

2-1-1998

*New Voices in the Nation: Women and the Greek
Resistance, 1941-1964*, by Janet Hart

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Publication Info

Published in *American Historical Review*, Volume 103, Issue 1, 1998, pages 229-230.

<http://www.indiana.edu/~ahrweb/>

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the fifth and final cholera epidemic in 1910–1911, a reconstruction made quite difficult as the government of Prime Minister Giolitti denied that any such outbreak had occurred in order to preserve the image of Italy as a modern and healthy nation and to prevent disruption of the Neapolitan economy. So desperate was his government to maintain this fiction that it published false health statistics, censored the mail of local officials, brought criminal charges against doctors diagnosing cholera, bribed the press, and harassed American consular officials who reported the real situation back to Washington. In so doing, Giolitti broke the Paris Convention of 1903 (requiring the reporting of all cases of cholera to international authorities) and facilitated the spread of the disease to New York and Buenos Aires by unsuspecting but infected immigrants.

A third theme addressed by both authors is that of the often conflictual relationship between doctors and their patients. In late eighteenth-century Trent, professionally trained physicians were only beginning to assert their authority over barber-surgeons, midwives, and other local healers trusted by the poor. Taiani's fascinating account of the process of "medicalization" complicates the usual story of a clear-cut opposition between traditional folk practitioners and modern doctors. In Trent, communal governments, often with the support of physicians, tended to exempt traditional healers from new regulations prescribing professional training and certification. In the case of midwives, for example, older women who had served a rural community well for many years were excused from the courses and examinations required of new recruits. For a period of transition, then, Trent had two parallel networks of personnel, one educated and the other using traditional methods. In this way, state-employed doctors were able gradually to assert control over public health without alienating the poor. Some physicians even recognized the wisdom of traditional methods and systematically recorded folk remedies. Taiani thus concludes that modern health policies in Trent were not simply imposed by the state from the top down but were developed in interaction with the local population.

In late nineteenth-century Naples, distrust of doctors was also widespread. Snowden argues persuasively that the initial response of the state to the epidemic of 1884—using police to enforce quarantines—only fueled the antipathy of the urban poor toward physicians. Cholera created "literal class warfare" as hysteria gripped the city leading to riots, witch hunts for suspected scapegoats, and conspiracies to conceal the sick from medical authorities (p. 138). Popular resistance abated only when a private organization, the White Cross, substituted persuasion for force. Banning police from its efforts, the White Cross initiated a campaign of public education by doctors in poor neighborhoods. This volunteeristic approach worked so well that antipathy toward the medical establishment

seems to have disappeared by the 1910–1911 outbreak of cholera.

In the end, these two works leave the reader with quite different impressions of the "politics of health" in modern Italy. In Trent, the state appears well-intentioned—if inefficient and tardy—in its efforts to organize a modern system of public health care. Naples presents a quite different picture; there both local and national government treated the poor with contempt, sending armed police against them in 1884 and fomenting a propaganda of lies in 1910–11. Officials at the highest levels were willing to sacrifice human lives on the altar of Italy's international reputation. Neither study devotes enough attention to gender, although women appear fleetingly as midwives in Trent and as protestors against quarantine in Naples. Equipped with excellent bibliographies, both books should inspire further research into the ways in which the new history of medicine can enrich our understanding of modern Italy.

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JANET HART. *New Voices in the Nation: Women and the Greek Resistance, 1941–1964*. (Wilder House Series in Politics, History, and Culture.) Ithaca: Cornell University Press. 1996. Pp. xiii, 313. Cloth \$39.95, paper \$16.95.

Some thirty years before Janet Hart conducted her field research, R. V. Burks interviewed a number of individuals who had been in the Greek leftist resistance movement (EAM), including members of the Greek Communist Party (KKE). When Burks did his "interrogations," his subjects were still in prison, either tried by courts for crimes against the state or arrested and held as dangerous to public order. Burks interviewed those, male and female, who agreed to sign declarations of repentance. He considered it "useless to approach the non-repentants" (*The Dynamics of Communism in Eastern Europe* [1961], p. 24). Burks's purpose was to analyze the social or class basis of the Communist movements that by then had come to power in eastern Europe. The women he interviewed in one prison did not have much formal education, seemed to have little knowledge of or interest in world affairs, said they had become party supporters because they were promised material goods, and now denounced communism as an evil, turning against it and toward the right if they expressed any preferences in current political life. At the time of Burks's study, Greece was firmly in the hands of a rightist government. *Ethnikofrosini*, a national-patriotic mentality composed of virulent anticommunism, ethnic exclusivity, and support for Greek Orthodoxy predominated; "others" were labeled *symmorites* (bandits and gangsters), their voices muzzled, and memory of their actions erased from the official collective identity.

