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The following essay was prepared in response to Meaghan Emery's article and Richard Golsan's response to that article published in *French Historical Studies* 33:4 (Fall 2010) and Emery's response to Golsan's response published in *H-France Salon* vol. 2, issue 1, #2.

## Negotiating Jean Giono: Texts, History, and Ethics

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## I

The debate between Meaghan Emery and Richard Golsan over Jean Giono's literary legacy re-enacts the title of Eric Conan and Henry Rousso's 1996 volume *Vichy, un passé qui ne passe pas*. Emery blends cultural, intellectual and social history in her analysis of the multiple strands of Giono's thought in texts of varied genres and traces Giono's involvement in several social movements during the 1930s.<sup>1</sup> She reads Giono as an idealist whose pacifist position was first compromised by events of the 1930s<sup>2</sup> and which, further reinforced by the realities of civil war during the Occupation, led the writer to retreat into a localized aestheticism. Drawing from his extensive work on World War II French literary relations and the French trials of crimes against humanity, Golsan continues his reflection on the role of writers, *engagement*, and ethics.

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<sup>1</sup> In her response to Golsan (Meaghan Emery, "Of Historical Hindsight and Oversight, and Why Reopening Giono's Case Is a Worthy Endeavor," *H-France Salon*, vol. 2, issue 1, #1: 8), Emery cites Giono's anti-Hitlerian and anti-Vichyist comments in several texts as evidence of the complexity of Giono's ideological positioning. They include *Triomphe de la Vie* (written from January to July 1941; published first in Switzerland in 1941 and in France in March 1942), "Provence" (1936/diary; republished in 1942 in the *Nouvelle Revue française*; and in April 1943 in *L'Eau vive*); "La vie de Mlle Amandine" (which first appeared in serialized format between 1934-1935); "Aux sources mêmes de l'espérance" (first published as "Le chant du monde" in 1933; republished with the new title in April 1943 in *L'Eau vive*), and "Le poète de la famille" (first published in April 1943 in *L'Eau vive*; see <http://pages.infinit.net/poibru/giono/gionobib.htm> for a catalogue, including dates of recent re-editions). Further questions regarding method emerge here: what is to be made of the recirculation of Giono's pre-war texts during the Occupation? Do these texts indeed illustrate thought independent of regime, as Emery asserts? Was this recirculation voluntary or involuntary on the part of Giono with respect to his publishers? What kind of negotiations were involved? What is Emery's rationale for the selection of these particular texts?

<sup>2</sup> Highlighted by Golsan as well, they include France's position on the Spanish Civil War, France's reaction to the Anschluss, and the fallout from the 1938 Munich Accords.

Golsan's analysis of Giono's pre-war texts and Occupation diary leads him to read Giono's political positioning as highly problematic in moral terms.

The Emery-Golsan debate may be framed with respect to the broader project of the socio-political contextualization of French writers, implicitly building on the previous studies by Anne-Marie Thiesse, Richard Golsan, David Carroll, Alice Kaplan, and Julian Jackson.<sup>3</sup> The current debate raises important questions regarding the parameters of literary history, its scope, methodologies, and theoretical framing of the text/context nexus. Which archives figure in the socio-political contextualization of a given author's corpus? How to understand the authorial function? Of particular relevance to historians is the question of periodization and how to measure ideological *engagement* before, during, and after war, especially in the microhistorical time of regime shift. Furthermore, (how) can Giono's pre-war and Occupation diary, published by Gallimard more than half a century after the events in question, be used as a form of historical evidence?<sup>4</sup> Golsan articulates questions about the relationship between thought and action during totalitarian regimes—analyzed by Jean-Paul Sartre and Hannah Arendt, among others—as he reflects upon the responsibility of the individual writer. He maintains that well-published literary authors, including one of Giono's stature, be held to the highest ethical standards. His analysis seeks to reconcile the author's pre-war identity as a pacifist with his Occupation complicity, if not duplicity, with broader regime values.<sup>5</sup> Emery and Golsan both address rhetorical issues as they contrast the hopeful tone of Giono's late 1930s diary entries with the derisive voice of his 1943-1944 entries and propose that these stylistic shifts correspond to Giono's ideological repositionings.

