

WORKERS, LABOR UNIONS,
AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS
IN LATIN AMERICA *

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- LABOR IN LATIN AMERICA.* By CHARLES BERGQUIST. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1986. Pp. 397. \$39.50 cloth, \$14.95 paper.)
- BLACK LABOR ON A WHITE CANAL: PANAMA, 1904-1981.* By MICHAEL L. CONNIFF. (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1985. Pp. 221. \$24.95.)
- INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS IN LATIN AMERICA.* Edited by EFREN CORDOVA. (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1984. Pp. 273. \$28.95.)
- HISTORIA DEL MOVIMIENTO OBRERO LATINOAMERICANO, Volume 2: NACIONALISMO Y COMUNISMO, 1918-1930.* By JULIO GODIO. (Caracas: Nueva Sociedad, 1983. Pp. 310.)
- HISTORIA DEL MOVIMIENTO OBRERO EN AMERICA LATINA.* Edited by PABLO GONZALEZ CASANOVA. (Mexico City: Siglo Veintiuno Editores, 1984. Pp. 1481 in 4 vols.)
- UNIONS AND POLITICS IN MEXICO: THE CASE OF THE MEXICAN AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY.* By IAN ROXBOROUGH. (Cambridge, London, and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984. Pp. 207. \$39.50.)

A positive trend has emerged in the study of the labor history and industrial relations of Latin America during the past decade. Once concentrated almost exclusively on the ideologies of working-class groups and their formal relations with political parties, research in the field has become increasingly varied and sophisticated. In most cases, it now seeks to analyze the relations between the economic experience of the working class and the nature of labor unionism. By focusing attention on what workers do rather than on the ideological posturing of their leaders, recent scholarly work is largely revising many of the simplistic and frequently self-serving views put forward by a previous generation of historians. Researchers are digging deeper into everyday working-class experience and building a firmer basis for their interpre-

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tations of political trends at the national level. Close attention is being paid to such issues as the recruitment and organization of labor, wages, working conditions, education, and mobility in society. Labor unions are beginning to be viewed as serving economic and social purposes as well as political ends. Scholars are no longer treating strikes as acts of rebellion but as normal features of industrial relations.

The books under review here, all published between 1983 and 1986, represent both the old and new tendencies in Latin American labor studies. Some are based on fresh, often painstaking research involving many primary sources, while others constitute hardly more than rambling essays on labor history that contribute little to understanding of the material. All deal with workers in Latin America during the twentieth century, but they diverge in purpose, focus, and methodology. One (González Casanova) is a general labor history of the entire region and another (Godio), a study of left-wing labor politics from an international point of view. The Roxborough volume is both country- and industry-specific. Bergquist's study focuses on export-sector workers in four countries, while Conniff's case study examines the unique situation of the West Indians who dug an American canal in Panama. The Córdova book, commissioned by the International Labour Office, provides a comprehensive overview of industrial relations in the region.

The work that most faithfully represents the slowly dying tradition of Latin American labor history as an extension of leftist politics is the four-volume series entitled *Historia del movimiento obrero en América Latina*, edited by Pablo González Casanova. Each Latin American country is treated by a different author, with most essays covering the history of organized labor from the middle or late nineteenth century to the 1970s. The length of the essays varies greatly, from twenty-five to nearly one hundred pages.

In his two-page introduction to the series, González Casanova establishes a viewpoint shared by nearly all the essayists: that organized labor is or should be permanently dedicated to the cause of social revolution, bemoaning any deviation from this course of action, especially those that lead to workers getting sidetracked by "concessions" (better wages, work conditions, and similar benefits) from employers or the state. Workers are therefore portrayed as potential or active social revolutionaries and labor unions, as institutions of some utility when properly linked with the right political groups (preferably Communist parties). As a consequence, most of the essays present a totally institutional account of working-class history, reciting a tedious litany of labor confederations, political parties, strikes, and elections but revealing little about industrial relations or the influence of economic factors on unionization, and little about workers themselves. Several, such as

Aleida Plasencia's contribution on Cuba and Alejandro Witker's essay on Chile, would warm the heart of any Stalinist. Others are less strident in tone.

The level of scholarship in most of the essays is low. While they provide a quick reference to the names and dates related to working-class movements and parties, especially in the less-studied cases like Central America, Paraguay, and the Caribbean, almost all are based on limited secondary sources and offer little help with bibliography. Had the chapters been assigned to scholars more familiar with the literature on their countries of interest and been written from an interpretive viewpoint, the González Casanova volumes would have been more useful.

