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Introduction

Susan Milner and Nick Parsons

The dawn of the twenty-first century provided France, like other countries, with the opportunity to reflect on the past, assess the present and embrace the future. Typically, France welcomed the new millennium in style. At midnight on 31 December 1999, the Eiffel Tower, originally built for the 1889 World Exhibition, was illuminated by fireworks in an impressive display of computer-controlled pyrotechnic wizardry and the image was projected around the world using twenty-first century communications technology. In this way, France looked forward to the future with a mixture of the old and the new.

France's self-conscious use of spectacle to project an image of itself to the outside world and to its own citizens formed part of a wider process of reinvention of national identity. The year-long celebration to mark the new millennium, featuring Ferris wheels, arts festivals and a nationwide picnic on 14 July, sought to depict a socially diverse yet solidaristic France, aware of its special national identity in an era of globalization.¹ The World Cup, which had taken place on French soil the previous year, had similarly seen the French people rejoice in their victorious national team, made up of star players from diverse ethnic, local and social backgrounds: another image of national solidarity which the rest of the world could only envy.

Yet, by 2002, the French dream seemed to be falling apart. The high level of support for the far-right candidate Jean-Marie Le Pen and record levels of political disaffection seen in abstention rates and attitudinal surveys revealed deep social divisions. Far from celebrating Frenchness, the prevailing mood between the two rounds of the presidential elections was one of national shame and confusion. The outgoing government, which had earlier won admiration for its communicative strategy and clever mix of economic pragmatism

and social justice, was decisively rejected whilst the president secured re-election by default, amid continuing suspicions about his personal integrity.

What we propose to do in this book is to examine to what extent the orchestrated image of France in official spectacle – diversity, solidarity, urbanity and universalism – corresponds to reality, and to analyse the nature of changes in several important areas of policy-making and society. We aim to analyse the political response to social changes and assess how far French politicians have been able in recent years to ‘remake France’, that is, to steer the country at a time of rapid international change in a way which does not fatally undermine social cohesion.

The state, citizenship and society

The main focus that emerges in the following chapters concerns the notion of identity, not in terms of a cultural notion of what it means to be French or which ‘national characteristics’ define ‘Frenchness’, but in terms of the relationship between the state and its citizens, and the societal links and values that bind them together. Both the state and the idea of citizenship are central to notions of collective identity, and nowhere more so than in France.

Basic citizenship rights were acquired in several stages over a lengthy period of time in France, often after bloody confrontation. Thus, although the 1789 Revolution brought the rights to freedom (including of opinion and expression), private property and equality before the law, it was not until 1848 that universal male suffrage was introduced. Women had to wait nearly a further one hundred years, until 1946, before being granted the most fundamental of citizenship rights. It is through the conferring of these political, or citizenship, rights that the state identifies some as citizens, fully integrated into the body politic and the nation, and others as ‘foreigners’ or ‘outsiders’. The latter may be able to exercise some social and economic rights, such as receiving certain welfare benefits or seeking and taking up employment within the national territory, but they cannot exercise the fundamental political rights that would identify them as belonging to, and being fully integrated into, the national community.

In France, this sense of national community, or identity, has been constructed over time without regard to social class, wealth, ethnicity or religion. Thus, in theory at least, it is universalist in nature. It confers on all those considered to belong to the national collectivity,

in other words those considered to be French, without distinction, the same rights, including the political rights of standing for election and voting, and the same obligations, including, until recently, that of defending the nation through military service. The notion of citizenship is intended to overcome differences of background in order to bind individuals together in the nation, on the basis of national belonging which can be acquired (according to certain rules) by those who do not possess it by right of birth. Citizenship was also intended to provide a framework and discourse of equality within which the demands of particular social groups could be met and thus social conflict could be avoided: what Constant calls the 'miraculous equalization of social conditions'.²