## II

Emery contends that any current readings of Giono must be undertaken with reference to the setting in which he lived and wrote for the entirety of his literary career, the small town of

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<sup>3</sup> By no means exhaustive, key reference points are Anne-Marie Thiesse, *Ecrire la France: le mouvement littéraire régionaliste de langue française entre la Belle Époque et la Libération* (Paris, 1991); Richard Golsan, *Fascism, Aesthetics and Culture* (Hanover, 1992), *French Writers and the Politics of Complicity* (Baltimore, 2006); David Carroll, *French Literary Fascism* (Princeton, 1994); Alice Kaplan, *The Collaborator: The Trial and Execution of Robert Brasillach* (Chicago, 2000), and "Ghostly Demarcations: The Case of Ramón Fernandez," *The Nation*, 15 February 2010, 29-32; and Julian Jackson, *France: The Dark Years 1940-1944* (Oxford, 2001).

<sup>4</sup> Emery and Golsan both note the selective nature of the diary, which begins with entries from February 11, 1935-July 27, 1939, is followed by a four-year hiatus, and resumes with entries from September 20, 1943-September 5, 1944, concluding three days before Giono's arrest of September 8.

<sup>5</sup> Golsan, "Of Jean Giono and Collaboration: A Response to Meaghan Emery," *French Historical Studies* 33:4 (Fall 2010): 605. Golsan cites Antoine Compagnon's recent contextualization of Bernard Faÿ's wartime anti-Masonic writings (2009) as further evidence of the timely nature of the current debate. See also Barbara Will's forthcoming study (Columbia University Press, 2011) of the intellectual collaboration between Gertrude Stein and Bernard Faÿ, director of the *Bibliothèque Nationale* under Vichy and chief protector of Stein's interests in France during World War II. For a discussion of the complexities of Jean-Paul Sartre's war-time positioning, see Allan Stoekl's multiple readings of Sartre in "What the Nazis Saw: *Les Mouches* in Occupied Paris" *SubStance* no. 32 (2003): 78-91, Issue 102 "The Politics of French Literary History." Jonathan Judaken's *Jean-Paul Sartre and the Jewish Question* sheds new light on Sartre's engagement during the Occupation (reviewed by Michael Christofferson: <http://www.hfrance.net/vol10reviews/vol10no4christofferson.pdf>).

Manosque.<sup>6</sup> She thus displaces the view of Giono as a literary collaborator, created in Parisian circles, away to the settings and groups with which he was associated in the pre-World War II years. This spatial positioning supports Emery's approach to Giono across time and varied literary genres. The very title of Emery's article "Giono's Popular Front: La Joie au Grand Air, Idéologie Réactionnaire"<sup>7</sup> sets up a *double jeu*. Emery situates Giono in terms of the Popular Front years of 1936-1938, with attention to the years prior and post, which supports her reading of Giono's writings and worldview as utopian and positive. At the same time, perhaps in a nod to Rougement, her title inscribes a query, namely that Giono maintains a front that is reactive to multiple currents of social thought, but is not politically reactionary.<sup>8</sup> In the concluding section of her article, Emery frames the utopian atmosphere of the Popular Front with respect to an anthropologically-informed cultural history and the theme of the *fête*.<sup>9</sup> With its anti-hierarchical, anarchist leanings, the *fête* links a celebratory Giono to the idealist tenor of Lagrange's vision of the *ajistes*, or youth hostel movement. Emery views culture—the region of Provence, literature as aesthetic production, the utopianism of the brief-lived Contadour "happenings" and the *fête*—as the multi-faceted base through which to evaluate Giono, whereas politics—corresponding to political institutions, state policies and ideology—functions as a superstructure.

Throughout this and her 2008 article, Emery repeatedly underscores Giono's aversion to organized movements, including the Félibrige and the French Communist Party, in order to explain Giono's lack of *engagement*. She attends less to Giono's predilection for anarchism, however, which carries across time and political regimes, and marks his close attachment to his father. This *retour au père*, as she adroitly terms it,<sup>10</sup> is important and provides a partial explanation of Giono's relationship to political ideologies.<sup>11</sup> Giono's diary entries reference his father's knowledge of the shoemaker's craft and an elegiac tone as the grown son mourns his father's death.<sup>12</sup> Caught between his memories as an only child of artisan parents and the

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<sup>6</sup> Manosque is located in the department of Alpes-de-Haute-Provence, in the region of Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, 27 miles northeast of Aix-en-Provence. In the 1930s and 1940s, it had a population of around 5,500.

<sup>7</sup> The title references Giono's belief in the transcendent power of nature/landscape and suggests another element of Giono's diverse "-isms": budding *ecologiste*.

<sup>8</sup> Meaghan Emery, "Giono's Popular Front: La Joie au Grand Air, Idéologie Réactionnaire," *French Historical Studies* 33:4 (Fall 2010): 577.

