

I am prepared to stand with Gramsci and Benjamin regarding the necessity of critical history; however, Füredi himself misconstrues and misrepresents their arguments about critical history and historical thinking, the task of intellectuals, and the radical-democratic possibilities of working-class consciousness and struggle. Second, though I make them critically, I am not prepared to give up claims on either Marx or the Enlightenment. The point seems to be that Füredi's Marx is that of the *Eighteenth Brumaire* where the Old Man writes that "the social revolution of the nineteenth century can only create its poetry from the future, not from the past." The Marx I know distinguished between ruling-class ideology and popular consciousness, having earlier observed that "The world has long possessed the dream of a thing which it need only to possess the consciousness in order to really possess it. It will be clear that the problem is not some great gap between the thoughts of the past and those of the future, but the completion of the thoughts of the past." (a correspondence, 1843)

Füredi's work takes in the modern "West" as a whole, Britain and the USA, and also Germany, France, and Japan. He finds the turn to the past dominating life and thought in all these states. Whereas I argued that the "crisis of history" (along with the rise of the New Right and its renewed pursuit of "class war from above") was a consequence of the dramatic political and economic crises of the 1970s, Füredi contends that the cultural anxieties and conservative campaigns *and* the intellectual crisis of the Enlightenment project which we are witnessing are actually a delayed reaction to the collapse of confidence in "progress" engendered by the crises of the 1930s. Quite possibly we differ here because I write from North America, viz. the "United Kingdom," but I think he underestimates the degree of confidence, belief in progress, and strength of the postwar consensus, engendered by the postwar economic boom of 1947-74 and "Pax Americana." In other words, the crisis of the 70s is a postponed confrontation with the 30s only to the extent that capitalism itself is subject to persistent contradictions and periodic crises and such contradictions and crises, thus far, have never been fully and finally resolved. (Contrary to the claims of Fukuyama and his ilk, we are *not* at the "end

of history" — and this is a point on which Füredi and I stand together!)

Again, and more important, *contra* the irrationalisms of conservatives, neo-conservatives and postmodernists, Füredi is eager to reinvigorate the Enlightenment project in order to make a radically-different future. Especially, he seeks a "restoration of the consciousness of *reason*, the *human potential* and the possibility of *change*." Fair enough. But, when approached critically, I find these possibilities not, at the outset, beyond the temporal horizon but in history — in E.H. Carr's memorable words, in "the dialogue between present and past." In other words, historical *memory*. Füredi's critiques of conservatives, liberals and postmodernists are well presented, but he never explains why he is willing to cede the past to them. Apparently, he fails to realize that the "historical thinking/critique of history" he urges means more than rationally looking at possibilities for the future and determining how to realize them. Crucially, it also entails wielding "the powers of the past: perspective, critique, consciousness, remembrance, and imagination" in favor of "the education of desire" (a practice Füredi would apparently reject), or, as Gramsci himself insisted, working towards the development of "an historical, dialectical conception of the world which understands movement and change, which appreciates the sum of effort and sacrifice which the present has cost the past and which the future is costing the present, and which conceives the contemporary world as a synthesis of the past, of all past generations, which projects itself into the future."

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Olwen Hufton, *Women and the Limits of Citizenship in the French Revolution* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1991).

*Women and the Limits of Citizenship in the French Revolution*, a collection of lectures given at the University of Toronto in 1989, examines the relationship between "the people" and authority during the French Revolution. The people, as one might guess from the title, are specifically women and it turns out

that the authorities they deal with are particularly male. The work examines how women during the revolutionary period, regardless of their political allegiances, were considered part of the many problems faced by the French Republic, and the reason for its ultimate failure. The book offers a helpful overview of the status and dilemma of women during the Revolution; however, it may be that the lecture format limits the development of some of the themes Hufton presents.

The first of the three main sections acknowledges the seemingly male rhetoric of the Enlightenment, which, as the language of the Revolution, already spells trouble for women in the Revolution. Time and again, Locke's idea of separate spheres and Rousseau's Sophie model were used to exclude women from political activity and from almost any benefits of *liberté* and *égalité*. The section goes on to recount some of the activities of women early in the Revolution, most gloriously the October Days and women's role in bringing the king back to Paris from Versailles. Hufton uses a fairly detailed retelling of the October Days to illustrate particular aspects of female activity and the gendered crowd in the Revolution.

Hufton indicates that the immediate impetus for the march to Versailles was the shortage of bread coupled with the fact that the official (male) authority, the Constituent Assembly, did not resolve this issue. The march is explained as particularly female — coordinated and led by women (with the exception of Maillard) and non-violent (they brought two cannons but no ammunition) — as Hufton states, “the women were intent upon a particular kind of demonstration which the men might have ruined, a demonstration which was non-violent or of limited violence.” The incredibly divergent narratives and interpretations of the women's march, both days after the march and according to modern historians, are an indication of the complexity of active participation by women in the French Revolution.

Hufton also uses the October Days to illustrate the splits among women during the Revolution; she is quick to point out that no crowd or group can be viewed as monolithic, particularly women at this time. The women who marched on Versailles were not only representative of a particular class (evidence indi-

cates that many of the women were market women, wives of artisans, and tradeswomen), but also tended to be either over fifty or very young.

