

Introduction

Migrant Actors Worldwide: Capitalist Interests, State Regulations, and Left-Wing Strategies

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Abstract

In this chapter, the authors first provide a brief summary of migrations worldwide. They outline the inability of governments to understand the demand for labour in their societies and industries as well as migrant strategies to access job options. Further, they examine the role of “the state” in its manifold historic appearances as empire, multi-ethnic conglomerate, or nation and juxtapose the concept of citizens with rights to elite practices of movability of populations. The authors trace these patterns into the distant past and then turn to capital investment strategies – whether privately- or state-owned – and labour and working-class organizations accepting or challenging the power of capital. Both insertion into labour markets and trade unions’ responses require analysis of segmented labour markets and job segregation by colour of skin. In conclusion, they discuss the agency of migrant and non-migrant working-men and -women.

Keywords

capital – empire – labour – labour organization – state – workers’ agency

In the early decades of the twenty-first century, few topics are as politically charged as “international migration,” and seemingly unrelated, the concept of “the superrich.”* However, if the individualized catchword “superrich” is

* Most chapters in this volume were first discussed at the 56th Conference of the International Conference of Labour and Social History (ITLH) in Linz, Austria, 23–25 September 2021, organized by Susan Zimmermann (Vienna), Lukas Neissl (Vienna), and Dirk Hoerder (Vienna), with Rolf Bauer (Vienna), Josef Ehmer (Vienna), Simon Goeke (Munich), and Marcel van der Linden (Amsterdam).

replaced by “large-scale profit-yielding capital investment strategies” the connection to migration is evident: Capital is being moved to where low-wage labour is available, migrants move – often in large numbers – to where investments and/or wealth accumulated due to specific historic factors create a demand for labour. In contrast, little attention is given to left-wing strategies and, if any, the theme is “the decline of the unions and the left.” Over the last two centuries, international wage differentials have grown enormously and, with labour markets divided into more or less segregated segments, large numbers of migrants have been channelled into low-wage sectors and whole segments of resident working classes have been dislocated. These processes have been exacerbated by neoliberal capitalist economies, promulgated by Chicago economists, and supported by state governments since the 1970s.¹

1 Research Approaches to Labour Migration and Capital Investment Strategies

In this volume, we combine – through case studies employing multiple methods – analyses of migrations worldwide in response to capital formation, concentration, and investment or, vice versa, migrations inducing mobility of capital.² Global coverage and local “labour supply,” a technical term for men and women charting routes to gain their livelihoods, requires a combination of global and micro-history, the teamwork of specialists for the many different social formations and labour regimes, as well as interdisciplinary approaches concerning migration data and theories, economic history, theories of capital generation and accumulation, the study of labour market practices and assessment of labour market theories, as well as rural and industrial studies.

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- 1 This strain of thought emerged from the Austrian School of Economics’ emphasis on individualism, particularly by Friedrich Hayek, and was institutionalized as the Mont Pèlerin Society in 1947. Its main proponent, the University of Chicago economist Milton Friedman, postulated a “natural unemployment rate” in 1951. The scholars – or ideologists – rigorously opposed Keynesian economics and the *ordoliberal* concept of combining societal with market factors to achieve a “social market economy.”
 - 2 In the frame of the series “Studies in Global Migration History” this continues approaches taken in Donna R. Gabaccia and Dirk Hoerder, eds., *Connecting Seas and Connected Ocean Rims: Indian, Atlantic, and Pacific Oceans and China Seas Migrations from the 1830s to the 1930s* (Leiden: Brill, 2011); Jan Lucassen and Leo Lucassen, eds., *Globalising Migration History: The Eurasian Experience (16th-21st Centuries)* (Leiden: Brill, 2014); Dirk Hoerder and Amarjit Kaur, eds., *Proletarian and Gendered Mass Migrations: A Global Perspective on Continuities and Discontinuities from the 19th to the 21st Century* (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

It recognizes the global inequalities of power and economic development and migrants' roles in mediating agency between labour markets and life prospects in unequal segments of the globe.³ The need to globalize and historicize transdisciplinary labour history has been widely recognized.⁴ Furthermore, the global-local approach also demands research into the role of "the state" whether national, provincial, municipal, or rural, as well as into "the left" whether unions, political parties, or revolutionary organizations. Agency-centred and anthropological approaches attempt to undertake careful analyses of workingmen's and -women's strategies, interactions, and everyday experiences in larger economic-societal-political frames: While events and structures require attention, the emphasis is on processes – on moving individuals, families, or groups. The spaces in or through which migrants move involve webs of social relations, some of them local, others ephemeral in transit, and yet others trans-continental or global.⁵

In this frame, the authors who contributed to this volume combine contemporary and historical perspectives. They analyse income inequalities and structures and mechanisms of exploitation within and between regions and political superstructures. Mobile capital and capitalist strategies force resident workers – "native-born" – and their organizations to re-act or, strategically, pro-act. In an innovative approach, several essays study colonizer-imposed work regimes intended to further the accumulation of profit in the imperialist cores by mobilization and exploitation of workingmen and -women in subjugated societies and emphasize how elites have pursued and adapted these labour regimes to post-colonial economies. While the essays mainly focus on developments from the nineteenth to the twenty-first century, we also refer to the more distant past in this introduction.

Given the global extent of migrations, it is clear that researchers need to decentre "nation" and "state."⁶ The still widely used Euro-centric construct of

3 Marcel van der Linden, "Enjeux pour une histoire mondiale du travail," *Le Mouvement Social* 241, no. 4 (2012): 3–29; Christian G. de Vito, "History Without Scale: The Micro-Spatial Perspective," *Past and Present* 242, Supplement 14 (2019): 348–372; Christian G. de Vito and Anne Gerritsen, "Micro-Spatial Histories of Labour: Towards a New Global History," in *Micro-Spatial Histories of Global Labour*, ed. Christian G. de Vito and Anne Gerritsen (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 1–28; in general, see Sebastian Conrad, *What is Global History?* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2016).

4 Concerning Marxist approaches, see Marcel van der Linden and Karl Heinz Roth, eds., *Beyond Marx: Theorising the Global Labour Relations of the Twenty-First Century* (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

5 This section is based on Christiane Harzig and Dirk Hoerder with Donna Gabaccia, *What is Migration History?* (Cambridge: Polity, 2009).

6 The literature on the emergence of the nation-and-state combination is extensive. See, for the once new, now traditional approach, Karl W. Deutsch, *Nationalism and*

“nation-state” as developed since the French Revolution and Napoleonic imperialism rests on a contradiction in terms: “State” is conceived as treating each and every inhabitant as a citizen that is equal before the law, whereas “nation” privileges the culture of some citizens, usually a majority, above that of others labelled “minorities” (see Chapter 2 in this volume). This contradiction is not only exacerbated by the fact that state governments and population planners have never considered all inhabitants as having “citizen” status but also that they considered whole population segments as internally portable or even exportable. Methodological nationalism, as will be discussed below, has marred much of the research ever since its emergence in the nineteenth century.

New approaches since the 1970s have discerned the manifold interactions below and above states, whether self-labelled as nations, empires or others.⁷ Migrants – with the exception of political or war-time refugees – never departed from a generic nation or overarching state but from the respective localities and regions of their socializations. They relocated (and continue to do so) to specific perceived job options in another locality or region.⁸ This requires the study of differentiated and distinct socio-economic geographies, of social and mental spaces.⁹

Social Communication: An Inquiry into the Foundations of Nationality (Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1953). Benedict Anderson undercut all essentialist constructions of “nation” in *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983); Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986) and Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism: A Critical Survey of Recent Theories of Nations and Nationalism* (London: Routledge, 1998); Tony Judt with Timothy D. Snyder, *Thinking the Twentieth Century* (London: Heinemann, 2012).

7 Pieter C. Emmer and Magnus Mörner, eds., *European Expansion and Migration: Essays on the Intercontinental Migration from Africa, Asia and Europe* (New York: Berg, 1992); Dirk Hoerder, *Cultures in Contact: World Migrations in the Second Millennium* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002); Jan Lucassen, Leo Lucassen, and Patrick Manning, eds., *Migration History in World History: Multidisciplinary Approaches* (Leiden: Brill, 2010); Ulbe Bosma, Gjis Kessler, and Leo Lucassen, eds., *Migration and Membership Regimes in Global and Historical Perspective: An Introduction* (Leiden: Brill, 2013); Hein de Haas, Stephen Castles, and Mark J. Miller, *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World* (London: Red Globe Press, 2020).

8 For early formulations, see Julianna Puskas, “Transatlantic Migration from a Hungarian Village on the Basis of Oral Testimonies,” in *The Press of Labor Migrants in Europe and North America, 1880s to 1930s*, ed. Dirk Hoerder and Christiane Harzig (Bremen: Universität Bremen, 1985), 59–70; Samuel L. Baily, “The Village-Outward Approach to the Study of Social Networks: A Case Study of the Agonesi Diaspora Abroad, 1885–1989,” *Studi Emigrazione* 19, no. 105 (1992): 43–67.

9 It is impossible to cite all research relevant to our topic globally. We are grateful to many colleagues for advice and references.

Given the fact that men and women, sometimes with their children, move translocally and transculturally, the concept of “transnational,” which, at the time of its formulation, was an important step to transcend the fixation on borders and “container states,”¹⁰ never captured migrants’ local-parental socialization and specific selection of a destination within family economies.¹¹ Viewed generically, migrants move within circuits of macro-regional or global investment and profit maximization strategies to increase or maximize the rewards for their labour and capabilities. States have had – and continue to have – only limited influence on both migrants’ decisions and capitalist strategies. “Empire” is a catch-all term for power politics, monopolies, corporations, settlers armed with superiority ideologies as well as dispossessed people internally and peoples externally. However, a stateside army- and navy-supported self-positioning as empire advantages capital within the state and, often, out-migrants such as imperial personnel, planters, and missionaries.¹² Historically, the eighteenth-century colonizing world – or worldwide – wars of the seaborne Dutch, British and French elites for territories and labouring populations initiated the global divisions of labour.¹³ “Empire” and “imperial” are labels that subsume violence, mutilation, rape, exploitation and dehumanization committed by the power-wielding personnel.¹⁴ In the imperial-military expansion of the nineteenth century, as well as in the unequal power relationships of the present, some

10 Nina Glick Schiller, Linda Basch, and Cristina Blanc-Szanton, eds., *Towards a Transnational Perspective on Migration: Race, Class, Ethnicity and Nationalism Reconsidered* (New York: New York Academy of Sciences, 1992), especially Nina Glick Schiller, Linda Basch, and Cristina Blanc-Szanton, “Transnationalism: A New Analytic Framework for Understanding Migration,” 1–24; Dirk Hoerder, “Transnational – Transregional – Translocal: Transcultural,” in *Handbook of Research Methods in Migration*, ed. Carlos Vargas-Silva (Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar, 2012), 69–91.

