

Edited by Christian G. De Vito
and Anne Gerritsen

MICRO-SPATIAL HISTORIES OF

GLOBAL LABOUR



Micro-Spatial Histories of Global Labour

Christian G. De Vito · Anne Gerritsen
Editors

Micro-Spatial
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Labour

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PREFACE

In May 2015, the Institute of World History of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing invited the historian Hans Medick to give a lecture, drawing on his work on the remote Swabian village of Laichingen, located in the mountainous region of Württemberg in southern Germany.¹ Medick's 1996 masterpiece features the daily struggle for survival of the weavers and farmers of Laichingen, and forms part of an approach known as *Alltagsgeschichte* or the history of the everyday. But Medick's approach is also explicitly a micro-historical one: he reads the history of Laichingen through a micro-historical lens to reveal a view on the past as a whole, or general history (*allgemeine Geschichte*).² The lecture in Beijing was well-received, as Medick describes in a recent publication.³ There were questions that connected the proto-industrial labour practices of Laichingen to the pattern of development in the Yangtze delta between Nanjing and Shanghai, and an observation by Institute Director Zhang Shunhong that 'world-history exists in micro-histories and what happens in a village might be of a global meaning'.⁴ Zhang's comment and Medick's reflections in a recent volume of *Historische Anthropologie* point in the same direction this edited volume seeks to travel, namely, to draw on the methodologies of micro-historical studies in combination with the broad spatial approaches of global and world history.

We will explain in more detail below what we understand micro- and global historical approaches to mean, but first it may be worth expanding briefly on why this direction of combining the two seems prudent at this

particular moment in time. Whether we take the field of global history to have started with the writings of Thucydides (460–395 BCE) in the ancient Greek world and Sima Qian (*c.* 145 or 135–86 BCE) of the Han dynasty (206 BCE to 220 CE) in China, or with Kenneth Pomeranz’ 2000 publication of *The Great Divergence*, there can be little doubt that in the last two decades, the field of history has been inundated with publications that espouse a global approach.⁵ Appearing more or less tandem with the first publications in this field were critical voices: those who felt a history could only be called ‘global’ if it covered the entirety of the globe;⁶ those who felt global history was by necessity so general that it failed to deliver anything concrete or new;⁷ those who thought the study of the global could never do justice to any primary sources, and thus did not merit the term ‘history’;⁸ those who feel that the agency of human entities is left out of a story ruled by macro-level structures and institutions, etcetera.⁹ Of course, micro-historians have also received their fair share of critiques, from those who claimed the micro-level of analysis rendered the results irrelevant for anything other than the micro-unit it purported to study, from those who felt the scarcity of the sources invited too much historical imagination, or from those who felt approaches like thick description and close observation should be left to the anthropologists.¹⁰

In recent years, perhaps since 2010, the idea of combining the two approaches, micro and global, has started to attract attention. Scholars like Francesca Trivellato, Lara Putnam, John-Paul Ghobrial, Tonio Andrade, Filippo de Vivo, Sebouh Aslanian, and Cao Yin, amongst others, have begun to explore ways in which the two approaches can be brought together.¹¹ They have experimented with a number of different terms—Ghobrial, Andrade, and Cao Yin describe their work as ‘global microhistories’, fewer have used the term ‘micro-global history’—but the intent of combining both is clear.¹² Within the same period, several of the gatherings of the professional associations in the field of history addressed this combination, including the European Social Science History Conference and the congresses of the European Network in Universal and Global History and the American Historical Association.¹³ Most recently, Maxine Berg (University of Warwick) and John-Paul Ghobrial (University of Oxford) organised a conference in Venice in February 2016, entitled ‘The Space Between: Connecting Microhistory and Global History’.¹⁴

It is in the same context that the scholars brought together here embarked upon a series of conversations that eventually led to this publication. Christian G. De Vito organised a panel at the 2014 European Social Science History Conference in Vienna, followed by several presentations at a conference in Salvador, Brazil, in the spring of 2015 and the Cosmopolis seminar in Leiden. And last but not least, in January 2016, the Global History and Culture Centre at the University of Warwick hosted all the authors at a writing workshop, where the ideas presented here started to take their final form. We are grateful for the numerous funders and organisations that supported these events and our participation financially, especially the working group ‘Mundos do Trabalho’ in Brazil, the University of Padua-FIRB 2012 Mediterranean Borders, and the Global History and Culture Centre.

This volume, then, seeks to participate in the conversations about global and micro-history, and make a contribution to their combination as a way forward for historical research. As editors, we offer one particular model in our introductory chapter, which sets out our vision for a new way of practicing the craft of global history, but we also present a variety of different approaches in the empirical chapters offered by the contributors to this volume. We have not imposed our editorial authority to emphasize a singular approach; instead, we have encouraged a diversity of visions so as to facilitate the debates and discussions that will undoubtedly follow. In practice, what this means is that in the introduction, we set out our understanding of what we call ‘micro-spatial history’: an approach that seeks to avoid the ever so common conflation of the analytical level of the analysis, macro or micro, with its spatial level (global or local), proposing to combine the tools of micro-analysis with a spatial approach. We suggest that a mere reduction of scales, which starts with the necessarily generalised units, standards and measures of the macro-level and ends with the smallest discernible historical unit, goes directly against the appeal of micro-historians, which seeks to use the particular and the exceptional as tools to enhance our understanding of the unexceptional.

The individual chapters reveal the wide variety of ways in which this combination of different tools from the micro-historical kit can be put to use in the historical landscapes of the post-spatial turn. For Canepari, the connections identified between different historical sites add up to a coherent trans-local vision; for De Vito, the key point lies in the simultaneity of singularity and connectedness of individual places; for D’Angelo, the

historical landscape can be visualised as a carpet, where the pattern reveals both the structuring elements of society in the warp of the carpet, and the varied and multi-coloured stories of individual agency that make up the weft. Atabaki looks at the consequences of a global event such as the First World War from the perspective of short- and long-distance labour recruitment across the Persian region; Gerritsen reverses the perspective, and focuses on a single locality where the manufacture of a product was undertaken for both regional and world markets; in Pizzolato's chapter, the focus lies on how a located event was differently appropriated and acted upon by historical actors and institutions in distinct sites. Of course, a multitude of other methodologies, conceptualisations and theories feature in these studies: biography, to tell the story of global lives and foreground the connected histories of distinct sites (Marcocci); prosopography, to reveal the details of social groups where full biographical details are absent (Tarruell); commodity chains, to follow the traces of commodities and the workers who handle them (Caracausi); network analysis to show how people are connected across long distances (Mitsiou and Preiser-Kapeller); and border studies, to examine short- and long-distance migrations (Rolla and Di Fiore), to name but a few.

These methodological and theoretical insights are embedded in research extensively based on primary sources. Ordered chronologically, the chapters invite the reader to take an ideal voyage from the late medieval Eastern Mediterranean to present-day Sierra Leone, through early modern China and Italy, eighteenth-century Cuba and the Malvinas/Falklands, the journeys of a missionary between India and Brazil and those of Christian captives across the Ottoman Empire and Spain. Labour is the *trait d'union*, analysed under multiple perspectives: its management and recruitment; its voluntary and coerced spatial mobility; its political perception and representation; and the workers' own agency and social networks.¹⁵ We very much hope that this volume, and the variety of approaches on offer in this collection, will be part of continuing and new conversations about the encounters between local and global historians, between labour historians and area specialists, and between medievalists, early modernists and historians of more recent times.

Leicester, UK
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October 2016

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NOTES

1. Hans Medick, *Weben und Überleben in Laichingen 1650–1900: Lokalgeschichte als allgemeine Geschichte* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996).
2. These methodological reflections can be found especially in the introduction of the book: *Ibid.*, 13–37.
3. Hans Medick, ‘Turning Global? Microhistory in Extension’, *Historische Anthropologie* 24, no. 2 (2016): 243–44.
4. *Ibid.*, 244.
5. Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, trans. Rex Warner, Rev. ed, The Penguin Classics (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1972); Sima Qian, *Records of the Grand Historian: Han Dynasty*, trans. Burton Watson, Rev. ed. (Hong Kong: Research Centre for Translation, Chinese University of Hong Kong; New York, 1993); Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence: China, Europe, and the Making of the Modern World Economy*, The Princeton Economic History of the Western World (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2000).
6. Simon Szreter, ‘Labor and World Development through the Lens of Cotton: A Review Essay’, *Population and Development Review* 42, no. 2 (2016): 359–67.
7. Douglas Northrop, ‘Introduction: The Challenge of World History’, in *A Companion to World History*, ed. Douglas Northrop (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 1.
8. T. E. Vadney, ‘World History as an Advanced Academic Field’, *Journal of World History* 1, no. 2 (1990): 212–13.
9. Roland Robertson, ‘Globalisation or Glocalisation?’, *The Journal of International Communication* 18, no. 2 (2012): 191–208.
10. See the discussion of critiques in Sigurður G. Magnússon and István Szíjjártó, *What Is Microhistory?: Theory and Practice* (London; New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2013), 40–41; See also Robert Finlay, ‘The Refashioning of Martin Guerre’, *American Historical Review* 93, no. 3 (June 1988): 553–71; Steven Bednarski, *A Poisoned Past: the Life and Times of Margarida de Portu, a Fourteenth-century Accused Poisoner*, 2014, 12–13.
11. Francesca Trivellato, ‘Un Nouveau Combat Pour L’histoire Au XXIE Siècle?’ *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 70, no. 2 (April 2015): 333–43; Lara Putnam, ‘To Study the Fragments/Whole: Microhistory and the Atlantic World’, *Journal of Social History*, 39, no. 3 (Spring, 2006): 615–630; John-Paul A. Ghobrial, ‘The Secret Life of Elias of Babylon and the Uses of Global Microhistory’, *Past & Present* 222, no. 1 (2014): 51–93; Tonio Andrade, ‘A Chinese Farmer, Two African Boys, and a

- Warlord: Toward a Global Microhistory’, *Journal of World History* 21, no. 4 (2010): 573–91; F. de Vivo, ‘Prospect or Refuge? Microhistory, History on the Large Scale: A Response’, *Cultural and Social History* 7, no. 3 (2010): 387–97; Sebouh David Aslanian, *From the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean: The Global Trade Networks of Armenian Merchants from New Julfa*, The California World History Library 17 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011); Cao Yin, ‘The Journey of Isser Singh: A Global Microhistory of a Sikh Policeman’, *Journal of Punjab Studies* 21, no. 2 (2014): 325–53.
12. Martin Dusinberre referred to the term “micro-global history” in the abstract of his paper for the annual conference of the European Social Science History Conference, held in April 2016. For the programme, see <https://esshc.socialhistory.org/esshc-user/programme> [consulted on 22 September 2016].
 13. In 2015, the European Network in Universal and Global History held its biannual conference in Paris, and featured sessions addressing the issue; the International Institute of Social History, which organises the European Social Science History Conference, devoted several panels to the topic at its conference in 2016; and the American Historical Association is using ‘Historical Scale: Linking Levels of Experience’ as the theme for its 2017 conference in Denver.
 14. For details of the conference, and a brief report, see <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/history/ghcc/thespaceinbetween> [consulted on 22 September 2016].
 15. For an example of a fruitful expansion of the labour history of Japan into a global debate: Martin Dusinberre, ‘Circulations of Labor, Bodies of Work. A Japanese Migrant in Meiji Hawai’i’, *Historische Anthropologie*, 24, no. 2 (2016), 194–217.

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Micro-Spatial Histories of Labour: Towards a New Global History

Christian G. De Vito and Anne Gerritsen

INTRODUCTION

At first glance, global history and micro-history appear irreconcilably disjunctive in their concerns, scope, and methodology. Is it possible to bring global and micro-history into a productive engagement? If

Draft versions of this article were discussed during the session on ‘Translocal- and micro-histories of global labour’ at the European Social Science History Conference 2014 (Vienna, 25 April 2014), at the Cosmopolis seminar (Leiden, 13 October 2014) and at the writing workshop held at Warwick on 23–24 January 2015. For their insightful feedback, we would like to thank all participants, together with the following colleagues (in random order): Simona Cerutti, Juliane Schiel, István M. Szijártó, Andrea Caracausi, Lara Putnam, Franco Ramella, Jos Gommans, Tom Cunningham, Valentina Favaró, Henrique Espada Lima, Evelien de Hoop, Eloisa Betti, Sigurður Gylfi Magnússon, Piero Brunello, Jesús Agua de la Roza, Michele Nani, Lorenzo D’Angelo. Many thanks to Emma Battell Lowman for her excellent work as copy-editor.

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so, which streams in these sub-disciplines might be relevant or open to such an interaction? What might be the theoretical and methodological implications of such an engagement? These questions present the central concern of this essay: to identify the significant opportunities that arise from combining the global historical perspective with micro-analysis. We would argue that it is possible to overcome the binary division between global and local by combining micro-analysis with a spatially aware approach. We propose to use the term ‘micro-spatial history’ to refer to this combination.

This essay begins by (re)defining ‘global’ and ‘micro’ from the perspective of their interaction. It then moves to an exploration of how the perspective of micro-spatial history relates to periodisation and conceptualisations of time. The final section addresses the potential of micro-spatial history for labour studies in particular. We close by framing this approach as an alternative perspective on global history.

THE ‘GLOBAL’ AND THE ‘SPATIAL’

The move away from Euro-centrism and nation-based histories, which defines the field of global and world history as a whole, has produced a fundamental reorientation of historiography and of the historian’s craft during recent decades.¹ However, as the field expanded and became institutionalised, new conceptualisations and practices of global history have been included in the discipline, while the debate on its epistemology has lagged behind. Scholars have recently highlighted the conflicting nature of some of the approaches within the field.² Lynn Hunt, for example, has contrasted the ‘top-down’ approach of macro-analytical and economics-driven global history with the ‘bottom-up’ perspective that defines globalisation as ‘a series of transnational processes in which the histories of diverse places become connected and interdependent’.³ From a different angle, Angelika Epple has insisted on the distinction between global histories that stand in the tradition of universal history and seek to cover the whole world, and those which are influenced by the spatial turn and conceive space as ‘socially constructed and not as a geographical fact’.⁴ Partly overlapping with these interpretations, we contend here that the most important divide within the field of global history exists between the interpretation that conflates the concept of ‘the global’ with

a macro-analytical perspective, and the view of the global as a spatially aware mindset and methodology. In other words, there are those who mean ‘analysis on the macro level’ when they say ‘global’, and those who mean ‘connections that stretch across cultural boundaries’. We argue that these are not complementary but mutually exclusive alternatives. Consequently, after a brief exploration of the limitations of the macro-analytical version of global history, we provide an epistemological basis for our alternative vision.

