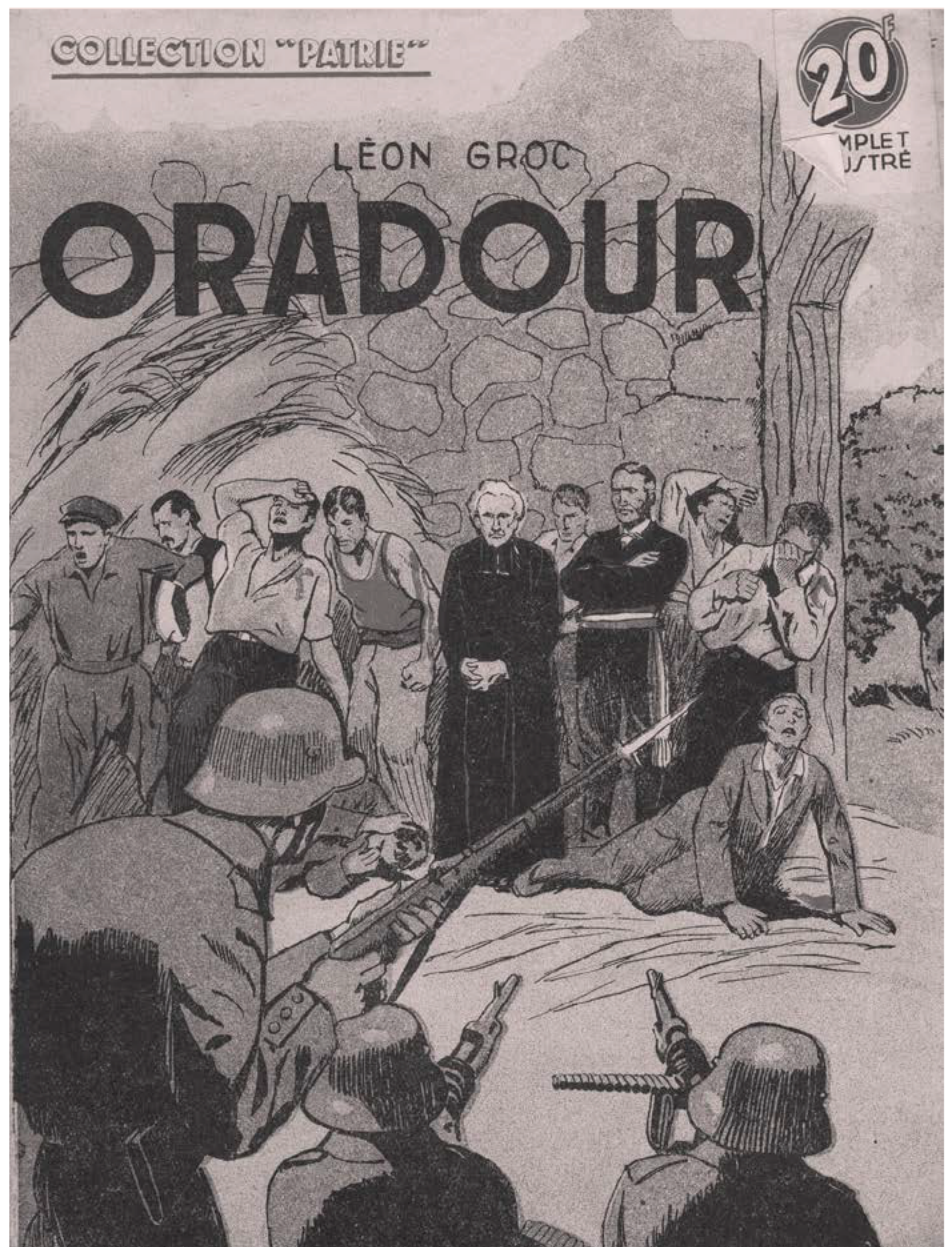
What happened in this village remains a Franco-German tragedy. The people Revisionists are accused of calling liars are French. Consequently, revisiting the Oradour tragedy conveys neither racism nor anti-Semitism.

By extending the anti-Revisionist law to the case of Oradour-sur-Glane, the legislator dropped the mask. He admitted that this memorial law protects versions of history declared beyond dispute.

Yet truth does not need a law to defend itself. When a law is deemed necessary, it means that the protected version is false.

TBR: In 1997, you published *The Oradour Massacre: Half a Century of Staging*. Twenty-five years later, you released a new book on the subject, *Oradour: The Cry of the Victims*. What are the main additions? What new discoveries did you make during this quarter-century of research?

Reynouard: We have above all benefited from work carried out by others, some of whom were by no means Revisionists. In 2001, for example, defenders of the memory of the Resistance revealed the locations of Resistance camps in the Oradour-sur-Glane region.



This front-cover illustration from *Collection Patrie*, a series of French illustrated anti-German propaganda booklets published by Éditions Rouff, depicts Waffen SS soldiers executing inhabitants of Oradour-sur-Glane during World War II. Though 643 French men, women, and children died that day, none were not lined up and executed.

It thus became possible, at last, to know that the village was indeed surrounded by Maquis units, one of which was located only a few miles away. Yet the official history had always claimed that Oradour-sur-Glane lay in the midst of a vast region with no Maquis activity whatsoever.¹⁸

The revealing interviews with Georges Albertini concerning Vincent Auriol were communicated to us by a

friend who had become aware of the work in question.

We also benefited from the publication of the written testimony of a survivor of the tragedy, Mathieu Borie. This testimony had existed since 1944, but only fragments of it had ever been published. Michel Bauray was able to obtain it and publish it in full.¹⁹ This account demolishes the myth of a village devoid of any Maquis activity.

