

De la politique à la guerre il n'y a qu'un pas que D. Roche franchit non sans avoir abordé la question de la constitution et de l'organisation des grandes écuries d'État qui se développent et évoluent du Versailles de Louis XIV au Paris de Napoléon et sont le miroir des changements dans les habitudes et les goûts. L'usage militaire du cheval est une question qui mérite un développement nourri que l'auteur n'esquive pas. La période qui va du XVI^e au XIX^e siècles est marquée par de profonds changements dans les conceptions et les pratiques militaires au cœur desquelles la place et le rôle de la cavalerie connaissent une grande évolution. Avant l'industrialisation de la guerre (et même en réalité après celle-ci si l'on veut bien se rappeler certaines opérations de la Seconde Guerre mondiale), le cheval est encore central dans les opérations : le mouvement, la logistique, la quête du renseignement et longtemps même le choc sur le champ de bataille impliquent son utilisation de plus en plus massive au fur et à mesure que s'accroît l'échelle des conflits. Cette réalité, couplée avec l'évolution de la tactique et les modifications techniques, transforme la conception que l'on se fait de la cavalerie (ou des cavaleries puisque coexistent la cavalerie lourde, la cavalerie légère et des unités d'infanterie portée). Parallèlement, le cavalier militaire comme type de combattant, sa formation, son action, les qualités pratiques qui doivent être les siennes, se transforment profondément. De la même façon, son recrutement social évolue radicalement dans la longue période envisagée qui est marquée par le passage de la guerre du prince aux guerres nationales.

En conclusion, l'ouvrage de D. Roche est nourri d'une puissante réflexion sur l'évolution de la société française dans un temps long, marqué certes par de grandes ruptures, mais où le rapport de l'homme au cheval dans le cadre de pratiques sociales élitistes est caractérisé par de remarquables éléments de continuité.

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RUBIN, Jeff, and Emma SOKOLOFF-RUBIN — *Sustaining Activism: A Brazilian Women's Movement and a Father-Daughter Collaboration*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2013. Pp. 200.

This book presents both an ethnographical research of the women's movement in rural Southern Brazil and a biography of Jeff Rubin and his daughter Emma during the 2000s, in which the authors are as much the subjects of the book as the Brazilian women's movement. It is a fascinating story of their collaboration over a number of years (Emma as a child, teenager and finally adult scholar) studying this very important movement in terms of agrarian reform and women's rights in Latin America. Half of the book is written in Jeff's voice and the other written under Emma's plume.

Through observatory participation, formal and informal discussions with rank and file and interviews, the father-daughter duo capture and retell the life stories of individual activists in the Brazilian rural women's movement. These are anthropologically romantic stories that will surely charm first year students of sociology, anthropology and development studies. Our university youth will definitely connect to Emma's story as a young researcher lucky enough to have a father to take her on his field research trips and treat her as a scholarly equal. The book demonstrates to aspiring researchers the pleasures and satisfaction of field research and the challenges of making sense of so much data and using it to contribute to the advancement of knowledge in North American academic institutions or as Jeff puts it

“bringing the knowledge and spirit home to the United States”. Throughout the book, the authors transmit the “enchantment” of this movement to its readers.

In terms of research methodology, the book is a rich source for students of anthropology, offering gems of advice such as the advantages of bringing along family members which makes scholars look more human and accessible to their subjects of research and thus opens the way to frank and intimate discussions with people who these Americans would otherwise have nothing in common. Jeff explains in great detail how he gained access to the movement’s local leadership and rank and file over a number of years in the context of an important grant he received from MacArthur Foundation.

Another appealing aspect of this book is its reflections on gender issues involving poor rural women in the South that demonstrate to young female students that the struggle for differentiated recognition of both productive and reproductive work is far from over and there is still a need for feminism around the world. The examples of inequality, confinement, drudgery and lack of options among rural young women will certainly touch students at a personal level. It offers an example of a different feminist movement, one that is rural and tackles both class and gender issues. It is unlike the urban feminist movement which most are more familiar.

The main story of the book deals with the trajectory of this social movement and important issues of its radicalisation and the institutionalisation of the struggle of some of its leaders. It delves into the splits within the movement around ideological paths the movement leadership took in the late 1990s. Although Jeff is very sceptical of these choices and documents the personal effects it had on local rank and file, he only analyses it through the eyes and voices of his informants forgoing social movement theories on the issue. For example, the authors tell the story of local movement leaders who decide to work for government and are pushed out of the movement due to an internal movement policy that forbids leaders to straddle positions in the movement and in government. The authors portray this difficult moment for these leaders but do not reflect upon the outcome in other movements that have permitted this situation and in general both the positive and negative impacts on the social movement itself and what it has achieved in recent years. Too often in their account of internal movement disputes and power struggles, the grassroots leaders and rank and file are portrayed as the good gals, while the national movement leadership are the bad ones. This element of the book is in itself important in terms of the positioning of social scientists when analysing and publishing on their subjects and I must agree with Pierre Bourdieu that social scientists have an important role in validating their subjects through their research and therefore participating in the real world of their subjects.

One of the important issues that both authors take up is that of social movements and democracy. Although the authors do not explain or explore definitions of democracy within social movements, they do offer a great deal of criticism of the lack of democracy in rural Brazilian social movements. Given their position on this issue, it would have been helpful if they would have engaged in the literature on new Brazilian social movements in order to unpack the democracy issue and explain if and why these social movements are less democratic than the ones in the past as well as their urban counterparts.

Although the book studies this movement in the early 2000s, many of the issues such as the internal organisation of social movements, the place of women in mixed movements and the relation of movements with the state are still very relevant and this book will certainly contribute to reflections upon these issues.

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