

**“THE FIRST WORLD WAR IN A GENDER CONTEXT.
TOPICS AND PERSPECTIVES”**
International Conference, September 29 – October 1, 2011
University of Vienna, Austria

Welcome and Introduction

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Thursday, September 29, 2011, 9:30 AM – 1:00 PM

PANEL I: Home Front

Manon Pignot (Amiens/France): French Boys and Girls in the Great War: The Use of Gender for a History of Childhood Experiences of the First World War

Women’s studies have shown how wartime reinforced gender barriers; logically, the same can be said about young people. Studying children’s wartime experiences reveals significant distinctions between boys and girls at specific moments or in specific places of war, where the way of experiencing the war is largely dictated by gender. From the perspective of an intimate history of childhood, gender appears as a relevant concept that increases the intelligibility of the mechanism of wartime experience. Combined with geographic, social or cultural criteria, gender is essential to understand how children experienced the Great War because it plays an important part in the “crystallization” of war’s representations and war’s practices. This paper will then consider children’s experiences by means of the places of war (“lieux de guerre”), which wouldn’t be understandable without a gender perspective. These places can be discursive as well as geographic. Discourses of mobilization, for instance, constitute a very specific “place” where boys and girls are called upon in different ways: There are male and female roles for children, in the French propaganda as well as in the material use of children’s abilities on the home front. The way French children represent themselves in their drawings or in their diaries confirms this. But gender is also relevant for certain geographic places, such as the occupied zone (Northern France). Unlike the free zone, where male values are glorified, the occupied zone appears to be a feminine “champ de bataille”, centered on the domestic area; invasion followed by occupation leads to the inversion of the traditional roles of men and women, which was clearly noticed by children at the time. In order to examine the relations between gender and intimate child experiences of the Great War, this paper will be mainly based on children’s private sources such as letters, diaries, drawings and oral recollections.

Silke Fehlemann (Düsseldorf/Germany): “Mobilization of Mothers”: German Mothers of Soldiers during World War I

The paper deals with the war experience of soldiers’ mothers in World War I and their integration in cultures of remembrance after the war. The majority of war literature written by women indicates a war experience that was different from but also equivalent to that of men. Waiting, starving, illnesses, and mourning were claimed to be life-threatening factors. Female writers described the home front as a female community, mainly as a “community of suffering”, mostly without criticizing the war. To a certain extent, this construction of community corresponded with the male ideal of comradeship. Within this female community, soldiers’ mothers were described as the persons who suffered the most. Their grief in particular was said to be a life-threatening experience, or one that led to mental illness. But in spite of this, it was required that the mother’s grief was silent. By using soldiers’ mothers as an exemplary group of bereaved females, we can see the different forms of exclusion after the war. The repression, and often (self-) exclusion, of women from discourses of remembrance was formidable and occurred at several levels: At memorials, in literature, in political

discourses, and in social politics. Due to the construction of the home front as a female community, the “stab in the back” legend had a remarkable effect on the exclusion of women's war efforts from the politics of remembrance. Only the Pieta memorials represented the mourning mothers in a silent and very stereotypical way. The absence of mourning mothers in public becomes especially clear when we take a look at the politics of other nations. There the mothers who lost one or more sons were awarded medals or other “honors”. Many examples demonstrate that in these other countries, mourning widows and mothers did not have any political influence, but they could be part of symbolic politics, which constructed a special form of female honor and made mourning mothers visible in public.

Claudia Siebrecht (Sussex/UK): The Female Mourner

The figure of the female mourner has occupied a prominent place in wartime and post-war societies in 20th century history. Public discourse on death and sacrifice during the First World War gave rise to a moral economy that laid down strict guidelines for female bereavement, in which a strong emphasis was placed on dignified composure. Women were expected to endorse male sacrifice and bear the consequences of soldiers' deaths as part of their contribution to the national war effort. Wartime societies aimed to channel women's bereavement and defuse their distress by honoring their heroic sacrifice. In Germany, this moral code was constantly reinforced by the army, the churches, the media, and by leading members of the women's movement. It was believed that the task of mourning assigned to women in wartime societies served to enhance the value of a soldier's death. The idea that wartime sacrifices should be borne with pride and that loss had to be endured with silent grace was deeply imbedded in German, but also in British, French, and Italian war culture. Drawing on art produced by female artists in Germany between 1914 and 1918, this paper argues that female artists used their work to re-imagine the role of the female mourner in wartime society, redefine the cultural practices of bereavement, and question the existing notion of proud bereavement as a means of transcending private grief and the trauma of wartime loss.

