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***La Chambre des officiers* and Recapturing the Evanescent Memory
of the Great War's Gravely Disfigured**

“These men weren’t looked at, they were ignored, 100 years ago. Isn’t it time that we afforded them the respect they are due by just looking at them?”¹

—Kerry Neale, archivist, Australian War Memorial.

Preface: *cinéaste* François Dupeyron and auteur Marc Dugain

French film director François Dupeyron died 25 February 2016. He was sixty-five. In eulogizing him, France’s minister of culture and communication Audrey Azoulay praised him as a trailblazer, a unique director whose work reflected both his passion for life and his compassion for those who were wounded by it.² Gerard Depardieu, who had worked closely with Dupeyron, compares the void his passing will create to that of François Truffaut’s: “Comme Truffaut, il manquera éternellement au cinéma.”³ Depardieu and Catherine Deneuve acted and collaborated in writing and producing one of his better known films, *Drôle d’endroit pour une rencontre* (*A Strange Place to Meet*, 1988), but he is best remembered for his production and adaptation of Marc Dugain’s novella, *La Chambre des officiers* (*The Officers’ Ward*, 2001). With Bertrand Tavernier and Jean-Pierre Jeunet, he is part of that small circle of late twentieth and early twenty-first-century French motion picture directors who, in a scant landscape of *la der des ders* films, have contributed to kindle the flame of the cultural memory as the last surviving veterans were reaching their centennial years.

Dugain’s 1998 début novel, originally written as a family memoir entitled *Le Canard et le masticateur*⁴ (*The Duck and the Masticator*)—a piercing personal account of his disfigured maternal grandfather’s narration of the 1914-1919 hospital convalescence that he, two other facially mutilated officers, and a nurse experienced—received numerous literary prizes, including *le Prix des Deux Magots*, *le Prix des Librairies*, and *le Prix Roger Nimier*. When a child in the nineteen-sixties, he spent all his vacations with his grandparents and regularly accompanied his grandfather to le Domaine de Moussy-le-Vieux, the historical convalescent home northeast

of Paris that housed the gravely disfigured men and women of the Great War. In the vernacular, they called each other *les gueules cassées*,⁵ or “broken faces,” “smashed faces,” and even “broken gargoyles” in ANZAC countries.

The experience marked the young Dugain, and for decades, the only memory of his grandfather was that of a “man with half of his face blown away, mouth, cheeks, and nose gouged out by a shell.”⁶ Later, when he came across a picture of him taken on the eve of the war, he was startled, for the photograph showed a very handsome young man.⁷ By some estimates, fourteen percent of First World War casualties were *blessés de la face*,⁸ prompting the establishment to pioneer reconstructive maxillofacial surgical facilities at L’Hôpital Militaire Val-de-Grâce in Paris and The Queen Mary Hospital in Sidcup, Kent, southeast of London. Before Dugain’s grandmother died, she pressed him to write her husband’s story, and Dupeyron’s 2001 adaptation was nominated for nine Césars in Cannes, including *la Palme d’or* with Tetsuo Nagata and André Dussollier each receiving a César for best cinematography and best supporting actor respectively.

Facial disfiguration, as Sophie Delaporte explains, can be traced as far back as High Antiquity to the Napoleonic War’s *invalides à la tête de bois*,⁹ but from its outbreak during the first industrialized world war, few were prepared for the effects and extent of the destructive power of the projectiles. The trenches protected the body but not the head, and a soldier raising his head above the parapet exposed it to sniper and machine gun bullets; however, it was the twisted metal fragments of shrapnel that would be particularly unforgiving, for they, unlike straight-line bullets, could rip a face to pieces. Although much has been written about First World War disfiguration, Dupeyron is the only Seventh Art director to have addressed the subject on the silver screen in almost a century. On that basis, and with the centennial anniversary of the establishment of those revolutionary medical facilities that performed “endless crude facial reconstructions in the vain hope of making them [*gueules cassées*] more acceptable to society,”¹⁰ Dugain and Dupeyron’s treatment of disfigured World War I soldiers makes both the novel and the film the subject of this essay.

Introduction: “Broken Faces” on the big screen

Dupeyron was not the first to portray *gueules cassées* on the big screen, for they had been shown in film sixty-three years prior, but by real ones—not actors playing roles. In *J’accuse* (1937), forty *gueules cassées* from the First World War answered Abel Gance’s call to be the cast in the

“Army of the Dead” sequence in which buried soldiers from both sides rise from the Verdun Douamont Ossuary and disperse in all directions. Unlike the indelible sequence of his 1919 version in which the revenant *poilus* march back to their villages to demand an answer from the living whether their sacrifice had been in vain, here, Gance—the “Victor Hugo of the screen”¹¹—wanted to horrify the living so that they not be swept into “*la guerre de demain*,” or “the war of tomorrow.” On the first page of the script, he wrote in pencil the following dedication to those who, he perhaps conscientiously or subconsciously knew, will skeptically view it [the film] and will not see themselves as the future *gueules cassées*: “Je dédie ce film aux morts de la guerre de demain qui sans doute le regarderont avec scepticisme sans y reconnaître leur visage.”¹² The sequence remains one of the most disturbing and haunting scenes in war cinema, for “[...] at first, they [*gueules cassées*] are not very visible, but when they approach the camera and fill the entire frame, the horror dawns. Suddenly, the disfigured soldiers seem to interpellate the audience.”¹³ That segment was a remarkable act of cooperation on the part of those victims to be re-immersed into war and their nightmare, and Gance publicly rendered them a moving homage afterward.¹⁴ Dupeyron’s cinematic production and Dugain’s novella are quite unlike Gance’s work; however, Gance’s choosing to film disfigured First World War victims as the *ne plus ultra* impressionable image about the realities of war casualties is testimony to the nature of that kind of wound and the unimaginable suffering that it can cause, making Dupeyron’s achievement that much more significant. Thus, the purpose of this essay is to examine and analyze how the *débutant* novelist Dugain remembers and portrays his *mutilé de la face* grandfather and three other victims—their physical and emotional challenges as shrapnel/burn victims both in the hospital where surgeons attempt the agonizing reconstruction of their faces and in post-war years where society marginalizes them—and how the seasoned *cinéaste* Dupeyron interprets and transposes that journey on the big screen as it unfolds in the confines of a military hospital ward over the course of five years.

