

it was that was radical about the post Restoration feminists – not their politics, but their philosophy.

Reason's Disciples treats this feminism almost as if it were a delayed response on the part of women to the ideas of English revolutionaries (an approach reminiscent of Viola Klein's concept of the evolutionary lag in social development between men and women). However, it is quite clear from the material and from her presentation of it that the feminist position arose out of an application of Cartesian principles and Lockeian rationalism to the case of women. Both Descartes and Locke subscribed to a concept of the individual subject as thinking, sentient being, able to apprehend the external world through sense perception and complemented by a God who created the world through the mechanism of laws which could be discovered and understood. Reason stood as mediator between man and God rather than revelation. As a philosophic stance, it is hostile to militant protestantism, and provides the intellectual and political key to the work of Mary Astell, Judith Drake and even Maragaret Cavendish, who had certainly met Descartes, even if she claimed that she never listened to a word he said.

It is an effect of the employment of a sociological perspective that the history gets obscured. There is hardly any sense in *Reason's Disciples* that the late seventeenth century was a time of amazing confusion and development, within which early feminism played its part. On so many issues – the struggles over the new philosophy, the new science, the vernacular versus the classics, methods of learning and teaching – feminists took the part of modernism against the ancients, but little of this comes through.

This is not to imply that they were thoroughly and completely modern. One of the book's disappointments is that what is alien is occluded. Hannah Woolley, for example, is praised for her pragmatism, which was certainly one of her qualities. That this pragmatism encompassed an empiricism which has as much to do with witchcraft (slitting the throat of a live mole and mixing its blood with white wine to be drunk at the full moon is not untypical of her recipes) as anything else, is glossed over. Nowadays it is hard to suppress a smile at Mrs Fawcett's description of Mary Wollstonecraft as a paragon of all the domestic virtues, but the extraction of what is understandable to us from these seventeenth century texts seems to me to have a similar sanitizing effect.

Yet by giving a detailed inspection of these seventeenth century feminist women, Hilda Smith has allowed others a key to the library catalogues. It is a contribution which in the long term should do much to help widen awareness and debate over the different strands of the feminist inheritance.

Roasalind Delmar

Family Time and Industrial Time, Tamara Hareven, Cambridge University Press 1982. ISBN 0 521 23094 Hb., 0 521 28914 Pb., £25 Hb., £9.95 Pb., 474pp.

Feminists have for a long time focused on both the family and employment as key areas in which women's subordination is shaped and perpetuated. An understanding of the relationship between the two has often proved a puzzling and formidable task. So often we have had to satisfy ourselves with the frustrating conclusion that the two are mutually reinforcing, but with very little sense of precisely how. Everyone who is

concerned with these crucial issues should welcome therefore, the rich and meticulous study of family processes and industrialism contained in Tamara Hareven's latest publication.

Building from the material she has gleaned for her earlier study of the Amoskeag textile mills in Manchester, New Hampshire, USA (*Amoskeag: Life and Work in an American Factory City*, Pantheon, New York, 1978), Hareven sets out to debunk the longstanding myth that industrialisation destroyed the traditional family and broke down community and kinship ties and traditional culture. Demonstrating an impressive interweaving of voluminous quantitative data drawn from census, business and other official records with detailed oral narratives, she not only provides a vivid penetrating portrait of life in this huge mill city between 1900 and the shutdown of the mills in 1936, but also undermines the many lineal conceptions of social change that characterize much modernization theory.

Started in 1838, the mills owned by the Amoskeag Company had by the beginning of the twentieth century reached giant proportions and dominated the city of Manchester on the banks of the Merrimack River. By 1906, the Company employed seven thousand women and six thousand men and produced four million yards of cotton and woollen cloth per week. By this time the majority of the workers were not the native mill girls of the early nineteenth century but families of new immigrants, predominantly French Canadians from Quebec but also Irish, Portuguese, Greek and East European.

In their adaptation to industrial work both first generation immigrants, negotiating the transition from task-oriented work habits to employment regulated by machinery, and second and third generation immigrants facing the increasing demands of intensification and systematization of work schedules, were aided by the extensive kin and local networks both within the city and beyond it. Kin connections were vital in hiring, job placement and the control of work processes and in providing assistance in critical life situations such as illness, disability and death. Through both short term routine exchanges and long term investment, kin connections provided mutual protection and assistance, aided promotion and contributed to 'family autonomy'. For the management a reliance on kin links for recruitment and settlement of workers saved the company both time and money.

The employment records of most Amoskeag workers were characterized by multiple hirings and separations. It was rare for workers to experience long, uninterrupted careers in the mills: approximately 60% of Hareven's sample were employed at the mills for less than a year all told. Up until the First World War, workers sought flexibility. Women timed their jobs in relation to the rhythms of family life and men frequently alternated mill work with farming or construction work. Hareven maintains that the flexibility of employment was connected to a fluidity of household organization among Amoskeag workers which also had other sources. Boarding and lodging for both kin and strangers played an important role as a transition route between leaving home and setting up a separate household. At the turn of the century, marriage was tending to be put off until women and men were in their late twenties and early thirties and it was not uncommon to find at least one child still present in the house of an elderly parent.

