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Staging Philanthropy

Patriotic Women and the National Imagination in Dynastic Germany, 1813–1916

Jean H. Quataert
In Memory of
Nancy Hannah (1933–1997)
and to
Sharon Levit,
for opening new vistas on the past and future
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Preface

This book grows out of my own engagement with issues of war and national consensus, which was rekindled during the Gulf War in the early 1990s. With the onset of hostilities, I observed the silencing of debate in the proliferation of “yellow ribbons” and, in Vestal, my small town in upstate New York, experienced at firsthand efforts at consensus building through parades and ceremonies. And yet these activities coexisted uneasily with deep ambivalences, stirred by historical memory, about the human costs of war. Serendipitously, at that moment my friends at the German Historical Institute—Stig Förster and Roger Chickering—asked if I would join an ongoing comparative research project on “total war,” starting with the mid-nineteenth-century American Civil War and German Wars of Unification. It seemed a way to combine personal and professional passions. I could turn my feminist commitments to the interrelationship between nationalism, war, and state building and rework these “traditional” themes in history through the lens of women’s lives and gender analysis. I wanted to understand how identification with such abstract notions as “state,” “nation,” and “national community” is made and contested in daily life.

Over the years, I have profited from the support of friends and colleagues. I am pleased to be able to thank them here. Richard Trexler has been an inspiration, not only for his own work on civic rituals, but also for our ongoing exchange of ideas concerning community solidarity, women, and sacrifice, even if we part company over agency. He encouraged my interest in ritual behavior as integral to power and politics. Howard Brown offered a very spirited reading of the introduction and conclusion. Stig Förster, James Retallack, George Stein, and Deborah Cohen read chunks of the manuscript and offered very useful comments for revision. I also want to thank John Röhl for helpful bibliographical suggestions at key moments of revision. Molly O’Donnell helped broaden my perspective on the colonial context, as did Kenneth Orosz. Specific chapters were also
read by Kevin Slick, Jennifer Evans, and other graduate students in history, particularly Dianne Criswell, Morgana Kellythorne, Rebecca Willis, Matthew Lungerhausen, and Ronald Applegate.

I presented parts of the argument at various German Historical Institute conferences, which were invaluable for broadening and deepening my understanding of the changing relationship between civilian and soldier, home front and battlefield in the nineteenth century. I took my case as well to Rutgers, Harvard, and Emory universities. I received indispensable cooperation from the staffs at the Generallandesarchiv, Karlsruhe, the Landesarchiv, Koblenz, as well as the Stadtarchiv, the Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz, and the Staatsbibliothek in Berlin, and also from the staff of the Hoover Library and its archives. I want to acknowledge as well their long-distance help in sending me materials after I returned from my research trips. In addition, the Interlibrary Loan Service staff members at Binghamton University tracked down countless volumes of printed materials and newspapers, and their efforts are truly appreciated.

The artistic eye of Michael Tanzer (1941–2000) helped me analyze form, design, and color in the Red Cross posters included in this work. I am grateful for the impact he had on this book and I will deeply miss his always challenging perspectives on the world. I also want to thank Kenneth Orosz for helping me with the tables, Costa Sakellariou for the maps, and Nadir Özbek for the index. The series editor, Geoff Eley, whose insights into German nationalism have shaped my own approach, read the manuscript with great attention; he encouraged a more equitable balance between “anthropology” and “sociology” as methods. I appreciate these suggestions and hope I have done them justice.

As always, my husband, Donald Quataert, lived through all the phases and stages of the completion of this book. He remains, variously, perceptive, helpful, calming, and patient.

JHQ
Vestal, New York
December 2000
Abbreviations

**DRK**  

**GK**  
Generallandesarchiv, Karlsruhe

**GSPK**  
Geheimes Staatsarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Dahlem, Königliches Geheimes Civil-Cabinet, I, HA, Rep. 89

**HIA**  
Poster Collection, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford, California

**LK**  
Landeshauptarchiv, Koblenz

**KZ**  
*Neue Preussische Kreuz-Zeitung*

**Mitteilungen**  
Mitteilungen des Badischen Landesvereins vom Roten Kreuz (Baden state Red Cross communiqués)

**VZ**  