For the purposes of this essay, we define the macro-analytical approach as the perspective by which the researcher predetermines the categories, spatial units, and periodisations that shape the topic of research, as opposed to seeing these as emerging from within specific historical processes and as the products of the agency of historical actors. For example, the macro-analytical approach might imply fitting the heterogeneous datasets and practices yielded by the sources into standardised taxonomies, prioritising continuities across space, and establishing teleological connections between events across time. Within the field of global history, this approach is usually, though not exclusively, combined with a spatial focus that covers the whole planet. Some global historians build databases that span the globe, as in the case of the Collaborative for Historical Information and Analysis (CHIA), which brings together a broad number of databases organised around predetermined variables concerning population and migration, commodities, government systems and actions, climate and health.⁵ Other global historians seek to reach across the globe by comparing large spatial units and *civilisations*—most typically within Eurasia. In both cases, generalisations are made on the basis of qualitatively diverse phenomena, brought together through spatial units and conceptual categories constructed by the researchers themselves, with scarce attention to contextual differentiations and to the agents’ own multiple perceptions and representations. For the same reasons, discontinuities and other connections and interpretations are often underplayed, elided, or omitted.

The focus on comparisons and relationships between macro-regions has helped to overcome traditional geographical divisions that dominate national historiographies and area studies, and revise (or ‘provincialise’) Europe’s role in history.⁶ Key works in the field illustrate the impact of this approach: Janet Abu-Lughod’s study on the formation of

a world-system between 1250 and 1350, i.e. ‘before European hegemony’; the new visibility acquired by Central Asia, both in relation to the decisive formation of the Mongol Empire, and regarding the vast region away from any polity control that Willem van Schendel and then James C. Scott named Zomia; Andre Gunder Frank’s study on the historical centrality of Asia, and especially China; and Kenneth Pomeranz’ ‘great divergence’ between Chinese and European history.⁷ However, the *exclusive* focus on the big scale also produces fundamental distortions. To begin with, it accentuates economic and political-institutional issues at the expense of social and cultural aspects, leaving little room for the study of historical agency and rendering differentiations around space, class, ethnicity, and gender barely visible. Moreover, from a spatial perspective, this approach tends to create a hierarchy between ‘centre’ and ‘periphery’, relegating ‘the local’ to the ranks of case studies that merely serve to illustrate the interaction of predefined factors. Therefore, the macro-historical approach also tends towards an ethnocentric perspective, albeit one that substitutes Euro-centrism with Eurasia-centrism. The exclusive focus on the global scope also usually implies the juxtaposition of contradictory insights from the secondary literature, and a move away from in-depth study of primary sources.

An alternative approach might take ‘the global’ to mean a spatially sensitive mindset. This makes the historian aware of the role of spatial dimensions in the construction of history, the ways in which multiple connections among places and temporalities construct spatiality, and the need for methodologies that overcome the local/global divide. We consider that three research strands belong to this approach, which we refer to collectively as *spatial history*.⁸ The first strand includes studies that have sought to deconstruct the idea of the nation state as a homogeneous and ‘natural’ object, either by historicising its formation and ideologies—focusing on cross-border economic and cultural exchanges—or by exploring the tension between centralising projects of territorial state-building and sub-national spatial units.⁹ The second strand, the ‘new imperial histories’, have focused on the intra- and inter-imperial circulation of individuals, objects, ideas, and imaginaries, and have questioned the centre/periphery model by showing the limits of imperial governmentality, the impact of colonies on the metropole, and independent connections among the colonies themselves.¹⁰ The third strand includes studies that have explicitly addressed the connection between ‘the local’

and ‘the global’, and in some cases have revealed the need to overcome the very local/global divide.¹¹

Such approaches, in connection with the growing awareness of the role of spatiality in history referred to as the ‘spatial turn’, characterise the majority of publications in the field of global history.¹² However, they are largely under-represented in surveys of the discipline, perhaps because their fragmented nature and lack of strong epistemological foundations make their contributions to broader historiographical issues less visible.¹³ Indeed, most of this literature pays scant attention to analytical issues such as the relationship between individuals and structures, power inequalities, representativeness/generalisation, the structure of archives, and the historian’s craft. We argue that micro-history can offer precisely this epistemological basis, while benefiting from the methodological insights offered by spatial history.

MICRO

*Pourquoi faire simple si on peut faire compliqué?*¹⁴ It seems to us that the anti-reductionist approach of micro-history, captured above by Jacques Revel, can provide spatial history with a solid epistemological basis. It is not our intention to write the complete history of the vast and complex field of micro-history.¹⁵ We draw here mostly on the Italian *microstoria*, since this field has foregrounded some issues that are especially relevant for the establishment of micro-spatial history.¹⁶ In particular, *microstoria* has highlighted the need to define categories, spatial units, and periodisations by the perspectives and actions of historical subjects themselves.¹⁷ Hence, Italian micro-historians have on the one hand pointed to the importance of the intensive study of primary sources and the attention to apparently meaningless ‘traces’ within them, and on the other hand stressed the existence of multiple temporalities across various geographical and social configurations, and refused teleological interpretations of history.

Building on these bases, particularly Maurizio Gribaudi has insisted that differences and changes in social practices are ‘the natural dimension of historicity’, and that the fabric of history can be described as ‘a configuration of moving points, organised according to specific local forms.’ According to this perspective, each context is unique, and its uniqueness is constructed at the intersection of infinite and ever-mobile connections, to which, in turn, each context contributes. This view of the

past as a series of locally configured connected points calls for overcoming both the global–local and the structure–agency divides. Indeed, as Carlo Ginzburg has written, ‘any social structure is the result of interaction and of numerous individual strategies’¹⁸; structures and agency intersect at all scales, rather than being conflated with, respectively, the global and the local scales.¹⁹ By ‘following the traces’ of distinct groups of people, objects, and ideas across the spaces and times they relate to, we can address broad historical questions.

It is this epistemology of difference and connectedness wherein lies the most important contribution of micro-history to spatial history. Yet, in turn, spatial history can be beneficial to micro-history, particularly with regard to methodological concerns. Indeed, micro-historians have traditionally focused on individuals and communities within specific places or relatively small regions, and have postulated the need to ‘reduce the scale’ in order to maintain complexity. In so doing, they have fallen into the same logical problem as their macro-analytical colleagues: just as some global historians equate macro approach and global scope, they conflate the micro level of analysis and the local spatial scale.²⁰ However, it is not the case that a micro-analytical approach can only be applied to single and/or small spatial units. In fact, neither the intensity of the archival research per se nor the awareness that ‘all phases through which research unfolds are constructed and not given’ necessarily imply a focus on one place or a single archive.²¹ Rather, they point to the need for a high level of reflexivity on the part of the researcher, who should have the latitude to make multiple choices and be aware of each.

Micro-historians’ conflation of the micro and the local reveals a limited conceptualisation of space, and of the connections between different contexts. It implies that ‘the local’ is a close and inward-looking unit, and prioritises the social relations that take place *within* certain localities as represented in records held exclusively in locally based archives. Conversely, a spatial history centred on specific contexts could benefit from a micro-analytical approach, provided that it is based on a dynamic conceptualisation of spatiality. As Doreen Massey already noted: ‘the spatial’ is ‘constructed out of the multiplicity of social relations across all scales’, and ‘the local’ can be understood as an open space, whose specificity stems from the unfinished process of the construction of interrelations across spaces rather than through bounded and self-referential ‘identities’.²² This perspective has three major consequences for our micro-spatial research.

First, circulations can be addressed that exist behind the scene of even apparently static localities, and in relation to individuals who have not themselves travelled. In fact, from this perspective, each place can be seen as a contact zone, no matter whether it is Denys Lombard's 'Javanese crossroads',²³ Mulich's 'inter-imperial microregion', a world city like Massey's present-day London or Kapil Raj's eighteenth-century Calcutta,²⁴ or a small village in a remote borderland.²⁵ No individual ever lives in totally isolated contexts: even if a whole life is spent in a single place, objects, ideas, and people around him/her come from and/or deal with other places. Each person is also part of multiple networks of power extending into space, constantly interacting with all of these. Moreover, each individual develops his or her own perceptions and representations of space, of 'otherness' and of the world. Finally, all these configurations of material and symbolic spatialities inevitably change across time, and each person does not simply react to these changes, but also shapes them.

Second, because places are hubs of multiple networks and intersections of multiple areas of influence by individual and institutional power, the ways in which places are connected with one another require attention. To quote the insightful metaphor recently proposed by Kirwin Shaffer, 'the lines' (the circulations) and 'the dots' (the contexts) should be kept together in historical writing.²⁶ The concept of trans-locality, used in several disciplines, seems especially appropriate for this task for it draws attention to the fact that connections, before linking large regions and polities, put specific sites in contact with each other.²⁷ Therefore, trans-locality highlights the need for an integrated study of short-, medium-, and long-distance connections within and across political, administrative, linguistic, and cultural borders; and it enhances the questioning of the global/local divide through detailed analysis of the entanglements among sites, on the nature of connections, and on the reasons and relevance of disconnections. Migration studies are one of the areas for which the refreshing potential of trans-locality can best be glimpsed. Historical studies on the topic still tend to be framed in macro-analytical and (at most) trans-national perspectives, by the idea of 'sending' and 'receiving' countries, and the exclusive focus on top-down exclusion/integration dualism.²⁸ Conversely, a trans-local insight demands analysis of specific places and contexts implicated in migration, including consideration of sources and destinations of actual and other places that prove relevant in the migrant's extended networks and imaginary.

This also directs attention to the power relationships of which each migrant is part, and with the multiple identities imbricated in the process. Finally, because of this deep insight into the spatiality of migrations, the relevance of traditional distinctions such as ‘internal’ and ‘international’ migrations is not taken for granted, but addressed from a context-bound perspective and from the standpoint of the migrants’ own strategies.

Besides addressing the circulations in apparently static localities and lives and paying attention to trans-local connections, a third consequence stems from an open conceptualisation of place. It is possible to envisage a more dynamic comparative history, one that addresses distinctive processes of ‘production of locality’ through the connections and conflicts that operate within and beyond each place.²⁹ In this perspective, the units to be compared are no longer taken for granted, and no predetermined ‘factor’ is being compared; rather, the key issues and the ever-changing configurations are selected according to historical questions and through the intensive study of primary sources. For instance, regarding what they have termed ‘second slavery’, Dale Tomich and Michael Zeuske have conceptualised ‘comparative microhistories’.³⁰ They envisaged ‘a different method than the comparison of apparently independent and commensurate (national) units’ and therefore chose an Atlantic plantation zone as the unit of observation; they sought to examine the ‘formation of relations in particular local time-place settings and theoretically [to reconstruct] the complex and multiform processes that produce the difference between them’; and explored ‘the conditions, possibilities, and limits of agency’ at the cross-roads of ‘social relations that are spatially and temporally complex and diverse’.

Comparisons then become possible in and across spatial units specifically related to the topic under research, or suggested by the historical sources. They might involve places that have not been in contact through space, or belonged to different historical periods. Moreover, as the borders of each place become porous under the action of multiple exchanges, direct and indirect entanglements between the units that are being compared are taken into consideration. Some research strategies are, therefore, particularly relevant. Examples include Sanjay Subrahmanyam’s ‘connected histories’, because they foreground how multiple local and regional interactions across different sites in the world gave rise to historical phenomena;³¹ Sandra Curtis Comstock’s ‘incorporating comparisons’, so far as they incorporate the awareness

of the fluid and historically defined nature of categories and borders;³² and Ann Laura Stoler's and Clare Anderson's focus on 'the politics of comparison', that is, those comparisons among places and phenomena that were made by the historical actors themselves.³³ Taken as a whole, these approaches allow for a rethinking of comparison as the analysis of the dialectics between specificity and connectivity of each site, and as the ethnographical study of the impact of multiple connections on specific localities.

MICRO-SPATIALITY

The key feature of the micro-spatial perspective lies in the focus on the simultaneity of different and interconnected spaces. However, we may ask ourselves how this epistemological approach can be operationalised in empirical research. It is our contention that a research strategy is possible that exceeds the local boundaries by closely 'following the traces', connecting multiple contexts by exploring the circulation of individuals, objects, and ideas.³⁴ In at least two areas—'global lives' and the circulation of objects—some research in the past decade has dealt with the need to overcome the local/global divide and even explicitly addressed the relations between micro-history and global history.