The state in France has played a major role in constructing and moulding an identity that would transcend the deep political, social, economic and regional differences. In this sense, as Gregory Flynn argues, 'A powerful centralized state helped to bring a nation into being where none previously existed.'³ Hervé Le Bras and Emmanuel Todd have shown how France was created as a political project to unite an ethnically diverse population made up of successive generations of immigrants.⁴ Thus the state is intimately linked with the notion of citizenship and identity, conferring 'insider' and 'outsider' status on those living both within, and outside of the national territory. However, citizenship and French national identity have not always coincided, and citizens do not always have equal status, despite the declared universalism of the French republican tradition. The position of women before 1946, and the conferring of full political rights upon them, is one obvious example. Even today, as we shall see, equality before the law, although a central tenet of the republican values that serve as one of the binding agents of the French state, has not been achieved for all groups in society. This has led to debates around citizenship rights – conceived as individual rights – and their relationship to non-national forms of identity (gender, ethnicity, religion, sexuality, age and lifestyle). Can a Republic which is constitutionally defined as 'one and indivisible' allow the institutionalized expression of identity and otherness within its boundaries? How does it ensure equality of treatment if it does not look specifically at the mechanisms of inequality which affect the way that individuals experience the workings of the state? Increasingly rapid demographic, social and cultural changes in the latter half of the twentieth century posed these questions with a new urgency.

The unity and indivisibility of the French state were also called into question territorially. Political decentralization had already begun in the 1970s but it was the left government's reforms in the early 1980s which signalled a major shift in French ways of doing politics. Although many commentators have downplayed the effect of decentralization, emphasizing the continuity of political elites and their integration into centrally-controlled mechanisms of decision-making, there can be no doubt that decentralization forms part of a wider shift in national politics, which political scientists like to portray as a move from government (top-down and largely autonomous) to governance (interdependent networks drawing in actors at different levels and in different spheres). At the same time, the national basis of identity was undermined at the end of the twentieth century by appeals to supra-national allegiance, or more importantly by public perception of a transfer of decision-making powers (state sovereignty) to European level and of the weakening of state power by the new power of multinational capital. Those fearful of the effects of economic and cultural 'globalization' called on the state to resist the erosion of national sovereignty and identity. Those who embraced the new search for international competitiveness called on the state to reform itself, to become less ambitious, to free up individual creativity. The state was summoned to find new ways of doing things: part of the problem, and also part of the solution.

Reinventing France

If the political class had, over time, 'invented' France, could it now 'reinvent' France in order to provide a new sense of collective purpose? The notion of reinvention can be considered from two possible angles, one rather negative and the other more positive in their conception of change. Firstly, 'reinvention' can imply that nothing really changes, that progress is more apparent than real, as in the phrase 'reinventing the wheel'. On the other hand, 'reinvention' can signify responsiveness to external change and an ability to adapt. Pop stars, and particularly those that achieve any longevity in the industry, for instance, are constantly reinventing themselves, changing their stage image, persona and style of music to keep up with latest trends. Reinvention in this sense implies an ability to adapt to a world which we know is characterized by constant change whilst retaining control of one's identity (as a market brand, in the case of pop stars). In the same way, the physical territorial entity of France, even some of its core institutions and

underlying values, may remain the same for some time after the start of the twenty-first century, but their interactions, nature and the uses to which they are put may change.

As the following chapters show, real change is indeed taking place within and around the old values and structures of France. In little over half a century, the country has been transformed from a largely agrarian economy and society trading mainly with colonial captive markets, to a modern, post-industrial one well and truly integrated into the global economy. Over 70 per cent of the employed workforce is in the tertiary sector, as successful high-technology and modern services sectors have replaced small-scale agriculture and industry as the main sources of employment and wealth. Trade patterns have shifted so that the EU is the main destination for exports and source of imports. Due to the arrival and subsequent settlement of immigrant communities, France is now a multicultural country.

