



Universidad de Valladolid

FACULTAD de FILOSOFÍA Y LETRAS
DEPARTAMENTO de FILOLOGÍA INGLESA
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The Role of Women in World War II: An Analysis of
Code Name Verity (2012)

Alba Alonso Carretero

V^o B^o del tutor y fecha

Tutor: Marta María Gutiérrez Rodríguez

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ABSTRACT

The role women acquired during World War II was essential for the war effort that the different countries developed in order to fight the Nazis, but also for the fight of women's rights. The aim of this study is to reflect on the situation of English women during this period, focusing mainly on the work of female spies and female pilots. This will be done through an analysis of Elizabeth Wein's novel *Code Name Verity* (2012) that portrays different roles assigned to women during the war as well as different interactions they had with other men and women. Although the novel is a fictional work, it represents the reality of lots of women at the time.

Keywords: World War II, feminism, female pilots, RAF, female spies, SOE.

RESUMEN

El rol que las mujeres tuvieron durante la Segunda Guerra Mundial fue esencial tanto para el papel que cada país tuvo en ésta, como para la lucha por los derechos de la mujer. El objetivo de este Trabajo de Fin de Grado es reflexionar sobre la situación de las mujeres inglesas en este periodo, sobre todo centrándose en el papel de aquellas que fueron espías o pilotos. Para ello, se realizará un análisis de la novela de Elizabeth Wein *Nombre en clave, Verity* (2012) la cual describe diferentes ocupaciones asignadas a las mujeres durante la guerra y los diferentes lazos forjados con otros personajes. A pesar de que la novela es ficción, representa la realidad de muchas mujeres en ese momento.

Palabras clave: Segunda Guerra Mundial, feminismo, mujeres piloto, RAF, mujeres espías, SOE.

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INTRODUCTION

Before World War I, the reduced group of women who worked did it mainly in textile factories or as domestic service. However, when the Great War started and men were dying in battles, some women started to occupy traditionally men's positions in factories. Anyhow, the big change happened during World War II when, as the male casualties were constantly increasing, women were needed to do war work also outside the factories. This dissertation will try to analyse the importance of women's work in the development of the war as well as how their work conditioned the view society had of them. The aim is to analyse if their work was considered as important as the one men- pilots, intelligence officers, etc. - were doing, and if they did encounter some problems related to gender along their professional careers.

In order to carry out this dissertation I will start providing some historical background about the situation of women during World War II, concentrating more on the case of England. This section will include general information about the English army forces as well as specific one about the two women's roles included in the novel: female pilots and female spies. Then, I will provide a brief summary of Elizabeth Wein's life, including her main works and the influences behind *Code Name Verity*. Afterwards, I will start my analysis of the novel with a summary of it, to then focus on the characters. This section is divided in four points: Julie Beaufort, Maddie Brodatt, Anna Engel, and other women. In all of them I will analyse the role and importance these women had during World War II. Although the characters are analysed separately, their differences and similarities can be also appreciated. Lastly, considering the analysis' results I will provide a number of conclusions that will confirm or deny the questions stated at the beginning of this dissertation.

1. WOMEN AND WORLD WAR II

The role and contribution that women around the world had during World War II was one of the most important and essential in history. At the beginning of the war, several countries like England, the United States, or Canada, recovered the women auxiliary forces that, in some cases, have been active during World War I. This was caused mainly by the increase in the number of male casualties at war, becoming women an indispensable part of the war force. However, although women could then have war occupations, they were mainly seen as mere civilians working as medical assistants or ambulance drivers (Brayley 3, 4).

1.1. The case of Britain

As the novel examined in this dissertation deals with the British forces, I will now give an overview of the situation of women in England during World War II. From 1939 to 1941 the recruitment of women was voluntary and, although at first the number of volunteers was high, as the war progressed and the conditions got tougher lots of women decided to desert. Nevertheless, since the number of combatant casualties was constantly increasing, England needed more women in the auxiliary services- the Auxiliary Territorial Service, the Women's Auxiliary Air Force, and the Women's Royal Naval Service- and in the war industry; thus the government passed the National Service (No. 2) Act of December 18, 1941. According to this law, unmarried women between 20 and 30 years old were called to arms, and they could choose between enrolling in the auxiliary services doing work in war territory or have war-related occupations in the industry at home. None of these women would be sent to combat areas unless they personally requested it. In 1942, due to another shortage of female recruits, all eligible women born between 1920 and 1921 had to enlist in the auxiliary forces unless they were already doing crucial war work (Cook 242). At the end of the conflict, 640,000 women had served in the British auxiliary services constituting 10% of the army forces, the majority coming from the middle- or upper-classes. Around 1,500 of these women were killed, wounded, gone missing or made prisoners during the conflict. The auxiliary services continued active after the war, showing the influence they had in society and in the female fight for equality (Cook 243).

1.1.1. Women as pilots: WAAF

One of these women auxiliary services was the Women's Auxiliary Air Force (WAAF), the female auxiliary of the British Royal Air Force (RAF). During World War I, between 1918 and 1920, this service already existed but was called the Women's Royal Air Force (WRAF), and included women doing some wartime needs such as being drivers or mechanics (Cook 237). The WAAF was established on June 28th 1939 to, initially, support the Air Transport Auxiliary (ATA), a civilian service working as clerical and administrative staff (Narracott 108). As a result, WAAF women did not serve as aircrew participating in active combat, but flew aircrafts from factories to RAF bases. The variety of jobs they had was extensive: radar reporters, photographic interpretation, and wireless operators among others. Some of these jobs were essential for the war such as photographic interpretation to locate and identify German launch sites, or radio operator to transmit messages back to London (Cook 242). Despite this, they, and all women working in the Allied services, were paid 2/3 of the male rates due to their considered non-combatant roles, also having less privileges and international protection (Cook 243). Besides, a direct order from Winston Churchill stated that: "[...] they were not allowed to fire the guns on the dubious grounds that they might not be able to live with the knowledge that they had caused the death of an enemy" (Cook 242). This statement shows that although some WAAF women had very dangerous, active war roles, these were seen as supportive ones, erasing all their importance.

Women did not feel as safe and protected as their male counterparts so a considerable number decided to leave the service, lowering the forces. Consequently, in 1941, the WAAF was given a complete military status, becoming part of the Armed Forces of the British Crown. This was done to put women under codes of military discipline like the court martial to discourage desertion. Besides, the WAAF was not very popular among women due to their poor housing conditions and the constant rumours spread about them (Cook 242, 243). Some people questioned them because of their supposed conduct that presumably included drunkenness, promiscuity, and illegitimate pregnancy. These rumours led part of the population to oppose the presence of women in their forces but, ultimately these accusations were proven to be false (Brayley 5). Despite all the obstacles, by the end of the war there were approximately 182,000 women enlisted in the WAAF. This number constituted 22% of the RAF forces in Britain and 16% of the RAF worldwide (Brayley 11).