In an important article, Francesca Trivellato has considered the study of the biographies of individuals who travelled across the globe of strategic importance to 'global microhistories' (or 'global history on a small scale'³⁵). Trivellato's own study about the Sephardim of Livorno represents a model for this kind of global biography at once sensitive to context and cross-cultural encounters and geared to address fundamental historical issues. The author cites Emma Rothschild's *The Inner Life of Empires* as another example, directly inspired by the 'manifesto of micro-history' written by Carlo Poni and Ginzburg in 1979 in its effort to connect 'micro- and macro-histories by the histories of the individuals' own connections'.³⁶ Interestingly, that very manifesto indicated the possibility of a 'micro-nominative' research strategy regarding 'individuals belonging to those social strata characterised by greater geographical mobility'. Other examples of this approach include Natalie Zemon Davies' study of Leo Africanus,³⁷ Edoardo Grendi's study of the trans-local connections of the Genoese family Balbi, and Ginzburg's 'experiment in micro-history' on the life of the seventeenth- to eighteenth-century corporal Jean-Pierre Purry in Neuchatel, Amsterdam, Capetown, and Batavia.³⁸

As these works show, the life experiences of diverse individuals and social groups can be dealt with through a micro-spatial approach. These studies all address transcontinental circulations, but suggest a way for dealing with much smaller, even local circulations: by following the individuals' own connections, and acknowledging the same complexity in cultural exchanges and in the individuals' own spatial representations. This is a field that some Italian micro-historians have explored during recent decades, centring their analysis on jurisdictional contentions and social networks of non-elite migrants across the borders of various pre-unification 'Italian' states, and surrounding territories.³⁹

'Micro-global' connections have also been addressed in the context of the circulation of objects. Studies in commodity chains, for example, seek to trace the social and labour relations involved in the processes of designing, producing, transporting, trading, and consuming a certain commodity. These studies often foreground the cultural aspects of these processes, unpacking the various representations they involve.⁴⁰ Similarly, this is the case for the interdisciplinary field of material culture research, which, as Glenn Adamson and Giorgio Riello explain, 'begins with a piece of evidence (the thing itself), and slowly but surely teases questions out of it'.⁴¹ They identify three ways by which 'an artefact can fit into a narrative of global history: objects that demonstrate cultural connection; objects that synthesise global difference within themselves; and objects that image the global'. As for commodity chain studies, the potential of this approach lies in its capacity to bring together material and symbolic connections, and circulations at various spatial scopes.

Of course, not only things have 'global lives', but also knowledge and information.⁴² The expanding literature on the transnational circulation of ideas promises to foster the spatial-sensitive perspective in areas of research that are traditionally framed within the national borders, such as the history of the prison, psychiatry, and criminology.⁴³ Finally, the field of digital humanities should be mentioned, for digitised accessibility of primary sources, text searchability, data mining, and portals expand the possibility to trace the transfers of individuals, objects, and ideas across space and time.⁴⁴ Although tools such as GIS were originally conceived for macro-analytical purposes, there is a considerable range of techniques that brings together large sets of hard data to facilitate the analysis of the complexity and intricacy of the data.⁴⁵ Spatial analysis based on such tools might challenge existing explanations, helping us to think about

‘what impact location and space have on all aspects of human behaviour’, ‘establishing how different places behave differently’.⁴⁶

TIME IN MICRO-SPATIAL HISTORY

The integration of the micro-analytical perspective and spatial methodologies has several implications for the conceptualisation of time, in particular for periodisation and synchronic-diachronic integrations. Because the micro-spatial approach views ‘the global’ as a mindset that does not necessarily imply the study of world-scale phenomena, the chronological scope can be extended back to periods when the interlocking of various regional systems did not extend to the globe as a whole.⁴⁷ Different from macro-analytical global history, which takes the formation of world-systems as its main object, the micro-spatial approach allows for a broader range of research questions concerning the contemporary perceptions of time and space of historical actors. Several recent studies have shown the ways in which such questions can be fruitfully asked of antiquity and the ‘pre-modern’ more generally, especially by focusing on migrations, transport, and communication systems, and the historical actors’ own representations and perceptions of the world.⁴⁸ Against this background of chronological expansion, new historical questions emerge. For instance, we might ask what the implications were of the birth of an integrated world-system for the quality and quantity of the connections and circulations of people, goods, and ideas. Were the exchanges and connections in the late-medieval, multi-polar world-system qualitatively different from those of the age of European colonisation? Micro-spatial historians are also particularly well-placed to explore the kind of spatialities that were constructed by bottom-up circulations, and their entanglements or disjunctures with those planned and created by the economic and political elites. Furthermore, we may ask how economic and cultural exchanges were experienced and represented by individuals and collectives, and what transformations they brought about in the everyday of different places.⁴⁹

The micro-spatial approach questions the very concepts of modernisation and modernity. From this perspective, it is not enough to point to the existence of multiple modernities, and to refuse the equation of modernity with the Western standard.⁵⁰ Differentiation and discontinuity in social practices across the globe create ‘unpredicted sequences of different configuration states’, which call into question any kind of

evolutional and teleological perspectives.⁵¹ Consequently, a more radical rethinking of periodisation is needed. The traditional division of history into prehistorical, ancient, medieval, early modern, and modern periods represents one of the most visible legacies of the Eurocentric approach that micro-spatial history seeks to overcome. Only once we move beyond this periodisation can alternative chronologies emerge, and the continuities and discontinuities that stem from empirical research on specific issues become visible. Periodisations ought to be built on the basis of the researcher's questions and of the historical actors' own connections and representations, as Jerry Bentley sought to do in his 1996 comments on periodisation and global connections.⁵² We, as researchers, will have to acknowledge the existence of multiple and alternative periodisations.

Synchronicity characterises micro-history, which often leads to critiques of an absence of theoretical explanations for historical transformations.⁵³ Hans Medick's study of the German town of Laichingen is one of the few exceptions.⁵⁴ By covering the period 1650–1900, Medick shows the potential for a *longue-durée* micro-history centred on a specific place, addressing the fundamental issue of 'proto-industrialisation'. We suggest that from a micro-spatial historical perspective, the possibility exists to integrate synchronic and diachronic approaches, by following the traces of individuals, objects, ideas, and representations both across space and time.

MICRO-SPATIAL HISTORY OF LABOUR

Labour history lends itself especially well to illustrate how our approach of micro-spatial history might look in practice. On the one hand, it has gone through several changes since the emergence of global history; on the other hand, within the field of global labour history, macro and micro approaches can be mutually contrasted with particular clarity.⁵⁵ As is the case for other global historians, the proponents of the broad and heterogeneous scholarly network of global labour history have in common the opposition to Eurocentric and methodologically nationalist approaches. By challenging the traditional conflation of labour history with the history of wage labour, this approach has led to a re-conceptualisation of the working class.⁵⁶ Global labour historians have questioned the validity of connecting the advent of capitalism to the process of proletarianisation and stigmatising all labour relations that are different from wage labour as 'peripheral' or 'backward'. In contrast, they have shown that no exclusive connection exists between wage labour

and the commodification of labour, and that multiple labour relations have concurred to the latter. Starting from this premise, the traditional 'free'/'unfree' labour divide has been questioned, as has the alleged linear shift from early modern 'unfree' to modern 'free' labour relations; conversely, a continuous process of replacement of one mixed configuration of different labour relations with another has been envisaged.⁵⁷ Finally, the focus on the process of labour commodification and multiple labour relations allows for a long-term approach that significantly resonates with the point we made in the previous section: the (for 'old' and 'new' labour history alike) seemingly impassable watershed of the Industrial Revolution may now be overtaken, and the centuries before it can be fully addressed in their own right.

The thematic and geographical expansion of research interests, therefore, has produced a qualitative change in the conceptualisation of key issues in labour history. However, the impact of this change on the ways in which space and connections are understood is limited to date. In global labour history, even more markedly than in global history as a whole, there is a tendency to conflate 'the global' with the world, to marginalise 'the local' to the rank of 'case study', and to address the connections within global space mostly through comparisons among structural patterns in predefined spatial units. Leo Lucassen's 'new directions in global labour history', exclusively based on a macro-analytical approach, accentuate these limitations, which are already visible in empirical research.⁵⁸ Indeed, in major quantitative projects like the *Global Collaboratory* and *Clio-infra*, data are aggregated on a national basis even for periods prior to the existence of such political units; moreover, they are categorised according to a predefined taxonomy⁵⁹ that leaves little or no space for fundamental qualitative insights such as those regarding contextualisation and the actors' own representations. Similarly, the 'collective research model' applied to various projects involving dock and textile workers, shipbuilding labour, and prostitutes, by aiming to 'cover the world', is striking for its essentialisation of the national frame and the rigidity of its comparative approach.⁶⁰

These trends reflect and accentuate the limited debate on spatiality that has taken place among global labour historians so far. In an article published in the French journal *Le Mouvement Social*, arguably the single most influential scholar in this area, Marcel van der Linden, has explicitly addressed this issue.⁶¹ He has affirmed that 'global history...should not necessarily deal with the big-scale; it can include micro-history as well'

and has consequently pointed to the strategy of ‘following the traces we are interested in, whatever the direction they lead us to: beyond political, geographical and disciplinary borders, temporal frames and territories’. ‘Other methodologies used by global labour historians in their individual research also proceed in the same direction: the focus on household’ strategies; the study of commodity chains; the tracing of ‘teleconnections’ between events that have taken place within various spatial contexts; and the reference to trans-locality.⁶²

This more dynamic approach resonates with our proposed micro-spatial historical approach. Some Brazilian global labour historians have also shown a consistent interest in the micro- and global historical perspectives.⁶³ For example, Paulo Fontes has written a history of the migration of workers from the north-east of Brazil to an area of São Paulo in the first two decades after the second world war: by using oral and archival sources intensively he was able to grasp the process of construction of multiple identities, the experiences and representations of work, and the power relationships embedded in these. As in the case of other micro-historians, legal sources have also revealed their potential: Sidney Chalhoub has Immersed himself into the records of ‘amazing trials, centred upon dense and fascinating individuals, who compelled me to tell their stories’, in order to address ‘slave visions of slavery’ and view the abolition of slavery as an open and unpredictable process rather than a linear transition; and Henrique Espada Lima has discussed the relationship between ‘little things and global labour history’ by thinking about the inventory of the belongings of Augusto, an *africano livre* who drowned at sea in 1861 while working as a mariner. Perhaps unsurprisingly, Chalhoub’s work explicitly refers to Ginzburg’s ‘index paradigm’, and Espada Lima is the author of arguably the most informative and insightful history of Italian micro-history. The other chapters in this volume each shed light on the value of this micro-spatial approach for the study of global labour without presupposing a link to the emergence of capitalism or dismissing studies of non-wage labour as peripheral.

CONCLUSION

The move away from Eurocentrism and methodological nationalism, which defines the field of global (and world) history as a whole, has produced a fundamental reorientation of historiography and of the

historian's craft during recent decades. However, with the expansion and institutionalisation of the field, potentially conflicting conceptualisations and practices of global history have become part of the discipline, while the debate on its epistemology has lagged behind. This article has intended to contribute to this discussion by highlighting potential problems within macro-analytical approaches to global history, and by laying out the epistemological and methodological bases for a micro-spatial global history.

The prevailing approach to global history, it seems to us, conflates the planetary scale with the macro-analytical approach. Consequently, it produces major distortions, especially regarding the ways in which concepts, units of reference, and periodisations are predetermined. Meanwhile, alternative ways of framing 'the global' in historiography have remained under-conceptualised. In recent years, critical voices have emerged both within and outside the field of global history, questioning the ways in which global historians produce and use basic concepts like circulation, exchange, and flows. We propose to overcome the global–local divide with a spatially aware approach to the study of history ('spatial history'). We have argued that spatial insights and micro-analytical perspectives can interact— 'micro-spatial history'—, provided that we avoid the conflation of the level of analysis (micro/macro) and its spatial scope (local/global). Micro-history can offer the epistemological foundations of this field, through its sensitivity to contextualisation and historical distinctiveness through time and space. At the same time, spatial history can help micro-history to overcome its tendency to remain confined in geographically limited spaces and to conceptualise localities as self-sufficient units.

In conclusion, we argue that this approach potentially has major implications for the ways in which global history has been practiced to date. We propose that a micro-spatial approach allows us to expand the chronological scope to the ancient, medieval, and early modern period, when the interlocking of various regional systems was not co-extensive with the globe, and to offer new ways of thinking about the process of modernisation and the concept of modernity in general, which in itself has significant implications for historical periodisation. Finally, we propose that micro-spatial history implies collaboration and co-operation. We need multi-sited, cross-cultural, and cross-linguistic studies of history.⁶⁴ We see collaboration not only as a technical response to pragmatic problems, but as a genuine way forward for academic research on a global scale: challenging existing boundaries created by linguistic,

environmental, geo-political, and hierarchical differences. Only then can we hope to aim for a new global history.

NOTES

1. The terms global history and world history have been defined in different ways in the literature. However, since the issues addressed in this paper cut across both field of research, the term ‘global history’ will be used here to include ‘world history’ as well.
2. Besides the two works mentioned in the text, see also the panel on ‘Global processes: Reflections on the language of global history’ at the ENIUGH conference, Paris, 4–7 September 2014: http://www.uni-leipzig.de/~eniugh/congress/programme/event/?tx_seminars_pi1%5BshowUid%5D=251 (consulted 18 September 2014).
3. Lynn Hunt, *Writing History in the Global Era* (New York and London, 2014), esp. pp. 59–68. Citation on p. 59.
4. Angelika Epple, ‘Globale Mikrogeschichte. Auf dem Weg zu einer Geschichte der Relationen’, in *Im Kleinen das Große suchen. Mikrogeschichte in Theorie und Praxis*, eds. Ewald Hiebl and Ernst Langthaler (Innsbruck, 2012), pp. 37–47. Citation on p. 40.
5. Patrick Manning, *Big Data in History: A World-Historical Archive* (London, 2013).
6. Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Post-Colonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton, 2007). On the relationship between area studies and global history see especially Birgit Schäbler, ed., *Area Studies und die Welt. Weltregionen und neue Globalgeschichte* (Wien, 2007).
7. For some examples, including the essays and issues mentioned in the text: Janet L. Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony: The World System A.D. 1250–1350* (New York and Oxford, 1991); Jerry H. Bentley, *Old World Encounters: Cross-Cultural Contacts and Exchanges in Pre-Modern Times* (New York, 1993); André Gunder Frank, *ReOrient: Global Economy in the Asian Age* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, 1998); David Christian, *A History of Russia, Central Asia and Mongolia* (Oxford, 1998), vol. 1; Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence: China, Europe, and the Making of the Modern World Economy* (Princeton and Oxford, 2000); Jerry H. Bentley and Herbert F. Ziegler, *Traditions and Encounters. A Global Perspective on the Past* (Boston, 2000); John R. McNeill, *The Human Web: A Bird’s-Eye View of World History* (New York, 2003); Serge Gruzinski, *Les quatre parties du monde. Histoire d’une mondialisation* (Paris, 2004); David Christian, *Maps of Time. An Introduction to Big History* (Berkeley, 2004); Peter Jackson, *The Mongols and the West, 1221–1410* (Harlow and London, 2005); Charles H. Parker, *Global Interactions in*

