

Labor and Dictatorship in Brazil: A Historiographical Review

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Abstract

This article analyzes recent Brazilian scholarship on workers and trade unions during the military dictatorship (1964–1985), emphasizing the relative absence of studies and the neglect of worker organization. By focusing on working-class agency and the dilemmas the labor movement faced due to the regime's economic policies and fierce repression, this essay offers a better understanding of the political scenario after 1964. The second part of the article examines the themes of the most recent studies about workers and the labor movement during the military regime, emphasizing existing blind spots and future challenges for scholarship.

In 1967, almost three years after Brazil's civilian-military coup, director Glauber Rocha, icon of the 1960s Brazilian cinematographic movement known as New Cinema (Cinema Novo), released his film *Terra em Transe*. The film provides an important glimpse into how the role of workers in the dictatorship was interpreted by intellectuals, politicians, leftist militants, and conservatives. In one scene from the renowned film, there is a striking dialog between a journalist, an aide to a populist politician, and a union leader, while they are surrounded by a priest, young activists, and politicians. The journalist enthusiastically calls on the union leader, Jerônimo, saying, "The people are Jerônimo. Speak, Jerônimo, speak!" Silence. A machine gun fires shots into the air. The populist politician adds his condescending plea. "Don't be afraid, my son. Speak, you are the people. Speak!" he implores. Jerônimo looks at the people around him, trying to force a word out, but he is unable to break the deafening silence that the long and uncomfortable scene has established. Finally, he turns to the camera and says, "I am a poor man, a worker, I am president of the union, I am engaged in the class struggle, and I think that everything is messed up, and I really don't know what to do. The country is going through a huge crisis, and the best thing to do is await the orders of the President." But his speech is interrupted when Paulo Martins, journalist, poet, and aide to the populist politician, representative of the intellectual class, puts his hands over Jerônimo's mouth and says, "You see what the people are like? Imbeciles, illiterate, depoliticized. Can you imagine what it would be like with Jerônimo running things?"¹

This important dialog from Glauber Rocha's film, which sought to tell a cinematographic parable of the history of Brazil at the start of the 1960s, is the point of departure for this article to reflect on the role of workers in studies of Brazil's military dictatorship. Despite some progress in the last few years,

International Labor and Working-Class History

No. 93, Spring 2018, pp. 27–51

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doi:10.1017/S0147547917000229

the Brazilian historiography about the dictatorship still maintains a “deafening silence” about the presence and role of workers during the regime. We highlight the limited number of historical studies that consider actors “from below” in their accounts of this plot written by military officers, civilian technocrats, businessmen, clerics, and conservative politicians, with the support of the United States. Moreover, even when workers did appear in narratives about the Left’s struggle during this period, they were characterized by their lack of autonomy, whether co-opted by the state or incapable of social organization, easy prey for the populism of Getúlio Vargas (1951–1954) and João Goulart (1961–1964). Thus, this article provides a historiographic reflection, focused on both political and labor history. It raises questions and makes observations about the old and new themes that have been the objects of recent studies, the gaps in the literature, and the challenges ahead.

1964: A Coup and a Regime Against Workers

It would be no exaggeration to affirm that the civilian-military coup carried out in Brazil in 1964 was a coup against workers.² Amidst a grave political and economic crisis that would culminate in the deposition of President João Goulart, workers were at the center of the conflicts. They acted as protagonists, recognized for their active militancy in the streets, unions, and workplaces. They also played a role as they reacted against and/or endorsed (although not without placing demands upon the authorities), the political and economic projects that targeted them.

Due to its support among workers, unionists, nationalists, and communists, the Goulart government received the joking nickname of the “Unionist Republic” (*República Sindicalista*). Working-class mobilization reached its pinnacle at the beginning of the 1960s, and its presence was not restricted to the unions. Workers also learned to make their voices heard in political parties, residents’ associations, labor courts, churches, and even the Ministry of Labor. In the countryside and in the cities, they took the political center stage. Before 1964, there were two main political projects vying to organize the Brazilian state and society. One project advocated core reforms (which included agrarian, urban, educational, electoral, administrative, and tax reforms), in addition to laws to regulate the remittance of corporate profits abroad, the nationalization of foreign companies, and the expansion of labor rights. This project gained its strongest support from workers and their unions. In contrast, political parties and other civilian and military right-wing sectors united around a project of conservative modernization that reflected the increasingly intertwined interests of business and political elites.³ The overthrow of President João Goulart by the military put an end to this process of ascent and mobilization for the Brazilian working class.

On April 2, 1964, housewives, businessmen, students, members of conservative sectors of the Catholic Church, and trade unionists, among others, celebrated on the streets of Rio de Janeiro the overthrow of President Goulart, in

an event called by the so-called March of The Family with God for Freedom (*Marcha da Família com Deus pela Liberdade*).⁴ From an office in the Institute for Research and Social Studies (IPES), an entity funded by the United States to promote the coup, jubilant businessmen watched the movement on the streets, pleased by the success of the fight against “communism.”⁵

At the American Embassy in Rio de Janeiro and the Consulate General in São Paulo, American analysts took note of the alleged “inability of workers to react in favor of Goulart.” It was expected that with the coup, so-called “Communist infiltration spots” would soon be eliminated, as well as alleged cases of corruption in the unions, as touted by Goulart’s opponents to justify interventions in entities run by the Communist and Labor parties (PCB and PTB).⁶ The new political context would also supposedly create an opening for labor leaders the Americans considered “authentic” and “democratic,” who had been eager to seize power in the unions since the early 1960s. As numerous scholars have shown, the US government was an important source of support for the military, via offers of military resources and the immediate recognition of the new government.⁷ The civilian-military coup marked a new phase in the history of Brazil.

The authoritarian regime sought to maintain a façade of democracy and was very concerned with its legal institutionalization. The idea that the “Revolution” (as the coup was called by the military and their conservative supporters) had saved “democracy” from the communists was a central component of the military’s official rhetoric. American support helped to consolidate this image. This was accomplished by issuing a series of “Institutional Acts,” constitutional amendments, and eventually a new constitution to legalize arbitrary rules within a formal legal structure. One example is the military’s treatment of political prisoners. Many people accused of being communists or practicing “subversive” acts were arrested and tortured, and some were killed. Those who faced formal charges were tried in military courts instead of the usual civilian courts.

With Marshal Humberto Alencar Castello Branco as president of Brazil (1964–1967) and the conservative takeover of Congress and other civilian institutions, a veritable hunt began to root out Goulart’s supporters.⁸ Many labor organizers, attorneys for the movement, and workers linked to left-leaning organizations were arrested; others fled to wait for better days. Trade unions headquarters were vandalized, and documents and other materials were seized by the political police as evidence of these unions’ “subversive” activities. The largest and most politically active trade unions, such as the metalworkers, textiles, chemicals, ports, maritime, and graphics, were the most affected, as well as farm workers in the countryside. About seventy percent of the unions with 5,000 members or more suffered intervention. In all, 536 entities faced some form of intervention or repression between 1964 and 1970. According to the investigation conducted by the 2014 National Truth Commission (CNV), about 10,000 union leaders were purged, although there is still some disagreement regarding this data.⁹ Between March and April 1964, the first few weeks

after the coup, the Ministry of Labor nominated 235 new union officials (called *interventores*) that the regime considered reliable.

