

Voici donc un livre de géographie humaine, autant à l'aise dans ses descriptions succinctes d'un « retour vers les basses terres » que dans sa discussion de la répartition des collèges classiques. Au dire de Courville, « la géographie n'est pas qu'une science du spatial, elle est aussi, et surtout, une science du social qui s'intéresse moins à l'espace qu'aux devenir des lieux et des sociétés, à la manière qu'ont eue les communautés humaines de connaître et de pratiquer ce qu'on appelle leur espace » (p. 25). Cet ouvrage rappelle aux historiens que l'expérience des peuples se fait dans l'espace autant que dans le temps. Bourré de chiffres, de tableaux, de cartes, d'une bonne bibliographie et d'un index clair, ce livre est idéal pour l'instruction. Son texte est limpide, la présentation aérée; bref, une synthèse qui intéressera tous ceux qui pensent et qui enseignent l'histoire.

Proust disait dans son *Albertine disparue* que « C'est seulement par la pensée qu'on possède les choses, et on ne possède pas un tableau parce qu'on l'a dans sa salle à manger si on ne sait pas le comprendre, ni un pays parce qu'on y réside sans même le regarder ». Le livre de Courville nous apprend à regarder le pays, à le saisir dans son évolution historique et à mieux le connaître. Ainsi donc, c'est de mieux le comprendre.

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Ute Daniel — *The War From Within: German Working Class Women in the First World War*. Translated by Margaret Ries. Oxford and New York: Berg, 1997. Pp. 343. (Originally published as *Arbeiterfrauen in der Kriegsgesellschaft*, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1989.)

The translation of this new classic study of working-class women's changing situation during the First World War is an extremely welcome event. At the time of its original publication, Ute Daniel's book was path-breaking in that it refuted the myth of war as having forwarded the "emancipation" of women. Instead, she offered a nuanced, deeply researched, and ultimately convincing argument that, to the extent that we can use this term at all, the war was at best "an emancipation on loan".

Daniel successfully combines a number of theoretical influences including feminist theory, *Alltagsgeschichte*, social historical methods, and structural approaches. These are discussed in her introduction along with the issue of "emancipation". Her command of the secondary literature is impressive, and much of the book's strength is due to the extensive and thorough archival work that underpins her conclusions. Sources include personal letters, government publications and documents, army and police archival materials, newspaper accounts, literature, and memoirs. The richness of the research is reflected in the thoughtful and rigorously supported arguments made throughout the book.

Daniel is careful to analyse the changing dimensions of women's "double burden" in the constantly shifting context of wartime conditions. She demolishes the

legend that there was an enormous increase in female employment for wages outside the home during the war. Instead, after 1916 women's work within the family increased to such an extent due to shortages in essentials such as food and basic consumer goods that women manifested considerably less interest in wage work. With painstaking thoroughness, Daniel documents that the participation of women in the labour force actually fluctuated greatly during the war and that the government's mobilization policies failed to make the use of female labour into a "politically manageable variable" (p. 89).

Another example of the book's originality is the juxtaposition of the perspective of government officials and military men with that of working-class women of the time. On issues such as how the war was viewed and attitudes toward the state and the military establishment, a huge credibility gap toward the established order emerged on the part of women, who in turn were judged as unpatriotic and selfish by the authorities. Women became increasingly demanding of government support to help ameliorate the deprivations of the war and developed an attitude of entitlement which was in direct opposition to the spirit of self-sacrifice the authorities were attempting to inculcate into the German population. Working-class women in particular were accused of undermining male morale at the front through complaints about the state of civilian provisioning and rationing, and were thus directly accused of contributing to the failure of the German war effort. Official and unofficial discussions of "war wives" on the part of the government and the military were completely negative in their assessment of women's role as workers outside the home, as well as of their roles in the family, as consumers, and even as sexual beings.

Particularly fascinating is the fourth chapter, in which Daniel examines the situation of the family in the First World War. The war saw a drop in marriage and birth rates. For women with men at the front, stress was endemic due to the separation from loved ones; the disappearance of men into the war machine was also reflected in the changing importance of women within the family as both mothers and providers. Many women now had total control of the family budget for the first time, which raised their authority. By 1916, however, the rise in prices made it virtually impossible to manage in a cash and rationed economy. During the war most working-class households were reduced to functioning in a quasi-subsistence economy in which women's ingenuity as housewives in procuring food and other essentials for their families was stretched to the limit. The state attempted, through propaganda and home-management courses, to encourage women to live within the inadequate means provided through Family Aid and other state-sponsored efforts to keep the civilian population at least marginally fed; women's housework was now honoured as a patriotic task. Urban women were also encouraged to plant gardens and engage in small-scale animal husbandry. Despite their best efforts, however, working-class women were unable to feed their families on the rations allotted to them and engaged in illicit activities such as "squirrelling", theft, and various types of fraud. Petty crime became a normal part of survival during the war for women and children on the "home front", much to the chagrin of government officials who increasingly found their authority undermined. Women and children participated in spontaneous and often violent anti-government demonstrations. Not surprisingly, civil authorities

(who had been scrutinizing morale since 1916) were clear on which part of the population was no longer willing to support the war effort. Potential protesters were more likely to be women than men, working class and urban rather than rural, and uneducated rather than educated. State authorities were not in a position to punish these protesters, as they perceived that actions against families at home would undermine the morale of the men in the trenches even further. Women thus became a subversive and destabilizing threat to the Wilhelmine state under wartime conditions. Their traditional role as procurers of food had become under these circumstances a political issue.

In her final chapter, Daniel returns to the issue of “emancipation” and brilliantly deconstructs it as “a mirror on the wall”, an image rarely used in contemporary women’s historical research. At the same time, she warns of the dangers of retrospective idealization when analysing past forms of protest. Women’s protests and other actions stemming from their need to care for their families helped lay the groundwork for the extremely rapid collapse of the German state in 1918, but Daniel insists that their influence ended with the war, as the organized, mediated, and institutionalized male political forms returned in the re-emergence of political parties and Soldier’s and Worker’s Councils. Female collective action is thus seen as tied both to a particular historical context (the war) and to a long history of female protest related to food acquisition.

The book will be of interest not only to students of twentieth-century German history, but to students of gender and war in modern states in general. While the style is at times a bit turgid and argumentative, the book remains a classic that has changed the conceptual frames in which the relationships between women and war had previously been understood.

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Sarah Fishman, Laura Lee Downs, Ioannis Sinanoglou, Leonard V. Smith, and Robert Zarestsky, eds. — *France at War: Vichy and the Historians*. Oxford: Berg, 2000. Pp. ix, 336.

This book might have been entitled *The Paxtonian Revolution*, for this is the issue addressed by most of the essays therein. The broad outlines of this “revolution” are well known. Prior to 1972 French historians by and large treated the Vichy regime as the reluctant, at times even unwilling, agent of the German occupier. Vichy represented a rupture in French history, a regime supported by few in a nation of 40 million resisters. In 1972 Robert Paxton published his *Vichy France: Old Guard and New Order*, published in translation by Seuil the following year. He argued that the Vichy government took the initiative in collaboration with Nazi Germany, including the most odious forms of collaboration. Vichy was far more than the revenge of the anti-Dreyfusards; at least as important were the apolitical technocrats and segments of the dissident Left. He stressed the continuities between Vichy and both the Third