

JEAN SCHLUMBERGER  
ÉVEILS  
A HISTORICAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY

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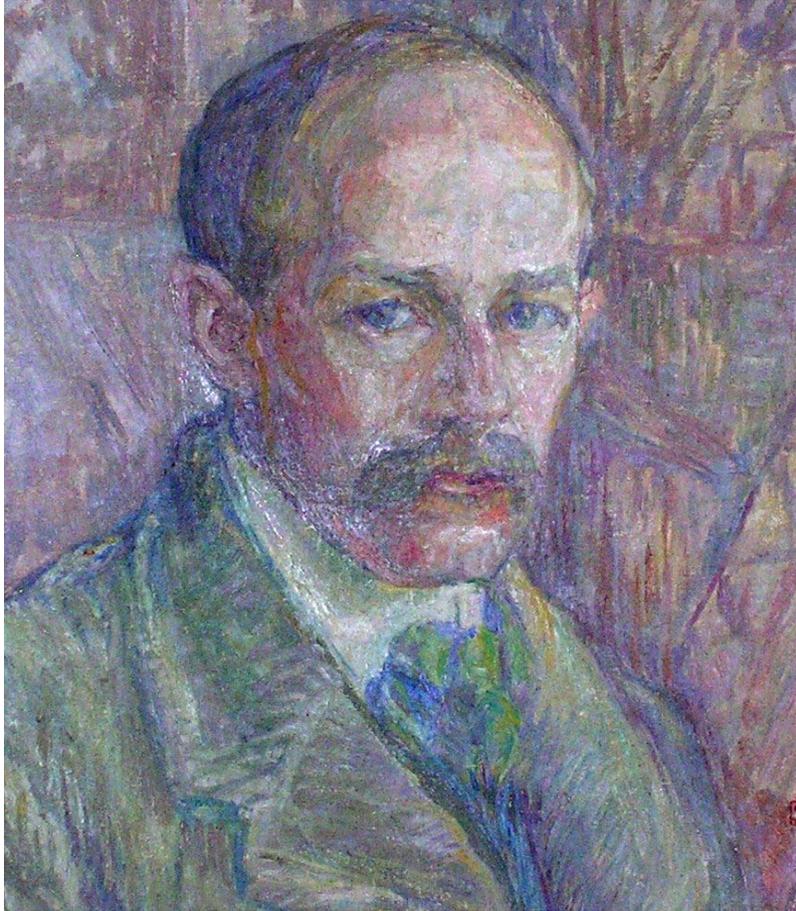
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Portrait of Jean Schlumberger painted by his wife, Suzanne Weyher  
Photograph taken by author

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## ABSTRACT

Jean Schlumberger (1877-1968), a French writer, journalist and co-founder of the Nouvelle Revue Française, a French literary journal, is best known as a writer of novels, plays and books of poetry. His non-fiction, especially his autobiography, Éveils, has been virtually neglected by critics and literary historians. This thesis examines Schlumberger's autobiography in the light of changing attitudes of historians to autobiography, with particular reference to the French Annales School and autobiographies written by historians such as those of Pierre Nora's Ego-Historiens. Schlumberger believed that memoirs and correspondences are often more enlightening than historical documents. His autobiography and historical articles reveal distinct similarities to the contemporary autobiographical approaches to history of Nora and his colleagues.

Schlumberger, who saw his work and his writings as being the most important aspects of his life, chose to dedicate a large portion of his autobiography to what he believed to be a reflection of himself. He recognized the importance of his literary friendships and wished to capture their history before it was lost or erased forever. He believed that the bourgeoisie was best situated for interpreting history and that it was its duty to do so. He demonstrates the interconnections between his own micro-historical experiences and other themes that have a broader significance such as the First World War. Autobiography's greatest contribution to the historical world is that it provides its readers with an understanding of what it means to be living in history. Schlumberger, as a writer of fiction and a historian, possessed the talents necessary for conveying how the world looked from many different perspectives.

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## DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my husband, Simon Stevenson, the great-grandson of Jean Schlumberger, and to my children Erica and Adam. Their continued love and support throughout made this thesis possible.

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## INTRODUCTION

Most research into Jean Schlumberger has revolved around his contributions to literature. However, he also wrote numerous historical articles and published his memoirs, Éveils, in the 1940s. A student of history throughout his life, Schlumberger shows knowledge of the art of the historian, as can be seen through his autobiography, many of his novels and his articles. This non-fiction work has been largely neglected by critics and literary historians alike. Schlumberger's contributions to history through his works in general and Éveils in particular are much more important than is commonly assumed and are in line with current historiographical thought and practice.

The theory of autobiography helps to illuminate Schlumberger's memoirs. Especially important are the changing attitudes of historians to autobiography, with particular reference to the French Annales School and autobiographies written by historians themselves. Until the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, autobiographies, even those written by historians, were not considered to be historically significant; it was felt that personal involvement undermined the authority of scholarship and that the personal timeframe of autobiography did not correspond to collective time favored in historical studies. Over the last thirty years, however, the discipline of the historian has changed. A new emphasis on case study has developed, and arguments based on personal experience have become more respectable (Popkin, Frontier 726-29).

A new historicist approach will be used throughout this thesis. This approach recognizes that the full understanding of a literary work, or indeed any action, cannot be obtained simply through considering the work in isolation, but must be arrived at through an appreciation of an author's psychology with respect to the social mores and beliefs, and the cultural currents of the time. The approach tries to avoid the error of ascribing motives to a person based on how we

would think if we were in that person's situation. For example, Schlumberger's upbringing in a Protestant family of the haute bourgeoisie colored his actions and opinions throughout his life as he was well aware; we might not understand his reluctance to speak about himself or personal matters if we were not aware of this.

New historicism looks for details that may appear insignificant, but are very revealing. It embraces the concept of "Microhistory," the idea that "apparently trivial events [. . .] can provide important insights into historical processes" (Popkin, Frontier 729). As an example, Jacques Rivière's familiar term for Jacques Copeau was "mon pauvre petit vieux," ["my poor little old man"] (Cabanis, Dieu 44), the word "vieux" being a term of endearment., but for Schlumberger, whom he regarded as having a more reserved character, he coined the sobriquet "Mon vieux gentil," a pun on "Jean," revealing that the two men were close friends but that their relationship was more reserved.

Schlumberger was born in Guebwiller, Alsace, in a French-speaking, haute-bourgeois Protestant family. His father was an industrialist and his mother was the granddaughter of François Guizot, an illustrious 19<sup>th</sup>-century statesman and historian. Alsace had been integrated into the German Reich after the defeat of the French in the 1870 Franco-Prussian war. In his youth, Schlumberger grew up in an environment where the sense of nationality and identity with a Calvinist ethos were extremely important. Like all Alsace males, Schlumberger had to make a choice that confronted few French people: either leave his homeland and remain French, or take on the obligations and duties of German citizenship, especially military service. He, like his brothers, left for France at the age of fifteen. Influenced by his pious mother, he started religious studies at the Sorbonne, and soon discovered that he had a passion for religious history and literature.

In his youth, he struck up friendships with many people who were to become important figures in France's cultural and literary landscape, friendships which would last a lifetime. With several of them, most notably André Gide, Jacques Copeau and André Ruyters, Schlumberger founded in 1909 La Nouvelle Revue Française (NRF), one of the most influential literary journals in 20<sup>th</sup>-century France. Just before the First World War, in 1913, Schlumberger collaborated with Jacques Copeau in the founding of an avant-garde theater, Le Vieux-Colombier.

Throughout his life, Schlumberger wrote numerous novels, plays and essays. His best known novel is Saint Saturnin, a psychological account of a patriarch's descent into senility. He wrote many articles on historical, cultural, and social events, published in the 1940s, and grouped today under the titles Jalons and Nouveaux Jalons. His biography of André Gide and his wife, Madeleine et André Gide, is justly praised as a masterful depiction of Gide's relationship with his wife. His most well-known autobiographical or semi-autobiographical works are Éveils and In Memoriam, the latter written in memory of his wife, Suzanne.

Schlumberger was always politically aware and was profoundly shaken by the outbreak of the First World War, in which a number of his friends were killed. During the Second World War, he took part in the Resistance literary movement and served as an active member of the executive group of the "Comité National des Écrivains."

Over the years, Schlumberger received many prizes, including the Northcliffe prize in 1931 for literature and the Prix Femina for his novel, Saint Saturnin. In 1955, he received the Grand Prix National des Lettres, and, in 1959, he received a "Goethe medal," a cultural award, in Frankfurt am Main for his literary accomplishments.

## AUTOBIOGRAPHY, A NECESSARY GENRE

Everyone knows what autobiography is, but no two observers, no matter how assured they may be, are entirely in agreement. James Olney says, “What is autobiography to one observer is history or philosophy, psychology or lyric poetry, sociology or metaphysics to another” (5). Autobiography is considered by many disciplines to be a useful source of information. Autobiography as a genre was largely ignored by historians until the 1950s, both as a discipline and a source for historical research. However, since the early eighties, the French historian, Pierre Nora, has figured prominently in an effort to show autobiography to be an important and integral part of the world of historical research. Nora teaches at the École des hautes études and is also active in publishing and journalism in his work for Gallimard. American historians know him best for his role as editor of the multivolume collection Les Lieux de mémoire [The sites of memory] which was first published in 1984. Nora recruited leading French historians to write essays on their own lives. The resulting volume, Essais d’ego-histoire, appeared as a collection of autobiographical essays in 1987. Nora believes that in “writing about themselves, historians create ‘a new genre, for a new age of historical consciousness’” (Popkin, Ego 1140).

Attitudes towards the methods for recording history first began to change in France in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. As Peter Burke mentions, a group often known as the Annales school emerged as a reaction to the dominance in France of political and diplomatic history and narratives of events by historians. First published in 1929, their journal Annales promoted a new kind of history committed to broadening the range of the discipline. It made a point of breaking down barriers between disciplines and consciously drew on the methodologies of disciplines such as geography, sociology, psychology, and linguistics. The two founder members of the journal

Annales were Lucien Febvre, born in 1878, a contemporary of Schlumberger, and Marc Bloch, born in 1886. The historian Jeremy Popkin highlights the fact that Pierre Nora claimed all his colleagues were heirs of Marc Bloch and Lucien Febvre and of the Annaliste tradition. He explains that “the Annales paradigm emphasized the primacy of collective forces rather than the importance of individual action in the shaping of history. Autobiographical writing, on the other hand, is an exercise in individuation, highlighting the unique thoughts and experiences of the author. [However] the Annales school aspired to a ‘total’ history that would take in all aspects of human experience, thereby validating the importance of the lives of ordinary people and the study of seemingly trivial events” (Ego 1148). In this sense, the Annalists opened the way for a reconceptualization of autobiography and its relationship to history.

Schlumberger’s autobiography and historical articles reveal distinct similarities to the autobiographical approaches to history of Nora and his colleagues as heirs of Lefebvre, Bloch and the Annaliste tradition. An exploration and recording of these similarities in the light of Nora’s work Ego-histoire will help to clarify the innovativeness of Schlumberger’s writings, as already pointed out by Jean-Pierre Cap in his book on the themes and techniques in Schlumberger’s writings (202, 210). Just as Nora believed that it was necessary to “encourage and promote autobiographical reflection as part of a larger effort to re-vision the process of the production of historical knowledge” (Popkin, Ego 1141), Schlumberger, likewise, believed that autobiography was a necessary genre. His article “Conscience Historique” contains this significant observation: “Un simple lecteur de mémoires et de correspondances peut s’y montrer plus perspicace que tel spécialiste penché sur ses fiches” [“A simple reader of memoirs and correspondence can display more insight than a specialist deep in his files”] (Jalons 164). Autobiography has been defined as “Retrospective prose narrative written by a real person

concerning his own existence, where the focus is his individual life, in particular the story of his personality” (Lejeune 4). Although Schlumberger’s memoir, Éveils, could be interpreted as a denial of autobiography—it is concerned with others before him and around him, the focus is often on literary events, and it avoids going into details of his more intimate feelings—it is more properly seen as an embracing of a different style of autobiography. By choosing a more historical approach and by putting his life story into the context of the time, he created a useful historical document about the period, similar to those of Nora and the other historian-autobiographers of today.

A recent memoir published by French historian Annie Kriegel, Ce que j’ai cru comprendre, started as a contribution to Nora’s Ego-histoire. She, like Schlumberger, asserted that she hesitated before embarking on her project because of an aversion to the subjectivity which she had always avoided in her books and articles. Popkin explains that she “claimed that her reticence also had roots in her personal experience [and that] she cited the emphasis on pudeur [modesty] in her childhood socialization” (Ego 1157).

Schlumberger had the same reticence about writing his memoirs. Jean Lambert acknowledges Schlumberger’s “reticence” and “pudeur” [modesty] as part of his rigorous character (373). Schlumberger himself explains in his introduction to Éveils how it was Joseph Breitbach who encouraged him to write his memoirs and to summon up the people during his youth before their image was swept away by the currents of time. Schlumberger was conscious of what he considered to be a “sclérose” [sclerosis] from which many autobiographers suffer; he mentions that by focusing only on the most salient points in their own lives, they often omit important information about surrounding events and people. This was something he wished to avoid. Therefore, rather than focusing only on his own life, he sets out to write his autobiography

as a tribute to all those people, events and influences that played a major role in his youth and development. He writes in his dedication,

En témoignage de reconnaissance / envers tous ceux et toutes celles /  
à qui j'ai dû ces années heureuses et qui favorisèrent, /  
avec sollicitude ou sans le savoir, / mon premier apprentissage de la vie.

[As a record of gratitude towards all whom I owed these happy years, and who encouraged with care or without being aware of it, my first apprenticeship in life].

In a signed copy of Éveils, Schlumberger wrote the following to his daughter Monique Hoffet-Schlumberger: “À ma chère Monique, gardienne fidèle des rites et des traditions. Tendrement Jean Schlumberger – Mai 1950” [“To my dear Monique, faithful guardian of rites and tradition. Affectionately Jean Schlumberger – May 1950”]. This dedication reflects Schlumberger’s own values and beliefs as the family historian. It once again gives evidence of his awareness that the individual is important as a custodian of life’s traditions and events.

## RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HISTORY AND AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Autobiography is similar to history in many ways. Both are reconstructions of the past usually in the form of a chronological narrative. But there are clear differences between the autobiography of a historian and that of a poet. In Éveils, Schlumberger relates events in chronological order beginning with his boyhood in Alsace, relating the relevant subjects in the order in which they appeared in his life. Also, when he begins discussing a topic, he finishes what he has to say before beginning the next one; he rarely jumps from one place to another. This is, of course, the way a historian would relate events. Smith and Watson agree that “Autobiographical narratives can be plotted strictly by chronology, with the narrator looking back upon the life course and organizing the segments of telling according to the movement of historical time” and they compare this approach to that of “A narrator [who] may employ a scheme of associational, or digressive, or fragmented remembering told through multiple flashbacks and flash-forwards” (72). For example, Gide, as a non-historian and a poet, in Si le grain ne meurt, tends to jump around more in his narration. Gide admits that he wrote down his recollections just as they came without trying to arrange them in any order. He says that the most he could do was group them into places and persons, that his memory seldom goes wrong about places but that he often confuses dates. He says, “je suis perdu si je m’astreins à de la chronologie” [“I am lost if I try to keep to a chronological order”] (49). For example in his relating of the story of Anna Shackleton he gets sidetracked. He explains, “Entraîné par mon récit, je n’ai su parler en son temps de la mort d’Anna” [“Carried away by my story, I was not capable of talking about the death of Anna at the correct place”] (278). Gide was known to be somewhat unpredictable in his behavior. Auguste Anglès notes how: “Gide était capable de flambées de zèle, qui lui faisaient pour quelques jours inscrire des adresses sur les bandes

d'expédition ou vérifier la liste des abonnés: bientôt il plaquait tout et filait vers Florence.

L'assidu, le ponctuel préposé à l'intendance, c'était Schlumberger" ["Gide was capable of bursts of enthusiasm; for several days he would write addresses on labels or check the list of subscribers: however he would soon let everything drop and go off to Florence. The hard working person, the punctual interim manager: Schlumberger was that person"] (327).