The new labor policy introduced in the wake of the coup, applied in conjunction with overtly repressive measures and intervention in the unions, greatly strengthened the ability of employers to control workers. The alliance between businessmen and the police became even stronger, its influence more widespread, and a climate of fear and persecution permeated the companies. In the countryside, a still-uncalculated number of rural workers were expelled from their lands, and many were killed. The regime's anti-labor economic policy effectively banned strikes, reduced wages, and terminated job security, facilitating massive layoffs and turnover. The deliberate weakening of trade unions significantly facilitated the exploitation of workers, one of the hallmarks of the authoritarian regime, and increased the number of workplace accidents and fatalities.

The new wage policy prevented workers from making collective agreements with employers for higher raises than those stipulated by the government to compensate for inflation. The generals believed that all collective agreements should be litigated in the labor courts, even when made directly with employers. The government also reduced the power of the labor courts in terms of how collective bargaining decisions were defined. In 1964, a new law (*Lei 4.330*) established a bureaucratic process that unions would have to follow to call a legal strike, effectively making all strikes illegal.¹⁰

In the early years of the regime, the generals tried to combat economic instability with regressive wage policies and tight control over labor. These actions caused great discontent among the labor movement, as well other sectors of civil society. Clearly the workers' demands were not a priority for the new economic program. For Minister of Finance (*Ministro da Fazenda*) Octavio Gouvea Bulhões and Minister of Planning (*Ministro do Planejamento*) Roberto Campos, Brazil's inflation was caused primarily by excessive demands and had three sources: public sector deficits, excessive credit to the private sector, and excessive wage increases.¹¹

After months of anti-dictatorship civilian mobilization (including large student rallies and labor strikes in important industrial cities), the regime's hardliners pushed for the enactment of Institutional Act no. 5 (AI-5), issued on December 13, 1968.¹² As a result, the regime intensified state repression while simultaneously distancing itself diplomatically from the United States in response to pressure from right-wing nationalists. The harsh repression launched by AI-5 made dialog between federal authorities and trade unionists even more difficult.

The years between 1968 and 1973 are widely known as the time of the "Brazilian economic miracle"—the golden age of military-directed economic development, characterized by massive public investment and private investment from multinational corporations. At the same time, the general pro-business atmosphere, relatively low wages, and strict control of labor led to rising wealth concentration. This period was also known for systematic human

rights violations (brutal persecutions, arbitrary arrests, and torture and murder, along with the disappearance and presumed execution of hundreds of people considered “enemies of the country”). The bitter motto, “Brazil: love it or leave it,” used by the military regime, offers a clear picture of this phase of the dictatorial period.

Starting with President General Ernesto Geisel’s administration (1974–1979), the government’s attitude towards the workers’ demands underwent significant changes. When Geisel became president, he promised to set the country on the path to democratization. International reports on human rights abuses, among other factors, had an important role in the dictatorial regime’s decision to liberalize. However, the government wanted the political opening to be slow, gradual and secure, in order to preserve the ruling class status quo and the interests of major international investors.

Although still limited, the reestablishment of dialog with the trade union leadership was stimulated by the new Minister of Labor Arnaldo da Costa Prieto, a Christian Democrat. Flexible measures for wage policy were initiated under his management, along with slightly increased autonomy for unions. During this period, the intensification of the regime’s internal contradictions related to the exercise of authoritarian power—especially the maintenance of military unity and an emerging economic crisis caused by the global oil crisis—affected the government’s legitimacy.

In addition to the repressive atmosphere experienced by workers, constant threats of intervention and bureaucratic demands placed severe constraints upon the few leaders who were more sensitive to workers’ problems. They were able to stay in the unions, but they had no more power to effect change than the conservative trade unionists committed to the interests of the employers and the state (“the yellows,” or “*pelegos*”), as evaluated in a study on unions in the metropolitan region of São Paulo, cited by Kenneth Erickson. The periodic arrests and interrogations, as well as veiled threats of torture, intimidated many leaders. Among workers, especially those who actively participated in strikes inside and outside the factories (or any empowering initiative), the repression could happen in many ways. A simple police record could cost them their jobs and have their names included in the infamous “black lists” that circulated among the companies and the political police (DOPS), as though their reactions to dictatorship and work exploitation were a meticulously calculated act of political subversion.¹³

Repudiating the dictatorial regime and the exploitation by their bosses, some activists from key industrial sectors (metallurgical, chemical workers) decided to participate in the unions’ daily activities to seek greater representation in conflicts with their employers and to win back the space they had lost since 1964. These militants forged ties with the Catholic Church’s Ecclesiastical Base Communities (*Comunidades Eclesiais de Base*) and with a variety of social movements that emerged in the peripheries of major cities in the second half of the 1970s. They also had a critical point of view regarding the trade union tradition before 1964 (called “populist”). Unionization and

active participation in assemblies were the ways these workers showed their disappointment with the union leaders' performance. Gradually, dissonant voices began to be heard within the union meetings. Between 1978 and 1980, a wave of strikes emerged, organized by the Metalworkers' Union of São Bernardo do Campo, São Paulo, led by Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, or simply Lula. Working men and women from the metal, chemical, petroleum, pharmaceutical, and bank sectors organized themselves both within and beyond the unions. Labor militancy was constructed and organized based on the social relationships that grew in neighborhoods and in workers' daily lives outside their factories. In the countryside, rural workers mobilized and organized strikes, too. The 1979 strike of sugarcane workers in Pernambuco, for instance, was a key moment for rural labor.

The wave of strikes between 1978 and 1980 were immensely important for both the workers' movement and society in general. From the epicenter of the ABC industrial region, strikes spread to other parts of the country. They went beyond the narrow limits set by the anti-strike law, beyond wage compression, and beyond the forced silence of the working class. In so doing, they struck a powerful blow against the economic and political pillars that supported the dictatorship and deepened the crisis of the military regime, becoming a key factor in Brazil's democratization. Their impact would reverberate in the years to come, and workers and their organizations have been at the center of Brazilian politics ever since.

