Chapter 1

Women in Europe between the Wars: a Culture of Contradictions

Angela Kershaw and Angela Kimyongür

Griffin and Braidotti's *Thinking Differently: A Reader in European Women's Studies* begins with an ironic challenge to the reader to name five feminists from the United States, five from Britain and five from other European countries.[1] An equally difficult challenge might be to ask readers about to embark on this book to name five women active in European politics, culture or professional life during the years between the two World Wars. The difficulty of such a task is unsurprising given the recurrence in the essays in this volume of motifs of exclusion and marginalization, experiences which characterized women's activities in all areas of public life during the inter-war period. Politics continued to be defined as a masculine sphere, even after the granting to women of the right to vote and to stand for election; in literature, women's writing was excluded from the canon and thereby from serious critical consideration; in professional life – journalism, public service or education, for example – women had to fight for recognition and resist discourses which often sought to relegate them to the private sphere.

And yet, it is not sufficient to approach the study of women in the inter-war period only from the perspectives of marginalization and exclusion. A wide range of research has already shown that inter-war women certainly were active in the cultural, political and social domains between the wars. Nonetheless, their activities and achievements are not necessarily familiar to readers today. In some cases, this is because adequate account was not taken of their activities by critics and commentators at the time.[2] In others, the process of marginalization has been retrospective: the names of many of the women who feature in the essays in this volume have fallen from memory, familiar only to a minority of specialists, despite the fact that they were well-known figures in their own time. Contemporary commentators who believed – or had a political motivation for making others believe – that the notion of female genius was a contradiction in terms and that women who pretended to an autonomous political or professional identity were acting against the best interests of the state, were unlikely to review their books or record their passage through history. And this has had its effect in terms of defining the object of research of later scholars: texts which were not reviewed at all, or were badly reviewed, which exist only in manuscript, or which were published in tiny print runs do not make it into the canon, and there has been an assumption that that which was not discussed at the time probably was not very important in any case. There has therefore been, and still is, a need for uncovering, for recuperation

of women's past. Some of the essays in this collection are motivated precisely by this need and desire to recover something that has been lost, for example, Lesley Twomey's work on Victoria Kent, Jane Fenoulhet's and Sharon Wood's discussions of Dutch and Italian women writers respectively, Ailsa Wallace's recuperation of German literature for young girls, and Lisa Silverman's recovery of the activities and experiences of Austrian Jewish women. But equally, this volume seeks to acknowledge progress that has already been made. As Martine Antle argues, research must now seek to show the variety and intrinsic interest of women's activities and demonstrate how this might lead us to review and possibly revise our understanding of the period as a whole. Some of the writers addressed in these pages certainly have no need of recuperation or recovery: this is the case of British writers such as Storm Jameson and Rebecca West, analyzed here by Jennifer Birkett and Mary Anne Schofield. It is important to bear in mind that a female gender identity does not necessarily lead to erasure from our collective memory, and that other factors have caused the lives and works of women and men alike to be forgotten. However, women's history remains a legitimate area of inquiry, as the many studies which now exist, both archival and methodological, amply demonstrate.

For women's history, and women's studies more generally, has of course a history of its own, and that history is a particularly self-reflexive one. It is appropriate therefore that this introduction should briefly interrogate its own academic contexts. The present volume is intended as a collection of practical illustrations rather than as a theoretical work. Nonetheless, in presenting the life and work of an individual woman, or in analyzing the collective experience of a discrete group of women in a particular country, the authors of the chapters collected here seek to demonstrate how those lives, works or experiences are illustrative of wider phenomena and recurrent themes characteristic of the inter-war period in Europe. A collection such as this one cannot pretend to offer a comprehensive overview of its subject: its more modest aim is to complement existing research by bringing together in a single volume studies based on a range of European national jurisdictions, with the intention that readers will see points of contact as well as points of divergence so that further research will be stimulated. The authors of the chapters collected here were not required to confirm to a common theoretical framework or methodology; it is hoped, rather, that the range of approaches taken to the task of illuminating European women's experiences of, and responses to, the inter-war period will serve to reveal the richness and diversity of their contributions. Commenting on his approach to the study of the lives of 'eminent Victorians' in his book of the same title, first published in 1918, Lytton Strachey wrote that 'I have sought to examine and elucidate certain fragments of the truth which took my fancy and lay to my hand'.[3] This eminently modernist approach to the investigation of past lives is appropriate to our period: this is not to say that the method or the result is arbitrary, any more than those of Strachey himself. It is rather to underline the impossibility of a totalized or homogenous account. Strachey is probably right that 'the direct method of a scrupulous narration' is not nearly so revealing as the selection of telling examples,[4] however, it is of course necessary to present those examples such that their meaning and coherence become evident.

Strachey suggests that the historian should 'row out over that great ocean of material, and lower down into it, here and there, a little bucket, which will bring up to the light of day some characteristic specimen, from those far depths, to be examined with careful curiosity'.[5] We have lowered our bucket into three distinct – though inevitably interrelated and overlapping – areas which, using a conventional shorthand, we have termed 'politics', 'culture' and 'society'. In Part I, we examine women's relationship to politics mediated through creative writing; in Part II, women's relationship to culture mediated through the notion of the canon, and, in Part III, women's relationship to society mediated through the structures of professional life, philanthropic work and voluntary organizations. By focusing our study on three broad but crucial domains of human activity and experience, we hope not only to illustrate, but also to elucidate something of the story of women between the wars in Europe.

It is not only Strachey's preference for the telling example that makes him an appropriate reference point for this volume, but also his interest in that fascinating oxymoron, the 'woman of action'. His account of Florence Nightingale as a maniacal, frenzied and power-crazed workaholic may not endear him to feminist historians. It nonetheless demonstrates a woman disrupting the gender conventions of her time, and shows the far-reaching and profoundly political implications of her all-too-feminine concern with cleanliness and health – an argument Lesley Twomey makes in this volume in relation to Victoria Kent's prison reforms. Strachey sets out to explore the space between the myth of the saintly, delicate and self-sacrificing 'lady with the lamp' and the determined individual whose experience of reorganizing medical provision in the Crimea ultimately led her to attempt to reorganize that bastion of British masculinity, the War Office. That Strachey's account oscillates between the poles of admiration and ridicule is illustrative of the gender anxieties of his own age, characterized by a culture at once convinced of, but unnerved by, female power and emancipation.

The authors of the chapters collected here have been free to choose from the wide variety of approaches available to them thanks to the fertility of the field of women's studies, fertility which has resulted from the continued development of the discipline. Women's history has passed through an initial (and, it should be said, most productive) phase which was separatist in approach and sought to illuminate that which had been previously obscured: hence the dominance of titles such as *Hidden from History* (Sheila Rowbotham, 1973), *Becoming Visible* (ed. Renate Bridenthal and Claudia Koontz, 1977), *Retrieving Women's History* (ed. S. Jay Kleinberg, 1988) and Joan Scott's essay on 'The Problem of Invisibility', included in Kleinberg's volume. The gradual extension of this work brought greater theoretical complexity. Michelle Perrot's collection on *Writing Women's History* remains an excellent introduction to the different directions in which the field began to develop.[6] Perrot herself has pioneered both the theory and the practice of women's history in France: the *History of Women in the West* project, in which she played a major role, is a landmark.[7] Since the publication of this work, historians have begun to address the 'ghetto-ization' of women's history by stressing the need for all history to be gender-aware, by advocating a gender-focused analysis of relationships and structures, and by using titles in which

the concept of women *in* history or the gendering of history replaces that of women's history.[8] The present volume seeks to understand both women's history and women *in* the history of the inter-war period, without pretending that the work of recuperation and recovery is over. It is, in a sense, unintentionally guilty of 'ghetto-ization' of another sort, in that all the contributors are women: this was by no means deliberate, but reveals yet again the gender imbalance which persists in academia as regards the analysis of women's lives and texts.