Another similarity that history and autobiography share is retrospective vision: the ability to look back at the past and know what the outcomes of events and people's actions were. Like historians, autobiographers can comment on results and point out ironies that are recognizable only with the benefit of hindsight. In Éveils, Schlumberger, because of his powers of hindsight, illustrates how his character has evolved over the years. In his youth he was in complete awe of Gide. Now in his sixties, he can look back at interactions with Gide and recognize Gide's faults as well as his own. Gide once criticized Schlumberger's worship of Wagner. He said, "Comment un homme cultivé pouvait-il ne pas être de ceux qui bataillaient pour faire triompher la musique nouvelle?" ["How could a cultivated man not be among those who fight to help the latest music to triumph?"] (346). This comment shows two things: first, Gide's tastes were more avant-garde, whereas Schlumberger's were more classical. More important, it shows Gide's disregard for the feelings of others. Schlumberger's reflection on Gide's comment is enlightening and amusing. It sums up Gide in an instant and shows that Schlumberger, far from being naïve, could read Gide like a book. He says, "Qu'est-ce donc que cet esthète admirait? Lui-même sans doute, et les inconnus de son cénacle" ["Whom does this esthete admire anyway? Himself, no doubt, and the unknown people in his circle"] (346). Two of the strengths of autobiography are illustrated here: the power of retrospection helping to illustrate

the past, and an example of a micro-historical event illuminating global characteristics of a person. Through a minute incident Schlumberger illustrates a major character trait of Gide.

Schlumberger's reflection on the absolute patriotism under which his parents and he grew up is another example of a micro-historical experience illuminating a more global one. He shows how "Ce patriotisme aux exigences illimité allait de soi. Les enfants le respiraient avec l'air de la maison" ["This patriotism without limits to its demands was seen as perfectly natural. Children breathed it with the air of the house"] (Nouveaux Jalons 259). A comparison between Schlumberger's background and that of Gide in Si le grain ne meurt illuminates further the repressive atmosphere that the young Schlumberger experienced. Unlike Schlumberger's patriotic family, Gide's parents never talked about patriotism, nor did they feel obliged to do so. Gide explains how it was his cousin Albert Démarest who first introduced him to the subject of patriotism. He says, "Ce soir, Albert m'expliqua ce que c'était que la patrie. Certes sur ce sujet il restait beaucoup à m'apprendre ; car ni mon père, ni ma mère, si bons Français qu'ils fussent, ne m'avaient inculqué le sentiment très net des frontières de nos terres ni de nos esprits" ["Tonight, Albert explained to me the concept of 'homeland.' To be sure, on this topic, I had a lot to learn, for neither my father nor mother, good French citizens though they were, ever gave me a very clear impression of the boundaries of our land or of our spirit"] (176).

An important feature that published autobiographies share with works of history is that in both, the authors have made a deliberate decision to share their stories with readers they do not know and therefore must make a conscious decision about what they wish to include and what they would rather omit. Popkin remarks that "Even the conventionally structured narratives that form the majority of historians' memoirs nevertheless challenge the normal professional boundary between public and private" (Frontier 737). Schlumberger, although nominally writing

about himself, downplays personal reference so as to remain as professional as possible. Historians tend to put the private events in their lives in the context of the wars, political movements and economic changes that were going on around them at a given time. In this spirit, Schlumberger keeps rigidly to the relating of events in the Dreyfus Affair rather than describing his own personal feelings about them. He doesn't go into any detail as to why he signed the petition for the retrial of Dreyfus or what his own political opinions were. What he does is to use the reactions of his uncle Gustave Schlumberger and his cousin François de Witt to illustrate the type of rift the affair created between members of the same family: Schlumberger as a young student had signed a petition, supporting the re-trial of Dreyfus, which both of these men fervently opposed. De Witt asked Jean Schlumberger if he still had "l'intention de porter le pantalon rouge" ["the intention of wearing the red trousers"] (336), the term "red trousers" referring to soldiers who wore red trousers until the First World War, and withdrew his offer to have Schlumberger to join his regiment. Gustave Schlumberger cut all ties with Jean Schlumberger for several years. With a historian's grasp of the larger implications of personal action, Schlumberger shows through his own family history the general disunity caused by the Dreyfus Affair. In his article "Familles d'Esprits" he explains how big crises such as these can be revealing. He says, "Lorsque l'affaire Dreyfus scinda la France en deux camps, on ne put constater aucune influence de l'âge sur l'adhésion à l'un ou à l'autre parti. Il y eut de jeunes, il y eut des vieux chez les révisionnistes du procès de Rennes comme chez leurs adversaires" ["While the Dreyfus affair split France into two camps, it appeared that age did not play a role in the choice of group one adhered to. The revisionists at the Rennes trial (1899 retrial of Dreyfus) contained young and old, just as did their adversaries"] (Nouveaux Jalons 207-08).

## SCHLUMBERGER, THE FAMILY HISTORIAN

The historian Phillipe Ariès recalls “feeling driven to discover the true history behind his family’s nostalgic recollections. He devoured textbooks and chronologies, filling in gaps and straightening out facts” (Popkin, Ego 1143). Schlumberger felt the same need to record and discover his own family history, which he does with great care. He introduces us to both grandparents, showing a preference, however, for the less austere de Witt grandparents who lived at the Val-Richer, especially his grandmother Henriette, the daughter of his great-grandfather, François Guizot, a statesman and historian whom Schlumberger greatly admired. He describes in detail the reverence and respect that was held for Guizot by all members of the family and how his office at the Val-Richer was like a sanctuary. He says, “Tout le monde dans la maison, jeunes et vieux, respirait cette atmosphère de vénération. Le cabinet de travail, maintenu intact, ne servait que pour le culte quotidien ; si l’on entrait à un autre moment dans ce sanctuaire, on osait à peine y élever la voix” [“Everybody in the house, young and old, breathed this atmosphere of veneration. The office, kept intact, was used only for the daily service; if one entered this sanctuary at any other time, one scarcely dared to raise one’s voice”] (293). Very little is known about Guizot’s earlier life, for in his own memoirs, a work which he entitled Mémoires pour servir à l’histoire de mon temps (8 vol., 1858–67), he omitted all personal details of his earlier life. Schlumberger fills in some of these gaps for his great-grandfather. At the same time Guizot’s example may have influenced Schlumberger to omit unnecessary detail about his own personal life. A particular event or location often provides an author with an impetus to write about a certain topic. Smith and Watson see this phenomenon as a type of “coaxing/coercing” of the author. They ask the reader to, “Think of sites as both occasional, that is, specific to an occasion, and locational, that is, emergent in a specific ‘mise en scène’ or context of narration”

(56). This theory applies to Schlumberger. In the chapter “L’Equipe” he tells us that he was writing part of his memoirs in the Val-Richer surrounded by bomb shattered windows, during the war in 1944. His autobiographical writing was no doubt prompted both by his location and the events of the war which surrounded him.

Popkin, referring to the ego-historians, comments that “Most of these historians remember being voracious readers from an early age” (Ego 1150). Likewise, Schlumberger discovered his love for history at an early age. He tells us that the first books he loved to read were almost always historical: “Si je cherche quelles lectures, dans mon enfance, j’ai faites de mon propre mouvement, je trouve, en dehors de quelque petits traités pieux, presque uniquement des récits historiques, tels La Bannière bleue de Cahun, Les Derniers Jours de Pompei, les livres de miss Yonge, Les Héroïnes de Harlem et Les Sœurs tragiques de ma grand-mère. Point de relations de voyages; rien de romanesque” [“If I look back at what I read in my childhood of my own free will, I find, outside a few pious tracts, almost exclusively historical stories such as Cahun’s The Blue Banner, The Last Days of Pompei, books by Miss Yonge, The Heroines of Harlem and my grandmother’s The tragic Sisters. Hardly any travel stories; no novels”] (280-1). He also preferred classical history to modern history: “Mais j’étais fermé à l’histoire moderne, incapable de lui trouver de liens avec les problèmes qui intéressaient mes seize ans” [“But modern history was a closed book to me; I was unable to find ties in it with issues that interested me at sixteen”] (315). Schlumberger’s reading only historical books and preferring classical history was already an indication of the direction he would choose in later life.

In contrast, Gide, as a poet, had a disdain for history as he admits in Si le grain ne meurt while talking about his first book Cahier d’André Walter, published in 1891. He says, “Je n’écrivais et ne souhaitais rien écrire que d’intime; je dédaignais l’histoire et les événements

m'apparaissaient comme d'impertinents dérangeurs" ["I wrote and wanted to write only on personal subjects; I despised history and events appeared to me like impertinent interruptions"] (276-7). However, Gide recognized his lack of interest in history as a handicap and explains how he tried to overcome it but never succeeded. He relates how to his great joy he discovered a passage by Schopenhauer explaining the difference between the historian's mind and the poet's: "Et voilà donc pourquoi je n'entends rien à l'histoire! [. . .] c'est que je suis poète. C'est poète que je veux être ! C'est poète que je suis !" ["And there's why history means nothing to me ! [. . .] It's because I am a poet. I want to be a poet. It's a poet, I am! "]. Gide tells us how he repeated to himself the phrase Schopenhauer quotes from Aristotle: "C'est une plus importante chose la philosophie, et c'en est une plus belle, la poésie—que l'histoire" ["Philosophy is more important, and poetry is more beautiful—than history"] (249).

Schlumberger remarks on Gide's disdain for history in Madeleine et André Gide. He says, quoting Gide's own words, "On sait le dédain qu'il a toujours professé pour l'histoire, estimant qu'il devrait son extraordinaire propension au bonheur à l'antihistoricité de son esprit" ["Everyone knows the disdain he has always shown for history, believing that he owed his extraordinary propensity for happiness to the anti-historical sense of his spirit"] (124). Therefore, the evidence provided by Gide's disdain for history and his preferring to write about more intimate and personal subjects in Si le Grain ne Meurt, is a good example of a non-historical autobiography. Both as the poet he professes to be and as a "romancier," Gide tends to emphasize drama more than fact. As Schlumberger explains in Madeleine et André Gide, "Nous l'accusons souvent de menus inexactitudes dans sa façon de relater un fait quelconque—non qu'il le déformât intentionnellement, mais un instinct de romancier lui imposait l'expression heureuse, l'arrondi de l'anecdote, et il ne s'en départait plus" ["We often accused him of tiny

inaccuracies in his way of relating some fact—not that he would falsify it deliberately, but his novelist’s instinct would make him use an appropriate expression or round out a story with an anecdote, and he would refuse to change anything”] (123-24). Gide who was more a poet than a historian chose aesthetic correctness over factual accuracy.

Schlumberger sets out in his autobiography to provide an insight into his family, and through them, into events relevant to French society of the time. He illustrates the attitudes towards some writers of the time through an anecdote about his uncle Guillaume Guizot, who was in trouble with the authorities for showing admiration for Flaubert’s banned book, Madame Bovary. Schlumberger uses the metaphor of his uncle finding himself on the wrong side of the barrier: “L’année 1857 voit deux fois mon oncle Guillaume du côté scandaleux de la barricade. On a conservé le billet, d’une juvénilité un peu piaffante, qu’il écrivait le 12 mai à Flaubert” [“Twice in 1857, my uncle Guillaume found himself on the scandalous side of the barricade. There still exists a rather astoundingly immature letter he wrote on the 12<sup>th</sup> of May to Flaubert”] (Éveils 331). Through the depiction of the tensions caused within his own family by the Flaubert scandal, and later by the Dreyfus Affair, Schlumberger shows in a microcosm how these events affected France on a larger scale.

## SCHLUMBERGER'S AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL STYLE

Schlumberger's approach to his autobiography is very similar to the one that Nora defined for his historian-autobiographers when he compiled his Ego-histoire. Popkin lists Nora's guidelines: "No falsely literary autobiography or unnecessarily intimate confessions, no amateur psychoanalysis." The participants in Nora's program, however, were "permitted discussion of family background and schooling ad libitum" (Popkin, Ego 1145-6). In Éveils Schlumberger seems to have naturally abided by these rules. He is discreet and never uses intimate confessions. For example, when he describes his marriage and honeymoon in Italy, he relates how he and his wife were impassioned by the architecture and the culture, but omits all other personal details.

The use of pronouns in autobiography is often significant. The first person singular pronoun "I," or "je" in French, is used when the writer wants to draw the attention of the reader to himself. The first person plural, "we," or "nous" in French, is more inclusive and general, and indicates that what is being described is applicable to a community of people. The French "on," a third person singular pronoun, is often used as a substitute for "je," but distances the author from the text.

Jean Lambert mentions how Schlumberger liked to use the form "on" rather than "je" (373). It was Schlumberger's way of limiting personal reflections. Phillipe Lejeune discusses some autobiographers who use third-person narration for the same reason. For example, he mentions that Claude Roy, in his book Nous. Essai d'autobiographie, uses third-person narration to place an episode of his love life at a modest distance (6). Schlumberger uses this same technique in Éveils, and for the same purpose. He uses the first person plural "nous" and "on" to describe his growing up in Guebwiller, his aim being to give his readers a more objective view of what it was like to spend one's youth in Alsace at that time. As the narrator, he tries to remain in

the background as much as possible. He often starts his sentence with the first person singular “je” but quickly reverts to the first person plural and dons the robe of the universal “nous.” For example, when discussing the need to leave for France, he says, “Je n’ai pas souvenir que jamais le problème du choix se soit posé dans nos esprits” [“I do not remember that it ever occurred to us to question the need to choose”] (272). In continuing to use the first person plural, Schlumberger absorbs the plight of all young French boys growing up in Alsace into his own life story. He explains how their future was already determined: “Il était résolu d’avance. Nous savions que nos petits camarades d’école, de qui les parents avaient pu s’abriter derrière une vague nationalité suisse, hériteraient de places toutes faites dans les usines, mais que nous-mêmes, à l’âge de quinze, date d’inscription sur les listes militaires, nous quitterions l’Alsace” [“It was decided in advance. We knew that our little school mates whose parents could hide behind some vague Swiss nationality would inherit ready-made places in the factories, but that we would have to quit Alsace at the age of fifteen, the date at which we would be added to the military lists”] (272).

Popkin says that the “desire to maintain a safe distance from conventional autobiography is also evident in Nora’s definition of Ego-histoire” (Frontier 735). Works like Rousseau’s Confessions, with its radical exposure of its author’s innermost secrets, do not conform to this model; indeed, they are written in a spirit that most academics would wish to avoid. A comparison of the two memoirs, Schlumberger’s Éveils and his friend Gide’s Si le grain ne meurt, illuminates this contrast and shows how Gide is more like Rousseau. Si le grain ne meurt reflects Gide’s need to reveal and to justify his personal feelings and his sense of being “different.” He declares, “Je ne suis pas pareil aux autres! Je ne suis pas pareil aux autres” (173) [“I’m not like other people . . . not like other people! ”] (If it die 109). Gide was aware of the

sensation that his book would create, especially the second part, yet he felt compelled to tell all, despite the consequences. After the passage in which he describes his encounter with Mohammed, he says, “Je sais bien que certaine précision, que j’apporte ici, prête à sourire; il me serait aisé de l’omettre ou de la modifier dans la sens de la vraisemblance; mais ce n’est pas la vraisemblance que je poursuis, c’est la vérité” (415) [“I know well enough that one of these details I describe here may provoke a smile ; it would be easy for me to omit or to modify it so as to make it seem more likely ; but it is not likelihood I am in quest of, but truth”] (If it die 289). He knew that in his telling the truth, people would be displeased by the references made to them in his memoirs; he tried to conceal people’s true identities and avoid angry repercussions by using pseudonyms. Schlumberger recognized Gide’s indiscretions and his special gift for treading on people’s toes. In an unpublished letter to his cousin, François de Witt, Schlumberger acts as mediator between de Witt and Gide. De Witt was upset at Gide’s comments about “Lionel,” the pseudonym Gide used for him in Si le grain ne meurt, and felt that Gide was hiding behind pseudonyms in general. Schlumberger apologizes on behalf of Gide, explaining that his intentions were more humorous than nasty:

Je déplore que le passage de Si le grain ne meurt t’ait blessé. J’avoue y voir plus d’humour que de méchanceté, ne parvenant pas à découvrir dans ce qui est dit de Lionel quoique ce soit qui entache ton honorabilité et étant accoutumé aux vivacités des polémiques littéraires.

