

Spring 2024

## Brewing Progress: An Exploration of The Historical Evolution, Economic Impact, and Globalization Dynamics of Coffee in Colombia

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### Recommended Citation

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Brewing Progress: An Exploration of The Historical Evolution, Economic Impact, and  
Globalization Dynamics of Coffee in Colombia

Senior Project Submitted to  
The Division of Social Sciences  
Of Bard College

By

Sophia Elenson

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## **Abstract**

This research paper delves into the multifaceted history of coffee in Colombia, tracing its origins from the Spanish Conquistadors' arrival in 1499 to its present-day significance. Through a comprehensive analysis, the chapter unfolds the intricate interplay of historical events, cultural influences, and economic shifts that have shaped Colombia into the world's third-largest exporter of coffee. The paper analyses coffee growing in Colombia as a subset of the globalization debate that took place in the 1980s and 1990s. It highlights how the globalization debate influenced events in Colombia's coffee industry. Important aspects and concepts of the globalization debate such as deregulation, privatization, neoliberalism, culture exchange, fiscal austerity, financial focus, and a global supply chain are also analysed and their implications on Colombia's coffee growing industry. The research project also highlights important factors that affect the inequalities in the Colombian coffee industry. The role of women is put under the microscope and their disproportionate gains are also highlighted. The impact of globalization on the role of women in Colombia's coffee growing industry is also explored.

## **Chapter 1: Background and History**

The chapter analyses coffee growing in Colombia as a subset of the globalization debate that took place in the 1980s and 1990s. It highlights how the globalization debate influenced events in Colombia's coffee industry. Important aspects and concepts of the globalization debate such as deregulation, privatization, neoliberalism, culture exchange, fiscal austerity, financial focus, and a global supply chain are also analysed and their implications on Colombia's coffee growing industry.

### *Methodology*

To examine the complex relationship between labor rights, globalization, and gender inequality in the Colombian coffee industry, a mixed-methods approach was adopted. This methodology involved quantitative data analysis and qualitative research methods, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter. The following sections outline the key components of the methodology:

### *Data Collection*

**Quantitative Data:** Labor participation, gender distribution, wages, and working conditions in the Colombian coffee industry were collected from official statistical sources, such as government reports and labor force surveys. This data provided a foundation for quantitative analysis and statistical inference.

**Qualitative Data:** Qualitative data was collected through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with key stakeholders, including coffee farmers, workers, industry experts, and representatives from relevant organizations. These interviews and discussions provided insights into women's lived experiences, perceptions, and challenges in the coffee industry.

### *Quantitative Analysis*

**Descriptive Statistics:** Descriptive statistical analysis was conducted to provide a profile of women's participation in the coffee industry, including their representation, wages,

and working conditions. This analysis helped identify trends and patterns in gender inequality and labour rights.

**Inferential Statistics:** Inferential statistical techniques, such as regression analysis, were employed to examine the association between globalization factors (e.g., international financial institutions, trade policies) and gender inequality in the coffee industry. This analysis aimed to uncover the causal relationships and identify the specific impacts of globalization on labour rights and gender disparities.

### *Qualitative Research*

**Semi-Structured Interviews:** Semi-structured interviews were conducted with coffee farmers, workers, and industry experts to gain insights into their perspectives, experiences, and perceptions of gender inequality and labour rights in the coffee industry. The interviews were guided by a set of predetermined questions while allowing for flexibility to explore emerging themes.

**Focus Discussions:** These discussions were organized to facilitate interactive and participatory conversations among diverse stakeholders. These discussions provided a platform for participants to share their knowledge, experiences, and perspectives on the complex issues of gender inequality, labor rights, and globalization in the coffee industry.

### *Data Integration and Analysis*

**Triangulation:** The quantitative and qualitative data findings were triangulated to validate and complement each other. This approach ensured a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the research topic.

**Thematic Analysis:** Qualitative data from interviews and focus group discussions were analyzed thematically to identify recurring themes, patterns, and narratives related to

gender inequality and labor rights in the coffee industry. This analysis facilitated the exploration of contextual factors and underlying social dynamics.

### *Ethical Considerations*

**Informed Consent:** Prior to data collection, informed consent was obtained from all participants involved in interviews and focus group discussions. They were provided information about the study objectives, their rights, and the voluntary nature of their participation.

**Anonymity and Confidentiality:** Participants' identities were kept confidential, and all data were anonymized during analysis and reporting. Measures were taken to ensure that participants' privacy and confidentiality were protected.

The methodology outlined above aimed to provide a robust and comprehensive investigation of the research topic. By combining quantitative and qualitative approaches, this proposal sought to uncover the intricate connections between labor rights, globalization, and gender inequality in the Colombian coffee industry, contributing to a deeper understanding of the issues and informing evidence-based policy recommendations.

### *Globalization Debate and Colombia's Role in a Globalized World*

There are estimates that Latin America and Colombia as a country were already feeling the effects of a globalized world before the 1940s. Bulmer-Thomas et al. Argue that Latin American countries that had more difficulties accessing the international market were poorer than other countries. In the chapter titled 'Globalization in Latin America before 1940' the authors argue that in 1870, countries like Argentina and Uruguay topped the list of countries with the least access to foreign markets<sup>1</sup>. Mexico and Cuba came second in the list

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<sup>1</sup> Bulmer-Thomas, Victor, John Coatsworth, and Roberto Cortes-Conde, "*The Cambridge Economic History of Latin America*", Vol. 2. (eds. 2006 ) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

while Brazil and Colombia were third in terms of ease of access to the international market. The above shows the early ramifications of an increasingly globalized world. It shows how Colombia as a country felt the need to improve its contribution on the global stage and serves as a precursor to some of the economic policies adopted in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

Bulmer-Thomas et al. highlight some of the reasons why Colombia may have developed a coffee growing culture later than most Latin American countries. The authors suggest that cities and states that lacked access to proper navigation systems delayed in adopting commercial crops such as coffee, sugar, and tobacco<sup>2</sup>. Bogota, an important Colombian city, is cited as one of the areas that struggled to access navigable systems along with Caracas, La Paz, Santiago and Quito. Coffee growing as a commercial enterprise struggled in Colombia because of the high transportation costs to transport the export commodities to navigable harbours. On the contrary, Bulmer-Thomas et al. suggest that countries such as Cuba and most of the Caribbean Islands had better access to navigable systems and failed economically for reasons other than navigation challenges<sup>3</sup>. From the above, it is reasonable to infer that Colombia was already affected by world events before the 1940s. The country's later journey towards being an important coffee growing state is best understood in hindsight of some of the economic challenges it experienced with the early ramifications of globalization.

In chapter 4 'Globalization and the New Economic Model of Latin America' Bulmer-Thomas et al. discuss the response of Latin American countries to globalization. The authors assert that most Latin American countries elected to implement protectionist policies. This was early in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century where policymakers became more aware of the need to increase tariffs on imports to protect local producers<sup>4</sup>. An early argument by Bulmer-Thomas et al.

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<sup>2</sup> Bulmer-Thomas et al., *History of Latin America*, 16.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, 1.



suggests that prior high tariffs in Latin America were designed to increase revenue to governments as opposed to protecting local production. The ignorant approach to policymaking discussed above where tariffs were solely driven by a desire to increase revenue changes as the 19<sup>th</sup> Century ended and in the early parts of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. At this point, countries like Colombia already had thriving local sectors and moved to implement policies designed to improve gains from local production<sup>5</sup>. In effect, the historical angle discussed above shows the effect of globalization on the economic policies of countries such as Colombia. The interactions with a more globalized world led to greater spread of economic knowledge which influenced the actions of most Latin American policy makers.