<sup>9</sup> Emery makes use of the *fête* to index regional identity and Provençal sociability, drawing from historical and ethnological literature to support this view: Emery, "Giono's Popular Front," 598-599. Giono's actual involvement with or knowledge of *fête* remains difficult to elucidate, however, beyond the context of the May 24, 1936 parade that he organized after the Popular Front electoral victory (Emery, "Giono's Popular Front," 584) and his support for the spontaneous quality of the short-lived Contadour meetings.

<sup>10</sup> Meaghan Emery, "Jean Giono: The Personal Ethics of an Author Writing Under the Occupation," *The Journal of European Studies* 38:3 (2008): 298.

<sup>11</sup> Giono, an only child born to a 50-year-old cobbler father and 38-year-old laundress mother, claimed affiliation with his patriline. Giono senior had subscribed to an anarchist political tradition, as had his father before him, notes Pierre Citron, *Giono* (Paris 1995), 9. Giono's consciously gendered affiliation was in part reactive, for the writer's daily life was in fact grounded in his mother's kin network (see Giono's November 22, 1935 entry, *Journal*, 79). Furthermore, Giono was caught between generations: too young to identify with the survivors of the Franco-Prussian war of 1870—see his October 1938 correspondence with Roger Martin du Gard and Jean Guéhenno on this issue, *Journal (1935-1939)*, in *Journal, poèmes, essais*, ed. Pierre Citron (Paris, 1995), 271—he was too old to identify with the young Resisters and Miliciens from his local world.

<sup>12</sup> See Giono's entry of November 16, 1935, *Journal*, 74.

middle-class world of writers of his adult years, Giono never entirely leaves behind his family genealogy, even as he rapidly achieves upward social mobility. Thus Giono's celebration of artisans and peasants marks a genealogical solidarity that is independent of political ideology.<sup>13</sup>

Emery's privileging of Giono's localism downplays his situatedness in networks of literary power at the level of the region and in the capital. Her view of Giono's artistic autonomy contrasts with that of Anne-Marie Thiesse. In her study of French literary regionalism between the Belle Epoque and the Liberation, Thiesse shows how Giono's *Naissance de l'Odyssee* was rejected by Grasset in favor of the more rustic *Colline*. Qualified as the "Provençal Virgil" by André Gide, Giono went to Paris briefly but returned to his home territory, launched in the category of "*rustico-régionaliste*." Thiesse observes that Giono subscribed to the image imposed by his publisher but would cast his own mark through an imaginary geography based in anachronism and myth.<sup>14</sup> In the periods of the Liberation and the Purge Giono's imaginary geography could work to displace any *littérature du présent* backwards in time, a strategy employed by Pétainistes who when brought to trial highlighted their World War I years and downplayed their World War II years.<sup>15</sup>

In addition to tracing Giono's involvement with 1930s movements, Emery explores themes from Giono's literary writings as the basis to her analysis. In contemporary parlance, Giono would qualify as a loca(l)vore, committed to an immediate circle of home/community. Emery maintains that Giono's localism is not contradictory with a universalist worldview.<sup>16</sup> She proposes that Giono supports a transcendent universalism that derives from French Revolutionary values and that would manifest in Provençal leftist political traditions. This universalism distances Giono from any form of particularism, such as political support for groups, including the Jews. Giono's macro view of society results in little attention to specifics, a point elaborated by Emery in her response to Golsan.<sup>17</sup> Giono's support of several Jewish artists during the Occupation was thus motivated by individual friendships and associations,

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<sup>13</sup> This genealogical solidarity appears to transcend Giono's class solidarity regarding peasants in war, who figured disproportionately among its casualties in World War I.

<sup>14</sup> Anne-Marie Thiesse, *Ecrire la France*, 144. Thiesse observes that regionalist and rustic writers were little represented among those directly involved with collaboration: anti-Semitic polemicists, apologists for National Socialism and representative of the anti-Parliamentary Right came from Paris and not from the provinces (Thiesse, 285-286). She underscores the case of *La Gerbe*, whose political section was devoted to the glory of National Socialism, with Giono regularly proposed as a valued author. Of particular note is the interview between Chateaubriant and Giono in the March 19, 1942 edition about reorganizing France based in rurality. Thiesse attributes Giono's Liberation imprisonment and subsequent trial as linked to his collaboration with *La Gerbe*. Thiesse notes that German authorities supported novelists who clearly manifested a pro-German engagement: Arland, Montherland, Vercel, Morand, and selectively Giono, via *Triomphe de la Vie* (which was translated and published by Fischer-Suhrkamp. See Thiesse, 286). The period of the Occupation does not involve an "invasion of official French publishing by literary regionalism" according to Thiesse. Thiesse links her evaluation of Giono's degree of ideological collaborationism to the degree of direct support for the German occupation and the conditions for the production and diffusion of his literary writings in Vichy France.