Contributors to this volume make it abundantly clear that the rehabilitation of women's voices in culture, politics and history is an ongoing task, since the neglect of decades cannot be remedied in a few years. It is also clear that, although women's inter-war voices may have been marginalized in their own time or forgotten in subsequent years, their contributions to contemporary debates about war, education, society and literature were far from being confined to a ghetto of 'women's issues'. The women who are the subjects of the various essays in this collection articulated views on the central issues of their time which, while revealing the specificities of their perspectives as women, are also of wider relevance. Jennifer Birkett and Mary Anne Schofield demonstrate how British women writers of the 1930s were committed to drawing attention to the looming prospect of a new war in Europe. Lesley Twomey and Martine Antle examine responses to Fascism in Spain, France and Germany, while Lisa Silverman considers the impact of anti-Semitism in Austria. Martine Antle and Laura Scurriati explore the roles of Claude Cahun, Hannah Höch, Mina Loy and Valentine de Saint Point who were active in avant-garde movements. This is not to say that issues relating specifically to their female gender were disregarded in their work, or that they were peripheral, but to stress the point that women had relevant views to articulate on the mainstream issues of their day, and indeed their part to play in these issues. In that sense the notion of ghetto is redundant.

That marginalization and exclusion continued to dog women's position in inter-war society might seem surprising, given the progress that had already been achieved. Strachey points out that, had Florence Nightingale been campaigning for reform of the institutions of government in 1918, she would have been part of the Commission.[9] In the immediate post-war period, and certainly by the end of the inter-war years, women in the majority of European countries had gained the right to vote. During the conflagration of the First World War, they had taken on new responsibilities, both in the home and in the workplace. The new self-confidence which women thus had the possibility to acquire during the war has been seen as a defining moment in the development of the women's movement.[10] The disruption to gender norms which resulted from this war was perhaps greater than had ever been seen before.[11] And yet, the end of the war was marked in many areas of Europe by a reassertion of traditional gender roles.[12] Some historians view such regression as normal, arguing that gains made by women during war are transient and pass when the disruption of war is over.[13] Others have proposed an intimate link between progression and regression in gender relations: Margaret and Patrice Higonnet have suggested that it was the very disruption of gender norms which occurred during the war that paved the way for the backlash which was to take place in the 1920s and beyond.[14]

What were the gains made by women during the First World War and why were they only temporary in nature? Women's work was of course not new in 1914, but until then women had largely taken unskilled, domestic jobs. The mass mobilization of male populations in 1914 and the subsequent decline in the working population meant that there was an economic imperative for women to enter the workforce, often taking jobs which had before been restricted to men, and often for higher wages than those to which they had been accustomed. During the war, women worked in munitions factories, in public transport, in banks and in numerous other professions. They became nurses at the front; they took on responsibilities as heads of families. Such activities were double-edged since they were necessary from the point of view of the economy and the pursuit of the war, but they also helped to create a new set of expectations in the women whom they liberated from lives previously constrained by the domestic sphere. Such expectations contrasted with more traditional attitudes towards women's role in the war, attitudes neatly encapsulated in the War Office's reported response to Dr Elsie Inglis's plan for a series of overseas hospitals: '"go home and keep quiet"'.[15] Perhaps little had changed in practice since Florence Nightingale's attempts to reform military medical care in the 1850s during and after the Crimean War. After the First World War, women were better paid than in the past (though still less well paid than men doing the same work), more independent, visibly competent in their new roles. At the same time, these developments created a certain level of anxiety in civilian societies, concerned that women might forget their 'essential' responsibilities as wives and mothers.[16] There were also fears among the soldiers at the front, generated by the disruption of pre-war gender roles, that in their absence, women would change beyond recognition or would be unfaithful.[17] The desire to ensure that women's dedication to their traditional domestic destinies did not waver manifested itself in a public preoccupation with the public and private conduct of women, with their appearance, with their clothes and hair, with their adoption of such unfeminine habits as drinking and smoking.[18]

The example of women's war work shows why the disruption to established gender norms was not necessarily going to survive much past the end of the war. For many women, November 1918 marked a very rapid return to their pre-war status, because their participation in the workforce had been 'only for the duration'. With the hostilities over, they were expected to return to 'normality'. This generally meant immediate demobilization, in other words, unemployment, either to make way for returning veterans or because their wartime work had ceased to exist. This policy gave no recognition to the contribution women had made to national economies during the war, nor to the fact that many women now needed to work even more than ever, either because they were now widows, or because they had become responsible for newly dependent, invalid husbands and fathers. The rapid dispensing with women's services responded to both an economic and a psychological imperative. It ensured that returning veterans had jobs to come back to, but also gave them a sense that they were returning to an unchanged world.[19] Women who remained in work were often criticized for doing so since they were deemed to be taking men's jobs.

We can only imagine the frustration and disappointment felt by women who, despite the heartaches of the war, had experienced during it a measure of freedom and independence, only to have their horizons limited once more by the expectation that they would henceforth dedicate themselves to the private sphere. And imagine it we can, since the traces of both their frustrations and their triumphs are inscribed in their texts. The coexistence of constraints and freedoms is striking: on the one hand, inter-war women could begin to take advantage of new opportunities, whilst on the other, they still had to resist the limitations which continued to be placed around their sphere of activity. The increase in the length and scope of girls' education was bearing fruit in terms of women's access to the professions, and although women had lost work in the immediate post-war years, the range of occupations open to them was greater than before.[20] There were many women who broke out of the mould: women involved in avant-garde artistic movements, women who became involved in public life and in politics despite practical difficulties and deeply entrenched prejudices. Given the odds stacked against them, their achievements are all the more admirable, and the critical neglect of their achievements all the more grievous.

Historians have proposed divergent interpretations of the global effect of the First World War on women. Françoise Thébaud points out that:

> [t]he idea that the Great War had done more to redefine relations between the sexes and emancipate women than years or even centuries of previous struggle had accomplished was widespread during and immediately after the conflict. It was commonplace in the literature and political speeches of the time […][21]

Subsequently, historians have engaged with this view, either to endorse, reject or nuance it. Four distinct positions have emerged: that the war changed everything, and paved the way for female emancipation; that the war changed nothing, and the inter-war period was predominantly characterized by the 'backlash' phenomenon; that whilst the 1920s saw a period of relative emancipation, the new political and economic context of the 1930s brought a reassertion of traditional gender roles; and that progressive and regressive definitions of femininity existed simultaneously during the inter-war period. It is our view that the essays collected in this volume suggest the last of these positions to be the most accurate description. Mary Louise Roberts has argued convincingly that the reconstruction of French society after the war took place via discourses on gender, and that such discourses proposed three very different modes of femininity in order to take account of, and understand, social change – the reassuring mother, the disruptive new woman and the ambiguous single woman.[22] The analysis of women's responses to their cultural context contained in the chapters collected here shows the variety of ways in which the co-existence of such disparate models of identity were negotiated. These responses show that such negotiation occurred both at an individual level and at the level of state intervention: for example, Louise Weiss's work reveals a very personal trauma resulting from her simultaneous desire for marriage and motherhood and her rejection of these models in favour of a completely autonomous identity as a politician and journalist, and Dodina's account

of the impact of Soviet policy on women shows how the state attempted to make it possible for women to combine the roles of mother and worker, treating them as both differently embodied and as potentially equally productive.

