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Waves in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries

Edited by Leopold H. Haimson and Charles Tilly

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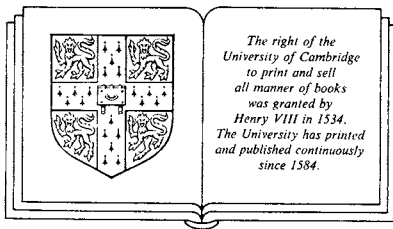
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# Strikes, wars, and revolutions in an international perspective

Strike waves in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries

*Edited by*

LEOPOLD H. HAIMSON  
CHARLES TILLY



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## Preface

Most of the contributions to this volume have been drawn, in revised form, from papers originally presented at an international colloquium in comparative labor history held in Paris in June 1982, under the sponsorship of the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, and from the discussions to which these contributions gave rise. The major object of the participants in this colloquium was to discuss, in a comparative perspective, the patterns of continuity and change in industrial labor conflicts in major industrialized countries before, during, and in the immediate aftermath of the First World War, and to explore the similarities and differences in these patterns of labor unrest and their underlying dynamics, with particular emphasis on the application for this purpose of quantitative methods. The participants included specialists in labor history and in the application of quantitative techniques to the analysis of industrial labor conflicts from seven countries: Austria, France, the Federal Republic of Germany, Great Britain, Italy, the United States, and the USSR. (Their involvement was supported, in most cases, by research institutions and learned societies of their countries of origin.)

At the conclusion of this colloquium, most of the participants expressed the desire to pursue jointly certain of the major substantive and analytic problems addressed in its proceedings, and in particular to explore further the possibilities of analyzing them in a comparative perspective through the application of quantitative methods. An international working group was created for this purpose, and assigned the task of designing and launching a cooperative project to further these objectives. To assist the implementation of this project, an international cooperative framework was established through the conclusion of accords involving the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme (Paris), the International Research and Exchanges Board (New York), the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, and the eventual cooperation of the Friedrich Ebert and Feltrinelli Foundations. The tasks pursued by this Project of date include:

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1. The creation of an international data bank to make available, in computer readable form, the statistical data on industrial labor conflicts recorded in the official and other major sources for the seven countries eventually encompassed in our Project design (Austro-Hungary, France, Great Britain, Italy, Germany, Imperial Russia, and the United States) from the inception of these sources (usually in the late nineteenth century) through the years of the First World War and of its immediate aftermath. For each of the countries concerned, data are to be provided on the overall intensity of industrial labor conflicts, as well as on their causes, durations, and outcomes, at the finest available level of aggregation (by branch of industry and/or geographical jurisdiction), along with major objective indices for the branches of industry and work forces for which these strike data were presented. The magnetic tapes on which these data are being recorded will be distributed at cost by the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme along with appropriate documentation for their use, to existing data banks as well as to interested individual scholars.

2. The organization, under the sponsorship of the Project, of other colloquia in the field of comparative labor history. In addition to our 1982 colloquium, the following meetings have been held to date, or are currently planned:

a. A colloquium convened in Cortona, Italy, in June 1986, under the sponsorship of the Feltrinelli Foundation, in cooperation with the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, the International Research and Exchanges Board, the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, and the USSR Academy of Sciences. The proceedings of this colloquium were devoted to more detailed discussions of patterns and dynamics of labor unrest during the period of the First World War and its immediate aftermath. The papers presented included qualitative as well as quantitative analyses of patterns of industrial labor conflicts in major European countries during these years, of the pressures and dislocations induced by the war that contributed to these labor conflicts, and of the roles played by certain of the major actors drawn into these labor conflicts and in the efforts at their organization and eventual resolution: employers, trade unions and other labor organizations, and the agencies of the state. But the most distinctive feature of this colloquium was the emphasis laid on the presentation of case studies of particular cities, regions, and branches of industry, in each of these belligerent countries that were beset during these years by particularly intense labor unrest. These case studies were discussed in a comparative perspective in an effort to bring out the similarities and differences that distinguished the dynamics of industrial labor conflicts in these epicenters of labor unrest.

b. A colloquium held in the Federal Republic of Germany in the spring of 1989, under the sponsorship of the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, which was devoted to analyses, in greater depth and longer term historical perspective, of the revolutionary and protorevolutionary situations that surfaced in a number

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of European countries at the end of the First World War in the interaction between industrial workers and other major political and social actors.

c. An international conference to be convened in Leningrad in 1990 under the sponsorship of the Institute of History of the USSR of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, which will pursue these themes in Russia's historical experience, and in particular the analysis of the dynamics of labor unrest, in the context of the "krizis verkhov" and "krizis nizov" – the crises that unfolded in the upper and lower strata of the Russian body politic – from the turn of the century up to the October Revolution.

3. The joint publication program, which has been designed in connection with these activities of the Project, includes:

a. The publication, in revised form, of the proceedings of the international colloquia listed above. (Those of the Cortona colloquium of June 1986 are to appear in an English language volume, as part of the *Annali* of the Feltrinelli Foundation, in a joint publication with the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme.)

b. Critical analyses of the major statistical sources used in the creation of the Project's data bank on industrial labor conflicts, contributed by specialists in the labor history of the various countries concerned. A volume incorporating Russian language versions of these contributions has recently been published by the Institute of History of the USSR of the Soviet Academy of Sciences. An English language version, being prepared under the sponsorship of the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, is to include statistical tables presenting the aggregate data recorded for the Project's data bank about the intensity and character of industrial labor conflicts, as well as the objective indices provided about the branches of industry and geographical areas for which they were recorded. Certain of the data presented, in particular for France and Imperial Russia, have not previously been available in any published form, and include aggregations newly constituted for the Project's data bank on the basis of strike-by-strike data. A morphological analysis of the aggregate data presented in the major sources for each of the countries concerned will seek through the application of descriptive quantitative techniques to regroup the original aggregations, in an effort to suggest certain criteria to be used in comparative analyses of the indices they provide on the intensity and character of industrial labor conflicts.

The contributions incorporated in this volume have thus been conceived as the first of a series of efforts to assist the further development of studies in the field of comparative labor history, and in particular to further the application of quantitative techniques to the analysis of industrial labor conflicts in a comparative perspective. We have listed these activities here partly to bring them to the attention of interested scholars, but also to express our gratitude to the specialists from various countries who are participating in this truly international cooperative effort, as well as to those individuals and groups whose support has made it possible.

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In this connection, we owe a special debt of gratitude to Messrs. Clemens Heller and Maurice Aymard of the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, whose intelligence, generosity, and tolerance saw us through our first stumbling steps. We also need to express our appreciation to I.D. Koval'chenko, V.I. Boykin, and their associates at the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, to Wesley Fisher and his colleagues at the International Research and Exchanges Board, and to the staffs of the Friedrich Ebert and Feltrinelli Foundations, all of whom have contributed at various stages to the fulfillment of our Project's research objectives. Finally I wish to express my personal gratitude to Jan Sammer, Marianne Dumont, and Laura Elwyn for their respective contributions to the preparation of the manuscript of this volume.

LEOPOLD H. HAIMSON