<sup>15</sup> See my "Hear No Evil, Read No Evil, Write No Evil: Inscriptions of French World War II Collaborationism" in *Crime's Power: Anthropologists and the Ethnography of Crime*, eds. Phillip C. Parnell and Stephanie C Kane (New York, 2003), 245-267.

<sup>16</sup> Emery's observation that the philosophy in *Triomphe de la Vie* is based on the premise that the "natural laws" favoring the well-being of the community safeguard individual freedom, whereas "human laws" designed to achieve the same end abolish it (Emery, "Giono's Popular Front," 594 n. 83), suggests a resonance with the opening lines of the Social Contract that might be fruitfully pursued.

<sup>17</sup> Emery, "Of Historical Hindsight and Oversight," 11.

rather than by a broader solidarity with a persecuted social group, which included Jewish inhabitants of Manosque as well as the Jewish internees at the nearby Camp des Mées.<sup>18</sup>

Emery's project is to read Giono independently of his wartime condemnation, which in her response she faults Golsan for repeatedly imposing *aposteriori*. It is somewhat disingenuous for Emery to claim that positioning Giono ideologically between resistance and collaboration is not central to her analysis,<sup>19</sup> however, for any contemporary study of Giono inevitably reads his written texts as multiply inscribed in previous discursive fields, between and behind the spaces of writing. Emery's focus upon tracing the multiple strands of Giono's prewar thought, the resonance of his literary texts with the values of the National Revolution (especially Work and Family, but not Fatherland), as distinct from the most extremist renderings of National Socialism, is a complex undertaking and necessarily selective. By ending her analysis with the 1943 texts, which can serve as counterpoint to Golsan's emphasis on the 1943-1944 period, Emery stops short of the evolution of ideology during an important transition within the Vichy State. Emery does cite from the post-1943 writings, as when she addresses Giono's derisive remarks regarding fellow Contadourien Vladimir Rabinovitch, a lawyer by training, who implored Giono to take a public position on the Jewish question in early January 1944.<sup>20</sup> Emery cites Pierre Laborie's conclusions on the diffusion of ideology in public opinion during the Occupation and thus explains Giono's derisive tone in the Occupation diary as reflecting collective public opinion, rather than any personal anti-Semitism.<sup>21</sup>

### III

Troubling when read in the context of what we now know about the Occupation, Giono's derisive tone follows a certain logic, Emery notes. Golsan, in contrast, finds this tone condemnable, and he insists on an engaged reading of Giono, organizing much of his case around the diary and citing from his extensive previously published work. Golsan presumes a correlation between text (lightly edited for form, and not content, its editors assert in their foreword) and Giono's political thought for the period from September 20, 1943 to September 5, 1944. It is important to note that Giono's full correspondence is not available in the 1995 edition, which expands from the 1989 Pléiade version.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Located in a former tile-making factory, the camp was located some twenty-five kilometers from Manosque, on the left bank of the Durance river (*Journal*, 1271). For further contextualization of the Mées camp in Basses-Alpes, n. 702, *Camp de travailleurs étrangers*, see Robert Mencherini in (<http://www.memorialjeanmoulin.fr/articles.php?lng=fr&pg=108>).

<sup>19</sup> Emery, "Giono's Popular Front," 579.

<sup>20</sup> Emery, "Jean Giono: The Personal Ethics," 294 and "Giono's Popular Front," 595 n. 90.

<sup>21</sup> Giono's entry on August 13, 1944 reflects his judgment on Rabinovitch's 38-page text entitled *Judas*. "Rabi is intelligent, it should be good. No. It is bad. It does not represent order and measure. It is constipation. Of no interest, either human, or general. Small rage without greatness" (*Journal*, 464-465). In the next sentence, Giono goes on to praise the recent verse of the sub-prefect in nearby Forcalquier, Roger Bellion (*Journal*, 1279), who would publish under the pseudonym of Roger Rabiniaux after the war, often employing a caustic and scathing tone reminiscent of Céline. Thus one element of assessing Giono's ideological collaborationism involves identifying authors and texts that he admired: who Giono read is as important as what he wrote.

