

Toward a Sociology of Labor and Development at the Margins of the Market

The focus of this book centers on explaining the stark variation in labor regime dynamics that has arisen across the rural commodity-producing regions of Viejo Caldas, Urabá, and the Caguán region of Caquetá. However, the presence of brutal violence and terror deployed to contain labor, the endemic crises and social unrest and the appearance of alternative social formations and illegal markets operating outside the effective control of the state pose significant problems for a labor regimes perspective that has been developed to explain labor dynamics in core regions of world capitalism. Indeed, this chapter argues that the existing conceptual framework typically utilized by labor regimes scholars falls far short when examining the dynamics on the ground in rural Colombia. To better grasp these dynamics, I reconstruct a labor regimes perspective that is attuned to the experiences of commodity production and development that arise at the margins of the market.

Rethinking Labor Regimes at the Margins of the Market

Analyzing capitalist trajectories over time and space necessitates clarification of what I mean by “local labor regime dynamics.” Like Michael Burawoy’s (1979, 1983, 1985) concept of a “factory regime,” as well as more recent conceptions of “labor control regimes,”¹ the patterns of commodity production and capitalist development in each of the three rural subregions I analyze are not strictly economic phenomena. They are neither simply “labor processes” in which human labor transforms raw materials into finished products nor mere “employment relations” that describe workplace authority structures, production arrangements, and compensation systems. Instead, they are modalities of social class reproduction and labor control that bring together human labor, capital, and the state

¹ Jonas (1996); Anner (2015); Baglioni (2018); Pattenden (2016).

through the transformation of the natural environment into a finished commodity for the market. They are “local” because they articulate a spatially anchored segment of the world’s population into global circuits of commodity production and exchange. They are “labor” regimes because this articulation occurs through a labor process that simultaneously produces a commodity and reproduces a social class whose livelihood depends on this production. They are “regimes” because the subjection of livelihoods to systems of commodity production tied to the whips and whims of the market is an inherently precarious, contradictory, and socially disruptive process that requires political-institutional strategies of labor control and class domination to ensure the continued extraction of surplus labor and the expanded reproduction of capital. Like any regime of social domination, the mechanisms of social control used to create workers and commodities are by no means guaranteed. Rather, they are projects that are institutionalized, contested, and sometimes even subverted.

Like any regime of social domination, the mechanisms of social control used to create workers and commodities vary significantly, with some regimes operating through the production of worker consent and others requiring more coercive mechanisms of labor control. Perhaps the earliest formulation of capitalist labor regimes can be traced back to the writings of Karl Marx (1976)[1867], whose descriptions of the “satanic mills” of English industrial factory life became emblematic of the despotism that results from full proletarianization and capitalist labor markets. This belief in “despotism” as the definitive experience of workers under capitalism, however, changed in the early twentieth century when labor unions and workerist parties began to wrest significant concessions from capital and gain social protections and rights from their respective states. The partial inclusion of workers’ interests into capitalist states, and especially the rise of Fascist regimes that were backed by segments of the working class, gave rise to new theories of labor control that sought to explain what the Italian Communist Antonio Gramsci described as “hegemony.” For Gramsci, hegemony existed as a form of class domination achieved predominantly through the acquiescence, if not active participation, of subaltern groups and classes in capitalist labor processes and capitalist systems of social control.

During and immediately following World War II, neo-Gramscian ideas were used by Western Marxists to highlight the role of propaganda and capitalist cultural practices in generating the “false consciousness” and worker political acquiescence to totalitarian regimes and practices.² In the postwar

² Burawoy (2003); Jeffries (2016).

decades, neo-Gramscian theories slipped into the shadows of academic circles, as Franklin Roosevelt's "labor-friendly" New Deal social compact between capital, labor, and the state spread among the advanced capitalist states of Europe and North America and as Truman's "Fair Deal" gained traction among the emerging developmentalist states of the Third World. However, by the closing decades of the century, these theories resurfaced again in academic circles to explain what many saw as a general decline in the strength of organized labor and the emergence of increasingly despotic labor regime dynamics as firms and workers struggled to adapt to an increasingly globalized world market.