1.1.2. Women as spies: SOE agents

As previously commented, the majority of the women in the auxiliary services were considered to have non-combatant roles but, in countries like America and England, some women had the decisive role of secret agents. In the case of England, the Special Operations Executive (SOE) was in charge of recruiting female agents who later became female spies, training them to use explosives, assisting resistance groups and working in intelligence against the Nazis. In these cases, women received the same training as their male counterparts, this blurring the lines between women's combatant and non-combatant roles (Walker 9). The recruitment of women as secret agents occurred thanks to the SOE's realization of women's suitability for spying. At this time, women could move more freely in the sense that they could wander around cities or the countryside pretending to be unemployed, being less suspicious to the Nazis than men (Walker 12). The SOE parachuted 50 female agents into occupied Europe, 14 belonging to the WAAF, resulting in the capture of 15 women that were either tortured, executed or died in concentration camps (Cook 243). Among the female secret agents of the British SOE we can highlight three of them.

Noor Inayat Khan (1914-1944) was born in Moscow though her family moved to Paris where she learned to speak French fluently. When the Germans invaded France she escaped to England, and in 1940 she enlisted in the WAAF where she was trained as a wireless operator, working as a SOE secret agent. Noor was the first woman to be sent to France as a wireless operator to work with the Resistance movement. She was very good at her job, and that made her one of the most sought British agents, being ultimately betrayed to the Gestapo. Noor was tortured and interrogated to betray the British but she refused to do so, giving the Nazis fake information. Noor was classified as a "Night and Fog" prisoner, for what she was taken to Dachau's concentration camp with other female SOE agents and shot in September of 1944. Nowadays there are two memorials for her, one in Dachau and one in London, and she received two posthumous honours: the French Croix de Guerre and the British George Cross (Cook 340, 341).

Virginia Hall (1906-1982) was American but worked as a British special agent. At the outbreak of the war she was in France so she escaped to England and volunteered to work with the SOE. There she was trained in weapons, communications, security, and resistance activities. She became a wireless operator and in 1944 she went back to occupied France and helped to set up, train and organise sabotage and guerrilla groups.

For all her work she was considered by the Gestapo to be the most dangerous allied agent in France. In 1945 she was awarded with the American Distinguished Service Cross, recognising her work (Cook 271, 272).

Nancy Wake (1912-2011) was born in New Zealand but worked as a British SOE agent and became a member of the French Resistance. She lived in Paris when the Nazis invaded it, so she decided to become a courier for the Resistance. Later, she received advanced military training by the SOE and did espionage work for them. After this, she helped to organise the D-Day invasion and she even led raids against some Gestapo's headquarters. Thus, the Gestapo was constantly trying to arrest her but she was very elusive. By 1943 she was the Gestapo's most wanted person. When the war ended Wake was one of the few SOE female agents that remained alive after operating for so long. She was awarded for her bravery with several medals such as the British government George Medal and the French Croix de Guerre (Cook 637).

These three women and many others not mentioned here, had a crucial role in the development of the war but, sadly, they are usually forgotten in history. These women risked their lives for their nations and beliefs, but they are rarely mentioned in the historical accounts. One of the reasons that can explain the secondary role assigned to female spies is how society considered and saw them, as spies and as women. First of all, during the two World Wars, there was a clear difference between espionage and intelligence. Espionage was considered to be something domestic, hidden, and sneaky while intelligence was something professional and bureaucratic. Thus, women were seen as doing espionage work while men were doing intelligence work (White 44). This distinction between genders gives us an idea about how the same job was seen depending on who was performing it.

During World War I the image of a female spy was either "eroticised and demonised as exotic", as in the case of Mata Hari, or "fetishised as the epitome of pure British womanhood" (White 35) as in the case of Edith Cavell. Mata Hari was portrayed as the *femme fatale* involved in immoral activities, constantly changing identities to prevent her discovery and having affairs outside marriage. She did not fulfil the traditional maternal ideal because she had an active role with men that at the time was not considered to be proper for a woman. Another issue was that she was seen as a threat because she engaged in international intelligence, considered to be a masculine sphere. Nevertheless, her role as a spy is partly fiction, since what she did was only to recollect information in exchange

for money as she had financial problems (White 35-40). The real danger was what she represented for women and society, being a free, sexually active, and independent woman.

On the other hand, we have the figure of Edith Cavell, a British female spy although this role was usually disregarded in favour of her work as a nurse. Nurses' jobs were seen "as a natural extension of the feminine predilection for nurture" (White 44) as women had been traditionally related to caregiving roles. She was seen as a martyr since she was executed for helping Allied soldiers to escape, thus dying and sacrificing herself for her country. After the execution, her life and image were used as war propaganda against the Germans showing her patriotism to create nationalistic feelings among the population (White 42-47). As stated in White (47), "descriptions of spy- martyrs usually emphasized the moral character, generosity, patriotism, and naïve spirit of the women who died for their nations". These two women had a huge influence on subsequent female spies although there are no accurate sources about the role of female spies during World War II.

2. ELIZABETH WEIN: LIFE AND WORK

Elizabeth Wein was born in New York City in 1964. As a consequence of her mother's death in a car accident, Elizabeth immersed herself in literature, especially in the works of J.R.R. Tolkien and Alan Garner. Her interest in reading and writing started to grow, composing herself some pieces. At this time she also discovered the legend of King Arthur that will later inspire her to write her first novel *The Winter Prince* (1993). One of her husband's passions are small planes and flying, a passion he transmitted to Elizabeth and together they have flown around the world. While Wein got her pilot's license in 2003, at 37, she had always been interested in planes and flying as it is reflected in her novels (Wein "Biography").

As a writer she has published several novels, short stories, and a number of essays, varying in topics, from fantasy and science-fiction to historical narratives. Her first series is called the *Lion Hunter Series*, composed of three main books and a two-part series named *Mark of Solomon*. It is historical fantasy set in an alternative world following medieval Welsh folklore, specifically the Arthurian legends (Wein "Novels"). The third book in the series, *The Sunbird* (2004), is "a spy novel about a person who is captured, tortured, and enslaved, and he figures out what's going on and brings down the regime" (Baker), a pattern that she will later replicate in her novel *Code Name Verity*.

In 2012 she started a new series called the *Young Pilot Series*, set during World War II. However, her interest for this time period started many years before because during middle school she read lots of Holocaust literature. The fact that she became a pilot herself in 2003 was also a great influence as she wanted to investigate how the life of women pilots was during World War II. Shortly after she got her license, she wrote a short story about a girl that disguises herself as her brother so she can become a RAF pilot during the war (Edinger). It is called *Something Worth Doing* (2009) and it was the precedent for *Code Name Verity*. The latter is the first of the novels in the *Young Pilot Series*, and the one analysed in this dissertation.