<sup>22</sup> The foreword states that correspondence cannot yet be fully brought together and published in its entirety (*Journal*, xvi) and the editors note, "We have often been led to cite letters received by Giono. Let us say once and for all, so as not to repeat useless references, that, except indications to the contrary, these letters are in his family's archives, which were liberally communicated to us" (*Journal*, xviii). The issue of the limits of the archive manifests itself here; see note 37.

Necessarily fragmentary, the diary provides evidence of the wide range of Giono's literary networks. It contains exchanges between Giono and Louis Aragon, who repeatedly asked Giono for a greater public *engagement* as of May 1935, to protest the torture of pacifists in Germany, and in September 1935 to sign an anti-fascist petition, to which Giono finally agreed on October 8.<sup>23</sup> It presents extensive communications between Giono and André Gide, who despite his more political public engagement appears as Giono's intimate throughout the pre-war period and the Occupation. It alludes to the triangulation of literary power between the three men, such that Gide mediates the Aragon-Giono dialogue, especially as Giono becomes increasingly disenchanted with Communist positioning. It presents exchanges with many fellow writers, including Jean Guéhenno (June 1937) and editor Jean Paulhan (late May 1938). The image of Giono that emerges from the diary is of a writer fully integrated in literary networks, not the solitary man that Giono puts forth and that would feed his legend.

Giono's identity as writer trumps political differences, as evidenced in his exchanges with Aragon and with Andrée Viollis, a journalist actively engaged in defending Spanish Republicans during the Civil War. Viollis beseeches Giono to engage more publicly in denouncing the Spanish Civil War in her letters of June 30 and July 2, 1937<sup>24</sup> and again later that month, on July 25, in which she describes the experiences of her soldier husband and her work as a nurse during World War I. The couple's traumas led to a militant anti-war stance. However, the current Spanish situation calls for a different response, notes Viollis. Despite their differences, Viollis closes her July 25<sup>th</sup> letter to Giono with admiration for his "magnificent certainty in the face of painful and complex problems."<sup>25</sup> The letters allow the reader to gain a more subtle sense of Giono's position: although broadly pacifist, Giono was disengaged from particulars, as early as the mid 1930s, well before the Occupation. The letters also enable the reader to understand Giono's subsequent reluctance to engage in more overt actions during the Occupation.

If one way to read Giono's public non-engagement during the Occupation is as a continuity with his post-World War I pacifist position, the tone in which he speaks about certain individuals varies and is problematic, as both Emery and Golsan observe. Giono's relationship with two Jewish artists, Jan Meyerowitz, the German/Polish-born pianist, and Luise Straus-Ernst, the German-born art historian, might be considered here.<sup>26</sup> The diary provides further context: when Meyerowitz was arrested and interned on October 23, 1943, in the nearby Camp des Mées, Giono intervened. He pursued multiple negotiations with the local head of the Milice, who communicated in turn with the bishop's see; with the local police and with his colleague in Marseille, contacted by telegram, to follow up with the Prefecture in Marseille about Meyerowitz's fate.<sup>27</sup> He spent October 24-25 working to get Meyerowitz out of the camp. On

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<sup>23</sup> Aragon expresses frustration with Giono's refusal to attend a writers' meeting in November 1938 (*Journal*, 321).

<sup>24</sup> *Journal*, 208-209.

<sup>25</sup> *Journal*, 215.

<sup>26</sup> Jan Meyerowitz (1913-1998) was born Hans Hermann Meyerowitz in Breslau, Germany (now Wrocław, Poland). Meyerowitz took up residence in Belgium in 1938, but when the Second World War commenced with the German invasion of Poland, in 1939, he went to southern France, where he acquired friends in the Resistance and survived underground much of the time. In Marseilles he was hidden from the Germans with the help of the French singer Marguerite Fricker, whom he married after the war. He emigrated to the United States in 1946, where he undertook a successful career as composer (<http://www.nytimes.com/1998/12/26/arts/jan-meyerowitz-85-composer-on-moral-subjects.html>). The editors' footnote in Giono's diary observes that Meyerowitz considered himself to be Polish but was German in nationality (*Journal*, 1269).

<sup>27</sup> *Journal*, 332-333.