In the political arena, over a longer time-span, there has been a shift from political instability and frequent lapses into authoritarian rule to a stable modern democracy with alternating left and right parties in government and the *cohabitation* of presidents and prime ministers from opposite sides of the political divide. Such political stability appeared problematic, however, even as recently as the late 1970s, when it was feared that the emergence of a left-wing political majority would plunge the country into constitutional chaos. However, the first Mitterrand presidency ensured that the Fifth Republic gained legitimacy in the eyes of the Left, and the regime now looks well on the way to beating the previous record for longevity for any French regime since 1789 – the seventy years (1870–1940) of the Third Republic. Sharp ideological divisions have given way over the last two decades to consensus over the market economy. Differences are now over points of detail, not over the nature and form of regime.

Accompanying these changes since the end of the 1970s, there has been a shift towards greater emphasis on European integration. Recognizing that the preservation of national *grandeur* and sovereignty may mean that these have to be pooled within a greater European whole, France has been at the forefront of moves towards greater political and economic integration. The Europe espoused by Mitterrand, which reached its culmination after the latter's death with the recent implementation of the euro, is a far cry from that defended by de Gaulle, with its accent on independence in the context of the Cold War. Indeed, de Gaulle would surely be alarmed at the loss of national sovereignty implied in the Maastricht Treaty, even if the

intergovernmental nature of the European defence and security policy and the notion of Europe as a 'superpower, not a superstate' fit a broadly Gaullist vision.

In short, France has modernized. Some aspects of this modernization can be considered to be a conscious (re)invention by governing elites, albeit within the confines of external constraints. Certainly, the remarkable economic performance of the country during the '30 glorious years' from the end of the war to the mid-1970s was due in part to world economic expansion, but it was also the fruit of deliberate industrial and economic strategies embodied in a system of five-year indicative plans. In the context of shared sovereignty and economic globalization, however, there may be less room for voluntaristic manoeuvring in this 'reinvention' than has been the case in the past.

Reinventing politics

In political science, 'reinvention' has a specific meaning in relation to policy innovation. Here, policy innovation is seen as a dynamic process: innovations are modified during implementation, in response to the experience of earlier adopters. Reinvention refers to purposeful changes made to innovations as they diffuse; in other words, it implies a learning process in politics.⁵

More generally, in the 1990s, politicians in all advanced economies spoke of the need to 'do politics differently' as they – implicitly or explicitly – assimilated the 'globalization' paradigm. The new era of international trade appeared to shift the parameters of political action.⁶ If the 1980s was the decade of neoliberalism (presided over by Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher), the 1990s marked the beginning of a new consensus between centre-left and centre-right governments that political decision-making somehow had to be recast in response to new constraints. The 'reinvention' model originated in the United States with the election of Bill Clinton in 1993 and was closely associated with the 'Third Way' thinking propounded by the American New Democrats, and in the UK with sociologist Anthony Giddens and the reform of the Labour Party under Tony Blair.⁷

The Clinton–Gore 'reinvention' offensive, which began almost immediately, followed the analysis developed in a 1992 best-seller entitled *Reinventing Government* (by a journalist and a former city manager) of a fundamental shift in economics and society: 'The emergence of a postindustrial, knowledge-based, global economy has undermined old realities throughout the world, creating wonderful

opportunities and frightening problems. Governments large and small, American and foreign, federal, state and local, have begun to respond.⁸ The Democrats' search for new policy initiatives responded to specific national circumstances: electoral pressure on taxes and the inability to control the state's budget after the Republicans' Congress victory in 1994. In this context, the Osborne/Gaebler recipe for 'entrepreneurial government' (pragmatic and cost-effective) looked particularly attractive. Osborne and Gaebler offered examples of city managers finding private funding for leisure facilities or contracting out refuse collection, army officers obtaining supplies more quickly and cheaply by going straight to local producers, and new managerial practices in education, notably in deprived city areas. Terms like 'downsizing', 'reengineering' and 'continuous improvement' dominated the New Performance Review produced by Al Gore in September 1993.⁹ Durst and Newell, reviewing government reinvention in the US in the 1990s, note the entry of management terms and methods in public-sector organizations, and suggest the term 'reorganization' as synonymous with reinvention in this context.¹⁰ The state not only had to become more like a business in its thinking and methods, it had to rely increasingly on private companies to carry out its own work. Rather than simply replacing the state, as in the Thatcherite vision, however, the Democrats' initiative was intended to save the state through reform. Evaluation of the results of the 'reinvention' initiative was mixed, but it appears to have provided a mobilizing impetus. In this context, reinvention had some tangible results – mainly a trimming of administrative costs and of public sector personnel – and, perhaps most significantly, provided a legitimating discourse for change which might otherwise have been resisted.