Julio Godio's *Historia del movimiento obrero latinoamericano*, Volume 2: *Nacionalismo y comunismo, 1918–1930* resembles the contributions to the González Casanova series in its treatment of workers and unions. A more accurate title would have been "The History of Marxist Thought in Latin America, 1918–1930." Only sixty-two of the book's three hundred pages are dedicated to workers and unions. The rest deal with either ideological trends on the Marxist left in some Latin American countries or early efforts at incorporating Latin American unions into international labor organizations, especially the Red International of Labor Unions. Godio's treatment of the ideological development of Latin American Communism, centered mainly on the debates between Raúl Haya de la Torre and Communists Julio Antonio Mella, José Carlos Mariátegui, and Vittorio Codovilla, is useful but hardly provides the key to understanding the history of labor during the period. Godio makes no serious mention of the growth of labor unions in the region after 1918, the great strike wave between 1918 and 1921, the nature of unionization and its relationship to the local economies, the economic and political role of unions, or their success or failure in meeting objectives. The decline of the anarcho-syndicalist federations in Argentina, Brazil, and Cuba is barely mentioned, let alone explained, nor is the case of Chile's influential anarcho-syndicalist movement discussed. Godio examines the history of the relatively obscure Argentine Communist party but ignores the issue of unionization. Despite the book's scope, Godio does not compare developments in the different countries and offers few conclusions on any points. The notes and bibliography suggest that his research was limited almost exclusively to secondary sources and appears to have neglected most of the major studies related to working-class history in Latin America written after 1970.

Charles Bergquist's *Labor in Latin America: Comparative Essays on Chile, Argentina, Venezuela, and Colombia* may well be the most ambitious and provocative study of workers in the region to have yet appeared in print. It postulates that labor is a crucial element in twentieth-century

Latin American history and establishes a framework for analyzing the role of workers in society on a comparative basis. For Bergquist, the central factor in explaining labor's historical influence is the experience of workers involved in producing or elaborating a key export during the boom years when that product dominated the national economy. The structural characteristics of each export industry comprise an important element in this equation. One of Bergquist's basic hypotheses is that in countries where foreign capital predominated in the central export industry and where no sustained growth took place in the national economy, the left came to dominate the labor movement based on its ability to establish a "potential for broad, anti-imperialist alliances within the whole society" (p. 12). Where ownership of the export industry was predominantly domestic, Bergquist claims, anti-imperialist ideology was less likely to prosper and labor unions became more conservative.

To prove his hypothesis that the experience of export workers determines the overall development of labor movements and national politics in Latin America, Bergquist offers the cases of nitrate workers in Chile, meat-packers in Argentina, petroleum workers in Venezuela, and small-scale coffee planters in Colombia. Chile and Argentina provide the greatest contrast, he contends, with a Marxist-led labor movement emerging in the former and labor being captured by authoritarian, corporatist Peronism in the latter. Venezuela and Colombia are less extreme examples of the same phenomenon. The foreign-controlled oil industry in Venezuela spawned a labor movement that was initially leftist and only later moved into the camp of democratic reformism. In Colombia early attempts by the Communists to organize small-scale coffee producers failed completely, and the Colombian labor movement came under the influence of the traditional oligarchic parties instead.

Each of the four essays contains a detailed description of the growth of the export sector and its primary product, the formation and organization of the work force, conditions on the job, salient social factors that influenced workers' behavior, and the growth of labor unions. Bergquist's concern for these matters places him squarely on the side of the "new social historians," and his analytical framework affords the reader the rare luxury of examining labor in Latin America on both country-specific and comparative bases. To support his claims, Bergquist musters evidence culled from an impressive variety of primary and secondary sources. Strong scholarship, a vivid style of writing, and the far-reaching scope of the author's hypothesis make *Labor in Latin America* required reading for students of the region.

The considerable strengths of the book notwithstanding, Bergquist's argument for the predominance of export workers is wholly con-

vincing only in the case of Venezuela. In this instance, his description of the early organization of petroleum workers by the Communists and the complicated process by which the liberal reformers of *Acción Democrática* won over the allegiance of labor is most persuasive. In this essay, Bergquist demonstrates clearly that the organizational, political, and economic struggles of oil workers played a crucial role in shaping the nature of industrial relations and labor unionism in Venezuela.

