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Working at the margins

Women and illicit economic practices in Lyon in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries¹

Anne Montenach

Historians of the medieval and early modern European economy have traditionally concentrated on the legalities underpinning economic activity, as shown, for instance, by the large body of work dealing with the corporate system in this period.² Recently, however, some historians have taken a great interest in the wide spectrum of activities existing beyond the regulated and legal economy, showing that irregular practices were a structural characteristic of early modern economies.³ At the same time, women's work has been the focus of much research dealing with women and gender in the early modern economy. These studies have produced important results on the variety of female activities, ranging from business to petty trading.⁴ Women played a prominent role in the regulated market, even if they were rarely mentioned in traditional source materials or relegated to a minor position by the guilds. Although the vast majority of women—as well as men—were not able to join guilds, they could nevertheless forge complex bonds with the corporate system. Women were thus omnipresent in a wide variety of informal or illegal work, a fact which blurred the boundaries between guild and non-guild worlds.⁵ However, little scholarly attention has been paid to the dark or unofficial side of the pre-industrial economy from a gender perspective.

Women who were discriminated against in terms of rights to citizenship, property ownership, and access to work nonetheless played a key role in the early modern underground economy that was never completely separated from the rising market economy. The aim of this chapter is to explore female involvement in a wide range of illicit economic activities: from survival strategies for the poor to criminal activities such as smuggling. From this perspective, it concentrates on Lyon's textile trades, a highly feminised sector in the eighteenth century. At a time of strong demographic and economic expansion, women took advantage of the demand for consumer and luxury goods, especially in the garment sector, to find a niche for themselves in the cloth trades, in both licit and illicit ways. As elsewhere in Europe, the presence of guilds had a significant impact, both positive and negative, on the opportunities available to women. In March 1673 a royal edict required all unincorporated trades to form guilds. In several French cities, due to this

reform, it was possible for women to create guilds in ‘feminine’ trades or to become members of mixed guilds.⁶ However, in Lyon many corporations continued to exclude women—with the exception of widows—from a wide range of professions in the pre-industrial economy, thus relegating them to minor or marginal roles. This chapter therefore compares traditional source materials for the urban economy (guilds’ archives) with specific documentation on practices, such as police ordinances and records of court proceedings relating to infringements and conflicts. Particular attention is given to the way women deliberately utilised, or circumvented, the systems in place in order to establish their economic identity in a gendered, and sometimes hostile, urban community. By interrogating the way in which women took advantage of loopholes in the law to rise above the restrictions on their lives, we can shed new light on their agency in the early modern urban economy.⁷ The existing economic environment based on secrecy and solidarity, how women negotiated this environment, the ways in which women (and men) used the urban space as a resource to undertake their activities, both licit and illicit, and finally, the ambiguous attitude of social and political institutions towards female subversive work also need to be taken into account.

In order to understand the issues, modalities, and spatial configurations of informal and illicit forms of women’s work in a major industrial city during the eighteenth century, the first part of this chapter will offer an overview of the official role available to women in the Lyon textile sector which was structured by the guilds and dominated by the *Grande Fabrique* (the term used for the regulatory body controlling much of Lyon’s silk industry). We will then analyse the diverse options available to women in the black market by studying three different yet similar activities: informal activities (women working in sectors dominated by the guilds), a felony specific to the *Grande Fabrique* (*piquage d’once*, or theft of thread), and finally criminal activities (smuggling of printed cottons). In discussing these developments, we will also review attitudes towards the way in which women’s work was seen by the women themselves and by the society in which they lived—was it permitted, tolerated, condemned, or expected?—and the nature of relationships that working women developed together and with men and city institutions (guilds, town councils), including the way women negotiated their presence in the urban space.

Women and the cloth trades in Lyon: An overview

In the eighteenth century Lyon was the second-largest city in France with a population that had grown from 100,000 to nearly 150,000 between the early 1700s and the end of the Old Regime. The textile sector, the city’s largest industrial sector, was dominated by the *Grande Fabrique* which increased its female workforce tenfold during the eighteenth century.⁸ Although indispensable, women working in the workshop or the shop still



Map 9.1 Clair III Jacquemin, *Plan géométral et proportionnel de la ville de Lyon*, 1747. Photograph by J. Gastineau. Lyon, Archives municipales de Lyon, 3 S 693.

needed an authorisation from a master or their husband to be employed there.⁹

The kings of France regularly recognised and confirmed the freedom of Lyon's guilds until 1718, but in fact the statutes for their establishment had been issued during the medieval period and were constantly revised during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Freedom here does not refer to free membership of a guild, but to the freedom conferred on the *consulat* (the city council) by the king to issue legislation for regulation of craft industries which, by the eighteenth century, had risen to seventy-two guilds.¹⁰ These regulations, which placed the guilds under the supervision of the *consulat*, contributed to the division of labour into two distinct groups: professional craftsmen and journeymen, and 'unincorporated' workers, who were thus seen as 'usurpers'.¹¹ During the eighteenth century, Lyonnais guilds gradually closed their doors to strangers, then to men who were not sons of masters, and, in doing so, encouraged the emergence of oligarchies within the community. As this small and conservative elite developed, the number of conflicts multiplied and workers found new ways to resist domination

by the guilds through barely disguised forms of fraud and unregulated or unauthorised work in the home.¹²

The role that women could play in the professions was closely linked to their marital status, since they could not be members in their own right. Regardless of the tasks they assumed as part of their husbands' activities, they were not entitled to any official status within the guild, with the exception of widows.¹³ In Lyon, as in other cities, widowhood provided masters' wives with a status similar to that of their husbands, at least temporarily. As the rank of master was considered to be part of the family wealth, guild regulations gave widows the right, under certain conditions, to continue their husband's business. However, the guild officers placed restrictions on the membership of widows. Above all, guild regulations strictly limited widows' rights to membership to the period of their widowhood and forbade them from taking on new apprentices. There is evidence that remarriage with one of their husband's journeymen could, in some professions, facilitate his promotion to the status of master. Conversely, a widow who married a man from another guild automatically lost all her rights in her previous husband's guild. Widows of *passemmentiers* (makers of trimmings, buttonholes, decorations, etc.) nevertheless retained the right to keep a loom 'for themselves alone' (*pour elles seulement*) when their second husband worked in another profession.¹⁴

Similarly, while unmarried daughters could help their fathers carry on their business, in some crafts, such as tailoring, only boys could be accepted as apprentices.¹⁵ On the other hand, women who married journeymen in the same guild as their father offered certain advantages for their husbands' accession to master status. Daughters, however, were totally banned from continuing to work for their father after marrying a man from a different profession. Thus, women appeared to be an important—but dangerous—link in the transmission of professional status, even though the skills that they acquired while working in their father's store or workshop were never explicitly recognised.