In western Europe, the reinvention of politics has taken different forms, although it shares with the US experience an importing of managerial discourse and methods into the state's core functions. As in the US, the focus has been on reorganizing public services to make them leaner and more cost-effective. In many countries, France included, this has meant large-scale privatization of companies and the reduction of public sector provision, including in key areas such as social welfare. In many ways, the French socialists' U-turn in 1982–1983 preceded the US 'reinvention model' and was linked to the adaptation to power, in specific economic and political circumstances, of the social-democratic left. For France, the reorganization of public services implies a wholesale rethinking of the role of the state. According to an influential report published in 2001, this thinking has not yet gone far

enough.¹¹ There appear to be limits to state reform which reflect public attachment to key services (even the ultra-liberal Alain Madelin in the 1990s could not contemplate the privatization of energy), or powerful interest groups (public sector workers, particularly in transport and energy, and also in education, long described as the ‘mammoth’ which successive education ministers have tackled in vain), or perhaps even ingrained habits within the state apparatus itself. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that a modernizing agenda within the Socialist Party, particularly around Laurent Fabius (who in the late 1980s set up his own working group on public services) and Dominique Strauss-Kahn, is at work.

In western Europe, as opposed to the United States, the renewal of social democracy has focused not just on the state as provider of services alongside the private sector, but on the state as an economic actor. For the French government in the late 1990s, this meant a shift from the state as a strategic actor, shaping business choices and objectives through selective funding, to the state as regulator. As Giandomenico Majone notes, the regulatory state is a feature of capitalist societies in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.¹² The search for new forms of regulation was a major theme of the Jospin government at the start of the twenty-first century: it reinvents the republican model by circumscribing the role of the state, whilst at the same time distancing French socialism from the minimalist approach of Tony Blair’s New Labour Party.

As well as the reorganization of key functions, the reinvention of politics – in line with the development of ‘Third Way’ ideas – also concerns the renegotiation of the social contract between state and citizens. In this context, the ‘new’ politics seeks to respond to demographic and societal change by rethinking its family policies (in the face of massively expanded female labour market participation) and seeks to promote a more cosmopolitan, tolerant society. France may boast relatively good childcare provision, but it has been criticized by feminists for the low numbers of women in positions of political power, and for the failure to conceptualize family policies except in the traditional pro-natalist approach which ‘allows’ women to reconcile work and family without questioning the underlying sexual division of labour.¹³ Nevertheless, there are signs of change here too: in 1999, France changed its constitution to ensure equal numbers of men and women standing as candidates in elections (parity), and in 2001 the law was applied for the first time to municipal elections. Although the outcome in terms of number of female mayors

(particularly in the larger cities) did not amount to an overnight revolution, the longer-term consequences of the parity law – particularly if it encourages women into local party networks – may well have profound effects on the way politics is done in France.¹⁴

A new France for the new millennium?

The present book is organized around the themes outlined above. In the first part, the contributions outline some of the major challenges facing the French state – from above, from below, and from within – and present different perspectives on them. In addition, two chapters focus on the impact of European policies and contacts on political strategies and the organization of the state. In the second part, we look at key areas of society where social groups are challenging traditional conceptions of national identity, or where the state is actively attempting to forge a new social contract. Finally, in the third part we examine the way in which France faces its past. Writing in 1995, historian Richard Kuisel noted that France's obsession with the 'warm glow' of the past betrayed a deep unease about the future.¹⁵ Here, our contributions examine current historiographical debates and the political treatment of history in order to draw lessons about France's ability to come to terms with its own identity as a nation and a people.