October 26, Giono proposed to lodge Jan Meyerowitz at one of his farm properties, *La Margotte*, in nearby Forcalquier, hiring him as a farmworker at the wage of 100 francs per month. Giono's journal entry of October 27 notes:

"Stupefaction. My intervention to save Meyerowitz has got the whole Jewish nest of vipers in Manosque swarming. Of course Meyerowitz is Jewish, fully so although hidden, although Catholic (is that how), a Jew in terms of his lips, his nose, his heart and his soul, but it would seem that all of the Jews collaborated on the anonymous denunciation which sent him to Mées. They associated with the police commissioner who is Francist, that is, they denounced Meyerowitz to the commissioner. You can get lost in this complication, intelligent, sly and certainly mean-spirited. So I, a real imbecile, I go to the Mées camp and I get Meyerowitz out without asking myself if he is Jewish or not, knowing only that he is in trouble and that all of this seems to be falling squarely on me."<sup>28</sup>

The diary entry reproduces ethnic caricature of the kind widely disseminated in the popular press during the Dreyfus Affair and an integral part of Vichy propaganda and places the blame for one Jewish man's arrest onto his "community." The passage implies that the local Jewish community (native? foreign?) sacrifices Meyerowitz so as to protect itself. Giono's choice of the term "*imbécile*" echoes his auto-critique in the term "*dupe*" at other points in the diary and sardonically marks the interface between social representation and political ideology: when Giono engages in a positive political action, larger forces work to undo the generosity of the gesture's intent and undermine Giono's public face. He has chosen to defend a man raised and self-identified as a Christian, but who is in fact Jewish and has been betrayed by his fellow Jews: Meyerowitz is thus doubly condemned by Giono. Giono's phrasing of "*tout le panier de crabes juif*" to qualify the community in Manosque merges Jews and shellfish in an alimentary taboo and a distinct ethnic positioning. The complexity of interpersonal relations during the Occupation is captured by the evocation of the Jews dialoguing with a Francist police commissioner, whether or not this is historical fact, and by the tense relations between vulnerable foreign Jews and Meyerowitz, protected by Giono. After his release from the camp, Meyerowitz's increasingly desperate pleas during the final months of 1943 and early 1944, as he seeks to emigrate, leave Giono unmoved, and by February of 1944 he cuts off all contact with the pianist.<sup>29</sup> The reasons for Giono's reluctance to further engage with Meyerowitz are not clear: was it due to warnings that he received for having intervened on the composer's behalf, to which he alludes in the diary; was it due to pressures he experienced in supporting other individuals, including Luise Straus-Ernst and Charles Fiedler, a German-born Trotskyist and architect; or was it due to his regret over having intervened at all, given the multiple social relations that he negotiated, which included his wife's kin, local Manosquins and regional military authorities?

The case of Luise Straus-Ernst also does not allow for a straightforward conclusion regarding Giono's complicity. Born in Cologne, a talented art historian and journalist, Luise Straus was the first wife of artist Max Ernst, from 1918-1926. After the Nazis took power in 1933, she fled Germany to Paris and remained in exile in France. She moved from Paris to the south and, after being released from the Gurs camp, sought protection from Giono. Throughout the Occupation diary, Giono expresses sympathy for *Madame E.*, as he calls her, and gives her money for lodging and for a medical operation. His entry of March 29, 1944 notes that Straus-Ernst was distraught upon seeing foreign Jews without papers being trucked out and his entry of April 29

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<sup>28</sup> Journal, 336.

<sup>29</sup> In early December 1943, Meyerowitz pleads with the writer to drive him to Marseille. Meyerowitz did manage to leave France, with the assistance of Varian Fry and the Emergency Rescue Committee in Marseille, and he emigrated to America, where he developed a successful musical career as composer and librettist.

notes her arrest at her hotel, with a reference to a Jew being gunned down in Manosque the day before.<sup>30</sup> Giono's entry of June 16<sup>th</sup> notes his receipt of a letter from the Red Cross about Luise Straus-Ernst's suitcase, evidence of her upcoming deportation from Drancy, which took place on June 30<sup>th</sup>, on one of the last transports to Auschwitz, where she perished.<sup>31</sup> In contrast to his derisive comments about Vladimir Rabinovitch and Jan Meyorowitz, Giono's remarks about Luise Straus-Ernst are consistently sympathetic and express concern for her well-being. However as her memoir makes clear, her complex post-divorce relationship to Max Ernst,<sup>32</sup> and her refusal to accept the full impact of the Final Solution meant that Luise Straus-Ernst stayed on in France, despite the mid- to late-1930s entreaties of her publisher friend Hans (J.J.) Augustin and her son Jimmy to migrate to the United States. The details of her arrest in Manosque remain unclear.<sup>33</sup> If the reader moves to condemn Giono for not protecting her further, we must note that Straus-Ernst resisted the idea of leaving Europe at earlier points when she had the opportunity to do so. How does the contemporary reader reconcile multiple layerings of ethical responsibility—collective, regional, personal—on the part of Straus-Ernst, Manosque and Giono?