*A Deafening Silence: The Absence of Workers from Studies of the Dictatorship*¹⁴

Historical studies about the Brazilian military dictatorship have proliferated over the last decade. The topic has attracted a growing number of researchers and has received significant attention in national political discourse. If the detailed bibliographic study by historian Carlos Fico in 2004, the fortieth anniversary of the coup, is any indication that the topic had already become an important one for scholarship, since then, this field of study has only grown and diversified.¹⁵ Nevertheless, it is undeniable that a specific set of themes continues to dominate the research agenda. Some of the most common of these include the political history of the regime and its various president-dictators, as well as the armed struggle carried out by leftist groups;¹⁶ the role of press censorship,¹⁷ intellectuals, and artists;¹⁸ the regime's economic policy;¹⁹ the role of the Catholic Church;²⁰ and the mechanisms of the dictatorship's repressive apparatus.²¹ In the last few years, new themes have emerged, such as right-wing organizations and their collaborations with the regime,²² the repression of the LGBT movement,²³ and the trajectory of women activists.²⁴

More recently, the collective research carried out by the National Truth Commission (CNV), created during the first administration of Dilma Rousseff (2011–2014), uncovered new information, gave rise to a series of questions, and deconstructed certain narratives that until then had been accepted as settled by our historiography. It highlighted new victims of dictatorial

repression: for example, hundreds of indigenous people and people from rural areas who were persecuted, tortured, and killed. Most importantly, it gathered and made available to the public thousands of documents produced by the regime's secret intelligence-gathering efforts and other agencies. Future research should and undoubtedly will explore the impact of the CNV on Brazilian society, especially on studies about the authoritarian period.²⁵

However, it is important to emphasize that amidst this movement toward historiographic renovation, the workers have been relatively neglected. Take, as an example, the academic conferences and publications that marked the fiftieth anniversary of the coup in 2014, in which experts on the period practically ignored labor and workers.²⁶ The invisibility of workers and union leaders is also evident in the way those killed and disappeared by the regime have been remembered. For a striking example, we need look no further than a comparison between the 1975 and 1976 tortures and murders of the journalist Vladimir Herzog and the metalworker Manoel Fiel Filho, which happened within months of each other in the headquarters of the feared secret police (DOI-Codi). Both were accused of being tied to the PCB, and both their murders were called suicides by the same police who had tortured them. Yet the atrocities committed against Fiel Filho, a Northeastern migrant and worker from the city of São Paulo, are little known among the larger public and rarely cited in textbooks.²⁷

A similar example is the labor militant and unionist Virgílio Gomes da Silva, who was also killed under torture. Known by his codename "Jonas," he was portrayed in the 1997 Brazilian feature film, *O que é isso, companheiro?* (with an English title of *Four Days in September*). Directed by Bruno Barreto and based on the homonymous 1979 book by Fernando Gabeira, the film narrates the 1969 kidnapping of American ambassador Charles Elbrick by the leftist guerrilla groups National Liberation Action (ALN) and October 8 Revolutionary Movement (MR-8). The film was controversial among the former political prisoners who had fought alongside Gabeira, not only for the central role that he assigned himself, but also for the way "Comrade Jonas" was portrayed. The Northeastern migrant, factory worker, and PCB militant, who opted for armed resistance after the coup, was chosen to be the film's villain.²⁸ In contrast with the supposedly sensitive, ingenuous, and idealistic middle-class student militants, Virgílio/Jonas is portrayed as uncouth, authoritarian, and inhuman, determined to kill without hesitation anyone who got in the way of the revolution. His stern, unsmiling demeanor intimidates even his comrades in arms.²⁹

The case of Virgílio Gomes da Silva not only allows us to challenge old stereotypes about workers (as "ugly, dirty, brutish, and mean"), but also can provoke reflections about workers' participation in the armed resistance and their relations with militants from other social groups. How did worker-militants, who brought their own culture with them from the world of factories and unions cope with the different habits, vocabularies, and ways of acting, thinking, and interpreting the world of middle-class student-militants? And how many of them might have participated in direct operations against the military regime

without having been acknowledged as worker-militants? Was their specific identity as workers diluted when they joined the guerrilla movement? On the other hand, it would also be important to know how workers viewed the armed resistance.³⁰ In his quantitative study of the relationship between the armed left and workers who belonged to the “base-level social strata” (such as peasants, low-ranking soldiers, and urban manual laborers), Marcelo Ridenti states that out of 1,897 leftist militants prosecuted by the justice system, only 311 (16.39 %) belonged to these “base-level” groups.³¹ His data highlight, then, the overall low participation of workers in the armed resistance against the dictatorship.

These and other questions about the relationship between the world of labor and the armed resistance have still not been sufficiently explored in the literature about the armed struggle, even though this is one of the topics that has received the most attention among scholars studying the military regime. New analyses might problematize and relativize a common belief, mentioned by Yuri Rosa de Carvalho (2012), that factory workers, “due to their inability to organize, were doomed to silence and ostracism; their failure to join, as a class, the resistance against the dictatorship was indirectly responsible for its failure.”³²

Based on these and many other examples, we can assert that the theme of labor, workers, and the union movement has remained at the margins of studies of the Brazilian dictatorship. In the end, it has even come to be considered a bit old-fashioned. This observation might sound strange to someone who witnessed the rise of the union movement in the 1950s, experienced the coup of 1964, and lived long enough to see a Northeastern metalworker and union leader elected president of Brazil in 2002. After all, it is worth remembering: The coup of 1964 was above all a reaction to the organized action of urban and rural workers who mobilized en masse to demand structural reforms. The military and its civilian allies, especially in the business world, had as one of their chief goals to impede the advance of the feared “Unionist Republic” (Weinstein, 1996). It certainly was not by happenstance that the troops commanded by General Olímpio Mourão Filho, on the morning of April 1, 1964, invaded the National Motor Factory (FNM)—a symbol of the nationalist developmentalism of the Vargas era, which was also strategically located on the highway that connects Minas Gerais to Rio de Janeiro. There they arrested and isolated the workers, many of whom were believed to be “highly dangerous subversives,” and treated them with great disrespect and violence.³³

But what happened to workers and their trade unions as a whole as the coup occurred? How did they discover what was happening? What strategies did they draw up? How did the repression against them, the unions, and their leadership play out? Everything the historiography told us until very recently can be summarized in the words of a student leader, Vladimir Palmeira, who, not coincidentally, echoes the character Paulo Martins in the film *Terra em transe*, cited at the beginning of this article. According to Palmeira, 1964 taught him a lesson: “You can’t place your trust in bourgeois legality. We lost in 1964 because the workers didn’t react” (Ventura, 2013: 65). The uncritical

acceptance of this assumption of workers' non-reaction, of their paralysis or passivity in the face of the coup, has long served to limit studies about them. The decision of President Goulart to not mount resistance to the advancing troops and his silent flight to Uruguay transformed the workers' movement into his image and likeness. They would henceforth remain imprisoned in interpretations dedicated to probing their supposed "absences" – from class organization, from political consciousness, from collective spirit.