Since the turn of the century, the overwhelming emphasis of labor regimes scholarship addresses the temporal question of how and why erstwhile hegemonic labor regimes established by activist Fordist–Keynesian states in the postwar decades have deteriorated toward increasingly despotic regimes in the current era of globalization. Specifically, many labor scholars argue that today's hypermobility of productive capital has created a single, global, and highly competitive labor market that pits the world's workers against one another in a worldwide "race to the bottom" in wages and working conditions. Whereas workers were afforded some degree of protection from full exposure to the competitive tendencies of the global market during the postwar decades, today's workers must compete against one another for access to jobs with businesses that have become increasingly mobile and less beholden to local worker demands. The result of this race to the bottom of the global labor market has been a generalized *convergence of labor regimes* in the present era toward increasingly precarious forms of working-class livelihoods and more despotic working conditions.³

³ Perhaps the most influential scholar of the new forms of market despotism that have resulted from the globalization of the world economy is Michael Burawoy. First laid out in his contemporary classic, *Manufacturing Consent: Changes in the Labor Process under Monopoly Capitalism* (1979), and later developed through subsequent writing (1983, 1985, 2003, 2015), Burawoy argues that contemporary advancements in technology, transportation, and communications infrastructure have made capitalist production increasingly mobile, affording capital the ability to move (or threaten to move) to cheaper and less regulated sites of production, thus tipping the balance of class power away from organized labor (unions, labor parties) to favor global capital. The result has been a shift away from various types of "hegemonic" social compacts that arose when activist states partially offset the costs of workers' class reproduction through provisions of social insurance, welfare, and formal labor rights and regulations toward regimes characterized by "hegemonic despotism," wherein workers submit to

To be clear, scholars disagree on the distinct mechanisms by which globalization has generated new forms of market despotism. One set of theories, what may be described as *structural globalization theory*, emphasizes how the global mobility of capital has undermined the structural power of workers, whether directly by expanding the size of the global labor market⁴ or indirectly by weakening state regulatory capacities,⁵ facilitating a growth in flexible production systems and global supply chains,⁶ or by fostering the movement of capital out of manufacturing into the financial service industries.⁷ A second set of temporal theories, what may be described as *neoliberalism theory*, posits that the decomposition of labor results from the resurgence of ideological doctrines of the self-regulating market, that is, the rise of “neoliberalism” as the dominant ideology and set of practices of national states and international development agencies.⁸ Despite these differences in their proximate causes, both structural globalization and neoliberalism theorists agree that twenty-first-century capitalism is forcing workers to adjust to increasingly despotic conditions of work and economic life. The question for our purposes, however, is whether the emergence of new structures of economic globalization and the widespread adoption of neoliberal practices are useful in explaining the spatial and temporal patterning of labor regime dynamics in rural Colombia.

increasingly despotic forms of managerial control due to their dependence upon their jobs to meet their reproduction needs and for fear that any efforts to challenge managerial control of their labor could potentially lead to a plant closing and job loss. Whereas the despotism of early industrial capitalism arose when job-dependent workers feared their individual loss of a job, today’s workers acquiesce to the dictates of capital for fear that they along with all of their coworkers will lose their jobs to more compliant workers living at the other end of the global labor market.

⁴ Cowie (1999); Milkman (1997); Collins (2003); Rothstein (2016).

⁵ Tilly (1995); Markoff (1996).

⁶ Gereffi (2018); Lichtenstein (2006); Petrovic and Hamilton (2006); Bonacich and Appelbaum (2000); Ross (2004); Hatton (2011); Woodcock (2017).

⁷ Silver (2003); Krippner (2011); Calhoun and Derlugian (2011).

⁸ Following Karl Polanyi’s writings in *The Great Transformation* (2001)[1944], today’s scholars of neoliberalism argue that efforts to force society (including land, capital, and labor) to the dictates of the global self-regulating market, subjects the very foundation of society to the dictates of the market. By reversing the natural social order in which markets serve the interests of society, neoliberal policies provoke processes of societal disintegration and destruction by rolling back workers’ access to state regulatory agencies and protections (Milkman and Ott 2014; Webster et al. 2008) and by facilitating the structural processes of globalization that undermine existing sources of worker power (della Porta 2015; Silva 2009; Zolberg 1995).

Rethinking Global Market Despotism and Effective Labor Control

Undoubtedly, contemporary labor regime scholarship has opened up promising avenues of research on the diverse ways that capital has forced labor to adapt to the whip of global markets. However, viewing the structural and politico-ideological dynamics of world capitalism from the perspective of rural Colombia, a region outside the typical purview of labor scholars, allows us to rethink some of the conceptual blind spots of labor regime analysis and clarify the specific patterning of labor regime dynamics that have arisen in Colombia's coffee, banana, and cocaine regimes. Two conceptual blind spots are of particular relevance to analyses of labor regimes dynamics at the margins of the market: a bias of global market dominance and a bias of labor control.

