
For many years the history of women workers in France focused on the “heroic period” of economic transformation, the rise of the labor movement, and the emergence of socialist politics in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries up to World War One, mirroring the scholarship on French working-class history generally. More recently, scholars have challenged the unitary story of French working class formation by examining how cultural and historical meanings of sexual difference shaped workers’ experiences and inflected the process of class formation. Now historians are turning their attention to the history of working-class women and gender after World War One, and are investigating how gender relations at work were affected by the war and the developments of the 1920s and 1930s. Catherine Omnès’s meticulously researched *Ouvrières Parisiennes* contributes to this latter body of literature on the interwar period. Omnès’s book, focused largely on women (rather than gender) in the metalworking, pharmaceutical, garment, and food processing industries of the Paris region, constitutes a major departure from some of the recent interpretations of women’s work experience between the wars. Relying principally on the retirement dossiers of the Institution de retraite nationale interprofessionnel des salariés (IRNIS), the internship reports of women factory superintendents in training, and the personnel dossiers of a selection of Parisian firms (including the Compagnie française des téléphones, Thompson-Houston, La société Thibaud-Gibbs, and Panhard et Levasseur among others), Omnès produces a detailed and solidly crafted study of professional mobility and labor markets. Her study focuses on structures, institutions, and market forces as the prime movers of women’s professional trajectories. In contrast to studies that have emphasized how gender difference negatively affected women’s occupational mobility or their opportunities for learning new skills, Omnès offers a more positive account of women’s experience both during World War One and World War Two.

Thus, she argues that in addition to opening new opportunities for women’s employment, the war allowed women to learn new skills and earn higher wages—a view that contrasts with that of Laura Downs, for example, in *Manufacturing Inequality: Gender Division in the British and French Metalworking Industries* (Ithaca, 1995). Downs is less sanguine about the opportunities for large numbers of women to learn new skills during the war and the durability of the skills women did learn. Omnès’s account of the recovery of the luxury industries (*haute couture*, fur and leather goods industries, for example) emphasizes the importance for women of 1920s economic growth and points to employer initiatives in the Parisian fashion industry as examples of how French entrepre-
neurs strove to improve France’s international competitive position. These employers developed apprenticeship and training programs, increased wages, signed collective contracts, and provided automatic cost-of-living adjustments and minimum wages as well as unemployment protections, sick pay, and paid vacations.

In some ways, more remarkable was the expansion of women’s work in sectors that hitherto employed few women or the expansion of positions for women in more traditional sectors. These shifts, according to Omnès, did not generally involve the substitution of women for men. Rather, rationalization and the redefinition of the labor process created new openings for women in metalworking, a development that, as Laura Downs has shown, began during World War One and continued during the 1920s.

The favorable conjuncture of the 1920s, moreover, led to employer-initiated social policies that also benefited women: rising wages (which narrowed the wage gap between women and men to seventy-five percent), cost-of-living bonuses, family wage bonuses, and paid maternity leave. Added to these measures was the practice of hiring women factory superintendents—an initiative that Downs has already described well for the Parisian metalworking industry. But as Omnès’s research shows, factory superintendents worked in a range of industrial settings—from metalworking to food-processing and textiles. Omnès’s work confirms that women were central actors in the “modernization” of numerous areas within the French economy, both in terms of the reorganization of work and the management of the French labor force. Her picture of the 1920s modifies and elaborates what Sylvie Zerner has described in “De la couture aux presses: l’emploi féminin entre les deux guerres” (Le Mouvement Social 140 [1987]:9–25) as the movement “de la couture aux presses” (from sewing to heavy industry) between the wars.

Omnès’s chapter on the 1930s provides the most recent analysis of the extent of French women’s unemployment during the Depression. In what is in some ways the most interesting and nuanced chapter of the book, Omnès attempts to map women’s and men’s unemployment against degrees of feminization, changes in the labor process, innovations within industries (rationalization and new products, for example), the cyclical stages of the Depression, sectoral and intersectoral mobility, and wages. Although the conventional wisdom about the Depression holds that it was less severe in France than elsewhere, unemployment in the Paris region (particularly in the heavy industries, such as metalworking and automobiles) came close to that of other industrialized countries that experienced the full impact of the crisis. But measuring unemployment is no easy task, as Omnès is quick to point out. The statistics of the Placement Offices of the Department of the Seine, for instance, although valuable for tracking job seekers during the crisis, probably underestimated the numbers of women. Additionally, women’s work patterns varied as women periodically temporarily withdrew from the labor force. What Omnès shows is that women’s and men’s unemployment followed different patterns in different industries and at different points during the Depression. Thus, women were affected earlier than
men and more seriously, as in the garment industry from 1929 (before the Depression had a more generalized impact on France). By 1936, however, the trend reversed and unemployment touched a larger proportion of men than women. In part, this is explained by the course of the Depression in different industries, sometimes with paradoxical effects. Thus, women’s employment in the region surrounding Paris in metalworking, where relatively large numbers of women had worked in the 1920s, suffered from the collective contracts and wage increases of the Popular Front, which, says Omnès, slowed the hiring of women and resulted in progressive defeminization. Although “protected industries” like food processing, necessary for the internal market, continued to experience high levels of feminization and relatively low female unemployment, in the textile and garment industries, feminization did not protect women from unemployment.

Omnès’s analysis of the movement of wages and mobility likewise reflects a more optimistic picture of women’s professional experience during the Depression. Whereas some scholars have suggested that wage adjustments lowered women’s purchasing power as the Depression progressed, Omnès argues in contrast that the wages of women who remained employed, as well as their purchasing power, improved, and that their position in male-dominated industries (like metalworking) solidified thanks to the process of rationalization that accompanied the Depression. At the same time, the effects of rationalization on job mobility were mixed: in some industries, a shortage of skilled workers led employers to protect men’s jobs over women’s. In others like meatpacking, rationalization was one reason why women’s jobs could remain stable in some areas during the crisis.

