



Civilians in a World at War, 1914-1918

Tammy M. Proctor

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World War I heralded a new global era of warfare, consolidating and expanding changes that had been building throughout the previous century, while also instituting new notions of war. The 1914-18 conflict witnessed the first aerial bombing of civilian populations, the first widespread concentration camps for the internment of enemy alien civilians, and an unprecedented use of civilian labor and resources for the war effort. Humanitarian relief programs for civilians became a common feature of modern society, while food became as significant as weaponry in the fight to win.

Tammy M. Proctor argues that it was World War I—the first modern, global war—that witnessed the invention of both the modern “civilian” and the “home front,” where a totalizing war strategy pitted industrial nations and their citizenries against each other. **Civilians in a World at War, 1914-1918**, explores the different ways civilians work and function in a war situation, and broadens our understanding of the civilian to encompass munitions workers, nurses, laundresses, refugees, aid workers, and children who lived and worked in occupied zones, on home and battle fronts, and in the spaces in between. Comprehensive and global in scope, spanning the Eastern, Western, Italian, East African, and Mediterranean fronts, Proctor examines in lucid and evocative detail the role of experts in the war, the use of forced labor, and the experiences of children in the combatant countries.

As in many wars, civilians on both sides of WWI were affected, and vast displacements of the populations shaped the contemporary world in countless ways, redrawing boundaries and creating or reviving lines of ethnic conflict. Exploring primary source materials and secondary studies of combatant and neutral nations, while synthesizing French, German, Dutch, and English language sources, Proctor transcends the artificial boundaries of national histories and the exclusive focus on soldiers. Instead she tells the fascinating and long-buried story of the civilian in the Great War, allowing voices from the period to speak for themselves.

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