Drawing from this data on both employment profiles and household patterns, Hareven spells out her explanation of the relationship between industrialization and familial processes. Central to her account is the concept of 'synchronization'. This 'synchronization' is claimed to operate at several levels. Most essentially, it is offered as a way of understanding the interrelationships between what Hareven calls 'individual time', 'family time' and 'industrial time'. Neither family life nor industrial life can be understood, she claims, without analysing the ways in which individuals time their 'life

transitions' in accordance with 'collective family needs'.

The most telling criticism that I have of Hareven's project is directed at this formulation. Although the notion of 'synchronization' does not necessarily rule out the possibility of conflict – indeed Hareven herself is at pains to point out that kin relations could provide pressure and strain as well as support and reliability – it does most decisively deny that gender and age are crucial variables characterizing both individual and families. It also enables the author to avoid confronting the power relations surrounding the decision which both women and men made about their 'life transitions' and, ultimately, to produce a conception of social change which shares many of the limitations of those lineal accounts of modernisation which she seeks to displace.

Hareven arrives at this conceptualization despite the evidence of her own data. The book is punctuated with masses of illustrations of how gender divisions were structuring the experience of women, men and children who lived in the shadow of the Amoskeag mills. Amidst the detailed descriptions of kin assistance and support we discover that it was women who were the primary 'kin keepers'. It was women who came to the aid of kin at critical times of need: grandmothers and ageing aunts cooked and cleaned and provided childcare for women who were employed in the mills, older sisters looked after younger ones while their mothers went to the mills, mothers carried out the domestic and caring duties for family members who were out at the mills, it was *female* offspring who stayed with their ageing parents. Through their close ties to kin outside their immediate household, women and girls were more likely to be involved in a 'treble shift' as well as a 'double shift' of factory employment and domestic work.

In the workplace, men and women were directed into different types of jobs with differing levels of status attached. Most higher paying jobs were closed to women and they were completely excluded from the highest ranking jobs of overseer and second hand. Jobs which were only for women, such as burling, were more likely to be semi-skilled and lower paid. In the mill it was men who went for career advancement while women were more concerned about issues such as the pace of work and the control of machinery. While women tended to have more continuous employment records than men they were also involved in a constant round of activities of all sorts to maintain their contribution to their households. Many of the women interviewed regarded themselves as 'standbys' – it was they who had to be ready to turn their hand to anything while men looked for ways of maintaining their status in the outside world. Even the tasks carried out for the household were gender-specific: men cut wood and carried coals but they rarely fed or washed the babies. The father also controlled the family economy. Wives, sons and daughters handed their money over to him and he decided how it was spent and how much 'pocket' money to allocate.

There were also hazards to which women were exposed which rarely had to be faced by men.

The bosses were very fresh. The boss would chase the girls and slap their behinds, give them kicks in the rear end. They'd send them away, those they didn't like, and not pay them.

Another interview describes the distress of a young woman who became pregnant after being raped and was ostracized by both female and male workmates. These and many other incidents reveal the very distinctive ways that women's lives were controlled in this mill town and forge a picture which is very similar to the lives of female millworkers in other towns on both sides of the Atlantic.

All these crucial features of life in a mill town somehow get pushed to the sidelines in an account which seeks above all to assert a mutuality of interests between corporate industrialism and 'collective family needs'. Hareven is, moreover, at pains to maintain that this mutuality of interest only collapsed after the First World War with

the increase in scientific management and the arrival of the Unions. It is here that the weakness in her conceptualization of the family is particularly highlighted. It is true that she alerts the reader not to confuse 'family' with 'household' and recognizes the variety of different arrangements which can characterize 'the family'. These are insights which have also been given much currency and much further elaboration by various feminist writers (Rapp et al, 1979; Thorne and Yalom, 1982, Harris, 1981). What Hareven does not share with these writers, however, is an ability to pinpoint the ideological significance of familial relations. By holding on to a view of the family as an institution characterized by blood ties and marital connections, she unwittingly replicates some of the serious shortcomings of the traditional functionalist analysis. In subscribing to the view that the family's functions were reduced with the onset of scientific management and trade union intervention, she neglects to analyse the ways in which familial relations were structured into other aspects of social and economic life. It is this view of the family which also prevents her from examining the full implications of internal divisions of interest among both 'household' and 'family' members of different sexes and ages. In many respects, she is simply moving the date at which family patterns get significantly altered to a later period from that postulated by the modernization theorists she criticizes.