The Setting: l’Hôpital Militaire Val-de-Grâce 1914-1919—“*Pro Patria et Humanitate*”¹⁵

The novel begins *le jour de la mobilisation* with Lieutenant Adrien Fournier leaving his Dordogne village train station in Lalinde, 2 August 1914, for Paris and then to the Western Front in the Ardennes along the Meuse River; however, the film opens with Fournier receiving *la Légion d’honneur* in 1919. As credits roll, we hear the flapping sound of French flags in the wind and the timpani of Richard Wagner’s *Marche funèbre de Siegfried, extrait du Crépuscule des dieux*, evoking

the hero's memory of his past and of his beloved's face, echoing his initial hopelessness and his final heroic triumph,¹⁶ and we witness three soldiers' receiving the Legion of Honor award, two kisses, and a salute from an unnamed General. The camera first focuses on the back of the soldiers' heads, then on the back of Fournier's facial mask strap, and finally pans around to a full-frame shot of his face partially covered by a dressing. So as not to shock the viewers by immediately zooming in on his gruesome facial wounds, Dupeyron's opening sequence slowly prepares us for a detailed flashback covering the protagonist's previous five years: first, the one-night affair with Clémence—his first *grand amour*—in his Parisian flat before going to the front; then, the early early-August morning of 1914 along the Meuse when a German shell permanently disfigures him; afterwards, the five-year stint in the officers' ward at Val-de-Grâce where he not only undergoes numerous, torturous maxillofacial surgeries but also develops respect for his pioneering plastic surgeon and his surrogate mother nurse, Anaïs, and a lifelong camaraderie with *gueules cassées* Henri de Penanster, Pierre Weil, and Marguerite; and finally, the post Treaty-of-Versailles months marking his Siegfriedesque triumph over all his "battles"—not only the physical agonies from the German shell that ripped away a quarter of his face and the sixteen operations to attempt to make him "whole," but also the psychological torments of shell shock, particularly the thoughts of suicide and the pain of being rejected by a post-war society who either refused to look at him or chose to mock him as a "living gargoyle."

The *blessés de la face* had different battles and different battlefields. Of the sixty-one sequences that constitute the two-hour-and-ten-minute film, Dupeyron dedicates only a one-minute-and-thirty-eight-second clip to show the moment when the unseen German shell disfigured Fournier and approximately one hour and sixteen minutes, or half of the movie, to depict the often fatal effects of shrapnel by focusing on the protagonist's mental and physical challenges in the officers' ward, and for good reason. Fournier's "war battles" are not fought in the trenches, or in No Man's Land, or at sea or in the air, but in the officers' ward at Val-de-Grâce, originally a fifth-arrondissement, seventeenth-century church designed by François Mansart, then eventually a famous World War I military hospital, and currently a teaching facility for the *École d'application du Service de santé des armées*.

Dupeyron's setting and protagonist remind war *cinéphiles* of Ken "Bud" Wilchek—Marlon Brando's film début character—brooding bitterly in the Birmingham Veterans Hospital in Van Nuys, California; however, Ken, unlike Fournier, did see combat and received a sniper's bullet in the spinal cord in the last days of the Second World War, but, like Fournier,

his “real” battles took place in a claustrophobic thirty-two-bed ward. Similar to *les gueules cassées* in *La Chambre*, the paraplegic war veterans—many of whom were actual patients in director Fred Zinnemann’s *avant-garde* black and white film *The Men* (1950)—also deal with painful physical and psychological challenges, and, in this case, producer Stanley Kramer projected the sensitive subject of sexual impotence to a 1950 audience. Furthermore, in *Stanley Kramer, Film Maker*, Donald Spoto credits Kramer for producing a “film that helped change the attitudes of countless people toward disabled young war veterans.”¹⁷ In a similar fashion but within the context of cultural memory, *La Chambre*’s role for better understanding those old wounds still alive today becomes urgently important, particularly for post millennials.

We catch first glimpse of the hospital’s exterior from the perspective of an almost-dead and completely mute Fournier lying on a stretcher in the courtyard and being comforted by a cold, soothing, fever-reducing rain. Using contrasting dark colors and low-angle shots, cinematographer Tetsuo Nagata creates the sense of diminutiveness with the towering façade in the background. As the camera now becomes Fournier’s eyes and field of vision, Nagata makes extensive use of not only low-level and close-up shots but also oblique or Dutch angles in order to create a continuous and unsettling psychological undercurrent for the rest of the film. Introduced by director Robert Weine in his film *Das Cabinet des Dr. Caligari* (*The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, 1920), this tilt technique was brilliantly employed in Carol Reed’s noir classic *The Third Man* (1949) “[...] to convey a world that is off balance or out of kilter, [...] a world in which human values and actions are distorted,”¹⁸ earning Robert Krasker the Oscar for best black and white cinematography. The technique proved effective in *La Chambre*, as Fournier’s first view is a Dutch angle fixed on the ceiling corner of the room and does help convey his stupor. Both in the novel and on the big screen, we see what bedridden narrator Fournier carefully observes, i.e., the spaciousness of the privileged officers’ ward, the cracked ceiling, and the strategically placed immaculate beds facing the windows and away from drafts, an indication that the room will soon fill with patients.¹⁹ Nagata’s distinctive style, his dexterity with the lens combined with a palette of well-defined, cleaving colors, particularly deep black, contribute to the film’s realism, earning him another César in Olivier Dahan’s *La vie en rose* (2007).

As the first patient in the officers’ ward, Fournier notices the janitor removing all the mirrors from the wall so the *gueules cassées* will not be able to see their wounds and deformities. In the novel, the four-story Val-de-Grâce consists of five wards: the second floor has two

reserved for infantrymen, the third for non-commanding *blesés-de-la-face* officers, the fourth for non-commanding *défigurés* officers and one for commanding officers;²⁰ and finally, there is *la Chambre des suppliciés*, the room dedicated to torturous rehabilitative contraptions designed to “rebuild” the “broken.”²¹ Central to it all is the ether-permeated terrifying operating room and its multitude of plaster masks of disfigured faces hanging on the wall like trophies of a warrior tribe.²²

When *Positif* asked Dupeyron how he created the set for the hospital ward, he explained that he visualized it as he was writing the script and that, instead of anticipating the *mise en scène*, he worked strictly on “feeling,” that he and the production designer first discussed details, such as the size of the room, the lighting, the colors, the furniture, and the number of beds; then made drawings and models; and finally practiced with the actors in a room with beds.²³ Despite Dupeyron’s claim to creating this film on “feeling,” Dugain’s writing style greatly facilitated Dupeyron’s endeavor in that the 171-page novella provided almost all the characters’ lines and film’s décor for the movie script, which is not unusual. A good case in point is Humphrey Cobb’s bestseller, *Paths of Glory* (1935), which immediately caught the attention of Hollywood; however, given the timing and the events then, it would take another twenty-two years for it to finally materialize in 1957. With Kirk Douglas adamantly insisting on keeping a young Stanley Kubrick’s original script, it was the director’s fourth film and what A. Walker calls “his graduation piece.”²⁴ Similarly, Dupeyron’s adhering to most of Dugain’s lines and setting contributed to the film’s success.

Lieutenant Adrien Fournier: a Sisyphean *gueule cassée*

“[...] the day before each operation, the myth of the man rolling his stone up the hill came to mind. The form of the punishment has changed, and so has its severity, but it must now equal what has become our means of destruction.”²⁵—Lieutenant Adrien Fournier’s thought prior to one of his sixteen maxillofacial operations.

