

flag that Shaffer talks about, could only be exercised if they were capable of merging it with the collective identity of Puerto Rican resistance, which the island's inhabitants had forged for hundreds of years.

To recapitulate, this is a splendid book, elegantly edited, which positions Kirwin Shaffer as an essential reference in the history of the Spanish-speaking anarchist movement of the Caribbean. It also shows how, from the most local sphere, we can understand the true essence of a transnational project.

*Bieito Alonso Fernández*

Independent scholar  
Camiño Novo 15-D, Ricamonde, 36715 Tui, Spain  
E-mail: bieitoalonso@edu.xunta.es

DRINOT, PAULO. *The Allure of Labor. Workers, Race, and the Making of the Peruvian State*. Duke University Press, Durham [etc.] 2011. 310 pp. Ill. £67.00. (Paper: £16.00.) doi:10.1017/S002085901300059X

The Andean historiography is very rich in the study of ethnic and social movements, in the analysis of the making of identity, and in the role of subaltern actors in different historical periods. However, research that explicitly stresses the labour question is scarce, and Drinot's contribution is therefore all the more welcome and important.

The cover of Drinot's book synthesizes one of the main arguments of his research: that the worker is totally different from the Indian. For intellectuals, social reformers, and policymakers the worker personified the promising journey (from the factory) towards industrialization and national prosperity. The process would involve the transformation of backward indigenous labour (the "Indian problem") into civilized white/*mestizo* workers; this was the allure of labour.

"Racializing Labor" and "Constituting Labor", chapters 1 and 2 respectively of Drinot's book, are devoted to the new concept of the state's purpose – namely to protect and "improve" labour. Particularly from the 1930s onwards, the state played a key role in improving labour relations in Latin America. Many studies have stressed, too, the importance of labour in the making of the state in the region, and in many Latin American countries issues such as national identity, internal political disputes, and even the construction of judiciary structures and international relations cannot be completely understood without reference to the labour system. However, much less attention has been paid to the significance of race and gender in these connections between labour and the state. It is precisely in relation to this that one of Drinot's main contributions lies.

During the course of the making of Peru, a racially and gendered state emerged in which labour and workers were considered agents of progress while Indians were considered obstacles to it. The political constitution of the 1920s reflects these conceptions, establishing a special sphere or regime for workers and a different one for the indigenous population. For the latter, laws were promulgated aimed at protecting them and their communities; for workers, laws offered worker recognition, union recognition, and encouraged the negotiation of collective agreements with employers. Drinot reads this as part of the making of the racialized Peruvian nation-state based on the differentiation between Indians and workers.

Two important issues are open to further research. The first concerns the analysis of the creation of special offices and their duties and responsibilities as part of a complex plot at

a crossroads between the demands of civil society, including worker demands, the emergence of the “social question”, and the international dissemination of ideas, as Lobato and Suriano have recently pointed out.<sup>1</sup> The second concerns the historicization of the significance of the special regimes instituted for indigenous people during that period, in relation to the Mexican Constitution of 1917, the emergence of the “social question”, and the projects and realities of *mestizaje*.

The core of Drinot’s book consists of four policies, or “agencies”, of the state in the period 1920–1930: the creation of a special office (the Sección del Trabajo) to regulate labour conflicts through state arbitration and conciliation (chapter 3); the construction of workers’ neighbourhoods (chapter 4); the establishment of “popular restaurants” (chapter 5); and the creation of an insurance law (chapter 6). These projects are considered not only as agents of progress but also as weapons of the strong to civilize workers by housing them, feeding them (“popular restaurants”), and caring for their physical well-being. Drinot believes that these policies were intended not just to incorporate and coopt workers, as studies of populist regimes have already shown. These policies were always negotiated, and the results were shaped from above and below. Drinot uses Foucault’s concept of governmentality to go beyond the paradigm of cooption, incorporation, and bureaucratic rationalities. He believes that this analytical framework allows him to argue that the “labour state” was constituted by state policies but also by the aspirations of workers.