In the 1980s there was a significant push for a more globalized world. People across the world through their governments and leaders vouched for more connectivity that would lead to more trading opportunities between different nations and peoples. The globalization debate was fuelled by disruptive changes in communication, technology, and transportation that made it possible for the world to evolve into a global village in the true sense of the concept<sup>6</sup>. There were many proponents of a more globalized world in the 1980s who suggested that lifting trade barriers such as tariffs would be more beneficial to international trade<sup>7</sup>. The proponents envisaged benefits ranging from increased opportunities for employment to better standards of living. They also emphasized the potential of the world benefiting immensely from more specialization from nations which would lead to more quality products on the international market. Critics of the proposed liberalized policies raised concerns about the implications for local industries which would come under stiff competition from the international market.

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid, 136.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, 165.

<sup>6</sup> Stockhammer, Engelbert, "Financialization and the global economy," *Political Economy Research Institute Working Paper* 242, no. 40 (2010): 8.

<sup>7</sup> National Coffee Association, "*The History of Coffee*," Accessed Mar. 22, 2020.

Neoliberal concepts also evolved and became increasingly popular in the 1980s. Popular figures who championed these philosophies include former US President Ronald Reagan and the renowned UK Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. Neoliberalism is about the reduction in regulations surrounding trade, shifting ownership of industries to private entities as opposed to governments, and free market economies where supply and demand serve as the main controlling influences as opposed to government forces<sup>8</sup>. Global financial markets also became a trend in the world where the exchange of currencies became popular as an instrument to facilitate a broader scope of international trade. People and goods moved across geographical borders in a quicker manner during this period and there were also financial innovation moves designed to achieve a measure of fiscal austerity<sup>9</sup>. Critics of the neoliberal movement alluded to the potential negative influence on individual country economies with inconveniences resulting from contagion effects, unstable currencies in certain countries, and financial speculation. Also, the 1980s choreographed a rise in environmental concerns and led to the development of a homogenous global culture.

Colombia played a significant role in the globalization debate of the 1980s and significantly influenced global affairs in the 1990s and the early 2000s<sup>10</sup>. Like most other countries in the world at the time, Colombia joined the circus with an array of liberal economic policies. Colombia was opened and policies were implemented to encourage foreign direct investment. Additionally, the country reduced its overall regulation on trade and transferred ownership of major industrial enterprises to private ownership. The reason for the deregulation and privatization was to stimulate competitiveness and to attract more foreign investors that would further help Colombia to achieve significant economic growth.

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<sup>8</sup> Ravallion, Martin, "Inequality and globalization: A review essay," *Journal of Economic Literature* 56, no. 2 (2018): 626

<sup>9</sup> Stockhammer, "Financialization," 11.

<sup>10</sup> Gwynne, Robert N., and Kay Cristobal. *Latin America transformed: globalization and modernity*. Routledge, (2014): 43.

During the 1990s, Colombia was also active in pursuing trade agreements with other Latin American countries and with like-minded nations across the globe. Agreements with the USA led to Colombia becoming a member of the Andean community with a view to fostering economic growth across the country and increasing its influence as a pivotal contributor to the global economy.

Colombia also suffered politically and economically because of the move towards globalization as there were significant troubles within its borders related to several socio-economic and political issues. The Colombian Governments of the 1990s were bent on being on the right side of the globalization debate. Because of their determination, Colombia was introduced to the global supply chain and enjoyed some benefits while also experiencing some detestable consequences<sup>11</sup>. Notably, the 1990s saw the Government of Colombia face a state of large-scale job losses resulting from its major industries being turned over to private entities<sup>12</sup>. Despite some of the shortcomings, the country also benefitted immensely from growth in Agriculture affiliated industries and textiles where the country got a ready and profitable market on the international stage. Coffee growing in Colombia enjoyed a significant boost as the country finally gained smooth access to the large consumer market in the United States<sup>13</sup>. As part of the globalized world of the 1990s, Colombia also experienced a transformation in its socio-cultural orientation as interactions with different cultures led to a newer perspective on matters relating to gender, lifestyle, and trade. Overall, Colombia sought to use the 1990s as an opportunity to boost trade with other countries, to encourage foreign investment into Colombia, and to take its place as one of the crucial economic pillars in the Americas.

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<sup>11</sup> Gwynne and Cristobal, *Latin America transformed*, 52.

<sup>12</sup> Ravallion, "Inequality and globalization," 635.

<sup>13</sup> Stockhammer, "Financialization," 11.

Coffee is a universal beverage that has become an essential part of modern society, and it has played a significant role in the global economy. This holds especially true for Colombia, where the coffee industry has significantly shaped the nation's development, economy, and culture since its introduction in the early 18th century<sup>14</sup>. As a cornerstone of Colombia's national and global identity, coffee has propelled the country to the forefront of the world's leading producers and exporters. In recent decades, globalization has emerged as a pivotal influence on the evolution of Colombia's coffee industry. While globalization has ushered in an era of interconnectedness and market expansion, it has also presented challenges and adverse effects. Notably, concerns have arisen regarding its impact on gender inequality and labour rights within agricultural sectors, including coffee production.

This thesis aims to delve into the multifaceted impact of globalization on the Colombian coffee industry, examining its historical development, economic trajectory, and prospects. The Colombian coffee industry has undergone profound transformation in response to the pressures of globalization, necessitating a comprehensive exploration of the issues at hand<sup>15</sup>. Drawing on insights from experts such as Marcos Palacios, David Bushnell, and Minsky, who have extensively analysed globalization's effects on economic policies and resulting inequalities, this research addresses the overarching question: In what context does a country become globalized? Furthermore, the study investigates how historical factors, such as colonization and the introduction of coffee, influence a nation's journey through modernization and economic development.

By unravelling the intricate dynamics between globalization and economic development within the Colombian coffee industry, this research aspires to contribute

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<sup>14</sup>Bushnell, David. "Indians and Spaniards." In *The Making of Modern Colombia: A Nation in Spite of Itself*, 1st ed., (University of California Press, 1993): 1–24.

<sup>15</sup>Posada, Carlos Esteban. "La gran crisis en Colombia: el periodo 1928-1933." *Nueva Historia de Colombia*, Planeta Editorial (1989): 45.

valuable insights to existing literature. The findings aim to guide policymakers, industry stakeholders, and advocacy groups, fostering the development of more inclusive and sustainable practices within the coffee sector.

Understanding Colombia's path to globalization, the challenges it experienced and the political lessons it learned along the way, needs a close view into its coffee growing history. It is pivotal to highlight how Coffee became such an important crop for the country's social, political and economic landscape. It is important to understand the history of Colombian coffee growing, particularly the advent of small-scale coffee growing, and its implication for the overall globalization debate with specific reference and effect on women as participants in Colombia's economic growth. The history of Colombian coffee growing is important when it comes to developing an understanding of the inequalities that have existed in the country and specifically relating to the coffee growing industry<sup>16</sup>. The rise of small-scale coffee growers in Colombia is an indication of the increased involvement in trade from all sections of the country's population that was made possible by the globalization debate. It highlights the implications of the socio-political climate in the country where sections of the populace engaged in actions showing support for the government's move seeking global integration.

The focus on the plight of women in the Colombian coffee industry has also been made possible by the 1990s efforts to put the country on the world stage<sup>17</sup>. As mentioned above, there was significant cultural exchange during the 1990s that led to Colombians and other people across the globe becoming aware of the inequalities faced by Colombian women coffee growers. The globalization debate therefore has a significant relationship with the Colombian coffee industry as it served as an early indicator of the plight of workers across the globe which has fuelled deeper focus into the power imbalance experienced by women in

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<sup>16</sup> Ravallion, "Inequality and globalization," 629.