Marginalised by the guilds, women were also at a disadvantage in the world of legitimate paid work. Although Lyon was officially subject to Roman law, the city's tribunals came under the authority of the *Parlement de Paris* and legislation from the capital had precedence in Lyon's courts. Thus, according to common law, married women had no legal status in their own right and were considered to be permanent minors under the authority of their husbands. Once married, women were no longer legally autonomous (*capitis diminutio*)¹⁶ and any contracts they might make without the permission of their husband were deemed to be null and void, with the exception of those made by the *marchandes publiques* (*feme sole* traders).¹⁷ Deprived of the right to enter into contracts, they had very few options in the market-place and were therefore relegated to unskilled work or illicit trading.

In addition, the way the *Grande Fabrique* had been organised during the sixteenth century is often presented as a demonstration of how women

were excluded from all opportunities of obtaining financial autonomy. The term *Grande Fabrique* refers to the silk corporations which had grouped themselves into a large co-operative industry—it was in fact run along the same lines as a traditional craft organisation. These guilds handled different types of manufacture, the most prestigious consisting of silk weaving.¹⁸ From 1596 all the guild regulations forbade women from working on the loom and only widows, wives, and daughters of masters were allowed to practise weaving.¹⁹ As shown by Maurice Garden, apart from wholesalers (*marchands-banquiers*) and their staff (fewer than 100 persons in all), there were in the eighteenth century 350 master merchants (*marchands fabricants*) at the top of the pyramid who gave work to approximately 6,000 masters in silk weaving (*maîtres ouvriers en soie*) and master weavers (*maîtres à façon*).²⁰

By the mid-eighteenth century the latter two groups had lost their right to sell their woven goods directly to consumers: the merchants had the exclusive control of sales. Together, they represented only a small proportion of the *Grande Fabrique*'s total workforce, which was estimated at more than 34,000 in 1789. A further 1,800 journeymen and apprentices were employed as members of the guilds and the rest of the workforce were lower-ranked labourers whose work was not covered by these regulations. Female workers made up a very large proportion of the 'true proletariat of the Lyon factory' ('véritable prolétariat de la fabrique lyonnaise')²¹ and fell into two major categories. One group of labourers consisted of 3,900 masters' wives 'working in producing fabrics' (*occupées à la fabrication*),²² 5,500 unsalaried sons and daughters of *maîtres façonniers*, and more than 1,000 waged female workers working on the loom: this last category was in fact clandestine work that was not recognised until September 1786 by a decree issued by the *Conseil d'État*. The second group covered 10,000 rope pullers or drawers (*tireuses de cordes*), unwinders of filament from cocoons (*dévideuses*), makers of warps (*ourdisseuses*), etc., who were in fact servants on very low wages with no opportunities for social mobility. Thus, inside the *Grande Fabrique*, two different hierarchies were interwoven: one covering the classic craft guilds of masters and journeymen; and the other covering commercial activities with the *marchand fabricant* dominating a mass of *maîtres façonniers* and a wide range of male and female workers working (sometimes clandestinely) at home or in huge workshops.²³

Women's work at the margin of professional guilds

In this context, my approach seeks to understand the role and agency of women throughout the urban economy during the long eighteenth century. By comparing regulations and practices, I can go beyond the simple argument of exclusion and marginalisation by the guilds and explore, from the perspective of an entire city, the social, economic, political, and cultural issues that influenced the presence of women in various professions. Furthermore,

the town offers a particularly pertinent perspective for highlighting the use and gendering of space at a micro- level. For this purpose, three types of workers will be analysed in particular: tailors and seamstresses, *passemmentiers*, and gauze makers (*guimpiers*), the latter two groups playing a key role in the *Grande Fabrique*'s production process. A review of the three guilds' regulations and records of infringements shows that the work of women, far from being marginal, was a real issue in power conflicts and can be analysed from a number of different perspectives: the couple and the family, relations within a given guild, relations with other similar trades, interactions between guilds and town officials, interactions between illicit activities and the urban environment. These conflicts shed light, in particular, on demands made by women, the gendered language used in court, and the image and spatiality of women's work.

Relations between tailors and seamstresses, and those between gauze makers and spinners (*fileuses*), illustrate the tensions caused by women's work and the ever-changing positions taken by the *consulat* concerning these triangular relationships. For example, masters appeared to be on the defensive with regard to women's work: in rules drawn up in 1667, master tailors prevented seamstresses from making clothes other than those for small children.²⁴ *Maîtres guimpiers*, on the other hand, sought to avoid using *fileuses* by establishing a monopoly in spinning threads of gold, silver, and silk for their wives and daughters. Behind these demands, we can clearly see gender issues in terms of attitudes towards work and of the 'master- *pater familias*' whose honour and prestige were linked, as Clare Crowston has shown, to their capacity to provide work for family members.²⁵

On the other hand, women argued that there was, in Lyon, a tradition of freedom to work and that they needed to earn a living in order to survive; this led to calls for the right to work in the 1760s and 1770s.²⁶ On December 3, 1773 Demoiselle Verant was discovered making women's dresses with four friends in a fourth-floor bedroom in Place des Terreaux. She told the guild officers 'that she had no other right than that of working, that she did not consider that she needed to obtain anyone's authority [to do so]' ('quelle n'a d'autre droit que celui de travailler, qu'elle ne pense pas devoir être revêtue d'autre autorité').²⁷ Other testimony demonstrates this desire to work freely and perhaps explains the sometimes virulent reactions of women—and of men, in fact—to visits from, and seizures by, guild officers while also mentioning instances of solidarity from their neighbours, regard-less of sex.²⁸

At the centre of these questions was the *consulat*, which took a rather ambiguous position. Sometimes it opened up a limited range of areas in which women could operate: in 1682 it drew up a list of twenty-five named seamstresses who were authorised to 'work and make skirts and dresses for women and small children' ('travailler & faire des jupes & robes de femmes & petits enfants'), despite resistance by master tailors who made costumes for women.²⁹ The tailors complained about their inferior status within the

guild and protested against both this decision by the *consulat*, which allowed seamstresses to compete directly with them, and the indulgence shown by guild officials to women infringing the rules who ‘could offer better prices as they did not have to pay master’s dues or any other fee to the guild’ (‘peuvent faire meilleur marché qu’eux ne payant ni maîtrise ni autres frais de communauté’).³⁰ On other occasions, the *consulat* favoured the masters. In 1679 it banned the apprenticeship of girls to tailors, on the grounds that they ‘would take work’ (*ôtent le travail*)³¹ away from masters and journeymen. In 1708, following complaints from *guimpiers*, the *consulat* finally agreed to a proposal that there would be no new nominations to the current list of 500 registered *fileuses* if any were to withdraw from the market during the next six years.³² When new conflicts arose in the 1740s and 1750s, the *consulat* once again came to the defence of the *fileuses* taking into account essential considerations such as the ‘naturally’ feminine characteristics of a task ‘which did not require an apprenticeship and had almost no need for training beyond a delicacy of touch and cleanliness’ (‘qui ne demande point d’apprentissage et qui n’a presque besoin que de délicatesse et de propreté’), and classic economic and moral concerns that, if they could no longer work away, there was a danger that they would be condemned to become prostitutes.³³ The somewhat ambiguous attitude adopted by the authorities towards women textile workers reveals the gap between social, economic, and repressive standards, in a global context of recurrent underemployment. It illustrates how the conservative city aldermen,³⁴ in assuming the pater-nalist role traditionally attributed to the king, were expected both to protect the masters’ monopolies from illicit competition and to ensure survival for the poor women of the town.