Too often, labor scholars share the economic assumption of the power of markets to shape and order society according to market imperatives. This *bias of global market despotism* is rooted in a set of assumptions that reify the so-called silent compulsions of the market without paying enough attention to the ways that commodity, labor, and financial market dynamics are socially and politically constructed and reconstructed by specific sets of social institutions and actors.⁹ Unfortunately, labor regime scholarship, and scholars of global capitalist markets more generally, often begins with what might be called a “post-primitive accumulation moment” – when systems of commodity production are already set in motion, workers already dispossessed of the means of production, class reproduction already proletarianized, and class struggles (if indeed these exist) narrowly rooted in worker struggles at the point of production.¹⁰ Not only does such a perspective give inordinate, if not magical, weight to the coercive powers of the market to shape social life by perennially removing and reshaping any obstacles to further economic growth. By eluding an analysis of the social foundations of markets and labor processes, it becomes susceptible to abstract and normative assumptions that are rooted in the experiences of predominantly white male industrial workers living in Europe and North America.¹¹

In many regions of world capitalism, processes of dispossession do not ceaselessly result in full proletarianization, and the silent compulsions of the market often fall short as effective mechanisms of labor control. And to make global

⁹ Perelman (2000).

¹⁰ Smith and Wallerstein (1992); Federici (2004); Weeks (2011); Dunaway (2014); Ferguson (2015); Harris and Hough (2021).

¹¹ Roediger (1991); Rose (1997); Weeks (2011); Ferguson (2015).

commodity production viable, capital must rely on extra-economic coercion that often takes the form of *state and parastate violence*.¹² World-systems scholars have long pointed out how peripheral regions of world capitalism have been pock-marked by pervasive practices of coerced labor.¹³ However, there is mounting empirical evidence suggesting that the systematic deployment of labor violence, state repression, policing, paramilitarism, and new forms of capitalist authoritarianism is becoming increasingly pervasive across the entirety of the contemporary global economy.¹⁴ Reports by the International Labour Organization (ILO 2009, 2017), for example, have described “forced labor arrangements” as the veritable “underbelly of globalization,” affecting some 24.9 million people in “virtually all countries and all kinds of economies.”¹⁵ Other studies have upped this number to 27 million, equivalent to the number of slaves seized from Africa during the Atlantic slave trade.¹⁶ As this book makes clear, the systematic deployment of state coercion and paramilitary violence has been an essential weapon in the capitalist tool kit in rural Colombia. Whether to dispossess rural inhabitants from

¹² To be clear, dependency and world-systems scholars have long pointed out the extra-economic coercion associated with colonial labor systems and other peripheral forms of capitalist production (Frank 1966, 1967; Furtado 1964, 1970; Galeano 1973; Wallerstein 1974). Moreover, a more recent wave of scholarship draws upon Marx’s writings on “primitive accumulation” to make a sense of the violent and dispossessing tendencies of neoliberal capitalism (Arrighi 2005a, 2005b; DeAngelis 2001, 2004; Federici 2004; Harvey 2003; Levien 2017, 2018; Perelman 2000).

¹³ Wallerstein (1974); Tomich (2016, 2017).

¹⁴ Indeed, a burgeoning body of scholarship analyzes the emergence of new forms of authoritarianism associated with the adoption of neoliberal policies, including the criminalization and policing of the poor (Bourgeois 1995; Gowan 2010; Wacquant 2009), the mass incarceration of surplus populations and racialized underclasses (Alexander 2010; Golash-Boza 2015), and the rise in new securitization and surveillance techniques developed to protect the lives and property of the privileged (Clarno 2017).

¹⁵ The ILO (2017) defines forced labor as

all work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily. It implies the use of deception or coercion, either by the state and public agencies, or by private individuals and enterprises, to force people to enter work or service against their will, to work in conditions they did not accept and to prevent them from leaving the job by using any form of punishment or threat of penalty.

For a critical analysis of the ILO’s forced labor campaign, see Lerche (2007).

¹⁶ Bales et al. (2009: vii).

the land or to repress worker militancy and political unrest, acts of extra-market violence have been regular and reliable tools of capital and states and therefore essential components of the global market at its margins.

A second blind spot of labor regime scholars is their tendency to assume that capitalist markets and systems of commodity production will continue to generate effective systems of labor control and social domination. This *bias of labor control* is evident in the market despotism perspective of Burawoy and others, who emphasize how contemporary processes of neoliberal globalization serve the interests of global capital at the expense of labor. Not only does this orientation presume a priori the durable workings of capitalist markets and therefore lead to over-deterministic explanations.¹⁷ There is mounting empirical evidence that the workings of the twenty-first-century market are not simply generating new forms of market despotism and working-class acquiescence to capitalist labor processes. Rather, they are also precipitating deep social crises, social mobilization, and unanticipated anti-systemic social formations that challenge the supremacy of the global market and the power of capital. Indeed, the past two decades have seen waves of global protest activity that are driven by not only organized labor but also informal and precarious workers, the unemployed, and other subaltern groups that have been systematically excluded from access to stable proletarian jobs.¹⁸ Indeed, both early protest waves such as the Pink Tide in Latin America, the Occupy Movement protests across Europe and North America, and the Arab Spring, and more recent upsurges by Black Lives Matter have chipped away at the hegemony of neoliberal practices across the globe. It is now imperative that labor scholarship account for both the precarity of labor as well as the precarity of twenty-first-century capitalism.