<sup>17</sup> Cornia, Giovanni Andrea. "Inequality trends and their determinants: Latin America over the period 1990-2010." *Falling inequality in Latin America: policy changes and lessons* (2014): 24-49.

the coffee business in Colombia<sup>18</sup>. The methodology section above highlights how this research will be conducted and how the history of the Colombian coffee industry will play a part in shedding a light on gender inequality within the industry and the country as whole and on important issues surrounding the globalization debate such as privatization, neo-liberalization, deregulation, free market economies, and global supply chain integration. Other authors such as Kentikelenis et al. and Woods also offer valuable insight on the effects of structural adjustments on Colombia and globalization in general.

The ensuing section highlights the country's journey to becoming a coffee growing powerhouse. Important geopolitical ramifications are also outlined and considered in the section below. Having a historical perspective will help develop more clarity on some of the issues this paper seeks to address.

### *History of Coffee in Colombia*

The story of coffee in Colombia is a fascinating blend of historical events, cultural influences, and economic developments. The origins of coffee in Colombia can be traced back to the Spanish Conquistadors' arrival in 1499, marking the beginning of a transition period with the establishment of permanent European settlements in the following decades<sup>19</sup>. Jesuit priests, wielding significant influence, are often credited with introducing coffee seeds to Colombia, inspired by their visits to Guyana and Venezuela. However, the timeline of influence ranges from the mid-1500s to the 1730s<sup>20</sup>. Since its introduction, coffee has become a vital part of Colombia, catapulting it to the current day where it is the world's third-largest exporter of coffee.

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<sup>18</sup> Cornia, "Inequality trends," 36.

<sup>19</sup> Yaupon, Rose, "Colombian Coffee History & the Excelso Standard." *Yaupon Rose*, October 14, 2021. <https://yauponrose.com/colombian-coffee-history-the-excelso-standard/>

<sup>20</sup> Beltra, Cely and William, Mauricio, "*Universidad Nacional De Colombia, Facultad de Ciencias Humanas, Centra de Estudios Sociales (CES), Maestria en Sociologia*" (2013).

While it is known that coffee is not native to Colombia, historians believe that Spanish conquerors, accompanied by Jesuit missionaries, first introduced coffee beans to Colombian farmers sometime in the 1700s<sup>21</sup>. During colonization, the Catholic Church dominated Colombia and had immense power as it oversaw public institutions and controlled much of the country's land. Jesuit priests had a strong influence during the Spanish colonization, and they are believed to have encouraged Colombian farmers in the northeastern part of the country to begin to grow coffee as a part of their religious practice. One priest, Francisco Romero, is credited with introducing coffee growing in northeastern Colombia. It is believed that Romero recognized that coffee could be a viable crop for rural farmers. The farmers held a differing opinion, firmly rejecting the idea of sowing coffee seeds with a potential five-year waiting period for crop yield, deeming it an impractical turnover. However, undeterred by their reluctance, Father Romero employed a persuasive strategy rooted in religious beliefs<sup>22</sup>. Father Romero initiated his transformative vision for the northeastern corridor of Colombia as a flourishing coffee hub in the confessional space of Salazar de la Palmas, where parishioners bared their souls. Utilizing a unique approach, he encouraged farmers confessing their sins to adopt coffee planting as a penance, deviating from the prevalent custom of expiating sins with gold or silver payments. In 1835, Francisco Romero, a Jesuit priest, imposed penances on sinners to increase coffee production, having the "sinners" each plant between 100 to 1,000 coffee plants<sup>23</sup>. The following led to a surge in coffee plantations around Salazar de las Palmas in Colombia's Norte de Santander department.<sup>24</sup> This penance-to-planting campaign was successful and spread across the region, eventually adopted by the Archbishop of Colombia. Some would believe that this was

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<sup>21</sup> Rose, "Colombian Coffee History".

<sup>22</sup> "Coffee in Colombia, a Long Story." FARO Roasting Houses. Last modified December 12, 2021, <https://farocoffee.com/blogs/news/coffee-in-colombia-a-long-story>

<sup>23</sup> Palacios, M, "Coffee expansion and the strengthening of the Liberal model of development, 1910–50." In *Coffee in Colombia, 1850–1970: An Economic, Social and Political History* (1980): Cambridge Latin American Studies, pp. 198-226, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. doi:10.1017/CBO9780511572869.01

when coffee became intertwined with Colombian cultural practices in society and the growing importance the crop would have on the nation. Within a short time, Colombia had grown enough coffee to enter the international export landscape. “No matter how coffee first came to Colombia, it quickly took off with its first commercial production in 1808 and the first international export in 1835 to the United States”<sup>24</sup>. Thus, the coffee industry was born, quickly becoming a primary industry, shifting from agricultural production of tobacco and cotton to coffee.

During the initial phase of coffee exports, the United States stood out as the pivotal marketplace in the Americas. Meanwhile, Europe, particularly France and Germany, held sway over the international coffee export market on the global stage. Against this backdrop, the Colombian coffee export market had successfully taken its place, contributing to the dynamic landscape of the coffee trade. “In Colombia, production continued to increase, representing 20% of the country’s exports in 1884 and 55% in 1895, going from 173,000 bags to 358,000. Five years later, in 1900, with 463,000 bags per year, it had 10% of the soft coffees on the international market (1.5% of global exports). The Santander and Norte de Santander departments led coffee production, making up 58% of the country’s coffee yield. Cundinamarca and Tolima followed behind with 32%. Antioquia yielded 9% of Colombia’s coffee production”<sup>25</sup>.

With the world economic boom in the later part of the 1800s, Colombians began to realize the value of coffee as a cash crop and economic driver. As other export markets, like tobacco, gold, and silver, began to collapse, coffee emerged as the leading export product, given its lack of stability in the international marketplace. As coffee became a lucrative business, large landowners’ interests began to focus on taking advantage of the commercial

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid, 2.

<sup>25</sup> Palacios, “Coffee expansion”, 205.



opportunities the coffee industry now offers. Coffee growing was a productive use of the land due to the long growth cycles of coffee versus traditional crops. The three to five-year coffee bean growth cycle meant landowners could create more sustainable and long-term economic growth through this use of their land. Across the globe, including in the United States, coffee consumption exploded. As a result, Colombia benefited from the desire for coffee and its ability to export more and more beans.

Unfortunately, in 1873, the world saw an international market crash that triggered an economic downturn across the globe. Global export prices tumbled, seriously impacting coffee producers in Colombia. “The Long Depression was a worldwide price and economic recession, beginning in 1873 and running either through March 1879, or 1896, depending on the metrics used. The U.S. National Bureau of Economic Research dates the contraction following the panic as lasting from October 1873 to March 1879”<sup>26</sup>.

Despite the effects of the 1873 international market crash, a quote by Pedro Alejo Forero in 1879 highlighted by Michael F. Jiménez in the paper titled ‘Traveling Far in Grandfather’s Car’ highlights some of the challenges that hampered Colombian coffee industry growth<sup>27</sup>. Pedro suggests that Colombia suffered from geographical constraints with an elongated distance to the sea. The long distance to the sea made it more costly for the country to export its coffee produce. Pedro also discusses ‘the oppressiveness of the government’ which probably hints at the stringent taxation policies implemented by the Colombian policymakers of the time<sup>28</sup>. The heavy taxation burden implemented during the 1870s severely reduced the revenues earned from coffee farming which made it an

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<sup>26</sup> “*Business Cycles and Depressions : An Encyclopedia : Glasner, David : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming.*” Internet Archive. New York : Garland Pub., January 1, 1997.

<https://archive.org/details/businesscyclesde00glas/page/148>

<sup>27</sup> Jimenez, Michael F. "Traveling Far in Grandfather’s Car: The Life Cycle of Central Colombian Coffee Estates. The Case of Viotá, Cundinamarca (1900-30)." *Hispanic American Historical Review* 69, no. 2 (1989): 185.

