

within the former Soviet Union contributed to the gathering's success by further encouraging, in the field of labor history, the open and frank exchange that has now become an important part of Russian historical research. It also strengthened a foundation for continuing mutual discussions and interaction between Russian and international scholars, which occurred in the Soviet past only cautiously. No new singular paradigm was expected or desired from all of this. As Russian scholars question and rethink their own intellectual traditions, they are becoming no less diverse in their methodological and interpretive orientations than their Western colleagues. In this sense, the old intellectual divide between us is becoming increasingly thin.

The proceedings of the conference will soon be published in Russia. We also anticipate publication in English of a large selection of the papers.

Society for French Historical Studies

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The Society for French Historical Studies met March 23–25, 1995 at Emory University for its forty-first annual meeting. Panels and individual papers explored a variety of topics in labor and economic history, particularly that of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

One panel each considered the revolutionary events of May 1968 and the Paris Commune of 1871. The session "Reconsidering 1968" included three revisionist assessments: Lisa Greenwald, "*Les Événements*: Turning the Tide of Feminism in France"; Michael Bess, "Why in the 1960s? The Historical Trajectory of French Environmentalism"; and Keith Reader, "Symbolic Violence in May 1968." Visual portrayals of Communards appeared in the panel "Representations of the 'Terrible Year': 1870–1871." Hollis Clayson discussed "The Visual Culture of the Prussian Siege In Paris: Parisian Women as the *Sine Qua Non* of Representation in the 'Terrible Year'"; Marc Gottlieb described "Painting Defeat"; and Alice Bullard examined "Self-Representations: The Nostalgia Diagnosis and the National Identity of the Deported Communard." In addition, in a session on public and private violence, Gay Gullickson presented an account of "The Women of Montmartre: Female Violence and the Paris Commune."

In a panel on the Old Regime, "Constructing the Economy: Economic Languages in Eighteenth-Century France," Cynthia Truant presented "Reflections on the Patrimony of Weakness: Parisian Guildswomen Negotiate the Old Regime Economy," which argued that the *corporations* of seam-

stresses and linen drapers opposed the 1776 reforms that would abolish the guilds. These craftswomen also defended their trades against male incursion, both challenging and employing contemporary notions of woman's nature in their efforts to protect female guilds. "*Au bien du commerce: Economic Discourse and Public Opinion in France, 1700–1750*," by David K. Smith, contended, contrary to Habermas, that public opinion in France developed in a public space created by the state. In the records of the Council of Commerce, Smith argued that masters, journeymen, and even day laborers found a state-sponsored forum that permitted public expression of their responses to state policy. Jeff Horn, in "Selling Commerce: Parisian Industrial Expositions and the French Economy, 1798–1806," examined the expositions as a reflection of postrevolutionary state efforts to turn the public's attention from politics to business and to encourage competition with Great Britain. Government-sponsored expositions highlighted French industrial and technological achievements, which promoted an economic nationalism that ironically undermined the free-trade ethos of the Revolution.

A session on "*Homo Ludens Revisited*" included James Farr's paper "The Play Element in Artisan Culture in Early Modern France." Farr posited that leisure activities, especially games of chance, represented a form of artisan resistance to the encroachment of the secular and religious authority of elite culture into their lives. Competitive play, such as dice and cards, could create antagonism and division but, Farr argued, also community as the games displaced the source of misfortune onto fate, rather than the players. Thus games of chance appeared as a source of disorder to a clergy that viewed this play as a rival to religion.

Discursive analysis was again the theme of "The Rhetoric of the Social Question: Work, Association, and Community, 1750–1850," a panel on which two papers considered the language of labor. Cynthia Koepp reexamined the changing attitudes toward work that emerged in the nineteenth century. "Rethinking Avarice and Adam's Curse, or New Myths about Work from the Provincial Academies, 1750–80" demonstrated that views of labor as either demeaning or ennobling coexisted in this period, at times in the work of an individual author. Those who took the emerging Enlightenment view of work as a virtue through which humanity shaped what nature provided could undermine their case with their use of biblical evidence. Reference to work's redemptive character recalled the degraded state that resulted from Adam's fall and thus supported an aristocratic disdain for labor. In "The Search for Moral Community: Women Workers and the Rhetoric of Association in France, 1840–1851," Lynne Bruehlman compared the associational rhetoric of Flora Tristan, Jeanne Deroin, and Pauline Roland to that of male artisans. Socialist women found themselves caught in contradictions as they exaggerated the importance of women's moralizing influence to gain access to the public sphere, which in turn undermined women's claims of powerlessness. Bruehlman concluded that associational rhetoric was ill-suited to the emancipation of women.

The session “Disharmony in the *Juste Milieu*: Labor in the July Monarchy” examined aspects of working-class history in the first half of the nineteenth century. Charles Crouch assessed the growing distance between the petit bourgeoisie and the working class in “The Politics of Economic Transformation: Small-Scale Employers, Their Employees and the Demise of Sociability.” In addition to structural transformations of the economy, Crouch argued that an increase in popular violence that included calls for a redistribution of wealth alienated the lower middle class from its allies among laboring men. The Revolution of 1848 completed the breach and thus frustrated a common politics. Judith DeGroat’s paper, “Gender in the Archives: An Assessment of the Sources for a History of Women’s Work in July Monarchy Paris,” called for a more complex view of female labor in this period. Focusing on the manufacturing trades, DeGroat asserted that archival sources challenge the contemporary perception of female labor as solely needlework and offer a means to assess women’s view of their labor beyond that provided by the printed works of socialist feminists. In “A Repertoire of Contention: Paris’ Place de Grève, 1830–1846,” Casey Harison explored the collective action of migrant masons. Drawing on Charles Tilly’s formulation, Harison suggested that police and the people developed a repertoire of contention—recognized by both groups—that accounts for the revolutionary activity in nineteenth-century Paris.

Eighty-Eighth Annual Meeting of the Organization of American Historians

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Political historians and labor historians alike were engaged in attempts to redefine their disciplines at the 1995 Organization of American Historians conference, which was held in Washington, D.C., from March 30 to April 2. The search for a “new synthesis” in each of these fields was a feature of panels working to “revitalize political history” and rethink industrial unionism. Some panels, unfortunately, mistook synthesis for bringing in