Pour mémoire: Investigating French history and memory through Didier Daeninckx's Inspecteur Cadin series

John James Gleeson BA, MA.

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Primary Supervisor: Dr Dervila Cooke
Secondary Supervisor: Prof. Michael Cronin (Trinity College Dublin)

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Declaration

I hereby certify that this material, which I now submit for assessment on the programme of study leading to the award of PhD is entirely my own work, and that I have exercised reasonable care to ensure that the work is original, and does not to the best of my knowledge breach any law of copyright, and has not been taken from the work of others save and to the extent that such work has been cited and acknowledged within the text of my work.

Signed: John James Gleeson ID No.: 16212966 Date: 23-08-2021

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List of Abbreviations

BD Le Bourreau et son double

FF *Le Facteur fatal*

GI *Le Géant inachevé*

MM *Meurtres pour mémoire*

MPT *Mort au premier tour*

Abstract

John Gleeson

Pour mémoire: Investigating French history and memory through Didier Daeninckx's Inspecteur Cadin series

This thesis contends that the popular crime fiction of Didier Daeninckx offers valuable insight into French society as his texts often centre on issues such as France's colonial past, the lasting impacts of both World Wars, and a variety of grassroots social concerns, such as the threats posed by nuclear energy and laissez-faire attitudes by the State in relation to unemployment, mental illness, or drug abuse. While I reference Daeninckx's body of work throughout my thesis, the Inspecteur Cadin series (consisting of four novels and one collection of short stories) are the principal works examined. My thesis extends the work of Max Silverman and Michael Rothberg, who have used their respective theories of palimpsestic memory and multidirectional memory to examine one of Daeninckx's most discussed texts, *Meurtres pour mémoire* (1984). *Meurtres pour mémoire* is the only novel from the series to have received any significant attention from scholars to date.

From my analysis of Daeninckx's texts, it is clear that the author frequently creates palimpsestic passages within his works to argue for a non-competitive commemoration of the past by highlighting the similarities between historic traumas, which at first often appear disparate from one another. My thesis also identifies how the Inspecteur Cadin series as a whole is hybrid in nature. On the one hand, literary movements not typically associated with popular fiction such as surrealism and abstract art are strongly present in some of the works. Yet, on the other hand, the Inspecteur Cadin series frequently evokes tropes associated with hardboiled crime fiction and makes recurring references to popular culture such as French music and cinema. As part of my research, I travelled to Paris in 2017 and conducted an hour-long interview with Daeninckx in his home. I draw on this new primary source throughout my thesis, a transcription of which is included in the Appendix.

Introduction

In this study, I draw on Michael Rothberg's notion of multidirectional memory, Max Silverman's concept of palimpsestic memory, and Emily Pine's work on remembrance culture to show how Didier Daeninckx interconnects various historical events in his work. These include events of major political resonance (such as the French deportation of the Jews during the Holocaust and events around the Algerian War of Independence 1954–1962) and other events and forces within French society such as trade unionism and controversies around nuclear energy. I show that Daeninckx's prevailing concern with hierarchies and power structures throws up connections between the various events that he highlights. In engaging with Pine's comments about fiction, memoirs, and State recognition of trauma (made in an Irish context), I explore and compare the role of individual narratives and French state involvement in Daeninckx's work. In 2017 I travelled to Paris and conducted a semi-structured interview with Daeninckx in his home. A full transcription of the interview is available in Appendix B. I draw on this new primary source throughout this study.[1] The corpus to be considered is Daeninckx's Inspecteur Cadin series of texts, mainly published in 1980s France. The series consists of four novels—*Meurtres pour mémoire* (1984b) [Murder in Memoriam, (Heron, 1991)], *Le Géant inachevé* (1984a) [The Unfinished Giant], *Le Bourreau et son double* (1986a) [The Hangman and his Double], *Mort au premier tour* (1997a) [Death on Round One]—and one collection of short stories—*Le Facteur fatal* (1990) [The Fatal Factor].[2] The latter chronicles the career of the detective before, during, and after the events of the previous novels as well as his ultimate demise through suicide.[3] I examine whether Daeninckx's creation of a historiographical narrative of history and memory as palimpsest in *Meurtres pour mémoire* is repeated in the rest of the Inspecteur Cadin texts. I begin by first discussing the work of scholars who have previously used multidirectional memory and the palimpsest as a lens to analyse *Meurtres pour mémoire,*

[1] This is referenced in the body of the text as '(Daeninckx and Gleeson, 2017)'.
[2] The reading order of the series, as outlined in the paratext of *Mort au premier tour* (1997a) and the paperback omnibus edition of the Inspecteur Cadin novels *Mémoire noire* (2010b) is as follows: *Mort au premier tour, Le Géant inachevé, Meurtres pour mémoire, Le Bourreau et son double* and *Le Facteur fatal*.
[3] *Meurtres pour mémoire* was translated into English by Liz Heron in 1991 as *Murder in Memoriam.* This is the only text in the series to be translated into English.

before extending the same approach to examine the other texts in the series that have been largely overlooked by scholars to date.

I identify examples of intertextuality found in the corpus and assess their significance by analysing how intertextual references impact on the role of memory in these texts by enhancing the emotional and intellectual impact of Daeninckx's texts. Furthermore, I examine whether Daeninckx uses intertextuality and other literary techniques to make interconnections between contrasting events in French history with a view to creating an alternative historiography. I investigate whether Daeninckx uses these details simply to bring his fiction closer to reality or if there are political ideologies underpinning these references.

This study also identifies the socio-economic problems that Daeninckx highlights in the Inspecteur Cadin series and analyses how these issues are highlighted throughout the texts. I argue that socio-economic issues occur with such prevalence in the corpus, that the texts should be viewed as a social commentary of this period. The series takes place from 1977–1990, in other words mainly in 1980s France. This is a significant period in France where "*Les Trente Glorieuses"* was brought to a halt by the global oil crises in the 1970s, and where, despite a period of significant success, the Left lost ground to the newly formed *Front national*. Similarly, events such as the trial of SS and Gestapo officer Klaus Barbie in France in 1983 reminded French society of France's dark years during World War II. The resurfacing of the past sparked debate around France's role during those years. Equally, the so-called memory boom during this period included the publication of key texts by scholars such as Pierre Nora and Henry Rousso. I draw on the work of both these historians, while also contesting some of their approaches, such as Nora's omission of France's imperial undertakings and Rousso's overly linear approach.

In the first section of this introductory chapter, I present further detail on the author and describe how his works are deeply influenced by his left-wing activism and his experience of growing up in Aubervilliers, a working class *banlieue* to the north of Paris (where he continued to live until very recently). This chapter will also discuss Daeninckx's works outside of the Inspecteur Cadin series to offer the reader a holistic view of the author's oeuvre. The second section of this chapter analyses this study's central theories of Michael Rothberg's multidirectional memory, Max Silverman's palimpsestic memory as well as Emilie

Pine's work on the politics of Irish memory. I then outline the importance of the literary device of intertextuality in Daeninckx's writing and show how it is used throughout the series to have a variety of impacts on the texts. The final section of this chapter then scrutinises the extent to which the series can be considered as a type of social history of France from 1977–1989.

This introductory chapter is succeeded by a discussion on the genre of crime fiction and its notable influence on Daeninckx's writings. Each of the five main Inspecteur Cadin texts is then examined separately in its own chapter. The analysis of texts does not follow their order of publication. The main reason for this is that *Mort au premier tour* was the first novel in the series to be published (initially by Le Masque in 1977), but was later completely rewritten by Daeninckx in 1997 for Gallimard. I will discuss this act of re-writing and how it testifies to Daeninckx's close attachment to the character of Cadin. The chronological narrative of the Inspecteur Cadin series is just as convoluted as its order of publication. Although *Meurtres pour mémoire* is not the first in the series in terms of chronology of plot, I have chosen to examine it first, as it is has received the most attention from scholars to date. The subsequent texts are then analysed in order of their shared themes. This is made clear in my chapter outlines below. I end with an analysis of *Le Facteur fatal*, which was written as a deliberate ending of the series by Daeninckx.

Chapter One contextualises discussion of Daeninckx's crime fiction heritage. Here, I examine the development of crime writing and speculate on its possible connections to folktales. This is integral to my examination of Daeninckx's use of carnival in *Le Géant inachevé.* The chapter discusses how crime fiction in France is indebted to Anglophone culture, while also having its own very distinctive traits. My examination of the influence of nineteenth-century and twentieth-century crime writers on Daeninckx's oeuvre leads to a discussion on the origins of the roman noir (and film noir) as well as the subsequent genre of the *néo-polar* (a politically engaged type of French crime fiction that first became popular in the 1970s).[4] This chapter offers an essential overview of the formulaic nature of crime fiction which is essential to my examination of Daeninckx's texts.

[4] This subgenre is discussed in greater detail in section "1.5 The Birth of the Néo-Polar" in the coming chapter.

Chapter Two examines *Meurtres pour mémoire* (1984b), engaging with the large body of critical work that already exists on this. My contribution is mainly to examine other uses of metaphor as well as intertextuality in the text. Scholars have mostly discussed *Meurtres pour mémoire* in terms of its comparison of the Occupation and the Algerian War. However, I describe how Daeninckx also highlights how social issues, such as racism, are present in French society of the 1980s and not simply confined to historic events.

Chapter Three focuses on *Le Bourreau et son double* (1986a), as it not only follows on from *Meurtres pour mémoire* in the chronology of the series but more importantly it too deals with the major themes of the Algerian War and the urban poverty in the *banlieues* of Paris. The main narrative of *Le Bourreau et son double* revolves around the murder of a trade-unionist, and the setting centres on a factory in the *banlieue*.

In Chapter Four I analyse *Mort au premier tour* (1997a), where the main setting is a nuclear power plant in Alsace, another industrial space like a factory and a site largely symbolic of modernisation. Many of the sub-plots in *Mort au premier tour* are used by Daeninckx to flesh out the history and regional identity of Alsace.

Chapter Five concentrates on *Le Géant inachevé* (1984a), which repeats the theme of regional identity and is set in the town of Hazebrouck in French Flanders. Daeninckx incorporates local customs, such as the carnival of giants, into the plot of the novel. This novel also depicts social issues, such as mental illness and drug abuse, which are common to several of the texts, but figure most prominently in the next text I analyse, *Le Facteur fatal* (1990).

Chapter Six looks at *Le Facteur fatal* as a sort of summary of the main issues discussed. It is appropriate to analyse *Le Facteur fatal* as the final text because Daeninckx purposefully used this collection of short stories to fill in—and complete the arc of—the literary figure of Inspecteur Cadin. Cadin also briefly appears in a few chapters of another novel, *Lumière noire* (1987). This, although not part of the Cadin series, is also briefly analysed in this chapter.

The Roman Noir as a Cultural Remembrance Tool

In her book *The Politics of Irish Memory* (2011), Irish literature scholar and memory studies specialist, Emilie Pine examines remembrance culture in Irish society over the previous thirty years and covers events and subjects of national importance, such as the traumas of child abuse, the legacy of conflict, and the pain of emigration. While Pine does not explicitly explain her understanding of the term "remembrance culture" it appears to relate to the German term "*Erinnerungskultur*". This term is usually translated into English as "culture of remembrance" meaning how individuals or society interact with their past and histories and is most closely associated with the Holocaust. These are what Pine terms 'recovered memories' (Pine, 2011: 2). Pine argues that these memories, stemming from both the individual and the collective past, are problematic and we are forced to question how to reconcile them with the present:

> Remembrance culture has a dual function as both a mode of knowing the past and as a way of reflecting the needs of the present. To remember is not a straightforward injunction: culture frames the past in political ways. A consideration of remembrance culture thus necessitates a process of decoding and analysis, a critical navigation of the territory of represented memories so that, as audiences, we know what we are seeing, and to what we are being asked to bear witness. (Pine, 2011: 3)

Pine stresses the importance of the creation of public works of art, such as novels, films and plays, to the process of understanding and coping with historical traumas. She argues that this is especially true in the absence of satisfactory State recognition or indeed official records of events (Pine, 2011: 25).

Daeninckx seems to be keenly aware of the role that the past plays in the present, especially as the recurring themes in his works often deal with hidden crimes, perpetrated by the State. For example, in his novel *Cannibale* (1998), Daeninckx makes the reader aware of the so-called "human zoos" that accompanied the 1931 Paris Colonial Exhibition, in an unofficial capacity. *Cannibale* highlights the mistreatment in France of the Kanak people indigenous to New Caledonia. More than one hundred Kanaks were recruited not by the official exhibition organisers but by *La Fédération Française des Anciens Coloniaux*. Although very closely linked to the State, this was a private group who promoted French colonial propaganda. They recruited Kanak people under the pretence that they would officially form part of the Paris Colonial Exhibition and have the opportunity to showcase their culture and traditional

dances. However, in reality, their exhibition took place in the *Bois de Boulogne* as a sideshow, and was very much marginal to the official event. As an additional mistreatment, they were not given suitable clothing for the cold March weather when they arrived in France. Their recruiters led them to believe that they would return to their tribes after seven or eight months when in reality the recruited Kanakas spent two years working in exhibits, as stated in their contracts (Dauphiné, 1998: 63).

In *The Politics of Irish Memory*, Pine notes that in the absence of a completely comprehensive State-led investigation, which names and shames, so to speak, it remains the remit of culture to continue to remember. When interviewed by Alan Morris, Daeninckx claimed that he fictionalises historical events less as a clearly defined act of remembrance but rather, more generally, against the disappearance of these memories: '*Je ne sais si j'écris "pour mémoire", mais j'écris contre l'oubli'* (Morris, 2015: 254) [I do not know if I write 'for remembrance', but I write against forgetting].[5] I show that Daeninckx sees literature as having a primary role in "writing against" silence and censorship. Censorship is a recurring theme in the Inspecteur Cadin texts. Daeninckx frequently shows how the French state for years managed to keep events such as the Algerian War hidden or partially out of sight. I examine how Daeninckx remembers the past in the Inspecteur Cadin series and how these texts interact with State censorship and cultures of silence that exist in traumatised groups of society. *Meurtres pour mémoire* testifies to the ability of fiction to overcome censorship and give a voice to those who have been silenced throughout history. The theme of censorship has not only had a marked influence on the content of the Inspecteur Cadin series but also underlies Daeninckx's stylistic approach to crime fiction. Daeninckx rarely offers a complete picture of past events to the reader, because it is not possible to do so accurately when retelling crimes committed by the State. Instead, Daeninckx blends fragments of history into his fiction in order to capture a truer sense of these hidden histories.

Pine argues that remembrance culture performs an important ethical role in the memorialisation of previously hidden histories and uncovered past traumas. Yet this is not without its complications. She contends that once trauma is at a safe enough distance from

[5] The translation of French language primary and secondary sources are my own unless otherwise stated throughout the thesis.

the present, and has receded into memory, a boundary is created between the past and the present. For Pine, remembrance culture polices this boundary and prevents the past from seeping into the present. She considers that 'in order to observe past sufferings, audiences must do so from a position of relative security in the present' (2011: 11). Yet, she also notes that it is difficult to make historical events relevant to the present if they are confined to the past. This leads her to question the extent to which acts of cultural remembrance in fiction function as 'ethical memory' (Pine, 2011: 14). For example, Pine is critical of Peter Mullan's film *The Magdalene Sisters* (2002) which highlights institutional abuse in Ireland. She states that although the film makes the point in its postscript that the last laundry closed in 1996, a mere six years prior to the film, *The Magdalene Sisters* makes little connection between a modern audience and the subject. Pine argues that the Ireland in Mullan's work seems far removed from the progressive Ireland of the early twenty-first century and that the issues raised are 'all too easily confined to the "bad old days" rather than, for example, being connected to continuing abuses of children and negative social attitudes towards women' (Pine, 2011: 43). She, therefore, suggests that fiction should not be relied on as the purveyor of past truths—or not solely—and underlines 'the need for official—and inclusive—acts of remembrance' (2011: 20).

For Pine, then, trauma as represented in fiction or film risks cordoning the past off from the present if the present reading or viewing seems to be radically divorced or too distanced from the horrors that are represented in fiction or film. I show that Daeninckx is aware of the implications of framing historical trauma as being removed from the present. Daeninckx avoids sealing off the past in his texts by not focussing solely on historic traumas and demonstrating how such events are connected to present day issues. The body of this study will demonstrate how Daeninckx avoids framing past traumas as isolated events by encouraging the reader to empathise with victims on the margins of history while also understanding their similarities to present day issues.

Pine's analysis includes a wide variety of texts to explore Irish remembrance culture in general. However, more importantly, she uses these works to question what is at stake in *how* we remember. Although Pine's work focuses uniquely on the context of Irish remembrance culture in the years between 1980 and 2010, which she sees as obsessed with the past, and more particularly with past trauma, her general approach to the role of

cultural texts in remembrance of past traumas is a valuable point of reference for my study of Daeninckx's work. Pine's work deals with many different authors using varying media to perform remembrance. However, my research focuses on a single author who uses a very specific type of detective novel, the roman noir, within the broader genre of crime fiction. An analysis of the workings of the roman noir is an integral part of my analysis. In 'Chapter One: The Crime Fiction Heritage of Didier Daeninckx', I discuss in detail the development of the genre, its typical traits, and characteristics as well as Daeninckx's distinct approach to the genre. I argue that Daeninckx's detective fiction is an important part of French remembrance culture's response to French society's past traumas.

Daeninckx as Ground Breaker

As Alan Morris notes, Didier Daeninckx is known to those with an interest in contemporary France, and especially in its literary scene, and is recognised as a prolific, best-selling author, whose 'outspoken commitment to a variety of (principally left-wing) causes has constantly led him to 'write against' (2017: Online).[6] *Meurtres pour mémoire* is Daeninckx's best-known work and is considered as one of the iconic texts of late twentieth-century socially-engaged literature (in French this is referred to as *littérature engagée*). The novel was first published in 1984 and subsequently received the *Grand prix de littérature policière* in 1985.

It is frequently remarked that the novel constitutes a milestone in the development of public consciousness about the massacre of peaceful protesters on the night of 17 October 1961 during the Algerian War (1954–62) (see Gorrara (2003), Hutton (2007) and Rothberg (2010)). As Margaret Atack points out, much of the success of the novel is due to Daeninckx's use of a layering process to highlight the interconnections between the events of 17 October 1961 and the round-up of Jews during World War II, and to unearth hidden histories:

> The combination of the deaths of Algerians in Paris with the 1942 deportations of the Jews has been a major reason why this novel is returned to time and again, together with the final image of the Algerian worker uncovering an Occupation military command poster which closes the novel, generating a historiographical narrative of history and memory as palimpsest that has received a great deal of critical attention , since it allegorises so

[6] '*Écrire en contre*' [writing against] is a phrase which Daeninckx uses to describe his politically-engaged style of writing see *Écrire en contre* (1997b: pp. 68, 97).

> powerfully what is at stake in the hidden history and memory of State crimes. (Atack, 2014: 272)[7]

I show how Daeninckx's creation of such fictionalised "historiographical narrative[s] of history" and his use of memory as palimpsest is repeated in the other four Cadin texts. I also explore the various ways in which this is carried out in each text, for example in terms of plot structure, the use of sub-plots to expose hidden histories, and the use of metaphor.

As Atack highlights in her article, there is a significant body of work written on *Meurtres pour mémoire*. However, the four other texts in the Inspecteur Cadin series have been largely ignored and to date nothing has been written about the series as a whole. Gianfranco Rubino's *Lire Daeninckx* (2009), part of Armand Colin's series of reader guides, is a monograph that catalogues Daeninckx's works. This is the only publication dedicated to specifically examining Daeninckx and all of his works. While Inspecteur Cadin is not the main focus of Rubino's text, I draw on his work at times in this study. This study aims to fill this gap in knowledge. Intertextuality is one key aspect I explore in all of the texts. While some research briefly discusses Daeninckx's use of intertextuality in *Meurtres pour mémoire* (Gorrara, 2003), I expand on this and its occurrence in the other Cadin texts. I also draw on the work of Sonya Florey whose book *L'engagement littéraire à l'ère néolibérale* (2013) briefly examines Daeninckx's critique of neo-liberalism. Florey mainly focuses on *Le Bourreau et son double*. I have extended her analysis to the whole Inspecteur series.

Cadin's Peregrinations

The series of texts follows the career trajectory of Inspecteur Cadin in the police force, from his initial investigations and ultimately to his demise through suicide. Daeninckx attaches a great amount of symbolism to Cadin's suicide on New Year's Eve 1989, which the author viewed as the end of an era of European socialism (Daeninckx and Maricourt, 2009: 266). Seismic societal and political shifts were taking place in Europe at the end of the 1980s, such as the fall of the Berlin Wall and the Romanian Revolution. A review by Bertrand Audusse in *Le Monde* shortly after the publication of *Le Facteur fatal* (1990), noted the importance of these political shifts, while also suggesting that Daeninckx's decision to put an end to Inspecteur Cadin is indicative of the author's reluctance to remain in a comfortable routine

[7] See for example Golsan (1998), Forsdick (2001), Fraser (2005), Reid (2010), Platten (2011), Gorrara (2003; 2012), and Hutton (2007, 2013).

of writing with a familiar protagonist. Another hypothesis is that Cadin's suicide represents Daeninckx's views on the impossibility of beating a corrupt system. In Chapter Six, I analyse Daeninckx's choice to end the Cadin series in such a bleak fashion and speculate on how it may be interpreted by the reader.

Each novel takes place in a different part of France, as Cadin regularly upsets the status quo and is sent packing by his superiors at the end of each text to another region. Cadin is portrayed as an outsider, a lonely and troubled protagonist who is constantly on the move. This characterisation of an alienated individual is synonymous with tropes from hard-boiled fiction and film noir. Cadin is a disruptive force and is continually forced to relocate. As a result, the series offers insight into various French regions. For example, *Mort au premier tour,* the first text in the series in terms of plot chronology, takes place in 1977 in Strasbourg, in the province of Alsace. The second instalment, *Le Géant inachevé,* is set in Hazebrouck in French Flanders. *Meurtres pour mémoire* sees Cadin flit between Bordeaux and Paris and *Le Bourreau et son double* takes place principally in the suburbs of Paris. The 1990 collection of short stories, *Le Facteur fatal*, the final text in the series, features the same diverse locations as the novels.

As well as the series' varied settings and locations, it covers a wide variety of themes such as nuclear energy, regional identity, and State surveillance. Social issues are also at the core of the texts and the series discusses drug abuse, unemployment, and mental illness. As Daeninckx specifies in the subtitle of each short story in *Le Facteur fatal* the year in which each narrative takes place, we can tell that the timeline of the series (1977–1990) is somewhat similar to the period of publication of the texts (1984–1997). As a result, at times it is fruitful to analyse how the issues presented in the texts correspond to French society at the corresponding time of writing.

During our interview, Daeninckx claimed that he began writing crime fiction simply because it was the type of book he most like to read. However, his decision to consistently use the genre as a means of unveiling obscure or hidden histories is worth further scrutiny. This study will highlight how Daeninckx is acutely aware that the genre of crime writing naturally lends itself to historical investigations. Daeninckx also uses the scope of the genre to good effect, frequently using false leads or subplots within the text that divert from the main investigation, in order to unearth a lost historical event or forgotten cultural obscurity. This

study will also investigate the extent to which Daeninckx's crime writing encourages the reader to become an amateur sleuth and carry out their own investigative work on historical events.

Aubervilliers

Place occupies a position of prime importance in the Inspecteur Cadin series and Daeninckx's hometown is central to any discussion of his oeuvre. Daeninckx grew up in the *banlieue* of Aubervilliers in the Seine-Saint-Denis *département* north of Paris. The area, where until very recently the author had continued to live, has had a very significant influence on his writing. Aubervilliers, or versions of the area, features frequently in the Cadin series and more broadly in Daeninckx's body of work: '*La Seine-Saint-Denis est un département dur et surprenant. Un piège à lieux communs. Pour un romancier, c'est un formidable terreau*' (Daeninckx and Maricourt, 2009: 63) [The Seine-Saint-Denis *département* is difficult and surprising. A magnet for preconceived ideas. It is a wonderfully fertile ground for a novelist].

Unfortunately, the area of Seine-Saint-Denis is mostly known for its severe anti-social problems which is inevitably linked to the fact that the area has one of the highest rates of poverty and income inequality in France. For example, according to a report commissioned by the French state in 2018, almost three in ten people in the Seine-Saint-Denis live below the poverty line, a figure that is double the national average (Cornut-Gentille and Kokouendo: 9).[8] The *département* has a long history of welcoming immigrants to the French capital and as a result it is a true melting pot of ethnicities, nationalities, and cultures. In recent years, the area is most infamous for acutely anti-social behaviour and the 2005 riots following the death of two youths who were electrocuted as they hid in a power station from the police. Moreover, a shootout took place in the *département* between French police and suspected members of ISIS following the November 2015 attacks in Paris.

The increase in anti-social behaviour in the area in recent years in fact was one of the factors that led to Daeninckx's decision to leave Aubervilliers in 2019 (*Le Parisien*, 2019:

[8] While economic research has shown that there is no/flat relationship between per capita income and crime rates, income inequality and unemployment rate directly increase crime rates. See "*Dynamic linkages between poverty, inequality, crime, and social expenditures in a panel of 16 countries: two-step GMM estimates."* (Answer et al, 2020).

Online). The author outlines in detail his reasons for fleeing the *banlieue* that had been his home for seventy years in his most recent publication *Municipales: Banlieue naufragée* (2020).[9] In his own typical style, Daeninckx offers four "*fait divers*" [miscellaneous news items] as an insight into the savagery and violence that has become almost an everyday event in Aubervilliers. For example, Daeninckx describes how two high-school students were stabbed to death in a *Lycée Professionnel* [French Vocational High-School] situated only one hundred metres from his home. He also references an arson attack carried out by drug dealers on two waitresses in his local café, along with the death of a pregnant woman and three of her young children who died in a fire in a HLM building that he could see from his office. Years previously, an arson attack was carried out on Daeninckx's own home when an unknown person attempted to burn down the front door of his home while he and his wife worked upstairs in their offices (Daeninckx, 2020: 32). However, it was the publication of his 2018 novel *Artana! Artana!* that forced Daeninckx to leave the area. The novel is a murder mystery set in a fictionalised Aubervilliers. Mirroring recent events, its plot describes how a corrupt city councillor is elected by soliciting the help of local drug dealers and Islamists.

Following the publication of an interview Daeninckx gave to the *Le Parisien* newspaper ahead of the release of the novel, he was contacted almost immediately by the intelligence service of the French police as they feared for his safety. They informed the author that his fiction describing the organised crime groups operating in Aubervilliers put his life in danger. After meeting with the police, Daeninckx quickly realised the gravity of their concerns and was forced to attend his own book launch with an undercover police protection (Daeninckx, 2020: 33).[10]

Left-wing Activist

Daeninckx is a former member of the *Parti Communiste Français* (PCF), which has traditionally been very strong in the *département* of Seine-Saint-Denis. The PCF were at the height of their popularity during the 1940s and their importance in the Cadin series is primarily discussed in Chapter Two on *Meurtres pour mémoire* but also referenced in

[9] In 2020 Éditions Gallimard revived its "*Tracts*" series, which it first published in the 1930s. The series has a journalistic style, consisting of short non-fiction pamphlets on current affairs published at an inexpensive cost to the reader. Daeninckx's *Municipales: Banlieue naufragée* (2020) was the thirteenth instalment in the revived series.

[10] In *Municipales: Banlieue naufragée* Daeninckx describes how he was in immediate danger and quickly realised that he no longer could continue to live in Aubervilliers.

Chapter Three on *Le Bourreau et son double* and Chapter Four on *Le Géant inachevé*. In many interviews, Daeninckx has spoken about how his parents and other family members were political activists: *'Mon père était anar, ma mère communiste. Ils ont divorcé. C'est, en plus petit, le drame du mouvement ouvrier*' (Maricourt and Daeninckx, 2009: 252) [My father was an anarchist, my mother was a communist. They divorced. It is a microcosm of the drama of the labour movement]. The author has a strong heritage of left-wing activism, which clearly had a marked influence on his own political leanings. As well as his family's political heritage, Daeninckx has also stated there is a strong autobiographical element to his writing and that novels have been influenced by his troubled family history:

> *Tout ce que je raconte, au fond, c'est l'histoire de ma famille, c'est de l'autobiographie planquée sous forme de fiction. Je me balade dans l'histoire de ma famille avec des personnages que j'invente. Mes ancêtres, ce sont des zozos, des marginaux.* (Maricourt and Daeninckx, 2009: 256)
>
> [Every story I tell, deep down, it is the story of my family, it is an autobiography hidden in the form of fiction. I explore my family history through characters I invent. My ancestors, they were perceived as loonies, they were marginalised.]

In an essay collected in *La Mémoire longue*, 'Mes grands-pères avaient raison . . . ' [My grandfathers were right . . .]*,* Daeninckx elucidates how his ancestors were often on the margins of their communities (2008b: 165). For example, Daeninckx writes about his paternal grandfather who was an anarchist and narrowly escaped execution after deserting the army during World War I (Maricourt and Daeninckx, 2009: 154). This is partly fictionalised in his novel *Le Der des ders* (1985a). He also details how his maternal grandfather, Jean Chardavoine, became the first communist mayor of the Stains commune in Seine-Saint-Denis in 1935. However, Chardavoine was relieved of his position in 1939 as he dissented from the PCF and protested against the Nazi-Soviet Pact. Daeninckx has also spoken about how the death of Suzanne Martorell, a close family-friend, at the Charonne métro station was the initial inspiration for *Meurtres pour mémoire* (Maricourt and Daeninckx, 2009: 151). This autobiographical element of the text and the direct link between Charonne and October 1961 are discussed in detail in Chapter Two. Left-wing activists, trade unionists in particular, feature in the series and are discussed throughout this study.

Daeninckx's Career Outside of Cadin

While this study focuses exclusively on the Inspecteur Cadin series of crime novels which initially helped launch his career, Daeninckx has published more than forty novels and short story collections. He has also written historical novels, children's fiction, scripts for television and graphic novels since the early 1980s. Colonialism and World War II are themes that feature frequently in Daeninckx's work. Daeninckx continues to write, publishing on an almost annual basis, and he returns to the genre of crime fiction frequently, as with *Artana! Artana!* .

Another Daeninckx publication that is worthy of note, is the historical novel *Caché dans la maison des fous* (2015). It tells the story of poet Paul Éluard, who was part of the French communist resistance movement. The novel reveals how Éluard sought refuge from Nazi forces during the Occupation by committing himself to a mental asylum in Lozère. During his time in the asylum Éluard met a sculptor, Auguste Forestier. Forestier is often cited as one of the first *art-brut* artists and after the war, Éluard helped launch the sculptor's career by showing his works to Pablo Picasso and Raymond Queneau (Faupin, 2017: 229). *Caché dans la maison des fous* is a good example of Daeninckx's use of fiction to embed hidden or lost aspects of history, even when, as in this case, it is not a detective novel.[11]

Daeninckx also writes to combat the far-right's use of nationalism and identity politics. For example, Daeninckx has stated in interviews that his novel *Galadio* (2010a) was written in direct response to President Sarkozy's decision to create a *Ministère de l'Immigration, de l'Intégration, de l'Identité nationale et du Développement solidaire* [Ministry of Immigration, Integration, National Identity and Co-development], which subsequently launched a national debate on French identity. Since researching French colonialism in the 1930s for his novel *Cannibale* (1998), Daeninckx had wanted to write about the occupation of the Rhineland by French colonial soldiers following the end of World War I. Because of the actions of Sarkozy's government Daeninckx was urged to write *Galadio*. The novel follows the life of a boy born in the Rhineland in the 1920s to a Senegalese soldier and German mother. The book documents the colonial atrocities committed by France and Germany in

[11] The novel is dedicated to the memory of the author's uncle Georges Daeninckx: 'Georges suffered from mental illness, but was not institutionalised, so remained part of a caring and supportive family unit' (Morris, 2016: Online).

Africa as well as the persecution of black people by the Nazis. For example, the book highlights how the Gestapo, the secret police of Nazi Germany, orchestrated a program that carried out forced sterilisation of black people, Romani people and anyone who they viewed as racially inferior. Also importantly, Daeninckx's novel subverted the simplistic notion of French identity that he felt Sarkozy's government sought to promote.

It is important to note that Daeninckx has also written crime fiction that does not feature Inspecteur Cadin. For example, Daeninckx has written three novels that form part of *Le Poulpe*, a pulp crime fiction series first published by Baleine in 1995 where a different author writes each instalment in the series featuring the same detective. The most famous of Daeninckx's contributions to this series is *Nazis dans le métro* (1996). The title is an intertextual reference to Raymond Queneau's *Zazie dans le métro* (1959), which is acclaimed for its use of colloquial and non-standard French. While Daeninckx's writings are perhaps less experimental than Queneau's text, both authors are similar in their depiction of ordinary citizens and portrayal of working-class struggles. Daeninckx's text deals with the rise of antisemitism and neo-Nazis in France in the 1990s and is another example of the didactic aspect of his writings. History and memory are central to everything Daeninckx writes, with literary and art references also featuring frequently in his texts, despite their working-class settings. Daeninckx's contribution to the *Le Poulpe* series is reflective of his interest in working collaboratively with other writers and artists. For example, throughout his career Daeninckx has frequently worked with illustrators on adaptations of his novels as well as original *bande dessinée* works.[12] This pulp fiction series also further demonstrates Daeninckx's willingness to use the most popular forms of culture (also including works for radio and television) to make his texts, and in turn French history, available to the widest audiences possible.

The political Landscape of the Mitterrand years

The politics of the French government of the 1980s is an important context when critically reading the Inspecteur Cadin series. The career of French President François Mitterrand in particular offers a valuable snapshot into the period. When Mitterrand was elected

[12] See Emmanuel Reuzé's adaptation of *Cannibale* (2009), Jacques Tardi's illustration of *Le Der des ders* (1997) or Daeninckx's collaboration with Mako on an original *bande dessinée, Le Train des oubliés* (2003).

president in 1981 as the Socialist Party's candidate, he brought the Left to power after twenty-three years in opposition. During his two consecutive terms as president from 1981–1995, Mitterrand led governments that successfully brought about significant changes to French politics and society. Some of Mitterrand's notable achievements include abolishing the death penalty, ending the monopoly of State radio and television, and introducing radical decentralisation laws (best known as *La Loi Defferre sur la décentralisation)* that gave far greater autonomy to the French regions (Tiersky, 2000: 147–150). Mitterrand's *Grandes opérations d'architecture et d'urbanisme* (often referred to as *Grands Projets* or *Grands Travaux* in the press) was an ambitious series of architectural projects that sought to modernise major monuments and landmark buildings in Paris such as the renovation of the *Louvre* including the audacious installation of a glass pyramid, the Opéra Bastille, and *La Grande Arche de la Défense* (Collard, 2008).

The Mitterrand years coincide approximately with the timeline of the Inspecteur Cadin cycle. This alone might prompt the reader to wonder about possible parallels between Daeninckx' plots and historical events during that period. Mitterrand's term in office was marred by several major political scandals. In 1982, two men carried out a terrorist attack on a Jewish café, Chez Jo Goldberg, in the Marais area of Paris, which for centuries has been host to one of the capital's main Jewish communities. Seeking a swift response, Mitterrand bypassed police hierarchies and established an anti-terrorist cell in the Elysée Palace that reported directly to him and 'the members of this new unit were given free rein and extensive resources' (Hassett, 2020: Online). Mitterrand's anti-terrorist cell helped members of the French police frame three Irish Republicans living in Paris for the attack, by planting evidence in their apartment in the suburb of Vincennes. Nine months after they were arrested, the so-called Irish of Vincennes were released when revelations made by French investigative press completely unravelled the official narrative (Tiersky, 2000: 269). Unfazed by this political scandal, Mitterrand continued to use the anti-terrorist cell as his private secret police to spy on his political rivals and to stop journalists reporting on his extra-marital affairs (Marlowe, 1997). In 1985, Mitterrand personally—and famously—authorised a mission carried out by the French secret service to bomb Rainbow Warrior, the flagship of the Greenpeace fleet. The ship was bombed while docked in the port of Auckland in New Zealand on its way to protest against France's planned nuclear testing in French

Polynesia (Gattegno, 2005). The above controversies of police corruption, State surveillance and nuclear power mirror many of the themes central to the Cadin series.

Towards the end of his second term as president, the publication of a biography by Pierre Péan, *Une jeunesse française: François Mitterrand* (1994), brought Mitterrand's role in World War II sharply into question. Firstly, the book showed that, while there is no evidence that he was ever a member of any right-wing group, Mitterrand flirted with far-right politics in the 1930s by attending anti-immigrant marches organised by the far-right monarchist political movement *Action française*. Biographers have described Mitterrand as being keenly interested in political debate and willing to follow trends 'but never committing himself to one side or the other' (Duhamel, 1998: 218). Péan also examined Mitterrand's ambiguous behaviour during World War II, where he collaborated as a civil servant with the Vichy regime (even receiving the regime's *Francisque* medal for his notable contributions). He is alleged to have joined the active Resistance in 1943, without severing his links with the Vichy regime (Duhamel, 1998: 217). The book also scrutinised Mitterrand's career in the post-war period and the crucial role that fellow Vichy collaborators played in his political success (Duhamel, 1998: 217). The most damning of Mitterrand's allies was René Bousquet, who served as secretary general to the Vichy regime police and was found guilty of crimes against humanity in 1991 for his role in *La rafle du Vélodrome' d'Hiver* (the mass arrest of Jews in Paris on 16–17 July 1942).[13] In 1994 during a now infamous televised interview with Jean-Pierre Elkabbach, which the Elysée Palace had requested in an attempt to put an end to the scandal caused by Péan's biography, Mitterrand flatly refused to apologise for the crimes committed by the Vichy state. He stated that France had nothing to apologise for as Vichy was not the Republic (Elkabbach, 2003). Mitterrand's failure to come to terms with the past is similar to Pine's criticism of the Church and State in Ireland to fully acknowledge recent history, and the notable impact this repression of memory has on official responses to State atrocities. Daeninckx uses the Cadin series to challenge official narratives that minimize or deny the State's responsibility for past traumas.

[13] This is often abbreviated to "*la rafle du Vel' d'Hiv"* in French or to "the Vel' d'Hiv Roundup" in English. *Vélodrome d'Hiver* was an indoor cycle track and sports stadium in Paris, arrested Jews were held here before being moved to the Drancy transit camp.

Multidirectional Memory

Michael Rothberg's *Multidirectional Memory* (2009) was one of the first attempts by the Academy to interconnect Holocaust studies and postcolonial studies and argues that the Holocaust should not be viewed as a unique event in isolation from the devastating legacies of colonialism. One reviewer of *Multidirectional Memory* describes the theory as 'bidirectional movements across times, [which] are combined with lateral connections between cultures' (Marcuse, 2012: 821). Rothberg argues for a need to move beyond 'competitive memory' which centres on the idea of the public sphere as 'a pre-given, limited space in which already-established groups engage in a life-and-death struggle' (2009: 5). For example, he cites literary critic, Walter Benn Michaels, who considers the history of slavery in the US and the Nazi genocide as two incompatible legacies. In his article *Plots Against America: Neoliberalism and Antiracism,* Michaels provocatively claimed that because of a lack of a similar memorial to slavery, the Holocaust memorial in Washington is in turn a denial of African-American history (2006: 28–291). Michaels' approach highlights how a competitive approach to collective memory can be very divisive. Rothberg describes this as follows: 'As I struggle to achieve recognition of *my* memories and *my* identity, I necessarily exclude the memories and identities of others' (2009: 5 [original emphasis]).

In response to competitive memory, Rothberg coined and developed the idea of multidirectional memory which encourages us to view the public sphere as a malleable space where groups do not simply articulate established positions but come into being through their 'dialogical interactions with others; both the subjects and spaces of the public are open to continual reconstruction' (2009: 5). Rothberg challenges the rigidity of competitive memory in the context of the Holocaust by arguing two main points. Firstly, he contends that the emergence of Holocaust memory on a global scale has contributed to the vocalisation of other historical memories 'some of them predating the Nazi genocide, such as slavery, and others taking place later, such as the Algerian War of Independence (1954–62) or the genocide in Bosnia during the 1990s' (2009: 6). Secondly, for Rothberg, Holocaust memory emerged in tandem with the dynamic modernisation and challenges that defined the age of decolonisation: 'The period between 1945 and 1962 contains both the rise of consciousness of the Holocaust as an unprecedented form of modern genocide and the

coming to national consciousness and political independence of many of the subjects of European colonialism' (2009: 7).

Rothberg notes that the trial of Maurice Papon plays a key role in this process of multidirectional memory in the French context. Papon was a French police official during the Vichy regime and climbed government ranks during the post-war period, eventually becoming *Ministre du budget* [Minister for Finance] in the government of Giscard d'Estaing with tenure from April 1978 to May 1981. However, in 1998 after a trial that lasted more than a decade (an indication of the difficulties surrounding his case in the French collective psyche), Papon was found guilty of crimes against humanity for his role in the round-up of Jews in Bordeaux during the Occupation. Papon's role in the deportation of Jews from Bordeaux was initially brought to light by the French satirical newspaper *Le Canard enchaîné*. However, this also led to French-historian Jean-Luc Einaudi denouncing Papon and proving that he was responsible for the massacre of peaceful protestors on the night of 17 October 1961, as *Préfet de police* in Paris at that time (*Le Monde*: 2007). The Maurice Papon affair resonates with Rothberg's theory, as it is an example of how the emergence of Holocaust memory allowed for the vocalisation of other historical memories, namely the broad period of police violence in Paris in 1961 (which is discussed at length in Chapter Two), which played a key role in the Algerian War of Independence. There are clear parallels between Rothberg's arguments in *Multidirectional memory* and the textual layering of memories in *Meurtres pour mémoire* which compare the Holocaust and the Algerian War.

In the penultimate chapter of *Multidirectional Memory* (2009), Rothberg compares *Meurtres pour mémoire* (1983) with Michael Haneke's film, *Caché* (2005). The plot of *Caché* centres on an upper-class couple in Paris who are terrorised by anonymous video tapes that mysteriously arrive at their house and appear to depict the family as being under surveillance. There are subtle references in the video to the childhood of the husband, Georges. During his youth, Georges resisted his parent's attempt to adopt an Algerian orphan named Majid. It is then revealed that Majid is the person harassing George and his family with the anonymous video tapes. Rothberg argues that the social setting in *Caché* is the reverse of *Meurtres pour mémoire*. While the socially disadvantaged *banlieue* of Courvilliers in *Meurtres pour mémoire* is stark in contrast to *Caché'*s middle-class family living close to the centre of Paris, both Daeninckx and Haneke demonstrate 'the ripple

effects of late colonial brutality' (Rothberg, 2009: 281). Rothberg's theory demonstrates that a reader can gain a better understanding of Daeninckx's texts by comparing them to other works that may at first seem vastly different in terms of form and style. Furthermore, this thesis will demonstrate that Daeninckx through his nuanced patchworking of histories encourages the audience to not simply read his texts in isolation but to be active readers and carry out their own "detective work".

Throughout *Multidirectional Memory*, Rothberg emphasises how coming to terms with the past can only happen in comparative contexts and through 'the circulation of memories linked to what are *only apparently* separate histories and national or ethnic constituencies' (2009: 272 [my emphasis]). For example, Rothberg claims that in paralleling *Caché* and *Meurtres pour mémoire*, we can subtly compare multiple varying contexts such as 'the Algerian War of Independence, World War II, the Algerian Civil War of the 1990s, the war on terrorism and the plight of undocumented migrants in Europe', while also stating that the texts cannot be reduced individually to any one of these contexts (2009: 272). This argument validates my methodological approach of comparing the texts in my corpus and analysing the variety of contexts the series calls upon. Equally, although not stemming directly from this argument, I discuss the Cadin series in the context of more recent events, such as the series of Islamist extremist terrorist attacks since 2015.

Like Pine, Rothberg is also aware of the importance of cultural works in performing memory in the absence of State or official recognition of past traumas. For example, Rothberg is very critical of French historian Pierre Nora's *Les Lieux de mémoire* (1984) for presenting a version of French history largely stripped of its colonial past. For Rothberg, *Les Lieux de mémoire* presents 'a starkly limited conception of the nation purged of many of its imperial adventures and minoritarian inflections—purged, in short, of phenomena that trouble the linear narrative of historical progress and the stark opposition between history and memory' (2010: 4). *Les Lieux de mémoire* was a seven-volume collaborative project led by Nora published between 1984 and 1992 and has been recognised as one of the most influential studies of memory of the twentieth century in France and internationally.

However, as later acknowledged by Nora, the project fails to make any reference to the Algerian War of Independence.[14] *Meurtres pour mémoire* and *Caché* are examples of cultural works that attempt to correct collective memory in the absence of official recognition. Rothberg not only criticises Nora for censoring the unpleasant aspects of French history, but he also argues that Nora's *Lieux de mémoire* (1984) are 'static conglomerations of heterogenous elements' (2010: 8).

In contrast, Rothberg suggests the notion of "knotted histories" or a "*nœud de mémoire*", where memory traces and intersections create a layering of French war memories that uncover often startling and unexpected reconfigurations of the past which is core to the idea of multidirectional memory: ' . . . "knotted" in all places and acts of memory are rhizomatic networks of temporality and cultural reference that exceed attempts at territorialisation (whether at the local or national level) and identitarian reduction' (2010: 7). Rothberg uses this "*nœud de mémoire*" to highlight the need to move away from such binary approaches to memory as seen in Nora's *Les Lieux de mémoire* and to progress towards non-static and cosmo-political interpretations of memory (2010: 8).

Palimpsestic Memory

A palimpsestic artefact is one where the original writing is erased and replaced with a new text on the same manuscript. However, traces of the original text are often still visible beside the new text. This phenomenon translates as an ideal term for the theory of memory proposed by Max Silverman in *Palimpsestic Memory* (2013). Silverman discusses how palimpsestic metaphor is often used to reinforce links between the past and the present. His work centres on the interconnections between the Holocaust and post-colonialism.

Silverman stresses that fiction is needed to record the past, and he supports this claim by paraphrasing French philosopher Jacques Rancière, who argued that history 'is not dependent on verisimilitude and scientific "fact" but the use of poetic figures like metaphor, montage and allegory that can connect the disparate' (2013: 140).

For example, Silverman compares the way *Caché* and Jean-Luc Godard's *Histoire(s) du cinéma* (1988–1998) reconfigure the past in different ways. *Histoire(s) du cinéma* is an eight-

[14] For a thorough postcolonial critique of Nora's project see *Postcolonial Realms of Memory: Sites and Symbols in Modern France* (Achille et al, 2020).

part video project and is often considered to be one of Godard's most important and most challenging projects, which he completed towards the end of his career. The idea of the palimpsest is central to the project, as it examines the history of cinema and parallels this to the history of the twentieth century. In his conclusion to this section, Silverman quotes Godard, to highlight the importance of art to history: 'Art, in its own way, makes History come back to life' (Temple and Williams, 2000: 50).

To demonstrate more clearly the idea of palimpsestic memory, Silverman discusses three scenarios from French texts: Françoise Emmanuel's 2000 novella *La Question humaine*, Daeninckx's *Meurtres pour mémoire* and Sebbar's *La Seine était rouge* (1999). Firstly, Silverman discusses Emmanuel's novella where the palimpsest is key to the plot. The thriller's narrator is forced, by his company, to investigate the origins of an anonymous letter sent by a disgruntled former employee. The letter raises questions about the company's role in massacring the Jewish people during World War II. The anonymous letter invokes the idea of the palimpsest by comparing the company's recent 'down-sizing' to the Nazi's Final Solution. The anonymous author achieves this by inserting sections of the famous SS memorandum of 5 June 1942, on technical modifications needed to improve the efficiency of the gas chambers at extermination camps, into drafts of the company's dismissal letters:[15]

> Certain sentences revealed a different origin; they were founded on the first text and seemed to push the logic of this text to its extreme, introducing evil connotations and thus corrupting its texture, to the point that certain familiar technical terms became charged with a meaning that one would not normally have associated with them. (Emmanuel, 2000: 72)

This layering of memories, which clearly resonates with Rothberg's theory of multidirectional memory, emerges from the use of the palimpsest. When the narrator compares the two letters, he remarks that it is as if the first text had been invaded by the SS memorandum and says that he 'immediately had a feeling of "doubling" and found myself hesitating over words whose meaning had suddenly become strange' (Emmanuel, 2000: 74).

Secondly, Silverman outlines the often-quoted final scene in *Meurtres pour mémoire* where metro workers, who are replacing advert posters, unearth anti-Semitic propaganda from the

[15] Significantly, passages from the same SS memorandum are read in Claude Lanzmann's film, *Shoah* (1985).

Vichy regime. These had been hidden beneath layers of older posters. This scene has been previously highlighted by other scholars such as Gorrara (2003), Rothberg (2009), Platten (2011), and Atack (2014). However, this is the only reference by Silverman to Daeninckx in the book and there is clearly much more to say on the matter as regards the whole Inspecteur Cadin series. I analyse other examples in the Inspecteur Cadin series where Daeninckx uses the palimpsest to make the reader aware of overlapping of historical events, which often take place in a single space. For example, two of the novels, *Mort au premier tour* and *Le Bourreau et son double* both feature factories as locations central to the plot. My analysis highlights how Daeninckx uses this space to highlight the links between the modernisation of French industry with the influx of immigrants following the period of decolonisation. Another example of Daeninckx's use of a shared space is the *Aubette* building in Strasbourg. The interior of this eighteenth-century building was entirely redecorated in abstract art by Sophie Taeuber-Arp, Jean Arp, and Theo van Doesburg. In *Mort au premier tour* Daeninckx uses this building to highlight the complexities of Alsatian history and identity.

To conclude the analysis in his introduction, Silverman discusses *La Seine était rouge* in terms of palimpsestic memory. The main protagonist of Leïla Sebbar's novel is filming a documentary on the massacre of 17 October 1961. During the film, the protagonist visits various memorial sites to the French resistance around Paris which were also sites of extreme colonial violence. For example, Louis, the protagonist, visits rue de la Santé where a plaque commemorates the site where the first students to respond to Charles de Gaulle's orders to resist the occupier were imprisoned. Louis then inserts his own commemorating inscription for the same site: '1954–1962. In this prison were guillotined Algerians who resisted the French occupiers' (Sebbar in Silverman, 2013: 3). These three examples from Silverman's introduction underline how French cultural works simultaneously use palimpsestic techniques to stage memories of the Holocaust and colonialism.

In his introduction, Silverman acknowledges the marked influence of Rothberg on his own work and applauds the important intervention *Multidirectional Memory* has had on the political and ethical stakes of cultural memory (2013: 21). Silverman echoes Rothberg's nuanced reading of Freud's screen memory which suggests that while the concept might be understood as conflict of memories, it ultimately more closely resembles a remapping of

memory, where links between memories are formed and then redistributed between the conscious and unconscious (Rothberg, 2009: 14). In his introduction, Silverman briefly introduces *La Question humaine, Meurtres pour mémoire,* and *La Seine était rouge* to 'highlight the complex interconnections between the visible and the hidden, the "deep" truth and the substitute, and hence the fluid relationship between the conscious and unconscious processes' (2013: 21).

Like Rothberg, Silverman claims that his approach to memory challenges competitive memory by arguing that, ethically memory should not function according to the linear trajectory of a particular ethno-cultural group (2013: 28). In contrast, Silverman states that rather than viewing history as "objective" (universal) and memory as "personal" (relative), the figure of the palimpsest creates an ambivalent space which overlays individual and collective meanings. This encourages a particular way of understanding the relationship between history and memory (2013: 28). Extending Silverman's analysis to the whole Cadin series, I will examine how Daeninckx tends to merge the individual and the collective in the unearthing of history and memory.

Claire Gorrara, whose 2003 book on the roman noir was an important precursor to Silverman in terms of his analysis of Daeninckx, has praised Silverman's model of palimpsestic memory for offering significant insight into post-war cultural production in France:

> Firstly, it captures a sense of the superimpositions and productive interactions of different inscriptions of the past over time. Cultural memories of war are constructed as fluid, contingent and open to future transformations that are powerfully engaged in creative acts of remembrance. (Gorrara, 2014: 18)

Furthermore, Silverman's work challenges established views on French memory. For example, palimpsestic memory, due to its non-linear nature, counters Henri Rousso's model of memory in his seminal work *Le Syndrome de Vichy* (1987). Rousso had famously divided France's national memory following World War II into four parts: 'Unfinished Mourning (1944–1954), Repressions (1954–1971), The Broken Mirror (1971–1974), Obsession (after

1974).[16] The importance of Rousso's work should not be underestimated. In *Le Syndrome de Vichy* he develops two major concepts: *résistancialisme* and *négationnisme*. *Résistancialisme* is the term he coined to describe the distorted and exaggerated importance accorded to the French Resistance after the Occupation. It has also been called the "Gaullist myth", referring to the myth that grew up around the resistance and principally de Gaulle, which was problematic as it tended to present an idealised view of events, especially in terms of the extent of his following and influence (Morris, 1985). *Négationnisme*, which has gained more currency in English than *résistancialisme* (perhaps because it is a less specifically French concept), is Rousso's term to describe those who would deny the magnitude or the existence of the Holocaust on ideological grounds rather than a scientific or critical approach to the subject (Rousso, 1987: 151).

Another important point put forward by Rousso in *Le Syndrome de Vichy* is that French metropolitan critics during the 1950s, even those with the best of intentions, such as Jean-Paul Sartre, were sometimes too quick to draw comparisons between narratives of the liberation of France from German occupation and the struggle for national liberation between the Occupation and the Algerian War of Independence. Indeed, this argument was later developed by Philp Dine, who contested that French film and fiction that deals with the Algerian War of Independence through the prism of liberation 'must ultimately be reckoned a reduction, and thus part of a wider occultation of the radical ideological challenge of militant colonial nationalism' (Dine, 1994: 280).

While Silverman accepts these arguments presented by Rousso and Dine, he stresses that it would be too hasty to dismiss the dynamic of memory at play when understanding the Algerian War of Independence through the deeper frame of World War II (2013: 16). For example, Silverman claims that the analogy between the different events has contrasting functions when employed by victims of colonial oppression as opposed to French metropolitan commentators. In support of this he also argues that: 'Substitution is not simply effacement, although it may have that effect; it creates a doubling process by which the displaced object continues to haunt the visible site' (2013: 16).

[16] *Le deuil inachevé (1944–1954), Les refoulements (1954–1971), Le miroir brisé (1971–1974), L'obsession (après 1974).*

Similarly, Gorrara argues that *Le Syndrome de Vichy* (1987) sits in opposition to palimpsestic memory. She sees Silverman's book, on the other hand, as presenting "a model of interconnectedness". For her, it 'emphasises the extent to which each group memory is seen through, and transformed by, its relationship with other wartime memories circulating in the public arena at a given moment' (Gorrara, 2014: 19).

While Silverman challenges certain aspects of Rousso's work, he is far more critical of Nora. For Silverman, memory trace is a hybrid network of echoes and reverberations across space and time. Nora's *Lieux de mémoire* appears outdated by the more contemporary approach of a *nœud de mémoire* (Silverman, 2013: 7). Silverman draws attention to the ambiguities informing the many textual and memorial inscriptions of the past. This is a direct continuation of Rothberg's argument in favour of a multidirectional approach to memory. As with Rothberg, there is never a definitive essence of the past for Silverman, as it is constantly reinterpreted and reinterpretable (and indeed *should* be constantly reinterpreted in the light of the present). Rothberg's and Silverman's respective theories overlap to such an extent that it can be often difficult to differentiate their mappings of memory. However, I would suggest that Rothberg's theory of multidirectional memory is perhaps best understood as a horizontal model that emphasises the echoing of events across time in a non-linear and non-chronological fashion. By contrast, Silverman's theory of palimpsestic memory is a more vertical model that centres on a more direct burrowing down of memory to excavate historical interconnections between the Holocaust and colonisation.

The idea of haunting is also central to *Palimpsestic Memory*. For example, in one chapter called "Colonial Hauntings of the Holocaust Imaginary", Silverman makes comparisons between George Perec's *W ou le souvenir d'enfance* (1975) and Patrick Modiano's *Dora Bruder* (1997). These texts both mention the Drancy internment camp in Paris and also *la rafle du Vel' d'Hiv*. Importantly, the same stadium was used for a 'similar round-up of about ten thousand Algerians following the demonstration of 17 October 1961' and both Perec and Modiano appear to Silverman to be making a link between the two persecutions, in a type of palimpsestic memory (2013: 104). Silverman argues that the links between sport, race and power in *W* is not only a way for Perec to describe the horror of Auschwitz but that it is also an allusion to the horrific history of the *Vélodrome d'Hiver*. In Dora Bruder, there is a similar use of a single space containing multiple memories by Modiano. The discovery of

the Bruder's address on the Boulevard Ornano in Paris immediately evokes the narrator's childhood memories of the Clignancourt Barracks. The narrator then remembers witnessing large groups of anti-riot police at every cross-road because of the events in Algeria: 'The gateway to a story that will turn out to be about Occupation and the Holocaust is, thus, the image of a colonial barracks and events in Algeria, not incidents or places related directly to the Holocaust' (Silverman, 2013: 111).

In this instance, Modiano successfully links the heart of metropolitan France more explicitly with the colonial adventure. Daeninckx achieves something very similar in *Meurtres pour mémoire*. In "Chapter Two: *Meurtres pour mémoire*" and "Chapter Three: *Le Bourreau et son double*" I will explore further how Daeninckx's evocation of the palimpsest, and other literary techniques, can be traced to the likes of Perec, and other French authors, who would not necessarily be associated with the roman noir.

I also argue that Daeninckx discusses the French provinces as victims of a quasi-colonial and an over centralised approach by officials in Paris. For example, two of the novels in the series take places in areas with a distinct regional identity and culture. The plot of *Mort au premier tour* is set in Strasbourg. Daeninckx explores elements of Alsatian culture and history throughout the text that have been deliberately lost as they do not adhere to the rigid view of French national identity. Despite the progress brought about by the aforementioned *La Loi Defferre sur la décentralisation* in 1982, Daeninckx's series shows that grassroots movements that attempted to repair the historical damage done to French regional identity and cultures were largely unsupported by the State or local governments.

Similarly, *Le Géant inachevé* is set in Hazebrouck and Daeninckx explores traditions belonging to the French-Flanders region whilst intertwining the history of the area into the plot's narrative. While the other Cadin texts mainly take place in the suburbs of Paris, this environment too should also be considered in terms of a colonial space, particularly due to the large number of immigrants who have been housed there, consigned to the geographical and social periphery of France there by officialdom. I explore Daeninckx's portrayal of these regional and suburban spaces, as well as his Parisian topography.

Spectrality

It is worth acknowledging that hauntology and spectral discourse has added greatly to the field of memory studies: 'The renewed conceptual interest in ghosts and haunting that characterized the 1990s has also been linked to a broader (and somewhat earlier) turn towards history and memory, concentrating in particular on dealing with personal and collective trauma' (Blanco and Peeren, 2013: 10). Colin Davis cites the publication of Jacques Derrida's *Spectres de Marx* (1993) and *L'Écorce et le noyau* (1978); a collection of essays by psychoanalysts Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok as the 'two distinct, related, and to some extent incompatible sources' on hauntology (2005: 373–374). In *Spectres de Marx,* Derrida coined the term hauntology, in its French form *hantologie*, which 'supplants its near-homonym ontology, replacing the priority of being and presence with the figure of the ghost as that which is neither present nor absent, neither dead nor alive' (Davis, 2005: 373). However, rather than Derrida's deconstructionist *spectres,* this study is more closely aligned with what Davis has termed the *phantoms* of Abraham and Torok's work. Their essays are interested in 'transgenerational communication, particularly the way in which the undisclosed traumas of previous generations might disturb the lives of their descendants even and especially if they know nothing about their distant causes' (Davis, 2005: 374). Spectrality is a recurring theme in the Inspecteur Cadin series, plots and subplots throughout the texts centre on coming to terms with the past. For example, the transgenerational communication (or lack thereof) of the traumas of the Algerian War and World War II are central to *Meurtres pour mémoire* and *Le Bourreau et son double.* Similarly, the climax of the series in *Le Facteur fatal* centres on Inspecteur Cadin's own inability to deal with personal traumas that have haunted him all his life. The spectral aspects of each of the texts will be examined in detail in the body of this thesis.

Intertextuality

The idea of the palimpsest was central to French literary theorist Gérard Genette when he examined the manifold relationships a text may have with prior texts in *Palimpsestes: La Littérature au second degré* (1982). Genette recognised intertextuality as one of the key types of transtextual relationships. His study expands upon the works of Michael Riffaterre and Julia Kristeva. Kristeva initially developed the concept of intertextuality in *Semeiotikè*

(1969). However, Riffaterre took inspiration from Kristeva's semiotic analysis and used Freudian psychoanalysis to adopt a more general approach. He stripped the radical poststructuralist straits from the concept by not viewing the concept as a free play of elusive meanings but rather as a compulsory logic bound by the unconscious (Juvan, 2008: 113). It is worth noting that throughout the Inspecteur Cadin series, Daeninckx makes intertextual references to French surrealists who were fascinated by the unconscious.

Riffaterre's definition of intertextuality in its most general sense is 'the perception, by the reader of the relationship between a work and others that have either preceded or followed it' (Riffaterre, 1980: 215). Riffaterre, like Genette, equates intertextuality with literariness (in the process distinguishing literary "significance" from more mundane "meaning"): 'Intertextuality is [. . .] the mechanism specific to literary reading. It alone, in fact, produces significance, while linear reading, common to literary and non-literary texts, produces only meaning' (Riffaterre, 1980: 215).

It will be essential, when examining Daeninckx's use of intertextuality, to assess what significance intertextual references gives the texts in the corpus. Genette's theory centres on how intertextuality works as a structural whole and analyses what he calls 'total field of relevant relationships' (1982: 3). Therefore, it will be necessary to study intertextual references in the corpus on the individual "trace" level but also on a structural level examining how these references work as a whole.

Intertextuality is prevalent in the Cadin texts. For example, the first sentence of *Le Géant inachevé* (1984a) is a piece of dialogue from a woman who Cadin witnesses in a bar drunkenly giving advice to nobody in particular: '*Il ne suffit pas d'être belle pour qu'un homme s'attache à vous*' (1984a: 1) [It is not enough to be beautiful to make a man become attached to you]. Cadin recognises this phrase but cannot remember where exactly he heard it before. The phrase echoes the unrequited love element of the plot where the victim is initially believed to be murdered by a jealous admirer. However, the line also resonates with the isolation and loneliness of Cadin in the novel and throughout the series. In the novel's epilogue, Cadin ventures into a second-hand bookshop and by chance leafs through a copy of Louis Aragon's *Blanche ou l'oubli* (1967). When Cadin reads the first line of the novel it is in fact revealed to be the same opening line of *Le Géant inachevé*. This is a significant reference also in that memory is central in Aragon's novel. There, the narrator

attempts to understand the breakup with his wife thirty years previous. In the novel, Aragon makes many references to *Luna-Park* (1959) a novel written by his partner Elsa Triolet. *Blanche ou l'oubli* is therefore an attempt by Aragon to blend fact and fiction, which he does in a surrealist fashion. The intertextual reference to Aragon resonates with Daeninckx's "factual" approach to fiction, as well as his emphasis on the importance of retrieving memory. This use of intertextuality, and the uses of circularity through the recurrence of the line from Aragon, are narrative strategies which Alan Morris argues are typical of Daeninckx's style: 'Prime amongst Daeninckx's narrative strategies—both within his individual, often interrogative texts and sometimes between them—are metaphor, repetition, circularity, intertextuality, and *mise en abyme*' (2015: 266).

In the same text, Cadin also makes many references to French rock icons such as Raoul de Godewarsvelde and Johnny Hallyday by quoting their melancholic song lyrics. This serves to reinforce the darkness and the violence of the murder of a young woman which is central to the plot. For example, the lyrics quoted by Raoul de Godewarsvelde reference Frankenstein and Jack the Ripper (*GI*: p. 129). Here the intertextuality serves to add depth to the atmosphere of the novel, but they also act as cultural markers of time. Gorrara cites another use of intertextuality in *Meurtres pour mémoire*, where Daeninckx, again, uses popular culture and film references to recreate the events of 17 October 1961: 'The screening of *Le Récupérateur de cadavres* (*The Body Snatcher*) is an intimation of Inspecteur Cadin's future investigations as he resurrects the life histories of the demonstrators to solve the crime' (Gorrara, 2003: 83).

Another function of intertextuality is seen in the 1986 text *Le Bourreau et son double,* where one of Cadin's colleagues, Officer Mernandez, is seen to compose poems throughout the text. A footnote at the end of the novel reveals that these verses were liberally inspired by the poems written by an actual police officer and published in *L'Essor de la Gendarmerie* in 1978. This obscure intertextual reference demonstrates the lengths to which Daeninckx goes when blending his works of fiction as close to reality as possible. This reference to a real published work of fact which has its own authenticity also serves to reinforce the authenticity of the historical events in *Le Bourreau et son double*. Additionally, this example highlights the variety of texts that Daeninckx references in his writings.

The structure of *Le Bourreau et son double* is itself a significant example of Daeninckx's use of intertextuality. The novel consists of two separate narratives, told through alternating chapters, which converge towards the end to solve the mystery at the core of story. Obvious parallels can be made to George Perec's *W ou le souvenir d'enfance* (1975) which also employed an alternating narrative. The principal narrative of *Le Bourreau et son double* is set in "Courvilliers", which is a fictitious amalgamation of the suburbs of Aubervilliers and La Courneuve, and takes place in the early 1980s. The second narrative in this novel is set in Algeria during the war of independence. The influence of Perec on Daeninckx in *Le Bourreau et son double* is discussed in greater detail in Chapter Three.

The above examples demonstrate the prevalent use of intertextuality of various types, including film, factual works, and other works of fiction, throughout the Inspecteur Cadin series. In what follows, I identify and explore further examples of intertextuality and analyse how they impact the role of memory in these texts. I argue that Daeninckx uses intertextuality, along with other literary techniques, to make interconnections between contrasting events in French history.

Inspecteur Cadin as a Social Historian of France 1977–1990

As touched on above in the brief outline of *Le Bourreau et son double*, The Inspecteur Cadin series not only examines historic issues in French society but also highlights socio-economic problems in France that were prevalent during the period between 1977 and 1990 (the dates of the events of the first novel and the date of publication of the last text in the series), and particularly in the 1980s. I argue that socio-economic issues occur with such prevalence in the texts that the texts should be viewed as a social history of this period. This is typical of Daeninckx's generation of detective fiction writers who decided to ground the roman noir in contemporary reality with the aim of producing texts that were as much a social history of their times as a murder intrigue: 'In the hands of such writers, the roman noir is aimed at educating the reader and sensibiliziing them to French socio-economic problems' (Gorrara, 2003: 77).