<sup>28</sup> Jimenez, "Traveling Far in Grandfather’s Car," 185.

unattractive undertaking to most Colombian farmers. Pedro also touches on some of the challenges associated with factors of production including access to capital, labour scarcity, poor agricultural equipment and the lack of industry from the Colombian plantation workers. Colombia was not an industrialized country during the 1870s and its backwards agricultural methods also significantly affected its coffee production quantities<sup>29</sup>. Overall, Pedro's quote shows that despite the impact of global affairs on Colombia's coffee industry, several internal factors hampered its potential growth.

With the international market crash, Colombian coffee production fell, causing a consolidation of operations throughout the country. On the heels of the global market crash, Colombia experienced its crisis in the form of a civil war known as The Thousand Days War, which began in 1899 and lasted until 1903<sup>30</sup>. During that time, Liberals and Conservatives battled for control of the country, resulting in tens of thousands of deaths, massive property damage, and a national economic downturn. The Liberal Party was supported by coffee plantation owners, exporters, and other workers who wanted a laissez-faire economic structure and who had been largely excluded from the government after the Conservatives' ascension to power in the 1880s. Due to the international market crash, many coffee farmers were losing money on their crops by the time of The Thousand Days War.

On the other hand, the Conservative government, which was in control at the time, issued unbacked currency, which caused the value of the peso to deflate. This led to an all-out war in the coffee-growing areas, which lasted almost a year before the Liberals were defeated. One element of the conservative rule was the support of the large coffee estate owners in the country, who imposed a sharecropping system amongst their workers. As is typical with this system, rural workers needed help to escape this unequal power structure.

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid, 1.

<sup>30</sup> Bulmer-Thomas et al., *History of Latin America*, 77.

The landowners gained more and more wealth, and the workers became increasingly agitated by their way of life on the coffee plantations. The Liberal forces were defeated within seven months of the start of The Thousand Days War. Still, sporadic guerrilla attacks continued for the next two and a half years in rural areas, causing great destruction of property and loss of life. In 1902, to quell the civil war, the ruling Conservatives offered an end to the war with Liberal guerillas<sup>31</sup>. To bring order back to the country, the Conservative government negotiated peace with the Liberals, promising amnesty to the rebels, free elections, and political reform.<sup>10</sup>

“In Colombia, The Thousand Days War (1899–1902) caused a severe drop in tax collections, while war outlays gave rise to huge deficits. Inflation affected customs revenues because they were collected in paper money... The wartime inflation led to avoiding similar situations in the future. After that, there came a period of stability”<sup>32</sup>. The convergence of The Thousand Days War and the preceding international market crisis severely affected the profitability of expansive coffee estates owned by influential landholders. Faced with the aftermath of these pivotal historical events, these once-prominent figures found themselves unable to sustain their coffee operations, accumulating massive debts that ultimately led to their downfall. Despite the Liberals' loss in the War of a Thousand Days, their resilience underscored a poignant truth—Colombia could not be governed peacefully when either political faction was excluded from power and subjected to intermittent harassment. “Even though the Liberals had lost the War of a Thousand Days... they had at least demonstrated that Colombia could not be governed peacefully when one of the two parties was excluded from power and subjected to intermittent harassment”<sup>33</sup>.

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<sup>31</sup> Bulmer-Thomas et al., “*History of Latin America*,” 25.

<sup>32</sup> Pike, “Military,” 1900.

<sup>33</sup> David, *Modern Colombia*, 13

“The ideological difference between the two parties lay primarily in the Conservative belief in the infallibility and universality of the moral precepts of Christ as transmitted by the Roman Catholic Church and in the insistence of Conservatives that only their party could speak for Catholicism in Colombia. The Conservatives’ interpretation of Catholicism led them to accept republican forms and institutions. Still, they placed greater emphasis than the Liberals on order, authority, and the necessity of restricting the rights of the individual to protect society. There was comparatively little disagreement on general economic policy between the two parties, though Liberals tended to display greater interest in the problems of development than did Conservatives”<sup>34</sup>.

Due to the change in the power structures and continued insecurities within the infrastructures, small pockets of instability became more common in the country. With conservatives in power for more than 50 consecutive years, liberals were continually left out of the political power spectrum<sup>35</sup>. This created a power vacuum in the national political landscape and perpetuated animosity between parties and peoples. The events that brought the large coffee plantations to their knees resulted in the demise of the robust landowner structure and led to one of the most significant changes in Colombia’s coffee business. Many plantation owners were forced to divide their land among workers to maintain coffee production. This created local ownership of coffee farms and autonomy, breaking the hold that large landowners had on the coffee business. “The period 1905–15 has been described as the most significant growth phase in Colombian history, characterized by an expansion of exports and government revenues, as well as an overall rise in the GDP. Coffee contributed most to trade, growing from only 8 percent of total exports at the beginning of the 1870s to nearly 75 percent by the mid-1920s”<sup>36</sup>.

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<sup>34</sup> Mauricio, *Universitas*, 73.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid*, 2.

On top of the dispersion of the large landowner operations, internal migration and colonization of new areas in the central and western parts of Colombia brought about even more growth of smaller coffee producers and a new way of developing Colombia's coffee industry. "Unprecedented amounts of foreign capital found their way into both private investment and public works during this period because of the strong performance of coffee and other exports"<sup>37</sup>. This change to a system of small, locally owned, and operated coffee farms was a boom for rural farmers. Growing coffee allowed farmers to make the most of their land use without leaving it fallow for long periods or having to grow alternate crops to sustain operations. This resulted in the growth of small business-owned farms that began dominating Colombia's coffee industry.

This new network of country coffee farmers throughout Colombia greatly grew the export business. Nonetheless, on the world stage, Colombia did not yet have the international standing and power to leverage the potential of the country's primary asset, coffee. In the late 1920s, to maximize the country's coffee export business, local farmers and small coffee producers banded together to form the Federación Nacional de Cafeteros de Colombia or the National Federation of Coffee Growers of Colombia<sup>38</sup>.

The Federación Nacional de Cafeteros (Fedecafe) gave the coffee industry a national trade association that has worked with commendable efficiency to regulate internal prices, assure supplies of credit, control the quality of the Colombian product, and much else; besides, and all those involved in growing and selling coffee were invited to belong. This union of small farmers helped local producers handle problems in the coffee export business that they could not deal with individually. In addition, by banding together, they consolidated

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<sup>36</sup> Hudson, Rex A., ed. *Colombia: A country study*. Vol. 550, no. 26. Government Printing Office, 2010.

<sup>37</sup> Hudson, *Colombia*, 2.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid*, 12.

their economic power across the industry. “A few months later, in the same year of 1927, the National Congress approved Law 76, by which duties were imposed on all exports of the country and gave the National Federation of Coffee Growers the authority to administer and manage all this revenue. Thus, the Federation and the national government signed a contract on October 15, 1928, by which the government was obliged to transfer all revenue generated by this tax to the Federation”<sup>39</sup>.

This revenue propelled and fortified the Federation, and these resources were used to create the National Coffee Fund.” Today, the Federation is entirely owned and controlled by Colombia's coffee farmers (cafeteros), which number over 500,000 people.<sup>18</sup> In the 20th century, coffee emerged as the driving force behind Colombia's economic transformation, leaving an indelible mark on the nation's trajectory. The surge in coffee exports fuelled economic growth and spurred a wave of industrialization. The success story of the coffee industry drew inspiration from the textile sector and brewing companies.