Why, in the end, did workers not "react"? This question has animated much of the historiography about the relationship of workers to the Brazilian military dictatorship. In general, the first generation of intellectuals to address this question, still during the authoritarian regime, focused on the period before the coup, placing the blame for the defeat of 1964 on the state-sponsored unionism of the Vargas era and the supposedly subaltern role of the left, particularly the PCB (Martins Rodrigues, 1966; Rodrigues, 1968; Moisés, 1978; Souza Martins, 1979; Vianna, 1976). Along these lines, the theories of populism formulated by Francisco Weffort in the late 1960s and early 1970s gained enormous influence and, despite some scathing polemics—see the debates between Weffort and Maria Hermínia Tavares de Almeida and Carlos Estevam Martins (Weffort, 1973, 1978; Almeida e Martins, 1973)—they set much of the agenda not only for studies about workers before 1964, but also for the few studies that were beginning to appear about the dictatorial period.

The highlight, however, was the debate about the relationship between unions and the state, particularly in analyses of corporatism, seen in general as a populist "trap" that had entangled workers in the web of state domination. The authoritarian nature of the Brazilian corporatist system and labor relations and their institution during the Vargas dictatorship (1937–1945) convinced many scholars that there was nothing to be learned about Brazilian corporatism beyond control, cooptation, and state concessions.³⁴ Due to its deepening of the mechanisms of corporatist control, the dictatorship had obvious continuities with the earlier period. Eloquent examples of this interpretation, albeit with different emphases, are works like those of the American historians Kenneth Mericle (1977) and Kenneth Erickson (1977), or the sociologist Heloísa de Souza Martins, produced during the authoritarian period. The same is true for political scientist Argelina Figueiredo's 1978 essays about interventions in unions and Maria Helena Moreira Alves's (1985) book that sheds light on the military's project to control labor within the framework of the national security state.

Political scientist Wanderley Guilherme dos Santos (1979) would approach the issue from a different theoretical perspective, but one nonetheless characterized by the necessity of understanding of the Vargas era in order to grasp the dictatorship's initial labor policies. Santos coined the useful term "regulated citizenship," which would also influence a series of studies, particularly about unemployment benefits,³⁵ social security, and other policies related to labor. Notwithstanding the richness of many of these studies, their focus on the top-down action of the state would reinforce the supposed absence and inaction

of workers and the subordination of themselves and their organizations to external actors who failed to consider their action and agency.

From yet another perspective, Marxist sociologist Celso Frederico in his pioneering studies was more interested in working-class ideologies and political consciousness during the Dictatorship than in the role of the State and its social control policies. Based on close interviews with both ordinary metalworkers (Frederico, 1978) and worker activists (Frederico, 1979), his books were among the first works to emphasize struggles and conflicts on the shop floor in the late 1960s and 1970s. Frederico (2010) also organized an extensive collection of working-class newspapers during the dictatorship and published an important and widely cited compilation called *A imprensa de esquerda e o movimento operário (1964–1985)*.

Analyses of the intriguing rural unionism of the National Confederation for Agricultural Workers (CONTAG) were rather different. The studies of sugarcane workers in Pernambuco carried out by anthropologists connected to the National Museum (Ligia Sigaud, Afrânio Garcia, Moacir Palmeira, and José Sérgio Leite Lopes, among others) and, a little later, the analyses of rural unionism in the state of Rio de Janeiro, done by social scientists at the Rural Federal University (Leonilde Sérvalo de Medeiros, among others) stand out. They portray a much more dynamic social movement that was frequently capable of re-appropriating corporatist logic in favor of workers, carrying out their struggle even amidst dictatorial repression. Still, most of these studies were only published in the 1980s, when they joined the emerging literature analyzing the so-called “new social movements.”

The memorializing literature that exploded onto the scene in the late 1970s, during the political “opening” (*abertura*), reinforced the erasure of workers from resistance to the military regime, especially between the coup and 1978. Thus, the strikes that broke out in Osasco and Contagem in 1968 were usually seen as exceptions that proved the rule (Weffort, 1972). The memories of participants in the armed resistance helped consolidate a view, not only of the typical opponents of the regime (middle class students), but also one of workers who were politically disinterested and acquiescent and sometimes even supported the regime. Historian Daniel Aarão Reis, citing “workers’ notable inability to participate in illegal acts,” raised the following questions:

To what extent might [workers’ inaction] be tied to the collapse of their traditional political points of reference? After all, their leaders, their forms of struggle, the types of organizations that had marked the evolution of the popular movement, an entire universe of representations and practices, had disappeared without a trace. Wouldn’t dispersion and demoralization be the inevitable results, if only for a time? At the same time, in what ways might the policies of the new regime have created new divisions among the oppressed and exploited? (Reis, 1990: p. 64)

Reis then draws attention to the divergence between the growth of the minimum wage for those living in so-called “absolute misery” and the

industrialized sectors who benefited from the growth of the internal market. Such discrepancies among workers, Reis argues, were not considered by the communists, who insisted on a political strategy that emphasized the conditions common to the entire working class. He asks how differences played out between workers in the “dynamic” sectors of the economy, who enjoyed their own higher wages and better working conditions, and employees in more “traditional” areas and in state-owned companies. Were important segments of the popular classes attracted by the new lifestyle proposed by the military regime? Reis, then, points out the heterogeneity of the working class as a way of explaining workers’ supposed timidity in the fight against the dictatorship. This heterogeneity deepened during the “economic miracle,” since the regime’s economic policy created a chronic increase in social inequality and sought primarily to benefit the middle class, even as it also amplified differences in salary and status among workers themselves.

As Brazil moved toward democratization in the late 1970s, inaction began to give way to agency, and researchers began to emphasize workers’ capacity for autonomous organization and mobilization; that is, without the dependency of the official unions tied to the corporatist system or to “populist” politicians. The large strikes that broke out in the so-called ABC industrial region³⁶ of Greater São Paulo in 1978, a movement that would soon spread across the country, quickly became symbolic of the change in perceptions about the working class and its relationship with the authoritarian regime. The mass rallies with their air of political protests, the role of the workers as protagonists, and a certain sense of generalized surprise contributed to the perception of that moment as unique in Brazilian history, a true game changer that was simultaneously breaking with the now-distant pre-1964 “populism” (Troyano, 1978; Costa, 1986; among others) and the recent past of subordination and paralysis during the dictatorship.

The idea of “novelty” overwhelmingly prevailed in the scholarly reading of the politics of that period. Workers were creating a “*new* unionism” and participating in “*new* social movements,” moving beyond the populist tradition of subordination to the state, mobilizing themselves en masse in their workplaces and neighborhoods, and acting independently and autonomously. This moment of ascent and effervescence for factory workers, along with their participation in the struggle for the country’s democratization, would mark a new generation of scholars. Many who wrote about the “*new* unionism” were inspired by events they had witnessed themselves (Almeida, 1983; Humphrey, 1982; Bargas, 1983; Maroni, 1982, Sader, 1988, Antunes, 1988).