Code Name Verity (2012) deals with some of the different roles women had in World War II but with fictional characters, the product of Wein's imagination. The idea appeared because, as she states, "being a woman and a pilot myself I wanted to explore the possibilities that would have been open to me during the Second World War" (Wein 443). She began to read different books to create an accurate setting and characters. For the

setting and period details she read books like *The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society* (2008) by Mary Ann Shaffer, *N or M?* (1941) by Agatha Christie, *Suite Française* (2004) by Irène Némirovsky, and *The Silence of the Sea* (1942) by Vercors. For the creation of Verity's character she used again *The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society*, paying special attention to Elizabeth McKenna's character, the protagonist. The idea of Verity writing her confessions in a different selection of papers was inspired by *The Documents in the Case* (1930) by Dorothy Sayers and Robert Eustace. Lastly, Verity's background, her childhood and family, was influenced by the autobiography *A Childhood in Scotland* (1981) by Christian Miller. The author tells her experience as a child living in a castle in Scotland during the 1920s, as well as the common family disagreements. For the creation of the rest of the female characters in the novel she read a considerable number of women's experiences belonging to the SOE and ATA (Grilo).

The novel also has a strong and deliberate feminist component. When Elizabeth moved to Scotland and had children she realised that people expected her to follow the traditional gender roles and drop everything, including flying, for her family. Besides, she encountered many problems in the flying community as she states it herself: "The first time I went to a flying club social evening as a student pilot, someone who hadn't met me before asked me "whose wife" I was—assuming I couldn't possibly be there as a pilot myself" (Todd). Elizabeth completely rejected these attitudes with the support of her instructors and colleagues, although she also faced some struggles. This alienation she felt and the problems she found, are reflected in the character of Maddie in *Code Name Verity*. These impediments, together with her fascination for the era, led her to include two female protagonists in *Code Name Verity* "because there *were* women doing these jobs. There weren't many of them. But they were real. They worked and suffered and fought just as hard as any man." (Wein 444).

The story started in *Code Name Verity* is continued in the next book in the series, *Rose Under Fire* (2013). Nevertheless, it is not a sequel but follows the previous book chronologically, during World War II, and we see some characters that appeared in *Code Name Verity*. For this book Elizabeth read lots of survivor autobiographies, from different nationalities and backgrounds, who had been imprisoned at some point in a concentration camp (Baker).

Apart from her novels, Elizabeth started writing short-stories in 1993. *Something Worth Doing* (2009) and "The Color of the Sky" (2016) have a female pilot as a

protagonist. The former is set during World War II and tells the story of the ATA girl Theo Lyons, who also appears briefly as a character in *Code Name Verity*. The latter is part of a feminist collection of short stories titled *A Tyranny of Petticoats: 15 Stories of Belles, Bank Robbers and Other Badass Girls* (2016). In her story, Wein talks about the first black woman in history to acquire the International Pilot's License, Bessie Coleman, and how she inspired other women that wanted to become pilots. Her ability and passion for flying also inspired her to write two travel stories in 2003, *The Airplane* and *Wales* (Wein "Novels").

3. ANALYSIS OF *CODE NAME VERITY*

3.1. Storyline

Code Name Verity tells the story of two girls that become friends during World War II and the repercussions this event has in their lives. Julie Beaufort-Stuart is an interrogator, a spy working for the British SOE, while Maddie Brodatt is a pilot in the WAAF. The story starts in media res with Julie captured in France by the Nazis and making a deal with them to betray the British. As the plot develops the reader gets to know both girls' backgrounds, how they became friends, and how they contributed with their jobs to the war's development. Along the story, both have to face their fears as they found themselves tangled in the Nazi machinery that will challenge their beliefs and loyalties. The two girls have different but important jobs, showing the crucial role that women played in World War II.

3.2. Characters

One of the most outstanding elements of the novel is the prominent presence of female characters, emphasising both their role as women and as army members. In this section I will analyse the different characters that appear in *Code Name Verity*, making a more in depth analysis of the main ones: Julie, Maddie and Engel. I will focus especially on their description as women, i.e. personality and relations with other characters, and in the different roles they played during the war. Similarly, in Julie and Maddie's characters I will comment on the code names assigned to them, looking at the context where they are used. Lastly, I will briefly mention some secondary female characters representing different women's roles in the story.

3.2.1. Julie Beaufort-Stuart

3.2.1.1. Julie as a woman: background, personality and relations

Julie is one of the story's two main characters, being one of the main perspectives we have in the book. She comes from a Scottish family "[...] long-established in rather the upper echelons of the British aristocracy" (Wein 155) that has money and lives in an ancient castle. Thanks to their wealth, she studied in a Swiss school where she learned a lot, especially literature as can be appreciated in all the literary allusions done along the book. Her school closed before the war started and she went to university for a brief period of time. There she studied German as she loved the language and the country. Despite her

education, she describes herself as “[...] always so foul-mouthed and foul-tempered” (Wein 115), a feature also highlighted by the Gestapo’s captain, von Linden: “‘She has the filthiest tongue of any woman in France’”(Wein 254). Here we can see one of Julie’s defining features, that, although she has been well-educated, she does not follow the conventions of how a wealthy young lady should talk. Another feature present in Julie is how proud she is of being Scottish and not English. Some of her ancestors are William Wallace and Mary Queen of Scots, and she takes a lot of pride in it, as can be seen along the novel. One instance where this is shown is when von Linden starts insulting her and she does not respond until he calls her English: “[...] the stupid man’s big mistake was in calling me ENGLISH [...] whatever else the hell I am, I AM NOT ENGLISH” (Wein 216). However, at one point in the narrative she includes herself as part of the British forces and population: “How quickly we were training people [...] how quickly we were building new planes of our own [...] we saw you coming” (Wein 52). That “we” refers to the British army forces and intelligence. In this case she does not make any distinctions, because that “we” is the one fighting against the Nazis, giving the sense of unification and pride. This idea of unification, despite your nationality, against Nazism is constantly present in the novel conveying that your origin is not as important as your moral values.