During his tenure as Colombian President from 1904 to 1909, Rafael Reyes Prieto was pivotal in the country's industrialization efforts. His strategic focus on attracting foreign investment and fostering industrial development reshaped the economic landscape. President Reyes created a conducive political environment and implemented protective measures, such as the 1905 revenue tariffs, which imposed higher taxes on imported textiles. This move shielded the domestic market and ignited a transformative incentive for the modern manufacturing industry. The tariff adjustments prompted Colombians to capitalize on their human resources, completing the country's final stages of textile production. Consequently, between 1910 and 1920, the export of goods experienced a remarkable twenty percent surge, marking a significant milestone in Colombia's economic evolution.

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<sup>39</sup> Bushnell, *Modern Colombia*, 18.

Rafael Reyes ran a liberal platform that was almost unheard of then. He began to build a public profile, promoting economic and technological modernization. Within those areas, his main focuses were on railroad and road work construction to make the country more widely accessible than ever before. He also focused on creating the Ministry of Public Works, and with these incentives, monetary reform began to follow. Many countries are perpetually stuck in resource-type commodities, but Colombia has bucked this trend by constantly diversifying<sup>40</sup>. It was Reyes's mission to differentiate commodities. The politics of diversification benefitted Colombia using human capital and productivity. Reyes proved a country can escape the resource curse by protecting industries with import tariffs. The resource curse is known to be "caused by too much of the country's capital and labor force being concentrated in just a few resource-dependent industries. By failing to make adequate investments in other sectors, countries can become vulnerable to declines in commodity prices, leading to long-run economic underperformance"<sup>41</sup>. History indicates that Rafael Reyes had strong foresight about the economic and political structures needed for Colombia to remain strong and competitive internationally.

In the first half of the 1920s, Colombia re-established its earlier monetary and exchange rate policy: money issues were convertible at an exchange rate of 1 peso, equal to 0.96 dollars that lasted until 1932<sup>42</sup>. This meant its central bank was closer to the United States Federal Reserve Bank than the Bank of England because money issues were backed by reserves and credits to the government and the private sector. Between 1923 and 1931, the country returned to the gold standard, and the correlation between currency and reserves was

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<sup>40</sup> Palacios, *Coffee expansion*, 209.

<sup>41</sup> Fernando, Jason. "Resource Curse Definition." Investopedia. Investopedia, May 19, 2021. <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/r/resource-curse.asp>.

<sup>42</sup> "Colombia: Land Ownership, Mother of All Conflicts." Colombia: Land Ownership, Mother of All Conflicts | Christian Peacemaker Teams. Accessed December 13, 2021. <https://cpt.org/cptnet/2021/07/06/colombia-land-ownership-mother-all-conflicts>

remarkably high (98). In fact, its gold exchange standard allowed the country to have its reserves in foreign currency because it had most of its reserves in the United States.

The exchange account was used to service the debts incurred by the government during the war with Peru in 1938. It also served to create a stabilization fund designed to keep the prices of government bonds stable and to regulate monetary policy. The “Columbian Exchange” was an attachment to village life that made peasants reluctant to enter the rhythms of commercial production or where population centres lay distant from the demands of highland mines or lowland plantations<sup>43</sup>. For example, Peru had control of cotton exports, while Central America dominated the banana industry. There were significant structural problems, such as a mismatch between labour supply and demand. In 1870, as commercial opportunities and pressures intensified, new means of acquiring or enlarging labour forces became widespread.

“For those who resist, the laws of the time allowed the landowners to become police authorities and imprison the reluctant peasants in private prisons located on the haciendas. Against these and other injustices, the peasants of haciendas in departments such as Cundinamarca, Boyacá, and Santander rebelled, creating the so-called peasant leagues at the end of the 1920s. The confrontation between landowners and peasants was partially resolved by the Liberal government of López Pumarejo when Law 200 of 1936 was issued. The law authorized the purchase of the estates by the State and their division among the peasants”<sup>44</sup>

This change in the structure of landowners in Colombia created a new class of small coffee growers. Across the country, rural farmers began to gain income due to their success in the coffee export business. In sharp contrast to mining and to some agricultural products such as bananas, which were grown on large plantations, coffee production in Colombia

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid, 2.

<sup>44</sup> “*Mother of All Conflicts*” Christian Peacemaker, 237.



historically developed on tiny plots of land. As a result, it generated an important class of small landowners whose income depended on a major export commodity. Unprecedented amounts of foreign capital found their way into both private investment and public works during this period because of the strong performance of coffee and other exports.

At the end of the 1920s, as the world economy went into chaos with the collapse of the New York Stock Exchange and the beginning of the Great Depression in 1929, Colombia's coffee industry helped shield the country from complete collapse. "Colombia continued to produce raw materials, and although coffee prices collapsed during the depression, output continued to expand. Nonetheless, social, and economic improvements were uneven"<sup>45</sup>.

The same year the U.S. stock market collapsed; Colombia saw a change in its political structure with the Liberal Party taking power. The Liberal Party's rule lasted 16 years and dealt with the internal impact of the world's economic problems. As the U.S. was the largest importer of Colombian coffee and suffered significant financial instability, this also impacted the Colombian economy. "There was a constant decrease in the exporting potential product of Colombia's coffee, as well as a cut in the international loans and investment. Eventually, the crisis in the U.S.A. generated a cut in urban employment within Colombia, diminished internal market, and other problematic social and economic situations"<sup>46</sup>. The economic ups and downs in Colombia's coffee export industry due to the U.S. and global economic instability was a particularly difficult time in the face of years of prosperity and growth on the back of the coffee sector.

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<sup>45</sup> Farnsworth-Alvear, Ann, "*Dulcinea in the Factory: Myths, Morals, Men, and Women in Colombia's Industrial Experiment, 1905-1960*", Durham: Duke University Press 2000.

<sup>46</sup> Palacios, "Coffee expansion," 209.

Despite the global financial chaos that ensued after the collapse of the New York Stock Exchange, Colombia's coffee sector played a crucial role in shielding the country from collapse. While coffee prices plummeted, Colombia managed to sustain raw material production despite uneven social and economic improvements.

*Table 1. Tobacco production: area under cultivation and work force, 1840–75*

Years	Hectares	Harvesters
1840–5	1,310	2,620
1850	2,650	5,300
1858	7,500	15,000
1865	8,000	16,000
1875	5,100	10,200

Simultaneously, the political landscape of Colombia transformed, mirroring the economic upheavals. In 1929, the same year the U.S. stock market collapsed, the Liberal Party ascended to power in Colombia, steering the nation through 16 years of rule<sup>47</sup>. This period coincided with the internal ramifications of the worldwide economic crisis. The United States, being the largest importer of Colombian coffee, experienced significant financial instability, leading to a decrease in the export potential of Colombia's primary commodity.

By the 1950s, the FNC (Coffee Growers Federation) laid the foundation for presenting Colombian coffee as a high-quality product. To educate the largest consumer market, the U.S., they embarked on a mission to create a central figure representing the authenticity of Colombian coffee. In 1959, the FNC commissioned Doyle Dane Berbach (DDB) to bring Juan Valdez to life, an iconic representation of a true coffee grower<sup>48</sup>.

<sup>47</sup> Posada, "La gran crisis," 96.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

When the coffee industry boomed (1945-1955), the availability of foreign exchange buoyed investment. The revaluation of the peso, which made imported goods such as machinery and equipment cheaper, was one of the main incentives for investment during such times. When coffee prices were low (the mid-1950s through the 1960s), the devaluation of the currency spurred the development of new import-substituting sectors and non-traditional exports<sup>49</sup>. Thus, the exchange rate functioned as the chief price signal for the diversification of production, acting on both the supply and demand for industrial goods. The trade policy instruments—tariff protection, import controls and export subsidies—supplemented rather than substituted for the exchange-rate policy. In other words, rather than replacing market signals, they reinforced the signals generated by the coffee industry's cycle via variations in the real exchange rate.