Despite overstatements and a certain naiveté, the social science studies of the role workers played as the dictatorship gasped its final breaths were not only numerous (according to the American historian John D. French, the ABC strikes are among the most studied in the world), but also, generally speaking, high in quality. Thanks to these scholars, the 1970s and early 1980s became the golden age of studies of workers and social movements.³⁷ Historians, however, arrived a bit late to the study of this period. Rather, the strikes

during Brazil's democratization appear to have inspired them to analyze another period of supposed autonomy and collective action as a class—the beginning of the twentieth century, particularly of anarchists and revolutionary unionists. (Hardman, 1983; Maram, 1979; Hall e Pinheiro, 1979; among others).

Shaped as they were by the growth of the workers' movement and by that era's general climate of democratic effervescence, many researchers tended to view the “new unionism” as lightning from a clear sky. However, we know now that the movement did not appear from one day to the next and, in fact, was the fruit of a silent struggle of daily resistance in the workplace and at home, frequently at the margins of the unions, in spaces where repression was less likely (Sader, 1988). Although the division between “new” and “old” unionism has been relativized and called into question (Grossi, 1981; French, 1992; Santana, 1998; Badaró, 1998), there remains much to be learned about the conditions that made it possible for the “new unionism” to burst onto the scene all over the country, as well as its international ties. For example, there have been few studies of the opposition movements within unions, except for the Metallurgical Union Opposition of São Paulo, and even this group has not been analyzed sufficiently.³⁸ Similarly, the connections between the autonomist discourses of the progressive Catholic Church and the *obreiro* and anti-bureaucratic perspectives that proliferated in the international labor movement in the 1960s and 1970s have still not been sufficiently explored in the literature.

Along these lines, one book that stands out is historian Antonio Luigi Negro's analysis of economic and labor policy from the nationalist developmentalism of the Vargas Era to the end of the 1960s. In *Linhas de montagem* (2004), Negro deconstructs the idea that migrant workers were incapable of forging a collective factory movement based upon common demands and working-class consciousness. The author uncovers, in the wake of the political and economic changes instituted after the coup, a series of acts of resistance among workers in the factories of multinational automobile companies in the ABC region of Greater São Paulo.³⁹

Thus, the impact of what was “new” appears to have been so strong that it obscured the analysis of labor in Brazil between the coup of 1964 and the eruption of mass strikes at the end of the 1970s; when it was studied, it was as a mere prologue to what came later. It is striking just how few academic publications there are about the world of labor in general or the union movement in particular between 1964 and 1978. In addition, the repressive and controlling nature of the regime, which practically attempted to transform the unions into an appendage of the state, might well have given the impression that there was nothing interesting to be studied about that period, except for the occasional acts of resistance by the working class. As a result, the idea that Brazilian unionism fell asleep in 1964, twitched in 1968, and finally woke up agitated ten years later, when the “new unionism” appeared, remains with us today, although a few works published in the last decade have begun to deconstruct this image.

The Broadening of the Field Today; Gaps and Challenges for the Future

The pioneering works of Braz José de Araújo (1985), José Ricardo Ramalho (1989), Elina Pessanha (1995), Antonio Luigi Negro (2004), Francisco Carlos Palomanes Martinho (2001), and Marco Aurélio Santana (2001), by analyzing the unionism of metalworkers in the years after the coup in Santos and Cubatão, Baixada Fluminense, Niterói, ABC, and Rio de Janeiro,⁴⁰ offered fresh ways to complicate the distinction between “old” and “new” unionism. These studies were also important for providing evidence of daily acts of resistance or even work stoppages and protests that had been “erased” from accounts of the period, along with the fundamental connections between the workplace and the communities where factory workers lived. As mentioned above, several studies of the Metallurgical Union Opposition of São Paulo (Faria, 1986; Batistoni, 2010) made similar contributions. The excellent work of history and memory put together by the NGO Exchange, Information, Study, and Research (IIEP) has yielded some fascinating studies about the Metallurgical Opposition, principally the association of the business world with the repressive apparatus during the dictatorship. (IIEP, 2014).

Recently, the strong tradition of studies of rural workers has allowed us to learn much more about the memory of peasants and the close collaboration between the state and large landowners in repression and land appropriation. The aforementioned sophisticated work of researchers like Leonilde Medeiros, Moacir Palmeira, Marta Ciocari, Cliff Welch, Christine Dabat, and the graduate students they advised, among others, in addition to broadening our knowledge, have had an important political impact, through initiatives like the Peasant Truth Commission, which presented a detailed report parallel to that of the CNV.⁴¹ Another encouraging result has been the rapprochement between studies of rural and urban laborers, long confined to separate disciplines with little dialog.⁴²

Among urban workers, the analyses have clearly focused on metalworkers (see Negro, 2010; Abramo, 1999; Paranhos, 1999), but we still know little about how the same processes played out among other important urban sectors, who also had a powerful capacity to mobilize and negotiate with their employers. It has also meant that the emphasis thus far has been overwhelmingly on male, not female workers.⁴³ It is true that there are a few studies of chemical plant workers and bank employees (see Corrêa, 2014; BLASS, 1992; Guimarães, 1990), but these studies remain confined to the 1950s and earlier. Textile workers have also begun to be “rediscovered,” as in the recent dissertation by Felipe Ribeiro (2015), which, through its focus on both male and female weavers (as well as rural laborers) in Magé, one of Brazil’s “little Moscows,” showed how repression and police violence left their mark on local memory for decades. Even so, our knowledge about workers in vital areas of the economy during the military regime, such as petroleum workers, or areas with a particularly large number of workers, such as civil construction, remains scarce.⁴⁴ Studies of workers, male and female, in the service sector—salespeople, shopkeepers,

or civil servants—are sparser still. In addition, there have been few studies about professions and unions in regions beyond the Rio-São Paulo axis in this period.⁴⁵

The study of strikes during the dictatorship, particularly between 1964 and 1978 (admittedly fewer in number than before the coup), offers an even clearer example of the geographic concentration in Brazilian labor historiography. We still lack a nation-wide survey of protests, work stoppages, and strikes during the military regime. Nevertheless, noteworthy monographs are beginning to appear. Some scholars, for example, have taken on the challenge of revisiting 1968, not the 1968 of French workers and students, nor that of the artists and intellectuals of the middle- and upper-class neighborhoods of the Zona Sul of Rio de Janeiro, but the 1968 of workers on the peripheries of Brazil's largest cities.