- the Early Modern Age, 1400–1800* (Cambridge, 2010); Peter N. Stearns, *Globalization in World History* (London and New York, 2010); David Christian, ‘The Return of Universal History’, *History and Theory*, 49, 4 (2010), 6–27; James C. Scott, *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia* (New Haven, 2010); Jean-Michel Sallmann, *Le grand désenclavement du monde 1200–1600* (Paris, 2011); Jürgen Osterhammel and Patric Camiller, *The Transformation of the World: A Global History of the Nineteenth Century* (Princeton, 2014).
8. The term ‘spatial history’ has already been in use among historians since the 1990s: Felix Driver and Raphael Samuel, ‘Spatial History: Re-thinking the Idea of Place’, *History Workshop Journal*, 39 (1995), v–vii. Presently it is being employed by scholars participating in the Spatial History Project at Stanford University: <http://www.stanford.edu/group/spatialhistory/cgi-bin/site/index.php> (consulted 18 September 2014). For a ‘manifesto’ related to this project: Richard White, ‘What is Spatial History?’, Stanford University Spatial History Lab, 1 February 2010.
 9. See for instance: Hastings Donnan and Thomas M. Wilson, *Borders: Frontiers of Identity, Nation and State* (Oxford and New York, 1999); Stefan Berger, *Writing the Nation. A Global Perspective* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); Anssi Paasi, ‘Border Studies Reanimated: Going Beyond the Territorial/Relational Divide’, *Environment and Planning A*, 44, 10 (2012), 2303–2309; Laura Di Fiore and Marco Meriggi, eds., *Movimenti e confini. Spazi mobili nell’Italia preunitaria* (Rome, 2013).
 10. On the New Imperial Histories see esp. Alan Lester, ‘Imperial Circuits and Networks: Geographies of the British Empire’, *History Compass*, 4, 1 (2006); Stephen Howe, ed., *The New Imperial Histories Reader* (London, 2009). See also: Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic* (Boston, 2000); Clare Anderson, *Convicts in the Indian Ocean: Transportation from South Asia to Mauritius, 1815–53* (London, 2000); Kerry Ward, *Networks of Empire: Forced Migration in the Dutch East India Company* (Cambridge, 2008).
 11. On the debate about the relations between global and local within global history see for instance: Jürgen Schlumbohm, ed., *Mikrogeschichte Makrogeschichte complementär oder inkommensurabel?* (Göttingen, 1998); Antony G. Hopkins, ed., *Global History: Interactions Between the Universal and the Local* (London, 2006); Patrick Manning, ed., *World History: Global and Local Interactions* (Princeton, 2006); Bartolomé Yun Casalilla, ‘“Localism”, Global History and Transnational History: A Reflection from the Historian of Early Modern Europe’, *Historisk Tidsskrift*, 127, 4 (2007), 659–678; Anne Gerritsen, ‘Scales of a Local:

- The Place of Locality in a Globalizing World’, in *A Companion to World History*, ed. Douglas Northrop (Chichester, 2012), pp. 213–226.
12. See esp.: Barney Warf, Santa Arias, *The Spatial Turn: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (Abingdon, 2009); Matthias Middell and Katja Naumann, ‘Global History and the Spatial Turn: From the Impact of Area Studies to the Study of Critical Junctures of Globalization’, *Journal of Global History*, 5 (2010), 149–170; Jo Guidi, The Spatial Turn in History—<http://spatial.scholarslab.org/spatial-turn/the-spatial-turn-in-history/index.html> (last consulted on 27 October 2016).
 13. For some surveys of the different tendencies within *Global History* and *World History* see: *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales*, special issue edited by Étienne Anheim, Romain Bertrand, Antoine Lilti and Stephen W. Sawyer on ‘Une histoire à l’échelle globale’, 56, 1 (2001); Patrick Manning, *Navigating World History. Historians Create a Global Past* (New York, 2003); Gunilla Budde, Sebastian Conrad, Oliver Janz, eds., *Transnationale Geschichte. Themen, Tendenzen und Theorien* (Göttingen, 2006); María Teresa Ortega López, ed. *Historia global. El debate historiográfico en los últimos tiempos* (Granada, 2007); Laurent Testot, ed., *Histoire globale: un autre regard sur le monde* (Paris, 2008); Georg G. Iggers and Edward Q. Wang, *A Global History of Modern Historiography* (Pearson, 2008), esp. pp. 387–400; Laura Di Fiore and Marco Meriggi, *World History. Le nuove rotte della storia* (Roma, 2011); Dominic Sachsenmaier, *Global Perspectives on Global History: Theories and Approaches in a Connected World* (Cambridge, 2011); Chloé Maurel, ed., *Essai d’histoire globale* (Paris, 2013); Maxine Berg, ed., *Writing the History of the Global: Challenges for the Twenty-First Century* (Oxford, 2013).
 14. ‘Why make things simple when we can make them complex?’. Quotation from Jacques Revel, ‘L’histoire au ras du sol’, in Giovanni Levi, *Le pouvoir au village. Histoire d’un exorciste dans le Piémont du XVIIe siècle* (Paris, 1989), p. xxiv.
 15. For the most complete essays on the history of micro-history: Henrique Espada Lima, *A micro-história italiana. Escalas, indícios e singularidades* (Rio de Janeiro, 2006); Sigurdur Gylfi Magnússon and István M. Sziijártó, *What is Microhistory? Theory and Practice* (Abingdon, 2013), esp. part one. Insights on the origins and evolution of micro-histories can be obtained also from the publications quoted in footnote 17.
 16. Whereas Italian micro-historians have especially insisted on the epistemological originality of their approach, almost without exception scholars in the anglophone world have merely equated micro-history with reduction of scale and with a narrative strategy. See for example Edward Muir and Guido Ruggiero, eds., *Microhistory and the Lost Peoples of Europe*

- (Baltimore, 1991), esp. Edward Muir, 'Introduction: Observing Trifles', pp. vii–xviii. For some fundamental distinctions within Italian *microstoria*: Christian G. De Vito, 'Verso una microstoria translocale (micro-spatial history)', *Quaderni Storici*, 150, 3 (2015), 855–868.
17. Among the most important retrospective interpretations provided by Italian micro-historians: Giovanni Levi, 'Il piccolo, il grande e il piccolo', *Meridiana*, 10 (1990), 211–234; Giovanni Levi, 'On Microhistory', in *New Perspectives on Historical Writing*, ed. Peter Burke (University Park, 1992), pp. 93–113; Carlo Ginzburg, 'Microhistory: Two or Three Things That I know about It', *Critical Inquiry*, 10, 1 (1993), 10–35; Edoardo Grendi, 'Ripensare la microstoria?', *Quaderni storici*, 86 (1994), 539–549; Giovanni Levi, 'The Origins of the Modern State and the Microhistorical Perspective', in *Mikrogeschichte Macrogeschichte*, pp. 53–82; Maurizio Gribaudi, 'Des micro-mécanismes aux configurations globales: Causalité et temporalité historiques dans les forms d'évolution et de l'administration française au XIX siècle', in *Mikrogeschichte Macrogeschichte*, pp. 83–128; Simona Cerutti, 'Microhistory: social relations versus cultural models? Some reflections on stereotypes and historical practices', in *Between Sociology and History. Essays on Microhistory, Collective Action, and Nation-Building*, eds. Anna-Maija Castrén, Markku Lonkila and Matti Peltonen, (Helsinki, 2004), pp. 17–40; Jacques Revel, ed., *Giochi di scala. La microstoria alla prova dell'esperienza*, Rome: Viella, 2006, extended and reviewed edition of the original French edition: Jacques Revel, ed., *Jeux d'échelles. La micro-analyse à l'expérience* (Paris, 1996)—see esp. the contributions by Gribaudi, Cerutti, Loriga, Grendi, Ago, Palumbo and Torre; Paola Lanaro, ed., *Microstoria. A venticinque anni da L'eredità immateriale. Saggi in onore di Giovanni Levi* (Milano, 2011). For some insightful interpretations on micro-history: Justo Serna and Anaclet Pons, 'El ojo de la aguja. ¿De qué hablamos cuando hablamos de microhistoria?', *La Historiografía*, 12 (1993), 93–133; Giovanni Busino, 'La microhistoire de Carlo Ginzburg', *Bibliothèque d'Humanisme et Renaissance*, 61, 3 (1999), 763–778; Matti Peltonen, 'Clues, Margins, and Monads: The Micro-Macro Link in Historical Research', *History and Theory*, 40, 3 (2001), 347–359.
 18. Ginzburg, *Microhistory*, p. 33. The author explicitly refers to: Giovanni Levi, *L'eredità immateriale: carriera di un esorcista nel Piemonte del Seicento* (Turin, 1985) (English trans. *Inheriting Power: The Story of an Exorcist*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988); Simona Cerutti, *La Ville et les métiers: Naissance d'un langage corporative (Turin, 17^e–18^e siècles)* (Turin, 1992).
 19. Indeed, the very idea of the existence of different scales of reality holding intrinsically different characteristics is highly problematic, for it

- reproduces the idea of a separation, and even a hierarchy, between the global and the local. Accordingly, Revel's idea of the need of *jeux d'échelles* also appears biased, as it fundamentally conflates 'the macro' with 'the global' and 'the structural', and 'the micro' with 'the local' and 'the individual'. We embrace here Gribaudi's position expressed in Gribaudi, *Scala, pertinenza, configurazione*, p. 121–122. For an empirical research making the same point, see Juliane Schiel, 'Zwischen Panoramablick und Nahaufnahme. Wie viel Mikroanalyse braucht die Globalgeschichte?', in *Europa in der Welt des Mittelalters. Ein Colloquium für und mit Michael Borgolte*, eds. Tillman Lohse and Benjamin Scheller (Berlin and Boston, 2014), pp. 119–140. For Revel's point of view, see Jacques Revel, 'Microanalisi e costruzione sociale', in Revel, *Giochi di scala*, pp. 19–44. It shall be noted that other micro-historians have shown ambiguity on this issue, most of them postulating different characteristics of macro- and micro-scales, and then either focusing on the second as a better perspective to grasp social relations (Ginzburg, *Microhistory*, p. 33) or 'constructing the 'macro' through the 'micro'' (Paul-André Rosental, 'Costruire il 'macro' attraverso il 'micro': Fredrik Barth e la microstoria', in Revel, *Giochi di scala*, pp. 147–170). For a recent debate among historians, see *AHR Conversation: How Size Matters: The Question of Scale in History*, Participants: Sebouh David Aslanian, Joyce E. Chaplin, Ann McGrath, and Kristin Mann, *American Historical Review*, 118, 3 (2013), pp. 1431–1472. For geographical insight on scale: Neil Brenner, 'The Limits to Scale? Methodological Reflections on Scalar Structuration', *Progress in Human Geography*, 25 (2001), 591–614; Anssi Paasi, 'Place and Region: Looking Through the Prism of Scale', *Progress in Human Geography*, 28, 4 (2004), 536–546.
20. The conflation of 'micro' and 'local' is especially evident in the Anglo-Saxon academic landscape, as noted in Magnússon and Szijártó, *What is Microhistory*, pp. 39–61. See esp.: James F. Brooks, Christopher R.N. DeCorse, John Walton, eds., *Small Worlds: Method, Meaning, and Narrative in Microhistory* (Santa Fe, 2008). For an implicit acknowledgement of the potential of micro-history to go beyond 'the local', see Filippo de Vivo, 'Prospect of Refuge? Microhistory, History on the Large Scale', *Cultural and Social History*, 7, 3 (2010), 387–397. On p. 392 the author notices: 'Microhistory seems tied to the local, but the way in which it investigate the connections between individual and context, between the regional, national and even the global, resonates meaningfully with current research'.
 21. Ginzburg, 'Microhistory', p. 32. As Ginzburg continues, this involves 'the identification of the object and its importance; the elaboration of the

- categories through which it is analysed; the criteria of proof; the stylistic and narrative forms by which the results are transmitted to the reader’.
22. See esp. the following volumes by Doreen Massey: *Spatial Divisions of Labour: Social Structures and the Geography of Production* (Basingstoke, 1984); *Space, Place, and Gender* (Minneapolis, 1994), quotation p. 4; *For Space* (Los Angeles, London and New Delhi, 2005). For other geographical insights on space, place and ‘local’: Edward W. Soja, *Postmodern Geographies. The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (London and New York, 1989); Henri Lefebvre, *La production de l’espace* (Paris, 2000); David Harvey, *Spaces of Hope* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 2000); David Harvey, *Spaces of Capital. Towards a Critical Geography* (Edinburgh, 2001); Arturo Escobar, ‘Culture sits in places: reflections on globalism and subaltern strategies of localization’, *Political Geography*, 20 (2001), 139–174; Anssi Paasi, ‘Region and Place: Regional Identity in Question’, *Progress in Human Geography*, 27, 4 (2003), 475–485; Anssi Paasi, ‘Geography, Space and the Re-Emergence of Topological Thinking’, *Dialogues in Human Geography*, 1 (2011), 299–303.
 23. Denys Lombard, *Le Carrefour javanais. Essai d’histoire globale* (Paris, 2004), 3 vols.
 24. Doreen Massey, *World City* (Cambridge, 2007); Kapil Raj, ‘The Historical Anatomy of a Contact Zone. Calcutta in the Eighteenth Century’, *Indian Economic Social History Review*, 48, 1 (2011), 55–82.
 25. Jeppe Mulich, ‘Microregionalism and Intercolonial Relations: The Case of the Danish West Indies, 1730–1830’, *Journal of Global History*, 8, 1 (2013), 72–94. See also Donald R. Wright, *The World and a Very Small Place in Africa: A History of Globalization in Niimi, the Gambia* (Armonk, 2004).
 26. See Kirwin R. Shaffer, ‘Latin Lines and Dots: Transnational Anarchism, Regional Networks, and Italian Libertarians in Latin America’, *Zapruder World*, 1, 1 (2014), <http://www.zapruderworld.org/content/kirwin-shaffer-latin-lines-and-dots-transnational-anarchism-regional-networks-and-italian> (consulted on 27 October 2016).
 27. The concept of ‘translocality’ has been used in historical studies in Ulrike Freitag and Achim von Oppen, eds., *Translocality: The Study of Globalising Processes from a Southern Perspective* (Leiden and Boston, 2010). Whereas the editors have stressed a ‘special’ importance of translocality for non-Western areas, we argue for a broader use of the concept. Human geographers have also used the concept: Katherine Brickell and Ayona Datta, eds., *Translocal Geographies. Spaces, Places, Connections* (Farnham, 2009). Ethnographers have referred to the concept of ‘multi-sitedness’, which presents some similarities: Marcus, ‘Ethnography in/of the World System’; Mark-Anthony Falzon, *Multi-sited Ethnography:*