In a brief chapter on the Occupation, Omnès investigates the extent to which women’s employment was disrupted by the war and the extent to which the policies of Vichy permitted continuities in earlier employment patterns. The withdrawal of almost fifty percent of French women from the labor force profoundly disrupted the work lives of the women in her sample. Yet, even here, she finds elements of stability. Thirty percent of those who remained employed also remained in the same job throughout the war. In contrast to World War One, which provoked the massive redistribution of the labor force, the Second World War froze the structures that determined women’s employment. In a series of final chapters, Omnès analyzes the retirement records of the sample for the “personal history of women,” focusing on intergenerational occupational mobility, geographical mobility, and the impact of women’s life cycles on their professional trajectories. The excerpts from women’s testimonies from the retirement records and other sources are perhaps most interesting for what they reveal about the meaning of work in women’s lives, collective life in the workplace, and the difficulties they faced on and off the job. Overall, the vast majority of women in the sample born before World War One experienced long but discontinuous working lives. Those born after World War One worked for less time but more continuously, given that they benefited from family policies “which permitted them to return to the home.” As Omnès argues, this shows how social legislation could be constitutive of the social reality of women’s working lives.
Omnès’s rigorous exploitation of the retirement archives (IRNIS), enabling her to track women’s employment history, has produced a unique and significant study that adds immeasurably to our understanding of the French economy and women’s work from 1920 to 1945. Indeed, her findings about the nature of women’s job training, mobility, and purchasing power alone challenge more pessimistic accounts of working women’s experience, especially in the little-understood years of the Depression. At the same time, one regrets the omission of culture and agency from the story. Throughout, Omnès steers clear of interrogating the cultural dimensions of how gender definitions of skill shaped employer strategies and produced different effects on the employment (or unemployment) of women and men. It is also unfortunate that she did not extend her analysis to service-sector occupations in order to see how already highly feminized occupations in sales and state administration fared both in the 1920s and in the Depression years.

Finally, Omnès’s focus on labor markets to the exclusion of the labor process leads her to ignore the way that rationalization led to the deskilling and routinization of the labor that women performed. She has demonstrated that employers made the management of women’s labor one of the central vehicles of the technological and social transformations of this period, and that ultimately women benefited by securing a more durable position in the labor force and better wages. Whether the quality of those jobs improved, however, and whether these developments shifted the cultural practices of gender in the labor market are questions that still remain to be answered.

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John J. Johnson’s Political Change in Latin America: The Emergence of the Middle Sectors (Stanford, 1958) concluded that the “middle sectors” would guide Latin Americans into a “golden age.” The golden age failed to materialize and in the process the Latin American middle classes came to be seen as anything but agents of progress. In particular, much of the Left saw the middle class as a dependent and reactionary force. In the 1980s, the continent’s “lost decade,” reports of the middle class’s imminent demise became common currency as hyperinflation and currency depreciation eroded already meager incomes. Today the middle class in Latin America continues to perfect its ability to survive
against considerable economic odds. Until recently, social historians had paid little attention to the Latin American middle class. D. S. Parker’s *The Idea of the Middle Class* and Brian P. Owensby’s *Intimate Ironies* are timely and welcome studies of the much maligned yet little understood middle classes of Peru and Brazil, respectively. Both Owensby and Parker’s studies concentrate on the first half of the twentieth century and on large metropolises: Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo, and Lima. Parker roots his analysis in a detailed study of Lima’s commercial employees, although he does not restrict it to them. Owensby’s middle class is more encompassing and ranges from nonelite doctors and lawyers to clerks.

Both authors creatively combine traditional sources—ministerial reports, white-collar union documents, newspaper articles—with more unorthodox ones. Owensby is particularly good in his use of advertisements to gain an insight into the middle class’s “struggle for life” (79). Both authors make use of literature. Owensby draws strongly on a series of novels on the Brazilian middle class to delve into the private dimension of middle-class life. Parker turns to Julio Ramón Ribeyro, the great Peruvian *cuentista* (writer of short stories), to illustrate the pathos of middle-class “respectability.” Parker also relies on a fictionalization of the lives of two hypothetical white-collar workers to illustrate the heterogeneity of middle-class experience. This “soft” evidence is complemented by the “hard” data provided by more traditional sources, including census material and, in the case of Brazil, what must be one of the earliest market surveys in Latin America.

In the late 1950s, in part because he was writing within a non-Marxist framework, Johnson examined “middle sectors” rather than “the middle class” or “the middle classes.” The choice of nomenclature was not merely ideologically determined; Johnson argued that his subject matter did not fulfill the central condition of a class: “a common background of experience.” To some extent, Owensby and Parker agree: Their “middle sectors” are heterogeneous entities; those at one end of the spectrum, lawyers or doctors, would have found it impossible to agree to a shared class position with those at other end, such as clerks or typists. However, neither Owensby nor Parker sees class as either objective or structurally determined. For them, class is subjective and imagined. The middle class, Owensby tells us, is “a state of mind” (8). For Parker, “classes, like abstractions, are products of the mind” (9). Crucially, though both see the middle class as a mental construct, they nevertheless root this construction in “reality”: Typically both Peruvian and Brazilian middle-class men were engaged in non-manual work, were literate, and were white or light-skinned.

In the early part of this century, the growth in white-collar employment was intimately linked to both countries’ insertion into the world economy through primary exports. Trade in goods and services and the institutions set up to oversee the trade created a large demand for bureaucrats, commercial employees, bank tellers, and clerks. By the 1920s, white-collar workers accounted for a similar proportion of the total work force in the two countries: between fifteen and thirty percent.
From the 1930s onwards, however, while Brazil developed a large industrial work force, Peru did not. Thus, while in Brazil the industrial proletariat became virtually the only significant social actor in the 1940s and 1950s, in Peru white-collar workers remained politically significant by virtue of the absence of a sizable industrial work force. As Owensby shows, in the 1930s emerging political parties of the Left and the Right fought to woo middle-class support. By the late 1940s, however, Brazilian political parties were only interested in courting the proletariat, just as the middle class began to feel politically abandoned. By contrast, as late as the 1950s, the military regime of Manuel Odría in Peru was handing out social benefits to white-collar workers largely to undermine middle-class support for the Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana (APRA), which in the late 1940s had successfully organized large sectors of the white-collar work force into militant unions. However, the bulk of the middle class in both countries refrained from direct political participation or restricted it to voting. In Peru, as Parker argues, white-collar workers saw unions as tools to claim a place for the middle class within the status quo rather than as engines of radical change. Owensby argues that the political disenchantment of the middle class meshed with Getulio Vargas’s “antipolitical statism” to give white-collar workers the idea that they had embarked on a moral mission to guarantee social peace and progress.