Similar to Mathilde’s personification of *le fil d’Ariane* as *fil conducteur* in Sébastien Japrisot’s novel *Un long dimanche de fiançailles* (1991) and its film adaptation by Jean-Pierre Jeunet (2004), both Dugain and Dupeyron also have pagan protagonist Fournier play the role of Sisyphean *fil conducteur* in his hopeless, “fly-caught-in-a-spider’s-web” predicament, digging deep within himself, much like Sisyphus arduously pushing his rock or the fly trying to escape the spider’s web, to find that inner strength to continue to exist stoically.²⁶ Similar to the

struggling fly bound in the spider's web and dying from exhaustion, the lone, disfigured, and bed-strapped Fournier, awakening from unconsciousness, grapples with his seemingly inevitable death.²⁷ Unbeknownst to him, other "Sisyphean flies," such as Pilot Weil, will also be trapped, and together, they will relentlessly fight their individual battles, "pushing their own boulders," trying to untangle themselves from "their web" to live, for these "living gargoyles" have "le droit de vivre," or the right to live, i.e., no matter how revulsed they initially feel about themselves, they will not finish what the Germans started—a leitmotif echoed by the foursome throughout the film.

Following the novel's narrative, Dupeyron has Lieutenant Adrien Fournier tell his story as well as introduce and comment on his three facially wounded companions in the officers' ward, describe their physically and psychologically traumatic bone and skin graft surgeries, and recount his reintegration into post-war Paris. After the first minute-and-a-half Legion of Honor scene, Dupeyron begins Fournier's flashback where the novel's action commences—with his grandfather taking him in a horse-drawn buggy to the Lalinde train station; however, to better acquaint the viewers with the protagonist, he could have had lead-role actor Eric Caravaca voice a few important self-introductory lines from the novel, such as he is an officer victim who never saw the Great War—neither the enemy, nor the battles in the cold, muddy, rat-filled trenches nor the stench of excrement mixed with decomposing dead and tobacco: "La guerre de 14, je ne l'ai pas connue"²⁸ ("The war of 14, I did not know")—an incipit reminiscent of Camus' style in the *ouverture* of his *L'Étranger*: "Aujourd'hui, maman est morte" ("Today, *maman* died"), a short, simple opening. Dupeyron perhaps chose not to echo these lines for fear of killing a certain element of suspense, wanting the audience to believe this movie will show trench warfare scenes, if few as Carion did in *Joyeux Noël* (2005) and Jeunet in *Un long dimanche de fiançailles* (2004), only to surprise them otherwise. As a French film based on a quasi-biographical First World War novel that delves into the facially wounded, the permanently disfigured, and *les sorties de guerre*, and opens with Siegfried's *Funeral March*, Great-War *cinéphiles* might expect a Wagnerian dénouement, such as in Stanley Kubrick's *Paths of Glory* (1957) and in Joseph Losey's *King and Country* (1964); but, inevitably, suspense he did, indeed, create. In spite of telling Peter Lennon that it [suspense] was not the main purpose of that scene—one that had been escalating for forty-eight minutes until the moment when the young officer was ready to accept himself by slowly removing his bandages—he subtly captured that "sense of repulsion" that the audience "was demanding to see."²⁹ Having re-

examined Dalton Trumbo's *Johnny Got His Gun* (1971) and David Lynch's *The Elephant Man* (1980), he realized that incommensurable views such as disfigurement are also rendered more powerful when masked. Forty-eight minutes to muster the courage to see himself also gives structure in real time to the 135-minute movie. Adrien's seeing the reflection of his face in the ward's window coupled with the corners of two frames—one in which Weil's burned face in the shadow is intensely staring at him from his bed, and the other with an equally mesmerized Penanster—is one of the most dramatic sequences of the entire movie. Overwhelmed by shock, Fournier walks like a zombie to the chthonic lower ward housing infantrymen, a descent into a Dantesque hell where he sees a room full of "moaning monsters," the one in the forefront—introduced with a screeching, scream-like instrumental—reminiscent of the agonizing, *gueule-cassée*-like figure depicted in Edvard Munch's *Serik*. The haunting visual experience, too immense to process, instinctively prompts him to return to the officers' ward to retrieve his gun from his locker and put the barrel to his head. What prevents him from pulling the trigger?—his conviction in the maxim, "On a le droit de vivre."

In addition to suicide, another aspect that viewers are almost always guaranteed in any war film is sex, and *La Chambre des officiers* is no exception. Only two minutes into the movie, Dupeyron wastes no time to graphically embellish Fournier's one-night fling with Clémence, a scene that is tastefully absent in Dugain's novel, thereby leaving it the readers' imagination to fill in the gap between the couple's entering the apartment and Fournier's discreet pre-dawn departure. Dupeyron's use of flashback presents to the audience an immediate juxtaposition of the post-war, disfigured, and masked Fournier with his pre-war debonair allure in the boudoir and emphasizes his loss of former self, all while preparing the viewer for the upcoming physical and mental challenges both he and his three comrades encounter in their roles as Sisyphean *gueules-cassées* patients: they are not only able to recognize their Camusian-like human condition, but they also find conciliation in their reality and discover a sense of purpose in their daily struggles in the officers' ward as *gueules-cassées* supporting each other as *blessés de la face* both in their pre- and post-operative hours and also during the many long recovery weeks between surgeries.

Of Fournier's pre-facially scarred life, viewers know very little, only that he was a young, handsome, self-confident, soft-spoken, and well-educated engineer lieutenant, taciturn about his opinion regarding the war; however, we do witness his well-mannered, *carpe diem modus operandi* when he first encounters Clémence's bidding a tearful farewell to her pianist

boyfriend on the soldier-filled train platform: not to be too presumptuous, he asks her, “Is he your husband?”,³⁰ not “your boyfriend?” Knowing that she is in a relationship, the tenacious Fournier nonetheless invites her for a final pre-war drink in rowdy, revelry-filled train station café; when he asks her her name and she replies, “Clémence,” he ripostes, “That doesn’t go well with war.”³¹ In Dugain’s novel, however, the two are much more intellectual and discuss their views about the war: Clémence blames the people’s enthusiasm for going to war on religion and the belief in eternal life;³² the Pagan Fournier, on the other hand, reproaches not God but the Germans for the war.³³ Satiated with the persiflage, the eager, semi-experienced lover lieutenant, politely avoiding the question he truly wishes to ask, inquires if she loves her pianist boyfriend, but Clémence—after listening to his long-winded analysis about freedom, time, and imagination—cuts to the chase, ordering him to take her to his apartment, which culminates in blindfolded sex, foreshadowing the bandage that Fournier will soon have to wear. This is the last time he makes love to a woman as a “whole” man. Almost identical to the novel, Dupeyron concludes this sequence with Fournier’s pre-dawn departure: his leaving her the apartment keys and a kind note indicating that she can remain as long as she wishes and that he desires to see her upon his return after the war.

Fournier blithely leaves his flat, skips down the street, and gladly takes the train to his unit in the Ardennes along the Meuse where he describes the early August 1914 weather as being much like *la rentrée*, or the first day of the academic year in France: “beau, chaud; l’air est léger.”³⁴ In some aspects, he is a schoolboy who has just transitioned into manhood within a week—from falling in love to going to war, from witnessing death to being disfigured—only to have the war teach him some unexpected lessons that relegate him to childhood in an instant, starting life again from the beginning with learning how to eat, then how to talk, then how to make friends, and finally how to make love.