I also examine whether in Daeninckx's work social issues simply coincide with the historic events in the novels or if they are shown to be interconnected to these events. In *Le Bourreau et son double,* Daeninckx links the decline of trade unions and the PCF partly to the fallout of the Algerian War of Independence, events that at first sight might seem to be

completely independent. Throughout the novel, it transpires that the murder victim suffered from PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) because of being conscripted to fight in the Algerian War of Independence. The novel also attributes the decline of trade unions during the 1980s in part to their incapacity to embrace identity politics or to incorporate the immigrant population who had become far more numerous in the workforce.

The above example shows how Daeninckx links decolonisation and modernisation, which he does frequently throughout the series. For example, the risk that nuclear energy poses to the environment is a central theme in *Mort au premier tour* which also discusses the colonisation of regional cultures in France by a centralising and monolithic French identity, as mentioned above. The controversial building of nuclear power stations in isolated rural areas could also be considered a form of neo-colonialism. For its part, *Le Géant inachevé* highlights the poverty and social problems affecting the northern regions of France during the 1980s. This underlines the isolation of parts of France lying on the periphery. Somewhat similarly, the State's abandonment of the *banlieues* of Paris, highlighted in *Meurtres pour mémoire* and *Le Bourreau et son double*, could be viewed as a form of neo-colonialism closely linked to modernisation. Working-class struggles and social hierarchies feature to such a frequent extent that it is clear that Daeninckx is using the series to highlight the imbalance of power in French society.

Throughout the series Daeninckx makes the reader aware of hidden histories. For example, in *Mort au premier tour*, Daeninckx highlights the short-lived Strasbourg Soviet in 1918, a communist revolution in Strasbourg and other cities in the Alsace region, following the end of World War I, which was swiftly ended on the orders of the French army. Similarly, Daeninckx educates the reader on little known elements of French culture such as the folk stories of giants and the tradition of the Carnival festival in Flanders, which are central to the plot in *Le Géant inachevé.* I analyse the extent to which Daeninckx uses these details to simply blend his fiction closer to reality and the extent to which there appear to be political ideologies underpinning these references.

Mental illness is a common theme in all the novels and it could be argued that Daeninckx uses the theme of mental illness to link ghettoisation (a by-product of modernisation) to the Algerian War of Independence (and the ensuing decolonisation) in *Le Bourreau et son double*. A similar argument could be made for Daeninckx's use of the theme of

unemployment as a vector for connecting nuclear energy (modernisation) to a rural form of ghettoisation in *Mort au premier tour*. Daeninckx highlights how the existence of nuclear power plants in regional areas creates a high density of people in low-paid and dangerous employment like the factories in the *banlieue parisienne*. It is worth noting that by linking the themes of modernisation and colonisation in French society these texts predate the publication of Kristin Ross' *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies* (1995). Ross' well-known text links modernisation and colonisation by focusing on the shift of French society during the 1950s and the 1960s from an insular and empire-orientated society towards a decolonised, Americanised, and a fully industrial society. For example, Ross highlights how Americanisation during this period is imbedded in commodities such as the automobile, as analysed through its representation in films such as *Lola* (Demy, 1961) and *Pierrot le Fou* (Godard, 1965). With his fictional explorations in the Cadin series, Daeninckx creates similar links between modernisation and decolonisation. Significantly, in her introduction Ross clearly states that she is aware of the similarities between her work and Daeninckx's fiction:

> The new contemporary racism centering on questions of immigration is, as the contemporary detective stories of Didier Daeninckx make clear, a racism that has its roots in the era of decolonisation and modernisation, in the inversion of movements of population between the old colonies and the old metropoles, in the conflict that crystallized in those days between the modern and the unmodern (or traditional). (1995: 9)

As mentioned, social issues are important in the genre of the roman noir. Both the roman noir and its cinematic equivalent of film noir place greater emphasis on the social context of their narratives when compared to other types of crime fiction. The roman noir is similar to the American hardboiled genre and sits in stark opposition to the detective puzzle, a brand of fiction championed by Arthur Conan Doyle and Agatha Christie. Noir is a gritty fiction in an urban setting and is known for its themes of corruption and isolation as well as its often-cynical endings. For example, Julien Duvivier's film *Pépé le Moko* (1937) is often considered an early example of film noir and stars the actor Jean Gabin who was the essence of French cinema during the 1930s and late into the 1960s. In *Pépé le Moko* (1937), Gabin plays the titular Pépé who was French noir's defining archetype: 'the doomed working-class antihero, an alienated loner, haunted by the past and resigned to his bleak fate with a rugged fortitude' (Male, 2017: Online). We will turn now to the development of French crime fiction and the stylistics of the roman noir, and its distinctive atmosphere in "Chapter One: The

Crime Fiction Heritage of Didier Daeninckx", in order to set the scene for his narratives of memory.

Chapter One: The Crime Fiction Heritage of Didier Daeninckx

The literary genre of the roman noir, first developed from French interpretations of American hardboiled fiction of the 1920s and 1930s, was initially championed by writers such as Dashiell Hammett and Raymond Chandler. From its initial inception, hardboiled fiction was closely associated with pulp fiction, as the pioneering texts of the genre were first published in pulp magazines. For example, Hammett's *The Maltese Falcon* (1930) was originally serialized in the Black Mask magazine in 1929 before being released in book form a year later. The typical protagonist of hardboiled fiction and the roman noir is a lone detective who battles organized crime and an equally corrupt police system. The French term roman noir derives its name from Marcel Duhamel's *Série noire* which Gallimard began to publish in France at the end of World War II (Glover, 2003: 145). The genre is often associated with its depiction of violent crime and its prevailing mood of pessimism, personal and societal failure as well as isolation and cynicism (Simpson, 2010: 189).

This chapter will analyse the genre of the roman noir, especially the genre's long-standing history of socially engaged writers in France. Daeninckx was one of the first French crime writers to use the roman noir as a cultural remembrance tool. Gorrara refers to Didier Daeninckx and Thierry Jonquet as politically active crime-fiction writers who 'came to the roman noir with an ethical agenda that sought to denounce abuses of power and raise awareness in their readers' (Gorrara, 2003: 72). Jonquet is best-known for his thriller *Mygale* (1984), which was made into a film by Pedro Almodóvar in 2011: *The Skin I Live In*. The narrative centres on a plastic surgeon who seeks revenge by transforming his wife's rapist into a woman and keeping them hostage in his house. Gender politics and sexual identity are the major themes in this deeply disturbing text. *La Bête et la belle* (1985), another notable crime novel by Jonquet, is set in a *banlieue* of Paris sometime in the 1980s, like several of the Cadin texts. A significant difference between both authors, however, is that, in general, Jonquet's narratives could take place in any location during a given era, whereas Daeninckx is very specific about where and when exactly his narratives are set.[17]

[17] Chapter Four on *Le Géant inachevé* includes a brief comparison of Daeninckx's text with Thierry Jonquet's *La Bête et la belle* (1985).

Daeninckx and Jonquet have used the roman noir to investigate specific social and political issues in France, such as nuclear power and environmental pollution, immigration and social deprivation, and crimes committed by the State in recent French history. Both writers are clearly aware that the nature of crime fiction lends itself very well to social commentary and historical investigations:

> . . . it could be argued that the generic conventions of detective fiction create an important form within which to investigate the heritage of the Occupation in contemporary France. Centred on a quest for a repressed narrative, that of the original crime and that of the identity of the murderer, detective fiction and its models of detection can be said to operate with the aim of establishing the parameters of a lost narrative. (Gorrara, 2000: 281)

Gorrara's focus here is on the ability of crime fiction to investigate the so-called "lost narrative" of the Occupation. However, as this study will demonstrate, the same argument can be made for the genre's ability to investigate other lost narratives such as that of the Algerian War, for example in Daeninckx's *Le Bourreau et son double,* which centres on the fallout of brutalised French soldiers who were both tortured and carried out acts of torture.

1.1 Drama, Folktales, and the Generic Features of Crime Fiction

Crime is one of the major plot sources in ancient Greek drama. Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex* centres on the protagonist's crimes, albeit committed inadvertently by him, during the pursuit of his own identity. John Scaggs notes that the play from ancient Greece 'draws together all the central characteristics and formal elements of a detective story, including a mystery surrounding a murder, a closed circle of suspects, and the gradual uncovering of a hidden past' (Scaggs, 2005:9). Indeed, Gallimard published a novelisation adapted by Didier Lamaison from the ancient Greek in 1994, as part of its *Série noire*. Similarly, Alain Robbe-Grillet's (1922–2008) postmodern detective novel *Les Gommes* (1953) 'alluded to, mimicked, intertwined itself about, and played endlessly with Sophocles' classical tragedy' (Dubois, 2005: 102). We could also extend the genre to include some of Shakespeare's works. For example, *Hamlet* centres on the Prince of Denmark's efforts to solve his father's murder, while the eponymous Macbeth cannot cope with the crimes that he has committed in his lust for power. It is significant to note that Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex*[18] and many of

[18] Dawe's introduction of the text highlights how Oedipus was an established myth before Sophocles' tragedy and cites Homer's inclusion of a retelling of the myth as the earliest written record of the story of the doomed king (Sophocles and Dawe: 2006).

Shakespeare's works are based on myths that were already familiar to audiences.[19] Folktales are an older source of inspiration for the structure of works of crime fiction and they echo the moral-pedagogical nature of the genre. Crime fiction shares some of its fundamental elements with popular genres of folktales, fairy tales, and myths. Various scholars such as David Pinault (1992) and Ulrich Marzolph (2004) have highlighted the presence of aspects of crime fiction in *One Thousand and One Nights*, the famous collection of Middle Eastern folktales. Earlier, Mia Gerhardt argued that *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves* should be considered as a crime story involving robbers, despite the story's common interpretation as a fairy tale (1963: 182).

The long tradition of crime as a theme in oral literature is an obvious inspiration for crime writing. However, David Platten extends the influence of folktales beyond its themes and argues that the *structure* of crime novels is more directly influenced by folktales than novels from other genres. Platten argues that modern incarnations of the novel have often undermined and restructured the chronology of the traditional story. Crime fiction is an exception to this:

> Its impulse is to reassemble the component parts, to restore order to a dysfunctional society, to achieve narrative closure. Thus, the crafting of a crime novel has much in common with the traditional arts of storytelling that governed the production of folk tales and the classical myths. (Platten, 2011: 14)

A noteworthy comparison is the similarities between the figures of the detective in crime fiction and the "good bandit" in folktales. In his book *Delightful Murder: A Social History of the Crime Story* (1984), Ernest Mandel argues that the history of crime stories is reflective of the development of bourgeois society. Mandel claims that the modern detective story stems from the tradition of folktales about "good bandits" such as Robin Hood (1984: 1). Historian Eric Hobsbawm has written extensively on outlaws and describes the figure of the "good bandit" as one of the most universal social phenomena in history (1972: 58). Hobsbawm highlights the significance of these figures in the following passage:

[19] *King Lear* is based on the legend of Leir of Britain whose story is found in the twelfth-century pseudohistorical work of Geoffrey of Monmouth (British Library, 2020: Online).

> The point about social bandits is that they are peasant outlaws whom the lord and state regard as criminals, but who remain within peasant society, and are considered by their people as heroes, as champions, avengers, fighters for justice, perhaps even leaders of liberation, and in any case as men to be admired, helped and supported. This relation between the ordinary peasant and the rebel, outlaw and robber is what makes social banditry interesting and significant. (1972: 58)

There are some obvious parallels between the social bandits and the figure of the detective in crime fiction, particularly detectives from the roman noir genre. As evident from Hobsbawm's description above, both the bandit and detective are types of outcast figures who live on the periphery to the rest of society while seeking justice. This is especially true for noir detectives who are often depicted as fighting against a corrupt state. This is discussed in greater detail in section "1.3 Roman noir" of this chapter.

In the series of interviews with Thierry Maricourt published in September 2009 as *Daeninckx par Daeninckx*, Daeninckx states that: '*Je suis un raconteur d'histoires, un griot de Seine-Saint-Denis'* (2009: 33) [I am a storyteller, a griot of Seine-Saint-Denis].[20] Griot is a West-African word for storyteller, oral historian, or praise singer of significant social importance akin to a bard (Hale, 1997). It is significant that Daeninckx uses this word, as it reflects the responsibility he feels towards society as a "*raconteur d'histoires*" [storyteller]. The word also resonates with the connection between folktales and crime fiction. A criticism could be made that such a description is a form of cultural appropriation; however, it is more likely that Daeninckx is expressing a form of solidarity with the peoples of West Africa by demonstrating a knowledge of their society and identifying with a key figure of their culture.

Daeninckx demonstrates an awareness of the similarities between crime fiction and folktales in particular in *Le Géant inachevé*, which incorporates Flemish folktales and the regional tradition of giants. Giants are a recurring character in Belgian and particularly

[20] *Daeninckx par Daeninckx* (2009) collates a series of interviews with Daeninckx's close friend and fellow writer Thierry Maricourt. Like Daeninckx, Maricourt hails from Seine-Saint-Denis and is also closely aligned with the political left, having worked as a journalist for the anarchist newspaper *Le Libertaire*, before becoming a writer in the early 1990s. His work with Daeninckx is a blended collection of many interviews recorded over several years, and the book reflects this in its patchwork style, which manages to cover many broad aspects of Daeninckx's personal life and literary career.

Flemish folklore. According to Flemish tradition, long ago every village used to have its own giant to protect the area. Daeninckx also integrates the tradition of the Carnival festival in Flanders, which centres on a parade of giants, into the novel's narrative. Two questions from my interview with Daeninckx related to the influence of folktales and the Carnival on his style of crime writing. Daeninckx drew comparisons between the generic and nocturnal nature of folktales and crime fiction:

> *Q: Au centre du* Géant inachevé *il y a le carnaval. Avant, les gens du peuple utilisaient le carnaval pour rendre une sorte de justice sociale et pour se moquer des gens pour les punir. Est-ce que vous voyez un lien profond entre le carnaval et le roman noir où est-ce que le carnaval figure dans ce roman plutôt pour donner un peu de la culture de la région?*
>
> *R: J'ai voulu montrer que le roman noir c'est le carnaval de la littérature. Cadin va se retrouver sur scène, il va être pratiquement un géant. Le roman noir c'est l'héritier des contes pour enfants où on est dans un monde de fantômes, un monde nocturne, un monde de frayeur. Et puis, dans les contes pour enfants et le roman noir on a les personnages-archétypes, tout comme dans le carnaval on a les archétypes. Dans le carnaval comme dans le roman noir on voit la vérité qui surgit d'un seul coup. Avec le carnaval ce surgissement est permis uniquement de telle heure à telle heure. La vérité dans le roman noir c'est pareil.* (Daeninckx and Gleeson, 2017)
>
> [Q: The Carnival is at the core of *Le Géant inachevé.* Before people used to use the Carnival to perform a sort of social justice by mocking people to punish them. Did you see a strong link between the Carnival and the roman noir or did the Carnival simply give the text a little of the region's culture?
>
> A: I wanted to show that the roman noir is the Carnival of literature. Cadin ends up on stage, he practically becomes a giant. The roman noir is the successor to children's fairy tales, which take place in a world of ghosts, a nocturnal world, a world of fear. As well as that, fairy tales and the roman noir use the same archetypal characters, just like the archetypes used in Carnival. In the Carnival, like the roman noir, the truth is suddenly revealed. During Carnival, these revelations were allowed only within a given number of hours. The truth is the same in the roman noir.]

Here, Daeninckx highlights the significance of the Carnival to the plot of *Le Géant inachevé* while also noting the parallels between the social justice role of the Carnival festival and the roman noir in modern France. These are discussed in detail in Chapter Four.

1.2 Nineteenth Century: Daeninckx's Influences and Contrasts

Literary movements from the nineteenth century are a significant source of influence for the earliest examples of contemporary crime fiction. For example, Fyodor Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment* (1886), a key text of the Russian realist movement, documents the effects that the sentiment of guilt may have on the perpetrator of a serious crime. Similarly, crime was also a major theme in the French school of realism. Honoré de Balzac, one of the pioneers of realism, exposed the hidden underbelly of Paris in his enormous series, *La Comédie humaine,* with characters such as the recurring criminal mastermind Vautrin who appears in *Le Père Goriot* (1835), *Splendeurs et misères des courtisanes* (1846) and *Illusions perdues* (1847).[21]

In our interview I asked Daeninckx whether he saw comparisons between French writers from the nineteenth century, such as Émile Zola or Balzac, who wanted to capture and portray the shadowy criminal underworld of French society in their works. Daeninckx admitted that there are similarities between crime fiction and novels from the nineteenth century. He stated that Balzac's *La Comédie humaine* demonstrates a desire to capture the development of '*le grand commerce et la spéculation surtout*' (Daeninckx and Gleeson, 2017) [big business and profiteering especially] in French society at that time. However, Daeninckx stressed that, for him, these works place the emphasis on describing rather than critiquing French society:

> *Chez les auteurs du 19e siècle il y a un aspect descriptif, quelque chose qui est de l'ordre de l'inventaire comme avec Balzac et L*a Comédie humaine*. Il y a là véritablement une volonté de regarder la naissance du grand commerce de la spéculation, mais sans désir de combat ni de dénonciation. Ils ne critiquent pas et le monde n'est pas considéré comme criminel. Le mécanisme n'est pas donné comme un mécanisme meurtrier . . .* (Daeninckx and Gleeson, 2017)
>
> [Nineteenth century writers had a descriptive approach, something which was like an inventory, as seen in Balzac's *La Comédie humaine*. They really wanted to show the birth of industry and speculation, but they had no desire to combat or denounce

[21] *La Comédie humaine* is Balzac's multi-volume collection of interlinked novels (ninety-one published texts and forty-six unfinished works) portraying French society from 1815 to 1848.

it. They were not critical, and the world was not considered to be criminal. The system was not depicted as a killing machine . . .][22]

To prove this point Daeninckx gave the example of Guy de Maupassant's (1850–1893) *Bel-Ami* (1885). Daeninckx demonstrated his vast knowledge of the literary canon by arguing that, in the beginning of the novel the main character returns to France after spending three years in military service in Algeria. However, Maupassant brushes over the role of the French army in Algeria during a particularly bloody period of French imperialism. Daeninckx argues that what was exceptional about the wave of French crime fiction in the 1970s was that it coincided with a period in French society where a new generation would not accept a whitewashing of the past:

> *Même avec Maupassant quand il fait* Bel-Ami*, son personnage principal revient d'Algérie à l'époque des massacres. Dans les années 1970 on est dans une période de l'histoire contemporaine française où toute une génération ne supporte plus le mensonge sur la collaboration, la participation à la Shoah, les millions de morts de la colonisation, le mensonge sur le génie français et ainsi de suite. Donc il y a un espace qui s'ouvre pour en parler. Pour moi, c'est l'espace du roman noir.* (Daeninckx and Gleeson, 2017)
>
> [Even with Maupassant when he wrote *Bel-Ami* his main character has just returned from Algeria during a period of massacres. The 1970s was a period of contemporary French history when a whole generation no longer tolerated the lies about collaboration, the participation in the Holocaust, the millions of dead from colonisation, the lies about French ingenuity and so on. So, there was space to talk about these things. For me that space was the roman noir.]

The above quotation demonstrates how Daeninckx is keenly aware that memories of colonisation and the Holocaust are deeply interconnected, resonating with Rothberg's and Silverman's theories as outlined in the Introduction.

1.2.1 The French Connection: Edgar Allan Poe and Émile Gaboriau

In our 2017 interview, Daeninckx cited his major influences as American hardboiled fiction and the French roman noir. However, any discussion of crime fiction is incomplete without reference to the legacies of Edgar Allan Poe and Arthur Conan Doyle. Crime writing developed into its own literary genre in the mid-nineteenth century, mainly due to the ground-breaking work of Edgar Allan Poe, 'who re-imagined and ultimately re-invented

[22] Daeninckx is perhaps over critical of Zola in this instance. For example, see John Orr's book chapter, "Zola: Germinal and Tragic Praxis" (1989), which presents a more nuanced discussion of the presence of social criticism in Zola's work.

crime fiction' (Schmid, 2015: 97). It is worth noting that Poe was an American writer best known for his works of horror and gothic fiction. Again, this underlines the wide variety of influences on the genre. In her essay for *The Omnibus of Crime*, Dorothy L. Sayers argues that Poe wrote five stories 'in which the general principles of the detective story were laid down forever' (1929: 72). Arthur Conan Doyle, who later standardised and championed the genre by creating Sherlock Holmes, himself, credits Poe with breathing life into the detective story (Frank and Magistrale, 1997: 103). The influence of Conan Doyle is discussed in greater detail in the next section of this chapter.

However, French literature also made many contributions to the initial works of crime fiction. *The Cambridge Companion to Crime Fiction* (Priestman, 2003) dedicates an entire chapter to highlighting the role of French writers in the development of the genre.[23] In her chapter from this book, Schütt cites the publication of the memoirs of Eugène François Vidocq—'a French brigand turned head of the *Sûreté* [the French criminal investigation department]'—in 1828 as an integral part of the genesis of crime fiction (2003: 60–61). Schütt also argues that Vidocq and his memoirs were a major inspiration for several French writers from that period. For example, Schütt cites Vidocq as the main source of inspiration for Balzac's previously mentioned Vautrin. Like Balzac, Daeninckx is often inspired by charismatic figures who performed incredible feats. However, in contrast, Daeninckx focuses on such figures who have been overlooked in the annals of history. For example, Daeninckx's 2013 historical novel, *Le Banquet des affamés* [Banquet for the famished] is a fictional biography of Maxime Lisbonne. Lisbonne was a military captain in the Commune's National Guard during the siege of Paris in 1871. However, prior to the commune Lisbonne worked as a theatre director and the novel details how during the siege Lisbonne organised concerts and other performances as well as "*le banquet des affamés*" which distributed food packages and hot meals to the hungry.

Schütt also credits Émile Gaboriau (1832–1873) as the first writer to dramatize full scale police investigations and to make heroes of the detectives who investigated them, an approach that eventually became a key element of the roman noir (2003: 63). Gaboriau is

[23] In this book chapter, Sita Schütt states that: 'French contributions to the development of crime fiction, in particular the detective story, are significant in the sense that one cannot conceive of the developments in the nineteenth-century English detective fiction without them' (2003: 59).

significant in the development of the genre because he had a notable influence on crime fiction in the English language. Gaboriau's works were translated shortly after publication and widely read in England. Based upon the number of editions issued, his works were extremely popular and were 'recommended reading for lawyers wishing for an overview of French judicial procedures' (Schütt, 2003: 63). There are clear similarities between Gaboriau, who wanted to capture the workings of the French police system, and Daeninckx who wants to highlight its failings. Andrea Goulet suggests that Gaboriau's 'historically-grounded *roman judiciaire* [legal procedural novel] of the nineteenth century' should be understood as 'founding a strand of engaged detective fiction that culminates today with the sorts of *néo-polars* and noirs for which Didier Daeninckx is known' (2010: 58). Schütt argues that Gaboriau had such an influence on Conan Doyle that 'many of Holmes' techniques and characteristics can also be traced directly to Gaboriau's detectives' (2003: 63).

1.2.2 Elementary Influences: Arthur Conan Doyle, Les frères Bonneff, Gaston Leroux, Maurice Leblanc

Arthur Conan Doyle's stories were so fundamental to the development of crime fiction that they are an inevitable point of reference in any discussion on crime fiction (Horsley, 2010: 29). Sherlock Holmes first appeared in *A Study in Scarlet* (1887), and Conan Doyle's creation has since become arguably one of the most famous literary characters of all time. The detective is listed in the Guinness Book of World Records as the most-portrayed movie character, 'with more than seventy actors having played the part in at least two hundred films' (Fox, 2009: Online). Conan Doyle's stories were preoccupied with investigative ratiocination, with Holmes being portrayed as obsessed with the art of deduction. The detective prides himself on his own style of deduction which relies on abductive reasoning involving 'interpretative epistemologies which insist that "facts" cannot be understood independent of how we observe and understand them' (Carson, 2009: 196). In short, abduction emphasises the idea that when we perceive something, we interpret it. Conan Doyle is also associated with development of the detective-centred model, a now generic feature of crime fiction. Holmes is unquestionably the first key figure from whom writers differentiated their protagonists, only rivalled by the composite hardboiled protagonists such as Hammett's Sam Spade and Chandler's Philip Marlowe in the early twentieth century

(Horsley, 2010: 29).[24] In his interview with Maricourt, Daeninckx cites several English and French writers from various genres as significant influences:

> *. . . les Sherlock Holmes de Conan Doyle, Illusions perdues du père Balzac, Quatre-vingt-treize du vieil Hugo, Agatha Christie, Horace McCoy, Steinbeck . . . Ça, c'étaient des lectures un peu fondatrices. Ce que j'aimais, c'était ça, une espèce de littérature populaire.* (2009 : 56)
>
> [Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes, *Lost Illusions* by Balzac, *Ninety-Three* by Victor Hugo, Agatha Christie, Horace McCoy, Steinbeck . . . those were more or less my founding books. That was what I liked, a literature of the people.]

Daeninckx elaborates on the importance of Conan Doyle, whom he sees as being far more important than Charles Dickens (2009: 58). However, he fails to explain this assertion. Daeninckx does note that the fact that Conan Doyle was very politically active during his lifetime is completely ignored in France. However, I would argue that this is a rather harsh criticism, as this is also the case in English-speaking countries. The unrivalled success of Sherlock Holmes dwarfs the non-literary achievements of his creator. Daeninckx only vaguely explains Conan Doyle's politics:

> *. . . il est le premier à s'être battu, au début du XXe siècle, pour promouvoir l'idée d'un tunnel sous la manche. Catholique d'origine française, il s'est aussi battu pour la grâce des Irlandais condamnés à mort'.* (Daeninckx and Maricourt, 2009: 56)
>
> [. . . he was the first to campaign at the beginning of the twentieth century, for the idea of building the Channel tunnel. A Catholic of French heritage, he also campaigned for the pardon of Irish rebels condemned to death.]

While *Daeninckx par Daeninckx* does not claim to be an academic text, it still is overly anecdotal in places and often lacks detail. For example, Daeninckx doesn't specify which Irish person or peoples Conan Doyle campaigned to be spared from being executed. One can only assume that he is referring to Conan Doyle's campaign to save his friend Roger Casement from execution following the Easter Rising in 1916. Daeninckx also erroneously refers to Conan Doyle as being of French heritage whereas Conan Doyle was born to a wealthy Irish-Catholic family in Scotland. This demonstrates that Daeninckx sometimes leaves the reader wanting more information and perhaps even that he has a tendency to

[24] Humphrey Bogart is closely associated with the image of Marlowe and Spade having played both detectives in Hollywood adaptations of the novels in the 1940s. Bogart starred as Sam Spade in *The Maltese Falcon* (1941) and as Philip Marlowe in *The Big Sleep* (1946).

over-embellish aspects of a story. These factual corrections show the potential methodological flaws in over-relying on interviews and I am cognizant of such potential pitfalls in my analysis.

In his essay "Les dits des maudits d'Auber" collected in *La Mémoire longue* (2008b) (a selection of Daeninckx's essays, travel writing, and works of short fiction from 1986 to 2008), Daeninckx praises Conan Doyle for the way he used Sherlock Holmes to capture the harsh reality of London during the industrial revolution:

> *Dans ce Londres bousculé par la révolution industrielle, martelé par d'innombrables pilons à vapeur, dans la lumière vacillante des lampes à gaz, le regard clinique de Sherlock Holmes sur les corps [. . .] dénonce la violence avec laquelle s'impose le nouvel ordre économique.* (p. 250)
>
> [In a London shaken by the industrial revolution, hammered by the countless steam pestles, in the flickering gas light, the clinical gaze of Sherlock Holmes over the corpses [. . .] denounces the violence imposed by the new economic order.]

The same essay also praises the works of the brothers Léon and Maurice Bonneff, in particular the former's novel *Aubervilliers,* which, like the work of Émile Zola, depicts the hardship suffered by the working-class in Paris. Daeninckx praises Bonneff's novel for the way it captures on every page the physical strain of living in the *banlieue* in the early twentieth century (2008b: 247–248).[25]

In the early twentieth century, French and English writers continued to influence each other. Gaston Leroux (1868–1927) and Maurice Leblanc (1864–1941) are two of the most noteworthy French crime fiction writers from this period. Gaston Leroux's *Le Mystère de la chambre jaune* (1910) [The Mystery of the Yellow Room] was his attempt at creating "something better" than Poe and Conan Doyle (Fondanèche, 2000: 31). The novel was a major influence on Agatha Christie's country-house mysteries, as it relies heavily on detailed reasoning that allows readers to move from room to room, step-by-step, with the characters (Dubose and Thomas, 2000: 102). The novel gently ridicules the success of Conan Doyle's style, as a large element of the plot centres on the competition between police detective Frédéric Larsan who employs a rather "Sherlock Holmes-esque" style of reasoning

[25] Léon Bonneff, and his brother Maurice, were two writers from Aubervilliers who only gained recognition posthumously after fighting and dying in World War I.

and the reporter and amateur detective Joseph Rouletabille who uses an overtly Cartesian methodology and claims that he will solve the case using pure reason (Schütt, 2003: 69). Leroux's contrasting of the professional and amateur detectives is similar to Daeninckx's *Meurtres pour mémoire,* which emphasises the importance of the work of amateur historians.

Following on from Leroux, Maurice Leblanc created a thoroughly French hero in Arsène Lupin. Leblanc appropriated the detective figure in an entirely new way by depicting Lupin as a "*gentleman-cambrioleur*" and a master of disguise who organises amazing thefts and frauds mostly for personal gain though sometimes for moral reasons (Neale, 2010: 298). This chimes somewhat with Mandel's theory which connects crime fiction to the tradition of folktales about charismatic bandits.

Sue Neale in her book chapter in *A Companion to Crime Fiction* (edited by Rzepka and Horsley, 2010), draws a noteworthy comparison between British mystery novels and the French *roman à énigme* [mystery novel] from this period. Neale claims that writers such as Leblanc and Gaboriau were attractive to readers because, in contrast to most British writers, their characters challenged the authority of the State by ridiculing the forces of law and order within their works (Neale, 2010: 298). Daeninckx's writing style sits in stark contrast to the picaresque novels of Leblanc and Gaboriau. However, they are similar insofar as Daeninckx also uses the genre of crime fiction to interrogate national identity and the French justice system. It is clear from the above that the earliest examples of crime fiction came from American and British writers, but from its inception France and French writers were also crucial to the development of crime writing.

1.3 Twentieth Century: British and American Inspirations

The first question I asked Daeninckx in our interview was why he preferred the genre of the roman noir over other forms of writing. His response elucidated the importance he attaches to the role of fiction in society, as well as the exceptional suitability of the roman noir to reveal the grey areas of society:

> *Les romans noirs, c'était longtemps une littérature dont personne ne se souciait. Les universitaires ne s'y intéressaient pas, c'était considéré comme la littérature de gare. Mais moi j'ai toujours considéré que le roman noir était une manière de faire des hypothèses sur le marché du monde. C'est une manière de bâtir des scénarios pour essayer d'expliquer des choses qui sont*

> *totalement inexplicables. Le monde est de plus en plus opaque, de plus en plus difficile à ausculter, de plus en plus difficile à comprendre.* (Daeninckx and Gleeson, 2017)
>
> [The roman noir was long considered a literature that no one was bothered about. The universities were not interested, the books were only considered 'airport novels'. But I always considered the roman noir to be a method of hypothesising on the workings of the world. A way of creating scenarios that tried to explain the inexplicable. The world is getting more abstruse, harder to examine and harder to understand.]

It is worth noting here that Daeninckx doesn't claim that the roman noir can or should be used to offer a clear-cut view of a profoundly complex world. Indeed, the stories he writes to theorise on the workings of the world frequently show that it is impossible and irresponsible to present the reality of the world in black and white terms.

Daeninckx continued his response by highlighting the influence of both American and British hardboiled writers on French crime fiction, whom he views as having developed "*ce petit genre littéraire*" [this little literary genre]:

> *Le roman noir français s'appuie sur certains auteurs américains comme Dashiell Hammett et Jim Thompson, puis des auteurs anglais comme [William] McIlvanney, donc il y a eu un espace du roman noir où les auteurs essaient de comprendre un monde incompréhensible par la fiction policière. Ça m'a fortement intéressé.* (Daeninckx and Gleeson, 2017)
>
> [The French roman noir was based on some American authors such as Dashiell Hammett and Jim Thompson, then English authors like [William] McIlvanney, so there was already a type of roman noir where the authors tried to understand an incomprehensible world through detective fiction. That really interested me.]

The above quotation demonstrates Daeninckx's deep understanding of the evolution of the genre of crime fiction and the significance of American and British writers for the development of the French roman noir in particular. The following section will further examine the influence of the American hardboiled writers, as well as the notable impact of Jack London and the English author Agatha Christie on Daeninckx, before turning to a closer examination of the French roman noir.

1.3.1 American Hardboiled

Howard Haycraft is credited with coining the term the "Golden Age of Detective Fiction", which he framed as existing from 1918 to 1930 in both Britain and America (Knight, 2003: 77).[26] However, American and British publications during the Golden Age differed greatly from one another. In the United States, Dashiell Hammett and Raymond Chandler were the forefathers of hardboiled fiction. This style of crime fiction helped to advance the genre further by shifting the intrigue from focussing on how crimes are committed towards examining the reasons behind the existence of crime in society.

The usual story is that in the 1920s Dashiell Hammett first created the adventures of a solitary and honest private detective amid the corruptions and betrayals of the modern American city (Knight, 2004: 110). Then in the 1930s Raymond Chandler brought wit and a literary polish to the newly identified sub-genre. This narrative is almost entirely based on Chandler's own arguments in the famous and highly persuasive essay "The Simple Art of Murder" (1950) (Knight, 2004: 110). In this essay, Chandler offers several noteworthy insights into crime writing. Firstly, Chandler refutes the claim made by Dorothy L. Sayers in *The Omnibus of Crime* (1929) that crime fiction does not and can never attain the loftiest level of literary achievement by suggesting that it is merely a "literature of escape" and not a "literature of expression". However, Chandler argues strongly that these are simply abstract phrases used by critics, and that all reading is for pleasure and to state otherwise is intellectual snobbery (Chandler, 1950: 8).

Chandler famously praises Hammett for 'giving murder back to the kind of people that commit it for reasons, not just to provide a corpse; and with the means at hand, not with hand-wrought duelling pistols, curare, and tropical fish' (1950: 10). Chandler lauds realist crime writers who dare describe a world in which gangsters can rule nations and who do so with 'tough minds and a cool spirit of detachment' (1950: 12). Dennis Porter echoes Chandler's sentiment when he notes that the emergence of the genre of hardboiled fiction greatly reflects America at that time:

> The emergence of private eye crime fiction and the heroic type associated with it depended on a particular historical, socio-economic, and cultural

[26] Haycraft first used the term in his 1941 book on the origins of the genre, *Murder for Pleasure: The Life and Times of the Detective Story*.

> conjuncture. On the level of history, it was the decades following the civil war or the so-called Gilded Age that laid the foundations of the modern American industrial capitalist system which was more or less fully formed by the 1920s. (Porter, 2003: 95)

Daeninckx was initially interested in hardboiled writers because they were trying to—in his words—'*comprendre un monde incompréhensible par la fiction policière'* (Daeninckx and Gleeson, 2017) [to understand an incomprehensible world through detective fiction]. The main emphasis of my study of Daeninckx's Cadin series is to demonstrate how the particular historical, socio-economic, and cultural context of French society in the 1980s is reflected there. For example, Chapter Five shows how *Mort au premier tour* was inspired by Alsatian ecologists who protested the development of a nuclear power plant in Fessenheim in the early 1970s.

In his article on the Cadin series, Dominque Jeannerod highlights that *Mort au premier tour* is the only novel that deals with a *'histoire politique immédiate . . . les romans suivants construisent une anamnèse faisant remonter un passé plus ancien'* (Jeannerod, 2007: 35) [a recent political history . . . the later novels construct an anamnesis [recollection of events] going back to older histories]. While the plots of later novels recall past traumas such as the Occupation and the Algerian War, they still capture the immediate social problems of France. For example, *Le Bourreau et son double* is primarily concerned with the use of torture in the Algerian War, however, the novel also captures the weakening of the influence of trade unions as well as the social deprivation in the suburbs of Paris.

Typically, in hardboiled fiction the detective is held up to be the democratic hero of a post-heroic age, fighting against injustice in an urban world where the traditional institutions and guardians of the law have become as corrupt as the organised crime itself (Porter, 2003: 97). Inspecteur Cadin shares many of these hardboiled traits as he too is often seen fighting against the corrupt institution of the French state. *Meurtres pour mémoire* is an obvious example where Inspecteur Cadin fights against corrupt police officials and the French state in general. Cadin is seen as a nuisance by his superiors and is routinely transferred to other departments at the end of each novel in an effort to dissuade and cover-up his efforts to highlight harsh realities. Scenes of graphic sex and violence in hardboiled fiction are often punctuated with a distinctly dry humour and the Cadin series is peppered with this same style of black humour. Daeninckx's repeated use of comically dark *faits divers* (a French term

for brief miscellaneous news items) in the texts is a good example of hardboiled humour. For example, *Le Bourreau et son double* opens with the headline: '*faits divers: un homme se noie dans l'espoir d'être réincarné en poisson*' (*BD*: p. 1) [Man drowns himself in the hope of being reincarnated as a fish].

Works of hardboiled fiction are often set in sordid urban backgrounds that are in stark contrast to the characteristically rural setting of much of British crime writing from the same period. While the Inspecteur Cadin novels are not situated exclusively in urban locations, the series is dominated by cities and the *banlieue*. *Mort au premier tour* and *Le Géant inachevé* are set in Alsace and Flanders respectively, and each has distinct regional settings. Although not conventionally urban, these once heavily industrialised locations are portrayed as being severely socially deprived and economically disadvantaged and are still reflective of a hardboiled atmosphere.

Hardboiled fiction is also noted for its use of fast-paced dialogue, a distinctly lower language register, and slang. Daeninckx uses a similar style of language register in the Inspecteur Cadin texts. For example, in *Meurtres pour mémoire* Cadin is haranguing Commissaire Matabiau about the authenticity of a letter he wrote. Matabiau's response at being importuned before his holidays is rather colourful:

> *Le commissaire Matabiau s'éjecta du dessus du bureau et vint se planter devant moi.*
> *— Des fausses convocations ! J'ai bien entendu ! Vous ne trouvez pas que c'est plus important que tout le reste ? Je me fous de votre meurtre et de votre fakir de bijouterie. Avant de partir en vacances je me doutais que vous parviendriez à me foutre dans la merde. Alors, ces documents falsifiés, c'est quoi au juste?* (*MM*: p. 161)
>
> [Commissaire Matabiau shot up off the desk and stood in front of me. False summonses! So this is what's up? Don't you think this is more important than anything else? I don't give a damn about your murder and your jewel eater. Before I went on holiday, I had my suspicions you might land me in the shit. What exactly is going on with these falsified documents.] (Heron, 1991:113)

However, Daeninckx also frequently dissents from the established norms within the genre of crime fiction. Inspecteur Cadin shares many tropes with Hammett's Sam Spade and Chandler's Philip Marlowe. These detectives are heartbroken loners who fight corrupt

institutions and cure their woes with vast amounts of alcohol. However, while Spade and Marlowe have distinct physical descriptions, Daeninckx intentionally never gives a physical description for Inspecteur Cadin, nor indeed for any of the main characters in the series:

> *Dans un premier temps c'est une réaction à un stéréotype du polar (. . .) J'ai rapidement eu le sentiment que cette manière de bloquer les personnages, de les catégoriser, avait à voir avec le travail de flicage par M. Bertillon, l'anthropométrie. Je m'attache non à caractériser, mais à dire les multiples contenus dans la même enveloppe humaine. C'est une manière de capter l'obscure complexité des bipèdes que de réserver les descriptions détaillées aux lieux, aux objets.* (Daeninckx 1997b: 23–24)
>
> [In the first instance, it was a reaction to crime fiction stereotypes (. . .) I quickly had the feeling that cordoning off characters, categorising them in that way had to do with the type of police work developed by Bertillon: anthropometry. I don't seek to limit but rather to express the manifold aspects of any given human. Describing solely places and objects is a way of highlighting the obscure complexity of humanity.]

In the above quotation, Daeninckx refers to the work of Alphonse Bertillon (1853–1914), who was a French police officer and biometrics researcher. Bertillon developed his own novel system of photographs and physical measurements to identify and record criminals. However, Bertillon is also infamous for playing a significant role in the Dreyfus affair, as he presented flawed evidence that played a part in the miscarriage of justice (Mansuy and Mazliak, 2008: 62).

Daeninckx chooses to sidestep the established physical tropes of the detective to avoid over-simplifying his main characters and leaves them surrounded by an aura of unexplained human complexities. Inspecteur Cadin is no exception to this, and he is further anonymised by Daeninckx who never gives the protagonist a first name. This may seem like a minor point on first appraisal, but in fact the slight mystery created by this absence is emblematic of Daeninckx's stress on complexity throughout his works: things are rarely clear cut with Daeninckx, nor are they always morally black and white, except in certain instances of State corruption. Daeninckx wishes to expose layer upon layer of French history and present a polyphonic, as opposed to a singular, or monophonic, version of the past.

1.3.2 Jack London (1876–1916)

Daeninckx has stated that he was an avid reader as a child, and cites Jack London's *Martin Eden* (1909) as the book which made him become a writer:

> *Si je suis devenu écrivain, c'est que j'étais lecteur, enfant. Lecteur de romans. C'est avant tout Martin Eden, de Jack London. Pour une part c'est grâce à ce bouquin, à cet écrivain, que j'écris.* (Daeninckx and Maricourt, 2009: 56)
>
> [If I became a writer, it's because I was a reader. A reader of novels. Before everything else, I first read *Martin Eden* by Jack London. It is partly thanks to this book, this writer, that I write.]

It is significant to note that London is not a crime fiction writer and is instead best known for works such as *The Call of the Wild* (1903) and *White Fang* (1906), which are adventure novels told from the viewpoint of sled dogs, set during the Klondike gold rush.[27] However, there are strong parallels between London's *Martin Eden* and Daeninckx's works, as major themes in the novel are social hierarchies and individualism versus socialism. *Martin Eden* is the story of a young uneducated sailor who attempts to climb the social ladder by hoping to become a successful writer. This is noteworthy in terms of the Inspecteur Cadin series as London's novel ends with Eden committing suicide, as does Daeninckx's series. Eden's suicide can be interpretated as a symbolic denunciation of individualism: 'Martin Eden (. . .) is so disillusioned by his education and entry into the world of the middle class, which he finds hollow, empty, and devoid of meaning, and so thoroughly loses himself in the course of his journey upward through the class structure, that he commits suicide at the end of the novel' (Christopher, 2002: 82).

1.3.3 Agatha Christie (1890–1976)

Agatha Christie is undoubtedly the best-known British writer of the Golden Age of crime fiction. Her works demonstrate how British novels from this period were a form of escapism. They tend to focus on plot, with the reader engaging with narrative as if it were a puzzle. Her narratives take place in a cosy setting, already familiar to the reader:

> The nuances of characterisation, setting and any criticism of social and class inequalities were sacrificed to the originality of the plot and the ingenuity of the murderer. The world these writers portrayed was one which readers shared and understood, and any sense of the world outside the comfortable confines of conventional English village life was absent. (James, 2013: Online)

In his youth Daeninckx read Christie and has an appreciation for her storytelling abilities, but he has never wanted to replicate her style, which fails to interrogate society:

[27] It is worth noting that Jack London has enjoyed lasting popularity in France. There have been several translations of his works.

> *J'ai toujours voulu organiser un suspens, mais ne jamais rivaliser avec Agatha Christie. L'intrigue est essentielle, mais je m'intéresse aussi à ce qui l'entoure. Il est primordial d'éviter le système de l'aquarium, je n'arrive pas à rester derrière la vitre, j'ai besoin de la réalité.* (Daeninckx and Maricourt, 2009: 120)
>
> [I have always wanted to create suspense, but never to the extent of Agatha Christie. The plot is essential, but I am also interested in everything surrounding it. It's vital to avoid the artificial atmosphere of an aquarium, I cannot stay behind the glass, I need it to be real.]

While Christie's detective fiction stands in stark contrast to Daeninckx's writing, her work is so central to crime fiction as we know it today, that some similarities are inevitable. *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd* (1926) was voted the best crime novel ever by the British Crime Writer's Association in 2013. The novel was praised for its originality as it employed a guilty narrator, a technique which Daeninckx has borrowed in works such as the novel *Itinéraire d'un salaud ordinaire* (2006) and the short story "*Les poissons rouges"* in *Hors-Limites* (1992). Christie pioneered this technique to create a dramatic ending to her story; however, Daeninckx adopted a guilty narrator to explore the complexities of human behaviour. Daeninckx's short story "Back Street" from *Hors-Limites* (1992) could also be considered as testament to his appreciation of her, as it tells the story of fleeting romance between a Frenchman in London, who is researching a book on the French anarchist Jules Bonnet, and Agatha Christie (Reid, 2010: 41–42). This is also another example of Daeninckx's playful use of intertextuality.

During our interview, William McIlvanney (1936–2015) was the only British writer that Daeninckx cited as an inspiration. While it may appear unusual that Daeninckx didn't mention Agatha Christie, despite her influence at times on his writings, this is mostly likely because my questions related specifically to the context of roman noir and the Inspecteur Cadin series.[28] McIlvanney is a Scottish writer best known for his crime novels in the late 1970s such as *Laidlaw* (1977) which is often considered as the first example of "tartan noir" and is seen as having inspired a wave of Scottish crime writers such as Ian Rankin and Denise Mina (Massie, 2013: Online).

[28] It is worth noting that the first French translations of William McIlvanney's works were only available very close to the release of *Meurtres pour mémoire* with *Laidlaw* and its sequel *The Papers of Tony Veitch* translated by Jan Dusay published in 1983 and 1984.

1.3.4 Georges Simenon (1903–1989)

Éditions du Masque publishing house was founded in Paris in 1925 and published exclusively works of crime fiction.[29] This is testament to the popularity of crime fiction in France during the interwar period which occurred in tandem to the golden age of crime fiction in America and Britain. However, French detective fiction at this time distinguished itself from its Anglophone counterparts by being far more open to mainstream literary influences (Gorrara, 2003: 12). For example, Georges Simenon's detective Jules Maigret, one of the most iconic characters of French literature, who debuted in *Pietr-le-Letton* in 1930, is highly engaged with the social contexts of France after World War I. Bill Alder highlights the importance of social class and social change in Simenon's Maigret stories by arguing that the author in the 1930s was documenting 'both a set of real human anxieties and also the actual processes by which France was, for many regrettably, changing its structures of work, of consumption, and socio-political attitudes' (2013: 2).

Daeninckx is a noted admirer of both Simenon's crime fiction and his work as a journalist. Daeninckx has stated that he has always preferred writers such as Georges Simenon '*qui ont su mettre les pieds dans le plat*' (2009: 57) [who knew how to discuss a delicate subject without any delicacy at all]. Daeninckx refers to Simenon's work as a journalist in the early 1930s which denounced French colonialism.[30] There are tangible parallels between Daeninckx's Inspecteur Cadin and Simenon's Maigret. In our interview, Daeninckx stated that when writing the Cadin series he wanted his protagonist to emulate Maigret, who moved from city to city throughout their career:

> *Pour le personnage de policier itinérant l'archétype c'est Maigret de Georges Simenon qui n'arrête pas de se balader. Il va de Fécamp à Concarneau, il va sur des bateaux et ainsi de suite. Ça m'intéressait de faire en sorte que Cadin soit aussi un personnage mobile.* (Daeninckx and Gleeson, 2017)
>
> [For the character of an itinerant policeman, the archetype is Georges Simenon's Maigret who does not stop wandering. He goes from Fécamp to

[29] Éditions du Masque still publish crime fiction today although since the 1990s they have also published children's literature.

[30] One notorious article by Simenon attacked French propaganda posters which attempted to recruit young French men to emigrate to the African colonies by rewriting the slogan '*L'Afrique vous parle*' [Africa speaks to you] to '*L'Afrique vous dit merde'* [Africa speaks shit to you] (Becker, 2002: 380).

> Concarneau, he goes on boats and so on. I was also interested in making Cadin a character who moved about.]

According to Michelle Emanuel in her comprehensive book on the works of Léo Malet and the evolution of the roman noir, *From Surrealism to Less-Exquisite Cadavers*, Simenon's Inspecteur Maigret bridged the gap between 'what was the codified *roman à énigme* of the early 1930s and the splintering of the genre beginning with Léo Malet and the French roman noir in the early 1940s' (2006: 20).

1.4 Roman Noir

The exact origin of the term roman noir is rather cloudy, but it is generally understood that it stemmed from the design of Gallimard's *Série noire* collection of detective novels. Gorrara highlights that the cover was designed to look like the inverse of a funeral announcement, black background with white edges, to symbolise the major themes of the genre: murder and violent death (2003: 10). The suggestion that the name of the French genre was dictated by the colour of the book's cover rings true when we compare this to the Italian literary genre of Giallo. Giallo is the Italian word for yellow and is the name given to a genre of Italian horror in post-fascist Italy as these novels were printed with cheap yellow covers (Needham, 2007).

A distinct trait of noir fiction and film is that it can be considered the result of the coming together of European and American cinema and literature: The origins of the genre are usually traced to four main sources: German expressionism, French poetic realism, American hardboiled fiction and Hollywood crime films (Bould, 2005: 26). As Bould suggests, there is a strong argument to be made that the genre of the roman noir is partly a French interpretation of the American hardboiled novel. He notes that the earliest publications in Gallimard's *Série noire* were pastiche translations of American hardboiled novels and gangster films from the 1930s. For example, Gorrara cites Léo Malet's *120, rue de la Gare* (1943) as an example of an early roman noir which borrows heavily from plot elements in Dashiell Hammett's *The Maltese Falcon* (1929). Therefore, the roman noir shares many of the characteristics of the hardboiled novel such as the image of the lone and troubled detective fighting against corrupt institutions and organisations in an urban setting. However, the roman noir is more than just a mere localisation of an American tradition. There are strong European influences in the roman noir, and this also resonates with

Bould's argument. For example, there are elements of surrealism—an art movement developed primarily by French and Belgian artists such as André Breton and René Magritte—in Malet's *Derrière l'usine à gaz* (1944) which draws heavily on key motifs such as 'dreams, eroticized violence, and evocative landscapes of gloom, fog, and terror in the city at night' (Gorrara, 2003: 24). Both of Malet's works mentioned above demonstrate the hybridity of the roman noir and exemplify how French crime writers took an American tradition and adapted it to French culture.

Published in 1944 just before the end of World War II, *Derrière l'usine à gaz* also demonstrates the influence of the German Occupation on the development of crime writing in France and how the genre can be viewed as a reflection of society at a given time. By July 1942, German authorities had banned all American and British literature; small French publishers exploited the gap in the market by producing home-grown versions of 'a formula associated with American gangster movies of the 1930s' (Gorrara, 2003: 23). France was not the only country where the authorities attempted to impede crime fiction during this period. For example, the civil war and the subsequent fascist reign of Franco in Spain extinguished the genre of crime fiction for a generation (Bradford, 2015: 69). Similarly, in Italy, Mussolini's Ministry of Culture banned all types of crime fiction in 1941, claiming that they corrupted the youth and encouraged immorality (Bradford, 2015: 68). These instances also highlight the perceived power that crime fiction can have on a society. While German censorship challenged French crime fiction during World War II, French culture was faced with the even greater challenge of Americanisation following the Liberation. America can be considered as having a rather ambiguous role in post-war French reconstruction:

> A new wave of American hardboiled detective fiction was emblematic of this coca-colonization of France. Gallimard's *Série noire*, founded in 1945, realized the thrills and anxieties surrounding American cultural influence with its shocking tales of crime, violence and gangsterism. With narratives saturated in despair and a profound cynicism about the human condition, the *Série noire* seemed well suited to a post-war France unsure of its future in a new world order. (Gorrara, 2003: 34)

In the years following the Liberation, American writers continued to influence French crime fiction heavily. American writers dominated Gallimard's *Série noire* to such an extent that, for a work to appear authentically noir, French writers who wrote for the series (and only

one was permitted to do so before 1950) were forced to write under English or American names (Buss, 1994: 13).

1.4.1 Film Noir

American films grew in popularity after the war and Hollywood had a huge influence on French film traditions in the 1950s, 'one of the most exciting developments for French film critics and directors was the advent of film noir' (Gorrara, 2003: 40). According to Deborah Jermyn's definition of film noir, it emerged in the United States in the 1940s and was initially identified by French critics in 1946, and is often described as a movement rather than a genre:

> Its origins can be traced to numerous sources including pulp novels, 1930s gangster films and the German Expressionist movement. Classic noir films are concerned with the seedy underbelly of America, where crime, corruption and sexual desire intermingle. Recurrent characters include the world-weary detective, the beautiful but deadly femme fatale and her male dupes. Visually, its most striking feature is the use of low-key, high contrast lighting, which evokes the immorality of the world explored within the film. (Jermyn, 2000: 249–250).

French film noir was heavily influenced by the American tradition, but it is clearly a French take on the genre: 'Crime here is not safely cordoned off in the underworld of gangsters who feature so largely in American cinema: the milieu of these French films is not *the* milieu, but an integral part of society' (Buss, 1994: 27–28). This contrast echoes the previously discussed difference between French and Anglophone crime writing where French crime fiction writers placed greater emphasis on the social context of their narratives. Film noir was the cinematic equivalent of the roman noir. It wasn't a cosy detective puzzle but a gritty fiction in an urban setting with a cynical outlook on life, with a particular American ethos (Buss, 1994: 13).

In 1955 Raymond Borde and Étienne Chaumeton published *Panorama du film noir américain*. They were the first critics to analyse in detail the influence of American film noir beyond the simple comparisons with the hardboiled fiction writers such as Hammett and Chandler. There are three main sources that Borde and Chaumeton highlight as influences of American film noir. Firstly, Borde and Chaumeton argue that film noir popularised the use of images of psychoanalysis in its portrayal of characters haunted by traumatic memories,

and fighting with suppressed desires. Secondly, they note the influence of European cinema traditions, in particular expressionism's experimental use of lighting, which became iconic in film noir. Thirdly, many of Hollywood's prominent film noir directors such as Otto Preminger, Billy Wilder, Fritz Lang, and Robert Sidomak were European émigrés (Gorrara, 2003: 43).

1.5 The Birth of the *Néo-Polar*

The events of May 1968 were the catalyst for a new generation of French roman noir writers, who had a significant impact on the genre and created their own modern style of *roman policier* or *polar* (an often-used slang term) referred to as the *néo-polar*. There are obvious links between a renewed interest in left-leaning politics in the early 1970s in France and the arrival of the *néo-polar.* The rise of the militant left-wing and the general profound sense of disillusionment and anger at the state of Western democracy was the result of a decade of repressive morality and political conformism (Gorrara, 2003: 57). Daeninckx is keenly aware of the significant influence of the post-68 era on the Inspecteur Cadin series: '*L'Inspecteur Cadin est un pur produit des questionnements de l'après-soixante-huit. Il résulte de cette idée qu'il était possible de changer l'état du monde, à quelque place qu'on se situe'* (Daeninckx, 1997b: 13) [Inspecteur Cadin is a pure product of the questions raised after '68. He was born from the idea that it was possible to change the state of the world no matter where we were]. Daeninckx has also added that the series also reflects the disappointment of the May '68 movement not reaching its full potential and ultimately its failure:

> *Le personnage de l'inspecteur accompagne en fait le mouvement de balancier dont l'amplitude va de mai 68 à novembre 1989. Des rêves insensés qui illuminèrent Prague, Paris, Mexico, San Francisco, aux utopies fourvoyées, trahies, qui s'étaient symboliquement figées dans le béton berlinois. Cadin est une personne déplacée* [. . .] *Mu par un sentiment de justice que ne freine nulle raison personnelle ou d'état, sa présence révèle les trahisons sur lesquelles se fondent les pouvoirs. J'ai commencé à écrire Le Facteur fatal, qui constitue la « biographie » de Cadin, à l'automne 1989 alors que la « Révolution de Velours » effaçait le « rideau de fer ». Je savais que son extrême sensibilité au monde ne pouvait être motivée par les seuls événements extérieurs, et qu'elle devait également répondre à une nécessité intime.* (Daeninckx, 1997b: 14–15)

> [The character of the Inspecteur mirrors the swing of the pendulum from May '68 to November 1989. Enormous dreams that light up Prague, Paris, Mexico, San Francisco, to the betrayed and lost utopias which were symbolically stuck in the Berlin Wall. Cadin is a displaced person [. . .] Driven by a sense of justice which never stops for any personal or State reason, his presence reveals the betrayals on which the authorities are based. I began to write *Le Facteur fatal,* which consisted of a 'biography' of Cadin, in the autumn of 1989 when the Velvet Revolution broke the Iron Curtain. I knew that his extreme sensibility to the world could not be motivated solely by exterior events and that they also had to respond to personal need.]

La Lutte de Larzac [The Fight for Larzac movement] is key to understanding the context of the Inspecteur Cadin series. This people-led movement highlights tensions between the French state and Regionalist movements during the 1970s and 1980s in France, which coincides roughly with the timeline of the Cadin cycle. *La Lutte de Larzac* was a ten-year long non-violent struggle led by a diverse group that included local farmers and national and international activists who protested against the extension of an existing military base on the Larzac plateau in the south-west of France. Larzac was a rare coming-together of French rural inhabitants, the urban working classes and their young left-leaning activists, pacifists, ecologists and even local religious leaders. Despite initial tensions between Catholic farmers and Marxist activists, both groups quickly united through 'mutually transformative learning processes about the changing nature of revolution, the importance of local struggles, internal colonization and ecology' (Gildea and Tompkins, 2015: 582).

One of the most notable aspects of the Larzac protests was that it was a small, isolated community in France that sought to give a voice to similar struggles in distant French territories such as the Kanak people in New Caledonia. There was a very international and global element to what the people of Larzac were trying to achieve. It is significant to note that Daeninckx has also attempted to give a voice to the Kanak people in his novel *Cannibale* (1998) and its sequel *Le retour d'Ataï* (2001).[31] Moreover, direct comparisons can be made between the Larzac movement and plot elements from the first novel in the Cadin series, *Mort au premier tour*, which captures this atmosphere of rural communities and left-leaning urbanites uniting to protest against the threat of nuclear power.

[31] See Charles Forsdick "Siting Postcolonial Memory: Remembering New Caledonia in the Work of Didier Daeninckx" (2010).

In our interview, Daeninckx stated that it was primarily from the 1970s onwards that he became interested in French crime writers, principally Jean-Patrick Manchette, but also to a lesser extent the works of Frédéric Fajardie, Jean Vautrin, and Jean Amila. The following sections discuss these four authors in turn to contextualise Daeninckx's position alongside some of his greatest influences and nearest comparators.

1.5.1 Jean-Patrick Manchette (1942–1995)

Jean-Patrick Manchette who championed the innovative form of the *néo-polar* is also believed to have coined the term. This new form differed from older noir novels because the *néo-polar* was used by young French writers who wanted 'to investigate their own social reality with inventive and highly politicized narratives' (Gorrara, 2003: 58). Sue Neale has described Manchette as being part of a new generation of French crime writers 'who openly use their fiction as a weapon to criticize social, political, and gender inequalities' (2010: 300). The *néo-polar* aimed to expose State corruption. One of the major innovations of the genre was to move away from the representation of crime as individual deviancy towards a sustained analysis of the State as a criminal institution (Gorrara, 2003: 58). Ernest Mandel best described the *néo-polar* as the genre that accuses the political system of being the murderer: '*l'assassin c'est le système*' (1986: 163) [the system is the killer]. Manchette used the roman noir to denounce capitalism. For example, the novel *Le Petit bleu de la côte ouest* (1976), in keeping with the tradition of French crime fiction drawing inspiration from other types of literature, was largely influenced by Perec's classic post-modern novel *Les Choses* (1965) which also highlighted the rise of consumerism in French society: 'In a manner reminiscent of Perec's novel, Manchette describes their home as a succession of objects that define their values and identity' (Gorrara, 2003: 65). The influence of Perec on Daeninckx's own writing forms part of my analysis of *Le Bourreau et son double* in Chapter Three.

1.5.2 Frédéric Fajardie (1947–2008)

Frédéric Fajardie was one of the most prominent writers associated with the *néo-polar* in the early 1970s. The ethical remembrance of France's history in Fajardie's works echoes Daeninckx's own approach to the roman noir. For example, the ghosts of World War II return to haunt a Normandy village in Fajardie's *La Theorie du 1%* (1981), when a serial killer dressed in a Wehrmacht uniform seeks revenge upon its inhabitants some fifteen years

after the war. As the novel includes a Black police officer who is dubbed "the Black Devil" by some of the villagers at the centre of the investigation, Fajardie 'generates comparisons between wartime prejudice and present-day racism and raises the ethical spectre of France's colonial excesses' (Hutton, 2013: 120).

Like Manchette, Fajardie was part of a wave of writers who were known for their militant past and having sympathy for dissident left-wing groups active during the late 1960s and early 1970s (Gorrara, 2003: 58). Daeninckx, as already discussed, is also known for his left-wing politics. However, in contrast to his predecessors, Daeninckx appears more wary of political groups and has been a vocal critic of the PCF which he abandoned in 1981 (Atack, 2014) and became active in anti-racist movements such as "*Touche pas à mon pote"* [Don't touch my buddy] and *Ras L'Front* (an association of left-wing political groups that united with the aim of combatting the far-right group *Le Front national*) (Compard, 2010: 18).

1.5.3 Jean Vautrin (1933–2015)

David Platten cites Jean Vautrin's *Billy-ze-kick* (1974) as 'one of the most enduring examples of the *néo-polar*' (Platten, 2011: 141).[32] The novel's narrative concerns the activities of a serial-killer, the eponymous Billy-ze-kick, who preys on prostitutes from the *banlieue*. Vautrin incorporates the high-rise H.L.M. buildings into the plot to such an extent that they could be considered as a lead character.[33] The H.L.M. buildings dominate the novel and are seen as 'a perpetual, oppressive presence, fortresses surrounded by an army of electricity pylons, towering over the regimented hordes below' (Platten, 2011: 141). There are striking similarities between Jean Vautrin's novel and Daeninckx's texts, which also capture the epic failure of the development of the peripheral city *banlieue,* as in *Meurtres pour mémoire* and *Le Bourreau et son double* from the Inspecteur Cadin series but also *Lumière noire* (1987) and *Métropolice* (1985b). The *banlieue* is a recurring setting throughout Daeninckx's long body of work. A more recent novel, *Artana! Artana!* (2018), deals explicitly with corruption in the local governments of the *banlieue*.

[32] Jean Vautrin is the penname of Jean Herman and is a clear evocation of Balzac's criminal mastermind of the same name.

[33] *Habitation à loyer modéré* is the Francophone equivalent of "rent-controlled housing".

1.5.4 Jean Amila (1910–1995)

Typically for Daeninckx, who is constantly concerned with exposing hidden elements and facts, during our interview he felt compelled to draw attention to Jean Amila, a French crime fiction author he considered to have been somewhat overlooked or in his own words 'passé inaperçu' (Daeninckx and Gleeson, 2017). Amila was the second French author to be co-opted into the *Série noire* by Marcel Duhamel. In his first contribution, Amila was forced to anglicise his name to John in line with Duhamel's marketing of the series and France's post-war obsession with American culture (Platten, 2011: 110). Two works of Amila's are significant in the context of Daeninckx's writings. Firstly, *La Lune d'Omaha* published in 1964 (nearly twenty years after the D-Day landings, just as *Meurtres pour mémoire* was written twenty years after the events) is considered a significant milestone in French crime fiction. It was the first roman noir to deal extensively with the themes of memory, place, and identity. Amila discusses the politics of commemoration through the novel, and confirmed his place in the wave of *néo-polar* writers actively writing against State oppression. Secondly, there are clear similarities between *Contest-flic* (1972), arguably Amila's best-known work, and Daeninckx's Cadin novels. *Contest-flic* is a fictionalised retelling of *L'affaire Dominici* in 1952 when former British-spy Jack Drummond and his young family were murdered while holidaying in the French Alps. The plot revolves around the conspiracy of a State-sponsored cover-up of the murders, which was entirely feasible in the context of the Cold War. While this narrative may be unoriginal, the novel successfully critiques the power and sensationalism of modern media (Platten, 2011: 115). Overnight a sleepy Alpine town makes national headlines, and Amila emphasises how the media reduces the murder suspects to the status of exhibits in a zoo: '*On n'est pas des bêtes fauves dans la cage! Tout le monde vient nous voir, comme au zoo!'* (1972: 15) [We are not wild beasts in a cage! Everyone comes to see us like a zoo]. This work strongly resonates with Daeninckx's approach to writing, as Amila's novel blends fact and fiction through the roman noir. However, a significant difference is that the reader would already be very aware of the true crime that Amila is fictionalising, whereas Daeninckx, particularly in his breakthrough with *Meurtres pour mémoire*, was using the genre to highlight histories that were for the most part hidden from the public.

1.5.5 The End of the *Néo-Polar*

The social revolution that Manchette and others had hoped for following May '68, ultimately failed to materialise to any great extent. The decline of the Left following the 1981 general elections was a huge disappointment. This also mirrored the fall of the *néo-polar* which was superseded by a new form of *roman noir engagé*: 'Left-leaning detective fiction writers of the 1980s were less concerned with revolution than investigating specific social and political issues in France, such as nuclear power and environmental pollution, immigration and social deprivation, crimes of State and recent French history' (Gorrara, 2003: 65).

It is significant to note that, while Daeninckx sees himself coming from the *néo-polar* movement, he stressed to me that he used roman noir as a vector to examine historical aspects of French society as well as more contemporary concerns:

> *Moi j'avais aussi d'autres interrogations, qui étaient quelque part simplement sociétales mais aussi historiques. Donc, le roman policier me semblait quelque chose de très important pour interroger la société française sur des choses qu'elle refusait de dire et ne voulait pas voir. J'ai des lecteurs qui viennent sur mes livres par surprise. Je pense qu'ils voient très vite la différence avec des romans d'évasion.* (Daeninckx and Gleeson, 2017)
>
> [I also had other lines of enquiry, some which were simply societal but also others that were historical. So, I considered the crime novel to be something very important for interrogating French society about things that it refused to see. I have readers who come across my books by chance. I think that very quickly they will see the differences between my work and books of pure escapism.]