In both countries middle-class involvement in politics was subordinated to a more important pursuit: the preservation of social status. As both authors pithily show, the middle class spent a considerable amount of time and money trying to distance itself from those below. Despite the obvious gulf in wealth that separated the middle class from the elite, white-collar workers possessing a modicum of education could nevertheless imagine themselves in a shared social universe with the upper class. As such, a miserly clerk considered himself to be a member of the upper half in a way that a well-off railway driver or a master baker could not. In both countries, cultures of race served to deepen the divide between white- and blue-collar workers: As Parker notes, white-collar workers may have been physically lighter skinned than the average Peruvian, but they were also classified as white because they were white-collar workers.

Both employers and the state made use of the division between manual and nonmanual workers, which they encouraged through legislation and bans on common white- and blue-collar unions, to create a social buffer. The division hardly needed to be encouraged: Almost by definition, joining the ranks of the middle class implied a certain respect for social order and a community of interest with those above. However, respectability—the sign of middle-class status—came at a cost. It implied large expenditure on housing, servants, clothing, “culture” and education. “The point, of course,” Parker rightly notes, “is that domestic service and private education were not only expected of the middle class, they were part of what people understood to define someone as middle class” (213). As such, both consumer culture and the development of credit can be seen as by-products of the emergence of the middle class. The “additional” expenditure required to preserve status led white-collar workers to believe that
they, as a class, suffered most. They were encouraged in this belief by the upper classes. As Parker argues, the not-so-hidden agenda of the elite was to present the white-collar employee as a heroic self-sacrificing figure, in sharp contrast to uppity blue-collar workers. The Brazilian middle class, Owensby suggests, considered itself on an even higher moral plane than those above by virtue of the effort needed to attain their social position.

Both studies concentrate on the urban middle class, yet there is no reason to exclude the rural or small-town middle class (such as rural school teachers, doctors, lawyers, and petty officials), particularly if one accepts Parker and Owensby’s definition of class as a mental construct. Parker examines the private dimension of middle-class life only fleetingly. He pays some attention to middle-class women at work, but says little about middle-class women at home. As Owensby argues, a successful middle-class man kept his family away from the “competitive arena” of work for as long as possible. From their homes, Brazilian donas de casa (housewives) partook in the construction of middle-class identity by becoming “the guardians of a politically charged moralism” that eschewed formal politics and particularly class conflict in favor of social peace.

In contrast to his thin discussion of home life, Parker is particularly strong in examining the dynamics of white-collar unionism. White-collar unions eschewed radicalism, but they were open to tactical alliances with the working class and radicals to obtain specific benefits. As Parker shows, in the 1920s, 1940s, and 1980s, white-collar unions handed their leadership positions to radicals in order to gain concessions from employers and the state. However, these alliances were usually short-lived and were subordinate to and aimed at the preservation of social status.

On balance, these are fascinating studies that open the field for further investigation into the Latin American middle class. They deserve very serious attention from anyone interested in Peruvian and Brazilian social history and the history of the middle class in Latin America and beyond.

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Janet L. Finn, Tracing the Veins: Of Copper, Culture and Community from Butte to Chuquicamata. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998. xiii + 246 pp. $45.00 cloth; $16.95 paper.


Scholars have historically characterized miners as among the most militant industrial workers due to their tightknit communities, difficult working conditions, and relative geographic isolation. These two new works on copper miners move
beyond this classic, if one-dimensional, image to focus on miners’ contradictory
class/political identities, the gendered construction of working-class men and
women, and mining companies’ physical and ideological organization of mining
communities. They examine a crucial commodity—copper—that was historically
central to the economic development, politics, and labor movements of
Chile and the United States Southwest.

Janet Finn, trained in both anthropology and social work, offers an ambitious
comparison of two Anaconda-owned copper mines: one in Butte, Montana, and the other in Chuquicamata, northern Chile. Finn seeks to develop a
comparison that identifies similarities, differences, and interconnections be-
tween the two communities. Theoretically, she is interested in how constrained
actors reproduce and transform social structure, feminist discussions of gender,
and how the researcher’s “positionality” affects her research stance.

The book is structured thematically, utilizing political, historical, and sym-
bolic analysis. Her historical analysis of strikes and ownership changes shows
how the company balanced repression of strikes in Butte with heightened cor-
porate welfare in Chuquicamata. This strategy helped maintain global produc-
tion during strikes while promoting Butte miners’ nationalistic jealousy of their
Chilean counterparts’ “privileges.” Moreover, Chile’s 1971 nationalization of
Chuquicamata contributed to the Butte mine’s gradual decline and temporary
closure in the 1980s. These two communities were deeply interdependent, al-
though the unions fought management in isolation.

The company also utilized distinct community-building strategies at the
two sites. While it promoted Irish ethnic and patriotic pride to counteract class
militancy in Butte, the firm crafted a racial/occupational hierarchy in Chile, of-
fering distinct work, housing, leisure, and payment conditions for Chilean man-
ual and technical workers and American supervisors. Additionally, the company
sought to “civilize” Chilean miners with social workers, hygienists, and
schools. The company made an alliance between the two workforces less likely
by promoting a different model of ethnic/national pride in each.