While Bergquist criticizes the tendency of labor historians to consider industrial workers apart from rural laborers as a “clumsy dichotomy” (p. 8), his essay on Colombia begs the question of why any position other than a conservative one could have been expected of small coffee growers. Their desperate struggle for land, which he vividly portrays, took place over a wide area and a long period of time. Although worrisome to elites, this process appears never to have threatened the vital flow of coffee from farms to ports. On the contrary, coffee workers were fighting for the right to produce and sell more as landed farmers. As Bergquist points out, attempts at forming a national organization of coffee workers or farmers never got off the ground, and widespread strikes were rare. It is hardly unusual that coffee workers should reject Communist overtures, given their goal of obtaining land and the prospect of achieving it. The condition of these worker-farmers and their “industry” therefore seems so basically different from those of nitrate workers, meat-packers, and oil workers, as to be almost incomparable. Because the period of “insurgence” in the coffee zone corresponded to that of major strikes in other sectors of the economy, it is hard to separate their effect on elitist reformers in the Liberal party, and the author does not attempt to do so. Bergquist provides little information on the inroads made by revolutionary parties of the left or by unions in other sectors, leaving considerable doubt as to their importance in the national labor picture and vis-à-vis coffee growers.

The essay on Argentina fails to demonstrate a comparable role for meat-packers in shaping the nature of the labor movement as petroleum workers did in Venezuela, despite situations described as somewhat similar: nationalistic governments using state resources to win control over labor from leftists. In both examples, the state was willing and able to “buy off” labor precisely because of huge reserves generated by the export economy. This scenario contrasts sharply with what happened in Chile. One gets the impression from reading Bergquist’s account of the Peronist takeover of the meat-packers’ unions in the mid-1940s that this process occurred in most other industrial sectors at about the same time, the only major difference being the symbolic and somewhat strategic importance of meat workers. His claim that the Communist-led resurgence within the Argentine labor movement dur-

ing the 1930s eventually provoked a corporatist reaction from Perón after 1943 seems plausible, but this development appears not to have been limited to meat workers.

The nature of the export economy in Argentina, more than the role of meat workers, may explain developments in Argentine labor history during the long period of export-led growth. During the boom years from 1892 to 1918, agricultural and livestock exports created an economy that demanded large amounts of foreign labor and offered sufficient real wages to attract it. Labor's inability to reorganize after the failure and repression of the strikes between 1918 and 1921 was in part due to the economic prosperity of Argentina during the 1920s. Universal manhood suffrage also provided an escape valve for the system. The comparative strength of the Argentine export economy made weathering the 1930 crisis much easier than in Chile and limited the potential of left-wing ideologies for taking hold in the labor movement.

The chapter on Chile most seriously undermines Bergquist's theory of the predominance of export workers. He is correct in claiming that the nature of the nitrate economy had much to do with radicalizing the Chilean working class, which led to the subsequent destruction of the parliamentary system in 1924 and the growth of Marxist parties in the 1930s. But Bergquist's essay fails to establish the linkage that he claims between the importance of the nitrate industry in the Chilean economy and the role of nitrate workers in shaping the Chilean labor movement. On the contrary, strong evidence indicates that nitrate workers played a relatively minor role in this process.

Bergquist lists four crucial factors that he claims set apart labor in the nitrate fields and eventually influenced nitrate workers to adopt what he describes as an anticapitalist, socialist outlook: ownership of production, location of the industry, work conditions, and the nature of the work process. His description of the nitrate industry points out the supposed role of each factor in forming an alienated, "anti-imperialist" work force. Among these factors were wages, housing, education, unemployment, and health. Like the mostly Marxist historians before him who studied Chilean labor from a political-ideological point of view, Bergquist is impressed by the fact that the Partido Obrero Socialista (the forerunner of the Chilean Communist party) was founded and based in the North and that the Communists also received substantial support from workers in the Great North. Because the Communist and Socialist parties of the 1930s led the revitalized labor movement, it is therefore assumed by tracing backwards that their Marxist predecessors, and hence the nitrate workers, were the motor of the Chilean labor movement.