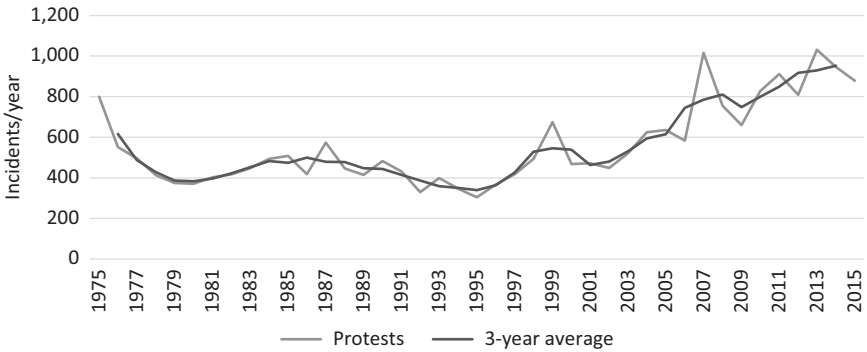
In Colombia, this bias of effective labor control is most evident in research that emphasizes the relationship between the adoption of neoliberal policies in the 1990s and the growth of paramilitarism.¹⁹ Some of the richest and most compelling recent studies of neoliberalism in Colombia highlight in painful detail how paramilitarism has terrorized opposition groups, including labor unions, human rights groups, and leftist political parties, forcing them to comply with new conditions of work, opening up new spaces for foreign investment, and paving the ground for renewed economic productivity. These studies of paramilitary domination as the face of twenty-first-century capitalism in Colombia capture the terror experienced by workers and working-class communities as they face

¹⁷ Stern (1988).

¹⁸ Karataşlı et al. (2015).

¹⁹ Chomsky (2008); Hristov (2009, 2014); Gill (2016).

Figure 1.1 Protest activity in Colombia, 1975–2015



Source: CINEP Social Movements Database

exceptionally violent forms of despotism. However, their emphasis on class domination through paramilitarism overlooks how the present era of neoliberal globalization has simultaneously been marked by new forms of political contestation, labor unrest, and social mobilization. Figure 1.1 provides evidence indicating how social protest activity in Colombia has progressively increased rather than diminished as the country adopted neoliberal reforms since the mid-1990s. During the 1980s and early 1990s, protest activities hung far below those of the mid-1970s, when the country erupted in mass social protests aimed at toppling the authoritarian practices that remained in place under the National Front regime. However, national protests began rising steadily in the mid-1990s, as the government progressively adopted neoliberal policies. By 2013, the number of protest incidents in Colombia topped 1,000 twice, surpassing the previous peak of protest activity in the mid-1970s. In short, neoliberal capitalism in Colombia has not only resulted in new forms of class domination; it has also generated new upsurges in social unrest and new crises of labor control that have shifted the pressures of global market competition onto capital as well as onto labor.

But the crisis tendencies of capitalist development do not solely generate social crises and militancy. Twenty-first-century scholars of labor need to be sensitive to the tendencies of capital to expel surplus workers from the circuits of capitalist production and exchange, and, in some cases, to facilitate the emergence of alternative (illegal, informal) class, state, and market formations that exist outside the effective authority of the state. The expulsion of surplus workers through processes of capitalist dispossession and displacement has indeed been a major “push factor” driving global flows of migratory labor.²⁰ But capitalism’s inability to

²⁰ Araghi (1995); Hart (2002); Harvey (2003); Davis (2006); Ness (2015); Sassen (2014).

absorb the totality of the world's workers does not simply push workers from one productive region to another. It also pushes surplus labor into conditions of advanced marginality that become breeding grounds for the establishment of alternative economic livelihoods and unruly social formations that operate in the shadows of state control.²¹ Analyses of the labor dynamics of mafias and gangs, warlord economies, illegal and informal markets, for example, are typically overlooked by most labor scholars.²²

In fact, illegal and informal activities remain significant generators of capitalist wealth and employment, especially in world regions that remain largely untouched by formal economic activities. For example, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2011:35) published a report estimating that the illicit financial flows that result from drug trafficking and other transnational organized crimes amount to some US\$650 billion per year, about 1.5% of global GDP. The transnational market for illegal drugs alone accounts for some 50% of these proceeds (US\$350 billion).²³ In terms of informal employment, the International Labor Organization's *Women and Men in the Informal Economy: A Statistical Picture* (2018:13–14) estimates that more than 60% of the world's employed population, more than 2 billion people over the age of fourteen, earn their living in the informal sector, in undeclared jobs that are not subject to national labor legislation, income taxation, social protection, or entitlement to employment benefits. Informality exists in all countries regardless of their level of socioeconomic development, although it is more prevalent in “developing countries,” where the percentage of the employed population working informally averages at 69.6% of the total workforce. These average rates are highest in Africa (85.8%), Asia and the Pacific (71.4%), and the Caribbean and Central and South America (68.6%). Informal employment in Colombia in 2016 was 60.6%, just under the world average of 61.2%.