The crowd of women was split almost immediately after arriving at Versailles; some returned to Paris after gaining access to the Assembly or the King, others remained to bring Louis to Paris. Hufton proceeds to indicate that the division among women is even more vivid after the October Days as members of *Le Club des Citoyennes Republicanes Revolutionnaires* came into conflict with the market women. Although Hufton provides a good general overview of the divisions among women, greater analysis of the origins and implications of these differences, for women then and now, would have added to the impact of the argument.

In addition to revolutionary women, Hufton examines how some of the new republican policies affected women. The greatest impact came from the dechristianization movement and the abolition of religious orders. In “freeing” men and women from the religious orders, the men of the Revolution had constructed an image of the young nun forced into the prison of religion by her parents. Religion had severed the nun from her natural duty as wife and mother and the Revolution would now free the girl and, according to the myth, she would find the right spouse in one of the “freed” monks. In reality, most of the nuns were significantly older than “girls” and in only one percent of the cases did the sisters marry. Further, it soon became evident that the nuns' work in charity, hospitals, orphanages, and so forth, was essential for the functioning of the republic's social services.

It is during Hufton's discussion of female religious orders and women's work in charity and health services, as well as the section on “counter-revolutionary” women and the religious revival in the later days of the revolution, that the similarities between the role of the new Republic and the Church become clear: “Both wanted moral order, paternal authority, and wifely obedience, responsibility for sexual conduct, and the shunning of excess.” While I essentially agree with this argument, it comes late in the book and since it seems central in examining the limits for women during the revolutionary period I wish it had received more attention earlier. Further, it is

unclear from this argument whether Hufton would agree that it was during the French Revolution that citizenship became based on the exclusion and subordination of women.

One of the most interesting aspects of the book is Hufton's discussion of the mythology of women and their combined roles in the French Revolution. On the one hand, women were viewed as dangerous. The Republican fathers claimed that women's political associations and protests were inappropriate and unnatural and that they should have been content with their domestic role as Republican mothers. Active female participation in the Republic was rejected, their citizenship was never seriously considered, and in 1793 women's clubs were outlawed and attendance at Assembly meetings was prohibited. On the other hand, when women tried to retain their connection to the church, one of the few areas where they could be active on some level, functioning at appropriate levels of femininity (through charity work, teaching or socializing), they were immediately labelled "counter-revolutionary" and blamed for the failure of the Republic. Women during the revolutionary period were in a terrible bind: try to participate actively in the Republic and you were seen as a threat, don't participate and risk being held responsible for the downfall of the Republic. Women were viewed as violent protestors or religious fanatics; even as they were denied citizenship or permitted active participation they continue to be blamed for the failure of the Republic. According to this logic women risked being blamed for the backlash against them. It is this mythology and legacy that Hufton claims kept women out of the public, political sphere for so long in France and that continues to have ramifications for women in the public sphere today. It is also this discussion that I find most new and interesting about Hufton's book.

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Rose Potvin, ed., *Passion and Conviction: The Letters of Graham Spry* (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Centre 1992).

Ever the cynic, Paul Goodman once stated that, in all likelihood, few great men [sic]

could make it past the Personnel Department. One might add in this regard that being a socialist never helped either. Political activist Graham Spry's career is a case study in this sort of irony. As this book clearly demonstrates, Spry was one of the most diligent, perceptive, and capable Canadians of the twentieth century. Yet because of his political leanings and despite his accomplishments — the greatest of which was persuading R.B. Bennett's free-enterprise government to create a nation-wide public broadcasting system — he remained penniless and unemployable in Canada. He had no choice but to leave the country if he wanted to find work. "Here I am," he wrote late in 1937, "the nationalist working for Americans and in England. And here I am the socialist serving the biggest of big business."

Spry was born into a well-placed Ontario military family in February 1900. He was gifted in many respects, not the least of which was his ability to teach himself French. Language remained a special interest, and throughout his career he promoted harmonious relations between Canada's two main linguistic groups. A well-rounded student, he went to Oxford in 1922 as Manitoba's Rhodes scholar and there came under the same Fabian influences as Frank Underhill, Eugene Forsey, and King Gordon (with whom he later wrote *Social Planning for Canada*). After university Spry went to work for the International Labour Organization in Geneva and later the Association of Canadian Clubs in Ottawa. As national secretary of the Association he played a principal role in planning a coast-to-coast radio broadcast for Canada's Diamond Jubilee in 1927. He became fascinated with radio's potential: in the right hands the medium could promote a sense of Canadian nationhood; but in the wrong hands — those of private owners who would do anything for profit — it would degenerate into another vehicle for the spread of American culture and for "selling cakes of soap." The Aird Commission on Radio Broadcasting (1929) later formally suggested public radio for Canada. Its recommendations, however, were adopted only after eighteen months of frantic lobbying by the Canadian Radio League (CRL) under the joint leadership of Spry and Alan Plaunt. Afterwards, Spry became immersed in the burgeoning socialist movements of the 1930s.