One understands why, since 1944, its most important sections had been kept secret. In my new book, I repeatedly draw upon this crucial text.

Moreover, a man who worked all his life as a building restorer contributed greatly to our research. In the ruins of Oradour, his trained eye identified elements that had escaped us. It was he, in particular, who explained to us the origin of the impact mark on the sphere of the ridge cross.

He also drew our attention to houses in the village whose shutter hooks had been torn off or twisted.

This fact attested that violent explosions had shaken the dwellings. Caused by ammunition depots, the blast violently ripped the shutters from their fixtures. In this way, the report of Judge Okrent—who spoke of explosions in virtually every house—was confirmed.

Finally, a correspondent provided us with at least part of the archives from the investigation of the trial of the former Waffen SS men of Oradour.

I have not yet been able to examine everything, but what I have studied has taught me a great deal. In particular, I was able to read the original versions of Mrs. Rouffanche's testimonies recorded on November 16 and 30, 1944.

I was thus able to ascertain that the testimony of November 30 had been crossed out and altered in an attempt to make more credible the impossible leap attributed to the woman presented as the sole survivor of the church.

I am confident the truth is on the march. Nothing will stop it now.

TBR: The “guardians of memory” have targeted you, but more recently they have also targeted a TF1 Television film in which the massacre serves as the background. What grievance has been raised against this work of historical fiction?

Reynouard: Initially, the screenplay told the story of a man sent to Oradour-sur-Glane as part of a mission planned by the Resistance. Yet the official history continues to maintain that the village was free of any Maquis

activity. Hence the dismay and concern of the “guardians of memory.”²⁰

I learned that the film was produced after discussions with the local authorities. It is expected to be broadcast sometime in 2026. Was the screenplay modified, and, if so, how? I do not know. We shall see.

I remain attentive to everything that happens around Oradour. Above all, I am watching for the reopening of the Oradour Memory Center. The scenography will have been modified in order to guarantee, so it is said, an “infallible memory.”

This is an admission that, until now, the officially accepted “memory” of events contained flaws.²¹ I am eager to see the result. ♦

The village was indeed surrounded by Maquis units, one of which was located a few miles away.

ENDNOTES:

1. Actual unedited testimony: “A dreadful noise erupted in the direction of the church, which was only a few dozen yards from us. Detonation followed upon detonation, followed by an immense clamor and terrifying screams.” (Statement of survivor Mrs. Lang in Guy Pauchoy and Pierre Masfrand, *Oradour-sur-Glane: Vision of Horror* [Limoges: Lavauzelle, 1966 ed.], p. 61).

2. Actual unedited testimony: “I saw in a garage ... about 20 men who were trying to get out while showing their identity papers. Capt. Kahn was there and would not listen to anything. In front of this garage there were two men with a machine gun. I saw Capt. Kahn push these men back into the garage with his arm and verbally give the order to fire.” (Statement of former Waffen SS member Jean-Pierre Elsaesser, August 12, 1947.)

“When we were in combat position, behind the church in the fields, we heard ... the sound of a powerful explosion, followed by cries of pain uttered by women and children.

“Then, a few minutes later, a single gunshot, following that shot, light machine guns fired intermittent bursts into the village.” (Statement of former Waffen SS member Henri Weber,

April 19, 1948.)

3. Testimonies of Otto Weidinger and Hans Werner (deputy to Col. Stadler), given during the investigation phase of the trial of the former Waffen SS men involved in Oradour, May 4, 1949, and November 20, 1947.

4. Vincent Reynouard, *Oradour: The Cry of the Victims* (London: Sans Concession, 2022), chapter 9.

5. *Ibid.*, pp. 259–307.

6. Jean Pallier, Report on the events of Oradour-sur-Glane. Mission carried out by a French engineer, June 9–13, 1944.

7. Report reproduced in Pierre Poitevin, *Dans l'enfer d'Oradour* (“In the Hell of Oradour”), Clermont-Ferrand, n.d. [1944], p. 200.

8. Frank Delage, *Oradour, ville martyre* (“Oradour: Martyr City”) (Paris: Mellottée, 1945), p. 46.

9. Pierre Poitevin, *Dans l'enfer d'Oradour* (“In the Hell of Oradour”), p. 92.

10. Camille Mayran, *Larmes et lumière à Oradour* (“Tears and Light at Oradour”) (Paris: Plon, 1952), pp. 223–224.

11. Morvan Duhamel, *Confidential Interviews With Georges Albertini* (Nantes: Amaltheé, 2012), pp. 775–776.

12. *Ibid.*

13. *Ibid.*

14. *Ibid.*

15. “Oradour-sur-Glane Georges: Le dernier meurtrier SS vivant” (“Oradour-sur-Glane: Georges—The Last Living SS Murderer”), *Paris Match*, February 15, 2015.

16. *Le Monde*, Issue 12–13, Jan. 1953, p. 1.

17. Law of July 29, 1881, in *Freedom of the Press*; Chapter IV: “Crimes and Misdemeanors Committed Through the Press or by Any Other Means of Publication” (Articles 23 through 41-1).

18. See the *Bulletin of the Friends of the Resistance Museum of the Department of Haute-Vienne*, No. 55, third quarter 2001.

19. Michel Baur, *Oradour-sur-Glane: The Account of a Survivor* (Toulouse: Privat, 2021).

20. “Oradour: The TF1 Film That Worries the Guardians of Memory,” V. Reynouard, *Blog Sans Concession*, July 7, 2025.

21. “Oradour: 13 Million Euros to Attempt to Counter Revisionism,” Vincent Reynouard, *Blog Sans Concession*, December 20, 2023.

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