For decades, the metalworkers' strikes in Osasco, São Paulo, and Contagem, Minas Gerais⁴⁶ have been defined by their spontaneous nature and insufficient political organization, something that Francisco Weffort (1972) blamed for their failure, as evidenced by their short duration. However, we still know little about the ebbs and flows of this movement, the relationship between workers and the militants of the student movement and armed resistance who chose to carry out their activism in the factories, and the role of the metalworkers' union and residents of Osasco.⁴⁷ Luis Carlos Galetti (1985), Ari Marcelo Macedo Couto (2003) and Alessandro de Moura (2015) explore the central issue of shop floor organization during the strike, while Paulo Sérgio Jesus (2007) analyzes the vital role of the Catholic youth among the Osasco workers. Recently, Marta Rovai's 2013 study of memory in Osasco, especially among women, sheds light on how striking workers and their families participated in the movement, along with the repression that came after the strike ended. Her interviews reveal the trauma this repression left behind and the stigma that the residents of Osasco suffered afterward.

Police and military repression against workers, both within and outside factories, as well as in the countryside, merits special attention. More broadly, when we discuss repression, we need a specific theoretical-methodological framework to understand the meanings of workers' acts of resistance within the specific context of authoritarianism. This is the only way to understand the profound impact of dictatorships on the lives of workers. Along these lines, studies that explain how the laboring class experienced acts of repression (originating with the state and employers alike), as well as police and private violence in their everyday lives, are sorely needed. In the end, living as they did in a constant state of structural insecurity, what did workers have to lose when they opted for political militancy, or simply to stand up against the abuses committed by their bosses?⁴⁸ The risk of losing their job and not being able to provide for their families; the risk of having a file opened on them by the State Department of Social and Political Order (DEOPS) and being blacklisted by employers; the risk of being imprisoned and tortured and getting their family involved; the risk of being killed, their bodies never found. Despite all the repressive measures and the fear that spread along the production lines, more

than a few workers risked their lives by distributing pamphlets at the factory gates, or by standing at a union assembly to give a speech denouncing the regime, even knowing that the regime's police had infiltrated their meetings. (The torture and disappearance of Olavo Hanssen, an engineering student turned metallurgical worker, is one of the most infamous incidents [See Pereira Neto, 2013].)

What do we really know about the lives of workers in the late 1960s and early 1970s? We know, for example, that in 1963, it required ninety-eight hours and twenty minutes of work in the city of São Paulo to buy a month's supply of food. Ten years later, 147 hours and four minutes were needed to obtain the same amount of food, and by the end of the military regime, it had risen to 194 hours and thirty-eight minutes (Costa, 1997). But what do we know about the culture forged among workers amidst the "economic miracle" and the great migratory flows that brought laborers to the peripheries of the large cities of the Southeast? How did urban and rural workers alike experience the dictatorship? What everyday strategies did they develop to survive the system of repression installed in the factories and the workplace in general? What impact did the regime's infrastructure and developmental projects have on labor in the country's various regions?

At the same time, we cannot forget or ignore workers who were sympathetic to the dictatorial regime, as Reis observed in 1990. Many workers, lulled by the "economic miracle," benefited from the economic growth and expansion of the labor market. Although the military's economic policies were founded upon the severe exploitation of the workforce, through the decrease in real wages and elimination of several labor rights, many migrants from rural areas still managed to take advantage of the opportunities provided by the expanding economy, especially in civil construction and services. Between 1969 and 1973, many workers participated with the middle class in the exaggeratedly patriotic fervor that seized Brazil, believing in the "Brazil of the future." Still, we need to better understand what motivated some workers to support the regime, and how that impacted their involvement in unions and other civilian institutions, their relationships with their employers, and the way they behaved in their workplaces, neighborhood associations, places of leisure, and religious organizations. Indeed, the dictatorship did not fail to recognize this process and took concrete measures to gain the support of workers and labor. Surprisingly, many labor and unionization rights were granted to domestic and rural workers, among others, at the height of repression under the dictator Emílio Garrastazu Médici (1969–1974). With the exception of a few studies of rural unionization (see Pereira 1997, Ricci 1999, and Maybury-Lewis 1994), we still know very little about this topic, and it could be a fruitful area for future research.⁴⁹

Notwithstanding the narrative of a dormant working class produced by the historiography in the 1970s and 1980s, the relationship between workers, unions, and the state is being revisited. With the aid of newly-available but often precariously-preserved labor court records, a new generation of scholars has

carried out systematic and quantitative analyses of the role of the state in labor relations and laborers' use of the state bureaucratic apparatus. Over the last ten years, an extensive bibliography has appeared about the role of the labor court system both before and after 1964. The court records upon which they are based have great historical value, due to their richness and the detailed information they contain about claimant workers, their demands, and work contracts; at times, they even reveal important details about workers' daily lives on the factory floor or as they labored in the fields.⁵⁰ These studies have offered new perspectives about the behavior of the apparatus of the state, challenging monolithic views of the state, and emphasizing its heterogeneity and internal disputes. Although it has been extremely difficult to access sources, there has also been progress in the study of the role of the federal Labor Ministry during the dictatorship and its relationship with the rest of the executive branch. In a recent study, Heliene Nagasava (2015) showed how the Labor Ministry, the most important federal ministry in the period from Vargas to Goulart and the heart of their laborism, was systematically dismantled by the finance and planning ministers, starting with the Castelo Branco government (1964–1967). However, although the Labor Ministry has started to be studied, we still know little about other federal, state, and local agencies or about social security, another factor fundamental to understanding this period. It is also worth pointing out that these scholars have not only done path-breaking research but also played a crucial role in the struggle for the preservation of judicial and ministerial sources, fighting to keep them from being discarded by the agencies to which they have been entrusted.

Another growing field is the study of the Brazilian trade union movement's international ties. Scholars like Cliff Welch (1995), Antonio Luigi Negro (2004), and Larissa Corrêa (2017) have shown the influence of American unionism both before and after the coup, uncovering its cooperation with conservative Brazilian unionists and the sharing of contacts and information between union leaders, specialists in labor relations, the American and Brazilian governments, and their respective embassies. The pioneering work of Mazé Chotil (2015) innovates by investigating exiled workers and unionists in the 1970s and their role in creating new networks of sociability and political and union contacts, which would exercise significant influence as the country democratized.

The study of conservative unionists has also benefited from the work of the Labor Working Group of the CNV and the opening of the archives of the National Information Service (SNI), which are making possible studies of the role of union interventors and their relationships with foreign unions (Corrêa, 2013). The connections between industrialists, conservative union leaders, and ordinary workers has been studied in an inspiring article by Barbara Weinstein (1995). The last few years have also witnessed new autobiographies written by former union leaders and leftist politicians with ties to labor, and even by important members of the Goulart government overthrown by the military, including those of former labor minister Almino Affonso (2014) and

railroad workers' union leader Raphael Martinelli, both published in 2014. Along these lines, the testimonies of ex-unionists and militant factory workers and rural laborers gathered by the CNV and its associated commissions at the state and local level will offer rich source material for the future study of labor under the military regime.⁵¹

Despite much recent progress, the historiography of the world of labor during the Brazilian military dictatorship still needs to address a series of challenges. For example, there have been few studies that include analyses of gender, race, and ethnicity (something that is relevant for all of Brazilian labor history, in fact); indigenous labor in various parts of the country, especially the Center-West and North; and the environmental impact of the military's nationalist developmentalist project, particularly during the "economic miracle."⁵² An especially promising point of departure for a study of labor and the environment under the regime might be Antoine Acker's study of accusations of labor, human rights, and environmental violations by Volkswagen on its ranch in Pará. A path-breaking *longue durée* study of labor and the environment in northeastern sugar-growing regions that includes the period of the dictatorship by Thomas Rogers is another excellent example.⁵³ By the same token, the effects of regional migration and urbanization have not been sufficiently measured. Nor has the responsibility of businesses for direct repression and workplace conditions and accidents received its due (although once again, the Labor Working Group of the CNV has shed new light on this issue). Another challenge for scholars interested in labor and authoritarian Cold War regimes is placing both in a broader Latin American context, making comparisons, and finding connections.