This chapter's brief overview of the genre contextualises my study of Didier Daeninckx for readers unfamiliar with crime fiction. The wide variety of literary influences discussed in this chapter serves as a touchstone for arguments made throughout all the chapters to come. Some sections of this chapter are relevant to my general discussion of the series. For example, this chapter's discussion of May '68 and the Larzac protest contextualises the entire series. However, certain parts of this chapter resonate more strongly with individual texts from the series. The influence of folk culture on crime fiction is particularly pertinent to my discussion of *Le Géant inachevé* and *Mort au premier tour*. Likewise, the influence of the *néo-polar* is most relevant to my analysis of *Le Bourreau et son double* and *Meurtres pour mémoire*. Manchette and others of the *néo-polar* generation laid the foundations for

Daeninckx, who then used the roman noir to fictionalise historical fact, in order to unearth hidden moments from France's painful past (Neale, 2010: 303). Daeninckx's blending of fact and fiction to expose the harsh realities of French history is perhaps most obvious in *Meurtres pour mémoire*, which is analysed in the next chapter.

Chapter Two: *Meurtres pour mémoire*

2.1 Delphine pour mémoire: Initial Inspirations

In this novel, having been transferred to Toulouse, Inspecteur Cadin investigates the mysterious murder of Bernard Thiraud. Cadin's investigation leads him to probe the murder of Bernard's father, Roger, who had been killed twenty years previously in Paris on 17 October 1961 during a peaceful demonstration against the Algerian War that was brutally repressed by the police. Eventually Cadin discovers how the two murders are linked: Roger had been researching the World War II internment camp at Drancy, in the suburbs of Paris, and twenty years later his son Bernard followed in his father's footsteps. It transpires that André Veillut, a senior politician who administered the camp at Drancy, ordered the killings of the Thiraud men in order to keep his collaboration with the Nazis secret.

For those familiar with French history, it is clear from the brief summary above that *Meurtres pour mémoire* is based on *L'affaire Papon.* The text is a thinly veiled fictionalised retelling of the crimes committed by French government official Maurice Papon, a high-ranking civil servant who only in the 1990s was finally convicted of crimes against humanity for his role in deporting Jews from the Bordeaux region of France during World War II. The character of André Veillut is used as an avatar for Papon by Daeninckx to remind the reader that Papon was also responsible for the massacre of hundreds of peacefully protesting Algerians on 17 October 1961, while he was chief of Parisian police. The important work by Jim House and Neil MacMaster in their book, *Paris 1961: Algerians, State Terror, and Memory* (2006), emphasises that the massacre should not be viewed as a single event but as part of a 'larger cycle of violence and killings spread over weeks if not months' (p. 13). Police violence was not restricted to brutal attacks on columns or groups of protesters on 17 October but continued unabated for about a week during the transport and detention of arrested Algerians (House and MacMaster, 2006: 129). Their research notes the huge scale of the police operation; for example, over 3,000 Algerian men were detained in the courtyards of police stations throughout Paris on the night of 17 October before being transported to temporary internment camps around the city (House and MacMaster, 2006: 129). During the period of 17–19 October, the police interned over 14,000 men. This required the requisitioning of RATP buses and the Palais des Sports, the Stade de Coubertin

and the Beaujon Stadium. It is certain that many Algerians died of beatings and gunshot wounds within these requisitioned stadia (House and MacMaster, 2006: pp. 129–132).[34]

Papon's career captures two of the greatest taboo issues in French society: the German Occupation and French collaboration with the Nazi regime, and France's (de)colonial wars—in this case the Algerian War. The *Archives de Paris*—the archives of the *Ville de Paris*—were central to Papon's conviction, as documents held there provided evidence of his role in deporting Jews from the prefecture where he served as Secretary General.[35] These archives are not only central to the plot but were also important resources for Daeninckx while he was researching the period for his novel. It was while consulting the newspaper archives at the *Bibliothèque Nationale Française* (1982) for information on a separate but related instance of State-sponsored violence—the 1962 Charonne metro massacre—that Daeninckx first became aware of the significance of October 1961.[36]

Initially Daeninckx had intended to write a novel about the Charonne massacre on 8 February 1962. The day before the massacre, a five-year-old girl, Delphine Renard, was injured by an OAS bomb intended to kill André Malraux, France's first *Ministre d'État chargé des Affaires culturelles* [Minister for Cultural Affairs]. Daeninckx was twelve years old at the time and vividly remembers the infamous photo of Delphine who had been seriously injured and blinded by the bomb (Maricourt and Daeninckx, 2009: 127). Alistair Horne termed the bombing in which Delphine Renard was injured, 'the fatal error' of the OAS. It even shifted the opinion of some newspapers that were usually *pro-Algérie française* [in favour of Algeria remaining under French control] which ran headlines intoning 'France wants no more of this' (2012: 194). The Charonne massacre occurred the following day, at an anti-OAS protest in response to the assassination attempt. Nine protesters were killed in a brutal suppression

[34] RATP (*Régie autonome des transports parisiens*) is the bus network of public transport in Paris.

[35] It is worth noting the efforts of the archivists Brigitte Lainé and Philippe Grand who testified in defence of the historian Jean-Luc Einaudi, who was subject to trial for defamation by Maurice Papon. Lainé and Grand were central to Einaudi's successful defence. However, they were later reprimanded by archive officials who deemed their actions to have been partisan. For more information, see their interview with Perrier and Saint Saëns (2000).

[36] The fact that Daeninckx was initially familiar with Charonne but unaware of 17 October aligns with House and MacMaster's argument that the decision of the communist left to commemorate Charonne eclipsed the memory of 17 October. See "The marginalization of 17 October 1961 (1961–1968)" in *Paris 1961: Algerians, State Terror, and Memory* (2006: pp. 242–264).

by French police at the Charonne métro (Soucheyre, 2018: Online). All were CGT members, and eight of the nine were also members of the PCF.[37]

Suzanne Martorell, a neighbour and friend of Daeninckx's mother, was one of those killed that night. In an interview as part of the *Réalisons L'Europe* educational project, Daeninckx stated that, with both his parents and grandparents alive at the time, that this was his first experience of death: '*Quand les adultes sont rentrés de la manifestation, ils ont dit que Suzanne a été tuée et elle a été tuée par Papon*' ("Projet Action Média", 2011: Online) [When the adults returned from the protest, they said that Suzanne was killed and that she was killed by Papon]. While *Meurtres pour mémoire* is not explicitly autobiographical, Daeninckx clearly draws on these events, which had a significant impact on his life:

> *Vingt années plus tard, j'ai voulu revenir sur ces émotions vives d'enfant de banlieue, me souvenir de cette peur, le soir, quand ma mère nous quittait, mes sœurs et moi, retrouver d'énigmatiques personnages qui participaient au comité anti-OAS du quartier. Le bouquin devait s'appeler 'Delphine pour mémoire'.* ("Projet Action Média", 2011: Online)
>
> [Twenty years later, I wanted to return to those powerful emotions of a banlieue child, to remember the fear when our mother left us in the evenings, my sisters and I, and to recover those seemingly mysterious characters who were part of the neighbourhood's Anti-OAS committee. The book was to be called '*Delphine pour mémoire*'.]

Despite changing the original title, and despite the lack of any explicit reference to her name in the text, Daeninckx has embedded in *Meurtres pour mémoire* a very subtle reference to Delphine, which can be easily recognised by readers who are already familiar with her story. In the text, Pierre Cazes was part of a Special Forces squad assembled to eliminate the most active leaders of the FLN and the OAS.[38] Cazes is manipulated by Veillut who informs him that he must assassinate Roger Thiraud under the false pretence that he is a member of the FLN. During his interview with Cadin, Cazes recalls witnessing an OAS bombing that clearly

[37] The *Organisation Armée Secrète* [Secret Army Organisation] (OAS) was a paramilitary organisation in France that carried out acts of terrorism with a view to preventing Algeria's Independence from France. For a comprehensive view of the origins of the group, see Horne (2012: pp. 498–505). *Confédération Générale du Travail* [General Confederation of Labour] (CGT), founded in 1895, is one of the largest national trade union syndicates in France. Until the 1990s the CGT was very closely aligned to the PCF. Historically the CGT was closely linked to the PCF. Only as recently as the 1990s did the syndicate seek to distance itself.

[38] This is based on *Service Action,* a special forces squad—founded by General Paul Aussaresses in 1946. *Service Action* played a murderous role overseas in Algiers with the killing of Maurice Audin, Larbi Ben M'Hidi, and Boumendjel, but also in Paris (House and MacMaster, 2006: 87).

evokes Delphine: *'J'ai vu des visages d'enfants ravagés par les bombes . . . Vous avez déjà entendu les cris de mômes de cinq ans rendus aveugles, dans le seul but d'instaurer la terreur ?*' (*MM*: p. 155) [I've seen children's faces torn to shreds by bombs . . . Have you ever heard the screams of five-year-old kids blinded, solely to terrorise people? (Heron, 1991: 108)]. This is an example of how Daeninckx's texts cater for a variety of readers, often weaving in historical details that would be most familiar to people of his own generation.

While researching in the archives, it took Daeninckx a while to grasp the scale and volume of the police repressions in France during the Algerian War; however, little by little his focus shifted from the Charonne metro station in February 1962 to the Bonne-Nouvelle metro station 1961 ("Projet Action Média", 2011: Online). In May 1981, the satirical newspaper *Le Canard enchaîné* exposed Papon's crimes to the nation, which brought the infamous politician sharply back into Daeninckx's focus. Between the second round of presidential elections, the newspaper published copies of documents signed by Papon that proved he deported at least 1,690 Jews from the Bordeaux region to the Drancy transit camp near Paris from 1942 to 1944 (*Libération*, 2007: Online).[39] While there is no clear equivalent of *Le Canard enchaîné* in Daeninckx's text, their role of sourcing the incriminating Vichy documents has been taken on by Roger Thiraud (and subsequently by his son Bernard).

Daeninckx has stated that Papon's career had a direct influence on the structure of the novel: '*Un seul homme et trois périodes, vingt ans—une génération—entre chacune d'elle; la structure du roman est là'* (Jacquelin, 2001: 5) ['One man and three eras, twenty years—a generation—between each of them, that's the structure of the novel]. In other interviews, Daeninckx has said that the novel's structure is also a reference to Alexandre Dumas' *Vingt ans après* (1845) [Twenty years after], the sequel set twenty years after *Les Trois mousquetaires* (1844) [The Three Musketeers] ("Projet Action Média", 2011: Online). Daeninckx has regularly praised the works of Alexandre Dumas. He argues that Dumas' works have often been dismissed as mere popular fiction, while he considers *Le Comte de Monte-Cristo* (1844) [The Count of Monte-Cristo] one of the greatest books ever written (Daeninckx and Maricourt, 2009: 108). It is significant to note that Daeninckx draws parallels

[39] While *Le Canard enchaîné* (founded 1915) is mainly a satirical newspaper, it also has a long history of investigative journalism. This includes probing of the circumstances around the Stavisky Affair in 1934 and more recently the scandal involving the bogus employment of French politician Francois Fillon's wife Penelope. For an extensive overview of the history of *Le Canard enchaîné* see Laurent Martin, 2001.

between the way Dumas' works had been 'pigeon-holed' as *sous-littérature* [B-literature] and the literary prejudice frequently shown towards crime fiction (Daeninckx and Maricourt, 2009: 108). One reason for Daeninckx's admiration for one of the most popular French novelists of the nineteenth century could be linked to Dumas' blending of history and fiction.

2.2 Unorthodox Openings

While Daeninckx may have borrowed the general structure of the novel from Dumas' *Vingt ans après*, *Meurtres pour mémoire* is a truly original piece of work. Michael Rothberg has noted that the text has quite an unorthodox opening for a crime novel, insofar as 'the mystery one would have expected to be uncovered is in fact the starting point of the plot' (2009: 274). The novel begins in the *bidonville* [shanty town] of Nanterre and follows three Algerians as they prepare to travel to the centre of Paris and take part in the demonstrations against a racist and illegal curfew. Under the orders of Papon, Parisian police imposed a curfew on French Muslims in retaliation for a series of FLN terror attacks targeting the police. [40] The curfew prohibited the Algerian community (and anyone presumed to be Algerian) from staying out after dark, gathering in cafés or bars in the evening or even driving a car (Thénault, 2008: 173).[41] However, 'by the end of the second chapter all of the characters through whom those events have been focalised are either dead—murdered outside the Bonne-Nouvelle metro station—or arrested and taken to the makeshift camps in sports stadiums at the edge of the city' (Rothberg, 2009: 275).

Margaret Atack has described *Meurtres pour mémoire* and Daeninckx's early novels as hybrid texts that have both roman noir and *néo-polar* elements. On the one hand Cadin embodies the typical roman noir police detective investigating cover-ups and corruption within the police force. On the other hand, Daeninckx's narrative style, which combines 'a third-person exterior point of view that switches abruptly mid-chapter to Cadin's first-person narration', is more closely associated with the *néo-polar* (Atack, 2014: 275). The switching of narrators is most obvious in the opening sections of *Meurtres pour mémoire*.

[40] *Front de Libération Nationale* (FLN) was the independence and anti-colonial paramilitary force during the Algerian War.

[41] For a thorough analysis of the 1961 curfew and Papon's role in its development, see Sylvie Thénault, 2008 : "*Des couvre-feux à Paris en 1958 et 1961 : Une mesure importée d'Algérie pour mieux lutter contre le FLN ?*".

Like Rothberg, Atack also notes the cinematic methodology of the opening sections of the novel:

> As with the classic disaster movie, we follow three individual figures heading to a particular and probably disastrous event, a narration suffused with irony as they plan for a peaceful demonstration and their immediate or long-term futures, neither of which they will enjoy. (Atack, 2014: 275)

While Rothberg is correct in stating that none of these characters explicitly reappear in the novel, Cadin does see their likeness in footage captured by the Belgian television crew on the night of the massacre: '*Un plan rapproché détailla le visage d'une jeune femme algérienne, bientôt masqué par un uniforme noir. Quand le policier s'effaça, un visage d'homme remplaçait celui de la femme; la matraque s'abattit* (*MM*: p. 106) [A close-up plainly showed the face of a young Algerian woman, soon blanked out by a black uniform. When the policeman stood back, a man's face replaced the woman's; a truncheon came down (Heron, 1991: 73)]. As such, like Cadin, the reader is haunted by these images of the three Algerians from the opening sections.

The perspective shifts back and forth from the young Algerians to Roger, '[*un*] *jeune professeur de latin et d'histoire dont la femme attend un enfant'* (*MM*: p. 18) [{a} young teacher of Latin and History whose wife is expecting a child' (Heron, 1991: 6)], who finds himself in the wrong place at the wrong time.[42] Throughout the course of the novel, it is revealed that the avid historian had been writing a monograph on the local history of his hometown of Drancy. A secret fan of all things sci-fi and fantasy, Roger is making his way home from an afternoon screening of Robert Wise's *Le Récupérateur de cadavres* (Wise, 1945) [*The Body Snatcher*] just as the CRS arrive on the scene.[43] During the chaos of the massacre, Roger Thiraud is shot and killed at point blank range. The film is an adaptation of a Robert Louis Stevenson short story based on the real-life murderers William Burke and Edmund Hare, two infamous nineteenth-century criminals. In Edinburgh in 1828, Burke and

[42] Chadia Sambers-Samadi suggests that Daeninckx based the figure of Roger Thiraud on Alain Dewerpe. Dewerpe was a friend of Daeninckx, and taught history at *L'École des hautes études en sciences sociales* [School for Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences] (one of the most prestigious graduate schools in Paris). His mother was killed during the Charonne massacre (2015: 86). Dewerpe has also published a substantial book on the massacre called *Charonne, 8 février 1962: Anthropologie historique d'un massacre d'État* [Charonne, 8 February 1962: An anthropological History of a State Massacre].

[43] The *Compagnies républicaines de sécurité* (CRS) are a security unit of the French police who are mostly tasked with crowd control and riot control.

Hare murdered sixteen people and sold their corpses to the university to be used as cadavers for dissections. As Gorrara points out, the French translation of the original English film title includes a subtle irony not found in the original title: 'the recoverer of cadavers' primes the reader for Cadin's investigation where he becomes a type of '*récupérateur de cadavres'* (2003: 83). Interestingly, Cadin is associated with the *suspension* of burial or disposal of bodies in his first scene in the novel, when the Inspecteur attempts to police a tense demonstration between mourners and gravediggers who are striking for better work conditions (*MM*: pp. 44–45) (Heron, 1991: 27). As Gorrara notes, this 'functions as a *mise en abyme* of the project of the book' (2003: 85).

One effect of Daeninckx's choice to begin with what one would have thought to have been the climax of the book is that the reader is immediately made aware of the events of the night of 17 October 1961 and drawn into the rest of the narrative. Charles Forsdick notes that an unknown critic in *Le Matin* was the first to refer to Daeninckx as '*le Michelet de la Série noire*' (2001: 341). The nineteenth-century French historian Jules Michelet played an important role in making history available to the working classes by writing history books in popular and accessible forms. One of Michelet's most celebrated works is his book on Joan of Arc, *Jeanne d'Arc* (1845), which famously begins with the climax of the narrative, with the French heroine being burned at the stake. This almost instantaneous revelation hastens the pace at which the plot unfolds, something which Daeninckx has stated was one of his primary objectives when writing his own book: *' . . . ce qui a déterminé l'écriture de ce livre, en premier lieu, c'est tout simplement l'envie de composer un bon polar, un de ces bouquins que l'on prend un soir et qu'on lâche vers deux heures du matin sur le mot ''fin'''* (Daeninckx and Maricourt, 2009: pp. 128–129) [. . . what determined the style of the book in the first place was simply the desire to write a good thriller. To write one of those books that you pick up one evening and don't let go of until two in the morning reading the words 'The end']. The comparison with Michelet also emphasises their shared goal of making French history accessible to the people through writing, as they both straddled generic boundaries that separate historians and literary writers.

During our interview, I asked Daeninckx whether he thought the page-turner element of his fiction could distract the reader from the politically engaged nature of his texts. He responded by firstly stating that he felt that any reader who would come across his works

would quickly realise his style: '*J'ai des lecteurs qui viennent sur mes livres par surprise. Je pense qu'ils voient très vite la différence d'avec des romans d'évasion* (Daeninckx and Gleeson, 2017) [I have readers who come upon my books by accident. I think they quickly see the difference between my work and books of pure escapism]. However, later in the interview he asserted that he pays little attention to how his books are received:

> *Q: Pensez-vous à votre public quand vous écrivez ?*
>
> *R: Je ne me suis jamais posé la question du public. Je m'en fiche complètement. Je m'en fiche aussi de la réception de mes romans : que ce soit lu par 150 personnes ou 150 000 personnes, ce n'est pas du tout quelque chose qui me travaille. Je n'ai jamais non plus eu dans la tête l'idée d'amoindrir la critique sociale pour avoir plus de lecteurs.* (Daeninckx and Gleeson, 2017)
>
> [Q: Do you think about your audience when you write?
>
> A: I never ask myself that question. I do not care at all. I do not care about how any of my novels are received by the public. Whether it is read by 150 people or 150,000 people, it's not something that motivates me. I have never considered the idea of reducing social criticism to have more readers.]

On first appraisal, these statements may seem somewhat contradictory, however, Daeninckx is simply stating that he chooses to write a gripping form of crime fiction that incorporates a strong element of social critique.

The death of Roger Thiraud is a strong example of Daeninckx's style of writing that blends fact and fiction, as his murder is based on the actual police killing of a Breton bargeman, Guy Chevalier, outside the Rex cinema where he was queuing to see John Lee Thompson's *The Guns of Navarone* (Einaudi, 1991: 154). This detail is also a significant example of intertextuality used throughout the text. *The Guns of Navarone* (Thompson, 1961) is based on a best-selling novel of the same name by Alistair MacLean (1957), which centres on the Allied forces campaign to capture Greek islands in the Aegean Sea.[44] On one level, Daeninckx's reference to the film makes the reader question romantic retellings of World War II, as in Thompson's film and MacLean's novel. On another level, the reference demonstrates how Daeninckx's fictions often depend on historical parallels. *Meurtres pour*

[44] The film is part of a cycle of high-budget films about World War II such as *The Bridge on the River Kwai* (1957), *The Great Escape* (1963) and *Where Eagles Dare* (1968). Ironically, *The Guns of Navarone* is based on the Dodecanese campaign (8 September to 22 November 1943), which resulted in one of the last significant German victories in World War II.

mémoire clearly parallels aspects of World War II with the Algerian War, via the embedding of the roots of a contemporary crime in earlier events (Forsdick, 2001: 343). The intertextual reference to *The Guns of Navarone* functions as a backdrop to the events of 17 October 1961, demonstrating French society's obsession with an earlier war that enables them 'to ignore a contemporary colonial war, despite the sudden outbreak of what Cadin calls "*un Oradour en plein Paris"* (*MM*: p. 81)' (Forsdick, 2001: 344). Oradour refers to the notorious and savage burning of a village and killing of its six hundred inhabitants by retreating German troops during the liberation of France on 10 June 1944. Crucially, the French national assembly passed a law in 1946 classifying the village of Oradour as a historic monument and ruling that the ruins of the village were to be preserved as a living memorial for eternity. Daeninckx's other uses of intertextuality in the novel are discussed in more detail in section "2.7 Meurtres pour Muriel: Intertextual Ghosts".

The originality of Daeninckx's approach to the genre is clear from the opening sections of *Meurtres pour mémoire*. As discussed in the preceding chapter, Daeninckx never gives a physical description of Inspecteur Cadin, nor indeed of any of the main characters in the series. Similarly, there is little physical description of the three Algerians at the centre of the first two chapters. However, in contrast to the faceless Inspecteur Cadin and his colleagues, Daeninckx emphasises the humanity of Saïd Milache, Kaïra Guelanine, and Lounès Tougourd by giving them strong individual identities. For example, Saïd works in a printshop, likes watching the French football teams and '*les relations avec ses compagnons de travail restaient amicales tant qu'il s'efforçait de fermer son esprit à leurs incessantes remarques*' (*MM:* p. 12) ['he got on quite well with his workmates so long as he forced himself to make light of their endless comments' (Heron, 1991: 1)]. Kaïra is a young Algerian woman who, since the death of her mother, takes care of her six younger siblings and the household: '*Les achats, la cuisine, le contrôle des leçons, le ménage, l'entretien des vêtements, l'approvisionnement en bois, en charbon* . . . (*MM*: p. 22) ['Shopping, cooking, overseeing schooling, housework, laundry and repairs, wood and coal supplies . . . ' (Heron, 1991: 9)]. However, she is also described as a feminist and wanting to break free from the burden of tradition and does so by wearing trousers for the first time (*MM*: p. 22) (Heron, 1991: 10). As shown in Chapter Four on *Le Géant inachevé,* Daeninckx is interested in writing strong

female characters, portrayed in a more positive light than the femme fatale characters typical of hardboiled crime fiction.

Daeninckx has stated that he wrote the first chapters of *Meurtres pour mémoire* in reaction to the anonymisation of the victims by the authorities and to write against the disappearance of their memory. In 1986, on the twenty-fifth anniversary of 17 October 1961, Daeninckx published a short article in the Algerian press which discussed how he was inspired to write about the countless murdered Algerians, while consulting newspaper archives from the period:

> *J'ai suivi dans les journaux du temps passé la litanie des morts anonymes : chaque jour de ces terribles mois d'octobre et novembre 1961, à la page des faits divers, quelques lignes non signées : « Les cadavres de trois Algériens ont été repêchés au pont de Bezons. La police a ouvert une enquête. » [. . .] Articles anonymes sur des anonymes. On leur avait ôté la vie, on effaçait leurs noms. Et c'est en réaction à cette amnésie volontaire, organisée, que les premiers chapitres de mon livre titré Meurtres pour mémoire se sont appelés Saïd Milache, Kaïra Guelanine, Lounès Tougourd.* (Daeninckx, 2011: Online)
>
> [I followed in the old newspapers the litany of anonymous deaths. Every day of those terrible months of October and November in 1961, on the page of minor news items, some unsigned lines: 'The corpses of three Algerians have been found at Pont de Bezons. The police have opened an investigation.' { . . . } Anonymous articles about anonymous people. They had been deprived of their lives; their names were erased. And it is in reaction to this voluntary and organised amnesia that the first chapters of my book entitled *Meurtres pour mémoire* are called Saïd Milache, Kaïra Guelanine, Lounès Tougourd.]

In this article, Daeninckx reiterates that on the night Maurice Papon had not killed one or two hundred anonymous Algerians but ' . . . *Belaïd Archal, pour mémoire. Achour Boussouf, pour mémoire. Fatima Bédar, pour mémoire* . . . ' [. . . in memory of Belaïd Archal, in memory of Achour Boussouf, in memory of Fatima Bédar . . .] and dozens of more real people who need to be identified so that they cannot be forgotten (Daeninckx, 2011: Online).[45] Daeninckx discovered the names of these victims while consulting the archives at the national library and Beaubourg. Several weeks after the original article was published in the Algerian press, the article was republished in *Actualités de l'Émigration* and in *L'Humanité.* On 17 October 1986, Daeninckx received a letter from Louisa Bédar, the sister

[45] It is important to clarify that the names of the Algerian characters in *Meurtres pour mémoire* are only inspired by the names of real people, and not the names of actual victims.

of Fatima Bédar, thanking him for naming her sister. Daeninckx recounts the story in its entirety in an essay titled "*Fatima pour mémoire*". He states that the French police had told the family that Fatima's death was a suicide when in fact she, like countless other Algerians, was thrown into the river Seine by the CRS on the night. This is tangible proof that Daeninckx's works have been somewhat successful in not only highlighting the crimes of the French state but also in giving the victims back their humanity and identities. There are clear parallels between Daeninckx's work of identifying the Algerian victims from 1961 and that of Serge and Beate Klarsfeld who listed the names of the Jews deported from Vichy France to Nazi concentration camps in *Mémorial de la déportation des Juifs de France* (1978). By listing the names of the deported Jews, the Klarsfelds made it possible for families to accurately remember their loved ones and emphasised the human cost of the immense tragedy of the Holocaust. However, Daeninckx takes this further and uses fiction to give greater identity to victims. This resonates with Pine's argument that in the absence of a completely comprehensive State-led investigation into historical traumas it is the remit of public works, such as literature, to remember (2011: 25).

"*Fatima pour mémoire*" was first published as an afterword of a *bande dessiné* Daeninckx wrote in collaboration with the illustrator, Mako, called *Octobre noir* (2011), published on the fiftieth anniversary of 1961.[46] It may be useful to consider *Octobre noir* as a type of companion text to *Meurtres pour mémoire* as it deals with the same events but from the perspective of the Algerian community that get caught up in the massacre. However, Gorrara notes that, in contrast to *Meurtres pour mémoire*, this text emphasises the legitimacy of the protesters' demonstration rather than portray them as silent victims of State crimes. The narrative is told from the perspective of the main protagonist Mohand/Vincent, the adult son of a first-generation migrant family to France:

> By night, he is Vincent, the lead singer of The Gold Star, a rock and roll band tipped for success and on the verge of winning a bandstand style competition. By day, he is Mohand, the brother of Khelloudja, the son of recent immigrants to France, living in the Saint-Denis district of Paris in cramped rooms above a café. (Gorrara, 2018: 136)

[46] "*Fatima pour mémoire*" was also published by the online investigative opinion journal *Mediapart*, as part of its 17 Octobre 1961, *17 Écrivains se souviennent* series in 2011.

Vincent/Mohand reluctantly participates in the demonstration against the curfew on 17 October 1961 and survives the massacre as the police mistake him for being part of the majority population due to his 'resemblance to—and indeed deliberate appropriation of—an American style that saves him but comes to haunt him as an indictment of his lack of intervention' (Gorrara, 2018: 136). The remainder of the text that follows centres on the protagonist's attempts to track down his sister, Khelloudja, who has disappeared since attending the demonstration unbeknownst to her family. Daeninckx makes it clear to the reader that Khelloudja is a fictionalised version of Fatima Bédar, as she shares the distinctive visual trope of her long plait of hair (Daeninckx et al, 2011: 35). The text's epilogue includes a photograph of Fatima allowing the reader to see her similarities to the fictional Khelloudja (Daeninckx et al, 2011: 56). This echoes the shift in Daeninckx's approach to the massacre in *Meurtres pour mémoire* where Papon is the central figure to *Octobre noir*'s focus on the victims rather than perpetrators.

Daeninckx's essay is followed by another document which lists almost four hundred of the *'morts et disparus à Paris et dans la région parisienne'* (Daeninckx et al*,* 2011: pp. 57–59) [dead and disappeared of Paris and the greater Paris area] compiled by the French historian Jean-Luc Einaudi, author of the meticulously researched and pioneering text *La Bataille de Paris* (1991).[47] The *bande dessiné* also includes a four-page long preface by French historian Benjamin Stora, a specialist in the history of the Algerian War. Gorrara notes that by 'foregrounding the comic's commemorative function via the date of publication, its paratextual endorsements, and the identification with one family's tragedy, Daeninckx and Mako align the comic with the viewpoint of the lost or disappeared of 17 October 1961 and an "anarchival" account of events' (2018: 136). The "anarchive", as conceptualised by Lia Brozgal, 'is not located in any single text but rather designates a set of works that evince an archival function and that, together, produce an epistemological system in oppositional relationship to an official archive' (2014: 50). As described by Gorrara in her analysis of *Octobre noir*, the anarchive 'is constituted by texts that violate the rules (anarchy), are

[47] Einaudi is one of the most important historians to have written about October 1961. In 1997, he served as a witness during Papon's trial for collaborating with the Vichy regime 1942–1944, by testifying to the police violence he sanctioned as former chief of police in October 1961. In 1999, Papon brought a failed defamation case against Einaudi for an article the historian wrote in 1998 in *Le Monde "En octobre 1961, il y eut à Paris un massacre perpétré par des forces de police agissant sous les ordres de Maurice Papon"*.

produced outside official channels, and challenge the hegemony of State-sponsored narratives. Produced from the margins, the "anarchive" reflects what cannot—or has not yet—been seen or recounted' (Gorrara, 2018: 133). Gorrara uses Brozgal's concept to emphasise how Daeninckx and Mako draw on a range of archival materials to reject the established political authorities' version of events. It is also worth noting that Brozgal's conceptualisation of the anarchival chimes with Pine's argument on the role of literature (and other works of art produced outside official channels) in challenging State-sponsored narratives.

Gorrara also argues that *Octobre noir* represents a major shift in narrative from *Meurtres pour mémoire* as 'there is no appropriation of the history and memory of the demonstration by a figure of State authority, in this case Inspector Cadin. Indeed, the complicity of the French state is assumed, and questions of State perpetration and culpability are of secondary importance' (2018: 136). This shift is clearly indicative of the greater recognition received of the State's role in the massacre since the publication of *Meurtres pour mémoire* and demonstrates the important role Daeninckx's text has played in French society. *Meurtres pour mémoire* and *Octobre noir* are significant contributions to French remembrance culture because, as part of a wider body of films and texts that reference 17 October 1961, they have helped create what Michel Laronde terms 'a series of "*effets d'histoire*" that contribute to the reclaiming of forgotten French colonial history' (2007: 139).[48]

2.3 Adaptations of *Meurtres pour mémoire*

The instant popularity of *Meurtres pour mémoire* with the public and critics upon publication led to its adaptation for French television the following year, in 1985. The book was adapted to screen as part of the *Série noire* television series created by Pierre Grimblat.[49] The series adapted a total of thirty-six books as telefilms from the series of the same name which were broadcast between 1984 and 1991. Differences between the book and its adaptation are immediately noticeable. It is disappointing to note that, despite Atack's aforementioned praise for the filmic quality of the opening chapters of the novel that echo the format of the classic disaster film, Laurent Heynemann's adaptation omits

[48] See Michel Laronde's essay *"Effets d'Histoire. Représenter l'Histoire coloniale forclose"* (2007).
[49] *Meurtres pour mémoire*, Season 1 Episode 9 of *Série noire,* was first broadcast in 1985.

Daeninckx's retelling of the massacre. The adaptation fails to incorporate the narrative of the three young Algerians who fatally get caught up in the police violence. This is problematic as the victims of the massacre consequently inhabit an even more minor role in the adaptation.

In place of the massacre, the film opens with a new scene, not in the original text, which shows Veillut receiving a medal for supposedly aiding the French Resistance during World War II, meaning that viewers are instantly introduced to the villain. This is a major but perhaps necessary change from the novel where the reader does not meet Veillut until over halfway through the novel. There are several possible reasons for the omission of the book's first two chapters. Firstly, the tone of the adaptation is not the same as the original. Heynemann's film places increased emphasis on the love story between Cadin and Claudine: *'L'enquête principale, au début du téléfilm, est une quête amoureuse'* (Daeninckx and Maricourt, 2009: 132) [The main focus at the beginning of the telefilm is the love story]. However, the adaptation does briefly depict the massacre when Cadin recovers and watches the candid film footage of the night captured by the Belgian TV crew. Daeninckx has been notably pragmatic when discussing the screen adaptation and admitted that at the time he naively thought it was not possible for him to have a role in the rewriting of the text. However, despite some of the major differences between the text and its adaptation he was very happy that a telefilm focusing on 17 October 1961 was broadcast at prime time to between seven and eight million viewers (Daeninckx and Maricourt, 2009: pp. 132–133).

The next notable adaptation of the text was in 1991, when an illustrated edition of *Meurtres pour mémoire* by the artist Jeanne Puchol was published. There are a total of ninety black and white images which vary in style and form. For example, some of Puchol's images are depicted in comic book style using pen and ink while the surreal and historical scenes are more expressive and are created with charcoal and paint. Twenty-four of the images are spread over two pages. As the illustrated edition is only 248 pages long, it uses a relatively significant number of images.

Given that this chapter has highlighted the importance of archives in *Meurtres pour mémoire*, and the following section will examine books and print in text, it is worth examining their representation in Puchol's illustrations. The opening scene of Saïd finishing

work at the printers is the first image in the illustrated edition (Daeninckx and Puchol, 2011: 4 (Appendix A: Figure 1)). The third image runs over two pages and depicts a Renault 4CV passing banlieue factories (Daeninckx and Puchol, 2011: pp. 10–11 (Appendix A: Figure 2)). The outline of the factory and its boundary wall appears very similar to images of the huts used to house prisoners in Nazi concentration camps, enabling what Rothberg would see as multidirectional memory in the reader.

The subsequent images in the lead up to the massacre are used to reinforce the poverty of *la bidonville*. Puchol details the use of unorthodox materials to build low quality housing and also the rural nature of the environment by including visual allusions to farm animals, which are all in stark contrast to the city centre (Daeninckx and Puchol, 2011: pp. 15–18 (Appendix A: Figures 3–5)). Puchol's depictions of the massacre are graphic: blood spatters as Algerians are beat with batons, one corpse lies on its placard which reads '*paix négociations*' (Daeninckx and Puchol, 2011: 33 (Appendix A: Figure 6)) [Peace negotiations]. However, the representation of the CRS is by far the most striking element of the massacre images. The CRS are depicted as brutal and ultra-violent, and their uniforms, goggles and helmets make them appear more alien than human (Daeninckx and Puchol, 2011: pp. 28–29, 31 (Appendix A: Figures 7–8)). It is worth noting that, like Daeninckx, Puchol makes a notable effort to include historically accurate details of the night. Puchol accurately recreates the style of the buses used to transport the survivors of the massacre to internment camps around Paris (Daeninckx and Puchol, 2011: 34–35 (Appendix A: Figure 9)).[50] Importantly, the very same buses were used in the 1942 *Vel' d'Hiv* Roundup of Jews, and to move prisoners to the Drancy transit camp. Puchol's illustrations therefore add greatly to Daeninckx's novel, as this interconnection is not made explicit to the reader in the original text.

Puchol's representations of Cadin's dream sequence of Drancy are highly effective. She illustrates Cadin reading Thiraud's manuscript on the history of Drancy while in bed, however, the background of the image is the barbed wire fence and sentry post of the transit camp (Daeninckx and Puchol, 2011: 194 (Appendix A: Figure 10)). The subsequent image is a double page of ghostly-looking Jewish prisoners in Drancy. Puchol excellently

[50] *Mémorial de la Shoah*, the Holocaust museum in Paris, has photos of these buses being used during deportations in 1942. However, the buses used in the mass arrest were made famous by Joseph Losey's 1976 film *Monsieur Klein.*

captures the surreal nature of Cadin's subsequent nightmare of deportees and trains (Daeninckx and Puchol, 2011: pp. 196–197, 200 (Appendix A: Figures 12–13)). Another very striking image is her illustration of the archivist, Lécussan, confronting and attempting to shoot Inspecteur Cadin. This scene takes place on the banks of the Seine, a return to the initial crime scene of 17 October 1961. Puchol's illustration again references the image of the deportees and trains as the wall on the bank of the river appears to be very similar to the outline of train carriages and the foliage of the tree in the foreground suggests the figures of the deported prisoners (Daeninckx and Puchol, 2011: pp. 212–213 (Appendix A: Figure 13)). From her illustrations, it is evident that Puchol intuitively grasped Daeninckx's call for multidirectional memory as she clearly attempts to render this faithfully in a visual form.

2.4 Archived Assassinations, Archival Assassins

As mentioned, the newspaper archive played a significant role in Daeninckx's research. This is reflected not only in the larger plot of the novel but also more subtly with recurring references to newsprint, books, documents, archives and libraries. Daeninckx's extensive historical research in writing the novel is another example of his original approach to the genre. Umberto Eco's *The Name of the Rose* (1983) is an early instance of use of the library and archives in a crime novel.[51] In the same decade, *Meurtres pour mémoire* was the first novel in the roman noir style to use the archive to highlight State corruption and hidden crimes.[52] Both Roger's monograph and the archive play significant roles in the text as they are instrumental to Cadin's investigation. Importantly, the very first scene of the novel takes place in the printers, where Saïd (a victim of the imminent massacre) works, recalling Daeninckx's own previous experience as a printer while also gesturing to the importance of newsprint and the printed book (including fiction) in recording and remembering the past.

It is the archive that leads to Bernard Thiraud's death. Twenty years after the death of his father Roger, Bernard leaves Paris for a short research trip to Toulouse before a month's holiday in Morocco with his girlfriend, Claudine Chenet.[53] As he leaves Toulouse's town hall,

[51] Eco's post-modern murder mystery set in a fourteenth-century Italian monastery centres on the themes of semiotics, theology, and literary theory.

[52] See Lia Brozgal article "In the Absence of the Archive (Paris, October 17, 1961)" (2014) which examines the use of the archives in *Meurtres pour mémoire* and Mehdi Lallaoui's *Une Nuit d'octobre* (2001).

[53] Father-son relationships are a recurring theme in Daeninckx's oeuvre. Similar to *Meurtres pour mémoire,* in *La Mort n'oublie personne* (1989) a son pays with his life when the past of his father comes to haunt the

having spent the day researching dossiers at the prefecture's archives, Bernard is shot and killed at point blank range, mirroring the fate suffered by his father. Cadin's investigation later reveals that Bernard had been trying to complete his father's unfinished monograph about Roger's hometown of Drancy. During his research, Roger had uncovered the collaboration of a distinguished civil servant, André Veillut (the fictional representation of Maurice Papon), within the Vichy regime in the transportation of Jews from the Toulouse region to Drancy. In 1961, when Veillut first learned of Roger's research he hired a CRS agent, Pierre Cazes, to assassinate the young history teacher during the Algerian demonstration. Twenty years later when Veillut learns of Bernard's curiosity, he must kill Bernard himself to keep his past crimes hidden, as Cazes is now too ill. There are clear parallels between Thiraud's fictional monograph and Daeninckx's *Meurtres pour mémoire*. As mentioned in the Introduction, Daeninckx is from Aubervilliers, the working-class area to the north of Paris on which Courvilliers in this text is based, although he no longer lives there. *Meurtres pour mémoire* could thus be viewed as Daeninckx's attempt to write an historical account of events that were important for his hometown, similar to Thiraud's monograph, only in the form of a crime novel.

The Cazes chapter is another significant literary device that demonstrates the hybrid nature of *Meurtres pour mémoire*. Michelle Emanuel argues that the public exposé of Veillut's wilful collaboration is far more important than his being brought to justice by his death at the hands of the veteran Cazes (2006: 168). In solving Bernard's murder, Cadin must also solve Roger's murder, making connections between the two crimes—which at first seem unrelated—while encountering strange people, false leads, and more deaths along the way. With Cadin's arrival, the narration changes to first-person, except for one chapter towards the end, written from the point of view of Cazes as an old man. With regard to genre, Koenraad Geldof argues that:

> *Les récits policiers de Daeninckx ne se conforment donc que très partiellement aux lois actantielles du genre : leur enjeu fondamental est moins la solution d'une quelconque énigme que la volonté de commémorer le passé ou plutôt . . . Le passé que l'Histoire officielle ignore, efface, refoule ou dégrade au rang*

present (Gorrara, 2003: 80). A significant section of *Itinéraire d'un salaud ordinaire* (2006) centres on the main character's troubled relationship with his son.

> *de fait divers insignifiant. L'écriture implique pour Daeninckx un acte de témoignage.* (2000: 149)
>
> [The police stories of Daeninckx thus conform only very partially to the narrative laws of the genre: their fundamental stake is less the solution of any enigma than the will to commemorate the past or rather. . . The past that official history ignores, erases, represses or degrades to insignificant facts. Writing implies for Daeninckx an act of testimony.]

Emanuel notes that Veillut is not a typical noir villain, as he has committed crimes against humanity as opposed to the more orthodox crimes of blackmail or infidelity that feature frequently in the genre (2006: 167). Pierre Verdaguer argues that Daeninckx uses the individual criminal (Papon) not to highlight a single deviant act of evil but as a vehicle to address the collective guilt of French society:

> *L'être vil . . . n'agit pas simplement pour son propre compte mais au nom de toute une nation, et même selon les directives de l'État auquel il a juré fidélité. Le mal s'en trouve d'autant plus aggravé, puisqu'il devient affaire de société. Les histoires de Daeninckx ne cessent, de ce fait, de poser la question de la responsabilité de l'homme au sein de sa communauté.* (Verdaguer, 1999: 251)
>
> [The vile being . . . does not act merely on his own behalf but in the name of an entire nation, and even according to State directives to which he has sworn his allegiance. The evil is all the more serious, since it has become a societal issue. Daeninckx's stories continually ask the question of the responsibility of man to his community].

In 2006, Daeninckx returned to the theme of career-driven Vichy collaborators in his novel *Itinéraire d'un salaud ordinaire,* which chronicles '*quarante ans d'histoire française, depuis la rafle du Vél' d'Hiv jusqu'à la candidature de Coluche à l'élection présidentielle de 1981 : Occupation, Libération, décolonisation, affaires politico-mafieuses, mouvements étudiants, grèves ouvrières, répression policière . . .'* (Daeninckx: excerpt from cover) [forty years of French history, from the roundup of the *Vel d'Hiv* to the candidacy of Coluche in the 1981 presidential election: the Occupation, the Liberation, decolonisation, mafia-like political affairs, student movements, workers' strikes, police repression . . .]. There are striking similarities between the protagonist of *Itinéraire d'un salaud ordinaire,* Clément Duprest, and *Meurtres pour mémoires'* antagonist André Veillut, as they both are driven to climb the social and political ranks. In the first part of the book, *Au Service de l'état* [At the Service of the State], Duprest joins the French police in 1942 and becomes part of the new *brigade des*

propos alarmistes [Alarmist Unit] created by the German occupation and the Vichy regime. In the second part, *Au Service de la république* [At the Service of the Republic], similar to Veillut and Papon, Duprest manages to have a successful career for decades in post-war France's governments by forging his involvement in acts of resistance during the war. The most marked similarity between both characters is the banality of their evil and the lack of any political motivation behind their actions: '*Je suis policier . . . Je ne fais pas de politique, mon boulot, c'est de faire respecter la loi . . .* ' (Daeninckx, 2006: 69) [I'm a police officer . . . I don't do politics; my job is to make sure laws are abided by . . .]. In *Meurtres pour mémoire*, Cadin describes Veillut as an ardent civil servant, uninterested in politics, eager to be as efficient as possible at his job:

> *En fonctionnaire zélé, Veillut a suivi les instructions du gouvernement de Vichy. Il a scrupuleusement organisé le transfert des familles juives vers le centre de regroupement de Drancy. Ni par conviction politique, ni par antisémitisme, mais tout simplement en obéissant aux règlements et en exécutant les ordres de la hiérarchie.* (*MM*: pp. 210–211)
>
> [As a zealous bureaucrat, Veillut followed the Vichy government's instructions. He scrupulously administered the transportation of Jewish families to the transit centre at Drancy. Not out of political conviction or anti-Semitism, but just by obeying the rules and carrying out the orders of the hierarchy (Heron, 1991: 150)].

Michael Rothberg argues that the emphasis of 'Veillut as an exemplary figure of the banal, death-dealing bureaucrat' (2009: 278) resonates with Hannah Arendt's famous account of Adolf Eichmann in her publication *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil* (1964).[54] Rothberg also notes that this fictionalised portrayal of Papon as a non-ideological perpetrator has been more recently contested by scholars. Indeed, Richard Golsan makes it clear that Papon was headhunted for the role of chief of Parisian police as his past experiences overseas proved his ability and success at fighting the violence of independence movements in the colonies with State-sponsored violence. Golsan's 1998 article is one of the first scholarly works to examine *Meurtres pour mémoire*. It is unclear as to why scholars had not already published material on Daeninckx's breakthrough text given that it was

[54] Adolf Eichmann was a German-Austrian Nazi SS officer and one of the main co-ordinators of the Holocaust in charge of managing the logistics of transporting Jews to concentration camps. Eichmann escaped to South America after the war. However, in 1960 he was captured by Mossad in Argentina and brought to trial in Jerusalem for war crimes. The trial was widely publicised, and he was executed in 1962.

already fifteen years old at that point and had been well received by both critics and the public in France. In her book, *Répression des manifestants algériens: La nuit meurtrière du 17 Octobre 1961* [Oppression of Algerian Protestors: The Murderous Night of 17 October 1961], Chadia Chambers-Samadi comments on the delayed impact of the novel and argues that in the early 2000s the publication of educational resources on the novel which facilitated the teaching of the text on the French *baccalauréat* curriculum led to increased social awareness of the massacre (2015: 86). However, it is quite possible that in 1997 when Maurice Papon finally stood trial after fourteen years of legal battles there was renewed interest in the novel. It could also be argued that the clarity brought about by Papon's sentencing would also have made it easier to teach the novel. Golsan's article is unique as it was published during Papon's trial and as a result he could only speculate whether the Vichy official would be found innocent or guilty for his alleged crimes against humanity. Published only one month before the end of Papon's trial, Golsan captures the anticipation surrounding the event. This demonstrates the value of Daeninckx's crime novel as a significant historical document before, during, and after the trial of Papon.

Golsan offers great detail on Papon's career and outlines his extended periods as a colonial administrator in Morocco and Algeria 'between the Liberation and his assumption of duties as prefect of Paris police in 1958' (1998: 159). Golsan makes it clear that Papon learned his craft in the colonies and earned himself a reputation as being someone willing to use violence to counter any colonial uprisings. In 1954, Papon served as Secretary-General of the Protectorate of Morocco. This period was marked by anti-European riots, pillaging and the murder of European nationals. The situation was further complicated by acts of terrorism carried out by French nationals against the native population. However, Papon led the police during this time and was made an officer of the *Ouissam alaouite* (a Moroccan military decoration) in recognition of 'services rendered to Morocco in executing his exalted functions' (Golsan, 1998: 159). As Papon is the overarching villain of the Cadin series, his experience as a colonial administrator must be remembered in any analysis of the series.

Many officials who, like Papon, had worked in the colonies were deployed to regional provinces of France as the French state began to retreat from some of its colonies. The *mission civilisatrice* [civilising mission] which civil servants and State officials had propagated in its overseas colonies (and previously in Alsace during the interwar period) was again

reproduced in the provinces to counteract regional independence and ecological movements such as La Lutte de Larzac.[55] Historians such as Herman Lebovics have described how, upon their return, these well-educated civil servants, such as Émile Biasini, were repurposed by the French government to bring Paris to the provinces (2004).[56] This was done with a complete disregard for regional cultures: 'Biasini and his team set to work giving *their* provincials national, that is Parisian, culture at its highest level. No room for amateurs or celebrations of local arts. No democratic initiatives allowed' (Lebovics, 2004: 81).[57]

2.5 Human Failures: Criticisms of the PCF and *L'Humanité*

Right-wing figures in French society such as Papon are not the only political group to be heavily criticised in *Meurtres pour mémoire*. The Left's response to 17 October 1961 is also scrutinised by Daeninckx. In the opening sections of the text, the author uses subtle references to the PCF, and their journal *L'Humanité,* an essential organ of the party, to place the left-wing party in the background of the lead up to the massacre.[58] Daeninckx highlights the proximity of the *L'Humanité* building to one of the bloodiest sites on the night.[59] In her article from 2014, Margaret Atack noted that the communist newspaper offices, situated on the Boulevard Poissonnière directly opposite the Rex cinema, is an under-remarked site in *Meurtres pour mémoire* (p. 277). Indeed, in Jeanne Puchol's illustrations the Rex Cinema features prominently in several panels, yet *L'Humanité* is not depicted.

The main reason Daeninckx repeatedly refers to the PCF in the early sections of the text is to be critical of their response to 17 October 1961 and the Algerian War more generally.[60] Daeninckx alludes to the success of the PCF when it was at its height of popularity in the 1920s and 1930s by referencing some of the party's most famous members. Thiraud often frequents the café situated underneath the paper's office, where he regularly sees some of '*les plus illustres figures du Parti Communiste. Thorez, Duclos, même Aragon venaient ici se*

[55] *La Lutte de Larzac* is discussed in detail Chapter One: The Birth of the Néo-Polar and referenced again in Chapter Five: Nuclear Politics.
[56] Émile Biasini is best known for sourcing the modernist architect I.M. Pei to radically renovate and expand the Louvre in the early 1980s.
[57] The chapters on *Le Géant Inachevé* (1984a) and *Mort au premier tour* (1997a) examine to what extent Daeninckx depicts the colonisation of France's regional cultures such as Flanders and Alsace respectively.
[58] *L'Humanité* was founded by Jean Jaurès in 1904. In 2009, Daeninckx wrote a book for "Ceux qui on dit non", part of Actes Sud Junior collection of educational texts for children, called *Jean Jaurès: 'Non à la guerre'.*
[59] The chapter on *Le Bourreau et son double* explains in greater detail how Daeninckx has been critical of the *L'Humanité* and PCF for their lack of opposition to the Algerian War.
[60] See *The French Communist Party and the Algerian War* (1991) by Danièle Joly.

restaurer entre deux réunions ou attendre que leur article arrive au marbre' (*MM*: p. 18) [the most illustrious names in the Communist Party. Thorez, Duclos, even Aragon came here for a break between meetings or while they were waiting for an article to be set]. The reference to Aragon is worth noting as Daeninckx has commented on the marked effect of Aragon's surrealist works on his writing.[61] For example, the influence of surrealism on *Meurtres pour mémoire* is most obvious in Cadin's dream sequence, previously discussed in relation to Jeanne Puchol's illustrations.

In the text, when the café opposite starts to close down as the protestors arrive, *L'Humanité* follows suit: '*En face, le journal, mieux équipé, abaissait un rideau de fer sur sa façade'* (*MM* p. 28) ['Better prepared, the newspaper office opposite lowered a metal shutter on its frontage'(Heron, 1991: 14)]. Daeninckx implicates the party in the violence by noting their refusal to shelter protestors from the massacre. However, this is perhaps not made obvious enough to the reader on first appraisal. The focus is on the figure of the racist theatre director who draws the police's attention to dozens of Algerians who have tried to hide in the backstage area. This theatre manager and the passer-by who witness the police brutality first-hand refuse to condemn the violence despite Roger's protestations. They even argue that the protestors were deserving of the vicious repressions: '*Ils l'ont bien cherché, lui dit un passant'* (*MM*: p. 34) ['They were asking for it, said a passer-by' (Heron, 1991: 19)]. This scene illustrates the work of House and MacMaster which argues that as victims of State violence, Algerians 'were unlikely to solicit much public sympathy; their social class and ethnic origin left them at the bottom of the sliding scale of moral outrage' (2006: 184). During this period of the Algerian War, 'there was arguably an increasing polarization of opinion with larger numbers against the continuation of the war (of which a minority were, in turn, actively against the war's repressive consequences) remaining isolated from the majority of French citizens who trusted de Gaulle to solve the Algerian "problem"'(House and MacMaster, 2006: 206). *Meurtres pour mémoire* shows how the indifference of French

[61] Daeninckx's *Le Géant inachevé* is strikingly similar to the title of Aragon's 1956 autobiographical poetry collection *Le Roman inachevé.* It is also worth noting that the most famous literary representation of the *L'Humanité* offices is in the opening of André Breton's *Nadja* (1926), which is one of the major works of the surrealist movement. The book is semi-autobiographical as it is based on Breton's ten-day affair with a mentally ill young woman whom he calls Nadja.

metropolitan public opinion towards Algerians that had existed for decades was a key contributory factor to the successful burial of the massacre.

Daeninckx's criticism of the inaction of *L'Humanité* is confirmed by the accounts of two of the journal's actual photographers, George Azenstarck and Serge Gautier, who were present in the newspaper's office on the night. These photographers managed to capture some of the iconic photos of 17 October:

> *Il se passe des choses très graves sur le Boulevard Poissonnière, juste devant le journal. [. . .] [Les photographes] entendent des coups de feu qui viennent de la gauche. Ils font éteindre les lumières pour ne pas se faire repérer par la police, s'allongent à plat ventre et prennent, parfois au téléobjectif, des images des massacres.* (Jauffret, 2011: Online)
>
> [There were grave going-ons on Boulevard Poissonnière just in front of the newspaper's office. [. . .] {The photographers} heard gunshots coming from the left. They turned off the lights so as to not alert the police, lay prone on the ground and took photos of the massacre (sometimes with a long lens).]

In 2011 *L'Humanité* stated, rather unapologetically, that they did not print the photos of the massacre taken from their balcony for fear of State reprisals: '*Les saisies, dont L'Humanité a maintes fois payé le prix, sont-elles, en cette période complexe, hyper violente, l'une des raisons de cette non-parution ?*' (Jauffret, 2011: Online) [*L'Humanité* had, several times, already been the victim of State seizures during this complex and extremely violent period. This is perhaps why they decided not to publish]. On the other hand, *L'Humanité*'s failure to publish these photographs immediately perhaps ensured their existence for years to come.[62]

During my interview with Daeninckx, he asserted that if a novel such as *Meurtres pour mémoire* had been published in the immediate aftermath of October 1961 it would without doubt have been seized by the police. He gave the example of Paulette Péju's *Ratonnade à Paris* (1961), published only fifteen days after the events it covers, which was banned and confiscated by the police.[63] It would be fruitful for future research to examine *L'Humanité*,

[62] It is important to note that while Azenstarck later released photographs he had managed to hide from the police, at the time of the publication of *Meurtres pour mémoire* these materials would not have been in circulation. In 2002, Azenstarck showed the photos he preserved in Faïza Guène's documentary *Mémoires du 17 octobre* (Brozgal, 2020: 19).

[63] It is also worth noting Jacques Panijel's documentary film *Octobre à Paris* (1962) which was immediately banned and not widely available until 2011 (Brozgal, 2014: 54). Similarly, William Gardener Smith's depiction

as being what Rothberg terms "an implicated subject" in the 17 October massacre, in other words, one of those who occupy positions of power or privilege when harm is occurring, without being themselves direct agents of harm. According to Rothberg's definition of the term, while implicated subjects inherit, contribute to, and benefit from regimes of domination they do not originate or control such regimes (2019: 1). In her article, Atack also noted how Daeninckx has drawn attention to this scene in the novel when discussing his split from the PCF: '*La cassure en 1982, avec le PC, se traduit par une phrase, quand au début de la manifestation, le rideau de fer de L'Humanité isole le PC des manifestants. Une image symbolique que peu de gens veulent voir'* (Jacquelin, 2001: 115) [The split in 1982 from the Communist Party translated itself into the novel in a single sentence, when at the beginning of the protest the shutters of *L'Humanité* are used to isolate the Communist Party from the protestors]. Although Daeninckx has been very critical of the PCF on 17 October in such interviews, perhaps he is not explicit enough on their failures in *Meurtres pour mémoire.* While there are no direct references to civilian photographers like Azenstarck or Gautier, their story is somewhat evoked by two elements of Cadin's investigation. Firstly, the Inspecteur gets a lead on a set of photographs taken on 17 October by a police photographer named Marc Rosner: 'However, this lead has long since grown cold: Rosner's photos had been seized by the police after he was indicted for professional misconduct—a story that appears that have been fabricated in order for the police to take possession of the incriminating documents' (Brozgal, 2020: 96–97). Secondly, just as Veillut is a fictional adaptation of Papon, it is perhaps best to interpret Daeninckx's Belgian TV crew as fictional manifestations of the photographers from *L'Humanité.* The Belgian TV crew are essential to the plot as they manage to film the massacre and even capture Roger's murder on film. However, similar to *L'Humanité*'s unpublished photos, the fictional video footage does not see the light of day until twenty years later when Cadin's investigation leads him to Brussels: *'La télé belge n'a rien diffusé'* (*MM*: p. 85) [Belgian television didn't [broadcast] it] (Heron, 1991: 59).[64]

of the massacre in his novel *The Stone Face* (1965) also predates Daeninckx's text but it has never been translated into French (Brozgal, 2014: 54). In contrast to these texts, *Meurtres pour mémoire* (its opening chapters in particular) was the first attempt in French-language literature to represent subjective experiences of the massacre (Brozgal, 2014: 46).

[64] For the sake of clarity, I have edited Heron's translation. Heron translated the French verb *diffuser* as "transmit" whereas given the context "broadcast" works better.

While the text is very critical of the media's response to 17 October, it is most critical of the severe and undemocratic nature of the French state's censorship. When the Belgian film director meets with Cadin he informs him that the French police had tried to buy the original and the copies of the footage of the massacre. However, management refused to hand over the reels :

> *La télévision belge a su se dégager du pouvoir politique bien avant ses homologues françaises . . . Personne ne fait pression sur les journalistes pour les contraindre à retirer un sujet.* (*MM*: p. 104)
>
> [Belgian television managed to free itself of political control long before its French counterparts . . . There's no pressure put on journalists that would compel them to keep something under wraps. (Heron, 1991: 72)]

A close reading also allows us to speculate on several reasons for Daeninckx's motivations for including this plot element. This passage strongly echoes the French censorship of Marcel Ophuls' film *Le Chagrin et la pitié* (1969). The four-hour documentary that examines the collaboration between the Vichy regime and Nazi Germany is one of the most significant cultural productions of French remembrance culture of World War II. The film had been banned from being broadcast on television until 1981 just two years before Daeninckx began writing *Meurtres pour mémoire*, and therefore was probably present in his consciousness at that time.

On the one hand, the decision to use a Belgian TV crew may simply be due to Daeninckx's wish to keep the plot as realistic as possible: it's highly unlikely that a French TV crew would have filmed the massacre had they been there. On the other hand, the deliberate involvement of a non-French body in the exposure of painful histories reinforces the role of foreign parties in revealing hidden French histories. The most notable example would be the American historian and political scientist Robert Paxton. Specialising in fascism, Vichy and Europe during World War II, Paxton's most significant contribution to French history is his 1972 book *Vichy France: Old Guard and New Order, 1940–1944.* In this important book, Paxton demythologised the notion that the Vichy government practiced "passive resistance" and demonstrated that they were willing collaborators with the Nazis. This argument is somewhat weakened by the fact that it is a stretch to consider Belgium a wholly foreign country to France given their shared histories and similar colonial practices. Indeed, it is

rather laughable to consider Belgium lecturing France on human rights abuses.[65] For example, Leopold II of Belgium (1835–1909), as personal ruler of the Congo Free State, was responsible for a number of atrocities including forced labour, mutilation, and brutalisation of the Congolese in order to loot their country of its mineral wealth. The Belgian Congo (not to be confused with the neighbouring French Congo nor the Portuguese Congo) was a Belgian colony until 1960. As such, it is worth considering the passage on a more ironic level with Daeninckx emphasising the sheer scale of self-censorship.

To use Silverman's term, the Boulevard Poissonnière is portrayed as a palimpsestic site in the text. Cadin dryly notes the Americanisation of the area: '*Peu de choses avaient changé depuis lors, à part l'affiche du Rex qui annonçait un dessin animé de Walt Disney et le self-service de L'Humanité qui s'était mué en « Burger King »*' (*MM*: p. 111) [Little had changed since then, apart from the poster at the Rex, now advertising a Walt Disney cartoon, and the cafeteria at *L'Humanité*, which has become a Burger King (Heron, 1991: 76)]. Cadin has several hours to kill in Paris before going to meet Madame Thiraud, so in the fashion of classic crime fiction he retraces the steps of the murderer and returns to the scene where Roger Thiraud was killed:

> *Je profitai des quelques heures qui me séparaient de ce rendez-vous pour flâner dans Paris. J'arrivai en avance sur les boulevards et je refis, presque inconsciemment, le trajet qu'avait effectué le C. R. S. vingt ans plus tôt, alors que les cinéastes belges le filmaient.* (*MM*: p. 111)
>
> [I used the time I had until this meeting to stroll around the city. I reached the boulevards ahead of time and, almost without thinking, I retraced the steps of the CRS man twenty years earlier, as filmed by the Belgian crew. (Heron, 1991: 76)]

This description, and particularly the verb "*flâner",* resonates strongly with Daeninckx's comments during our interview on his own understanding of the connections between history, memory, and the palimpsest:

> *Je marche beaucoup dans Paris et en banlieue et j'ai 68 ans, donc j'ai plein d'images d'anciennes balades. La ville pour moi est véritablement un*

[65] Similar to Vichy, with only rare exceptions, the Belgian government and monarchy provided maximum administrative collaboration throughout the Nazi occupation during World War II. See *La Belgique docile: Les autorités belges et la persécution des Juifs en Belgique durant la Seconde Guerre mondiale* (Debruyne et al, 2007).

> *palimpseste. Il y a des quartiers entiers où je me souviens qu'il y avait autre chose quand je me baladais. Mon ombre était sur des murs, il y avait des usines, il y avait des inscriptions, tout a disparu, et donc une grande partie des cordes de ma vie a totalement disparu. Mais moi quand je me balade il y a toutes ces choses-là qui sont présentes dans ma mémoire.* (Daeninckx and Gleeson, 2017)
>
> [I walk a lot in Paris and in the suburbs and I am 68 years old, so I have lots of memories of such walks. The city for me is truly a palimpsest. There are whole neighbourhoods where I remember there was something else when I was walking around. My shadow was on walls, there were factories, there were inscriptions, everything disappeared, and so many old connections to my life disappeared completely. But when I walk there are all these things that are present in my memory.]

Given Daeninckx's influences from surrealism already noted in this chapter, it is worth highlighting the significant similarities between this scene where Cadin is acting as a *flâneur* in Bonne-Nouvelle and André Breton's *Nadja* (1928). Breton's novel is often considered one of the greatest works of the French surrealist movement and, as in *Meurtres pour mémoire,* the Boulevard Bonne-Nouvelle is a key location in the text, which prominently references the *L'Humanité* bookshop. Chapter Three on *Le Bourreau et son double,* further explores Daeninckx's surrealist references, such as his subtle allusions to Robert Desnos.

In the novel's first description of the Boulevard Poissonnière in the lead up to the massacre, there is also a dense evocation of multidirectional memory that appears to have been missed by scholars to date. Roger Thiraud briefly speaks with the owner of a nearby café, whose memories of past riots are used to add several layers of history and to contextualise the imminent massacre. He vaguely remembers a night of violence from May 1958 '*au cours d'une démonstration de force gaulliste ou anti-gaulliste ; il ne se rappelait plus exactement*' (*MM*: p. 28) [during some demonstration or other, pro or anti de Gaulle; he couldn't remember which (Heron, 1991: 14)]. He also remembers the bombings of Paris during World War II. However, he specifically recalls the anti-Soviet riots—'. . . *en 1956 lors de l'attaque du journal L'Humanité*' (*MM*: p. 28) [. . . in 1956 during an attack on *L'Humanité* (Heron, 1991: 14)]—in response to the violent suppression of the Hungarian revolt by the Soviet Union. During these riots *L'Humanité*'s offices were burned by Parisians carrying French and Hungarian flags (Flanner writing as Genêt, 1956: 222).

It is difficult to gauge, especially for those unfamiliar with the author's politics, whether such a brief reference to the Soviet invasion of Hungary suggests that Daeninckx is being critical of Stalinism or the PCF.[66] The density and brevity of such historical references is typical of Daeninckx. On first reading it is easy to dismiss such references as overly compact and fleeting. For example, the text fails to mention the significant impact the brutal State-communist repression of the Hungarian people's revolt had on some of the French celebrity communists who are previously mentioned in the passage. There is no mention of how Aragon was a vocal supporter of the Hungarian insurrection nor that this was one of the events that led him to be more critical of Soviet totalitarianism. However, the ephemeral nature of some of Daeninckx's historical references may encourage some readers to become detectives and conduct their own research on these vaguely alluded to events.

Initially, the passage appears simply too condensed, that Daeninckx is trying to remember too many events in such a small space. However, as suggested by Lia Brozgal, upon closer inspection this could be viewed as a literary device where the researcher becomes an archive investigator who must assess which events to look into as a priority. Brozgal notes that the level of superfluous historical detail in *Meurtres pour mémoire* 'stimulates the researcher-archive relationship by confronting the reader with a mass of hierarchically undifferentiated elements and compelling her to select the ones to which meaning will be attributed' (2014: 47). It is clear from the amount of historical detail that Daeninckx weaves into his texts that he is catering for several types of readers. He caters for those who, similar to the above café owner, remember a wealth of historical events, as well as for those who are unaware of such histories.

In contrast to his measured criticisms of the PCF in *Meurtres pour mémoire*, during our interview Daeninckx was explicitly critical of their role in facilitating the Algerian War during the same period:

> *En 1956 le Parti Communiste gagne les élections avec le Parti socialiste et ils votent pour l'augmentation des crédits de guerre pour l'Algérie. Ils ont une*

[66] In our interview, Daeninckx cited Gavin Bowd's book, *L'Interminable enterrement: Le communisme et les intellectuels français depuis 1956* (1999), and stated that 'Pour [lui], la fin de la dynamique de libération que portait le communisme c'est 1968, avec l'invasion de la Tchécoslovaquie de Dubcek' (Daeninckx and Gleeson, 2017) [For [him], the dynamic freedom that Communism had to offer ended in 1968 with Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia].