This phase of rapid structural change coincided with a long-term downward trend in the ratio between exports and national output, indicating that the domestic market was its main engine. Economic policy strengthened this trend in part but sought to avoid directing import substitution towards production sectors that, because of the market's size, had little chance of success. Even more importantly, because of the collapse of coffee prices beginning in the mid-1950s and the 1967 reforms to trade and foreign exchange rules, early on, the country shifted to a “mixed model” that combined import substitution with export promotion<sup>50</sup>. In the 1960s and the first half of the 1970s, a significant level of export diversification was achieved, and the country took its first steps toward overcoming its over-dependence on coffee.<sup>30</sup> Economic integration was a third component of this mixed model, most clearly manifested in creating the Andean Group in 1969. The effects of this latter process, however, were somewhat limited.

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<sup>49</sup>Ibid, 2.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid, 3.

The economic growth rates posted during the period of rapid structural change were low since, at an annual level of 4.5%, the average was like the rate for the Third World or Latin America. The glory days of industrialization came at the end of this period, between 1967 and 1974, when the mixed model was at its height, and the Colombian economy boasted an annual growth rate of 6.5%. The most striking features of this long change process were the highly stable growth achieved for almost half a century, its regionally heterogeneous base, and the characteristic gradualism and pragmatism of economic policy, which avoided excesses in import.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

Chapter 2 sheds light on the pressing issues of gender inequality and labor rights within the Colombian coffee industry. It highlights the potential harms of globalization and emphasizes the importance of addressing workers' rights and promoting equitable economic development in the coffee industry and other sectors. By deepening our understanding of this correlation, we can strive for a more inclusive economic landscape in Colombia.

### *Background on globalization's impact on Colombia's economy*

The Colombian coffee industry has experienced significant changes in recent years, primarily caused by the pressures of globalization. This trend, characterized by the integration of markets, the movement of capital, and the transfer of knowledge and technology across borders, has positively and negatively affected many aspects of the global economy. It has raised concerns about its impact on gender inequality and labor rights within agricultural industries such as coffee production.

This section incorporates expert perspectives and research to illuminate the issues. Scholars like Sarah Babb, Alexander Kentikelenis, and Ngaire Woods have extensively examined the effects of globalization on various aspects of the economy, including the coffee industry, economic policies, and resulting inequalities. Their insights into globalization's impact will provide a comprehensive framework for understanding the relationship between gender inequality and labor rights in the Colombian coffee industry.

Building upon the previous scholars I mentioned works, this proposal aims to investigate the influence of globalization on gender inequality and labor rights in the Colombian coffee industry and explore the implications for workers' well-being and sustainable economic development. Specifically, I seek to address the following research question: How does globalization influence gender inequality and labor rights in the

Colombian coffee industry, and what are the implications for workers' well-being and reasonable economic development?

By examining this research question, we can better understand the elaborate dynamics between globalization, gender, labor rights, and economic development within the Colombian coffee industry. In addition, the findings of this proposal will contribute to the existing literature on globalization and provide insight for policymakers, industry stakeholders, and advocacy groups to develop more inclusive and sustainable practices within the coffee sector.

*Rationale for investigating gender inequality and labour rights in the coffee industry*

The article "Racing to the Bottom or Climbing to the Top?" by Layna Mosley and Saika Uno offers a nuanced investigation of the relationship between globalization, labor rights, and gender inequality. The article discusses how globalization can worsen gender inequalities and weaken labor protections. In contrast, the piece highlights the opportunities for workers to demand better conditions and collective bargaining rights within the globalized context.

Additionally, Chapter 7 of "Women: Harmed or Helped?" by Economist Jagdish Bhagwati provides valuable insights into the impact of economic globalization on women in developing countries. Bhagwati's analysis emphasizes the harmful effects of globalization on women in the Colombian coffee industry, highlighting the need to address workers' rights and promote equitable economic development.

By analysing the findings and arguments presented in the previous sections, this research proposal aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the correlation between gender inequality and labor rights in Colombia's coffee industry. The discussion will explore the complexities and nuances of this relationship, acknowledging the implications for policy and future research.

In conclusion, this research proposal sheds light on the pressing issues of gender inequality and labor rights within the Colombian coffee industry. It highlights the potential harms of globalization and emphasizes the importance of addressing workers' rights and promoting equitable economic development in the coffee industry and other sectors. By deepening our understanding of this correlation, we can strive for a more inclusive economic landscape in Colombia.

### *The Link between Gender Inequality and Labor Rights*

The Colombian coffee industry serves as a crucial sector for understanding the dynamics of gender inequality and labor rights. Within this industry, women occupy a significant proportion of agricultural workers in Colombia, comprising the largest proportion of the workforce engaged in coffee production<sup>51</sup>. Their participation in coffee cultivation, harvesting, and processing is not only substantial but also essential for the functioning of the industry.

### *Women as the most significant proportion of agricultural workers in Colombia*

Despite their significant contribution, women in the Colombian coffee industry often face disparities in respect and rights compared to their male counterparts. As a result, they are subjected to lower levels of recognition, respect, and opportunities for advancement. These gender-based inequities are deeply rooted in societal norms, cultural expectations, and discriminatory practices, restricting women's access to resources, decision-making power, and representation<sup>52</sup>. In addition, women in the coffee industry are frequently employed in the lowest-paid and most precarious jobs, enduring long hours of physical labor under challenging working conditions<sup>53</sup>. These conditions compromise their well-being and

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<sup>51</sup> Diaz, Maria. "Gender Inequality and Labor Rights in the Colombian Coffee Industry." *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 53, no. 4 (2021): 965.

<sup>52</sup> Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). "The State of Food and Agriculture: Women in Agriculture - Closing the Gender Gap for Development." FAO, 2019.

<sup>53</sup> Diaz, "Gender Inequality and Labor Rights," 977.

perpetuate gender inequalities in the workforce.

*Lower respect and fewer rights for women in comparison to their male counterparts*

In addition to women, children are commonly found working alongside their mothers in the agricultural industry. This practice further highlights women's vulnerabilities and challenges as it intertwines the issues of child labor, education, and economic livelihood. The presence of children in agricultural labor raises concerns about their well-being, access to education, and potential long-term effects on their development<sup>54</sup>. The prevalence of women and children working in agriculture jobs signifies the need for a comprehensive examination of labor rights and gender equality in the Colombian coffee industry.

*Common occurrence of women working in agriculture jobs with their children*

Understanding the specific challenges women face, including the disparities in respect and rights and the entrenched issue of child labor, is crucial for promoting inclusive and sustainable development in the coffee sector. It emphasizes the need for comprehensive policies, interventions, and advocacy efforts to promote gender equality, protect labor rights, and create a more equitable and empowering environment for women in the coffee industry.

Overall, exploring gender inequality and labor rights within the Colombian coffee industry sheds light on the systemic barriers and social injustices women face in the workplace. Furthermore, it underscores the importance of addressing these issues to ensure the well-being and empowerment of women, promote equitable economic growth, and foster an inclusive society.

## **The Influence of Globalization on Gender**

*Inequality and Labor Rights*

The correlation between globalization and gender inequality, particularly when discussing labor rights, is a critical aspect to explore within the context of the Colombian

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<sup>54</sup> Farnsworth-Alvear “*Dulcinea in the Factory*,” 12.



coffee industry. Globalization, characterized by the integration of economies and the free flow of goods, services, and capital across national borders, has profoundly shaped Colombia's economic landscape. Therefore, understanding how globalization influences gender inequality and labor rights is essential for comprehending the challenges faced by women in the coffee industry and identifying opportunities for improvement.

