

# Empires, Nations and Private Lives



# Empires, Nations and Private Lives:

## *Essays on the Social and Cultural History of the Great War*

Edited by

Nari Shelekpayev,  
François-Olivier Dorais,  
Daria Dyakonova  
and Solène Maillet

Cambridge  
Scholars  
Publishing



Empires, Nations and Private Lives:  
Essays on the Social and Cultural History of the Great War

Edited by Nari Shelekpayev, François-Olivier Dorais, Daria Dyakonova  
and Solène Maillet

This book first published 2016

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

Lady Stephenson Library, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2PA, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data  
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Copyright © 2016 by Nari Shelekpayev, François-Olivier Dorais,  
Daria Dyakonova, Solène Maillet and contributors

All rights for this book reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced,  
stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means,  
electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without  
the prior permission of the copyright owner.

ISBN (10): 1-4438-8606-8

ISBN (13): 978-1-4438-8606-2

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

|                                                                                                                                    |     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| List of Illustrations and Tables .....                                                                                             | vii |
| Acknowledgments .....                                                                                                              | ix  |
| Introduction (English) .....                                                                                                       | xi  |
| Introduction (Français) .....                                                                                                      | xxv |
| Chapter One.....                                                                                                                   | 1   |
| <i>Architecture as Nation-Building: The Search for National Styles<br/>in Habsburg Central Europe Before and After World War I</i> |     |
| Dániel Veress                                                                                                                      |     |
| Chapter Two .....                                                                                                                  | 40  |
| <i>La Première Guerre Mondiale : une matrice oubliée de l'histoire cubaine ?</i>                                                   |     |
| Xavier Calmettes and Sandra Rodríguez Loredó                                                                                       |     |
| Chapter Three .....                                                                                                                | 56  |
| <i>Le conflit national durant la Grande Guerre : l'exemple des Tchèques<br/>et des Allemands dans l'Empire Austro-Hongrois</i>     |     |
| Helena Trnkova                                                                                                                     |     |
| Chapter Four .....                                                                                                                 | 81  |
| <i>Vivre le conflit loin des champs de bataille : la communauté allemande<br/>de Lima (Pérou) face à la Grande Guerre</i>          |     |
| Guillemette Martin                                                                                                                 |     |
| Chapter Five .....                                                                                                                 | 107 |
| <i>Making and Unmaking National Histories at the Dawn of the Great War</i>                                                         |     |
| Imre Tarafás                                                                                                                       |     |
| Chapter Six .....                                                                                                                  | 134 |
| <i>Les mémoires des Jeunes-Turcs unionistes : sources particulières sur<br/>une guerre particulière</i>                            |     |
| Duygu Tasalp                                                                                                                       |     |

|                                                                                                                                           |     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Chapter Seven.....                                                                                                                        | 151 |
| <i>La Première Guerre Mondiale : une opportunité pour la lutte contre la tuberculose au Sénégal</i>                                       |     |
| Fatoumata Camara                                                                                                                          |     |
| Chapter Eight.....                                                                                                                        | 163 |
| <i>The Great War in the Backyard: The Unsettling Case of a Rural Hit(Wo)man</i>                                                           |     |
| Tamás Bezsenyi                                                                                                                            |     |
| Chapter Nine.....                                                                                                                         | 185 |
| <i>Drunken Cesspool of Vice or Model of Government Control of Alcohol: Conflicting Visions of Montreal during Prohibition (1920-1933)</i> |     |
| Michael Hawrysh                                                                                                                           |     |
| Conclusion (English) .....                                                                                                                | 203 |
| Conclusion (French) .....                                                                                                                 | 211 |
| Contributors.....                                                                                                                         | 220 |

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS AND TABLES

- Illustration 1.1 Frigyes Feszl: *Vigadó concert hall*, Budapest, 1859-1864. Photo by Attila Brunner, Kiskunfélegyháza. Courtesy of the photographer.
- Illustration 1.2 Frigyes Feszl: *Vigadó concert hall*, Budapest, 1859-1864 (detail: gable of the main facade). Photo by Attila Brunner, Kiskunfélegyháza. Courtesy of the photographer.
- Illustration 1.3 Ödön Lechner and Gyula Pártos: *Museum of Applied Arts*, Budapest, 1893-1896. Photo by József Sisa, Budapest. Courtesy of Institute of Art History, Research Centre for the Humanities, Hungarian Academy of Sciences.
- Illustration 1.4 Ödön Lechner and Gyula Pártos: *Museum of Applied Arts*, Budapest, 1893-1896 (detail: open atrium). Photo by József Sisa, Budapest. Courtesy of Institute of Art History, Research Centre for the Humanities, Hungarian Academy of Sciences.
- Illustration 1.5 Ödön Lechner: *Postal Savings Bank*, Budapest, 1900-1901. Photo by Péter Hámori, Budapest. Courtesy of Institute of Art History, Research Centre for the Humanities, Hungarian Academy of Sciences.
- Illustration 1.6 Ödön Lechner: *Postal Savings Bank*, Budapest, 1900-1901. Photo by Péter Hámori, Budapest. Courtesy of Institute of Art History, Research Centre for the Humanities, Hungarian Academy of Sciences.
- Illustration 1.7 Stanisław Witkiewicz: *Pod Jedłami villa*, Zakopane, 1896-1897. Courtesy of Tatra Museum, Zakopane.
- Illustration 1.8 Kazimierz Skórewicz: *Milusin manor of marshal Józef Piłsudski*, Sulejówiek, 1921. Photo by Zygmunt Fit. Courtesy of Józef Piłsudski Museum, Sulejówiek.
- Illustration 1.9 Ignác Ullmann: *High School for Girls*, Prague, 1866-1867. Reproduced from: Zdeněk Wirth. *Stará Praha*. Prague: J. Otto, 1940. Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.
- Illustration 1.10 Josef Zitek and Josef Schulz: *Rudolphinum*, Prague, 1876-1884. Photo by Vendula Hnídková, Prague. Courtesy of the photographer.
- Illustration 1.11 Josef Gočár: *Czechoslovak Legiobank*, Prague, 1921-1923. Reproduced from an issue of *Styl*. Courtesy of Vendula Hnídková, Prague.
- Illustration 1.12 Bohumír Kozák: *Radio station*, Poděbrady, 1921-1924. Photo by Martin Mádl, Prague. Courtesy of Vendula Hnídková, Prague.
- Illustration 4.1 Le premier numéro de La Guerra Gráfica, Lima, 28 novembre 1914. Courtesy of the National Library of Peru.
- Illustration 4.2 « Après le combat. Un soldat allemand donne à boire à un blessé français », *La Guerra Gráfica*, Lima, 2 janvier 1915, 1. Courtesy of the National Library of Peru.

