

S. 5. 6. MALE AND FEMALE 19TH-CENTURY LABOUR REGIMES

Chair: Valerie Burton

(Maritime Studies Research Unit, Memorial University of Newfoundland, St. John's, NL, Canada)

Women doing business in Iberian Ports during the First Globalization

LUISA MUÑOZ ABELEDO (University of Santiago de Compostela)

Abstract

This contribution analyzes women's participation on business and commerce in some principal Spanish fishing and ports at the end of the nineteenth century. The study different and varied sources: trade directories, newspaper advertisements, industrial and commerce taxes (1878, 1899), to know the kind of business women did in different Spanish Atlantic (A Coruña, Cádiz), Cantabrig (Bilbao) and Mediterranean (Barcelona) ports as well as Portuguese (Lisboa and Porto). The paper link those sources with demographic sources (nominative population census) and commercial letters from different companies to discover how important was female business participation in local economies, in which economic sectors were located, and if there was social mobility in their professional lives. Taking as example commerce, this research shows that women owned different type of establishments: few widows were wholesaler and owned department stores, but a lot of married as well as single women owned grocer's shops, clothing stores, and taverns. The study reveals the activities of lower middle-class women in business, especially in commercial enterprise, women who have largely been ignored in Spanish economic history literature, just few historians incorporated women as entrepreneurs and managers (Gálvez, 2004; Fernández and Gálvez, 2007; Solà, 2008). Some family businesses in commerce and services were managed by women. Thus, they were actively participating not only as workers for local factories but also as entrepreneurs, acting in housing market, as moneylenders. Measuring this participation can be done throughout the rate of new business owners along the study period. Business women contribute to economic modernization and urban growth in those Spanish Ports creating employment through their participation on different local business.

Keywords

Businesswomen, ports, trade directories

Biography

Ph.d in Economic History from the Autonomous University of Barcelona and assistant professor in the History Department at the University of Santiago de Compostela. I had been a visiting researcher at several foreign universities (British Columbia University-Canada, Center for the History of Business, Technology and Society- United States, University of Porto-Portugal, Center de Recherches at Histoire Internationale et Atlantique -Université de Nantes). My main lines of research are the history of work and business from a gender perspective and living standards in maritime communities. I participated in the project "Reconstruction of the

rate of Spanish female activity, 1750-1980”, Ministry of Science and Innovation (HAR2009-11709). I was the principal IP of the project “Reconstruction of the taxa of feminine activity in the Galician economy: 1850-2009”, Xunta de Galicia (10SEC210031PR) and of the MINECO project “Salaries, activity and living standards in Galicia (1850-1950)” (HAR2013)

Goan stewards at sea between empires and states, c.1890s-1960s

FRANCES STEEL (University of Wollongong)

Abstract

From the early nineteenth century, there was significant emigration from the Portuguese colony of Goa to British India, particularly to Bombay. The vast majority of Goan migrants entered shore-based professions and service industries, while a small and significant proportion engaged as stewards on British ships from the 1890s, principally those of the P&O, to the extent that British shipmasters labelled Goa 'a land of servants'. By the 1950s, the proportion of migrants from Goa serving on ships as compared to shore-based occupations was estimated at over one-third. In the 1960s, other companies, such as the Orient Line, adopted a 'Goanisation' policy, recruiting Goan stewards in preference to Europeans for the first time. Despite this long-standing employment at sea, there is a relative invisibility of seafarers in historical work on the Goan diaspora. Many contemporary accounts positioned Goan crew as in-between, holding themselves somewhat apart as not Indian, but more European. They typically wore western dress, spoke English and were Catholic. In this paper I tease out this 'betweenness', to consider the ways in which Goan stewards might historically be at once between the Portuguese and British empires, Goa and India, Goa and the diaspora, and land and sea.

Keywords

Goans, P&O, Orient Line, stewards

Biography

Frances Steel teaches and researches Pacific, colonial and transnational history at the University of Wollongong in Australia. Her recent publications include the edited volume *New Zealand and the Sea: Historical Perspectives* (Bridget Williams Books, 2018) and with Julia Martínez, Claire Lowrie and Victoria Haskins, *Colonialism and Male Domestic Service across the Asia Pacific* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2019).