

Une guerre pas comme les autres – André Maurois and the First World War –
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The study of intellectuals during the First World War is well-established as Vincent Duclert records in his stock-taking of research in the domain:

L'histoire culturelle de la Grande Guerre, notamment portée par l'équipe du Centre de recherche de l'Historial de Péronne, ne s'est pas désintéressée des intellectuels qui occupent une place désormais importante dans ses productions. L'analyse de leur rapport à la guerre permet de mieux la connaître et de mieux les comprendre. Le champ de la Grande Guerre a favorisé également une reprise des études sur les intellectuels de la part de chercheurs spécialisés sur l'histoire antérieure du tournant du siècle.¹

Works especially by Christophe Prochasson² and Martha Hanna³, but also more recently and more peripherally by Nicolas Beaupré⁴ and Charles Ridel⁵ have widened and deepened our understanding of what it meant to be an intellectual during the First World War.

The case we intend to study for this paper does not fit neatly into the established categories of shirker intellectuals who wrote about the war from Paris or combatant intellectuals who risked their lives in the front lines. As a military interpreter working for the British Army, he existed between these categories while encompassing aspects of all of them. Our wider research on these go-between figures will enable us to examine closely this little-studied aspect of Maurois' biography.

1 Vincent Duclert, « Les intellectuels, un problème pour l'histoire culturelle », *Les Cahiers du Centre de Recherches Historiques*, 31 | 2003, [on-line], URL : <http://ccrh.revues.org/index293.html>. Consulted on 29th November 2008.

2 Christophe Prochasson, *Les intellectuels, le socialisme et la guerre : 1900-1938* (Paris: Éd. du Seuil, 1993); Christophe Prochasson und Anne Rasmussen, *Au nom de la patrie. Les intellectuels et la Première Guerre mondiale, 1910-1919* (Paris: Découverte, 1996).

3 Martha Hanna, *The Mobilisation of Intellect* (Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996).

4 Nicolas Beaupré, *Ecrire en guerre, écrire la guerre : France, Allemagne 1914-1920* (CNRS, 2006).

5 Charles Ridel, *Les embusqués* (Paris: Armand Colin, 2007).

Maurois' war experience left a multitude of traces reaching from the translation of Ian Hay's novel *The First Hundred Thousand*⁶ into French, the documents of the French military administration, his private correspondence, the fictionalised account of his experience published as *Les silences du Colonel Bramble*⁷ all the way to his memoirs⁸ written at the very end of his life. Using a wide range of analytical approaches, including methods from translation studies, eminently suited to this topic, we intend to reconstruct this particular experience of the War which was in a certain way foundational for Maurois' existence as an intellectual. He might well have continued after the war as the Normandy textile industrial Emile Herzog he had been before, had it not been for the literary success of his fictionalised account of the War⁹ and the shadow and the memory of the War thus continue to bear on him throughout his life.

6 Ian Hay, *The First Hundred Thousand: Being the Unofficial Chronicle* (Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1915); the translation was published as John Hay Beith, *Les Premiers cent mille*, traduction de Georges Richet et Emile Herzog (Paris: Nelson, 1915).

7 André Maurois, *Les Silences du colonel Bramble* (Paris: B. Grasset, 1918).

8 André Maurois, *Mémoires 1885-1967* (Paris: Flammarion, 1970).

9 André Maurois, *Les Silences du colonel Bramble* (Paris: B. Grasset, 1918).