- Illustration 4.3 « Les barbares allemands? Un réserviste allemand donnant à manger à un petit enfant français », *La Guerra Gráfica*, Lima, 16 janvier 1915, 1. Courtesy of the National Library of Peru.
- Illustration 4.4 « Germanizando a Francia ! », *La Guerra Gráfica*, Lima, 26 décembre 1914, 1. Courtesy of the National Library of Peru.
- Illustration 4.5 « El nuevo sol de Francia » (« Le nouveau soleil de France »), *La Guerra Gráfica*, Lima, 23 janvier 1915, 1. Courtesy of the National Library of Peru.
- Illustration 4.6 « Balles dum-dum trouvées par l'Administration militaire allemande sur des prisonniers », *La Guerra Gráfica*, Lima, 5 décembre 1914, 9. Courtesy of the National Library of Peru.
- Illustration 4.7 « Les tranchées des Allemands », *La Guerra Gráfica*, Lima, 23 janvier 1915, 11. Courtesy of the National Library of Peru.
- Illustration 8.1 Pista Pipás (photo from the criminal files), *Az Est*, January 11, 1933. Courtesy of the National Library of Széchenyi István.
- 
- Table 1.1 The repartition of population into the two main economic sectors in 1900. Ernst Bruckmüller, *Histoire sociale de l'Autriche*, with a preface by Jacques Le Rider (Paris: Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 2003), 289.
- Table 1.2 Population of the Habsburg Monarchy as per linguistic groups and economic sectors in 1900. Ernst Bruckmüller, *Histoire sociale de l'Autriche*, with a preface by Jacques Le Rider (Paris: Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 2003), 354-355.
- Table 9.1 Arrests for drunkenness in the City of Montreal (monthly average), Commission des liqueurs de Québec, *Rapport Annuel 1926/27*, 73. Courtesy of the *Bibliothèque et Archives Nationales du Québec* (BANQ).
- Table 9.2 Arrests for drunkenness in the City of Montreal (monthly average), Commission des liqueurs de Québec, *Rapport Annuel, 1933/34*, 83. Courtesy of the *Bibliothèque et Archives Nationales du Québec* (BANQ).
- Table 9.3 Criminal arrests per 100,000 population, Canada/Quebec, 1919-1930: Commission des liqueurs de Québec, *Rapport annuel 1929/1930*, 83. Courtesy of the *Bibliothèque et Archives Nationales du Québec* (BANQ).

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book stems from a conference held in March 2014 at the *Université de Montréal* (UdeM), dedicated to the notion of conflict in general and the centenary of the First World War in particular. The conference attracted around 50 scholars from 14 countries and 29 universities and was a rich event to which many people contributed. I would like to thank first and foremost François-Olivier Dorais, Daria Dyakonova, and Solène Maillet who helped me to organize the conference and who later became co-editors of this volume. Without their professionalism and dedication, this book would not have been accomplished in its current form.

Many individuals and associations at the UdeM helped us at various stages of this project. I would like to thank the History Department and its Graduate Students Association, *Fonds d'investissement des cycles supérieures de l'Université de Montréal*, *Fédération des associations étudiantes du campus de l'Université de Montréal*, Prof. Michael J. Carley (former Director of the History Department), Prof. Laurence Monnais (Canada Research Chair in Healthcare Pluralism), and Prof. Michael Huberman (McConnell Chair in American Studies) for their financial support. Caroline Vachon (*Carrefour des arts et des sciences*), Prof. Fabien Desage (Chair in Contemporary French Studies at the Montreal Center for International Studies) as well as Héli Marzloff, Renaud Morin-Gagnon, Cornel Bontea and other graduate students provided important organizational help. I am particularly thankful to Caroline Reid (Office of the Vice-Rector for Student and Academic Affairs) and *Fonds d'amélioration de la vie étudiante* for helping us to finance the conference and for subsequently providing the generous funding for the preparation of the manuscript.

Many scholars shared their ideas and suggestions during the discussions that took place at the conference. I am particularly thankful to Prof. Catherine Foisy (*Université du Québec à Montréal*), Giordano Marmone (*Université Paris-Ouest Nanterre*), Prof. Frédéric Merand (UdeM), Prof. David Meren (UdeM), Prof. Sean Mills (University of Toronto), Prof. Cynthia Milton (UdeM), Prof. Yakov Rabkin (UdeM), Prof. Samir Saul (UdeM), and Prof. Ulrich Ufer (Karlsruhe Institute of Technology) for the time they spent with us and for their intellectual generosity. When we decided to transform the conference papers into a book, Prof. Carl

Bouchard (UdeM) was tremendously helpful with offering insights for the conceptual part of this volume.

Sam Baker from Cambridge Scholars Publishing floated the idea of a book proposal, and then he and his colleagues guided us through the volume's preparation. Many thanks to them. Also, contributions by anonymous peers from various universities across the world were invaluable. They helped authors to improve their texts greatly and provided scientific rigor to the entire volume.

Finally, my enormous gratitude goes to our anglophone editor, Chris Worsley, who, at the late stage of this project, meticulously proofread many texts from this book, and helped to provide clarity and coherence to chapters written by different authors.

—Nari Shelekpayev  
Montreal, November 2015

## INTRODUCTION

FRANÇOIS-OLIVIER DORAIS,  
DARIA DYAKONOVA AND NARI SHELEKPAYEV

This volume compiles a series of papers presented at a University of Montreal interdisciplinary conference held in March 2014 and devoted to various little known facets of the First World War's cultural and social history. The commemorative activities of the war's centennial triggered the conference, as this anniversary had precipitated a lively renewal of historical reflections on the causes and consequences of this global conflict. If the commemoration was an occasion to foster a more civic-minded pedagogical approach regarding the meaning of this major historical event, the conference itself strove to engage the rich and substantial body of research about the war that had evolved over the past few decades. Essentially, the project was a perfect excuse to generate wide international scientific cooperation and research on the topic, and specifically, it became an opportunity to encourage young researchers from different backgrounds to share and publicize their latest work.

From a historiographical point of view, it also seemed that despite the proliferation of fresh questions and studies that have appeared over recent years, the Great War has still mainly been considered through national frameworks, especially those relating to Western Europe. To a certain degree, this bias is comprehensible insofar as the conflict was inseparable from the strategies, affects, and national feelings that had fed it, not to mention the firm commitment of the nation-states that had been involved in it.<sup>1</sup> Consequently, each nation had espoused its own narrative of the war by giving priority to the episodes and events that bore most directly on it. In France, for example, the Great War is still mainly seen as a victorious event, purchased at the price of difficult sacrifices that had ensured the national community's survival. In Great Britain, however, where national interests were less directly threatened by the war, it has been easier for the

---

<sup>1</sup> Antoine Prost and Jay Winter, *Penser la Grande Guerre. Un essai d'historiographie* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 2004), 266.

country to have more critical distance regarding the validity and usefulness of such a costly conflict.<sup>2</sup> The situation in Russia is yet another story: the event remains, at best, a “forgotten war”—thanks to an official Soviet historiography which long ago relegated it to the darkest hours of the tsarist regime, or kept it on the margins of a collective memory still dominated by recollections of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution.<sup>3</sup> In Canada, the events of 1914-18, commemorated on November 11 and on Vimy Ridge Day, still remain a powerful vector for national unity.<sup>4</sup>

The dynamic of dissension/perpetuation that characterizes the history and memory of the Great War may galvanize the historian seeking a challenge. Antoine Prost recently wrote that “every country sees war as ‘its’ war,” underlining the degree to which “national blinders” may make us lose sight of the “worldly” dimension of the conflict.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, the European experience of the First World War can in no way be universalized if one fails to take into account the diversity of the actors that were involved. To illustrate this point, one need only refer to the participation of overseas contingents that were, often for the first time, sent to fight outside their regions: the Canadian expeditionary forces sent close to 425,000 soldiers to fight on European soil; New Zealanders and Australians constituted nearly a third of the 129,000 combatants who landed during the Gallipoli campaign; Indian troops were assigned to the Mesopotamian front; and the United States for their part, albeit belatedly, shipped about 4 million soldiers to the European fronts,<sup>6</sup> 117,000 of which were killed.<sup>7</sup>

In much the same way, one cannot know the history of the European conflict without taking the transatlantic shockwave it produced into account. In Latin America, it fired up the national and religious press in many countries, and even stirred up anti-German coalitions in several

---

<sup>2</sup> Antoine Prost, “Commémorer sans travestir. La guerre de 1914-1918 comme grand événement,” *Le Débat* 4, no. 176 (2013), 138.