The Occupation diary entries about Meyerowitz and Straus-Ernst reveal Giono's active knowledge of local and regional political networks during the Occupation and his actions within, deepening the picture offered in the analyses of Emery and Golsan.<sup>34</sup> Giono's micropolitical engagement sees him participate in local power networks, as evidenced by his

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<sup>30</sup> *Journal*, 413, 425.

<sup>31</sup> *Journal*, 447. The details about Luise Straus-Ernst's deportation are published in her son's memoir, *A Not-So-Still Life* (New York, 1984), 254-255. Jimmy Ernst's acknowledgments thank Serge Klarsfeld and Robert Paxton for clarifying the chronology of his mother's death.

<sup>32</sup> Straus-Ernst had suffered greatly from Ernst's marital infidelities. Although interned in a camp at Milles (near Aix-en-Provence) in 1938, Max Ernst was released and able to leave France with Peggy Guggenheim in 1941, to whom he was married from 1942 to 1946. During their interview with the U.S. Vice Consul Hiram Bingham in Marseilles, Max Ernst offered to remarry Luise so as to allow her to leave France with him on a couple's exit visa, but Luise refused (Jimmy Ernst, *A Not-So-Still-Life*, 199; and Louise Straus-Ernst, *The First Wife's Tale* (New York, 2004), 120-122).

<sup>33</sup> At the end of his autobiography, Jimmy Ernst notes first learning of the circumstances of his mother's death from Fritz Neugass, Lou Straus-Ernst's closest companion from the 1933 days in Paris until his 1941 escape to New York, and who obtained information from the newly formed *Centre de documentation juive contemporaine* in Paris (Ernst, *A Not-So-Still-Life*, 254). The closing pages of the son's and the mother's memoirs contain the final photograph of Luise Straus-Ernst taken in Drancy just before her deportation on convoy 76. Forwarded by Charles Fiedler, Jimmy Ernst cites "the group of political and Jewish refugees that had lived under the protection of the great poet Jean Giono in Manosque (Alpes Maritimes) during the war. Fiedler, a young German architect, was the shepherd of Giono's farm animals and he met Lou in her capacity as translator into German of Giono's writings" (Ernst, 265). When a friend of J.J. Augustin went to Manosque to inquire about her whereabouts, he was told, "Lou Straus-Ernst was supposed to have been deported – perhaps September 1943. No one wanted to say which police carried out the orders, "but it wasn't anyone from here" (Straus-Ernst, *The First Wife's Tale*, xxii). The unidentified source proposes Straus-Ernst's deportation as having taken place ten months earlier than what actually occurred. If Giono's diary is accurate, Straus-Ernst spent the month of June in detention at Drancy before being deported to Auschwitz.

<sup>34</sup> Julian Jackson suggests parameters for reflection on the questions raised here. In his 2001 study of Vichy France, Jackson nuances collaborationism through the logic of diverse trajectories for writers such as Alain, Giono, Montherland, Chardonne, and Fabre-Luce: "Their degree of commitment varied. How many collaborationist papers did they write for? How long did they continue doing so? How political were their contributions? Did they go on either of the two trips to Weimar organized by the Germans in October 1941 and October 1942? The answers to these questions defined each individual's level of commitment." Jackson, *France: The Dark Years*, 208.

negotiating with Vichy officials on behalf of a range of individuals. If we follow Golsan's insistence on moral seriousness when analyzing literature during times of extreme political crisis, how to address the issue of individual action within the context of the moral corruption of a regime? How do we read Giono's multiple subjectivities, reflected in the range of voices within the diary: the dedicated writer; the sardonic observer and chronicler of events of June–August 1944, who witnesses the intensification of reprisals; the family man who provides for an extended household?<sup>35</sup> Is the difficulty in reconciling Giono's prewar "integral pacifist" position with his actions during the Occupation not linked to the transformation of his ethics, that transcend Emery's reading as strictly personal, and that remains to be fully elucidated through a careful study of the intersection of text, context, and action?