Our collection shows a France in the process of change, but becoming more confident about how it can try to master the process through learning and adaptation. France's caution can often be irritating to its neighbours, but in seeking to adapt at its own pace and in tune with its own cultural references, it may be managing the reinvention process better than most.¹⁶

Part One: State and Nation

Given its centrality, the state would appear to be a logical place to start any examination of the reinvention of France. Before subsequent contributors analyse the ways in which the state has, and should, change to face up to the challenges of the twenty-first century, however, David Hanley takes us on an historical detour to compare the challenges facing France now and in 1900. The lesson appears necessary and salutary, since it serves as a reminder that history is characterized by continuity as much as it is by change. Hanley argues that any reinvention of France is unlikely to be wholesale, but rather piecemeal and incremental. The lesson from 1900 appears to be that societies rarely develop in a controlled, rational manner, as actions often have

unintended consequences. This seems all the more true today, argues Hanley, as although ideological conflict and divisions over the identity of France were sharper between left and right, republicans and reactionaries, in 1900, this to some extent made conflict more manageable than it is today. Politicians today may have more information at their disposal, but society is more fragmented, and protest more diffuse. While this poses a problem of integration and of identity within the republican framework at the domestic level, internationally French identity is being eroded by the sharing of sovereignty that is the necessary corollary of European integration.

Indeed, as Jack Hayward points out, European integration has blurred the distinction between domestic and external policy constraints, weakening the capacity of the French state to act decisively in its core areas of intervention: economic, social and defence policy. In defence, there has been a loss of independence via integration into NATO and EU forces; in the economy, indirect methods of regulation of private business have replaced nationalization and *dirigiste* economic control under the twin pressures of globalization and EU policy demands; welfare state provision is threatened, not only by demographic change, but also by an EU monetary policy that requires reduced budget deficits. In Hayward's analysis, then, the state must become more modest in order to retain its legitimacy by reducing expectations of what it can do. Like Hanley, however, he is pessimistic that this can be done in a rational manner. Firstly, state bureaucratic elites are divided, while politically the state is weakened by multi-party government and *cohabitation*. Secondly (and here again the weight of history is important), the cultural and structural heritage of the authoritarian Jacobin state militates against the acceptance of political and economic liberalism whereby the role of the state becomes one of regulation to ensure social justice rather than one of direct economic management.

Pierre Sadran also identifies a shift away from the state's role as economic entrepreneur and even regulator of society, towards its core (monarchic) functions. The monolithic state has given way to a fragmented polity, particularly as the process of change itself is uneven and opposing forces within the state itself are at work. Sadran notes two strategies in the face of external pressures for change: the first, which he dubs the strategy of the 'leopard' (after Lampedusa's famous novel), consists of 'changing so that things remain the same', a deliberate strategy of controlled adaptation which keeps elites in place; the second strategy is to carry out reforms whilst appearing to change as

little as possible, in order to conserve energy and resources for the long haul (as a camel conserves water). The first strategy may be seen in certain sections of the public administration, the second in Lionel Jospin's governmental practice. Reinvention in this context consists of responding to the need for fundamental change, whilst tailoring the message to suit internal political or tactical requirements. As Sadran emphasizes, the process of change is far from complete and the effort of inventing or reinventing still requires considerable political will.