Tu parles de ‘lâches pseudonymes,’ mais le pseudonyme n’est lâche que si l’auteur s’y dissimule lui-même, appliqué aux personnes qui font l’objet d’un récit, il n’est qu’une marque d’égard dont sont loin d’avoir bénéficié toutes les personnes citées dans ces mémoires.

[I'm very sorry that the passage in Si le grain ne meurt hurt you. I admit that I see there more humor than nastiness, as I am unable to discover anything that is said about Lionel which would impugn your honor and as I am used to the liveliness of literary polemics. You talk about "cowardly pseudonyms," but a pseudonym is cowardly only if the author hides behind it himself. Applied to persons in a narration, it shows only a mark of respect that most people cited in these memoirs were not given.] (Appendix 2)

Schlumberger, in his autobiography, remains much more discreet than Gide; he abstains from speaking about personal things that might offend members of his family or friends. Unlike Gide, he omits any discussions or intimate revelations about homosexuality concerning himself or his family. This raises the question as to whether the novel or autobiography is more representative of the truth. Phillippe Lejeune asks, "If the novel is truer than autobiography, why are Gide, Mauriac and many others not happy with writing novels?" (27). Lejeune's answer to his own question is that "if they had not also written and published autobiographical texts, even 'inadequate' ones, no one would ever have seen the nature of the truth that it is necessary to look for in their novels. Schlumberger, however, makes it more difficult for his readers to reach a conclusion as to what it is we should be searching for in his novels. Jean-Pierre Cap explains that "Ces mémoires quoique scrupuleusement honnêtes, ont cette faiblesse de passer sous silence bon nombre d'événements importants, soit par discrétion, soit par souci d'art ou de concision" ["These memoirs, although scrupulously honest, have the failing of omitting a good number of important events, either through discretion or through the concern for style or for conciseness"] (10). Schlumberger is scrupulously honest in his autobiography, yet discreet, because its main purpose was to serve as a historical tribute to the events and people of his life. It was not intended like those of Gide and Mauriac, to be a clue to the reading of the man behind his novels.

Schlumberger, as a trained historian, also refrained from including personal details for stylistic reasons and in order to keep his story concise.

## SCHLUMBERGER AND MEMORY

Schlumberger from the beginning is aware of the unreliability and the incompleteness of all recollections. He says in his introduction to Éveils, “Je dus constater plus d’une fois quels dangereux télescopages de souvenirs la mémoire peut commettre, faute de recouplements avec des documents datés” [“I noticed more than once how dangerously memory can telescope memories together when it is not corroborated with dated documents”] (267). He acknowledges that quite often, a long duration lies between an occurrence and its recollection, allowing time for attitudes to change and events to be seen through today’s eyes.

Gide was also aware of how memories become blurred and unreliable with the passage of time. Schlumberger quotes Gide, “Que ma mémoire ne soit pas (du moins pas toujours) fiable, je le sais” [“That memory is not (at least not always) reliable, that I know”] (Madeleine 123) Gide adds, “Une autre chose me gêne, qui vient du désordre chronologique de mon esprit: certains souvenirs chevauchent, se télescopent, se juxtaposent; des surimpressions se produisent” [“Another thing disturbs me, caused by the chronological confusion of my spirit: some memories overlap, telescope, meet; they get superimposed”] (123). However, unlike Schlumberger, Gide was less concerned by the fallibility of memory in his autobiography.

Schlumberger believes that what is true for the character of a nation can also be true for an individual. He mentions how Gide “ne sut jamais prendre goût à l’histoire: elle lui semblait une cendre érudite sous laquelle rien ne palpitait plus” [“never could get a liking for history; to him, it was like an erudite cinder under which nothing lived”] (Œuvres vii 207). Schlumberger recognizes Gide to be, like certain nations, in a state of “perpétuelle disponibilité” [“perpetual availability”]. He recognizes some nations as having a powerful vitality, but one that is turned to the present rather than dwelling on the past:

Certaines nations ont une vitalité puissante, mais toute tournée vers l'instant présent. La faculté d'oublier fait partie de leur force. Elle les laisse dans un état de perpétuelle disponibilité, qui leur permet des volte-face, des transformations surprenantes. Le passé n'est à leurs yeux qu'une matière morte qu'il importe d'éliminer, une cendre qui menace continuellement d'étouffer la vie.

[Certain nations have a powerful vitality, but are always looking to the present. The ability to forget is part of their strength. It leaves them in a state of permanent availability, which gives them the ability to do an about-face and undergo surprising transformations. In their eyes, the past is only some dead matter that is important to dispose of, ashes which continually threaten to choke life.] (Jalons 163-64).

For Schlumberger, however, history was alive. In Éveils, he shows how history defined him and his milieu, both through his Protestant heritage and his awareness of his ancestry.

Johanna D. Hosbach believes that in order to really recollect the past, it is necessary to be completely alone, and to have no more distractions from the present. She explains that when Proust isolated himself from the world, his remembrance of the past came tumbling in like the links of a chain: one memory followed another; the treasure of observations from an earlier world is inexhaustible. She quotes Claude Mauriac saying, "Proust, coupé du monde extérieur par la maladie, le retrouva en lui. Il n'avait dès lors plus qu'à l'observer à loisir dans la chambre noire de sa mémoire et à le décrire" ["Proust, cut off from the outside world by illness, was able to find it [the outside world] in himself. After that, he only needed to observe it at leisure in the darkroom of his memory and describe it"] (186). Schlumberger wrote Éveils during the Second World War while staying in the South of France and also while at the Val-Richer. Separated from everyday activities because of the war, he was, like Proust, isolated from the world he

knew. Alan Sheridan mentions that “Gide, like his closest friends, Martin du Gard and Jean Schlumberger, went into ‘internal exile’ in and around Nice, doing what they could, refusing to compromise, but willing, where appropriate, to write articles that were quietly subversive, risking censorship” (544). Schlumberger, surrounded by war and censorship, was no doubt glad to escape the present and lose himself in the memories of his past while writing his memoirs.

Schlumberger, in Éveils, avoids making references to the present; he does so only when he feels it will be of benefit to his readers and to their understanding of the past. For example, one exception is when he compares the writers of his youth to the young writers of the 1940s to illustrate the differences between the two groups. Schlumberger’s distancing of himself from the present allows him to give a more objective view of the past. In contrast, Gide’s ideal of an eternal “disponibilité” [availability], an attitude where one makes oneself available to present influences, leads to blurring of temporal boundaries. In Madeleine and André Gide, Schlumberger states that present-day dominating impressions often influenced the vision Gide had of earlier events. With reference to Gide’s description of his marriage in Et nunc manet in te, Schlumberger says, “il a regardé les vingt premières années de son mariage à travers le voile des vingt dernières, son midi à travers les ruines de la vieillesse de la maladie” [“he saw his first twenty years of his marriage through the veil of his last twenty, his noon through the ruins of his old age and illness”] (Madeleine 125). Schlumberger recognized that Gide, unlike himself, was not very concerned by the fallibility of memory.

Smith and Watson believe that “While autobiographical narratives may contain ‘facts,’ they are not factual history about a particular time, person, or event. Rather they offer subjective ‘truth’ rather than ‘fact’” (10). Judging from the evidence presented above, this theory can be true to a greater or lesser extent depending on the author to whom it is applied. For example, it

would be less relevant to historian-autobiographers such as Schlumberger and Nora's colleagues who make it their business to remain as objective as possible, than to Gide. It is important to note this variance; indeed, as Smith and Watson illustrate later in an appendix, "Fifty-two Genres of Life Narrative" (183), there are so many different forms of autobiography, it is impossible to generalize.

## AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND THE BOURGEOISIE

Schlumberger shares many of the background and character traits of Nora's historian colleagues and their precursors of the Annales School. Like Schlumberger, most of them came from bourgeois homes and most members were "beneficiaries of the rigorous meritocratic French educational system, which allowed a certain amount of movement within the bourgeoisie but not much access to those lacking the necessary cultural background" (Popkin, Ego 1149). Schlumberger reminds us that a certain level of education is necessary for the accurate recording of dates and relating of history. He explains that this requires a lot more knowledge than a child could learn in primary school; it requires more maturity of thinking, if not the knowledge of a good undergraduate. He believes that the bourgeoisie, such as himself or Nora's historians, is a natural candidate to hold the role of the memory of the nation. As he comments, "C'est dire que la bourgeoisie était tout naturellement désignée pour tenir ce rôle de mémoire de la nation" ["That is, the bourgeoisie is perfectly adapted to own the role of the memory of the nation"] (Jalons 165). Since memoirs are, as Schlumberger believes, a means for interpreting history, they too are part of this belief. Smith and Watson explain that "According to researchers in developmental psychology, we learn early in childhood what people around us and by extension, our culture expect us to remember [. . .] We learn something about who is charged with remembering, and what kinds of memoirs they are charged with keeping" (16). Schlumberger's theory about the bourgeoisie was no doubt influenced by his upbringing and his family's place in society.

In the chapter "Tradition au Point Mort" [Tradition at a Standstill], Schlumberger explores some of these characteristics of the bourgeoisie; he takes us back historically to the time of Guizot and his family. He discusses their tastes in literature, which reflect those of upper class

families of the time. He makes the interesting observation that France lacked writers who wrote about everyday life: “ce qui manque, c’est le pain quotidien, le pur pain de pure farine blanche, fait pour toutes les bouches, nécessaire à toutes—ce qu’un Dickens ou une Eliot apportent à l’Angleterre” [“what is missing is the daily bread, pure bread made from pure white flour, made for everyone’s mouth and necessary for all—something that a Dickens or an Eliot bring to England”] (330). He remarks, “ce n’est pas merveille si le roman anglais prit tant de place dans les lectures de cette maison” [“it is hardly surprising that English novels took such a large role in what was read in this house”] (Éveils 330). Schlumberger’s family, like many bourgeois families who were able to read English, had the advantage of being able to enjoy the English novel with its scenes of everyday life, unlike their less educated countrymen. Schlumberger completes his exploration by contrasting his great-grandfather’s time to his own; he points out that reading English novels in the 1840s for an evening’s entertainment fulfilled the same role as going to the cinema in the 1940s. Each of these anecdotes about Schlumberger’s own ancestors creates a historical picture of the everyday life and experiences of the educated upper-class of his grandmother’s and Guizot’s generation.

Schlumberger extends his discussion of the responsibilities of the bourgeoisie, observing that “Nous avons rien de pareil à ce qu’est Schiller pour l’Allemagne, à ce que l’Angleterre possède, d’une part sa Bible, de l’autre dans ses grandes séries de romans. Ceux de Dickens, par exemple, ou de George Eliot dégagent quelque chose de direct, d’émouvant, qui ouvre à des êtres simples certaines régions de la vie morale” [“We have nothing like what Schiller is for Germany, or what England owns, the Bible on the one hand, its famous series of novels on the other. Those of Dickens, for example, or of George Eliot provide something direct, moving, opening to simple souls certain aspects of moral life”] (Jalons 131). English Victorian literature was a bourgeois

phenomenon, and identified with middle-class aspirations and morality. The English novel explored the declining influence of the aristocracy and the Church, and concerned itself with the scourge of poverty, themes that could usefully have been explored in France. Schlumberger recognized the moral education that these novels offered the English common people and the French bourgeoisie who could read English. This was obviously a subject that preoccupied Schlumberger. He shows concern for “des êtres simples” [“the common people”] among the French people because he believes that they were deprived of a basic human right due to the lack of French literature covering everyday life. He also believed that the bourgeoisie had the education and the means to record history but that “Elle a souvent manqué à cette tâche” [“It has often failed in this function”] (Jalons 165). Schlumberger, it seems, believed that the French bourgeoisie had failed in their duty to provide adequate literature for its people.

Phillipe Lejeune discusses the question as to whether autobiography is a genre of the bourgeoisie or not. He asks, “Is autobiography a ‘bourgeois’ genre?” (163). Lejeune’s answer appears to be no. He remarks that “it is tempting to make such an assertion, but it is undoubtedly as risky as it is tempting” (163). To prove his case, he presents us with an inventory of autobiographies from the nineteenth century; by people of all classes, including industrialists, artisans and some workers (177). In the light of Schlumberger’s theory that the bourgeoisie are best situated for holding the role of the memory of the nation, and the belief that France lacked writers who would appeal to the non-bourgeois, it is interesting to consider Lejeune’s proposal. Certainly in Schlumberger’s time and up to quite recently, before research into French autobiographies of the nineteenth century began, autobiography was still considered to be a genre of the bourgeoisie. It was mainly autobiographies like that of Schlumberger which were published and available to the public, so it was generally believed that it was only the

bourgeoisie who wrote. Critics like Lejeune have since shown this to be untrue: others outside of the bourgeoisie also wrote memoirs.

A quote on an opening page of Reading Autobiography says that “Autobiographies. . . may reveal as much about the author’s assumed audience as they do about him or her, and this is a further reason why they need to be read as cultural documents, not just as personal ones” (Smith and Watson, viii). Schlumberger is writing his autobiography as a tribute to all the people who made an impression on his early life. Since this milieu was mainly bourgeois, we can assume that his intended audience was also the bourgeoisie; but perhaps it was also aimed at future students of memoirs with a hope for influencing the future.

## PARENTAL, SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS INFLUENCES

Ariès believed that an awareness of the historical conditioning and influences of one's own life was "a requirement for the success of a researcher's historical scholarship, [that] only when one understood both the past and the present could one really understand history" (Popkin, Ego 1144). Schlumberger was aware of the historical conditioning of his own life, through the influence of his family, religion and friends. Thus, when he wrote Éveils, he was able to look back with a historian's eye and record his past with an awareness of the influences that would affect his present writing.

In one of his historical articles, Schlumberger analyzes the influences that our past can have on our present. Each one of us is influenced by the positive teachings we have received, by examples we have learned. We are also shaped by what we detest, reject, and react against: The causes of such negative influences are hard to find, because they are unexpected and are not a continuation of what has gone before, but are breaks with the past. He uses the analogy of a deer that skips around to make dogs lose its scent. Historians who look straight ahead might lose sight of their objective. The education system and psychological analysis underestimate the gains made by our refusing the status quo. Fathers who wonder where their sons get their ideas look for corrupting influences, but they are wrong to seek them on the outside. Your son is influenced by you, but the image can turn out to be a negative photograph. If you had let him experience other things, he might have turned back to you and returned home through another door (Nouveaux Jalons 216). As an adult, Schlumberger reflects on the weaknesses of his own father. He accuses his father of being too aloof on matters of religion and sexuality. He says, "mon père se garda de tout ce qui pouvait nous induire à nous poser des questions. Son seul tort fut de prolonger cette abstention jusqu'à une époque où, cherchant notre voie, nous aurions déjà pu

bénéficiaire de son expérience et de sa largeur de pensées” [“my father kept away from everything that could encourage us to ask questions. His only mistake was to continue this abstinence into the time when we were searching for our path, we could have benefited from his experience and his broadmindedness”] (Éveils 304). Schlumberger tells a story of how at the age of ten, under the direction of his mother, he learned to crochet and sew clothes for needy children. He stresses that this was one occasion where his father should have intervened and made it clear to him that “un homme peut se mieux préparer, fut-ce au service de Dieu, que par ces travaux de petite fille” [“A man can find better ways to prepare himself, even for the service of God, than by carrying out these activities more fitting for a little girl”] (Éveils 306). In retrospect, Schlumberger appears to resent this mixing of gender roles, and he wishes that his father had been more assertive in reinforcing the separation of roles.

