

During most of the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries, the former masters of southern Ontario lived under the domination of missionaries and federal bureaucrats, who thwarted Ojibwa attempts to establish autonomous Native communities and pursued a policy of relentless assimilation. Yet in the twentieth century, extensive participation in the First World War brought the Ojibwa into extensive contact with members of other Amerindian nations which led to the beginnings of pan-Indian consciousness and the formation of provincial and national organizations which fought for Amerindian rights. By mid-century, a renaissance had begun, as the Ojibwa rejected assimilation and outside control, and sought to reassert control over their own lives and resources.

By producing a history of southern Ontario from a native perspective and highlighting those issues which are of concern to Ontario's native people, Schmalz has enriched the historiography not just of Amerindians but of the province as a whole. In stressing native dynamism and initiatives, he has demonstrated once again that the history of Canada's Amerindians is one of activist response to changing conditions over the centuries, rather than passive acceptance of inevitable doom in the face of advancing European civilization.

Schmalz's research is as thorough as his arguments are compelling. In addition to European documents, he has drawn upon both Ojibwa oral traditions and the histories written by Ojibwa like Peter Jones and George Copway in the nineteenth century to assemble a convincing portrait of one of Canada's most important native nations. Previous major works on the Amerindians of the lower Great Lakes, among them Bruce Trigger, *The Children of Aataentsic: A History of the Huron People to 1660* and Francis Jennings, *The Ambiguous Iroquois Empire: The Covenant Chain Confederation of Indian Tribes with English Colonies* have highlighted the very important role of the rival Iroquoian confederacies of the Huron and the Iroquois in the history of this region. But this focus by historians on Iroquoians has tended to relegate the equally significant Ojibwa to the sidelines of history. Thanks to Schmalz, future students of Ontario will no longer be left in ignorance of the role of the Ojibwa in the history of that province, first as dominant conquerors, then as beleaguered remnants, and finally as increasingly assertive and successful activists in the twentieth century. In writing *The Ojibwa of Southern Ontario*, Schmalz has restored the Ojibwa to their rightful place in the history of Canada.

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E. Patricia Tsurumi — *Factory Girls: Women in the Thread Mills of Meiji Japan*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1990. Pp. xi, 215.

This is a carefully crafted work of deep commitment about the lives of women textile workers in Japan (1868-1912). Working with a historiography little known outside of Japan, the author has taken great care in balancing traditional scholarly sources with evidence drawn from the songs of the women themselves. These workers were part of Japan's first generation of industrial workers, half of whom worked in textiles, where the operatives were primarily women. The *Kôjo*, or factory girls, were

the motive force behind the “*Meiji* miracle” of industrialization, providing intensive labour at wage differentials based on gender to a cotton and silk industry that generated needed foreign exchange.

Patricia Tsurumi argues that these women, from rural peasant families, saw themselves as fulfilling a role not for nation or company, but as extensions of their family economy, bound over by paternalistic legal contract and motivated by obligations of filial piety. Extended from this is an argument that through this experience these women discovered their sisterhood, finding a communal identity as *Kôjo*.

The study presents the lives and conditions of these workers within the context of *dekasegi*, women who went out to work. The main discussion concerns the origins and evolution of Japan’s modern silk thread reeling and cotton spinning factories, which began, much as the mills of Lowell, Massachusetts, as showplaces staffed by middle class women — daughters of officials, samurai, and community figures. These women were quickly replaced by young women from poor peasant families, contracted into increasingly harsh, abusive and dangerous working conditions. After a period of independence based on skill, textile companies and the state combined to restrict the workers’ ability to extract favourable terms of employment, a structural position for women workers which continues into this century.

The case is well proven, with minor criticisms. While the songs support the author’s themes and give place to these womens’ voices, are these the total expression of their private culture? The author cautions that positive statements by elderly workers about factory food may be coloured by nostalgia (613), but statements by non-workers, such as Hosoi Wakiz’s allegation, that women with cholera were poisoned by managers to save expense (168-9, fn. 32), are not challenged. One wonders whether filial piety and financial need were indeed the only motivations for the exodus from rural villages and why there is little sense of the future expectations of these women. Whether they worked for a few years and married or not, they went somewhere, and that needs to be explored. Otherwise, like the first silk workers these factory girls become frozen as symbols. While some died, most had lives which moved on.

A comparative survey of the experience of women factory workers, of gender structures, and of nineteenth century textile workers in general, is needed. This book should be read in the company of works by Sally Alexander, Thomas Dublin, Rose Glickman, Madeleine Guilbert, Patricia Hilden, Emily Honig, William Reddy, Louise Tilly and Joan Scott. Each in their way has kept faith, as has Patricia Tsurumi’s fine book, with those who went, like the women who crossed the snows of Nomugi Pass (86), on their way to, and from, the factories of industrialism.

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