As mentioned earlier, little evidence is available to support this contention. Lawrence Stickell's dissertation on labor in the nitrate

fields, by far the most sophisticated study done on the topic, runs counter to many of Bergquist's arguments on the conditions that supposedly drove nitrate workers to become Marxists.¹ While Bergquist cites Stickell on some points, he ignores other findings: that Chilean capital in nitrates overtook British investments as early as 1912, that real wages in the nitrate fields were the highest in Chile and probably allowed many workers to rise to middle-class status once they left the zone, that housing was free and no worse than workers' dwellings elsewhere, that (except in the direst moments of crisis in the industry) unemployment in the North was lower than elsewhere, that the markup on basic goods in company stores in the nitrate region was far lower than in port cities of the North or urban areas of the center-south, and that the level of worker savings was substantial enough to embarrass union organizers claiming rough times for their constituents.² Neither Stickell nor anyone else portrays labor in the nitrate camps as being better organized, more combative, or more radicalized. In fact, no careful study exists of labor unions in the nitrate zone or the northern ports for the 1890–1930 period, forcing Bergquist to cite nothing at all or rely heavily on such sources as the memoirs of Communist leader *Eliás Laferte*, which were written forty years after the fact. The evidence available shows nitrate workers to have been less strike-prone than their peers elsewhere, isolated, and unwilling to engage in interindustry strikes.³ The major nitrate strikes came only at times of absolute crisis, when production was massively curtailed, as in 1907, 1921, and 1925. During most other periods, labor in the nitrate zone rarely asserted itself.

Yet Bergquist's observation that labor was mobilized and radicalized during the period of the nitrate boom is true. Nitrate workers participated to a limited degree in this process and stimulated it. So did Marxist propagandists, like *Recabarren*. But more important contributions were made by the anarchist transport workers and socialists of the Northern ports, the anarcho-syndicalists and reformists who organized labor on a large scale in the central cities, and the anarchist, and later Communist-led, coal miners of the *Concepción* region. The effect of this mobilization on elite politics and Chilean society was patently destabilizing. The Chilean nitrate economy, which fomented industrialization, commerce, and better transportation, also brought rampant inflation, periods of great unemployment, and low wages for most workers. The anticapitalist mentality of the Chilean working class, well on its way to being firmly rooted by 1925, was hardly the monopoly product of socialism and even less that of nitrate workers.

Bergquist's insistence on the importance of the rise of "anti-imperialist" sentiment as a result of foreign participation in the Chilean and other economies appears overstated. Some 44 percent of all manufac-

turing establishments in Chile were owned by foreigners in 1914, as well as major utilities, important urban transport companies, shipping lines, and a large percentage of the pawn shops and stores where workers had an important economic stake.⁴ Contact with these establishments meant that many Chilean workers were directly involved daily with “foreign capital,” but the “anti-imperialist” theme was not the factor before 1925 that it came to be later, when the visibility of American copper companies became extraordinarily high and public sentiment against them was whipped up by the Communists and Socialists. No correlation whatsoever exists before 1925 between foreign ownership of an industry and the propensity of workers to strike.⁵

The length of my comments reflects the provocative nature of Bergquist’s book. *Labor in Latin America* is without doubt one of the most significant studies of Latin American labor history to appear in many years. It will stimulate further comparative thinking on regional and interregional bases and should force a thorough reevaluation of the political impact of organized labor in twentieth-century Latin America.

No book reviewed here more accurately reflects the positive trend toward more rigorous research and the revision of orthodox views on Latin American labor than Ian Roxborough’s splendid study, *Unions and Politics in Mexico: The Case of the Mexican Automobile Industry*. Based on a careful examination of industrial relations in the industry from the late 1960s to 1980 and the comparative achievements of labor unions in nine different plants, the work provides persuasive arguments for reconsidering the common belief that Mexican workers are thoroughly controlled and manipulated by the state. The book is also a model of its kind. Roxborough combines elements of labor history, comparative politics, industrial relations research, and social statistics to create a well-rounded case study that is highly pertinent to larger issues. So carefully researched is *Unions and Politics in Mexico* that it appears to be written from an insider’s point of view, although it lacks the built-in biases so common in the field of Latin American labor.

Roxborough begins by outlining what he calls the “standard account” of Mexican labor history that portrays the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI) as having gradually dominated organized labor and assimilated it into a corporatist system under PRI control. The government, as the “standard account” goes, maintains its influence over labor by manipulating “official” unions and labor confederations and eliminating independent competition. Once totally incorporated into the PRI’s system, organized labor is called upon to make sacrifices to further government economic goals. According to this orthodox history, similar developments occurred with labor in Argentina and Brazil under the corporatist-populist regimes of Perón and Vargas, much to the detriment of workers’ economic and political well-being.