In the chapter on religion, Schlumberger examines the origins of his religion and explains how it colored his and his family’s behavior and outlook on the world of the time. He recognizes its positive and negative influences. He explains that his mother was deeply religious in an orthodox, simple way: “L’orthodoxie de ma mère se fondait [. . .] sur le besoin d’une voie bien tracée, où l’on pût aller jusqu’au bout des choses” [“My mother’s orthodoxy was based on the need for a well-marked path that allowed you to reach a logical conclusion”] (Éveils 305). His father, however, was much more of a relativist: “Porté à regarder toute chose dans sa complexité et à ne se satisfaire que par de lentes mises au point, mon père avait un sens profond de la relativité” [“Ready to look at everything in its complexity and not satisfied with less than a lengthy clarification of a point, my father had a deep sense of relativity”] (304). Subject to these conflicting influences, Schlumberger illustrates his evolution from a simple belief to a more nuanced recognition of the validity of other world views, especially that of the Greeks – “et puis

il y avait mes chers Grecs” [“and then there were my dear Greeks”]. Like a true historian, he is careful in his use of language, avoiding categorical statements and refusing to see concepts in black and white terms. For example, he states that he was not forced but was strongly encouraged to take the path of becoming a pastor – “Je ne peux pas dire qu’à proprement parler une pression ait été exercée sur moi, mais tout ce qui pouvait orienter mes goûts vers les choses de la religion trouvait de tendres encouragements” [“I cannot say that it is correct to say that I was put under pressure, but anything that could turn my desires toward things religious was given tender encouragement”] (306). Schlumberger did not think of resisting this encouragement and only began to question his vocation when he was a student at the Sorbonne.

Gide’s autobiography, Si le grain ne meurt, provides an illuminating contrast; religion is mentioned in a much more anecdotal fashion, and no attempt is made to place it in the context of the times. He was not particularly aware of being Protestant when he started school until it was pointed out to him that “les catholiques sont ceux qui croient à la Saint Vierge” [“Catholics were those who believed in the Virgin Mary”] (142), and, indeed, his family had hidden from him the fact that not all the French were of the same faith. This highlights the stark contrast between Gide and Schlumberger’s upbringing. Gide’s unrestricted character reflects his upbringing just as Schlumberger’s restricted character does his.

Like any historian, Schlumberger recognizes the significance of his family’s religion and draws conclusions on how their beliefs influenced their own behavior. He shows how the family was isolated partly because it was Protestant in a predominantly Catholic community in Alsace. The family lost a sense of community since they did not attend the same church as the majority of the people. Further, their Calvinist background made Schlumberger’s parents and grandparents more likely to be obedient to authority (Éveils 271).

Schlumberger was aware of the adverse effect that his strict religious upbringing had on him. José Cabanis mentions that “Après une enfance ‘très religieuse’ dont il ne s’était ‘affranchi que très difficilement’, Schlumberger n’avait aucun goût pour les superstitions” [“After a very religious childhood from which he escaped with great difficulty, Schlumberger had no taste for superstition”] (Dieu 61). Cabanis also says, “Schlumberger avait eu un grand mal à ‘se dépêtrer’ (c’est son mot) de son éducation protestante, et dans sa famille il avait pu constater que le salut ne venait pas de la religion” [“Schlumberger had great difficulty to ‘extricate himself from’ (his words) his Protestant education, and in his family he was able to see that salvation did not come from religion”] (Diable 154).

Schlumberger was always aware of the historical conditionings in his life, especially those caused by friends. An illustration can be seen in his account of the Universités Populaires [People’s Universities]: he explains that their purpose was to bring education to the ordinary people and that his friend Jacques Bardoux’s enthusiasm for the Toynbee Hall settlement in England was their inspiration for the French equivalent at Belleville. He links these events to France of the 1940s. By making a comparison between the past and the present he makes the contrast clearer for his readers. He says, “On ne saurait imaginer aujourd’hui tant d’heures et tant de soins sacrifiés à une entreprise si modeste” [“One cannot imagine today the number of hours and the attention sacrificed for such a modest undertaking”] (Éveils 338). Since he has experienced first-hand many of the events he discusses, he paints a more accurate picture of the emotions surrounding them, something even an experienced historian would find difficult to accomplish. Through the recording of his own feelings he reveals those of many of his fellow students. He compares his generation of students and the next : “Ils n’avaient pas eu, comme nous, la stupeur de voir une société, saine d’apparence, éclater en deux blocs antagonistes sous la

poussée de principes inconciliables; ils n'avaient pas pris peur devant un isolement de la pensée, que d'épais malentendus entre les classes risquaient d'aggraver encore. Pour nous, l'Affaire avait pris la forme d'une croisade contre toute forme de mensonge social" ["They did not have, like us, the stupefaction of seeing an apparently healthy society split into two opposing camps under the pressure of irreconcilable principles; they have never become fearful of narrow-minded thinking, that was in danger of becoming even worse through a deep misunderstanding between classes. For us the '[Dreyfus] Affair' took the form of a crusade against all forms of social lies"] (337). This comparison illustrates the profound effect the Dreyfus Affair had on Schlumberger's generation of students.

Schlumberger is skeptical of biographers or historians who think they can determine the effect of different influences on the individuals they are studying. He believes that it is the individual himself, an autobiographer, who is most qualified to judge what things have influenced his own character. This reinforces the confidence Schlumberger places in autobiography as a source for historical research. He says, "On est toujours stupéfait de l'assurance avec laquelle les biographes croient pouvoir déterminer les influences subis par un personnage [ . . . ] Or, le plus souvent, qu'en savent ces historiens ?" ["One is always shocked with the confidence with which biographers can determine the influences to which a person was subjected. But, more often than not, what do these historians know?"] (Nouveaux Jalons 215). Schlumberger, although aware of the fallibility of memory (Éveils 267), believes that the reading of an autobiography or a correspondence is often more valuable as a historical source than the reading of files written by specialists (Jalons 164). Evidence of this belief is illustrated in his examination of his own cultural awakenings in which he provides a historical interpretation of the cultural and literary currents of his youth with far greater insight than any history book. In the

chapter “Balbutiements” [Beginnings] he relates how his discovery of the power of words stemmed from his attendance at literary meetings led by José-Maria de Heredia, one of the first Parnassien poets and keeper of the Bibliothèque de L’Arsenal. He says, “Je suivis ces dimanches avec assez d’assiduité. Quelque chose s’en dégagait pour moi: une notion du mot en tant que matière plastique, que matière précieuse par elle-même, une attention à ses valeurs propres, à sa couleur, aux associations subtiles que ne peut indiquer aucun dictionnaire, bref un culte du langage dans ses mystérieux accidents, un quasi religieux accès à ses trésors” [“I went to these Sundays with a fair amount of dedication. I gained something from this: the notion that the word was a supple material, a precious material in itself, requiring attention to its own values, its colors, its subtle associations that no dictionary can illustrate; in brief a cult of language in its mysterious accidents, a quasi-religious access to its treasures”] (Éveils 340-41). Schlumberger views words as a malleable material like the potter’s clay or the artist’s oils, with the writer as the artist. Perhaps he was influenced by the painters in his life: his wife, Suzanne Weyher, and his good friend, pointillist painter Théodore Van Rysselberghe.

Believing that only when one understands both the past and the present can he really understand history, Schlumberger compares his own youth with the contemporary literary climate of the 1940s. Schlumberger remarks that “Aujourd’hui tout garçon impatient d’écrire a devant lui l’atlas de la littérature, soigneusement mis à jour, où les distances sont kilométrées, les éminences marquées d’une cote. La moindre nouveauté lui parvient munie de commentaires, avec ses sources, ses directives, voire sa métaphysique. Il sait ce qu’il y a dans un livre avant de l’avoir lu” [“Today, every boy who is impatient to write has available to him the map of literature carefully brought up to date, where distances are measured, and notable people are signposted. The least novelty comes to him filled with comments, its sources, its directives, even

its metaphysics. He knows what there is in a book before having read it”]. Schlumberger questions whether it is beneficial or not for the young writers of the 1940s to have everything mapped out for them. He sees them as having no virgin territory to explore: “Plus une coin de taillis qu’il lui faille explorer. Si ce défrichement universel lui rend service c’est une autre question. Quels terrains à moutons que ces plaines découvertes, quels champs pour les mouvements grégaires!” [“No corner of the copse remains to explore. Whether this universal clearing serves him, that is another question. What great land for sheep are these naked plains, what fields for gregarious movements!”] (Éveils 340). To make his point, Schlumberger uses the metaphor of sheep following each other blindly to illustrate how the young writers of the 1940s no longer had to think for themselves. It makes us, as readers, wonder what Schlumberger’s thoughts would be on the computerized world of today’s writers and academics.

Schlumberger appears to favor the Homeric climate of his own youth, of which he remarks, “Nous appartenions encore à un temps, disons homérique, où les secrets du métier se transmettaient oralement, dans certains cafés littéraires, dans certains petits groups” [“We still belonged to a time, let’s call it Homeric, where the secrets of the trade were transmitted orally in certain literary cafes and certain little groups”] (340). He records how the secrets of the writing trade were to be discovered in literary cafés and literary groups where young writers got together with older more experienced ones who acted as their mentors. He remarks how names like Rimbaud and Mallarmé were unknown to them until they integrated themselves into the literary circles. The relationship between Gide and Schlumberger, that of a more experienced writer mentoring a younger one, gives an insight into literary friendships of the time. Schlumberger consulted Gide on many of his works, including his first book, Le Mur de Verre. He quotes Gide’s letter of response to his request : “Plus que jamais je vous conseille de publier d’abord

vos vers. Leur forme m'avait paru plus sûre, plus accompli que celle de votre livre" ["More than ever I recommend that you publish your poems first. Their form appeared more sure, more accomplished than that of your book"] (350). Gide was the one who helped get some of Schlumberger's earlier works published in the Mercure and the Ermitage. In his youth, Schlumberger valued Gide's experienced opinion and sought his advice on many of his works; it was only later with the hindsight of age that he began to question some of Gide's motives.

## CHARACTER – FORMATION AND EVOLUTION

Schlumberger was always viewed as having a very reserved and timid character. It was a view of himself that he disliked. Jacques Brenner comments, “On a trop parlé de la modestie de Jean Schlumberger. Lui-même était un peu agacé de s’entendre toujours louer pour sa discrétion” [“People have talked too much about Jean Schlumberger’s modesty. Schlumberger was a bit exasperated to hear himself always being praised for his discretion”] (Brenner 383). The fact that he was aware of this weakness by the time he wrote Éveils suggests that timidity was not his reason for keeping himself aloof in his memoirs. On the contrary, we can presume that it was a professional decision on his part to write an autobiography devoid of emotional baggage, which would serve as a useful historical document. As Schlumberger said, “mes sentiments intimes n’étaient pas matière à récit” [“my intimate sentiments were not material to write about”] (Pénault 113).

We notice from his autobiographical reflections that Schlumberger has resolved his undue concern about overburdening his readers. He says, “Je n’aurais plus aujourd’hui, je veux croire, cette timidité contractée, qui me faisait m’imaginer que je manquais d’égards au lecteur, si je lui imposais trois lignes pour ce qui pouvait s’exprimer en une seule. Je me suis efforcé de mettre ma politesse dans une présentation plus aisée, moins allusive et qui procède par moins de détours” [“I believe I would not be subject to this nervous shyness today that made me think that I showed a lack of respect for the reader if I imposed on him three lines when one would suffice. I have tried to render my politeness in a more relaxed presentation, less allusive, that develops more directly”] (383). By the time he wrote Éveils, Schlumberger had more confidence in the interest that his writing would hold for others.

Schlumberger's concerns resemble those of some of Nora's historian-autobiographers. Popkin explains how Nora's project involved many different types of autobiographical texts: some chose to present their text as an essay in a collaborative volume. Rather than appearing to force their stories on readers, contributors to such volumes can leave the responsibility for the project to an editor or interviewer, who often sets limits on the subjects for discussion, thus removing responsibility from the historian (Popkin, *Frontier* 734). In a similar vein, Schlumberger was reluctant to force his opinions on people. He explained this reluctance as being partially due to his shyness, but he also felt, like Nora's historians, that people "s'intéressent à eux-mêmes plus qu'aux autres et qu'on les oblige fort en écoutant leurs histoires sans les importuner de siennes" ["are interested in themselves more than in others, and that you really oblige them when you listen to their stories without imposing yours"] (*Éveils* 350-51). On hindsight he recognized that this attitude was wrong: it was "valable dans la vie courante, mais meurtrière en amitié, et particulièrement déplacée avec Gide" ["valid in everyday life, but murderous in friendship, and particularly out of place with Gide"] (350). This attitude may be attributed to two causes. First, Schlumberger's upbringing was strict; his father did not allow any teasing whatsoever in his family, or even humorous bantering – "La moquerie à l'égard d'un être à qui la réciprocité n'est pas permise, ou les taquineries ironiques lui restaient en horreur" ["Teasing someone who was not allowed to respond was forbidden; ironic teasing was anathema to him"] (288). Secondly, Schlumberger grew up in Alsace where exhibiting any personal opinion that was anti-German or nationalistic was frowned upon. This feeling that he should avoid speaking about personal matters was a literary and social handicap that followed Schlumberger to the end of his life.

Popkin remarks that “Nora detected a certain lack of intellectual self-confidence [amongst his colleagues] in the choice of history over other disciplines: ‘many clearly admit that they didn’t think themselves capable of scaling the heights of philosophy or worthy of associating with the great figures of literature [. . .] Going into history for many of them was a further extension of the act of intellectual and social modesty they had made in choosing to become professors’” (Ego 1151). So maybe history is an option that people choose when they feel that they don’t have the talent to be a writer. Schlumberger also lacked intellectual self-confidence. He began by studying to be a pastor but soon changed his studies to the history of religion, and it was only when he met Gide and other writers that he began to consider a career as a writer. He often felt inadequate, especially in the presence of Gide. He describes a particularly embarrassing moment: “Il me fallait déjà confesser d’assez nombreuses ignorances. Gide me fit rougir d’avoir tant de fois monté et descendu l’escalier de la Trinité-des-Monts sans connaître seulement l’Ode on a Grecian Urn [sic], et le jour même il m’offrit un Keats” [“I had to admit to quite a few failings in knowledge. Gide made me blush for having gone up and down the stairs of Trinité-des-Monts without even knowing ‘Ode on a Grecian Urn’ [sic], and that same day he offered me a Keats”] (Éveils 365). Schlumberger was unsure if he could make it as writer and resolved to return to his history if he failed. In a letter to Gide in August, 1902 he says, “Je sais bien qu’en cas d’échec complet et mon impuissance reconnue, je pourrais toujours revenir à ces études d’histoire où tout travail consciencieux est, malgré tout, utile. Mais j’aurai perdu du temps” [“I know well that in case of a complete failure and the recognition of my powerlessness, I could always return to these history studies where all conscientious work is, after all, useful. But I would have wasted time”] (Mercier and Fawcett, 9-10). Schlumberger returns to the

profession of a historian in the writing of his memoirs: he felt that it was his duty as a writer to interpret the history of the events and people surrounding his life.

A major aspect of autobiography is that it provides an insider's view into events. Popkin examines a section on the Communist Party in the memoirs of the historian Annie Kriegel and remarks that Kriegel's memoir makes it clear that "only a scholar with her extensive inside knowledge of the Party could have tracked down the sources she used [. . .]. Her work demonstrates the value of her having been an insider, possessed of the 'local knowledge' that enabled her to find what a perfectly disinterested and objective scholar might never have located" (*Ego* 1159). This also applies to Schlumberger's memoirs. His account in *Éveils* of the founding of the *Nouvelle Revue Française* (NRF) and its team, along with that of the avant-garde theatre, the *Vieux-Colombier*, is told from the point of view of someone as an 'insider' with 'local knowledge' that nobody else possessed. Of course the other members, such as Gide and Copeau, could have done the same, but recording history was not Gide's bent, and Copeau was too busy being a self-professed artist. Schlumberger believed that his work and his writings rather than his "life" needed to be recorded. Pierre-Jean Pénault gives us an insight into Schlumberger's thoughts on the writing of his autobiography after his demobilization at the end of the First World War:

Démobilisé, Jean Schlumberger se remet au travail. Sa vie se confond désormais avec son activité littéraire. A des amis qui le pressaient de publier ses souvenirs, 'J'ai toujours répondu, écrit-il, que ma vie avait été dépourvue d'événements mémorables, que mes sentiments intimes n'étaient pas matière à récit, bref, que mon histoire se réduisait à celle de mon travail et de mes livres, la seule disais-je qui me semblât pouvoir présenter quelque intérêt.'