The list of tasks ahead is long, but there are reasons to be optimistic about the future of the study of labor during the dictatorship. An example of the growing interest in the topic occurred in 2015, at the First International Seminar of Worlds of Labor and Southern Cone Dictatorships, in Rio de Janeiro. Sponsored by three Rio universities, the event attracted over one hundred scholars not only from Brazil, but also from Argentina, Chile, Paraguay, Uruguay, and the United States. Over the course of the three-day event, the breadth of innovative research being conducted about this topic became clear, along with the challenges that this field of study still faces. Particularly promising is the comparative and transnational perspective that is becoming more widespread in this field of study; indeed, the very international character of the event was a clear indicator of this. For many scholars, it is becoming ever more obvious that it is necessary not only to engage in dialog with the historiography of neighboring countries, but also to analyze exchanges, connections, and comparisons within the world of labor in all of them. In addition, the key roles of the United States, and to a lesser extent, of other countries, and their relationships with dictatorial regimes show just how necessary a global approach is for analyzing worlds of labor during this period.

NOTES

1. *Terra em transe*, film by Glauber Rocha, 1967.
2. We use the expression “civilian-military coup” to emphasize the participation of civilian sectors in the overthrow of the democratic government of João Goulart in 1964.
3. CNV Final Report, chapter on the violation of workers’ human rights, 56.
4. The March of The Family with God for Freedom (*Marcha da Família com Deus pela Liberdade*) was a movement that emerged in March 1964, preceding the civilian-military coup. It was a series of “marches,” mainly organized by sectors of the Catholic Church and women’s organizations with a politically conservative orientation. The event brought together middle-class segments fearful of the “communist threat” and favorable to the ouster of the president. The march originally was meant to encourage the military to seize power, but events unfolded faster than expected. For the news coverage of the event on April 2, 1964, see the newspaper *O Estado de São Paulo*, April 3, 1964, 7.
5. René Dreifuss, 1964: *A Conquista do Estado* (Petropolis, RJ, 1981), 420–21 and 433.
6. Report to the State Department, October 29, 1964, U.S. Embassy in Brazil, LAB 3-2—box 1281, General Records of the Department of State (GRDS), RG 59, Central Foreign Policy Files (CFPF), NARA II.
7. Jan Knippers Black, “Lincoln Gordon and Brazil’s Military Counterrevolution,” in *Ambassadors in Foreign Policy: The Influence of Individuals on U.S.-Latin American Policy*, eds. C. N. Ronning and A. P. Vannucci (New York, 1987), 95–113; Phyllis R. Parker, *Brazil and the Quiet Intervention, 1964* (Austin, TX, 1979).
8. Maria Helena Moreira Alves, *State and Opposition in Military Brazil* (Austin, TX, 1985).
9. CNV Final Report, 59.
10. Alves, *State and Opposition*, 70.
11. Thomas Skidmore, *Brasil: de Castelo a Tancredo* (São Paulo, 1988).
12. AI-5 suspended constitutional rights and increased the president’s dictatorial power, including allowing him to place Congress in indefinite recess.
13. Central Única dos Trabalhadores. Relatório da Comissão nacional da memória, verdade e justiça da CUT (São Paulo: Central Única dos Trabalhadores, 2015), 105.
14. An earlier version of this section and the next was published in Portuguese as Larissa R. Corrêa and Paulo Fontes, “As falas de Jerônimo: trabalhadores, sindicatos e a historiografia da ditadura militar brasileira,” *Anos 90* 23 (2016): 129–51.
15. Carlos Fico, *Além do golpe. Versões e controvérsias sobre 1964 e a Ditadura Militar* (Rio de Janeiro, 2004).
16. Marcelo Ridenti, *O fantasma da revolução brasileira* (São Paulo, 1993).
17. Beatriz Kushnir, *Cães de guarda. Jornalistas e censores, do AI-5 à constituição de 1988* (São Paulo, 2004).
18. Daniel Pecault, *Os intelectuais e a política no Brasil. Entre o povo e a Nação* (São Paulo, 1990).
19. Paul Singer, *A crise do “milagre”* (Rio de Janeiro, 1977).
20. Ibid.
21. Carlos Fico, *Como eles agiam. Os subterrâneos da ditadura militar: espionagem e polícia política* (Rio de Janeiro, 2001).
22. Janaina Cordeiro, *A ditadura em tempos de milagre. Comemorações, orgulho e consentimento* (Rio de Janeiro, 2015).
23. James N. Green and Renan Quinalha, *Ditadura e homossexualidades: repressão, resistência e a busca da verdade* (São Carlos/SP, 2014).
24. Susel Oliveira da Rosa, *Mulheres, ditaduras e memórias* (São Paulo, 2013).
25. The final report of the CNV is available in Portuguese at: <http://www.cnv.gov.br/index.php/outros-destaques/574-conheca-e-acesse-o-relatorio-final-da-cnv>, acessado em 10 de fevereiro de 2017.
26. A representative example of the scarcity of analyses of the trade union movement and the world of workers in studies of the military dictatorship appears in the volume organized by Daniel Aarão Reis, Marcelo Ridenti, and Rodrigo Patto Sá Motta, *A ditadura que mudou o Brasil. 50 anos do golpe de 1964* (Rio de Janeiro, 2014). The only article dedicated to this topic addresses the “new unionism” and thus covers only the final years of the regime.

27. See the documentary *Perdão Mister Fiel—o operário que derrubou a ditadura no Brasil*, by Jorge Oliveira, 2012.

28. For more about Virgílio Gomes da Silva, see: Edileuza Pimenta and Edson Teixeira, *Virgílio Gomes da Silva: de retirante a guerrilheiro* (São Paulo, 2009).

29. The criticisms made by ex-political prisoners, intellectuals, and journalists over the way the film portrayed Virgílio were published in a small collection intended to clear his name. Daniel Aarão Reis et al. (eds.), *Fatos e versões: o sequestro da história* (São Paulo, 1997).