Chapters on gender, everyday life, consumption, and trust/betrayal point
to men’s and women’s complex mental worlds. In these chapters, Finn empha-
sizes how men experienced class via work, “while it is in and through relations
to the means of consumption that working-class women often lived the contra-
dictions of capitalism” (190). In Butte, women’s lives were structured by three-
year contract cycles, while Chuquicamata women’s daily lives focused on wait-
ing in lines at water pumps and company stores. Her discussions of consumption
and trust focus on how disease, worry, and changing consumption styles affect
men and women, while the company calls for “participation” at both sites place
miners in a double bind: Participation invites company betrayal, while total re-
sistance prevents workers from affecting the process. The overall portrait em-
phasizes the importance of consumption and everyday life in shaping mining com-
unities. Moreover, men’s and women’s identities, shaped in part by the company,
revolved around class, nationality, ethnicity, and gender. She ends with examples
of new social movements emerging from the crises in both communities.
Thomas Klubock’s study of El Teniente, the other major copper mine in Chile, argues that class and state formation are fundamentally gendered processes. His historical narrative utilizes an array of sources, ranging from company reports, marriage records, union publications, court proceedings, and oral histories to build a tightly woven analysis of the evolution of firm, union, and community. Klubock seeks to move beyond two standard accounts of Chile’s copper miners that alternatively see them as the most militant fraction of the labor movement or as a conservative labor aristocracy. Building on the “new” labor history’s concerns with hegemony and working-class subjectivity and feminist discussions of class formation, the author argues that neither of these standard accounts adequately characterizes miners’ contradictory political consciousness and the centrality of masculinity to miners’ social and political identities.

The Guggenheim family purchased the El Teniente mine in 1908 and quickly identified a fundamental problem: how to establish a permanent, stable work force. Given Chilean rural workers’ traditional patterns of migratory labor, the company suffered chronic labor turnover. Their solution was to mold men’s and women’s private lives. The company required male residents of company housing to prove they were married to their partners, offered married men and women economic incentives, and proscribed or undermined single women’s economic activities: commerce, sales of alcohol, and prostitution. The company believed that single women corrupted miners, leading to alcoholism, absenteeism, etc. The company added social programs, bans on alcohol and gambling in the camps, and intense surveillance of mining families and single women’s private lives.

Miners developed notions of pride and self-worth tied to physical strength and skill, aspirations for upward mobility, independence (expressed through foot-dragging, fights, and violation of the company’s strict moral codes), and self-assertion. Women, whom the company had virtually pushed out of the labor market, sought redress through the courts and the company welfare department, although these organizations often ruled in men’s favor. Women suffered the dark side of miners’ self-assertion.

While some social reformers involved in drafting Chile’s first labor law during the 1920s looked with interest at Braden’s corporate welfare policies, Popular Front governments during the late 1930s and 1940s finally began to enforce workers’ rights to organize while promoting the male breadwinner model through national social welfare policies. Popular Front leaders provided El Teniente workers with a language of citizenship while enforcing the 1931 labor law for the first time, triggering a long-term pattern of union and community militancy. These political changes interacted with the unintended consequences of corporate welfare. Many workers who participated in company schools and clubs became union and political activists. Additionally, miners’ informal rebelliousness often spun out of union leaders’ and leftist parties’ control. Finally, although gender relations were unequal and conflictive, women’s economic dependence on men led them to actively support miners’ strikes. The company’s model of social control based on the male breadwinner had backfired.

Klubock’s complex and tightly integrated analysis will certainly lead to a re-
thinking of Chilean labor history, a literature that has only recently examined women workers and has been largely silent regarding men’s gender identities. It also contributes to a recent trend in Latin American labor history that poses gender as an organizing problem, but at times overstates the national importance of this single firm and union. Greater attention to how other factors and groups contributed to these national outcomes would provide a fuller account. However, this minor point does not detract from the author’s central argument. Taken together, these two works offer more complex views of copper miners in Chile and the United States. They will certainly interest labor specialists, gender theorists, and development scholars.

As the authors contend, miners and their wives, lovers, and children develop their gender identities in relation to one another and to specific company-promoted gender ideologies. Miners’ relation to the workplace is not straightforward, nor can their ideas and actions be understood without reference to their lives as family members, community residents, and sexual subjects.

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Doug Yarrington’s *A Coffee Frontier*, a new study of class formation and agrarian change in Venezuela, forms part of a small but important body of research on peasant producers of export crops in Latin America in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Most work on the history of commercial agriculture in Latin America has addressed issues related to the plantation and its expansion at the expense of peasant communities. But a growing number of scholars, Yarrington among them, are looking at the experiences of small cultivators who grew crops such as coffee, tobacco, or cacao for export—frequently in frontier areas. This important research adds nuance to our understanding of commercial agriculture, class structure in the countryside, and the behavior of social groups known as small farmers by some and precipitate peasantries by others.

Yarrington argues that coffee allowed the creation of a precipitate peasantry and an elite in the area known as Duaca, Venezuela, during the nineteenth century. These two social groups were formed from numerous sources, among them, Duaca’s indigenous population, some settlers who had been there during the colonial period, and a large number of nineteenth-century migrants from other parts of Venezuela, Germany, Italy, and the Middle East. All of these people invested in coffee in one form or another once they arrived in Duaca: Those with capital opened shops and invested in processing coffee and the coffee trade; those without financial resources settled the open land on the frontier and began to plant coffee, for the most part in small plots. Relatively high coffee prices
during the nineteenth century allowed all of these people, including the peasants growing coffee on the frontier, to become prosperous. Thus, while nineteenth-century Duaca was not an egalitarian society, neither was it one in which elites were able to monopolize land and exploit labor to the degree that they were capable of doing elsewhere in Latin America during the period.

Yarrington argues persuasively that the peasants obtained land and were able to establish themselves because the local elite was without influence at the national level. Efforts on the part of elites to privatize land, making it less accessible to peasant producers, or to enforce debt peonage laws therefore were largely unsuccessful during the nineteenth-century. With the emergence of a strong central state in Venezuela in the first three decades of the twentieth century, however, this changed. Venezuelan strongmen Cipriano Castro and Juan Vincente Gomez empowered the Duaca elite in exchange for their assistance guaranteeing the security of the railroad that passed through the area. The two strongmen thus allowed Duaca’s elites to carry out a process of land privatization between 1919 and 1923 that turned Duaca’s independent peasantry into rent-paying tenants. Peasants attempted to litigate their grievances, but to no avail. They quietly submitted to the new regime, not because they wished to, nor because they did not understand what was happening to them, but because the Gomez state was so repressive that it offered them little alternative.