[After his demobilization, Jean Schlumberger went back to work. His life now merges with his literary activity. To those friends who would press him to publish his memoirs, 'I've always answered,' he wrote, 'that my life has always lacked memorable events, that my intimate sentiments were not material to write about, in short, that my story reduces to that of my work and my books, the only thing, I would say, which could be of any interest] (Pénault 113).

Schlumberger, having already recorded the history, the social mores and beliefs, and the cultural currents surrounding his own family and childhood, now turns to the history that surrounded his life and work as a young man. He dedicates a very large section of his memoirs to the literary friendships surrounding the NRF and the Vieux-Colombier. These pages provide an excellent historical record about the literary scene of the time. Pénault mentions that, “Que de visages amis apparaissent autour de Jean Schlumberger! Les citer tous serait composer le tableau le plus valable et le plus vaste de la littérature et de la pensée contemporaines. Lorsque l'on écrira l'histoire littéraire de ce siècle, il faudra insister sur cette amitié qui lia une pléiade d'écrivains et féconda leur œuvre” [“So many faces of friends appear around Jean Schlumberger! Go through all their names and you compose the most legitimate and rich tableau of modern literature and thought. When the history of this century is written, it will be necessary to emphasize this friendship that linked a galaxy of writers and gave birth to their work”] (121). Schlumberger's life story links the lives of all these friends; he is the backdrop on which their stories are painted. Schlumberger recognized his role to be that of a mediator for his friends and family, both as an instrument for remembering their past and a solver of differences, as is discussed later in the chapter on “Mediator and the Nouvelle Revue Française.”

## DUTY IN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

Schlumberger recognized the importance of these literary friendships and how they were the backbone to the formation of the Nouvelle Revue Française (NRF), and he felt it his duty to record their involvement in its history before it was lost or forgotten. In the opening lines of the chapter “Naissance de la N.R.F.” he says, “Avant d’être le groupe de la N.R.F., nous fumes ce groupe d’amis dont je viens de parler, très divers par leur goûts mais d’accord sur un certain nombre de choses essentielles. C’est ce qui fit le caractère original et la solidité de l’équipe” [“Before becoming the NRF group, we were this group of friends I have just spoken about, having a wide range of tastes, but in agreement on a certain number of essential things. This is what formed the unique character and solidity of the team”] (Éveils 368). As a group they shared common moral and ethical values as well as having common likes and dislikes.

Going beyond personal matters, Schlumberger explains why, historically, the formation of a group like the NRF was necessary. The Revue Blanche [The White Review] an extremely left wing intellectual review, had disappeared. L’Ermitage was a more discreet and more literary journal where Gide and Henri Ghéon often had their work published. However, it too had recently closed its doors. Le Vers et Prose, which was run by Paul Fort, was still in business but dealt only with poetry and had no section for literary criticism. Finally, there was the Mercure, but that was under what Schlumberger considered to be the rather suffocating direction of Remy de Gourmont. Their small group—Gide, Ghéon, Copeau Schlumberger and Drouin—still managed to publish some articles and papers, but what they really needed was somewhere they could publish their articles without having to conform to the policies of journals they did not agree with. Schlumberger as an ‘insider’ records the true reasons behind the founding of the NRF: “Mais ce qui nous faisait envie, c’est de pouvoir parler de mille choses qui ne sauraient

faire l'objet d'un livre, d'aborder librement tous les problèmes qui ont trait aux lettres et à leurs incidences sur la vie. Il nous semblait que nos apports à cinq ou six, en s'étayant réciproquement, prendraient un poids qu'isolément ils n'avaient pas" ["But what we wanted to do is to talk about a thousand things that would not make the subject matter of a book, to bring up freely all types of problems pertaining to letters and their effect on life. It seemed to us that the mutual support of five or six of us, each shoring the other up, would give us a weight that we would not have individually"] (Éveils 369). We notice that Schlumberger, as he did when recording the story of his youth in Guebwiller, continues to use the universal "nous" to record the story of his work and life as a young man.

The arrival of André Ruyters on the scene brought the question of forming their own review to the forefront. He was a Brussels banker with a lot of literary experience; he had already directed another review called the Antée, which had recently closed down. Ruyters had numerous contacts, including a well known printer named Édouard Verbeke who was noted for his method of printing in a traditional style and at a modest price. Verbeke soon became their printer and a long lasting associate of the NRF. The art of running a review was a new concept for these young literary friends. They needed someone who already had experience in the field, and so they engaged the services of Eugène Montfort, who was already the editor for a small periodical called Les Marges. They believed that the criticisms and opinions of an outsider would be beneficial to the group. However, they didn't have the foresight to look over the covering articles or comments that Montfort would add to their work before the first copy of the review went to the press on 15 November 1908. They were surprised by what Montfort said in an introduction to their work, and they did not like the articles that he selected for publication in conjunction with theirs, believing them to be unworthy examples of literary criticism. It was no

doubt a form of literary snobbery on their part. Somewhat disappointed, Schlumberger comments on one of the articles, “l’article relevait du dithyrambe plus que de la critique littéraire” [“the article was more of a eulogy than a literary criticism”] (Éveils 371).

Montfort’s second issue in December 1908 was no better. He published an article that savagely attacked Mallarmé. Gide, Marcel Drouin, and Louis Phillipe were very upset at the idea of their being seen as accomplices to such an indecency. Montfort had put behind the cover a few sentences stating that each collaborator had a right to voice his own opinion and placed it along with a list of people that Gide and his colleagues didn’t even recognize or know. Ultimately, the first issues of the NRF failed because Schlumberger, Gide and the other members of the team did not monitor the editing of the journal’s first two issues, both because they trusted Montfort despite his having a different concept of art to theirs, and because they did not take the time to read the issues before they were published. Schlumberger explains that their only choice was to back out gracefully and save their reputations for another venture. The significance of this episode is that it illustrates that the group had very firm ideas on which direction their journal should go, and were ready to suffer a loss of face to preserve these views.

Montfort went back to publishing with Les Marges and left the NRF to Schlumberger and his circle. He also left them the title NRF, which he had adopted from a previous review, the Revue Française. Schlumberger explains that in a sense Montfort had indirectly brought him back into his own family circle by adopting this name, which was of course that of the review that his great-grandfather, François Guizot, had founded and directed. And so, as Schlumberger relates, they were ready to take up their oars and try again. The address of the NRF became that of Schlumberger’s apartment at 78 Rue d’Assas, where the first issue under its new direction appeared in February 1909. As a participant, Schlumberger is able to relate in minute detail this

founding of the NRF, something that could never be recorded by a historian who was not a witness to these events.

John D. Barbour states that “The relationship between the narrator of an autobiography and the past self who is this work’s protagonist requires a process of interpretation and evaluation that inevitably involves conscience” (174). Schlumberger’s conscience produces this sense of duty he feels to record history. His historical conscience not only encompasses the events in his past but also the people of his past. Barbour also comments how “The specific issues and concerns that preoccupy each autobiographer depend on many variable factors in his or her situation and do not set the agenda for every autobiographer” (174). For Schlumberger, this profound sense of duty to record the history of his family and friends was sparked by a conversation he had with Joseph Breitbach. He explains in his introduction to Éveils that, at first he wasn’t very enthusiastic about the idea of writing his autobiography: “je n’apportais pas beaucoup de chaleur à ce projet” [“I didn’t have much enthusiasm for this project”] (267). Breitbach convinced him, however, that he owed it to his family and friends to write down their history. Schlumberger repeats what Breitbach said to him “Avec mon peu de loquacité je risquais, disait-il, de laisser s’effacer dans un silence ingrat quelques figures, souvent marquantes, auxquelles je devais une part de moi-même” [“As I am not very talkative, I ran the risk, he told me, of allowing certain people to disappear in an ungrateful silence, people to whom I owed a part of myself”]. Breitbach, no doubt, touched Schlumberger’s conscience with this gentle reprimand.

In the chapter in which he describes the team of the NRF, Schlumberger situates for us the precise time and place for his writing of his memoirs. He tells us how in “Juin 44, dans un Val-Richer aux vitres cassées par le soufflé d’un bombardement” [“in June 1944, in the Val-

Richer with windows broken by the blast of bombings”], he learned of the death of his good friend Henri Ghéon (375). The news of his friend’s death was, no doubt, the inspiration for the content of this chapter, another example of coaxing as described by Smith and Watson (56). He feels it is his duty to interrupt his memoirs to pay tribute to his former colleagues of the NRF. He explains why, after their demobilization in 1918, neither Henri Ghéon nor Marcel Drouin returned to work for the NRF. Ghéon had converted to Catholicism during the war, and so “envahi tout entière par son nouveau bonheur, il ne pouvait plus trouver de contentement hors d’une action militante, aux cotés de ceux qui partageaient sa foi” [“totally immersed in his new happiness, he could not find happiness outside some military action at the side of those who shared his faith”] (376). Schlumberger, observing Ghéon’s conversion, gives a humorous rendition of how Ghéon shocked the Carmelites by dedicating his story of St Theresa of Lisieux to her neighbor Jean Schlumberger, adding that unfortunately he didn’t have any saint to give him in return. Instead, he tells us, he dedicated his final book Stephane le Glorieux to him. Drouin suffered from a form of depression after the war. He never recovered from the sudden death of his daughter, and blamed external events for his unhappiness. Schlumberger says, “Mais ce qui, dès cette époque, était grave, c’est une ingéniosité, déjà devenue automatique, à rejeter sur des accidents du dehors la faute de tout ce qui clochait dans sa vie, à se leurrer de l’idée que tout serait différent dès que telle circonstance aurait changé” [“But what was serious from this time on was his tendency that had already become automatic to blame external events for all that was not going right in his life, to fool himself with the idea that everything would be different once circumstances had changed”] (Éveils 378). The conscience of the autobiographer may be seen at work here in several ways. As Barbour says, “acts of conscience may take many different forms. An author may confess her sins, offer an apology in defense of her actions, present

extenuating or excusing conditions, or examine the significance of deeper motivations behind commendable or culpable actions” (174). Schlumberger sometimes offers apologies for his actions. For example, with regard to Drouin he says, “Je m’accuse d’avoir souvent manqué d’indulgence pour ces irritantes justifications et bousculé le malheureux Drouin avec plus d’incompréhension que je n’aurais dû” [“I blame myself for having often been impatient for these irritating justifications, and for having goaded the unfortunate Drouin with less understanding than I should have”] (Éveils 378).

Schlumberger’s inclusion of the stories of what happened to his various colleagues reminds us of Nora’s approach. In Nora’s Ego-histoire, different life stories are printed and are meant to be read side by side. Similarly, Schlumberger sketches different life-stories and includes a tribute to a man called Amos, which for many readers might seem out of place amongst his memoirs. He says, “il me faut mentionner un homme étrange, aux traits si accusés qu’on parle difficilement de lui sans apparence de caricature, mais qui méritait l’attachement dont je lui fis preuve pendant quelque trente-cinq ans, et qui, dans le début, lorsque je me cherchais encore, ne fut pas sans influence sur l’orientation de mon esprit” [“I have to mention a strange man with features so pronounced that it is hard to talk about him without appearing to describe a caricature, but who deserved the attachment I had for him for thirty-five years, and who, from the beginning, when I was still searching for myself, was not without influence on the direction my mind was taking”] (Éveils 352). These stories, which Schlumberger wants us to read alongside his own, reflect the idea of the common experience adopted by Nora. One of the stories, of course, is that of Gide. The contrasts Schlumberger draws between Gide and himself illuminate Schlumberger’s beliefs; for example, his attitudes to history when he compares his own careful historical descriptions in his autobiography to the more carefree attitude exhibited

by Gide. Some revelations are not conscious: Schlumberger shows that Gide pushes the limits of polite society in a way that Schlumberger never would. Examples of this are Gide's rather scandalous autobiography, Si le grain ne meurt, and his domination of the team at the NRF, as expanded upon elsewhere in the thesis. Another significant story is that of Copeau. Like Gide, Copeau challenged the accepted order, this time in the theater, while Schlumberger tried to protect him from his excesses.

Popkin mentions how very few of the French historian-autobiographers devote much space to discussing their own research or the reasons why they chose their subjects, with the exception of Georges Duby, whose History Continues is explicitly devoted to his scholarly career (Ego 1155). However, even Duby does little to link his professional interests to any personal interests. Schlumberger, however, felt it was his duty to organize his works into a collection of volumes published by Gallimard in 1958, and to comment on the reasons behind his writing them. He says,

Quand me vint, il y a plus de dix ans, l'idée de réviser mes premiers écrits, je ne croyais pas m'embarquer dans une entreprise qui m'absorberait si longtemps. Il est vrai que j'ai plus d'une fois dû l'interrompre, distrait par des tâches dont je ne pouvais me désintéresser, quitté par trop d'amis dont il fallait défendre le souvenir et l'œuvre—au reste, de plus en plus persuadé par leur exemple qu'avant de s'en aller soi-même, il était décent de ne rien laisser en désordre.

[When the idea came to me over ten years ago to revisit my first writings, I did not think that I was embarking on a task that would absorb me for so many years. It is true that I had to interrupt it more than once, distracted by tasks I could not ignore, left behind by too many friends whose memory and works had to be vindicated—besides, I was

increasingly convinced by their example, that before I passed from the scene, I should arrange everything in an orderly fashion.] (Œuvres vii 435).

The care Schlumberger took to revise his works reflects his sense of duty and thoughtfulness towards others. He was also perhaps inspired by a conversation he had with Henri Bergson, the philosopher, at a meeting in 1939. Schlumberger relates how Bergson “deplorer que les artistes en général nous aient laissé si peu de documents biographiques sur leur travail créateur, sur l’idée première de chaque oeuvre et les phases de sa gestation” [“deplore(s) how artists in general left us so few biographical documents on their creative endeavor, on the original concept behind each work and the phases of its gestation”] (Œuvres vii 437). On hindsight, Schlumberger is surprised that the revising of his works was so time consuming. It was perhaps with some reluctance, as with his autobiography, that he took on the task in the first place. However, just as Breitbach convinced him that it was his duty to write his memoirs, so too did Bergson convince him that revising his works was the right thing to do.

In his essay on historian-autobiographers, Popkin mentions how “most of these authors suggest that the decision to become autobiographers represents a conscious break with their existing professional identity” (Frontier 734). Schlumberger’s final novel was Stéphane le Glorieux, which he finished just before starting Éveils. For Schlumberger, his autobiography also represents a conscious break with his existing professional identity, that of the novelist. He came to believe that the 1940s was not a time for literature but rather one for capturing contemporary history: “l’heure n’était pas à la pure littérature, ni à l’ingéniosité critique, ni à la réflexion qui raffine: elle était à une action immédiate d’où dépendait notre existence” [“it was not a time for pure literature, nor for clever critique or for enlightening thought: it was a time for immediate

action on which our existence depended”] (Œuvres vii 436). His nation had been defeated in war and he felt that it was his duty to maintain the morale of the people.

Jean-Pierre Cap, in his book on Schlumberger’s works, refers to a comment made by Marie Delcourt with reference to Schlumberger’s final novel. He says that according to her, “Schlumberger a mûri” [“Schlumberger has matured”] (Cap 174). Schlumberger was ready for this break in his professional identity. As an autobiographer, he looks back at the past, comments on results, such as the creation of the NRF and the founding of the Vieux-Colombier, and points out insights, such as his awe of Gide in his youth, that are recognizable only with the benefit of hindsight and maturity. He illustrates how his character has evolved, so that upon reviewing the past, he is able to be more critical of the tasks that were placed upon him by his family and colleagues, especially the role of mediator.

## MEDIATOR AND THE NOUVELLE REVUE FRANÇAISE

Schlumberger's "memory" of the Nouvelle Revue Française (NRF) is a sharing of a social past that would probably have been obscured or forgotten had he not decided to dedicate a large part of his memoir to capturing it. His personal remembering, in this context, becomes a group recollection. Schlumberger always viewed his role to be that of a mediator for his friends, both as a solver of their problems and an instrument for remembering their past. In his discussion of the NRF, he self-consciously exemplifies what is true to some extent in all autobiography: "Memory is a means of 'passing on,' of sharing a social past that may have been obscured, in order to activate its potential for reshaping a future of and for other subjects" (Smith and Watson 21).