There are also good reasons to believe that the alternative economic livelihoods of global surplus labor will continue to grow into the future. As James Ferguson (2015:89–90) points out,

As any observer of the contemporary world cannot fail to have noticed, more and more of the things in the world are produced by smaller numbers of

²¹ Davis (2006); Ferguson (2015); Benanav (2019a, 2019b); Wacquant (2009).

²² Some notable exceptions include Arrighi and Piselli (1987); Bair and Werner (2011); Bourgois (1995); Derlugian (2005); Karataşlı et al. (2015); Reno (1999).

²³ The markets analyzed include illegal narcotics, counterfeiting, human trafficking, oil, timber, fish, art/cultural property, gold, human organs, small arms and light weapons, and diamonds and colored gems (UNODC 2011).

people who specialize in it. Plastic toys for children are overwhelmingly made in China. Wheat is grown in Canada on a scale and at a price that few can compete with . . . This is not simply a matter of the sort of functional global division of labor that is evoked by the phrase “comparative advantage.” For the fact is that whole regions and populations find that they have no “advantage” of any kind and are (in some significant measure) simply left out of the global production regime. Even where valued products are exported, it is often in ways that do not generate much employment . . . In such situations we have massive populations that are, from the point of view of the production system, “redundant.”

Despite their redundancy to capital and capitalist states, these burgeoning surplus populations are indeed carving out new economic livelihoods that raise important questions about the continued viability of capitalist systems of production. Clearly, these alternative social formations should be analyzed by labor regime scholars. This book contributes to contemporary discussions along these lines by viewing alternative state, market, and class formations as “normal” dynamics of capitalist development and part of the everyday experiences of the world’s workers, particularly as processes of global peripheralization push people to the margins of the market.

Toward a Theory of Labor Regimes at the Margins of the Market

To capture the broad range of labor regime dynamics that arise at the margins of the global market, I reconceptualize labor regime types along two dimensions: (1) mechanisms of labor control and (2) control of the labor process. The former distinguishes whether or not capitalists have come to rely heavily upon what Marx (1976:899) described as “direct extra-economic force” (state and parastate forms of labor repression and violence) to control labor and the labor process of a given commodity or, instead, if the labor process occurs through what Marx described as the everyday “silent compulsions of economic relations.” The latter describes the extent to which these mechanisms of labor control – violent or not – are indeed effective in maintaining capitalist control of workers and the labor process. These distinctions can be seen in ideal-typical forms in Figure 1.2.

The ideal type displayed in box (1) consists of a situation in which the reproduction of the local regime does not rely upon “extra-economic” violence as a principal mechanism of labor control. Instead, systems of commodity production run largely through the everyday “silent compulsion” of the market. Drawing upon Gramscian nomenclature, I describe this type of labor regime as “hegemonic,” or a situation of “hegemony,” to emphasize the acquiescence of commodity-producing farmers and workers to the demands of the labor process for the commodities

Figure 1.2 Labor regime ideal types

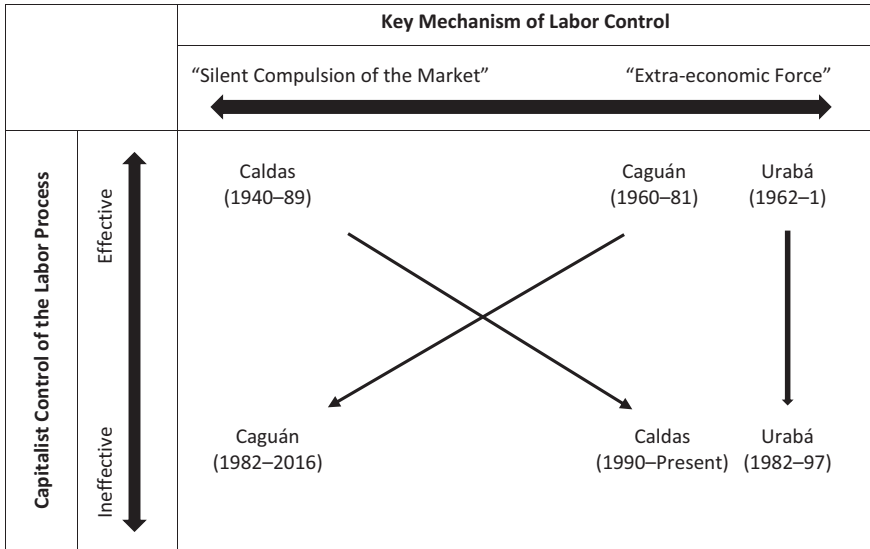
		Key Mechanism of Labor Control	
		“Silent compulsion of economic relations”	“Extra-economic force”
Capitalist Control of Labor Process	Effective	1. “Hegemony”	2. “Despotism”
	Ineffective	3. “Counter-Hegemony”	4. “Crisis of Control”