Although European integration may imply some erosion of national sovereignty, national government–EU relations cannot be conceived of in terms of one-dimensional dynamics. The EU is a collective construction of nation-states, all of which have an input into its policies and processes. Thus, David Howarth argues that while European integration may undermine the capacity of the central state to act in the economic sphere, the political position of the state in France has paradoxically been reinforced vis-à-vis sub-national units of government, even to the point of reasserting its control over several policy areas devolved to local authorities by the 1980s decentralization reforms. With its technical expertise, the state plays a gatekeeper and coordinating role as far as the application for, and implementation of, EU funds is concerned, determining national priorities in the allocation of funds earmarked for France through a revamped regional and national planning process. As the state is the sole legal representative of French interests in the EU policy-making and legislative process, European regional policy, far from undermining the French state, fits quite well with French traditions of *dirigisme*, indicative planning and integrated economic development. Once again, Howarth draws our attention to the weight of history in suggesting that the Jacobin tradition may make France more resistant than her European partners to further decentralization. Although it is not possible to identify a relocation of decision-making to the European level, however, Howarth demonstrates that a reformulation of governance has taken place, in which sub-national authorities (regions and communes) act alongside national decision-makers.

Echoing Howarth, Jean-Marc Trouille argues that France has managed economic integration in order to preserve some sovereignty in macroeconomic policy. As a previously de facto member of the Deutschmark zone, France could not implement an independent monetary policy, but has now regained some sovereignty by pooling it in institutions which dilute German influence. Whilst the Franco-German alliance was crucial for the construction of Europe in the twentieth

century, however, the twenty-first century has seen the relationship severely tested. In particular, eastward enlargement of the EU is likely to weaken the political leadership of the Franco-German axis, but Trouille sees opportunities for strategic trilateral partnerships to lead the new Union. Reinvention in this context implies an incremental process of mutual learning, as well as the ability to adapt to changed power relationships. Formal institutions can help to maintain mutually beneficial relations even during adverse political circumstances, whilst the security of a bilateral and regional partnerships gives France an advantage in an internationally competitive environment.

Part Two: State and Society

Sociologically, France has changed in the post-war period, particularly in terms of the ethnic origins of its population. The immigrants that were originally thought to have entered the country on a temporary basis, to help with the post-war reconstruction effort, have remained and settled in France, producing offspring that have been able to claim French nationality by dint of being born in France. As the post-war waves of immigration came largely from north African countries with different beliefs, customs and practices – particularly religious ones – France has had to face up to the difficulties of assimilating and integrating these new immigrant populations and their descendants. France has thus become a multicultural country, with Islam challenging Catholicism as the dominant religion of the country. The rise among distinct ethnic groups of an Islamic identity at odds with both Catholicism and the secular state has challenged some aspects of the universalist concept of French citizenship. This was seen starkly, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, in the debates surrounding the wearing of the veil by Muslim girls in French schools.

Such affirmations of particular cultural and ethnic identities challenge universalist and assimilationist republican values. In metropolitan France, the immigration question has been a national obsession since the *Front national's* (FN) electoral breakthrough in the 1983 Dreux by-election. Michèle Tribalat argues that it is precisely the presence of the FN that prevents a proper national debate on the question from taking place in France, and this is seen as dangerous for the survival of republican values. In effect, the ethnic dimension of social problems is rendered taboo as the FN has recuperated this ground for itself. There is great need for this debate, however, as the lack of integration of populations of foreign origin, particularly north African, renders communitarian, especially fundamentalist Islamic, identities all the more attractive to the

socio-ethnically excluded who are pushed out to the rundown suburbs of large towns. Indeed, the debate is all the more urgent as the problems of integrating these populations do not stem from insurmountable cultural differences and practices as the evidence shows a convergence towards 'French' norms in language, family structure and religious behaviour with the passing of the generations. Rather, the problems stem from the failure of republican institutions, and foremost amongst them the education system, to promote equality, particularly where labour market access is concerned. The resultant disaffection of the young French *maghrébin* (of North African origin) population for republican values and the concomitant recourse to anti-social behaviour both feeds and feeds off discriminatory practices. Republican universalist and egalitarian values are thus undermined from both sides by the failure of republican institutions.