> *responsabilité écrasante là-dedans. Dans les années qui suivent les travailleurs algériens se rappellent que la solidarité internationale a été mesurée.* (Daeninckx and Gleeson, 2017)
>
> [In 1956 the Communist Party won the elections with the Socialist Party and voted to raise funds for the Algerian War. They have an overwhelming responsibility in it. In the subsequent years, the Algerian Workers did not forget that the supposed international solidarity was limited.]

Daeninckx returned to, and further developed, this point in *Le Bourreau et son double* which I discuss in the next chapter.

2.6 Writings on the Wall: International Solidarity and Anti-competitive Memory

Daeninckx's evocation of the palimpsest in the text's epilogue is one of the most acclaimed aspects of the text. As Inspecteur Cadin and Claudine enter the Bonne-Nouvelle metro station they see Algerian workers replacing old billboard posters:

> Une dizaine d'ouvriers, grimpés sur des échafaudages étaient occupés à arracher les couches successives d'affiches qui recouvraient les panneaux publicitaires. Plus loin, au bout du quai, deux autres ouvriers grattaient les carreaux de céramique blanche à l'aide de spatules métalliques. En se déchirant, les papiers laissaient apparaître de vieilles réclames collées dix, vingt années auparavant. [. . .] Claudine s'arrêta devant un coin de mur. Elle me montra un carré de céramique à demi recouvert de lambeaux de papier jauni qui résistaient aux efforts d'un travailleur algérien. On ne distinguait qu'une partie du texte mais le sens ne s'en trouvait pas affecté :
>
> . . . est interdite en France . . . coupable à être condamn . . . cour martia . . . lemande . . . personne qui porte . . . sortissants jui . . . peine allant jusqu'à la mo . . . éléments irrespon . . . à soutenir les ennemis de l'Allemagne.
> . . . met en garde . . . coupables eux-mêmes et la population des territoires occupés
>
> Signé le *Militaerbefehlshaber Stulpnagel.* (*MM*: p. 216)
>
> [A dozen workmen on scaffolding were busy tearing off the layers of posters covering the advertising hoardings. Further down, at the end of the platform, two other workmen were scraping the white ceramic tiles with metal spatulas. As it was torn away, the paper exposed ten, twenty-year-old ads. [. . .] Claudine stopped in front of another bit of the wall. She pointed to a tile still partly covered in shreds of yellowing paper that an Algerian workman was having trouble getting rid of. Only some of the text was legible but its meaning was not lost:
>
> . . . prohibited in France . . . liable to be sentence . . . courtmart . . . Ger . . . Anyone carryi . . . Jews maximum sentence of de . . . irresponsible eleme . . . support for

the enemies of Germany. . . . iliance . . . guilty and the population of the occupied territories.

Signed: *Militaerbefehlshaber Stulpnagel* (Heron, 1991: 154).]

The image of Algerian workers uncovering the partial remains of posters from the Occupation is an effective metaphor for the interconnections between the round-up and deportation of Jews to concentration camps by French police during World War II and the State-sanctioned police massacre on 17 October 1961. However, Atack argues that this scene is not entirely the pure slice of history it appears on first viewing. Atack demonstrates that the above poster is also a fictional artefact and is in fact adapted from the 1941 poster banning all communist activity following the invasion of the Soviet Union. The poster banning the PCF, in both German- and French-language versions, has been well documented and is now available in online archives.[67] Therefore, readers like Daeninckx who have a detailed knowledge of the PCF will recognise that this scene also commemorates the persecution of French communist activists during World War II. Through correspondence with Atack, Daeninckx confirmed 'that he came across this poster in the metro during renovation work and drew upon it in combination with another relating to the deportation of the Jews' (Atack, 2014: 279).

Atack highlights that Daeninckx's manipulation of this poster recalls a similar subplot in the novel involving a group of Situationists. The Situationist International was a group of European radical social activists made up of avant-garde artists, intellectuals, and political theorists active from the late 1950s to the early 1970s. The Situationists clearly reflect Daeninckx's own interests as the group was inspired by the politics of anti-authoritarian Marxists and art movements such as Dada and surrealism.[68] One of the actions carried out by the Situationists group in the novel involves producing fake election posters (*MM*: pp. 139, 161) (Heron: pp. 96, 113). Another action the group carries out involves sending hundreds of fake notices to noteworthy people around Toulouse, instructing them to register their details with police as they are compiling un *fichier anti-terroriste* [an anti-terrorist index]. Atack highlights that this 'seems like a disruptive parody of the oppressive rationality of bureaucracy until one remembers that such sudden multiple convocations to

[67] For example, digitised copies of posters from World War II are available at www.archives.nantes.fr
[68] See Sadie Plant's *The Most Radical Gesture: The Situationist International in a Postmodern Age* (1992).

be "*fiche*" were part of the ordinary experience of the State for Algerians and earlier for Jews in France' (2014: 276). The epilogue's poster captures not only the major theme of the novel, but it is also representative of Daeninckx's overall blending of fact and fiction throughout the text. Atack rightly notes that the poster is as much grounded in the fictional as it is in the historical, and just as Veillut is a fictional adaptation of Papon, so too does Daeninckx use fiction to adapt the anti-communist poster (2014: 277).

Max Silverman states that epilogue's poster scene resonates with an earlier moment in the text when Cadin describes politically motivated graffiti that frequently appears on the wall opposite the police headquarters: '*Le mur situé face au commissariat résonnait depuis toujours des événements qui secouaient le monde'* (*MM*: p. 158) [The wall opposite the station had always carried echoes of events that shook the world (Heron, 1991: 110)]. This scene is a dense condensation of global conflicts and post-war France. The first piece of graffiti that Cadin notices is also the oldest —'LIBÉREZ HENRI MARTIN' [FREE HENRI MARTIN]— which makes reference to a French communist activist who, during the French Indochina war, was arrested by French military police *'pour s'être refusé d'envoyer les quelques centaines d'obus dont il avait la charge, sur les quartiers populeux d'Haiphong, au début des années cinquante'* (*MM*: p. 158) [for having refused to fire the several hundred shells under his control on the working-class districts of Haiphong, in the early fifties (Heron, 1991: 111)]. Before gathering local knowledge on who exactly this graffiti refers to, Cadin unsuccessfully attempted to glean the answer himself from a dictionary and came upon three of Henri Martin's namesakes:

> *Était-ce « Henri Martin 1830–1883 né à Saint-Quentin », historien français (Histoire de France 1833–1836). Membre du Collège de France. Ou « Henri Martin 1872–1934 né à Dunkerque », poète symboliste français « Le lys et le papillon » (1902). Prix de l'Académie Française en 1927 pour son recueil Légumes et crustacés. Ou encore « Henri Martin 1912–1967 né à Saint-Denis », architecte français. Rénovation de Paris. Projet du boulevard périphérique (Percée Martin).* (*MM*: p. 158)
>
> [Was it Henri Martin 1830–1883, born in Saint-Quentin, French historian (History of France, 1833 – 1836) member of the Collège de France. Or Henri Martin 1872–1934, born in Dunkirk, French symbolist poet, *The Lily and the Butterfly* (1902), Académie Française Prize in 1927 for his collection *Vegetables and Shellfish*. Or again, Henri Martin 1912–1967, born in Saint-

> Denis, French architect. Renovation of Paris. Project for the outer ring road. (Heron, 1991: 110)]

This graffiti is noteworthy as Daeninckx combines an evocation of the palimpsest, the writing on the wall is being continually renewed and replaced, with intertextual references. Citing a nineteenth-century French historian lends itself well to Daeninckx's project and sophisticated intertextual references such as those to symbolist poets are typical of the *néo-polar.* While sources identify the historian Henri Martin (1830–1883) as real, I could not find any evidence of the existence of the symbolist poet or the architect. Whether these historical figures are real or not, it does not matter as they are representative of Daeninckx and his interests. This blending of high and low culture is typical of Daeninckx's writing and effectively captures his interests in a nutshell.

However, more significant is the political resonance surrounding this description of the wall: '*le mur ne vivait pas qu'au passé'* (*MM*: p. 158) [But the wall didn't live only in the past (Heron, 1991: 111)] with references to the 1979 Iranian Revolution. Cadin notes that pro-Shi'ite graffiti – '*SOLIDARITÉ AVEC L'IRAN*' [SOLIDARITY WITH IRAN] — is later replaced with pro-Palestinian graffiti: '*D'autres peintres, en désaccord probable avec les thèmes khomeynistes s'étaient contenté de rayer « IRAN » et de le remplacer par « PALESTINE »* (*MM*: p. 159) [Some other graphic artists, probably in disagreement with Khomeini's outlook had simply crossed out 'Iran' and replaced it with 'Palestine' (Heron, 1991: 111)]. However, this is then erased and replaced by Zionist students who wrote "ISRAËL" in blue. This compact scene captures, rather well, Michael Rothberg's notion of competitive memory as we see various groups fighting for a space on the wall which is a metaphor for the perceived limited space of solidarity or remembrance. Daeninckx both demonstrates the competitive nature of memory of groups and attempts to counter it by offering an anti-competitive mode of memory. The end of this scene demonstrates how Daeninckx is critical of such a conservative approach to identity politics:

> *Un sage se manifesta en dernier lieu et mit tout le monde d'accord en masquant au rouleau les noms d'Iran, de Palestine et d'Israël. Pour faire bonne mesure, il badigeonna également la préposition « AVEC » ne laissant que le mot de « SOLIDARITÉ ».* (*MM*: p. 159)

> [Finally a genius came along and created unanimity by rollering over the words Iran, Palestine, and Israel. For good measure this person also whitewashed 'WITH', leaving only the word 'SOLIDARITY'. (Heron, 1991: 111)]

One of the reasons this text resonates so strongly with Rothberg's theory of multidirectional memory is that Daeninckx expands the scope of his novel beyond the memories of Vichy and the Algerian War to include other events such as the Israel-Palestine conflict.[69]

2.7 Meurtres pour Muriel: Intertextual Ghosts

Claire Gorrara has demonstrated that popular culture references are highly significant in Daeninckx's reconstruction of 17 October 1961. As mentioned, Roger Thiraud leaves the cinema after seeing *The Body Snatcher*, which not only primes the reader for the imminent police violence but, constitutes, as Gorrara argues, 'an intimation of Inspector Cadin's future investigation as he resurrects the life histories of the demonstrators to solve the crime' (2003: 83). Fiona Barclay argues that, 'in popular culture, to be haunted entails an obsession with an aspect of the past which cannot be let go, even possession by the spirit of the past whose presence signals "unfinished business"' (2013: 91). In her book chapter on Laurent Herbiet's film *Mon Colonel* (2006), which deals with the similar theme of the lasting impact of the Algerian War on French society, Barclay briefly cites the characters of Bernard in Alain Resnais' *Muriel ou le temps d'un retour* (1963) [Muriel, or the Time of a Return] and Madame Thiraud in *Meurtres pour mémoire* (1984b) as notable examples from French film and literature of figures that are haunted by a past. While Barclay introduces this idea, she does not discuss either of these texts as the comparison is tangential to her work. However, a brief comparison of Daeninckx's novel with Resnais' film demonstrates significant parallels between the texts as they both share the aim of recovering the disappearance of the Algerian War from the consciousness of French society.

Suzanne Gauch in her article on *Muriel,* demonstrates that the film is structured on an intercutting of narrative sequences related to two moments of catastrophic violence—the Second World War and the Algerian War (2001). The same is true of *Meurtres pour*

[69] See Olivia C. Harrison's *Transcolonial Maghreb: Imagining Palestine in the Era of Decolonization* for analysis of texts that compare and contrast the decolonization of the Maghreb with the history of Palestine. For example, Harrison examines how the trilogy of novels by Ahlam Mosteghanemi exhumes memories of postcolonial violence in Algeria and uses Palestine as a symbolic equivalent—a very recognizable avatar—of the Algerian revolution (2016: pp. 61–80).

mémoire. Despite the shared themes and their similar use of a layering of histories, scholars have not yet discussed Daeninckx and Resnais' oeuvres in a comparative manner. While it does not fall under the scope of this study to thoroughly compare Resnais' film with Daeninckx's fiction, a brief examination offers significant insight into the possible influence of *Muriel* on *Meurtres pour mémoire*.

The repetition of characters' names—Muriel and Bernard—is suggestive of intertextual references to *Muriel* by Daeninckx. The importance of nomenclature here has been overlooked by scholars to date. The eponymous Muriel, who never appears throughout the film, is an Algerian woman who has been tortured to death by a group of French soldiers. It is very likely that Daeninckx would have been familiar with this film, given the proximity of its subject matter with *Meurtres pour mémoire.* The film's main character, Bernard Aughain, was coerced into participating in this act of murderous violence. Muriel is also the first name of Madame Thiraud in Daeninckx's text. Traumatised by the murder of her husband, Muriel Thiraud becomes a recluse and rarely leaves her apartment. She is referred to as Muriel four times in the early sections of the novel (*MM*: pp. 19, 39, 40) (Heron, 1991: pp. 7, 23). As Barclay suggests, both Muriel Thiraud and Bernard Aughain are indeed haunted by the past. However, via the reference to Resnais' film, she may *also* represent the ghosts of murdered Algerians (Claudine Chenet—the fiancé of Bernard Thiraud—describes Muriel as a ghost (*MM*: p. 40) (Heron, 1991: 24). Bernard Aughain is haunted in perpetuity by the image of Muriel gazing at him while she was being tortured. Her gaze constantly haunts Bernard to remind him of his complicity in the crime of her torture (Gauch, 2001: pp. 51, 55; McMahon, 2016: 226).

Further comparison of the Thiraud and Aughain families demonstrate significant similarities between the texts' approach to memory. Firstly, Muriel Thiraud shares a vague resemblance to Bernard Aughain's stepmother, Hélène Aughain. For the majority of Resnais' film, Hélène is seen solely in her apartment where she is surrounded by antiques that she buys and sells. Hélène's obsessive memories of her love affair with a certain Alphonse, which ended abruptly in 1939, is an example of Resnais' palimpsestic layering of World War II in the film's narrative. Muriel Thiraud is obsessed with the memory of her husband in so far as that she cannot cope with the grief even twenty years later:

> *Elle ne quittait pratiquement jamais ce fauteuil dans lequel, vingt ans plus tôt, elle avait appris la mort de son mari. Seul l'enfant qui distendait son ventre lui avait interdit alors, de se laisser mourir. Dès que Bernard vint au monde, elle s'en désintéressa et vécut en recluse, dans les trois pièces de la rue Notre-Dame-de-Bonne-Nouvelle. Elle ne s'approchait jamais de la fenêtre pour ne pas apercevoir, trois étages plus bas, les marches de l'escalier où, un matin d'octobre 1961, on ramassa le corps de son mari.* (*MM*: p. 39)
>
> [She hardly ever left this armchair; in it, twenty years earlier, she had learned of her husband's death. Only the child swelling her belly had stopped her from taking her own life. As soon as Bernard came into the world, she lost interest in him and lived like a recluse in the three rooms at rue Notre-Dame de Bonne-Nouvelle. She never went near the window, so as not to see three floors below, the steps where one morning in October 1961, the body of her husband was found. (Heron, 1991: 23)]

Secondly, while there are only vague similarities between Bernard Aughain and Bernard Thiraud, both characters have lost their fathers and are investigating the Algerian War. However, unlike his namesake, Bernard Aughain is a *bourreau-victime* of the Algerian War who naively volunteered for duty before he was conscripted. Upon his return from Algeria, as indicated by the film's subtitle 'or the time of a return', this Bernard struggles with his responsibility for Muriel's killing. In an attempt to free himself of this guilt, similar to a detective, Bernard 'devotes all his time to documenting the recent torture-murder of Muriel by compiling proof from his memory, notes, sound recordings, innocuous home movie footage of French soldiers and Algerians, and photographs, he takes from Boulougne' (Gauch, 2001: 49). In *Meurtres pour mémoire*, Bernard Thiraud, uses the archives as a means of compiling evidence of Veillut's hidden crimes, just as his father had done. There are strong similarities between the ways characters from both texts attempt to gather evidence of past crimes. Resnais' film and Daeninckx's novel also share the aim of not only demonstrating the disappearance of the Algerian war from French society but noting its inevitable and painful resurfacing.

The most striking difference between the two texts is their representation of the Algerian victims of the war. Importantly, as previously stated, the eponymous Muriel of Resnais' film is never seen on screen; while her memory still haunts Bernard, she is invisible to the audience and a faceless victim of the Algerian war. On the other hand, Daeninckx attempts

to make visible the countless invisible and faceless victims of *la guerre sans nom* [the war without a name].[70]

Madame Thiraud exemplifies the phantoms cited by Colin Davis' in his analysis of Abraham and Torok's work on spectrality, discussed in the Introduction to the present study: Muriel's inability to cope with the death of her husband has a notable impact on her son Roger. Daeninckx uses this individual example of transgenerational communication of trauma as a metaphor to highlight the consequences of French society's inability to come to terms with the past. It is worth noting that Pine has highlighted the prevalence of ghosts and haunted figures in Irish remembrance culture.[71] Yet in contrast to Daeninckx's anti-competitive representation of the past, Pine notes that Irish remembrance culture 'falls short of full ethical remembrance'(2011: 153). She argues that this is because 'too often it has been politically and aesthetically shaped, or is still subject to the perils of amnesia'(2011: 153). Daeninckx's work, on the other hand, while aesthetically shaped (and in many ways political) tries hard to remember as many aspects of history as possible. It does so in an ethically-motivated attempt to unearth them and to show connections, for example by setting various manifestations of State repression alongside one another, as detailed above.

This chapter has elucidated not only the histories covered in the text but the history of the text itself including its various adaptations. We have seen how the discussion of the text's remembrance of 17 October 1961 changed in tandem with the evolution of Papon's trial. Similarly, by comparing Daeninckx's treatment of the same events in later works, I have highlighted how the author shifted from focussing on the perpetrators to giving a voice more directly to the victims.

This chapter has also expanded on Atack's analysis of the novel's subtle criticism of the PCF. The upcoming discussion of *Le Bourreau et son double* also examines Daeninckx's critique of the PCF and trade unions who, in his opinion, failed to properly represent immigrant workers and rally behind the antiracist movements of the 1980s. I have furthered Gorrara's intertextual examination of *Meurtres pour mémoire* by highlighting the similarities of

[70] The epithet *La Guerre sans nom* was coined by Bertrand Tavernier, in his 1992 documentary film of the same name on the Algerian War.

[71] See her chapter, "Haunted Pasts: Exorcising the Ghosts of Irish Culture" in Pine's *The Politics of Irish Remembrance Culture* (2011: pp. 163–182).

Daeninckx's text to Alain Resnais' film *Muriel*. Intertextuality is central to the next chapter in the discussion of the allusions to Georges Perec and French popular culture in *Le Bourreau et son double.* Daeninckx uses *Meurtres pour mémoire* to recuperate the identities of the victims of 17 October 1961 who had been deliberately lost (and locked in the archives) by the French state. The following chapter examines how Daeninckx uses *Le Bourreau et son double* to recuperate the lost voices of the French conscripted soldiers of the Algerian War.

Chapter Three: *Le Bourreau et son double*

The novel examined in this chapter, *Le Bourreau et son double* follows Inspecteur Cadin's investigation into the suspicious circumstances surrounding the death of two Hotch factory employees, Claude and Monique Werbel, who actively campaigned for better working conditions for immigrant workers. Initially, the death of the Werbels is treated as a murder-suicide; however, Inspecteur Cadin's investigation leads him to discover that the Werbels were being blackmailed by the factory owners. During the course of his investigation, Cadin discovers that the factory employs a private security company to enforce their unethical and illegal recruitment policies that target vulnerable immigrants. Similar to *Meurtres pour mémoire*, the root cause of the present-day crime dates back twenty years to the Algerian War.

3.1 Palimpsestic Layers of the Algerian War

Silverman's concept of the historical palimpsest is central to *Le Bourreau et son double,* as the novel consists of two separate narratives told through alternating chapters. The opening chapter is the main narrative and follows Inspecteur Cadin. This is set in Courvilliers, the aforementioned fictitious amalgamation of the suburbs of Aubervilliers and La Courneuve to the north of Paris, during the early 1980s. The second narrative is set in Algeria sometime during the war of independence, between 1954 and 1962. This narrative is much shorter in length and appears as flashbacks which describe the experiences of a guilt-ridden conscript who tortured prisoners. These chapters reinforce the book's themes of doubles and parallels. The two narratives converge towards the end of the novel, and it is revealed that Claude Werbel (who is the victim in the main narrative, along with his wife) is in fact the "*bourreau-victime"* [executioner-victim], the character who is internally focalised from the second narrative.[72] Werbel struggles with deep inner conflict after being coerced by his sergeant to carry out acts of torture on prisoners. Traumatised by this brutalisation, he represents a forgotten victim group of the Algerian War, *les appelés* or conscripted soldiers.

In an attempt to move on from the past, Werbel (with the help of his wife) forms an alternative trade union movement that works to welcome and integrate vulnerable

[72] *Bourreau* is also often used to refer to torture but the francophone term *bourreau-victime* refers to all types of perpetrators who are traumatised by their own actions making them a victim of their own crimes.

immigrant workers to Courvilliers. The novel therefore also focuses on the history and rapid turnover of migrant workers who arrive to working-class suburbs of Paris, with some indication of their variety:

> *Des Portugais d'abord, mais après la Révolution des Œillets, Hotch s'était rabattu sur les Marocains puis les Turcs, les Pakistanais . . . Tous les six mois, le temps d'un contrat, une nouvelle nationalité s'exilait à Courvilliers. [. . .] Les Cambodgiens et les Vietnamiens venaient de faire leur apparition et on se demandait déjà qui leur succéderait.* (*BD*: p. 10)
>
> [Initially the Portuguese, but after the Carnation Revolution, Hotch reshuffled their staff with Moroccans then Turks, Pakistanis . . . Every six months, the duration of a contract, a new nationality arrived in exile to Courvilliers. [. . .] The Cambodians and Vietnamese had just arrived, and people already wondered who would be next].[73]

However, things begin to fall apart for Werbel when Pierre Molier, his former Sergeant from the Algerian War, is appointed head of a private security company in the factory where he works. Molier blackmails Werbel for confidential information on the candidates for future elections of staff delegates. The stress of this blackmail ultimately leads to the accidental killing of Monique Werbel and subsequent suicide of Claude Werbel. The Algerian War has followed Claude back to the *banlieue* where is he haunted by his memories of torture and torturing and by the physical presence of Molier. However, Bruno Levasseur also suggests that the novel's structure 'based on a subtle *dédoublement* [duality] and *enchevêtrement* [entangling] of histories' forces the reader to reflect on the ongoing racism suffered by North African immigrants and their descendants in France (2012: 231).[74] Daeninckx reinforces the intratextual haunting of both narratives within *Le Bourreau et son double* by repeating contrasting images between chapters. The end of the first Cadin chapter, for instance, closes with a subtle evocation to the star of the Algerian flag, '*une forme d'étoile'* [the shape of a star](*BD*: p. 17), which is followed by a contrasting image of the French

[73] The Carnation Revolution, also known as 25 April, was the 1974 Portuguese revolution that ended the authoritarian Estada Novo regime.

[74] For Levasseur, this is reinforced by the suggestive metaphor of cancer with the image of a black cat (the cat is named Chatka after a variety of crab which alludes to the zodiac symbol for cancer) that Inspecteur Cadin cares for in his apartment and its strategic location at the opening and epilogue of the novel (2012: 231).

tricolour in Algeria, *'le drapeau tricolore'* [the tricolour flag] (*BD*: p. 18), in the opening paragraph of the first chapter of the Algerian War narrative.[75]

Le Bourreau et son double covers a period where there was a marked increase in violence against the *Beurs* (a French term for European-born people whose parents or grandparents are immigrants from North Africa), but also an intensification of their appropriation of public spaces through organised demonstrations and marches.[76] One of the most notable features of the text, written after the 1983 *Marche pour l'égalité et contre le racisme* [March for equality and against racism] (a significant event of the *Beurs* movement), is perhaps how Daeninckx uses the novel not only to highlight the historical enforcement of a closed formed republicanism as an instrument of exclusion and marginalization rather than inclusion in France, but also to identify and explain the secret links existing between colonial and postcolonial racism in contemporary France (Levasseur, 2012: 228).[77] At the start of *Le Bourreau et son double,* Daeninckx highlights how accommodation in HLM was used to keep the immigrant population at an arm's length from the Republic: '*Toutes les communes, dans un rayon de cinq kilomètres, s'étaient mises à enfler ; on montait du béton à tour de bras, des foyers, des studios, des deux-pièces maxi pour loger les armées de célibataires qu'on attelait aux chaînes'* (*BD*: p. 7) [All the *communes*, within a five kilometre radius, had started to swell. They were putting up concrete galore, residence halls, studio apartments, apartments with two rooms at most, to house the army of single people hitched to chains].

It is worth emphasising that in no way is this a recent phenomenon, as Tyler Stovall notes, throughout the history of Paris 'spatial and racial marginality often went hand in hand' (1990: 15). The physical exclusion and isolation of immigrant workers (the "single people" referenced by Daeninckx often being North African men who went to France ahead of their families) is a reflection of working class segregation more generally. This partially stems

[75] It is worth noting here that the French word *étoile* [star] is closely associated with the Jewish Star of David. As part of the Vichy regime, Jews were forced to wear an identifying yellow badge in the shape of a Jewish Star. The similarity between the Jewish and Islamic symbols brings to mind a recent controversy in France, where during a demonstration in Paris against islamophobia (*La Manifestation contre l'islamophobie,* 10 November 2019) Muslim demonstrators wore yellow Islamic stars in a direct comparison to Jews living under the Vichy regime (Agence France-Presse, 2019). See Figures 14 and 15 in Appendix A for a direct comparison of the symbols.

[76] *Verlan* is a type of French argot that inverses syllables as a form of slang. The term *beur* is *verlan* for *arabe*.

[77] For more on the Beur movement and the *Marche pour l'égalité* see "Between Political Failure and Cultural Identity: The Emergence of the 'Beur Movement' in France in the 1980s" (Chabanet, 2016).

from Haussmann's renovation of Paris (1853–1871) which was commissioned by Napoléon III: 'By depopulating the center, Haussmann's reforms sharply increased Parisians' residential segregation, for as the working class moved to the northern and eastern edges of the city, middle-class and wealthy inhabitants moved into newer quarters in the western part of Paris, especially the sixteenth arrondissement. The Parisian working class was more spatially marginalized and isolated from its neighbors; before long the majority of this class would be forced out of the city altogether' (Stovall, 1990: 21). In his book *The Margins of City Life* (1991), John Merriman notes that the image of the workers living on the periphery of the city as barbarians lurking just outside the gates of the civilized city goes back to well before the French revolution.[78]

The politics of race and ethnicity severely deteriorated in the 1980s and 1990s with the renaissance of national republicanism. This movement sought to stigmatise immigrants as the new "internal enemy", most obviously by the new-found success of Jean-Marie Le Pen's *Front national*.[79] In *Le Bourreau et son double*, Daeninckx describes the plight of migrants arriving by boat and truckload, and attempts to counter jingoistic fearmongering attacks on the "*zoufris*". The latter term was originally used to refer to Algerian workers who migrated to France in the 1950s to help rebuild post-war France. In the novel, we are told that Werbel had led a team of journalists on an investigative report into human trafficking of Malian workers:

> *[Werbel] a consacré ses vacances, en août 80, à un reportage sur les conditions d'embauche des Maliens. Il est parti là-bas. Il a réussi à assister au véritable marché aux esclaves organisé par Hotch pour se procurer de la main-d'œuvre à bon compte . . . les équipes d'enrôleurs qui se pointent dans les villages . . . les paysans rassemblés par la police locale . . . l'examen des mains, des muscles, des dents . . . puis le car, le bateau, et à la clef un contrat de six mois renouvelables !* (*BD*: p. 77)
>
> [[Werbel] devoted his vacation in August 1980 to reporting on the employment conditions of Malians. He went there and managed to attend the actual slave market organised by Hotch to get cheap labour . . . teams of

[78] See the chapter "Marginal People, Peripheral Spaces, Fearsome Faubourgs" (pp. 59–83).

[79] The phrase "internal enemy" is deeply associated with France's history of anti-Semitism. The phrase was used in the propaganda of a nationalist (and later monarchist) movement, born out of the Dreyfus affair, called *Action française*. Similar anti-Semitic phrases were also in propaganda posters by the Vichy regime. See "*D'une guerre l'autre. L'Action française et les Juifs, de l'Union sacrée à la Révolution nationale* (1914–1944)" (Joly, 2012).

> recruiters show up in the villages . . . the local police gather up villagers . . . they examine their hands, muscles and teeth . . . then a bus, a boat, all for a six-month renewable contract!]

Daeninckx comments here on the unethical recruitment practice by the Hotch factory and their ability to manipulate the workers to satisfy both the supply and demand of labour—*'C'est le planning de production qui en décide, personne d'autre'* (*BD*: p. 47) [It's the production schedule that decides and nothing else]. This is typical of the *néo-polar* genre which often borrows the language of the capitalist and neoliberal systems it denounces. However, Levasseur also notes that this mimicking of capitalist language is used to illustrate the racism perpetrated by the most powerful in society (here, Big Industry) in the post-colonial era (2012: 230).[80] Daeninckx also uses the figure of Werbel to be critical of the traditional Left-wing groups who have neglected to represent migrant workers. As such, while the racist and greedy Hotch factory is used to denounce capitalism, Daeninckx also stresses the complexities of the problems in French society caused by neoliberalism.

As with most of his texts, Daeninckx peppers *Le Bourreau et son double* with references to historical events that force the reader to seek out more information and investigate their significance. In Chapter Three, Cadin finishes his work shift after attending the Werbel crime scene and buys the local newspapers on the way home. The newspaper articles are used to add to the novel's haunting atmosphere. Firstly, an advertisement for a 'Miss Courvilliers' beauty pageant is announced as taking place in '*l'espace Desnos'* (*BD*: p. 35) which alludes to the surrealist poet Robert Desnos. The poet was an active member of the French resistance and was arrested and deported to Nazi concentration camps in 1944. Desnos died a month after his camp was liberated in 1945.

In interviews Daeninckx has spoken about how when he was nineteen-years-old in May '68, he became aware of the surrealist movement and cites Desnos and Louis Aragon as principal inspirations: '*Je suis tombé en syncope devant* Le Paysan de Paris *d'Aragon et la poésie de Desnos, dont la gouaille me plaisait'* (Frey, 1996: Online) [I had become completely entranced while reading Aragon's *Le Paysan de Paris* and I enjoyed the cocky

[80] It is worth noting that Stieg Larsson's Millenium trilogy of crime novels use a similar technique of borrowing the language of the corporate world to denounce neo-liberalism in Sweden. See "Corporations, Crime, and Gender Construction in Stieg Larsson's '*The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*': Exploring Twenty-First Century Neoliberalism in Swedish Culture" (Stenport and Alm, 2009).

attitude in the language of Desnos' poetry]. He has also commented on the similarities he sees between roman noir and surrealist writers:

> *Je lisais Aragon et les romans noirs américains. Le premier comme les autres traitait de l'actualité. Ils se saisissaient d'évènements contemporains et produisaient des effets immédiats. C'est ce qui m'a séduit et motive.* (Daeninckx, 1993: 2)
>
> [I used to read Aragon along with American noir novels. Both dealt with current affairs. They took possession of contemporary events and had an immediate impact. This is what sparked my interest and motivated me].

As previously mentioned, the Cadin series frequently alludes to surrealist artists, with *Meurtres pour mémoire* and *Mort au premier tour* incorporating significant references to writers like Louis Aragon and André Breton. Most notably, the artist Jean-Hans Arp is discussed at length in *Le Géant inachevé,* which is examined in detail in Chapter Four. On first appraisal it may seem superfluous to attach great importance to '*l'espace Desnos*'; however, Daeninckx frequently uses place names, street names, and plaques, as in *Mort au premier tour* and *Le Géant inachevé,* to reveal hidden histories, or as Rubino argues '[*pour*] *faire éclore tout un passé significatif*' (2009: 65) [to open up an entire significant past].

In a similar fashion, Daeninckx also uses historical dates as a gateway to the past. The newspaper bought by Cadin notes that the Werbels died on 24 August, St. Bartholomew's Day (*BD*: p. 47). The St. Bartholomew's Day massacre in 1572 was a key event in the French Wars of Religion where, over two days, Catholic mobs killed French Calvinist Protestants (the Huguenots). King Charles IX had ordered the killing of prominent Huguenot leaders who were invited to attend the royal wedding of the King's sister in Paris. The violence lasted several weeks with killings spreading to other cities and rural areas of France. Modern historians estimate that somewhere between 5,000 and 30,000 were killed during the massacre (Knecht, 2002: 50-52). There are obvious parallels between this massacre which was sanctioned by the French monarchy and the State-sponsored massacre of 17 October 1961. However, Daeninckx is discreet and does not offer any explanation to the significance of this date in the text and forces the reader to search for more information. This is an excellent example of Daeninckx's use of Rothberg's concept of multidirectional memory, as his text links one of the bloodiest massacres of French history from the sixteenth century with the Algerian War, making the reader reflect on centuries of sectarian and ethnic based

violence in France. Furthermore, in the same passage, the newspaper references the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, citing '*une série de reportages décrivant l'évacuation de Beyrouth par les Palestiniens'* (*BD*: p. 47) [a series of reports describing the evacuation of Palestinians from Beirut]. This brief passage quickly contrasts several past, more recent, and on-going sectarian conflicts. Comparable to *Meurtres pour mémoire, Le Bourreau et son double* also makes clear that 'history is an echo chamber; an ethics of memory establishes fidelity to the echoes' (Rothberg, 2009: 224).

The plot of the novel mirrors the real-life events of the murder of Pierre Overney, a Maoist trade unionist, who was shot by a security guard on the grounds of the Renault Factory in Boulogne-Billancourt in 1972. It is very significant to note that Overney had been attempting to distribute leaflets to rally the factory workers to commemorate the ten-year anniversary of the 1962 Charonne métro station massacre (Puech, 2012: Online). As discussed in the previous chapter, the Charonne massacre was one of the most influential events of Daeninckx's childhood, and one that he has cited as having probably sparked his motivation to write (Daeninckx and Maricourt, 2009: 108). While Overney's funeral was the largest demonstration since May '68, drawing some 200,000 people to the procession, which was famously attended by Jean-Paul Sartre and Michel Foucault, the event has received little attention in French literature.[81]

From this basic outline of the story, we can see that Daeninckx's remembrance of torture during the Algerian War is twofold. Firstly, the novel is an acknowledgement of the systematic use of torture committed by the French Army during the Algerian War, which, for decades, France had denied. Only in 2018 did the French state, through President Emmanuel Macron, admit that 'France instigated a "system" that led to torture during the Algeria conflict, and that the past must now be faced with "courage and lucidity"' (Chrisafis, 2018: Online). Written in 1986, *Le Bourreau et son double* challenged State narratives that denied or minimised the use of torture during the Algerian War. During our interview, Daeninckx stated that when writing *Le Bourreau et son double* he wanted to dissent from

[81] Annie Ernaux briefly refers to Overney's funeral in *Les Années* (2008: 65) and the event is the basis of a song, *Pierrot est tombé*, by the militant French singer-song writer Dominique Grange.

the stereotype that only a small number of paratroopers were responsible for acts of torture in the Algerian War:

> *Sur la torture avant on avait l'image des tortionnaires Port-Maria d'Algérie. C'était des parachutistes, un stéréotype. Mais quand on regarde de plus près on s'aperçoit que chez les appelés, les gens ordinaires, il y a des milliers qui ont torturé. On a des exemples de prêtres, d'aumôniers, qui torturent, on a l'exemple d'intellectuels qui torturent. Tant que c'est les mercenaires on est rassuré, ce n'est pas nous c'est eux, et là d'un seul coup on s'aperçoit que cette répression c'est nous.* (Daeninckx and Gleeson, 2017)
>
> [Before, we had the image of torturers in Port-Maria Algeria. It was the paratroopers, a stereotype. But when you look closer, you soon realise that there were thousands of conscripted soldiers, of ordinary people, who tortured. There are examples of priests, chaplains, and intellectuals who tortured. As long as it's the mercenaries who torture, and not us, we are reassured. It's not us, it's them, and then suddenly we realise that we too are to blame].

By listing several types of people who committed torture, including thousands of ordinary conscripts and even priests, chaplains, and intellectuals, Daeninckx is stressing the complexity of the conflict.[82] However, Daeninckx also stated that the shame and guilt of the character of Werbel is representative of widespread feelings in the French population after the war. He spoke of *'la culpabilité d'une grande partie de la classe ouvrière française. Cette culpabilité est une certaine manière d'accepter la guerre*' (Daeninckx and Gleeson 2017) [The guilt of a large part of working-class France. A certain culpability of just accepting the war].[83] Daeninckx's depiction of Werbel's individual shame and personal confliction is symbolic of the wider societal problem of coming to terms with the Algerian War.

Secondly, the novel remembers the conscripted soldiers who too became victims of the Algerian War when they returned home and were unable to cope with the horrors they not only witnessed but were complicit in committing. This underlines the importance that Daeninckx places on remembering a wide variety of lost voices in his fiction. Thirdly, the text

[82] This corresponds to a subplot in *Le Géant inachevé* involving the former military chaplain whose regiment massacred a village during the Algerian War. It is possible that Daeninckx was referring to Le Père Louis Delarue who was a French priest and paratrooper who justified the use of torture during the Algerian War (Isnard, 1998: Online).

[83] The French term *culpabilité* can refer to either the factual culpability of someone or a sentimental feeling of guilt. Given the context of Daeninckx's argument I think he is referring to the former sense of the word, however this is not completely clear.

also highlights the brutalisation of amateur French conscripts by their professional counterparts, the paratroopers. One particular flashback involves a French officer force-feeding a subordinate conscript the testicles of an executed rebel of the FLN after the subordinate took exception to the inhumane treatment of prisoners (*BD*: pp. 113–116). Daeninckx is here highlighting the use of torture by the French army both on the Algerian population but also the forgotten victims of the war, *les appelés,* who are both *bourreau* and *victime.* Daeninckx has also covered the same issue in a *bande dessinée*, *Corvée de Bois* [the title literally means to gather firewood but the phrase was used as a euphemism by French soldiers to signify the summary execution of prisoners] (2002).[84]

The divide between conscript and paratrooper that Daeninckx describes in *Le Bourreau et son double* is by no means exaggerated and is perhaps most obvious in the historical failure of the *Putsch des généraux* in April 1961. The paratroopers were the most senior and professional section of the French army in Algeria. They attempted a putsch in opposition to the French government's secret talks with the FLN but failed as they were unable to rally "*la piétaille*" [the ordinary soldiers]:

> Unconsulted by their officers, many of the rank-and-file had felt at least apathetic towards the putsch in the first place; there were also many, in inverted snobbery, who bore a resentment against the braggadocio of the paras—who got all the girls, the decorations and the fame, and tended to treat the 'line' regiments with all the arrogance of elitism (Horne, 2012: 451).

One possible criticism of *Le Bourreau et son double* is that the novel fails to incorporate the FLN into any significant part of the novel. While the narrative set in Algeria exposes the torture of Algerians and the brutalisation of French soldiers, it does not mention the torture of suspected members of the OAS (*Organisation de l'armée secrète*) [Secret Armed Organisation] by the FLN. This torture by the FLN is now widely accepted thanks to the work by historians such as Jean-Jacques Jordi (2011). *Le Bourreau et son double* is, therefore, probably better viewed as a crime novel from the point of view of conscripted French soldiers rather than a crime novel set during Algerian War of Independence.

[84] Daeninckx wrote *Corvée de Bois* in collaboration with Tignous, a long-time cartoonist with *Charlie Hebdo* who was assassinated in a terrorist attack on 7 January 2015.

Similar to *Meurtres pour mémoire*, *Le Bourreau et son double* functions on the principle of "*un choc en retour*" [a backlash] where France's colonial past returns to haunt the guilty, in another echo of Rousso's Vichy Syndrome.[85] Anne Donadey has previously applied Rousso's framework to explore the question of the French in the Algerian War and argues that 'the phase of mourning for the loss of French Algeria was quickly stifled by the repression of the pain and shame created by that war, as France moved into the second phase of its "Algeria syndrome". The third and fourth phases of the Vichy syndrome may have been facilitated by the desire to cover up the double loss caused by the Algerian trauma: the loss of innocence (which had been regained by the erasure of memories of Vichy and the collaboration) due to the Nazi-like methods employed by the French military in the Algerian conflict and the loss of a land that signified the end of France's status as an imperial power and thus signalled a crisis in French identity' (Donadey, 1996: 218).[86]

Towards the end of the novel, the two protagonists from the Algerian narrative Claude Werbel and Pierre Molier find themselves once again face to face at the factory in Courvilliers where both narratives converge to reveal the strong link between the two men. A few months before the death of the Werbels, Molier becomes head of security at the Hotch factory. Realising that his former colleague has concealed his military service in Algeria, Molier is able to blackmail Werbel:

> *Vingt ans, on oublie . . . Et un jour on est tombé nez à nez au milieu d'un atelier . . . La même gueule . . . J'ai dû lui tendre la main . . . Je me suis repris et j'ai fait semblant de ne pas le reconnaître, attendant qu'il me salue . . . Il a baissé les yeux. À ce moment précis j'ai su que je le tenais . . . Tout le monde ignorait son passé. Il me suffisait de menacer de révéler ses états de service en Algérie pour l'anéantir . . .* (*BD:* pp. 207–208)
>
> [After twenty years people forget . . . but one day we stumbled upon each other face to face, in the middle of a workshop . . . he had the same mug . . . I had to shake his hand . . . I was taken aback, so I pretended not to recognise him, waiting for him to recognise me . . . he lowered his eyes. And from that exact moment I knew I had control of him . . . No one was aware of his past.

[85] See Chapter Three of *Multidirectional Memory* "*Un choc en retour*: Aime Césaire's Discourses on Colonialism and Genocide" (2009: pp. 66–111).

[86] Donadey developed the "Algeria Syndrome" to analyse the memory of the Algerian War in Leïla Sebbar's novel *Le Chinois vert d'Afrique* (1984). See her book chapter "'Une Certaine Idée De La France': The Algeria Syndrome and Struggles over 'French' Identity" in *Identity Papers: Contested Nationhood in Twentieth-Century France* (1996) edited by Steven Ungar and Tom Conley.

> To completely crush him, all I needed to do was to threaten to expose his service record in Algeria . . .].

Claude effectively becomes an informer for the Hotch enterprise and is forced to betray his factory comrades by divulging sensitive information such as '*la liste des candidats pour la future élection des délégués du personnel*' (*BD*: p. 208) [the list of candidates for the future election of staff representatives]. When Monique discovers the dark secret that Claude and Molier share, she is killed accidentally, '*tuée à bout portant d'une balle dans le cœur . . . '* (*BD*: p. 211) [killed at point blank with a bullet through the heart]. Claude then commits suicide. As the exact circumstances of the Werbels' deaths are not revealed until the final few pages of the novel, in the style of classic works of crime fiction such as Poe's "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" (1841) or Leroux's *La Mystere de la chambre jaune* (1910), their apartment functions as a locked-room puzzle.

Cadin's colleagues, and especially his superiors, are happy to treat the Werbel's case as a straightforward "crime of passion". However, when Cadin discovers that the Werbels had been harassed by the anonymous circulation of a fake '*dossier de photos pornos où figurait Monique Werbel'* (*BD*: p. 207) [collection of pornographic photos featuring Monique Werbel] he is compelled to investigate the matter further. Photography features frequently in works of detective fiction and film. Private investigators are often seen to use cameras as a means of surveillance and photographic evidence, such as the character of Jake Gittes in Roman Polanksi's *Chinatown* (1974), which also echoes other elements of Daeninckx's text discussed in the following section. *Le Bourreau et son double* also resonates with the plot of Raymond Chandler's *The Big Sleep* (1939), where the private detective Philip Marlowe is hired to investigate the case of a young woman who is being blackmailed with nude photos.

Daeninckx evokes other literary tropes when describing the tragic manner of the Werbels' deaths. There is significant symbolism attached to the manner of Claude Werbel's suicide, which is coldly stated by the pathologist while speaking to Cadin:

> *– À première vue, cela ressemble bougrement à un suicide. La balle est entrée par l'œil droit et elle est ressortie en emportant une partie de la boîte crânienne . . .* (*BD*: p. 39)
>
> [At first glance, it looked damned like a suicide. The bullet entered the right eye and passed through blowing out part of the cranium . . .]

The eye grants us vision and allows us to see. Daeninckx subtly uses the device of the "gunshot to the eye" as an allegory to reference the horrors Werbel witnessed during the Algerian War. This is also a long-established film trope, which was first used in Sergei Eisenstein's classic silent movie *Battleship Potemkin* (1925). Daeninckx has cited *Battleship Potemkin* (and other Russian films) as one of the first films he saw in the cinema during his childhood (Daeninckx and Maricourt, 2009: 144). Given the left-wing activism of his parents, it is no surprise that Daeninckx was familiar with Russian cinema from a young age. *Battleship Potemkin*'s most famous scene is the massacre at the Odessa steps where Cossack soldiers opened fire on the unarmed crowd of men, women, and children. Towards the climax of the scene a woman, who attempts to plead with the soldiers to cease firing, is shot through the eye. The entire scene has been pastiched into many other films such as *The Godfather* (1972), *The Untouchables* (1987), and *Star Wars: Revenge of the Sith* (2005). However, the specific image of the screaming woman with the gunshot to the eye is possibly the best-known element of *Battleship Potemkin*.[87]

The most notable comparison of Werbel's death is in Roman Polanski's aforementioned neo-noir film *Chinatown.* The eye is a prominent motif in Polanski's film and it emphasises that what we see is not always the truth (Cileone, 2015: Online). The main character, former police detective turned private investigator Jake Gittes, suffers from a type of post-traumatic stress disorder. While it is never revealed exactly what happened, it is made clear throughout the film that Jake saw something in Chinatown that forced him to leave the police. The film culminates in Evelyn Mulwray—the *femme fatale*—being shot through the eye by the police as she attempts to flee. Similar to Claude Werbel, Evelyn is traumatised by her past; the final act of the film reveals she has a daughter from an incestuous relationship with her abusive father. Equally, the film's *dénouement* of a wealthy and influential member of the Los Angeles elite, as a paedophile and incestuous predator, is very similar to *Mort au premier tour,* and these significant similarities are discussed in greater detail in Chapter Five.

A feature relevant to the literary technique of the palimpsest is Daeninckx's consistent use of spaces and objects related to writing and books. Rubino highlights the specific emphasis Daeninckx places on libraries, archives, and bookshops, as well as individual books in his

[87] The image was reproduced by Francis Ford Coppola in *The Godfather* when Moe Green is assassinated and is shot in the eye through the lens of his glasses.

texts. He notes that there are obvious connections between Daeninckx's previous experience working in printing and the recurrence of written spaces synonymous with texts and books (2009: 65). Indeed, *Le Bourreau et son double* begins with Cadin reading another *fait divers*, a recurring theme throughout the series. Daeninckx has written about his fixation on this type of journalism, and how he used to write such stories when he formerly worked as a journalist:

> *Les faits divers sont des éclats d'existence. C'est la première chose que je lis dans un journal, je suis accro. J'ai été journaliste, j'ai écrit ce genre d'articles. Dans ces histoires, il y a quelque chose de l'humanité qui passe. Et puis, je suis sensible à l'ironie des situations.* (Daeninckx and Maricourt, 2009: 118)
>
> [The '*faits divers'* are flashes of existence. They are the first thing I turn to in a newspaper; I'm addicted. I used to be a journalist; I wrote those kinds of articles. In these stories, on some level there is a lot of humanity. And I'm also aware of the irony of these situations.]

Fait divers in the Inspecteur Cadin series are always ironic in nature and are often used to reinforce a theme or issue at the centre of a text. As briefly alluded to in Chapter One, the first line of *Le Bourreau et son double* reads '*un homme se noie dans l'espoir d'être réincarné en poisson*' [Man drowns himself in the hope of being reincarnated as a fish] (*BD*: p. 1). The newspaper clipping then explains that the body of a sixty-year-old man was found drowned in the Seine. The man had written a suicide note proclaiming that he would be reincarnated as a fish. This unsettlingly dark humour is used to prime the reader very subtly for Werbel's suicide. Furthermore, the image of a drowning man resonates with the novel's descriptions of waterboarding as a form of torture in the Algerian War and an oblique reference to the drownings in the Seine of Algerians in October 1961. Throughout the series Cadin meticulously collects *fait divers* as newspaper clippings and gathers them in a scrapbook. Daeninckx has described how he does something very similar when preparing to write:

> *Je me promène, je vois des films, je lis, je découpe, je constitue des dossiers : à un moment, je trouve une astuce qui va réunir tous les éléments. Dès que j'ai trouvé la ficelle, je fais un nœud. Je fais un gros travail de construction. La construction n'est pas linéaire, il y a des cassures, des brisures. C'est une tentative pour dérouter le lecteur. L'écriture est faite de phrases que je travaille pour épurer encore et pour avoir assez peu d'effets de style.* (Daeninckx and Maricourt, 2009: 119)

> [I go for walks, I watch films, I read, I cut out newspaper clippings, I create documents. Then, sometime, I find a clever way of joining all these elements together. As soon as I've found the thread, I make a knot. I create a large piece of work. The construction is not linear, there are cracks and broken parts. It's an attempt to disorientate the reader. I use pared-back sentences to purify the writing and to have very few stylistic effects.]

The idea of disorientation resonates strongly with Daeninckx's approach to writing. *Dérouter* is somewhat similar to Daeninckx's, previously discussed, dissenting phrase of *écrire en contre* or "writing against". However, *dérouter* also mirrors Daeninckx's technique of deliberately disorientating the reader to evoke the complexities of history. Daeninckx uses inverted logic to show the reader the importance of always questioning things are presented as simple. Daeninckx's disorientating—and associated rerouting—of the reader is in fact an ethically-guided technique as it demonstrates to the reader that disorientation is sometimes a healthy state, as long as one tries to make sense of things through one's own research and questioning of accepted narratives and so-called "facts". As also alluded to in the above quotation, Daeninckx constructs his texts by assembling pieces of histories. This is linked to his use of *fait divers,* which he considers to be fragments that are representative of greater truths. Daeninckx's writing process, which resembles assembling pieces of a puzzle to form a narrative, is rather like detective work too.[88] It is also worth noting that the author's description of his non-linear and fragmented construction of narratives chimes with the ideas of multidirectional memory and palimpsestic memory.

During our interview, Daeninckx stated that he does not practice any form of "*autofiction"* in his texts: '*Je ne suis pas des écrivains qui se permettent de faire de l'autofiction, on a un respect pour les gens qui sont autour de soi, donc on essaye de passer autrement*' (Daeninckx and Gleeson, 2017) [I am not one of those writers that allows themselves to write *autofiction*, when you have respect for those around you, you try and do it using something else]. However, there may be some credence to considering Inspecteur Cadin as an alter ego of Daeninckx. Through his interest in *fait divers*, the fictional detective clearly

[88] The fictional detective John Luther, created by Neil Cross and played by Idris Elba in the BBC television show *Luther,* inspired by David Bowie's approach to writing lyrics uses *découpage* (cut-up technique) as a detective process. In the fourth episode of the series, Luther surrounds himself with photographs of a case he is trying to solve and randomises the material with a view to finding new patterns or clues in the process (Hobbs, 2019: Online). It would be worthwhile for future research to further examine representations of the use of creative techniques in detective work.

shares some of his creator's practices, encouraging us to reflect on how similar Cadin and Daeninckx can be to one another. While, as previously mentioned, there is no physical description for Cadin, in the *bande dessinée* of *Meurtres pour mémoire* he shares a likeness with Daeninckx (Daeninckx and Puchol, 2011). Equally, Daeninckx has stated that his decision to kill off the Inspecteur in such miserable circumstances was partly in response to his bout of depression following the death of his father and other close family members. This is discussed in greater detail in Chapter Six, on *Le Facteur fatal*.

3.2 Intertextuality: Pastiche, Perec, and Pop

There are significant parallels between *Le Bourreau et son double* and Georges Perec's *W ou le souvenir d'enfance*, which also uses alternating narratives and shares the major themes of repressed memories and haunting.[89] This section demonstrates that Perec's debut novel *Les Choses* (1965) should also be considered as a source of inspiration for Daeninckx as there are striking similarities between both texts. On first appraisal, the need for a comparative analysis of very different texts from very different authors may seem unfounded; however, a precedent in the crime-fiction context is Gorrara's discussion of the significant influence of Perec's *Les Choses* on Jean-Patrick Manchette's *Le Petit bleu de la côte ouest* (1976), which both condemn materialism and capitalism in French society (Gorrara, 2003: 64–65).

The main characters in *Les Choses,* Jérôme and Sylvie, are a young couple living in Paris in the early 1960s. They 'eke out a marginal life in the midst of a world obsessed with material well-being', and gradually become obsessed with 'the objects of elegance and luxury (the Things of the title) that the world offers them' (Matthews, 1983: 138). The novel's first chapter is a deeply detailed description of their apartment and all their belongings. Manchette reproduces this style to great effect in *Le Petit bleu de la côte ouest*. As Gorarra notes, 'the detailed reference to makes of guns, their calibre, shooting distances, and effects on the human body are, thereby, contextualised as another fetishised object in a consumerist culture' (Gorrara, 2003: 65).

While Perec as a writer stands in stark contrast with Daeninckx, the similarities between *W ou le souvenir d'enfance* and *Le Bourreau et son double* demonstrate that they are

[89] *W ou le souvenir d'enfance* is one of three texts (the other two being Patrick Modiano's *Dora Bruder* (1997) and Charlotte Delbo's *Auschwitz et après* (1965)) discussed by Max Silverman in his chapter "Colonial Hauntings of the Holocaust Imaginary" in *Palimpsestic Memory* (2013: pp. 101–111).

essentially writing about the same issue, the recovery of inadequately processed memories, in diverging styles. Perec writes about his own memories in his distinct, experimental style centred on word play, whereas Daeninckx uses crime fiction as a vehicle to address collective memories and social histories. The comparison of the two texts demonstrates Daeninckx's wish to continually push the boundaries of crime fiction and is testament to the literary merit of his works.

While the influence of Perec's *W* on Daeninckx's text is evident in the structure of *Le Bourreau et son double,* it also resonates (though more subtly) with certain elements of *Les Choses*. Postcolonialism is an undercurrent throughout *Les Choses*, with the main characters arguably trying to flee the middle-class pressures of modernisation in France by moving to Sfax in the former French colony of Tunisia. The Algerian War lingers in the background of *Les Choses* with references to the Charonne massacre (Perec, 1965: 45). Furthermore, Jérôme and Sylvie are briefly distracted from their obsession with consumerism by becoming, although only for a short time, radical members of an anti-fascist group protesting the Algerian War:

> *Néanmoins, ils entrèrent au Comité antifasciste qui venait de se créer dans leur quartier. Ils se levèrent quelquefois, à cinq heures du matin, pour aller, avec trois ou quatre autres, coller des affiches appelant les gens à se montrer vigilants, dénonçant les coupables et les complices, stigmatisant les lâches attentats, honorant les victimes innocentes. Ils firent passer des pétitions dans toutes les maisons de leur rue, ils allèrent, trois ou quatre fois, monter la garde dans des immeubles menacés.* (Perec, 1965 : 45)
>
> [Nonetheless, they joined the Anti-Fascist Committee which had just been set up in their area. They rose, on occasions, at five in the morning, to go out, with three or four comrades, pasting up posters calling on people to be alert, denouncing the guilty and their stooges, protesting at outrages and honouring the innocent victims. They took petitions round to all the houses in their street and three or four times did guard duty in threatened premises. (Bellos and Leak, 1990: 74)]

The most striking common thread between *Les Choses* and *Le Bourreau et son double* is the similarity between the Werbels, and Jérôme and Sylvie. Similar to Claude who returns to la banlieue from Algeria, at the beginning of *Les Choses* Jérôme and Sylvie have just returned to Paris after working as teachers in Tunisia. Inspecteur Cadin's description of the Werbel's

apartment may also subtly echo *Les Choses'* motif of materialism, through its enumeration of consumerist items (particularly the leather sofa and the stereo hi-fi here):

> *L'aménagement de l'appartement ne présentait aucune originalité ; le papier peint uni, de couleur claire, mettait en valeur le canapé cuir et l'équipement hi-fi. Pour le reste, les cinquante objets usuels présents dans tous les intérieurs français du milieu des années quatre-vingt parsemaient les différentes pièces.* (*BD*: p. 24)
>
> [There was no originality to the layout of the apartment; the entire wallpaper -brightly coloured- showcased their leather sofa and hi-fi equipment. As for the rest, the usual fifty objects found in every French home of the 1980s were scattered throughout the different rooms].

Born to Jewish parents of Polish extraction, Perec was profoundly affected by the disappearance of his mother (who most likely died in Auschwitz) and death of his father during World War II. *W ou le souvenir d'enfance* is an autobiographical text in which Perec details his experiences of losing both his parents during the Occupation and frequently questions the accuracy of his own memories. In tandem to this narrative of deep personal trauma is a fantastical narrative devoted to the fictitious Gaspard Winckler and the utopian island of "W", which is obsessed with sport. The chapters written in italics narrate Winckler's adventure to "W" while the non-italicised chapters address the author's memories. Towards the end of the text, both narratives converge and it becomes clear that the "W" is a metaphor for the experiences of prisoners in the concentration camps. As Perec did not personally experience the horrors of life in the concentration camps, he must employ a fictitious narrative to perform remembrance of these historic realities. It appears that the loss of his parents affected Perec to such an extent that he simply cannot remember his childhood: '*Je n'ai pas de souvenirs d'enfance'* [I have no childhood memories] (Perec trans. Bellos 1988: 13).

However, as Silverman notes, Perec's text does not deal exclusively with the horrors of the Holocaust but *also* clearly alludes to colonialism and shows that 'the two interconnect, overlap and slide into each other in a number of ways' (2013: 102). The island of "W" is first presented as a colonial settlement of westerners: *'des Blancs, des Occidentaux, et même presque exclusivement des Anglo-Saxons : des Hollandaise, des Allemands, des Scandinaves, des représentants de cette classe orgueilleuse qu'aux États-Unis on nomme les Wasp'* (Perec, 1975: 95) ['white, Western, and moreover, almost exclusively aryan: Dutchmen, Germans,

Scandinavians, scions of that proud class called WASPs in the United States' (Bellos, 1988: 67)].[90] By the end of the text, the colonial island has been transformed into a concentration camp and its Olympic ideal perverted into a form of grotesque dehumanization (Silverman, 2013: 103). For example, Silverman argues that Perec's linking of sport, race and power suggests that the text is not dealing exclusively with the history of Auschwitz (2013: 103). Perec's blending of Holocaust and sporting imagery clearly alludes to the history of the *Vélodrome d'hiver* in Paris which, as previously referenced, was used during World War II in the round-up of Jews and also during the round-up of Algerians in October 1961.[91]

In his biography of *Georges Perec: A Life in Words* (1993), David Bellos devotes an entire chapter to elucidating the significance of M/W (pp. 538-555). Firstly, Bellos highlights the obvious significance of the letter M, it can stand for mother in English, as in French (*mère*) and German (*Mutter*). However, in German the letter is most known as the title of a film about a child-murderer, *M,* by Fritz Lang from 1931. Bellos describes how Perec most likely lifted the name Winckler from one of the film's characters and, more importantly, notes that the final words of the film are 'that won't bring our children back to us! Mothers, take better care of your children!' (1993: 555). From this, Bellos extrapolates that the upside-down M (W) directly addresses Perec's guilt for having failed to 'take better care of his mother' (1993: 555). Considering the similarities between the themes and structures of both works, it is significant to note that the names of the titular *Bourreau* and his double in Daeninckx's texts begin with M (Molier) and W (Werbel). The way Perec's feelings of shame and guilt are symbolically represented by M/W in *W ou le souvenir d'enfance* mirrors how Daeninckx uses Molier/Werbel to embody the guilt of the French national psyche remembering the Algerian War.

Daeninckx did not lose his parents in the Algerian War, so he cannot be directly compared to Perec in this respect. Perec is personally haunted by the death of his parents (and the millions of other Holocaust victims), whereas Daeninckx is ashamed of his country's colonial legacies. However, there is nonetheless some similarity between their blending of history and fiction. For example, similar to Perec who had no direct experience of life in the

[90] WASP is an acronym for White Anglo-Saxon Protestant.

[91] See Rothberg's discussion of representations of the history of the *Vélodrome d'hiver* in *Multidirectional memory* (2010: pp. 236–246).

concentration camps, Daeninckx also relies on fiction to remember the experiences of *les appelés* during the Algerian War. While *Le Bourreau et son double* is not autobiographical in nature, and the haunting is by no means as intensely personal as in *W*, both Daeninckx and Perec are writing about memories that are impossible to access. This is the most important similarity between the texts. A significant barrier in accessing information on the victims, survivors, and veterans of the Algerian War was, and still is, the French government's reluctance to open sealed archives. While Perec is using fiction to process his own deeply personal memories of World War II, Daeninckx is using a similar approach to process the French collective memory of the Algerian War. *Le Bourreau et son double* is a good example of how fiction can significantly add to French cultural remembrance and, as Pine argues, especially in the context of the absence of a comprehensive State-led investigation into the past (2011: 25).

Interestingly, Perec and Daeninckx's texts are also both interspersed with passages of very dark humour. Irony is a major theme in the fantastical Winckler narrative of *W*. The narrator, Gaspard Winckler, is informed by a stranger that after deserting the army, instead of false papers he was given the identity of an eight-year-old deaf boy (Perec, 1975: pp. 39–41). The narrator is then compelled to find the real Winckler who is missing and thought to be shipwrecked. The protagonist's existential crisis spurs a surreal search for his identity that leads him to the island of W. As Gaëtan Brulotte notes, the juxtaposition of the manic sporting ethos of the utopian island of W with its tortuous conditions is an example of the dark humour underpinning much of the book: *'L'utopie, elle, maintient une froide ironie, qui est surtout sensible lorsque le narrateur s'émerveille sadiquement des systèmes atroces qu'il décrit'* [The utopia holds a cold irony, which is especially sensitive as the narrator is sadistically amazed by the atrocious systems he describes] (Brulotte, 1993: 177). Influenced by both Perec and hard-boiled crime writers, Daeninckx speckles the Inspecteur Cadin series with a similar dark humour.

Aside from Daeninckx's pastiche of Perec's *W*, there are other intertextual references worthy of note. As with the use of pop culture references in *Meurtres pour mémoire,* Daeninckx again makes allusions to French popular culture throughout *Le Bourreau et son double*. At the end of the sixth chapter of the Algerian narrative, after Werbel is

manipulated into helping waterboard a prisoner, he enters the mess hall of the camp and sees two French soldiers drinking beer and singing along to Eddy Mitchell's "*Tu parles trop*":

> *Il franchit la porte du mess. Le barman lui tournait le dos, et tentait de régler son transistor. Il parvint à capter Europe 1. L'indicatif de Salut Les Copains shunta pour laisser la fréquence à la voix d'Eddy Mitchell, le chanteur des Chaussettes Noires.*
>
> *« Tu parles trop,*
> *J't'entends du soir au matin in . . .*
> *Les mêmes mots,*
> *Toujours les mêmes refrains ains . . .*
> *Bla, bla, bla a a a . . .*
> *C'est ton on défaut . . . »*
>
> *Les deux bidasses accrochés au bar reprirent en chœur en choquant leurs canettes de bière*. (BD: p. 117)
>
> [He reached the door of the mess hall. The barman turned his back and tried to tune his radio. He managed to get Europe 1. The theme tune of *Salut Les Copains* faded out and was replaced by the voice of Eddy Mitchell, the singer of *Les Chaussettes Noires*.
>
> 'You talk too much
> I hear you from mornin' to evenin'
> Always the same words,
> Always the same old tune,
> Bla, bla, bla, a a a . . .
> It's your fault']
>
> The two squaddies hanging at the bar joined the chorus and slapped their cans of beer together.]

The lyrics of the song add to the sense of monotony and the senselessness of torture. There is a perverse irony to the lyrics of "*Tu parles trop*" in the context of waterboarding. The contrast between the preceding torture scene and the jovial singing and drinking of the soldiers also reinforces the notion that torture was an everyday event for the French army in Algeria.[92]

Artefacts of French popular culture are frequently cited throughout Daeninckx's works and his oeuvre should be viewed not simply as an encyclopaedia of French culture but rather as a sort of hypertext or a form of metafiction. Works of metafiction are generally self-

[92] It is worth noting that Eddy Mitchell's career was put on hold in 1962 as he too like thousands of other Frenchmen had to complete his military service.

conscious about language, literary form and narrative, and they either directly or indirectly draw attention to their status as artefacts (Waugh, 1984: 2). The frequency of cultural artefacts in Daeninckx's writing indirectly draws attention to the potential status of his oeuvre as a cultural artefact itself. This again resonates with Pine's arguments on the importance of cultural artefacts in remembrance culture. However, and more importantly, these cultural artefacts most often belong to '*un passé collectif, public, éloigné dans le temps'* (Rubino, 2009: 65) [a collective past, a public past, a past lost in time]. The typical figure of the detective as a solitary individual makes it difficult for such a character to investigate the crimes of the collective. However, as demonstrated above, Daeninckx effectively uses intertextuality to align the individual investigations of Cadin with the collective past of French society.

3.3 Individuals and Power Systems

According to Anthony Giddens, modernity consists of four basic institutional elements: capitalism, industrialism, administrative power, and military power (1990). Giddens' definition resonates strongly with the general themes and plot of *Le Bourreau et son double*. And as the main locations in *Le Bourreau et son double* are Algeria and the heavily industrialised suburb of Courvilliers, Daeninckx is clearly linking the themes of decolonisation and modernity. It is significant to note that this predates by eight years the similar work of Kristin Ross in *Fast Cars, Clean Bodies* (1995). Ross examines the crucial period from the battle of Điện Biên Phủ (the climactic confrontation of the First Indochina War where the French military were decisively beaten by the Viet Minh in May 1954) to the mid-1960s where France shifted from a largely rural and empire-orientated society towards a decolonised, Americanised, and fully industrialised France. Indeed, Ross is aware of the similarities, and in her book praises the detective fiction of Daeninckx, noting how it demonstrates that immigration-centred racism has its roots in the era of decolonisation and modernisation (1995: 9).[93] Ross stresses that France without its ex-colonial immigrants could not have successfully "Americanised" or competed in the post-war industrial competition (1995: 9).