Given the above interpretation, one would expect modern industrial relations in Mexico to be a continuing saga of state control of workers by means of co-opted, often corrupt union officials, labor inspectors, and courts. Not so, Roxborough argues. Union independence is relatively widespread, and the state bureaucracy is unable to enforce its will with the ease often attributed to it. He postulates instead that the proliferation of unions independent of the government-controlled Confederación de Trabajadores de México (CTM) during the 1970s has resulted in a brand of labor "militancy" that wins greater economic benefits for workers and weakens the PRI's potential for manipulating organized labor. "Militant unions," Roxborough contends, will be more strike-prone, more democratic, more effective as bargaining agents for workers, and more successful in establishing job control.

As proof, Roxborough offers the case of automobile workers, whom he claims are not atypical of other industrial and unionized workers in Mexico. Automobile workers in this study belong to nine unions in nine different plants in four states and the Distrito Federal. True to his hypothesis, Roxborough found the three independent unions of his sample to be "strike-prone" during the period studied, but two CTM-affiliated unions also fit this description. These two official unions, aside from their willingness to strike, resembled the three independent unions in many other important ways, leading Roxborough to conclude that being strike-prone more accurately indicates union militancy than being independent rather than official.

Consulting a wide variety of sources that included union contracts, official documents, and interviews with management and workers, Roxborough conducted a thorough study of the variables related to his hypothesis on militant union behavior and the result of successful union activity. To his credit, he spelled out his methodology at every step, questioning the value of sources and data and qualifying his findings whenever he found them misleading. The result of this rigorous survey affirms his basic conclusion that militant unions "deliver the goods" to members appreciably more often than official, or better put, nonmilitant unions. In a perceptive chapter entitled "Unions and Potential Stability in Mexico," Roxborough uses these findings to comment on the future of Mexico's corporatist system. His major conclusion is a logical one, that the "shop-floor power" demonstrated by the independent or militant unions, which leads to greater worker control and benefits, could be potentially destabilizing to the regime, especially during periods when a policy of wage controls is being imposed.

While at first glance, using a case study of less than one hundred thousand workers in one industry to predict the future of the Mexican political system may seem inappropriate, the quality of Roxborough's research and his portrayal of militant autoworkers as pragmatists out to

better their economic lot makes the argument far more plausible. It is also a refreshing change to learn that not all Latin American workers are innate social revolutionaries, many being preoccupied instead with more control over their work and a larger paycheck.

Roxborough's conclusions regarding the emergence of an independent trade-union movement in Mexico fit into a more general pattern, according to the study entitled *Industrial Relations in Latin America*, edited by Efrén Córdova of the International Labour Office (ILO). This important survey of industrial relations in all Latin American countries postulates that many of the traditional views on labor in the region are no longer correct (if they ever were) and that major changes are taking place.

According to Córdova, "parallel systems" of labor relations are emerging in many countries, the first established by law and the second being a de facto system based on actual practice. The former usually consists of a complex body of labor legislation and the assumed participation of a labor office bureaucracy in regulating union affairs and industrial relations. Such legislation is often so cumbersome that it is unevenly enforced and in most cases reflects a paternalistic desire on the part of the state to control labor and avoid industrial conflict. The parallel practical systems, Córdova claims, are based more on reality and offer both workers and employers greater autonomy in settling disputes through collective bargaining. He perceives important trends emerging in the region toward voluntary settlement of industrial disputes with less state intervention, a consequent rise in the practice of conciliation as a means of settlement, and notable growth in agricultural unionism. Like Roxborough, Córdova assumes that the current growth in the practice of collective bargaining poses a threat to the ability of governments in the region to carry out austerity programs and capital accumulation by legislating wage controls.

Industrial Relations in Latin America is divided into three parts and thirteen chapters that summarize recent trends in a number of key areas, including workers' and employers' organizations, the role of state labor departments, collective bargaining, and labor disputes and their settlement. From these readings, a picture emerges of widely divergent levels of unionization and evolution of industrial relations in the region but a general trend toward greater sophistication. Relatively little attention is paid to labor union politics, although the high degree of politicization of workers is noted and explained (correctly, many would believe) as the result of an overabundance of restrictive labor legislation. Perhaps reflecting its ILO sponsorship, *Industrial Relations in Latin America* does not discuss the many illegal labor organizations that have appeared in the region over time. These entities in part embody the "parallel systems" emerging in so many Latin American countries

as a result of traditional politicization of labor as well as strict legal limitations placed on workers by the state.