- Theory, Praxis and Locality in Contemporary Research* (Farnham, 2009); Simon Coleman and Pauline von Hellermann, eds., *Multi-Sited Ethnography: Problems and Possibilities in the Translocation of Research Methods* (New York, 2011). Similar debates have taken place in the field of historical archaeology: see esp. Martin Hall, Stephen W. Silliman, eds., *Historical Archaeology* (Oxford, 2006).
28. See for instance the Global Migration History program based at the International Institute of Social History: <http://socialhistory.org/nl/projects/global-migration-history-programme> (consulted 27 October 2016). For an alternative approach, see for example: Beverly Lozano, 'The Andalusia-Hawaii-California Migration: A Study in Macrostructure and Microhistory', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 26, 2 (1984), 305–324; Mark-Anthony Falzon, *Cosmopolitan Connections. The Sindhi Diaspora, 1860–2000* (Leiden and Boston, 2004); 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 and Boston, 2011). For a focus on the migrants' own strategies, see: Franco Ramella, 'Reti sociali, famiglie e strategie migratorie', in *Storia dell'emigrazione italiana*, eds. Piero Bevilacqua, Andreina De Clementi and Emilio Franzina (Roma, 2001), vol. 1, pp. 143–160.
 29. See esp. the following publications by Angelo Torre: *Luoghi. La produzione di località in età moderna e contemporanea* (Roma, 2011); 'Comunità e località', esp. pp. 45–54, where Massey's work is also explicitly mentioned. For an interesting collection of historical essays on the 'production of space', see Antonella Romano, Sabina Brevaglieri, eds., 'Produzione di saperi, costruzione di spazi', special issue of the journal *Quaderni Storici*, 1 (2013).
 30. Dale Tomich, Michael Zeuske, 'Introduction: The Second Slavery. Mass Slavery, World-Economy, and Comparative Microhistories', *Review (Fernand Braudel Centre)*, 31, 2, Part I (2008), 91–100. Quotes respectively on pp. 95, 96, and 97. However, the authors conflate the analytical and the spatial levels when they talk about the necessity of the juxtaposition of macro-history (i.e. global scope) and microhistory (i.e. micro-analysis).
 31. On connected history see esp. Sanjay Subrahmanyam, 'Connected Histories: Notes Towards a Reconfiguration of Early Modern Eurasia', *Modern Asian Studies*, 31, 3 (1997), 735–762; Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Explorations in Connected Histories. From the Tagus to the Ganges* (Oxford, 2005); Sanjay Subrahmanyam, 'Beyond Incommensurability: Understanding Inter-Imperial Dynamics', Department of Sociology UCLA, Theory and Research in Comparative Social Analysis, Paper 32,

- 2005: <http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/soc/soc237/papers/sanjay.pdf> (consulted on 27 October 2016).
32. Sandra Curtis Comstock: 'Incorporating Comparison', in *The Handbook of World-System Analysis: Theory and Research*, eds. Christopher Chase-Dunn and Salvatore Babones (Routledge, 2011); 'Incorporating Comparisons in the Rift. Making Use of Cross-Place Events and Histories in Moments of World Historical Change', in *Beyond Methodological Nationalism: Social Science Research Methodologies in Transition*, eds. Anna Amelina, Devrimsel D. Negriz, Thomas Faist and Nina Glick Schiller (Routledge, 2012), pp. 176–197.
 33. Ann Laura Stoler, 'Tense and Tender Ties: The Politics of Comparison in North American History and (Post) Colonial Studies', *The Journal of American History*, 88, 3 (2001), 829–865; Clare Anderson, 'After Emancipation: Empires and Imperial Formations', in *Emancipation and the Remaking of the British Imperial World*, eds. Catherine Hall, Nicholas Draper, Keith McClelland (Manchester, 2014), pp. 113–127.
 34. The expression 'following the traces' has been recently used by Marcel van der Linden in 'Historia do trabalho: o Velho, o Novo e o Global', *Revista Mundos do trabalho*, 1 (2009), 11–26 and in 'Éditorial. Enjeux pour une histoire mondiale du travail', *Le Mouvement Social*, special issue on 'Travail et mondialisations', 241, 4 (2012), p. 16. A similar strategy had been previously suggested by George E. Marcus in: 'Ethnography in/of the world system: The Emergence of Multi-Sited Ethnography', *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 24 (1995), 95–117, esp. pp. 105–110. Besides the traces regarding individuals, groups and objects, the author mentions the possibility to 'follow the metaphor', by tracing 'the circulation of signs, symbols, and metaphors', and to 'follow the plot, story or allegory', e.g. by tracing alternative social memories.
 35. Francesca Trivellato, 'Is There a Future for Italian Microhistory in the Age of Global History?', *California Italian Studies*, 2, 1 (2011)—<http://escholarship.org/uc/item/0z94n9hq> (consulted on 27 October 2016). See also: Francesca Trivellato, 'Microstoria, storia del mondo e storia globale', in Lanaro, *Microstoria*, pp. 119–132. A biographical approach to 'global microhistory' is also in John-Paul A. Ghobrial, 'The secret life of Elias of Babylon and the uses of global microhistory', *Past and Present*, 222, 1 (2014), 51–93. For the micro-historical approach to biography: Jill Lepore, 'Historians Who Love Too Much: Reflections on Microhistory and Biography', *The Journal of American History*, 88, 1 (2001), 129–144; Sabrina Loriga, *Petit x: De la biographie à l'histoire* (Paris, 2010).
 36. Rothschild, *The Inner Life of Empires*, p. 7 (quoted in Trivellato, 'Is There a Future', p. 15). For the manifesto, see Carlo Ginzburg and Carlo

- Poni, 'Il nome e il come: scambio ineguale e mercato storiografico', *Quaderni storici*, 40 (1979), 1–10 (published in English as: 'The Name and the Game: Unequal Exchange and the Historical Marketplace', in *Microhistory and the Lost Peoples*, pp. 1–10, quotation on pp. 6–7).
37. Natalie Zemon Davis, *Trickster Travels: A Sixteenth-century Muslim between Worlds* (Basingstoke, 2006).
38. Poni and Ginzburg, 'The Name and the Game', pp. 6–7; Edoardo Grendi, *I Balbi. Una famiglia genovese fra Spagna e Impero* (Torino, 1997); Carlo Ginzburg, 'Latitude, Slaves, and Bible: An Experiment in Microhistory', *Critical Inquiry*, 31 (2005), 665–683. Although the examples provided by the authors in the first article concern mobility among Bologna, Venice and Florence, their implications for multi-sited archival research are similar than for broader geographical contexts. For an example, see Clare Anderson, *Subaltern Lives: Biographies of Colonialism in the Indian Ocean World, 1790–1920* (Cambridge, 2012).
39. See esp. the above mentioned works of Angelo Torre, Paola Lanaro, Franco Ramella and Simona Cerutti. See also: Angelo Torre, ed., *Per vie di terra. Movimenti di uomini e di cose nelle società di antico regime* (Milano, 2007); Piero Brunello, *Storia di anarchici e di spie. Polizia e politica nell'Italia liberale* (Roma, 2009); Laura Di Fiore and Marco Meriggi, eds., *Movimenti e confini. Spazi mobili nell'Italia preunitaria* (Roma, 2013); Laura Di Fiore, *Alla frontiera. Confini e documenti di identità nel Mezzogiorno continentale preunitario* (Soveria Mannelli, 2013).
40. On commodity chains: Sydney W. Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* (New York, 1985); Steven C. Topik and Allen Wells, 'Commodity Chains in a Global Economy', in *A World Connecting. 1870–1945*, ed. Emily S. Rosenberg (Cambridge, Ma., and London, 2012), pp. 593–812; Karin Hofmeester, 'Le diamants, de la mine à la bague: pour une histoire globale du travail au moyen d'un article de luxe', *Le Mouvement Social*, special issue on 'Travail et mondialisations', 241, 4 (2012), 85–108.
41. Glenn Adamson and Giorgio Riello, 'Global Objects: Contention and Entanglement', in *Writing the History of the Global*, pp. 177–194 (quotes on pp. 177 and 179). See also Anne Gerritsen and Giorgio Riello, eds., *The Global Lives of Things: The Material Culture of Connections in the Early Modern World* (Routledge, 2015). For trans-disciplinary perspectives on material culture: Janet Hoskins, *Biographical Objects: How Things Tell the Stories of People's Lives* (New York and London, 1998); Daniel Miller, ed., *Materiality* (Durham and London, 2005); Carl Knappett, Lambros Malafouris, eds., *Material Agency: Towards a Non-Anthropocentric Approach* (New York, 2008); Carl Knappett, *An*

- Archaeology of Interaction: Network Perspectives on Material Culture and Society* (Oxford, 2011). For a theoretical essay on entanglements between things and humans, consult Ian Hodder, *Entangled: An Archaeology of the Relationships between Humans and Things* (Oxford, 2012). For excellent examples of historical archaeology of object-based colonial connections: Nicholas Thomas, *Entangled Objects: Exchange, Material Culture, and Colonialism in the Pacific* (Cambridge, MA., and London, 1991); Gil J. Stein, ed., *The Archaeology of Colonial Encounters: Comparative Perspectives* (Santa Fe, 2005).
42. Gerritsen and Riello, *The Global Lives of Things*; Arndt Brandecke, *Imperio e información. Funciones del saber en el dominio colonial español* (Madrid, 2012).
 43. For two examples of the potential of this approach: Christian G. De Vito, 'Liminoids, Hegemony and Transfers in the Liminal Experiences in Italian Psychiatry, 1960s–1980 s', in *Ausnahmezustände. Entgrenzungen und Regulierungen in Europa während des Kalten Krieges*, eds. Cornelia Rauh and Dirk Schumann (Göttingen, 2015), pp. 236–252; Clare Anderson, Carrie M. Crockett, Christian G. De Vito, Takashi Miyamoto, Kellie Moss, Katherine Roscoe and Minako Sakata, 'Locating Penal Transportation: Punishment, Space and Place c. 1750–1900', in *Historical Geographies of Prisons: Unlocking the Usable Carceral Past*, eds. Dominique Moran e Karen Morin (New York, 2015).
 44. See esp. Lara E. Putnam, 'The Transnational and the Text-Searchable: Digitized Sources and the Shadow They Cast', *American Historical Review* 121, 2 (2016), 377–402.
 45. For example, Multimedia GIS, 'deep mapping' and cartograms. See: David J. Bodenhamer, John Corrigan and Trevor M. Harris, eds., *The Spatial Humanities: GIS and the Future of Humanities Scholarship* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, 2010). See esp. John Corrigan, 'Qualitative GIS and Emergent Semantics', pp. 76–88. See also: David O'Sullivan and David Unwin, *Geographical Information Analysis* (Hoboken, 2003); Anne K. Knowles, ed., *Placing History: How Maps, Spatial Data, and GIS Are Changing Historical Scholarship* (Redlands, 2008).
 46. Ian N. Gregory and Paul S. Ell, *Historical GIS. Technologies, Methodologies and Scholarship* (Cambridge, 2007): quotations respectively from pp. 18 and 161. See also the contributions of the two authors in Bodenhamer, Corrigan and Harris, eds., *The Spatial Humanities*, respectively on pp. 58–75 and 143–166.
 47. One of the authors of this introduction has previously made a similar point in: Christian G. De Vito, 'New Perspectives on Global Labour History', *Workers of the World*, 3 (2013, special issue on 'Global labour

- history'), esp. pp. 22–28. This issue has been stressed, for instance, during recent conferences and workshops at the Global History and Culture Centre at the University of Warwick and at the Oxford Centre for Global History at Oxford University. See: <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/arts/history/ghcc/> and http://global.history.ox.ac.uk/?page_id=663 (both consulted on 27 October 2016). For a similar point on the Middle Ages: Robin W. Winks and Teofilo F. Ruiz, *Medieval Europe and the World: From Late Antiquity to Modernity* (Oxford, 2005).
48. Richard J.A. Talbert and Kai Brodersen, *Space in the Roman World: Its Perception and Presentation* (Münster, 2004); Øystein S. Labianca, and Sandra Arnold Scham, eds., *Connectivity in Antiquity: Globalization as a Long-Term Historical Process* (London and Oakville, 2006); Kurt A. Raaflaub and Richard J.A. Talbert, *Geography and Ethnography: Perceptions of the World in Pre-Modern Societies* (Bognor Regis, 2010); Susan E. Alcock, John Bodel and Richard J.A. Talbert, eds., *Highways, Byways, and Road Systems in the Pre-Modern World* (Bognor Regis, 2012); Klaus Geus and Michael Rathmann, eds., *Vermessung der Oikumene* (Berlin and Boston, 2013); Michael Scott, *Space and Society in the Greek and Roman Worlds* (Cambridge, 2013); Victor Cojocaru, Altay Coşkun, Mădălina Dana, eds., *Interconnectivity in the Mediterranean and Pontic World during the Hellenistic and Roman Periods* (Cluj-Napoca, 2014); Martin Pitts and Miguel John Versluys, eds., *Globalisation and the Roman World: World History, Connectivity and Material Culture* (Cambridge, 2015).
 49. For an important example, see Romain Bertrand, *L'histoire à parts égales* (Paris, 2011). See also Stefan Hanß and Juliane Schiel, eds., *Mediterranean Slavery Revisited (500–1800) Neue Perspektiven auf mediterrane Sklaverei (500–1800)* (Zürich, 2014).
 50. For this perspective, see for example: Irene Silverblatt, *Modern Inquisitions. Peru and the Colonial Origins of the Civilized World* (Durham and London, 2004). For a similar critique: Gurminder K. Bhambra, *Rethinking Modernity: Postcolonial and the Sociological Imagination* (Basingstoke, 2007).
 51. Gribaudo, 'Scala, pertinenza, configurazione', pp. 141–143.
 52. Jerry H. Bentley, 'Cross-Cultural Interaction and Periodization in World History', *The American Historical Review* 101, 3 (1996), 749–770.
 53. See for instance: Sidney Chalhoub, *Visões da liberdade. Uma história das últimas décadas da escravidão na Corte* (São Paulo, 1990), pp. 18–19; Trivellato, 'Is There a Future'. See also Don Handelman, 'Microhistorical Anthropology. Toward a Prospective Perspective', in *Critical Junctions. Anthropology and History Beyond the Cultural Turn*, eds. Don Kalb and Herman Tak (New York and Oxford, 2005), pp. 29–52.