For some women, the encounter with history in the political arena and beyond proved to be a formative one in a period of momentous change, and it provides a frequent motif in these essays. Birkett illustrates Storm Jameson's intense awareness of the 'dangerous flood of history'[23] in the 1930s and of the part that she as a writer could play in it. In common with many male left-wing writers of the time, women writers such as Jameson demonstrated a belief in the power of art as a force for change. As history and politics force their way into art, the artist's voice becomes one of 'reason and conscience' in a mad world, as Schofield shows through the work of Jameson, Phyllis Bottome and Rebecca West. History also forces its way into writers' personal lives: Victoria Kent's autobiographical account of her period of exile is structured by a series of parallels between inter-war Spain and France during the Occupation, while the autobiography of Louise Weiss is structured by political and historical rather than by personal events. It was not only through their writing that women responded to history, but also through their participation in political activities. Victoria Kent was an elected politician in Republican Spain before the Civil War, while Louise Weiss campaigned for female suffrage in France. Storm Jameson was active in PEN as well as in Labour party and pacifist groups. Hermynia Zur Mühlen was a one-time member of the German Communist Party and later a Socialist activist, and Alexandra Kollontay, in her capacity as head of the Women's Section of the Communist Party Central Committee, played an active part in tackling gender issues in the Ukraine.

For many of the women discussed here, the encounter with history took the form of a political response to the First World War, the rise of Fascism and the threat of another war.[24] The characterization of the 1920s and 30s as the *inter-war* period is not an entirely retrospective construction, but accurately describes the experience of a generation only too conscious of the dangers the future presented, only too aware of the political imperative to understand the future in terms of the past and the past in terms of the future. European anti-Fascism was inevitably linked to the peace movement and was therefore Janus-faced, looking back to the First World War and ahead to a future conflict. Women's involvement with anti-Fascism was mediated by the long-standing association between feminism and pacifism.[25] Two international women's organizations might be seen as emblematic of these aspects of anti-Fascism. The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom was founded in 1915 at a congress in The Hague, at the instigation of Aletta Jacobs, President of the Dutch Association for Female Suffrage, and under the presidency of the American Jane Addams. The congress brought together women from across the whole spectrum of belligerent and non-belligerent countries in order to oppose the First World War and imagine ways to end it.[26] The League continued to work for peace throughout the inter-war period. In 1934 it held a congress in Zurich to consider how best to operate in the context of the new and increasing Fascist threat. This congress saw some disagreement between Gabrielle Duchêne, the leader of the French section, and other members over the issue of the use of violence. The organization found itself divided

over adherence to ultra-pacifist principles and the more pragmatic need to actively fight Fascism.[27] At the Zurich congress, Duchêne was criticized for her key role in organizing the Paris Congress of the International Committee of Women against War and Fascism in August 1934.[28] This organization was closely associated with the so-called 'Amsterdam-Pleyel' movement, which had arisen out of two congresses organised by the French Communist intellectuals Romain Rolland and Henri Barbusse in Amsterdam in 1932 and at the Salle Pleyel in Paris in 1933. These congresses were a direct response to Hitler's accession to power and sought to prevent a second conflict.[29] Leading women activists such as Dolores Ibárruri, Sylvia Pankhurst and Vera Brittain were important players in the International Committee of Women against War and Fascism, which was to become heavily involved in Republican relief efforts during the Spanish Civil War. As Siân Reynolds points out, women's anti-Fascist organizations were faced with the same issues as non-separatist groups: how could anti-Fascism move from a focus on pacifism to a focus on resistance, and to what extent did anti-Fascism imply a pro-Soviet stance?[30] The Committee was not a Communist Party organization and Duchêne was not a card-carrying Communist (although she was a fellow traveller); whilst the Amsterdam-Pleyel movement, and therefore the Committee, were Popular Front initiatives, the Committee did draw the participation of both left-wing and bourgeois feminists (such as Brittain).[31]

Women writers addressed Fascism via a wide range of discursive strategies.[32] In this volume, Jennifer Birkett discusses Storm Jameson's representations of politics embodied both as individual human beings and as the landscapes of the urban and rural societies created by those individuals, identifying ways in which Jameson employs complex syntax and fragmentary images to locate the individual within a collective 'landscape of experience'. Mary Anne Schofield's essay draws out metaphors of madness and sanity and of the madhouse and the prison from the novels of Jameson, Phyllis Bottome and Rebecca West. The image of awakening sleepers who are blissfully unaware of the dangers ahead recurs here, recalling Jameson's recommendation of Hermann Broch's *The Sleepwalkers*, cited by Birkett. Whilst the metaphor of the prison is a starting point for Schofield's discussion of women writer's evocations of the Fascist threat, in Victoria Kent's writing, the prison gives rise to a discussion on freedom. Kent shares with Louise Weiss a dependence on the trope of memory; Kent represents her experience of and opposition to Fascism through the motif of exile, which she depicts as haemorrhage. Schofield stresses British women writers' preference for realism as a mode of writing anti-Fascist fiction, whilst Sharon Wood suggests that during Italy's 'ventennio fascista', realism could be interpreted as a bearer of a collaborationist ideology, likely to result in the exclusion of women writers of realist fiction from serious consideration. For Germaine Dulac, cinematographic realism could be used to undermine Fascist ideology and politics; Tami Williams argues that Dulac's realism was productively informed by, not divorced from, her avant-gardism. Martine Antle shows how avant-garde artists manipulated received notions of gender and racial identity in order to contest Fascist misogyny and racism, and Wood shows that the use of experimental modes of writing and the renegotiation of female identity were deemed appropriate anti-Fascist strategies by Italian women writers.

The diversity of women's textual responses to Fascism is emblematic of the diversity of their creative output in a more general sense. Women were working in a multiplicity of different media – journalism, film, photography, as well as literature – and within a multiplicity of literary genres, contrary to the frequent perception of women as writers of nothing but novels. Consequently, the theme of genre emerges as a central preoccupation in a number of essays. Wood comments on the wide range of genres employed by women writers in inter-war Italy. Nonetheless, their writing was not always recognized by the literary establishment and thus did not find a way into the canon. Jennifer Milligan has identified the romance as a genre of choice for many inter-war French women writers,[33] and, through a number of the essays in this volume, we see this preference replicated by women in other countries of Europe. Fenoulhet shows how Dutch women's writing of the life of the emotions was seen, in the Netherlands of the inter-war period, as a transgressive act, bringing a hitherto private concern into the public domain. However, just as Milligan observes that, in writing romances women were often 'offering new directions, new definitions',[34] Fenoulhet shows how women used the form to draw attention to the unhappiness of the lives of many women caught within traditional expectations. Such writing was often shunned by the literary establishment as being on the wrong side of the high/low culture divide, despite – or perhaps because of – any commercial success it may have known. Wood attributes the lack of serious consideration of women's writing in this period in part to the assumption that women catered only to the market for romance, an assumption belied by the narrative experimentation she identifies in inter-war Italy. Wood's essay, as well as Scuriatti's and Antle's contributions, shows that some women were engaged in pushing back the boundaries of established genres. Others reworked existing forms. In her analysis of Hermynia Zur Mühlen's writing for young girls (itself a non-canonical genre), Wallace shows how Zur Mühlen both provides a critique of an existing genre and adapts it to reflect her own political ideology. Her narratives, moreover, offer a reworking of the *Bildungsroman*. Autobiography, a form often appropriated by women writers, is adopted and adapted by Louise Weiss and Victoria Kent, who both take the form beyond the personal to encompass the historical and the political.