How different was the situation when Hart worked in Greece. It is important to note this in order to

understand how profoundly recent Greek history was affected by the events of the 1940s. In the 1980s, a socialist government was in power. One of its avowed goals was to bring about a healing of the breach, stemming from the events of the 1940s, that had divided Greek society. The left had come into its own as the resistance (*antistasi*), and its wartime contributions against the foreign occupiers were officially recognized by the state. The "others" now had a voice in the nation through memoirs, diaries, documents, interviews, organizations, and documentaries. It was the right moment, and Hart was in the right place to engage the past through its survivors in the present. But, as Hart is aware, there are issues that confront the researcher precisely because of such seemingly favorable circumstances.

This book examines the potential for social mobilization by an organization committed to political and social change in a time of crisis. Within this theoretical framework, it considers the Greek resistance and its impact on the women who joined it. The work is an empathetic and sympathetic postmodernist study of the problems related to gender. Hart is motivated as much by engaged scholarly analysis of the past as by a commitment to social justice in the future.

The temporal framework of the study runs from the organizing of the resistance, when Greece was an occupied country, to the mid-1960s, when a center-left government had just been elected and most prisoners from the civil war were released. But the greater part of the work is concerned with the wartime era up to the start of the civil war in 1946; a final chapter covers the remaining years. Hart's theoretical framework is as much in the foreground of the study as the specific events. She draws on an array of recent studies from social science disciplines to weave a coherent and intellectually challenging narrative. In particular, Hart relies heavily on the ideas of Antonio Gramsci for her analysis and interpretation of the politics of social mobilization.

By choice, Hart leaves out a great deal when it comes to the historical events of the time: the nature, policies, and strategy and tactics of the KKE; the motives and significance of many of the political and military (male) leaders of the resistance; the role of outside forces; the changing nature of the left in tactics; and its recruitment of members once the civil war commenced.

To the historian, three elements stand out both for their intellectual creativity and for the concerns they raise about the study of the past. The first is the use of Gramsci's ideas as both text *and* context. Hart depicts the Greek resistance as a force for mobilizing social groups and understanding the cultural factors involved in seeking to bring about modernist change. There certainly was an element of social progress in the political vision of the resistance, which it pursued at first through moderate rather than violent means. But to what degree this was practiced and to what extent the leadership believed in this goal and stayed with it

as it confronted its opponents are questions that are still debatable. Hart also seeks to draw out possible influences and interactions between Gramsci and Greek intellectuals, raising questions about how influential Gramsci's ideas were and, more importantly, whether they had any real impact on Greek leftists of that era.

This leads to the second issue of creativity and concern for the historian. Unable to determine if there was any direct conduct between Gramsci and people like the demoticist intellectual Dimitrios Glinos, Hart relies on "historical imagination" (p. 63) to assert a common culture of antifascist thought in Europe. Although an intellectually stimulating exercise, it skirts historical factualness.

The third issue is how to treat the perceptions and memory of the women the author interviewed. Were they recalling historical reality, or were they reinventing their past as justification for the hardship they suffered later and as self-validation? And, as Hart asks, when some of the commentary from the men whom she interviewed contradicts the idea that equality for women was a real goal of the resistance, what is to be made of their testimonies?

Through her research, Hart highlights three positive aspects of the historical significance of the left resistance in Greece: the ability of EAM to gain a following among significant numbers of people who were hoping for social and civic change; the appeal of the resistance policy of constructing a national society through defensive nationalism; and the expectations raised among women for future civic equality.

In using the Greek case as a means to explore the possibilities of change in other societies at a later time, Hart engages in ahistoricism and the transhistorical use of the past, the perils of which she recognizes. Nevertheless, her account amplifies our understanding of the recent historical legacy in Greece while placing it in a wider spatial and theoretical perspective.

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JAMES RAMON FELAK. *"At the Price of the Republic": Hlinka's Slovak People's Party, 1929-1938.* (Pitt Series in Russian and East European Studies, number 20.) Pittsburgh, Pa.: University of Pittsburgh Press. 1994. Pp. xiv, 263. \$59.95.

On January 1, 1993, Slovak nationalism achieved the goal of all nationalist movements, an independent state. The upsurge of Slovak nationalism in Czechoslovakia after the "Velvet Revolution" in 1989 was no novelty but a contemporary manifestation of a problem that had shaped the country's history since 1918: what should be the political relations between Czechs and Slovaks? In interwar Czechoslovakia, the most intransigent advocate for a separate, autonomous Slovak nation was Hlinka's Slovak People's Party (HSPP), named for its charismatic leader, the Catholic priest Andrej Hlinka. James Ramon Felak's study of this