54. Hans Medick, *Weben und Überleben in Laichingen 1650–1900. Lokalgeschichte als Allgemeine Geschichte* (Göttingen, 1996). Another perspective is that of addressing a single ‘great historical question’ through multiple micro-historical studies. For a recent example spanning more than two millennia: *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales*, 68, 4 (2013), special issue on ‘Statuts sociaux’.
55. For a more detailed description of the formation, evolution and scope of global labour history, see De Vito, ‘New Perspectives’, pp. 7–14. In the same article, the argument for a more dynamic conceptualization of spatiality in global labour history is presented on pp. 15–22.
56. An open debate goes on within global labour history, concerning the way to conceptualize the new social subject that includes all carriers of commodified labour. Among the competing concepts that have been presented: ‘subaltern workers’ (Marcel van der Linden), ‘subaltern’ (Willem van Schendel) and ‘labouring poor’ (Sabyasachi Bhattacharya).
57. This point has been explicitly made in R.J. Steinfeld, *The Invention of Free Labour: The Employment Relation in English and American Law and Culture, 1350–1870* (Chapel Hill and London, 1991), p. 9. The idea of ‘one mix of kinds of freedom and unfreedom for laboring people replacing another set of historical practices with a different mix of kinds of freedom and unfreedom’ resonates with the configurational metaphor of micro-history.
58. Leo Lucassen, ‘Working Together: New Directions in Global Labour History’, *Journal of Global History*, 11 (2016), 1, pp. 66–87.
59. It must be added, however, that in the *Global Collaboratory* the taxonomy is the product of a long-term debate among the scholars involved in the research.
60. For a detailed description of the *Collective Research Model* consult E. van Nederveen Meerkerk, ‘Covering the World: Textile Workers and Globalization, 1650–2000: Experiences and Results of a Collective Research Project’, in *Labour History Beyond Borders. Concepts and Explorations*, eds. Marcel van der Linden and Eva Himmelstoss (ITH, 2009), pp. 111–138. A variation of this methodology is used by Jan Lucassen in some of his diachronical comparative studies. See for instance: J. Lucassen, ‘Brickmakers in Western Europe (1700–1900) and Northern India (1800–2000): Some Comparisons’, in Jan Lucassen, *Global Labour History: A State of the Art* (Bern, 2006), pp. 513–572.
61. All quotation in the text are taken from Van der Linden, Éditorial, p.16.
62. The term ‘teleconnections’ is used in Marcel van der Linden, *Workers of the World* (Leiden and Boston, 2008), pp. 372–378.
63. P. Fontes, *Um Nordeste em São Paulo. Trabalhadores migrantes em São Miguel Paulista (1945–1966)* (Rio de Janeiro, 2008); Chalhoub, *Visões*

da liberdade (quotes respectively on pp. 21, 29 e 20); Henrique Espada Lima, 'What can we find in Augusto's trunk? About little things and Global labour history', *Workers of the World*, 3 (April 2013): 139–157—<http://digitalcommons.ilr.cornell.edu/wotw/3/> (consulted on 27 October 2016).

64. See for instance Berg, 'Global history', p. 13, and John Darwin, 'Globe and Empire', in *Writing the History of the Global*, p. 199.

Moving Hands: Types and Scales of Labour Mobility in the Late Medieval Eastern Mediterranean (1200–1500 CE)

Ekaterini Mitsiou and Johannes Preiser-Kapeller

WHY THE LATE MEDIEVAL EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN?

The Eastern Mediterranean in the late Middle Ages constitutes an ‘ideal’ area of research to reflect on questions related to micro-historical and trans-local perspectives of global labour, since during this period, ‘no other region of Europe or the Mediterranean became a cynosure of so many ethnicities in such a small place’.¹ Due to a peculiar combination of political fragmentation and economic integration, especially within

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the former imperial sphere of the Byzantine Empire in Anatolia and the Balkans, there emerged a multitude of overlapping zones of power and commerce, of various religious, ethnic and linguistic backgrounds. With the conquest of Constantinople by the Crusaders in 1204, the (anew) advance of the Seljuks towards the Anatolian coast, the increasing presence of Italian merchants in the harbours of the Aegean, the Black Sea and the Levant and finally the Mongol expansion from the 1220s onwards, the Eastern Mediterranean became a zone of intensive contact between Mongols (the realms of the Golden Horde in Russia and the Ilkhans in Iran, Iraq, the Southern Caucasus and parts of Anatolia), Byzantines (after 1204 in the competing exile realms of Nicaea, Epirus and Trebizond), Armenians (in the Kingdom of Cilicia), Turks, Persians and Arabs (in the Sultanate of Konya), Slavonic-, Albanian- and Vlach-speaking people (in the realms of Serbia and Bulgaria as well as in the Kingdom of Croatia united with the Crown of Hungary), ‘Latins’, respectively, ‘Franks’ and a large number of further ethnicities (members of which were, of course, also mobile across political borders²), thus also between Orthodox, Oriental and Western Churches as well as Islam (in its various denominations) and (within the Mongol Sphere) also Buddhism. With the fragmentation of Seljuk central power after the defeat against the Mongols in 1243 into various Emirates and their expansion especially into Western Asia Minor towards the Aegean and the establishment of Italian colonies (including ‘Catholic’ bishoprics) in coastal towns and off-shore islands (e.g. the Genoese on Chios and in Phokaia/Foça) and of the Knights Hospitallers on Rhodes, the number of zones of interaction, but also conflict, increased in Anatolia, as they did in the Balkans in a dynamic interplay between centralisations and fragmentations of political power in Byzantium, Bulgaria and Serbia. At the same time, Venetians and Genoese integrated all these locations and regions as hubs and nodes into their commercial networks and into the Mediterranean subsystem of the late medieval ‘World System’, as Janet Abu-Lughod has called it.³ With the Ottoman Expansion from 1300 onwards, these territories gradually were absorbed into one imperial framework once more (as it has existed under Byzantine rule until the eleventh century), which finally also included the remaining western colonies.

Beyond traditional over-regional contacts of members of medieval religious elites and nobilities, which always had crossed borders within

and beyond cultural-religious frontiers,⁴ the increase in the number of contact zones, especially on the basis of commerce, opened paths to border-crossing also for other, non-aristocratic members of society. Commercial interests contributed to the establishment of a ‘middle ground’ (for this issue, see below) beyond religious or ethnic antagonisms. As Kate Fleet stated in her study of Genoese and Ottoman trade: ‘money largely formed the basis of the relationship between the Genoese and the Turks and this, rather than any religious scruple, dictated relations.’⁵ One illustrative aspect of these relations also pertaining to labour and labour mobility is the use of eastern-style textiles in Europe and of western-style textiles in the Islamic world. This ‘cultural cross-dressing’ has found considerable scholarly attention recently and certainly deserves further study; ‘adopted, adapted, and appropriated by medieval elites, these kinds of artefacts produced networks of affinity not bounded by religious, ethnic, or linguistic identity but by possession, consumption, and display.’⁶ Similar ‘networks of affinities’ also emerged based on profession and know-how, for instance. One most impressive result of entangled phenomena in this regard is the emergence of the *Lingua franca* of Mediterranean seafaring in the late medieval and early modern period.⁷

Within this framework, there emerged various phenomena of ‘labour mobility’, both deliberate (by ‘economically informed actors’ from elite and non-elite strata of societies) and forced ones, across spatial and temporal scales and especially also across political, religious or cultural frontiers. Even more, the Eastern Mediterranean and the Black Sea constituted the most important transfer zone between the Euro-Mediterranean sphere and the Mongol-Islamic world of the thirteenth to fifteenth century, from which (again both deliberate and forced) mobility of labour was effected across Eurasia—epitomised in the notorious figure of Marco Polo, a labour migrant from Venice who between 1273 and 1291 joined the administrative service of the Great Khan in Yuan China as did many other individuals from the Western regions and peripheries of the Mongolian sphere.⁸ A survey of ‘moving hands’ across the late medieval Eastern Mediterranean, therefore, very much illustrates the ‘global’ dimension of labour mobility before 1500 and its ‘trans-local’ character.

CONCEPTS AND METHODS: MOBILITIES, NETWORKS AND IDENTITIES

‘Mobility’ has been identified as a central aspect of socio-economic and-political, cultural and religious developments in historical and social research in recent years; some scholars even speak about a ‘mobility turn’ which ‘connects the analysis of different forms of travel, transport and communications with the multiple ways in which economic and social life is performed and organized through time and across various spaces.’⁹ This ‘turn’, of course, resorts to earlier theoretical frameworks of mobility as they have been developed especially for phenomena of migration.

Typologies of Mobility

Already in the 1880s and 1890s, E.G. Ravenstein classified mobile individuals by distance and time into local migrants, short-journey migrants, long-journey migrants, migrants by stages and temporary migrants. His ‘Laws of Migration’ identified economic factors as main causes of migration within a framework of ‘push and pull’, where socio-economic or political conditions in places of origin motivate mobility while the character of these conditions in places of destination attracts mobility. This framework, of course, underwent several modifications since then, but core concepts are still valid especially within economic theories of mobility. Their relevance can also be demonstrated for our period.¹⁰

A ‘global perspective’ on mobility was developed based on the ‘World-System Theory’ as established by Immanuel Wallerstein and as adapted by Abu Lughod also for the ‘late medieval World System’, as we have seen. A ‘world system’ is characterised by a differentiation between highly developed core areas, less developed peripheries and semi-peripheries in between, connected via ‘labour supply systems’, within which mobility takes place. Especially for ‘core centres’ such as Venice, attracting manpower from nearby and far away ‘peripheries’ across the Eastern Mediterranean, the value of such an approach can also be illustrated for the late medieval period (see below the example of maritime workforce).¹¹

Such a macro-perspective pays little attention to the agency of individuals, while recent research on migration has very much focused on the interplay between ‘structure’ and ‘agency’; this approach has been summed up by McLeman as follows: ‘The terms structure and agency are

inherently linked, but their precise definitions can vary according to the context in which they are used. In simplest terms, agency refers to the degree of freedom an individual has in choosing his or her actions, while structure refers to the societal norms, obligations, and institutions that shape and set limits on the individual's actions'.¹² Structure and agency are also core concepts within a 'system approach' towards migration phenomena as developed recently.¹³ It focuses on the interplay between socio-economic, political and spatial structures both in the 'society of departure'¹⁴ and in the 'receiving societies',¹⁵ which very much defined the scope of action, and the actual agency of individuals and groups. Equally, it highlights the significance of social networks established and/or used by individuals to effect mobility as well as integration within the socio-economic framework in the places of destination.¹⁶ Also, Charles Tilly analysed the relevance of 'solidarity networks', for instance, which 'provide a setting for life at the destination, a basis for solidarity and mutual aid as well as for division and conflict' for the mobility of individuals. But he also emphasised the potentially constraining effects of such networks via which 'members of immigrant groups often exploited one another as they would not have dared to exploit the native-born'; he also made clear that 'every inclusion also constitutes an exclusion'.¹⁷

Networks, Mobility and Frontiers

The conceptualisation and analysis of social (and other) networks in general has attracted increasing attention in social and historical studies beyond mobility and migration studies. Tools of network analysis enable us to integrate information on the interactions, communications and affiliations of individuals into 'social topographies', which make visible the actual complexity of these entanglements beyond selective or serial depictions of data. Researchers and other observers are able to detect patterns of social interaction—sometimes previously unnoticed within the mass of information. But network analysis claims 'not only that ties matter, but that they are organized in a significant way that this or that individual has an interesting position in terms of his or her ties'.¹⁸ Furthermore, network analysis can be combined with tools of *historical geographical information systems* (HGIS), thus establishing the connection between 'social' and 'geographical topography', whose correlation can also be inspected.¹⁹

At the same time, network analysis is only one aspect of the theoretical framework of relational analysis. In addition to quantitative analysis, the field of ‘relational sociology’ has highlighted the more ‘qualitative’ aspects of social networks with regard to their relevance for the embedding and even construction of identities and relationships.²⁰ The relational approach views nodes and their identities as well as relations and their interpretations as ‘mutually generative’. In a meshwork of structure and culture, identities are created at the crossing points of relations and networks emerge: ties create nodes create ties.²¹ The best-known theoretician of relational sociology is Harrison C. White; for him, ‘networks are phenomenological realities as well as measurement constructs’—and ‘persons’ are constructs of communication; they only emerge in the process of communication and gain profile by their embedding in the web of communications.²²