Inter-war women writers and artists used a wide variety of textual strategies and cultural forms to explore and redefine what 'femininity' could mean in the new historico-political environment of post-First World War Europe. Their explorations of gender identity were a response to the simultaneous existence of different, contradictory models of femininity in inter-war culture, to which we have already referred. The notion that European women between the wars operated in a cultural context which offered them contradictory images of femininity can be illustrated by a consideration of two key elements of policy concerning women in the inter-war years: the vote question, and legislation relating to women's bodies. European women's access to suffrage was probably the most significant and visible result of the disruption of traditional gender identities that formed part of the social upheaval wrought by the First World War. Finland and Norway were exceptional in granting the vote to women in the early years of the century.[35] The pattern of post-war enfranchisement was by no means

coherent across Europe, although a trend towards increased political rights was clear: by the 1930s, most European countries had granted women the right to vote.[36] But France, Italy, Belgium, Switzerland and Greece were notable exceptions: thus, women looking beyond their own national borders would have perceived, at a European level, a contradictory state of affairs as regards the granting of female suffrage. Various interpretations of the development of European women's political rights have been suggested. Recently, Geoff Eley has argued that the particular form of democracy current in a given nation state was a key determinant.[37] Thus he distinguishes, for example, between new states formed as of 1918 where female enfranchisement was part of the creation of a new constitution (he cites Austria, Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland; one might also mention the Soviet Socialist Republics which were to form the USSR); established states which responded to the call for reform after the First World War (here Eley includes Britain, Ireland and the Netherlands); and states which resisted this call, such as France and Italy. The rise of Fascism in Italy, Germany, Austria and Spain had a detrimental effect on women's political and civil rights. Eley argues for a link between the dominance of the left and the expansion of women's political rights, maintaining that 'it is a salient fact of twentieth-century political history that female enfranchisement followed the fortunes of the Left'.[38] He also sounds a note of caution with which most commentators are in agreement: that political rights were by no means the only significant factor in relation to women's emancipation and their margin for activity in the public domain.[39] Whilst Anne Phillips is surely right to cite the right to vote as the basic unit of political participation,[40] Siân Reynolds's work on French women's 'alternative' politics in the inter-war period has shown that the very withholding of the franchise prompted women to engage in activities that can be termed political, and not only in relation to the suffrage question.[41] Clearly, the domain of the political was, in the inter-war period, and remains today, primarily a masculine sphere of activity to which even enfranchised women could only gain access by sacrificing their 'femininity' to some extent. In another recent study, Gisela Bock has, like Eley, pointed to the link between the nature of national democracy and women's quest for enfranchisement. For Bock, European women of the early twentieth century were canny political pragmatists: they called for political rights in propitious political circumstances – that is, at times when the fact that male democratization was on the national agenda meant that they had a better chance of success.[42] Bock argues that women's access to suffrage was determined in national contexts by the development of manhood suffrage in the country in question.[43] However, Bock is also keen to stress the internationalism of the European women's movement, noting that by 1929, the International Women's Suffrage Alliance, founded in Berlin in 1904, had 51 member organizations worldwide.[44] Whatever patterns, continuities or discontinuities one perceives in the history of European women's enfranchisement, it is undeniable that the period between the wars was one of intense debate and legislative activity as the nation states of Europe attempted to define, delimit and codify women's relationship to the polity.

There is not enough space in this introduction to write the history of female suffrage in each of the countries dealt with in the chapters which follow, and to do

so would be to accord an excessive significance to the role played by the vote in determining women's experience of, and activities during, the inter-war period in Europe. However, a brief overview of the different national situations will assist the reader in contextualizing the studies of European women contained in this collection.[45] Furthermore, it is justified by the undeniable symbolic power of the vote for women: whilst the granting of the vote by no means guaranteed full and equal inclusion in the polity, and its withholding did not prevent women from acting autonomously in the political and broader public sphere, Danièle Bussy Genevois's argument surely holds good for European women in general, that so-called 'political majority', that is, the right to vote and to stand for election, meant not only citizenship but also the recognition by women themselves of their own dignity and identity.[46]

In Britain, the campaign for women's suffrage was given new impetus by the notorious Mrs Pankhurst and her daughters, with the foundation of the Women's Social and Political Union in 1903. In 1918, the franchise was extended to women over the age of thirty under the Representation of the People Act, with full and equal suffrage being granted in 1928 under the Equal Franchise Act. Only property-owning women could vote under the 1918 act: economic status was a key element in the suffrage debate in Britain for both men and women. This act also extended the male franchise: women's partial access to citizenship in the wake of the war was granted as part of a broader rethinking of who should constitute the British electorate.[47] 'Votes for women' was a significant gain, and yet its presentation as a 'thank you' from the state for the female war effort had the effect of neutralizing any notion of a feminist victory.[48] The new Spanish Republican constitution of 1931 granted the vote to all citizens over the age of 23. In the elections of that year, women could stand as candidates, as in Victoria Kent's case, but could not vote; Spanish women voted for the first time in 1933. The Spanish Republic produced other high-profile female politicians, such as Margarita Nelken, Clara Campoamor and Dolores Ibárruri. However, the suspension of democracy in Spain brought with it the severe curtailment of the progressive legislation adopted by the Republic in favour of women; full equality was not restored until democracy was restored with the 1978 constitution.[49] In France, the question of women's suffrage was repeatedly passed between the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate in the inter-war period, but although the lower house voted in favour, the upper house rejected the suffragists' demands. With the approach of the Second World War, suffragist feminists such as Louise Weiss turned their attention away from local concerns to fight for the preservation of democracy on an international scale. The 1944 constitution of the French Fourth Republic granted women the right to vote, a right which they exercised for the first time in the elections of the following year.[50] Women in the Netherlands, like their Spanish sisters, obtained the right to stand for election in 1917 (when total male franchise was accorded), before they obtained the right to vote, in 1919. A concerted women's movement which argued for suffrage had emerged in the Netherlands in the 1890s; although it was composed of upper-class women, working-class women committed to Socialism also supported the vote.[51] Although a bill on female suffrage was presented before the Italian parliament in 1919, parliament was dissolved before it could be passed. Whilst Italian Fascism recognized