La Bataille des frontières, 7 August-13 September 1914: a battle that shaped the century

“By the end of August, the French Army had suffered 75,000 dead, of whom 27,000 were killed on 22 August. French casualties for the first month of the war were 260,000, of which 140,000 occurred during the last four days of the Battle of the Frontiers.”³⁵

We are not told its name, nor are we shown any firing or fighting, but we do witness the ominous and imminent prelude to The Battle of the Frontiers as Fournier, stationed in a Meuse village, rushes to the aid of a teenage soldier who is disemboweled by a spooked

regiment stallion running wild before ever seeing the enemy, a scene auguring his absence from all battlefields of the Great War. We also see the sedulous, 6th regiment lieutenant reporting to his nervous, profusely sweating, 9 a.m.-shot-drinking commander sending him on his fateful reconnaissance mission to build a mobile bridge over the Meuse near Chaumont before the anticipated arrival of the Germans. From the camera lens in a wide-angle contre-jour shot, as if on the bank of the Meuse, the viewer sees the backlit silhouettes of Fournier and his two comrades on horses surveying the land from a hilltop, then hears the distress cry of a bird as if to alert them of the inevitable, and finally, detects, in a flash, a high-pitched whistling sound. Two exploding bombs leave a barely alive, motionless, air-gasping Fournier quivering on the ground and the other two men and horses dead.

Because of its punctilious cinematographic composition, this “idyllic scene” is one of the most memorable shots of the entire movie. With no visual battlefields, no soldiers firing, no trenches, the bucolic yet ominous one-minute-thirty-eight-second scene shockingly captures, as few words could express, the moment when the nineteenth century abruptly ended and the most violent century in history began. In *1914-1918: Understanding the Great War*, Audoin-Rouzeau and Becker describe that pivotal August 1914 moment that marked when the “about turn—from a social state where violence had become very controlled, repressed and unreal to a state of war where extreme violence had free rein—occurred in an extremely brief period of time.”³⁶ The sequence is one that contributes to the Seventh Art’s *lettres de noblesse*.

As the 21-23 August 1914 Battle of the Ardennes ensues, Fournier becomes one of the very first *guenle cassée* victims, a casualty that shocks most medical staff: one officer makes the sign of the cross in a church makeshift hospital where wounded soldiers lie on the straw-laden floor as a doctor explains his miraculous survival—mud clogging the lingual artery—as well as lists his shrapnel injuries: “the face is split open from the chin to halfway up the nose, with destruction of upper right jawbone and palate, partial destruction of the tongue, organs at the rear of the throat unprotected.”³⁷ Because Fournier is unable to speak, the uninitiated doctor believes he is also deaf, so Dupeyron has Caravaca do a voice-over narration so that viewers can understand his self analysis of his wounds: knowing that he can move his feet, legs, and hands calms him; however, the excruciating pain from having lost all his teeth and palate overwhelms him, and panic sets in when he hears the gurgle that has replaced his voice. Bewildered, he asks himself, “Has the war started?”³⁸—a scene reminiscent of a bed sheet-

draped Joe Bonham (*Johnny Got His Gun*, 1971) who, hit by an artillery shell on the last day of the Great War and declared “unthinkingly dead” by doctors, provides voice-over information to the audience—but not to the other characters—of his thoughts and feelings: “Where am I? It’s dark in here.”³⁹ Upon realizing that Fournier is an officer, the medics send him on the long, hot, journey to Val-de-Grâce in a truck stacked with bunked mattresses, the one above Fournier blood saturated.

***Le Regard*, or “The Look”**

“My initial reaction is to run away. [...] I try to look at them as little as possible; I look at their hands. It is safer, because I have to make an effort to push back the tears.”⁴⁰—Henriette Rémi, caregiver of First World War disfigured soldiers and author.

Removing the wounded and dead from the ambulance, the medics see that Fournier, burning with high fever from infection, desperately needs water but are baffled as to how to aid the thirsty, mouthless officer; they also unknowingly inform him that there is no more morphine. Lying on a stretcher in the Val-de-Grâce courtyard, Fournier is greeted by Anaïs—a name associated with peace, tranquility, and grace—his soon-to-be twenty-four-seven nurse, companion, and mother figure of sorts who, initially trying to protect him from the rain with her umbrella, somehow instinctively understands his gurgle and senses that he finds the rain drops soothing when she asks him: “You prefer the rain?”⁴¹ Shortly after he falls unconscious, the operating surgeon, recognizing him as an officer, orders the assistants to take him to the officers’ ward where, when he awakens, Anaïs is tending to him. When Dupeyron has the medical staff enter the ward to examine Fournier, the camera focuses on their faces, zooming in on the parts he no longer has—chin, lips, and mouth. The surgeon’s plan to bring him back to health consists of feeding him through a tube, operating on him, allowing him plenty of rest, and then addressing the serious issues: “A leg, an arm, they’re easy, just chop them off, but a jawbone is different; a bone graft may take. It is fascinating work. More for me than for you, of course.”⁴² Anaïs gives mute Fournier a piece of chalk and a board on which to write and feeds him soup; she sees in him her son who is fighting at the front in the Ardennes, comments on how calm the officers’ ward is compared to those downstairs that are overcrowded with infantrymen, and encourages him to write to his mother.

With Sabine Azema as Anaïs, Dupeyron succeeds in capturing what Frantz Vaillant perceptively describes as the “*lien humain*,” or that last link connecting *les gueules cassées* to

humanity,⁴³ a link expressed not only in words and in tone of voice, but also in a person's look, as he explains in reviewing Henriette Rémi's 1942 book *Hommes sans visage*: "The nurses' look is of crucial importance. Their eyes cast no fear, no repulsion, and no pity. Many of them will eventually marry these men whom no one else wanted."⁴⁴ Indeed, *le regard*, or "the look," how the non-disfigured look at the disfigured, how the disfigured look at the non-disfigured, and how the disfigured look at each other, quickly becomes the leitmotif of *La Chambre*.

First published in 1942, Henriette Rémi's 2014 edition of *Hommes sans visage*, with Stéphane Garcia's insightful forty-two-page postface, is a fascinating eyewitness account of a volunteer in a hospital for the disfigured soldiers. *La Chambre*'s suicide victim officer Louis Levauchelle may actually have been—and is more than likely—M. Lazé whose young horrified son, according to her account, cries, "C'est pas papa...pas papa!"⁴⁵ upon seeing his father's face. Moreover, as she explains in the preface intended for publication in 1939, it was the inexorable escalating events twenty years later that finally prompted her to write the book. As another world war was looming, the more she was writing, the more it seemed as if it all had happened only yesterday.⁴⁶ Like *J'accuse* for Gance, *Hommes sans visage* was Henriette Rémi's way of warning us about the horrors of *la guerre de demain*.

The *Gueules Cassées* and "kinship" in the ward

"In the amitié I speake of, they entermixe and confound themselves one in the other, with so universall a commixture, that they weare out and can no more finde the seame that hath conjoined them together. If a man urge me to tell wherfore I loved him, I feele it cannot be expressed, but by answering; Because it was he, because it was myself."⁴⁷—Montaigne's description about his friendship with Etienne de La Boétie.