[93] While the terms overlap significantly, it is important to differentiate between modernity and modernisation. Modernity is the condition of social existence that is radically different to previous forms of human experience. Modernisation refers to the transitional process of moving from traditional communities to modern societies (Shilliam, 2010).

The novel compares the extreme violence of the Algerian War with that of the *banlieue* of 1980's France. The fictional Hotch factory is the biggest employer in Courvilliers and is portrayed as a dangerous work environment. Accidents are frequent and workers are injured in terms that conjure up images of soldiers on the warfront:

> *Les cadences de l'usine s'imposaient à la ville tout entière. L'activité du commissariat suivait la mesure. Au cours de sa première semaine de travail, par dix fois Cadin avait dépêché le car de Police-Secours pour assurer le transfert d'accidentés vers l'hôpital : blessés sur les chaînes de montage, accrochages dans la folie des sorties . . .* (BD: p. 9)
>
> [The pace of the plant imposed on the entire city. The activity of the police station followed its rhythm. During his first week of work, ten times Cadin had dispatched the police bus to ensure the transfer of casualties to the hospital: wounded workers from the assembly lines, clashes in the madness of the outputs . . .]

The above quotation highlights the influence of the fictional Hotch factory to dictate the pace of life in Courvilliers and even its ability to impact the police's schedule. Indeed, Florey highlights the factory's sprawling influence over its employees and the social, political, and economic spheres of the *banlieue* (2013: 75). Daeninckx's description of the power of the factory shows the influence of nineteenth-century French naturalist writers such as Émile Zola, who depicted factories and industry as all-powerful malevolent forces.

In *Le Bourreau et son double,* Cadin is also somewhat repressed by the powerful establishment. Upon his arrival to Courvilliers, the Inspecteur is immediately delegated by his superiors to continually work the night shift. This is a futile effort to stop him from stirring up trouble. However, the most significant power relations highlighted within the police forces are the conflict between Cadin and the newly-recruited *police municipale* [municipal police]. The structure of the *police municipale* differs greatly from both *la police nationale* and *la gendarmerie*, which are under the direction of the *ministère de l'intérieur. La police municipale* is under the authority of the local *mairie* [town hall/mayor], and therefore open to corruption from those quarters. While Daeninckx has criticised the State and state police in other texts, here he is criticising the municipal police, as no powerful organisation is safe from his sharp analysis.

In this text, Daeninckx deliberately portrays *la police municipale* as a heavily militarised and Americanised police force, in order to highlight the difference between them and *la police nationale*:

> *Trois flics d'opérette l'attendaient dans la grande salle du bas : casquettes plates à l'américaine, rangers, fausses guêtres, pantalon de combat et blouson. Cadin remarqua les Manurhin calibre 357 qui pendaient aux ceinturons, alors qu'eux devaient continuer à bricoler leurs vieux Rr 51* (*BD*: p. 17)
>
> [Three jokes-for-cops were waiting in the big room downstairs; American style baseball caps, biker boots, fake gaiters, combat trousers and jackets. Cadin noticed their new Manurhin .357 revolvers holstered to their belts while [Cadin and his colleagues] had to keep cobbling with their old Rr 51s].

In *Le Bourreau et son double*, *la police municipale* refer to themselves as *"Courvilliers sécurité"*. The American influence on them, symbolic of France's period of economic growth and modernisation during the post war period known as *Les Trente Glorieuses* (the approximately thirty years after the end of the Second World War up to the years of the global oil crisis: 1946–1973), is reinforced by a sergeant with the Anglophone name of Bob. Cadin who is initially dismissive of the group is warned by his colleague Léonard that Bob and his team should be taken seriously: *' . . . Bob est tout le contraire d'un clown, c'est un ancien para-commando. Il a passé trois ans au Tchad, dans les coins les plus pourris*' (*BD*: p. 20) [Bob is the complete opposite of a clown, he's a former paratrooper. He spent three years in the worst corners of Chad]. Bob is a character of significant importance as he is symbolic of France's on-going process of decolonisation. He is presented as a larger-than-life figure, who has a severe scar around his throat and an inability to sleep for more than ten minutes; in short, his description more than borders on caricature:

> *un maquisard de Goukouni a essayé de lui couper la gorge, une nuit . . . /Léonard appuya son index droit sur sa pomme d'Adam et traça un trait imaginaire sur sa gorge./– . . . depuis il paraît qu'il ne dort plus. Seulement dix minutes de temps en temps . . .* (*BD*: p. 20)
>
> [One night a member of the Goukouni resistance tried to slit his throat . . . /Léonard imitated an attack by tracing his right index along his Adam's apple and throat./ . . . since then it seems he can't sleep anymore. Only ten minutes from time to time . . .]

However, Léonard, the youngest police officer under Cadin's command is not unwelcoming of their presence and admits that he even feels safer as a result of the newly formed municipal police:

> *Dès que Lebroux a été élu, à la place de l'ancien maire communiste, il a mis en place l'équipe de Bob. Comme par hasard les rumeurs ont baissé de volume. Ils ont placardé des affiches « Courvilliers Sécurité » avec un numéro de téléphone relié en direct à leurs voitures de ronde, des placards de pub dans le bulletin municipal . . . Résultat, la population leur fait risette, les commerçants jubilent et moi, c'est peut-être dur à avaler, mais je me sens plus à l'aise . . .* (*BD*: p. 21)
>
> [As soon as Lebroux was elected, in place of the old communist mayor, he set up Bob's team. Unsurprisingly,the rumours quietened. They put up posters, 'Courvilliers Security' with a telephone number direct to their patrol cars, local news bulletins with their details . . . and so the locals smile when they see them, businesses are delighted, and as for me, it may be hard to admit, but I feel more at ease . . .]

This indicates the level of unrest in the local population and the severe challenges that ordinary people and small businesses face in such disadvantaged areas. Daeninckx is highlighting that criminals in the area are a small minority of the community who significantly lower the quality of life of working-class people.

3.3.1 Failures of the PCF: Identity Politics

The subtle reference in the above quotation to the failure of the former communist mayor to be re-elected underlines the decline of left-leaning politics, a key trope in the novel. Daeninckx's text partially links the decline of trade unions and the PCF to the fallout of the Algerian War. We have seen that Werbel's death is symbolic of the disappearance of the complex experience of *les appelés* [conscripted soldiers] who, until relatively recently, have been largely forgotten.[94] Equally, the fact that the plot centres on the murder of a trade unionist is symbolic of the death of the labour movement or the communist dream. The text attributes the decline of trade unions during the 1980s in part to their unwillingness or incapacity to involve the immigrant population who had become far more numerous in the workforce (Levasseur, 2012). The trade unions are described as being completely uninterested and even suspicious of Werbel's solidarity with migrant workers (*BD*: p. 61). By

[94] The previously mentioned documentary *La Guerre sans nom* (1992) focused exclusively on the testimonies of twenty-eight conscripts and a few of their wives.

criticising the Left in this instance, Daeninckx is not relinquishing his left-leaning roots, as he remains ideologically left wing. However, he is compelled to denounce the Left's lacklustre efforts regarding inclusivity and their apathy towards '*faire cohabiter les différentes nationalités*' [integrating the different nationalities] in the workplace (*BD*: p. 61). This is significant as it shows that Daeninckx does not hesitate to criticise injustice wherever he sees it. It is worth noting that during our interview Daeninckx was very critical of the unwillingness of the PCF to make a stand against the Algerian War:

> *En 1956 le Parti Communiste gagne les élections avec le Parti socialiste et ils votent l'augmentation des crédits de guerre pour l'Algérie. Ils ont une responsabilité écrasante là-dedans. Dans les années qui suivent les travailleurs algériens se rappellent de ça, que la solidarité internationale a été mesurée* (Daeninckx and Gleeson, 2017)
>
> [In 1956, the PCF and the French Socialist Party voted to increase war credits for Algeria. They had an overwhelming responsibility for it. In the years that followed Algerian workers remembered this and that international solidarity was very limited].

Indeed, when Guy Mollet's government called for "special powers" to allow them to pour conscripts into Algeria in 1956, the PCF supported the government and were adamant that peace must be re-established to ensure the permanence of the political, economic and cultural bonds between France and Algeria (Horne, 2012: 130).

3.4 Cadin and his Relationships: Colleagues and some Female Characters

In orthodox hardboiled fashion, Cadin is for the most part a loner. Rubino notes that there are very few recurring characters throughout the Inspecteur Cadin series and cites Dalbois as the only character worthy of note who appears in *Meurtres pour mémoire*, *Le Facteur fatal*, *Mort au premier tour* and *Lumière noire*. For the most part those around Cadin, as noted by Rubino, are rarely deeply described and are usually only given trivial roles to develop the plot. However, *Le Bourreau et son double* is an exception to the series, as it is the only book where Cadin develops a noteworthy relationship with his colleagues. In *Le Bourreau et son double* Inspecteur Cadin works the nightshift with a team of three other police officers: Léonard, Mernandez and Mimosa.

Rubino states that Mernandez and Mimosa function as comic relief who are '*caractérisés par ces particularités quelque peu pittoresques et bizarres qui font la joie et l'amusement des lecteurs des romans policiers à la Simenon'* (Rubino, 2009: 43) [characterised by their

somewhat picturesque and bizarre features, that provide joy and amusement to readers of Simenonesque detective novels].[95] The pot-bellied Mimosa, who gets his nickname from his reddish complexion and his 'passion immodérée pour les boissons alcoolisées' [unrestrained passion for alcoholic beverages], only speaks in stammers and rambles (*BD*: p. 16), clearly resonates with the atmosphere of Simenon's detective novels.

In similarly picturesque style also reminiscent of Simenon, Mernandez is an avid poet and writes sonnets and prose poetry. At several stages, he asks Cadin for his opinion of his pieces.[96] Cadin (and the reader) reads three pieces of Mernandez's poetry. These poems, while seemingly sentimental and mawkish, and at times a little like doggerel, prime the reader for subsequent events in the Algerian narrative of the text through their shared imagery. The first is a poem called "*La Lettre"* [The Letter] which appears in the third chapter of the Courvilliers narrative:

« *La lettre »* *« Comme elles sont douces* *Ces jolies violettes* *Venues dans la mousse* *Tendres et discrètes* *Elles vous diront tout bas* *Que je n'oublie pas* *Mais elles sont si frêles* *Que je crains pour elles* *Le cachet brutal* *Du facteur rural.* »	[*The Letter* How sweet they are, these lovely violets, From over the foam, Tender and discreet, They will whisper to you, That I haven't forgotten, But they are so delicate, That I worry about, The brutal stamp, of the rural postman].

[95] George Simenon's Maigret novels are known for frequently featuring colourful characters. For example, in *Le Chien jaune* (1931) [*The Yellow Dog* (2003)] Maigret arrives to the Breton coastal town of Concarneau to investigate the murder of a local prominent wine merchant Monsieur Mostaguen. During his investigation, Maigret encounters curious characters such as Jean Servières, a retired newspaper editor from Paris; Ernest Michoux, a qualified doctor who has never practised; Emma, a downtrodden waitress and Léon LeGlérec, an eccentric fisherman who is the initial suspect. Each of these characters has significant depth, as the novel progresses further details of their pasts are revealed adding layer upon layer to their characterisation.

[96] After the book's epilogue, Daeninckx states that Mernandez's poems were liberally inspired by poems written by members of the Gendarmerie published in 1978 in *L'Essor de la Gendarmerie nationale*. *L'Essor de la Gendarmerie nationale* was originally created as a corporate bulletin by Jean Cousteix in 1936. The publication is now recognised as the principal independent media for members of the French police forces (*L'Essor de la Gendarmerie nationale*, 2020: Online).

(*BD*: pp. 45-46)[97]	

This poem foreshadows the subsequent third chapter of the Algerian narrative where Claude Werbel receives a letter from his mother and sister in France, who are concerned for him, as it has been almost six months since they last got a letter from him (*BD*: pp. 63–65). Werbel is clearly disturbed by the letter and cannot bring himself to write home to his family, who are oblivious to his hellish conditions. From an intermediary they are under the impression that Claude's camp is far removed from the violence of the war: '*il dit que tu es en bonne santé et que ton poste n'est pas exposé, qu'on se bat rarement dans ton secteur'* (*BD*: p. 64) [he says that you are in good health and that your post is not exposed, that you rarely fight in your sector].

The second of Mernandez's pieces of poetry is a verse that appears in chapter five of the Courvilliers narrative:

« Enfin voici l'hélicoptère, Qui, survolant de haut la terre, Pourra servir d'observatoire Pour surveiller le territoire. » (*BD*: p. 100)	[Finally, here is the helicopter, Which flying over the ground, Can serve as an observatory To monitor the territory.]

This fragment of a poem that Cadin finds discarded by Mernandez clearly evokes the Algerian War. Scholars such as Iain Mossman have noted that in French media the image of the helicopter is particularly synonymous with the Algerian War. Importantly, the Algerian War was the first time that helicopters had been used on a large scale. Mossman's book chapter, "Conflicting Memories: Modernisation, Colonialism and the Algerian War Appelés in *Cinq colonnes à la une*" (2013), discusses how the French government used newsreel footage of helicopters to promote the idea of modernisation and justify the existence of the colonies. Daeninckx incorporates the image of the helicopter at the climax of the Algerian story. In the same narrative, as the French army prepare to leave the area, Werbel is

[97] It's worth noting that the final lines of the poem (through the consonance of "brutal" and "rural" and the repetition of "Facteur") prefigures the title of *Le Facteur fatal.*

physically and morally exasperated from torturing prisoners and attempts suicide by slitting his wrists. Daeninckx contrasts this with the image of the Sikorsky helicopters passing over the camp for a final salute (*BD*: p. 188).

The third and final of Mernandez's poems is about a French police officer who is about to retire from his job: '*. . . l'histoire d'un vieux flic qui range sa paire de godillots en partant a la retraite'* (*BD*: p. 171) [. . . the story of an old cop who hangs up his boots as he retires]. The most interesting line of the two verses is '*Dieu qu'elles en ont vu ces vieilles chaussures/Les Ardennes, Saigon, puis Mai soixante-huit*' (*BD*: p. 171) [God what they have seen, these old shoes/The Ardennes, Saigon and May '68]. The poem's description of an old police officer who hangs up his boots foreshadows Cadin's departure from the police force. Similar to the character in the poem, through his investigations Cadin has indirect experiences of World War II, France's wars of decolonisation as well as the aftermath of May '68.

While Mernandez and Mimosa serve as light entertainment for the reader, Léonard is one of the very few characters in the police force who develops a significant relationship with Inspecteur Cadin throughout the series. His character greatly contributes to the text's portrayal of the complexities of Franco-Algerian relations in the 1980s and *la banlieue parisienne.* Similar to Claude Werbel and Pierre Molier, Léonard is also haunted by his past and through the story of his brother we see that he too has a sort of double:

> *Un passé difficile pèse sur ce jeune homme de père algérien et de mère française, dont le frère, en proie à des complexes de jeune Arabe mal intégré, avait mitraillé un café et tué des gens, ce qui lui avait valu plusieurs années de prison.* (Rubino, 2009 : 43)
>
> [This young man, born to an Algerian father and a French mother, is burdened by a difficult past: his brother, plagued by the complex of being a young, poorly integrated Arab, machine gunned a café and killed people, which earned him several years in prison.]

Cadin is curious as to Léonard's motivations for becoming part of the police force. He considers '*l'intensité des combats qu'il avait dû livrer pour s'imposer comme flic à part entière dans une ville qui avait assisté aux exploits de son frère'* (*BD*: p. 80) [the intense fights he must have endured to establish himself as a cop in a city which had witnessed his brother]. It may also be worth reflecting on the extent to which Cadin and Léonard are

doubles of each other. During our interview Daeninckx described his real-life inspiration for Inspecteur Cadin in very similar terms to Léonard:

> *J'étais animateur, éducateur de rue, ici à Aubervilliers pendant une période, dans un quartier compliqué. Parmi les jeunes avec qui je travaillais il y en avait un type très intéressant qui se destinait au métier de flic. Je me rappelle son surnom : beau-bosse. C'était un type vraiment très intelligent et un jour il m'avait dit qu'il voulait devenir policier. Donc je me suis dit, ce type bien, ce type qui a une vision positive du monde, qui a une volonté de faire en sorte que personne ne soit mis de côté, qu'est-ce qu'il va devenir quand il va passer dans la machine à laver d'un commissariat ? Cadin est né de ça, puis après il y avait autre chose, mais il est né surtout de cette réflexion. Comme souvent chez moi c'est né de ce que je vois autour de moi, que j'intègre dans l'écriture.* (Daeninckx and Gleeson, 2017)
>
> [I worked as an *animateur*, street educator, here in Aubervilliers for a while, in a complicated neighbourhood.[98] Amongst the young people I was working with there was a really interesting guy who decided to become a cop. I remember he was nicknamed *beau-bosse* {good-looking grafter}. He was a really intelligent guy and one day he told me that he wanted to join the police. So I said to myself, this good guy, this guy who has a positive outlook on life, who makes sure that no one is ever left out, what will happen to him when he goes through the brain-washing machine of a police station? Cadin was born from that, there were also other things, but he stemmed particularly from that idea. As is often the case in my writing, it was born from things I saw around me, things I integrate into my writing.]

It is also worth noting that Léonard is portrayed as having a very good relationship with the young people in the community who freely talk to him even though he is a police officer (*BD*: p. 29).

Much of the portrayal of women in the Inspecteur Cadin cycle demonstrates the misogyny prevalent in France of the 1980s. Inspecteur Cadin has somewhat of a troubled relationship with women. In *Meurtres pour mémoire,* Daeninckx nods to other texts in the series, by having Cadin recount his history of falling in love with witnesses and other women he meets through his police work.

> *Dans ma courte carrière j'étais déjà tombé deux fois amoureux de témoins ou de victimes. Et dire que certains trouvent que la police manque de cœur ! En Alsace d'abord, où j'avais rencontré Michèle Shelton, l'amie d'un jeune*

[98] *Animateur* is a francophone term for an activity leader who usually works with young people and organises extra-curricular activities.

> *militant écologiste assassiné. A Courvilliers ensuite, une ville-dortoir de la banlieue parisienne. Là encore je ne m'étais pas avoué facilement mon intérêt pour Monique Werbel. Il y avait de quoi : quand j'avais fait sa connaissance elle était allongée sur son lit, une balle de neuf millimètres venait de lui transpercer la poitrine. Le plus ringard des psychanalystes réussirait à soutirer dix ans de séances bi-hebdomadaires d'un paumé qui lui annoncerait un tel programme ! Éros et Thanatos, le couple maudit !* (*MM*, p. 70)
>
> [In my brief career I had twice before fallen in love with witnesses or victims. And to think some people see the police as heartless! First in Alsace, where I'd met Michele Shelton, the girlfriend of a murdered young ecology activist. Then in Courvilliers, a dormitory suburb of Paris. There too I'd been slow to admit my interest in Monique Werbel. There was good reason; when I made her acquaintance, she was stretched out on her bed, a nine-millimetre bullet lodged in her chest. Even a third-rate psychoanalyst could get ten years of fortnightly sessions out of a no-hoper with that on his mind. Eros and Thanatos, cursed as always.]

The blasé manner in which Cadin describes himself as having fallen in love with the corpse of Monique Werbel is unsettling and is perhaps a red flag as to the decline to come later in the series. *Le Géant inachevé,* examined in the next chapter, remedies this misogyny as the text gives a key role to a strong female character.

3.5 Anti-Migrant Racism and DNA profiling: "It's in their genes"

Levasseur notes that *Le Bourreau et son double* is one of Daeninckx's first testimonies of support for immigrants and argues that the text aims to stimulate reflection on the evolution of institutional racisms in the French Republic between the 1960s and 1980s (Levasseur, 2012: 228).[99] The main example of racism in the text is the Hotch factory's plan to introduce a new hiring practice. Towards the end of the novel, Cadin finds a newspaper article written by Werbel denouncing this new practice as inherently racist, as it aims to profile candidates according to their supposed chromosome fragility. In order to ensure maximum profit, the factory aims to detect '*les employés de race noire porteurs du gène d'une affection sanguine qui seraient, selon les statistiques, plus enclins à se mettre en maladie'* (*BD*: p. 156) [Black employees with the gene for a blood disorder who, according to statistics, are more likely to become ill]. This subplot resonates strongly with the

[99] It is significant to note that *Lumière noire* (1987) was the next text published by Daeninckx which was directly inspired by the expulsion of 101 Malians from France in October 1986. *Missak* (2009), *Galadio* (2010a) and *Dans la jungle* (2017) are other works by Daeninckx that centre on migrant characters.

contemporary issue of genetic privacy surrounding companies, such as 23andMe and Ancestry.com, which offer DNA genetic testing and analysis for people researching their genealogy. Databases created by these companies have been used by law enforcement in the United States to solve cold case crime such as the identity of the Golden State Killer in 2018 and the identities of the victims and perpetrator of the Bear Brook murders in 2019.[100] However, these databases pose serious risks to the privacy not only of the customers who have consented to the DNA testing but also to their extended relatives. One such risk is that, in the United States, this DNA database may allow insurance companies to discriminate in the provision of life insurance, disability insurance or long-term care insurance (Bélisle-Pipon et al, 2019). While Daeninckx's subplot of employers hiring on the basis of DNA test results may have appeared as science-fiction when first published in 1986, contemporary readers of the text would no doubt appreciate the feasibility of such a dystopian scenario. The now routine use of DNA testing in solving crimes also appears perversely ironic to modern-day readers.

Similar to Ross, Daeninckx combines the context of industrialisation with the recolonisation of the colonial subject in France to highlight the violent forms of neo-colonialism in France of the 1980s. This is further reinforced by the dehumanising descriptions of migrant workers comparing them to animals: '*Les dictateurs nous envoient du bétail à bosser*' (*BD*: p. 77) [The dictators send us 'worker cattle']. This animalisation of the worker is also alluded to in the *fait divers* which describes the death of a worker in a dogfood factory, "*La société Doux-Canin*" [The Gentle-Dog company], who is killed when, for reasons unknown, he is torn to shreds after falling into one of the factories meat mincers. The *fait divers* is also a rather blunt metaphor of the worker being eaten or consumed by their workplace. As with the other *fait divers*, the case of Gérard Noret is punctuated with dark humour in the name of factory, which appears to be the opposite of "*doux*" [gentle].

This resonates with Sonya Florey's analysis of *Le Bourreau et son double* in her book *L'Engagement littéraire à l'ère néolibérale* (2013). Florey praises the text's denunciation of a dysfunctional society, and states that the way Daeninckx successfully weaves the socio-

[100] For more on the Golden State Killer see Michelle McNamara's *I'll Be Gone in the Dark* (2018) which played a significant role in the arrest of Joseph James DeAngelo. *The Bear Brook murders* (2018) podcast produced by New Hampshire Public Radio offers a thorough discussion on the advantages of DNA databases in helping solve cold case crimes and the privacy issues surrounding such genealogical data.

economic and political context into the elucidation of the crime at the centre of the plot is typical of the *néo-polar*. Florey notes that "Courvilliers" is a microcosm of France and that Cadin's investigation into a single murder is used as a vehicle to describe the power imbalances present in French society in general. Florey is keen to stress the depth and complexity of Cadin, who is portrayed as a pillar of integrity: *'. . .intègre, loyal, [Cadin] apparaît comme un repère axiologique'* (2013: 80) [. . . integrity, loyalty, Cadin appears as an axiological point of reference]. *Le Bourreau et son double* captures quite well Cadin's moral struggle which could also be interpreted as the collective challenge of acknowledging and coming to terms with the Algerian War in French society. However, the tragedy of Cadin is that his incessant quest for the truth has ambivalent consequences for him and those around him:

> *La quête du vrai est une référence positive, un achèvement, dans ce système de valeurs, mais l'irruption de la vérité à la fin de l'investigation entraîne des effets ambivalents sur les personnages : la révélation constitue l'élément déclenchant la mort de l'épouse, le suicide de Werbel et la mutation de l'inspecteur dans un autre commissariat.* (Florey, 2013: 80)
>
> [The quest for the truth is a positive reference, an achievement, in this broken value system. However, the irruption of the truth at the end of the investigation has ambivalent effects on the characters: the revelation is the element that triggers the death of the wife, the suicide of Werbel and the transfer of the inspector to another police station.]

The violent consequences of the explosive revelation of the truth is also central to *Le Géant inachevé*, which is discussed in the coming chapter. Similar to *Le Bourreau et son double*, Daeninckx successfully integrates the socio-economic context of the industrial north of France in *Le Géant inachevé* which takes place in the French-Flanders town of Hazebrouck and mirrors the industrial setting of Courvilliers. While Daeninckx also highlights the issue of racism in *Le Géant inachevé* at a few significant points, the text's main focus surrounds the social ills of drug abuse, social isolation, and poverty. The plot centres on the murder of young woman during the area's medieval tradition of Carnival. Daeninckx also uses both the festival's traditions and aesthetics to, once again, expose political corruption, police incompetence, hidden histories from World War II and traumas stemming from the Algerian War.

Chapter Four: *Le Géant inachevé*

Le Géant inachevé was favourably received upon publication in France, winning the *813 Trophée* French crime fiction award for best crime novel of the year in 1984, as well as the *Prix du Roman Noir* the following year in 1985. Testament to its popularity, the novel was adapted by France Culture into a ninety-minute radio play in 1986.[101] Despite the success of the novel, the text has received very little attention from scholars to date. The second novel in the chronology of the Cadin series takes place in Hazebrouck and features a notably young and idealistic Inspecteur Cadin, who is, as with *Meurtres pour mémoire* and *Le Bourreau et son double*, a stranger in town, or as he refers to himself in the text '*un jeune flic étranger à la région*' (*GI*: p. 64) [a young cop, a stranger to the region].

The plot of the novel centres on the mysterious murder of a young woman. Guy Mallet is a mentally ill man who has left his wife and travels from Paris to Hazebrouck in an effort to find Laurence Cappel, his childhood sweetheart. However, when Guy reaches Laurence's workshop, she is already dead. Alerted by the sound of gunfire, Inspecteur Cadin arrives on scene and arrests Guy for the murder of Laurence. The motivation and exact circumstances surrounding the murder of Laurence are unclear, as Guy has a nervous breakdown upon discovering her corpse, and the police assume him to be the sole perpetrator. Towards the end of the novel, Cadin discovers that that Laurence was in fact killed by a local organised crime gang, who had been coercing her to launder their money.

As with *Mort au premier tour's* emphasis on elements on the periphery of French society, *Le Géant inachevé* is set in Hazebrouck; a small town in the *département du Nord* in the north of France, just sixteen kilometres from the Belgian border. The text has a strong regional flavour, incorporating Flemish culture, particularly the area's tradition of Carnival and its folklore based on giants, as major themes and plot elements in the novel.

While the region's giants are supposed to act as protectors, the novel raises the question of how protected ordinary people are, as protection or aid does not often come from the

[101] Like the radio adaptation of *Le Bourreau et son double, Le Géant inachevé* has not yet been digitised or re-released. The radio adaptation of *Meurtres pour mémoire* is widely available. This was recorded in 2003 and subsequently released on CD by Gallimard.

State. Indeed, much of the protection in the novel is *protectionism* by gangsters, or the protection afforded by money in the case of the wealthy industrial classes. Cadin again acts as a disruptive force by exposing corruption within the police force and their collusion with '*des gros poissons*' (*GI*: p. 77) [wealthy individuals and big shot criminals] such as the text's antagonist Courtini, a rich industrialist who has the police in his pocket. The end of the novel shows that Courtini had led the organised crime group that had murdered Laurence. In hardboiled fashion the antagonist's wife, who is simply referred to as Madame Courtini, is a typical *femme fatale*. Cadin briefly meets Madame Courtini at a social event organised by her husband and is immediately struck by her attractiveness and her voice in particular: '*C'est surtout sa voix . . . Je suis sûr qu'elle fait des dégâts en prononçant seulement « Passez-moi le sel » . . .* ' (*GI*: p. 69) [It's her voice especially . . . I'm sure that she does plenty of damage by simply saying 'pass me the salt']. It is this very *femme fatale*, Madame Courtini, who later makes an anonymous phone call to the Inspecteur in an attempt to lure him to a secluded V2 missile site, to be assassinated. In contrast to Madame Courtini who is merely a secondary character, Laurence Cappel, the murder victim, is arguably the text's main character as she is central not only to the plot but the novel's themes of poverty, drug addiction, as well as the area's traditions of Carnival and Flemish folklore. Laurence is a strong female character and tries to gather the necessary money to help save her brother who is addicted to heroin, in order to keep him out of prison. Throughout the course of the novel, we also learn that she was keen to avoid the sanitisation and commodification of the Carnival festival by the area's corporate industries. Laurence is arguably the strongest female character in the Inspecteur Cadin series, especially when compared with Monique Werbel in *Le Bourreau et son Double* and *Meurtres pour mémoire*'s Claudine Chenet who are both far less developed. The characterisation of Madame Courtini demonstrates that Daeninckx is willing to borrow from the conventional tropes of the genre, however, his portrayal of Laurence is testament to his progressive feminist views.

Feminism is tacitly present in Daeninckx's oeuvre, as the role and position of women is frequently raised by the author. Noteworthy female characters are central to Daeninckx's noir novel as far back as *Play-back* (1986b), which won the *Prix Mystère de la Critique* in 1987. The novel denounces the abandonment of the deindustrialized region of Lorraine through a plot centred on two women whose lives were destroyed by the misogyny of the

music industry (Modenesi, 2018). The main protagonist of Daeninckx's novella *La Repentie* (1999) is Brigitte, a former terrorist who attempts (and fails) to leave her traumatic past behind by adopting a new identity when she is released from prison.[102] The history of Jewish resistant Denise Glaser is an integral part of the previously discussed *Caché dans la maison des fous* (2015), which as, noted by Alan Morris, implicitly highlights the status of women (2016: Online).

In terms of gender, it also worth highlighting another one of Daeninckx's novels, *Camarades de classe* (2008a), as its protagonist is a transgender woman. The plot of *Camarades de classe* centres on a class reunion of a group of high-school students from Aubervilliers, forty years after the events of May '68. The text captures the erratic path of a generation who are significantly marked by the events and major ideas of May '68 but who find it difficult to assume its whole legacy or to remain faithful to it (Domingues de Almeida, 2019).

It is worth clarifying that while *Camarades de classe* is very much a plot-driven thriller, the text is not a work of crime fiction. While the transgender identity of the protagonist in *Camarades de classe* is used as a dramatic plot twist towards the climax of the novel, the transgender element of the character is treated very sensitively by Daeninckx. Importantly, this avoids the very problematic stereotypes of transgender characters being associated with crime (or punishment), as seen for example in Thierry Jonquet's aforementioned *Mygale* (1984) and its filmic adaptation *The Skin I Live In* (2011), directed by Pedro Almodóvar.[103] On first appraisal, Daeninckx's *oeuvre* may appear to be dominated by male characters, yet upon further inspection it is clear that he has written several texts with multifaceted female protagonists and that the issue of gender equality is an undercurrent throughout all of his works

Le Géant inachevé highlights the visible divide between the bourgeoisie and the working-class. In Daeninckx's own words, the book shows '*ces milieux sociaux qui se croisent sans se rencontrer*' (Daeninckx and Maricourt, 2009: 133) [these social classes that pass each other without ever meeting]. At several points Daeninckx notes how health care is only accessible to those who can afford it. The murder victim, Laurence Cappel—who, interestingly, is

[102] In 2002 this was adapted into a film of the same name directed by Lætitia Masso.
[103] See "Troubling transformations: Pedro Almodóvar's *La piel que habito*/The Skin I Live In (2011) and its reception" (Waldron and Murray, 2014).

reflective of Daeninckx himself in several ways as her voluntary work in the community and lead role in the Carnival troop is very similar to Daeninckx's experiences working as a set decorator and what, in relation to himself, Daeninckx calls an '*animateur socioculturel*' [French term for a sociocultural activity leader](Daeninckx and Maricourt, 2009: 51). In order to earn enough money to send her brother to a drug rehabilitation centre, Laurence is forced to launder money for Courtini. Conversely, money is no obstacle for Courtini who is able to send his own son, Daniel Courtini, to Switzerland to overcome his addiction problems (*GI*: pp. 159-160).

In contrast to *Meurtres pour mémoire* and *Le Bourreau et son double, Le Géant inachevé* primarily addresses the social issues of inadequate State provision for social problems such as drug addiction, long-term unemployment, general healthcare, mental illness and isolation, and an overall lack of attention to the provinces. All of this takes place during the economic depression of 1980s France and in the context of a region that was exploited for its mines, but that has lost that financial lifeline. However, the novel does make fleeting but important references to the historical traumas of the Algerian War and World War II. Samy, a close friend of Laurence and a key witness in Cadin's investigation, is disgusted by the racist mockery of drowning Muslims in a sketch prepared by a troop that he is involved with for the Carnival parade. A sub-plot of the novel also sees Cadin come into contact with an ex-priest who was traumatised by his time serving as a chaplain in the French army in Algeria. While Hazebrouck appears to be a place of relative insignificance and is certainly treated as such by the French state, its involvement in World War II is strongly indicated in the novel. Daeninckx explores the physical remnants such as the V2 missile launch sites built by the Nazis to bombard England with rockets. This is typical of Daeninckx's approach where he picks a location that initially appears entirely banal but that has a complex and profound hidden history lurking beneath its surface.

The central focus of *Le Géant inachevé* on social ills makes the text somewhat of an outlier in terms of the other novels in the Inspecteur Cadin series. However, in the series' short story collection, *Le Facteur fatal* (1990), Daeninckx returns to the some of the social issues explored in *Le Géant inachevé* such as mental illness, addiction, and isolation. In contrast to

Meurtres pour mémoire, *Le Bourreau et son double,* and to a lesser extent *Mort au premier tour,* historical traumas are only secondary in *Le Géant inachevé*.[104]

4.1 Social Realism: Poverty, Unemployment, Healthcare, and Prison

Daeninckx immediately introduces the poverty and abundant social problems of Hazebrouck and the *département du Nord* to the reader in *Le Géant inachevé*. The first scene of the novel includes a grim description of a young alcoholic woman, *'elle ne semblait pas très âgée, trente-cinq ans peut-être, et il l'avait déjà remarquée, accoudée à d'autres bars, plus ou moins ivres*' (*GI*: p. 9) [She didn't seem very old, maybe thirty-five, and he had already seen her hanging around other bars, more or less drunk], who is aimlessly shouting advice and proverbs at other customers. The very first line of the text is the drunk woman shouting: *'il ne suffit pas d'être belle pour qu'un homme s'attache à vous*' (*GI*: p. 9) [Beauty is not enough for a man to attach to you]. This is in fact an intertextual reference, as it is a direct quotation from the first line of surrealist writer Louis Aragon's novel *Blanche ou l'oubli* (1967) [Blankness or Forgetting]. Daeninckx reveals the prominence of this quotation at the very end of *Le Géant inachevé* as Cadin purchases Aragon's text in a second-hand bookshop before leaving Hazebrouck for the final time (*GI*: p. 212). Daeninckx was most likely drawn to this text in particular as it is a notable blend of autobiography and fiction as well as a philosophical discussion on memory. These references give a distinct circular feel to the text and as a result the end of the novel offers the reader little hope in terms of change or progress in the near future for the region. It is significant to note that Daeninckx has credited reading Aragon's *Les Incipit* (1969) as making him aware of the importance of the first sentence of each text he writes (Daeninckx and Maricourt, 2009: 83). It is also worth noting the symbolic resonance of the title of *Blanche ou l'oubli* to blankness and forgetting, which are central concerns in Daeninckx's oeuvre.

In the same way that Cadin was physically attracted to the murder victim Monique Werbel in *Le Bourreau et son double*, the Inspecteur also remarks that Laurence was very attractive, on seeing her corpse. In contrast to Monique Werbel, Laurence has a far more prominent role in the text, and she is portrayed as a richly complex character. Laurence understands

[104] Daeninckx wrote *Le Géant inachevé* two months after completing *Meurtres pour mémoire*. As stated, there is a significant switch of focus and themes, but *Meurtres pour mémoire*'s concern with racism and anti-Algerian behaviour is echoed at several points in *Le Géant inachevé*.

that prison is the worst possible situation for people suffering with drug addiction and she does all she can (which ultimately costs her her life) to keep her brother out of prison and get treatment for his addiction. Laurence is also keenly aware of the value of local culture and works towards reclaiming and reviving the traditions of the area's Carnival festival. The feminist thrust of the novel is heightened by Laurence's strong moral compass and heroic efforts to save her brother and protect Carnival traditions from a number of sanitising neo-liberals around her. In short, as suggested by the first line of the novel, Daeninckx attaches much more than just beauty to Laurence.

The figure of the alcoholic woman at the beginning of *Le Géant inachevé* is also significant as it primes the reader for Cadin's ultimate descent into depression and alcoholism as depicted in his cameo in *Lumière noire* and in greater detail in *Le Facteur fatal*. Indeed, having arrested Guy Mallet and discovered the corpse of Laurence, the first chapter ends with Inspecteur Cadin turning to alcohol in an attempt to cope with the misery he has just witnessed: '*Il prit une bière dans le frigidaire,* [. . .] *et la vida d'un trait en réprimant une envie de pleurer*' (*GI*: p. 23) [He took a beer from the fridge, [. . .] and emptied it in one go to fight his urge to cry]. This also reinforces the impression that it is a far younger and perhaps more emotional Inspecteur Cadin in the text.

Throughout Daeninckx's novel, the French healthcare system is depicted as under-resourced and ineffectual. Mallet receives little help while detained in the psychiatric hospital and his treatment borders on abusive as the psychiatric nurses refer to him as '*Mélodie-Cassette'*: the nickname given to him by other patients in the asylum (*GI*: p. 35). Indeed, Mallet manages to commit suicide in the very place he has been incarcerated for his own safety. Daeninckx's characterisation of Mallet is clearly an argument for the need of more funding to address mental health issues in France. From his recorded confession it is clear that Mallet had been suffering for many years with undiagnosed issues. Moreover, Daeninckx's intertextual references to the music of John Lennon reinforces this argument. Mallet records his confession over the music of The Beatles and John Lennon, reminding the reader by implication of the murder of John Lennon in 1980 by a delusional and psychotic fan.

Mallet's confession forces Cadin to investigate the case further and the Inspecteur's first port of call is to visit the mother of Laurence Cappel. Similar to Madame Thiraud in *Meurtres pour mémoire* who is also a widow shut off from the rest of the world, Madame Cappel is another figure that Daeninckx uses to reinforce the social problems and misery of Hazebrouck. Madame Cappel lives in a severely disadvantaged area called *Quartier Perdu* (*GI*: p. 79) [Lost Quarter], which was formerly a *cité de transi.t*[105] Madame Cappel is described as being socially isolated and living in deplorable conditions while she attempts to care for a vast number of dogs, many of which have been abandoned by their owners. At first, this appears to be a rather cheap trope of a "crazy cat lady"; however, the compassion shown by Inspecteur Cadin for Madame Cappel resonates with Daeninckx's own progressive politics. As council workers attempt to confiscate all of her dogs and cats, Inspecteur Cadin pleads for a more sensible approach: '*Au lieu de venir avec la fourrière, renseignez-vous sur son histoire et demandez plutôt à l'assistante sociale de faire un tour, ça évitera sûrement que ça dégénère*' (*GI*: p. 86) [Instead of coming here with the pound, learn a little about her case and ask a social worker to call around, it will surely stop her situation from deteriorating].

The text also emphasises that hospitals are under resourced in the area. Commissaire Rubecque's wife who is diagnosed with cancer is forced to travel to Lille for treatment rather than the local hospital in Hazebrouck as its facilities are obsolete: '*ils vivent avec vingt ans de retard . . . à part la grippe et les règles douloureuses je me demande bien ce qu'ils arrivent à soigner !*' (*GI*: p. 39) [They're living in the past, twenty years ago . . . a side from the flu and period pains I wonder how they manage to treat anybody]. However, the text's central criticism of the healthcare system is its response to the heroin crisis of the 1980s.

Laurence is forced by Courtini to launder money at the hospital where she works as a nurse in order to afford her brother's treatment at "Narcostop", an alternative private rehabilitation centre, since such help was not provided by social security: '*il n'existe pas de service spécialisé comme celui du docteur qu'on voit à la télé*' (*GI*: p. 87) [a special service doesn't exist like you see with the doctors on the television]. The patients are housed in a château and their bizarre therapy is based on the idea of '*manque*' (*GI*: p. 168) [lack], in

[105] This term is used to describe short-term housing projects that have often been developed for migrants.

tandem to being withdrawn from drugs, newly arrived patients must do everything for themselves including making their own clothes from scratch:

> *Le jour de leur arrivée, ils n'ont pas d'habits, de repas. Rien. [. . .] S'ils ont froid, qu'ils tissent, s'ils ont faim, qu'ils cultivent, s'ils ont soif, qu'ils tirent de l'eau . . .* (*GI*: p. 169)
>
> [The day they arrive, they have no clothes, no meals. Nothing. { . . . } If they are cold, they weave. If they are hungry, they grow food, if they are thirsty, they must draw water from the well . . .]

Daeninckx's representation of "Narcostop" could be interpreted as a criticism of the French state's response and equally unsympathetic approach to drug addiction at the time. During the 1980s, hospital departments were adamant that the only solution for drug addiction was enforced withdrawal and psychiatric supervision. *Conseil national de l'Ordre des médecins* [The French Order of Physicians] strictly forbade doctors from not only prescribing opioid or morphine substitutions but even banned the distribution of syringes (Zappi, 2014: Online). These archaic approaches to drug addiction were a significant factor in the AIDS epidemic in France of the 1980s, which was formally recognised in 1986, but it would not be until 1992 that the general public in France would become fully aware of the AIDS crisis (Bergeron and Nathanson, 2012: pp. 8–9). Through the text's direct comparison of Alain Cappel and Daniel Courtini, Daeninckx demonstrates that the scourge of drugs affects both the working-class families and the wealthy bourgeoisie. It clearly shows that due to the State's failure to properly engage with the heroin epidemic; only the rich could properly afford the private clinics. However, as Gianfranco Rubino argues, while Daeninckx knows the importance of social structures, which can often exemplify inequalities, '*il n'est pas pour autant enclin à un déterminisme généralisé qui rendrait innocents tous les coupables*' (Rubino, 2009: 38) [this does not necessarily make him inclined towards a general determinism that would make every perpetrator innocent]. Rubino points to a similar argument made by Cadin when discussing Alain Cappel and Dany Courtini with the ex-priest at the *Scopitone* bar:

> *Les défauts d'organisation de la société n'expliquent pas tout. Prenez deux gosses, en tout point semblables, origine, culture ; comment expliquez-vous que le premier se retrouve derrière les barreaux tandis que l'autre en sort ?* (*GI*: pp. 143-144)

> [The faults of social structures don't explain everything. Take two kids, similar in every regard, background, culture, how do you explain that one finds themselves behind bars while the other makes it through?]

It is significant to note here that Cadin argues that everyone has a certain amount of individual agency they can exercise. This resonates with the series' discussion of the personal responsibility of those who collaborated with the Vichy regime during World War II and those who committed acts of torture during the Algerian War. Cadin is raising the issue of individual agency with a character who is acutely aware of personal responsibility.

The class divide made clear in Daeninckx's depiction of France's heroin crisis is contextualised by the economic depression of the 1980s following the end of the *Trente Glorieuses* boom period.[106] *Le Géant inachevé* highlights the severity of unemployment affecting regional areas of France in particular. This is most obvious in chapter three when a group of more than twenty unemployed factory workers present themselves at the police station demanding that Inspecteur Cadin arrest them all. Since the closure of the local factory *'Il n'y a plus de travail dans le secteur textile à cent kilomètres à la ronde*' (*GI*: p. 45) [There is no longer any work in the textile sector for one hundred kilometres around]. The factory workers argue that that they would be better off in prison, as they have been unemployed for two years and no longer receive any social welfare payments: '*si vous nous bouclez, on sera au moins sûrs d'être nourris et même de travailler de toucher un salaire dans les ateliers pénitentiaires . . . '* (*GI*: p. 45) [If you arrest us, we will at least be guaranteed to be fed and even guaranteed work and a salary in the penitential workshops].

In *Le Géant inachevé*, Daeninckx also briefly criticises the prison system in the context of the heroin crisis. The ex-priest informs Cadin that there is no rehabilitation centre for drugs addicts in the *departément* and that inevitably '*ils échouent en prison, dans les cellules d'isolement*' (*GI*: p. 146) [*they wind up in prison, in solitary confinement*]. Aware of this harsh reality, Laurence was deeply conflicted when her brother refused to return to the rehabilitation centre, she unwillingly supported his drug habit in order to keep him out of prison: '*Elle ne voulait pas qu'il se retrouve en prison. Il parait que pour les drogués, les jeunes surtout, c'est pire que l'enfer . . . '* (*GI*: p. 88) [She didn't want him to end up in prison

[106] It is worth noting that the Algerian *zoufris* referenced in *Le Bourreau et son double* were just one group of North Africans who were exploited to contribute to this period of rapid economic growth. This makes the racist jokes targeting Algerians later highlighted in *Le Géant inachevé* all the more uncomfortable.

again. They say that prison is worse than hell for drug addicts, especially the younger ones . . .]. Similarly, Inspecteur Cadin does not minimise the failings of the French penal system: '*Vous pensez bien que si les hôpitaux ne sont pas en mesure de soigner les drogués ce n'est pas la prison qui pourra s'y substituer'* (*GI*: p. 88) [You really think that if the hospitals aren't capable of treating drug addicts that the prisons will be better able?]. Daeninckx's text offers no solution to the complex issue of drug addiction but it effectively highlights that the State's response (or lack thereof) to the heroin crisis in the 1980s was wholly ineffective.

4.2 Unearthing Political and Traumatic Histories

During our interview, Daeninckx noted that one of the issues he wanted to highlight in the novel was the rise of far-right politics in the north of France. *Le Front national* [The National Front] (renamed *Le Rassemblement National* [The National Rally] in 2018) were relatively new at the time and while visiting the area the author was taken aback by their popularity when compared to his equally economically disadvantaged home place of Aubervilliers, one of the poorest suburbs of Paris:

> *. . . ici à Aubervilliers en 82, Le Front national c'était exotique, ça existait pas, ils n'étaient pas organisés, on ne voyait pas des affiches, il y avait rien du tout. Mais quand j'arrive à Hazebrouck, le Front National est une réalité, c'est déjà une présence avec des années de militantisme.* Le Géant inachevé *est un des premiers livres en France qui prend cette dimension de l'éruption du parti d'extrême droite sur une région française.* (Daeninckx and Gleeson, 2017)
>
> [. . . here in Aubervilliers in 82, the National Front was *exotic,* it didn't really exist, they weren't organised, they had no posters, and they had nothing. But when I get to Hazebrouck, the National Front was a reality, with years of campaigning already behind it. *Le Géant inachevé* is one of the first books in France to show the rise of far-right politics in a French region.]

Daeninckx noted that he distinctly remembers National Front election posters in Hazebrouck with the slogans '*Français, défendons notre peau*. *Rapatrions les immigrés*' (*GI*: p. 11) [French people, defend our skins. Send the immigrants home] and purposely incorporated them into the novel. However, Daeninckx is keen to also highlight in the novel that the north of France has not always been a bastion for far-right politics. He notes how northern industrial cities were home to some of the pioneers of municipal socialism at the beginning of the twentieth century, just like the working-class suburbs of Paris. For example, Daeninckx cites the progressive efforts and work of Abbé Jules-Auguste Lemire (1853–

1928). The novel includes, early on, a reference to a statue of Abbé Lemire, which notes his greatest legacy of passing laws that made it possible for citizens to buy land from the French state for allotments:

> *ABBÉ LEMIRE, député du Nord 1893-1928, Maire d'Hazebrouck 1914-1928, Créateur des Jardins Ouvriers. Et plus bas, la devise de cet illustre flamand : Un coin de terre, un foyer : un jardin ouvrier.* (*GI*: p. 17)
>
> [ABBÉ LEMIRE, MP for the North of France 1893-1928, Mayor of Hazebrouck 1914-1928, founder of Workers' Allotments. And below this was the motto of this celebrated Fleming: one corner of land and one homestead is one worker's allotment.]

Abbé Lemire founded "*La Ligue du coin de terre et du foyer*" in 1896 in order for land to be made available to urban workers who wished to grow their own crops. Lemire was a popular social reformer with very progressive politics, and he primes the reader for a character later (the ex-priest and nameless patron of the *Scopitone* bar) in the novel who served as a chaplain in the French army during the Algerian War before leaving to become an unofficial social worker. Unfortunately, the text does little else to illuminate Abbé Lemire's notable career as a left-wing politician. For example, the priest campaigned against the death penalty for anarchist Auguste Vaillant even though Lemire was injured by a bomb thrown by Vaillant in the chambers of the National Assembly (Visse, 2017: 22). However, this demonstrates that readers who decide to further investigate these historical figures that Daeninckx scatters throughout his texts are subsequently richly rewarded for their efforts. In a similar fashion to *Le Géant inachevé, s*tatues and architecture are referenced by Daeninckx in *Mort au premier tour* to explore hidden histories. Despite the allusive (and perhaps overly-allusive) quality of these references, they also serve to give the reader an authentic feel for the location.

As mentioned, historical traumas such as the Algerian War and World War II are referenced in *Le Géant inachevé*. However, they are not as central to the plot when compared to Daeninckx's engagement with the same historical traumas in *Meurtres pour mémoire* and *Le Bourreau et son double*. *Le Géant inachevé* briefly discusses war crimes carried out by the French army during the Algerian War, through the character of the ex-priest and former military chaplain who has become a bar owner. Cadin's investigation into the circumstances of the death of Alain Cappel, who is the brother of the initial victim Laurence, leads him to

the *Scopitone* bar on the outskirts of Hazebrouck.[107] The former military chaplain who runs the bar as a sort of unofficial youth club, knew Alain as just one of the many young people in the area struggling with drug addiction. While talking with Cadin, the ex-chaplain says meeting his wife was one of two reasons he left the vocation, the other being his experience of the Algerian War. The ex-priest recounts to Cadin a massacre that his unit carried out in December 1960 against an innocent village:

> *Tout a basculé, les gars se sont transformés en bêtes sauvages et ils ont passé leur écœurement, leur colère sur les habitants du village. On n'a pas mis la main sur une seule arme . . . que des paysans, des femmes, des vieillards et des enfants. Nous sommes rentrés à la nuit, la marche de la honte.* (*GI*: p. 142)
>
> [Everything fell apart, the boys turned into wild savages and let their anger and heartbreak loose on the villagers. We didn't find a single weapon . . . they were just peasants, women, old people and children. We returned that night, the walk of shame.]

He finishes his story by emphasising that it was not simply the horrors he witnessed that led him to quit the church but the ease of which such murderous sins were forgiven:

> *Personne n'osait regarder son voisin . . . Ce n'était hélas pas fini. Je vous ai dit que nous étions en décembre sans vous préciser le jour exact . . . Il y a eu cette messe de minuit avec l'évêque du diocèse d'Oran qui n'a pas hésité à donner l'absolution à tous ces soudards dont certains n'avaient pas pu se laver, se changer. La plus importante partie de ma soutane est tombée aux orties en cette nuit de Noël. Le reste a suivi . . .* (*GI*: p. 142)
>
> [No one dared to even look at one another . . . but that wasn't all. I told you that this happened in December without knowing the date exactly . . . We had midnight mass with the bishop of the dioceses of Oran who didn't hesitate to give absolution to all these soldiers, some of whom hadn't even washed themselves or changed their clothes. The main part of my robe fell to tatters that Christmas night. The rest followed . . .]

The Christmas aspect of this war crime is significant as Daeninckx appears to be reimagining and deromanticizing the famous unofficial Christmas ceasefires in 1914 during World War I. This manifestation of multidirectional memory in the chaplain's memories of the Algerian

[107] As described in Daeninckx's novel (*GI*: pp. 139-140), *Scopitone* was a type of Jukebox invented in France in the 1960s that also projected a short film of the artist in tandem to their music record. The *Scopitone* jukebox was short-lived and failed to garner much success outside of France. Daeninckx's inclusion of this obscure invention is an example of his fascination with popular culture and hidden histories.

War, is reinforced by direct references in *Le Géant inachevé* to other French wars of decolonisation: *Un gradé, il avait gagné ses sardines en Indochine . . .* (*GI*: p. 142) [One officer, he had already earned his stripes in Indochina . . .]

A more subtle reference to the Algerian War appears in the text through Guy Mallet. As previously discussed in the chapter on *Le Bourreau et son double*, nomenclature and place names are frequently used in Daeninckx's texts to direct the reader's attention toward hidden histories. In the context of crime fiction, the character of Guy Mallet initially appears as a reference to the French crime writer Léo Malet (1909–1996). However, in the context of the Algerian War this character is an obvious reference to the French politician Guy Mollet (1905–1975) who served as Prime Minister during the Battle of Algiers. Guy Mallet is the first character in Daeninckx's novel and is representative of one of the novel's major themes of mental illness. Therefore, when Mallet is understood as a direct reference to the Algerian War, the character's self-enforced silence and mental breakdown is reflective of French society's inability to address the fallout of France's wars of decolonisation at the time. This aligns with Anne Donadey's "Algeria Syndrome", discussed in the previous chapter, which applies Rousso's analysis of Vichy France to the Algerian War. Donadey argues that the phase of mourning for the loss of French Algeria was quickly stifled by the repression of the pain and the shame created by that war, as France moved into the repression stage of its "Algeria Syndrome" (1996: 218). Donadey also notes that, just as Rousso highlighted how it took years before historians were allowed to access Vichy archives, the repatriated archives of the Algerian war were still not available to scholars in 1990 (1996: 218). This demonstrates how the Inspecteur Cadin series, published during a repression phase of the "Algeria Syndrome", attempts to break the silence surrounding the Algerian War.

Historical traumas from World War II are also referenced by Daeninckx in *Le Géant inachevé*. The most significant reference to World War II in the novel is the incorporation of the abandoned German V2 missile launch site into the plot (*GI*: p. 186). Fearing that Cadin will expose his corruption, Courtini attempts to assassinate him at the derelict launch site by luring him there with an anonymous tip-off for a night-time meeting. As such, Daeninckx lends great importance to this site. Through Cadin's curiosity the reader is given a brief history of the site and told that some of the most significant bombings of England during the

war were in fact fired from the outskirts of Hazebrouck: '*Qui aurait pu penser que les pires ravages causés à l'Angleterre lui viendraient d'Hazebrouck?'*(*GI*: p. 189) [Who would have thought that the most devastating bombings of England would come from Hazebrouck?]. The Germans built several V2 launch sites across northern France, the Netherlands and even parts of western Germany targeting London as well as Ipswich and Norwich (Rincon, 2004: Online).

The V2 missile site is another example of Daeninckx's interest in excavating forgotten sites, or as Cadin is told by his colleague '*Ça vaut le coup d'aller visiter, mais je suis sûr que la moitié des gens, ici, ne savent pas ce que c'est'* (*GI*: p. 189) [It's worth visiting, but I'm sure that most people here don't know what's there]. Daeninckx highlights the reaction of the local people in the area who were initially baffled by the German's construction of the launch site:

> *Les paysans les prenaient pour des fous, des Martiens, mais à partir de novembre, on a commencé à voir des convois exceptionnels qui arrivaient de Belgique. Ils bouclaient la région pour les faire passer, des milliers de soldats, le long des routes.* (*GI*: p. 188)
>
> [The locals thought that they were crazy, that they were Martians, but from November onwards they began to see heavy transport arriving from Belgium. They blocked off the entire region to allow thousands of soldiers to travel all along the route.]

However, other than highlighting the V2 launch site as a place of interest, Daeninckx fails to examine the historical importance of the site in any meaningful way. This is an example of how Daeninckx can be deliberately brief in his exploration of historical events, as a way of suggesting to the reader that they should carry out their own further research into such events. In this case, a reader who is willing to carry out such detective work is richly rewarded, since a closer inspection of the V2 launch sites effectively evoke several multidirectional memories. In 1943, 9,000 members of the French resistance were among thousands of slave labourers assembling V2 rockets in the underground factory at the Mittelbau-Dora concentration camp, a sub-camp of Buchenwald (Lavergne, 2017: Online). Indeed, the museum exhibition at the former camp emphasises the historical significance of Mittelbau-Dora which is 'not just as a model case of forced labour and the relocation of armament production to underground locations, but also as an example of the strong

integration of the concentration camps in German society' (Mittelbau-Dora Concentration Camp Memorial Foundation, 2020: Online). While it would not be feasible to cover a vast number of historical events in such detail given the relatively short length of the typical roman noir*,* Daeninckx's texts can sometimes appear overly dense and lacking in detail. *Le Géant inachevé* references so many noteworthy histories in a very brief fashion that in order to fully appreciate the text, the reader as investigator must carry out a lot of their own "detective work".

4.3 Flemish Traditions: Carnival, Giants, and Fairy Tales

Hazebrouck's Flemish culture is straightaway highlighted to the reader in the opening scene of the novel. The alcoholic woman drunkenly shouts in Flemish, '*Wat zegt gy nu*? (*GI*: p. 9) [What do you think about that?], which is translated in a footnote. Daeninckx continues to emphasise Flemish specificity by incorporating folklore and the area's tradition of Carnival to the plot. The reader is also quickly introduced to the area's tradition of giants: Laurence is murdered while working on a puppet of a giant (named Pierlala) that is damaged, a stray bullet blinds one eye of the puppet, during her murder: *'On lui avait même tiré une balle dans l'œil. — Oui, c'était Pierlala, et il l'a transformé en cyclope.'* (*GI*: p. 108) ['They even shot a bullet through his eye. — Yes that was Pierlala, they turned him into a cyclops']. Blindness is frequently referenced throughout: Guy Mallet listens to the music of a troop of blind accordionists, '*l'Amicale des Accordéonistes Aveugles'* (*GI*: p. 14); a *fait divers* runs with the headline '*CONCOURS DE CHANTS DE PINSONS AVEUGLES*' (*GI*: p. 78) [Blind chaffinches song competition]; and the text makes reference to Bruegel's painting "The Blind Leading the Blind" (*GI*: p. 101). The repeated references to blindness reinforce the novel's suggestion that the State is willingly blind to the issues of drug addiction and poverty, turning a blind eye to the likes of the socially-isolated Mère Cappel and the growing problem of drug abuse in early 1980s France.

The motif of blindness also makes the reader reflect on what the people of Hazebrouck may also be blind to, such as their significant World War II histories which are symbolically represented in the novel by the V2 missile site. Tourists appear to be the people most interested in the abandoned military location (*GI*: p. 193) which lies in ruin, out of sight and out of mind of most of the townspeople.

The long history of the folk figure of Pierlala is worthy of closer examination. Pierala is best known through a Flemish ballad, dating probably from the seventeent century, and dealing with the pranks and escapades of the roguish peasant. In keeping with the typical traits of folklore texts, at the end of the ballad, Pierlala eventually repents and offers a moral for the audience (Leach and Fried, 1984: 869). Scholars have cited strong similarities between Pierlala and German folk-figure Till Eulenspiegel.

Till Eulenspiegel was the eponymous hero of a sixteenth century German chapbook, a collection of satirical tales pointed at certain class distinctions of the period and region (Leach and Fried, 1984: 1114). The tales recount a long series of jests and pranks (often cruel and scurrilous) showing up the superior wit of the clever peasant over townspeople of greater social status such as innkeepers, the clergy, and lords. In short, Till Eulenspiegel is often portrayed as a personification of peasant wit over the bourgeois (Leach and Fried, 1984: 1114), and this aspect is shared with Pierlala. Power dynamics are central to both of these folk heroes, a theme which clearly resonates with *Le Géant inachevé.* Therefore, Daeninckx's intertextual references to a centuries old folk hero has a two-fold effect: such allusions evoke palimpsestic memory and invites the reader to burrow down deeper into the history and culture of Flanders and they also encourage the reader to reflect on how such folk stories can inform our understanding of present-day issues concerned with social hierarchies and power structures.

Given the prominence of folk culture in the novel, it is worth further examining how Inspecteur Cadin and other characters in the novel compare with fairy tale characters. Frameworks developed by Russian theorist Vladimir Propp on the narrative structure of folktales allow for a brief but valuable comparison of *Le Géant inachevé* and the structure of the fairy tale. In *Morphology of the Folktale,* Propp identifies seven spheres of action that are distributed among *dramatis personae*: villain, dispatcher, donor, helper, princess, hero and false hero (Propp, 1968: 79–90). It is important to note that these are not archetypes but patterns of behaviour and that individual characters may often fall into more than one of these spheres.

Under Propp's framework, Inspecteur Cadin clearly functions as the hero of the novel and Laurence Cappel falls within the sphere of the princess. This is most apparent in the early

section of the novel, when Cadin first discovers Laurence and her corpse is described in terms that allude to the Sleeping Beauty fairy tale: '*Elle semblait dormir, le front posé sur ses avant-bras repliés. Ses longs cheveux blonds se séparaient sur sa nuque en deux rubans soyeux'* (*GI:* p. 20) [She seemed to be sleeping, her forehead resting on her folded forearms. Her long blond hair parted at the back of her neck in two silky ribbons]. Daeninckx is deliberately drawing on tropes from fairy tales that are universally recognised, but he is also bending them to fit the genre boundaries of the *néo-polar*: *this particular* Sleeping Beauty will never wake up. This blending of genres is another example of how Daeninckx frequently reworks familiar tropes in order to capture the attention of the reader. However, if the characterisation of Laurence merely fell into the sphere of a tragic beautiful princess, this would contradict the novel's theme of feminism. Daeninckx ensures that Laurence is not simply defined as a passive victim of violence, by emphasising the admirable effort she made to try and save her brother, which demonstrates that she also occupies to some extent a hero's role in the narrative.

Propp's theory can also be applied to other significant characters in the novel. For example, the actions of Guy Mallet could be interpreted as dispatcher, the character who tasks the hero with their quest, as his recorded messages are the starting point of Inspecteur Cadin's investigation. Laurence's mother, the nameless ex-priest of the *Scopitone* bar and, perhaps most importantly, Samy are helpers as they provide key information to Inspecteur Cadin on his journey. Samy was a close friend and former partner to Laurence. Cadin interviews Samy at the *Orphéon* rehearsal space where his theatre troop, *Tape-tout,* are preparing for the Carnival's variety show: the highlight and finale of the festival. The reading of Samy as helper is supported by the central importance of his relationship with Cadin to the text. Samy is initially reluctant to help Cadin, and the Inspector is initially somewhat vague about his reasons for speaking with him:

> *Je ne sais pas encore bien ce que je fais. Je ramasse des bribes, des morceaux, à gauche et à droite, j'essaie de voir si ça correspond. Un peu comme quand on joue aux « cadavres exquis », vous connaissez ?* (*GI*: p. 104)
>
> [I don't really know what I'm doing yet. I gather fragments, pieces, left and right, I try to see if they correspond. A little like playing 'exquisite cadavers', do you know?]

Samy is less than impressed by this drunken ramble from Cadin, '*C'est à cause de toute cette bière. Vous ne pouvez pas vous imaginer ce qu'il faut ingurgiter de liquide pour mener à bien une enquête !*' (*GI*: p. 105) [It's because of all that beer. You couldn't imagine how much of that liquid you need to gulp down to lead a good investigation]. However, while adding to the humour of the text, this scene is also indicative of the Inspecteur's "gut instinct" approach to his work. This is reinforced by his reference to the surrealist technique "exquisite cadavers". The technique is a type of parlour game where fragments of text or images are collectively assembled. There are several variations of the game, one of the best-known examples being when a piece is composed in sequence by each player adding a text or image but they are only able to partially see the previous contribution. Surrealists such as André Breton were attracted to the game as they felt it was a useful exercise that drew on the subconscious.[108] Daeninckx's comparison of Cadin's investigative methods to "exquisite cadavers" also resonates with the previously discussed references to Aragon. A detective's reliance on his gut instincts, and its direct link to the influence of the surrealists, is one of the long running French noir fiction tropes established by Duhamel's *Série Noire* collection (Rolls, 2009: 22).

In many ways, Samy is very similar to Daeninckx, both would describe themselves as *"artistes engages"* and neither have a problem with confronting injustices. For example, Samy challenges the group who have prepared a racist sketch, a type of *tableau vivant* based on the sixteenth-century Pieter Bruegel the Elder's painting *The Blind Leading the Blind* (1568) (Encyclopaedia Britannica: Online). The painting depicts six blind men holding shared walking sticks at the moment their leader falls into a ditch or stream. The artist arranged the figures in a sloped manner to suggest that they will soon fall down. In the sketch, the actors wear djellabahs and claim that these costumes resemble the type of clothes worn in the Middle Ages. However, Samy is very vocal and challenges them, saying that it is a racist sketch against immigrants and that the group are simply perpetuating stereotypes from the tabloid press. The manner in which the sketch ends eerily confirms the racism at its core:

[108] For more on this surrealist art practice see *Le Surréalisme et la peinture* (Breton, 1965: 288-290).

> *Pour finir, un officiel en frac entrait en scène et conduisait les immigrés vers les coulisses où ils disparaissaient, tandis que la bande sonore était remplacée par le bruit de corps tombant dans l'eau.* (*GI*: p. 101)
>
> [At the end, an official in a frock came on the scene and led the immigrants backstage where they disappeared, while the soundtrack was replaced by the sound of bodies falling into the water.]

The figure of authority (who is clearly dressed differently to the immigrants' djellabahs and the water-based sound effects combine to plainly reference drowning Arabs, evoking the French army's practice of waterboarding prisoners during the Algerian War and the drownings on 17 October 1961. The memories evoked in this scene are both palimpsestic and multidirectional in nature.

This scene also reinforces the novel's theme of blindness as the locals attempt to deny the area's issue of xenophobia and Islamophobia. Daeninckx's novel from 1984 is still pertinent, as today's readers would see how it resonates with the recent issues of racism and anti-Semitism surrounding some Flemish Carnivals. In 2019 the Aalst Carnival, a town in the province of East Flanders in Belgium, was removed from UNESCO's List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity due to several extremely racist floats on parade during the festival. In 2019, the Jewish community was outraged by floats of anti-Semitic figures with hooked noses, surrounded by rats and perched on top of bags of money. The Carnival organisers were emboldened by international condemnation and returned with even more offensive floats of the Jewish community in 2020 which included depictions of Orthodox Jews as bankers, and Jews as ants alongside the Western Wall in Jerusalem. Such reverberations with present-day issues demonstrate the effective (and often unintentional) presence of "multidirectionality" in Daeninckx's texts.