the need to mobilize women in support of its ideology, it did not seek meaningfully to include them in public life, but primarily defined their role in terms of motherhood. Fascist Italy granted women the right to vote in administrative elections, but since elections were then suspended in 1926, this new right had no significant effect. The acknowledgement of the possibility of a public and political role for women only came with the re-establishment of democracy: Italian women acquired the right to vote in 1945 under the terms of the new Republican constitution.[52] In Germany, the Third Reich did not remove the suffrage that had been granted to women under the Weimar constitution in 1918, although this was of limited significance given the abolition of free elections after 1932. In contrast to the policies on women in Fascist Italy, National Socialism did not define women primarily in terms of motherhood; Nazi eugenics required that maternalism be subordinated to racialism, and that women subscribe to national solidarity over gender solidarity.[53] Nazi women's organizations such as the National-sozialistische Frauenschaft and the Deutsches Frauenwerk seem to have had little real power. Austrian women were granted the vote in 1918 with the end of the monarchy and the establishment of the Republic, along with a raft of social reforms. Socialist women did play an important role in the 'Red Vienna' experiment, although party and trade union leadership remained a male preserve.[54] The Soviet states that resulted from the 1917 Bolshevik revolution were advanced in their views on gender. Soviet women were granted equality with men under the new national constitutions that emerged, including the right to vote and be elected, and gender equality was a feature of the 1924 constitution of the USSR. The 1920s saw the passing of much progressive legislation, as is illustrated in this volume via the example of the Ukraine. However, the unavoidable fact that legal equality does not necessarily produce equality in practice was as true in political life as it was in other domains: the level of women's active participation in the Communist Party increased very slowly in the inter-war period, and their presence in the seats of power was negligible.[55]

The aim of presenting this schematic overview is not only to sketch national differences – although that is important for an understanding of the chapters which follow – but also to illustrate the extent to which the relationship between the nation state and women was debated in Europe in the inter-war years. Women were constantly the object of attention as new voters, as non-voters or as potential voters. And if the debate was not focused on political rights, then it frequently turned its attention to the creation of a legislative framework around women's role as workers, wives and mothers. There was enormous legislative activity between the wars in the context of the gradual emergence of the welfare state, which impacted specifically on women, around the issues of the family, divorce, pregnancy, abortion and working conditions. Given the Europe-wide economic crisis in the wake of the 1929 crash, the question of women's work was politicized, either in order to bring more women into employment to strengthen the economy (as in Germany and the USSR) or in an attempt (often covert) to send them back to the home to ease the problem of male unemployment (as in France and Britain). So the 'woman question' was a vexed one, with the result that the social and political space in which inter-war women operated was never neutral. As a context for cultural production and social activity, with which this volume is

primarily concerned, this fact is particularly significant: inter-war women could not but be conscious of gender in all their spheres of activity.

Biological sex difference was generally the starting point for debates on gender difference in the inter-war period. Legislation on women's work was directed at protecting their different bodies, as Yevgeniya Dodina shows in her account of Ukrainian women's professional experience. The different body meant, of course, the procreating body. It was this focus on the female body as always potentially pregnant which produced the paradoxes inherent both in the state's attitudes to women and in the demands made by inter-war feminist organizations. Whilst second-wave feminisms of the 1960s and 1970s defined themselves either as feminisms of 'difference' or as feminisms of 'equality', and recent theory has revealed the limitations of opposing these terms within a binary structure, inter-war feminism had no qualms whatever about campaigning simultaneously on the basis of equality and difference. Thus, suffragist feminists could argue from a gender-neutral perspective that, since women constituted half of humanity, they should also constitute half of the electorate, whilst also upholding a gender-differentiated perspective according to which if women were to vote, then the cause of world peace would be advanced since women, as mothers, would naturally resist war and the resultant slaughter of their offspring. An 'equality' feminism based on the universality of certain rights co-existed with a 'difference' feminism based on women's specific role and their potential contributions. The paradox is particularly evident in discussions around maternity. Maternity was politicized by nationalist rhetoric, since the trauma of the war losses coincided with a declining birth rate and the threat of another conflict to come. Therefore women were both protected, legislatively, and valorized, discursively, as the mothers of the next generation of soldiers; they were to teach their sons to be ready to sacrifice themselves for the nation, and were to protect their own bodies (and avoid moral degeneracy) so that their progeny would be sufficiently physically and mentally robust to make that sacrifice effective. Whilst protective legislation aimed at improving the conditions in which children were brought into the world and in which they were raised and nurtured was motivated primarily by the need to regenerate the nation, it had an undeniably positive effect on women's experience of childbearing. Thus, a paradoxical situation resulted in which progressive, sex-specific legislation really did improve women's lives, whilst at the same time further confining them to the private sphere and defining them in terms of their biological function. Laura Levine Frader has argued that French legislation on maternity in the period was 'a means by which women could claim new rights but also a means by which the assumed link between the maternal body and the nation would be used to maintain gender difference as an underlying principle of social provisions'.[56] This 'double-edged sword' argument is generally true of debates and action in relation to maternity across Europe. Nonetheless, natalist policies necessarily had different rationales in different European countries. In Italy, Mussolini's aim to increase the population had an economic as well as an imperialist logic;[57] in France, the main concern was to reverse depopulation, whilst in Nazi Germany, the drive to motherhood, although bound up with population renewal, was irretrievably caught up in a racist agenda.[58] But whatever the emphasis, one thing was clear: motherhood

became a national duty in the years between the wars. Therefore, at a discursive level, there was a paradox inherent in the inter-war politicization of maternity. For to posit the female procreating body as the site of women's contribution to the nation was to accord them a public role in the polity and to acknowledge their citizenship in practice.[59] Neither legislative protectionism nor discursive maternalism had equality as their goal: both were based in a potentially oppressive ideology of difference, but both had potentially positive implications for female emancipation.

Whilst it may be true that left-wing policies were more favourable to women's political emancipation, traditional political divides made little difference to discourses on women and maternity. There is no straightforward correlation between the left/right and progressive/regressive binaries. The left promoted women's liberation in some areas, but it was not necessarily more progressive when it came to the issue of motherhood. Mary Nash has demonstrated how the association of motherhood with femininity on the Spanish left helped to reinforce women's exclusion from the workplace.[60] The French Communist Party held progressive views on women's matters in the 1920s, but by the time of the Popular Front government of the mid-thirties, their position had shifted, with the leadership denouncing abortion and promoting social measures to guarantee large families. The envisaged endpoint of the politicization of maternity in the period was not female liberation but social cohesion. Women's mobilization into the workforce during the war had created fears that women were being masculinized and losing their traditional 'feminine virtues'; a return to motherhood could perhaps allay these fears.[61] Victor Margueritte's novel *La Garçonne*, first published in 1922, encapsulated these issues through its sexually liberated eponymous central character sporting the short hair and short skirts of the 'flapper'. References to the *garçonne* and the *femme nouvelle* by a number of contributors to this volume indicate the concerns which both the novel, and the new woman it embodied, generated, not just in France but across Europe. Ironically, as both Christine Bard and Alison Fell have pointed out, the novel can be read not as a promotion of the new woman, but rather as a demonstration of how a woman is 'punished', in this case by sterility, for her failure to adhere to the post-war ideal of woman as wife and mother.[62] Thus despite its apparently subversive presentation of a 'new', emancipated woman as a heroine, the work reinforced the pronatalist discourse of the post-war years.