30. Some of these questions are addressed in Yuri Rosa de Carvalho, “O movimento operário e a Ditadura Civil-Militar: resistência, luta armada e negociação,” *Revista Latino-Americana de História* 1 (2012), 338–66. See also: Celso Frederico, ed., *A esquerda e o movimento operário—vol I. A resistência à ditadura (1964–1971)* (São Paulo, 1987).

31. Marcelo Ridenti, *O Fantasma da Revolução*, 163.

32. Yuri Rosa de Carvalho, “O movimento operário e a Ditadura Civil-Militar”, 340.

33. José Ricardo Ramalho, *Estado-Patrão e luta operária. O caso FNM* (Rio de Janeiro, 1989). On São Paulo industrialists’ fears of the alliance between labor unions and the political sphere, see Barbara Weinstein, *For Social Peace in Brazil: Industrialists and the Remaking of the Working Class in São Paulo, 1920–1964* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1996).

34. For a critique of this body of interpretation and an account of Brazil’s corporatist system of labor regulation that focuses on the workers, see Larissa R. Corrêa and Fernando T. Silva, “The Politics of Justice. Rethinking Brazil’s Corporatist Labor System”, *Labor: Studies in Working-Class History of the Americas* 13 (2), (2016): 11–31.

35. The Guaranteed Fund for Time of Service (FGTS) was a benefit created by the military regime to replace the previous system, under which workers enjoyed job security based on time of service. The FGTS is a type of forced savings for workers, paid monthly by employers. On the FGTS see Vera Ferrante, *FGTS: ideologia e repressão* (São Paulo: Ática, 1978) e Maria Inês Rosa, “A indústria brasileira na década de 60: as transformações nas relações de trabalho e a estabilidade” (Master dissertation, Campinas: Universidade Estadual de Campinas, 1982). For a recent study see Maya Damasceno Valeriano, “O processo de precarização das relações de trabalho e a legislação trabalhista: o fim da estabilidade no emprego e o FGTS” (Masters dissertation, Niterói: Universidade Federal Fluminense, 2008).

36. São Paulo’s suburbs of Santo André, São Bernardo do Campo and São Caetano, collectively known as ABC, were Brazil’s most important industrial production area during the military regime.

37. For a recent bibliographic summary study about the new unionism, see: Oliveira and Ladosky, 2014.

38. The best study is that of Batistoni, 2010.

39. See also, by the same author, “Nas origens do ‘Novo Sindicalismo’: o maio de 59, 68 e 78 na indústria automobilística”, in: Rodrigues, 1999.

40. Santos is the most important port city in Brazil and Cubatão is a neighboring industrial city on the coast of São Paulo state. The Baixada Fluminense is a vast region of working class suburbs to the north of Rio de Janeiro, along the northwestern edge of Guanabara Bay. Niterói is the city located across the bay from Rio.

41. The report of the Peasant Truth Commission is available at: <http://r1.ufrjr.br/cpda/blog/2015/01/21/relatorio-da-comissao-camponesa-da-verdade-esta-disponivel-para-download/>. Accessed 10 December 2015.

42. See for example Felipe Ribeiro (2015).

43. An important and inspirational exception is Elisabeth Lobo, *A classe operária tem dois sexos. Trabalho, dominação e resistência*, 2a ed. (São Paulo: Editora da Fundação Perseu Abramo, 2011).

44. Although it is not the focus of his interesting study, Pedro Campos touches on labor relations in civil construction during the dictatorship. See *Estranhas catedrais. As empreiteiras brasileiras e a Ditadura Civil-Militar* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora da UFF/Faperj, 2014). For a pioneering analyses of oil workers during the dictatorship see Vinícius Caldeira Brant (ed.). *Paulínia: Petróleo e Política* (Campinas: Sindicato dos Petroleiros de Campinas e Paulínia; São Paulo: CEBRAP, 1990).

45. The special issue of *Revista Mundos do Trabalho* 6 (11) (2014) on “Trabalhadores e ditadura,” organized by Antonio Luigi Negro, Larissa Rosa Corrêa, and Paulo Fontes sought to reduce this gap by gathering a group of works that reflect broad regional and thematic diversity.

46. There are few specific studies on Contagem strike. See, for instance, Edgard Leite Oliveira, “*Conflito social, memória e experiência: as greves dos metalúrgicos de Contagem em 1968*” (Master dissertation, Belo Horizonte: Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais, 2010); Magda de Almeida Neves, *Trabalho e cidadania: as trabalhadoras de Contagem* (Petrópolis: Vozes, 1994). For a more recent and promising perspective, see the current Carolina Dellamore’s PhD project on metalworkers of Contagem in the 1960s and 70s.

47. These topics have been analysed by Cibele Saliba Rizek, “*Osasco: 1968, a Experiência de um Movimento*” (Master dissertation, São Paulo Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo, 1988); Roque Aparecido da Silva, “A Greve de 1968 em Osasco,” in *Rebeldes e Contestadores—1968, Brasil, França e Alemanha*, eds. Marco Aurélio Garcia and Maria Alice Vieira (São Paulo: Editora Fundação Perseu Abramo, 2008); Orlando Miranda, “*Sindicato e Classe Operária: História do Sindicato dos Metalúrgicos de Osasco*” (Livre docência thesis, São Paulo: Universidade de São Paulo, 1987) and Ricardo Antunes and Marcelo Ridenti, “Operários e estudantes contra a Ditadura: 1968 no Brasil”. *Mediações* 12(2) 2007: 78–89.

48. The concept of “structural insecurity” originated in the work of Mike Savage, “Class and labour history,” in Lee Hermma Van Voss and Marcel van der Linden, *Class and other Identities: Gender, Religion and Ethnicity in the Writing of European Labour History* (Oxford: Bergham Books, 2002).

49. One example is the law that guaranteed pension and retirement rights for rural workers, via decree no. 69.919, issued by the Médici government on January 11, 1972. Law no. 5.859, from December 11, 1972, granted some labor rights to domestic workers.

50. See Dabat and Rogers (2012); Montenegro (2013).

51. See Relatório do GT Trabalhadores da CNV (2014) at: <https://trabalhadoresgtcnv.wordpress.com/>. Accessed 10 December 2015.

52. One of the few studies that take this approach is that of Frank Meyer, “Cidades-empresa numa cadeia produtiva transnacional: dimensões sociais e ambientais da produção de alumínio em Porto Trombetas, Brasil, e Årdal, Noruega,” *Revista Mundos do Trabalho* 6 (11), (2014): 107–27.

53. Antoine Acker, “‘O maior incêndio do planeta’: como a Volkswagen e o regime militar brasileiro acidentalmente ajudaram a transformar a Amazônia em uma arena política global,” *Revista Brasileira de História* 34:68 (2014) and Thomas Rogers, *The Deepest Wounds: A Labor and Environmental History of Sugar in Northeast Brazil* (Chapel Hill, NC, 2010).

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