<sup>3</sup> For details see Karen Petrone, *The Great War in Russian Memory* (Indiana University Press, 2011). See also Frederick C. Corney, *Telling October: Memory and the Making of the Bolshevik Revolution* (Cornell University Press, 2004).

<sup>4</sup> See Mourad Djebabla, “Historiographie francophone de la Première guerre mondiale : écrire la Grande Guerre de 1914-1918 en français au Canada et au Québec,” *The Canadian Historical Review* 95, no. 3 (September 2014).

<sup>5</sup> Prost, “Commémorer sans travestir,” 137-144.

<sup>6</sup> Michael Clodfelter, *Warfare and Armed Conflicts: A Statistical Reference to Casualty and Other Figures, 1618-1991* (Jefferson, NC: Mcfarland & Company, 1992), 781-785, 787-788.

<sup>7</sup> *The Oxford Companion to American Military History*, ed. John W. Chambers, II, (Oxford University Press, 1999), 849.

countries, including Cuba, Haiti, Panama, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Peru, Ecuador, Uruguay and the Dominican Republic. These countries would feel a certain cultural distance or disassociation towards the European continent. This led to a new attitude towards the United States, a country that would acquire a stronger economic position after the conflict.<sup>8</sup> The disruption of transatlantic trade (as trade was redeployed by the war economy) significantly shook up Africa's capacity to import manufactured goods. Once a few British and German colonies entered into the war a modernizing force was triggered which was to have a significant effect on industrial infrastructure, electricity, transport, and the supply of provisions. On a global scale, the war of 1914-18 also led to deep transformations in the economic and political order, upsetting growth patterns in industrialized countries and creating a definitive developmental gap between Europe and the United States, the country that was to become the indisputable creditor in the new dominant economy.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, there was no doubt that the shock wave in the great colonial empires of a Europe in crisis instigated the growth of national liberation movements in Africa, as well as in Asia, and that this would fuel the dynamics of decolonization during the following half-century.<sup>10</sup> Nor can we overlook the phenomenon of displacement that the war incurred, and which single-handedly reshaped the ethno-cultural landscape of many regions in Greece, Turkey, the Balkans and the wide band of territory that stretched from the Baltics to the Caucasus. As a global phenomenon, the war contained the initial conditions for the vast social and cultural changes that were to occur on a global scale, and with such a level of magnitude that some, like historian Carl Bouchard, have called the war "the matrix of our contemporary world."<sup>11</sup>

The present volume considers certain themes in cultural and social history that pertain to the First World War. While taking national and regional approaches into account, it also aligns itself with the recent interest in a global history of the Great War that, by not excluding various national traditions, strives to re-examine the causes and consequences of the conflict from a perspective whose scope extends beyond Europe. By

---

<sup>8</sup> Olivier Compagnon, *L'adieu à l'Europe. L'Amérique latine et la Grande Guerre* (Paris: Fayard, 2013).

<sup>9</sup> See Éric Bosserelle, "Guerres, transformation du capitalisme et croissance économique," *L'Homme et la société* 4, no. 170-171 (2008), 219-250.

<sup>10</sup> On this subject, one may learn from Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism* (Oxford University Press, 2007).

<sup>11</sup> Carl Bouchard, "La Grande Guerre," *Argument* 15, no. 1 (Fall-Winter 2012), 105.

engaging in a broader temporal and spatial consideration of the war, this standpoint not only calls into question the relevance of using the nation-state as a singular political and cultural framework with which to understand the conflict but also, and especially, strives to more clearly apprehend peripheral geopolitical spaces in the conflict and to integrate them more effectively.<sup>12</sup> The adoption of a more mindful approach with regards to the war's social and cultural aspects, along with the inclusion of a trans-European and transatlantic framework, has been the outcome of several decades of historiographical evolution. Let us consider the broad outlines of the steps that have accompanied this development so that we can more accurately assess what has been gained from a body of literature that, so far, has already produced more than 50,000 specialized monographs, as well as countless articles, films, television programs, exhibitions, and websites that continue to play a role today in the way the history of this conflict evolves.<sup>13</sup>

## The historiography of the Great War

Several studies have already examined the historiographies of the Great War, and the important contribution by experts Antoine Prost and Jay Winter must be emphasized in this regard.<sup>14</sup> Most of these studies, many of them branches of French and English historiography, agree that the way the history of the war has been structured can be described in terms of three successive paradigms: the "Clausewitzian" paradigm; the social history paradigm; and the cultural history paradigm.

"Clausewitzian" historiography, which spanned the outbreak of the First World War to the end of the Second World War, privileged an event-based version of the war and drew on the broad axioms of German historical methodology (of Rankean inspiration) that were predominant in Europe at the beginning of the century. The first works of this historiography appeared while the conflict was in process<sup>15</sup> and they focused primarily on

---

<sup>12</sup> For a deeper consideration of the topic, see Robert Boyce, Sabine Jansen, and Pierre Purseigle (eds.), "Historiographies étrangères de la Première Guerre mondiale," *Histoire@Politique* 1, no. 22, 2014. Also consult Jay Winter, "Introduction to Volume 1" in *The Cambridge History of the First World War: Volume I: Global War*, ed. Jay Winter (Cambridge University Press, 2014).

<sup>13</sup> Prost and Winter, *Penser la Grande Guerre*, 9.

<sup>14</sup> Prost and Winter, *Penser la Grande Guerre*, 9.

<sup>15</sup> One thinks especially of the book *Why we are at war?: Great Britain's case* prepared by members of the Oxford Faculty of Modern History (Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1914).

military strategies, diplomatic intrigues and the exercise of state power, and foregrounded mostly local and national politicians. Due to the weak institutional status of the historical discipline along with restricted access to archives, Clausewitzian historiography favored a relatively “brief” timespan for events (such as those delineated by conventional chronological markers: 1914-18) and tended to confine its analytical framework to Western Europe. According to Jean-Jacques Becker, works produced under the banner of this paradigm stand out for their “unilateral” character, in that their authors’ efforts would be less focused on understanding the warrior phenomenon (the *why*) than on identifying the causes and responsible agents (the *who*).<sup>16</sup> Thus, political discourse, given its focus on managing national heritages, generally distorts historical discourse about the Great War when it produces a “historiography of responsibilities” (in such historiographies, Germany typically plays the role of the guilty enemy). Apart from some notable exceptions—such as the publications by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, devoted to the economic and social history of war,<sup>17</sup> or the famous book by Pierre Renouvin, *The European Crisis and the First World War* (1935)—this historiography has been composed mostly of memoirs, novels, testimonials and essays produced by veterans and military officials. This “literature of the front” was very popular with the public and won the favor of literary juries. As for a genre more concerned with scholarly rigor and factual accuracy, one can refer to both the “Little Lavissee” on the Great War (1922), which focused primarily on military operations, and the *Revue d’histoire de la guerre mondiale*, founded in 1923, which predominantly analyzed military-political incidents. These publications are significant by virtue of their adherence to the modern scientific method in historical research and for having exalted a distinct literary approach—and literary style and scientific method would, in combination, open the way to progress in terms of how the war would be thought about.

