



Editorial



The thematic focus of the twelfth volume of *Aspasia*—the international, peer-reviewed yearbook of women’s and gender history of Central, Eastern, and Southeastern Europe (CESEE)—is women and violence. Violence has shaped the historical experiences of women in the region in fundamental ways, both at the personal and state levels. We were interested in issues extending from war and state terror to domestic violence and other manifestations of violence in the personal sphere.

From among the many submissions that arrived in response to our call, we selected a pair of closely connected articles that deal with gendered violence in the controversial Ukrainian nationalist movement from the 1930s to the 1950s. Both articles stem from the need to provide a counterdiscourse to the celebratory approach to the inclusion of women in the nationalist underground that prevails in Ukrainian historiography.

Olesya Khromeychuk focuses on the militarization of women from the 1930s to the 1950s with the example of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army. The article provides an invaluable survey of the existing research, some of which is unavailable to the English-language readership. Khromeychuk’s main contribution is her examination of the mechanisms by which women were incorporated into nationalist paramilitary structures and the profoundly gendered nature of this process, specifically the contradictory ways in which the nationalists instrumentalized ideals of traditional femininity.

Marta Havryshko’s article continues a similar line of reasoning, but zooms in on a specific and neglected aspect of the Ukrainian nationalist underground, that of intimate relations between Ukrainian women and men identified as enemies. Her starting point is also the intertwined construction of gender, female sexuality, and the nation in nationalist discourse. The core of the article is dedicated to a rich set of background materials from both the Ukrainian nationalist underground and the Soviet punitive organizations, but also, most significantly, from women’s oral histories. The war intensified the control of women’s bodies and especially their sexuality, and violence against women who were perceived as transgressing norms was a widespread form of social control.

This volume of *Aspasia* also publishes two articles outside of this thematic section that both touch on topical themes related to the construction of national identity. Anđelko Vlašić tackles the representation of the status of women in the newly established Republic of Turkey in the interwar Yugoslav public discourse. Turkey has long served as Europe’s “Other,” but in this period its meaning shifted. While the Ottoman



Empire was conservative in its treatment of women, the Republic of Turkey introduced a series of modernizing reforms that radically altered the status of women. This shift was a cause of great fascination in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, as Vlašić shows in his analysis, as the modernization of Turkey ran parallel with the Yugoslav Europeanization process.

Valentina Mitkova focuses on the formation of Bulgarian literary canon as a part of the development of national identity after the Liberation, specifically how women authors were systematically excluded from the canon and represented through gender tutelage. Mitkova uses the periodical press of the period and women's correspondence and memoirs, alongside a rich array of previous Bulgarian research hitherto unavailable in English, to map the hierarchies of national canon formation. Women's writing is assessed in the historical sources studied on the basis of its adherence to gender norms, including gendered norms of authorship, rather than artistic merit. This analysis is important for historians as well, as it helps to show the androcentric construction of not just the literary canon but also national identity.

In our Research Notes section, Kimberley Anderson and Sophie Roupetz introduce the work of the Children Born of War (CHIBOW) network of early career researchers who are investigating the lives of children fathered to local mothers by enemy soldiers, occupying forces, or peacekeeping forces through both consenting relationships and rape during conflicts of the past one hundred years. The network looks at several countries in Central, Eastern, and Southeastern Europe: Czech-German children; the experience of Upper Silesia in Poland; children fathered by German and Soviet occupiers in Poland, Lithuania, and Latvia; and children born after the Allied occupation in Austria and Germany. This new research project enriches our thematic section. We hope to see some of the research, when completed, also on the pages of *Aspasia*.

In the Source section, Susan Zimmermann introduces an exciting archival find, a letter sent by Mrs. István Bordás and Mrs. Gábor Magyar to suffragist Róza (Rosika) Schwimmer, the leader of the Feminist Association. It is one of the very few existing sources in which a poor woman peasant worker living in Hungary during the Habsburg Monarchy speaks about the experiences and struggles of women belonging to her social group in her own voice.

In this issue we also bid farewell to one of our editorial board members, Şirin Tekeli.

The Book Review section includes two review essays in addition to book reviews. Željka Janković and Svetlana Stefanović discuss two books dedicated to Serbian herstory, and Selin Çağatay reviews two volumes that engage with the intersection of modernity and nationalism in the late Ottoman period. Krassimira Daskalova deserves many thanks for the numerous book reviews that introduce new scholarship on and from the region.

We would like to thank all of our authors and also colleagues who have helped us by providing blind peer reviews. Without this collegial support, we would not be able to produce high-quality scholarship. Our thanks also go to the members of our editorial board. Many thanks to all of our editors who make up our international team that keeps *Aspasia* going. Our final thanks go to our publisher, Berghahn Books.

I would like to conclude by inviting new submissions to *Aspasia*. We are a year-book, but, like any journal, we welcome contributions on women's and gender history on an ongoing basis. Even if there is a theme issue, we are also open to other topics. To encourage submissions on a wide range of topics, our next volume will be an open one. Information for contributors can be found on the inside back cover of this volume and on our website, www.berghahnjournals.com/aspasia.

Raili Marling, on behalf of the *Aspasia* editors