In addition to measures regulating women’s work, records of infringements of the guilds’ statutes allow us to produce a more concrete analysis of the presence of women in the economy and to clarify the position taken by masters and city authorities with regard to illegal practices. Guilds’ reports also reveal the existence, at the infra-urban level, of a shadowy world made of hiding places, clandestine workshops, inns, and peddling circuits, in which female actors discreetly operated. Irregular work appears to have been endemic and its principal actors were single women, either widows— who had to be particularly supervised by guild officers—or spinster ‘girls’ (*filles*): these two categories represent about 65 per cent of infringements recorded by officers of the guilds of tailors, *guimpiers*, and *passemmentiers* between 1670 and 1720.³⁵

Living alone, and often in poverty, appears to have been a key factor in women’s decisions to become involved in illegal activities. However, the situation was slightly different for seamstresses. ‘Adult girls’ (*filles majeures*) with professional skills and income may have simply chosen to remain unmarried and to practise their profession outside the restrictive framework of the tailors’ guild. Most of them had one or more apprentices working for them or journeymen, formally forbidden by the guild’s regulations,

but clearly demonstrating the importance of informal forms of female apprenticeships.³⁶ On the other hand, wives, daughters, or servants of masters found to be working illegally were, at first sight, rarely penalised, an indication of a certain tolerance of practices that led to the survival of numerous small workshops. Instances of couples arrested for illicit work refer mostly to practising a profession illegally or members of one profession encroaching on the activities of another: for example, the couple Besse made and sold braid ‘as if they were master *pasementiers*’ (‘comme s’ils étaient maîtres passementiers’),³⁷ while a master glove maker and his wife were arrested for making gold and silver thread.³⁸

On occasion, women working illegally were part of a more complex system of subcontracts, involving masters and merchants with a good reputation in the town. In 1714 three masters and the widows of two others from the *pasementiers*’ guild were charged with having hired ‘unqualified girls’ (*filles sans qualité*) (i.e. those not authorised to work). The five offenders declared that they were themselves working for two other merchants from the same guild.³⁹ Another affair involved a former *fileuse* in 1700: a woman, who was living with her mother, had been banned from practice for bad work-manship but she employed a master *guimpier* (as he provided legitimacy for her workshop) and several ‘girls’ and was working for a *marchand fabri-cant* reputed to sell poor-quality silver and gold thread to other merchants.⁴⁰ Furthermore, records of infringements provide other evidence of women’s entrepreneurship: often widows and spinsters lived together in the same home and set up clandestine workshops outside the guild system for making clothes, ribbons, and buttons that were later peddled throughout the town or sold in inns. In 1690 three women were arrested in an inn for selling lace pieces to ‘foreign’ merchants (*marchands étrangers*), an activity explicitly forbidden in the 1682 regulations.⁴¹

The relatively light sentences handed down by the *consulat* against these women could be interpreted as tolerance of activities that allowed them to escape poverty. In February 1715 a couple was fined 50 *livres* for hiring several women and ‘girls’ to make buttons in their homes, even though the husband was not a master button-maker. Two cases, heard on the same day, involved a widow and a spinster employing, respectively, six girls and five girls for making buttons with ‘no right or authority’ (*aucun droit ni qualité*); the first was fined eight *livres* and the second five *livres*.⁴² In addition, the *consulat* and guild officers authorised certain women to practise their profession—on a case-by-case basis, and in complete contradiction of the professions’ regulation—suggesting, once again, the inconsistencies in applying social and repressive standards. In the 1760s some women were officially accepted as *maîtresses passementières*, even though there was no mention in the guild’s regulations of women becoming masters before 1779. However, all the women admitted were either sick or old and apparently spinsters who had worked for a long time as journeywomen. They were perhaps being offered a pension in their old age.⁴³

Finally, some women were not content to take up the niche opportunities offered by the guilds' regulations. In August 1750 the Clair sisters, adult daughters of a master *guimpier*, were accused of working illegally by the guild's officers. This seems somewhat surprising since on July 17, 1748 the *guimpiers*' guild had decided to allow masters' daughters to have two spinning wheels or two looms on condition that they worked for guild masters. It seems that the sisters had decided to 'free themselves by setting themselves up in business' ('s'émanciper à travailler pour leur compte particulier') independently of the masters.⁴⁴ The circumstances of this case are indicative of a new attitude emerging in Lyon's guilds in the second half of the eighteenth century: while a minority of masters wanted to assert their authority and rigorously defended the existing regulations, a growing number of men and women—the latter being particularly numerous in the textile sector—sought to challenge the monopoly held by the guilds.⁴⁵ At the same time, the guild system in France encountered growing attacks from physiocrats—who believed that work was a basic human right—and the royal government stopped creating new guilds.⁴⁶ The master *guimpiers* also accused the Clair sisters of *piquage d'once* (stealing threads) by buying threads stolen by workers and servants from guild members.⁴⁷ There is no evidence that this accusation was made in order to condemn them more severely for their desire for independence, but the allegation does allow us to go beyond the simple facts of infractions of the guilds' regulations and learn more about illicit activities in the *Grande Fabrique*.

Women's work in the underground economy: The *piquage d'once*

The felony known as *piquage d'once* refers to the ability of the perpetrators (called *piqueurs d'once*) to buy 'both small and large quantities (ounces)' (*depuis le poids le plus petit jusques au plus haut*) of silks. Daryl Hafter has shown that Lyonnais female workers, because they were excluded from becoming masters in most professions in the silk industry, took advantage of their technical skills to steal and re-sell raw materials, sometimes to the masters themselves.⁴⁸ They developed, quite illegally, commercial practices that circumvented constraints placed on women workers by the *Grande Fabrique* which was heavily dependent on national and international markets and rigorously controlled its workforce.

Documents deposited at the City Archives in Lyon, covering some thirty cases over a little more than a century (between 1667 and 1773), provide more details for our study.⁴⁹ In fact, *piquage d'once* was far from being an exclusively feminine activity. On the contrary, a wide range of players throughout the production and distribution chain were actively involved in this illicit process, from the *marchand fabricant* to the *dévideuse*, including the *maître ouvrier* and the *marchande de modes* (milliner). Both men and women bought stolen silks which they gave to poor masters to make into clothing using stolen designs for later resale.