The usefulness of such a relational and flexible approach to the mobility of individuals and objects as well as to the fluid character of identities has been demonstrated also recently for the medieval ‘Hindu-Muslim’ frontier zone in India by Finbarr B. Flood; he cites James Clifford: ‘Yet what if identity is conceived not as [a] boundary to be maintained but as a nexus of relations and transactions actively engaging a subject? The story or stories of interactions must then be more complex, less linear and teleological.’²³ The survey and mapping of the embedding of individuals or localities in multiplex networks across allegedly fixed boundaries and their modification through mobility thus in itself makes visible the potentials for the modification—be it affirmation or accommodation—of identities. But we have to take into account that also in late medieval Eastern Mediterranean, we do not encounter ‘precise linear divisions’ of boundaries, but ‘frontiers’, which ‘connotes more zonal qualities, and a broader, social context’; and ‘rather than bounded (or bordered) space, therefore, we are dealing with cultural and political spheres of authority that intersected at their margins to form ‘zone boundaries’ or ‘transfrontiers’ where limits of cultural and political authority overlapped and were continuously negotiated, whether by belligerent ruler or itinerant merchants, pilgrims, and travellers’ (see also below the examples of peasant mobility).²⁴ Such frontier zones give room for the emergence of what Richard White has famously called ‘the Middle Ground’, ‘a place in between’, where ‘diverse peoples adjust their difference through what amounts to a process of creative, and often expedient, misunderstandings. (...) They often misinterpret and

distort both the values and practices of those they deal with, but from these misunderstandings arise new meanings and through them new practices—the shared meanings and practices of the middle ground.²⁵ Labour mobility within such a politically fragmented, religiously, ethnically and linguistically diverse environment as the late medieval Eastern Mediterranean thus very much demands a combination of perspectives of history of labour and economy with that of cultural and religious history; the high density of border zones as spheres of contact and exchange as well as conflict and exclusion very quickly connected any act of spatial mobility with the necessity for ‘cultural mobility’.²⁶

Types and Institutional Frameworks of Mobility in the Late Medieval Eastern Mediterranean

In the late medieval Eastern Mediterranean, we encounter similar types of mobile individuals, as Dirk Hoerder has identified them in his ‘Cultures in Contact’, especially for Western Europe (also a region of origin of many of those mobile in the East), many of which can be connected with phenomena of ‘labour mobility’: ‘cosmopolitan nobles and their households’, ‘itinerant administrators’ and ‘warfaring mercenaries’; ‘rural people, labourers and servants’; merchants and traders, ‘journeymen artisans’ and ‘out of town maids’ as well as masons and miners; and pilgrims and clerics. Hoerder has also highlighted the considerable degree of agency (see above) of individuals also within non-elite strata of societies, identifying, for instance, also itinerant peasants and artisans as ‘economically informed actors’.²⁷ But even more than in the ‘Latin/Catholic Occident’, actors also had to take into account parameters for mobility based on differentiations, especially of religion—especially since institutional frameworks from the side of state authorities very much operated along these lines.

Since the tenth century, the existence of a walled enclosure as quarters for (Western) Christian individuals (especially merchants) (*funduq/fundacio*) was a common and traditional solution for their presence in cities under Muslim (and also Byzantine) rule and the most important clause of the frequently renewed agreements between European merchant communities and local rulers, be they Byzantines or Muslims.²⁸ This was in the interest of both sides; local authorities were able (up to a certain degree) to control and limit the movement of strangers and their interaction with endogenous population, especially during times of religious

significance such as the Friday prayer, but also for the purpose of taxation.²⁹ Western travellers, in turn, could establish a secured area for living and storage, which also allowed for the practice of their faith (including church buildings) and a certain autonomy under their own consul, who also represented the community towards the local authorities.³⁰ At the same time, as also recent comprehensive studies have highlighted, there existed many occasion for interactions and commerce between Europeans and Muslims beyond the borders of the *funduq*, establishing partnerships and common commercial ventures.³¹ Thus, while communities already existing within such frameworks very much facilitated the mobility of further individuals from regions of origin, these regulations did not necessarily totally limit the potential of interaction with indigenous communities.

At the same time, there existed various voices against contacts, commercial or otherwise, across the frontier, especially from the side of representatives of religious authorities such as the Catholic orders also active in the East. We observe deep suspicions toward the ‘results’ of such ‘inappropriate’ exchanges, such as individuals of (religiously, ethnically) ‘mixed’ origins; a crusading treatise of the earlier fourteenth century, the *Directorium ad passagium faciendum* contains detailed chapter on the spiritual and personal deficits of these groups and why one has to be wary of them. For the Gasmouloi (descendants of ‘Latin-Greek’ unions), who in the Byzantine Empire played a special role as mariners and marines (thus also one of several cases in which professional attribution accompanied the ethnic one), the author provides an interesting description of a what we would call today ‘transcultural’ identity: ‘When they are with Greeks, they show themselves as Greeks, and when with Latins, as Latins.’³²

Similar differentiations were also made with regard to forced mobility. Slaves were a special ‘commodity’ in various regards; and while owners and slaves could be of the same religious or ethnic background (see also below), there existed certain reservations towards delivering co-religionists to ‘infidels’. Guillelmus Ada (d. 1338/9, temporarily Bishop of Smyrna and later Archbishop of Sultaniyya in Iran), for instance, wrote about the spiritual danger of selling (Orthodox) Christians to Muslims: ‘The miserable Greeks are sold and become slaves of every nation, that is, of the Saracens, the Tartars, and the Jews, and each of them follows the sect professed by his master.’³³ This issue became even more critical

when slaves had become mobile on their own and had escaped across the frontier to an area under control of fellow Christians or Muslims. In such cases, the payment of a compensation was agreed upon in the treaties of Venetian Crete with the Turkish Emirates of Menteshe and Aydin in Western Asia Minor, for instance, while the restitution of an enslaved co-religionist to the ‘infidels’ was neither expected by the Christian nor the Muslim partner. Also, Ottomans and Genoese followed the same principles in an agreement in 1387.³⁴

At the same time, too strong a presence of slaves of ‘inimical’ background was also considered a threat to security; in 1341, the Venetian Senate decreed that Turkish slaves should not be present on Crete for more than six months and should then only be transported further on to the West. In 1363, we learn about measures against merchants declaring Turkish slaves as ‘Greeks’ (who were—due to the weakness of Byzantine power—more or less ‘harmless’) to circumvent such restrictions.³⁵ A statute of the Hospitallers on Rhodes regulated in 1357 that no slave of Turkish origin should be in the service of any knight of the Order living within the fortified town of Rhodes for security reasons.³⁶

As in many cases, we observe the friction between the utilisation of the potential of contacts and of manpower across the frontier and the necessity for control. Propagandists for a new crusade such as Guillelmus Ade or Mario Sanudo Torsello (d. 1338, a Venetian statesman travelling widely in the East) even argued for a total embargo against Muslim powers as precondition for a successful re-conquest of the Holy Land, denouncing also by name those among the Italian merchants doing intensive business with the ‘enemy’ as bad Christians and ‘ministers of hell’.³⁷ Any instruments of control, of course, would have been of limited effectiveness under pre-modern conditions, and almost ineffective in the face of extreme situations: when the armies of Timur devastated Anatolia after the Ottoman defeat at Ankara in 1402, both ‘Latins’ from Ayasoluk and *Turci innumerabiles* fled from the mainland to islands such as Samos.³⁸

An Analytical Framework Across Scales

Integrating historical conditions as well as various typologies of mobility discussed above, we propose an analytical framework flexible enough to capture the complexity of labour mobility across scales and beyond rigid

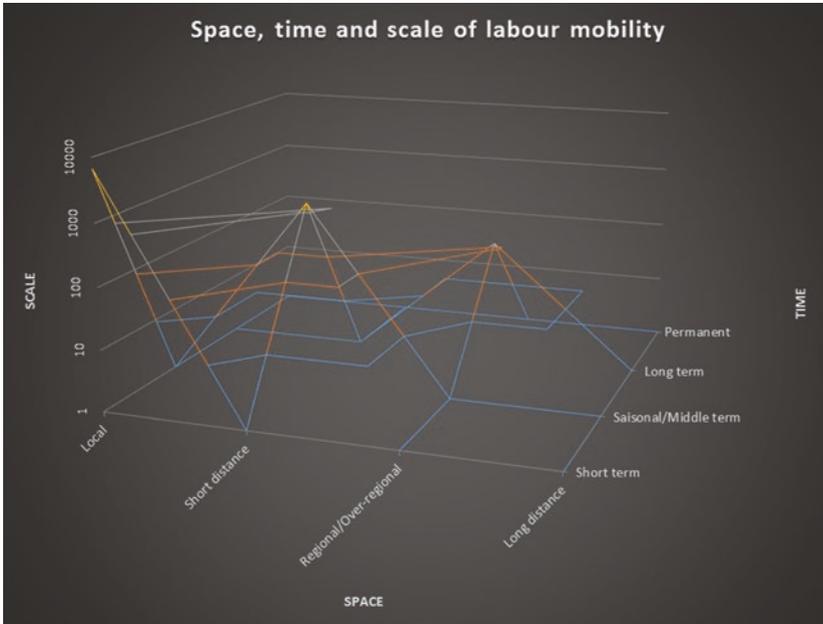


Fig. 2.1 The ‘space of possible shapes’ of labour mobility (graph: Mitsiou and Preiser-Kapeller)

categorisations. We understand the parameters of space, time and scale (in term of numbers) as an axis of a three-dimensional ‘space of possible shapes’ of these phenomena (Fig. 2.1).

Within this space, localities, due to a bundle of various socio-economic and cultural factors, may have acted as attractors which created ‘pull effects’ on specific combinations of parameters (short-distance seasonal labour mobility at a large scale, long-distance permanent mobility at a small scale) or also across scales. Also, individual life stories could move across this space (from permanent, long-distance migration to occupational, seasonal migration, for instance; see also examples below), connecting various local attractors at a different scale. A cumulative mapping of such trajectories (micro-histories making up macro-history) may

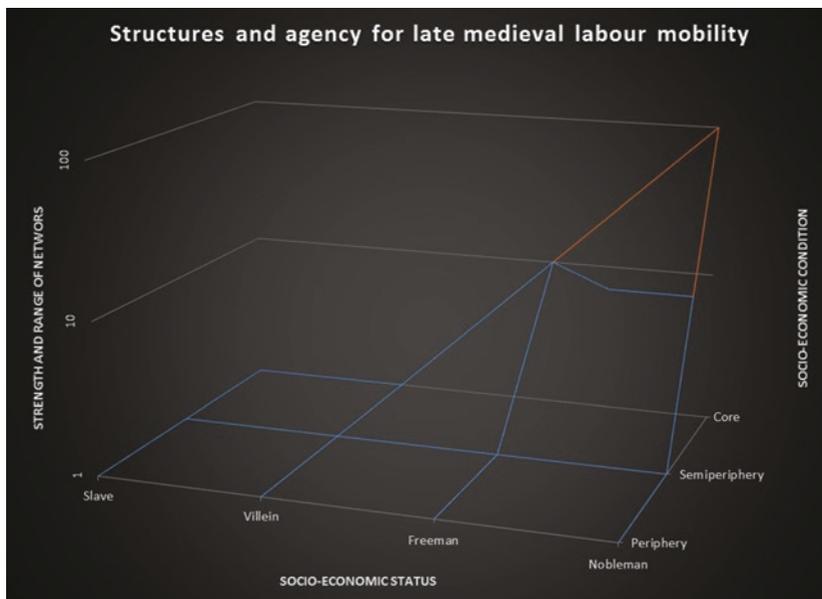


Fig. 2.2 The ‘space of options’ of individual agency (graph: Mitsiou and Preiser-Kapeller)

help to identify the power of attractors, but also patterns of divergence. Similarly, we draw a ‘space of options’ for individual agency limited by axes of individual ‘socio-economic status’, of ‘socio-economic conditions’ and of ‘strength and range of social networks’ (Fig. 2.2).

Again, specific localities may provide specific parametric ‘boxes’ for individual agencies—and individuals may open larger spaces of options through mobility. In both cases, rigid typologies are replaced by a diversity of combinations across scales and attributions of status.

In the following, we are, of course, not able to survey the entirety of this multiplexity;³⁹ instead, we will focus on two sample groups which seem at the opposite ends of this ‘space of options’: groups for which mobility was an integral part of their occupation; and groups which became objects of forced mobility.