11 The seminal formulation of family economies was Louise A. Tilly and Joan W. Scott, *Women, Work and Family* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1987).

12 Migrants’ decision-making in the frame of family economies is well-studied for labour migrants. In imperial states, the English segment of Great Britain in particular, urban upper middle class, rural gentry, and nobility families sent non-inheriting surplus sons into the (colonizing) army and the colonized economies.

13 For the global historical frame, see John R. McNeill and Kenneth Pomeranz, eds., “Production, Destruction, and Connection, 1750–Present,” in *The Cambridge World History*, vol. 7 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015). A concept of acquiring labouring populations, “manpowering,” in the medieval world – a Eurocentric designation – has been developed by James Belich, *The World the Plague Made: The Black Death and the Rise of Europe* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2022).

14 Caroline Elkins, *Legacy of Violence: A History of the British Empire* (New York: Knopf, 2022). Case studies for particular cases exist for all empires, whether traditional overseas colonizing or continentally annexing.

states provide “investment incentives” through low taxation of profits and high exploitability of, especially migrant, workingmen and -women. Migrant information networks react to such impositions, whether of low wages or poor working conditions, or both (see, among others, Chapter 8 in this volume).¹⁵

In the present high-income and high-consuming societies, it is low-wage sectors that deliver all of the basic needs: food production and preparation, textiles and clothing, hospital work and health/child/old-age care, housing and other construction, and delivery of food and consumer items. “It so happens” – the veiling term for “this involves intentionally” – that in many of these sectors women’s work dominates, which is neglected by states-economies-societies.¹⁶ The neoliberal policies in the frame of globalization have vastly expanded reserve labour pools, transient industries, and transient workers. To maintain this pool, the global opening of borders for low-wage workingmen and -women requires sending states to support the export of labour, i.e., in terms of political theory, the export of citizens: European empires did so in the nineteenth century, whereas North African states, Pakistan, Bangladesh, the Philippines, Central American states and others do so in the present. The receiving states, in turn, maintain highly stratified, segmented, and segregated labour markets and structurally hierarchize their resident populations over migrants.¹⁷ The core tenet of democratic governance, equality before the law, is abandoned when maintenance of the reserve labour pool is the goal as this relies on intended globally unequal – in modern parlance “asymmetrical” – power relations and economic investments.¹⁸

In this volume, we use a broad definition of migration, including free and unfree labour, temporary and permanent migrants, as well as the full variety of legal status assignments from “classic” labour migrants via refugees or, legally more circumscribed, asylum seekers to temporary migrants and undocumented ones. Since no state or society wants to permanently support refugees, all have to enter the respective labour markets, either immediately after arrival or at a later point in time. To cite a few cases, Palestinian refugees, for

15 For the contemporary unequal distribution of wealth, see Oxfam, *The Inequality Virus: Bringing Together a World Torn Apart by Coronavirus Through a Fair, Just and Sustainable Economy* (Oxfam: Oxford, 2021).

16 Dirk Hoerder, Elise van Nederveen Meerkerk, and Silke Neunsinger, eds., *Towards a Global History of Domestic and Caregiving Workers* (Leiden: Brill, 2015).

17 For an early formulation of labour market theory, see F. C. Valkenburg and A. M. C. Vissers, “Segmentation of the Labour Market: The Theory of the Dual Labour Market – The Case of the Netherlands,” *Netherlands Journal of Sociology* 16 (1980): 155–170.

18 For the emergence of world-systems analyses and the relation of power politics and racialization, see Chapter 3 in this volume.

stateside political reasons, have had to live in camps for a long time and some have developed strategies to de-camp; Rohingya refugees from Myanmar, 2017, are being shunted to remote and secluded locations; refugees from Central American US-supported dictatorial regimes are often being pushed back by US southern border forces. “Classic” labour migrants move for economic reasons “pure and simple,” they make decisions concerning their life-courses. Those in Western Europe have been styled “guestworkers” in the second half of the twentieth century. While the question might be posed concerning which culture makes its “guests” work, the idea behind the term’s invention was political: “Migrants” stay while “guests” are expected to leave. In addition, the same type of migrants, up to the defeat of fascism – German, Austrian, Italian, or any other variant – in 1945, had been called “foreign workers” and, thus, the label could not be used again. While the label “guestworker” is increasingly criticized in German-language research, where it originated, it has received international scholarly acceptance.¹⁹

Self-decided migrant workers, who are usually designated “free migrants,” depart under – often extreme – economic constraints and, instead of being free, these men and women have been and are being coerced out of unsupported “home” societies. They are, in a way, a homeless social group, an exportable part of a population. Most head for regions of (investment-created) job options that are perceived as better than those in their society of birth – even though they may still be highly exploitative. Migrants, who – in their own words – move “to bread,” develop flexible life plans and pursue multiple strategies: If means and goals as well as stateside regulations permit, permanent emigration, and immigration – individually or as a family – is one potential option. Others decide to move in stages to the next income-providing labour market, then to a sea- or air-port location, then to the intended temporary or final destination. They may move in sequence (“chain migration”) with early arrivals’ savings financing the subsequent trips of kin and friends. Again, others decide for commuting in a wide range of temporal rhythms, depending on the distance between their workplace and home, the job requirements, and the costs involved. (Potential) migrants develop strategies to negotiate, sidestep, or alter migration regulations (see Chapter 20 in this volume). They compare wage levels and working conditions across destinations: In the past,

19 Cindy Hahamovitch, “Creating Perfect Immigrants: Guestworkers of the World in Historical Perspective,” *Labor History* 44, no. 1 (2003): 69–94. For a recent critical analysis in the German context, see Veronika Kourabas, *Die Anderen ge-brauchen: Eine rassistischtheoretische Analyse von “Gastarbeit” im migrationsgesellschaftlichen Deutschland* (Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag, 2021).

for example, potential South Italian migrants compared working conditions in Montreal, New York, Buenos Aires and elsewhere,²⁰ Polish migrants from Chicago to Sydney,²¹ and Chinese workers between the French and British colonizer realms (see Chapter 8 in this volume).

The decisions of migrants about their lives and the destinations at which they expect or hope to realize their aspirations jointly with official data on the scale of global migrations – probably involving considerable undercount – highlight the ineffectiveness of nation-state approaches. We will outline the extensive theoretical and empirical fallacies of the concept of the “nation-state” below. “Methodological nationalism” as the unquestioned positing of the nation-state as a “natural” base of social, political, economic, and cultural developments has been critiqued for over two decades, at first in a concise theoretical summary by Andreas Wimmer and Nina Glick Schiller. We expand this critique by including analyses of empires, “methodological imperialism,” and by designating the emphasis on bordered (state) territories as “methodological territorialism.” We add that the positing of “state” – from small units such as Fiji, where imperial powers once “harvested” workers, to imperial ones such as Russia or Britain – comprises “methodological top-down institution-centeredness.” Furthermore, the research presented in this volume emphasizes the historical continuities of labour regimes notwithstanding seemingly major changes in political organization, whether from imperial to Soviet Russia or from colonized to independent societies. The combination of labour and migration histories permits refinements of analyses while the inclusion of the major economic actors, those with the power to determine investment flows – whether nineteenth-century plantation owners or late twentieth-century hedge fund managers – permits comprehensive analyses of political-economic interrelations. The separation of politics-policies and economics, once combined in the field of *Politische Ökonomie*, political economy, was a Cold War tool to

20 Samuel Baily, *Immigrants in the Lands of Promise: Italians in Buenos Aires and New York City, 1870–1914* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999); Donna R. Gabaccia and Fraser M. Ottanelli, eds., *Italian Workers of the World: Labor, Migration and the Making of Multi-Ethnic States* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001); Donna R. Gabaccia and Franca Iacovetta, eds., *Women, Gender, and Transnational Lives: Italian Workers of the World* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002).

21 Ewa Morawska, “Labor Migrations of Poles in the Atlantic World Economy, 1880–1914,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 31, no. 2 (1989): 237–272; Adam Walaszek, “Labor Diasporas in Comparative Perspective: Polish and Italian Migrant Workers in the Atlantic World between the 1870s and the 1920s,” in *The Social Construction of Diversity: Recasting the Master Narrative of Industrial Nations*, ed. Christiane Harzig and Danielle Juteau (New York: Berghahn, 2003), 152–176.

juxtapose a (politically) “free West” to an (economically) authoritarian “East.” The “South” and its struggles to liberate itself (rather: themselves) from the imperial segments of “the West” was not part of this ideological construct. It was, however, part of the resident and migrant workers’ lives.²²

In this introduction, after a summary of migrations worldwide, we will first outline the inability of governments to understand the demand for labour in their very own societies and industries. Secondly, we will examine the role of “the state” in its manifold historic appearances as empire, multi-ethnic conglomerate, or nation and its moveable populations. Next, we will outline capital investment strategies – whether privately- or state-owned – and labour and working-class organizations accepting or countering the power of capital. In conclusion, we will discuss the agency of migrant and non-migrant workingmen and -women.²³

Globally, international migration of all kinds involves nearly 258 million people or 3.4 percent of the world’s population (2017 data). The number of internal migrations is – and generally has been – higher. Nearly one-third of the international migrants live in Asian countries (79.5 million in a total population of 4.5 billion) or in Europe (77.8 million in a total population of 745 million).²⁴ Of the migrants, women account for between 42.5 percent (Asia) and 52 percent (Europe). (See Figure 1.1).