Shortly after his first surgery and with the continuous arrival of more *gueules cassées* in the ward, Fournier, no longer alone, nurtures a brotherhood-like relationship with them, the type that Winter refers to as "fictive kinship":

The war provided challenges too heavy for most individuals or families to bear on their own. [...] The disfigured has special problems of sociability which only their own association could address. [...] They form strong bonds during their long stays in hospitals. [...] These groups had a 'collective memory,' but

it was not shared by the larger collective. [...] The only ‘collective memory’ was theirs and theirs alone.⁴⁸

Fournier’s friendship with three in particular matures into an unbreakable bond that will endure the Great War in the movie and well after the end of the Second World War in the novel. What unites them from the beginning, besides their facial wounds, is their decision to renounce all introspection, the temptation to contemplate their disastrous existence, and bitterness.⁴⁹ However, Fournier’s strongest kinship, the type that Montaigne had with La Boétie, is not with his two closest disfigured officers but rather with Alain Bonnard, a childhood friend with a maimed hand, a union separated only by his death in the Ardennes days before the signing of The Armistice: “I felt extremely helpless for not being able to protect him, for not being there to cover his body with mine when the bomb exploded. Oddly, I had the feeling of being confronted by death for the first time. I had witnessed death before, often of a kin, but Bonnard and I shared a spirit. One must experience the same feeling when a twin passes away.”⁵⁰

Comparable to the unspoken undercurrent of intimacy which brings a chamber music ensemble together —“the music of friends,”⁵¹ or as Goethe described it, “four rational people conversing”⁵²—the “disfigured quartet” begin to share their experiences, and a relationship so personal and inextricably intertwined develops, one that only they can understand and fathom. With the exception of Fournier, viewers see nothing of their pre-war life, not even a quick flashback; instead, Dupeyron has the four recount their story to each other, creating a more authentic rendition of daily routine in the ward.

It is during one of the many “conversation sequences” that burn-victim pilot Pierre Weil recounts to Fournier the moment of his disfigurement: it happened when his cockpit engulfed in flames after being shot down by Germans just after flying over the front: “I was coming in. All of sudden, shots from everywhere. Two Boches. I didn’t see them coming. The plane becomes engulfed in flames, a tree hits me... After that, I no longer remember.”⁵³ In the novel, Fournier describes him as a pouting Cro-Magnon who laughs with his eyes: “Weil ressemble à un crâne préhistorique, les sinus à l’air. Sa lèvre inférieure est épaisse et lui donne l’air boudeur. Cet homme-là sait rire avec ses yeux.”⁵⁴ Always happy, joking, and talking about the intoxicating effects of flying and the day when he will fly again, Weil expresses his anger, however, only once, when remembering the anti-Semitic indignation he experienced in the

French air force, comparing himself to a black crow among eagles: “Tu sais ce que c’est un corbeau dans un nid d’aigle?—C’est un juif dans l’aviation française.”⁵⁵ A sequence exemplifying one of his many humoristic banter occurs during his post-operation dialogue with the surgeon who, trying to reassure him that the skin graft will work, says that he will soon have the nose of Apollo, but Weil, insisting on wanting to keep a Jewish nose, ripostes that he wants his mother to recognize him: “Ah non, un nez juif! Il faut que me mère me reconnaisse!”⁵⁶ In the novel’s post-war years, so unique and cemented was the kinship of *gueule cassée* that Weil faithfully meets Fournier for dinner and a drink every weekend in Montmartre.

Unlike their pilot comrade, both Breton aristocrat Captain Henri de Penanster and nurse Marguerite receive their facial wounds from German shrapnel, the former in the Argonne and the latter at Noircœur-sur-la-Lys. The first *gueule cassée* that both the audience and Fournier see in the ward is Penanster, and with the camera focusing first on Penanster’s half destroyed face, Dupeyron is preparing us for Fournier’s self discovery—the moment when he sees his disfigured reflection in the hospital window. Deeply religious as a result of believing that God spared his life from the German shell, Penanster spends much of his time either praying or sculpting a wooden Virgin face, much like the surgeon dedicates his time to “creating new faces” for his patients, and just as Weil boosts the trio’s morale with humor, Penanster does so with his unfaltering faith, wisdom, and guardian-like demeanor, which Fournier, in particular, admires.

After his first surgery and still unable to speak, Penanster, relying on his conviction and wanting Weil and Fournier to know that they will overcome all obstacles, assuredly writes on the chalkboard, “On va s’en sortir” (“We’ll get through this”)—a simple yet powerful line of encouragement. And, to console an uncertain and mute Fournier who—after one of many surgeries—doubts he will ever speak again, Penanster calms his convalescing comrade with prayer, letting him know that all will be well: “Je vais prier pour toi. Ça va aller.”⁵⁷ The agnostic Fournier, appreciating Penanster’s tranquil demeanor, believes that he, too, must find that inner serenity, but without the ridiculous belief in God: “Je ne crois pas en dieu. C’est ridicule. Il faut que je me calme tout seul. Je n’ai jamais senti quelqu’un d’aussi calme.”⁵⁸ Another example of Penanster’s protective nature occurs in a late-night scene where, when watching over the other officers in the ward to make sure they do not attempt suicide, he finds himself guilt ridden for having fallen asleep when officer Levauchelle, only hours after being rejected by his family and children because of his disfigurement, ends his life by slitting his wrists with

a straight razor. Suicide sequences such as this are expected in war films; for example, we see broken Private Gomer Pyle's blowing his brains out while on the toilet in Stanley Kubrick's *Full Metal Jacket* (1987), and heart-broken officer candidate Sid's hanging himself in the shower in Taylor Hackford's Academy-Award winning *An Officer and a Gentleman* (1982), just to name a couple. As a result, Penanster makes Fournier swear never to attempt suicide: "Jure-moi que tu ne suicideras jamais. Jure-le!"⁵⁹

In addition to grounding his two buddies, Penanster also serves as Fournier's speech therapist as well as their voice, particularly when in the presence of women. In the sequence when learning to speak again, Fournier practices his consonants with Penanster who, while sculpting a virgin from wood as a form of cathartic prayer, encourages him to work on the V sound, "Non, je sculte une Vierge, pas une 'ierge,'" and the P and C sounds, as in "prière, patience, science, [...]." Unable to sound the P and C, Fournier eventually produces the F with "Fatienche."⁶⁰ Upon Weil's announcing that there is a woman in the ward who is not a tending nurse, Penanster first wonders if she bears the same wounds as they do, and because his disfigurement is less frightening than the others, he is nominated to talk to her on their behalf; the soft, slow piano notes playing one key at a time in the background create a calm and serene effect as the nervous trio come face-to-face with a woman other than their nurses—the first time since their disfigurement—with Penanster at the forefront, speaking for the others to a disfigured Marguerite.