What emerges, then, from an overview of the development of suffrage debates and sex-specific legislation in the inter-war period and from popular cultural representations of gender issues is the fundamental and constituting incoherence of states' attitudes towards women. That is why, despite the fact that, taking Europe as a whole, an enormous amount of progress was made in a very concentrated period as regards women's political rights and the social organization of their lives, the results of the extensive research coordinated by Helmut Gruber and Pamela Graves on women and Socialism point unavoidably to 'a lack of change in traditional power between men and women in the two decades between the wars'.[63] It is this contradiction between a drive for progress, whatever its motivations, and a reassertion of tradition that makes women's cultural production in the inter-war period such a fascinating

object of study. On the one hand, the fact that new models of femininity based on freedom and choice were being proposed and defined provided a context in which women who wanted to be more self-aware, more creative perhaps, and wanted to construct themselves as autonomous agents could begin to do so. On the other hand, the simultaneous assertion of highly conservative gender norms through multiple channels, often with a political motivation, as we have seen, functioned variously: it provided a justification for those men and women who sought to oppose the emergence of the 'new woman'; it was the ideology which those seeking emancipation sought to demolish; and it was also a potential source of guilt or regret for women who recognized that the quest for modernity in the shape of independence and emancipation also entailed the renunciation of past models of femininity to which they were still attached through ties of emotion, nostalgia or just habit. The essays collected in this volume show the tremendous variety of ways in which women used the political, cultural and social spheres to assert or to explore their own identities, to analyze and alter the world around them, and to interrogate the relationship between that world and their own identities.

Part I demonstrates that the inter-war years were characterized by an increase in the number of women for whom writing was as much a political as an aesthetic vehicle.[64] The inter-war period saw an intensification of the politicization of writers, particularly on the left, and women were no exception. Part II focuses on the relationships between women and the cultural and literary establishment of their day. It considers their exclusion from the canon and their use of literature as a means to question women's accepted place in society. It also explores their contribution to the anti-establishment, that is, to avant-garde movements. The interrelationships between women, the avant-garde and the canon are complex. As Susan Suleiman has suggested, female avant-garde writers and artists were 'doubly intolerable', since they contested established norms of genre and gender; whilst their status as 'doubly marginal' placed them in a potentially privileged position in relation to the avant-garde, and whilst 'woman' was a privileged object of study and inspiration for the avant-garde, the fact remains that avant-garde movements fostered few women writers and artists, and their contributions tend not to have a place in the new 'canon' of famous avant-garde texts.[65] The avant-garde is revealed to be – perhaps by definition – a paradoxical space, frequently misogynistic, and yet one in which women could nonetheless play a significant role. Part III considers the role of women in public, associative and professional life, examining areas as diverse as journalism, cinema, education, the Women's Institute and Soviet factory work, in order to demonstrate ways in which women responded to certain new opportunities, and ways in which they contested the continued closing or restriction of certain other opportunities on the grounds of gender. Over and above this thematic division, the essays have in common the wish to ensure that women's contributions to the inter-war period are given the recognition their activities merit, and that they are remembered.

Jennifer Birkett's essay on Storm Jameson traces the writer's trajectory as a political activist in left-wing circles. Jameson was a journalist and a writer who saw all too clearly the precarious political position of Europe in the 1930s, poised on the edge of

disaster, and she sought to alert her readers to the dangers which the continent faced. For Jameson, writing is not a solitary craft; the writer bears a responsibility towards the society in which he or she lives. She is critical of those writers, her contemporaries, who turn their backs on these responsibilities, while her own work, politically engaged and aware, is 'a call to awakening and resistance'. The metaphor of Britain as a nation of sleepwalkers moving inexorably towards disaster is one which recurs in Mary Anne Schofield's chapter on British women writers and Fascism. Focusing on three British women writers, Storm Jameson, Phyllis Bottome and Rebecca West, Schofield analyzes their use of the discourse of sanity and insanity in order to identify specific female responses to the rise of Fascism and the impending war. Where traditional, heroic masculine discourse is seen to justify the insanity of war, the writings of these three women 'allow [a] more feminine, more private, more sane voice of war to be heard'. They seek to reveal the insanity of Fascism in order to awaken England to the dangers it posed.

Louise Weiss, a woman who played a high-profile role in feminism and journalism in inter-war France, is the subject of Angela Kershaw's essay. Before committing herself full-time to feminism and the suffragist struggle in the mid-1930s, Weiss had focused her activities on the question of how to achieve a durable European peace. Kershaw examines Weiss's writing, which encompassed various genres: journalism, autobiography and fiction. The unifying element between her activism and her writing is Weiss's struggle to construct a legitimate political identity for herself as a woman at a time when women's identity was normally bound up with marriage and maternity. Responses to Fascism subtend Lesley Twomey's essay on Victoria Kent, which is focused on Kent's autobiographical account of her experience in exile of the Nazi occupation of France during the Second World War. Kent evokes the Occupation through the optic of her life in Republican Spain where she had played an active role in government. Reflections on imprisonment, freedom and exile underpin her narrative in order to pinpoint a continuity between the anti-Fascist struggle of the Republicans during the Spanish Civil War and the anti-Nazi struggle of the Allies in Europe during the Second World War. Her fate, to have her name 'wiped out of history' also engages with the theme of lost voices, as does that of Hermynia Zur Mühlen whose name, as Ailsa Wallace shows, fell into oblivion on her death. Wallace's essay focuses on a woman whose writing was well known in Germany during the inter-war period and whose Socialist views made her the object of some controversy. It soon became clear that there was no place in Nazi Germany for the woman who had been a committed Communist and was known as the 'Red Countess', nor for her politically engaged, anti-Fascist writings, which were banned shortly after Hitler's accession to power. Her prolific output in various genres was forgotten on her death. Wallace looks particularly at Zur Mühlen's literature for young girls in which the author undertakes a re-appropriation of the themes of popular girls' fiction in order to challenge and subvert the gender stereotypes and sexual mores promoted by the bourgeoisie.

The essays by Twomey and Wallace touch upon the question of the erasure of women writers from literary history. This theme is addressed in detail in Part II. Here, the essays focus on the problematic relationship between women and the cultural

and literary establishment, and on their attempts to negotiate a place for themselves within that predominantly male environment. Milligan's *The Forgotten Generation* highlighted the erasure of women from the canon of inter-war fiction in France.[66] This was not a problem specific to France. Sharon Wood and Jane Fenoulhet discuss women who succeeded in overcoming the social barriers to women writing only to face a further barrier in the form of literary establishments dominated by men with very different agendas and criteria of success, which failed to take them seriously. Fenoulhet shows that, as in France, the voices of women writers in the Netherlands were not forgotten by accident but were silenced by those who dictated the cultural trends of their day, and by later critics.[67] Within this framework, Fenoulhet looks at the major preoccupations of these forgotten women writers. Wood also takes as her theme the recovering of lost voices, this time of neglected women writers in Fascist Italy where, despite the inherent misogyny of Futurism, women discovered a space within which to experiment with new literary forms and with new approaches to women and modernity. Wood illustrates the range and variety of women's writing in these years, deemed to be an 'artistic desert' by conventional literary and cultural historians.

The essays by Laura Scuriatti and Martine Antle analyze the texts of female avant-garde artists and writers which, for Suleiman, are potentially characterized by a double marginality in relation to genre and gender, as we have seen. The body, and specifically discourse on the female body, is to the fore in Laura Scuriatti's essay on Mina Loy, Futurism and feminism. Through a comparative reading of the Futurist manifestos of Loy and Valentine de Saint Point, Scuriatti explores the tensions between Futurism's celebration of the modern, its rethinking of sexual and gender categories, and its emphasis on women as mothers and lovers, which fixed their core essences in their bodies and reproductive potential. The female body consequently continued to be associated with nature and natural instincts, associations which in the past had been 'the traditional marks of female inferiority', associations which reaffirm patriarchal values. The importance given by the Futurists to women's reproductive potential is at once progressive and regressive, and is reflected in Fascist social policy which promoted improved maternity facilities to the benefit of women but which at the same time reinforced the natalist ideology so widespread in Europe during the inter-war years. Martine Antle's essay on 'New Geographies of Cultural Diversity' examines the work of Claude Cahun and Hannah Höch. Cahun's self-portraits challenge notions of fixed identity, particularly in relation to racial and national identities, while Höch challenges the racial rhetoric of Fascism by focusing on images of racial Others. Antle's essay also engages with the representation of the female body since Höch's photomontages subvert accepted notions of sexual identity by proposing images of lesbian bodies.