Related to her personality, Julie is presented as having a good sense of humour even in extreme cases such as when she is imprisoned. Along the narrative she steadily makes witty comments proving it, like when she talks about recovering from a mental breakdown because she is betraying her country, saying: “I feel better already. Like a proper little Judas” (Wein 33). This type of sarcastic humour can be interpreted as a response to the trauma and stress she has to live in her imprisonment. Julie is also described as an empathic person that cares about other people, a trait that she particularly shows when someone else is being tortured in front of her: “[...] I too am strapped securely to my own chair [...] and gasp with sobs on his account and look away the whole time [...]” (Wein 32). Part of this empathy comes from having experienced herself those tortures, so she knows the pain they are enduring and remembers the suffering. Besides, Julie presences how Marie, a French prisoner, is guillotined and, although they did not have a good relation for reasons I will later comment, at the end they respect each other. The way in which Julie shows her respect and empathy is looking at Marie while she is beheaded: “[...] I did not look away from her face. It was all I could do” (Wein 260). Throughout the novel, Julie also shows envy. While imprisoned, she envies people she

met before war because during the war they are living *normal* lives in England, not being directly involved in war work like she is. Instantly after thinking this, she feels selfish because some of those places have been bombed and people's lives were destroyed. Thus, she shows a double morality, not being the typical brave, morally-good heroine, an idea continuously reinforced throughout the novel. This double morality is also present when Julie talks about Isolde, von Linden's daughter: "[...] Isolde alive in the day and the sun while I suffocate in Night and Fog, the unfairness of it [...] me being here and Isolde being in Switzerland" (Wein 241). Isolde is a little girl who does not know anything about her father's work in war but Julie still compares herself, a young woman trained in war's machinery, with an innocent child. She transfers the frustration she feels for her situation and for von Linden, the one imprisoning and torturing her, to his daughter.

Moreover, Julie faces the confrontation between cowardice and fear versus heroism and bravery. During the narrative, this battle takes place inside her character, resulting in Julie viewing herself as a coward. However, some of her actions and thoughts are brave and defiant. The story starts with Julie breaking down under the Nazi's pressure and, after being tortured and interrogated, accepting to collaborate, betraying Britain: "[...] I know I am a coward. And I'm going to give you anything you ask [...]" (Wein 3). She accepts to give information as she is afraid of what they will do to her, she does not want to be tortured again so she becomes a traitor. Along the story we see her struggle with this decision, not feeling proud about it: "I would like to write something heroic and inspired [...] but I am too stupid and sick with dread to think of anything" (Wein 131). The fight is constant inside herself, reaching the point that her full name, Julia Lindsay Mackenzie Wallace Beaufort-Stuart, is "[...] a much more heroic name than I deserve [...]" (Wein 265), for the historic connotations it has and to which she does not feel she does justice. Similarly, in her confession she writes about herself in 3rd person, since it is a way of eluding the thoughts and feelings that remembering those moments could bring her. On the other hand, we can see several thoughts she has in extreme moments that are brave and defiant:

[...] I am not going to face my execution without a fight. Or with anything remotely resembling dignity. (Wein 133)

[...] the Wallace in me still makes me want to face the enemy on my feet. (Wein 236, 237)

[...] she knows I will battle her [...] Even with my arms tied behind me [...] (Wein 251)

With these statements Julie shows that, despite what she thinks, she is a brave woman ready to fight for her life and, if the case may be, to die with dignity. Nonetheless, she knows that she will die in prison because of her work: “I will be shot [...] I am a military emissary caught in enemy territory masquerading as a civilian. I count as a spy.” (Wein 176). Her defiance is achieved at the end of the story when, while being transported to a concentration camp, Julie bites one of the guards trying to get herself rapidly killed so there is “no Nazi fun” (Wein 375).

Related also with her fears, we see along the narrative how they change because of World War II. At the beginning of war she is afraid of things like darkness, ghosts, or getting old, among others. Some of them are maintained during all the story, like falling asleep while working, bombs falling on her family, or killing someone. However, the most trivial ones are replaced with others like being sent to a concentration camp, kerosene, or von Linden. We see the growth war puts her through, making her mature rapidly, but also creating some traumas like when she presences Marie’s death: “[...] I think they killed her for *no reason* other than to scare me [...]. It is my fault she is dead – one of my worst fears realised. [...] Marie’s blood stains my hands, figuratively and literally” (Wein 260, 261). This shows the horrors that war put people through, since it does not make any gender distinctions and, despite of what some people believed at the time, women also had to confront these situations.

To finish with Julie’s role as a woman I will briefly analyse the interactions she has with different men in the novel. There are three that can be highlighted: von Linden, Jamie, and the Gestapo’s headquarters cook. Starting with von Linden, they have a complex relation since he tortures her but, when he discovers she is educated in literature, he tries to talk with her about books. He is a *proper* Nazi, cold and brute, but Julie sometimes fights him back, using his daughter against him: “What do you tell your daughter? When she asks about your work, what *truth* does the lovely Isolde get out of you?” (Wein 254). Despite this, Julie is afraid of him since “he *is* intimidating [...]” (Wein 240), as in the end he is a Nazi officer. On the other hand we have Jamie, her older brother, whom she loves dearly. They have always been very close and, since he is a war pilot, Julie constantly worries about him. The love and respect they have for each other is present during all the novel, being Jamie the only main male character that respects and defends women. Lastly, we have the Gestapo’s headquarter cook that sexually harasses Julie when she works in the kitchen for some time. He “[...] was such a foul and filthy

beast he would not have noticed if I'd been in drag as the Führer himself, as long as he could fondle my breasts" (Wein 110). He is a sexist brute that only stops when Julie suggests she is von Linden's lover and he could get angry if he finds out what the cook is doing to her. He perpetuates the sexual objectification of women, and represents a part of life and war that women had to deal with at the time and nobody talked about.

3.2.1.2. Julie as an army member: the spy

Concerning Julie's role as a woman in war, she is an important agent of the SOE that, as previously mentioned, was a secret organization in charge of training and sending spies into Europe during World War II. This explains why lots of things such as how she became a SOE member or the missions she does, are not explained. She speaks English, French and German, and is very good at lying, probably as a result of her training, although she has a terrible sense of direction that will cause her to be caught. In her confession to the Nazis, she explains how things like radar detection or reconnaissance planes work, as well as things they were trained to do such as work with radios or how to defend themselves. This shows that she knows how the SOE works and that women like her were trained to do those things in the same way men were.