2 Labour Demand and Migration in the Present

In the last decade, labour demand and supply have been at the forefront of both regional and global crises. Declining populations in some states and a high percentage of job-seeking young people in others have been and are a

22 Andreas Wimmer and Nina Glick Schiller, “Methodological Nationalism and Beyond: Nation-Building, Migration and the Social Sciences,” *Global Networks* 2, no. 4 (2002): 301–334; Andreas Wimmer and Nina Glick Schiller, “Methodological Nationalism, the Social Sciences, and the Study of Migration: An Essay in Historical Epistemology,” *International Migration Review* 37, no. 3 (2003): 576–610.

23 Given the intensity of research in the last three decades, it is impossible to cite all the relevant literature. We thus refer to two encyclopaedias: Klaus J. Bade, Pieter C. Emmer, Leo Lucassen, and Jochen Oltmer, eds., *The Encyclopedia of European Migration and Minorities: From the Seventeenth Century to the Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Immanuel Ness, gen. ed., *Encyclopedia of Global Human Migration*, 5 vols. (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013).

24 “World Population,” Worldometer, accessed 5 March 2022, <https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/>.

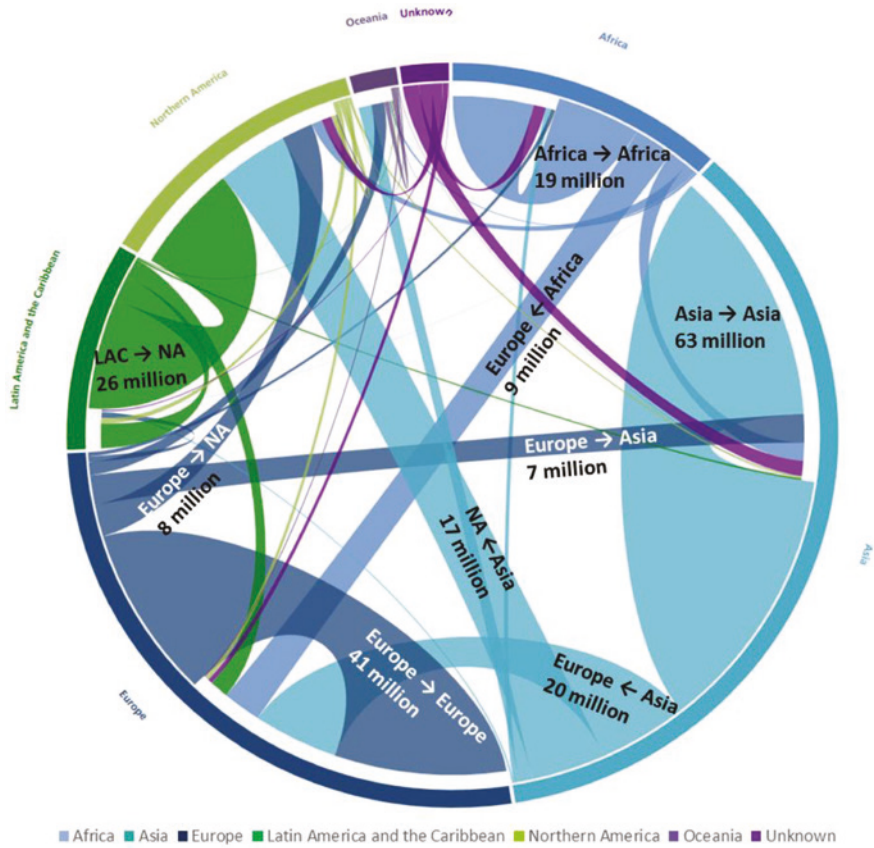


FIGURE 1.1 International migration patterns, 2017, as vectors from origin to destination, by geographical area

Note: NA refers to Northern America, LAC refers to Latin America and the Caribbean

SOURCE: *INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION REPORT 2017* (NEW YORK: UNITED NATIONS, DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS, POPULATION DIVISION, 2017), P. 11, FIGURE 5

preoccupation of governments and employers, whether mid-size companies or large capitalist conglomerates. The war of the Assad family (in power since 1970) against a democratization movement in Syria had dislocated more than half of the country’s population of 18 million by 2015 and sent millions of refugees to neighbouring countries and Western-Southern-Northern Europe. While highly qualified refugees could enter labour markets quickly, if laws permitted, others became workers in sweatshops in Turkey (Türkiye as from 2022) and other countries of the region, with some displacing resident low-wage workers.

Similarly, when in February 2022, the president of the Russian Federation, Putin, declared war on Ukraine, millions of Ukrainian women and children fled, as did perhaps one million opponents of the war in Russia (estimates of late 2022). At the beginning of the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, governments rigorously closed borders to prevent the spreading of the virus through travel. As a result, labour migrants on the move were literally stopped in their tracks, while those at their destinations were often ordered to depart.²⁵

The topic of aliens, i.e., migrants, carrying “alien germs” into healthy societies had been an anti-immigrant slogan of exclusionists in the late nineteenth-century North Atlantic world.²⁶ Under the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, policymakers and public opinion in the highly developed – and mass-consuming – segments of the world economy suddenly became aware that undervalued and underpaid workers were essential to the functioning of the societies’ economies. No food without distant plantation labour or local slaughterhouse staff, without airfreighting and transoceanic shipping, without migrant truck drivers and local supermarket sales personnel. No healthcare and other care work without immigrant nurses, doctors, and caregivers for infants and children as well as the infirm and aged. In the face of such pressure, politicians decided that the “system-relevant” migrant workers were to be admitted under quickly imposed regulations, often with quarantine at their own cost. Unless migrantized, racialized, and feminized work sectors are integrated into rule-based labour markets, high levels of underpayment and exploitation will remain systemic.²⁷

Throughout history and across the globe, in times of rapid economic development, migrant workingmen and -women from population-exporting states form an essential part of the segmented labour forces in importing states. The latter segregate migrants into 3-D jobs – dirty, dangerous, demeaning – and frame migrants’ status below access to citizenship, usually without rights to political participation or organizations to improve working conditions. In Western Europe’s guestworker period, trade unions and social-democratic, socialist, and communist parties struggled for (some) inclusion, but industrial

25 Katharine Jones, Sanushka Mudaliar, and Nicola Piper, *Locked Down and in Limbo: The Global Impact of COVID-19 on Migrant Worker Rights and Recruitment* (Geneva: International Labour Office, 2021).

26 Alan M. Kraut, *Silent Travelers: Germs, Genes, and the “Immigrant Menace”* (New York: Basic Books, 1994).

27 In the post-Brexit United Kingdom, the anti-immigrant campaign led to a shortage of 50,000 truckdrivers, 5,000 or more slaughterhouse workers, both mainly East European, as well as approximately 100,000 each in the National Health Service and care services, all globally recruited (data from early 2022).

trade unions have been shunted aside by the capital-state complex since Thatcherism and Reaganism. In the oil-producing Arab states and Iran, since the region's economic take-off in the 1970s, the ruling elites had prevented trade union formation. In China, the All-China Federation of Trade Unions is a party organization. In Latin America, the trade union movement is characterized by an enormous degree of heterogeneity. Historically, major trade unions have emerged from above and/or have been integrated into specific national political systems, while independent and autonomous trade unions have often been targeted by repressive capital and state measures. In addition – and comparable to other segments of the globe – a vast proportion of workingmen and -women in the so-called informal sector are traditionally not organized by trade unions.

In Europe, where anti-immigrant sentiments – a kind of updated anti-Semitism – have been growing, large sectors of agricultural food production and its industrial processing rely on more than 5 million migrants, many of them temporary and circular (2020 data): Those from Eastern European societies mostly head for western and northern states, those from North and West Africa mostly for Mediterranean states and France. A large segment is forced to live without documents since the respective governments refuse regularization both of border crossing and legal status. In the EU-28 of 2016, non-regular workers in the agricultural labour force accounted for between 18 and 15 percent of the totals in Italy, Spain, the UK and the Netherlands, and 12 percent in France and Greece.²⁸ In Central Asia, especially Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan, “the state” – or is it a political-economic elite? – forces the populations into internal seasonal migration for cotton harvesting.²⁹ In the People's – or Peoples' – Republic of China (PRC), 285.6 million internal migrants drive the urban economies (2020 data). “Internal” in the PRC covers 9.6 million square kilometres as compared to 4.2 million for all EU member states. While at the beginning of Deng Xiaoping's³⁰ economic reforms of 1979,

28 Johan Fredrik Rye and Karen O'Reilly, eds., *International Labor Migration to Europe's Rural Regions* (London: Routledge, 2021), especially Johan Fredrik Rye and Karen O'Reilly, “New Perspectives on Labor Migration to Europe's Rural Regions,” 3–21; Agricultural and Rural Convention, described as “a platform for organizations working together for good food, good farming and better *rural* policies in the EU,” 2020 data, accessed 5 February 2022, <https://www.arc2020.eu/>.

29 In Uzbekistan, forced cotton harvest labour, of which 65 percent were female and which also included children, was abolished in 2020, according to the International Labour Organization (ILO).

30 Deng, in the early nationalist period, had – like most Chinese foreign students at the time – studied and worked in France under the “Diligent Work-Frugal Study Program” which brought some 4,000 Chinese students to France. Turning to radical politics, he

the number of the mostly rural-urban migrants had stood at 6.6 million (1982), by 2010 it involved 6.5 percent of the total population. Since social welfare and public services, including schools for children, are financed and administered through local *hukou*, migrants from afar cannot access registration. However, on the positive side, the options of the state-capitalist reforms have permitted tens of millions of men and women to lift themselves out of poverty through their own agency.³¹

Turning from the “Global North” to the “Global South,” a division that requires differentiation, similar patterns are evident.³² Singapore and Hong Kong, the former a British colony until 1965 and the latter until 1997, attracted and continue to attract hundreds of thousands of migrants, while Malaysia has done so since pre-colonial times, and the Philippines since the introduction of unregulated “special economic zones” in 1995. At the same time, the Philippine state engages in labour export of men into global shipping and of women into domestic and care work in Europe and North America (see Chapter 23 in this volume). European states were labour-export, people-export regions in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The respective governing elites exclude “surplus” men and women from residence and citizenship.

In India, according to the 2011 Census, some 450 million people were internal migrants, approximately 175 million seasonally and circularly, the others for multi-annual or permanent search of incomes individually or as families. A total of 93 percent of them work in the “informal economy” (see Chapter 6 in this volume) and are thus outside the reach of “typical” rural or industrial unions.³³

continued his education at Sun Yatsen University in Moscow. Deng witnessed poverty when a rival faction in the Chinese Communist Party downgraded him to work for four years at a tractor factory in rural Jiangxi province.