Alison S. Fell (Leeds/UK): The Afterlives of French and British First World War Heroines

Although few are remembered today, the First World War produced scores of heroines who became household names in their respective nations. From 1914 onwards, nationalist journalists and writers sought out women who could be constructed as heroic and lauded them in the press, in poster, and in popular fiction. Activities that marked women out during the First World War for heroism usually involved some degree of risk, the potential for ‘blood sacrifice’, thereby aligning them with soldiers. However, at the same time as heroines' temporary transgressions of gender stereotypes were celebrated, efforts were made in the popular press and in propaganda images to define their activities within a more traditional understanding of men's and women's roles. In this paper, I concentrate on two case studies: Emilienne Moreau, the French ‘Heroine of Loos’, and the two British ‘Heroines of Pervyse’, Elsie Knocker and Mairi Chisholm. I consider firstly the ways in which they illustrate the features of gendered representations of female heroism, analyzing their representation in the popular press in France and Britain. I also assess the extent to which the women themselves colluded with and/or exploited the press in order to further their wartime aims. Secondly, I consider the extent to which the women themselves refer to their wartime notoriety in their post-war constructions of self. I argue that the similarities and differences between my French and British case studies illustrate, on the one hand, the centrality of war experiences in the post-war self-presentations of women who can be categorized as Great War ‘veterans’ and, secondly, the changing status of women's war work in the wake of the First and Second World Wars.

Thursday, September 29, 2011, 2:30 PM – 6:00 PM

PANEL II: Front

Marco Mondini (Trento/Italy): The Construction of a Masculine Warrior Ideal in the Letters from the Front: An Italian Case

A veritable paper monument bearing witness to the experience and the significance of the war – the correspondence of soldiers, like their diaries – saw extraordinary growth in Italy as early as the 1920s. Unlike the case of war literature, which has never been systematically anthologized, there were early attempts to collect and classify this body of letters.

From a perspective that attempts to go beyond the excessively rigid opposition between the paradigm of consensus and that of dissent towards the war, my paper will investigate the cultural models by means of which the soldiers represented themselves to those who had remained at home, their relatives and friends. In particular, I will suggest that through the medium of more or less refined writing, the soldiers articulated a manly image of themselves, grounding it in the classical canons of war heroism, and sometimes invigorating it with more or less spontaneous references to the themes of patriotic propaganda. On the one hand, this kind of construction of a manly war identity aided the soldiers' attempts to render both trench life and the risk of death – otherwise characterized by a distressing absurdity – more meaningful and reassuring. On the other, it served to narrate and represent those masculine bonds, typical of the “community at the front” (the small trench group, one's own platoon), which were – far more than the bonds of hierarchy and training – one of the key factors of the combatants' psychological and disciplinary resistance.

Matteo Ermacora (Venice/Italy): Women Behind the Lines: The Friuli Region as a Case Study of Total Mobilization, 1915–1917

The essay focuses on the mobilization of women in Friuli, Italy's northeastern border region, during the Great War. Women were deeply involved in economic and logistical efforts in the countryside and behind the frontline. State, military authorities and priests encouraged female employment, and propaganda exalted the new women's tasks in a reassuring way, presenting the new role as temporary in order to avoid their masculinization; women were depicted as a model of patriotism and self-sacrifice, as soldiers' mothers and wives. The images used by propaganda were far from reality: The analysis of wartime correspondence and parish reports shows that conditions were very difficult for women; they had to cope with new tasks courageously and with increasing fatigue. About 5,000 women and girls were also employed as transporters and workers behind the front; this kind of mobilization, however, was neglected as it was too “male”, heavy and dangerous; in this case too, the concerns about immorality and prostitution prevailed over labor safeguards. Enemy occupation and flight in 1917/18 modified the women's image: They were portrayed as passive victims, and in the postwar years they become “suffering mothers”; their efforts, although successful, were overshadowed by the myth of victory and the “male” nation at war. Too directly affected by war and militarization, women could not gain liberation through work, but these experiences contributed to reasserting their role within families, and the “wartime skills” were not lost, especially among younger women and girls.