According to Yarrington, this state of affairs persisted until the 1930s when the combination of the Depression and Gomez’s death provoked a series of protests throughout Venezuela, including in Duaca. There, in 1936, peasants refused to pay rent, burned landlord property, and even resorted to murder when the death of the dictator revealed divisions among the elite. Their goal was a return to the days when land had been a free good, in what Yarrington sees as an effort to enforce a moral economy in Duaca. Ultimately, they were unsuccessful although their efforts left a lasting legacy for Venezuelan politics.

The story Yarrington tells is, in many ways, familiar: Peasants losing land to local elites with powerful allies is an oft told tale in Latin American history. Yet closer attention reveals that Yarrington’s peasants are not traditional occupants of the land producing subsistence crops only to be replaced by elites growing commercial crops: They are migrants from other parts of Venezuela cultivating coffee for export to the world market. Despite their origins in other parts of Venezuela and their relatively recent arrival on the frontier, they came to share an understanding of the common good that allowed them to resist the transformation of the countryside in the 1930s, when divisions in the elite surfaced due to the Depression and the death of Gomez.

Yarrington is able to make his case forcefully because of extensive research in archives at the local, state, and federal levels. The notarial and legal documents that he uncovered in the Duaca archives are particularly useful for helping him reconstruct patterns of land tenure, tenancy, and land transfers. It is these documents that allow him to show rural Duaca society in all of its complexity, with groups of peasants and elites that included a wide variety of people from a wide variety of backgrounds.
Yet while he consistently argues that the peasants and elites in Duaca both worked to further their own class interests, Yarrington does not show us how diverse groups of people, with very different class, ethnic, and racial origins, came to see themselves as having anything in common. In other words, he does not show us how class consciousness developed in the area. He does not help us to understand how small producers from Duaca and those who migrated there from elsewhere came to share a notion of the common good. Nor does he explain how an elite made up of men who were sons of prominent local families came to believe that they formed part of the same social class as their wealthy neighbors who began as illiterate black farmers or as immigrants from the Middle East who could neither read nor write Spanish.

Despite this concern, Doug Yarrington’s study of the coffee frontier in Venezuela is well worth reading: He addresses a question of importance and places it in the context of the principal theoretical and historical work on issues relating to precipitate peasantries and moral economy. In doing so, he offers a valuable case for comparison with similar work being done on other parts of Venezuela, Colombia, Costa Rica, Puerto Rico, and Brazil.

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Do not be misled by the title of this book. While it does describe a strike carried out by sugar-cane workers, its reach and implications are much broader than that focus might suggest. Masayo Duus has succeeded in telling the microhistory of this strike and a murky, perhaps related episode of a dynamite explosion at a plantation supervisor’s home, while at the same time making some important points about the history of Japanese immigration to Hawaii and California, the response of haole (white) elites in Hawaii and mainstream politicians on the mainland, and global connections in the history of labor politics.

After a dramatic opening that tells of the April 1920 nighttime bombing of supervisor Jūzaburō Sakamaki’s home, the first chapter offers a brief but effective overview of the history of Japanese immigration to Hawaii, some early labor organizing, and the activities of a small circle of Japanese socialists in California in the early twentieth century. This sets the stage for Duus’s ongoing strategy of weaving together thematic strands from Japan, from the mainland United States, and, of course, from multiple aspects of Hawaiian political and economic life.

The next two chapters (two and three) offer a prelude to the story of the strike itself, focusing especially on a fascinating character named Noboru Tsutsumi. He combined a university education in Kyoto with a commitment to so-
cial justice, which he sought to realize through activism on behalf of the sugar-cane workers in Hawaii. The intimate connections between Japanese political culture in Tokyo and in Hawaii are nicely brought out through characters such as Tsutsumi and vignettes such as the Honolulu speeches of prominent political leaders from Japan en route to the Paris Peace Conference in 1919. Throughout, Duus constantly reminds the reader and also demonstrates that Hawaiian political and economic history has unfolded in a global context inseparable from events and forces on both shores of the Pacific. She also presents a nuanced and complex view of the local Japanese community and its manifold divisions, although it is noteworthy that on the eve of the strike even the leaders of the Japanese community, who might have been expected to urge moderation, in fact stood solidly behind the strikers.

The following chapter ("The Japanese Conspiracy") dramatically tells the story of the strike itself. The initial mobilization of the entire Japanese community is most impressive (86), as are the efforts to forge cross-ethnic alliances with Filipino workers. Eventually, however, identities grounded in ethnicity decisively trumped those of class, and the joint effort fell apart. In addition, important divisions emerged within the Japanese community, some grounded in religion (Buddhist versus Christian) as well as some based on economic or social status. Local, national, and international events are juxtaposed to good effect, as when Duus reminds us that *haole* fear-mongering that spoke of a “Japanese conspiracy” to take over the Hawaiian sugar industry had a certain resonance with both white missionaries throughout Asia and other Asians at a moment when the Japanese were brutally suppressing resistance to their colonial rule in Korea and Chinese students were protesting the Japanese occupation of the Shandong peninsula.

The second half of the book turns from the 1920 strike, which ends in a defeat for the organized workers, to the conspiracy trial of 1922, in which twenty-one members of the Japanese Federation of Labor (in Hawaii) were charged with conspiracy to dynamite the Sakamaki house. Duus systematically builds a devastating picture of this trial. Riddled with contradictory evidence, the prosecution case was extremely weak. It nonetheless played effectively upon the linked triad of antilabor, anti-Left, and anti-Japanese prejudices on the island. As a result, the “conspirators” were found guilty by an all-white jury. (One puzzle that I wish Duus had discussed further is that the defense excluded nine prospective jurors whose last names appeared to indicate either “Filipino, Portuguese, or Hawaiian” ethnicity [141]. One might imagine that the defense would have preferred to entrust its case to such jurors rather than *haole.*) The account of the trial itself ends with a moving account of the way in which the presumed but in fact quite dubious guilt of these men has established itself as an unquestioned fact in the judgment of posterity.