*Role of international financial institutions in shaping the coffee industry*

International financial institutions (IFIs) have significantly shaped the Colombian coffee industry and its labor dynamics. These institutions, such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, have often imposed structural adjustment programs and economic reforms on developing countries, including Colombia<sup>55</sup>. While these programs aim to promote economic growth and development, they can worsen gender inequalities and weaken labor rights. The policies and conditions imposed by IFIs, often in exchange for financial assistance, have frequently prioritized the interests of global markets and investors over the rights and well-being of local communities and workers<sup>56</sup>. The focus on market liberalization, deregulation, and trade openness can undermine social welfare and labor rights. As a result, the repercussions are disproportionately felt by women in the coffee business, who already experience systemic discrimination, expanding the gender gap regarding rights, opportunities, and financial security.

*Impact of liberalized trade policies on labor protections and social welfare*

Liberalized trade policies, driven by globalization, have also profoundly impacted labor protections and social welfare in the Colombian coffee industry. Trade liberalization has opened new markets and increased competition, creating opportunities and challenges for coffee growers and workers<sup>57</sup>. While increased exports and market access can lead to

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<sup>55</sup> Woods, Ngaire. *The Globalizers: The IMF, the World Bank, and Their Borrowers*. Cornell University Press, 2006, 12.

<sup>56</sup> Babb, Sarah. *Behind the development banks: Washington politics, world poverty, and the wealth of nations*. University of Chicago Press, 2009.

economic growth, they can also intensify competitive pressures and price volatility, affecting women's livelihoods and working conditions in the industry.

To remain competitive in the global market, coffee producers may resort to cost-cutting measures, including reducing labor costs and weakening labor protections<sup>58</sup>. This can result in the exploitation of women workers, often concentrated in low-paid and precarious jobs. In addition, the lack of adequate labor regulations and enforcement mechanisms further exacerbates gender inequalities and compromises the well-being of women in the coffee industry.

*Prioritization of global market interests over local communities and workers*

One of the encompassing challenges posed by globalization is prioritizing global market interests over the needs and rights of local communities and workers. The pursuit of economic growth and attracting foreign investment can overshadow relations of social equity, gender equality, and labor rights<sup>59</sup>. Consequently, women in the coffee industry, despite their significant contributions, continue to face marginalization, limited access to resources, and unequal opportunities for advancement.

The influence of globalization on gender inequality and labor rights in the Colombian coffee industry highlights the importance of critically examining the social and economic impacts of global economic integration<sup>60</sup>. It underscores the need for a comprehensive approach that considers the well-being and empowerment of women and safeguards labor rights. It promotes equitable economic development in the coffee industry and beyond. By

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<sup>57</sup> Kentikelenis, Alexander, et al. "Structural Adjustment and Public Spending on Health: Evidence from IMF Programs in Low-Income Countries." *Social Science & Medicine*, vol. 126, 2015, 172.

<sup>58</sup> Mosley, Layna, and Uno, Saika. "Racing to the Bottom or Climbing to the Top? Economic Globalization, Labor Rights, and Gender Equality", *Comparative Political Studies*, vol. 52, no. 8, 2019, 1142.

<sup>59</sup> Woods, *The Globalizers*, 38.

<sup>60</sup> Kentikelenis, "Structural Adjustment," 129.

addressing the systemic barriers and inequalities created by globalization, it becomes possible to foster a more inclusive and sustainable coffee sector that benefits all its

### *Expert Perspectives and Research*

To gain deeper insights into the impact of globalization on gender inequality and labor rights in the Colombian coffee industry, it is crucial to examine the perspectives and research of experts in the field. Several scholars have provided valuable analyses and research findings illuminating these complex issues.

#### *Sarah Babb's analysis of globalization's effects on the coffee industry*

Sarah Babb, a professor of sociology at Boston College, has conducted extensive research on globalization and its effects on various industries, including the coffee industry in Colombia. In her book "Behind the Development Banks: Washington Politics, World Poverty, and the Wealth of Nations," Babb explores how international financial institutions have influenced the development of the coffee industry in Colombia and other Latin American countries<sup>61</sup>. In addition, she examines how globalization has shaped coffee production, distribution, and consumption and the implications of these changes for gender inequality and labor rights in the industry.

Babb's analysis provides valuable insights into the mechanisms through which globalization influences the dynamics of the coffee industry. By understanding the role of international financial institutions in shaping economic policies and practices, we can better comprehend the underlying factors contributing to gender inequalities and labor rights violations in the Colombian coffee industry.

#### *Alexander Kentikelenis' research on the negative consequences of globalization*

Alexander Kentikelenis, a lecturer in global health and social medicine at King's College London, has researched the negative consequences of globalization on various

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<sup>61</sup> Babb, *Development Banks*, 37.

aspects of society, including labor protections and social welfare. In a notable article published in *The Lancet* in 2018, Kentikelenis argues that the liberalization of trade policies, driven by globalization, has led to the erosion of labor protections and social welfare programs in many developing countries, including Colombia<sup>62</sup>.

Kentikelenis' research sheds light on the detrimental effects of globalization on workers, particularly in sectors such as agriculture. His findings emphasize the importance of considering globalization's social and economic implications beyond the immediate gains in economic growth<sup>63</sup>. By examining the context of the Colombian coffee industry, we can better understand the challenges women and workers face in accessing their rights and achieving fair working conditions.

*Ngairé Woods' examination of economic policies and resulting inequalities*

Ngairé Woods, a professor of global economic governance at the University of Oxford, has significantly contributed to understanding globalization and its impacts on developing countries. In her book "The Globalizers: The IMF, the World Bank, and Their Borrowers," Woods analyzes how international financial institutions have influenced economic policies in Latin America and other regions<sup>64</sup>. She highlights how these policies have often prioritized the interests of global markets over those of local communities and workers, leading to inequalities and social unrest.

Woods' examination of economic policies and resulting inequalities provides a broader perspective on the systemic factors contributing to gender inequality and labor rights violations in the coffee industry. Her insights emphasize the need to assess the role of international financial institutions critically, the policy frameworks they promote, and the

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<sup>62</sup> Kentikelenis, "Structural Adjustment," 118.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid, 2, 169.

<sup>64</sup> Woods, *The Globalizers*, 34.

implications of these policies for vulnerable groups such as women workers in the Colombian coffee industry<sup>65</sup>.

By drawing upon the analyses and research of experts like Babb, Kentikelenis, and Woods, we can better understand the dynamics between globalization, gender inequality, and labor rights in the Colombian coffee industry. Moreover, their research findings contribute valuable knowledge to the ongoing dialogue surrounding the need for greater attention to workers' rights and the promotion of equitable economic development in the coffee industry and other sectors.

*"Racing to the Bottom or Climbing to the Top?" by Layna Mosley and Saika Uno*

In their influential work "Racing to the Bottom or Climbing to the Top? Economic Globalization, Labor Rights, and Gender Equality," Layna Mosley and Saika Uno examine the complex relationship between economic globalization, labor rights, and gender inequality<sup>66</sup>. Their analysis sheds light on how globalization impacts gender disparities and labor protections.

*Relationship between economic globalization, labor rights, and gender inequality*

Mosley and Uno delve into the intricate interplay between economic globalization, labor rights, and gender inequality. They explore how globalization, characterized by increased international trade and investment flows, shapes labor markets and working conditions, affecting gender dynamics within various industries, including agriculture. Their research highlights the interconnectedness of these factors, demonstrating that globalization does not occur in isolation from labor rights and gender equality<sup>67</sup>. Instead, they argue that these dimensions are closely intertwined and mutually influential, necessitating a

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid, 2, 15.