Susan R. Grayzel (Oxford, MS/USA): The Baby in the Gas Mask: Air Power, Chemical Warfare, and the Gendered Division between the Fronts during the First World War and its Aftermath

One of the First World War's many innovations was its increasingly widespread use of aerial attacks against civilian targets. As one feminist commentator in Britain wrote after devastating air raids on London in 1917 that included a direct hit on an infant school: “things which used to be separate in fact, or in our minds, have been violently thrown together, and, as it were, mixed up. In former days it used to be possible to arrange things in categories. One could still, if one wished, think of the state as separate from the home, of men as separate from women.” Air war waged against civilians made this no longer possible. It literally placed the “home” on the front line.

Following on from the experience of air raids during the war, interwar peace campaigners and war planners alike faced the prospect that the next war would be an air war, quite possibly a war in which

the aerial deployment of chemical weapons (another wartime “innovation”) would lead to mass civilian casualties. Furthermore, this would be a war that would not discriminate – women and children would be as vulnerable as any man serving in the military. Preparing the “home front” for its new frontline status or protesting vigorously against this prospect animated a range of interwar voices, and civilian anti-gas protection for children (in particular) became a vital emblem of both state efforts to protect the homeland and anti-militarist fears of the worst legacies of the First World War. This paper examines the legacy of air power and chemical warfare in challenging conventional notions of warfare, particularly the mixing up of the wartime roles of state and home / men and women. It focuses on the interwar development of strategies to protect the so-called home front by means of measures to protect a civil population and prepare it to face aero-chemical warfare, and on the vigorous and multi-faceted feminist/pacifist response to such measures. Taking Britain as its case study (but with comparative references to other European states), the paper shows how new forms of state-sanctioned violence in World War One reshaped gendered assumptions about the home front/front line in the aftermath of the war.

Jason Crouthamel (Allendale, MI/USA): “We Need Real Men”: The Impact of the First World War on Germany’s Sexual Reform Movement

The focus of this paper is the construction of masculinity among homosexual German veterans during the First World War. How did ideals of comradeship and the war experience shape the image of the homosexual male and Germany’s homosexual rights movement? I argue that publications by veterans reveal what appears to be an interesting inversion of male identity and sexuality: As otherwise heterosexual men experimented with feminine characteristics in order to survive the brutality of the trenches, homosexual men discovered their more masculine side as a result of the front experience. Homosexual veterans appropriated militarized, nationalistic ideals of comradeship to counter stereotypes of homosexuals as effeminate ‘social outsiders,’ and they applied this new warrior image to the sexual reform movement. In contrast, front newspapers that were produced for (heterosexual) mass soldiers’ readership embraced a softer or an effeminate side to comradeship and the warrior ideal that do not easily fit into strict dichotomies of the martial ‘good comrade’ versus the deviant, effeminate male ‘other.’ Front newspapers depicted men, ostensibly heterosexual, who fantasized about gender transgression within the ‘safe’ confines of humor and entertainment. Fantasies of gender transgression tended to simultaneously reinforce traditional gender structures and signal a need by heterosexual men to modify or even escape from martial masculinity. In their fantasies of gender inversion, men attempted to normalize and humanize non-normative sexuality. In contrast, homosexual civil rights advocates, by celebrating martial masculinity and denouncing ‘effeminate’ men, moved closer to the mainstream culture’s militarized image of manliness.

Friday, September 30, 2011, 9:30 AM – 12:00 noon

PANEL III: Violence

Dorothee Wierling (Hamburg/Germany): Imagining and Communicating Violence: The Case of a Berlin Family's Correspondence 1914–1918

The paper will take up the case of a family's correspondence, and explore how experiences of war violence are imagined, communicated and interpreted among the family members, one of whom – the teenage son – is serving as a young officer at the Eastern front. The paper attempts to understand why violence is basically seen as a positive experience, and how this valuation is linked – in the context of the Great War – to an ideal of masculinity, shared by the correspondents as their own ideal self.