- 31 Ming Lu and Yiran Xia, “Migration in the People’s Republic of China,” Asian Development Bank Institute, Working Paper 593 (Tokyo, 2016), accessed 5 February 2022, <https://www.adb.org/publications/migration-people-republic-china/>; C. Textor, *Migrant Workers in China: Statistics and Facts* (2021), accessed 5 February 2022, <https://www.statista.com/topics/1540/migrant-workers-in-china/>. On worker mobilization before the reforms, see Felix Wemheuer, *A Social History of Maoist China: Conflict and Change, 1949–1976* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 193–277.
- 32 The juxtaposition is a “northern” concept that has not been incorporated in analyses and theorizations from scholarship south of the US border, the Mediterranean, and the Himalayas.
- 33 At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, millions were sent back to their places of origin without any support. Priya Deshinkar, “Structural Violence and Normalising Human Suffering: Labour Migration during the Covid Pandemic in India,” *Journal of South Asian Development* 17, no. 1 (2022): 134–140; Pooja Misra and Jaya Gupta, “Impact of COVID 19 on Indian Migrant Workers: Decoding Twitter Data by Text Mining,” *Indian*

In mineral-rich post-colonizer societies, as in post-apartheid South Africa, governments and mining corporations (usually white-owned international capital) supplemented the internal forced mass migration of workers (of black colour of skin) with in-migration from neighbouring societies. In West Africa, Ghana (self-liberated from British colonizer rule, 1957) attracted foreign workers for its fast-growing economy. By the late 1960s, 830,000 men and women (12.3 percent of the population) had arrived, but when world market prices for groundnuts dropped sharply, the government expelled 214,000 of them. As in similar cases, the government thereby shifted the cost of unemployment to the societies of origin, where, if remittances of each of those expelled had supported a family of five, more than one million men, women and children suffered.³⁴

In the Arab and Iranian oil-extracting and producing economies, migration began around 1900. British, US, and French (“Western”) imperial political tutelage and capital investment regimes induced technical experts and political “advisers” to migrate. When, in 1953, the Persian government led by Swiss-educated Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadegh attempted to change power hierarchies for the benefit of the Iranian state and society, a coup orchestrated by the Western powers’ secret service and oil corporation managers ousted him.³⁵ In the Arab oil-extraction economies, international corporations and

Journal of Labour Economics 64 (2021): 731–747. Public media reports, particularly in *The Guardian* (London) and “Indian Migrant Workers During the COVID-19 Pandemic,” Wikipedia, accessed 7 February 2022, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indian_migrant_workers_during_the_COVID-19_pandemic. In general: Ravi Srivastava, “Labour Migration in India: Recent Trends, Patterns and Policy Issues,” *Indian Journal of Labour Economics* 54, no. 3 (2011): 411–440. We are grateful to Indu Agnihotri at the Centre for Women’s Development Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi, and Silke Neunsinger, Swedish Labour Movement Archives and Library, for references to migration research in India.

34 Hoerder, *Cultures in Contact*, 550–559. Among many others, also see Margaret Peil, “Expulsion of West African Aliens,” *Journal of Modern African Studies* 9, no. 2 (1971): 205–229.

35 One year later, the US Department of State and the CIA ousted the Guatemalan President Jacobo Árbenz Guzmán in a coup because his government intended to nationalize part of the lands, devoted to fruit extraction, of the US-based United Fruit Company (UFC, now: Chiquita Brands International). The UFC (founded 1899) had organized armed interventions in Central America since 1910 and was behind a massacre of approximately 2,000 workers in Colombia in 1928. This capital-worker clash is a theme of Gabriel José García Márquez’ novel *Cien Años de Soledad* (One Hundred Years of Solitude). Under the subsequent right-wing governments, a civil war began, 1960–1996, with approximately 200,000 dead, many killed by government death squads, and a larger number of interstate refugees. Another five years later, 1961, the prime minister of the mineral-rich Democratic Republic of Congo, Patrice Lumumba, was murdered by Congolese secessionist and

regional state elites rearranged profit distribution, and hence a brief export stop in the early 1970s was labelled “oil crisis” rather than “capitalist struggle.” The high demand for crude as well as the investments required and induced mass labour migrations from population-exporting Egypt, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, as well as Southeast Asian states, including women for domestic work. The oil-consuming segment of the globe with its car cultures and energy-intensive industries is based on the labour of these workers without rights and amenities.³⁶

In the Americas, too, labour migration changed considerably over the course of the twentieth century. Until the 1950s, the US and Canada were important destinations for European migrants; thereafter migrants from Latin America and Asia began to fill the labour demand. While most of the latter migrants initially came from Mexico, dependent Puerto Rico, and Cuba, in recent years, migration from Central America has increased. In South America, Venezuela (with its booming oil industry) became an important post-war destination for European migrants, particularly from Italy, Spain, and Portugal. During the 1970s and 1980s, people from all over Latin America, and particularly from Colombia, fleeing (US-backed) dictatorships and civil wars migrated to Venezuela. With falling oil prices, the situation began to change and the severe economic and social crisis of the most recent past led an estimated 6 million Venezuelan citizens to emigrate to neighbouring countries and the US (UNHCR data, 2022). From the Andean region, considerable migratory movements reached the countries of the Southern Cone (Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay) as well as the US and Spain.³⁷

Belgian military with connivance both mine corporation managers and British and US secret services.

36 Hoerder, *Cultures in Contact*, 546–550.

37 De Haas, Castles, and Miller, *The Age of Migration*, 145–172; Blanca Sánchez-Alonso, “The Age of Mass Migration in Latin America,” *Economic History Review* 72, no. 1 (2019): 3–31; “Migration Data in South America,” Migration Data Portal, accessed 3 December 2022, <https://www.migrationdataportal.org/regional-data-overview/migration-data-south-america>. For the Caribbean see, among many others, Madhavi Kale, *Fragments of Empire: Capital, Slavery, and Indian Indentured Labor Migration in the British Caribbean* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998); O. Nigel Bolland, *The Politics of Labour in the British Caribbean: The Social Origin of Authoritarianism and Democracy in the Labour Movement* (Kingston: Ian Randle, 2001); Lara Putnam, “Undone by Desire: Migration, Sex Across Boundaries, and Collective Destinies in the Greater Caribbean, 1840–1940,” in Gabaccia and Hoerder, *Connecting Seas*, 302–337, and Lara Putnam, “Borderlands and Border-Crossers: Migrants and Boundaries in the Greater Caribbean, 1840–1940,” *Small Axe* 42 (2014): 7–21. For an overview on labour history in Latin America and the Caribbean, see Rossana Barragán and David Mayer, “Latin America

Societal arrangements across most societies of the globe, Europe included, did not and often still do not provide life chances and perspectives to men and women. Particularly in the age group from 15 to 25 years, when young men and women leave their families of birth for independent lives, millions are coerced to move and hence, to reiterate the obvious, “self-decided migration” often occurs in coercive economic frames.

3 The Role of States in Historical Perspective: Empires, Multi-Ethnic Conglomerates, Self-Declared Nations³⁸

For the manifold labour and left organizations, the conceptualization of highly differentiated working classes (not: “the proletariat”) was a challenging issue since their emergence. Most state apparatuses, under the guise of “nation,” privileged or continue to privilege elites or, more broadly, middle and upper classes. In Europe, at the time of the French Revolution against the aristocracy-church-complex, spokespersons from the middle classes needed historical legitimization and thus the bourgeoisie rooted itself as “the people” in a “natural” peasant culture³⁹ and carefully avoided any reference to the service and early industrial classes. In the context of the revolutionary struggles in general, a broad overarching unity against the old elite(s) was necessary: When, throughout the nineteenth century, industrial labour forces or working classes grew, the newly established bourgeois states both refused them and the rural classes political membership, i.e., citizen status. Most state-socialized middle-class scholars, a few like Karl Marx and Frederick Engels excepted, excluded the lowly from political theory. Since the same ideological forces also excluded

and the Caribbean,” in *Handbook Global History of Work*, ed. Karin Hofmeester and Marcel van der Linden (Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2018), 83–110.

38 The “Global Collaboratory on the History of Labour Relations” at the International Institute for Social History (IISH) has studied historical shifts in labour relations from, roughly, the rise and subsequent development of capitalism (1500–2000). See Gijs Kessler, Christine Moll-Murata, and Karin M. Hofmeester, eds., “Conquerors, Employers and Arbiters: States and Shifts in Labour Relations, 1500–2000,” *International Review of Social History* 61, no. S24 (2016), especially “Introduction,” 1–26.

39 Dirk Hoerder with Inge Blank and Horst Rössler, eds., *Roots of the Transplanted*, 2 vols. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 1–110. The complex relation between “state” and “nation” was originally conceptualized by (emigrant) scholars from the multinational Habsburg Empire. During the struggles for liberation from the imperial centre, the trans-European Habsburg family in the increasingly Austrian-German core, intellectuals and activists used their respective “national culture” as strategy. Emil Niederhauser, *The Rise of Nationality in Eastern Europe* (Budapest: Corvina Kiadó, 1976).

women,⁴⁰ the “nation” was as much a middle-class male claim and construct as “state” had originally been a territorial claim of a leader with an armed band of (usually unmarried) young men, self- and discourse-styled as “warriors” or “knights.”