Hareven's neglect of the ideological dimensions of the family shines through her discussion of the paternalism in the extension of corporate control over the entire existence of the workforce for we are not informed as to *which* family model forms the central axis. It is assumed that 'family' means marital and primary kin relationships which were organized in such a way as to place a priority on the role of the husband/father as chief breadwinner and to increasingly delegate the main domestic responsibilities to the wife/mother. What we are not told is just *how* this division of responsibilities emerged as an ideal, except in so far as it was part of an 'American culture', to which the immigrants to Manchester, despite the fact that they were bringing with them a good many traditions and values from their native homelands, were increasingly aspiring. In this respect, we are asked to accept that immigrants were being socialized into a way of life the origins of which are not explained.

An explanation of the gender divisions which Hareven so vividly documents lies in the very process of corporate industrialization which she is describing. Far from leaving behind patriarchal familial relationships in the rural farm areas from which the immigrants originated, as Hareven claims, it was precisely this type of family model which was being incorporated into the industrial context. The corporation was not simply making use of the networks in order to facilitate its recruitment and placement policies. The patriarchal family system represented a central organizing principle of workplace relations. Similarly, paternalistic practices were not only a way of staving off the intervention of labour unions. They were based on strategies inherited from the nineteenth century developed as a means of controlling predominantly female workers.

Certainly, many of the workers interviewed stressed how the mill was like a family, but surely it is no coincidence that in the words of one of the women, 'Its like a family, the father is the big boss . . . the mother is the second hand.' What this woman is describing is a structure of authority relations and it is this, rather than extended ties and connexions, which is of crucial importance in understanding the significance of the patriarchal family system. To get drawn into the never-ending debate concerning the dissolution or otherwise of the patriarchal family, where the patriarchal family is characterized solely in terms of kin networks and functions, is to follow a red herring. The essential point is that a particular set of authority relations whereby men were assumed to be more powerful than women were being reconstructed throughout the process of industrialization.

This power structure was recreated through the construction of hierarchical

relations in both the home and the workplace. Men who had secured the highest positions in the labour force were also encouraged through a whole range of paternalistic practices to increasingly espouse the 'domestic ideal' for their wives. The Company established an all-male Textile Club, Gun Club, Boy Scout group and Young Mens Christian Association which cultivated a masculinist culture that directly benefited men and boys since it reinforced their claims to be released from the duties of the 'double' and 'treble' burden. At the same time, a separate Textile Club was set up for women where activities focused on sewing and cooking classes. This sort of paternalistic separation of spheres was very common among large textile industrialists. (See Lown 1983.) Hareven sees the nine month strike of 1922 as a 'watershed' – a sharp turn from the paternalism of the past and the end of the workers' identification with the company. In many ways, however, what this period was witnessing was the coming home to roost of years of uneasy compromise between the employment of women outside the home and the belief in the domesticity of womankind. When demand for goods and productivity was high it suited the company to allow a flexible regime whereby women could move back and forth between their many duties at home and their jobs in the mill. By the early 1920s however, increased competition and falls in demand persuaded the management to implement attempts to lower the piece rates and increase the hours of work of their employees. The decline in the need for labour also resulted in women not being guaranteed a return to their jobs after periods of absence during childbirth or care of dependants. The squeeze on wages and production affected both female and male workers. But although women were very active in the 1922 strike it was men who occupied positions of leadership and it was these men who many women bitterly claimed, had 'sold them down the river' by eventually negotiating a settlement which conceded the increase in hours demanded by the employers.

Most of the members of the Union activist group were part of the stable core of Amoskeag workers. They were mainly 'skilled' men occupying the highest ranks in pay and status and no doubt pillars of the Textile Club and other recreational bodies. There was no discontinuity between the period preceding the First World War and that following it. These were the same men whose interests had been cultivated by paternalism adopting different tactics to serve those same interests. Indeed, there is no grounds to assume that the bonds between male employers and certain male employees were completely severed during the strike. In a classic illustration of the hidden corridors of male power we are told by the treasurer's son, F.C. Dumaine that 'Horace Riviere (a major strike organizer) and I settled the 1922 strike in the men's room.'

The Union had, in fact, already established a record of colluding with management in order to control the women in the workforce. One Union representative reported girls who tried to increase their daily pay by throwing away rather than repairing broken bobbins. After the strike, it was married men and single women who had the least difficulty in gaining access to jobs in the mill. And after the shutdown in 1936 married women's employment opportunities were even more drastically curtailed.

To understand the processes which produced this pattern of events it is not sufficient to rely on a view that conceptualises the corporation's paternalism as harmonizing with the workers attitudes and with familial orientation until historical and economic conditions brought about a collapse of the balance. We need to know *which* workers attitudes were being accommodated and the continuities which were assured by such accommodation in pursuit of the project of toppling the myth of the breakdown of the family power relations between women and men get submerged from historical view in this book. Feminists should not be deterred, however, from combing through this wealth of material for clues as to why both the structure of the

labour force and the culture of paternalism characterizing mill life served to marginalize women and girls in this emerging city community.

Judy Lown

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