The Córdova study implies that in democratic or semidemocratic situations, especially those of greater stability such as Mexico and Venezuela, industrial relations become more dynamic and sophisticated, with workers exercising greater autonomy. Readers familiar with the historiography of Latin American labor, dominated as it is by studies written from political and ideological viewpoints, may wonder if Córdova and his colleagues are talking about the same countries. This viewpoint is one of the main reasons for reading the book, which paints a picture of labor and industrial relations seldom presented elsewhere. Like the Roxborough study, it provides a needed antidote to the often simplistic and inaccurate accounts of modern industrial relations in Latin America as a war between workers who are actual or potential social revolutionaries and an alliance of employers and the state.

Michael Conniff's *Black Labor on a White Canal* tells the unique story of the mainly black West Indian laborers who dug the Panama Canal, then stayed on as Canal employees or took other jobs outside the Canal Zone or left Panama altogether. Because of the nature of its subject, the work is at once a labor history, a chronicle of race relations, a study of Panamanian domestic politics, and an account of a key chapter in U.S. relations with Latin America. To Conniff's credit, he has integrated all of these elements into a cohesive and informative piece of scholarship.

Much of what is contained in *Black Labor* is painful reading for North Americans. Conniff portrays what he calls the "third-country system" of labor relations in the Canal Zone as having been based on racism and having led to gross injustices. Black workers recruited by the hundreds of thousands in Jamaica, Barbados, and Martinique were brought to the isthmus to perform the back-breaking and often dangerous manual labor required to construct the canal and the locks. Early on, these workers were relegated to the lower part of what was to become a two-tiered pay scale based almost entirely on race. Ironically termed the "gold" and "silver" rolls, the two pay scales formed the basis for segregating black workers in jobs performed, upward mobility, housing, schooling, and a host of privileges. Conniff is quick to rectify the frequently held belief that this tropical version of Jim Crow was the handiwork of American Southerners, showing instead that it was implemented mostly by Northerners, many of them military or civilian government employees. According to Conniff, this Anglo-Saxon brand of racism was new to Panama but nonetheless infected local society to the point that it stimulated a wave of antiblack sentiment among Panamanians. Improvements in race relations in the United States did not necessarily lead to similar advances in the Canal Zone, although the

West Indian community, as it became Panamanian in customs and nationality, eventually carved out a cultural and political niche for itself. By the time the 1977 Panama Canal Treaty was signed, the vast majority of these West Indians had become integrated into Panamanian society.

This absorbing and well-written account of labor and racial affairs will interest a wide variety of scholars. *Black Labor on a White Canal* is based on a careful and imaginative use of primary sources—all Conniff's major arguments are bolstered by impressive documentation. Government officials involved in Panamanian affairs would do well to read it.

Labor history and the study of industrial relations are still relatively new and underdeveloped fields in Latin America studies. Important gaps in research remain to be filled, such as works that are regionally and industrially oriented, investigations of working-class life and culture, and analyses of the socioeconomic role of labor unions. The traditional tendency of many scholars to view labor as a mere extension of leftist politics has by no means been overcome. The works reviewed here, however, demonstrate that the study of labor is becoming far more sophisticated and serious. The result of this trend will be a much fuller appreciation of labor's important role in the development of Latin American societies.

NOTES

1. Arthur Lawrence Stickell, "Migration and Mining: Labor in Northern Chile in the Nitrate Era, 1880–1930," Ph.D. diss., Indiana University, 1979.
2. For a comparison of wages and conditions in the North with those of Santiago, see Peter DeShazo, *Urban Workers and Labor Unions in Chile, 1902–1927* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1983), 84–85.
3. A recent study using strike statistics compiled by Chilean historian Jorge Barriá shows little strike activity occurring in the nitrate zone during the strike-prone years of 1918–1925. See Cristósono Pizarro, *La huelga obrera en Chile, 1890–1970* (Santiago: Ediciones Sur, 1986), 63.
4. DeShazo, *Urban Workers*, 48–49.
5. *Ibid.*, 49. Pizarro's *La huelga obrera* counts nearly as many strikes in the coal industry, where capital was almost entirely national, as in the nitrate camps between 1918 and 1925 (p. 63).