The construct of a cultural “nation” congruent with a territorial state never had an empirical basis. The postulated European model cases of France and Great Britain included Basques, people in Brittany, the bilingual Alsatians, or English, Scottish, Welsh, Cornish, Ulster Scots and Irish. The English elite arrogated itself the monopoly of ideology-production, British-imperial, it deprived the colonized Irish of any rights and their descendants had to emigrate as workers. In fact, “colonization” – as term usually applied to overseas annexations – began in Europe in the second half of the fifteenth century with the annexations of the Irish societies, the Northern Russian-Siberian-Central Asian ones as well as Galician-Balkan ones by the respective dynasties and the usage of the subjected populations.⁴¹ The bulk of many-cultured Europe was family-ruled and -owned, Habsburg and Hohenzollern for example. In many-cultured Eurasia the Romanov, correctly the Holstein-Gottorp-Romanov, family held sway and colonized Central Asian and Siberian societies. In many-cultured China, the in-migrant or conquering Jurchen Qing dynasty ruled over Han Chinese and dozens of other cultures. In the colonized segments of the world, later to become the “Global South,” diasporas of Spanish, Portuguese, British, French, Dutch and, later, US migrant (white-skinned) administrative and military men ruled over people of skin colours other than white. When the latter successfully struggled and fought for independence, Western scholars expanded the “nation-state” ideology to Africa, Latin America, and Southeast Asia. Their political theory, which in fact comprised an ideology, was generally conservative and liberal, later neoliberal capitalist. Only ordo-liberals planned to regulate markets according to societal needs.⁴²

The classes excluded by elites from state practice and by subservient scholars from political theory began, from the mid-nineteenth century onward, to organize. Workers in general and militants, in particular, found themselves in a quandary: They lived and organized within states but understood that workingmen and -women were exploited regardless of state borders. To the

40 Edith Kuiper, *A Herstory of Economics* (Cambridge: Polity, 2022).

41 The conquest of the North American “West” and the peoples living there by the US and Canada was also part of empire-building.

42 Els Bogaerts and Remco Raben, eds., *Beyond Empire and Nation: The Decolonization of African and Asian Societies, 1930s-1970s* (Leiden: Brill, 2013); Lester D. Langley, *The Americas in the Age of Revolution, 1750-1850* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1996).

bordered nations, they thus juxtaposed an inter-national working class and, as supra-state organizations, the “Internationals.”⁴³ In addition, these new left movements also faced “colonialism” or, in terms of agency, colonizer domination over labouring peoples across the globe. Were workers of colours of skin other than white equal to white-skinned ones? They provided foods or fabrics to working-class consumers in those powerful countries in which the labour and left movements emerged (see Chapter 11 in this volume).

Europe’s ideology-producing scholars as well as schoolteachers achieved hegemony, but not rule. Latin American “locals” of European background – intellectuals included or even at the forefront – liberated themselves from the Euro-North American ideological hegemony during the first half of the nineteenth century, while those in Africa and Southeast Asia could do so only in the 1930s and 1940s after the European state and power structures had self-destructed during the First World War or had been destroyed by fascist aggression. The anti- and post-colonial militants, however, generally fought for independence and not for a redrawing of borders. However, in Latin America Simón Bolívar attempted to unite post-colonial polities and, later, in Arabia and Sub-Saharan Africa, some leaders advocated pan-movements aiming at dissolving colonizer-drawn border lines but remaining ephemeral. Most of the newly independent states remained confined in their colonizer shapes, and their political classes frequently remained mentally fettered to nation-state constructs and communicated in the colonizer’s language. “Western” state-supported capital investments buttressed this post-colonial continuity.

In states in Asia, neither political theory nor state practice offered different perspectives. Scholars in imperial China, operating in the frame of methodological imperialism, constructed Han Chinese as the basis of society even though the imperial realm – after 1911/12 republican – consisted of many peoples and several other-cultured ruling elites had imposed themselves. Imperial Japan, like family-ruled imperial Europe, consisted of a patchwork of samurai family-run entities with a constructed hierarchy of southerners versus (allegedly inferior) northerners. Neither these elites nor those of other societies of the region considered labouring families, peasant-artisanal-industrial, as full

43 For recent literature on the development of the “Internationals,” see Fabrice Bensimon, Deluermoz Quentin, and Jeanne Moisand, eds., *“Arise Ye Wretched of the Earth”: The First International in a Global Perspective* (Leiden: Brill, 2018); Jean-Numa Ducange, “The Second International: 1889–1914,” in *The Cambridge History of Socialism*, ed. Marcel van der Linden, vol. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022), 278–299; Brigitte Studer, *Reisende der Weltrevolution: Eine Globalgeschichte der Kommunistischen Internationale* (Berlin: Suhrkamp, 2020).

members of society. This elite-versus-the-rest-of-society ideology remained intact when insurgent elites restructured the empire. Reacting to a US military threat in 1853/54, Japan's Meiji reformers (since 1868) shifted the cost of industrialization to rural taxpaying families. This forced many, especially from the southern prefectures, to emigrate (see Chapter 20 in this volume). They, like most migrants, provided their labour or, more broadly "human capital," to states more advantageously placed in global power hierarchies. Significantly, labour and left organizations in these "advanced" receiving states usually refused to accept "yellow" migrants as working-class equals.

At this juncture, the power-wielding empires or more correctly, their political-economic elites, had abolished slavery but still needed labour forces for plantations and mines as well as service personnel, especially in the economies of the Indian Ocean rim and Southeast Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean. The colonizer powers, by direct rule or unequal treaties, extracted workingmen and -women, in particular from Southern China, French-ruled Southeast Asia ("Indochina") and British-ruled South Asia (see Chapter 8 in this volume).⁴⁴ When, after a middle-class nationalist period, a new elite and mass movement in China established a communist state in 1949, the peasant and working classes were ideologically upgraded, but power resided with a privileged party apparatus. Thus, across the globe, containerized "nation-states" dominated discourse and held power while imperial cores and colonized macro-regions were inextricably linked by capitalist strategies and working-class experiences. The working classes, however, were compartmentalized by languages and cultures.

4 Portable Working Populations in Historical Perspective

Within states, family-run for centuries or millennia and discursively "national" since the outgoing eighteenth century at best, parlance had caused women, men, and children to lose their individuality by designating them as "populations" in a "territory" rather than as "citizens." Territories, seemingly geographically fixed, were malleable realms of rule, of power. The populations – peasant, craft or worker families producing sustenance, utensils for everyday

44 Hugh Tinker, *A New System of Slavery: The Export of Indian Labour Overseas, 1830–1921* (London: Oxford University Press, 1974); Piet C. Emmer, ed., *Colonialism and Migration: Indentured Labour before and after Slavery* (Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff, 1986); David Northrup, *Indentured Labor in the Age of Imperialism: 1834–1922* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

use as well as luxury items for a miniscule clientele – appear as an anonymous mass. Rulers/ruling families could require service and forced labour, dispose of the masses as war materials, and deport “surplus” men and women.

The portability of populations has been part of human history since the invention or imposition of power apparatuses. In the Persian Empire, rulers such as Dareios and Xerxes (522–465 BCE) forced masses of war captives to move to where their labouring bodies were to be used. A ruler in Babylon planned a zikkurat for the god Marduk and, from around his empire, drafted such a cultural variety of forced workers and war captives that they could not understand each other’s tongues. Later mythologists, changing the story, had their God punish the blasphemy of building the “tower of Babel” by confusing the languages of the workers. Other biblical authors knew of King Solomon of Israel, who, wanting to build a huge temple with a sumptuous palace for himself (“First Temple” in the Jewish religion), requested building materials from King Hiram of Tyrus and paid for migrant woodcutters. Then Solomon, “took a census of all the aliens who were residing in Israel [...] seventy thousand of them he assigned as laborers, eighty thousand as stonecutters in the hill country, and three thousand six hundred as overseers to make the people work” (2 Chronicles 2:17). Pharaonic Egyptian and imperial Chinese chronicles also report mass recruitment of workers, be it for the construction of pyramids or canals. Such large construction projects required capital accumulation through taxation and, given the high quality of much of the work, highly skilled workers. Some of these struggled for better conditions. Workers at a tomb near Thebes, Egypt, who did not receive their wages, struck in 1159 BCE. In view of bad harvests, corrupt officials, and high public expenses, they demanded that societal harmony – represented by the goddess *ma’at* – be re-established.⁴⁵

Fast forward: In fifteenth-century Sub-Saharan societies, rulers and elite families had imposed rights-in-persons slavery on their realms’ populations. When, in the sixteenth century, European well-capitalized and -armed seafarer merchants reached West Africa’s coasts, they expanded the portability of the enslaved across the Atlantic to the Americas and, in the power relationship, turned the rights-in-persons labour regime into “chattel,” exploitable things, as a commodity. This transatlantic American, not “African,” *slavery* was not merely a condition, as the term suggests, but an active process of enslavement and human trafficking to the plantation mode of production, or “factories in the

45 Toby Wilkinson, *The Rise and Fall of Ancient Egypt* (New York: Random House, 2013), 324–336.

fields,”⁴⁶ established in the Caribbean and the Americas with mobile capital of European merchants, gentry, and aristocrats. The enslaving process involved capture with resulting high human loss through marches to the embarkation ports, ex-port of 12 million or more enslaved and, after “wastage” of 3 million chattel or “pieces” during the Atlantic crossing, sale of 9 million people, one-third of them women. The slave-labour regime extended from the British-colonized Atlantic coast and, subsequently, the US South and Mississippi basin via the Caribbean and Central American colonies southward as far as Brazil.⁴⁷ Especially on Caribbean plantations, the capitalists had their overseers work millions to death since importing new workers was cheaper than keeping those who were already there in working health or raising slave children to working age.⁴⁸ While most cultures in the Americas have partly been created by the enslaved and their children, scholars who were self-segregated and contained in whiteness-ideology have long denied this. This also pertains to the agency of enslaved people in the Americas.⁴⁹ The Haitian revolution against French colonizer rule and slavery in Saint-Domingue did, for a long time, not receive adequate historiographical attention. Research and historiography on the region were only decolonized though the contributions of scholars such as W. E. B. Du Bois from the US and George Padmore, Eric Williams, Walter Rodney, Aimé Césaire, Frantz Fanon, C. L. R. James, and Stuart Hall from Caribbean societies.⁵⁰

46 Carey McWilliams first used the term in *Factories in the Field: The Story of Migrant Farm Labor in California* (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1939).

47 In contrast to methodological nationalist approaches, referring, for example, to US or Brazilian slavery, an integrative approach was first proposed by David Brion Davis in a sequence of three volumes published over four decades: *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1966), *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Revolution, 1770–1823* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1975), and *The Problem of Slavery in the Age of Emancipation* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2014).

48 Patrick Manning, ed., *Slave Trades, 1500–1800: The Globalization of Forced Labour* (Brookfield, VT: Variorum, 1996) and Patrick Manning, *Slavery and African Life: Occidental, Oriental, and African Slave Trades* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

49 Research on slavery was long dominated by US scholars focusing on their own society with – compared to the Caribbean and Brazil – relatively few slaves. A change in perspective to the latter societies reveals the extensive cultural input of enslaved Africa-socialized men and women in the formation of the respective cultures.