Regulations, reissued at steady intervals during the eighteenth century, bear witness to the ubiquitous nature of *piquage d'once*, but did not refer specifically to women. Rather than specify the identity of *piqueurs*, they appear to take greater interest in the neighbourhoods in which they operated, providing us with a map of a city immersed in a criminal, and thus frightening, obscurity even if this was probably quite imaginary. In 1711 *piqueurs d'once*, according to the masters specialising in silk sheets, 'avoid the sun's rays in all weathers'; 'they usually lived in dark houses and back alleys that are crowded and to be shunned by honest people. ... They have boutiques with low doors standing ajar along the street' and, 'in addition, ... several easy exits and backdoors always left open' for those who want to disappear discreetly after doing their business ('Ils devancent dans tous les temps les rayons du soleil ... Ils habitent ordinairement des maisons obscures, des rues retirées, remplies de peuple et impraticables aux honnêtes gens. ... Ils ont des boutiques dans le rez de chaussée dont la porte est toujours basse et à demi fermée [mais qui ont] en échange plusieurs sorties aisées et des portes de derrière toujours ouvertes').⁵⁰ Lyon's street layout, with its narrow, twisting streets and back passages on the peninsula and right bank of the Saône, make it easy for people to circulate without being seen and thus facilitated an underground economy.⁵¹ Fabrics woven clandestinely from stolen silks were sold 'in hotels and private homes' ('dans les hôtelleries et les maisons particulières')⁵² and also 'in basements, attics, and all sorts of boutiques run by craftsmen and small shopkeepers, including butter-makers, wine merchants, and haberdashers, and an infinity of other places that have several entries and exits' ('dans des lieux souterrains, dans des greniers, dans toutes sortes de boutiques d'artisans ou de petits marchands, chez des beurrières, des marchands de vin, des merciers, et dans une infinité d'autres endroits qui ont plusieurs entrées et plusieurs sorties').⁵³ In pursuing their illegal activities, *piequeuses d'once* thus made use of a range of private, public, and underground spaces. Furthermore, they may have moved between these places and thus constructed specific spatial configurations in their conduct of illicit work.

From these thirty or so cases, we can see the role played by women in the different phases of this illicit practice: production, distribution, and sale. Silk was usually stolen by *dévideuses*, the first workers to come in contact with the silk and then, moving up the production chain, by clerks, journeymen, and even *mâîtres ouvriers en soie*. Sometimes, they stole waste silks, though these were supposed to be returned to the *marchand fabricant* who provided the raw materials. The threads, either silk or gold, were removed from the reels, the difference in weight being disguised by deliberately greasing or dampening the remaining threads before they were returned to the *marchand fabricant*.

In this first phase, it appears that the key factor was not so much the perpetrator's sex per se, as his or her easy access to the raw materials. Women played an essential role as peddlers or brokers, in the distribution

of stolen silks: with their street knowledge and capacity for moving around without attracting attention, together with their inability to obtain skilled work or capital, they were essential in developing underground networks based on acquaintances and word of mouth. Networks created by *piqueurs d'once*, whether male or female, could be either direct or circuitous, usu-ally involving several intermediaries in order to create further confusion. Records for 1761 provide two extreme examples. An accusation of stealing an ounce and 18 *deniers* from silk provided by a merchant made on July 4 involved a *dévideuse* who had sold it to the wife of a *maître ouvrier en soie* in whose house the officers had found scales and a loom for making hand-kerchiefs, thus proving that stolen raw materials were being re-used. In the second case, on May 25, a former silk worker's wife was arrested with stolen silk which she had bought from an upholsterer's wife. The upholsterer's wife, in turn, had acquired it from a *maître ouvrier's* wife, who was given it by a comb seller. The comb seller, wife to a haberdasher, said that she earned a living 'any way she could' (*comme elle peut*) and claimed that she had bought it from a *marchand fabricant* who had given her an obviously fake invoice.⁵⁴

Piqueurs d'once came from a wide range of social categories. Several worked as couples and in professions related to silk production: the hus-band might be a silk stocking maker, a folder of silk (*plieur de soie*), *guimpier*, or *passementier* and there are even two cases involving a *maître fabricant*. In other cases, we find the wives of a chair-porter and a scrap merchant among the culprits. Some deliberately turned to crime, including Pierre Terrasse, a former *guimpier* who was suspected of leaving his guild to avoid inspections by its officers. He then used his daughters to sell 'small foodstuffs and haberdashery as a form of free and independent commerce' ('de menues provisions de bouche et de mercerie qu'on regarde comme un commerce libre et indépendant'). At the same time, his girls discreetly asked their clients, male and female workers at the *Grande Fabrique*, whether they had silks to sell.⁵⁵

Many different types of women were involved in this trade. One example is the female entrepreneur such as Widow Hérard, a *bourgeoise* and re-seller of fine clothes (*revendeuse à la toilette*), who was sentenced for repeated offences for *piquage d'once* in 1760.⁵⁶ Others were suppliers, both men and women: in 1763 Demoiselle Allard, a *marchande de modes*, was accused of paying an almost blind former silk journeyman for silks stolen by a *maître ouvrier* who had fallen on hard times '[and] had no bread for his children' ('n'ayant pas du pain à donner à ses enfants').⁵⁷ The wife of a Parisian mer-chant visited Lyon for a few weeks in order to buy silks, taffetas, satins, and other fabrics 'which she sold in her store in Paris' ('dont elle fait commerce à Paris'). She attracted a large number of brokers and peddlers to her lodgings in the Place des Carmes and this attracted the attention of the authorities.⁵⁸ At the other end of the social scale, a *dévideuse* was accused of *piquage d'once* in 1765: as she was separated from her husband who beat her and

left her with only a spinning wheel, she was forced to earn a living as best she could. In her defence, she claimed that she was in fact covering for a *maître fabricant*'s wife who had already been convicted and wanted to hide her own illicit trade.⁵⁹

Piquage d'once sometimes appears to offer the only alternative to poverty. A woman separated from a *maître ouvrier en soie* and having to feed 'five children and an aged mother' ('chargée de cinq enfants et d'une mère avancée en âge') explained that, after doing piecework for a widow, she began to produce 'a few fabrics herself in order to earn a living' ('quelques étoffes pour son compte particulier pour être en état de gagner sa vie'). Somewhat naively, she also said that 'with regard to the right to trade, after her husband left her to go to Spain fifteen years ago, she thought that women did not have this right' ('à l'égard du droit de marchand, son mari l'ayant quittée pour passer en Espagne depuis quinze ans, elle a cru que l'on n'accordait point ce droit aux femmes').⁶⁰ Poverty and ignorance were also used as an excuse. Ollard, a woman separated from her husband, a master silk worker, was arrested two years after her first conviction for *piquage d'once* for making handkerchiefs from stolen silk. She argued that, because she was illiterate, she had no ledgers for her purchases, sales, and bills for dyeing. But she was not as poor as she claimed, since she paid

a 70-year-old widow to act as her cover and employed two country girls 'without qualifications' (*sans qualité*) and a girl from the Charity Hospital to work on her looms.⁶¹

Piquage d'once permitted not only feminine solidarity but also the exploitation of needy women by wealthier women and involved, we have seen, a number of male and female actors in an emerging world of working relationships based on mutual support and domination. In the final section, we will review a black-market activity with similar characteristics: the underground market for smuggled calicos, which was punished with much heavier penalties.