Despite his piety, the devout Penanster, aware that remaining cloistered in the hospital is unhealthy, understands that they are still men with carnal desires and is the first of the trio, not the *bon vivant* Weil, to admit his sexual need for a woman: "I need a woman. We are going to go out. We've been locked up in here too long. It's unhealthy."⁶¹ Surprised by his friend's risqué suggestion, Weil can only wonder if God gave him the bold proposal to visit a brothel: "Did you have a revelation last night? Did God speak to you?"⁶² In the novel, however, the three are not so brave on their first outing; instead, they innocently walk the desolate streets of Paris, but shortly after their failed first jaunt, they find the courage to try again, this time not only to "face" women but also to prove to themselves that they are still virile men. Dapperly dressed in their military best and covering their disfigurement as well as they can—Fournier with his nose covered, Penanster his right cheek, and Weill his lips—they are, nonetheless, refused entry by the old hag door lady, who claims that she does not accept soldiers even though the joint is crawling with them. Because "money talks," the determined

Penanster pays their entry; however, upon admission, they encounter another obstacle with the *maquerelle*, or the madam, yelling—because she assumes that their disfigurement automatically makes them semi-deaf—that she does not operate an establishment of charity and has nothing to offer them: “On n’a rien pour vous ici.”⁶³ Following Penanster’s example, Weil convinces her of their determination by giving her all his cash; she not only agrees to accommodate their wishes to have the prettiest girls, but also offers them a drink. In the following sequence illustrating the trio’s celebrating their triumphant shag, the three smoke American cigarettes in the brothel’s side street and cajolingly comment that syphilis will be their reward for their “mission accomplished”: “We always think that the worst has happened. The only thing we didn’t have was syphilis. Now we’ve got it.”⁶⁴ Laughing at the idea that the STD is the worst that can happen to them, they walk back to the hospital, and shortly afterwards, Penanster’s supporting role concludes with his giving hugs, the first in joy on the occasion of the signing of the Armistice at the eleventh hour on the eleventh day of the eleventh month and the second in sadness of saying *au revoir* to his *gueules cassées* comrades at Val-de-Grâce in the spring of 1919; however, in the novel, they will meet again. Although Penanster spends his post-war years working the land, he comes to Fournier and Weil’s rescue when the Germans ravage France again during the Second World War. The ever-protective aristocrat hides them from the enemy—on the hunt for all Jews—for two years in his subterranean shelter. Of the quartet, he is the first to die, found in a ravine in 1946, and when, at his funeral where many Second World War *gueules cassées* paid their respects, Fournier asks Weil, “What are they going to do next?”, he replies, “*on va leur apprendre la gaieté*,”⁶⁵ or we’ll teach them gaiety.

Even though the film focuses on Fournier and his comrade officers, Dupeyron, aware that the Great War scarred not only men, adeptly includes a too often ignored but very real chapter of *la Grande Guerre*: the many women who served. By introducing Marguerite last—a Greek and Latin name for purity and also a flower associated with death in France because they decorate the tombs of the dearly departed on *la Toussaint*, or All Saints’ Day—he limelights one of the rarely shown atrocities of war: the disfigured women who, as due icons of *les blessés de la face*, merit their rightful place in war films and remembrance. In the novel and on the screen, her presence not only awakens the trio’s sentiment of failure in their mission as soldiers and of powerlessness to punish the enemy⁶⁶ but also inspires them to become “normal, virile men.”

Just as Dupeyron primed the audience well in advance before seeing Fournier's disfigurement, he does the same with Marguerite's by allowing Weil to announce the presence of this new woman in the ward, and, to their surprise, she is not a Val-de-Grâce nurse but a *blesmée de la face*, a victim like they are. While Penanster wonders if she bears immoderate facial wounds like they do, Weil, outraged with the fact that the enemy is disfiguring women, associates the Germans to a mad dog who bites everyone, men and women: "On a été tous mordu par le même chien."⁶⁷ Thus, Nagata gradually introduces Marguerite, first as a mysterious silhouette hiding in the shadows on the hospital's narrow hallways, heightening the suspense: a desirable, attractive, and respectable woman has been facially disfigured, but to what degree? However, unlike Dupeyron's giving us the opportunity to see Fournier as a handsome, pre-disfigured officer, we never see Marguerite's pre-war face and do not need to, for her beauty, lies under the skin.

As a result of the German shell that killed all but her at that field hospital, Marguerite is deaf stricken but can read lips, provided that the locutor speaks slowly, and, like most deaf-stricken victims, she cannot detect her own volume and fears speaking too loudly. Because Penanster is the least disfigured and, thus, less "frightening," and also the better able to articulate of the three, he speaks on behalf of the trio, informing her of their stint at Val-de-Grace—he for fifteen months, Weil thirteen, and Fournier twenty—and also invites her to join their officers' club. She shares her family history full of cowards, explaining that her brothers dodged their duty, that she left them to get away, and became a nurse at the front at Noireur-sur-la-Lys where, in the novel, German shrapnel ripped away the bottom portion of her face at the end of 1915. Even though the war destroyed her visage, she acknowledges that it saved her from her snobby, hypocritical bourgeois family who had arranged for her to marry one like them—"un lâche," or a coward.

Sensitive to a disfigured woman's feelings, they compliment her beauty, Pierre praising her lovely hair and smile and Fournier her stunning eyes. Flattered all while remaining humble, she recounts that many thought she was "beautiful." Likewise, she, too, empathizes with the trio's physical and psychological wounds and, in return, flatters them, acknowledging that they, too, must have been handsome before the war. Sycophancies aside, she admits her own living hell, confesses her nightmares, and wonders if they ever get accustomed to them. Penanster's advice is, "Il faut vivre,"⁶⁸ or "one must go on living"; however, the DVD's English subtitle

mistranslates it with the banal cliché, “life goes on.” Soothed by his wise, comforting words, Marguerite properly introduces herself and encourages them to visit whenever they fancy.

Even though Marguerite’s name is directly associated with the dearly departed, she, nonetheless, revitalizes the trio’s self-confidence, and in the sequences that follow, both Weil and Fournier acknowledge they dreamt of Marguerite, and Weil even fantasized about her on the front “amidst the falling shells, running to [him], hugging [him], smiling, and then a shell hits [them], uniting [them] for eternity.”⁶⁹ The pensive Penanster, however, not content with simply dreaming of a woman and recognizing both their unhealthy claustrophobia and their natural sexual needs, musters the courage to lead the trio’s sortie to a brothel. Fournier, not wanting to be a coward, consents, and the three successfully pass the manhood test at a brothel—ironically, all thanks to a flower of purity for the dead: Marguerite.

Unlike the gravely disfigured men who survived the war and were eventually able to re-integrate into society, albeit with difficulty, and to marry and have children, women such as Marguerite, however, experienced more severe ostracism. Dupeyron captures this type of rejection with Marguerite’s attempt to come home to her bourgeois family of *lâches*: the polite butler does not recognize her, and her soused brother, upon seeing her unmasked disfigured face, insults her with insensitive interrogatives: “What are you doing here?”, and “Are you going to stay like that?”.⁷⁰ The empathetic Fournier rescues her from this painful predicament by taking her to his pre-war apartment in Paris, which he has not entered since he left Clémence there that early August 1914 morning. When addressing each other within the small confines of his undisturbed flat, they use the polite and respectful “vous,” not the familiar “tu,” and when she attempts to look at herself in the mirror—a flashback of Fournier’s desire to see his reflection five years prior—he prevents her in order to keep her calm, and wanting to help her, at least for the night. Echoing Penanster’s adage, “il faut vivre,” Fournier encourages her to resume a normal, post-war life, and he believes that once they both find a partner, the war will truly be over for both of them; however, the realistic Marguerite intuitively knows that a man will never want her—“Jamais un homme ne voudra de moi”⁷¹—and that women such as herself are different than men in that they do not focus on the same things—“Les femmes sont différentes. On ne s’attache pas aux mêmes choses.”⁷² Fournier realizes for the first time being a *gueule cassée* is worse for a woman than a man. In the novel, Marguerite spends her post-war years helping handicapped children, and just as the Chrysanthemum

flower honors the dead, a shattered Marguerite re-appears at Penanster's funeral to bid him—her “kin”—adieu.