50 Adom Getachew, *Worldmaking after Empire: The Rise and Fall of Self-Determination* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2019); Michelle Ann Stephens, *Black Empire: The Masculine Global Imaginary of Caribbean Intellectuals in the United States, 1914–1962* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005).

Shifting of populations followed a different pattern in the Ottoman Empire. Since the mid-fourteenth century, segments of assumedly disloyal populations in newly annexed regions were uprooted and transported to where their labour was needed, often for grain production near urban concentrations. In this *sürgün* practice, those uprooted would be resettled under conditions that, ideally, would induce them to invite friends and neighbours from their region of birth to join them – by migrating at their own cost rather than with state support.⁵¹

Europe's "imperial nation-states" of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries deported "surplus" or unwanted populations. The British government, under a scheme to reduce overstock on the internal labour market, planned "assisted migration" to send some 7,000 workers annually to the undersupplied colony of New South Wales, Australia; from the 1880s the Barnardo philanthropy sent poor – in some cases kidnapped – children to the White Dominions as labourers; after 1918, an Empire Settlement Act ex-ported disabled soldiers.⁵² The French government, in particular after the Commune uprising in 1871, deported left militants to forced labour in the colonies. The German Emperor allegedly called social-democratic workers "fellows without a fatherland" and, a few decades later, West Germany's population planners, after the Second World War killing fields, hoped to induce surplus women, i.e., those without husbands, to emigrate.⁵³ All this evidence notwithstanding, the concept of a "surplus" population has never entered the political science of "democratic" societal organization.

51 The resettling of populations had also been practiced in this macro-region by the elites of the previous East Roman, Byzantine, Empire. Reşat Kasaba, *A Moveable Empire: Ottoman Nomads, Migrants, and Refugees* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2009).

52 From the broad literature: Lydia Murdoch, *Imagined Orphans: Poor Families, Child Welfare, and Contested Citizenship in London* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2006); Gail H. Corbett, *Barnardo Children in Canada* (Peterborough: Woodland Publishing, 1981); Stephen Constantine, ed., *Emigrants and Empire: British Settlement in the Dominions Between the Wars* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990); Melanie Burkett, "Explaining Resistance to Early Nineteenth-Century British Emigrants to New South Wales," *Journal of Migration History* 7, no. 1 (2021): 1–23.

53 Johannes-Dieter Steinert, "Migration and Migration Policy: West Germany and the Recruitment of Foreign Labour, 1945–61," *Journal of Contemporary History* 49, no. 1 (2014): 9–27.

5 Capitalist Investment Strategies, Mass Migrations, and Segmented Labour Markets since the Nineteenth Century

The very title of this subsection should invite critical questions. It does not ask how capital is formed and accumulated, but, like much of scholarship, assumes a status quo, namely existing funds for investment. Second, again like much of scholarship, it is forward-looking, “strategies.” Migrants, however, often face retrograde living conditions comprising a lack of jobs, ossified social structures, and neither innovation nor development. They leave stagnant societies-economies-polities without strategies. Furthermore, withdrawal of capital – turning irrigated agriculture into dust belts or industrial regions into rust belts – forces residents to out-migrate. In the nineteenth century, much of Europe – its industrializing western and eastern cores excepted – was an economic disaster zone. At present, the absence of investment in China’s rural regions leads to mass departures and the same holds true for much of Africa’s rural regions. Large extraction complexes, such as mining or oil, use machinery rather than human labour while agricultural extraction under the plantation regime cannot do without human labour.⁵⁴ Viewed positively, labour migrants move from regions with a labour surplus – meaning insufficient food and life chances for some, many, or most – to regions of dynamic development with labour supply shortages. Migrants’ decisions provide a balancing effect, men and women decide in gendered frames of reference whether to stay put or to move while states provide frames, usually favouring some over others.

In the century from the 1830s to the 1930s, centres of investment emerged in the Americas along the St. Lawrence River in Canada, the northeast of the US, and Buenos Aires; in Western Europe in a core region from the Netherlands, Belgium and Northeast France, across the Germanies to Silesia and to Budapest and Vienna, in the south to North Italian cities; in European Russia in the region from Moscow northward to St. Petersburg/Leningrad and southward to the Donbas mines. From Europe’s peripheries, the mass transatlantic labour migration system emerged, while in the east, a Russian-Siberian migration system extended to the Amur River, the border to China.⁵⁵ In both regions,

54 Of the many life-writings of colonized workers, the most widely known is that of Rigoberta Menchú, a Guatemalan indigenous woman. She described internal migration to plantation work, exploitation, state violence, and labour organizing in *I, Rigoberta Menchú*, dictated to anthropologist Elisabeth Burgos (1983). She received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1992.

55 The settlement of farms in North America attracted approximately one third of the migrants in the 1840s, the ratio dwindled to a mere five percent by the 1890s. In contrast, in

the rural-urban migrations vastly outnumbered the transoceanic or transcontinental ones.

In the Southern Atlantic region, the investment into the West Africa-to-Americas human trafficking regime to supply plantation economies with capital-generating labour forces continued until the 1870s. With the formal abolition of slavery in the British Empire (mainly in its Caribbean segment) in 1834/39,⁵⁶ new investments in plantations for industrial crops such as rubber, palm oil, and copra in Asia necessitated that a new labour force had to be “found” or fabricated. As a consequence, the Empire’s political-economic elites established a regime to generate involuntary workers through debt bondage extending from British-ruled South Asia via French-ruled Indochina to the populations ravaged by the opium trade – a British imperial monopoly⁵⁷ – in the southern provinces of the Chinese Empire. The British Empire only decided to end the labour regime in 1917 after nationalist Indian leaders had demanded its abolition in exchange for letting Indian soldiers fight on the Empire’s side during the First World War. However, the regime’s ongoing and (in-)voluntarily extended contracts lasted into the 1930s.⁵⁸

In the Northern Chinese provinces, Shandong in particular, as in many parts of Europe, rural poverty coerced peasant families from the 1880s into mass out-migration towards the culturally different Manchu lands. Originally agricultural migration, the development of Manchurian mining and heavy industry through imperial Japanese capital with the connivance of regional (Chinese) warlords changed the character to rural-industrial labour migration.

Among these migration systems, especially the transatlantic system has been called a “proletarian mass migration.”⁵⁹ However, in most migration

the Tsarist Empire, the majority of migrants headed to agriculture in the fertile Southern Siberian belt.

56 The London government abolished slavery in 1834 with the proviso that the liberated men, women, and children undergo an “apprenticeship” period with their former owners. For studies on the general history of slavery in the Atlantic region, see Michael Zeuske, *Sklavenhändler, Negeros und Atlantikkreolen: Eine Weltgeschichte des Sklavenhandels im atlantischen Raum* (Berlin/Munich/Boston: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2015) and Michael Zeuske, *Afrika – Atlantik – Amerika: Sklaverei und Sklavenhandel in Afrika, auf dem Atlantik und in den Amerikas sowie in Europa* (Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter, 2022).

57 To increase the recruitment reservoir, British government-supported investors had opium produced in Northwest India and forced the Chinese government in the Opium Wars to permit sale of the drug. As intended, mass indebtedness followed.

58 Marina Carter, *Voices from Indenture: Experiences of Indian Migrants in the British Empire* (London: Leicester University Press, 1996); Alessandro Stanziani, *Labor on the Fringes of the Empire* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018).

59 Walter F. Willcox and Imre Ferenczi, *International Migrations*, 2 vols. (New York: National Bureau of Economic Research, 1929/1931).

systems, a large majority of the men and women originated from marginal peasant or sub-peasant strata and their trajectory to mines and industries – for women also into service – involved a process of proletarianizing, in some cases delayed through enforced circulation back to rural regions. Such migrants had to adapt peasant forms of resistance to industrial conditions.

So far, this survey, reflecting the state of scholarship, has neither focused on the interior of imperial China nor on North or Sub-Saharan Africa. In the case of China, figures for nineteenth-century rural-urban migrations are not available. The unequal treaties imposed by the European and US colonizer empires did skew but did not stop economic development and it is thus reasonable to hypothesize that urban investments and job options were comparable to those in the urbanizing cores of Europe, Russia, and North America. Concerning Africa, the colonizer empires had divided the populations beginning in the 1830s (Algeria) via tutelage over Egypt (since the late 1840s) to the carving up of “Black Africa” at the Berlin colonizer conference in the 1880s.⁶⁰ Given the racist aspect of the division of the world by the white supremacist powers, the term “black” rather than “Sub-Saharan” Africa reflects the attitudes toward the colonized populations. Regional investments, supported by colonizer soldiery and administrators, forced – mainly – men into migrant “wage” labour to extract profits (investors) and taxes (state) from their labour power. State administrators and investors factored in the work of the migrants’ wives and children as producers of food and refused to pay family subsistence wages (see Chapters 9 and 17 in this volume). The colonizer empires’ structures prevented the emergence of a trans-African investment and migration region.⁶¹

The investment-labour mobilization nexus, dating from the 1830s, suddenly ended with the financial crisis of the US stock market in 1929.⁶² The subsequent decade-long depression – due to the manipulations of (segments of) the miniscule global financial elite – impacted most economies across the world and drastically lowered living standards and life course options of hundreds of millions of people. It also reduced migration since no dynamic economies attracted potential movers and those impoverished were deprived of the

60 The newly established German Hohenzollern Empire (1871), in order to become an imperial player, hosted the “Congress of Berlin” to carve up the Ottoman Empire in 1878 and the “Berlin Conference” for the carving up of Africa in 1884–85.

61 Ewout Frankema and Anne Booth, eds., *Fiscal Capacity and the Colonial State in Asia and Africa, c. 1850–1960* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019); Michiel de Haas and Ewout Frankema, eds., *Migration in Africa: Shifting Patterns of Mobility from the 19th to the 21st Century* (London: Routledge, 2022).

62 In the first half of the nineteenth century, the US financial speculation panic of 1837 had economic consequences lasting into the 1840s.

means for migration. In a separate but parallel political development in many European countries, fascist – and in Japan corporatist – governments pursued aggressive and racist projects of economic expansion, with the shared goal of acquiring slave-like working populations, whether Koreans, East Europeans, Somalis or others.