Smuggling inside the city: Women and the calicos trade

The fashion for printed, painted, or dyed cotton fabrics, originally imported from the Indies and later manufactured in Europe, spread quickly throughout France during the last decades of the seventeenth century.⁶² However, following pressure from silk and wool manufacturers, bans on imports, manufacture, and wearing of cotton—whether bleached or coloured—were introduced into the kingdom between 1686 and 1759, as in most parts of Europe.⁶³ During the eighteenth century two regions, Dauphiné and the Lyonnais (the territory around Lyon), which lie on France's frontier with Savoy, provided smugglers with an ideal opportunity for bringing in cotton canvas produced in large quantities by factories in Geneva and the Swiss Cantons. Despite court orders and arrests, smuggling remained endemic, at least until 1759.⁶⁴

Research into the fashion for calicos in Europe at the end of the seven-teenth and eighteenth centuries has, until now, shown that women from all walks of life were the main customers for these light and coloured fabrics. The roles they played at the top of the chain, in terms of production and distribution of fabrics, are less well known. However, fashion and new tastes among a growing section of the population interested in calicos gave women opportunities to operate in the economy at various levels in the production and distribution of these fabrics. The archives of the intendant's office⁶⁵ in Lyon and Grenoble and of Lyon's customs office contain information on seizures of cotton textiles at the gates of, or even inside, these cities. These sources allow us to reconstruct, through the prism of gender, networks for smuggling and distribution of banned fabrics in the towns and to analyse the specific relationships that female smugglers developed with the urban space.

Unsurprisingly, given the restrictions on their legal status and their right to engage in economic activities under the Old Regime, few women appear in the group of major traders in contraband, who were often drawn from among the towns' leading merchants. One interesting example is Catherine Teillard, a merchant from Lyon and wife of a corrupt tax officer: together with her maid, she sold prohibited fabrics.⁶⁶ We find cases involving not only widows, but also women who were living in 'separation of property' (*séparation de biens*), that is, legally separated but still living with their husband. Both groups of women acquired greater social and financial autonomy, suggesting that poverty was not always the reason for women's involvement in illicit trade. In 1725 Widow Patron appeared to take on the role of intermediary—perhaps to deflect interest from the principals—between Lyonnais merchants and their suppliers in Geneva.⁶⁷ In May 1748 Simone Assada, 'a merchant in fabrics in Lyon and separated from her husband Nicolas Gislain, erstwhile merchant in the said city' ('marchande de toile

à Lyon & femme séparée de biens de Nicolas Gislain, ci-devant marchand de ladite ville'), was banned from commerce 'for all time' (*pour toujours*), because she was involved in the smuggling of cottons and foreign textiles; she was sentenced again four years later as a repeat offender.⁶⁸ As shown by Julie Hardwick, separations of property 'depended legally on a husband's failure to maintain his wife'. These separations 'did not permit spouses to establish separate households'.⁶⁹ However, they were useful for a variety of reasons, for instance to shelter the household's assets from creditors, or from justice—as in this case, where the wife continued her husband's illegal trade.

The archives provide more information on the case of Widow Lescalier. For five years after her husband's death in 1713 she maintained her husband's partnership with his brother. Her sister had even invested 20,000 *livres* in the family enterprise, but was not involved in the management of the business. In 1718 Widow Lescalier was accused, together with her brother-in-law, of smuggling large quantities of calicos from Flanders, Germany, and Switzerland and from the East India Company. Moreover, false hallmarks, similar to those used by the East India Company, were found in their house,

further proof that these were used in re-selling calicos to other merchants and clients in Lyon and elsewhere. The brother-in-law and five employees (*facteurs*) spent about three months a year travelling to Picardy, Champagne, Normandy, Flanders, and other countries to buy the merchandise, while the widow stayed in Lyon and managed the accounts: the judicial inquiry clearly shows that she was a full partner in the business, as was often the case for widows of merchants and traders who continued to exercise their husband's profession.⁷⁰ A clever woman, she made use of heavily gendered—and classic—arguments to wriggle out of false declarations 'because she was so troubled' during the search in their shop 'that she cannot remember what she might have said then' ('elle estoit si troublée lors de nostre transport qu'elle n'a aucune memoire de ce quelle peut avoir dit pendant notre recherche').⁷¹

Any attempt to analyse the geography and sociology of smuggling inside the city is limited by the low level of information available in the sources, which are exclusively documents from the judicial and police archives. However, these documents do at least provide some interesting information about the spatial and social environment in which the black market in Lyon and Grenoble operated. Official reports of seizures at Lyon's gates show that the town was a tightly controlled space and various actors of both sexes knew how to deploy tactics of varying levels of complexity. Some women and men were clearly receiving orders and operating as intermediaries, while others were acting on their own initiative and for their own purposes, for example women who hired poorer women to act as go-betweens, thus demonstrating real entrepreneurial skills. Magdelon Jardin, who was arrested at the Halincourt Gate on August 30, 1756 with five *coupons* (pieces) of calico under her dress, said that she came from Rives in Dauphiné, 'by profession washerwoman without residence here' ('de son talent lavendiere sans residence icy'). She explained that the calico had been given to her 'a little distance from the town, to be brought in with a promise of receiving a little something in return' ('à quelque distance hors de la ville, a entrer sous promesse de quelque chose'), and that 'necessity, as she was a poor girl, made her accept' ('la nécessité, estant une pauvre fille, luy avoit fait accepter').⁷² Claudine Sigeaux, 'not having for the present a fixed abode in Lyon' ('n'ayant par le present aucune demeure fixe dans Lyon'), had come from Vaise, where an unknown woman 'had given her the said calicos in order to carry them into Lyon for a salary' ('luy avoit remis lesdites indiennes pour les entrer dans Lyon moyennant salaire').⁷³

Generally speaking, the police suspected several merchants, who were clearly involved in long-distance smuggling, of having clandestine 'shops' (*magasins*) where calicos were stocked prior to sale. In addition to these warehouses, they used inns and underground areas, including cellars, for storing clandestine stock.⁷⁴ According to a well-established delegation of responsibilities, women were allocated the task of peddling these fabrics around the town and even in the private homes of clients.⁷⁵ From the perspective of gender, we can see that, while very few women were involved at

the macro level, their presence in these micro-spaces was dramatically more significant. This suggests that smuggling offered economic and social opportunities within the town as part of a multi-tasking household economy, but was also one of a single woman's strategies for survival.