Gabriela Dudeková (Bratislava/Slovakia): Suffering and Catharsis: Gender-Specific Reflection of Violence in World War I

Gender aspects of perceptions and experiences of World War I could be analyzed from different points of view and based on various sources. The paper attempts to compare the official normative propaganda-formulated concepts of masculinity and femininity to self reflections based on ego-

documents such as correspondence, memoirs and interviews. The official wartime discourse seemingly redefined gender issues, especially the role of women. The propaganda appeals urged people to fulfill their duty towards their homeland precisely on gender-specific fronts: Men on the battlefield, women at home. Instead of redefinition, this unavoidably strengthened the conservative gender hierarchies. Ego-documents enable us to uncover the way in which people adapted, and the strategies of behavior that they used in new circumstances, such as war. A particularly interesting source is the censored and withheld correspondence kept in a regional archive in Nitra (Slovakia), as well as a special collection of oral historical narratives entitled “World War I” in the archive of the Institute of Ethnology and Slovak Ethnographic Society in Bratislava. Correspondence and the memoirs written and published after the war offer new dimensions for interpretations of perception and experience of everyday wartime reality, based on approaches of social history and social anthropology. Perceptions of violence and reflections on this traumatizing experience comprise an interesting and relatively new focus of research – a very important one for the education of younger generations. The paper will analyze from the gender perspective different types of experiences of wartime violence (such as in battle, in captivity, in prison), and reflections on the ways in which people dealt with these different circumstances.

Marie-Emmanuelle Reytier (Hamburg/Germany) / Dorota Kurpiers (Opole/Poland): Rape Victims and Rapists: An Introduction to Sexual Crimes Committed by German, Austro-Hungarian and French Troops, 1914–1925

Sex crimes that were perpetrated by German, Austro-Hungarian or French troops during and after the First World War remain largely ignored; moreover, there is no synthesis that considers them in their entirety. This gap is probably due to the fact that the archives were closed for a long time (for instance in Poland), and due to the very different situations on the Western and the Eastern Front. Indeed, in the west, the context was clear: German troops invaded Belgium and northern France. The rapes were committed on enemy civilians. On the other hand, in the east, there were Polish soldiers in the Russian, German, and Austro-Hungarian armed forces: Rapists could be Polish.

It seems important to recount the history of rape committed between August 1914 and August 1925 (the date of the end of the occupation of the Ruhr) by German, Austro-Hungarian and French soldiers, because these crimes occurred at a crossroads. In fact, until the First World War, rape was regarded as unfortunate and inevitable collateral damage. It was during the First World War that rape became an unacceptable crime. The charge of rape became a political weapon used by the Triple Entente to demonize German troops and strengthen the victim status of peoples that were invaded. The example of Belgium is well known: Propaganda in the countries of the Triple Entente spoke of the “rape” of Belgian neutrality by German troops in August 1914. This culminated in speeches denouncing the famous “German atrocities” against civilians in Belgium and northern France. Throughout the occupation of the Rhineland, Germans also used the same propaganda to make the presence of French troops on German soil intolerable in American and English public opinion. The French counterattacked by opening the councils of war to the public, a new attitude aimed at refuting the charge that the rapes were allegedly orchestrated by the occupants.

Friday, September 30, 2011, 1:30 PM – 3:45 PM

PANEL IV: Visualization

Beatriz Pichel (Madrid/Spain): Photography and Masculinity during the First World War in France

While cultural history has traditionally approached the question of death in wartime by examining the mourning rituals and the commemorative ceremonies, this paper proposes a theoretical perspective focused on what we refer to by the term “death”. As Butler’s question “When is life grievable?” suggests, not every life is fully recognized as such. What is acknowledged as a life depends on social, cultural, and political norms, as well as what is regarded as death. Thus, this paper aims to bring to light the practices and representations which defined which deaths mattered during the First World War in France.

The focus on visual representations, in particular on photography, will enable an analysis of the values promoted by the French military and governmental authorities. Among them, this study argues that masculinity played an essential role because it served both to characterize the ideal French soldiers and to denigrate the enemy. In this process, the construction of the body, especially the dead body, became an essential tool for defining grievable death. This is why this paper will analyze the photographs showing cadavers. These images give rise to two related questions. On the one hand, they show that racial and national differences were reduced to a bodily diversity, which was interpreted in gender terms related to moral qualities. On the other hand, the photographs reveal that not all kinds of death were visually represented. Once again, this omission can be read in gender terms. In conclusion, by means of the analysis of the photographs intended to represent death, this paper suggests that death was a gendered category during the First World War. Masculinity thus became a demarcating criterion of what was recognized as death in war.