Duus turns from the story of the trial to the concurrent and linked effort of Walter Dillingham and others of the Hawaiian *haole* elite to argue in Washington for the reopening of Chinese immigration to Hawaii. This is a remarkable tale of hypocrisy and a brazen (and ultimately failed) attempt to play the race
card on behalf of the Hawaiian elite in a way that contradicted the interests of
the mainland exclusionists whose racial and economic strategizing was less fine-
ly calibrated. Dillingham and his allies wanted more Chinese in Hawaii so they
would be less dependent on Japanese labor and free to play off divided ethnic
labor groups against each other. They struck a paternalistic (if, in retrospect, hol-
low) note of concern about elevating all races in Hawaii, which lead them to dis-
tance themselves from the more outright racism of the California elites. Neither
mainland unions, chiefly the American Federation of Labor (AFL), nor exclu-
sionists such as William Randolph Hearst, would accept this strategy, and
Dillingham’s effort to move Congress to modify the Chinese exclusion policy
ended in failure.

The book’s final chapter on the Japanese Exclusion Act of 1924 brings to-
gether the story’s several threads in a superb and moving fashion. The irony of
Hawaii’s haole opposition to the Act is striking. The depth of a humiliated na-
tionalist reaction in Japan comes across powerfully, and Duus effectively stress-
es the tortured character of Japan’s official position against the Act when con-
sidered in tandem with Japanese colonial policies of racial discrimination in
Korea. Japan’s government asked for “special treatment” on par with Cau-
casians rather than condemn the act on universalistic grounds that could have
compromised its own position in its colonies (314–15). Such irony and nuance
of analysis also emerges in a discussion of the fact that the United States ap-
peared on the verge of revising this Act in 1931, at which point the Japanese mil-
tary took over Manchuria and effectively ruled out the prospect that the Amer-
cans might reopen the door to immigration.

There is little to criticize in this book. On occasion, the author falls back on
rather simplistic cultural generalizations about homogeneous Japan and het-
erogeneous America that did not seem helpful to me or convincing (218). One
unfortunate problem, given the potential appeal of this book to those unfamil-
iar with Japanese history, is that a fair number of phenomena, names, and events
(“working in Edo as a clerk,” the Meiji Restoration, Katsu Kaishu, Sakai Toshi-
hiko, Kōtoku Shusui, and Tokutomi Sohō) are introduced without explanation.
In the Japanese-language original, one could (perhaps) rely on the readers to
understand such references. Many readers of this translation will need a bit more
help. Even so, this book should appeal to those interested in the histories of la-
bor in the United States or Japan, as well as elsewhere, in addition to those in-
terested in the histories of migration, diplomacy, and the early history of identi-
ty politics. The author does not impose or develop her own explicit analytical or
theoretical framework, a choice that might frustrate some readers, but the nar-
rative offers rich material for readers to draw on in their own efforts to under-
stand the intersection of class and ethnicity in specific historical settings.

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In the opening pages of her clearly written and nuanced book on the emergence of the provincial middle classes, Catherine Kelly notes that nineteenth-century Americans held two seemingly different visions of the New England town. While some lauded the New England town as a source of order and stability, others condemned it as stagnant and parochial. What the casual observer misses, according to Kelly, is that these visions rested on a shared belief that the New England town had remained untouched by market culture, somehow avoiding the changes wrought by capitalism. Historians have devoted considerable attention to the processes that transformed rural New England in the nineteenth century, stressing the transformative effects of the “market revolution” on economic and social relations. Despite living in the midst of these enormous changes, Kelly’s observers focused primarily on continuity—seeing in the New England town the persistence of preindustrial values of cleanliness, social harmony, and stability. Rather than dismissing these visions as mere “pastoral fantasy,” Kelly interprets them as expressions of profound anxiety, generated by an emerging provincial middle class in the throes of negotiating the transition from a household economy to a commercialized one. Ultimately, however, their expressions of resistance would prove pivotal in the spread of bourgeois culture and in the perpetuation of capitalist social relations.

*In the New England Fashion* addresses several significant historiographical problems and will be of interest not only to women’s historians and cultural historians but to social and economic historians as well. Kelly contributes to the study of the emergence of rural capitalism by looking at the role of women and bourgeois domesticity in the legitimization of market culture and bourgeois social relations. Relying on letters, diaries, and “imaginative writings,” she studies the intersection of “imagination, ideology, and experience” to reconstruct how women articulated their experiences and, more importantly, affixed meanings to these experiences (6, 8). Kelly provides valuable information about the finer textures of middle-class formation, demonstrating, for example, that urban models, such as Stuart Blumin’s, do not adequately apply to provincial New England. Providing an important counterbalance to the preponderance of literature on nineteenth-century homosocial relations, she also stresses the significance of heterosocial relations in the construction of middle-class identities. But her most significant contribution may lie in her explication of the ways in which seemingly subversive acts and discourses were ultimately put to the service of bourgeois culture and liberal capitalism.

Kelly devotes individual chapters to identifying competing ideologies of women’s work, female education, marriage and love, sociability, and consumerism. From 1820 to 1840 the ideals of the household economy, rooted in mutuality and community, existed alongside competing bourgeois visions built upon individualism, but by the end of the antebellum period, Kelly argues, mod-
ified forms of bourgeois idioms and conventions had triumphed. Although anti-market representations of the New England town persisted, they were increasingly used to bolster the very culture they set out to critique.

Women, Kelly contends, suffered most dramatically from the pull of these competing ideologies and lived in worlds of contradiction. Even mundane housework contributed to the family either by earning cash or saving it through household frugality. Increasingly told that their work was valued for its feminine qualities, women drew on the values of the household economy and continued to define their work as productive and useful. Women’s lives and identities emerged not just from their efforts on behalf of their families but through extensive kin and community networks. The standards of local exchange that had dominated the household economy remained powerful even as market relations made inroads into provincial homes. Women clung to the values of mutuality and reciprocity as their husbands and sons took advantage of the new opportunities provided by the market.