Several records of arrests show that married women took responsibility for hiding, transforming, and selling smuggled calicos as a way of earning a living. Antoinette Renaud, a cook's wife, said she was a public hawker and 'sold clothes, china, furniture, and everything that she was given to sell, but did not have a boutique or a shop' ('elle revend des nippes de la vaisselle des meubles & tout ce qu'on luy donne pour revendre mais n'a ny boutique ny magasin').⁷⁶ Other women involved in hawking were dressmakers or wives of journeymen weavers, dyers, and tailors.⁷⁷ All said that they considered these activities to be a way of 'earning a living' (*gagner leur vie*): for instance, the wife of a Lyon canvas merchant, Claudine Billet was 'obliged to leave the trade because of the troubles and losses when he [her husband] went bank-rupt' ('obligé de quitter le commerce par les malheurs et les pertes qui luy sont arrivés par le discredit des papiers dont il s'est trouvé chargé').⁷⁸ Fraud was clearly practised by couples, as can be seen from cases in Lyon where a shoemaker and a printer's boy and their wives were convicted.⁷⁹ In 1757 a couple in Grenoble was suspected of 'trading in banned calicos' ('faire un commerce prohibé d'indiennes') and of hiring Thérèse Caillat as a 'peddler' (*colporteuse*).⁸⁰ Trade in banned merchandise appeared to offer additional income for the households of craftsmen and town workers also involved in the textile sector. It developed into an intertwining of multiple licit and illicit activities within the family: smuggling was not a permanent source of income, but served as a fall-back plan frequently combined with legal forms of employment and resources. Husband and wife were often condemned and fined 'in collusion' (*solidairement*).

Finishing and re-selling banned fabrics could also offer widows and single women a survival strategy in combination with other forms of mutual support, such as shared homes. Several arrests involved widows and women who appear to have been spinsters, living in the same house: 'spinsters clustering' was a common way to reduce the cost of heating and lighting, while offering a substitute family.⁸¹ The type of fabrics seized—pieces or *coupons*, especially handkerchiefs—suggests that these women, who did not state their profession, were involved in finishing work as home-based and informal subcontracted work.⁸² Sharing their resources and clandestine work in a typically feminine sector—sewing—was thus a survival strategy. Even if these activities were small scale, we can see that women were prepared to be enterprising, even with all the risks and uncertainties inherent in engaging in crime. Some widows set up clandestine workshops for manufacturing calicos in their homes, possibly managing a small cottage industry that would have served to employ other women: in September 1752 a raid on Widow Vaillet's house in Grenoble found twenty-one rolls of painted canvas, thirty-eight stencils for a variety of designs, twenty-one paintbrushes, and three

platters filled with ground colours.⁸³ In the ‘makeshift business’ of smuggling, fraud was undoubtedly just another way of earning a living. Secrecy, confidence, solidarity with the network or with one’s neighbours were essential elements in urban commercial activities, but more specifically in the case of these single women, neighbours and friends were important resources. Mme Sibut, a Lyon hawker accused of illegal trading in calicos, was protected by her neighbours who unanimously told the bailiff when he came to arrest her ‘that the said Sibut had long ago moved to Trevoux’ (‘qu’il y a longtemps que ladite Sibut s’estoit retirée en la ville de Trevoux’); moreover, a month later, they all refused to sign the warrant in her name issued by the intendant.⁸⁴ Similarly, Claudine Billet, imprisoned while awaiting trial in January 1723, managed to escape from the archbishop’s jail with the help of several women ‘dressed in various ways’ (*habillées de différentes façons*) who had come to visit her: ‘she disguised herself by taking some of their clothes and headwear and left with them without being recognised when she was supposed to be in her bed’ (‘elle se deguisa en prenant partie de leurs habits et coiffures, et sortit entre elles sans être reconnues et la croyant dans son lict’).⁸⁵

Conclusion

These snapshots have highlighted the ways in which women’s place, status, and influence within various types of social and economic configurations shaped their economic roles and their relationships to the urban space and environment. Although women appeared to operate in all sectors (licit and illicit) in the marketplace, the range of options available to them differed according to their social, legal, and marital status. Moreover, women’s work was unequivocally positioned in an urban world of institutions, laws, regulations, customs, and ideologies. Town rules and customs, as well as police and guild regulations, affected women’s participation in the urban economy and shaped their working experiences. For the most part, women were operating at just inside or just outside Lyon’s guild structures. Here, Lyon seems to be out of step with other French cities where growth in several economic and manufacturing sectors, but particularly in the textile sector, favoured the entry of women in their guilds during the eighteenth century.⁸⁶ This was no doubt due to the influence of the *Grande Fabrique* and to the conservative position taken by the guilds’ masters. Most Lyonnais women were excluded not from the workforce, but from positions of authority. This chapter draws attention to how women navigated these gendered terrains and found some niches for personal autonomy and freedom of action. Guild restrictions provide an example of the discordance between regulation and reality. Women could benefit from the contradictions inherent in moral and social unwritten norms and economic regulations, and this allows us to observe the divergences between official policy and real practice. In Lyon, the municipal authorities and guilds sometimes introduced flexible strategies for incorporating women and altered their rules to regularise female work.

Working women's experiences also differed according to marital status and to different phases in their life cycle. On the one hand, women did not operate alone, and often worked in partnership with husbands, family, employers, or other workers, since there was sometimes no clear dividing line between home and workshop. On the other hand, family and household were not always supportive structures for their members. Solitude, and more specifically widowhood, could thus, depending on circumstances, allow women greater freedom of movement in the economy or, on the contrary, push them into greater poverty and illegal ways for earning a living. These circumstances also forced them to develop, by necessity, a culture of solidarity to compensate for the fact that they were legally less protected. However, they initiated an entrepreneurial culture where those with greater skills or better positioned in the market did not hesitate to exploit the misery of those in need. In any event, the capital invested by women in family enterprises or, more modestly, the wages they earned from day to day were useful not only for the well-being of the family, but also for providing a better future in an uncertain present. Even if the archives are somewhat lacking in details, it is clear that their financial resources certainly contributed to, or allowed the development of, gendered interactions within the couple and the family.

