VICHY’S DOUBLE BIND

Vichy’s Double Bind advances a significant new interpretation of French collaboration during the Second World War. Arguing that the path to collaboration involved not merely Nazi Germany but Fascist Italy, it suggests that the Vichy French government was caught in a double bind. On the one hand, many of the threats to France’s territory, colonial empire and power came from Rome as well as Berlin. On the other hand, Vichy was caught between the irreconcilable yet inescapable positions of the two Axis governments. Unable to resolve the conflict, Vichy sought to play the two Axis powers against each other. By exploring French dealings with Italy at diplomatic, military and local levels in France and its colonial empire, this book reveals the multi-dimensional and multi-directional nature of Vichy’s policy. It therefore challenges many enduring conceptions of collaboration with reference to Franco-German relations and offers a fresh perspective on debates about Vichy France and collaboration with Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy.

Karine Varley is Lecturer in French and European History at the University of Strathclyde, having previously lectured at Durham University and the University of Edinburgh. She is a graduate of the Universities of Cambridge, Leeds and Royal Holloway, London. She has published widely on nineteenth- and twentieth-century European history, including Under the Shadow of Defeat: The War of 1870–71 in French Memory (2008) and (ed. with Marco Maria Aterrano) A Fascist Decade of War: 1935–1945 in International Perspective (2020). Her research has been supported by grants from the British Academy, Carnegie Trust and Royal Society of Edinburgh.
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VICHY'S DOUBLE BIND

French Collaboration between Hitler and Mussolini during the Second World War

KARINE VARLEY

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