

Working seven-day weeks, twelve-hour shifts forced father into an equally constrained gender role, remote breadwinner to mother's role as primary nurturer.

It is clear that Pittsburgh was no melting pot, although the mill wards were very fluid, not fixed, ethnic enclaves. Home changed constantly as workers moved from mill to mill. We get a good spatial sense of old Pittsburgh's crowded boarding houses, clustered in the shadow of various scattered mills. Kleinberg also presents a detailed examination of death under a class-divided municipal infra-structure. Mill wards had dramatic rates of diphtheria, typhoid, and inanition, childrens' deaths due to lack of food or water, compared to middle-class suburbs. Death certificates are used to trace comparative mobility patterns of men and women, oddly stressing the limitations of the source for out-migration (54). We are given a too brief glimpse of immigrant women isolated by linguistic and cultural barriers (229) and a scattering of ethnic cultural mechanisms, immigrant beneficial societies, cultural centres, and the alderman's court (278-279). Hartford's ethnic dualism would have been helpful here.

Unlike Holyoke, Pittsburgh was based around the family living wage. Kleinberg shows how women's non-wage work was an essential component of the functioning of Pittsburgh's mills despite being less than one percent of the iron and steel workers, compared to 25 percent in Birmingham's metal-trades in Birmingham (5). This focus on women's relationship to an industry that did not employ them directly makes an interesting contrast with Behagg's study of a town where women were directly employed. His book does not even index the word women, but he did note the existence of "Female lodges" where women went to drink (127). Like Scott, Kleinberg's book suggests historians should spend more time looking at where there is silence, instead of the sounds of conflict.

In all, an interesting group of approaches to consider when beginning work on a life of work in an industrial town.

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Donna Bohanan — *Old and New Nobility in Aix-en-Provence, 1600-1695: Portrait of an Urban Elite*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1992. Pp. x, 168.

In her valuable study of the Aixois nobility, Donna Bohanan provides new ammunition for the revisionist assault on the traditional thesis of aristocratic "crisis" in the late-sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Bohanan points out that the standard interpretation rested on a set of interlocking assumptions: that the sixteenth-century warrior nobility proved unwilling or unable to adapt in an age of rising prices and religious wars; that a new and dynamic *noblesse de robe* — wealthier, better educated, and devoted to the civil professions — consequently stole power and influence from the decadent nobility of the "sword"; that the sword nobles, their strength sapped in part by the contest with their *robin* rivals, found it increasingly difficult to resist the growing power and size of the monarchy whose expansion they naturally opposed.

Bohanan systematically undermines these assumptions by focusing her spotlight on the unique case of Aix-en-Provence. The nobles of Aix exhibited many of the

characteristics typical of elites in the Mediterranean region. They were an urban nobility integrated into every aspect of town life, unlike the rural magnates of the North. The legacy of Rome imparted to them a strong sense of civic duty and a tradition of state service. Most important, since the practice of enfeoffment had appeared late and spread only gradually in southern France, the nobility of Aix had grown up essentially outside the historic framework of feudalism. As late as the seventeenth century, Bohanan writes, "the proportion of property held in fief in Provence was rather low when compared with the amount of property that was still allodial" (14). This meant that Aix, as in most of the Midi, noble status was traditionally based on wealth and antiquity rather than valor. Thus, in the Aixois context, it makes no sense to apply the dichotomous categories of "sword" and "robe" nobilities. Instead, the native nobility of Aix should be seen as a relatively homogeneous elite molded by its distinctively urban experience. Remarkable for its ability to adapt, this elite retained considerable political power and superior social standing throughout the seventeenth century.