From an urban and spatial point of view, we see that women did not necessarily operate in the same geographical spaces or in the same phases of craft, trade, theft, or smuggling as men; nonetheless, they were 'separate yet bound together' in networks of shared interests and complicities.⁸⁷ In the black market, for example, they acted as go-betweens in illegal and ephemeral networks and operated as intermediaries between the official and parallel markets. They were particularly present at the sales end of the smuggling chain: as peddlers and hawkers, they needed only a small financial investment to begin trading. Their knowledge of local neighbourhoods and of networks opened up opportunities for delivering stolen silk or banned merchandise and exchanging pertinent information. Women knew how to use the urban space as a resource in illicit trafficking. They made use of their knowledge of the town to find the most effective ways of operating and of increasing their daily earnings by greasing the wheel of the black market.

Women in Lyon were not the only women involved in illegal work or smuggling. They challenge the stereotypes which identify women as consumers and men as traders in the debate on luxury—and more specifically in the calico campaigns—in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Detailed studies in other parts of Europe certainly demonstrate that women were broadly involved in this kind of illicit economy, as well as in the second-hand market for clothes and, more generally, in many grey areas of the urban economy that are often ignored by historians. Beyond the specific cases developed here, micro-analytical studies could therefore highlight the ways in which female activities contributed to both the construction of the urban space and the development of various and adaptive forms of work within European towns.

Notes

- 1 Translation by Caroline Mackenzie.
- 2 Two important studies, with further bibliography, are S.R. Epstein and Maarten Prak, eds., *Guilds, Innovation and the European Economy, 1400–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Jan Lucassen, Tine De Moor, and Jan Luiten van Zanden, eds., *The Return of the Guilds*, special issue of *International Review of Social History* 53, suppl. 16 (2008).
- 3 Laurence Fontaine, *Le marché. Histoire et usages d'une conquête sociale* (Paris: Gallimard, 2014); Laurence Fontaine and Jürgen Schlumbohm, eds., *Household Strategies for Survival 1600–2000: Fission, Faction and Cooperation*, special issue of *International Review of Social History* 45, suppl. 8 (2000).
- 4 Danielle van den Heuvel, *Women and Entrepreneurship: Female Traders in the Northern Netherlands, c. 1580–1815* (Amsterdam: Aksant, 2007); Merry Wiesner Wood, 'Paltry Peddlers or Essential Merchants? Women in the Distributive Trades in Early Modern Nuremberg', *Sixteenth Century Journal* 12 (1981).
- 5 Clare Crowston, 'Women, Gender, and Guilds in Early Modern Europe: An Overview of Recent Research', in *The Return of the Guilds*, ed. Lucassen, De Moor, and van Zanden; Dora Dumont, 'Women and Guilds in Bologna: The Ambiguities of "Marginality"', *Radical History Review* 70 (1998).
- 6 Elizabeth Musgrave's study of Nantes reveals an increased participation of women in the corporations as a result of economic growth (in 1728, for instance, the tailors' guild created a mistresses' section): Elizabeth Musgrave, 'Women and the Craft Guilds in Eighteenth-Century Nantes', in *The Artisan and the European Town, 1500–1900*, ed. Geoffrey Crossick (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007). See also James B. Collins, 'The Economic Role of Women in Seventeenth-Century France', *French Historical Studies* 16 (1989); Clare Crowston, *Fabricating Women. The Seamstresses of Old Regime France (1675–1791)* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2001).
- 7 Deborah Simonton and Anne Montenach, eds., *Female Agency in the Urban Economy: Gender in European Towns, 1640–1830* (London: Routledge, 2013).
- 8 Françoise Bayard et al., eds., *Histoire de Lyon des origines à nos jours* (Lyon: Éditions Lyonnaises d'Art et d'Histoire, 2007), 589.
- 9 Maurice Garden, *Lyon et les Lyonnais au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1970), 594.
- 10 Garden, *Lyon*, 326.
- 11 Dean T. Ferguson, 'The Body, the Corporate Idiom, and the Police of the Unincorporated Worker in Early Modern Lyons', *French Historical Studies* 23 (2000): 551.
- 12 Françoise Bayard, 'Les conflits du travail portés en justice, Lyon, XVIIe–XVIIIe siècles', in *Le travail avant la révolution industrielle*, ed. Maurice Hamon (Paris: Éditions du C.T.H.S., 2006), 79; Bayard, et al., eds., *Histoire de Lyon*, 605.
- 13 Scarlett Beauvalet-Boutouyrie, *Être veuve sous l'Ancien Régime* (Paris: Belin, 2001), 276–77; Janine M. Lanza, *From Wives to Widows in Early Modern Paris: Gender, Economy, and Law* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007).
- 14 Archives municipales de Lyon (AML), HH 168, March 16, 1682. See also AML, 304 326, June 21, 1668; 305 264, September 5, 1667, Art. XIV.
- 15 AML, 305 266, December 14, 1679.

- 16 While unmarried daughters under 25 (the legal age of majority) were minors under the authority of their father, adult spinster daughters were, theoretically according to common law, able to exercise their full legal rights.
- 17 The term *marchandes publiques* was adopted from Parisian common law and used exclusively for women who sold goods not produced by their husbands. A married woman could enter into contracts, under these conditions, 'for her wares' (*pour le fait de sa marchandise*), which would, given the notion of prop-erty held in common, specifically involve the responsibility of her husband.
Brigitte Basdevant-Gaudemet and Jean Gaudemet, *Introduction historique au droit XIIIe-XXe siècles* (Paris: Librairie générale de droit et de jurisprudence, 2000), 270. On the very similar status of *feme sole* trader in England and the Netherlands, see Amy Louise Erickson, 'Coverture and Capitalism', *History Workshop Journal* 59 (2005); Amy Louise Erickson, *Women and Property in Early Modern England* (London: Routledge, 1993), 30–31, 140, 146; Nicola Phillips, *Women in Business, 1700–1850* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2006), 18, 19, 27, 48–68; Van den Heuvel, *Women and Entrepreneurship*, 58–69,84.
- 18 Daryl M. Hafter, 'Women Who Wove in the Eighteenth-Century Silk Industry of Lyon', in *European Women and Preindustrial Craft*, ed. Daryl M. Hafter (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), 47.
- 19 Jean-François Budin, 'Les ouvrières de la soie à Lyon au XVIIIe siècle', in *Le travail*, ed. Hamon, 117–18.
- 20 Maurice Garden, 'Ouvriers et artisans au XVIIIe siècle. L'exemple lyonnais et les problèmes de classification', in *Maurice Garden, un historien dans la ville*, ed. René Favier et al. (Paris: Éditions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 2008),88– 91.
- 21 Garden, 'Ouvriers et artisans au XVIIIe siècle', 89.
- 22 Garden, 'Ouvriers et artisans au XVIIIe siècle', 89.
- 23 Garden, 'Ouvriers et artisans au XVIIIe siècle', 89–91.
- 24 AML, 305 264, September 5, 1667; 305 266, December 14, 1679.
- 25 Clare Crowston, 'Engendering the Guilds: Seamstresses, Tailors, and the Clash of Corporate Identities in Old Regime France', *French Historical Studies* 23 (2000):340– 41.
- 26 At the same time, work was considered by the Minister Turgot to be a natural right (cf. Edict of 1776, preamble).
- 27 AML, HH 187, December 3, 1773. See also June 4, 1761; December 20, 1765; October 21, 1773.
- 28 A similar phenomenon was seen in Nantes during the second half of the eighteenth century: Samuel Guicheteau, *La révolution des ouvriers nantais: mutation économique, identité sociale et dynamique révolutionnaire, 1740–1815* (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2008), 111–13.
- 29 AML, HH 185, December 31, 1682. They were not allowed to take on apprentices or employ journeymen/women. Each woman had to pay the guild 9 livres as an 'entry fee' and an annual fee of 20 sols.
- 30 AML, HH 185 (n. d., early eighteenth century).
- 31 AML, 1 C 305 266, December 14, 1679.
- 32 AML, HH 92, September 10, 1708.
- 33 AML, HH 92, n. d. (probably 1703).
- 34 Garden, *Lyon*, 558.