Along the novel we see how her work gets harder. After her first interrogatory she is "[...] glowing with success. She looked as though she'd just won herself a gold medal at the Olympic Games" (Wein 195) because she had caught her first double agent. However, we also see her leaving another interrogation with bruised arms and throat because the interrogated man tried to strangle her. This is a turning point in Julie's view of her job, told through Maddie's eyes who "[...] had never seen her friend quite so undone" (Wein 213). This is the first time Julie breaks down, and reveals what her true job is: an interrogator, not a translator. Despite her breakdown, at the moment of the fight, Julie is described as knowing how to handle and resolve the situation by herself, being later praised by her intelligence male colleagues: "*Good show, my dear [...] you've nerves of steel [...]*" (Wein 217). Julie can only show her true self with Maddie, even recognising that she envies Maddie because her work is much easier than Julie's: "I envied her, the simplicity of her work [...] There was no guilt, no moral dilemma, no argument or anguish [...] I envied that she had chosen her work herself and was doing what she wanted to do." (Wein 185). After this event, she was given the opportunity to consider if she wanted to continue working for the SOE or not, and she accepted because she "[...] loved the play-

acting and the pretence and the secrecy of it [...]” (Wein 224), but above all she liked the importance she had with that job, feeling useful. Her importance as a secret agent is also shown in France’s mission, being in charge of stealing the blueprints of the hotel that the Gestapo occupies, so the Resistance can blow it up. She is the key of the operation; without her nothing works and when she disappears everything collapses.

Related to the idea of heroism, when she is captured by the Gestapo and starts giving sets of code, she is seen as a coward by von Linden, as well as by other prisoners: “[...] they all know, that I am the collaborator, the only coward among them. No one else has given a single scrap of code [...]” (Wein 32). This, added to the already existing conflict within herself, makes Julie feel ashamed about what she is doing: “I will not mention my cowardice again because it is beginning to make me feel indecent” (Wein 9); “I am so ashamed of myself I want to be sick again” (Wein 54). Once again the conflict of heroism versus cowardice in the supposed heroine of the story is present. In the end, it is discovered that Julie was giving the Nazis fake codes to gain time for the Resistance and for herself, so the conflict is resolved. Even more, she ends up doing her work in the mission since, in her writings, she hides information and codes of the town hall’s archives for the Resistance. Nevertheless, she suffered physical torture at the Gestapo’s hands that left her with a psychological trauma seen throughout the novel. Because of this trauma, she makes a deal with the Nazis and tries several times to kill herself. Lastly, her importance is again shown in her designation as a “Night and Fog” prisoner, a term given by the Nazis to those people who were thought to be extremely dangerous for the Reich security:

[...] allows them to do whatever the hell they feel like to people suspected to be ‘endangering security’, and then make them disappear [...] they ship them off without leaving a trace, into the ‘night and fog’. (Wein 134)

At the end, she is sent as an experimentation specimen to a concentration camp with other Night and Fog prisoners.

3.2.1.3. Julie’s code names: context

To conclude with Julie’s analysis, I will now briefly analyse the three code names assigned to her along the novel. Starting with Queenie, the most used one, she is presented as a woman that defies the traditional gender roles. On the one hand she is described as feminine and pretty with “[...] slender, perfectly manicured fingers [...]” (Wein 66). She

follows the conventional image of a perfect woman, being “[...] a vision of feminine perfection and heroism [...]” (Wein 66), also very popular among men, being the ideal woman “[...] the pilots went for” (Wein 58). However, at the same time she is also fearless, confident in that she “[...] work(s) as diligently [...] as any self-made shop girl” (Wein 58), and has “[...] the careless authority of a headmistress [...]” (Wein 61). She is admired by lots of people, including Maddie, some of her male colleagues, and even a male squadron leader that describes her as “[...] the heroine I was telling you about [...]” (Wein 103) to other man. In Queenie’s persona, tradition and progress are mixed, being a feminine woman in appearance but also having the strength, capacity and bravery that, at the time, only men were believed to have. Furthermore, she directly defies some gender roles of the time, like when there is an air-raid, a male gunner needs help and Queenie and Maddie are the only ones near, he says that: ““The Prime Minister don’t like girls firing guns”“, to what Queenie responds: ““Bother the Prime Minister! Load the damned gun [...]”” (Wein 85). This code name could be related with Julie’s confident and extroverted personality features, representing with the name “Queenie” her posh background.

The second code name is Verity, assigned to her when she flies to France though she would never use it as she is captured. This code name is only used by the double agent Georgia Penn when she interviews Julie and tells her that she is “[...] looking for verity” (Wein 172), coded information to see if Julie was the secret agent she was looking for. This allows the Resistance to confirm that Julie is captured by the Nazis but alive.

Finally, Julie uses Eva Seiler when she works as an interrogator, doing secret projects for the SOE. Under this name she is described as having “[...] *presence* [...] people pay attention to her. They don’t always agree with her, but she does command attention” (Wein 233). Eva Seiler is how she is called when she does spy work, the name is known by the Nazis that consider her a menace and, as Julie wishes, “[...] perhaps she’s even become one of many niggling thorns in the Führer’s side” (Wein 238).

3.2.2. Maddie Brodatt

3.2.2.1. Maddie as a woman: background, personality and relations

Maddie Brodatt is the other female main protagonist. She was born in Manchester in an immigrant middle-class family, her background being completely different from Julie’s, making her experience in war more complicated, even more if we consider she is

Jewish. The education she receives is not very extensive, which explains why she just knows very basic French. Besides, she differs even more from other girls in that she loves engines and planes, considered a not very feminine hobby at the time. The first time she sees a female pilot she is impressed by the fact that some women were allowed to fly, and decides to become a pilot. However, gender roles complicate the situation again. Along the narrative, there are several instances showing how people thought women should not get involved with things like engines, bicycles or planes. From Maddie's grandma wanting her to learn to type instead of fixing engines, to a group of Fascist men that mock Maddie for having a bike: "“What's a lass like you need with a big toy like this?”“ (Wein 22). Nevertheless, there are also people, such as the mechanics in an airfield, that after seeing the passion and knowledge Maddie has for planes and engines, let her help them fix a plane. This contrast between people who have issues with women doing certain things simply because of their gender, and people that realise women's capacities and support them, is constant in Maddie's character as will be later seen.

Regarding Maddie's personality she is presented as an insecure person, despite her abilities, describing herself as "“[...] one of the Always Terrified Airwomen [...] I don't like guns [...] Someday I'll be fired on in the air, and I'll go down in flames just because I'm too blooming scared to fly the plane”“ (Wein 163). Even more, she compares herself with Julie, feeling that she "“[...] couldn't have done what she just did [...]" (Wein 64). This lack of confidence she has may be due to her fear of bombs and guns, together with the constant doubts some people have about her capacities. Despite people being mean to her she is an empathic person, continuously worrying about other people's well-being; she is very emotional about lots of things, as we see her crying when she is overcome by an extreme situation, or when she thinks about what the war is doing to people: "“[...] she found herself spilling childish tears, not just for her own besieged island, but for all Europe” (Wein 207). Maddie is also a grateful person with the people that take care of her. For example, with the French family that hides her in their barn because she knows they are risking their lives to protect her. Besides, she shows her maternal side with tender behaviours towards children that appear in the narrative such as the French family's little daughter, Amélie, or the evacuees to whom Julie's mother gives shelter. Overall she is a good person, who has no problems, contrary to Julie whose appearance is colder, showing her emotions and worries. Nevertheless, she also has some flaws since she envies the female pilot Dympna because she can fly a plane whenever she wants and Maddie has

not touched a plane since the war started. At one point she also envies Julie for all the opportunities she had in life and Maddie did not because of her economy. Once the war develops and Maddie matures and experiences different things, she feels ashamed “[...] for ever having thought any of it was worth envying” (Wein 349).

