

- 6 suspension, but there was also a clarification and simplification in moral terms. Nazism and its emulators were an evil which had to be, and was, resisted. The occupation experience, therefore, is reductable to a good-bad polarity, historians have worked, in J. C. H. Blom's phrase, "with a political/moral scale marked from good to bad". By acting so, however, they have been obliged to place every event and every current of opinion from the occupation within a frame of reference that allows little or no room for ambiguity or neutrality.

Once a scale marked from good to bad was accepted as appropriate, the two ends had to be taken by the terms collaboration and resistance. It is these categories which form the second major pillar on which the historiography of the period has been built. That they should do so is neither surprising nor false. In the first place, it is within these categories that it has seemed most possible to write an active history that best illuminates the twilight of the occupation years. The political world formed by the groups and movements of the Collaboration and the Resistance was public, in the sense that it operated largely through the medium of the printed word, vociferous and, therefore, reconstructable. And if it is true, as Louis de Jong has put it, that the real history of most peoples' life under occupation lay in the mundane and untraceable, then collaboration and resistance serve to provide the commentary, as it were, on the context in which that life was conducted. In the second place, the two categories exemplify in themselves the fact that the political choice under the occupation was between accepting or rejecting Nazi fascism. Collaboration and resistance stood as indicators that there could be no modification of, or compromise with, Nazism and the methods by which it expressed itself. For the historians they have taken on a necessarily symbolic and representational value greater than their finite existence or limited memberships. They have a normative value as the poles of attraction to which, gradually, all events and choices in the occupation period tended.

This focus on collaboration and resistance itself rests on two further assumptions. First, that there could be no response to Nazi occupation other than commitment to defend the liberal order or to challenge it and hasten the birth of a fascist society. Second, and most problematic in its consequences, that the political history of the occupation was the end-point of a long battle between fascism and its opponents, these assumptions have encouraged interpretation in terms of a teleology in which collaboration and resistance are seen as being the culminating statements of the ideological conflict which had been well-rehearsed but inconclusive before the war. In this case resistance stands in a continuity of purpose to fight fascism that pre-dated the occupation and had found common expression from German to Spain. So also, collaboration as the vehicle which would force occupied societies toward fascism, is regarded as having concentrated in itself all those attacks on, or arguments to abandon, the liberal policy that had been voiced before the war.