Schlumberger's friends and family also regarded him as a mediator. He records an incident in which he acted as mediator between his friend Théo Sueur and his father: "j' avais déjà parmi ces agités, le rôle qui m'échut trop de fois dans la vie, celui de médiateur ou de tampon" ["Surrounded by these excitable people, I already had the role of mediator or go-between, a role that would fall upon me too many times in my life"] (318). Since he was noted for his diplomacy and his skills as a mediator, Schlumberger was often called upon by members of the NRF, perhaps a little too often, for he tells us how he was the one who was given the job of firing Montfort. He explains, "sous prétexte que j'étais celui qui connaissait le mieux Montfort, mes amis me laissèrent le douteux agrément des explications" ["under the pretext that I was the person who knew Montfort the best, my friends left me the doubtful pleasure of providing explanations"] (Éveils 372). We notice his usage of the word "pretext," because as a man in his sixties, he now recognizes the hidden motives behind his colleagues' request. He relates another incident where Charles Péguy asked him to intervene between himself and a

neighbor. He says that Péguy “eut recours à moi pour tenter une démarche auprès de son ancien camarade de Normale, mon opulent voisin de campagne D., qui lui avait prêté dix mille francs lorsqu’ils étaient encore tous deux libres-penseurs, et qui lui en réclamait le remboursement, pour le punir de son retour à la ‘bigoterie’” [“turned to me to try to approach his old colleague from Normale [École Normale Supérieure], my wealthy country neighbor D., who had lent him [Péguy] ten thousand francs when they were still both free thinkers, and was asking him to repay him in order to punish him for his return to ‘bigotry’”] (385). Schlumberger’s descriptions and use of words like “pretext” show how he considered himself to be exploited because of his diplomacy.

The reader detects notes of sarcasm and irony gradually creeping into the reflections of Schlumberger about Gide, which of course would not be visible if we had only a recorded history without the lens of autobiographical hindsight. Schlumberger remarks on Gide’s ability to be always absent from anything that he considered might tarnish his name, noticing how he reappeared in all his splendor in the new edition of the NRF under new direction. He says, “Gide demeuré, je ne sais quel hasard, absent du numéro mort-né, régnait avec autorité dans celui-ci. Une tranche massive de la Porte étroite et plusieurs notes, dont une qui précisait sa position à l’égard de Mallarmé” [“Gide, having avoided involvement with the stillborn issue, by what accident I don’t know, ruled with authority in this one. [Gide contributed] a huge part of La Porte étroite and several notes, one of which gave his position with respect to Mallarmé”] (Éveils 374). Although Schlumberger was unaware that Gide was self-promoting at the time of the event, on hindsight he now recognizes his motives.

When Schlumberger reflects on the circumstances that drove Drouin into a state of despair, he proposes that “Peut-être fut-il découragé par la gloire de Gide, qui montait tout à côté

de lui et le distançait trop; peut-être se gara-t-il du scandale qui entourait cette ascension. Avec combien d'auteurs ne nous brouilla-t-il pas, de qui nul ne parla jamais dans la N.R.F., parce qu'il s'était réservé de leur rendre hommage mieux que d'autre n'auraient su le faire" ["Perhaps he was discouraged by the glory of Gide which was rising right before him and was outpacing him, or perhaps he was keeping away from the scandal surrounding his rise. Who knows how many authors were upset at us for never having been mentioned in the NRF simply because he [Gide] gave himself the right to pay them homage more skillfully than anyone else could"] (378). This shows that Schlumberger was more sensitive than Gide to the feelings of others. Schlumberger elaborates in a footnote added in 1960: "Notamment Romain Rolland sur l'œuvre duquel il promettait toujours la grande étude qui aurait mis toute chose au point—étude toujours promise pour les plus proches vacances et toujours différée sous de nouveaux prétextes—si bien que, par son incompréhensible silence, la N.R.F. parut nourrir à l'égard de Romain Rolland une hostilité foncière. Les explications que nous pûmes donner après coup ne dissipèrent jamais le malentendu" ["Take, especially, Romain Rolland, about whose work he promised a major study that would explain everything—a study he promised for the next vacation but which was always put off under new pretexts—so much so that, through its inexplicable silence, the NRF appeared to be deeply hostile to Romain Rolland. Explanations we gave afterwards never quite dispelled the misunderstanding"] (Éveils 378). Schlumberger recognizes now, as he had not in the first years of the NRF, that the whole team was in thrall to Gide's larger-than-life persona.

In the later parts of Éveils, Schlumberger writes more freely about Gide's faults and some of their character conflicts. We are aware of a certain irritation towards Gide's behavior that Schlumberger didn't show in the earlier years of their relationship when he was still in awe of Gide. It is as if we are witnessing the awakenings (éveils) of Schlumberger as he writes his

autobiography. Schlumberger describes Gide's inability to cope with problems when they arose at the NRE, and how it was always he himself who was responsible for fixing things. He even resorts to the forbidden "je" to refer to himself, as he explains Gide's reactions to the inadequacy of their secretary Pierre Lanux, who was "plein de zèle, de dévouement et d'amitié, mais dans la lune aussi souvent que sur la terre. Gide m'accablait de lamentations sur ses étourderies et désespérant de l'en corriger lui-même, m'adjurait sans cesse de veiller à tout. Car pendant deux ans c'est moi qui centralisai les manuscrits, qui m'efforçai, d'équilibrer les numéros, de les faire paraître à peu près ponctuellement, bref de tirer un périodique régulier des ressources à la fois si riches et si fragmentaires dont nous disposions" ["Pierre de Lanux was full of zeal, devotion and friendship, but had his head in the clouds as often as he had his feet on the ground. Gide hounded me with complaints about his absent mindedness and despaired of correcting them himself, and was always begging me to watch out for everything. Because for two years, I was the one who centralized the manuscripts, who tried to ensure the issues had balance, that they appeared more or less on time, in short, to create a regular journal using sources available to us that were both so rich and so fragmented"] (Éveils 381). Schlumberger's conscience finally forces him, out of a sense of duty to himself and others like Lanux who had dealings with Gide, to show how Gide could be difficult. This reinforces what Barbour says about the exercise of conscience being an essential component of the autobiographical act itself: "The writing of an autobiography is not simply mimesis or description of earlier periods of conscience-formation, but an exercise and extension of the writer's still-developing conscience" (9). Schlumberger's conscience manifests itself through the writing of his autobiography and is a belated apology to himself and others for not having recognized earlier the significance of events that would be revealed to him in hindsight.

Popkin proposes that the main challenge for contemporary historian-autobiographers is to “demonstrate the interconnections between their own micro-historical experiences and some theme of broader significance; [that] the possibilities are limited only by the narrator’s skill and historical imagination, not by the objective dimensions of the event itself” (Frontier 729). In several instances in Éveils, both here when describing the NRF and elsewhere, Schlumberger is very conscientious about connecting his own micro-history to themes that have a broader significance within the literary world of the time. By relating the problems he had getting his book Heureux qui comme Ulysse published, he illustrates a more global problem that existed for the writers in his cultural scene. Writers like Gide and Claudel and Charles-Louis Phillipe had to pay a deposit in advance to have their books published. Schlumberger explains, “Je n’avais pu faire paraître mon petit livre partout refusé que dans une édition à compte d’auteur” [“The only way I could get my little book published after it was refused everywhere was at my own expense”]. He adds, “D’ailleurs personne ne se sentait humilié d’avoir plier devant ces nécessités économiques, tant l’obligation de payer d’avance pour trouver un gîte était le sort commun de presque tout ce que nous appelions la littérature” [“Besides, nobody felt humiliated to have to cave in before these economic necessities as the requirement to pay in advance for a home was the common lot of almost everything we called literature”]. He mentions how “Gide avait dû faire les frais de ses propres volumes jusqu’à la Porte Étroite” [“Gide had to pay the fees for his own works until La Porte Étroite”] (Éveils 385). Schlumberger goes on to explain how these difficulties led to their decision to found their own publishing house and that the arrival of Gaston Gallimard on the scene was a deciding factor. And so the publishing house, Gallimard, was founded. Schlumberger remarks how he takes no credit for the founding of Gallimard and

that it was pure vanity that made him so proud of being responsible for the design of the monogram “NRF” and the fountain which would appear on their books.

Schlumberger describes some jealousy from other literary groups, especially those who hated Gide. Jean de Pierrefeu, a critic with the weekly magazine L’Opinion, attacked Schlumberger’s book Inquiète Paternité in an article titled “L’Immoraliste et son Disciple,” referring of course to Gide and Schlumberger. Pierrefeu described the book as having “une odeur ‘de géhenne et de bagne’” [“an odor of Gehenna and penal servitude”] (388). But the attack backfired and turned out to be good publicity rather than bad. A more serious assault was made against them at the end of 1912 by the review L’Indépendance. Schlumberger apologizes for relating such seemingly trivial incidents, but he explains that these little pieces of micro-history illuminate the reasons that led them to alter some of their roles within the NRF. He says, “Si j’ai relaté cet épisode qui ne fut que bouffon, mais derrière lequel nous sentions fermenter toute sorte d’inimitiés sourdes ou déclarées, c’est qu’il eut tout de même pour effet de nous amener à modifier l’officielle désignation de nos rôles respectifs” [“The reason I relate this farcical episode but behind which we felt all sorts of hidden or open enmities fermenting is that it had the effect all the same of our changing the official designation of our respective roles”] (389). Some critics attacked the review, saying that although Gide’s name didn’t appear on the front cover of the NRF, everyone knew that he was the director. Schlumberger explains that their communal directorship of three people—Schlumberger, Copeau and Ruyters—created an atmosphere of suspicion and the idea that they were each hiding behind the other. For this reason, they decided to remove Schlumberger’s and Ruyter’s names and have only Copeau’s on the front cover.

Schlumberger is also very conscientious about keeping his facts as accurate as possible, a concern that reflects his training as a historian. He mentions in his introduction to Éveils, “Je

me suis efforcé d'être exact en ce qui concerne les événements et vrai dans l'évocation des personnes" ["I tried to be precise in everything concerning events and true in the evocation of people"] (267). From the beginning he appeals to the 'trust' of his audience. It is clear that in this Schlumberger follows one of the tenets laid down by Smith and Watson: "the autobiographical relationship depends on the narrator's winning and keeping the reader's trust in the plausibility of the narrated experience and the credibility of the narrator" (29).

Schlumberger illustrates how it is necessary to be accurate as possible in recording details about people and events. He explains how he and his colleagues planned from the beginning that their publishing company would start very small and publish only a very select number of books. Therefore, when Proust offered them the multi-volume A la recherche du temps perdu, they were obliged to refuse it without even opening the enormous manuscript. Its publishing would have threatened the survival of their little company. Schlumberger explains that "lorsque, en 1913, Proust nous offrit A la recherche du Temps perdu, nous dûmes écarter, sans même les ouvrir, les blocs de ses manuscrits, la publication d'un ouvrage s'annonçait en huit ou dix tomes risquant d'écraser notre naissante maison" ["when, in 1913, Proust sent us A la recherche du Temps perdu [Remembrance of things past], we had to reject it without even opening it – the volumns of manuscript; the publication of the work in eight or ten volumes would risk overwhelming our budding house"] (Éveils 387). This reference turned out to be very important as evidence in the future. Schlumberger, in a letter to Jean Lambert of the NRF in the 1950s, is able to use this passage of Éveils to defend himself and his team against the charges of aesthetic blindness leveled by Lambert and his colleagues (Mercier and Fawcett, 1080). He tells Lambert that they are making too much of the whole incident. He says that what he already explained in Éveils is the real truth, that nobody was directly responsible for the refusal; neither Gaston, Gide, Copeau,

nor he read the manuscript. Therefore, it was not an inability on their part to recognize a great work, but an action which was necessary for the survival of their fledgling company.

Schlumberger's explanation is credible to his readers, since he has gained their trust from the beginning.

Accuracy is a constant concern for Schlumberger. An indication of this concern is the fact that he revised his explanation concerning Gide's not being given the directorship of the NRF after the war in 1919. When he first wrote Éveils, he didn't explain why it was Rivière and not Gide who was given the directorship; he just mentioned that "Après 1919 quand nous lui [Rivière] abandonnâmes la direction de la revue, il sut, l'euphorie générale aidant, la conduire avec le plus chatoyant éclat" ["After 1919 when we left the management of the review to him (Rivière), he was able with the help of a general euphoria to direct it with the greatest brilliance"]. Schlumberger also explains that he didn't always agree with Rivière's ideas: "et mes convictions esthétiques regimbaient souvent contre les siennes" ["and my esthetic convictions clashed often against his"] (Éveils 391). At this point, a footnote refers the reader to an explanation Schlumberger wrote in 1960 while revising his works: "Sans trop le dire, Gide avait songé à prendre la direction de la revue. Le bruit en courut et Claudel fit savoir qu'il ne publierait pas une ligne sous un tel patronage. Pour bien d'autres raisons encore (notamment que Gide avait mieux à faire), nous pensâmes plus sage de donner le titre à Rivière qui dès avant la guerre centralisait tout le travail" ["Without saying it, Gide had thought of taking over the running of the review. The rumor made its rounds, and Claudel made it known that he would not publish a single line under such a leadership. For many other reasons also (notably that Gide had better things to do), we thought it to be wiser to give the title to Rivière, who had been doing the work from before the war"] (Œuvres ii 197). The fact that he adds a footnote here is significant.

Obviously, this incident still bothered him, even in 1960, and perhaps remembering that he didn't always agree with Rivière's policies made him want to explain the situation fully. An unpublished letter between Schlumberger and his wife highlights this even more; his explanation in both instances is very similar. He writes,

C'est hier seulement que j'ai revu Gide rentrant de Cuverville. Lentement la situation se clarifiant je ne désespère pas d'aboutir à un règlement satisfaisant. La direction de la revue ne peut être assumée par André ; tant il y a contre lui d'animosité chez un grand nombre d'écrivains. Claudel a déclaré à Rivière qu'il n'écrirait plus une ligne dans la N.R.F. si Gide en avait la direction. Je trouve cela ignoble de la part de ce faux bonhomme ; qui envoie à André des protestations d'amitié. Ce n'est certes pas ce sale chantage qui m'intimide, et ni Gallimard ni Rivière n'hésiteraient un seul instant à balancer Claudel si cela suffisait pour faire place nette devant Gide. Mais l'hostilité de ceux que Gide a griffés, ou qu'il a scandalisés, ou qu'il a laissé tomber rendrait la situation très malaisée. Je n'avais du reste envisagé la direction de la revue par Gide que parce que je ne voyais pas d'autre moyen de le retenir dans l'association. Fort heureusement, le premier contact entre Gide et Gaston s'est bien passé, ce qui fait que même sans la revue on pourra peut-être trouver une situation intéressante pour André.

[Only yesterday I saw Gide again, returning from Cuverville. Gradually the situation became clear and I do not despair of finding a satisfactory answer. The leadership of the review cannot be assumed by André as so many writers feel animosity against him. Claudel declared to Rivière that he would not write another word in the NRF if Gide led it. I find this petty on the part of this phoney gentleman. This dirty blackmail certainly will not intimidate me, and neither Gallimard nor Rivière would hesitate to throw out

Claudé if this was enough to put everything right by Gide. But the hostility of those whom Gide had attacked or shocked or had let down would make the situation very uncomfortable. Anyway I thought of Gide being given the leadership of the review only since I could not find any other means to keep him in the association. Very luckily, the first contact between Gide and Gaston [Gallimard] went well, which meant that even without the review, we could perhaps find an interesting position for André.]