Bohanan adduces much quantitative evidence to support her claims. For analytical purposes, she divides the nobility into two broad groups, the "old" (thirty-eight extended families) and the "new" (forty-three). She defines as "old" those families whose nobility could be traced to the fifteenth century or earlier. Her "new" families entered the nobility in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries when the easy availability of ennobling offices and royal letters of ennoblement led to "rapid upward mobility and instantaneous ennoblement" (7). Her comparison of the wealth, career choices, marriage alliances, dowries, investment patterns, inheritance strategies, and education levels of the two groups reveals no significant behavioral differences. Contrary to what one might expect, for example, thirty-one of the thirty-eight old noble families owned one or more royal offices in the seventeenth century, and thirty-four of the forty-three new families owned at least one fief (24-27). Moreover, both groups showed an ability to take advantage of new opportunities: the proportion of noble wealth invested in municipal *pensions* and other types of government debt increased steadily over the course of the century. Although Bohanan goes too far in describing these new credit instruments as "capitalist," she is right in suggesting that the nobility's close involvement in government finance indicates a forward-looking sensibility.

But old and new families were united by more than their economic rationalism. They also intermarried frequently — the new families purchasing the prestige of older families with large dowries and the old families replenishing their coffers through alliance with the wealthy. One infers from Bohanan's evidence that the nobility's habits of careful family planning may have been fostered by the enduring framework of Roman law. In a region where partible inheritance was the rule, families had to specify alternative arrangements in written testaments. Bohanan shows that, in order to keep their families on an upward spiral, fathers most often designated a "universal heir" to receive most of the family's wealth, titles, and honor. This practice kept the patrimony intact while giving parents flexibility in providing for younger siblings.

Bohanan's analysis of provincial politics and warfare is less than original. She relies heavily on previous work by Sharon Kettering and other specialists of Provence. Nevertheless, the chapter balances her argument and adds weight to the growing consensus that the "absolutist" state won the obedience of provincial nobilities through conciliation rather than intimidation. Bohanan emphasizes that the factional

divisions within the Aixois nobility correspond not to a fault line between old and new nobles, but to competing patronage hierarchies and institutional rivalries. In any case, as more and more nobles came to see the benefits of cooperation with the centralizing state, willful obstructionism gave way to compliance and communication.

Donna Bohanan's study follows a now-familiar "revisionist" pattern, but it is enlivened by fresh insights. For example, readers may be surprised to find that thirty of the thirty-eight old noble families had members who graduated from the University of Aix in this period, and that they earned a total of 141 terminal degrees — compared to 119 terminal degrees earned by members of the supposedly more education-minded new nobility (126). Bohanan's analysis of the dimensions of aristocratic charity is also quite revealing. More important, her evidence vindicates her call to focus more attention on regional variations among France's provincial nobilities, and this study may deal a fatal blow to the venerable "sword" vs. "robe" construct, at least as it applies to the analysis of seventeenth-century elites.

Donna Bohanan has made a welcome contribution to the growing body of literature on French nobles, but I am concerned that a new orthodoxy is rapidly emerging to replace the old one revisionists rightly criticize. The new paradigm emphasizes the unity, common outlook, and shared interests of a broad "aristocratic" class in early-modern France. Indeed, Bohanan does not merely strike down the unsatisfactory functional dichotomy between robe and sword; her work further suggests that the distinction between "old" and "new" nobles is (and was) a superficial one — perhaps no more than an analytic convention. This telescoping of the nobility creates new problems. For example, how do we make sense of the traditional nobility's repeated attacks on venality of office? Or the increasing social and legal tendency — apparent by the 1660s — to discriminate between *gentilshommes* (nobles boasting at least four generations) and the rank and file nobility? If antiquity had little meaning, how does one explain what Harold Ellis has called the "genealogical consciousness" of nobles in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries? In throwing out the stale bathwater, let us not throw out the baby: the contemporary conviction that a qualitative difference separated nobles from *roturiers*. Newly minted nobles carried with them the stigma of their former status, and it took time for the stain of *roture* to fade. In 1650, an *officier* family ennobled in 1650 would pass as acceptably "old" even in the eyes of the chivalric nobility; the same would not be true of a family "instantaneously ennobled" in 1640. Had Bohanan assumed that the criteria for determining "new" and "old" were ever-changing, her impression of easy and open relations between old and new nobility in Aix-en-Provence might have been altered appreciably.

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