Joëlle Beurier (Paris/France): Women, Photographs, and Non-Fighting Men: A Redefinition of Masculinity in Wartime

During World War I, every European country had some of its male population fighting in the midst of the extreme violence at the front line. The illustrated press – photos and engravings – pictured the soldiers as heroes, thus enticing each country into creating its own understanding of a new manhood. In France, the hero's glorification was built upon suffering and resilience. At the same time, pictures illustrated the visible emancipation of women at the home front and sometimes closer to the front line. In the pictures, women could be seen transgressing many a gender taboo during the war, with objectivity if not admiration.

Soldiers were made heroes, and so were the women who stayed at the home front. There is only one group that did not participate in any such glorious deeds: The “non-fighting men”. Within the illustrated press, these men represent themselves as a group set aside from the rest of society, which has not been transformed by the violence of the war. They are unified by a feeling of belonging to the same intermediate gender, which they show as a “subgender”, sexually unaccomplished and socially despised. An anthropological study of this group will enable a better understanding of how societies functioned at war and after the war.

Julia Barbara Köhne (Vienna/Austria): Visualizing War Hysterics: Strategies of Feminization and Re-Masculinization in Scientific Cinematography, 1916–1918

During World War I, officials at military headquarters and hospitals saw themselves confronted with an unexpected phenomenon: Large numbers of soldiers displaying the symptoms of war hysteria, including ways of walking and speaking as well as tics, paralysis, and other disabling factors. Psychiatric and neurological knowledge of traumatization was insufficiently sophisticated at that time; a medical consensus had not yet been found. In fact, it was only found in the 1970s as a reaction to soldiers suffering from massive psychological injuries during the Vietnam War. Therefore, symptoms of war hysteria were considered to be signs of male weakness, anti-heroism, and even so-called “inner desertion”.

The widespread phenomenon severely damaged idealized and glorified images of the strong soldier. War hysterics seemed to subvert male myths and ideologies such as strength, the display of tough fighting skills, and a strong belief in victory – at that time associated with warfare.

Between 1916 and 1918, the use of scientific cinematography – a relatively new medical visualization technique – increased considerably in the field of military psychiatry. It served to distribute knowledge and empirical values about innovative therapies (amongst others, forced physical training and electric shock therapy). It was also used to document methods that accelerated and improved the healing process for patients. Thus, scientific cinematography helped the medical community to take on the fight against the rapidly increasing numbers of soldiers and even high-ranking officers suffering from war hysteria.

With teleological narration, scientific films on war hysteria served a twofold function: On the one hand, they pathologized and feminized the affected soldiers by stressing their psychic vulnerability. The patients were characterized as a source of irritation within the well-structured military corps. On the other hand, these films bore opposing ‘messages’. In accordance with their specific healing

dramaturgy, they re-installed the image of the brave, active, physically fit and masculine soldier. Their special filmic coding included the (magical) disappearance of the respective patient's symptoms. Thus, the uniform was, literally and metaphorically, put back on ("re-dressing") in order to re-idealize and re-militarize the feigned convalescent patient as a "hero". Therefore, films on war hysteria (I will show film clips from Germany, Great Britain, and France) can be analyzed as highly gendered sign systems and imaginary 'healing machines' that indicated healing without failure – which, in reality, was mostly an unattainable goal.

Friday, September 30, 2011, 4:15 PM – 6:30 PM

PANEL V: Peace

Bruna Bianchi (Venice/Italy): Towards a New Internationalism: Pacifist Journals edited by Women (1914–1919)

The first part of the paper focuses on the space devoted to feminist pacifism in three journals published in Lugano, Geneva, and Lausanne: *Coenobium*, *Demain*, and *Les Tablettes*. These journals, in fact, apart from giving exposure to women's international peace conferences, featured numerous papers by pacifist women, and published some of their key writings in French translation. During the conflict, some new journals also emerged that were edited by women, others survived censorship and kept the internationalist ideal alive, supported conscientious objection, denounced war crimes, and dealt with the issue of peace education.

The second part of the paper analyzes a French journal, *La mere educatrice*, founded by Madeleine Vernet in 1917, and the journal *Jus Suffragii*, published by the *International Woman Suffrage Alliance* (IWSA), which from 1913 to 1919 was edited by Mary Sheepshanks. She gave the periodical a pacifist orientation and managed to preserve its international quality. In addition, she was committed to maintaining relations with suffragists from war-affected countries, as well as publishing news, reports, appeals and theoretical writings on war and peace.