As in the case of Julie, some of the fears she has at the beginning of war, for instance getting old or not wearing the uniform properly, change when she experiences war’s cruelties. They change into more real things like concentration camps or being discovered by the Nazis. When she remembers her previous fears she feels embarrassed because “[...] they seem so trivial now” (Wein 294). Anyhow, some others such as bombs dropping on her family, court martial, or letting people down remain the same, even intensified because of war. Most of the time, and since she does things like illegal flying or use her pilot’s notebook to record the Resistance’s movements, her main fear is court martial, i.e. her actions being judged by a military tribunal. At the end of the story, back in England and after what she lived during war, she no longer cares about court martial; all she feels is relief for being at home. Thus, we also see a flawed heroine in her character, making her more human and never an idealised woman. Nevertheless, Maddie suffers a positive change as she has to confront her fears and insecurities, learning to moderately overcome them: “Think of her three years ago, a weeping jelly of fear under fire. Think of her now, guiding a wounded aircraft through the unfamiliar fire and darkness of a war zone” (Wein 247).

To conclude with her role as a woman, I will briefly analyse her interactions with some of the men in the novel: some fascist men, SOE agent Paul, Jamie Beaufort-Stuart and von Linden. From the beginning Maddie is presented as a woman that will not consent to be man-handled, even physically and verbally confronting fascist men that catcall her and try to steal her bike. Besides being good-natured, she is also fierce and capable to defend herself when in need. Similarly to Julie, Maddie is also sexually harassed by a man, the SOE agent Paul that trains her in France. We see her fierce and brave side when she confronts him. Paul constantly harasses her, touching her without her consent, and Maddie eventually tells him “[...] to keep his mucky hands to himself [...]” (Wein 338), stopping the touching. However, one day he appears in her hiding place without previous notice, so she gets scared for what he may do and kicks him out at gun point. Apart from the harassment itself, Maddie feels even more defenceless knowing that if he, or anyone, tried to force her she could not cry for help since the Nazis could discover her (Wein 296).

The rest of her interactions with male characters are, in its majority, very good as there is a number of officials and colleagues that regularly support and value her capacities. In any case, Maddie's relation with Julie's brother, Jamie, is the most remarkable one. They see each other as equals, and Jamie acknowledges her RAF position calling her "Second Officer Brodatt" (Wein 160), empowering her as well as recognising her abilities: "'She's a cracking good pilot-navigator and a reasonable mechanic too'" (Wein 322). They become friends while talking about their common experiences as pilots, developing a very close relationship similar to siblings that will end in a romantic interest. However, romantic love is not the main element of their relation, but respect and affection, having their love for Julie as a priority. Besides, Jamie fights for her rights and dreams, e.g. convincing a flight squadron that Maddie should accompany one of the pilots in a flight to France, and he is also the only man that responds directly to the sexist comments that Paul makes, confronting him. Almost at the end of the novel, Maddie briefly meets von Linden and, as a consequence of what he did to Julie, she sees him as her main enemy: "[...] my hatred for him is pure and black and unforgiving" (Wein 413, 414). She reinforces and validates this hate as:

[...] I am *everything* he is battling against, I am British and Jewish, in the ATA I am a woman doing a man's work at a man's rate of pay, and my work is to deliver the aircraft that will destroy his regime. (Wein 413)

Despite this, she feels bad for Isolde when Maddie hears about von Linden's suicide, saying that Isolde is "'another wretched girl'" (Wein 438), once again showing her empathic side.

3.2.2.2. Maddie as an army member: the pilot

Regarding Maddie's role as an army woman, we see her grow and achieve the consideration she deserves with hard-work and constant fighting. Her love for engines and planes, together with the fascination she feels the first time she goes to an airfield, makes her want to be a pilot. However, as the training is very expensive she remains helping the male mechanics at the airfield that "[...] were happy to have an extra pair of capable hands around" (Wein 34). Then, she enters the Civil Air Guard that gave free flight training in exchange for possible future military duties. Among the people there "[...] only one in 20 [...] were women" (Wein 34), but Maddie gets in thanks to the good relations she has with the engineers and mechanics of the airfield that recommend her "[...] for being quick and committed and knowing all about oil levels" (Wein 35).

After her training, she gets her basic pilot license that allows her to fly but cannot go to war nor enlist in the ATA because she is a woman: “It didn’t matter that Maddie already had a deal more experience than a lot of boys; there wasn’t a place for her” (Wein 39). So, as the British government needed women to do radio work because men were sent to war, Maddie enlists in the WAAF working first as a telephonist and later as a radio operator, helping lost pilots. Soon after, she starts making clandestine flights covered by her male colleagues and, at one point, the praising about her abilities as a pilot reaches a superior that offers her “[...] further training [...]” (Wein 48). Maddie receives radar training as a special duties clerk, answering calls from broken plane pilots and indicating them their way to airfields or giving landing priorities.

Later, Maddie enters the ATA where her rank is lowered to civilian though she is now allowed to fly official planes but cannot have any aid such as maps or radios. Despite Maddie being perfectly trained, it is at this time when she encounters the majority of problems related to gender roles. Firstly, there is only one more woman mentioned as an ATA colleague, meaning that there were not many women flying planes. Secondly, lots of people are “[...] aghast at the idea of a girl flying [...]” (Wein 141) because they think that they would not be strong enough to do it. Maddie defies this flying and overcoming all the situations she is thrown at and, consequently, lots of people change their minds although Maddie still feels like she is “[...] expected not to be able to do whatever it is fly a plane, load a gun, make a bomb- fix a car [...]” (Wein 337). Thanks to Maddie’s hard work the praising about her continues and the SOE recruits her to work in Special Duties, i.e. secret missions, doing taxi work. She privately transports important people to other airfields and is instructed not to ask questions. Maddie is given courses on night flying and how to fly a plane while others jump from it, also having a man as a co-pilot because she has more flight hours than him. They have a good relation, and he “[...] support(s) her loyally [...]” (Wein 186). At this time, even the intelligence leader recognises her work:

‘You’re a consistent pilot, a superb navigator, sharp as a tack and exceptionally discreet. There are plenty of men and several women better qualified than you, but none, I think, as appropriately suited for this particular taxi service.’ (Wein 189)

Also, as she starts to get recognition among the other pilots, she becomes as respected, valued, “[...] trusted, accepted [...]” (Wein 201, 202) as any other pilot.