“Disciplining Labor”, Drinot’s third chapter, shows that labour agitation in the period 1917–1921, coupled with improvements in wages and working conditions, led employers to reject the rulings of the Sección del Trabajo because those rulings were too onerous and because they believed that worker demands were being influenced by external and political factors. The state was incapable of forcing employers to respect the collective agreements or the new labour laws, and workers lost faith in the Sección del Trabajo. The strike repression of the period aimed to disarticulate unionism, to promote a new form of unionism controlled through patronage, and to build a different image of labour and workers: as respectable patriots, not led by demagogues and union militants with nefarious intentions. Some years later, although most employers and political parties were not in favour of state mediation workers themselves continued to favour it, contributing to building a labour state from below. This perspective regarding state formation in Latin America relates to the approaches to everyday forms of state formation, to state-making as a long process and as a set of complex dynamic relations between the dominant and the popular (see Corrigan and Sayer, and Joseph and Nugent), and to the analysis of populism not only as a regime that manipulates people and trade unions.<sup>2</sup>

“Domesticating Labor” and “Feeding Labor” (chapters 4 and 5) are about housing and nourishing workers, policies regarded by Drinot as mechanisms to undermine the growth of the Left and of new parties such as the Peruvian Communist Party, the APRA (Alianza Popular Revolucionaria Americana), and the Unión Revolucionaria. Those weapons were more than that: they constituted not only a civilizational strategy, but also a civilization in itself.

During this period, the general strike of 1931 was a key factor in the political atmosphere and the policies that followed. As in Argentina and other countries, the state’s aim was to ensure harmony between capital and labour, to ensure a corporatist and modern

1. Mirta Lobato and Juan Suriano, *Pensar el Estado. Las instituciones laborales en la Argentina durante la primera mitad del siglo XIX* (forthcoming).

2. Gilbert M. Joseph and Daniel Nugent, *Everyday Forms of State Formation: Revolution and the Negotiation of Rule in Modern Mexico* (Durham, NC, 1994); Philip Corrigan and Derek Sayer, *The Great Arch: English State Formation As Cultural Revolution* (Oxford, 1985); Daniel James, *Resistance and Integration: Peronism and the Argentine Working Class, 1946–1976* (Cambridge, 1988).

state built in the name of the nation. Working-class housing had two aims: to provide workers with a sanitary environment by offering clean and hygienic homes, and to transform them from tenants into owners. This 1920s “fantasy” did not in fact take place, or if it did it was on an insignificant scale. Without an adequate place to sleep, the *mens sana in corpore sano* was not possible. The most important houses and neighbourhoods, the “*barrios obreros*”, were built in the 1930s, influenced by German social modernism and housing 4,859 people in 1,000 houses, equipped with swimming pools to improve vigour and health. Nevertheless, it was clear that the project to generate “human capital” would not solve the housing problem in Lima, a city in which the population grew from 223,807 in 1920 to 376,097 in 1931.

The state also ran *restaurantes populares*, because food and nutrition were considered civilized values. The elites and workers too associated Asian food, important during that period, with disease and low levels of nutrition. Presented as the antithesis of Chinese restaurants, the *restaurantes populares* were intended to overcome the problem of popular nutrition by providing workers with a place where they could eat well and at the same time learn table manners.

“Healing Labor” (chapter 6) is devoted to the social security system, presented by its proponents as a policy completely different from charity, as something to which indeed workers were entitled and the state had a duty to provide. The Seguro Social Obrero, introduced in 1936, covered some 275,000 workers by 1939. The system implied both inclusion and exclusion: some categories of workers, such as women, were ineligible to register and so were not covered. Social security depended on the concept and definition of a worker; in addition to women, white-collar workers and Indians were excluded, since these groups were not considered part of “industrial life”.

In his conclusions, Drinot emphasizes how race and racism structured Peruvian history and society. Racism was reflected and reinforced because indigenous people were not regarded as industrial workers. As the author reminds us, the Peruvian case does not seem so very different from that of its neighbours, Ecuador and Bolivia. Drinot encapsulates one of the main arguments of his book in the proposition that the indigenous people were considered incompatible with progress and that the policies that endeavoured to incorporate or include them involved circumventing or erasing their indigeneity, or the de-Indianization of Peru.