The historian’s practice was to be transformed by the experience of the war. An atmosphere of incomprehension, uncertainty, and profound instability reigned over the still smoking ruins of Europe. Various themes—ruin, the uselessness of history, the inability to have foreseen the

---

<sup>16</sup> Jean-Jacques Becker, “L’évolution de l’historiographie de la Première guerre mondiale,” *Revue historique des armées*, no. 242 (2006), 4-15.

<sup>17</sup> On this subject, consult Jules Maurin, “L’historiographie de la Grande Guerre à travers les publications de la Dotation Carnegie pour la paix internationale” in *La Grande Guerre 1914-1918, 80 ans d’historiographie et de représentations*, ed. Jules Maurin and Jean-Charles Jauffret (Colloque international, Montpellier, Université de Montpellier, 20-21 November 1998 (2002)), 209-220.

disaster—were widespread in the intellectual appraisals in the immediate postwar period.<sup>18</sup> From Lucien Febvre's point of view, the war permitted a thorough reassessment of the aims and methods of historical knowledge, starting with the question of whether history should be in the service of a national community's purposes (the functionalization of history). "Should we dress [history] up in the fashions specific to a country, an era's tastes, place it at the mercy of our passions? For lack of scholarly awareness, our national prudence forbids it; our informed love of France, our sense of its obvious benefits, intensified by so many dangers, so many recent fears and emotions, would reveal the hazards and myriad perils of such an undertaking. The reason Germany lost—was it not precisely that it had created a truth for its own exclusive purpose?"<sup>19</sup> This insight is perhaps even clearer in Marc Bloch, for whom the Great War represented an "immense experiment in social psychology of unprecedented rewards."<sup>20</sup> His own path would express more clearly the trend that would take shape with the new generation of historians from the 1920s who, faced with the loss of control over the destiny of societies, aspired to produce accounts preoccupied with "physical evidence, the tangible and physical, with practices, with building a science of observation that starts in the present."<sup>21</sup>

Thus the renewal of historical knowledge during the interwar period, which would incorporate new subjects like those related to the economy and social issues, is partly due to the crisis in the intellectual climate of the early 1920s. This shift, in turn, would establish the conditions for a historical reading of the Great War, which was to evolve over the following decades. It should be noted, however, that the founders of the *Annales* school were not very involved in this rereading, the Great War having been a subject that was held at bay for being too politically sensitive,<sup>22</sup> and for being too reliant on the conditions of an event-based history; and admittedly, the topic was quickly demoted by the burning issues that would lead to the rise of European totalitarianism. One would have to wait for the triumphant demands that characterized social history in the 1960s and 1970s for the history of the First World War to be

---

<sup>18</sup> Christian Delacroix, François Dosse, and Patrick Garcia, *Les courants historiques en France. XIXe-XXe siècle* (Paris: Éditions Armand Colin, 2005), 204.

<sup>19</sup> Lucien Febvre, "L'histoire dans le monde en ruines," *Revue de synthèse historique* 30, no. 88 (1920), 1-15.

<sup>20</sup> Cited in Delacroix, Dosse, and Garcia, *Les courants historiques en France*, 205.

<sup>21</sup> Cited in Delacroix, Dosse, and Garcia, *Les courants historiques en France*, 205.

<sup>22</sup> Prost and Winter, *Penser la Grande Guerre*, 25.

examined in the light of new analytic frameworks, once many official records became accessible to researchers.

The kind of social history that was promoted in the decades following the Second World War took shape mainly through its opposition to nineteenth and early twentieth century political and event-based history. The focus of the historian's curiosity thus shifted to communities, groups, and classes, if not to the masses, thus allowing historical science to embrace the broader dimensions of a history that would now include peoples. In other words, from this point on, history would be constructed "from below" and not just "from above," so that the experience of the *common man* could be reinstated.<sup>23</sup> In 1960, the publication of the book *Vie et mort des Français 1914-1918* by André Ducasse, Jacques Meyer, and Gabriel Perreux, heralded this reversal of perspective in the historiography of the Great War. Emphasizing the "story of men at war," the three authors engaged in extensive use of testimonials to complement official documents. They were also keen to explore various aspects of life in the trenches and analyze the soldiers' equipment in depth. Two works affiliated with this approach are the *Histoire de la Première Guerre mondiale* (1968) by General Gambiez and *The Face of Battle* (1976) by John Keegan. In both works, the experiences of soldiers in combat, along with their ways of doing things and their reactions to the war were now included in the analysis.

Historiography, once it became more interested in understanding the whys and the wherefores (and less concerned with identifying the who that was "responsible" for any given conflict), began to encompass the "human" dimension of the war and to inquire into the repercussions on its players. The publication in 1969 of British historian Alan J. P. Taylor's *War by Timetable*, which questioned Germany's responsibility in the conflagration of 1914 and favored a more detailed account of the escalating conflict, is a clear example of this new direction. This branch was also driven by the rise of the Marxist paradigm, which encouraged the historian to adopt a more global and holistic perspective on the past.<sup>24</sup> The democratizing of historical experiences of the war should be seen in the context of other changes: education became more diversified and more accessible to the people; the discipline of history was becoming professionalized; there was greater access to archival collections; and new

---

<sup>23</sup> Christian Delacroix, "Histoire sociale," in *Historiographies, I. Concepts et débats*, ed. Christian Delacroix, François Dosse, Patrick Garcia, and Nicolas Offenstadt (Paris: Gallimard, 2010), 422.

<sup>24</sup> François Dosse, *L'histoire en miettes. Des Annales à la "nouvelle histoire"* (Éditions La Découverte, 2010), 59.

evidence about the Great War had started to mushroom. It was also partially connected to the growth of mass media, the emergence of television being quite significant. The arrival of television sets in homes indeed created strong public interest in multi-episode shows on popular history, the most well-known being *The Great War* in 26 episodes, produced by the BBC in 1964.<sup>25</sup>

The third and final paradigm is cultural history. It emerged mainly after the 1980s and has a special evolutionary relationship with the social historians (many of whom will migrate towards cultural analysis). Methodologically speaking, this historiography is still marked by the legacy of economic and social history, especially in terms of its preference for long-term perspectives and for massive sources for quantitative research. This migration takes place against the backdrop of a major shift in the discipline of history—some will even talk of a “crisis”<sup>26</sup>—that occurred not only because Marxist hypotheses had begun to run out of steam but also, more broadly, because a break occurred with the objectivist approaches (structuralism, functionalism) and quantitative history. Under the influence of the “linguistic turn” in the lineage of Hayden White’s theses and Reinhart Koselleck’s work on the historicity of concepts, historical science would no longer see social realities as natural components or as past facts, but rather as categories “constructed” by the various agents’ discourses.<sup>27</sup> Cultural history, understood as the “social history of representations,” is directly in line with this reconfiguration.<sup>28</sup>

It was under the aegis of this approach that the most recent forms of historiography on the Great War take shape. It should also be mentioned that this reorientation, which opens up new interpretative possibilities, is also closely connected to political developments. After the fall of the Iron Curtain, latent tensions in memory seemed to be alleviated and this enabled a more serene vision of the past to be adopted.<sup>29</sup> The inauguration in 1992 of the Museum of the Great War in Péronne, the leading museum and scientific institution devoted to the cultural history of the Great War, is testimony to the attention that this approach has received. Today, the

---

<sup>25</sup> Winter, “Introduction to Volume 1,” 2.

<sup>26</sup> Gérard Noiriel, *Sur la « crise » de l’histoire* (Paris: Berlin, 1996).