Despite all her training, she still cannot fly to France because she is a woman. However, thanks to Jamie's help and the squadron leader's trust she will prove that she is even more capable than they thought as she guides a novice pilot when he is lost. This is a turning point in Maddie's career as it is the first time a man, apart from Jamie, makes her feel like an equal: "*Thanks, mate*. Maddie hugged herself with pride and pleasure. *I'm one of them*, she thought" (Wein 206). She authorises the last flight to France as she is a First Officer and the squadron needs one more pilot. The flight, as acknowledged by the author herself, is complete fiction since women ATA pilots could not fly into Europe before the invasion of Normandy (Wein 444). During the flight, the plane is attacked mid-air and, after parachuting Julie into France, Maddie has to make an emergency landing controlling the crash. She manages to do so and the Resistance men that rescue her "[...] were all astonished [...] because I'd successfully managed not to go down in flames [...]" (Wein 279). They praise her ability telling her she was "[...] born to be a soldier", but she does not feel proud because first, she does not know if Julie is safe, and second, she "[...] wasn't born to be a soldier. There's a war on, so I'm delivering aeroplanes" (Wein 357).

After weeks in France, the SOE and ATA want her back in England as soon as possible, but it is quite complicated because of the Nazis, the few available airfields, etc. The Resistance try to help her but fail several times, the second attempt not being successful because of a man's prejudices against her. In this case, the car breaks down and Maddie knows what is wrong with it but the driver does not listen to her because she is a woman. They spend a lot of time arguing and when he finally listens to her and the car is fixed, they get to the airfield too late and the plane that should have taken Maddie back to England is already gone. After this, Maddie also collaborates in looking for new available possible landing sites, going with other girls as women seemed less suspicious than men: "[...] three girls on bicycles, you know, having a jolly afternoon out together, what could be more normal?" (Wein 328). This represents the reality mentioned previously that women were considered less suspicious than men if seen wondering around unemployed. Meanwhile, the Resistance intercepts a Nazi truck that transports prisoners to concentration camps, including Julie, but the operation ends with only 7 prisoners rescued and Julie dead. Despite how heartbroken Maddie is, several days later she participates in a Resistance's mission that will blow up the Gestapo's headquarter, liberating several prisoners. That same day, she finally flies back to England where she has to give as much information about code names, Nazi locations and maps as she can

to the British intelligence. Also, she has to face the consequences of authorising herself to fly into France, as the Air Ministry wants to take her pilot's license away and the SOE wants to recruit her. Although Maddie does not want to belong to the SOE she accepts in order to keep her pilot's license. Regarding the written records she and Julie made in France, she never tells anyone about them as she feels they are very personal and does not want anyone to know anything. However, in the end she sends them to Julie's mother because Maddie thinks "[...] it is her right to know" (Wein 439).

3.2.2.3. Maddie's code names: context

To conclude Maddie's analysis, I will explain the two code names she uses in the novel and their contexts. Kittyhawk is the code name she uses at the beginning of her time in France because she is afraid that if someone knows her real name they will betray her. The combination of the words "kitty" and "hawk" shows perfectly the two sides of Maddie's personality. She is tender and sweet as a kitty, but at the same time fierce and courageous as a hawk. Most of the characters only see her "kitty" side, so when she starts fighting people back they seem surprised because, as Maddie realises, "apparently I've got a reputation for being quiet and a bit weepy [...] they think I'm gormless" (Wein 340).

After knowing Julie had been captured by the Nazis, the Resistance members decide to change Maddie's code name in case Julie has told it to the Gestapo, although Maddie knows Julie would never do that. Therefore, it is decided that Maddie uses what should have been Julie's fake identity if she had landed safely: Katharina Habicht. Thanks to this identity she can go out of hiding as the French family's distant cousin. Although now Maddie feels more secure, with strangers she acts as a naïve, foolish, innocent girl: "[...] smiling like an idiot, hiding my face in my own shoulder as though I'm too shy to deserve to live, giggling and mumbling" (Wein 328) as, since she is not fluent in French or German, she is afraid someone will suspect and discover her true identity.

3.2.3. Anna Engel

3.2.3.1. Engel as a woman: background, personality and relations

Anna Engel is Julie's German female guard, which plays an important role in the narrative being presented as ambiguous. Firstly, along the narrative, Julie gives her several adjectives like "harpy", "evil", or "beastly punctilious official". Also, when

Maddie first meets her she says that Engel reminds her “[...] of Julie when she was angry” (Wein 409). Thus, it can be inferred that Engel provokes fear on people as she is working for the Nazis. Her background is quite impressive since, although she is young, she studied chemistry during one year in the University of Chicago; this explains her fluency in English. Despite being an educated and intelligent woman, Engel works as a chemist for the Gestapo manipulating chemicals to torture prisoners, as Julie says, wasting her talent (Wein 176).

Engel’s relation with other women like the daughters of the French family that hide Maddie, or Maddie herself, is very limited and scarce because of her work and personality. Engel is distant and serious, though she shows her emotional side with Maddie while talking about Julie. With the French girls, Engel occasionally tells them some news about what had happened in the headquarters when they reunite in the family house as the oldest brother is working with the Nazis and invites them for lunch. Engel is described as a woman who talks too much about Nazi issues, even criticised by Maddie and Julie, though she may have been giving the girls this information on purpose, knowing they collaborated with the Resistance, however it is not specified in the story.

Nevertheless, despite her presence and seriousness, in her relations with men Engel is always relegated to a second place, probably because she is a woman. Engel is also harassed by SOE agent Paul, who inappropriately touches her bum, making her feel disturbed although she does not make any remark. At that moment, Engel is accompanied by a male co-worker that laughs at the scene, perpetuating the sexism. Lastly, Engel’s relation with her superior, von Linden, is full of fear for his reactions, fear of getting caught doing something undutiful such as smoking, or fear because she thinks Julie has not “[...] coughed up enough facts [...]” (Wein 31), since Engel is the one in charge of Julie’s confession.

3.2.3.2. Engel as an army member: working for the Nazis

Regarding her role as an army woman, before the story’s events she worked in a concentration camp for women in Germany as a guard and then was transferred to France. Along the story she works as a kind of secretary for von Linden, translating for him. Moreover, she is in charge of supervising Julie all the time, controlling that she does not misbehave, and also making her “pretty” for her interview with the American journalist. Once again, she is constantly set aside, and even though she is more educated and

intelligent than, for instance, the male guard Etienne Thibaut, von Linden does not trust or value her “[...] because Engel is a woman” (Wein 31). Thus, gender roles are very present in Engel’s character that is “[...] just an employee, she doesn’t even have a rank” (Wein 402). However, some of her insubordinations such as smoking cigarettes at work, which Hitler prohibited, are overlooked since “[...] they won’t get rid of her because her combined talents would be quiet difficult to replace [...]” (Wein 82).