produced. The labor regime in box (2) is the ideal-typical opposite. Here we see a situation in which state and/or parastate actors employ violent forms of labor repression, which are often effective in establishing capitalist control over the labor process. I call this ideal type of labor regime “coercive domination,” or simply, “despotism.”

Boxes (3) and (4) differ from boxes (1) and (2) in that they indicate a situation in which capitalists have lost their capacity to control the conditions of commodity production that constitute the labor process. Box (3) refers to a situation in which the local population establishes an economic livelihood, or class reproduction strategy, that operates outside of the effective regulatory control of the state. Under these conditions, levels of violent labor repression would be low, given the fact that the state does not exercise significant influence over the local population. I call this ideal type “counter-hegemony” to highlight the ability of the local population to establish an alternative political economy. Finally, box (4) consists of a situation in which the local population contests its articulation into the labor regime and vies for control over the labor process or the fruits of commodity production, despite efforts by capital and the state to deploy violence to retain control over their labor. I call this ideal type, a “crisis of control.”

Adopting this broadened ideal-typical conceptual framework clarifies the empirical patterning of Colombia’s coffee, banana, and cattle-turned-coca labor regimes across time and space (depicted in Figure 1.3). During the era of US hegemony, capitalists maintained control of producers across the three labor regimes. Yet, the primary mechanisms of labor control varied, with hegemony predominating in Viejo Caldas and despotism predominating in Urabá and the Caguán region of Caquetá. Each of these regimes gave way to crises of labor control as US hegemony began to unravel in the 1980s and 1990s. Caldas and Urabá transformed into regimes marked by waves of labor unrest while the Caguán developed into a counter-hegemonic regime under the protection of the FARC guerrillas.

Figure 1.3 Local labor regime trajectories over time and space



Rethinking Peripheral Proletarianization as Development in the Twenty-First Century

Broadening the labor regimes framework beyond its neo-Gramscian consent-coercion dichotomy not only cautions against overdeterministic and unidimensional explanations of the causes of hegemony, despotism, crisis, and counter-hegemony. It also refocuses attention on the proximate causes of labor regime stability and crisis that have arisen in rural Colombia across broad historical periods of time. Put simply, it requires an approach that puts extra-market coercion and endemic crises of effective labor control, and the hegemonic institutions created to contain these dynamics, at the center of the analysis.

To this end, I utilize a world historical sociological approach that is rooted in three specific insights of Giovanni Arrighi in his analyses of capitalist development over the *longue durée*.²⁴ The first comes out of Arrighi’s earliest work

²⁴ Arrighi’s earliest work dates back to the 1960s when he analyzed labor market formation, development and underdevelopment in Southern Rhodesia. In the 1970s, Arrighi moved back to his native Italy, where he led a team of researchers who studied the varied the varied processes of market, class and state formation that arose in rural Calabria, a peripheral region of southern Italy. By the 1980s, Arrighi moved once again, this time to Binghamton University where he became a leading figure of

analyzing labor and development dynamics in Rhodesia in the 1960s, but was also later revisited at the end of his career in *Adam Smith in Beijing* (2009) and a coauthored article, “Accumulation by Dispossession and its Limits” (Arrighi et al. 2010). This is the idea that fully proletarianized labor regimes are both a heavy burden to developmental states and an obstacle to capitalist profitability. In contrast to Marxists of the left and modernization theorists on the right, both of whom viewed proletarianization as synonymous with capitalist development, Arrighi argues that populations that have been dispossessed from the means of subsistence and transformed into wage-dependent workers are prone to class conflict, invariably struggling for higher wages and redistributive social compacts that are an expensive drag on capitalist profits and a fetter on their market competitiveness. More useful to the productivity imperatives of capital are semi-proletarianized workers who subsidize their reproduction costs by retaining control of land and other assets, and are therefore amenable to processes of super-exploitation that give capital a competitive edge in the global market. Access to the means of subsistence, in turn, grants workers greater control over the conditions of their entrance into labor markets and therefore greater structural power vis-à-vis capital.