<sup>27</sup> On this subject, see in particular: Sudhir Hazareesingh, “L’histoire politique face à l’histoire culturelle : état des lieux et perspectives,” *Revue Historique* 2, no. 642 (2007), 355-368; Pascal Ory, *L’histoire culturelle* (Presses Universitaires de France, Collection « Que sais-je? », 2011), 128.

<sup>28</sup> Ory, *L’histoire culturelle*, 8.

<sup>29</sup> Jean-Yves Le Naour, “Le champ de bataille des historiens,” *La vie des idées* (November 2008). <http://www.laviedesidees.fr/Le-champ-de-bataille-des.html>.

venerated partisans of this institution—Jean-Jacques Becker, Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau, Annette Becker, Jay Winter, Gerd Krumeich—are still the preeminent figures at the meeting point of current historiographies on the Great War. The perspective favored by these historians has led to the development of a new framework with which to read the conflict and has introduced concepts like “war cultures” which, although increasingly challenged these days,<sup>30</sup> focus on the examination of discursive forms through which the war’s contemporaries apprehended the world in which they lived.<sup>31</sup> The current trends in cultural history are also in favor of refocusing on the intimate, on lived experience, and on war practices along with their emotional dimensions.<sup>32</sup> Consequently, an entirely new body of evidence is now being considered by historians, such as the experiences of bereavement, brutalization, violence, suffering—not to mention the effects of war on art, science, medicine and literature.<sup>33</sup> The development of this kind of history enables a re-examination not only of the role of women in the context of war, but also of the construction of masculinity—crucial features for an integrated view of war, if such a perspective can be found.<sup>34</sup>

---

<sup>30</sup> On this subject, see Emmanuelle Picard, “À propos d’une notion récente : la culture de guerre,” in *Guerres, paix et sociétés, 1911-1946*, ed. Frédéric Rousseau (Atlande, 2004), 667-674.

<sup>31</sup> Prost and Winter, *Penser la Grande Guerre*, 217.

<sup>32</sup> Prost and Winter, *Penser la Grande Guerre*, 47.

<sup>33</sup> For more on these various issues, consult: Matthew Stibbe, “The Internment of Civilians by Belligerent States during the First World War and the Response of the International Committee of the Red Cross,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 41, no. 1 (2006), 5–19; James E. Connolly, “Mauvaise Conduite: Complicity and Respectability in the Occupied Nord, 1914–1918,” *First World War Studies* 4, no. 1 (2013), 7–21; Uğur Ümit Üngör, “Orphans, Converts, and Prostitutes: Social Consequences of War and Persecution in the Ottoman Empire, 1914–1923,” *War in History* 19, no. 2 (2012), 173–92; Santanu Das, *Touch and Intimacy in First World War Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Martha Hanna, *The Mobilization of Intellect: French Scholars and Writers During the Great War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996); Christof Prochasson and Anne Rasmussen, *Vrai et faux dans la Grande Guerre* (Paris: Éditions La Découverte, 2004); Guy Hartcup, *The War of Invention: Scientific Developments, 1914-18* (London, Washington: Brassey’s Defence Publishers, 1988); Emily R. Mayhew, *Wounded: A New History of the Western Front in World War I* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014); Margaret R. Higonnet, “Authenticity and Art in Trauma Narratives of World War I,” *Modernism/modernity* 9 (2002), 91–107.

<sup>34</sup> See *Gender and the First World War*, ed. Christa Hämmerle, Oswald Überegger, and Birgitta Bader-Zaar (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014); *Behind the*

Concepts about private and public recollections of the war as well as those surrounding its commemoration through time also suddenly became key issues.<sup>35</sup> This reorientation was linked to the dissociation of history and memory that had taken place in the historiography of recent decades, a disassociation set in motion specifically in France through the publication of Pierre Nora's *Lieux de mémoire*. The result would be a "pluralization" of the memorial object—a symptom, *inter alia*, of the crisis of living together in Western societies, where the pressure of new centrifugal forces would undermine national references and the idea of shared memories.<sup>36</sup>

By widening the line of inquiry and the scope of interpretation regarding the Great War, cultural history thus paved the way for a new generation of historians who rallied behind the transnational perspective.<sup>37</sup> This new line of questioning, present in the 1990s and more so at the turn of the century, invites one to re-evaluate standard analytic elements, starting with the conventional chronology of the event (1914-18) as well as the role of "foreign zones" or "marginal zones" in the geopolitics of the conflict. Unlike the traditional international approach or the comparative approach, which are still largely focused on national differences, the transnational approach favors the examination of historical experiences below and beyond the national level. In the words of Micol Seigel, this method "examined units that spill over and seep through national borders, units both greater and smaller than the nation-state. Perhaps the core of transnational history is the challenge it poses to the hermeneutic preeminence of nations. Without losing sight of the 'potent forces' nations have become, transnational history treats the nation as just one among a range of social phenomena to be studied, rather than the frame of the study

---

*Lines: Gender and the Two World Wars* ed. Margaret R. Higonnet (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987); Jessica Meyer, "Separating the Men from the Boys: Masculinity and Maturity in Understandings of Shell Shock in Britain," *Twentieth Century British History* 20, no. 1 (2009), 1-22; Clare Makepeace, "Male Heterosexuality and Prostitution during the Great War: British Soldiers' Encounters with Maisons Tolerees," *Cultural and Social History* 9, no. 1 (2012), 65-83.

<sup>35</sup> On public and individual memory of the Great War see in particular Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1975).

<sup>36</sup> On this subject, see François Dosse, "Entre histoire et mémoire : une histoire sociale de la mémoire," *Raison présente*, September 1998, 5-24.

<sup>37</sup> On transnational history and "transnationalism," consult Patricia Clavin, "Defining Transnationalism," *Contemporary European History* 14, no. 4 (Nov. 2005), 421-439.

itself.”<sup>38</sup> From this perspective, Europe (or indeed the West) at war can be reframed as a range of experiences that transcend national boundaries. These experiences no longer need to be limited to patriotic concerns, for these concerns can be extended to include political, religious, and ideological affiliations, as well as issues pertaining to class, gender, and age group.

## Presenting the Studies

The nine chapters that comprise this book are concerned with four main themes pertaining to the Great War: the transformation of national identities before, during and after the conflict; the experiences and perceptions of war from the perspective of minorities and “small nations”; the relationship between the war and the discourse of the intellectual and ruling elites; and the social effects of war.

The first part of the book focuses on the role the Great War played in transforming national identities within the domain of the European empires. In his chapter entitled “Architecture as Nation-Building: The Search for National Styles in Habsburg Central Europe Before and After World War I,” Dániel Veress proposes to analyze the evolutionary relationships between architecture and the consolidation of national identities in Central Europe before and after the war. By stressing the importance of a comparative approach between the Hungarian, Polish and Czech cases, the author maintains that the First World War had marked a turning point in the development of European nationalisms. If the Czech and Polish examples show that their national architectural styles developed after the war—once Czechoslovakia and Poland became sovereign—the Hungarians, for their part, possessed a national architecture before the collapse of the Habsburg Empire. According to the author, this phenomenon can be accounted for by the fact that Hungary had the benefit of greater autonomy thanks to its semi-independent status within the Empire. Dániel Veress examines the sources of these different trajectories in terms of distinct socio-historical developments in the three countries.