Importantly, Samy gives the reader and Inspecteur Cadin the most detailed picture of Laurence. Through Samy, we learn that Laurence was very much socially and culturally engaged in the community. For example, she was responsible for establishing the '*Rendez-vous des Géants*' (*GI*: p. 107) [Meeting of Giants], an association aimed at reviving the Flemish cultural heritage of the carnival parade of giants. Given the importance lent to the theme of giants throughout the text, it is significant to note Cadin's physical description of Samy, which portrays the actor as very physically imposing and almost gigantic in stature:

> *Cadin l'observa. Il comprit que sa grande taille, il mesurait bien un mètre quatre-vingt-dix, l'aidait au même titre que son regard sombre à tenir son public en respect. Un effet proche de celui provoqué par l'apparition d'un 357 Magnum.* (*GI*: p. 103)
>
> [Cadin watched him. He understood that his height, he was a good 190cm tall, helped him to keep the audience's attention just as much as his sombre expression. Something similar to the effect of the appearance of a 357 Magnum.]

Samy's close association with giants is further reinforced as he is the person that explains to Inspecteur Cadin their particular prominence in Flemish folklore: '*Ici, en Flandre, chaque ville, chaque village possède son géant protecteur* (*GI*: p. 107) [Here in Flanders, every town, every village has their own protective giant]. He continues to explain that Pierlala is the name of Hazebrouck's giant and that he and Laurence discovered the mythical figure by accident while reading children's fairy tales. According to folklore the giant reawakens whenever the area needs his protection.[109] Samy has read tales describing how Pierlala reawakens during the Norman invasions of Hazebrouck and prevented the Vikings from pillaging the province. However, according to legend the invading Germans in 1940 managed to decapitate the Giant:

> *. . . puis en juin 40 lors de la percée des blindés allemands. Un détachement de la Wehrmacht s'en est emparé ; le char, un Panzer, l'a emmené sur la route de Dunkerque où il a été retrouvé décapité, écrasé . . . Une histoire bizarre.* (*GI*: p. 108)
>
> [. . . then in June '40 as the armoured division of Germans broke through. A Wehrmacht unit captured him. A tank, a panzer, took him along the road to Dunkirk where he was later found decapitated, crushed . . . a weird story.]

This entertaining subplot demonstrates how folk culture was often used to respond to traumatic histories in a similar manner to the way Daeninckx uses crime fiction. Indeed, during my interview Daeninckx claimed that with *Le Géant inachevé* he wanted to show the parallels between the roman noir and fairy tales:

> *Le roman noir c'est l'héritier des contes pour enfants où on est dans un monde de fantômes, un monde nocturne, un monde de frayeur. Et puis, dans les contes pour enfants et le roman noir on a les personnages-archétypes,*

[109] This is a prominent motif in European folktales and legends. For example, the legendary English King Arthur and the Irish mythical hero Fionn Mac Cumhaill are said not to be dead but to be asleep in a cave to be reawakened when needed by their country.

> *tout comme dans le carnaval on a les archétypes.* (Daeninckx and Gleeson, 2017)
>
> [The roman noir is the successor to children's fairy tales, which take place in a world of ghosts, a nocturnal world, and a world of fear. As well as that, fairy tales and the roman noir use the same archetypal characters, just like the archetypes used in carnival.]

Given that didacticism is central to both the fairy tale and Daeninckx's oeuvre, it is worth briefly noting his approach to children's literature. The previously discussed *Cannibale* is a book aimed at teenagers, and Daeninckx has also written several texts for younger children. *Le Chat de Tigali* (1988), which won *Prix Polar Jeunes* the year it was published, was one of the author's first attempts at the genre. When the teacher François Huet and his family are forced to leave Algeria and return to France they receive an anonymous letter threatening their pet cat because it is Kabyle and not French. The novel's success is partly due to the subtlety of the allegory that Daeninckx uses to raise the issue of racism in a manner suitable for young children. Daeninckx approaches his works for children, teenagers, and adults all with the same sensitivity, the delicate manner that didactic elements are woven into his narratives ensures that readers never feel as though they are being patronised or chastised.

It is also worth stating that Daeninckx is not the only author of the *néo-polar* generation to link the roman noir to fairy tales. Thierry Jonquet's *La Bête et la belle* [The Beast and the Beauty], published in Gallimard's *Série Noire* in 1985, won the *Trophée 813* the same year, is a reinterpretation of the classic fairy tale. Jonquet's text relocates the ancient fairy tale to *la banlieue parisienne* of the 1980s, the same location and setting of much of the Inspecteur Cadin texts, and the main characters directly correspond to the archetypes of the 'Beauty and the Beast' fairy tale. It is also significant to note that the aforementioned *La Bête et la belle* shares several similarities with Daeninckx's *Le Géant inachevé*: the detective in Jonquet's text, *Le Commissaire Gabelou*, begins his investigation by listening to the confessions of the hospitalised *Le Coupable*/The Beast, which he recorded onto cassette tapes, wrongly accusing himself of killing Irène/Beauty (Pranville, 2019).[110]

The most obvious expression of Daeninckx's understanding of the shared heritage between the Carnival, fairy tales, and the roman noir occurs is in his depiction of Cadin as a folk hero

[110] In a similar manner to Daeninckx, Pranville claims that much of Jonquet's works, *La Bête et la belle* included, are inspired by *fait divers* (2019: 16).

or in the author's own words '*Cadin va être pratiquement un géant'* (Daeninckx and Gleeson, 2017) [Cadin practically becomes a giant]. The climax of *Le Géant inachevé* suggests that Cadin is a protective giant, or perhaps a manifestation of Pierlala. At the *Orphéon* variety show, the finale of the Carnival festival, Cadin recognises the distinctive voice of Madame Courtini and takes to the stage to arrest her for complicity in the murder of Laurence Cappel in front of the entire town. However, after confronting and shooting Dernu, the private-investigator and Courtini's henchman, Samy wraps Cadin in Pierlala's cape symbolically turning the Inspecteur into Hazebrouck's protective giant. As the series as a whole shows, Cadin is in some senses a "flawed giant (or rather a damaged one)", like the one shot through the eye in *Le Géant inachevé.*

Much of Daeninckx's comments on the Carnival elements of *Le Géant inachevé,* comparing the medieval festival to the roman noir which also seeks to violently expose harsh truths for a brief period, very strongly resonate with the concept of the carnivalesque developed by Mikhail Bahktin (1895–1975). The carnivalesque is one of the most well-known concepts developed by the Russian linguist and philosopher. Bakhtin first explored the idea of the carnival in his book *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* (1984a); however, he later further developed this theory and coined the term "carnivalesque" in *Rabelais and his World* (1984b). In *Rabelais and his World*, Bakhtin primarily discusses *Gargantua and Pantagruel,* a novel by French renaissance writer François Rabelais (1483–1553). The satirical text about a family of royal giants subverts medieval ideology, argues for reformation of the Church and encourages readers to be more critical independent thinkers (Renner, 2014: 404). Bakhtin's scholarship of Rabelais had two primary purposes. Firstly, he wished to recover lost passages of Rabelais' text which had been ignored or suppressed by successive generations of scholars as they deemed aspects of his works unliterary. Secondly, Bakhtin wanted to present an analysis of medieval society that would highlight the type of language that was permitted (and not permitted) during this period as Rabelais had to carefully negotiate the boundary of constructing a punishable and unpunishable text (Clark and Holquist, 1984: 297–299). Rabelais' careful use of language to try and avoid censorship resonates with Daeninckx's delicate blending of fact and fiction in his novels. However, the element of social critique in Rabelais' work is perhaps the most significant similarity between the two authors.

One of the key elements of Carnival that Bakhtin applied to his theory was the medieval festival's reversal of hierarchies, where for a strictly defined period, individuals were given free rein to break free of, and often to mock, perceived power systems. Bakhtin noted that the essential carnivalistic act was the 'mock crowning and subsequent decrowning of the Carnival king', which temporarily made royalty of the peasants and vice versa (1984a: 124). The reversal of hierarchies in *Le Géant inachevé* relates to the text's depiction of corruption. The figures of authority, the police and politicians of Hazebrouck, are shown to be criminally dishonest. However, mirroring the carnival, the inversion of power structures in *Le Géant inachevé* is only temporary as even when the corruption is exposed at the end of the novel the same social hierarchies remain.

Characters with eccentric behaviour, often leading to humour and chaos, also constitute another trait of carnivalesque texts. We have seen how Cadin is clearly a disruptive and chaotic figure in each of his texts, as he consistently goes against the wishes of his superiors. In terms of secondary characters in *Le Géant inachevé,* Guy Mallet is another obviously eccentric and chaotic figure. Similar to Cadin's fate, Mallet commits suicide which highlights the societal and institutional abandonment of people suffering from mental illnesses. Samy also acts as a disruptive force in the novel and his imposing stature almost appears caricatural. Bakhtin's theory of the carnivalesque also strongly associates such texts with non-linear narratives. This is partially true of *Le Géant inachevé,* which begins from the perspective of Guy Mallet before switching to Inspecteur Cadin. The circularity of the novel beginning and ending with the image of Aragon's *Blanche ou l'oubli* also adds to the non-linear style of the text.

While these carnivalesque elements of *Le Géant inachevé* appear to occur organically in *Le Géant inachevé*, comments that Daeninckx made during out interview suggest that he had at least an awareness of Bakhtin's theory. For example, according to Bakhtin, the normal perception of time is suspended during the Carnival festival (Clark and Holquist, 1984: 302-303). This resonates with Daeninckx's own comparisons between the medieval festival and the genre of the roman noir:

> *Dans le carnaval comme dans le roman noir on voit la vérité qui surgit d'un seul coup. Avec le carnaval ce surgissement est permis uniquement de telle*

> *heure à telle heure. La vérité dans le roman noir c'est pareil.* (Daeninckx and Gleeson, 2017)
>
> [In the carnival, like the roman noir, the truth is suddenly revealed. During carnival these revelations were allowed between such and such time. The truth is the same in the roman noir.]

Daeninckx's understanding of the carnival and its relation to crime writing underlines the richness of his texts and reinforces his style of blending high culture and popular culture.[111]

4.4 Political Corruption and Police Incompetence

Daeninckx depicts the police force in *Le Géant inachevé* as dysfunctional and severely corrupt. For example, in one of the funnier events in *Le Géant inachevé,* a small-scale riot breaks out between the French and Flemish speaking police officers at an annual dinner organised by *le Maire* for the local police:

> *Cadin se croyait projeté dans un film de Mack Sennett en voyant la valse des uniformes, mais les insultes proférées en flamand et en français le ramenaient à la réalité. Après quelques minutes d'engagement, plus un homme ne tenait debout ; la bataille se déroulait au sol dans un fouillis de bras, de jambes.* (*GI*: p. 56)
>
> [Seeing the waltz of uniforms Cadin thought he was in something from a Mack Sennett film, but the insults being shouted in French and Flemish brought him back to reality. After a few minutes, no one was left standing. The battle had migrated to the floor in a muddle of arms and legs.]

Mack Sennett (1880–1960) the Canadian filmmaker, who was known as the King of Comedy, is most noted for his silent films featuring the Keystone Cops. This intertextual reference reinforces the humour and absurdity of the lack of professionalism Cadin witnesses, since much of the slapstick humour the Keystone Cop films is based on their incompetence.[112]

The following week, a newspaper runs a story falsely blaming '*une bande de délinquants venue du quartier du Nouveau Monde'* (*GI*: p. 57) [a gang of delinquents from the *Nouveau Monde* area] for causing trouble at the annual social event for police, in an effort to '*mettre un terme aux rumeurs fantaisistes qui couraient la ville'* (*GI*: p. 57) [put an end to far-fetched rumours that were spread around the town]. This type of political corruption, where the

[111] It would be very fruitful for future research to explore global manifestations of interconnections between crime fiction and medieval folk practices such as the Carnival and fairy tales.
[112] For example, see *A Thief Catcher* (Ford, 1914).

police seek to protect their own image, demonstrates their utter contempt for working-class people, like those living in the ironically named *Nouveau Monde* [New World], which is one of the town's socially disadvantaged housing developments.

Le Maire's reception is followed by another similar evening organised by *l'Amicale des Industriels Hazebrouckois* (*GI*: p. 65) that sponsors the Carnival festival. As president of the society, Courtini hosts the fund-raising event. As Cadin holds the rank of Inspecteur, this made him part of the Hazebrouck's elites who were invited to the association's annual cocktail evening. Daeninckx is very effectively highlighting the powerful influence of Courtini who is depicted as being as important as *le Maire*.

A more nefarious example of police corruption in *Le Géant inachevé,* is the private-investigator, Duyck. He and his business partner, Dernu, act more or less as henchmen for Courtini: they murder Laurence and frame Mallet. Daeninckx explicitly addresses the inevitable comparison to the classic hardboiled characters of Philip Marlowe and Sam Spade by contrasting the visible wealth of Duyck and Dernu: '*(Rien à voir avec les décors de Dashiell Hammett ou de Chandler.) En un mot, l'immeuble des détectives respirait le fric à plein nez*' (*GI*: p. 50) [(Nothing like the locations of Dashiell Hammett or Chandler.) In a word, the detectives' office stank of money]. Inspecteur Cadin learns that Duyck was in fact a former member of the police force. Commissaire Rubecque tells Cadin that he worked with Duyck ten years ago, before he was fired from the police service:

> *Il sait mener sa barque. Il s'est fait jeter en 72 ou 73, dans ces eaux-là. Il ne se contentait pas de tirer des renseignements de ses indicateurs, il lui fallait de la monnaie par-dessus le marché. Fatalement il s'est fait piquer, sur dénonciation, on a tout juste réussi à lui éviter une inculpation pour proxénétisme mais l'I. G. S. ne l'a pas loupé.* (*GI*: p. 66)
>
> [He knows how to get by. He was thrown out in around about 72 or 73. He wasn't happy enough with just getting information from his informants, and insisted on getting money on top of that as well. Inevitably, he was denounced and caught. We thought we had just managed to avoid him getting indicted for procuring prostitutes but the Anti-Corruption unit didn't let it slip.]

Commissaire Rubecque fails to condemn the actions of Duyck and even praises the success of his enterprise with Dernu: '*Selon la rumeur, leur société marche très fort, ils sont parvenus à ramasser toute la grosse clientèle du secteur*' (*GI*: p. 66) [Rumour has it that their

business is very successful, they have managed to attract all the large clients in the sector]. Similarly, when Cadin begins to question Courtini's involvement in the murder of Guy Mallet, Commissaire Rubecque quickly jumps to the industrialist's defence:

> *— Restez calme, inspecteur. Vous savez que Courtini est un personnage influent ici ! Il préside plusieurs sociétés d'intérêt local et il siège en bonne place dans les organisations patronales. Il y a peu d'exemples d'industriels qui acceptent d'investir dans une région sinistrée et qui réussissent.* (*GI*: p. 73)
>
> [Calm down Inspector, don't you know that Courtini is an influential person around here? He is the CEO of several businesses invested in the area and has places of prominence within employers' organisations. There are few examples of industrialists who willingly invest in such a disaster area and succeed.]

At the end of the novel, Courtini is arrested for the murder of Laurence Cappel and Cadin has exposed the industrialist's dummy corporation, which he operated under the false name of Jean Maillard. However, the rest of Hazebrouck's wealthy elites are unhappy with the Inspecteur's disruptive impact on the area and subtly force Cadin's superiors to transfer him elsewhere.

> *Au cours de la semaine qui suivit, le député, le maire, le préfet et tous ceux qui gravitaient autour de Jean Maillard firent savoir qu'ils ne s'opposaient pas au fait que l'inspecteur poursuive sa carrière dans une région plus ensoleillée. On déguisa sa mutation en promotion.* (*GI*: p. 211)
>
> [Throughout the following week, the local MP, the mayor, the councillor and everyone who gravitated towards Jean Maillard made it known that they wouldn't be opposed to the Inspector pursuing his career in a sunnier region. They disguised his transfer as a promotion.]

The brevity of this significant passage effectively portrays the subtlety of political corruption that is often very difficult to concretely identify. The epilogue of *Le Géant inachevé,* which features the previously discussed circular references to Aragon, leaves the reader with the impression that institutional corruption is so widespread that it is impossible for individuals like Inspecteur Cadin to invoke change from within. The novel's final image of Cadin buying a copy of *Blanche ou l'oubli* suggests that French society is so corrupt that unpalatable disruptors, such as the Inspecteur, are quickly blanked out and forgotten.

However, it appears that Hazebrouck has taken its toll on the Inspecteur. One of the lasting images from the text is of a hunched Cadin, naked, blood-soaked, and shouting after chasing

down and killing Dernu: *Il criait maintenant en arrachant ses habits souillés, sa chemise, son maillot de corps, s'essuyant le visage, les paumes, à l'aide des rares coins de tissus immaculés* (*GI*: p. 201) [He was now screaming, tearing off his soiled clothes, his shirt, his vest, wiping his face and palms with the few corners of clean unstained tissue]. Prefiguring his suicide in *Le Facteur fatal*, Cadin appears at his most fragile at the end of *Le Géant inachevé* which leaves the reader with the feeling that the protagonist will inevitably not have a happy ending.

4.5 Concluding Notes: Exploring the Peripheral in *Le Géant inachevé*

Le Géant inachevé effectively captures the social ills of the north of France in the 1980s. Daeninckx not only highlights political corruption, but contextualises the rise of drug addiction by highlighting how such issues often stem from poverty, mental illness, and unemployment.-While the political and social problems of Hazebrouck are the main focus of the text, Daeninckx also includes references to national traumatic memories, ranging from World War II to memories of the Algerian war and to October 1961 (through the Breughel painting dramatic sketch), and brings them back from the periphery of collective memory. In exploring French Flemish identity, which lies on the periphery of French national identity, the novel highlights the plight of those who are living on the periphery of French society. Those on the periphery, are again explored by Daeninckx in *Mort au premier tour* (set in another French region, Alsace), which is discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter Five: *Mort au premier tour*

The original version of *Mort au premier tour,* Daeninckx's first manuscript, was published by Le Masque in 1982. This was the first novel to feature Inspecteur Cadin. However, Daeninckx had initially conceptualised the character in the satirical magazine *Hara-Kiri*.[113] Fragments of Daeninckx's '*personnage fétiche'* (Daeninckx and Maricourt, 2009: 135) [favourite character] appeared in this magazine as early as 1976. These cartoons are collected in *Arcadius Cadin* (Coureuil and Daeninckx, 1991) which is discussed in the chapter to come, dealing with *Le Facteur fatal*. Testament to Daeninckx's wishes to establish himself as more than just a crime writer, both *Le Facteur fatal* (1990) and *Mort au premier tour* (1997a)**,** were originally published as part of Denoël's literary fiction series, *Série blanche,* and these titles were only later added to Gallimard's crime fiction series, *Série noire*.

After working as a printer for ten years, Daeninckx decided to take a risk and leave his job for three months to complete the first version of *Mort au premier tour* in 1977 (Daeninckx and Maricourt, 2009: 68). The work was poorly received commercially and made no impression on critics. There are several reasons that explain the low quality of Daeninckx's text. It was Daeninckx's first attempt at writing a book and completing the manuscript was a steep learning curve: '*. . . au début, chaque mot me posait un problème, chaque tiret que je mettais était un apprentissage'* (Daeninckx and Maricourt, 2009: 68) [. . . at first, every word posed a problem, every dash I used was an apprenticeship]. There was a period of five years from when Daeninckx finished and submitted the manuscript to publishers in 1977 (nine out of ten publishers declined), until the manuscript was later edited when it was accepted by Le Masque in 1982 (Daeninckx and Maricourt, 2009: 68). It was really only by chance that this manuscript was eventually published. A new young editor who had recently replaced the founder of Le Masque, Albert Pigasse (1887–1985), came across Daeninckx's manuscript after browsing through the archive of rejections (Daeninckx and Maricourt, 2009: 72).[114]

[113] *Hara-Kiri* was a monthly French satirical magazine founded by François Cavanna and Georges Bernier. First published in 1960, the magazine ran until 1989.

[114] Daeninckx's relationship with Le Masque was short-lived as after publishing *Mort au premier tour* they rejected manuscripts of *Meurtres pour mémoire*, *Le Géant inachevé* and *Métropolice*: '*Il m'a simplement dit que mes textes étaient recalés parce qu'ils ne correspondaient pas à la ligne éditoriale du Masque. Il m'a conseillé d'aller cogner à la porte de la Série noire'* (Daeninckx and Maricourt, 2009: 72) [They simply told me

Unhappy with this text, Daeninckx has never allowed this 1982 version to be reprinted (Daeninckx and Maricourt, 2009: 73). However, he returned to the story in 1997 and rewrote the entire manuscript, retaining only the first three lines of the original text (Daeninckx and Maricourt, 2009: 72). This heavily revised version of *Mort au premier tour,* published by Gallimard in 1997, is in fact the last text Daeninckx wrote featuring Inspecteur Cadin. The fact that Daeninckx decided to return to the original story twenty years later is testament to the success of the Inspecteur Cadin series, as well as the author's enthusiasm for his breakthrough character. The 1997 version of *Mort au premier tour* is perhaps the novel which best reflects the whole cycle of texts as it contains several of the themes that are explored in the other Cadin novels and short stories.

As alluded to in the title, the politics surrounding nuclear energy in France of the late 1970s is the prevailing theme of *Mort au premier tour*. "*Premier tour"* is jargon from French elections meaning the first round of balloting. Set in Alsace in 1977, the plot centres on the murder of a militant ecologist, Alain Dienta, whose body is found on the grounds of the nuclear power plant where he worked.[115] Dienta was murdered the day after he was elected to local government as part of the regional Green Party called *Verts Demain* [Green Tomorrow]. Much of the plot involves Cadin following leads that fail to advance his investigation into Dienta's death. Cadin pursues leads with the victim's trade union colleagues, his involvement in a local counter-culture magazine and his association with a group of squatting hippies. Eventually, towards the very end of the text, the Inspecteur somewhat confirms his original suspicion that Dienta was murdered by his political rival. In the final few pages, Cadin discovers that the outgoing mayor, Émile Loos, killed Dienta not because of any electoral conflict but in an effort to keep hidden his vice of paedophilia.

A significant portion of the novel examines how the construction of a nuclear power plant is both a blessing, offering rare employment opportunities during an economic downturn, and

that my texts failed because they did not correspond to the editorial policy of *Le Masque*. They advised me to go knock on the door of the *Série noire*].

[115] Similar to *Le Géant inachevé*, *Mort au premier tour* gives a starring role to regional areas. The fact that the main investigation takes place in a small village (Marcheim) on the outskirts of Strasbourg demonstrates that important events occur in smaller places too.

a curse**,** in terms of pollution and the threat it poses to the environment.[116] There are obvious comparisons here between Daeninckx's depiction of economic depression and drug abuse in *Le Géant inachevé* and *Mort au premier tour*.[117] Similarly, the description of factories in *Le Géant inachevé* and *Le Bourreau et son double* resonates with the context of the nuclear power plant in *Mort au premier tour.* Indeed, there are strong similarities between the murder victim in *Le Bourreau et son double*, Claude Werbel, and Alain Dienta in *Mort au premier tour,* as both are trade unionists who struggle against the imposition of the will of the State or Big Industry.

In several subplots of the novel, Daeninckx explores the history of Alsace-Lorraine, such as the short-lived Strasbourg Soviet following the end of World War I.[118] This brief uprising was part of a series of Soviet revolts in Germany which were initially inspired by the Kiel mutiny, a rebellion led by sailors of the German Imperial Navy on 3 November 1918 at the port city of Kiel. The communist uprisings during were easily suppressed by the leaders of the Social Democratic Party of Germany (who opposed the destruction of the capitalist system) as the Soviet revolts were confined to a select few cities and only supported by a minority group.

Another key issue highlighted in the novel is the ethnic cleansing of Alsatians who were expelled to Germany after France's reintegration of the regions. The Strasbourg Soviet and the expulsion of ethnic Alsatians are typical subject matter for Daeninckx's works as they are taboo histories of working-class struggles. During our interview, Daeninckx stated that he was drawn to these events as they go against any conservative narrative of French national identity:

> *C'est de la perte de l'Alsace-Lorraine que le nationalisme moderne en France est né [. . .] On a considéré ces gens-là comme des gens extrêmement conservateurs, alors que [. . .] Il y a des choses très différentes qu'on a complètement mises à la poubelle, par exemple le fait qu'en 1918 il y a eu une*

[116] While no other of Daeninckx's texts deal with environmental issues in such depth, in his other works he often highlights the issue of pollution in Paris. For example, in *Cannibale* (1998) Gocéné contrasts the beauty of his native land with the pollution surrounding Paris.

[117] A subplot in *Mort au premier tour*, '*Operation coup de poing'* (1997: 58-59) [Operation crackdown], involves the police carrying out drug raids with the help of informants who are then rewarded with free supplies of the same illicit substances.

[118] For a thorough discussion on the reintegration of the region in the aftermath of World War I see Alison Carroll's book *The Return of Alsace to France, 1918-1939* (2018). *Quand le drapeau rouge flottait sur la cathédrale* (Delamarre, 2009) is a documentary produced by Public Sénat that focuses on the 1918 Strasbourg Soviet.

> *révolution à Strasbourg qui était une révolution spartakiste et soviétique. Ça ne va pas dans le sens du nationalisme ou de l'écriture du roman national, donc ça m'intéressait de dire ça à l'intérieur d'un roman.* (Daeninckx and Gleeson, 2017)
>
> [The loss of Alsace-Lorraine was the birthplace of modern French nationalism. [. . .] People from there were considered to be extremely conservative when in fact [. . .] there were really interesting events that were just completely disregarded, for example, the fact that in 1918 there was a revolution in Strasbourg, a Spartacist revolt, a Soviet revolt. It doesn't align with nationalism or the nationalistic retelling of history; I was interested in showing that in a novel.]

French attitudes towards Alsace during the interwar period that can be considered to be informed by a "colonial" mindset, are very evident in the educational and linguistic policies introduced by the education commissioner for the region, Sébastien Charléty, in January 1920. Charléty introduced the controversial '*méthode directe'* [direct method] which effectively meant that French was the main language of instruction from a student's first day at school (McGillicuddy, 2011: 160). Before assuming the role of education commissioner in Alsace in 1919, Charléty had first applied the *méthode directe* in the French colony of Tunisia. Similar to Papon, Charléty had honed his techniques overseas before applying them domestically in metropolitan France.

Daeninckx partially captures the linguistic tug of war between Alsatian, German, and French in *Mort au premier tour.* In chapter thirteen, a Strasbourg antique dealer tells Cadin that he remembers Nazi propaganda posters from 1941 that promoted the (re)Germanisation of Alsatian culture: '*C'était il a trente-six ans, quand les murs de la ville disparaissaient sous les affiches proclamant : Hinaus mit dem Welschen Plunder . . . Sortez le fatras francais !'* (*MPT*: p. 155) [It has been thirty-six years since the walls of the town were covered in notices proclaiming: *Hinaus mit dem Welschen Plunder . . .* Out with the French junk!]. This reference to a historical poster is another example of palimpsestic memory in the text and Daeninckx's blending of fact and fiction. The antique dealer also recalls that the Nazi regime attempted to rid the Alsatian dialect of any French influences: '*Même le dialecte alsacien a été épuré de ses mots d'origine française. Il était interdit de prononcer "Bouschour", "Orevar", quand on se rentrait ou que on l'on se séparait*' (*MPT*: p. 155) [Even the Alsatian dialect was purified of any words of French origin. It was prohibited from saying *"Bouschour"* and *"Orevar"* when saying hello or goodbye].

The references to art in the novel are testament to the author's fascination with art and artists, but also echo his concerns as a writer. Daeninckx weaves the life and art of Hans Arp (also known as Jean Arp) and Sophie Taeuber-Arp into the novel to disrupt conservative narratives of French national identity. Hans Arp, in particular, embodies Daeninckx's fascination with characters who have dual or complex identities as he sees them as going against jingoistic narratives of France.[119] There are some parallels here with the references to Breughel's "The Blind Leading the Blind" painting in *Le Géant inachevé,* which allowed Daeninckx to expose the issue of racism, in that case against Algerians.

Continuing the Inspecteur Cadin series' emphasis on police corruption, *Mort au premier tour* is also severely critical of the French police's intelligence unit, *Renseignement Généraux*, which is depicted as being corrupt and completely unethical in its surveillance of cultural groups and political activists. Cadin's colleague Dalbois (a recurring figure throughout the series and a sort of double of Cadin himself), laughs at the naïve Cadin who does not understand why *Renseignement Généraux* are so invested in counter-culture magazines. Dalbois declares that he even writes articles under a fake name (on behalf of the police) to influence these organisations: '*le journalisme nous occupe énormément. . . J'écris des dizaines d'articles. [. . .] On essaie de planquer un gars du service dans chaque comité de rédaction pour contrôler et au besoin retourner le canard à notre service. . . '* (*MPT*: p.78) [Journalism takes up a lot of our time. . . I write dozens of articles. [. . .] We try and place one of our guys from the force on every editorial board to control and when necessary steer the rag to our needs. . .]. *Mort au premier tour* also underlines the series' recurring theme of police corruption and shares significant parallels with *Le Bourreau et son double's* industrial setting and the depiction of the decline of trade unions.

Abuse of individuals by individuals also figures strongly in this novel. Here, it is important to note that Daeninckx's work not only criticises groups, institutions, or collectives, but does not hesitate to lay blame squarely at the foot of given persons. The first chapter of the novel details the problem of domestic abuse. This may prime the reader for the issue of paedophilia that comes to the fore at the climax of the plot. In this chapter, I will also

[119] As mentioned in the introductory chapter, Daeninckx's 2010 novel *Galadio* centres on the life of a teenager in 1920s Germany born to a German mother and African father who had served in the French colonial army occupying parts of the Rhineland following the end of World War I.

examine how the text's depiction of domestic abuse and paedophilia in the novel reinforces the idea that complicit silence is necessary for the perpetrators to carry out such an atrocious crime. This chimes with the emphasis on police and State silence in other contexts, both in this novel and elsewhere in his work.

5.1 Recognising Domestic Violence

As with *Le Géant inachevé,* Daeninckx uses the first chapter of *Mort au premier tour* to foreshadow the major themes of the novel. For example, the first person Cadin sees as he enters the police station is Françoise Drecht who, it transpires, is a domestic abuse survivor who suffers at the hands of her husband Freddy Drecht: '*Une femme d'une quarantaine d'années, le visage déformé par les coups, sanglotait sur le banc des divorcés sous le portrait de penché du président d'Estaing tandis que le responsable de son état s'agitait dans la cage*.' (*MPT*: p. 12) [A woman in her forties, her face deformed by blows, was sobbing on the divorcees' bench under the leaning portrait of the president of Estaing, while the man responsible for the state she was in, moved around behind bars]. It is significant to note here Daeninckx's reference to the painting of centre-right president Valéry Giscard d'Estaing. On the one hand, this reference is simply a time marker for the reader; however, by linking the image of the French president so closely to a domestic abuse survivor, Daeninckx may also be arguing that the State at the time was failing to address this issue. This mixing of personal stories along with collective societal problematics is typical of Daeninckx's texts. Such an approach reaffirms Pine's work, which demonstrates that when remembrance culture is served to represent survivors as both individuals and as members of a group, it effectively embodies both a personal and a collective past (2011: 49).

In the closing section of the chapter, Inspecteur Cadin remembers meeting the Drechts two years previously where Freddy was on trial for abusing his wife and charged with *'séquestration, de coups et blessures, d'actes de cruauté, et son fils âgé de dix-neuf ans était également poursuivi pour complicité*' (*MPT*: p. 17) [forcible confinement, assault and battery, cruelty, and his nineteen-year-old son was also charged with complicity]. The trial is darkly farcical: the son who tended to his mother's wounds with a needle and thread also sewed her to the bed where she was recuperating from the attack. It is apparent that not only the judicial system but that French society as a whole is failing to address the issue of domestic abuse, as Inspecteur Cadin appears to be the only person to take it seriously.

> *L'humour supérieur du juge déclenchait immanquablement l'hilarité policée du public. Cadin se rappelait cette amertume née du sentiment d'être seul à penser que la chair bouffie du réel ne se trouvait pas obligatoirement et éternellement du même côté de la barre.* (*MPT*: p. 19)
>
> [The judge's good humour inevitably triggered the public's polite hilarity. Cadin remembered the bitter feeling of being the only person thinking that the swollen flesh of reality was not necessarily and eternally on the same side of the bar.]

Cadin distinctly remembers the words of Françoise Drecht who at the end of the trial wanted to simply forget about the past: '*Si c'est encore possible, j'enlève ma plainte. Je ne lui en veux plus, tout ça c'est du passé'* (*MPT*: p. 19) [If it's still possible, I want to withdraw my complaint. I don't want it anymore, that's all in the past]. However, as demonstrated by her husband's inevitable return to violence, this character represents the dangers of forgetting past traumas too easily.

5.2 *Klapperstei 68*: State Censorship and Policing the Media

The opening scene of *Mort au premier tour* is very similar to the epilogue of *Meurtres pour mémoire*: Cadin comes across several groups of French soldiers who are in the process of removing posters. The posters have such slogans as '*un jour de fête pour vous, un an de prison pour nous'* (*MPT*: p. 12) [a bank holiday for you is a year in prison for us]. The soldiers belong to an obscure syndicate of army conscripts from Strasbourg, who are campaigning for the right to be represented by a union. This image signposts the novel's major theme of industrial disputes and the policing of clandestine groups such as the Alsatian counter-culture magazine *Klapperstei 68*. Daeninckx's inclusion of this real magazine is typical of his blending of fact and fiction.

The prominence of magazines, newspapers and in particular *Klapperstei 68* in the novel is reflective of their importance to Daeninckx's research for *Mort au premier tour*: '*Je lis donc tout un tas de journaux, écolos et autres, je vais dans des librairies parallèles'* (Collovald, 2001: 11) [I read all types of newspapers, environmentalist and others, I went to unofficial bookshops]. *Klapperstei 68,* a counter-cultural magazine that was based in the region, is so central to the plot of *Mort au premier tour* that it warrants closer analysis. In Daeninckx's text, the regional magazine publishes several articles belonging to the murder victim and the police have infiltrated their editorial board. The fictional posters belonging to an army syndicate resonate somewhat with the actions of the *Klapperstei 68*, who in May 1973 were

taken to court by the former French Defence minister, Michel Debré, for '*provocation de militaires à la désobéissance, injures publiques envers l'armée et provocation à la désertion*' (*Le Monde,* 1973a: Online) [inciting soldiers to disobey, public insults towards the army and inciting desertion]. The following month, the magazine was also taken to court by the French Interior minister, Raymond Marcellin, for defamation of the police (*Le Monde*, 1973b: Online). The activities of *Klapperstei 68* clearly influenced Daeninckx when he first conceptualised *Mort au premier tour* in 1977.

These parallels are so strong that it is possible to directly link plot elements in the text with specific political scandals in France of the 1970s that are not openly referenced in the novel. For example, as Donald Reid highlights, in *Mort au premier tour* the *Renseignements Généraux* try to infiltrate and write for both countercultural and neo-Nazi publications in order to turn them to their own purposes (2010: 41).Upon first reading, this plot element appears far-fetched, however, upon closer inspection it is obvious to readers familiar with French politics of the post May '68 period that Daeninckx was clearly alluding to the "*l'affaire des plombiers"* [the plumbers' affair] which was France's own Watergate scandal.[120] In 1973, members of the French counter intelligence agency (under the orders of Raymond Marcellin) were caught red-handed trying to plant microphones in the offices of *Le Canard enchaîné*.[121] This eventually led to the resignation of Marcellin from his position of Interior Minister in 1974, however, he remained a senator and active in local politics until the mid-1980s. There is no doubt that Daeninckx would have been keenly aware of Marcellin at the time as he introduced legislation that banned the display, publicity and sale of *Hara-Kiri Hebdo* to minors, following the magazine's publication of a cover mocking the death of Charles De Gaulle in 1970.[122]

While *Klapperstei 68* is obviously reflective of "*l'affaire des plombiers"* and is central to the text's focal strand of State censorship, the counter-cultural magazine also reinforces the text's theme of regional identity. As depicted in *Mort au premier tour*, *Klapperstei 68* was

[120] Figure 16 in Appendix A shows the cover of an issue of *Klapperstei 68* mocking Raymond Marcellin's involvement in "*l'affaire des plombiers*".
[121] See *Les Micros du canard* (Angeli and Mesnier, 2014) for a complete overview of "*l'affaire des plombiers"*.
[122] *Hara-Kiri Hebdo* was the weekly counterpart to *Hara-Kiri* which, as noted above, published comic strips by Daeninckx featuring Cadin. In order to sidestep the ban imposed on *Hara-Kiri Hebdo* the editorial board changed the name of the magazine to *Charlie Hebdo.*

'*une feuille régionale*' (*MPT*: p. 45) [a regional gazette] from Mulhouse that focused on local political issues. Cadin asks Michèle Shelton, a close friend of the murder victim and member of the editorial board, about the significance of the name of the magazine as it is not in French but in the Germanic Alsatian dialect : '*Le Klapperstei, c'était un masque de pierre qu'on attachait au cou des menteurs, des personnes médisantes, au Moyen Âge dans la région de Mulhouse. . . On a rajouté 68. . . Si on traduisait l'idée, ça donnerait un truc comme "le pavé qui parle" !'* (*MPT*: p. 55) [The Klapperstei was a stone mask that would be hung around the neck of liars, slanderous people, during the Middle Ages in the Mulhouse region. . . We added 68. . . a literal translation of the word would be something like "the chatter stone''!].[123] While this is the only reference to Alsatian folklore in *Mort au premier tour* it brings to mind the *Le Géant inachevé*'s exploration of Flemish folklore.

5.3 Nuclear Politics

Along with the personal issues of domestic abuse and paedophilia, nuclear power and regional identity are the two dominant themes of *Mort au premier tour*. In an interview from 2001 with Annie Collovald, Daeninckx stated that while writing the novel he became interested in two emerging political movements: '*la revendication écologiste, la revendication régionaliste'* (2001: 11) [ecologist demands, regional demands]. However, during the late 1970s Daeninckx was still a member of the PCF and was frustrated by the party's refusal to consider these issues: '*Or, le PCF met sur elles une véritable chape de plomb, la discussion n'est pas possible'* (Collovald, 2001: 11) [However, the PCF was a complete wall of silence, so the discussion wasn't possible]. The novel was born out of this frustration and Daeninckx used the process to attain a better understanding of these issues: '*. . . l'écriture c'est pour moi la façon de faire l'expérience de certaines réalités'* (Collovald, 2001: 11) [. . . writing for me is a way of experiencing certain realities]. Daeninckx also stated that during this period he spent time researching the nuclear accident at Three Miles

[123] Figure 17 in Appendix A is an image from *Klapperstei 68* that explains the significance of the title to the reader. Pavé is strongly associated with the protests of May 1968: some of the event's best-known images are of protestors uprooting and hurling paving stones. One of the protest's iconic slogans also reinforces this association: '*Sous les pavés, la plage*' (Calmeilles, 2018: Online) [Under the paving stones, there is a beach]. Indeed, the French slang term *pavé* meaning weighty tome could be understood as a reference to the Cadin series taken as a whole (which "speaks" of historical and social issues). It is worth noting that the '68' could also refer to the number of the Haut-Rhin *département* in which Mulhouse is situated, again underscoring the regional nature of *Klapperstei 68.*

Island in the USA in 1979, which preceded the 1986 Chernobyl disaster. In *Mort au premier tour*, Daeninckx wanted to voice the concerns of people who were already extremely frightened of the dangers posed by this relatively new form of energy (Collovald, 2001: 11).

However, as with his discussion of historical traumas in *Meurtres pour mémoire* and *Le Bourreau et son double*, Daeninckx does not discuss the issue of nuclear energy in black and white terms. Daeninckx's text is more nuanced than just a simple romantic denunciation of the industrialisation of the French countryside. In economic terms, the text describes the life-saving impact of the building of the power plant, given that many people left the area due to the lack of work with the closure of the potash mines ten years previously (*MPT*: p. 61): *La construction d'une centrale de ce gabarit représente plusieurs années de travail, sans compter la maintenance. En période de récession, c'est pratiquement vécu comme du fonctionnariat !* (*MPT*: p. 48). [The construction of a power plant of this size provided several years of work, not counting maintenance jobs. In times of recession, it's almost like being a civil servant!]. Daeninckx is keenly aware of the positive effect the building of a nuclear power plant can have on the socio-economic situation of a disadvantaged area by offering highly paid employment opportunities. However, the text also notes that any such financial gains are offset by the potential health risks associated with nuclear energy.

Upon first examination, there are strong similarities between Alain Dienta in *Mort au premier tour* and the murder of Pierre Overney (previously discussed in detail in the context of *Le Bourreau et son double*), as both were political activists killed on the grounds of their workplace. Indeed, the text makes explicit reference to the event, which Cadin hears broadcast over the radio:

> *Un flash spécial interrompit le couplet de Gilbert Lafaille annonçant l'exécution de l'ancien vigile Tramoni, par un commando des Noyaux Armés Pour l'Autonomie Populaire, cinq ans après qu'il eut assassiné le militant maoïste Pierre Overney devant l'entrée des usines Renault, à Boulogne-Billancourt.* (*MPT*: p. 126)
>
> [Gilbert Lafaille's singing was interrupted by a special news bulletin announcing the execution of former security guard Tramoni, by a commando of the Armed Nuclei for Popular Autonomy, five years after he had killed the Maoist activist Pierre Overney in front of the entrance to the Renault factory in Boulogne-Billancourt.]

However, a series of violent clashes between the army and anti-nuclear protesters in Mulhouse in 1977 bear an even stronger resemblance to several aspects of Daeninckx's novel. For example, as reported in *Le Monde*, one notable clash occurred on '*la nuit du mardi 12 au mercredi 13 juillet à Heiteren (Haut-Rhin) sur le chantier de construction d'un des pylônes géants qui serviront au transport de l'électricité produite par la centrale nucléaire de Fessenheim'* (*Le Monde*, 1977: Online) [the night of Tuesday 12th to Wednesday 13th July at Heiteren (Haut-Rhin) on the construction site of giant pylons serving the transport of electricity produced by the Fessenheim nuclear power plant]. The brief newspaper article—very similar in style to the *fait divers* Daeninckx consistently employs in his works—details an arson attack carried out by a paramilitary group: '*un commando d'une dizaine de jeunes gens armés de bâtons et de ceinturons'* (*Le Monde*, 1977: Online) [a commando unit of a dozen young people armed with batons and belts] attacked a group of young ecologists from France and Germany. The paramilitary group burned the ecologists' makeshift "*dortoir*" [sleeping quarters]. The living conditions of this real-life group of ecologists mirrors very closely Daeninckx's fictional group of squatting hippies that Alain Dienta was part of for a time: '*Alain Dienta habitait à l'époque dans une ferme abandonnée, sur des terrains voués à la construction de la centrale*' (*MPT*: p. 71) [For a while Alain Dienta had lived on an abandoned farmland designated for the construction of the power plant].

This newspaper article aligns with the plot of *Mort au premier tour* so much that it appears that Daeninckx may have read the piece and borrowed specific details from it to blend his fiction more closely with reality. For example, one specific detail mentioned in the article resonates with Daeninckx's description of Cadin discovering Dienta's dead body. *Le Monde* noted: '*les membres du commando ont dispersé les gardiens, obligeant ceux qu'ils rattrapaient à se coucher face contre terre'* (*Le Monde*, 1977: Online) [The paramilitary members scattered the guardians and forced those they captured to lie face down on the ground]. This is strikingly similar to Daeninckx's description of Dienta, who is found '*le visage planté dans la boue*' (*MPT*: p. 36) [his face planted in the mud]. Additionally, Dienta is found on a construction site on the grounds of the power plant, which mirrors the location of the nonfictional arson attack. The fictionalisation of this incident highlights how Daeninckx consistently grounds his fiction in actuality by including tangible factual elements.

In the fourth chapter of the novel, Daeninckx highlights the long history of police violence against trade unions. Cadin receives a notably cold welcome when he interviews one of Dienta's trade unionist colleagues, Paul Bauman, who is less than cooperative: '*Les rapports du syndicat et de la police se bornaient aux rencontres obligées avec les inspecteurs des Renseignements Généraux quand il fallait mettre au point le parcours d'une manifestation*' (*MPT*: p. 47) [Relations between trade unions and the police were limited to the obligatory meetings with *Renseignements Généraux* when planning the route of protest]. The chapter ends with Bauman advising Cadin that it is unlikely that Dienta was killed by a fellow trade unionist, even if his ideas were too radical, as '*quand des syndicalistes se font tuer dans l'exercice de leurs fonctions, c'est toujours des gens de chez vous qui sont au bout du flingue*' (*MPT*: p. 50) [when trade unionists get killed in the line of duty, it's always one of your people holding the smoking gun].

As depicted in the novel, the 1977 municipal elections were a breakthrough moment for the Green Party in France, which received more than ten per cent of votes in certain municipalities such as Boulogne-Billancourt, Chambéry, Mulhouse and Strasbourg (Boy, 2007).[124] In *Mort au premier tour,* the sitting mayor, Émile Loos, is defeated for the first time in twenty years by the ecologists' political party *Verts Demain.* Issues such as nuclear energy are shown in *Mort au premier tour* to have far-reaching implications for the whole country and not simply the local area. The bar owner that Cadin meets in the first chapter states that the ecologists are unrealistic to think that the mayor had enough influence to block the nuclear power plant: '*Comme si le maire d'un bled de même pas cinq mille habitants pouvait s'opposer au ministre de l'Énergie, aux ingénieurs de l'E. D. F. et à la hausse du prix du pétrole !* (*MPT*: p. 28) [As if the Mayor of a backwater of not even 5,000 inhabitants could challenge the Minister for Energy, the Électricité de France engineers and the rise in petrol prices!].

During our interview I asked Daeninckx if he had specifically intended to use the Inspecteur Cadin series to link French overseas colonialism with its bending of regional concerns to the will of a centralised Nation State in mainland France. While he was unwilling to wholly agree

[124] The political success of the Green Party in these cities is of no surprise considering that they are all areas that have for a long time been severely affected by pollution. See *Le Nouvel Observateur* (2016: Online) *Pollution : Grenoble, Lyon, Chambéry . . . Toutes ces villes qui suffoquent*.

with my hypothesis, '*Non, pas vraiment mais ça m'intéresse*' (Daeninckx and Gleeson, 2017) [No, not really, but that does interest me], one passage from *Mort au premier tour* explicitly captures this idea. While investigating Dienta's background, Cadin reads an extract of a pamphlet the activist had been distributing on behalf of a support group for soldiers who had deserted the French army:[125]

> *POURQUOI J'AI DÉSERTÉ*
>
> *J'en avais marre de servir dans l'armée du capital, qui embrigade la jeunesse pour mieux la préparer à l'exploitation patronale, qui réprime les peuples dominés par l'impérialisme français (Martinique, Guadeloupe, Réunion, Nouvelle-Calédonie), qui vend des armes aux régimes fascistes de Grèce, d'Espagne, du Brésil, qui vole les terres des paysans prolétaires pour en faire des terrains militaires (Larzac, Lorraine, Fontevrault), qui utilise l'énergie nucléaire à des fins meurtrières. . .* (*MPT*: p. 80)
>
> [WHY I DESERTED
>
> I was tired of serving in the capital's army, which recruits the youth to better prepare them for employer exploitation, which represses the peoples dominated by French imperialism (Martinique, Guadeloupe, Réunion, New Caledonia), which sells weapons to the fascist regimes of Greece, Spain, Brazil, which steals the lands of the proletarian farmers to make them into military bases (Larzac, Lorraine, Fontevrault), which uses nuclear energy for murderous ends. . .]

The above quotation is a striking example of Daeninckx's evocation of multidirectional memory as it associates French imperialism with both global and local injustices. In echoes of the Larzac movement, a recurring theme of the text is how the nuclear power plant has replaced farmlands. Throughout the text, Daeninckx subtly suggests that the nuclear power plant has polluted the former farmlands: *La pluie avait cessé quand il quitta l'ancienne ferme, laissant derrière elle un ciel d'un gris plombé* (*MPT*: p. 46) [When he left the former farm the rain had stopped, leaving behind it a lead-grey sky]. Strasbourg too is described as polluted: '*Le vent dispersait la fumée blanche des chaudières. [Cadin] avait envie de passer au sauna pour se laver de la fatigue et des épreuves de la journée'* (*MPT*: p. 55) [The wind dispersed the white chimney smoke. [Cadin] wanted to go to the sauna to wash away his tiredness and the day's hardships].

[125] The issue of desertion is particularly close to Daeninckx as his grandfather narrowly avoided execution for deserting the military during World War I, and this was the inspiration for *Le Der des ders* (1985a).

Daeninckx is also keen to point out that the nuclear power plant has not only affected the environment but has significantly disrupted the area's cultures and traditions. The trade union official explains why Dienta's wish to close the power plant was popular with some of his colleagues: '*. . . toutes leurs vignes ont été arrachées au bulldozer, les fermes détruites* [. . .] *Ils ont perdu leur liberté, leur mode de vie traditionnel. . .'* (*MPT*: pp. 48–49) [. . . all their vines were torn down by bulldozers, their farms destroyed [. . .] They lost their freedom, their traditional way of life. . .].

When interviewed by Inspecteur Cadin, the newly elected ecologist mayor is severely critical of the greed of the local people who welcomed the building of the power plant in their area:

> *. . . ici tout le monde était dans le brouillard. . . Personne n'avait les éléments pour réfléchir aux inconvénients de la centrale* [. . .] *Si on leur avait annoncé que l'usine allait réchauffer l'eau du Rhin de deux à trois degrés et modifier à terme les conditions climatiques du secteur, ils nous auraient ri au nez. . . Tous se foutaient des conséquences comme de leur première couche ! Ils ne voyaient que l'argent à en tirer et les emplois que ça allait créer.* (*MPT*: p. 70)
>
> [. . . here everyone was in the dark . . . Nobody was able to consider the disadvantages of the power plant . . . If they had been told that the factory would heat the water of the Rhine by two to three degrees and eventually modify the climatic conditions of the area, they would have laughed at us . . . They couldn't have cared less about the consequences! They only saw the money they could make from it and the jobs it would create.]

The dilemma of the power plant, which on the one hand offers employment to local people in an economically disadvantaged area but which on the other hand directly damages their environment, is embodied by the murder victim Alain Dienta. The contradiction between Dienta's politics and his employment at the power plant (he was a newly elected Green Party councillor and trade unionist) is best explained by one of his colleagues while being interviewed by Cadin, who simply states that '*les pauvres n'ont pas le choix*' (*MPT*: p. 39) [The poor don't have the choice]. Daeninckx is keen to avoid any shaming of working-class people who through poverty may have no alternative but to work in industries that go against their personal politics.

As well as the text's larger criticism of police surveillance, Daeninckx also highlights the issue of anti-Semitism and suggests that the French police are still unwilling to acknowledge hate crimes against Jews. Cadin once again differentiates himself from his colleagues when

Inspecteur Gossen arrests two teenagers for vandalising graveyards but wilfully ignores the fact that it was the Jewish cemetery:

> *Cadin n'insista pas, il avait assez à faire sans venir fourrer son nez dans l'enquête de son collègue. Mais il savait qu'à sa place, il ne serait pas assis là, tranquillement, un gobelet de café fumant sous le nez. Il aurait fichu sens dessus-dessous les baraques des deux mômes à la recherche du moindre symbole néo-nazi, médaille, disque, livre, fanion. . .* (*MPT*: p. 93)
>
> [Cadin didn't insist. He had enough to do without sticking his nose in his colleague's investigation. But he knew that if it was him, he wouldn't be sitting there, relaxing, with a cup of hot coffee in his hand. He would have turned the house of the two kids upside down, looking for the smallest neo-Nazi symbol, medal, record, book, pennant. . .]

Cadin understands the wider implications of attacks on Jewish cemeteries and even suggests that, in a roundabout way, such attacks subconsciously reflect attempts by neo-Nazis to deny the Holocaust: *Il savait également qu'au terme de leur logique infernale, ces vidangeurs de mémoire proclamaient que si un seul n'était pas mort, c'était bien la preuve évidente que six millions d'autres ne l'étaient pas* (*MPT*: p. 93) [He knew as well that according to their diabolical logic, these drainers of memories proclaim that if one wasn't dead that was good enough proof that six million others weren't either]. This passage clearly echoes back to the theme in *Meurtres pour mémoire* of keeping alive the memory of Vichy anti-Semitism. As noted, *Meurtres pour mémoire* also briefly features the use of a graveyard in the plot at the beginning of the text with the gravediggers' strike.[126]

5.4 Layering Histories through Popular Culture and Abstract Art

Mort au premier tour highlights Daeninckx's personal interest in art as he makes recurring references to different art and artists throughout the text. Their inclusion has a variety of impacts on the text. Firstly, references to the psychedelic art of Wes Wilson, which was synonymous with the hippie movement, gives the text an authentic feeling of the late 1970s in France. Music is used in a similar manner in the text, for example, the music of the American band, The Grateful Dead, who are closely associated with the hippie movement, is another cultural marker of the era. References to the music of politically engaged French

[126] *Artana! Artana!* (2018) also incorporates an important scene in a graveyard to its plot. In this novel Daeninckx uses the headstones in the graveyard as a timeline marking the various waves of immigrants to Courvilliers, his fictionalisation of Aubervilliers.

singer, Gilbert Lafaille, also serve a similar purpose of signalling the time period (*MPT*: p. 126).[127] Daeninckx reinforces the German heritage of Alsace by alluding to the German electronic groups Tangerine Dream and Kraftwerk. Daeninckx's reference to Kraftwerk is very significant as it is typical of his style '*de jouer sur les mots, les références au cinéma et à la musique*' (Daeninckx and Maricourt, 2009: 188) [of playing with words, references to cinema and music] as the name of the band is in fact the German word for power station.

As highlighted earlier in this chapter, *Mort au premier tour* opens with the image of French soldiers removing political posters. Various kinds of political posters subsequently appear throughout *Mort au premier tour*. While attending a *Klapperstei 68* event, Cadin sees an anti-nuclear poster designed by Alsatian illustrator Tomi Ungerer (1931–2019):

> *Cadin s'installa sur une banquette de coin, près d'un dessin de Tomi Ungerer représentant l'image traditionnelle de l'Alsacienne avec son chapeau à larges oreillettes et ses lourdes tresses couleur de blés mûrs. Le seul problème était que le visage se résumait à une tête de mort que légendaient ces simples mots : "Nucléaire non merci !"* (*MPT*: p. 52)
>
> [Cadin took a seat on a corner bench near a Tomi Ungerer drawing depicting the traditional image of an Alsatian woman wearing a hat with large ear covers and heavy braids the colour of ripe wheat. The only problem was that the face consisted of a skull that had a simple caption: 'Nuclear energy, no thanks!'][128]

As a child, Ungerer lived under the German occupation of Alsace, and readers familiar with his works would automatically associate him with World War II, protest, and children's literature.[129] Ungerer was best known for his politically engaged posters, as well as books he wrote for children such as *Les Trois brigands* (1968). Ungerer also designed the poster for Stanley Kubrick's anti-war film *Dr Strangelove* (1964) which is referenced in Daeninckx's novel (*MPT*: p. 99).

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[127] This use of intertextuality reinforces the politically engaged nature of Daeninckx's own work, as Lafaille is best known for his 1977 album *Le président et l'éléphant* [The President and the Elephant] which was in part a satirical criticism of French president Giscard d'Estaing's foreign policy towards Africa.

[128] This slogan was popularised in 1975 by a Danish anti-nuclear movement called Smiling Sun. The original slogan in Danish was "*Atomkraft? Nej Tak*", within a few years the group's slogan and logo became internationally recognised. For more see https://www.smilingsun.org/.

[129] It is also worth noting that Tomi Ungerer spoke French, Alsatian, German and English which gave him the linguistic fluency to translate and/or supervise the translation of his own works. For a detailed discussion on Ungerer's experimentation with multilingualism see "*L'oeuvre Ouverte de Tomi Ungerer : Traductions palimpsestes et transferts interculturels*" (Schneider and Willer, 2016).

Daeninckx's reference to Ungerer also prepares the reader for a sub-plot later in the novel involving the work of Alsatian artist Hans Arp and his wife Sophie Taeuber-Arp.

In chapter nine, in a fashion very similar to a *flâneur*, but without the aspect of pleasure usually associated with this archetype, a sleepless Cadin aimlessly walks the streets of Strasbourg in the early hours of the morning. During this walk the Inspecteur finds himself in front of the Aubette building on Place Kléber. This reminds him of a curious incident three months previous where a man was arrested for using a sledgehammer to destroy paintings that were recently installed as part of an exhibition at the Aubette building: '*Une fois transféré à la Nuée-Bleue, l'homme s'était révélé être un ancien collaborateur du Musée alsacien qui avait accompagné Hans Arp dans l'Aubette lors de la dernière visite du sculpteur au tout début des années 60*' (*MPT*: p. 110) [Once transferred to *la Nuée-Bleue,* it turned out the man was a former associate of the Alsatian museum who accompanied Hans Arp to the Aubette when the sculptor last visited the building in the early 1960s].[130]

Cadin is here shown to be kind and sensitive in how he deals with this very agitated elderly person by sharing a drink with *'l'homme au marteau*' (*MPT*: p. 111) [the sledgehammer man] while interviewing him at the police station. Having previously seen his familiarity with the sixteenth century paintings of Bruegel the Elder in *Le Géant inachevé*, it is worth noting that Cadin is well-read and has a significant knowledge of art and impresses the unnamed *l'homme au marteau* with his awareness of Hans Arp: '*Cadin lui parla des sculptures disséminées sur les pelouses des résidences de la rue Charles-de-Gaulle, lui arrachant un sourire condescendant*' (*MPT*: p. 111) [Cadin wiped the smile off his face by telling him about the sculptures on residential lawns along rue Charles-de-Gaulle]. *L'homme au marteau* then explains to Cadin how Arp was much more than just a sculptor: *'Mais il était également poète, peintre et dessinateur, dadaïste tyrolien et surréaliste bilingue*' (*MPT*: p. 111) [But he was also a poet, a painter, a drawer, a Tyrolean Dadaist and a bilingual surrealist].[131]

[130] The former Strasbourg central police station was located on *rue de la Nuée-Bleue*. *La Nuée-Bleue* is also the name of a well-known publishing house which took its name from the same street where it was first founded in 1920. *La Nuée-Bleue* has a strong focus on publications of regional interest.

[131] Daeninckx used to be an avid painter and sculptor in his spare time before becoming a writer: '*Mon truc, à l'époque, c'était plutôt l'expression plastique. Je faisais de la peinture avec des encres d'imprimerie ou des sculptures avec des plaques offset. Le soir, après le boulot, je filais à Bobigny où Jean-Pierre Coureuil animait*

The man explains his act of vandalism by claiming that he was trying to reveal forgotten abstract art that had been plastered over. He details how in 1926 Hans Arp, his wife, Sophie Taeuber-Arp, and their friend, Théo van Doesburg, had redesigned the entire interior of the Aubette building and turned it into a living piece of abstract art. He then elaborates that contrary to popular belief this art was not destroyed by the Nazis during their occupation, even though they would have considered works of abstract art to be degenerate, but that it was almost all removed by local commerce who disliked the architecture (*MPT*: p. 112).[132] Daeninckx uses this to highlight to the reader the importance of questioning histories that are presented as overly simplistic.

As alluded to in the text, Arp was bilingual and referred to himself as Jean while speaking French but called himself Hans while speaking German. The brief but detailed inclusion of Hans Arp adds to the text's discussion of the regional and national identity, as Arp is someone who does not fall neatly into any one single category of French, German, or Alsatian. The Aubette is also typical of Daeninckx's obsession with hidden histories, depicted here as a physical palimpsest with a character literally hammering away to recover lost artworks. This echoes with the epilogue in *Meurtres pour mémoire* where layers of hidden histories are revealed through the unpeeling of posters.

5.5 Hidden Histories: Recovering the Memory of the Strasbourg Soviet

There are several other sub-plots in *Mort au premier tour* that also expose other hidden histories related to Strasbourg. A notable aspect of Daeninckx's novel is the layering manner in which he unearths minoritised histories. As noted above, Daeninckx incorporates the short-lived Soviet revolution that took place in Strasbourg and the surrounding towns at the end of World War I as a sub-plot. He does this by having Cadin view a fringe documentary about the history. Cadin sees the film while working a covert operation on an underground

une sorte de phalanstère' (Daeninckx and Maricourt, 2009: 68) [At the time, I was more interested in making art. I painted with inks from the printworks and made sculptures from offset printing plates. In the evenings after work, I would dash over to Bobigny where Jean-Pierre Coureuil organised a type of *phalanstère* (a self-contained utopian community)].

[132] The Aubette designs of Hans Arp, Sophie Taeuber-Arp and Théo van Doesburg were rediscovered in 1977 and their almost complete restoration was finished in 1997. See the French Ministry for Culture's *Plateforme Ouverte du Patrimoine* (Online) webpage which describes the Aubette as a listed building.

film festival with Commissaire Brück.[133] As previously seen in *Meurtres pour mémoire, Le Bourreau et son double* and *Le Géant inachevé*, the palimpsest is central to Daeninckx's recovery of lost histories. The concept is clearly evoked in the fictional documentary, as the opening shot of the film is a street sign: '*La première image, tremblante, qui anima l'écran fut celle d'une plaque connue de tous les Strasbourgeois, « Rue du 22-Novembre »*' (*MPT*: p. 103) [The first shaky on-screen image showed a sign known to everyone from Strasbourg, « Rue du 22-Novembre »]. The documentary then cuts to a seventy-year-old veteran dressed in a German Imperial navy uniform who is asked by an off-screen voice about the curious prominence of the date on the street sign, since most towns in France celebrate Armistice Day on 11 November. The veteran explains to the camera then that on *'le 9 novembre, plusieurs milliers de soldats allemands venus de Kehl, des marins mutinés pour la plupart, s'étaient rassemblés sur la place Kléber pour y dégrader des dizaines d'officiers et proclamer la création du Conseil des Soviets de Strasbourg !'* (*MPT*: p. 103) [on 9 November, several thousand German soldiers from Kehl, navy mutineers for the most part, had assembled on Place Kléber to demote dozens of offices and proclaim the creation of the Strasbourg council of Soviets!].[134]

This fictional documentary describes the series of brief Soviet revolutions in Strasbourg and other cities and towns that occurred as part of the German revolution as detailed in the first section of this chapter. The film documents how during the revolution the red Socialist flag flew from the spire of the cathedral and a council of workers immediately voted to increase miners' wages. This fictional film makes it clear that this workers' revolution challenged the inevitable arrival of French rule and the influence of the Church and Industry.

In a 1988 essay collected in *La Mémoire longue* (Daeninckx, 2008b: 43-47), Daeninckx recounts his own experience of seeing the above street sign in Strasbourg. Despite asking people he know from Strasbourg about the sign, Daeninckx had to turn to the local archives to discover that the street sign commemorated that date of 22 November 1918 when the French army ended the Soviet revolt: '*Les troupes françaises avaient mis fin au Soviet de*

[133] There are significant autobiographical elements in this scene of the novel, Daeninckx's draws on his own experiences working as an "*animateur culturel*" [youth worker in a cultural context] who travelled around hosting films and debates. This was his final job before his breakthrough with *Meurtres pour mémoire* (Daeninckx and Maricourt, 2009: 51).

[134] Kehl is the town directly opposite Strasbourg on the eastern side of the Rhine river.

soldats, d'ouvriers, de paysans. . . ' (Daeninckx, 2008b: 43) [The French troops had put an end to the Soviet led by soldiers, workers, labourers. . .].[135] It is significant to note that in *Mort au premier tour,* Daeninckx specifically implicates *'les régiments bretons'* (*MPT*: p. 104) [the Breton regiments] as overthrowing the people-led revolution in Alsace. This is most obviously a critique of the militarisation of French regions but it also leads the reader to question whether regional movements in France have historically failed to work together in solidarity to achieve their similar goals.

The palimpsestic nature of this fictional documentary in *Mort au premier tour* is reinforced by Daeninckx's description of the cinematography of the closing scene where historical images are projected over the veteran soldier: *Des documents d'époque, affiches, tracts, photos, venaient s'imprimer sur les traits du vieux soldat révolté, comme les lambeaux d'un rêve au sortir du sommeil* (*MPT:* p. 104) [Documents, posters, leaflets, photos from the era were imprinted on the features of the old rebel soldier, like the shreds of a dream upon waking up].

Within the context of the film's history of the Strasbourg Soviet, another traumatic history is revealed: the expulsion of non-ethnic French. The documentary also highlights the expulsion of Germans or those Alsatians deemed not French, and therefore undesirable:

> *Dans les livres d'histoire, on vous dit que l'Alsace et la Lorraine ont été rattachées à la France dès novembre 18. Il n'y a rien de plus faux. Nous avons vécu sous le joug d'une administration militaire d'exception qui nous a fait payer l'affront fait à la cathédrale de Strasbourg. Il nous a fallu prouver notre appartenance au peuple français, devant des "Commissions de réintégration dans la nationalité française" présidées par des officiers du Deuxième bureau. Plus de cent cinquante mille d'entre nous, les plus remuants, ont été expulsés vers l'Allemagne. . . Quinze ans plus tard, ils ont été les premiers à peupler les camps de concentration nazis.* (*MPT*: p. 104)
>
> [History books tell us that Alsace and Lorraine were reintegrated into France on 18 November. This couldn't be farther from the truth. We lived under the burden of an exceptional military administration which made us pay for the attack on the cathedral of Strasbourg. We had to prove that we belonged to the French people, before the "commission of reintegration to French nationality" presided by officers from *Deuxième Bureau* (France's military intelligence agency). More than 150,000 of us, who stirred up the most

[135] In the essay Daeninckx cites the archives of Strasbourg's *Bibliothèque Nationale et Universitaire* (BNUS).

> trouble, were expelled to Germany. . . fifteen years later, they were the first to populate the Nazi concentration camps.]

The French established this special tribunal in Alsace-Lorraine to rid the reclaimed territory of any Germans and their descendants (McGillicuddy, 2011: 163). Amongst the displaced peoples of Alsace and Lorraine were political opponents of the French state, inevitably including the organisers and supporters of the Soviet revolt who Daeninckx refers to as '*les plus remuants'* [those who stirred up the most trouble], who no doubt would go on to be persecuted by the Nazis as Daeninckx suggests. However, Daeninckx's description is rather hyperbolic as the figure of 150,000 refers more broadly to the number of people expelled from the region, having been deemed not French, and not the number of people expelled for their political activities. The figure of 150,000 people forcefully expelled from Alsace-Lorraine is generally supported by the work of historians such as Laird Boswell who states that between 1918–1920 at least 110,000 German men, women, and children left Alsace and crossed the Rhine back to Germany, while approximately 100,000 from Lorraine met the same fate (2000: 141).

