

international review of social history

Articles

- 1 Transnational Radicals: Labour Dissent and Political Activism in Detroit and Turin (1950–1970)
Nicola Pizzolato
- 31 Establishing Distinctions: Unemployment versus Vagrancy in Austria from the Late Nineteenth Century to 1938
Sigrid Wadauer
- 71 Friendly Societies, Commercial Insurance, and the State in Sickness Risk Coverage: The Case of Spain (1880–1944)
Jerònia Pons Pons and Margarita Vilar Rodríguez
- 103 Starving Strikers and the Limits of the “Humanitarian Discovery of Hunger” in Late Victorian Britain
Andy Croll

Review Essay

- 133 “Shall I Compare Thee ... ?” Problems of Comparative Historical Analysis
Michael Hanagan

- 147 Book Reviews
165 Bibliography
193 Resumés
195 Zusammenfassungen
197 Resúmenes

Corrigendum

- 199 “Out in the Open in a Threatening World”: The Scottish Churches’ Industrial Mission 1960–1980
Ronald Johnston and Elaine McFarland

- 201 Notes on Contributors

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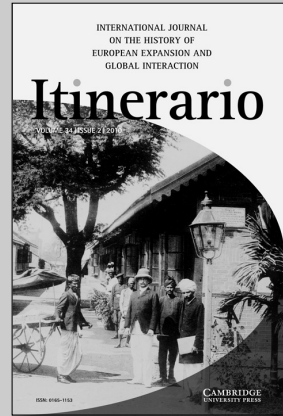
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ILO Histories

Essays on the International Labour Organization and Its Impact
on the World During the Twentieth Century

Bern, Berlin, Bruxelles, Frankfurt am Main, New York, Oxford, Wien, 2010.

539 pp., 1 graph

International and Comparative Social History. Vol. 12

Issued by the International Institute of Social History Amsterdam

General Editor: Marcel van der Linden

ISBN 978-3-0343-0516-7 hb.

sFr. 105.- / E 72.40 / E* 74.50 / E 67.70 / £ 60.90 / US-\$ 104.95*

* includes VAT – valid for Germany ** includes VAT – valid for Austria

In 2009, the International Labour Organization (ILO) celebrated its ninetieth anniversary. The First World War and the revolutionary wave it provoked in Russia and elsewhere were powerful inspirations for the founding of the ILO. There was a growing understanding that social justice, in particular by improving labour conditions, was an essential precondition for universal peace. Since then, the ILO has seen successes and set-backs; it has been ridiculed and praised. Much has been written about the ILO; there are semi-official histories and some critical studies on the organization's history have recently been published. Yet, further source-based critical and comprehensive analyses of the organization's origins and development are still lacking. The present collection of eighteen essays is an attempt to change this unsatisfactory situation by complementing those histories that already exist, exploring new topics, and offering new perspectives. It is guided by the observation that the ILO's history is not primarily about «elaborating beautiful texts and collecting impressive instruments for ratification» but about effecting «real change and more happiness in peoples' lives».

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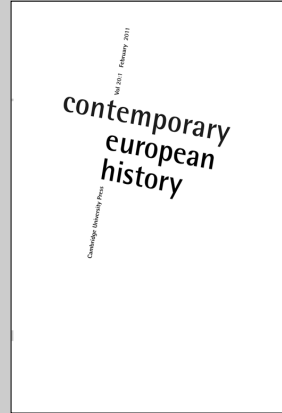
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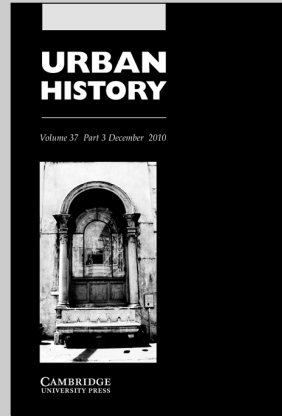
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