This focus on the critical role of proletarianization processes that have shaped rural Colombia’s development trajectories is especially important in light of a second set of insights Arrighi later developed on the spatial dynamics of global commodity chains. In the 1980s, Arrighi agreed with Immanuel Wallerstein’s assertion that the capitalist world-system was comprised of global commodity chains that linked the labor processes of core regions to those of peripheral regions. However, Arrighi and his coauthor, Jessica Drangel (1986), argued that core and peripheral positions within a commodity chain were not determined by differences in production activities or even by processes of unequal exchange. Rather, drawing from Schumpeterian insights into the nature of market competition and innovation, Arrighi argued that global disparities between core and peripheral locations under world capitalism are defined by the degree to which a nodal location in a given chain is marked by monopoly or competitiveness. Core locations are defined by capital’s ability to avoid market competition and accumulate “core-like profits” that can be reinvested in innovative and promising new products while externalizing competitive pressures onto peripheral chain actors.

world-systems analysis, a process that culminated in the 1990s and 2000s in his trilogy on world hegemonic transitions: *The Long Twentieth Century* (1994), *Chaos and Governance in the Modern World-System* with Beverly Silver (1999), and *Adam Smith in Beijing* (2009).

Peripheral locations, in turn, are defined by their market competitiveness and therefore their continual struggle to obtain and maintain the smaller “peripheral profits” made available to them in the market.

When situating labor regimes within the core–periphery position of this Arrighian understanding of commodity chains, we see that contradictions of full-proletarianization are intensified when commodity production exists in the periphery of the chain rather than at its core. In the latter, capitalists can use their monopoly profits to reinvest in both profitability and legitimacy concerns. Core-like wealth is reinvested in the expanded accumulation of capital through more efficient production techniques and the development of new and innovative production lines. And it is also redistributed back down to workers through expensive social compacts that purchase their consent through high wages, safe working conditions, and internal labor markets, as well as through social insurance, welfare, and other social protections provided by respective states that partially decommodify their social reproduction. In contrast, peripheral locations cannot afford to redistribute their scant profits back into protective social compacts that subsidize workers’ social reproduction and cultivate worker consent. Instead, labor processes and class relations become highly unstable, subject to class conflict and social unrest that can undermine capitalist production altogether.²⁵

This insight was later incorporated into the intellectual corpus of world-systems analysis. In his later writings, for example, Wallerstein (1995, 2004) himself drew upon these insights in his explanation of the recurrent tendencies of the world market to make and remake exclusive boundaries around which segments of the world’s population are included in protective social compacts and which are systematically excluded. He refers this boundary-drawing process as the “systems-level problem.” That is, when looking at the composition of social compacts from a world-systemic perspective, we see that expensive social compacts that redistribute some of the total wealth created can only be provided to a relatively small segment of the world’s working population without fundamentally threatening the profitability of the system as a whole. As Wallerstein (1995:25) described with reference to the social compacts established during the postwar Fordist-developmental decades, “One could cut in several-hundred-million western workers and still make the system profitable. But if one cut in several billion Third World workers, there would be nothing left for further capital accumulation.”

²⁵ Silver and Slater (1999); Silver (2003).

Beverly Silver (2003) sharpened these conceptual insights in her analysis of world-systemic patterns of labor unrest and class de/formation. Poignantly, she writes historical capitalism is characterized by a “fundamental contradiction,” wherein,

on the one hand, the expansion of capitalist production tends to strengthen labor and, therefore, brings capital (and states) recurrently face to face with strong labor movements. The concessions made to bring labor movements under control, in turn, tend to drive the system toward crisis of profitability. On the other hand, efforts by capital (and states) to restore profits invariably involve breaking established social compacts and intensifying the commodification of labor, thereby producing crises of legitimacy and backlash resistance.

(Silver 2003:20)

Drawing on this analytic thread, I describe the socially destabilizing convergence of processes of proletarianization and peripheralization as *peripheral proletarianization*, a situation in which the structural concerns of capitalist profitability contradict sharply with their legitimacy concerns for control over the labor process. I argue that this structural contradiction is more easily redressed for capitalists in core nodal locations, who (when confronted by demands from workers from below) can afford to reinvest in expensive social compacts that can cultivate the consent of fully proletarianized workers without threatening their market position and continued profitability. Peripheral capitalists, in contrast, must find ways to repress these demands without losing control of the labor process or losing their legitimacy vis-à-vis other market actors, including support from their respective states as well as consumers of their products, importing countries, and other market actors. In short, capitalists in the core have a greater probability of cultivating hegemonic labor regimes while peripheral capitalists are more likely to cultivate regimes that are marked by crises of labor control and repression.