<sup>66</sup> Mosley and Saika. "Racing to the Bottom," 1142.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid, 2.

comprehensive understanding of the interplay between economic forces, labor rights, and gender inequalities.

*Exacerbation of gender inequalities and weaker labor protections*

The work of Mosley and Uno also sheds light on the exacerbation of gender inequalities and weaker labor protections resulting from economic globalization<sup>68</sup>. They demonstrate how the competitive pressures of globalization, including the race to reduce production costs and increase competitiveness, can lead to a downward spiral in labor conditions, disproportionately affecting women workers.

By analyzing empirical evidence from various countries and industries, Mosley and Uno highlight how pursuing profit maximization and cost-cutting strategies can result in gender-based wage gaps, limited access to decent work, and precarious employment for women in the coffee industry and beyond<sup>69</sup>. These dynamics underscore the need for a closer examination of the implications of globalization for gender equality and labor protections.

*Opportunities for workers to demand better conditions and collective bargaining.*

Despite the challenges posed by economic globalization, Mosley and Uno also emphasize the potential for workers, including women, to leverage opportunities for better conditions and collective bargaining. They identify instances where organized labor movements and advocacy efforts have successfully pushed for improved labor rights and fair working conditions, countering the "race to the bottom" narrative<sup>70</sup>. Through case studies and empirical analysis, Mosley and Uno present examples of successful collective action and policy interventions that have resulted in enhanced labor protections and improved gender equality. By highlighting these cases, they demonstrate the agency and potential of workers to shape the outcomes of globalization processes and mitigate gender inequalities.

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid, 3.

<sup>69</sup> Cornia "Inequality trends" 36.

<sup>70</sup> Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), "The State of Food and Agriculture," FAO, 2019.

By examining the research and insights presented by Mosley and Uno, we gain a deeper understanding of the nuanced relationship between economic globalization, labor rights, and gender inequality<sup>71</sup>. Their work emphasizes the urgent need for policies and interventions that prioritize gender equality and labor protections while recognizing workers' potential to mobilize and demand better conditions through collective action.

*Chapter 7 of "Women: Harmed or Helped?" by Jagdish Bhagwati*

In Chapter 7 of "Women: Harmed or Helped?" by Jagdish Bhagwati, the author explores the impact of economic globalization on women in developing countries, specifically focusing on the harmful effects of globalization on women in the Colombian coffee industry. Bhagwati's analysis underscores the importance of addressing workers' rights and promoting collective bargaining as essential measures to mitigate the negative consequences of globalization.

*Impact of economic globalization on women in developing Countries*

Bhagwati delves into the multifaceted impact of economic globalization on women in developing countries. He examines how globalization can harm and benefit women through its effects on trade, investment, and labor markets. Bhagwati explores how globalization can create new economic opportunities for women, such as increased employment options and income generation. It also highlights their potential risks and challenges, including exploitation, precarious working conditions, and limited access to social protection.

*Harmful effects of globalization on women in the Colombian coffee industry*

Focusing on the Colombian coffee industry, Bhagwati elucidates the harmful effects of globalization on women. He emphasizes how the competitive pressures of the global market can exacerbate gender inequalities, particularly in industries characterized by labor-intensive production. Bhagwati highlights low wages, lack of job security, and inadequate

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<sup>71</sup> Ibid, 4.

labor protections that disproportionately affect women engaged in coffee farming and processing. Through empirical evidence and case studies, Bhagwati provides insights into the gender disparities prevalent in the Colombian coffee industry, shedding light on the need for interventions to address these inequities and protect the rights and well-being of women workers.

#### *Importance of addressing workers' rights and collective bargaining*

In his chapter, Bhagwati underscores the significance of addressing workers' rights and promoting collective bargaining as crucial mechanisms to counteract the adverse consequences of globalization on women in the Colombian coffee industry and beyond. He argues that strengthening labor protections and enabling collective bargaining empower workers, including women, to demand fair wages, better working conditions, and social benefits.

Bhagwati highlights the importance of policy interventions that prioritize workers' rights and collective bargaining as fundamental pillars of equitable economic development. By amplifying the voices and agency of women in the workforce, these measures can help mitigate the adverse effects of globalization, foster gender equality, and enhance the overall well-being of workers. Through Bhagwati's analysis, we gain insights into the complex dynamics at play in the context of economic globalization and its impact on women. His work emphasizes the urgent need for policies and interventions that address gender disparities, protect workers' rights, and promote collective bargaining to ensure a more inclusive and equitable globalization process.

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, this comprehensive examination of the relationship between labor rights, globalization, and gender inequality in the Colombian coffee industry reveals a complex and interconnected web of challenges and consequences. Furthermore, the research



and expert perspectives shed light on globalization's detrimental impacts on women's rights, labor conditions, and overall gender equality in the industry.

Globalization, driven by international financial institutions and liberalized trade policies, has profoundly influenced the coffee industry and its labor dynamics. The role of international financial institutions, such as the IMF and the World Bank, in shaping economic reforms and structural adjustment programs must be considered. While these programs aim to foster economic growth, they often unintentionally worsen gender inequalities and weaken labor rights. The prioritization of global market interests and the emphasis on market liberalization can lead to the erosion of labor protections, exacerbating the existing disparities between women and men in the industry.

Liberalized trade policies, another key aspect of globalization, have presented opportunities and challenges for the Colombian coffee industry. While increased market access and competition can lead to economic growth, they also intensify labor conditions and social welfare pressures. Women, the most significant proportion of agricultural workers in Colombia, are particularly vulnerable to the negative consequences of these policies. Cost-cutting measures and the lack of robust labor regulations further perpetuate gender inequalities and compromise the well-being of women in the industry.

The expert perspectives and research findings further emphasize globalization's detrimental effects on women in the Colombian coffee industry. Scholars like Sarah Babb, Alexander Kentikelenis, and Ngaire Woods provide valuable insights into the influence of international financial institutions, the negative consequences of globalization, and the resulting economic inequalities. Additionally, the research conducted by Layna Mosley and Saika Uno in "Racing to the Bottom or Climbing to the Top?" highlights the exacerbation of gender inequalities and weaker labor protections due to globalization. However, their work

also reveals potential opportunities for workers to demand better conditions and collective bargaining rights.

Jagdish Bhagwati's chapter in "Women: Harmed or Helped?" adds further evidence of the harmful effects of globalization on women in developing countries, specifically in the Colombian coffee industry. The need for attention to workers' rights and collective bargaining is emphasized as a crucial aspect of addressing these negative impacts and promoting equitable economic development.

The story of Colombian coffee, from its crucial role in shielding the nation during financial crises to the establishment of the FNC and the creation of Juan Valdez, underscores the profound and enduring impact of the coffee bean on Colombia's economic, political, and societal evolution. The resilience and innovation of the Colombian coffee industry not only weathered challenging times but also paved the way for showcasing Colombian coffee as a symbol of quality on the global stage. There has been no more significant driver of change and development in Colombia than the coffee bean first introduced during colonization. From the 18th Century through the beginning of the 20th Century, coffee has been central to Colombia's economic, political, and societal evolution through the lens of religion and revolution. The small coffee bean and its role in the development of Colombia has had a significant impact on almost all aspects of the country since colonization, and that remains true even today and most likely well into the future. Addressing globalization's social and economic impacts on vulnerable groups, particularly women in the Colombian coffee industry is imperative. This requires comprehensive policies and interventions that prioritize gender equality, protect labor rights, and create a more empowering environment for women. The findings underscore the importance of considering the well-being and empowerment of women as central to achieving inclusive and sustainable development in the coffee sector and beyond. By addressing the systemic barriers and inequalities created by globalization, it

becomes possible to foster a more equitable and just society that benefits all stakeholders involved in the coffee industry.

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