Editorial

It is a pleasure to present volume 5 of *Aspasia*, which consists of six articles, nine Forum contributions about regional women's and gender studies, two review essays, nine book reviews, and an In Memoriam of Richard Stites, the influential historian of women in Russia.

The volume begins with a thematic section on "Gendering the History of Spiritualities and Secularisms in Southeastern Europe," guest edited by Pamela Ballinger and Kristen Ghodsee, and with articles by Ballinger and Ghodsee, Maria Bucur, Melissa Bokovoy, and Mary Neuburger. As Ballinger and Ghodsee argue in their Introduction, the articles in this special section contribute to larger debates about the multiethnic and historically pluralistic region of Southeastern Europe, and demonstrate how secularization projects are intricately interwoven with gender relations. Taken together, the articles in this section "urge readers to draw connections between the shifting spiritual cartographies, state formations, and definitions of appropriate masculinity and femininity of particular Southeastern European societies."¹

The next two articles deal with Ottoman women's political history and contemporary feminist art. Historian Serpil Atamaz-Hazar focuses on Ottoman women's periodicals, which she argues can be crucial sources for uncovering women's history during the Ottoman Constitutional era. Her careful reading of some of the main journals of the early twentieth century leads her to conclude that these journals became "a powerful vehicle for women to make their voices heard, to become visible in public, and to initiate social and cultural change."² Atamaz-Hazar emphasizes that using these journals will allow historians, who have hitherto hardly included women's experiences in their narratives about the 1908 Revolution, to integrate the history of women into the history of the Constitutional era and thereby to much better understand "how revolutionary the 1908 Revolution actually was."³

The last article focuses on contemporary artist Tanja Ostojić, whose performances are analyzed by Jehanne-Marie Gavarini. Gavarini is herself a visual artist whose work has been exhibited internationally and who also writes about art, cinema, and visual culture. Gavarini argues that Ostojić's work exposes the gendered power dynamics that rule the Western-dominated art world and the European Union.

In the previous volume of *Aspasia* we published the first of a two-part Forum series on women's and gender studies in Central, Eastern and Southeastern Europe (CESEE). This volume contains the second part of that Forum. Together, these contributions present and discuss the different paths of women's and gender studies in fourteen countries of CESEE: Hungary, Poland, Romania, Serbia, and Ukraine (published in

Aspasia 4) and Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, and Turkey (see this volume). Krassimira Daskalova, who served as the main organizer and editor of the two-part Forum, ends the series with a concluding article about “‘The City of Gender Studies’ in Central, Eastern and Southeastern Europe.”

The Forum contributions contain a wealth of information about the development of the field and its institutionalization since 1989 (or, in the case of Turkey, much earlier). In addition to demonstrating profound differences between the countries—in some cases, for example, gender studies is still not recognized as an academic discipline at all, while in others it has been successfully institutionalized—the articles also point to a number of interesting similarities. These include the importance of transnational collaboration in establishing women’s and gender studies, the ongoing lack of sufficient material resources, ranging from books to salaries,⁴ and a number of important attempts to develop context-related concepts and theories. These concepts and theories, it seems, have not yet had a significant impact on hegemonic Western women’s and gender studies. In the words of Katerina Kolozova, a professor of gender studies and philosophy in Macedonia, “the wider region of Eastern Europe is yet another context with respect to which gender studies should establish a culturally and politically sensitive approach that will inform the field in new and innovative ways, both in terms of epistemology and of contents.”⁵ Finally, it is important to note that many of the texts included here most likely and in the not-so-far future will become important historical documents themselves, because they will allow us to identify and analyze shared discourses on women’s and gender studies in former socialist countries in Europe.

The *Aspasia* editorial team has been expanded significantly over the last year, which has much increased our possibilities and networks. The editors as always thank those who have reviewed manuscripts for *Aspasia* for their crucial contribution to maintaining high-level scholarship, and express our thanks for the ongoing support from the Editorial Board. Committed as we are to the goal of transforming European women’s and gender history, we continue to welcome contributions in the field of interdisciplinary women’s and gender history of the region. These contributions can deal with all periods, as long as there is a clear historical question or approach. We invite you to read our updated mission statement. Notes for contributors can be found on the inside back cover of this volume. For more and updated information about *Aspasia*, please visit <http://journals.berghahnbooks.com/asp/>.

Francisca de Haan, on behalf of the *Aspasia* editors

◆ Notes

1. Kristen Ghodsee and Pamela Ballinger, this volume, 1.

2. Serpil Atamaz-Hazar, this volume, 105.

3. Ibid.

4. The low salaries of academics in the region, including feminist scholars, are among the most important and influential structural inequalities between these academics and their colleagues working in “the West.”

5. Katerina Kolozova, this volume, 187.