At the end of the resulting Second World War, with much of Europe and Japan, as well as segments of China and Southeast Asia destroyed, new investment and migration patterns emerged.⁶³ In this context, seven migratory macro-regions may be discerned: North America; Europe west of the dividing line between the “free west” and the “people’s republics,” both highly problematic terms; Central and Eastern Europe and Siberia; East and Southeast Asia with Oceania; the oil-extracting economies around the Persian Gulf; North and Sub-Saharan Africa; Mexico, Central and South America. These widely used designations involve methodological territorialism. What is, in fact, referred to are the societies in these regions and the people in them pondering whether to stay or to move.

In the northern quarter of the globe,⁶⁴ the traditional transatlantic migratory and private investment connections came to an end in the 1950s, with the latter being replaced by US state investment, the Marshall Plan’s seed money (1948–1952). The Central-Europe-to-Siberia socialist political and economic sphere separated itself or, perhaps, was separated by the elites of the capitalist political sphere.⁶⁵ Both North American and Western European developments continued to require more labour – more workingmen and -women – than available in the respective states. The US economy began to rely on migrant workers from Mexico and later from Central America, who often arrived without documents. In the “body parts” approach to human beings, these were called “braceros,” working arms. In England, for centuries, workingmen had been called “hands” and in modern parlance, migration of intellectuals is labelled “brain” drain. Migrants from Mexico left a state with massive oversupply of working people ever since a liberal government in the 1850s had deprived native Mexicans (First Peoples) of commonly held lands and, thus, sustenance, to force them into service and other labour, often unpaid. Since the 1960s, migrants from Central America mainly included

63 Hoerder, *Cultures in Contact*, 508–563.

64 The designation “northern hemisphere” involves methodological territorial expansionism since the north-south dividing line extends from the Gulf of Mexico via the Mediterranean and Caucasus to the Himalayas.

65 Scholars still debate whether the Soviet Union and East European states were intended to be included into the program or whether it was designed to exclude the socialist societies.

refugees from right-wing, US-supported regimes that, internally, were delivering cheap labour forces to US plantation companies. Land ownership and economic power in the Northern Triangle historically have been concentrated in the hands of a small group of elites, leaving a legacy of extreme inequality and widespread poverty.⁶⁶ This political regime has been dubbed “banana republic” or “corporate mafia state” – another aspect of “state” that has had no place in traditional Atlantic-world-centred political science.

Labour migrants for Western and Northern European economies were recruited from Mediterranean societies-states. Rather than “braceros,” they were designated as “guests,” temporary workers, and were without political rights in most receiving states. Unions, however, quickly began organization drives and in some sectors, the West German metal industry for example, the unionization rate of migrant workers was higher than that of native ones. At the same time, investors seeking low-priced labour began, with governments concurring, to export their capital from Western Europe and North America to low-wage states in North Africa, Southeast Asia and, later, the PRC. This forced native workers to change sectors, if other jobs were locally available, or to leave deindustrialized regions altogether.

In the states of the communist “bloc,” an undifferentiated western designation, rural-urban migrations followed the pattern of all urbanizing and industrializing societies across the world. However, the ideology of collectivization of farms added political to economic coercion. Migrants did move between socialist states and the Polish and the Yugoslav states kept their outward borders permeable. Prospective Polish migrants could connect to the almost worldwide Polish diaspora (see Chapter 7 in this volume) and the usually skilled labour migrants from Yugoslavia, remaining in their particular economic segments, could transfer their skills. In the Soviet Union, labour migrations eastward had intensified with the investments into mines and industries beyond the Urals, which under the Stalinist regime since the 1930s also involved forced labour. From the late 1950s on, many migrants moved seasonally during the summer months to construction projects with attractive wages in Siberia (see Chapter 12 in this volume).⁶⁷

66 Peter J. Meyer, “Central American Migration: Root Causes and U.S. Policy,” Congressional Research Service, accessed 20 April 2022, <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/IF/IF11151>.

67 John Randolph and Eugene M. Avrutin, eds., *Russia in Motion: Cultures of Human Mobility since 1850* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2011).

In the southern worlds of the globe, the continuing, if declining imperial domination and the resulting struggles and wars for independences (plural!) involved massive refugee mobilization and, occasionally, deportations. With a specific independence achieved, the diasporic administrative and military colonizer communities had to be shipped back to the former cores in which, given the end of the colonizer power to extract, jobs were not necessarily available. In the newly independent states, withdrawal of colonizer capital resulted in high levels of under- or unemployment and thus significantly increased the potential for internal or inter-state (not: inter-national) migration. Attempts to privilege post-colonial state decisions over (foreign) investment decisions, especially as regards extraction of raw materials, resulted in the delocalization of (foreign) private capital assets, thereby exacerbating economic problems. In Latin America, the Argentine economy and the Venezuelan oil boom attracted mobile workers in periods of economic growth while recessions had the same effect on labour markets as deindustrialization. Similarly, in Sub-Saharan Africa, specific regions – South Africa, Ghana, Rhodesia (after independence Zambia and Zimbabwe) – mostly attracted workers from agriculture (see Chapters 9 and 17 in this volume). In some cases, states forced migrants into temporary and circular mobility to avoid the emergence of labour organizations and class consciousness.

From the post-war 1950s, several societies in Asia – south, southeast, and east – developed dynamism in terms of innovation, investments, and job creation at wage levels attractive both to potential internal migrant low-income workers and migrant profit-searching capital-capitalists. In Kerala, India, for example, the heavy industry – and a responsive state – also permitted development of social security systems. However, scholarship and public information have largely concentrated on so-called tiger states, such as South Korea or Singapore. In these states, the wage levels were low compared to traditional (“western”) industrialized regions but not necessarily in terms of the actual means available since living costs in these countries were lower. The resulting shifts of production thus involved job losses in economically highly developed societies and income options in the newly developing ones. When the PRC changed its economic system in the 1980s, job-creating global investors targeted the labour-rich industrializing nodes of the empire. These shifts of production locations, in turn, generated labour demand in ocean shipping to transport the consumer goods to regions where people with purchasing power lived. Crews in transoceanic shipping have largely been recruited from among Philippine men, production of cheap clothing has been assigned to women (and men) in Bangladesh, electronic products often stem from work in Chinese

factories, both Taiwan and the PRC, with the Foxconn company a widely criticized mass employer using coercive labour arrangements.⁶⁸

This overview – certainly superficial because of the constraints of space – has used macro-regions as frames to chart developments. However, as noted above, migrants do not move to vaguely circumscribed macro-regions or to states that set frames for legally documented or, often also intended, undocumented entry. Migrants head to specific labour markets and, in consequence, their destinations are local, even when they compare wage levels and cost of living as well as working and living conditions in regions as large as the former colonial empires or the states of the African Copperbelt. Their decision-making is based on their actual local living conditions and – usually with accurate information – on the perceived income and living costs at their intended destination.⁶⁹ They factor in the cost of transportation and, perhaps, of state-side admission, as well as the loss of income during their trajectory when they cannot generate income. They reach societies – economies in state frames – in which labour markets are segmented (by skill and language, for example), stratified (by level of skill or education) and segregated (by gender, ethnic culture, colour of skin). Their options are limited to particular slots in these labour markets and, contrary to populist pronouncements, migrants do not pose a threat to native workers unless they arrive with similar qualifications. If, however, frames of reference differ between native and migrant workers, as long as the latter reference their wages or other incomes to their society-locality of origin incomes and cost of living rather than the standards of the receiving economy, competition may and does occur. This issue has posed problems for labour organizations and parties appealing to working-class voters.

68 Pun Ngai and Jenny Chan, “Global Capital, the State, and Chinese Workers: The Foxconn Experience,” *Modern China* 38, no. 4 (2012): 383–410; Devi Sacchetto and Rutvica Andrijasevic, “‘Disappearing Workers’: Foxconn in Europe and the Changing Role of Temporary Work Agencies,” *Work, Employment and Society* 31, no. 1 (2017): 54–70; Rutvica Andrijasevic, Devi Sacchetto, and Pun Ngai, “One Firm, Two Countries, One Workplace Model? The Case of Foxconn’s Internationalization,” *Economic and Labour Relations Review* (2019): 1–17.

69 Information was exchanged by transatlantic letters in the nineteenth century, by return and multiple migrations in the South China-Malaysia and the modern Kerala (India) Gulf economies migrations. Walter D. Kamphoefner, Wolfgang Helbich, and Ulrike Sommer, eds., *News from the Land of Freedom: German Immigrants Write Home*, trans. Susan Carter Vogel (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991); Carl A. Trocki, “Singapore as a Nineteenth Century Migration Node,” and Elizabeth Sinn, “Hong Kong as an In-Between Place in the Chinese Diaspora, 1849–1939,” in Gabaccia and Hoerder, *Connecting Seas*, 198–247; Kunniparampil Curien Zachariah and Sebastian Irudaya Rajan, *Kerala’s Gulf Connection, 1998–2011: Economic and Social Impact of Migration* (Hyderabad: Orient Blackswan, 2012).

As several of the authors in this volume emphasize, the economic rationales just outlined were only one aspect of entwined rationales including family relationships, emotional and psychological aspects and, in some cases, religious preferences. No rational choice theory covers these manifold aspects. In addition to migrants capable of assessing the options in the labour markets of their intended destination by (relatively) accurate information flows, an intensively media-discussed present-day aspect of migration is lack of information about a match between migrants' so-called human capital and the absorptive capacities of labour markets in the destination countries. Without resources to question the propagandistic aspects of the imagery, both potential and actual migrants succumb to the media and stateside projected images of wealthy societies. Again, there are parallels in the past in which Englishmen were lured to the White Dominions by propaganda or rural migrants in many economies of the globe were attracted by the urban facades without information on the working-class living conditions.⁷⁰

6 Class and Organization: How Do Left Unions and Parties React to Labour Migration?

In immigration countries and regions, workers in the higher-reward segments of the labour market and some organizations of the political left tended (and still tend) to see migrants entering the low-wage sectors as a threat. They may respond to the challenge in different, albeit frequently connected, ways: exclusion of the seeming and in many cases badly paid competitors, i.e., attempts to block immigration; institutionalization as the mandated confinement of low-wage workers to certain occupations and economic activities; or solidarity, i.e., attempts to raise lower wages to higher levels, which would have to include demands for a global redistribution to improve conditions in emigration countries (at the expense of capital and/or at the expense of the labouring classes). Viewed from the other side, potential migrants might also choose to stay in their society of birth and struggle for improvement of their underclass position. States – or more precisely: the elites in them – have generally opposed such self-organization. Workers, both resident and migrant, thus had

⁷⁰ These issues are discussed in Monika Glettler, “The Acculturation of the Czechs in Vienna,” in *Labor Migration in the Atlantic Economies: The European and North American Working Classes During the Period of Industrialization*, ed. Dirk Hoerder (Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1985), 297–320, and, for one White Dominion, in Dirk Hoerder, *Creating Societies: Immigrant Lives in Canada* (Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1999).

to struggle (collectively) against exploitation and, in some cases, even against the destruction of their livelihoods, and for the improvement of working conditions and recognition as citizens. Some workers' organizations demanded and continue to demand a deep restructuring of societies and a redistribution at the expense of capital, reversing the ongoing neoliberal redistribution to the richest ten or even one percent of societies. Colonized peoples had to fight and have to fight to get out from imperial and neo-imperial rule and exploitation, whether traditional European or informal but effective US state-supported capital. In Southeast Asia, movements for self-rule also targeted the impact of imperial Chinese policies and – during the period of Japan's imperial conquests – from this foreign rule. This aspect is receiving increased attention with the PRC becoming a major global economic power.