In their chapter, Xavier Calmettes and Sandra Rodríguez Loredó analyze the impact of the First World War on Cuba, a surprisingly neglected topic to date in the historiography on the Great War in Latin America. More specifically, using the prism of the labor movement’s evolution (an evolution which the war was instrumental in inspiring), the

---

<sup>38</sup> Cited in Michael S. Neiberg, “Toward a Transnational History of World War I,” *Canadian Military History* 17, no. 3 (2008), 33.

authors examine the links between the growth of Cuban nationalist and anti-imperialist movements and the construction of a Cuban national identity. A source of economic vitality—Cuba was the main supplier of sugar to the Entente powers—the war also spurred a profound and complex reflection on “Cuban-ness” in nationalist players and inspired the workers towards self-organization.

The following two chapters provide a reflection on the everyday experiences and perceptions of war in various ethnic groups. In her chapter, “The National Conflict during the Great War: The Example of the Czechs and Germans in the Austro-Hungarian Empire,” Helena Trnkova examines the conduct and experiences of Czech and German soldiers in the Austro-Hungarian army. Despite the fact that they were in the same units, these two groups fought for different political ends; if the first had the objective of preserving the integrity of the German Empire, the latter campaigned for greater political autonomy. This situation led to the emergence of two opposing discourses during the war: one championed the “good” German soldier and the other disparaged the Czech “deserter.” The dissemination of such stereotyping, the author noted, would shape the soldiers’ self-representations during the conflict, define how they perceived the other national group and also, incidentally, determine how the soldiers gauged the phenomena of consent and dissent.

By closely examining the German community in Lima, Peru, Guillemette Martin has offered her own contribution to the theme of the minority experience. Her cultural and discursive approach to the study of the European communities established in Latin America during the conflict adds its voice to the current revival of international studies on the Great War while also combining the perspectives of social and cultural history. It is in this way that her contribution invites us to reframe the concepts of mobilization and “culture of war” from the point of view of populations which, lying on the periphery of Europe, experienced the conflict remotely. Through a detailed scrutiny of *La Guerra grafica*, a review of pro-German propaganda produced by the German community living in Lima, the author examines how this community was positioned relative to the conflict and its belligerents. An analysis of the performances and speeches expressed by the German minority in Lima becomes a convincing case study through which to explore and rethink the integration of European communities in Latin America during the Great War. Guillemette Martin’s analysis is a compelling example of the heuristic value that the global history framework brings to the study of the First World War.

Two other chapters set out to explore the theme of how the war was represented and how the discourse of intellectuals and ruling elites disseminated these representations in a variety of contexts. Based on a study of history textbooks, Imre Tarafás offers a new reading of social realities in the Austro-Hungarian Empire during the prewar period. Inspired by the historiography of the “linguistic turn,” he juxtaposes the representations of national histories promoted by the ruling elite in Hungary with versions generated by minority advocates in *Ausgleich* Hungary (1867-1918) on the brink of the First World War. By identifying the strategies for representing the “other” in the narratives of national history, the author thus helps to deepen our understanding of the precursors of the Great War.

Duygu Tasalp discusses war memoirs from the Young Turks (the Committee of Union and Progress), who were at the head of the Ottoman Empire during the First World War. On the one hand, the author rethinks “traditional” Turkish historiography, which had essentially been nationalistic, narrative-based, and tinged with the denial of the Armenian genocide. On the other hand, she adjudges the memoirs by the Young Turks to be historical sources in their own right that can shed light on current realities and highlight the issues and challenges related to historical writing about the Great War in modern Turkey. By looking at the stories told in these memoirs, the author is able to examine the range of representations and the general topography of these memorial records that date from the early years of the republic. She also explores the motivations behind the production of memories in the decades following the First World War as well as the collective dimension that characterizes their subjectivity. Written by men accused of crimes against humanity, these memoirs are, according to Duygu Tasalp, a plea to history, bequeathed to future generations.

Finally, three texts, basing themselves on a variety of case studies, tackle the influence of the Great War on daily life in different societies. Fatoumata Camara explores the way that tuberculosis was treated in Senegal in the 1920s. Her analysis demonstrates to what extent the war had, somewhat paradoxically, become an opportune time to fight against this infectious and contagious disease. Under pressure from the tuberculosis epidemic that was ravaging Senegalese soldiers, administrators and health professionals were encouraged to develop a preventive treatment during the war. Consequently, during the 1920s, tuberculosis became one of the best-targeted diseases by health care units, which led to the improved identification of its causes and the ability to limit its spread within the most affected populations.

Tamás Bezsenyi's research lies at the intersection of War Studies and Gender Studies. Through a micro-historical study of the exploits of a female criminal who had adopted a male identity and murdered several men by hanging in rural Hungary in the 1920s, the author examines how the relationship between sex and crime had evolved in the wake of the First World War. By questioning traditional gender perceptions, this case study deepens our understanding of the First World War's socio-moral implications and, by extension, the predicament of Hungarian women in this conflict, for women at the time were forced, due to the relative absence of men, to assume what were traditionally considered to be "male" roles.

Finally, Michael Hawrysh considers the Great War's impact on the regulation of alcohol in the city of Montreal in the 1920s. The demobilization of combatants and their reintegration into society had provided North American governments with a pretext for implementing prohibition of the sale of alcohol, in the guise of facilitating the transition from the chaos of war back to family life. A tide of prohibition swept over all the United States and every Canadian province except Quebec, which had adopted an alternative model with its creation of the Quebec Liquor Commission in 1921. This situation would make of Montreal a unique oasis on the continent, attracting hordes of tourists, but also many pro- and anti-prohibitionists intrigued by this model for regulating the public consumption of alcohol. By studying how Montreal was portrayed in public debates on prohibition, the author shows how, even though it didn't have a ban, the city nonetheless became a roiling center of disagreement. Anti-prohibitionists depicted the city as a model of temperance and even elevated it into an exemplar of the benefits of government control, but as far as the prohibitionists were concerned, Montreal was the embodiment of vice and immorality.

## INTRODUCTION

FRANÇOIS-OLIVIER DORAIS,  
DARIA DYAKONOVA AND NARI SHELEKPAYEV

Fruit d'un colloque interdisciplinaire tenu à l'Université de Montréal les 26, 27 et 28 mars 2014, cet ouvrage rassemble une série de chapitres consacrés à divers aspects méconnus de l'histoire culturelle et sociale de la Première Guerre mondiale. Il trouve son amorce dans l'activité commémorative de son centenaire, qui fut l'occasion d'un vif regain de réflexions historiques sur les causes et les conséquences de ce conflit. L'initiative se voulait aussi une occasion de participer à un plus vaste effort de pédagogie civique sur le sens à accorder à cet événement historique majeur, pour ainsi éviter que la commémoration soit propre à nourrir des interprétations contraires à ce qu'une abondante et féconde recherche nous avait déjà permis d'établir au fil des dernières décennies. Le projet s'avérait finalement un heureux prétexte pour favoriser une coopération scientifique internationale plus étendue autour de ce sujet et, surtout, d'encourager de jeunes chercheurs aux horizons variés à partager et mieux faire connaître leurs plus récents travaux.