One response to the perceived failure of the education system has been the development of 'citizenship education'. Producing citizens that are integrated into society has been an aim of the education system since the Third Republic, but it has received more attention in recent years as perceived violence in schools is seen as indicative of a system, and therefore a Republic, in crisis. As Hugh Starkey points out, anti-school violence is seen as disaffection for the Republic given the key socializing role of the school in the dissemination of republican values. Echoing Tribalat, Starkey sees an ethnic dimension to this, with children of foreign origin stigmatized through streaming, often on the basis of knowledge of the French language, and therefore developing a counter-school culture. The result is once again a threat to universalist republican discourse. The education system is responding to such challenges not only through citizenship education, which is centred around knowledge of republican values and human rights, French institutions and the rules and norms of life in society. Over and above such formal instruction, the notion of effective citizenship education demands a radical transformation of schools from centralized, authoritarian institutions to pupil-centred ones which encourage student participation and engagement within a republican framework that allows for local autonomy and the needs of individual pupils to be catered for. Once again, the promotion and survival of a republican political philosophy are paradoxically equated with decentralization and a respect for differences that enable the goal of equality to be at least approached if not achieved.

It is not only in schools, of course, that the rules of democratic participation that are central to French republicanism, at least in

theory, can be learnt. In wider society, too, they can help overcome the disaffection that undermines republican institutions in France. Sharon Collins argues that the 'political crisis' in France is one of representation rather than one of political action per se: French citizens are disillusioned with national political institutions, parties, unions and figures, and look to other means of making their voices heard. There is thus a democratic deficit in France requiring a shift from passive to active citizenship. In a case study of Nîmes, Collins shows how the municipality has attempted to involve its citizens, including the young, in the decision-making process through the development of consultative mechanisms. This did not imply the transfer of power from local elites to the public, but an increase in the political expression, involvement and control of the latter. It was seen as fostering a closer relationship between local political representatives and their electorate, and, crucially, a greater trust in the former by the latter. Thus, experiments in democratic renewal and a redefinition of the relationship between citizenship and politics have been taking place at the local level in France. The Nîmes case study, however, points to the problems such experiments will encounter, particularly in the tension between the slowness of consultative decision-making processes and the wish for rapid and effective action. Furthermore, there is a risk of a deleterious effect on republican institutions if such renewal is not replicated, or does not spread to the national political level, held in such high disregard by French citizens.

The reinvention of social relations in order to foster a new kind of citizenship is not confined to the political sphere, but is also occurring in the economic and social spheres. Thus, as Marie-Christine Kok Escalle shows, the implementation of the 35-hour week at the start of the new millennium in France was not only about tackling the country's severe unemployment problem. Government information campaigns, aimed at all citizens, and an insistence on the negotiated implementation of the reform have tried to give everyone a sense of responsibility and involvement in a social project that aims to change the balance between work and free time. Through the negotiated reduction of working time, an appeal is made to social solidarity in an attempt to build a more cohesive society. Those that are economically excluded through unemployment find jobs, while those in work gain by having more free time, and business gains in productivity through the modernization and reorganization of work provoked by the need to reorganize working time. Thus, economic efficiency is wedded to social inclusiveness: an inclusive form of citizenship is put to the fore

through the notion of job-sharing and solidarity in a new social contract based on employment flexibility in which both workers and employers are supposed to be winners. All this is underpinned by a renewed emphasis on social dialogue as a means to bring about social consensus. The success of this societal project, however, is still in the balance. Greater free time, Kok Escalle argues, looks like being spent, not on the solidaristic social and political activities that would renew social links in an atomized society, but in an individualistic manner dependent upon pre-existing material and cultural resources. Rather than fostering a more participative and cohesive citizenship, the result may only be an exacerbation of social fragmentation and inequalities, especially for women, for whom the notion of 'more free time' may often merely mean more time to do the housework.

Part Three: History and Identity

This last section of the book also brings us full circle in that, once again, the weight of the historical legacy on the future of France can be clearly appreciated. Indeed, tensions surrounding the notion of universalism in the modern French Republic also come to the fore when looking at France in historical perspective, especially when, as is the case in our final two chapters, the Second World War is the period under scrutiny. In his examination of wartime commemoration, Michael Martin argues that, in the 1980s and 1990s, France saw the rise of a human rights-based ideology and of community-based identities which together undermined the Gaullist myth of a united French nation at war with Germany. The result was seen in a shift from national to community-based commemoration, as the unified model proved incapable of subsuming diverse wartime experiences. Thus, the French nation, under the first Chirac presidency, came to accept responsibility for the anti-Semitic crimes of Vichy. In doing so it has opened itself up to compensation claims from victims, and, more importantly in the long term, it has implicitly recognized the existence of an identifiable ethnic group within the 'one and indivisible' French nation.