If the first two Arrighian insights help contextualize Colombia’s labor regimes in capitalist space, the third contextualizes them in capitalist time. Giovanni Arrighi’s (1994, 2009; Arrighi and Silver 1999) later writings on world hegemonic transitions, in turn, helps situate local labor regimes temporally within the arc of rising and falling world hegemonies. Following Arrighi, we see that the world market is much more precarious and dynamic an institution than typically understood. Indeed, for the silent compulsions of the world market to function, market practices must be sustained by geopolitical institutions that govern market norms and protect enterprises and capitalist profits from threats from below. Periods of world hegemony help stabilize the workings of the world market by generating

hegemonic geopolitical alliances connecting core and peripheral actors who share an interest in the expansion of specific markets but that ultimately sustain the primacy of the world hegemon at the commanding heights of the world economy. Periods of world hegemony, however, unravel when these geopolitical alliances and the hegemonic institutions that they generate fail to deliver on their promises, be they from peripheral actors seeking to upgrade to core niches in world markets or from peripheral actors who have been denied access to such opportunities for market growth and development.

Picking up on Arrighi's writings on world hegemonic transitions, Beverly Silver and Eric Slater (1999) make the explicit link between periods of world hegemony and the establishment of hegemonic social compacts. In their sweeping world historical analysis of the social origins of world hegemonomies from the Dutch to the British to the American, they find a broad pattern of recurrence in that periods of world hegemonic stability are associated with the establishment of hegemonic social compacts that incorporate subaltern groups and classes as junior partners, while periods of hegemonic unraveling are associated with the breakdown of these compacts. Silver (2003) later developed this argument even further, arguing that the viability of these hegemonic pacts differs across each world hegemonic period, with more robust and inclusive social compacts created in core regions and more fragile and less inclusive pacts created in peripheral regions. This book picks up on this line of inquiry, focusing on the extent to which world hegemonic transitions impact the local labor regime dynamics of distinct global commodities.

Overall, the world historical perspective sheds light on the crisis tendencies of labor regimes that arise at the margins of world capitalism and the need to develop a broader conceptual toolkit to explain the social conditions under which labor control strategies break down, give way to extra-institutional violence, or the establishment of alternative economic livelihoods outside of the effective control of states and capital. In doing so, this book draws attention to one critical social condition driving labor regime crises: the toxic convergence of processes of proletarianization with conditions of market peripheralization, or peripheral proletarianization.

Far from assuming processes of proletarianization and peripheralization as *a priori* dynamics of labor regimes, this book draws attention to the specific sets of local, national, and global forces and actors driving processes of peripheral proletarianization as well as the struggles by workers, farmers, and even capitalist organizations and state agencies to avert the experiences of peripheral proletarianization. As we shall see, a key driver of proletarianization has been the Colombian state, which has engaged in efforts to transform the country's rural regions into sites of global commodity production through practices that have dispossessed rural inhabitants from the land and created pools of surplus labor to be exploited by local capital.

This state developmentalist strategy of promoting capitalist systems of production that rely upon proletarianized labor is a social gamble. In itself, these state development practices merely articulate local labor regimes into highly peripheralized niches of the global market, thus exacerbating the social contradictions of peripheral proletarianization and contributing to the forms of endemic social crises that have pockmarked rural Colombia for decades. Only when these state developmentalist practices on the ground have been supplemented by a simultaneous set of developmentalist state actions to geopolitically reconstruct the core–periphery dynamics of the global market and upgrade to more profitable market niches have they been successful in averting situations of peripheral proletarianization. However, as this book demonstrates, the ability for Colombian labor regime actors to effectively engage in developmentalist market politics and upgrade to core-like niches in global commodity markets has dwindled over the past decades due to world-systemic processes associated with the decline of US world hegemony. As processes of market peripheralization have intensified and spread across the global economy, the opportunities for economic and social upgrading have diminished, leaving the world's workers in an increasingly precarious predicament.

Analyzing Colombia's labor regimes world historically thus illuminates how the rise of US world hegemony in the mid-twentieth century expanded and stabilized the institutional workings of global markets. This market expansionary process, in turn, fostered both the *movement into* the market from emerging sites of global commodity production as well as the *movement up* the value chains of those markets to avert the negative consequences of peripheralization. However, by the turn of the twenty-first century, the United States has largely rolled back its market safeguards in ways that have re-peripheralized Colombia's niches in the global market. The contemporary crises of labor control that have arisen at the margins of the market in rural Colombia have been spawned by the state's continued efforts to retain market-dependent, proletarianized systems of global commodity production in a context of deepening peripheralization. As this book indicates, a first step out of this toxic developmental conundrum would be the formulation of new models of economic growth and development that seek not to de-peripheralize Colombia's market niches, but to de-proletarianize its systems of production and diminish worker reliance on income generated in the market to meet their subsistence livelihood needs. In other words, a first step would be to gamble not on development through the market, but development in the fortification of rural livelihoods outside the global circuits of capital.