

Merridee L. Bailey, Tania M. Colwell and Julie Hotchin (eds.), *Women and Work in Premodern Europe. Experiences, Relationships and Cultural Representation, c. 1100-1800* (London: Routledge, 2018). 244 p. ISBN: 9781138202023.

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The principal aim of the editors of *Women and Work in Premodern Europe* is to contribute to the ongoing reassessment of the definition of work. Many earlier studies on this subject have mapped how women participated in what we would call the labour market and work today, like guild-organized production. More recently, however, scholars have challenged this narrow notion of work and have broadened the scope of activities that should be considered as such. Merridee Bailey, Tania Colwell and Julie Hotchin's introduction gives a useful overview of expanding definitions of work and its consequences for histories of women's work (p. 2-9). They mention intellectual, cultural, emotional, and economic labours (p. 2) and the nine contributions in the volume study activities as diverse as begging, letter writing, smuggling, having sex, maintaining kinship relations, and managing welfare institutions. The result of this broad notion of work, combined with a large chronological scope, is a volume that incorporates a range of activities performed by women as different as vagrants and noblewomen in Western Europe during the twelfth through the eighteenth centuries. As the title indicates, the contributions cover both women's experiences of work and their work relationships, as well as cultural representations of women's activities. To draw the nine articles together the volume would perhaps have benefitted from a concluding chapter sketching how these articles fit in longer-term evolutions in women's work.

However, there are recurring themes that run through the wide-ranging contributions. For example, many articles discuss the importance of networks and the maintenance of social relationships. Diana Jeske's analysis of letters from the twelfth century collection *Tegernseer Liebesbriefe* and Ellen Thorington's work on Christine de Pizan show how women used texts to demonstrate their social standing or maintain networks. Thorington also analyses how de Pizan represented herself as a writer and scholar in her texts in order to give her voice authority. This theme is picked up again in the contributions of both Julie Hotchin and Ariadne Schmidt that delve into women's contested authority. Particularly interesting is their nuanced assessment of the often tense relationships between male and female managers of institutions and workshops, respectively a convent in Brunswick (ca. 1500) and Dutch welfare institutions, craft guilds, and workshops (eighteenth century). Hotchin analyses a convent diary while Schmidt uses, amongst others, petitions and guild regulations. In their contributions, Anne Montenach, Jeremy Goldberg, and Ariadne Schmidt demonstrate that even after broadening the scope

of what we consider work, the roles of women in guild-organized production and trade remains a key theme in the history of women's work, although Goldberg calls attention to a range of activities that were not directly related to the production of goods for a market, like maintaining kinship relations. E. Jane Bruns and Sarah Randles' articles on textile production focus more on representation of women's work than actual work conditions. Bruns inspects passages on cloth workers in French songs from the thirteenth century and Randles explores the gendering of the textile trades in mid to late medieval England and France by meandering through a diverse range of sources, from civic records to book illustrations. Finally, Nicholas Dean Brodie reassesses England's legislation and punishment of vagrancy during the long sixteenth century to reconsider the notions of the male vagrant and the female beggar.

The volume positions itself firmly in the agency-centred approach of the last decades. Instead of emphasising the structures that limited women's capacity to act, it focuses on how women, as individuals and sometimes in groups, navigated, circumvented, and manipulated the limitations imposed on them by the patriarchal society they lived in (p. 2). Anne Montenach for example studies in detail how in Lyon's textile industries women were pushed to the margins but also how they made a living, if need be by participating in the trade's underground economy.

This volume is a valuable addition to a growing body of literature on the history of women's work in premodern Europe. It covers a broad scope of activities performed by women from different social backgrounds and displays the incredible variety of sources at our disposal to study women's work in the past. In doing so, the volume invites further research on women's experiences of work.

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Jane Whittle (red.), *Servants in Rural Europe 1400-1900* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2017). 286 p. ISBN 9781783272396.

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De opkomst van de sociale en demografische geschiedenis in de jaren 60 van de twintigste eeuw heeft er voor gezorgd dat dienstboden voorgoed als onderwerp van historisch onderzoek op de kaart zijn gezet. Het West-Europese huwelijkspatroon (EMP), in 1965 geïntroduceerd door John Hajnal, werd immers gekenmerkt door een relatief hoge huwelijksleeftijd en een lange periode van zelfstandigheid voorafgaand daaraan, waarin veel jonge mannen en vrouwen (werk-)ervaring opdeden door in een vreemd huishouden een betrekking aan te gaan. Meer recen-