Her relationship with Julie is quite complex and changes a lot throughout the story, starting with Engel supervising Julie but also showing her cruellest side: “Now she is sitting across the table from me lighting and relighting her cigarette and flicking the matches in my direction to make me jump, but she is laughing [...]” (Wein 31). As the story develops, she starts to make little changes like telling Julie information about the Nazi machinery, telling her what will happen if she does not give them the right information, or not translating everything Julie writes for von Linden, although it is not clear why she does it: “I think it was self-preservation on her part rather than any good nature towards me” (Wein 182). Also, she manages “[...] to scrounge some ice [...]” (Wein 256) for Julie’s water, as well as constantly giving her lots of cigarettes in secret. Almost at the end, Engel admits that seeing what the Nazis did to the prisoners, and especially to Julie, made her feel guilty and awful: “[...] I’ve never despised myself so much as I did that day-she was so small and-[...] so fierce, so *beautiful*, it was like breaking a hawk’s wings [...]” (Wein 404). There is one turning point in the narrative, when Julie passes out after being tortured and Engel discovers a number written in Julie’s hand and, instead of telling her superiors, she erases it so Julie is not discovered. Engel knows it is an archive number for the headquarters’ blueprints and will later ask Julie about what she should do with it, to what Julie responds she should use it to blow up the place. This is the first time that the two women realise they are in the same team, both wanting to stop the Nazis. After this, Engel will decide to collaborate with the Resistance, being the one who sends Julie’s writings to Maddie after Julie is sent to a concentration camp, and even making a copy of the service door key so they could enter the headquarters. Finally, when Engel meets with Maddie and she tells her that Julie is dead, the appreciation she felt for Julie is seen in “[...] a single violent word of disappointment” (Wein 401).

3.2.4. Other women

The number of women that appear in the novel is quite extensive, representing different jobs women did during World War II. Some work in the mill, or doing laundry, or cleaning houses, or sorting potatoes, while others work in the army as Radio Direction Finding girls identifying planes in the radar. Others join the First Aid Nursing Yeomanry who drive people from the airfield to offices.

Then, we have the mothers' role such as Julie's or the French mum. They are mothers, not only for their children, but also for other people such as Maddie or the eight Scottish evacuees. They are presented as caring women that are always suffering for the well-being of their loved ones. This category could also include Julie's great-aunt that, despite being old, belongs to a Resistance circuit, being in charge of hiding them when they intercept the Nazis' truck. She also risks her life taking care of Maddie after Julie is killed, preparing her a bath and some food. She does this, as burying Julie's body in her backyard, out of kindness.

Lastly, several characters are quite important for the story. There are two female pilots who influence Maddie's life. Dympna Wythenshawe is the young pilot who inspires Maddie to learn to fly, and although she is described as rich and beautiful, she is also powerful being one of the first female pilots. Dympna becomes friends with Maddie, teaching and encouraging her, as well as doing and saying things on her behalf expecting nothing in return but doing them because she values Maddie. The other pilot is Theo Lyons that, being a First Officer, inspires and encourages Maddie to follow her dreams. The French girl Marie, imprisoned with Julie, represents a patriotic, loyal woman that despises Julie for being a traitor. She is strong since, despite being tortured, she never betrays anyone. However, just before dying she also acknowledges respect to Julie, setting aside any patriotism. Georgia Penn is a middle-age American woman that works as a journalist and as a double agent. Her cover is doing a radio programme with Nazi propaganda but in reality she works for the Allies doing "interviews" with prisoners, i.e. finding captured people. Lastly, we have the two French sisters, Mitraillette and Amélie. Mitraillette is a Resistance girl, the second in command in her circuit and, after Paul's death, she takes its leadership. She becomes Maddie's friend, comforting and taking care of each other. Amélie is young and emotional, though smart and brave being the one who collects the headquarters' blueprints. She loves Maddie and sees her as an older sister.

4. CONCLUSIONS

As a conclusion, it can be seen that Julie is a very important and key figure for the missions because of her abilities as an interrogator. It does not matter that she is a woman, although she encounters several obstacles due to it. Besides, she is characterised as fierce and brave but also human since she breaks down under the Nazis' pressure. This duality is the centre of the constant confrontation between heroism and cowardice, presenting Julie as an imperfect heroine.

In the character of Maddie it can be seen how hard it could be for women in general to achieve the recognition they deserved for their capacities, at the same level as men due to gender roles in all areas. Maddie visibly struggles a lot to achieve this, having to work really hard to prove herself to other people. In contrast, we have Julie, from whom it is unknown how she became a SOE spy, not showing if she did struggle to achieve it or not. Besides, along the story, Julie does not have to confront as many problems due to gender roles as Maddie does. This difference between the two girls could possibly be due to their class difference, showing that the situation was more complicated for lower class women. However, it is also seen that with perseverance and the support of male and female friends that recognised Maddie's strength, she could prove that she was, at least, as capable as her male colleagues.

In the character of Engel we have the question of morality, in this particular case a conflict between patriotism and moral values. As previously said, this is a conflict present along the novel in several female characters, who put their beliefs and values before their nationalities. You could be German as Engel and, despite doing horrible things at the beginning, see its horrors and try to do the right thing. And you could be French, a supposed Ally, and work for the Nazis as Thibaut's son, Etienne, who did not care about his actions. Besides, apart from the moral conflict, Engel has to face gender roles that put her in a second place despite her abilities and capacities, in some cases superior to men's.

Regarding the analysis carried out in this study we can conclude that women were as capable, prepared and trained as men to do dangerous war work. Despite this, their capacities and hard work were quite frequently disregarded only because of their gender. This situation forced these women to double prove themselves to others, especially if they were not from the elites. In the same way, the constant pressure and doubt inflicted on them, sometimes creating them insecurities, and the sexism they had to live day after day,

complicated their empowerment. This situation was suffered by women from all countries and in different positions as can be seen in the three different main female characters.

As seen in the novel, the work women did was key to the war's development, actively contributing in some events against the Nazis, e.g. destroying some Gestapo's headquarters. Thanks to their abilities, working together with other men and women and putting their lives at risk, very big accomplishments could be achieved. However, their role in World War II has not been properly acknowledged in history until now that some writers such as Elizabeth Wein have decided to create books like *Code Name Verity* as a way to honour them and transmit their stories to people. Despite this book being a fictional work with invented characters, situations and times, the author was inspired by real events and women who were doing those jobs and risking their lives.

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