(Appendix 1)

Schlumberger wished to express how, even though he went along with the arrangement at the time, he didn't agree entirely with the decision. He originally expected and would, no doubt, have preferred Gide to be director, since he didn't always see eye to eye with the young Rivière. In the revision of his works, he appears to have wanted to clarify what the situation was when the decision was made. The letter Schlumberger wrote to his wife in 1919 reveals his true feelings at the time and there are distinct similarities between the explanation written in 1960 and the contents of the letter (for example, the reference to Claudé). Schlumberger's opinion in 1960 is still the same as it was forty years earlier. In the revision of his memoirs, Schlumberger wished to clear up any discrepancies that might have existed. The fact that Schlumberger corrects such omissions actually strengthens the authenticity of the other parts of his memoirs that he did not think needed revising: It strengthens his claim that what he says in Éveils about their refusal of Proust's novel was really the truth. Schlumberger's explanation, once again, is credible since he has maintained the trust of his readers.

## THEATER AND LE VIEUX-COLOMBIER

Popkin explains that quite often the “autobiographer has to exercise talents more often associated with the writing of fiction than with the writing of modern academic history” (Frontier 736). Schlumberger, as a writer of fiction and a historian, possessed both talents. Popkin adds, “In place of the adults who occupy center stage in most works of history, the historian-autobiographer, at least in his or her early chapters, usually has a child for a protagonist and the success of the project requires the ability to convey how the world looked from that perspective” (Frontier 736). It would be easy for a writer of an autobiography to describe his childhood in the light of his adult hindsight, but Schlumberger successfully avoids this, as is seen in his description of his awakening passion for the theater.

At the beginning of the chapter entitled, “Théâtre” Schlumberger tells us about a trip his family made to Germany. His opening sentence suggests that what we are about to hear is a story told through the eyes of a twelve-year-old-youth. We observe the adult skill behind his youthful reflections as he tells us, “Je pouvais avoir douze ans quand mon père faisant un voyage d’affaire en Allemagne, voulut nous donner le plaisir d’une descente du Rhin jusqu’à Coblenze. Nous le rejoignîmes avec ma mère à Francfort, et le soir quelqu’un lui fit la politesse de nous inviter tous à l’Opera. On jouait Tannhäuser” [“I must have been twelve when my father, on a business trip to Germany, wanted to give us the pleasure of a trip down the Rhine to Koblenz. My mother and I joined him in Frankfurt, and that night somebody politely invited us all to the Opera. Tannhäuser was playing”] (Éveils 392). Schlumberger, in his description, expertly captures the boyish elation he felt because of his visit to the opera. He says, “Je ne dis pas que, le lendemain, je n’aie pas été intéressé par le rocher de la Lorelei et par les ruines des burgs perches tout le long du fleuve (j’étais très entiché de ruines), mais l’événement ce fut ce Tannhäuser. Aucune

représentation que j'en ai vu depuis, n'a pu surimprimer et faire pâlir celle-là" ["I'm not saying that I was not interested the following day by the rock of the Lorelei and by the ruins of the castles perched along the whole length of the river (I was fascinated by ruins), but the big event was this Tannhäuser. No performance that I saw later could overlay itself and make this one pale in comparison"] (Éveils 392). Most boys of this age would be more excited about a trip on the Rhine and a visit to the Lorelei than by a visit to the theater. Schlumberger, however, succeeds in portraying his early passion for the theater through a comparison of the two events and he adds that it wasn't the music of the opera that enthralled him either; rather, it was the theater performance: "La révélation ne résidait pas dans la musique, dont je ne saisissais que les parties les plus faciles mais sur laquelle j'avais déjà des lueurs : c'était le Théâtre, brusquement surgi, dans sa majesté" ["The revelation did not lie in the music of which I understood only the simplest parts, but only in those parts which I had an inkling about: it was the Theater, suddenly surging in its majesty"] (Éveils 392).

Having so wonderfully portrayed his awakening passion for the theater from the perspective of a child, Schlumberger goes on to examine from an adult perspective why this event had such a powerful effect on him. He explains that "Pour un petit Parisien qu'on a déjà conduit dans une sale de spectacle, au Châtelet ou ailleurs, cette représentation n'aurait pas fait date; dans mon imagination vierge elle marquait puissamment" ["For a young Parisian who has already been brought to a show at Châtelet or elsewhere, this performance wouldn't have made a great impression; in my virgin imagination, it touched me deeply"] (Éveils 392). Because of his dual abilities as a writer of fiction and a historian, Schlumberger is able to vividly record in these short passages his passion for the theater. It is remarkable that, although he had hardly ever been to the theater, he learned all the tricks of the theater and how the scenery worked. He says, "Je

sus comment on fait jaillir un démon d'une trappe, se transformer à vue un jardin en désert, s'écrouler un palais dans la fumée et les flammes" ["I learned how to make a demon jump up through a trap-door, a garden transform in front of your eyes into a desert, a palace collapse in smoke and flames"] (Éveils 393). Schlumberger modestly denies that any of this was an indication of his being gifted or predestined for the theater. Instead he quickly invites us to move forward with him to the theater and literary scene of the early 1900s.

By means of his autobiography Schlumberger depicts the Paris theater scene of the time. He explains how he was finding it difficult to get his plays accepted by Paris theaters. He switches from his own story to a more global perspective, explaining that he was not the only one who was having difficulty. Gide, for example, although he was not a great fan of the theater, still needed a place to stage his play Saül. Schlumberger says, "Gide, il est vrai, considérait le théâtre comme art impur, qui asservit l'auteur à mille contingences, un art auquel on ne saurait confier ses plus précieuses pensées ; mais il avait tout de même en réserve son Saül qu'aucun directeur n'aurait eu l'audace de monter" ["Gide, it is true, considered that theater was an impure art, subjecting the author to a thousand contingencies, an art to which one does not confide one's most precious thoughts; but all the same, he had kept in reserve his Saül which no director would dare produce"] (Éveils 397). Jacques Copeau, also, was especially frustrated by the theater scene. Schlumberger says, "De son côté, quand Rouché lui avait monté ses Karamazov, Copeau avait bouillonné contre les obstacles auxquels se heurtait son exigence de perfection. Il m'écrivait, dans un jour d'exaspération : 'je vous souhaite de n'approcher jamais le théâtre'" ["On his side, when Rouché had staged his Karamazov, Copeau was railing against obstacles to his demand for perfection. He wrote to me after a day of exasperation: I hope you keep away from theater"] (Éveils 397). Plays by well known writers such as Molière, Shakespeare, and Ibsen commanded

the scene. Their little group—Gide, Copeau, Schlumberger and colleagues—now felt they needed to form their own theater just as they had been forced to found their own review and publishing house.

Schlumberger begins his description of the founding of the Vieux-Colombier by explaining that “C’est à Copeau qu’il revient d’écrire l’histoire du Vieux-Colombier: ce fut sa chose à lui” [“it’s up to Copeau to write the history of the Vieux-Colombier: it was his project”] (Éveils 398). Schlumberger as part of his memoirs wishes to include the background to the Vieux-Colombier in whose founding he played a major role. His opening sentence indicates that he does not wish it to seem that he is taking the limelight from Copeau, and also illustrates Schlumberger’s belief in the importance of autobiography even above a biography written by somebody who worked closely with him. He begins by explaining that Copeau’s true ambition was to have an almost cult-like re-evaluation of the theater: “Il apparut que la création d’une scène déjà mondialement réputé la plus intéressante de Paris, ne représentait aux yeux de Copeau qu’une première étape, et que son ambition visait à tout autre chose, à une complète revalorisation du théâtre et presque à l’instauration d’un culte” [“It appeared that the creation of a theatrical venue that had the world-wide reputation of being the most interesting in Paris, was, for Copeau, only a first step, and that his ambition was something quite different, the complete rethinking of theater and almost the creation of a cult”] (Éveils 398). Schlumberger, just as he was an ‘insider’ and a person possessed of ‘local knowledge’ for the Nouvelle Revue Française (NRF), was also an ‘insider’ with regard to the Vieux-Colombier. Only a scholar with such extensive inside knowledge could have recorded the story of Jacques Copeau and the Vieux-Colombier with such accuracy. Schlumberger and his wife Suzanne and their children were also close friends with Copeau and his wife Agnes and their children. The families vacationed and

lived together during the setting up of the Vieux-Colombier in Limon. Thus, Schlumberger both knew and was able to judge Copeau very well, both as a friend and a work colleague.

Copeau considered that conditions in Paris were unfit for what he envisioned for his theater. Schlumberger's description of the hunt for a suitable location for a theater displays considerable narrative skill and humor. They found a seedy place, and after ringing on a bell, "ce M. Saint-Père montrait son pâle visage dans l'entrebâillement de la porte" ["this Mr. Holy Father showed his pale face through a crack of the door"] (Éveils 399), giving in a few words their weak position with respect to "Mr. Holy Father," a shady character who did not see much sunlight, "pale face," and who mistrusted everybody, peering "through a crack of the door." This man used pompous language, "qu'on ne touchât [. . .] au titre de sa salle 'avantageusement connue dans tout le quartier'" ["that they were not to touch the name of the establishment 'known and respected throughout the district'"]. In about twenty lines, Schlumberger gave a precise depiction of the owner.

Copeau and Schlumberger decided to move the whole troupe to a little hamlet in the Limon region, thus solving their problem: "une idée qui a hanté Copeau dès le premier jour, qu'un art sain ne pouvait renaître, si ce n'est loin de tout ce qui rappelait l'habituel climat des coulisses" ["an idea which haunted Copeau from the beginning is that a pure art can be reborn only if it is far away from everything that reminds one of the usual atmosphere of the theater"] (Éveils 399). Schlumberger describes the wonderful month he shared in "la vie de la colonie" ["life of the colony"] (Éveils 401). Copeau became ever more obsessed with perfection as time passed. The conscience of the autobiographer is evident in that Schlumberger again feels it is his duty to explain to his readers the grave extent to which Copeau's character became unreasonable: "Mais ce serait manquer de clairvoyance que vouloir expliquer par de simples raideurs de

caractère un drame qui s'est passé dans de tout autres profondeurs dans les régions où l'âme s'épuise à lutter contre l'ange de l'absolu. Peu à peu, toute réforme est apparue illusoire à Copeau, à moins que de restaurer le sens sacré du théâtre" ["But it would show a lack of perception to explain away simply by invoking a rigid character a drama that took place at an altogether different level, in an area where the soul exhausts itself in fighting the Angel of the Absolute. Gradually, it seemed to Copeau that any reform of the theater was an illusion unless a sense of its sacredness was restored"] (Éveils 401). Schlumberger no doubt also felt a sense of duty towards the young actors upon whose shoulders Copeau's ambition weighed so heavily. He says, "Cette ambition était d'un poids bien lourd pour les épaules des élèves en qui se réfugiait son espoir; mais tout ce qui s'est fait, au cours des dernières années, de vivant et de renouvelant n'en est pas moins dû à l'action des jeunes essaims nourris dans cette ruche" ["This ambition was a heavy weight on the shoulders of the students on which he lay his hope; but everything alive and renewed produced in the course of the last years is no less due to the action of the young swarm nourished in this hive"] (Éveils 401). Schlumberger believed that as much credit was due to Copeau's young recruits for their success as to Copeau himself. His use of words like culte, colonie, essaims [swarms], and ruche [beehive] depicts how he perceived this experiment of Copeau's to be like the culturing of bees; whether this was meant to be viewed positively or negatively is for the reader to decide.

Schlumberger jumps forward in the middle of his text to Copeau's tour in New York during the First World War to show that the excitement of the times would be tempered by future events. New Yorkers did not prove to be as receptive to Copeau's vision as he and Schlumberger hoped. Schlumberger also provides hints of later disagreements between Copeau and him as if to prepare the reader for bad news: "le bouillonnement des projets, l'urgence des tâches immédiates

ne laissaient pas encore apparaître en quoi nos deux tempéraments se gêneraient, à la longue, dans une activité trop étroitement liée” [“the bubbling cauldron of projects, the urgency of immediate tasks did not expose how our two temperaments would rub against each other after working too closely together”] (Éveils 400).

Finally, at the end of October 1913, their theater was ready to open its doors. Schlumberger explains that “Notre soirée inaugurale ne laissa pas de faire événement. Jamais tant de luxueuses voitures n’avaient encombré la rue du Vieux-Colombier” [“Our opening night created a stir. Never have so many luxury cars blocked up the rue du Vieux-Colombier”] (Éveils 403). Schlumberger, judging from his description, considered their opening night to be a huge success. Their euphoria, however, was short lived for at the end of their first season and less than a year later, on August 3rd 1914, the war began.

## THE WAR – SCHLUMBERGER, “L’ÉCRIVAIN ENGAGÉ”

Popkin states that

Historian-Autobiographers’ recollections of their wartime experiences and their reflections on personal commitments and their consequences show that these texts do offer genuine insights, both for historians and for students of autobiography. On both sides of the Atlantic, the ways these historically trained witnesses recall the era of the world wars challenge standard historical reconstructions and the clichés of popular culture. Their first person accounts carry a degree of conviction missing in many other memoirs of the period because their training makes them aware of the larger historical context in which their own stories unfolded (Frontier 746).

This conviction is evident in Schlumberger’s final chapter, “Guerre” [War], which covers the outbreak of the First World War. Schlumberger recounts how most of the people who surrounded his life did not believe that the threat of war was real. He says, “Personne parmi ni autour de nous ne croyait à la guerre” [“Nobody among or around us thought that war would break out”] (Éveils 405). Schlumberger expresses a personal surprise at how uninformed their own team at the Nouvelle Revue Française (NRF) were despite their being neither dreamers nor monks. He felt they lacked the necessary contact with the world of the press, the army press and the diplomatic press. Schlumberger’s impressions reflect the larger historical context under which the threat of war unfolded. Most people were unaware that the threat of war was so serious. Schlumberger mentions that Gide sometimes had contact with one of the big chiefs from the “Quai” [d’Orsay, French department of foreign affairs], and Ruyters was their contact with the world of finance; but neither provided any information of great significance. People believed that nobody would support the colossal cost of a war.

Schlumberger admits that he also was too occupied with his own affairs to contemplate a war. He tells us how in the final months before the war he spent some time with Martin du Gard in June at his home in Verger d'Augy, in Allier and how he met Gide at Braffy in July and their main topic of conversation was their own works. He remarks that he and Gide used little ceremony on July 14<sup>th</sup>, the French day of national celebration, being primarily concerned with other matters. Schlumberger adds that it was likewise everywhere in France. Writing about Gide, he notes, "Il a consigné les minimales incidents d'une soirée de 14 juillet, aussi débraillée et insouciant que de coutume. Cette insouciance, toute la France la partageait" ["He recorded the insignificant incidents of an evening on the 14<sup>th</sup> of July, as haphazard and carefree as ever. The whole of France shared this carefree state"] (Éveils 407).

Every individual looked at the war from his own perspective and its impact varied dramatically from person to person. Popkin explains that "Not only do the autobiographies show that there was great diversity in reaction to common national experience, but they also demonstrate that the patterns of reaction were often unpredictable" (Ego 1153). Schlumberger looks at the impact of the war on his life from the viewpoint of a writer, a journalist and a 37-year old man who thought he had found his niche in life and was getting ready to enjoy the rewards of his achievements. He now believed that he would have to learn the rules of a new society. He says,

Ses lettres d'adieu et ses dernières volontés rédigées comme s'il ne devait jamais revenir, chacun de nous allait devoir chercher à s'insérer dans un ordre de choses où il repartait presque de zéro. J'avais pu me croire au midi de ma vie, équipé de ce qu'il fallait pour donner enfin ma mesure, avec mes années d'apprentissage derrière moi. La guerre et les épreuves qui l'ont suivie allaient me remettre à l'école, m'enseigner ce qu'on ne tire ni

des livres, ni de la méditation, ni du travail, mais d'une plus chaude communion avec les êtres.

[His farewell letters and his last wishes composed as if he should never come back, each one of us had to try to find a place in an order of things in which he was starting again almost from zero. I had thought myself at the midday of life, equipped with all that was necessary to make my mark, with my years of learning behind me. The war and the tribulations which followed it were going to send me back to school, and teach me things that one does not glean from books, nor through thought, nor through work, but through a closer communion with others] (Éveils 407).