Ingrid Sharp (Leeds/UK): "A Foolish Dream of Sisterhood": Anti-Pacifist Debates in the German Women's Movement, 1914–1919

In 1914, the dominant discourse within the women's organizations was of the natural pacifism and the international solidarity of all women, especially those who were working in their own nations to improve their social, professional and political situations. In all combatant nations, the majority of organized women supported the war policies of their government and suspended their international contacts, while a small minority of women in each nation opposed the war and retained or even strengthened international contacts. In Germany, the two poles were represented by the women of the *Bund Deutscher Frauenvereine* (BDF), notably Gertud Bäumer, who organized women's work in support of the war, and Lida Gustava Heymann and Anita Augspurg, members of Germany's most radical suffrage organization, who were active in working for peace.

It was in the interests of both groups of women to distance themselves from the ideas and attitudes of the other. For the women of the BDF, the association with the highly negative elements suffrage, internationalism, and pacifism threatened to undermine their own unstated war aims, tacitly geared towards demonstrating the fitness of women for involvement in the life of the state, and full acceptance in the national community. For the pacifist women, the existence of a warlike majority undermined their view of the innate pacifism of women on which their own claims to full female citizenship rested.

This paper will examine three key, interlinked ideas – pacifism, internationalism, and suffrage – in the following areas:

- The differing responses of the BDF and German pacifist women to the war;
- The context in which the women were operating as reflected in contemporary press reports;
- The strategies that the BDF employed to distance themselves from the activities of German pacifists and the women's international congress at The Hague.

**Thomas F. Schneider (Osnabrück/Germany): “Then Horror Came Into Her Eyes ...”:
(De-)Constructions of Masculinity in German Anti-War Texts on World War I, 1914–1918**

Numerous studies have been published on war and masculinity, mainly addressing nationalist male authors and their understanding of male behavior in times and circumstances of war, on categories of heroism, male fantasies of superiority, and on the construction of the “new man” as one of the outcomes of World War I. On the other hand, numerous studies have been published on female authors writing about war and gender aspects, on the destruction and construction of gender, and modes of relationships between the sexes, especially focusing on differences and consistencies in constructions of masculinity in wartime.

But what about the pacifists? Did pacifist or anti-war writing during World War I inherit different concepts of masculinity? Did pacifist male writers aim at another concept of masculinity in order to achieve their pacifist goal? Is there any de-construction of the dominant masculinity wartime discourse as one (first) step to put an end to the Great War or war in general?

This paper will focus on anti-war texts written by pacifist male authors during World War I with a close examination of the (de-)construction of masculinity and constructions of new forms of masculinity as one consequence of the experience of this first modern war. I will initially discuss a distinction of masculinity and its sub-category, soldiery. Second, I will describe the circumstances and restrictions of writing, publishing and distribution of anti-war texts in the German Empire. Then I will turn to the texts written during wartime, especially poems published in the expressionist periodicals *Die Aktion* and *Der Sturm*, and prose published in Swiss exile, mainly in the publishing house of Max Rascher in Zurich. Finally, the discussion of (de-)constructions of masculinity in texts of the post-war period will widen the perspective and I will investigate whether the wartime texts had any lasting impact on the pacifist representation of war.

Saturday, October 1, 2011, 9:30 AM – 1:00 PM

PANEL VI: Citizenship

Nikolai Vukov (Sofia/Bulgaria): Women’s Public Responses to War and Issues of Citizenship in Bulgaria during World War I

The onset of World War I found Bulgaria in a state of economic and social disaster after the catastrophe that the country had faced following the second Balkan war. In the tense period before Bulgaria joined the side of the Central Powers in October 1915, different women’s organizations were involved in attempts to improve the disastrous situation after 1913 – through volunteer work in military schools and hospitals, journalist activities, and maintaining international contacts for the purpose of overcoming the state’s political isolation. Whereas in the first years of World War I, Bulgarian women and women’s organizations joined or themselves initiated demonstrations for supporting the policy of the country’s neutrality, the period of belligerency was marked by a series of women’s anti-war protests, public demonstrations, and hunger strikes. These public expressions were affirmations of women’s social and political rights and showed a new notion of citizenship as a claim for an equal role in shaping the policy of the nation-state. The goal of the current paper is to shed light on the role that women and organized women’s movements had in Bulgarian public life at the onset of the war and in the course of military action, focusing particularly on the cases of anti-war initiatives, protests and public responses to developments at the war front. All of these will be regarded as providing a new discourse on citizenship and women’s rights in the context of military action.