Conclusion

“And all of the sudden their disfigurement changes. They just become old. Their lines and everything soften and you just get these men whose faces are worn—just well worn—rather than disfigured. It's really a very beautiful thing.”⁷³—Kerry Neale, archivist, Australian War Memorial.”

Sophie Delaporte poignantly describes the scene at the signing of *le Traité de Versailles* on that historic 28 June 1919. At Clemenceau's request, head physician Dr. Morestin had chosen Albert Jugon, Val-de Grace's longest residing patient, to head the five-member *gueules cassées* delegation at Versailles. Half of Jugon's face and throat had been blown off by a shell splinter during the Battle of Argonne in September 1914. Jugon, in turn, chose the other four *frères de souffrance*: Eugene Hebert, Henri Agogue, Pierre Richard, and Andre Cavalier. Together, the five sat at the smallest of the tables in the Hall of Mirrors in such a way that “[t]he plenipotentiaries had to pass in front of them, and then turn their back to them in order to sign the document.”⁷⁴ With no other *blessés de la Grande Guerre* from either side invited, she goes on to analyze the significance of the quintuplet's presence from *La Grande Nation's* appreciation for their sacrifice, to the victory and signing of the peace treaty symbolically justifying the immense suffering endured by all French combatants, but, above all, they were showcased to shock and shame the German delegation, “C'est donc avant tout un acte anti-allemand,”⁷⁵ and as Audoin-Rouzeau and Becker bluntly state, “[...] the men were also nothing more than strange—and emblematic—decor. [...] and soon they would be consigned to virtual oblivion, which only deepened as the years went by.”⁷⁶ Or, as Suzannah Biernoff says, the *gueules cassées* would subsequently disappear into a culture of aversion,⁷⁷ but for Adrien Fournier, the long five-year journey took a different turn with the smile of a child while riding the metro, perhaps a parallelism with Dugain's childhood days spent at le Domaine Moussy-le-Vieux.

Film critic Bosley Crowther considered a great movie as one based primarily on strong content, “[...] content that has given us—and still may give us—new insights, new joys, new awareness of the human condition in exciting and absorbing ways.”⁷⁸ With that thought in mind during the construction of *L'Historial de la Grande Guerre (Musée de la Première Guerre*

Mondiale, Péronne, France), Jay Winter asked a group of *ceux de '14* which film they most wanted in their museum, to which three unhesitatingly responded, “*La grande illusion*.”⁷⁹ As Winter explains, the response by soldiers who had seen combat choosing a film without a single combat scene “raises central questions about our understanding of the status and character of films about war, and the way they frame personal and collective memories.”⁸⁰ In the following, he concludes with the soldiers’ reason for selecting Renoir: “[...] it [their response] is unmatched in elegy, an illuminated poem throwing a flood of light on what war is. That is what these men were saying about choosing this one film to be shown in a museum about their war, the Great War. Their personal memories of war were touched by Renoir’s masterpiece.”⁸¹ Winter’s interpretation of the three veterans’ unexpected answer certainly indicates that they believed that Renoir’s *chef d’œuvre* reflects strong content, new insights, and shed a neoteric light on the human condition.

Sixty-four years later and much like *La grande illusion*, there is not a single battle scene in *La Chambre des officiers*, a rarity for any war film, but particularly for a twenty-first-century production. Furthermore, protagonist Adrien Fournier has not even participated in or witnessed war. Yet, by closely adhering to Dugain’s novel and the memory of a child spending time with his disfigured grandfather and other *blesés-de-la-face* veterans at Moussy-le-Vieux, perhaps because of that thin but living *transmission de la mémoire*, Dupeyron convincingly portrays to the audience the hell of that particular aspect of war and its aftermath within the confines of four walls.

Among those who rendered tribute to Dupeyron in *Le Figaro*, actor Denis Podalydes (Henri de Penanster in *La Chambre*) expressed that the beauty of this movie becomes more and more obvious with the passage of time: “J’ai revu *La Chambre des officiers* il y a deux ans. Je crois que le temps grandit ce film et sa beauté, sa noblesse, plus évidente encore, portent l’empreinte humaine de François.”⁸² When released fifteen years ago, not long before the deaths of the last veterans, it would have seemed that disfiguration would remain closely associated with *la der des ders*, but after 2001 came Afghanistan and Iraq, and the story of Adrien Fournier could not be more relevant than now.

Peter Lennon writes that, contrary to the norms, it is at the end that the novella and the film diverge the most, and it is Dupeyron who chose the “lesser happy” ending by allowing his characters to attempt reintegrating into the post-war world on their own, whereas Dugain faithfully heeds his disfigured grandfather’s fortunate serendipity of having “a happy marriage

and children.”⁸³ The film director explains he had several endings in mind, including one in which Fournier marries and holds a child in his arms, but he found it very sad and cut it, believing that “it might work against the story.”⁸⁴ Determining a war film’s finale, or any film, is not always evident, and a good example is Lewis Milestone who also had several possible conclusions from which to choose in his *All Quiet on the Western Front* (1930). Like Milestone with the help of Karl Freund (*Metropolis*, 1927), Dupeyron deviates from Dugain’s dénouement, opting to create his own final sequence.

His choosing the metro scene where the child unexpectedly and spontaneously smiles at Fournier may be too idealistic of an ending for some; however, in doing so, he adroitly and perceptively captures the underlying essence of the novel: of Dugain the child and the memory of his grandfather in the closely-knit circle of *pensionnaires* at Moussy-le-Vieux. As Dugain told Lennon, “I did not think it exceptional,”⁸⁵—or *c’était normal, une tranche de vie* in the circle of life, and he saw them as Kerry Neale sees the elderly *gueules cassées*, those “broken gargoyles” in those sepia photographs of the Great War.

Unlike Humphrey Cobb, Dugain wrote *La Chambre* strictly as a family memoir, and when invited to submit it for publication five years later, the editor insisted on renaming it *La Chambre des officiers* for marketing purposes.⁸⁶ So impressionable was Dugain’s immersion at Moussy-le-Vieux that it has made him feel as he actually lived *la Guerre de 14*,⁸⁷ an impression that Dupeyron cleverly extracts from the novella’s 1914-1919 section. By cleaving not only to the dialogues, most verbatim, but also to the leitmotif of the confined setting and the adage “il faut vivre,” Dupeyron’s production aptly portrays the physical disfigurement—albeit restrained—and the psychological trauma endured by the gravely disfigured and, thus, fittingly captures their evanescent memory. When released at the dawn of the twenty-first century as the last centenarians of the Great War were passing, *La Chambre des officiers* is a timely and consequential contribution to the Seventh Art for future generations not to forget those often ignored victims. Of the poets honoring those who either fell or survived with a *gueule cassée*, such as Dugain’s grandfather during the opening days of the *la der des ders* along the banks of the Meuse in August 1914, Laurence Binyon’s “Ode of Remembrance” from his poem, “For The Fallen”—which first appeared in September 1914 of *The Times*—perhaps eulogizes them the best in the following verses:

They went with songs to the battle, they were young.