Through 1840 these competing visions of women’s work and social relations coexisted, but increasingly women used the ethic of mutuality not to resist the incursion of market relations but to encourage it. For example, women (and families) adapted the ethic of mutuality to help one another achieve a middle-class standard of living. Women who had aided their neighbors and kin during childbirth now helped them stage increasingly “elaborate ‘affairs’” and acquire other skills necessary to becoming ladies (58). The language and conventions of the household economy were more and more frequently put to the use of bourgeois culture. Women’s work, once heralded for its value as productive labor, became instead a labor of love. While provincial definitions of women’s work and ladylike behavior might not have been exact replicas of urban bourgeois conventions, they served similar roles as subtle markers of class distinction. By the 1860s, the more affluent provincial middle class had renounced all claims to productive labor for women, leaving their less affluent neighbors struggling to reconcile their very real need for female labor with cultural constraints that defined this labor as unrefined.

A similar process played out in a variety of areas. In a particularly fascinating chapter, Kelly demonstrates how conflicting definitions of love pitted “reciprocal” love against romantic love (129). Reciprocal love, rooted in the needs of the household economy, emphasized male “competency” and female “domestic accomplishments” (128). Provincial women initially used the language of reciprocal love to critique the bourgeois individualism inherent in romantic love, especially its emphasis on personal fulfillment. Adapting the language of evangelical religion to these ends, provincial women inadvertently allowed for the spread of romantic notions of the heart and the self, and unwittingly contributed to the triumph of bourgeois individualism. Kelly carefully describes how this occurred, paying close attention to the language of “religious emotion” (144). By 1859, she maintains, romantic love had triumphed; provincial men and women described reciprocal love as old-fashioned and backward.

Kelly documents a similar process of change in consumerism. As con-
sumption increased in the 1830s, provincial New Englanders feared its excesses and projected their anxieties onto images of women who were seen as most vulnerable to excessive consumption. By casting the problem as an issue of womanhood, the provincial middle classes obscured the very real social, cultural, and economic processes at work and avoided important questions of commodity production and class relations, allowing once again for the ultimate triumph of the market culture they ostensibly resisted.

While Kelly may in some instances overstate the antiindividualist ethos of provincial women and dismiss women’s claims to personal autonomy too quickly (especially in the chapter on young women’s fears of marriage and spinsterhood), her work provides a finely textured description of the process by which middle-class hegemony was achieved in provincial New England and affords a very important look at the emergence of rural capitalism and capitalist social relations. Cloaked in the language of the household economy, discourses on a variety of subjects obscured the extent to which bourgeois culture and social relations were being embraced in provincial New England. But Kelly also recognizes that the provincial middle class was different in important ways from the urban bourgeoisie. The New England town remained more informal and egalitarian than its urban counterpart, but, she argues, these discourses of “resistance” actually obscured the extent to which the provincial New England town had been transformed and allowed the rise of the provincial middle class to appear organic, the result of the natural evolution of small-town America. And here lies the power of any hegemonic culture.

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In 1995, with the assistance of a grant from the National Endowment of the Humanities, a number of scholars gathered at the University of Pennsylvania to commemorate the centenary of W. E. B. Du Bois’s study *The Philadelphia Negro* (New York, 1967 [1899]). This collection of essays is the result of that conference; it attempts to situate Du Bois’s project within the social and intellectual contexts of the late nineteenth century and to examine how it may help us understand contemporary intersections of race and the city.

The introduction written by the editors connects Du Bois’s arrival in Philadelphia with the condition of the Seventh Ward, which was both Du Bois’s place of residence and object of study; the Philadelphia Settlement House, which provided Du Bois and his wife with a decent place to live; and the state of the social sciences at the University of Pennsylvania, the institution that sponsored *The Philadelphia Negro.*
The first section of the volume comprises three essays that examine the intellectual development of Du Bois with regard to race and connect it with *The Philadelphia Negro*. Mia Bay shows how Du Bois, in writing *The Philadelphia Negro*, attempted to depart from two intellectual traditions with regard to African Americans: Social Darwinism, which dominated white American social thought, and the black ethnological tradition of Christian monogenism, which was based on the Scriptures and functioned as the main argument for black equality. Du Bois contended that instead of rejecting race by appealing to the Bible, African Americans should study and understand race so that they could use its power for their own development. Bay finds this idea essentialist and by drawing on the work of philosopher Anthony Appiah argues that “Du Bois assigned race an essential reality—invoking history and sociology as the constitutive elements of race, but never quite escaping biology” (47).

The second essay of the first section, written by Thomas C. Holt, stands at odds with Bay’s essay. Holt takes on Anthony Appiah and his “misreading” of Du Bois’s thinking about race as incomplete and problematic and claims that Du Bois’s interrogation of the concept of race throughout his life left us with the idea that, although race is a “social, political, and historical construction of the modern era,” it is also “thoroughly implicated in the genesis and continued hegemony of the modern world” (73).

Finally, in the third essay, Robert Gregg breaks down Du Bois’s writings into three groups that show his development as an historian: the social-scientific, the cultural materialist, and the anticolonial Marxist. In each stage of development, Du Bois tried to remedy the methodological and theoretical limitations that he encountered.

The second section of this collection, entitled “Du Bois’s Philadelphia,” reflects upon the racial division of labor as examined in *The Philadelphia Negro* and the relevance of Du Bois’s inquiry to late twentieth-century urban labor markets. Jacqueline Jones argues that authors of recent studies of ghetto life who downplay the effects of chronic unemployment and underemployment of African Americans should reexamine *The Philadelphia Negro* and its conclusions on labor. As Jones points out, Du Bois was among the first to argue that department store owners and professionals would not hire African Americans because they feared that their presence would offend a white middle-class clientele, that African Americans were typically excluded from the educational opportunities to which their white counterparts had access, that even when they were able to acquire such education they still performed tasks that required less or no formal education, and that by having to work as service workers in downtown hotels and other businesses, African Americans lived in housing adjacent to downtown that was more expensive but inferior. Employment discrimination thwarted the ambitions of African-American men, women, and children and at times led them to criminal activities.