Virginija Jureniene (Kaunas/Lithuania): Lithuanian Women during World War I: Activities and Aspirations

World War I was the beginning of a new life for most men and women, not only of Lithuania, but other countries as well. Women had to represent their families in the community and take care of the protection of the home. Until the war, men had carried out this function. Besides household and community duties, women became involved in public life. After Lithuania was occupied by the German Empire in the fall of 1915, all organizations were banned, therefore women worked on their own initiative. They fed captives, organized the nursing of wounded soldiers, sewed clothes, and raised funds for those who suffered from war, for the lame, the injured, and the homeless all over the

country, as well as opening a dining canteen for Lithuanians. During the war, women established and ran these organizations: *To Support our Countrymen from Prussian Lithuania who Suffered from War* as well as *To Support those who Suffered from War*. Lithuanian women worked actively not only in occupied Lithuania, but also in parts of Russia: Voronezh, Moscow, Saint Petersburg. When the war started, women transferred their organizations, parties, schools, and activities to Russia. We know of only a few Lithuanian women who worked in Western Europe in the course of the war. This presentation will analyze the activities of women in occupied Lithuania, in Russia, and in Western Europe. It should be noted that all of the activities of women were devoted to the survival of the nation during wartime and the restoration of the statehood.

The activity of Lithuanian women has not been thoroughly analyzed until now, so the aim of the presentation is to analyze the organized and non-organized activity of Lithuanian women, revealing its peculiarities and features of implementing organizational and individual aims. The presentation will be based on the press reports of World War I and archive material.

Tina Bahovec (Klagenfurt/Austria): Of Women's Armies, Heroic Mothers and Insane Men. Strategies and Discourses of the National and Political Mobilization of Carinthian Slovene Women from 1917 to 1920

In the years 1917–1920, (Carinthian) Slovene women played an important role in the May declaration movement, demanding the unification of the Habsburg South Slavs in an independent state under Habsburg scepter, as well as in the propaganda for the Carinthian plebiscite that resolved the border dispute between the new Yugoslav and Austrian states. The article discusses the discourses and strategies used in the organization and mobilization of (Carinthian) Slovene women in public speeches, newspaper articles, propaganda material, etc. It focuses on three (partially overlapping) fields: The notions of (national and/or political, female and/or male) duties/rights, and war/peace; the question of (women's) voting rights and (men's) military duty; the images of the "heroic mother" and the "women's army". In general, we encounter an ambiguous mixture of old and new gender(ed) roles and images in a time when the old gender order was becoming fragile and women were called upon on a large scale to step into the public sphere and into politics – first and foremost for national objectives, less for their own. The results of women's commitment were also ambiguous, as Slovene women becoming citizens of Yugoslavia gained "national freedom", but other rights including suffrage were withheld from them, whereas Carinthian Slovene women as citizens of Austria gained political rights, but their national rights were contested. The paper concludes with a comparative glance at pre- and post-war gender relations in Southern Carinthia, and questions for future research.

Allison Scardino Belzer (Savannah, GA/USA): Making Women into Citizens: The Great War in Italy

The Great War profoundly altered how Italian society perceived women and their relationship to the state. *Making Women into Citizens: The Great War in Italy* relies on contemporary articles, essays, pamphlets, and speeches by Italian women and men. The discourse about female participation in the national war effort articulated a new understanding of femininity that prioritized national loyalties above gender identity. Derived from my recently published *Women and the Great War: Femininity under Fire in Italy* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), my paper explores the changing discussion of civic inclusion that paved the way for acceptance of Fascism only four years after the war ended; total war (1914–1918) became total politics (1922–1943).

During the Great War, the public understanding of what it meant to be a good woman shifted. Replacing the nineteenth-century model of the wife and mother who dwelt in the home away from public life, wartime society constructed the *donna italiana* as the ideal type of woman. She was fervently patriotic and willing to sacrifice herself for the good of the state. The war brought her into the public sphere by treating her as a citizen of Italy. This definition of "citizenship" was not an emancipatory civic ideal, but it did offer women a place on the national stage. For the first time in Italian history, women were expected to participate in national life and to see themselves as members of a group bigger than their own individual families. The public portrayal of the *donna italiana* invited women to be female citizens in exchange for their unquestioning commitment to the national cause of winning the war.