

## Abstract

Renzo Ramírez Bacca, *History of Labour on a Coffee Plantation: La Aurora Plantation, Tolima-Colombia, 1882-1982*. Avhandlingar från Historiska Institutionen i Göteborg 31 (Göteborg 2002). 226 pages. ISBN 91-88614-41-7; ISSN 1100-6781.

This thesis researches the administrative-labour regime on a Colombian coffee plantation. The study analyses the modes of labour participation, the administrative systems, and the roles of individuals and families of labourers working in the coffee crops. The objective is to explain the administrative-labour changes and the reasons put forth for the use of the labour force tied to the parcelled land plantation system.

The author selected the La Aurora coffee plantation in the municipality of Libano (Tolima, Colombia). This choice is due to the plantation's historic importance from 1882 –the year in which the land began to be cultivated agriculturally– until 1982 –when coffee-growing was abandoned at the local level.

The internal use of the labour force and the plantation's administrative regime are examined using a diachronic analysis. The research identifies and studies the processes and conditions of an external order that affected administrative and labour relations. It also analyses the response by the historical actors –plantation owners, administrators and workers– in their endeavours to maintain the equilibrium and stability of the social-productive system. Furthermore, it studies the changes that took place concerning the labour functions of the “campesino” families involved in the plantation regime.

The results of this study show that the evolution of the agrarian structure does not always represent socio-economic development of a global nature or linear and progressive historical evolution. In this case, the process and its transformation are the result of dispositions of a local nature that adapted to the impact caused by external conditions. These conditions were technological, political-social and institutional.

*Key words:* plantation, agricultural work, tenancy farming, coffee-growers, coffee enterprise, family parcels, women in coffee-growing, labour relations, rural administrative systems, tenant farmers, landowners, Colombia.