Other scholars have advanced similar arguments for the region. This assertion is present, for example, in the concept of “internal colonialism” as a civilizational project of the nation-state, a cornerstone of the analysis offered by the Bolivian scholar Silvia Rivera, and in the work of the US-resident Argentinian scholar Walter Mignolo and his concepts of colonial difference and coloniality. The phrase “coloniality of power”, coined by the Peruvian Aníbal Quijano, is part of this same trend.<sup>3</sup>

Few people could deny the importance of these frameworks, which can be used for several countries including Mexico, Guatemala, Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia. I, too, am

3. Silvia Rivera, *Oppressed but not Defeated: Peasant Struggles among the Aymara and Quechwa in Bolivia, 1900–1980* (Geneva, 1987) [translated from the Spanish: *Oprimidos pero no vencidos: Luchas del campesinado aymara y quechwa de Bolivia, 1900–1980* (La Paz, 1984)]; *idem*, *Violencia (re)encubiertas en Bolivia* (La Paz, 2012); Walter Mignolo, *Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges, and Border Thinking* (Princeton, NJ, 2000); Walter Mignolo and Madina V. Tlostanova, *Learning to Unlearn: Decolonial Reflections from Eurasia and the Americas* (Columbus, OH, 2012); Walter Mignolo, *The Darker Side of Western Modernity: Global Futures, Decolonial Options* (Durham, NC, 2011); Aníbal Quijano, *Colonialité du pouvoir et démocratie en Amérique latine* (Paris, 1994); Aníbal Quijano, “Coloniality of Power, Eurocentrism and Latin America”, *Nepantla: Views from South*, 1 (2000), pp. 533–580.

convinced of the deeply inherent and racist structure of these societies. Nevertheless, I believe that this drastic plot was interwoven with other threads: states and officers were not present throughout Peru (during the period covered by Drinot's study, the policies analysed in his book were implemented mainly in Lima and the major cities) and they did not always have unlimited power of coercion; patriarchal relationships linking different actors with personal bonds, and, in the case of Bolivia, the actions or inactions (also a form of action) of subaltern groups could also influence and change state policies.

Drinot's book on state and workers opens up rich paths that allow one to escape the narrow avenues of identity and ethnicity. As Marcel van der Linden has shown,<sup>4</sup> in Peru, as in other parts of the world, the concept of worker was highly restricted, and until very late in the twentieth century it was associated with a small group of white wage-earners. To avoid the narrow scenario created by the process of exclusion/inclusion inherent in the discourses associated with the development of capitalism, it would be interesting to analyse and reconstruct the categories of labour and workers and the incredible variety of systems of work that have been omitted. This would enrich our understanding of what is concealed by the homogenous term associated with "indigenous" or "Indian". It would be necessary as well to reconstruct the large space of work and labour between the Indian and non-Indian in a vast geography with different structures of land tenure, production, and relations with the market and the state.

Another important path open to research would be to differentiate various proposals and public policies towards the Indians, and their significance to them and to different actors. In the 1930s, for example, a separate system of justice was planned in Bolivia for the Indian population. For some contemporaries, this was to introduce again, as in the colonial period, a system of segregation; for others it was compensatory justice (rather like affirmative action); for some of the indigenous population, it was better to have separate courts.

Educational projects raised similar issues, and it is clear that not all those who were looking for change were necessarily anti-Indian. In countries with important Indian populations the two poles of state policies seemed to be the integration model (as it exists now in many European countries in relation to their immigrant populations) or the model of a differentiated society. Nevertheless, there was a range of intermediate possibilities.

Finally, it would be interesting in future research to place these stories in a broader context, because the worker/Indian dichotomy corresponds to the urban worker/rural peasant dichotomy frequently associated with discourses of civilization. One way to advance our understanding of this topic would be to analyse the "imagined" visions and yearned prospects shared by a large part of the population in Latin America, confronted – as they were – by the challenges of their day-to-day existence. Then, the top-down questions about "civilization and modernity" could be examined through a different lens. Certainly, in any analysis of identity and ethnicity the inclusion of labour, and the importance of seeing things through the lens of ethnicity, is promising territory for research in the Andean world, and Paulo Drinot has made an important contribution to that.

*Rossana Barragán Romano*

Latin American Desk, International Institute of Social History  
PO Box 2169, CD 1000 Amsterdam, The Netherlands  
E-mail: rba@iisg.nl

4. Marcel van der Linden, *Workers of the World: Essays Toward a Global Labor History* (Leiden [etc.], 2008).