- 35 Lanza, *From Wives to Widows in Early Modern Paris*, 139–47; AML, HH 96, HH 169, and HH 187.
- 36 See for instance AML HH 224, June 14, 1712 and March 28, 1713; HH 225, February 11, 1717.
- 37 AML, HH 171, April 27, 1757.
- 38 AML, HH 219, March 12, 1692.
- 39 AML, HH 170, June 4, 1714. See also HH 215, June 20, 1674; HH 170, August 28, 1713.
- 40 AML, HH 94, August 26, 1700–August 1, 1702.
- 41 AML, HH 218, August 23, 1690; HH 168, March 16, 1682, art. XXI.
- 42 AML, HH 225, February 20, 1715.
- 43 AML, HH 169, December 1, 1761, November 30, 1769; HH 260, January 16, 1770.
- 44 AML, HH 96, August 18, 1750.
- 45 Garden, *Lyon*, 561.
- 46 Crowston, *Fabricating Women*, 207–08.
- 47 AML, HH 96, August 18, 1750.
- 48 Daryl Hafter, ‘Women in the Underground Business of Eighteenth-Century Lyon’, *Enterprise & Society* 2 (2001).
- 49 AML, HH 147–55.
- 50 AML, HH 147, October 25, 1711.
- 51 Hafter, ‘Women’, 20.
- 52 AML, HH 147, October 25, 1711. See also Archives nationales (AN), F₁₂ 764 B, June 19, 1744, art. X.
- 53 AML, HH 148, December 18, 1727.
- 54 AML, HH 150, May 25 and July 4, 1761.
- 55 AML, HH 147–48, 1727–28.
- 56 AML, HH 150, February 29, 1760.
- 57 AML, HH 151, July–October 1763.
- 58 AML, HH 150, January–August 1711.
- 59 AML, HH 153, August 1765–May 1766.
- 60 AML, HH 151, July–September 1763.
- 61 AML, HH 150, March 29, 1743.
- 62 For a review of the fashion for calicos in Europe, see Beverly Lemire, *Cotton* (Oxford: Berg, 2011); Giorgio Riello, *Cotton. The Fabric that Made the Modern World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).
- 63 Beverly Lemire, *Fashion’s Favourite: The Cotton Trade and the Consumer in Britain 1660–1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 29–42; Beverly Lemire and Giorgio Riello, ‘East & West: Textiles and Fashion in Early Modern Europe’, *Journal of Social History* 41 (2008): 898.
- 64 The embargo was lifted in 1759 following a long debate on free trade, known as the *querelle des toiles peintes* (dispute over painted cloth). However, because calicos had to pay heavy taxes on entering France after 1759, they were still smuggled in the 1760s.
- 65 Intendants were the king’s agents in the provinces. They were, *inter alia*, responsible for the repression of smuggling.
- 66 AML, FF 65, June 10 and 12, August 11, 1739. Olivier Le Guoic, ‘La contrebande des indiennes à Lyon au temps de la prohibition (1686–1759)’, in *Territoires*

de l'illicite: ports et îles. De la fraude au contrôle (XVIe–XXe siècles), ed. Marguerite Figeac-Monthus and Christophe Lastécouères (Paris: Armand Colin, 2012), 86–87.

- 67 Archives départementales du Rhône (ADR), 1 C 249, December 21, 1725.
- 68 Archives départementales de la Drôme (ADD), B 1304, May 22, 1748 and June 15, 1752.
- 69 Julie Hardwick, 'Seeking Separations: Gender, Marriage, and Household Economies in Early Modern France', *French Historical Studies* 21 (1998): 160–61.
- 70 ADR, 1 C 279, June–December 1718. See for instance Phillips, *Women in Business*, 118–19.
- 71 ADR, 1 C 279, December 13, 1718.
- 72 ADR, 5 C 12, August 30, 1756.
- 73 ADR, 5 C 12, April 26, 1756.
- 74 ADR, 5 C 12, March 11, 1756.
- 75 ADR, 1 C 277, July 3, 1722; 5 C 2, November 29, 1757; April 8, July 20, and August 17, 1758. The same phenomenon was found in Paris: Philippe Haudrère, 'La contrebande des toiles indiennes à Paris au XVIIIe siècle', in *Tisser l'histoire. L'industrie et ses patrons XVIe–XXe siècle. Mélanges offerts à Serge Chassagne* (Valenciennes: Presses universitaires de Valenciennes, 2009), 178–79.
- 76 ADR, 1 C 277, July 3, 1722.
- 77 ADR, 5 C 12, March 11 and 19, May 5, 1756.
- 78 ADR, 1 C 277, December 25, 1722.
- 79 ADD, B 1304, March 6, 1741 and June 10, 1752.
- 80 Archives départementales de l'Isère (ADI), 2 C 101, April 18, 1757.
- 81 Olwen Hufton, 'Women Without Men: Widows and Spinsters in Britain and France in the Eighteenth Century', *Journal of Family History* 9 (1984): 361; Garden, *Lyon*, 158 and 162.
- 82 ADI, 2 C 101, March 5, 1738; January 19, February 16, March 4, 1751; March 12, 1753; March 20, 1754; February 10, 1758.
- 83 ADI, 2 C 101, September 29, 1752. See also June 11, 1739.
- 84 ADR, 1 C 277, July 22 and August 26, 1722.
- 85 ADR, 1 C 277, January 6, 1723.
- 86 Crowston, *Fabricating Women*; Musgrave, 'Women'.
- 87 Claude Zaidman, 'Ensemble et séparés', Preface to Erving Goffman, *L'arrangement des sexes* (Paris: La Dispute, 2002), 9.

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