D'un point de vue historiographique, il nous a aussi semblé qu'en dépit du renouvellement des problématiques et des interprétations dont elle a fait l'objet dans la littérature scientifique ces dernières années, la Grande Guerre demeurerait largement tributaire des cadres nationaux, en particulier ceux contenus dans le théâtre européen occidental. Pour un peu, ce biais interprétatif se comprend dans la mesure où ce conflit demeure indissociable des stratégies, des affects et des sentiments nationaux qui l'ont nourri, mais aussi, de la volonté ferme des États-nations qui s'y sont engagés.<sup>1</sup> Chaque nation en est venue à adopter sa propre trame narrative de la guerre en privilégiant les épisodes et les événements qui la concernent plus directement. Ainsi, en France, la Grande Guerre demeure appréhendée surtout comme un événement victorieux, acquis aux prix de

---

<sup>1</sup> Antoine Prost et Jay Winter, *Penser la Grande Guerre. Un essai d'historiographie* (Paris : Éditions du Seuil, 2004), 266.

durs sacrifices grâce auxquels la survie de la collectivité nationale put être assurée. Du côté de la Grande-Bretagne, où l'intérêt national fut moins directement compromis par la guerre, on s'est longtemps autorisé une distance plus critique à l'égard du bien-fondé et de l'utilité d'un conflit d'usure aussi coûteux.<sup>2</sup> Le cas russe est encore différent; l'événement demeure, tout au plus, une « guerre oubliée », conséquence d'une historiographie soviétique officielle qui l'a pendant longtemps reléguée aux heures sombres du tsarisme ou encore, tenue à la périphérie d'une mémoire collective encore dominée par le souvenir de la Révolution bolchévique de 1917.<sup>3</sup> Et que dire du Canada, où la mémoire de 14-18, portée à travers les commémorations du 11 novembre et de la bataille de la crête de Vimy, demeure un puissant vecteur d'unité nationale ?<sup>4</sup>

Une telle dynamique de concurrence/résonnance entre mémoire et histoire de la Grande Guerre dévoile un enchevêtrement délicat qui n'est pas sans interpeller directement l'historien. « Chaque pays voit la guerre comme "sa" guerre », écrivait récemment Antoine Prost, en rappelant au passage combien ces « œillères nationales » risquent de nous faire perdre de vue la dimension proprement « mondiale » du conflit.<sup>5</sup> De fait, l'expérience européenne de la Première Guerre est loin d'être universalisable pour peu que l'on s'intéresse à la diversité des acteurs qui y furent impliqués. À preuve, il suffit d'évoquer la participation des contingents d'outre-mer qui furent, souvent pour la première fois, envoyés se battre hors de leurs régions: le corps expéditionnaire canadien a envoyé en sol européen près de 425 000 soldats; les Néo-zélandais et Australiens représentaient quant à eux près du tiers des 129 000 hommes débarqués durant la campagne de Gallipoli; des troupes indiennes furent affectées au front de Mésopotamie; les États-Unis ont expédié pour leur part, quoique tardivement, un corps d'environ 4 millions d'hommes sur les fronts européens,<sup>6</sup> dont 117.000 perdirent la vie.<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> Antoine Prost, « Commémorer sans travestir. La guerre de 1914-1918 comme grand événement », *Le Débat* 4, no. 176 (2013), 138.

<sup>3</sup> Voir Karen Petrone, *The Great War in Russian Memory* (Indiana University Press, 2011). Voir aussi Frederick C. Corney, *Telling October: Memory and the Making of the Bolshevik Revolution*, (Cornell University Press, 2004).

<sup>4</sup> Voir notamment Mourad Djebabla, « Historiographie francophone de la Première guerre mondiale : écrire la Grande Guerre de 1914-1918 en français au Canada et au Québec », *The Canadian Historical Review* 95, no. 3 (Septembre 2014).

<sup>5</sup> Antoine Prost, « Commémorer sans travestir », 137-144.

<sup>6</sup> Michael Clodfelter, *Warfare and armed conflicts: a statistical reference to casualty and other figures, 1618-1991* (Jefferson, North Carolina: Mcfarland & Company, 1992), 781-785, 787-788.

<sup>7</sup> *The Oxford Companion to American Military History*, dir. John W. Chambers, II, (Oxford University Press, 1999), 849.

De la même manière, on ne peut penser l'histoire de la déflagration européenne sans prendre la mesure de son onde de choc transatlantique. En Amérique latine, elle survolta la presse nationale et religieuse de bon nombre de pays, allant jusqu'à susciter une coalition anti-allemande dans plusieurs États, dont Cuba, Haïti, Panama, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Pérou, Équateur, République dominicaine et Uruguay. Aussi, a-t-elle hâté un « éloignement » culturel et identitaire de ces pays face au continent européen et, partant, un déplacement du regard vers les États-Unis, dont la position économique se retrouva renforcée à la fin du conflit.<sup>8</sup> Sur le continent africain, les perturbations du commerce transatlantique, reconverti à l'économie de guerre, ont significativement bousculé les importations de produits manufacturés. L'absorption de certaines colonies britanniques et allemandes dans la guerre a généré quant à elle une poussée modernisatrice pour le moins considérable dans les domaines de l'infrastructure industrielle, de l'électricité, des transports et de l'approvisionnement. À l'échelle globale, la guerre de 14-18 déboucha aussi sur une transformation en profondeur de l'ordre économique et politique mondial, bouleversant les régimes de croissance des pays industrialisés et creusant un écart de développement définitif entre l'Europe et les États-Unis, devenus le créancier net de la nouvelle économie dominante.<sup>9</sup> Il n'est pas douteux non plus que l'ébranlement des grands empires coloniaux dans une Europe en crise pût favoriser la croissance des mouvements de libération nationale en Afrique mais aussi, en Asie, lesquels alimentèrent en retour des dynamiques de décolonisation pendant le demi-siècle suivant.<sup>10</sup> On ne saurait non plus négliger le phénomène des déplacements de populations précipités par la guerre et qui vinrent, à eux seuls, recomposer le paysage ethnoculturel de plusieurs régions de la Grèce, de la Turquie, des Balkans et de la vaste bande de territoire qui s'étire depuis les pays baltes jusqu'au Caucase. C'est dire combien la guerre, comme phénomène global, contient en elle-même les conditions initiales de vastes transformations sociales et culturelles qui se sont opérées à l'échelle planétaire, à tel enseigne que certains, comme

---

<sup>8</sup> Olivier Compagnon, *L'adieu à l'Europe. L'Amérique latine et la Grande Guerre* (Paris : Fayard, 2013).

<sup>9</sup> Voir Éric Bosserelle, « Guerres, transformation du capitalisme et croissance économique », *L'Homme et la société* 4, no. 170-171 (2008), 219-250.

<sup>10</sup> Sur ce sujet, on consultera avec profit Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian moment : Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism* (New York : Oxford University Press, 2007).

l'historien Carl Bouchard, y perçoivent la « matrice du monde contemporain ». <sup>11</sup>

Le présent ouvrage offre un regard sur certaines thématiques d'histoire culturelle et sociale se rapportant à la Première Guerre mondiale. Sensible aux approches nationales et régionales, il rejoint aussi la préoccupation nouvelle pour une histoire globale de la Grande Guerre qui, sans pour autant sacrifier l'intégration aux diverses traditions nationales, entend réinterroger les causes et les conséquences de ce conflit à l'aune d'un prisme qui s'étend au-delà de l'espace européen. En autorisant un élargissement temporel et spatial de la guerre, cette perspective tend à remettre en cause la prégnance de l'État-nation comme unique cadre culturel et politique d'appréhension du conflit et surtout, souhaite voir à une meilleure intégration des espaces périphériques à la géopolitique du conflit. <sup>12</sup> L'adhésion à une approche plus soucieuse des aspects sociaux et culturels de la guerre, ainsi que son inscription dans un cadre transeuropéen et transatlantique, cumule plusieurs décennies d'évolution historiographique. Revoyons dans ses grandes lignes quelles étapes ont ponctué cette évolution de manière à prendre une plus juste mesure des acquis d'une littérature qui, à ce jour, réuni déjà plus de 50 000 monographies spécialisées, en plus des innombrables articles, films, émissions télévisées, expositions et sites internet qui participent encore de nos jours à l'élaboration de l'histoire de ce conflit. <sup>13</sup>

## La Grande Guerre dans l'historiographie

L'examen du passé de l'historiographie sur la Grande Guerre a déjà fait l'objet de quelques études, parmi lesquelles il faut souligner l'importante contribution des spécialistes Antoine Prost et Jay Winter. <sup>14</sup> La plupart de ces études, pour nombre d'entre elles tributaires des historiographies française et anglaise, s'entendent pour établir que la structuration de l'histoire de la guerre met en évidence trois paradigmes

---

<sup>11</sup> Carl Bouchard, « La Grande Guerre », *Argument* 15, no. 1 (Automne - Hiver 2012), 105.