In the final months of the summer of 1944, Giono anticipates his arrest and impending judgment. His editors' note in the diary cites:

"the lengthy memorandum in the archives which lists his help to the Fradisse sisters, to Luise Ernst, to Meyerowitz, to Lévine, to men hiding from the STO in Contadour and in Criquet....The paragraphs devoted to his literary activity include inaccuracies that are unlikely as they concern points easy to verify: Grasset being pro-German, he no longer published anything with them, he says, forgetting *Triomphe de la vie* from March 1942. He underscores his publications with Gallimard, but omits half of the works (*L'Eau vive* and *Le Théâtre*)."<sup>36</sup>

The literary historian who seeks to follow up on this aspect of the archive comes to a major gap, however. Just six years after Gallimard's 1995 publication of the diary, a significant collection of Giono letters, whose final grouping, #83, concerns the above-cited correspondence pertaining to the Purge, made its way into the Tajan auction house and was offered for sale at the Salle Drouot.<sup>37</sup> Who purchased the Giono letters pertaining to the Purge and where are they? How

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<sup>35</sup> Giono represents himself as sole bread-winner prior to and during World War II, supporting his wife, two young daughters, his aged blind mother, and alcoholic maternal uncle on a diminishing salary. He contrasts his bank employee earnings, of 800 francs per month with his writer's salary of 10,000 francs per month pre-World War II. By the end of the Occupation, he notes that he has the equivalent of 1-2 months pre-War writer's salary, and he references lack of money throughout the diary.

<sup>36</sup> *Journal*, 1301.

<sup>37</sup> The auction catalogue for the June 2001 sale lists a Giono collection of 3000 letters related to his works and private life. The collection is described as "letters written by the most diverse key figures from the world of the arts, letters, and politics...as well as by close friends residing in Provence, letters from admirers, university professors. Analyses of his work, manuscripts about his public and private life, testimonies, often dramatic. Political life: letters of support, especially on the activity of purgers in 1945. Several documents show the support by Giono, during the war, to Charles Fiedler, a German Communist, to Louise Ernst (the wife of painter Max Ernst) as well as of numerous individuals hunted down by the Gestapo: Olga and Lucie Fradisse, M. Levine, etc. Literary activity: Letters regarding his contacts, his adaptations, newspaper articles, etc. deriving from editors and directors of French journals: Bordas, Carrefour, Denoël (many letters, such as this one from October 14, 1932: "You will receive in the next packet *Le Voyage au Bout de la Nuit* by Céline. We respectfully invite you to give your attention to this novel exceptional for the richness of its substance and breath") Grasset, Juilliard, Martel, Morihien, Nagel, *Oeuvres libres*, Pauvert, Plon, *Revue de Paris*, *Opéra*, *Vox*, etc. Similar letters from editors and foreign press representatives, from diverse countries: Germany, Belgium, Canada, Great Britain, Italy, Norway, Switzerland, Czechoslovakia, Turkey, United States, Yugoslavia, etc. Family life: Very lovely intimate family letters, documents on his home in Manosque, with notes, architectural plans. Several letters and documents are annotated by Giono ([www.tajan.com/pdf/2001/autographes06062001.pdf](http://www.tajan.com/pdf/2001/autographes06062001.pdf)).

and why did they leave the literary estate? Were copies made and archived prior to the sale? Does the emptying of the archive support a reorientation of the figure of Giono?<sup>38</sup>

The black hole in the Purge archive and the vibrancy of the Emery-Golsan exchange suggest that previous debates about the interrelation of aesthetics and ideology and the degree of autonomy of the literary field are far from over. Emery's and Golsan's respective positions—admittedly somewhat schematically represented here as culturalist and ethicist—result in sharp crossfire and make a full dialogue impossible. While historians inevitably come up against the limits of the archive—broadly conceived here to encompass both written text and oral histories<sup>39</sup>—the Giono case inspires new reflections on what it means to read a text. If Meaghan Emery's work on Giono illustrates “the recuperative power of nationalist discourses,” to borrow her phrasing, we might view her current conversation with Richard Golsan as a historical moment in the recuperative power of context to merge history, memory, and myth.

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<sup>38</sup> Giono's *Les Ames fortes* (1950, Gallimard) is one of three works on the current list for French students preparing the French/Philosophy examination of the *grandes écoles* for placement in the sciences (2010-2011). It shares the stage with Rousseau's *Profession de foi du vicaire savoyard* and Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, the three texts grouped under the heading of “Le Mal” (<http://www.prepas.org/renseignementselevescpge/francais.htm>). I would like to thank Anne-Marie Thiesse for bringing this to my attention.

<sup>39</sup> Accounts by Rose and Paul Astier, Alphonsine and David Chauvin, Sophie Dol, Jeanne Régnier, and Alix Raybaud, Manosquins who were awarded the title of righteous ones for their wartime aid to Jewish families, would illuminate our understanding of wartime events at the local level of the ideological landscapes in which Giono moved about (<http://www.ajpn.org/juste-78.html>).

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