This practice of forced migration based on perceived ethnicity was a precursor to the crimes committed by the Nazi regime two decades later. By evoking World War II in this way, Daeninckx adds another layer of history and this once again evokes Rothberg's notion of multidirectional memory. There is a notable evolution in Daeninckx's layering of histories throughout the Inspecteur Cadin series, as his evocation of multidirectional memories in *Mort au premier tour* (1997) is more effective than *Le Géant inachevé* in particular, which at times appears overly dense and crowded.

5.6 Confronting Unseen Crimes

Suicide is a recurring theme throughout *Mort au premier tour*, giving the reader the impression that something must be seriously wrong with French society. In the first chapter, Inspecteur Cadin interviews a train driver in relation to the death of person who committed suicide by jumping in front of the train. The train driver nonchalantly claims that it is a very frequent occurrence: '*Deux ou trois par semaine'* (*MPT*: p. 15) [Two or three a week. . .]. Elsewhere, Cadin's colleagues are forced to break into the house of a man who has not been seen by his neighbours for days only to discover that he has committed suicide. However, the description of the man's apartment lends a black humour to the text:

> *Quand les pompiers ont défoncé la porte, l'appartement était rempli d'oiseaux. Des tourterelles, des pigeons, des perruches, des fauvettes, des pinsons, un toucan. . . Une vraie volière ! Le gars était au milieu de la pièce principale, pendu au lustre, et ses épaules servaient de perchoir aux volatiles. . . On ne sait toujours pas pourquoi il a ouvert les cages avant de se suicider. . .* (*MPT*: p. 40)
>
> [When the firefighters broke down the door, the apartment was full of birds. Doves, pigeons, parakeets, warblers, finches, a toucan . . . A real cuckoo house! The guy was in the middle of the main room, hanging from the chandelier, and his shoulders served as a perch for the birds . . . We still don't know why he opened the cages before committing suicide . . .]

Birdcages are symbolic of the loss of freedom, and the image of the cages being opened suggests the man sought to attain a sense of liberty before committing suicide, which mirrors Cadin's own actions in *Le Facteur fatal.* However, the chaos ensuing from the birds' newfound freedom lends to the absurdity and dark humour of the image of the man's suicide. Cadin also reads a *fait divers* in the local newspaper, *Dernières Nouvelles d'Alsace,* about how one of the last surviving eunuchs of the former emperor of China committed suicide '*après qu'on lui eut dérobé l'écrin dans lequel était conservé « son trésor », les organes génitaux sans lesquels il ne pourrait vivre une éternité d'homme*' (*MPT*: p. 191) [after being robbed of the box in which his "treasure" was kept, the genitals without which he could not live in eternity as a man].

Despite the emphasis on suicide, an apparent death-by-suicide in the novel turns out to be a murder. In the early stages of Cadin's investigation into the murder of Alain Dienta, Cadin learns that Dienta was briefly part of a group of squatting hippies led by Boris Undermatt. In the final stages of the novel, Cadin proves his hypothesis that Undermatt was murdered, and that his death was framed to appear as a suicide. Undermatt had attempted to blackmail the outgoing mayor, Émile Loos, as the hippie had learned about the local politician's vice of paedophilia. To keep his crimes hidden, Loos gives Undermatt an overdose and arranges his body to make it appear as a suicide.

While the crimes of paedophilia are only revealed in a very hurried manner in the final ten pages of the novel, Daeninckx prepares the reader by referencing crimes against children throughout the novel. For example, in chapter seven Cadin reads a *fait divers* describing the brutal murder of a toddler by another child: '*À Bescherwiller, la gendarmerie venait*

d'arrêter un gamin de sept ans qui avait battu à coups de pied, de poing puis à l'aide d'un bâton, un nourrisson de vingt-quatre mois afin de lui voler son tricycle électrique' (*MPT*: p. 75) [Gendarmerie in Bescherwiller arrested a seven-year old boy who had beaten with a baton and kicked to death a two year old infant before stealing his electric tricycle].[136]

The text also alludes to the abuse of intellectually challenged children in the care of religious institutions. Cadin is hoodwinked by his colleague Inspecteur Gossen into doing an unofficial favour for a cousin of Commissaire Brück:

> *'Cette cousine est pour quelque chose dans la gestion de cet établissement. . . La Croix du Bon Pasteur. . . Les sœurs transfèrent un lot de caractérielles vers un autre de leurs centres, et elles craignent que certains éducateurs s'y opposent*'. (*MPT*: p. 143)
>
> [This cousin does something in the administration of this institution. . . The Cross of the Good Shepherd. . . the nuns are transferring a bunch of disturbed children to another one of their centres and they think that some of the educators are against this.]

In a striking scene, one of the young girls throws herself onto the ground kicking and screaming and refuses to board the bus transporting them to the next institution. The incident clearly echoes the victims of the Holocaust who were forcefully transported to internment and concentration camps, as well as the Algerians in Paris in October 1961 who were similarly rounded-up and forced onto buses. Cadin chooses, on principle, not to intervene and voices his disapproval directly to his colleague: *'On n'est pas venus là pour ça. . . Je ne suis pas d'accord avec ces méthodes. Je ne vois pas ce que l'on a à faire ici. . . [. . .] Si au moins on savait pourquoi ils les envoient autre part. . . '* (*MPT*: p. 145) [We didn't come here for this. . . I don't agree with these methods. I don't see what we are supposed to be doing here. . . [. . .] If we at least knew why they were being sent somewhere else. . .].

The events at *La Croix du Bon Pasteur* (an imposition of force by the powerful on the powerless) foreshadow the attack on the novel's second victim, Marie Rosch, '*Une pauvre môme d'origine hongroise dont les parents ont échoué dans le bidonville de la rue du Heyritz*' (*MPT*: p. 200) [A poor kid of Hungarian origins whose parents ended up in the

[136] This is vaguely similar to the murder of James Bulger in Liverpool in 1993 by two ten-year-old boys; Robert Thompson and Jon Venables. However, Daeninckx's fiction is dissimilar enough; only those already aware of the case could make a possible connection so that the allusion does not become distasteful. This is typical of Daeninckx's approach to writing and also his awareness of the privacy of victims.

shanty town on rue du Heyritz], who was sexually abused by Émile Loos and his nephew Gérard Regain. As previously mentioned, it is ultimately revealed that Alain Dienta was murdered by Loos, not because of any political rivalry but to hide the mayor's vice of paedophilia, as Loos was under the false impression that Dienta was aware of his sexual crimes against children.

Donald Reid (2010) correctly argues that Daeninckx's obsession with memory is premised on the idea that there is a past hidden by those in power—and that they seek to keep it hidden. The element of paedophilia is not present in the *Le Masque* version of *Mort au premier tour,* as the 1977 text is solely a leftist critique of capitalism and power dynamics in the workplace. By contrast, the 1997 text focuses on how the State gains power by controlling the narrative of several given histories while also underlining how those in power (in this case wealthy politicians or industrialists) can hide their crimes.

In contrast to the recurring crimes of State corruption and police violence in the series, paedophilia and domestic abuse only feature in *Mort au premier* and *Le Facteur fatal*. The 1997 edition of *Mort au premier tour* and *Le Facteur fatal* were written with the similar purpose of completing Cadin's arc: '*pour boucler le cycle de Cadin*' (Daeninckx and Maricourt, 2009: 72) [to close the Cadin series].

The recurring references to suicide in *Mort au premier tour* highlighted in this chapter are mirrored in Le *Facteur fatal* where Cadin ends his own life. The disparate nature of the hidden histories, the inclusion of the crimes of paedophilia and domestic abuse as well as the incorporation of art and artists in *Mort au premier tour* chimes with the fragmented style of *Le Facteur fatal,* which also covers a broad range of topics that interest Daeninckx. The short stories collected in *Le Facteur fatal*, to which we will now turn, document the Inspecteur's journey from city to city, and centre on his investigations between the events of the novels in the series, until he inevitably leaves the police force.

Chapter Six: *Le Facteur fatal*

The final text in the chronology of the Inspecteur Cadin series marks a significant change in form as *Le Facteur fatal* is a collection of six short stories.[137] The collection is very fragmented in style as Daeninckx uses the short stories to flesh out Inspecteur Cadin's career and to put an end to his fictional character. Each story is introduced with the year and location under the story title. The change of genre from novel to short story is significant as it appears symbolic of a return to the roots of crime fiction in the short story championed by Poe and then Conan Doyle. *Le Facteur fatal* is the first text Daeninckx wrote as a collection of short stories. He has since greatly favoured this form throughout his career with his oeuvre, including sixteen collections to date.[138]

This chapter firstly examines how *Le Facteur fatal* interacts with the other texts in the series. I am inspired here by the approach of Dervila Cooke who shows that Patrick Modiano's works often contain subtle echoes and fore-shadowing of events (2005). Cooke highlights how readers who are familiar with Modiano's oeuvre can recognise such intertextual echoes. For example, *La Ronde de nuit* (1969) frequently references the geographical "*place de l'étoile*" evoking Modiano's novel of the same name (2005: 27). In a similar manner, readers familiar with the Inspecteur Cadin texts can recognise echoes of the novels in *Le Facteur fatal*. As with Modiano's work, there is a significant emphasis on self-referentiality in Cadin's short stories, as they are made to deliberately resonate with each of their corresponding novels. For example, Cadin refers to the "Jane Doe" murder victim in the short story "*Le Facteur fatal*" as *la géante* [the giant] because of her huge stature, which directly references the title of *Le Géant inachevé*.

Le Facteur fatal returns to a variety of themes that link to issues previously explored in the series. One example is the recurring theme of paperwork in this collection of short stories, which links to *Meurtres pour mémoire*'s portrayal of the archive. In *Le Facteur fatal*,

[137] Here are the names of the stories in the collection, which are listed with the year and location: ''*Croix de bois, croix de fer…*'' [Wooden cross, iron cross…] Strasbourg 1977; ''*Le Facteur fatal*'' [The Fatal factor] Hazebrouck 1980; ''*Voie de garage*'' [Road to nowhere] Courvilliers 1982; ''*Exécution sommaire*'' [Summary execution] Toulouse 1983; ''*Un privé à la dérive*'' [A private detective adrift] Toulon 1986; ''*Souvenir à la fenêtre*'' [A window into the past] Roissy 1987; ''*Épilogue albertivilliarien*'' [Aubervilliers Epilogue] Aubervilliers 1989.

[138] *Non-lieux* [Dismissed cases] (1989) was Daeninckx's first book of short stories. While not conceived as a collection, it brought together thirty texts published in various magazines during the preceding decade.

Daeninckx uses the image of the monotony of paperwork to punctuate Cadin's frustrations with his work as an Inspecteur, and this theme is also central in terms of plot to several of the stories. For example, a paper trail is central to the plot of both "*Le Facteur fatal*" and "*Exécution sommaire*". I also examine how paper and file-keeping were central to Daeninckx's earliest concepts of Cadin.

Here again, Cadin comes in contact with the legacies of French colonialism in *Le Facteur fatal*. "*Exécution sommaire*" most notably highlights the importance of *le devoir de mémoire* [the duty of memory] and the violent consequences of the suppression of traumatic memories.[139] This short story is particularly noteworthy as it includes the experiences of the *pieds-noirs* (this French term is used to describe colonial settlers of European descent in North Africa), which were not previously explored in the series.

Importantly, *Le Facteur fatal* extends the suppression of traumatic memories to Cadin. It is the first text to offer insight into the Inspecteur's private history. Cadin's painful memories of his past are used to contextualise his gradual downfall and eventual suicide. The collection also effectively introduces new imagery to the Cadin series such as the symbolism of the car, which is used in terms of both plot and imagery in several short stories, in order to capture the regression into despondency of Cadin. I also examine the symbolism Daeninckx attaches to Cadin's suicide and the effects this has on the series as a whole.

6.1 Intratextual Echoes and Returning Themes

The first story in the collection, "*Croix de bois, croix de fer . . .*" [Wooden cross, iron cross . . .], takes place in Strasbourg in 1977 in tandem with the events of *Mort au premier tour*. It is significant to note that Daeninckx's references to his first novel are vague enough that they do not conflict with his rewriting of *Mort au premier tour* seven years later:

> *Il fit apparaître sur le papier les grandes lignes du rapport de synthèse sur le meurtre d'Alain Dienta, un militant écologiste dont on avait retrouvé le corps,*

[139] *Devoir de mémoire* became a commonly used phrase in French political discourse in the 1990s following a dramatic shift in the national remembrance of World War II and particularly the Holocaust. This phrase was used to argue that the State was obliged 'to commemorate the memory of the victims for which France was acknowledging its responsibility (Jewish deportees during the Vichy Regime), and the recognition of a community (the Jewish one) victim of genocide' (Ledoux, 2013: 239). However, the phrase and sentiment were quickly adopted and used by other groups such as those seeking similar recognition for the Atlantic slave trade, and the phrase is no longer solely associated with the Holocaust (Ledoux, 2013).

> *le soir du premier tour des municipales, dans la pelle d'un bulldozer du chantier de la centrale nucléaire de Marcheim.* (*FF*: p. 19)
>
> [It showed on paper, the outline of a summary report on the murder of Alain Dienta, a militant ecologist whose body was found the night of municipal elections, in the shovel of a bulldozer on the grounds of Marcheim nuclear power station].

It is worth highlighting that the title of the short story is multidirectional in nature, encouraging the reader, again, to reflect on many different layers of history. *"Croix de bois*" is a term from World War I referring to makeshift wooden crosses used in the trenches to mark the corpses of soldiers.[140] *Croix de fer* refers to the German military award of the Iron Cross, which dates back as far as the Kingdom of Prussia. However, this award was also later used in the military regimes of the German Empire and Nazi Germany.

There are several elements of "*Croix de bois, croix de fer . . ."* that resonate with *Mort au premier tour*. For example, the short story shares the theme of State surveillance with Daeninckx's novel. Dalbois, Cadin's friendly rival during his time in the police academy, makes a surprise visit to Strasbourg and shocks Cadin when he announces that he now works in *Renseignements Généraux*, the intelligence service for French police. Throughout the series, Daeninckx contrasts Dalbois with Cadin.[141] In his brief appearance in "Croix de bois, croix de fer . . .", Daeninckx uses Dalbois to highlight how people generally become part of the power system (which is sometimes corrupt) when they enter the police force. This resonates with comments from our interview that Daeninckx made on his initial motivations for writing about police corruption and wanting to examine whether a person with a strong moral compass can positively influence the broken police system:*'qu'est-ce qu'il va devenir quand il va passer dans la machine à laver d'un commissariat?*' (Daeninckx and Gleeson, 2017) [what will become of him when he passes through the brainwashing machine of a police station?]. Cadin reminds Dalbois about how vehemently opposed to State surveillance he was while studying:

> *Les r.g. ! Tu es aux r.g. ! Je me souviens de tes théories, à la fac . . . Tu étais le premier à gueuler contre les tentatives de fichage, je me rappelle même que tu avais refusé de donner ton numéro de Sécurité sociale, pendant presque un*

[140] *Les Croix de bois* (1919) was also the title of a novel by Roland Dorgelès, which was inspired by the author's experience of fighting in World War I.

[141] The similarities between Dalbois and Cadin are discussed in Chapter Five: *Mort au premier tour*.

> *an, parce que tu considérais que c'était une atteinte à la vie privée . . .* (*FF*: p. 17)
>
> [The R.G.! You're in the R.G.! I remember the theories you had when we were at university. . . you were the first to speak out against the creation of government databases, I even remember that for almost a year you refused to give your social security number because you considered it an invasion of your privacy . . .]

Dalbois deflects by saying that Cadin is overestimating the power of the *Renseignements Généraux.* He claims that their department is completely dysfunctional because *'Dès qu'un ministre est nommé, sa première préoccupation est de faire nettoyer sa fiche et celles de ses amis, des types qui ont financé sa campagne . . .'* (*FF*: p. 17) [As soon as a Minister is appointed, their first concern is to clean their records and their friends' records, the people who financed their campaign . . .]. This clearly aligns with the series' critique of political corruption.

The opening scenes of "*Croix de bois, croix de fer . . .*" also mirrors the beginning of *Mort au premier tour*. As Cadin enters *La Nuée-Bleue* police station, he notices a young teenage girl *'assise sur le fameux banc que ses collègues appelaient le banc des divorces depuis qu'ils avaient pris l'habitude d'y faire patienter les couples déchirés, les familles au bord de la guerre civile . . .'* (*FF*: p. 11) [sitting on the famous bench that his colleagues called the divorce bench, as they often made drunken couples or families on the brink of civil war wait there . . .]. This bench is referenced in the opening scene of *Mort au premier tour* where it is occupied by a woman who is a survivor of domestic abuse. The young girl, Michèle Schneebele, sitting on the same bench in "*Croix de bois, croix de fer . . ."* is the victim at the centre of the short story. Michèle alleges that a drunken Portuguese immigrant attempted to sexually assault her (this drunkard foreshadows the type of *pochard* [wino] that Cadin becomes in the final two texts of *Le Facteur fatal*). However, upon his return to Strasbourg years later, Cadin learns that two of Michèle's comrades went to the Police later to say that they all invented the story for fun. As a result, the Portuguese man is released and disappears. Upon hearing this news Michèle has a mental breakdown and is committed to a psychiatric hospital. The story's ending is ambiguous, as Cadin never learns what really happened between Michèle and the Portuguese man, and nor does the reader. Michèle

strongly mirrors the child victim in *Mort au premier tour,* the sexually abused Marie Rosch, whose whereabouts and welfare are similarly unresolved.

The fortune of sexual abuse survivors and perpetrators is deliberately vague in the Cadin series as it is reflective of how most such crimes are not reported to the police and consequently the vast majority of perpetrators are never convicted.[142] This technique of deliberately omitting details, and intentionally introducing uncertainty, is frequently used by Daeninckx to draw the reader's attention to issues he considers important and worthy of further examination.

Daeninckx primes the reader for the theme of ambiguity through his inclusion of a *fait divers,* which is a typical element to any Inspecteur Cadin narrative. "*Croix de bois, croix de fer . . .*" contains a *fait divers*, "*L'omelette qui tue*" (*FF*: p. 15) [The killer omelette], describing the death of a stowaway, after an articulated lorry carrying 25 tonnes of eggs crashed. The anonymous article, which Cadin saves as a clipping, is equivocal and the reader does not know if the driver was engaging in human trafficking:

> '*L'enquête devra déterminer s'il s'agissait d'un passager clandestin ayant profité d'une minute d'inattention du personnel lors du chargement du camion, ou alors d'une personne voyageant discrètement, en accord avec le chauffeur'.* (*FF*: p. 15)
>
> [The investigation should determine whether the stowaway simply took advantage of the driver's momentary lack of attention to climb aboard the truck or if he was discreetly travelling with the lorry driver's explicit knowledge.]

By attaching so much uncertainty to his description of human trafficking, Daeninckx is subtly suggesting to the reader that, in a similar way to sexual assault, many of these crimes are hidden and that the victims are invisible.

In the same way that the child victim at the centre of "*Croix de bois, croix de fer . . .*" resonates with the sexually abused Marie Rosch in *Mort au premier tour,* the victim in the short story "*Le Facteur fatal*" echoes elements of *Le Géant inachevé*. When Cadin first discovers the body of the murdered woman in *Le Facteur fatal,* he is shocked by her size and

[142] For example, according to the US based organisation, RAINN (Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network) fewer than five perpetrators in 1000 are ever incarcerated in jail or prison for sexual assault (RAINN, 2020: Online).

describes her as being gigantesque in stature: *'Il fut tout de suite frappé par la taille de la femme. Une géante'* (*FF*: p. 41) [He was immediately struck by the size of the woman. A giant]. Cadin frequently refers to the victim as '*la géante'* [the giant] throughout the story even though he eventually learns her identity to be Marianne Lesdin (*FF*: pp. 51-53, 65).

As noted in the chapter on *Le Géant inachevé*, the main character, Laurence, is also a victim of the misogyny present in French society. Before her murder she is more or less stalked by the mentally ill Guy Mallet who appears to be obsessed with her. Similarly, Monique Werbel in *Le Bourreau et son double* is equally subjected to misogyny, as prior to her death intimate photographs of her are doctored to intimidate her and her husband. The gigantic Marianne Lesdin in "*Le Facteur fatal*" is representative of the series' underlying theme of misogyny. Given the nationalistic connotations of the victim's first name (Marianne, the name borne by the personification of the French Republic), as well as the reference to her enormous size, Daeninckx subtly suggests that misogyny is not only a countrywide issue but particularly prevalent in France and even on a gigantic level.

The short story "*Voie de garage*" [Road to nowhere] references violent clashes between the police, trade union activists and the Hotch factory's private militia, which chimes with the key events in *Le Bourreau et son double*.[143] In this way, by including plot elements in his short stories that resonate with their respective novels, Daeninckx rewards the reader who is very familiar with Inspecteur Cadin's career.[144] However, these references also serve to reinforce the short story's central motif of the car. The plot centres on Inspecteur Cadin's investigation of a young woman killed in a "hit-and-run". When Cadin apprehends the perpetrators, it is revealed that they buried the car in the ground of their garage, in an attempt to hide the crime. This seemingly unrealistic plot evokes the memory of the Nazi occupation for readers with an interest in the history of the automobile. The image of the buried car in "*Voie de garage*" resonates with the efforts of French car manufacturer Citroën to resist the German occupation by hiding the design of their iconic 2CV models, which were technologically advanced and likely to be militarised by the Nazis. The car was initially scheduled to debut at the 1939 Paris auto show, but this was cancelled with the

[143] It is worth noting that Cadin's personal decline to a dead end is hinted at in the title of "*Voie de garage*" [Road to nowhere].

[144] It is worth noting that while some of these intertextual references will be meaningless to readers less familiar with the series, the collection of short stories still works well as a standalone text.

declaration of war (Calder, 2017: 17). Citroën delayed production and prototypes were either destroyed, buried, or hidden. The first surviving prototype was discovered in 1968 at the Citroën test centre at La Ferté-Vidame, where it was found disassembled and hidden in crates, the second car was discovered during the 1980s at the Michelin factory in Clermont-Ferrand where it had been disguised and repurposed as a pickup truck, and in 1994 three more prototypes were found in the attic of a barn on the grounds of La Ferté-Vidame buried behind bales of hay (Hudry, 2019: Online). This reference to World War II depends, however, on readers having an intimate knowledge of Citroën during the war.

6.2 Paperwork

The titular short story of the collection, "*Le Facteur fatal*" [The Fatal factor], continues the series' recurring themes of newspapers, paperwork, and records. Indeed, the title could also be interpreted as a pun, alluding to these themes as *facteur* is also the French word for postman. In the story, the main leads for Cadin's investigation are love letters between the murder victim, Marianne Lesdin, and the dozens of people who replied to the lonely hearts notices she placed in newspapers: *'Il en compta soixante-douze et parvint à relever les adresses personnelles de soixante-cinq d'entre eux*' (*FF*: p. 58) [He counted seventy-two and managed to find the personal addresses of sixty-five of them]. Six of these letters are reproduced in full within the body of the short story. This is typical of Daeninckx's desire to play with form, previously visible—though to a lesser extent—in *Meurtres pour mémoire*. In the 1984 text, when Cadin receives a letter from Dalbois its form is recreated in the novel (*MM*, p. 148). Similarly, the layout of archival documents is replicated within the body of the text (*MM*, pp. 179, 187). This is most probably linked to his experience of working as a printer. As discussed earlier, Daeninckx also experiments with style in *Le Bourreau et son double* which incorporated poetry and which even bears the expression "*le Facteur fatal*" in one of the poems (*BD*: pp. 45-46). This is typical of the intratextual references in this short story collection.

It is worth noting that paperwork is also to the fore in the very brief short story "*Main courante*", from the collection of the same name (1994: 180-187). This is the only short story outside of *Le Facteur fatal* to feature Inspecteur Cadin. It centres on his last few years in the police force where he has been relegated to '*service de la main courante*' (Daeninckx, 1994: 182) [the register of complaints service]. There, Daeninckx reinforces the theme of

paperwork by describing and reproducing the form in which incidents are logged within the text itself:

> *'Dix lignes maximum pour traiter chaque sujet, séparé par un double trait de stylo du sujet suivant dont le numéro était écrit en rouge dans la marge. La main habituelle, crispée sur le bâtonnet de plastique orange, alignait les signes avec soin.*
>
> . . . . . .'
> (Daeninckx, 1994: 182)
>
> [A maximum of ten lines to discuss each subject, separated by a double line from the next subject, its number was written in red in the margin. The regular hand, clenching the orange plastic stick, carefully aligned the signs.
>
> . . . . .]

The themes of paperwork, record keeping, and bureaucracy central to the series of novels were also vital to Daeninckx's initial inception of Inspecteur Cadin in comic strips, alluded to in Chapter Five. As mentioned, he wrote these in collaboration with the illustrator Jean-Pierre Coureuil, for the *Hara-Kiri* magazine. The comic strips have a playfully postmodern style. For example, one strip describes how the vanishing of Cadin's dossier from the archive leads to the character's mysterious assassination, as if the disappearance of the Inspecteur's file leads inevitably to his physical disappearance (Coureuil and Daeninckx, 1973: 16-19). For the most part this postmodern aesthetic was not carried over in the Inspecteur Cadin series of books. However, there appears to be some echoing of this playful disappearance of Cadin in the final story of *Le Facteur fatal,* "*Souvenir à la fenêtre",* as the Inspecteur gradually fades from the text as the story is not told from his perspective.[145] While the character Daeninckx created in *Hara-Kiri* has little in common with the literary detective from his *Série noire* novels, both creations share similar points of reference within their own texts. For example, in *Hara-Kiri* some strips are overtly critical of the *Renseignements Généraux* while others include intertextual allusions, such as a parody of Jacques Prévert's poem "Barbara" (1946) (Coureuil and Daeninckx, 1973).

[145] "*Souvenir à la fenêtre"* is discussed in depth in the "A Window into the Past" section of this chapter.

6.3 Colonial Legacies

A paper trail is the biggest lead in Cadin's investigation in "*Exécution sommaire*" [Summary Execution] which is set in Toulouse in 1983 and precedes the events of *Meurtres pour mémoire*. Like "*Le Facteur Fatal*" and "*Voie de Garage*", "*Exécution sommaire*" shares the theme of its corresponding novel (*Meurtres pour mémoire*), as the text describes how a powerful French civil servant is haunted by crimes they committed during the Algerian War. On first reading, the short story appears to be a simple reissuing of the themes discussed by Daeninckx in *Meurtres pour mémoire*. However, "*Exécution sommaire*" addresses one of the notable gaps in *Meurtres pour mémoire* by incorporating the identity of the *pieds-noirs* who were largely absent in that novel's remembrance of the Algerian War. Many of the *pieds-noirs* were forced to leave North Africa and move to France when the colonies gained independence. Similar to the experiences of the French conscripts unearthed in *Le Bourreau et son double*, *Le Facteur fatal* recovers the *pieds-noirs'* memories of the Algerian War. Indeed, like the French conscripts' experience of the Algerian War, for years the *pieds-noirs* unique memories of the conflict received little attention in works of fiction. Just as Daeninckx recovers the lost memories of French conscripts in *Le Bourreau et son double,* he unearths the forgotten *pieds-noirs* of the Algerian War. The fact that Daeninckx has included their history in one of the later Cadin texts is perhaps indicative of the shift of French attention, given them greater inclusion in the historical memory of the Algerian War, as a generation of *pieds-noirs* began to express their own voices in the late 1980s.[146]

The murder victim in "*Exécution sommaire",* Jacques Loubry, is a civil servant and a *pied-noir* who fled Algeria before the colony gained its independence from France. The description of Loubry's corpse as Cadin arrives on the murder scene reinforces the recurring theme of bureaucracy and primes the reader for the importance of a paper trail to the plot:

> *Le type était allongé en travers de la pièce, une jambe repliée sur le pied d'un tabouret renversé et des dizaines de dossiers étaient éparpillés autour de son corps. Un mouchoir lui recouvrait le visage. Son assassin lui avait enfoncé dans la gorge, sous la pomme d'Adam, un coupe-papier dont on ne voyait que*

[146] For example, *pieds-noirs* autobiographical texts became particularly numerous from late 1970s and throughout the 1980s, such as Jeanne Cheula's *Hier est proche d'aujourd'hui* (1979) and Marie Cardinal's *Au pays de mes racines* (1980). For a comprehensive examination of this genre see "The Wounds of Algeria in Pied-Noir Autobiography" (Hubbell, 2007).

> *l'extrémité, une boucle d'argent grosse comme une pièce de cinq francs, frappée aux armoiries de la ville.* (*FF*: p .106)
>
> [The guy was lying across the room, one leg bent over the foot of an overturned stool with dozens of files scattered around his body. A handkerchief covered his face. The murderer had cut his throat, just below the Adam's apple, using a paper cutter. The only visible bit of the silver letter opener was the very end which was as big as a five-franc coin and was engraved with the city's coat of arms.]

In contrast to Bernard and Roger Thiraud in *Meurtres pour mémoire*, as well as the hundreds of peacefully protesting Algerians killed, the central victim in "*Exécution sommaire*" is not completely innocent. This chimes with Daeninckx's tendency to favour complex characters and situations that are not black and white. The summary execution referenced in the title of the short story refers to the murder of an Algerian by Jacques Loubry. The initial suspect accused of Loubry's murder is Medhi Haroui, an Algerian who had sent threatening letters to Loubry: '*Je n'ai rien oublié de ce que tu m'as fait, à moi et aux miens. Tu le paieras, d'une manière ou d'une autre, dans ta chair ou dans ton esprit'* (*FF*: p. 114) [I haven't forgotten anything about what you did to me, to me and my people. You will pay for it, one way or another, with your body or soul]. While being interviewed by Cadin and his colleagues, Haroui explains that Loubry's family were wealthy *pieds-noirs*:

> *À Menchem, dans la Mitidja . . . C'est là que je suis né. À l'époque le village s'appelait Maison-Dieu et tout appartenait à la famille Loubry, les bêtes, les maisons, les vignes, les champs. On habitait à côté de l'église. Tout le monde à la maison travaillait pour les Loubry, mon père, ma mère, mon frère et mes sœurs . . .* (*FF*: p. 121)
>
> [At Menchem, in Mitidja . . . That's where I was born. At that time the village was called Maison-Dieu and everything belonged to the Loubry Family, the animals, the houses, the vines, the fields. We lived beside the church. Everyone at home worked for the Loubry family, my father, my mother, my brother, my sisters . . .]

The threatening letters were sent to remind Loubry about the evening he executed Haroui's brother, Mohand, without the slightest hesitation, as he believed the Algerian had assaulted one of the French settler women.[147] Haroui's description of his brother's murder clearly highlights how some of the French settlers viewed the Algerians as sub-human: '*La décharge*

[147] The name Mohand could also be another intertextual echo, as it is also the name of the central character in Daeninckx's graphic novel *Octobre noire*.

a atteint mon frère dans le dos, à hauteur des reins. Il est mort une heure plus tard, comme un chien, sur la place du village, sans soins . . .' (*FF*: p. 122) [The gunshot struck my brother in the back, around his middle or lower back. He died an hour later, like a dog, on the village square, without any treatment . . .]

However, Haroui's letters are used as a red herring by the real killer, Phillipe Graco, who killed Loubry in a furious argument stemming from his affair with Loubry's wife.

The police interview with Haroui is also significant. Daeninckx uses it to evoke the memory of several different histories of French colonial violence and police violence. When Cadin naively asks if there was an investigation into Mohand's killing, Haroui says that there was obviously never going to be any investigation '*Les colons avaient pratiquement le droit de vie et de mort sur les fellahs, la police c'était leur police, la justice, c'était leur justice . . .*' (*FF*: p. 127) [The settlers practically had the right of life or death over the Arabs, the police were *their* police, the justice was *their* justice . . .]. Haroui then directly compares the killing of his brother and subsequent cover-up to the 14 July 1954 police massacre of Algerians in Paris:

> *Mohand est mort à Menchem le 14 juillet 1954, en milieu d'après-midi, et au même moment, place de la Nation à Paris, la police tirait sur une manifestation algérienne, tuant sept de mes compatriotes . . . Là non plus il n'y a pas eu d'enquête, ils sont passés à la trappe et personne n'a retenu leurs noms . . .* (*FF*: p. 127)
>
> [Mohand died in Menchem on the 14 July 1954, in the middle of the afternoon, while at the same moment at the Place de la Nation in Paris, the police fired upon an Algerian protest, killing seven of my compatriots . . . there wasn't any investigation there either, they disappeared and no one remembered their names . . .]

This historical allusion is slightly inaccurate as the police massacre referenced actually took place on 14 July 1953. As was tradition at the time, the PCF and trade unions would hold a protest walk between Place de la République and Place de la Nation in Paris on 14 July, the Bastille day national holiday (Vergnol, 2017: Online). Several thousand members of the Algerian nationalist party, *Mouvement pour le triomphe des libertés démocratiques* [Movement for the Triumph of Democratic Liberties] participated in the protest in 1953

campaigning for Algerian independence and were fired upon by French police, resulting in the death of six Algerian workers and one French member of the CGT Trade Union.[148]

For once, Inspecteur Cadin appears to be unable to face the harsh reality of France's colonial past and appears at a loss at how to react to what Haroui is telling him:

> *Qu'est-ce que vous cherchez à prouver ? J'ignorais complètement ce qu'il s'était passé à Paris en 1954 . . . Ce n'est pas à moi qu'il faut dire tout ça : je ne suis qu'un simple inspecteur de police et je ne vais tout de même pas être comptable de toutes les saloperies commises depuis que les flics existent !* (*FF*: p. 128)
>
> [What is it you are trying to prove? I was completely unaware of what happened in Paris in 1954 . . . I'm not the person you need to tell this to, I'm only a simple Police Inspector and I'm not going to be held responsible for all the filthy tricks committed since cops existed!].

Haroui challenges Cadin for washing his hands of crimes committed by his predecessors by saying that '*Et pourquoi pas? Moi, je me sens responsable de l'histoire de mon peuple . . .*' (*FF*: p. 128) [And why not? Me, I feel responsible for the history of my people . . .]. This is perhaps one passage that accurately captures the series' raison d'être of making the reader aware of the responsibility of learning and remembering the past. Haroui specifically argues that remembering the past should be a key issue for later generations who are temporally removed from such histories. This still resonates with contemporary readers, as remembering the past remains a key issue in today's society with the return of populist leaders around the world who are eager to rewrite histories.[149] Haroui then reminds the Inspecteur, and the reader, of many more instances of French massacres against colonised peoples:

> *C'est facile de répondre qu'on ne savait pas . . . On efface les dates et les chiffres du tableau de chasse . . . Les 40 000 morts de Sétif le 8 mai 1945, les 100 000 de Madagascar en 47, ceux de mai 53 et de juillet 54 à Paris, les 300 cadavres d'Algériens du 17 octobre 1961, les dizaines de patriotes guillotinés à Barberousse et dans toutes les prisons d'Algérie ne vous empêchent pas de dormir* (*FF*: p. 128)

[148] For more on this massacre see Daniel Kupferstein's *Les Balles du 14 Juillet 1953* (2017) which includes a preface by Daeninckx.

[149] See Estera Flieger's newspaper article on the rise of the Law and Justice Party which is now the biggest political party in Poland and their attempts at rewriting the histories of World War II and the Cold War (2019: Online).

> [It's too easy to say we didn't know . . . you delete the dates and the figures on your list of conquests . . . the 40,000 dead at Sétif on the 8 May 1945, the 100,000 in Madagascar in '47, those in Paris in May '53 and in July '54, the 300 corpses of Algerians on 17 October 1961, the dozens of patriots guillotined at Barberousse and in all the other prisons in Algeria, all those dead don't stop you from sleeping].

This very long sentence is a dense but nonetheless very effective use of multidirectional memory by Daeninckx, as he effectively gestures to layers of history. It is also worth noting that, in contrast to the rest of the series, Cadin is not the person giving the moral history lecture and instead appears uncomfortable with confronting Haroui's history. This apparent regression of Cadin's moral compass, or his overwhelming feeling of helplessness, is perhaps an early indication of his gradual demise and suicide.

In contrast to other dense passages in the series, all the histories remembered in this section of *Le Facteur fatal* are so closely related and similar in nature that it is easy for the reader to follow the links. The massacre at the Algerian city of Sétif occurred on Victory in Europe Day when Nazi Germany unconditionally surrendered to the Allies of World War II. An Algerian uprising against the occupying French forces in Sétif and the nearby villages of Kherrata and Guelma resulted in the death of 102 *pieds-noirs* (including fourteen military personnel and two Italian prisoners) as well as 110 injured and the rape of ten European women (Pervillé, 2015: 33). This was brutally repressed by the French and the controversial official figure of 1,165 Algerians killed in retaliation has been considered by many historians to be significantly lower than the actual number of Algerians killed. Similar to Daeninckx's description of the massacre, Algerian nationalists have claimed that as many as 45,000 people were killed on the 8 May 1945. However, Annie Rey-Goldzeigeur argues that it is impossible to put an exact figure on the number of Algerian victims on that day, other than saying that there were thousands killed (2002: pp. 292-307). The 100,000 killed in Madagascar in 1947 is a reference to the Malagasy uprising that lasted for two years. In 1949 at the end of the conflict, the High Commissioner of Madagascar Pierre de Chevigné estimated the final death count of Madagascans to be in excess of 100,000 (Mas, 2005: Online). There appears to be one inaccuracy in Daeninckx's reference to two massacres in Paris in May 1953 and July 1954; however, he is clearly citing the previously discussed massacre of 14 July 1953.

The final war crimes referenced in the passage are the guillotining and summary execution of Algerian prisoners by the French army during the Algerian War.[150] Barberousse was just one of the many prisons built by the French during their colonisation of Algeria. It is worth noting that Barberousse is a particularly palimpsestic site of memory, as the French constructed the prison on the site of a former Turkish fortification. Upon independence, efforts were initially made by Algeria's first president, Ahmed Ben Bella, to transform the prison into a museum honouring the memory of the FLN. However, in 1965 it was reopened by Ben Bella's successor, Houari Boumédiène, as a prison under its new name Serkadji who used it to detain dissidents and political prisoners (Crawley Jackson, 2017: Online). However, a contemporary reader would also associate references to Barberousse/Serkadji prison with significant events subsequent to the publication of *Le Facteur fatal* in 1990 such as the prison mutiny in February 1995. Following the mutinous escape attempt, over one hundred prisoners were massacred by State forces (Garçon, 1998: Online). This highlights how the multidirectional elements of Daeninckx's texts often continue to resonate with events subsequent to the original context of their publication. This is testament to the valuable insight Daeninckx's texts offer contemporary readers, as they frequently demonstrate how past events continue to echo with current issues.

Uncomfortable with Haroui's re-telling of the realities of French Algeria, Cadin's colleague, Bourrassol throws himself across the room at the interviewee: *'Tu as beau jeu maintenant, mais à l'époque vous ne nous faisiez pas de cadeaux non plus, toi et tes petits copains . . . Je sais de quoi je parle : j'ai tiré vingt-huit mois dans les djebels . . .'* (*FF*: p. 127) [You play a good game now, but back then you weren't doing us any favours either, you and your little friends . . . I know what I'm talking about: I spent twenty-eight months in your mountains. . .]. Bourrassol's reaction is worthy of note as Daeninckx uses this character to recognise that many French soldiers were traumatised by their experiences of fighting in Algeria. Daeninckx is suggesting here that there may have been reprehensible actions by the Algerian rebels, but he does so without whitewashing the criminal actions of the French (military and colonial settlers) in Algeria.

[150] Henri Alleg's *La Question* (1958), which was clandestinely published during the Algerian war, describes the French army's methods of torture and the summary guillotining of Algerians. Alleg wrote the text in secret while held prisoner in Barberousse prison.

Daeninckx ends the short story with a final exchange between Cadin and Medhi Houri that reinforces the absence of French consciousness of its colonial past in 1990. The Inspecteur offers a meagre apology to the Algerian as he releases him from custody: *'Je suis désolé . . . Excusez-nous, on ne pouvait pas savoir . . . [. . .] –C'est tout ce que vous avez appris en trente ans . . . À dire pardon . . .* (*FF*: pp. 151-152) [I am sorry . . .excuse us, we couldn't have known . . . [. . .] That's all you have learnt in thirty years . . . to say sorry]. The Algerian clearly feels that Cadin's apology is void of any real manifestation of empathy. This is perhaps reflective of Daeninckx's opinion of President Jacques Chirac's 1995 State apology for France's role in the deportation of Jews to concentration camps. In a newspaper with *20 Minutes*, Daeninckx stated that the forty years it took the French state to apologise for its role in the Holocaust reveals that: '*les institutions ont du mal à traiter ces problems en temps réel, et l'art vient donc en franc-tireur avec les romans, les films, les chansons . . . '* (Bonnefous, 2006: Online) [institutions never deal with such issues in a timely manner and that art can dissent from this through fiction, films, songs . . .]. These comments by Daeninckx on the important role of fiction in remembering histories that have been neglected or forgotten by official institutions chime with Pine's assessment of the role of remembrance culture.[151] It is also important to note that Cadin's pitiful apology to the Algerian could also be an allusion to the fact that the French state has never apologised for any of its colonial abuses in Algeria. This appears unlikely to change in the near future as the French president in January 2021 ruled out issuing any such statement. Emmanuel Macron made this remark ahead of the publication of a report that he commissioned Benjamin Stora to carry out on the development of French remembrance of the colonisation of Algeria and the Algerian War. Macron stated that instead of an apology, France would take part in symbolic acts aimed at promoting reconciliation with the former colony (Mahe, 2021: Online).

As is perhaps clear by now, the chronology of the Cadin series is overly complicated, both as a whole and in *Le Facteur fatal*. The paperback omnibus edition of Inspecteur Cadin novels called *Mémoire noire* (2010b) and the paratext of *Mort au premier tour* (1997a) both present the texts in the following reading order: *Mort au premier tour, Le Géant inachevé,*

[151] It is worth noting that the public apology Irish Taoiseach Bertie Ahern made in 1999 to the children who had been abused while in the care of the State is central to Pine's analysis of cultural representations of institutional abuse in Ireland (2011: 18–27).

Meurtres pour mémoire, Le Bourreau et son double and *Le Facteur fatal*. However, according to the logic of Cadin's career as presented in *Le Facteur fatal* and in *Le Bourreau et son double, Meurtres pour mémoire* should be read as the final novel before *Le Facteur fatal.*

Equally, *Le Facteur fatal* raises more questions than it answers about the Inspecteur's movements between the suburbs of Paris and regional areas. The career of Cadin is thus convoluted and makes it difficult for the reader to follow. Indeed, while in general Daeninckx presents a plausible logic for the timeline of Cadin's career, there are some errors. For example, the title story of *Le Facteur fatal* is first described as taking place in Hazebrouck in 1980 but as part of the plot Cadin comes across letters that are dated 1982 and 1983. On the one hand, these inaccuracies could conceivably be a deliberate ploy by Daeninckx to make the series rather jarring for the readerly detective.[152] On the other hand, the inaccuracies of Cadin's timeline might more plausibly serve to note how the histories of crimes committed as part of French colonialism are often impossible to attain due to cover ups, misinformation, the sealing of archives and so on. Whatever the case, the muddled timeline of the Cadin series makes the Inspecteur appear to hover between the texts. This has the effect of stressing the links between texts and the histories they unearth. The muddled timeline is reinforced by the vagueness of Cadin whose physical stature is never described and whose first name is never revealed to the reader.

6.4 Cadin Comes to a Standstill

In the penultimate short story of the collection, "*Un privé a la dérive*" [A Private Detective Adrift], Cadin is no longer in the police and instead is working as a detective for a private investigation agency. From the first line of the short story, it is clear that he is only a shadow of his former self and that he is distracted from his work, '*Cadin ne parvenait pas à fixer son attention sur son travail'* (*FF*: p. 155) [Cadin couldn't manage to focus his attention on his work]. The main function of this story is to portray Cadin's downward spiral. His dependency on alcohol is frequently referred to throughout the short story: '*Il s'habilla, remplit en maîtrisant le tremblement de ses mains la flasque d'alcool qui, toute la journée, chauffait contre son cœur, et descendit l'escalier'* (*FF*: p. 156) [He got dressed, controlled the shakes in his hands enough to fill his hip flask, which for the whole day would rest against his heart,

[152] This could be used to form a thought-provoking question in any future correspondence with Daeninckx.

and went downstairs]. It is easy to have sympathy for Cadin, as he has had to fight so much corruption, on his own over the past twelve years.

In some ways, Cadin has become like Duyck, the private investigator in *Le Géant inachevé*, who after being forced to leave the police opened his own agency and initially specialised in '*les flagrants délits d'adultère*' (*GI*: p.100) [blatant adultery offences]. In "*Un privé à la dérive*", the duties Cadin perform have very little semblance to police work, and are similar to Duyck's initial ventures, as he is tasked with finding the missing wife of a wealthy bourgeois businessman. This is not a disappearance; foul play is not an issue. The wife appears to have simply decided to leave her husband. In the end, Cadin even fails to find the missing wife before she returns home of her own will. Cadin's role is completely futile in this story. Another striking similarity between "*Un privé à la dérive*" and *Le Géant inachevé*, is Cadin's use of a tape recorder. Cadin uses the tape recorder as a sort of audio diary to record his thoughts. Although the reader never knows what Cadin speaks into the microphone, there are several references in the story to Cadin recording '*sa cassette quotidienne*' (*FF*: p. 162) [his daily cassette tape]. A detective using a dictaphone is a rather common trope in the genre of crime fiction, especially in television series.[153]

In *Le Géant inachevé,* the mentally ill patient Guy Mallet uses a cassette player to record his confession and from the confines of his psychiatric cell he manages to commit suicide by electrocuting himself by putting the device in a sink of water. The reference to a tape recorder in "*Un privé a la dérive*" is therefore associated with suicide for the reader aware of the other work. Towards the end of the text, Cadin's car stereo is stolen while he interviews an acquaintance of the missing woman. The thieves also take his dictaphone, to which he has become notably attached: '*Au réveil, dans un réflexe professionnel qui le surprit lui-même, Cadin tendit la main vers le vide-poches, à la recherche du magnétophone dont, hélas, son voleur ne lui avait pas fait cadeau'* (*FF*: p. 166) [Upon awakening, in a professional reflex which surprised him, Cadin reached out to the storage compartment, looking for the tape recorder which, unfortunately, his thief had not been so kind to leave

[153] Notable examples are Agent Cooper in David Lynch's *Twin Peaks* who records investigative notes on a daily basis addressed to the mysterious Diane and the titular Columbo in the American television series also frequently uses a cassette.

him]. This scene reinforces Cadin's isolation as it appears to suggest that he has no one he can talk to.

Several times throughout this story, Cadin is frustrated by his inability to move freely through traffic now that he is no longer in the police: '*Il avait beau jouer du klaxon à deux tons et de l'appel de phares, l'aiguille du compte-tours déprimait dans le vert*' (*FF*: p. 100) [He was well used to using the two-tone siren and blue lights, and driving with the needle of the tachometer in the green]. His newfound immobility is later reinforced in the story, as Cadin interviews a potential witness he sees ten police cars rapidly arrive to the housing project with their sirens blaring: '*Soudain dix voitures s'arrêtèrent à l'entrée de la cité en faisant hurler leurs klaxons*' (*FF*: p. 100) [Suddenly ten cars stopped at the entrance of the housing project with their sirens blaring]. The theme of mobility at first seems insignificant; However, movement is central to the modern depiction of the figure of the detective, and Cadin himself has been a particularly mobile one, moving from region to region in pursuit of justice, as well as around the regions and towns where he is stationed. Detectives are portrayed as being constantly on the move, and Cadin is no exception. This makes Cadin's immobility significant and reflects his personal situation where his life appears to have come to a standstill. Indeed, the story ends with Cadin having an emotional breakdown in his car, which freewheels to a stop:

> *Cadin lâcha l'accélérateur. La Peugeot continua sur sa lancée et s'immobilisa, ruisselante, à deux doigts du fossé. Cadin posa ses bras sur le volant et se mit à pleurer, refusant de s'en avouer les raisons* (*FF*: p. 166)
>
> [Cadin took his foot off the accelerator. The dripping wet Peugeot continued its momentum and then stopped within a hair's breadth of the ditch. Cadin put his arms on the wheel and started to cry, refusing to admit the reasons.]

6.5 A Window into the Past

As Cadin gradually disappears from the text, the final story of the collection, "*Souvenir à la fenêtre",* is initially told from the perspective of Commissaire Londrin. In another intertextual nod, Londrin is one of the main characters in Daeninckx's novel *Lumière noire* (1987) in which Cadin makes a brief appearance.[154] In *Lumière noire,* when Londrin first

[154] The epigraph of the second edition of *Lumière noire* suggests that the last words of Victor Hugo was the inspiration for the novel's title: '*c'est le combat du jour et de la nuit… je vois de la lumière noire*' [It's the fight between day and night…I see black light]. This reinforces the influence of Hugo and other nineteenth century writers on Daeninckx.

encounters Cadin he fails to recognise the former Inspecteur. In "*Souvenir à la fenêtre*" Londrin again mistakes him for a random '*pochard*' (*FF*: p. 173) [wino]:

> *Le commissaire se retourna et dévisagea l'homme miné par l'alcool qui s'était installé près de lui. Il effaça mentalement la moustache mal taillée, la barbe, les poches sous les yeux, le rictus qui déformait la bouche [. . .] C'est pas vrai ! Vous n'allez pas me dire que vous êtes Cadin !* (*FF*: p. 173)[155]
>
> [The commissaire turned and looked hard at the man haggard by alcohol who was sitting near him. He mentally removed the poorly shaped moustached, the beard, the bags under his eyes, the grin that distorted his mouth [. . .] I can't believe it! You're not really Cadin, are you?]

In "*Souvenir à la fenêtre*" Daeninckx stresses fictional self-referentiality by including a short story penned by Cadin also called "Souvenir à la *fenêtre"*. This text-within-a-text reinforces Daeninckx's consistent evocation of palimpsestic imagery throughout the series. This also adds to the theme of circularity, bringing the reader back to the first three lines of *Mort au premier tour.* There, the novel, began with Cadin attempting and failing to pen his own story, which he finally manages to write here in the final story before his suicide. The second half of "*Souvenir à la fenêtre*" consists of Londrin (and the reader) reading the short story within a story. This turns out to be an autobiographical narrative written by Cadin but told from the perspective of his younger brother Jean-Michel. After giving the drunken Cadin a lift home, the Inspecteur insists that Londrin reads what he has written before later dramatically revealing that the tragic short story is about his own brother.

In *Daeninckx par Daeninckx*, Daeninckx suggests that Inspecteur Cadin is someone who cannot let go of the past, as his memories are too burdensome (2009: 77). While this appears to be true to the reader, the Inspecteur's memories are only ever vaguely referenced throughout the rest of the series. When the source of Cadin's personal traumas is finally revealed in "*Souvenir à la fenêtre*", it is very abrupt, as none of the preceding texts in the series make any references to him having siblings, a dead sister, or dysfunctional parents. It is worth noting that this is very much a personal outpouring of Cadin's grief, and he is very insistent that Londrin reads his story. It is also significant that Cadin chooses to write about himself through the prism of his brother; the short story could have been told

[155] In *Lumière noire*, Cadin has already left the police and appears worse for wear to Londrin. But he is not completely dysfunctional as Cadin manages to put Londrin in contact with Dalbois in order to help his investigation (1987: 143–152).

from his personal point of view but Cadin deliberately excludes himself from the autobiographical text. This perhaps explains why the Inspecteur continually seeks escape in other people's traumas and has dedicated his life to remedying other peoples' situations (now seeking escape in alcohol), having never come to terms with his personal trauma.

As noted in Chapter Two on *Meurtres pour mémoire*, father-son relationships are a recurring feature in Daeninckx's oeuvre. This theme is also central to "*Souvenir à la fenêtre*". Following the death of his sister, Jean-Michel was continually abused by his parents. His father, who had served in the French army in Indochina and Algeria (*FF*: p. 193), used to waterboard him as a child: '*Et sa poigne sur la nuque de Jean-Michel, le forçant à plonger la tête dans l'eau*' (*FF*: p. 187) [Gripping Jean-Michel's neck he forced him to plunge his head into the water]. Cadin's father is clearly another one of Daeninckx's characters, who captures a generation of French men who were traumatised as conscripts. Importantly, the short story written by Cadin depicts the often brutally explosive consequences of repressed memories whether personal or collective.

Cars are a recurring theme in *Le Facteur fatal.* They neatly weave the stories together and highlight their interconnections. As previously noted, Cadin investigates a hit-and-run incident in "*Voie de garage*" where the perpetrator futilely attempts to conceal their crime by literally burying it. "*Un privé à la dérive*" climaxes in Cadin having an emotional breakdown in his car which rolls to a standstill.[156] These events are important forerunners to the importance of cars (or more specifically a particular model of car) in "*Souvenir à la fenêtre",* where they are central to the plot. While playing in his father's sports car as a toddler, Jean-Michel caused the accidental death of his sister by leaning on the button for the electric windows and breaking her neck. We see the breakdown of the relationship between Jean-Michel and his partner, Thérèse, which stems from Jean-Michel's lack of commitment to their relationship and his refusal to talk about his family or parents.[157] This appears to be a gesture to the importance of attempting to express and approach complex

[156] It is worth noting that Daeninckx gives very little detail on the period between the end of *Meurtres pour mémoire* and Cadin's subsequent downward spiral. Barely fifty pages are dedicated to the Inspecteur's period after leaving the police, which is two years in length.

[157] Given the importance of nomenclature throughout the series, Thérèse could be interpreted as a reference to Émile Zola's *Thérèse Raquin* (1867), which shares the general themes of heartbreak and haunting of traumatic memories.

and traumatic issues, whether in oral discussion or in writing, as Daeninckx has done. This links to Pine's work which stresses the value of fiction in expressing the complexity of the past. To appease Thérèse, Jean-Michel takes her to visit his parents in Normandy. Jean-Michel is an avid antique car collector. He and Thérèse drive there in a very rare Citroën SM Opéra that they managed to buy several months previously.

Before Jean-Michel leaves, his parents fly into a rage as they believe he is mocking them when they see that he is now driving the same car model in which he accidentally killed his sister. However, this painful memory is so suppressed in Jean-Michel's mind that he does not even recognise his deceased sister's name:

> *Jean-Michel fit un effort pour reconstituer cette image qui lui échappait depuis si longtemps . . . Sa mémoire, brouillée par la peur, lui resservit l'intérieur de la S.M., le volant, les boutons. Les cris de sa mère couvraient tout, des cris qui appartenaient autant à ses souvenirs qu'au moment présent.* (*FF*: p. 192)
>
> [Jean-Michel tried to rebuild that image which he had lost for so long . . . his memory, clouded by the fear, brought back to mind the interior of the S.M., the steering wheel, the buttons. The cries of his Mother drowned out everything else, the cries belonged as much to his past memories as to the present moment.]

Jean-Michel's father, Alain, then fetches his rifle from the house and shoots dead both his son and Thérèse. The short story reads much more like a realistic horror story than crime fiction. This is perhaps done to give Cadin a distinctly different writing voice compared to Daeninckx's usual style.

At two points throughout the short story penned by Cadin, the reader is primed for the death of Jean-Michel's sister. Firstly, when Cadin's brother arrives at his parents' house, Thérèse innocently asks if the woman at the door is his mother. He petulantly replies by saying: '*Qui veux-tu que ce soit d'autre . . . Ma sœur ?*' (*FF*: p. 189) [Who else do you expect it to be . . . my sister?]. Similarly, when the local mechanic fixes Jean-Michel's car he remarks that this is the second S.M. he has worked on before. The above scene also has an eerily resonance with the echoing of the past and present cries of Jean-Michel's mother and captures the violence of suppressed memories that inevitably resurface. *Le Facteur fatal* focuses on the individual suppression of Cadin's personal trauma, which is in contrast to the other works in the series that focus on the suppression of collective memories. However,

with *Le Bourreau et son double* Daeninckx suggests that even when traumas are collective, they have effects on individuals. Similarly, *Le Facteur fatal* focuses on the individual but it is part of a larger collective whole.

6.6 The End of Cadin

Daeninckx cites the success of French investigative journalism at the time as a reason he decided to move away from the *Série noire* and crime fiction: '*Plus besoin de la littérature policière pour faire tomber les masques . . .'* (Daeninckx and Maricourt, 2009: 76) [Crime fiction was no longer needed to reveal the truth . . .]. For example, Daeninckx points to the central role of journalists in uncovering the corruption of the *maire* of Nice, Jacques Médecin (1928–1998), in the late 1980s and 1990s. Médecin succeeded his father as *maire* of Nice in 1966 and served in that role until 1990 when he fled to Uruguay. Médecin was eventually extradited to France in 1994 where he was found guilty of accepting bribes in excess of four million francs (Bresson, 1998). Daeninckx also references the media's investigation of the mysterious 1990 murder of gay priest Joseph Doucé who had been under the illegal surveillance of the *Renseignements Généraux* before his death (Gaetner, 1997).

Daeninckx has acknowledged that the death of his father at the time influenced his decision to kill off Cadin, as well as the bizarre incident where another writer from Quimper was impersonating him (Daeninckx and Maricourt, 2009: 76).[158] However, the main argument Daeninckx makes for his decision to write Cadin's suicide is that the Inspecteur's downfall mirrors the seismic changes in the political landscape of Europe at the time: '*Au moment où j'ai écrit Le Facteur fatal, le mur de Berlin tombait, les restes d'une utopie s'écroulaient*' (Daeninckx and Maricourt, 2009: 76) [At the time I was writing *Le Facteur fatal,* the Berlin wall had just fallen, the remnants of a utopia were collapsing]. However, these changes to Europe are not clearly visible in the text and appear only once with the previously noted brief reference to the end of communism in Romania. Even though the communist dream in

[158] For a period of six months towards the end of the 1980s a man operating in the Brittany region of France impersonated Daeninckx. The impostor gave interviews with journalists and even printed his own books under Daeninckx's name. This was a troubling experience for Daeninckx and contributed significantly to his decision to put an end to Inspecteur Cadin in an attempt to start anew (Daeninckx and Maricourt, 2009: 196-198).

Europe was now clearly tainted and flawed, Daeninckx is linking the collapse of this leftist ideal to Cadin's despondency.

As with *Le Géant inachevé*, *Meurtres pour mémoire,* and *Le Bourreau et son double*, Daeninckx finishes *Le Facteur fatal* with an epilogue. *Epilogue albertivilliarien* (*FF*: p. 197) [Aubervilliers Epilogue], which describes Cadin's final moments before he commits suicide during the New Year's Eve countdown in 1989.[159] This year saw a series of anti-communist revolutions in Europe and beyond, that led to the dissolution of the Soviet Union (and the formation of the Russian Federation) and the collapse of many communist regimes the world over.[160] Daeninckx has suggested that the personal psychological disintegration of Inspecteur Cadin corresponds to what he considered the significant degradation of French society in the 1980s or in his own words '*Finie l'utopie, finie l'illusion*' (Daeninckx and Maricourt, 2009: 76) [No more utopia, no more illusion]. However, aside from a passing reference to the trial of Nicolae Ceaușescu, the last communist leader of Romania, there are no other references in *Le Facteur fatal* to significant events that signal the end of an era (*FF*: p. 197). While the paratext of the paperback edition of *Le Facteur fatal* describes the text as covering the Inspecteur's career from Strasbourg in 1977 to Aubervilliers in 1989 at the fall of the Berlin wall, the text itself makes no reference to this event or any allusion to the cessation of the German Democratic Republic. The dramatic changes in Europe in 1990 were perhaps obvious to the readers at the time but this is not necessarily true for a contemporary reader of the text.

The use of a brief epilogue to describe the most important moment of the text is frustrating for the reader who, due to the saturation of references to suicide, has long been anticipating Cadin's suicide. The four-page epilogue consists of Cadin re-reading some of the newspaper clippings of *fait divers* he has collected in a scrapbook. All of the *fait divers* incorporated into the epilogue describe bizarre manners in which men have committed

[159] Jeannerod notes the significant symbolism attached to Cadin's suicide which deliberately coincides with the end of an era. He stresses that the Inspecteur's final act is dominated by the metaphor of time being reset to zero (2007: 33): '*[Il] appuya, les yeux grands ouverts au moment exact où les chiffres de 23 h 59 mn. 59 s. s'effaçaient pour être remplacés par une théorie de zéros* (*FF*: p. 200) [Eyes wide open, he pulled the trigger at the exact moment the numbers 23:59:59 disappeared and were in theory replaced by zeros].

[160] Anti-communist protests in Poland spread throughout central and eastern countries such as Hungary, East Germany, Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia. For a comprehensive overview of this period see *The Revolutions of 1989: A Handbook* (Wolfgang et al, 2015).

suicide, as though he has been contemplating (consciously or subconsciously) putting an end to his life for some time. This reinforces the weight of the burdens he has been struggling with, both in terms of personal trauma, and—perhaps more importantly—in terms of having had to go against corruption and injustice by himself for so long.

The text also references the American postmodern writer, Richard Brautigan, and quotes a line from the postface of the French translation of *So the Wind Won't Blow It All Away* (1982) (*FF*: p. 199). Brautigan, who committed suicide, is described as a literary alcoholic with a cult following (*FF*: p. 198). The repeated references to suicide before Cadin kills himself seem a little heavy handed, compared to his use of literary devices in the rest of the series. While the *fait divers* and allusions to Brautigan reinforce the grimness of Cadin's situation, living in complete isolation above a stinking delicatessen (*FF*: p. 197), the reader easily anticipates the Inspecteur's suicide for the reasons given above. This could also, and perhaps more trivially, be indicative of Daeninckx's fatigue with the character, at this point in his writing career (it was only after that he returned to Inspecteur Cadin seven years later in the rewriting of *Mort au premier tour*). Yet, what emerges most strongly is that Cadin is so despondent at the weight of corruption and concealment of incriminating evidence by powerful entities, influential people, and the State—all of which is compounded by his personal tragic circumstances—that he simply gives up.

The decision to set Cadin's suicide in Aubervilliers, in Daeninckx's hometown and where he continued to live until very recently, raises questions. Rather than attributing Cadin's death to the poor socio-economic situation of Aubervilliers, I believe Daeninckx is subtly linking the two, in order to highlight the systemic failures of the French state. In the same way that French police failed or were unwilling to incorporate Cadin as a force for good, Daeninckx is highlighting how the French state is failing the people in working-class suburbs like Aubervilliers, which has partly contributed to Cadin's despondency.

This chapter has highlighted how intertextual echoes to the rest of the Cadin series in *Le Facteur fatal* are mainly used by Daeninckx to very strong effect. They not only highlight issues previously explored in the novels, but they also add to the reader's understanding of those texts. For example, the murder victim in the titular short story of the collection, "*Le Facteur fatal*", strongly resonates with *Le Géant inachevé* and elucidates the series' overarching theme of misogyny and feminism. The intertextual style of *Le Facteur fatal* is

arguably at its most effective in the collection's final story "*Souvenir à la fenêtre*". The story within a story details the source of Cadin's own traumatic memories and demonstrates how literature can be used to try to come to terms with the past, in the manner that Pine suggests in *The Politics of Irish Memory*. This metatextual plot device also evokes Silverman's theory of palimpsestic memory as it reveals how the present is haunted by the past and through its textual layering brings together multiple moments in time. Daeninckx's technique of unearthing traumatic histories through the revealing layers of histories is last used in the series to recount the tragedy of Cadin's family.

In returning to the Algerian War in "*Exécution sommaire*", Daeninckx manages to add to his discussion of France's war of decolonisation by including the significant role of the *pieds-noirs.* The text does not simply repeat the narratives found in *Meurtres pour mémoire* and *Le Bourreau et son double.* Daeninckx uses the text to condense and expand upon the discussion of French colonialism in the series. We have also seen how *Le Facteur fatal* operates as a standalone text. References to paperwork are used to highlight the Inspecteur's frustrations with his work. They are also reflective of the amount of density in the paper and history that the reader has had to wade through, the hard work involved in investigating histories, and how bureaucracy can be used as an obstacle to keep crimes hidden. Despite Cadin's suicide and the work that the density of *Le Facteur fatal* demands of the reader, Daeninckx's text greatly adds to French remembrance culture as it recovers many lost memories of important histories.

Conclusion

On an individual basis, each of the five texts in the Inspecteur Cadin series greatly adds to France's remembrance culture of traumatic events such as the World Wars, the Algerian War and France's ongoing process of decolonisation. Furthermore, the series as a whole effectively captures a social history of France from 1977 to 1989 as it examines many of the social ills present in society during this period. Fundamentally, this Cadin series represents Daeninckx's interest in power relations and his concern with questions of responsibility, whether individual or institutional, including the responsibilities of the State. We have seen how he uses various modalities and techniques of layering of memories (social, collective, historical or individual, and combinations of these), to unearth hidden histories and demonstrate how the effects of past traumas manifest themselves in society today. It is clear that Emilie Pine's notions of cultural remembrance, Michael Rothberg's concept of multidirectional memory, and Max Silverman's work on palimpsestic memory are all highly applicable to Daeninckx's politically engaged crime fiction.

Prior to this study, *Meurtres pour mémoire* was the only Inspecteur Cadin text to have received any significant attention from scholars. However, this study has demonstrated the literary quality of the entire series and has shown that the overlooked Inspecteur Cadin texts warrant scholarly attention. In examining the extensive critical literature on *Meurtres pour mémoire,* I have sought to add significantly to this body of work on this important text. I am indebted to Claire Gorrara's examination of the role of intertextuality in *Meurtres pour mémoire*, which highlighted the role of references to film and popular culture in the text. Also invaluable were Margaret Atack's analysis of the influence of film on the text, which provoked me to identify similarities between the themes, and more specifically the names of characters in Daeninckx's novel with Alain Resnais' film *Muriel* (1963). As noted, this previously unremarked connection reinforces how Daeninckx draws on both classic crime fiction sources as well as how atypical textual sources such as New Wave cinema influence his works.