In the second essay of this section, Tera W. Hunter compares and contrasts the working experiences of African-American women in Atlanta and Philadelphia during the 1890s. Hunter criticizes Du Bois’s inability to adequately explore
women's issues. In particular, Hunter argues that Du Bois's mainstream Victorian moral convictions informed his critique of the everyday cultural practices that black working women employed in order to survive within a discriminatory labor structure. In that sense, Du Bois sounded like many late-twentieth-century commentators who blame black women for the breakup of the African-American nuclear family.

Part Three of this volume, entitled “The Problem of the Twentieth Century,” juxtaposes Du Bois’s modernist account with postmodern and postindustrial developments during the twentieth century. Antonio McDaniel appraises Du Bois’s demographic analysis in the context of contemporary knowledge of Philadelphia’s population and socioeconomic conditions. One of McDaniel’s most important findings is that eighty-three percent of Philadelphia’s African-American residents would have to move in 1990 if they were to match the residential distribution of the rest of the city’s population and overcome residential segregation. That figure stood at seventy-five percent in 1970 and at forty-six percent in 1910.

In another essay, Carl Nightingale argues for a study of urban poverty and racial marginalization through a transnational perspective that uses the methods of international political economists, world-systems practitioners, and underclass theorists. Nightingale artfully analyzes global processes such as the movement of investment capital, labor markets, world trade, and information networks that reinforce the conflict between, on the one hand, the middle and the working classes and, on the other hand, the poor. Because of the asymmetrical relationships between inner-city residents and these global economic and cultural processes, Nightingale contends that as “W. E. B. Du Bois recognized a century ago . . . whatever hope the American urban poor harbor for greater self-determination depends, more vitally than ever before, on their capacity to build bonds across borders and across continents” (243).

The two other essays of Part Three address the problem of crime and delinquency in African-American communities. V. P. Franklin in his essay “Operation Street Corner: The Wharton Centre and the Juvenile Gang Problem in Philadelphia, 1945–1958,” discusses the role of black professionals who approach neighborhood gang members and convince them to turn their energies away from violence. In Du Bois’s terms these professionals comprised the “talented tenth” reaching out to the “submerged tenth,” a category of people that Elijah Anderson in the last essay of the volume claims has increased throughout the twentieth century because of social and racial exclusion and because of the lucrative rewards of the drug trade.

Though uneven, the essays of this volume adequately commemorate Du Bois’s classic work and represent diverse historiographical and theoretical approaches. In response to the question of whether African Americans fared better during Du Bois’s Philadelphia or today, most of the authors suggest that while inequalities persist and certain indicators such as residential segregation and family breakups have risen, more black Philadelphians than ever before own their own homes (by 1990 more than half lived in a household owned by a mem-
ber of their family) and, despite their limitations and recent contractions, welfare state schemes provide poor families with a safety net that did not exist during the 1890s.

Themis Chronopoulos

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It is fitting that this volume of fourteen essays is dedicated to Allan Wildman and edited by Reginald Zelnik, two historians whose seminal books a generation ago helped to define the parameters within which all future explorations of the complex relationship between Russian workers and their would-be labor organizers and political leaders would take place. This collection of essays stems from a conference held in St. Petersburg in 1995, the full proceedings of which were published two years later in a Russian-language edition. Now an English-language audience can sample articles written by the American, British, French, German, and Russian participants.

I must admit that I approached this volume with some degree of skepticism since I wondered how much more we could cull from extant materials on worker-intelligentsia relations. But the contributions amply demonstrate that there is still much to learn. Not only have archives in the former Soviet Union opened up more broadly than before, but there is a willingness to ask new questions of old materials, to apply novel approaches and methodologies, and to examine what would have once been considered marginal and even unusual topics. Consequently, the contributors have invigorated the study of Russian workers during the final years of tsarist rule. Indeed, it is a treat to return to issues that I first encountered as a graduate student many years ago and that stimulated my initial interest in the history of the Russian labor movement.

The essays assembled run the gamut from the interaction among workers, radical students, and revolutionaries in the 1870s (selections by Reginald Zelnik and Deborah Pearl) to the organized activities of St. Petersburg workers just before and during the 1905 revolution (contributions by Sergei Potolov and Gerald Surh), from the social and political identities of workers (essays by Iurii Kir’ianov, Leopold Haimson, and Steve Smith) to the relationships among workers and Socialist Revolutionaries, workers and liberals, and workers and Communist party schools in Capri and Bologna (articles by Manfred Hildermeier, William Rosenberg, and Jutta Scherrer), and finally from theaters run and operated by workers and stories and poems written by literary workers (selections by E. Anthony Swift and Mark Steinberg) to the social and political attitudes and values expressed by workers in court cases and during the First World War (Joan Neuberger and Hubertus Jahn). In all instances, the authors draw con-
clusions buttressing the view that worker-intelligentsia relations embodied many of the same social, cultural, and political fractures and fissures that made late imperial Russian society fragile and ripe for revolution. While this line of analysis is hardly novel or surprising, the essays add dimensions of depth and breadth and, in some instances, force a rethinking of certain phenomena such as economism.

In particular, the majority of the volume’s authors engage in analyses of the language (written and oral) employed by workers and intelligentsia. Exploration of linguistic discourse enables the authors to enter the minds of their subjects, thereby giving them the opportunity to uncover workers’ and intelligentsia’s perceptions of each other. The essays reveal the complexity of social identities and class relationships, underscoring the mistrust that animated interactions between workers and intelligentsia who came from the educated and privileged strata of society. In particular, many authors find that the patronizing attitude of the intelligentsia toward workers helps to explain the strained relations between them.

In sum, *Workers and Intelligentsia in Late Imperial Russia* offers new insights into the study of the Russian revolutionary movement. The richness of the research and the subtleties of analysis make reading the individual chapters a rewarding experience that I recommend to all those interested in labor history in general and the Russian Revolution in particular. Finally, Zelnik has done an outstanding job of editing and has provided a compelling introductory essay that highlights the major themes and demonstrates the scholarly contributions of the volume as a whole. Now I must excuse myself while I run to the library and borrow the writings of Russian Marxists such as Georgii Plekhanov, Pavel Aksel’rod, and Fedor Dan. I am convinced that revisiting their works will bring me a deeper understanding of the dynamics of social, cultural, and political conflict in Russia on the eve of 1917.

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