Straight of limb, true of eye, steady and aglow.
They were staunch to the end against odds uncounted,
They fell with their faces to the foe.

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning,
We will remember them.⁸⁸

Endnotes

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³ Ibid.

⁴ "Best seller—La chambre des officiers de Marc Dugain." *France 2*, 22 August 2015, accessed 18 June 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fywth803OAc>.

⁵ Colonel Yves Picot, a facially disfigured patient at Val-de-Grâce, is credited with coining this term and in 1921 was a founding member and later president of the *Union des Blessés de la Face et de la Tête*. See "Les Pères fondateurs," *L'Association des Gueules Cassées*, accessed 18 June 2016, http://www.gueules-cassees.asso.fr/srub_7-les-peres-fondateurs.html

⁶ Peter Lennon, "The hidden horrors," *The Guardian*, 19 March 2002, accessed 18 June 2016, <https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2002/mar/20/artsfeatures.history>.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Sophie Delaporte, *Les Gueules Cassées: les blessés de la face de la Grande Guerre* (Paris: Éd. Noësis, 2001), 30.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Peter Lennon, "The hidden horrors."

¹¹ Georges Sadoul, *Le Cinéma français (1890-1962)* (Paris: Flammarion, 1962), 29.

¹² Joël Huthwohl, "J'accuse," *Chroniques de la BnF* 52 (jan/fév 2010): 21-22, accessed 21 June 2016, <http://www.bnf.fr/documents/chroniques52.pdf>.

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¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ “*Mari transve mare, pro patria et humanitate, hominibus semper prodesse*” is the complete motto for L’Ecole de santé des armées.

¹⁶ For a detailed synopsis, see Stanley Sadie, *The New Grove Book of Operas*, second edition (New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 264-269.

¹⁷ Donald Spoto, *Stanley Kramer, Film Maker* (New York, New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1978), 22.

¹⁸ Bruce Mamer, “Oblique Shot,” *Film Production Technique: Creating the Accomplished Image* (Belmont: Cengage Learning), 9.

¹⁹ Marc Dugain, *La Chambre des officiers* (Paris: Le Grand Livre du Mois, 2001), 41.

²⁰ Ibid., 64-65.

²¹ Ibid., 67-68.

²² Ibid., 77.

²³ Philippe Rouyer et Yann Tobin, “Entretien avec François Dupeyron Chaque séquence contient tout le film,” *Positif* 488 (2001), 16.

²⁴ Andrew Kelly, *Cinema and The Great War* (London; New York: Rutledge, 1997), 164.

²⁵ My translation. See Marc Dugain, *La Chambre des officiers*, 70.

²⁶ Ibid., 31.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid., 9.

²⁹ Peter Lennon, “The hidden horrors.”

³⁰ *La Chambre des officiers*, directed by François Dupeyron, (2001; Paris: ARP—France 2 Cinéma, 2014), DVD.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Marc Dugain, *La Chambre des officiers*, 15.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid., 16.

³⁵ David Stevenson, *1914–1918: The History of the First World War* (London: Allen Lane, 2004), 54.

³⁶ Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau and Annette Becker, *14-18: Understanding the Great War*, trans. Catherine Temerson (New York: Hill and Wang), 33.

³⁷ *La Chambre des officiers*, DVD.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Marten F. Norden, "Johnny Got His Gun," *Hollywood's World War I: Motion picture images*, ed. Peter C. Rollins and John E. O'Connor (Bowling Green, Ohio: Bowling Green State University Press, 1997), 168.

⁴⁰ My translation. See Henriette Rémi, *Hommes sans visage* (Genève: Slatkine, 2014), 34-35.

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⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Frantz Vaillant, "Les femmes et la 1ère Guerre Mondiale: les infirmières des 'gueules cassées'," *TV5Monde*, 10 November 2010, accessed 10 September 2016, <http://information.tv5monde.com/terriennes/les-femmes-et-la-1ere-guerre-mondiale-les-infirmieres-des-gueules-cassees-3403>.

⁴⁴ My translation. See Frantz Vaillant, "Les femmes et la 1ère Guerre Mondiale: les infirmières des 'gueules cassées'."

⁴⁵ Henriette Rémi, *Hommes sans visage*, 80.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 11.

⁴⁷ Michel de Montaigne, *Montaigne's Essays*, The First Booke I, Chapter XXVII: Of Friendship, trans. John Florio, *Luminarium* (The University of Oregon: Renaissance Editions, 1998), accessed 14 January 2017. <http://www.luminarium.org/renascence-editions/montaigne/1xxvii.htm>.

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⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ My translation. See *La Chambre des officiers*, DVD.

⁵⁴ Marc Dugain, *La Chambre des officiers*, 68.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 97.

⁵⁶ *La Chambre des officiers*, DVD.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ My translation. See *La Chambre des officiers*. DVD.

⁶² My translation. Ibid.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ My translation. Ibid.

⁶⁵ Marc Dugain, *La Chambre des officiers*, 172.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 86.

⁶⁷ *La Chambre des officiers*, DVD.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ My translation. Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Paul Daley, “Broken gargoyles: the disfigured soldiers of the first world war.”

⁷⁴ My translation. See Sophie Delaporte, *L'Histoire par l'image*, accessed 28 October 2016, <http://www.histoire-image.org/etudes/traite-versailles>.

⁷⁵ Sophie Delaporte, *L'Histoire par l'image*.

⁷⁶ Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau and Annette Becker, *14-18: Understanding The Great War*, 232.

⁷⁷ Suzannah Biernoff, “The Rhetoric of Disfigurement in First World War Britain,” *Social History of Medicine* (2011), 27 February 2011, accessed 28 October 2016, <http://shm.oxfordjournals.org/content/early/2011/02/27/shm.hkq095.full>.

⁷⁸ Bosley Crowther, *The Great Films* (New York: G.P. Putnum’s Sons, 1967), 10.

⁷⁹ Jay Winter, *Remembering War: The Great War between Memory and History in the 20th Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 186.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 186.

⁸¹ Ibid., 186.

⁸² Alicia Paulet, "L'hommage poignant de Denis Podalydès à François Dupeyron," *Le Figaro* 26 February 2016, accessed 18 June 2016, <http://www.lefigaro.fr/cinema/2016/02/26/03002-20160226ARTFIG00200-l-hommage-poignant-de-denis-podalydes-a-francois-dupeyron.php>.

⁸³ Peter Lennon, "The hidden horrors."

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ "Best seller—La chambre des officiers de Marc Dugain."

⁸⁷ "Centenaire de la 1ère Guerre mondiale—Interview de Marc Dugain," 26 Nov. 2013, accessed 18 June 2016, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VQrMG6IKcBI>.

⁸⁸ Stanzas 3 and 4. See Laurence Binyon, *Selected Poems of Laurence Binyon* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1922), 77.

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