As shown, Daeninckx's evocation of multidirectional memory and his use of palimpsestic imagery is not limited to *Meurtres pour mémoire*, since the other texts in the Inspecteur Cadin series operate in a similar manner. However, it is clear that Daeninckx does not simply

reuse the same techniques to tackle the same issues throughout the series, as there is a notable evolution in terms of the themes and the aesthetics of the texts. For example, Chapter Three noted that Daeninckx's experimentation with narrative and form in the Cadin series is at its greatest extent in *Le Bourreau et son double*, which features alternating narratives and a doubling of chapters. In operating on two timelines, Daeninckx highlights how the neo-colonial work-practices of the industrial Parisian *banlieue* of the 1980s are deeply connected to France's wars of decolonisation. This text's structure in fact embodies Rothberg's notion of multidirectional memory. The text's doubling of narratives reinforces its themes of muddled and intertwined histories. This novel in particular demonstrates the influence of Georges Perec on Daeninckx's writing, as it resonates strongly with the motifs and structures of *W ou le souvenir d'enfance (1975).*

While multidirectional memory does not directly apply to the main plots of *Le Géant inachevé* and *Mort au premier tour,* subplots in these novels clearly resonate with Rothberg's theory. The memory of the Algerian War is referenced in *Le Géant inachevé* by subtle detail such as the Islamophobic sketch, but also more directly by the ex-priest's testimony. This is an example of Daeninckx's ability to subtly place France's colonial past in the background of texts. Subplots in *Mort au premier tour* uncover the hidden history of the Strasbourg Soviet, which resonates with the then-contemporary issues of power relations between workers and "Big Industry", and ongoing class struggles in France.

The Inspecteur Cadin series frequently uncovers hidden historic sites. We have seen how Hazebrouck's collective memory of World War II is symbolically represented by the abandoned German V2 missile launch site, which plays a key role in the dénouement of the plot of *Le Géant inachevé*. Daeninckx's use of the subplot in *Mort au premier tour* to recover the lost abstract art of the Aubette building designed by a trio of artists including Hans Arp is another example of this approach. Arp—whom Daeninckx uses to symbolically represent the people of Alsace-Lorraine, who identified to varying degrees with French and German culture—is key to the discussion of regional and national identity in *Mort au premier tour*. In fact, he exemplifies Daeninckx's fascination with dualities and with layers of complexity. This study has also highlighted how the Inspecteur Cadin series often references art in his work, particularly paintings. This testifies to Daeninckx's desire to democratise the arts by incorporating references to both popular culture and high culture in his works.

Multidirectional memory and the palimpsest are also essential to the *Le Facteur fatal* collection of short stories. The short story "*Exécution sommaire*" is particularly worthy of note here. Importantly, it adds to the series' remembrance of the Algerian War by incorporating the *pied-noir* experience. It is worth noting that Daeninckx's description of the repression and resurfacing of the *pieds-noirs* collective memory of the Algerian War echoes Rousso's "Vichy Syndrome". The publication of *Le Facteur fatal* coincides with the coming of age of a younger generation of *pieds-noirs* who sought to address the memories of the Algerian War that the older generation, traumatised by their experiences, were unable to process. This is testament to Daeninckx's commitment to exploring new layers of history as they emerge, and his place at the forefront of discussion of them. The evolution of Daeninckx's historiography of the Algerian War demonstrates how histories gradually come to light through the assembly of fragments, like a layer of palimpsests that are progressively revealed. Palimpsestic imagery is integral to the final short story of the collection "*Souvenir à la fenêtre*", which features Cadin's haunting autobiographical short story within that short story. The inclusion of an autobiographical element to Cadin is possibly *Le Facteur fatal*'s greatest addition to the series. It is an allusion to Daeninckx's style of drawing on his own life experiences, such as working as an *animateur* and printer, being a resident of Aubervilliers, and the experience of having family members who suffered in French state mental health institutions.

Nuanced Victims and Ambiguous Perpetrators

Daeninckx is continually drawn to nuanced figures of ambiguity. Many of the victims in the series are complex and often conflicted characters. For example, Claude Werbel in *Le Bourreau et son double* is the victim at the centre of the text but he is not completely innocent himself. Werbel is one example of how Daeninckx effectively uses individual characters throughout the series to capture the collective memory of traumatic events in French history. Werbel is an effective representation by Daeninckx of an entire generation of French conscripts who, traumatised by crimes they committed during the Algerian War, were both *"Bourreau"* [executioner] and "*victime"* [victim]. However, upon his return to France after the war, Werbel attempts to atone for his actions by aiding the vulnerable migrant workers in the *banlieue.* Daeninckx's characterisation of Werbel suggests that, while never excusing his actions, the author believes a person should not be defined by their past

actions if they are genuinely remorseful and willing to change. The murder victim in *Le Géant inachevé*, Laurence Cappel, is also a nuanced character developed by Daeninckx. By laundering money for organised crime, Laurence is able to afford the private treatment needed to help her brother, who is addicted to drugs. Laurence is acutely aware that without any help her brother would inevitably end up in prison, where his drug addiction would only worsen. Daeninckx effectively uses this character's progressive approach to the issue of drug abuse to be severely critical of the French state's response to the drug epidemic of the 1980s. Alain Dienta from *Mort au premier tour* is a similarly morally-conflicted murder victim. Despite being an enthusiastic ecologist, due to poverty Dienta had no choice but to work on the site of the very place he also was campaigning to shut down. Dienta's murder is used as a vehicle by Daeninckx to discuss the environmental impact of nuclear energy while not ignoring the employment opportunities the industry can offer economically disadvantaged areas, in this case the rural areas of Alsace and Lorraine. This is a characteristically Daeninckx way of "*écrire en contre*" [writing against] injustices and giving a voice to minority groups.

The recurrence of morally conflicted victims in the Inspecteur Cadin series demonstrates that Daeninckx never views issues in black and white terms. This aligns with Primo Levi's ethical notion of a moral "grey zone", which he developed in an essay from his 1986 book *I sommersi e i salvati* [The Drowned and the Saved]. Levi's "grey zone" attempts to understand the actions of Jews who aided Nazis during the Holocaust.[161] The essay takes the example of the *Sonderkommando* who were concentration camp prisoners that were forced by the Nazis, under threat of their own death, to operate the gas chambers and crematoria. In the "grey zone", Levi does not pass judgement on the *Sonderkommando* but simply presents evidence and raises questions. Daeninckx's Inspecteur Cadin series operates in a similar manner to Levi's "grey zone", by simply presenting evidence to the reader and making them ask questions. However, there is behaviour that Daeninckx's texts unreservedly condemn, in the strongest possible terms, such as political corruption, crimes

[161] Primo Levi was an Italian Jewish Holocaust survivor. His other notable works include *Se questo è un uomo* (1947) [*If This Is a Man* (1959)] an autobiographical account of the year he spent as a prisoner in Auschwitz concentration camp, and a collection of autobiographical short stories, *Il sistema periodico* (1975) [*The Periodic Table* (1984)], which describe the author's experiences of working as a chemist and living as a Jew under the fascist regime in Italy and afterwards.

against humanity, and paedophilia. Daeninckx's presentation of moral ethics in a "grey zone" is essential. It not only stops his texts from appearing overly judgemental and continuously condemnatory (which would otherwise quickly fatigue the reader), but also ensures that his fictions are grounded in reality.

In the short story "*Le Facteur fatal*", which centres on the murder of Marianne Lesdin, Cadin refers to Marianne, as "*la géante*" [the giant]. As seen, this is firstly an intratextual nod to *Le Géant inachevé* and secondly, given the nationalistic connotations of her name and the circumstances surrounding her death, symbolic of the enormous problem of misogyny in French society. The issue of misogyny in French society is a recurring theme throughout the series and the texts feature some notable feminist characters. Previous scholars have noted how Claudine Chenet in *Meurtres pour mémoire* plays a significant role in aiding Cadin to reveal Veillut's role at the Drancy deportation camp and the 17 October 1961 massacre. However, we have seen that women also play prominent roles in the other Inspecteur Cadin texts. Michèle Shelton in *Mort au premier tour* is a prominent member of the Klapperstei 68 editorial board, and is therefore a strong part of the novel's themes of regional identity, police corruption and Alsatian folklore. Although Laurence Cappel is a victim of violence and is almost immediately killed in the novel, she is also the series' strongest representation of a feminist character. Laurence is clearly creative, highly intelligent, strong-willed, and we infer that she is probably morally torn.

A more obvious example of the series' portrayal of misogyny is Monique Werbel in *Le Bourreau et son double,* who is a victim of sexual harassment. The sexually explicit manipulated photographs of Monique that are circulated to intimidate the Werbels, remind the reader that historical narratives can be just as easily doctored and that it is always necessary to question the providence and authenticity of information. One criticism could be made that the majority of these female characters only perform passive roles. While central to the text's narrative, many are already dead when the story begins. However, a reluctance to write from the perspective of women is perhaps indicative of Daeninckx's own awareness of his male privilege.

Power Systems: Corrupt Politicians and "Big Industry"

We have seen how the series frequently condemns the corruption of the police and the political system. The figure of the *maire* [mayor] is consistently portrayed as dishonest

throughout the Inspecteur Cadin texts. For example, the epilogue of *Le Géant inachevé* describes how the *maire* of Hazebrouck pressured the police into moving Cadin to another division because the Inspecteur revealed the criminal activities of one of the area's biggest industrialists. The figure of the corrupt *maire* is used both to highlight the prevalence of political corruption in powerful institutions and as a plot device to keep Cadin moving to new areas of iniquity across France. The newly elected *maire* of Courvilliers in *Le Bourreau et son double* creates a far more militarised version of the area's municipal police, thereby furthering the divide between them and the national police. This tells the reader that the police force in France is not immune to political influence.

The *maire* of Marcheim in *Mort au premier tour*, Émile Loos, is the main perpetrator of the text who kills Dienta in an attempt to keep his vice of paedophilia hidden. Rather than merely repeating the image of the *maire* as a person corrupted by money or power, *Mort au premier tour* notes that the political elites can abuse their power to hide their personal vices. These local politicians contrast with the more senior figures of André Veillut (the fictionalisation of Maurice Papon) in *Meurtres pour mémoire* who is described as "*un ponte"* [a bigshot] from the Paris Police Prefecture, and the corrupt office of the *maire* of Toulouse in "*Le Facteur fatal*". With this series, Daeninckx is therefore emphasising that corruption is an issue to all levels of French politics, both local and national.

The series highlights the various levels of nefarious influence that "Big Industry" can have over French society. Daeninckx highlights how these industrialists are able to co-opt the police and the local politicians. For example, the Maillard business group in *Le Géant inachevé,* along with other wealthy businesspersons from Hazebrouck, exert significant control over the local police. Similarly, the Hotch factory owners in *Le Bourreau et son double* are able to intimidate workers and trade union activists by hiring a private military company to operate under the guise of security. This is an example of how the series captures the social history of France during the 1970s and 1980s, as the storyline is clearly inspired by the killing of Maoist activist Pierre Overney on the grounds of Renault's Bilancourt factory in 1972. Resonating with the series' theme of postcolonialism, and with Daeninckx's more general interest in this area, *Le Bourreau et son double* also describes how large factories are engaging in modern slavery by recruiting and exploiting vulnerable migrant workers.

In the original version of *Mort au premier tour* (1977), published by Le Masque*,* the nuclear power plant was linked directly to the cause of Alain Dienta's death. The second version, published by Gallimard in 1997, shifted focus from the actions of "Big Industry" to the individual actions of a corrupt *maire.* However, both versions of *Mort au premier tour* highlight the unjust power dynamics between the residents of a rural village and *Electricité de France* (*EDF*), the owner and operator of France's nuclear power plants. The series clearly demonstrates that while French industry may appear to be modern on the surface, it continues to operate in a neo-colonial fashion in both the suburbs of Paris and France's regions.

One possible reason that *Meurtres pour mémoire* has received far more attention than the rest of the series is that Daeninckx's fiction so clearly mirrors the Papon case. While the other texts in the series also mirror real life events, such as the killing of Pierre Overney and violent clashes between squatting eco-warriors and private militia (resonances that seem have been largely overlooked to date), none of these come close to the fame of Papon's trial. It is nonetheless important to look at these questions, and the others Daeninckx highlights in the series, such as the depiction of the 1980s drug epidemic in France and regionalist movements such as *La Lutte de Larzac,* as these are testament to how the series operates as a social history of France from 1977 to 1989.

Regional Identities: Heritage and Justice

Throughout the series, the inclusion of plotlines related to regional cultures serves to highlight the plurality of French identities. As Cadin spends roughly half of his career in the *banlieues* of Paris and the other half in French regional towns and cities, the series captures issues affecting those living on the periphery of the capital city as well as regional areas that are geographically and culturally on the margins of French identity. The cultural heritage of Alsace is highlighted in *Mort au premier tour* through its references to the region's language and folk practices. Its use of the *Klapperstei* mask, which was used by medieval Alsatian communities to publicly shame liars, is symbolic, given Daeninckx's concerns with social justice, hypocrisy, and concealment of the truth.

Le Géant inachevé, which highlights the Flemish heritage of Hazebrouck, emphasises regional identity in France to an even greater extent. By making the text's main character, Laurence, one of the key people to revive the area's medieval festival of Carnival and

engage with the Flemish folklore of protective giants, Daeninckx is using this distinct heritage not only in terms of plot but also to add to the aesthetics of the text, and of the series as a whole.

During our interview, Daeninckx demonstrated an understanding of Bakhtin's notion of the carnivalesque by comparing and contrasting the purpose of the medieval festival and the roman noir which both seek to violently expose the truth during a limited time and space. Bakhtin considered the Carnival to be deeply rooted in both the individual and collective human psyche. This resonates with Daeninckx's use of crime fiction to address the individual and collective memory of past traumas. Bakhtin also emphasises how events during Carnival allow groups which are usually separated to interact freely. However, the notion of carnivalesque also resonates more generally with Daeninckx's objective of using the Inspecteur Cadin series to subvert social hierarchies and dominant assumptions surrounding French national identity and its colonial history.

Lost Illusions: The Failure of France's Left

The Inspecteur Cadin series tracks the decline of left-wing politics in France. By expanding Atack's analysis of the subtle critique of the PCF in *Meurtres pour mémoire* I was able to identify how *Le Bourreau et son double* acts as a sequel in this respect, further examining the failure of the PCF (and left-wing groups in general) to combat the issues of racism and identity politics of France in the 1980s. We have also seen how *Mort au premier tour* stems from the PCF's unwillingness to engage with the issue of nuclear energy. While Cadin's deterioration and suicide is clearly linked to the systemic corruption of the police force, during interviews Daeninckx linked the Inspecteur's death to what he deemed France's democratic regression:

> *'Au fil des enquêtes, il y a une dégradation psychologique du personnage, qui correspond, dans mon esprit, à la dégradation de la société française dans les années 1980. […] Fin des illusions de mon personnage. Il ne pouvait plus vivre socialement au-delà de 1989*'. (Daeninckx and Maricourt, 2009: 76)[162]
>
> [Throughout the course of his investigations, there is a psychological degradation of the character, which corresponds, in my mind, to the

[162] It is worth noting the similarity here between Daeninckx's vocabulary and the title of Balzac's *Illusions perdues* which in a similar manner to the Inspecteur Cadin series flits between Paris and the regional provinces.

> degradation of French society in the 1980s. It was the end of my character's illusions. He could no longer live beyond 1989, socially.]

One possible criticism of the series is that it somewhat avoids the moment Cadin decides to retire from the police force. However, this is typical of Daeninckx's style of fiction, which often minimises plot elements that the reader would expect to be of major significance in order to highlight an element he deems to be of greater importance. There are two likely reasons that Daeninckx decided against giving the reader a detailed account of the moment Cadin leaves the police force. Firstly, it was a long-drawn-out process, as Cadin has always had his doubts about the actions of his colleagues and his superiors. Secondly, a dramatic description of the Inspecteur quitting the police force might distract from the personal capitulation of the protagonist. It is significant to note that the final short story before Cadin's suicide is the first time the reader is offered substantial insight into the character's personal life. This reinforces the problematic nature of repressed memories (both personal and collective) and their often-violent consequences. Cadin's demise symbolically represents the series' overarching theme of the importance of confronting the past despite the discomfort it creates.

In 2019, Daeninckx's anthology of short stories *Le Roman noir de l'histoire* was published. This weighty tome consists of seventy-seven short stories collected throughout the author's career as well as several new short stories. The collection spans French history from 1855 to near-contemporary times, with Daeninckx even offering projections for the near future, as the final story is set in 2030. The short stories are presented in chronological order of the events they depict, and the stories are grouped together in chapters describing specific periods such as the decline of the Second French Empire, both World Wars, France's wars of decolonisation, May '68 and so on. *"Exécution sommaire*" is the only short story featuring Cadin included in *Le Roman noir de l'histoire*. Given its inclusion in this recent collection, Daeninckx clearly attaches great importance to *"Exécution sommaire*". A likely reason for this decision is that the story is an effective condensation of both *Meurtres pour mémoire* and *Le Bourreau et son double*, which are both extremely important texts in relation to the remembrance of the Algerian War. "*Exécution sommaire*" shares *Meurtres pour mémoire's* theme of political figures using their power to hide crimes they committed during the Algerian War. In a similar manner to *Le Bourreau et son double*, "Exécution sommaire"

features a plot that flits between the geographical spaces of metropolitan France and Algeria. The final words of the short story belong to the Algerian who tells Cadin that the only thing the people of France have learned about the Algerian War in thirty years is to say "sorry". Daeninckx is stating that at the time French society (and the State) paid only lip service to the Algerian War and was unwillingly to genuinely come to terms with its past.

With the Inspecteur Cadin series, Daeninckx attempts to offer the reader a snapshot of France from 1977 to 1989. *Le Roman noir de l'histoire* operates in a similar manner only over a longer time frame, and employs the form of the short story. In the preface to *Le Roman noir de l'histoire,* acclaimed French historian Patrick Boucheron praised Daeninckx's use of chronology as a means of lending historical authenticity to his fiction:

> *Davantage qu'une chronique, l'ensemble forme une chronologie—soit une découpe politique du temps, scandée par périodes. Comme si l'histoire n'était rien d'autre en somme qu'un ensemble de fictions bien composées.*
> (Boucheron, 2019: 7)
>
> [More than a chronicle, the whole forms a chronology—a political division of time, punctuated by periods. As if history was nothing more than a set of well-composed fictions.]

Boucheron correctly suggests that Daeninckx uses the roman noir to challenge "fictional" narratives that are created by the State and others. This research has highlighted how fiction is often the only means of accurately capturing history, as many victims are voiceless and the State's archives are often inaccessible. Daeninckx uses Inspecteur Cadin series, and the roman noir, to make a significant contribution to French remembrance culture. Indeed, the series demonstrates how the structure of the classic whodunnit can be used as a vehicle to highlight the crimes committed by the State.

Given the international popularity of crime fiction today, it would be fruitful for future research to apply Rothberg's and Silverman's respective theories of memory in different contexts. For example, multidirectional memory is central to Damon Lindelof's 2019 television series *Watchmen* (a work of science fiction that manipulates superhero stereotypes), which recovers the hidden history of the 1921 Tulsa race massacres. Lindelof's series shows parallels between these massacres and the contemporary acts of racist terrorism in America such as the Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville 2017. This resonates

with Daeninckx's approach of unearthing past traumas to expose and highlight to the reader the relevance of such histories to present-day issues.

The Inspecteur Cadin series is testament to Daeninckx's ability to use crime fiction as a vehicle to significantly add to French remembrance culture. Victims and perpetrators occupy a moral grey zone in Daeninckx's narratives, as they are not simply described in black and white terms but in a highly nuanced manner. This is often linked to Daeninckx's use of genre conventions and character archetypes, which he sometimes reinforces but equally often subverts. Daeninckx uses palimpsestic imagery not only to show that France's colonial histories do not exist in isolation, as they are entangled and intertwined with other traumatic histories, but also to highlight how such histories inform present-day social ills. Daeninckx uses the series to "write against" the unjust power relations between those living on the periphery of society and the elites at the centre of control: *écrire en contre*. While the texts reinforce the collective responsibility of French society, the State, and the political left, the series also emphasises personal and individual responsibility. There are multiple layers of complexity to Daeninckx's unearthing of knotted histories and entangled memories.

Appendix A

Figure 1 (Daeninckx and Puchol, 2011: 4)

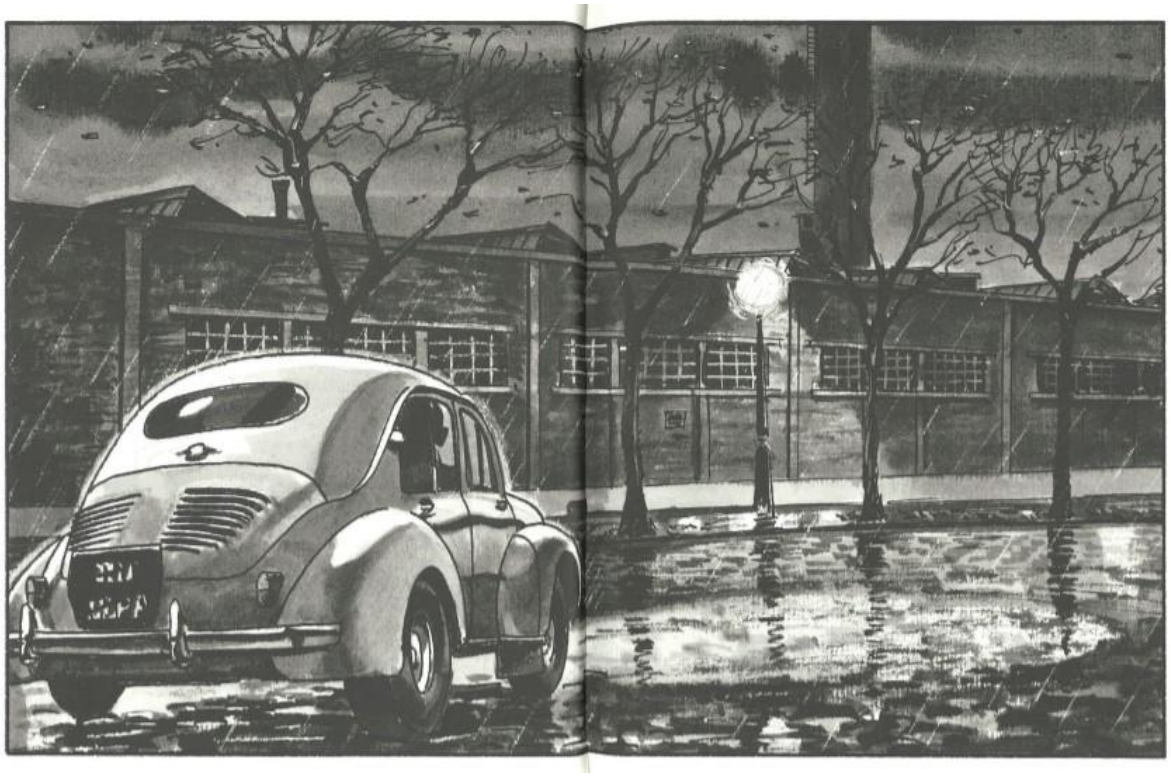

Figure 2 (Daeninckx and Puchol, 2011: 10–11)

Figure 3 (Daeninckx and Puchol, 2011: 15)

Figure 4 (Daeninckx and Puchol, 2011: 16)

Figure 5 (Daeninckx and Puchol, 2011: 18)

Figure 6 (Daeninckx and Puchol, 2011: 33)

Figure 7 (Daeninckx and Puchol, 2011: 28–29)

Figure 8 (Daeninckx and Puchol, 2011: 31)

Figure 9 (Daeninckx and Puchol, 2011: 34–35)

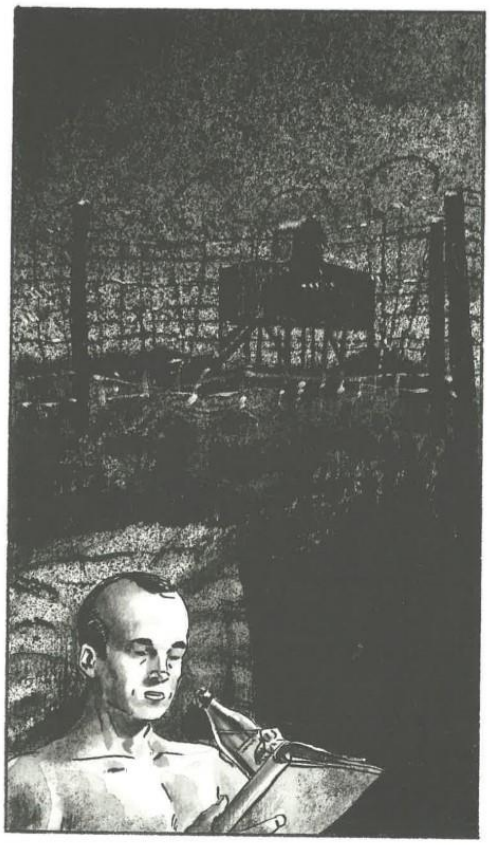

Figure 10 (Daeninckx and Puchol, 2011: 194)

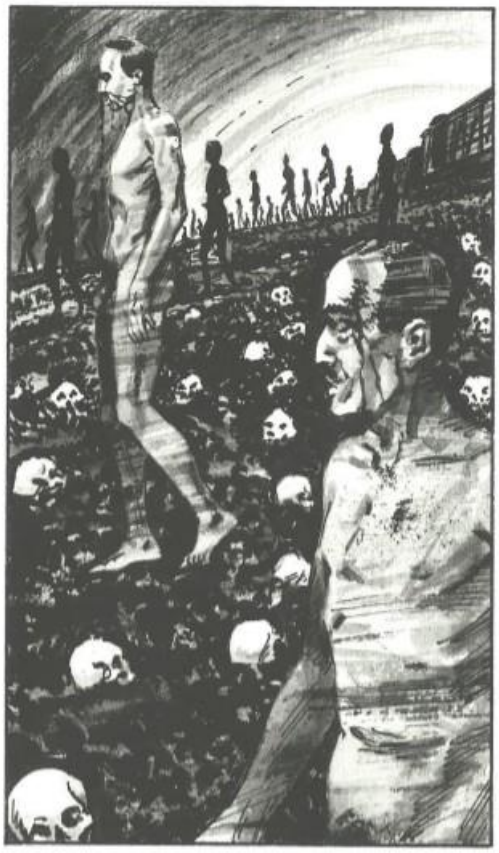

Figure 11 (Daeninckx and Puchol, 2011: 200)

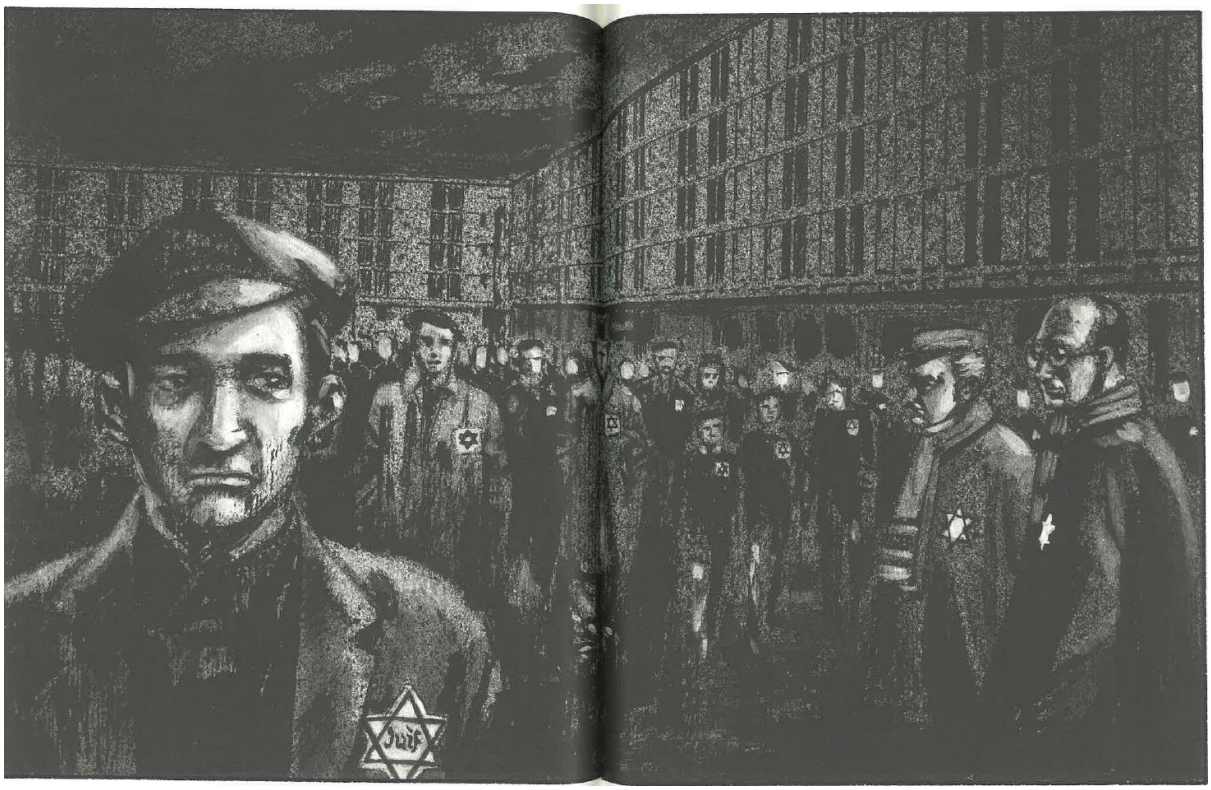

Figure 12 (Daeninckx and Puchol, 2011: 196–197)

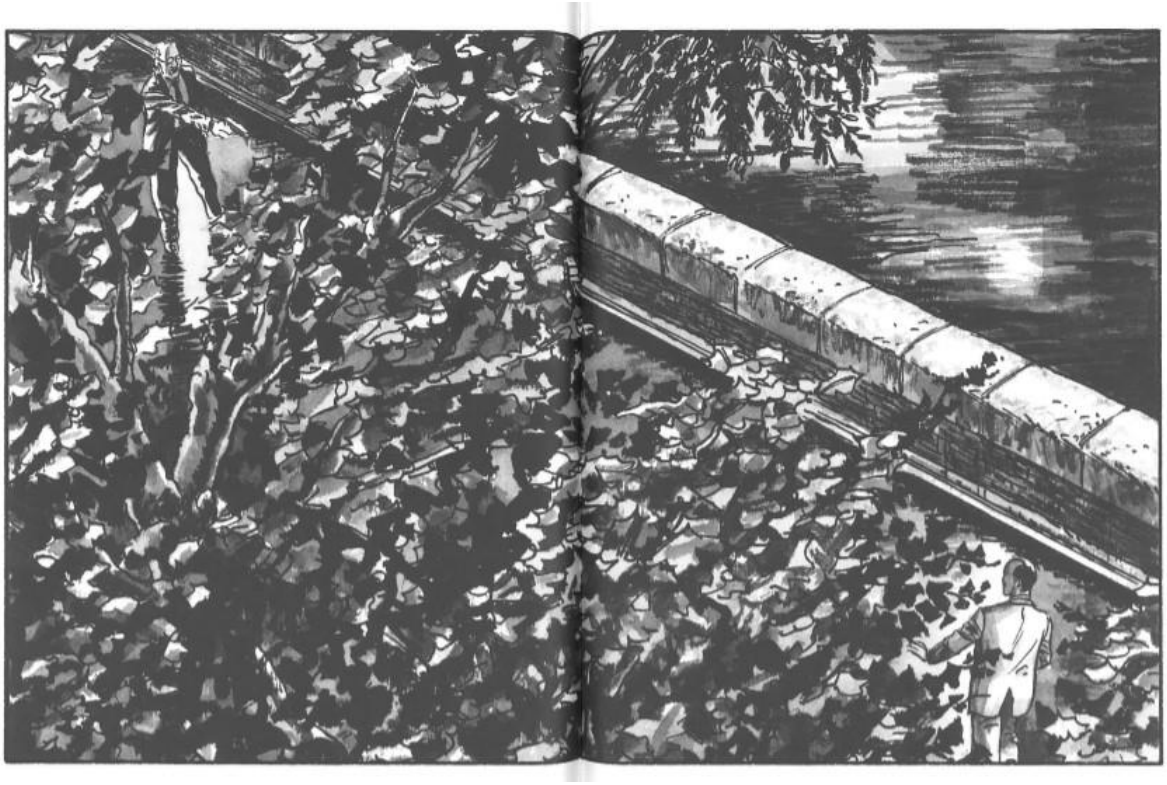

Figure 13 (Daeninckx and Puchol, 2011: 212–213)

Figure 14 (Agence France-Presse, 2019: Online)

Figure 15 (Wikimedia, 2019: Online)

KLAPPERSTEI 68

MENSUEL D'INFORMATION HAUT-RHINOIS

No 18 LE PLUS FORT TAUX DE PENETRATION DE LA PRESSE LIBRE DANS LE HAUT-RHIN 2F.

Souscription nationale pour son Noël: un passe-montagne faut cacher ça!

Dernière minute :

Grand-mère Marcellin pourquoi as-tu de si grandes oreilles? — C'est pour mieux t'écouter mon enfant

Figure 16 (Époque Klapperstei 68: Online)

This cover of this issue of *Klapperstei 68* references "*l'affaire des plombiers"*. The manipulated image of Raymond Marcellin with caricatural big ears is accompanied by lines from the fairy tale of Little Red Riding Hood: *'Grand mere Marcellin pourquoi as-tu de si grandes oreilles? -C'est pour mieux t'écouter mon enfant*' [Grandmother Marcellin why are your ears so big? All the better for listening to you my child.] It is worth

noting that this image ironically resonates with the theme of child abuse in *Mort au premier tour* where children are not listened to. The image is sourced from an online blog, *Époque Klapperstei 68.*

Figure 17 (Époque Klapperstei 68: Online)

This image from an uncited edition of *Klapperstei 68* explains the prominence of the magazine's title.

Appendix B

Interview avec Didier Daeninckx, Aubervilliers, le 16 août 2017

Question: Pourquoi choisissez-vous d'écrire des romans noirs?
Réponse: Les romans noirs, c'était longtemps une littérature dont personne ne se souciait. Les universitaires ne s'y intéressaient pas, c'était considéré comme la littérature de gare. Mais moi j'ai toujours considéré que le roman noir était une manière de faire des hypothèses sur le marché du monde. C'est une manière de bâtir des scénarios pour essayer d'expliquer des choses qui sont totalement inexplicables. Le monde est de plus en plus opaque, de plus en plus difficile à ausculter, de plus en plus difficile à comprendre. Le roman noir français s'appuie sur certains auteurs américains comme Dashiell Hammett et Jim Thompson, puis des auteurs anglais comme William McIlvanney, donc il y a eu un espace du roman noir où les auteurs essaient de comprendre un monde incompréhensible par la fiction policière. Ça m'a fortement intéressé. C'était surtout les Américains qui avaient mis au point ce petit genre littéraire et puis des auteurs français à partir des années 1970, comme Jean-Patrick Manchette ou Jean Vautrin, ou encore Frédéric Fajardie. Principalement, c'est ces trois-là, mais juste avant il y en avait un autre qui s'appelle Jean Amila qui était un auteur très important mais qui est passé inaperçu. Ils ont essayé aussi d'interroger la société, et puis les changements de psychologie, des changements de comportement humain, par le biais de la fiction policière. Moi j'avais aussi d'autres interrogations, qui étaient quelque part simplement sociétales mais aussi historiques. Donc, le roman policier me semblait quelque chose de très important pour interroger la société française sur des choses qu'elle refusait de dire et ne voulait pas voir. J'ai des lecteurs qui viennent sur mes livres par surprise. Je pense qu'ils voient très vite la différence d'avec des romans d'évasion.

Il faut dire qu'on n'était vraiment pas nombreux à utiliser le roman noir de cette manière quand j'ai commencé. Aujourd'hui il y a tout un tas d'auteurs en Espagne qui ont travaillé exactement de la même manière, par exemple Manuel Vazquez Montalban, Francisco Gonzalez Ledesma, ensuite Paco Ignacio Taibo el segundo en Amérique du Sud. Maintenant on voit dans les pays nordiques les Islandais comme Arnaldur Indridason qui travaillent un

petit peu de la même manière. Déjà dans les années 1960 il y avait un couple d'écrivains suédois très importants dans l'histoire du roman noir qui faisaient la même chose que ce que je faisais. Ils s'appellent Maj Sjowall et Per Wahloo, un monsieur et une dame. La dame vit toujours. Dans les années 1960 ils ont inventé un roman noir qui est à peu près la même chose que je fais. En Suède comme en France, une partie du pays a été résistante et l'autre a collaboré et il y avait du non-dit autour de tout ça. Il y a eu aussi l'assassinat du premier ministre Olof Palme, qui n'est d'ailleurs toujours pas résolu. Il y a eu 50 hypothèses là-dessus. Palme était quelqu'un de considérable qui a beaucoup travaillé au rapprochement entre Israël et le monde arabe, donc c'était un personnage des années 1970 très important mondialement. Sjowall et Wahloo ont fait un livre sur cet assassinat et ils ont aussi réfléchi sur l'extrême droite. C'est vraiment des auteurs qu'on a oubliés et qui ne sont pas cités mais ils sont très importants. Quand on lit ces auteurs suédois d'un seul coup il y a ce poids de l'histoire, ce poids de la réflexion politique, dans leur engagement à l'intérieur des livres mais en même temps on se retrouve à se promener dans les espaces.

Q: Les écrivains français du 19e siècle comme Zola avaient aussi envie de montrer la société française. Quel est votre rapport avec ces écrivains ?

R: Chez les auteurs du 19e siècle il y a un aspect descriptif, quelque chose qui est de l'ordre de l'inventaire comme avec Balzac et la Comédie humaine. Il y a là véritablement une volonté de regarder la naissance du grand commerce de la spéculation, mais sans désir de combat ni de dénonciation. Ils ne critiquent pas et le monde n'est pas considéré comme criminel. Le mécanisme n'est pas donné comme un mécanisme meurtrier, même avec Maupassant quand il fait *Bel Ami* et son personnage principal revient d'Algérie à l'époque des massacres. Dans les années 1970 on est dans une période de l'histoire contemporaine française où toute une génération ne supporte plus le mensonge sur la collaboration, la participation à la Shoah, les millions de morts de la colonisation, le mensonge sur le génie français et ainsi de suite. Donc il y a un espace qui s'ouvre pour en parler. Pour moi, c'est l'espace du roman noir.

Q: Pensez-vous à votre public quand vous écrivez ?

R: Je ne me suis jamais posé la question du public. Je m'en fiche complètement. J'en m'en fiche aussi de la réception de mes romans : que ce soit lu par 150 personnes ou 15 0000

personnes, ce n'est pas du tout quelque chose qui me travaille. Je n'ai jamais non plus eu dans la tête l'idée d'amoindrir la critique sociale pour avoir plus de lecteurs.

Q: Cadin est policier, il n'est pas détective privé. Pour moi, la figure de Cadin est une manière de critiquer la police et l'État français de l'intérieur, mais de manière réaliste. À travers son personnage on voit que ces systèmes peuvent aider et avoir un côté positif. Était-ce votre intention ?

R: Je crée l'inspecteur Cadin en 1977 et je l'abandonne en 1990. En 1977, on est dans le contrecoup de 1968 où il y a eu cette tentative de réforme d'une société complètement bloquée. Il y a beaucoup de gens qui disent que 1968 c'est une génération qui a essayé de passer du noir et blanc à la couleur. C'est à peu près ce qui s'est passé. On était dans une société étouffante. On était dépendant des parents jusqu'à 21 ans et on avait l'impression de jamais s'en sortir. Les femmes en France n'avaient pas le droit de faire un chèque sans l'autorisation de leur mari. La sexualité était totalement un domaine bloqué, l'avortement était interdit, il y avait une télé d'État. L'État possédait tous les moyens. En 1968 les questions du pouvoir de la police et de la loi sont apparues comme des questions vraiment importantes à débattre. Moi j'avais autour de moi des militants politiques, des gens qui étaient engagés dans le combat politique qui se posaient la question d'investir l'appareil d'État ou de devenir juge, toute une série de choses. Il y avait ceux qui disaient qu'il fallait investir la police et c'est de là que venait l'inspecteur Cadin. J'étais animateur, éducateur de rue, ici à Aubervilliers pendant une période, dans un quartier compliqué. Parmi les jeunes avec qui je travaillais il y en avait un type très intéressant qui se destinait au métier de flic. Je me rappelle son surnom : *beau-bosse.* C'était un type vraiment très intelligent et un jour il m'avait dit qu'il voulait devenir policier. Donc je me suis dit, ce type bien, ce type qui a une vision positive du monde, qui a une volonté de faire en sorte que personne ne soit mis de côté, qu'est-ce qu'il va devenir quand il va passer dans la machine à laver d''un commissariat ? Cadin est né de ça, puis après il y avait autre chose, mais il est né surtout de cette réflexion. Comme souvent chez moi c'est né de ce que je vois autour de moi, que j'intègre dans l'écriture.

Q: La moitié des romans dans la série de l'Inspecteur Cadin se déroulent en province (Strasbourg, Hazebrouck, Toulouse). Dans l'autre moitié, l'action a lieu dans une banlieue parisienne fictionnalisée, Courvilliers, qui est un mélange entre Aubervilliers et la

Courneuve. Vous dévoilez les cultures et les histoires provinciales que Paris a cachées, et en même temps dans la Série vous dévoilez aussi les horreurs du colonialisme. Est-ce que vous essayez de souligner les liens entre le colonialisme « outre-mer » et le colonialisme « provincial » ?

R: Non, pas vraiment mais ça m'intéresse ! Pour le personnage de policier itinérant l'archétype c'est Maigret de Georges Simenon qui n'arrête pas de se balader. Il va de Fécamp à Concarneau, il va sur des bateaux et ainsi de suite. Ça m'intéressait de faire en sorte que Cadin soit aussi un personnage mobile. Sa première enquête c'est à Strasbourg en Alsace, qui était considérée comme une province reculée et intellectuellement très conservatrice. C'est un pays qui est en cheval entre l'Allemagne et la France, où on parle un patois allemand. Ce pays a été occupé pendant presque 50 ans, puis encore après pendant 4 ans, donc il y une sorte de regard de méfiance. Et puis, pour ces régions l'Alsace et la Lorraine le monde entier a payé un prix. C'était le point de départ de la guerre de 14–18 et en même temps l'Alsace-Lorraine a créé ce qu'on appelle le roman national. C'est-à-dire qu'en France la manière de raconter l'histoire est née de la défaite de 1870 quand l'Allemagne a pris l'Alsace et la Lorraine. Donc c'est une guerre qui remonte à 140 ans. Quand la France a perdu avec Napoléon III, l'Allemagne a pris l'Alsace et la Lorraine et à ce moment-là on a commencé à écrire les histoires de Jeanne d'Arc, de Vercingétorix et ainsi de suite, en disant voilà on est un peuple extraordinaire avec un génie, on s'est fait prendre ces pays-là par des barbares. C'est de la perte de l'Alsace-Lorraine que le nationalisme moderne en France est né. Donc l'Alsace et la Lorraine ont symbolisé véritablement ce nationalisme. On a considéré ces gens-là comme des gens extrêmement conservateurs, alors que ce que je raconte dans *Mort au premier tour* ce n'est pas tout à fait ça. Il y a des choses très différentes qu'on a complètement mises à la poubelle, par exemple le fait qu'en 1918 il y a eu une révolution à Strasbourg qui était une révolution spartakiste et soviétique. Ça ne va pas dans le sens du nationalisme ou de l'écriture du roman national, donc ça m'intéressait de dire ça à l'intérieur d'un roman. Je voulais couper un petit peu les fondations sur lesquelles tout le monde semble bien installé et puis on s'aperçoit que ça bouge un petit peu plus que ça.

Q: Est-ce que vous avez été influencé par les mouvements régionalistes comme celle de Larzac qui sévissaient en France à l'époque que vous écriviez les romans de la Série?

R: Non, ce n'est pas vraiment ma culture mais j'étais sensible à tous ces mouvements en Corse, en Bretagne, en Flandres, comme en Alsace. Cette diversité pour moi c'est une richesse. La Révolution française a voulu imposer une langue et donc une partie de toutes ces différences a été cassée par la République française. Dans les années 1970 ça resurgissait, toute cette palette de couleur des langues régionales et des façons de vivre. En même temps à l'intérieur des mouvements régionalistes il y a beaucoup d'ambiguïtés. Dans mon livre *La Complainte oubliée*, qui n'est pas un livre de Cadin, j'ai inventé une histoire policière autour de l'ambiguïté des mouvements indépendantistes français qui étaient subventionnés par les nazis. Un des principaux dirigeants, un abbé qui s'appelle l'Abbé Perrot qui était vraiment un nazi nationaliste, a été tué par les résistants. Donc une partie du mouvement nationaliste breton a basculé dans le nazisme. Et puis un des principaux linguistes bretons pour la renaissance de la langue bretonne était un nazi. Il avait une école à son nom et j'ai participé à des mouvements pour faire débaptiser l'école. Je pense que la République à tort de ne pas reconnaître les langues régionales mais en même temps les régionalistes doivent accepter qu'à certains moments de l'Histoire ils ont été totalement manipulés et à la remorque des mouvements d'extrême droite.

Q: Dans *Mort au premier tour* Hans/Jean Arp est important. Pourquoi la présence de cette figure historique ?

R: Il s'appelle Jean et Hans et puis sa femme est Sophie Taeuber, une figure très importante et souvent oubliée du mouvement dadaïste. Dans le livre je raconte qu'au cœur de Strasbourg il y a ce bâtiment, L'Aubette, avec ses fresques, son cinéma, son cabaret et tout, qu'Arp et Taeuber ont créés ensemble avec Theo van Doesburg. Après la guerre de 1939–1945 tout le monde pensait que tout ça avait été détruit par les Nazis et c'est faux. Ça a été détruit par les commerçants dans les années 1930 avant l'arrivée des nazis parce qu'ils ont considéré que ça repoussait la clientèle. On voit là comment le sentiment national peut être fabriqué sur des choses totalement fausses. Ça me plaisait bien de souligner ce genre de chose.

Q: La Série de l'Inspecteur Cadin nous donne beaucoup d'informations sur la France du siècle dernier et surtout sur la période d'après-guerre et les conséquences du déclin de l'Empire français. Nous discutons aujourd'hui en 2017, à une époque où les questions de la

religion et de la laïcité sont des thèmes de société importants. Ces questions n'apparaissent pas trop souvent dans la Série. Quel est votre avis là-dessus ?

R: Pour la République française, la laïcité c'est normalement la protection de la liberté de conscience. Aux États-Unis le fait d'être comme moi athée, de ne pas croire en l'existence d'un Dieu quelconque est considéré comme anormal. Là-bas, il ne s'agit pas de liberté de conscience mais de la protection des religions. Mais on ne protège absolument pas les gens comme moi qui n'ont aucune religion et aucun rapport à Dieu sinon le fait que c'est un phénomène culturel. On le voit avec Trump avec ce qui se passe à Charlottesville en ce moment. C'est basé sur une conception créationniste du monde. La guerre de Sécession s'est faite là-dessus, sur le fait qu'il y avait des divisions entre les hommes par le système de création, ce qui vouait une partie de l'humanité à être esclaves.

En France je pense qu'on parle mal de ces questions parce que tout s'est joué il y a plus d'un siècle sur la séparation de l'Église et de l'État. On a vraiment eu l'impression que c'était gagné pour toujours, que le système d'une laïcité comprise comme un garant de la liberté de croire ou ne pas croire était bon. Mais non, c'est extrêmement fragile et on est dans un pays qui s'aperçoit de la fragilité de cette manière de vivre ensemble.

Pendant très longtemps il y a eu ceux qui se sont battus très fortement contre la laïcité, pour permettre à l'église catholique de s'imposer dans l'espace politique. J'habite dans un département qui vit de manière difficile ces questions-là, en ce qui concerne l'Islam. Je pense qu'une partie des hiérarchies de l'Islam a cette tentation d'être sur le terrain politique. Il y a un véritable combat à mener pour que cette religion qui prend vraiment de l'importance aujourd'hui dans le monde, en Europe et un peu partout en France, comprenne exactement sa place. Essayer d'occuper un terrain qui est un terrain de décision politique c'est quelque chose qui pose des problèmes extrêmement sérieux. Les intégristes catholiques ont profité il y a quelques années de ce vaste débat qui était mené (et mal conduit) sur le mariage pour tous. Ils ont essayé de reprendre de l'influence sur un terrain politique et ils ont pour une part réussi. Donc on est dans une période de redéfinition. Mais je pense que sur le problème de la laïcité en France il faut véritablement dire qu'on ne va pas faire de concessions.

Q: Pour retourner à la Série de l'Inspecteur Cadin et aux problèmes sociaux qu'elle dépeint, le personnage principal du *Géant inachevé,* Mélodie-cassette, est enfermé dans un hôpital psychiatrique. Pourquoi cet accent sur la folie dans *Le Géant inachevé* ?

R: L'hôpital psychiatrique et la folie c'est véritablement quelque chose que j'ai très peu abordé mais j'ai toujours eu envie d'en parler. *Le Géant inachevé* c'était aussi une manière d'aborder ça. Le petit roman que j'ai publié en 2015, *Caché dans la maison des fous*, a lieu dans un hôpital psychiatrique à Saint-Alban, avec Paul Eluard, dans le contexte de la persécution des gens « différents » sous l'Occupation.

Et puis ça ramène à des choses personnelles, familiales. Quand j'ai écrit *Caché dans la maison des fous* j'y ai mis des personnes de ma famille qui sont directement liées à l'expérience psychiatrique. Certains sont toujours là. Je ne suis pas des écrivains qui se permettent de faire de l'autofiction, on a un respect pour les gens qui sont autour de soi, donc on essaye de passer autrement. Mais j'avais véritablement envie de signaler avec ce personnage de roman les gens qui sont enfermés en eux-mêmes et enfermés aussi par l'institution.

Le Géant inachevé se passe à Hazebrouck. C'est tout simplement la suite de *Mort au premier tour*. Quand j'ai écrit mon premier *Mort au premier tour* il y avait un juge dans la vie réelle à Marseille qui s'appelait le juge Ceccaldi. En 1977, le juge Ceccaldi fait une enquête sur la mafia des pétroliers BP Shell. Il est en train de comprendre comment ça se passe juste après le grand choc de pétrole et il voit qu'il y a des magouilles à un niveau mondial. On va complètement le casser en lui disant bon tu arrêtes ton truc et tu vas à Hazebrouck et il se retrouve nommé là-bas. Dans *Mort au premier tour* mon personnage est muté (on ne peut pas licencier les fonctionnaires) pour qu'on n'en aie plus jamais à parler. Je l'envoie à Hazebrouck. « Hazebrouck » est le dernier mot de *Mort au premier tour*.

Sous Napoléon il y avait un préfet qui avait été muté à Limoges et on a inventé les verbes « limoger » et « se faire limoger » pour l'idée de se faire licencier. En 1977, *Le Canard enchaîné* avait inventé le verbe « se faire *Hazebroucker* », mais ça n'a pas pris, je suis un des seuls à m'en souvenir. C'est pour ça que Cadin se trouve à Hazebrouck, pour tenir compagnie au Juge Ceccaldi. Quand j'ai décidé d'écrire *Le Géant inachevé* je voulais situer mon personnage à Hazebrouck, c'est le dernier mot de *Mort au premier tour*. Donc, je suis

parti d'ici, j'ai pris ma voiture et je suis allé m'installer 15 jours à Hazebrouck pour essayer de voir ce qu'il pouvait bien se passer là. Quand j'arrive, je tombe sur les vestiges de la Seconde Guerre, la rampe de lancement de fusées V1 et V2 qui bombarde Londres. Je tombe sur la partie flamande de la France et puis surtout on est en 1982 je crois quand je l'écris, c'est l'influence du Front National que je vois dans le nord et maintenant c'est un bastion du Front national, et c'est même un des principaux bastions, avec la région de PACA Marseille (Provence-Alpes Côte d'Azur). Mais ici à Aubervilliers en 82, Le Front national c'était *exotique*, ça existait pas, ils n'étaient pas organisées, on ne voyait pas des affiches, il y avait rien du tout. Mais quand j'arrive à Hazebrouck, le Front National est une réalité, c'est déjà une présence avec des années de militantisme. *Le Géant inachevé* est un des premiers livres en France qui prend cette dimension de l'éruption du parti d'extrême droite sur une région française.

Q: Au centre du *Géant inachevé* il y a le carnaval. Avant, les gens du peuple utilisaient le carnaval pour rendre une sorte de justice sociale et pour se moquer des gens pour les punir. Est-ce que vous voyez un lien profond entre le carnaval et le roman noir où est-ce que le carnaval figure dans ce roman plutôt pour donner un peu de la culture de la région?

R: J'ai voulu montrer que le roman noir c'est le carnaval de la littérature. Cadin va se retrouver sur scène, il va être pratiquement un géant. Le roman noir c'est l'héritier des contes pour enfants où on est dans un monde de fantômes, un monde nocturne, un monde de frayeur. Et puis, dans les contes pour enfants et le roman noir on a les personnages-archétypes, tout comme dans le carnaval on a les archétypes.

Dans le carnaval comme dans le roman noir on voit la vérité qui surgit d'un seul coup. Avec le carnaval ce surgissement est permis uniquement de telle heure à telle heure. La vérité dans le roman noir c'est pareil.

Q: L'histoire du *Meurtres pour mémoire* se déroule 20 ans après la nuit du 17 octobre 1961. On a dit que c'est une petite référence à *Vingt Ans Après* d'Alexandre Dumas. *Meurtres pour mémoire* est sorti 23 ans après le massacre du 17 Octobre. Est-il nécessaire d'avoir du recul pour parler des crimes de l'Histoire? Que serait-il passé si *Meurtres pour mémoires* était sorti jusque quelque mois après ?

R: Il aurait été interdit. Il y a un livre qui est sorti jusqu'après. C'est quelque chose d'extrêmement rare. C'est même un livre interdit. Il s'agit de *Ratonnade à Paris* chez François Maspero, avec des photos. On y voit *achevé d'imprimer en novembre 1961*, c'est à dire 15 jours après octobre 1961. Ce livre-là a été totalement interdit. La police l'a saisi pour détruire les exemplaires, et si j'en ai un c'est que j'ai un copain qui est tombé par hasard à Lyon sur un carton qui n'avait jamais été ouvert avec dedans 25 livres complètement rescapés. Après le 17 octobre 1961 le silence a été organisé par la censure. La censure a été impitoyable sur cet événement. Un numéro des *Temps modernes* de Jean-Paul Sartre a même été interdit. Ensuite pendant 20 ans il y a eu des gens qui essayaient d'en parler et à chaque fois il y a eu la répression. Et puis le doute s'installe, ça n'a pas existé. On arrive en 1982-83 où il y a toute une génération de jeunes qui sont nés ici mais dont les parents étaient Algériens, Marocains, Tunisiens. Tous ceux qui organisent la Marche pour l'égalité. Ils traversent la France et ils vont être cent mille à Paris et d'un seul coup il y a une génération qui prend conscience du fait qu'elle vient de quelque part. Ils sont des jeunes français mais leur histoire n'est pas simplement l'histoire qu'il y a dans les livres d'histoire française. Leur histoire est également dans d'autres endroits. Il y a aussi une partie de leur histoire qui n'existe nulle part, qui n'existe même pas dans la parole de leurs parents, qui n'a pas de transmission. Donc à un moment donné toute une génération s'aperçoit qu'elle a besoin d'une histoire complète, qu'elle a droit à ça. J'ai un rapport direct avec la répression ici à Aubervilliers, donc je voulais en parler. Mais pendant tout ce temps de ces 20 années il y a eu la répression, le silence organisé et ensuite le découragement des gens. Dès qu'on parle de ça on s'en prend plein la figure. Il a fallu le surgissement de la génération qu'on a appelé les potes (du logo de SOS racisme, « Touche pas à mon pote »), cette génération de la Marche pour l'égalité qui fait que d'un seul coup cette parole a été nécessaire.

Q: Dans *Le Bourreau et son double* vous êtes très critique des gens qui gardent le silence. Est-ce que c'est très sévère de critiquer des gens qui sont blessés et qui veulent garder le silence. Comme les parents de la génération de la Marche pour l'égalité ?

R: Il y a le silence des institutions, le silence de l'État. Ce silence aurait pu être brisé par la parole des témoins mais il ne l'a pas été parce les témoins sont restés silencieux. Il y a quelque chose qui est de l'ordre du secret, le secret des familles, des gens qui prennent la responsabilité du secret. Pour les générations qui viennent après ça crée un malaise, ce

secret qu'ils assument même si c'est compliqué, difficile. Pour les gens qui n'y sont pour rien ça rend fou, parce que la jeune génération sait qu'il s'est passé quelque chose. Ils savent qu'il y a des gens qui manquent, des gens qui ne sont pas là, qui sont absents, et personne ne leur donne d'explication. Mais moi je considère qu'on a le droit de demander des comptes.

Q: Assez souvent dans la Série des liens sont faits entre des évènements que d'habitude on étudie séparément. Dans *Meurtres pour mémoire* la Shoah et le colonialisme figurent ensemble. Est-ce que le roman est une forme de littérature appropriée pour faire de telles comparaisons?

R: C'est compliqué. Très sincèrement, je ne raisonnais pas en tant que romancier quand j'écrivais *Meurtres pour mémoire.* C'est toujours la réalité qui me renvoie à une chose. En 1980 ou 1981 le Conseil des ministres se tenait tous les mercredis en présence du président de la République. A cette époque le président de la République s'appelle Giscard d'Estaing, le premier ministre s'appelle Raymond Barre et autour de la table il y a quelqu'un qui a été le responsable de la répression du 17 octobre 1961. Il s'appelle Maurice Papon, il est ministre du budget et on sait aujourd'hui que c'est un complice de crimes contre l'humanité. Il a été condamné longtemps après pour son rôle dans la déportation de centaines et des centaines de Juifs de la région de Bordeaux. De l'autre côté de la table il y a Simone Veil, une rescapée des camps. C'est à dire qu'on se retrouve en France au Conseil des ministres les mercredis avec un complice des nazis, un criminel contre l'humanité, et en face de lui une victime. C'est d'une violence absolument incroyable, c'est totalement insupportable, c'est à rendre fou. Dans le roman j'essaye de comprendre ça. Le roman me sert pour émettre des hypothèses. Est-ce que Papon sait que Simone Veil a été déportée, a échappé de peu à la mort, qu'une partie de sa famille y est passée ? Est-ce que Simone Veil sait que c'est un des organisateurs des convois vers les chambres à gaz ? C'est quelque chose qui coupe le souffle. Dans le roman avec les personnages de fiction on peut aller un petit peu plus loin dans la manière de montrer la dissimulation, montrer les complicités, toute une série de choses. A chaque fois, je trouve des solutions romanesques mais les problèmes me sont posés par la réalité.

Q: Dans *Meurtres pour mémoire* différentes époques sont évoquées, et il y a beaucoup de métaphores. Le père et fils qui sont tués sont des professeurs d'histoire, il y un moment où

il y a une grève des fossoyeurs (donc, des gens qui enterrent des corps…) et il y a surtout la dernière scène dans le métro avec l'affiche-palimpseste […].

R: Ah oui, la scène où toutes les époques se dévoilent... Il faut dire que cette scène vient d'une pratique que j'ai de la ville. Je marche beaucoup dans Paris et en banlieue et j'ai 68 ans, donc j'ai plein d'images d'anciennes balades. La ville pour moi est véritablement un palimpseste. Il y a des quartiers entiers où je me souviens qu'il y avait autre chose quand je me baladais. Mon ombre était sur des murs, il y avait des usines, il y avait des inscriptions, tout a disparu, et donc une grande partie des cordes de ma vie a totalement disparu. Mais moi quand je me balade il y a toutes ces choses-là qui sont présentes dans ma mémoire. Je sais qui habitait là, il y avait un tel qui a habité là, il y avait ce type qui a refusé de faire la guerre au Vietnam en Indochine, et ainsi de suite, et donc je me balade dans plein de souvenirs de signification alors que les autres personnes qui sont dans la rue ne voient que des immeubles modernes, que des terrains vagues. Là où je marche il y a des sens interdit, alors les voitures vont dans un seul sens et je prends le sens interdit à pied de l'autre côté…

La ville est faite de plus en plus pour le regard de l'automobiliste. Toutes les publicités et toutes les enseignes ont été faites pour les gens qui circulent en voiture. Quand je m'en vais à pied, quand je prends à rebours comme ça, je vois qu'on a laissé de vieilles publicités et de vieux panneaux. Il y a encore plein de choses qui sont visibles. J'essaye de retrouver dans la ville tout ce que dit l'histoire d'une ville, tout ce qui s'est empilé. Il faut pratiquer le travail sur l'histoire de la même manière et là on peut trouver des choses absolument incroyables. Quand j'ai écrit *Caché dans la maison des fous* je suis tombé sur un personnage très important dans la culture populaire française, Denise Glaser, qui faisait cette émission de télévision Discorama sur les vedettes, sur les chanteurs, et elle était avec Paul Eluard. Ça change tout d'un seul coup, on est ailleurs. Aucun historien n'avait fait attention à ça.

Q: Dans *Le Bourreau et son double* les syndicats sont très présents, comme dans la Série en général. Le personnage de Claude Werbel est un de ceux qu'on a forcé à faire la guerre, un des bourreaux-victimes, mais il est aussi très important comme militant politico-syndical. C'est dans le contexte du déclin des syndicats pendant les années 1980, et du parti communiste français aussi, en partie à cause de son incapacité à incorporer les immigrés qui sont devenus beaucoup plus nombreux dans les usines à l'époque. Est-ce que ce personnage est un réflecteur de la société de l'époque?

R: Oui il y a tout ça, c'est-à-dire que ce personnage est important pour son parcours en France. Il a fallu attendre les années 1990 pour avoir une thèse d'État sur la torture, qui est un fait majeur des guerres coloniales. C'est une universitaire, Raphaëlle Branche, qui a fait ce livre, un livre essentiel mais qui est venu 20 ans en retard. Mais c'est très courageux ce qu'elle a fait. C'était quelque chose qui me manquait depuis plus de 20 ans, un travail de ce genre-là. Sur la torture avant on avait l'image des tortionnaires Port-Maria d'Algérie. C'était des parachutistes, un stéréotype. Mais quand on regarde de plus près on s'aperçoit que chez les appelés, les gens ordinaires, il y a des milliers qui ont torturé. On a des exemples de prêtres, d'aumôniers, qui torturent, on a l'exemple d'intellectuels qui torturent. Tant que c'est les mercenaires on est rassuré, c'est pas nous c'est eux, et là d'un seul coup on s'aperçoit que cette répression c'est nous. Mon personnage a été embarqué dans une histoire qui le dépasse complètement. Il est manipulé par les techniques de l'armée qui jouent sur la virilité d'un jeune type de 19 ans. Il faut avoir une conscience morale extraordinaire pour échapper à la meute.

Mon personnage rentre dans un endroit où il sait qu'on torture. Il ne veut pas y rentrer mais il est obligé. Son chef lui dit d'ouvrir le robinet qui sert à remplir la baignoire pour une torture. Avec ce simple geste il est sali à jamais. Il aurait dû dire « ton robinet, tu le gardes, j'y touche pas » mais il ne le fait pas et d'un seul coup il est dans cet immense culpabilité, la culpabilité d'une grande partie de la classe ouvrière française. Cette culpabilité est une certaine manière d'accepter la guerre.

En 1956 le Parti Communiste gagne les élections avec le Parti socialiste et ils votent l'augmentation des crédits de guerre pour l'Algérie. Ils ont une responsabilité écrasante là-dedans. Dans les années qui suivent les travailleurs algériens se rappellent que la solidarité internationale a été mesurée. *Le Bourreau et son double* parle de cette difficulté dans un pays comme la France où la culture impériale a été d'une grande importance, le fait d'être d'avoir eu des colonies, d'avoir dominé une partie du monde. C'est une fierté qui n'a pas été remise en cause d'un seul coup quand la France devient une terre mondialisée avec des gens qui viennent travailler de partout. En Angleterre c'est pareil, sauf que l'Angleterre n'est pas une République. Nous on est une république et donc il y avait normalement une égalité qui aurait dû se faire. On a accumulé les problèmes et ça explique une partie du malaise français à mon avis.

Q: *Le Facteur fatal* est un recueil de nouvelles qui tracent une sorte d'autobiographie de Cadin. Est-ce que l'idée était de revenir au cœur du genre en écrivant des nouvelles, car le roman noir a commencé sous la forme des nouvelles avec Poe ?

R: L'aspect social est plus important. Cadin est vraiment un personnage qui est du milieu des années 1970 à la fin des années 1980. Au milieu des années 1970, d'un seul coup la société française se met à respirer. Il y a la majorité à 18 ans, il y a les radios libres, il y a le droit à l'avortement, il y a la maîtrise sur la sexualité, il y a une émancipation des femmes. Il se passe quelque chose. Moi, je l'ai vécu comme je le fais vivre à Cadin, c'est-à-dire que d'un seul coup on a une société qui ouvre les poumons. Ça dure jusqu'au milieu des années 1980 avec Mitterrand et donc c'est comme si le balancier de l'histoire redonnait de l'air. La machine se grippe vers 1983. On sent que le moment se bloque et puis vers la fin des années 1980 le balancier s'immobilise et repart en arrière.

Q: Même avec des choses comme la chute du mur de Berlin ? Est-ce que le rêve du communisme était mort à ce point-là ?

R: Pour moi, la fin de la dynamique de libération que portait le communisme c'est 1968, avec l'invasion de la Tchécoslovaquie de Dubcek. Après, c'est des momies qui viennent au pouvoir. Gorbatchev il est là pour fermer le cercueil. Il y a un auteur anglais (Gavin Bowd) qui a écrit un livre extraordinaire sur le Parti communiste qui s'appelle *L'Interminable enterrement*. Il parle de l'impression d'être à l'enterrement pendant 20 ans depuis 1968 jusqu'à la fin de l'Union soviétique. Plus profondément, on voit que la société au niveau mondial et la société américaine se libéralisent pour en arriver à Reagan, Bush, et aujourd'hui à Trump. Dans tout un tas d'endroits du monde on s'aperçoit qu'il y a une sorte de contre-révolution qui s'est installée. En Russie aujourd'hui, c'est de l'ordre de la régression énorme. Au Moyen-Orient, j'ai fréquenté des gens autour de l'OLP et c'était une organisation laïque. L'OLP de Yassir Arafat au début c'était pour un État socialiste et laïque. On sait ce que c'est devenu. En France c'est pareil, il y a véritablement une régression démocratique en France. Je la date de la fin des années 1980, à la fin d'un espoir. 1989 la chute du mur de Berlin, 1990 la guerre du Golfe : ça va vite, hein. L'histoire se décline très rapidement.

(Daeninckx and Gleeson, 2017)

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