Women's wider role in society is further explored in Part III with four essays which look at women who, either individually or collectively, forged public identities for themselves in a variety of different fields. Lisa Silverman, in her essay on Jewish intellectual women in the inter-war period in Austria, highlights the individual, forgotten contributions of three of these women to Austrian education, culture and

journalism, achievements made in the face of sustained hostility towards them both as Jews and as women. Tami Williams considers the multiple and innovative contributions of avant-garde filmmaker Germaine Dulac to the development of French cinema in the inter-war years, highlighting the particular difficulties Dulac faced as a woman filmmaker, subjected in the male-dominated world of filmmaking to the kind of marginalization and exclusion experienced by women writers. Lorna Gibson's chapter on the music-making activities of the Women's Institute in Britain during the inter-war years draws attention to a largely uncelebrated area of British associative and cultural life. The role of music-making held an important place in the lives of hard-pressed women during the years of depression, but Gibson also demonstrates that the provision of training for women conductors by the National Federation of Women's Institutes offered not just a musical training but also a means of empowerment for women within an organization most often associated with conservative images of femininity.

Yevgeniya Dodina's essay on women in the workforce in the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic provides a counterpoint to the other essays in terms of a very different national perspective and unique political agenda, both of which obtained in the rest of Western Europe in the inter-war years. Ostensibly a country where the coming of the Revolution had in theory resolved the 'woman question', the example of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic nonetheless highlights some of the contradictions and tensions which characterized the relationship between Communism and feminism. While issues of citizenship and equality were yet to be resolved in large parts of Western Europe, in the Ukraine and elsewhere in the USSR women had obtained equality with men in terms of education and employment. Legislation was enacted to provide legal protection for pregnant and nursing women, and to free them from some of the burdens of childcare, and the marriage and divorce laws were rewritten to protect women. This essay shows that much of this legislation had an economic rather than a gender imperative; it was enacted to render women capable of entering the workplace as much-needed labour rather than to rectify gender inequalities in themselves. As Dodina concludes, 'the state emancipated workers primarily as workers, not as women', although, as she points out, this should not blind us to the very real progress that was made for Soviet women. Whether the progress made was sufficient or of the kind that other women discussed in this volume would value is another question.

Notes

1 Gabriele Griffin and Rosi Braidotti (eds), *Thinking Differently: A Reader in European Women's Studies* (London and New York: Zed Books, 2002).
2 Jennifer Milligan has, for example, designated French inter-war women writers as a 'forgotten generation' in her study *The Forgotten Generation: French Women Writers of the Inter-War Period* (Oxford: Berg, 1996).
3 Lytton Strachey, *Eminent Victorians: The Illustrated Edition* (Aylesbury: Albion Press, 1988), p. 8.
4 Ibid., p. 7.

5 Ibid., p. 7.
6 Michelle Perrot (ed.), *Writing Women's History* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992). This book, translated by Felicia Pheasant, was first published in France as *Une histoire des femmes est-elle possible?* (Marseilles and Paris: Rivages, 1984).
7 *A History of Women in the West* was first published in France as Georges Duby and Michelle Perrot (eds), *Histoire des femmes en occident* (Paris: Plon, 1991–1992).
8 See, for example, Helmut Gruber and Pamela Graves's Introduction to Gruber and Graves (eds), *Women and Socialism/ Socialism and Women*, *Europe Between the Two World Wars* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 1998), pp. 3–24 and Gisela Bock, 'Women's History and Gender History: Aspects of an International Debate', in Robert Shoemaker and Mary Vincent (eds), *Gender and History in Western Europe* (London: Arnold, 1998), pp. 25–42, and first published in 1989.
9 Strachey, *Eminent Victorians*, p. 101.
10 Gruber and Graves, Introduction to Gruber and Graves (eds), *Women and Socialism*, p. 5.
11 Françoise Thébaud, 'The Great War and the Triumph of Sexual Division', in Georges Duby and Michelle Perrot (eds), *A History of Women in the West*, vol. 5, *Toward a Cultural Identity in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 1994), pp. 21–75 (p. 22).
12 The Soviet Union with its far-reaching social and political transformations after 1917 is the main exception to this. Even the post-war Socialist experiment in Austria did not effect any meaningful transformation in gender roles. See Gruber, 'Gender Equality in Red Vienna', in Gruber and Graves (eds), *Women and Socialism*, pp. 56–94.
13 Margaret R. Higonnet and Patrice L.-R. Higonnet, 'The Double Helix', in Margaret Higonnet, Jane Jenson, Sonya Michel and Margaret Collins Weitz (eds), *Behind the Lines: Gender and the Two World Wars* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1987), pp. 31–47 (p. 31).
14 Ibid., p. 42.
15 Quoted in Thébaud, 'The Great War and the Triumph of Sexual Division', in Duby and Perrot (eds), *A History of Women in the West*, vol. 5, p. 27.
16 Susan Grayzel, *Women and the First World War* (London: Longman, 2002), pp. 27–8.
17 Some of these fears were embodied in Raymond Radiguet's 1923 novel *Le Diable au corps*, which dealt with the adulterous affair between an absent soldier's wife and a boy too young to have been conscripted. For a psychoanalytic account of masculinity in relation to war trauma, see Klaus Thewelheit, *Male Fantasies*, vol. 1, *Women, Floods, Bodies, History*, trans. by Stephen Conway (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987) and vol. 2, *Male Bodies – Psychoanalyzing the White Terror*, trans. by Erica Carter and Chris Turner (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989). See also Eric J. Leed, *No Man's Land. Combat and Identity in World War One* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979).
18 Grayzel illustrates the concern about the changes in women's behaviour as depicted in the press of the time. See *Women and the First World War*, pp. 62–5.
19 Thébaud, 'The Great War and the Triumph of Sexual Division', in Duby and Perrot (eds), *A History of Women in the West*, Vol. V, p. 68.
20 Grayzel, *Women and the First World War*, p. 106.
21 Thébaud, 'The Great War and the Triumph of Sexual Division', in Duby and Perrot (eds), *A History of Women in the West*, vol. 5, p.21. Thébaud's essay provides an excellent overview of the development of scholarship on this question.