Similar concerns are also prevalent in the chapter by Hanna Diamond and Claire Gorrara. They show how a re-evaluation of the wartime role of two important figures reveals the way in which current developments in historiography are challenging the notion of a nation united in opposition to the fascist enemy. First, a questioning of the allegiances and role of Jean Moulin – hitherto seen as the unifier of the Resistance movement – has led to a questioning of the 'heroic' Gaullist

myth of the Resistance. Second, the trial of the former Vichy official Maurice Papon contributed to a re-evaluation of the role of the French state in Hitler's Final Solution. The result does not only have consequences for the interpretation – or reinterpretation – of history, it has also been an undermining of the moral legitimacy of the state as the incarnation and upholder of core values at the heart of French identity: those of human rights, liberty and democracy.

From the disciplinary perspectives of history, political science and sociology, the contributions in our book reveal a country trying to cope with change and manage it in ways least likely to disrupt overall social cohesion, even at the expense of the legitimate demands of particular groups. The response of the state appears crucial: sometimes encouraging change, often attenuating or diverting change. Political change has been slow. In 2002, it was remarked by external media commentators that France stood out among Western countries for the longevity of its main election contenders, sparking fears about a failure to renew political leadership. Nevertheless, significant institutional change had occurred: most notably, the introduction of the five-year presidential term (the '*quinquennat*') and moves to reduce the number of political posts held by politicians. In electoral politics as more generally, apparent continuity can hide real underlying change. Our final chapter reviews the evidence from the contributions and discusses the future prospects for change in France.

Notes

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3. G. Flynn, 'Remaking the Hexagon', in G. Flynn (ed.), *Remaking the Hexagon*, (Boulder, CO and Oxford: Westview Press, 1995), pp. 1–16.
4. H. Le Bras and E. Todd, *L'Invention de la France* (Paris: Hachette, 1981).
5. See J.-F. Bayart (ed.), *La réinvention du capitalisme. Les trajectoires du politique* (Paris: Éditions Karthala, 1994).
6. S. P. Hays, 'Influences on Reinvention during the Diffusion of Innovations', *Political Research Quarterly*, 49/3 (1996), 631–50.
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9. D.F. Kettl and J.J. DiIulio, Jr (eds), *Inside the Reinvention Machine* (Washington DC: The Brookings Institution, 1995).

10. S.L. Durst and C. Newell, 'Better, Faster, Stronger. Government Reinvention in the 1990s', *American Review of Public Administration*, 29/1 (1999), 61–76
11. R. Fauroux and B. Spitz (eds), *Notre État. Le livre vérité de la fonction publique* (Paris: Robert Laffont, 2000). See also C. Bébéar, *Le Courage de Réformer* (Paris: Odile Jacob, 2002).
12. G. Majone, *Regulating Europe* (London: Routledge, 1996).
13. On this, and the pressure from the European Commission for a new type of policy approach, see D. Méda, *Le temps des femmes. Pour un nouveau partage des rôles* (Paris: Flammarion, 2001).
14. See special issue on gender parity: S. Dauphin and J. Praid (eds), *Modern and Contemporary France*, 10/1 (2002).
15. R. Kuisel, 'The France We Have Lost: Social, Economic, and Cultural Discontinuities', in G. Flynn (ed.), *Remaking the Hexagon*, pp. 31–48.
16. See, for example, G. Walden, 'France Says No', *Prospect* (October 1997), 20–4. If anything, the British view of France as portrayed in the press moved from triumphalism to envy in the early twenty-first century.

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