<sup>12</sup> Pour une étude plus approfondie de la question voir Robert Boyce, Sabine Jansen et Pierre Purseigle (dir.) « Historiographies étrangères de la Première Guerre mondiale, » *Histoire@Politique* 1, no. 22, 2014. Voir aussi Jay Winter, « Introduction to Volume 1 » dans *The Cambridge History of the First World War : Volume 1 : Global War*, dir. Jay Winter (Cambridge University Press, 2014).

<sup>13</sup> Antoine Prost et Jay Winter, *Penser la Grande Guerre*, 9.

<sup>14</sup> Antoine Prost et Jay Winter, *Penser la Grande Guerre*, 9.

successifs, à savoir le paradigme « clausewitzien », le paradigme de l'histoire sociale et le paradigme de l'histoire culturelle.

L'historiographie « clausewitzienne », qui se déploie entre l'année du déclenchement de la Première Guerre et la fin de la Seconde, privilégie surtout une histoire événementielle du conflit appuyée sur les grands axiomes de la méthodologie historique allemande d'inspiration rankéenne, encore dominante en Europe au début du siècle. En faisant surtout intervenir les acteurs politiques locaux et nationaux de premier plan, cette historiographie, dont les premières œuvres paraissent pendant le déroulement même du conflit,<sup>15</sup> met surtout l'accent sur les stratégies militaires, les intrigues diplomatiques et l'exercice du pouvoir par les États. Tributaire de la faible institutionnalisation de la discipline historique en Europe, mais aussi de l'accès encore restreint aux archives, elle privilégie une temporalité « courte » des événements, balisés par les bornes chronologiques conventionnelles (1914-1918), et tend à limiter son cadre d'analyse à l'Europe occidentale. Selon Jean-Jacques Becker, les œuvres produites à l'enseigne de ce paradigme se distinguent par leur caractère « unilatéral », en cela que leurs auteurs auraient moins eu pour fin la compréhension du phénomène guerrier (le *pourquoi*) que celle de l'identification des causes et des responsables (le *qui*).<sup>16</sup> Dans cette « historiographie des responsabilités », où l'Allemagne apparaît généralement sous les traits de l'ennemi coupable, le discours politique, soucieux de la gestion des héritages nationaux, infléchit le discours historique sur la Première Guerre. Hormis quelques exceptions notables, dont la grande série du *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace* consacrée à l'histoire économique et sociale de la guerre<sup>17</sup> ou encore le célèbre ouvrage de Pierre Renouvin, *La Crise européenne et la Première Guerre Mondiale* (1935), cette historiographie reste surtout le fait des mémoires, romans, témoignages et essais produits par d'anciens combattants et officiels de l'armée. Cette « littérature du front » triomphe auprès du public et gagne la faveur des jurys littéraires. Dans un genre plus

---

<sup>15</sup> On pense notamment ici à l'ouvrage *Why we are at war. Great Britain's case*, préparé par la Faculté d'Histoire moderne à l'Université d'Oxford (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1914).

<sup>16</sup> Jean-Jacques Becker, « L'évolution de l'historiographie de la Première guerre mondiale », *Revue historique des armées*, no. 242 (2006), 4-15.

<sup>17</sup> Voir à ce propos Jules Maurin, « L'historiographie de la Grande Guerre à travers les publications de la Dotation Carnegie pour la paix internationale, » dans *La Grande Guerre 1914-1918, 80 ans d'historiographie et de représentations*, dir. Jules Maurin et Jean-Charles Jauffret (Colloque international, Montpellier, Université de Montpellier, 20-21 novembre 1998 (2002)), 209-220.

soucieux de rigueur savante et de véracité sur les faits, on note le « Petit Lavis » sur la Grande Guerre (1922), centré surtout sur les opérations militaires, ainsi que la *Revue d'histoire de la guerre mondiale*, fondée en 1923 et axée principalement sur l'analyse des phénomènes politico-militaires. Pour peu qu'elles souscrivent aux canons modernes de la méthode scientifique en histoire, ces publications n'en demeurent pas moins importantes en cela qu'elles sont venues ennoblir un terreau littéraire particulier qui a ouvert une voie indispensable au progrès de la réflexion sur la guerre.

La pratique historienne sera transformée par l'expérience de la guerre. Sur les ruines encore fumantes de l'Europe, règne une atmosphère d'incompréhension, d'incertitude et de profonde instabilité. Les thèmes de la faillite et de l'inutilité de l'histoire, incapable de prévoir la catastrophe, sont communs aux bilans intellectuels de l'immédiat après-guerre.<sup>18</sup> Pour le grand historien Lucien Febvre, la guerre autorise une réévaluation en profondeur des buts et méthodes de la connaissance historique, à commencer par le principe d'une histoire instrumentalisée au service de la collectivité nationale. « L'habiller à la mode d'un pays, au goût d'une époque, au gré de nos passions? À défaut de notre conscience de savant, notre prudence nationale nous l'interdirait; notre amour averti de la France, notre sens de son intérêt évident, aiguisé par tant de dangers, tant de crainte et d'émotions toutes récentes, nous représenterait les dangers, les périls sans nombre d'une telle entreprise. Ce qui a perdu l'Allemagne, n'est-ce pas précisément de s'être façonné une vérité à son usage exclusif? »<sup>19</sup> Cette prise de conscience est peut-être encore plus évidente chez Marc Bloch, pour qui la Grande Guerre a représenté une « immense expérience de psychologie sociale, d'une richesse inouïe. »<sup>20</sup> Sa propre trajectoire exprimerait au mieux la tendance de cette nouvelle génération d'historien des années 1920 qui, devant le sentiment d'une perte de maîtrise du destin des sociétés, aspire à une histoire dont les préoccupations s'étendraient « aux indices matériels, aux éléments corporels et physiques, aux pratiques, en construisant une science de l'observation qui part du présent. »<sup>21</sup>

Ainsi, la rénovation du savoir historique durant l'entre-deux-guerres, qui fera sienne de nouveaux objets tels ceux de l'économie et du social, est

---

<sup>18</sup> Christian Delacroix, François Dosse et Patrick Garcia, *Les courants historiques en France. XIXe-XXe siècle* (Paris : Éditions Armand Colin, 2005), 204.

<sup>19</sup> Lucien Febvre, « L'histoire dans le monde en ruines », *Revue de synthèse historique* 30, no. 88 (1920), 1-15.

<sup>20</sup> Cité dans Delacroix, Dosse et Garcia, *Les courants historiques en France*, 205.

<sup>21</sup> Delacroix, Dosse et Garcia, *Les courants historiques en France*, 205.