Here, and again in the Second World War, it is clear that wars play a pivotal role in Schlumberger's life. The First World War forces him to rethink his life, "chacun de nous. . .repartait presque de zero" ["each of us. . .was starting again almost from zero"], and in the 1940s, Schlumberger wrote a series of articles, collected in Jalons and Nouveaux Jalons, around the meaning of nationhood, civilization and culture. As he said, "l'heure n'était pas à la pure littérature" ["it was not a time for pure literature"] (Œuvres vii 436).

We can compare the impact of the war on Schlumberger's character with that of Copeau. Schlumberger seemed to have matured during the war. It was a time for learning and it made him more open and adept at dealing with people, whereas Copeau remained his stubborn self. Schlumberger explains that

Quand le Vieux-Colombier rouvrit après la guerre, Paris manquait encore de charbon et d'électricité. Les théâtres reçurent l'ordre de terminer leur spectacle à onze heures. La générale du Conte d'Hiver dura jusqu'à une heure du matin. La police nous fit dire qu'elle avait bien voulu clore un œil mais qu'en cas de récidive la salle serait fermée.

Copeau fut intraitable : la pièce était ce qu'elle était, il n'en retrancherait pas un mot. Je lui fis valoir qu'il n'y avait rien d'humiliant à plier devant une mesure imposée à la ville entière pour une raison majeure, et que nous n'allions pas mettre la troupe sur la paille par une absurde obstination.

[When the Vieux-Colombier re-opened after the war, Paris was still lacking coal and electricity. Theaters got the order to finish their shows at eleven at night. The final dress rehearsal of Conte d'Hiver [Winter Tale] lasted until one in the morning. The police let us know that they were willing to shut their eyes this time, but if it was repeated, the stage would be closed. Copeau was uncompromising: the play was what it was; he would not reduce it by a word. I let him know that there was nothing humiliating in submitting to a measure imposed on the whole town for an important reason, and that we were not going to put the troupe on the street for an absurd bit of stubbornness] (Éveils 401).

Copeau's reply was, "Je ne me prêterai à rien" ["I won't compromise"]. Schlumberger managed to convince Copeau to shorten the play with an apology to the audience in the fourth act. Schlumberger explains that the curtain came down at the designated time the next night, but Copeau "affalé sur un banc, [. . .] les lèvres serrées, le regard fixe, semblait un assassiné, lardé par les siens de coups de poignard" ["collapsed on a bench [. . .], tight-lipped, staring, looking like a victim of an assassination, stabbed by his people"] (Éveils 401). The war had not changed Copeau, "l'ange de l'absolu" ["Angel of the Absolute"]. These are the kinds of emotions that we would almost never find expressed in history books.

Autobiography's greatest contribution to the historical world is that it provides its readers with an understanding of what it means to be living in history. Popkin describes how in 1980 Michel Winock, in a personal recollection of the last years of the fourth republic, invited the

historian Phillipe Ariès to contribute to a series of contemporary memoirs. The resulting text was an edited transcript of interviews titled Un Historien du dimanche (A Sunday historian) which demonstrated the power of contemporary history written by an engaged observer (1142). Schlumberger's historical works and memoirs can be viewed in this light. He, too, was an engaged observer. Although not a historian by profession he was, as Sartre called him, "un écrivain engagé" ["an engaged writer"] (Brenner 380). He believed himself to be apolitical: In the introduction to his war chronicles he says, "Est-il nécessaire d'ajouter que ces réflexions ne ressortissent à aucune doctrine d'économie politique?" ["Is it necessary to add that these reflections come from no doctrine of political economy?"] (Nouveaux Jalons 180).

Both World Wars no doubt had a dramatic influence on the writing of Schlumberger's autobiography: Éveils covers the First World War and was written during the Second World War. He finished his final novel Stéphane le Glorieux in 1940 and in what seemed like a turning away from literature, he set about writing his memoirs along with historical articles for the newspaper Le Figaro. He explains the reasons behind the writing of these articles which appeared under the title: Jalons Chroniques 1940-41 and Nouveaux Jalons Chroniques 1941-42. At first the newspaper Le Figaro was suspended by the censors and then a short time later, their literary supplement was also. Since any action by the press was forbidden, they decided to maintain contact with their readers by publishing articles in the form of books. As previously mentioned, Schlumberger's opinion, in the light of these articles, was that, "l'heure n'était pas à la pure littérature, ni à l'ingéniosité critique, ni à la réflexion qui raffine: elle était à une action immédiate d'où dépendait notre existence" ["it was not a time for pure literature, nor for clever critique or for enlightening thought: it was a time for immediate action on which our existence depended"] (Œuvres vii 436). This need to turn away from "pure littérature" towards a capturing

of more historical events to serve the people is also reflected in the fact that he decided to write his memoirs at this time. Popkin discusses some end-of-career memoirists like Jacques Le Goff and Raoul Girardet and how the Great War shaped their lives and their sense of history. Although they were a generation behind Schlumberger, since most of them were born either during or just after the First World War, their lives were still greatly affected by it. Popkin says, “From childhood on, these memoirists were aware that this event [the First World War] separated their lives from a dimly understood era before 1914 when everything had been different. For this generation, a sense of the possibility of sudden and radical historical change was almost unavoidable; so was a recognition that they would have to reconstruct the past truly to understand themselves and their own time.” Schlumberger, like these historian-autobiographers, felt the need to reconstruct the past in and with his autobiography. He too is aware of radical historical change, having witnessed two world wars, and since the past can be elusive and difficult to understand, he sets out to capture the memories and to analyze history before they are forever erased.

## CONCLUSION

As we have seen, Schlumberger wrote his memoirs, not only as a recollection of his own past, but as a tribute to all the people he knew and also as a memory of his work and writings. His principal aim was to interpret, through his own life story, the political and cultural history of his time.

His approach was very innovative for this period, for rather than focusing on himself, he explores the more historical and global aspects surrounding his life. He also wrote his autobiography in a time when this type of historical approach was still alien to historians. He was ahead of his time in that his approach to autobiography resembles that of the modern historian-autobiographers who worked with Pierre Nora.

Schlumberger believed that the bourgeoisie, because of its educational opportunities and background, was best situated for interpreting history. He also believed that it had a sense of duty towards its “less fortunate” countrymen, to use these attributes to capture both the political and cultural history of contemporary France. In a sense he believed the bourgeoisie to be a historical mouthpiece for the people. However, it is interesting to note who his audience really was and about whom he was writing. He was not capturing history simply for the people of his time, but for generations to come, like researchers of today. Despite his having succeeded only in interpreting the history of his own class and culture, he still took the approach to history a step beyond that of his great-grandfather Guizot’s time, towards a new, more popular, narrative form. Following in the footsteps of the Annales School with their embracing of a more global approach to history, Schlumberger succeeded in breaking away from the more conventional methods for narrating and interpreting history.

Marguerite Yourcenar recognized the innovativeness of Schlumberger's writings written during the Second World War, and their importance for both historians and analysts in the future:

Dans la grande série des Œuvres complètes, qu'il eut le bonheur de mettre en ordre avant de mourir, il m'arrive peut-être surtout de relire les 'portraits' : portraits de la famille Guizot ou Schlumberger dans les Souvenirs, reprises à la N.R.F., d'extraits desquelles il a en quelque sorte cimenté chronologiquement ses livres, portraits de faits, d'événements ou de courants d'idées dans les aperçus politiques parus entre 1938 et 1945, et qui seront précieuses à n'en pas douter aux analystes de l'avenir.

[In the large series of Œuvres complètes, which he had the good fortune to put into order before dying, I re-read probably most of all the 'portraits:' portraits of the Guizot or Schlumberger family in the Souvenirs, reprinted in the Nouvelle Revue Française (NRF), extracts of which he places to a certain extent in chronological order his books, portraits of events or ideas in the political sketches that appeared between 1938 and 1945, and which will be precious without doubt for analysts of the future.] (Yourcenar, 324).

Schlumberger's autobiography was no doubt of great interest to Yourcenar. It appears to have been a genre of writing which intrigued her. She also believed in the power of autobiography. Lejeune comments: "Marguerite Yourcenar and Jean Delay have recently shown what a benefit there is for all of us in the reconstruction of our family history: knowing as much as possible about where we come from" (165).

Schlumberger's honesty, humanity, and culture are revealed in his autobiography Éveils. He exhibits his talent as an accomplished historian and chronicler, providing his readers with an insight into the political, social and cultural events of France at the beginning of the twentieth century, events that would continue to exercise their influence over the whole century.

Unfortunately, the book has been sadly underestimated as the valuable historical record that it is. Almost no critical research has been done on Éveils. Critics usually mention Éveils only in passing before moving on to Schlumberger's plays and novels, which are considered to be more important in the literary world. However, Schlumberger's evident love of the French language, literature and the people with whom he worked shine through in Éveils like a beacon, and his depiction of them is sharp and clear in a way that no biographer or historian can hope to imitate.



Goethe-Prize given to Jean Schlumberger in 1959  
by the city of Frankfurt Am Main, Germany  
Photographs taken by author



Guizot's office "cabinet de travail"  
Val Richer, Calvados France  
Photograph taken by author



Val Richer near Lisieux in Calvados, France  
Old abbey bought by François Guizot  
Photograph taken by author

## APPENDIX 1: LETTER FROM SCHLUMBERGER TO SUZANNE WEYHER

17 mars [1919]

Mon chéri

C'est hier seulement que j'ai revu Gide rentrant de Cuverville. Lentement la situation se clarifiant je ne désespère pas d'aboutir à un règlement satisfaisant. La direction de la revue ne peut être assumée par André ; tant il y a contre lui d'animosité chez un grand nombre d'écrivains. Claudel a déclaré à Rivière qu'il n'écrirait plus une ligne dans la N.R.F. si Gide en avait la direction. Je trouve cela ignoble de la part de ce faux bonhomme ; qui envoie à André des protestations d'amitié. Ce n'est certes pas ce sale chantage qui m'intimide, et ni Gallimard ni Rivière n'hésiteraient un seul instant à balancer Claudel si cela suffisait pour faire place nette devant Gide. Mais l'hostilité de ceux que Gide a griffés, ou qu'il a scandalisés, ou qu'il a laissé tomber rendrait la situation très malaisée. Je n'avais du reste envisagé la direction de la revue par Gide que parce que je ne voyais pas d'autre moyen de le retenir dans l'association. Fort heureusement, le premier contact entre Gide et Gaston s'est bien passé, ce qui fait que même sans la revue on pourra peut-être trouver une situation intéressante pour André.

Les projets sont grandioses. Il est évident qu'il faut que la maison d'édition devienne tout à fait une grande entreprise ou qu'elle périclite. Développée avec des moyens suffisants, j'ai la conviction qu'elle peut devenir une des premières maisons de Paris, car nous avons en mains des atouts que personne d'autre ne possède. Pour cela, il faut que nous ayons notre imprimerie à nous et que nous élargissions beaucoup notre fabrication. Nous avons une quantité de projets, tant du côté des ouvrages pour bibliophiles, que des livres d'enfants, des livres de vulgarisation, etc.

Gallimard, Rivière, Tronche sont pleins d'allant... Seulement tout cela ne va peut-être pas pouvoir se décider en trois jours...

Passe l'après midi d'hier chez Ruyters, dîner chez les Allégret.

Voici Gide

Tendrement J.

[17<sup>th</sup> March (1919)]

Only yesterday I saw Gide again, returning from Cuverville. Gradually the situation is becoming clear and I do not despair of finding a satisfactory answer. The leadership of the review cannot be assumed by André as so many writers feel animosity towards him. Claudel declared to Rivière that he would not write another word in the NRF if Gide led it. I find this petty on the part of this phoney gentleman. This dirty blackmail certainly will not intimidate me, and neither Gallimard nor Rivière would hesitate to throw out Claudel if this was enough to put everything right by Gide. But the hostility of those whom Gide had attacked or shocked or had let down would make the situation very uncomfortable. Anyway I thought of Gide being given the leadership of the review only since I could not find any other means to keep him in the association. Very luckily, the first contact between Gide and Gaston (Gallimard) went well, which meant that even without the review, we could perhaps find an interesting position for André.

The projects are ambitious. It's clear that the publishing house will either have to become a large company or it will die. If it is developed with enough financial support, I'm certain that it is capable of becoming one of the top houses in Paris because we have in our hands advantages

that nobody else possesses. To this end, we will have to have our own printing presses and increase greatly the volume of our manufacturing. We have a good number of projects, works for bibliophiles as well as children's books, popularizing works, etc. Gallimard, Rivière, Tronche are full of energy. . . The only thing is that all this cannot be decided overnight. . .

Spent yesterday afternoon at the Ruyters, had dinner with the Allégrets.

That's Gide

Tenderly J.]

## APPENDIX 2: DRAFT OF LETTER FROM SCHLUMBERGER TO FRANÇOIS DE WITT

[Mi-janvier 1921 ?]

Mon cher François,

Je déplore que le passage de Si le grain ne meurt t'ait blessé. J'avoue y voir plus d'humour que de méchanceté, ne parvenant pas à découvrir dans ce qui est dit de Lionel quoique ce soit qui entache ton honorabilité et étant accoutumé aux vivacités des polémiques littéraires.

Tu parles de 'lâches pseudonymes,' mais le pseudonyme n'est lâche que si l'auteur s'y dissimule lui-même, appliqué aux personnes qui font l'objet d'un récit, il n'est qu'une marque d'égard dont sont loin d'avoir bénéficié toutes les personnes citées dans ces mémoires. Malgré mon regret de voir passer dans l'anonymat le joli portrait de ma grand-mère, je me suis réjoui que, dans cette occasion, la plus parfaite discrétion eût été observée en ce qui concerne les noms. Sans doute verrai-je à mon tour ma figure marquée de quelques traits qui me feront sourire ; je tâcherai de sourire aussi, content après tout d'imaginer qu'une petite glose sera consacrée à mon nom dans les commentaires qu'on fera de ce beau livre dans quelques cent ans. La très grande admiration et l'amitié que j'éprouve pour lui me font regretter d'autant plus vivement des malentendus qui peuvent surgir entre lui et des hommes pour qui j'ai de l'estime et de l'affection. Aussi voudrais-je les convaincre qu'il y a lieu de prendre les choses plus avec de philosophie qu'avec colère.

[(Mid-January 1921?)

My dear François,

I'm very sorry that the passage in Si le grain ne meurt hurt you. I admit that I see there more humor than nastiness, as I am unable to discover anything that is said about Lionel which would impugn your honor and as I am used to the liveliness of literary polemics.

You talk about “cowardly pseudonyms,” but a pseudonym is cowardly only if the author hides behind it himself. Applied to persons in a narration, it shows only a mark of respect that most people cited in these memoirs were not given. Despite my regret at seeing the pretty portrait of my grandmother being presented anonymously, I am pleased that, in this occasion, absolute discretion was kept as far as names are concerned. No doubt, I will see myself sketched out in a few words that will make me smile; I'll try to smile also, happy after all to imagine that a short footnote will be attached to my name in the commentaries that will be made on this beautiful book in a few hundred years. The enormous admiration and friendship I feel for him makes me feel even more regretful for the misunderstandings that can arise between him and those people I esteem and for whom I have affection. So I would like to convince them that it is better to accept things with equanimity than with rage.]

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## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Joyce Shortall-Stevenson was born in Dublin, Ireland. She graduated from University College, Dublin in 1986 with a B.A. in French and German and a minor in Greek and Roman Civilization. Her areas of study included language skills and the French and German novel, plays and poetry from the 17<sup>th</sup> century to the late 20<sup>th</sup> century covering genres such as the French and German Romantics, the Nouveau Roman, Realism, Existentialism and East German literature.

In January 2003 she entered the graduate program in English at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington where she worked under the direction of Dr. Lewis Walker and graduated in December 2004. Her special interests are comparative literature and interdisciplinary studies.

She has a Cambridge Certificate in English as a Second Language (ESL). She has taught ESL in France and in North Carolina, USA and has also worked as a translator from French and German into English. She lived and worked in Germany for 3 years and France for 8 years, and is fluent in French and German.

Her objective is to carry out research in the future in France and the US and to promote liaisons between French and US universities by encouraging and organizing interdisciplinary study-abroad programs. She will shortly be published in the French journal Le Pays d'Auge, and plans to continue writing for scholarly publications while she earns her Ph.D.