The probably most famous quote of the Communist Manifesto, "Proletarier aller Länder, vereinigt euch!"⁷¹ is the origin of the internationalist postulate of solidarity of the (historic) labour movement (in the Global North). Our use of qualifying bracketed insertions in the previous sentence is necessitated by the historic emergence and rootedness of both left thought and organizations and the nation-state concept in the Global North. The fundamental assumption of solidarity suggests the existence of a common interest of an inter- or transnational (or even global) working class. Based on the development of a capitalist world market, the international working class (singular!) was supposed to seek its liberation in the collective struggle against capital. However, the complex historical realities shaped by the emergence of (suggested) nation-states in Europe and the processes of racialization inherent to colonialism contested the labour movement's internationalist postulate almost since its inception. Therefore, the history of the labour movement (and the political left in general) has always been characterized by profound divisions over migration. Wherever migrant workers arrive, local workers and their organization had and have to decide whether to include or discriminate against them. The migrants' decision to change societies – in the double sense of the act – reflects the deeply uneven development of regions and states within the capitalist orbit and its former colonialist, now neo-colonialist expansion. In the US, for example, organized labour (with the notable exception of the Industrial Workers of the World after its foundation in 1905) supported the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. The American Federation of Labor (AFL) openly discriminated against black workers internally and at the beginning of the twentieth century also

71 English as "Working Men of All Countries, Unite!" in the translation by Samuel Moore from 1888, edited and approved by Friedrich Engels.

campaigned against immigrant workers from Southern and Eastern Europe – of allegedly “dark” or “olive” complexion of skin.

In these debates about the exclusion of migrant workers from (supposedly nationally constrained) labour markets, economic arguments regarding the weakening of the bargaining power of unions of resident workers due to the increased supply of workingmen and -women were frequently linked to (racialized) notions of superiority. Although racism also played a crucial role in the emergence of labour movements structured by the boundaries of states (or “ethnically” defined regions), it took way into the twentieth century for left-wing organizations to acknowledge the (individual and mass) psychological reasons for racialized discrimination, the racialized structuring of labour markets, and the global division of labour with its massive inequalities (see Chapter 3 in this volume).

Nonetheless, there have also always been attempts to develop politics of solidarity between local and (arriving) migrant workers. Trade unions often constituted mass organizations (at least formally) open to all workers and thus could or did provide one of the few important opportunities for political participation for “foreign” migrant workers deprived of rights by nationalist theory and nation-state practice. Therefore, the history of the relationship between resident and in-migrating workers (and their organizations) has always been characterized by conflicting trends of exclusion, discrimination, and solidarity. This volume also aims at exploring these trends in different geographical areas and periods across the world.

In the present, some of the agendas of left unions based in specific states are expanded by “new social movements” or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) which, by avoiding (or attempting to avoid) stateside and national limitations, intend to subject all stages of production and distribution of goods – whether foodstuffs, clothing, or other – regardless of the region involved to common standards of respect for work and of “fair” remuneration. This had been a goal of reformers from the 1870s on and resulted in the founding of the International Labour Organization (ILO), first as a branch of the League of Nations (1919), and since 1946 based in Geneva. The, in the term of the period, “universal” claim to law and regulation of migration, had been developed by the members of the Institut de Droit international, founded in 1893,⁷² debated

72 Founding members included in addition to those from Western and Southern Europe, one expert each from Buenos Aires, New York, and Saint Petersburg. Philippe Rygiel, *L'Ordre des circulations? L'Institut de Droit international et la régulation des migrations (1870–1920)* (Paris: Éditions de la Sorbonne, 2021). The Institute received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1904.

at the 1907 Stuttgart Congress of the Second International of social-democratic and socialist parties and unions and again demanded energetically by the members of the Second International in 1912 (see Chapter 11 in this volume). In response to the ravages of the First World War, the ILO Constitution became Chapter 13 of the Versailles Peace Treaty and began with the statement:

Whereas the League of Nations has for its object the establishment of universal peace, and such a peace can be established only if it is based upon social justice; And whereas conditions of labour exist involving such injustice, hardship and privation to large numbers of people as to produce unrest so great that the peace and harmony of the world are imperilled; and an improvement of those conditions is urgently required: as, for example, by the regulation of the hours of work, including the establishment of a maximum workingday and week, the regulation of the labour supply, the prevention of unemployment, the provision of an adequate living wage, [...] protection of the interests of workers when employed in countries other than their own, recognition of the principle of freedom of association.⁷³

Thus, in principle, the demands of left organizations and representatives of the state seemed to be congruent. However, this call for social justice was passed after the workers' agency of 1905 and 1917 in Russia as well as in 1917/18 in other countries, after general strikes in parts of the US and Great Britain as well as Buenos Aires and elsewhere. State representatives labelled this working-class agency "the threat of communism" and intended to stabilize the capitalist system – if with increased rights and equalities – by more peaceful and institutionalized labour relations.

7 Workingmen's and -women's Struggles "from the Bottom Up" – but Why Are They at the Bottom?

Both resident and migrant workingmen and -women have tried to improve their living conditions either individually for themselves and their families or, collectively, for a class within an economic sector or a whole state. Since historians have begun to include labouring families into their studies, this

73 Cited in International Labour Office, *Official Bulletin*, vol. 1, April 1919-August 1920 (Geneva: 1923).

particular perspective has been called “from the bottom up.” However, this raises the question of why workers are generically posited to be at the bottom of society and, specifically, of each and every society. The terminology betrays the implicit acceptance, even by critical historians, of the discursively embedded societal hierarchy of lower-middle-upper classes. While the hierarchy is, of course, socio-economically visible, the notion of being “at the bottom” involves a connotation of being less couth, less educated, and ultimately less capable. For wage labouring men and women such as those of farming families, however, their living spaces are the centres of their lives. The label “bottom” is assigned by observers and interested parties implicitly or even explicitly posited as higher up in the societal hierarchy. It is thus not an acceptable term for scholarly analyses.

Workingmen and -women, whether in agriculture, handicrafts, or factories, undertake their own analyses of power relations and social hierarchies. While they usually do not advocate undifferentiated levelling, an accusation often levied by those more advantageously placed in the societal hierarchy, they do demand fair remuneration in the frame of moral economies that may vary between regions and economic sectors. The minimum demand is a “living wage” in the case of workers or “fair” prices for their products in the case of craft and rural men and women. Most of the struggles analysed by the authors of this volume reflect such basic analyses of family and individual needs in the frame of moral economies and under the recognition that the respective (state-supported) regime of labour and remuneration does not permit healthy lives for adults, prospects for children, and retirement for those beyond working age.

Moral economies, varying between regions, economic sectors, and historical periods are, in a way, the political “theories” of those neither heard nor represented in academic political world views: “Academic” camouflages “middle class,” “stateside,” or other. A modern term would be “received opinion” – which raises the question: Received by whom? This critique of political theory takes up the previous sections’ thoughts on labour and left movements: While these labour and left movements and organizations, ideally, take up the demands and rights of a society’s working (and farming) segments, they in turn face the right to live (and prosper) of those who are not part of the specific community but annexed to the powerful states’ economic spheres. The demands and rights of migrants as well as of working families in parts of the globe annexed by state power, states’ powers, and capitalist regime(s) stand in contrast to those in the annexing, powerful segments of the globe. “Annexed” may refer to nineteenth-century and earlier colonial and imperial domination, to indirect rule of core elites with the help of dependent elites, and to twentieth-century exploitation

of raw materials – whether ores or foodstuffs – by international capital backed by the state apparatuses of the Global North and profiting elites in the segments of the Global South.

Given the connotations of terms, often unintended but nevertheless frequently insidious, “Global North” is not merely a label for the Euro-Atlantic world, but included, in a way, powerful socialist states before 1989 and, in the present, states such as the PRC. And, given the catch-all aspect of “global”: The moral economies and struggles of labouring families and classes vary from region to region, regime to regime, and over historical formations. However, similarities do exist: The South Indian workers in Ceylon and the French-Canadian and Ukrainian workers in Quebec struggled for living wages and family relations against bosses supported by state institutions (see Chapters 18 and 21 in this volume); the hotel workers in Los Angeles and Copenhagen faced exploitative, increasingly irregularized working and living conditions and developed strategies other than those of the established unions (see Chapters 14 and 23 in this volume). Working families on plantations lost their homes when capitalists shifted production to another colony or decided to invest in different raw materials. Working families in Detroit, US, lost their homes and were forced to migrate when corporation managers shut down the automobile factories and the city’s population of 1.85 million (1950, at the end of the wartime boom) “fell” by two thirds to 0.64 million in 2020. Over 1.2 million men, women, and children had to leave on their own, in families, in larger sequential moves. In Kerala, India, the state government developed social security and educational systems but a lack of investors and slow agricultural development resulted in large-scale migrations to the Gulf oil economies: 3.5 million Keralites – one tenth of Kerala’s population – lived there in 2010. Working classes were being shifted around under colonizer regimes or are forced to move by themselves in the highly industrialized world around the globe.