22 Mary Louise Roberts, *Civilization Without Sexes. Reconstructing Gender in Post-War France, 1917–1927* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).
23 Citing Auden, Janet Montefiore adopts this subtitle for her work *Men and Women Writers of the 1930s* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996).
24 The present volume does not consider women's role within Fascist organizations. Some useful research exists on this topic: see, for example, Martin Durham, *Women and Fascism* (London: Routledge, 1998) and Kevin Passmore (ed.), *Women, Gender and Fascism in Europe 1919–1945* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003).
25 See Karen Offen, *European Feminisms, 1700–1950: A Political History* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), pp. 359–60.
26 See Gertrude Bussey and Margaret Tims, *Pioneers for Peace. Women's International League for Peace and Freedom 1915–1965* (London: WILPF British Section; Oxford: Alden Press, 1980). Offen discusses the WILPF and the International Committee of Women against War and Fascism in Offen, *European Feminisms, 1700–1950*, pp. 359–69.
27 Bussey and Timms (eds), *Pioneers for Peace*, p. 125.
28 Ibid., p. 126.
29 Siân Reynolds, *France Between the Wars: Gender and Politics* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), chapter 8 on 'War and Peace: Assent and Dissent', especially pp. 196–8. See also Christine Bard, *Les Filles de Marianne. Histoire des féminismes 1914–1940* (Paris: Fayard, 1995), pp. 297–301.
30 Reynolds, *France Between the Wars: Gender and Politics*, pp. 196–97 and p. 200.
31 Pamela M. Graves, *Labour Women. Women in British Working-Class Politics 1918–1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 208.
32 On women's anti-Fascist fiction in Britain, see Angela Ingram and Daphne Patai (eds), *Rediscovering Forgotten Radicals. British Women Writers 1889–1939* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1993). On French political fiction by left-wing women, see Angela Kershaw, *Forgotten Engagements. Women, Literature and the Left in 1930s France* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, forthcoming). On Germany, see Elaine Martin, *Gender, Patriarchy and Fascism in the Third Reich: The Responses of Women Writers* (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1993).
33 Milligan, *The Forgotten Generation*, p. 141.
34 Ibid., p. 141.
35 Finland granted women the vote in 1906, followed by Norway in 1907.
36 Belgium, France and Italy all granted women the vote in the 1940s, Greece in 1952; Swiss women, notoriously, had to wait until 1971.
37 Geoff Eley, 'From Welfare Politics to Welfare States: Women and the Socialist Question', in Gruber and Graves (eds), *Women and Socialism*, pp. 516–43 (pp. 517–19).
38 Ibid., p. 519.
39 Ibid., p. 520.
40 Anne Phillips, *Engendering Democracy* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), p. 99.
41 See Reynolds, *France Between the Wars: Gender and Politics*, especially chapter 7 on 'Mainstream and Alternative Politics', pp. 156–80 and also Reynolds's *Alternative Politics: Women and Public Life Between the Wars* (Stirling: University of Stirling, 1993).
42 Gisela Bock, *Women in European History*, trans. by Alison Brown (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002), p. 129.
43 Ibid., pp. 146ff.
44 Ibid., p. 137.

45 Joni Lovenduski and Jill Hills (eds), *The Politics of the Second Electorate: Women and Public Participation* (London, Boston and Henley: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981), which covers a range of 13 countries, and provides key information on women's access to citizenship in a single volume. More recent volumes include Offen's *European Feminisms, 1700–1950: A Political History*, and Monica Threllfall (ed.), *Mapping the Women's Movement: Feminist Politics and Social Change in the North* (London and New York: Verso, 1996), although the latter emphasizes modern feminism. Duby and Perrot (eds), *A History of Women in the West*, vol. 5 includes country-by-country contributions which cover the inter-war period. The full range of scholarship relating to each national jurisdiction is too extensive to record in detail here; individual contributors have referred to key texts where relevant in their essays. We have therefore limited our references to a key source in English for each country, as a suggestion for further reading.

46 Danièle Bussy Genevois, 'The Women of Spain from the Republic to Franco', in Duby and Perrot (eds), *A History of Women in the West*, vol. 5, pp. 177–93.

47 See June Purivs (ed.), *Women's History: Britain 1850–1945* (London: UCL Press, 1995). There are two contributions focusing particularly on politics: June Hannam, 'Women and Politics' (Chapter 9, pp. 217–45), and Sandra Stanley Holton, 'Women and the Vote' (Chapter 11, pp. 277–305).

48 The same phenomenon is perceptible in the presentation of the granting of the vote to French women in 1944 as a gift from de Gaulle rather than as a result of the struggles undertaken by French feminists and suffragists.

49 See Victoria Lorée Enders and Pamela Beth Radcliff (eds), *Constructing Spanish Womanhood: Female Identity in Modern Spain* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999).

50 See Paul Smith, *Feminism and the Third Republic: Women's Political and Civil Rights in France 1918–1945* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1996).

51 Michael Wintle gives an overview of the Dutch women's movement and of women's access to suffrage in *An Economic and Social History of the Netherlands, 1800–1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 252–6 and pp. 324–9.

52 See Victoria de Grazia, *How Fascism Ruled Women: Italy 1922–1945* (Berkeley and Oxford: University of California Press, 1992).

53 In her contribution to Duby and Perrot (eds), *A History of Women in the West*, vol. 5, Gisela Bock argues forcefully for an understanding of Nazi policies on women in terms of their policies on race ('Nazi Gender Policies and Women's History', pp. 149–76). See also Ute Frevert, *Women in German History: From Bourgeois Emancipation to Sexual Liberation* (Oxford: Berg, 1989).

54 Gruber and Graves, Introduction to Gruber and Graves (eds), *Women and Socialism*, pp. 17–18. See also David Good, Margarete Grandner and Mary Jo Maynes (eds), *Austrian Women in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries: Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives* (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 1997).

55 See Rosalind Marsh (ed. and trans.), *Women in Russia and Ukraine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

56 Laura Levine Frader, 'Social Citizens Without Citizenship: Working-Class Women and Social Policy in Inter-War France', *Social Politics* 3 (Summer–Fall, 1996), 111–35 (p. 125).

57 Victoria de Grazia, 'How Mussolini Ruled Italian Women', in Duby and Perrot (eds), *A History of Women in the West*, vol. 5, pp. 120–48 (p. 132).

58 Gisela Bock, 'Nazi Gender Politics and Women's History', in Duby and Perrot (eds), *A History of Women in the West*, vol. 5, p. 150.

59 Victoria de Grazia brings out this point in her analysis of the situation of Italian women under Fascism in 'How Mussolini Ruled Italian Women', in Duby and Perrot (eds), *A History of Women in the West*, vol. 5, pp. 120–48.
60 Mary Nash, 'Women on the Left in Spain', in Gruber and Graves (eds), *Women and Socialism*, pp. 348–80 (p. 357).
61 Thébaud, 'The Great War and the Triumph of Sexual Division', in Duby and Perrot (eds), *A History of Women in the West*, vol. 5, pp. 34–5.
62 Christine Bard, 'Lectures de *La garçonne*', *Les Temps modernes* 593 (April–May 1997), 78–95; Alison Fell, *Liberty, Equality, Maternity in Beauvoir, Leduc and Ernaux* (Oxford: Legenda, 2003), p. 50.
63 Gruber and Graves, Introduction to Gruber and Graves (eds), *Women and Socialism*, p. 14.
64 Bock, *Women in European History*, p. 179.
65 Susan Rubin Suleiman, *Subversive Intent. Gender, Politics and the Avant-Garde* (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 1990), chapter 1, 'A Double Margin: Women Writers and the Avant-Garde in France', pp. 11–32.
66 See note 2 above.
67 Milligan points out that 'It is the omnipotent, self-perpetuating canon which is largely responsible for the way in which female fiction has been lost with passing time'. Milligan, *The Forgotten Generation*, p. 209.