MOBILITY AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF OCCUPATION

Itinerant Members of the Secular and Religious Elites: Samples and Connections

As already mentioned above, Dirk Hoerder for the Middle Ages listed several types of mobile individuals, for whom mobility was not a temporary, but integral part of their occupation such as ‘cosmopolitan nobles’, ‘itinerant administrators’ and ‘warfaring mercenaries’. One figure combining all these attributes as well as connecting the Western and Eastern Mediterranean was the French nobleman Philippe de Mézières (ca. 1327–1405), who served rulers in Lombardy, Naples, Cyprus and France, fought in Crusading expeditions in Smyrna (İzmir) and Alexandria in Egypt as well as in the Hundred Years War and travelled as diplomat and propagator of a crusade to the Papal Court in Avignon, Venice, France, Spain and Germany. While his itinerary may suggest the image of a free knight errant, his ‘space of options’ was also often limited by factors beyond his influence, such as the death of royal patrons (King Peter I of Cyprus in 1369, King Charles V of France in 1380), who had supported his mobility in attempts to mobilise forces for another crusade.⁴⁰

In total, warfare also supported the mobility of individuals across the frontiers in the Eastern Mediterranean in various forms, and also in the case of prisoners sold as slaves across the sea (see below) or via the recruitment of mercenaries from various backgrounds; even the ‘crusading’ King Peter I of Cyprus employed Turkish mercenaries in his garrisons along the Pamphylian coast in the 1360s.⁴¹ In general, ‘war is not, therefore, always inimical to the promotion of cosmopolitan identities. On the contrary, it can unite men of different ethnicities and faiths (often against their coreligionists) and engender new patterns of circulation.’⁴²

A most impressive example of a combination of both integration into recipient society and maintenance of connections to core elements of identity in the society of origin over long distances is a group of (Orthodox) Christians in Mongol service recruited mainly among the ethnicity of the Alans in the Northwestern Caucasus, but also neighbouring ethnicities, who already took part in the conquest of the Chinese Song Empire between 1265 and 1279. This is not only mentioned by Marco Polo, but also described in detail in the Annals of the

Mongol Yuan Dynasty, who ruled over all of China from 1279 to 1368. In biographical outlines, the careers of several members of the *Asud* (as the Alans are called in the Chinese texts) regiments, which in 1309/11 comprised not less than 33,000 men and were stationed mostly in and around the Yuan capital of Khanbaliq (Beijing), are described; they not only included ‘Alans’, but also Russians. Unfortunately, the Chinese sources, now accessible due to the book of Agustí Alemany, are interested only in their military deeds and not in their religious affiliation.⁴³ But the activities of Latin missionaries provide invaluable additional information; in 1307, the Papacy ordained the Franciscan John of Monte Corvino as Archbishop of Khanbaliq, where he served until his death in 1328. According to a Latin description, his flock also encompassed ‘some good Christians, called Alans, 30,000 of whom are in the Great King’s pay; these people and their families turn to Friar John and he comforts them and preaches to them’.⁴⁴ This information seems reliable, since the indication of the strength of Alan troops also accords with the one from Chinese sources. Even more, after the death of John of Monte Corvino, in July 1336, Emperor Toghon Temür (1333–1368) and five Christian Alan princes from his guard sent an embassy under the leadership of Thogay, *Alanus de Cathayo* to the Pope; it arrived in Avignon at the court of Pope Benedict XII in May 1338. The correspondence between Beijing and Avignon is transmitted to us in Latin and conveys the names of these Alan leaders, which, in turn, can be identified with individuals from Chinese sources and allow us to reconstruct the lineage of several Christian ‘Alan’ families in Mongol service in China from the 1240s up to the 1330s. One of the addressees of the Pope was a certain *Kathiten*, in Chinese *Xiang Shan*, who served in the *Asud* guards in the fourth generation as had done his father *Dimidier* (Demetrios), his grandfather *Kouerji* (Georgios, he died in 1311) and his great grandfather *Fudelaici* (Fjodor?, Theodoros?).⁴⁵ The same was true for *Jemmega*, in Chinese *Zheyuan Buhua*, the son of *Jiaohua* (1328), son of *Atachi* (under Kubilai, 1260–1294), son of *Niegula* (Nikolaos), who had entered the service of Möngke Khan in 1251/59.⁴⁶ Especially the usage of typically ‘Orthodox’ Christian names, also after the first generation, provides a hint of the ‘original’ denominational background of these families. In their letter to the Pope, the Alan leaders demanded the dispatch of a new bishop, since the flock was without a pastor after the death of John of Monte Corvino in 1328.⁴⁷ This may also have been the motivation for the Alans to accept the pastoral care of the Latin missionaries and hierarchs in China in the

first place; this strategy also allowed them to maintain their Christian faith until the end of the Mongol Dynasty. Also, beyond the route to China, Alans became subjects and objects of deliberate and forced mobility, especially as mercenaries of the Golden Horde and later Byzantium, as military slaves (Mamluks) in Egypt (thereby joining the leading stratum of society there) and as slaves traded from the Black Sea in the entire Eastern Mediterranean as far as Italy.⁴⁸

The evidence for the Christian Asud in China also highlights the far-reaching occupational mobility of clergymen. The Western Church, especially since the thirteenth century, tried to expand its influence to the East under the banner of mission, especially through the monks of the Mendicant orders. For their activities (and communication with the ecclesiastical centre in Rome respectively Avignon), Dominicans and Franciscans also relied on the networks of trade and founded their convents and stations in mercantile nodes, where merchants from the West supported them and became part of their flock besides (desired) converts among the endogenous population. Archbishop John of Sulṭāniyya (in Persia) wrote in retrospective at the beginning of the fifteenth century: ‘About the year of our Lord 1310, when there was no mention in the regions of the east of the Church of Rome and of its ceremonies, some of the Dominican Brothers went with merchants in these regions (...), and from that time they began to preach the Catholic faith’.⁴⁹ Over time, Dominicans and Franciscans established convents which, in turn, became bases for the founding of archbishoprics and bishoprics, such as in China (Khanbaliq—Beijing) in 1307 (see also above) or in Sultaniyya (Iran) in 1318.⁵⁰ The continuous presence of clergymen or even bishops depended on the acceptance by the respective Muslim ruler; also in this regard, the trading posts of European merchants provided important support, since, as we have seen, agreements between merchants and local authorities also included the maintenance of a church within the *fondacio*. Guillelmus Ade praised those ‘Tartars and Saracens, who allow the friars to come to them to preach the word of God to them and to live peacefully and quietly among them.’⁵¹ Yet, the success of missions was limited, and bishoprics thus remain dependent on the ups and downs of trade cycles and Latin presence. The collapse of the Mongol Ilkhanate after 1336 (with the partial withdrawal of Italian merchants from Inner Anatolia) and the Black Death after 1347 and especially ‘the absence of any association between the mission and political power’ very much limited the chances for a sustainable or even growing ecclesiastical life in

many of the new foundations, although many sees existed as titular bishoprics until the fifteenth century.⁵²

Occupational Mobility and Shipboard Societies

As already mentioned, the networks of Catholic clergymen in the East at all scales (from local to regional to long distance between China and Europe) very much overlapped with those of merchants, another group of occupational mobility. The famous ‘Handbook of Trade’ of Francesco Pegolotti from the 1330s, for instance, provides not only an overview of the most important ports and cities of Europe and the Mediterranean as well as the commodities one could buy there, but also descriptions of the inland route from Laiazzo (the harbour of Ayas at the Cilician Coast) to Tabriz, the capital of the Ilkhans in Iran, as well as of the much longer way from Tana/Azow on the Black Sea through Central Asia to Khanbaliq in China.⁵³

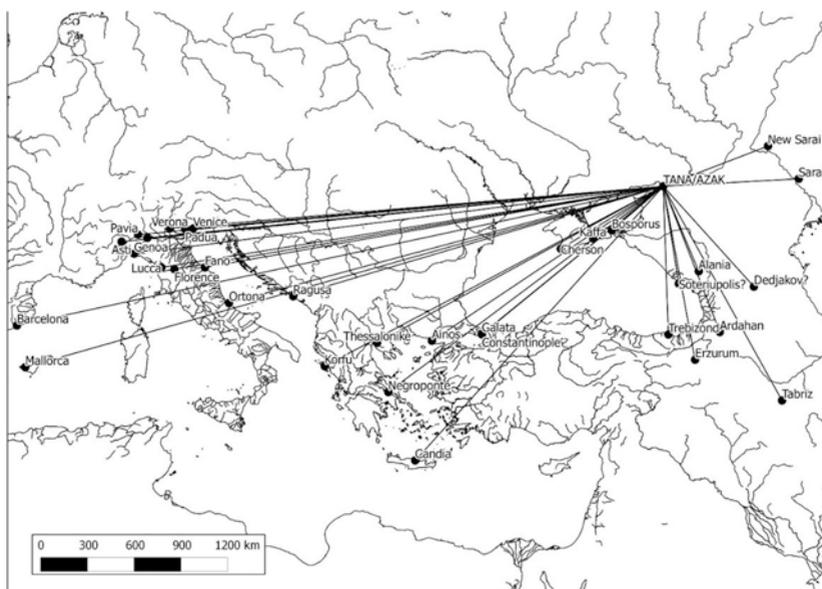


Fig. 2.3 The connections between the port of Tana/Azow and localities of origin of merchants active there in 1359/1360 (graph: Johannes Preiser-Kapeller, *Before European Hegemony*)

Tana/Azow at the mouth of the river Don was the most important trading post of the Venetians in the Northern Black Sea and a city of many religious and ethnic groups, as the notarial records of Benedetto Bianco for the period September 1359 to August 1360⁵⁴ allow us to reconstruct.⁵⁵ Under the sovereignty of the Golden Horde, Tana attracted in this period many merchants from Venice and its Italian hinterland as well as its colonies in the Adriatic and Aegean Sea, but also many other Italians, even from Venice's main rival Genoa, as well as Catalans from the far west of the Mediterranean. But, in addition, we also find 'Byzantine' or 'Greek' traders from Constantinople and Trebizond in the city, other orthodox Christians from Russia and Alania (in the north-western Caucasus, see also above), Armenians from diaspora communities in the Black Sea region as well as from Armenia proper, Jewish merchants and Muslim merchants, some of them subjects of the Golden Horde ('Tatars'), others from Eastern Anatolia and Tabriz (Fig. 2.3).

Tana therefore functioned as attractor of mobility across several spatial scales.⁵⁶ This mosaic becomes even more multifaceted if we look at the places of origin of the most important commodity traded in Tana: slaves (see below).

Central hubs of communication thus were once more the ports, connected by a network of maritime routes; for their usage, merchants and all other travellers had to rely on the knowledge accumulated in the workforces of navigators, mariners and shipbuilders. Gilles Deleuze has defined the sea as the 'realm of the unbound, unconstructed, and free', where possibilities for the control of mobility of individuals and objects were much more limited.⁵⁷ Christer Westerdahl has described the emergence of peculiar 'maritime communities' in 'maritime cultural landscapes', 'the people who in their daily practice engage with the sea in roles such a fishermen, coastal traders, seafarers, and shipbuilder' and construct their identities often in deliberate differentiation from the 'landsmen'.⁵⁸ A most interesting example for the transfer of maritime know-how within networks based on kinship and ethnic affiliation has been recently analysed by Ruthy Gertwagen in her article on 'Byzantine Shipbuilding in Fifteenth-century Venetian Crete: War Galleys and the Link to the Arsenal in Venice'; she demonstrates how even the arsenal of the Serenissima in the first half of the fifteenth century, for the building of a specific type of light galleys, depended on the knowledge of a Greek

master from Rhodes (Theodoro Baxon, d. 1408) and later his nephew (Nicolò Palopano) and his son-in-law (Leo Miconditi, who was also active on the Venetian island of Crete), to whom Baxon had transmitted his skills.⁵⁹

Other research has called for the study ‘of communities of mariners aboard ships, or shipboard societies’, also integrating Michel Foucault’s notion of the ‘ship as the heterotopia par excellence’, meaning a ‘real place in which society is simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted’, capable ‘of juxtaposing different places that are in themselves incompatible in a single real place’.⁶⁰ As a matter of fact, we observe that ships, regardless of the flag under which they were sailing, served as mobile contact zones of individuals of different religious or ethnic background.⁶¹ Besides temporary passengers, ship crews permanently consisted of individuals from many areas along the Mediterranean shores; the manpower necessary to man a ship, especially a large galley with 200 oarsmen, could only be found by attracting hands from a lot of places.⁶² A special issue of the journal ‘Medieval Encounters’ in 2007 was devoted to ‘Cross-Cultural Encounters on the High Seas’; contributions illustrate the poly-religious and poly-ethnic composition of crews on board ships of Latin, Byzantine and Muslim fleets during the Middle Ages.⁶³ For the late medieval Eastern Mediterranean, Bernard Doumerc has illustrated the ‘Cosmopolitanism on Board Venetian Ships’ and Theresa M. Vann has done so for Rhodes in the time between 1453 and 1480.⁶⁴

Rhodes was also the place of origin of one of the best-documented sailors of our period, Michael of Rhodes, who in the 1430s and 1440s wrote a fascinating book (in Venetian Italian, while Greek was his mother tongue, which he most probably was not able to write) summing up his maritime and commercial know-how accumulated in 30 years of service in the fleets of Venice across the entire Mediterranean and beyond. The book ‘provides a fascinating window into the technological and practical knowledge of an ordinary, non-elite—but certainly exceptional—Venetian mariner’.⁶⁵ Michael started his career (maybe at the age of 16) signing in as a simple oarsman on board of a galley of the Venetian guard fleet in 1401 in Manfredonia in Apulia; he provides information on his annual travels (commanders of ship and fleets, his own rank, places of destination, purpose of the journey) until 1443. Michael worked his way up to the rank of an ‘armiraiò’, the highest position a non-noble could achieve in a Venetian fleet. This was a remarkable career for a Greek

coming from Rhodes, an island which itself since 1309 was under the 'Latin' rule of the Knight Hospitallers, who allowed the practice of the Orthodox rite up to a certain degree.⁶⁶ Unfortunately, Michael's manuscript does not provide any clear information on his own religious affiliation beyond being Christian; but considering the relatively strict politics of Venetian authorities regarding the practice of the Orthodox faith in this period and the generally existing barriers for integration into the citizenship of Venice, one may assume that in light of his continuous advancement, Michael adopted Catholicism, at least to the exterior. Also, his possible marriage to a Venetian woman (which would have made him a Venetian citizen *de intus* in 1407) points in that direction.⁶⁷ One highlight of his career may have been the convoys of 1437 and 1439, which brought the Byzantine Emperor John VIII Palaiologos and his retinue from Constantinople to Italy for the Council of Ferrara/Florence (with the purpose of negotiations on a union of churches, which also brought some eases for Orthodox Christians in Venice) and back.⁶⁸ Michael retired after a last journey to London in 1443 and may have died shortly after 1445, maybe at the age of 60.⁶⁹

Michael's life (which certainly deserves further study) is a most illustrative example for a combination of permanent migration and occupational mobility; at the same time, it is representative for many micro-histories summing up into a macro-perspective of labour mobility centred on the core hub of Venice in this period. In a Venetian account book, we possess the list of names and places of origin of many of the oarsmen working on a ship which sailed from Venice to Jaffa and back also along the Southern Anatolian coast between 9 May and 15 August 1414, under the command of Francesco Querini.⁷⁰ If we combine this data into a network model, we can visualise how the ship connects the places of origin of its crew with the localities on its route from Venice to the East. This data also allows us to visualise the relative significance of localities on the basis of the respective number of oarsmen coming from each of them. The largest numbers came from Venetian possessions and other sites in Dalmatia and Albania as well as from further inland of the Western Balkans, but also from the Italian hinterland of Venice, Hungary and Germany, and from the Eastern and Western Mediterranean (Fig. 2.4).⁷¹

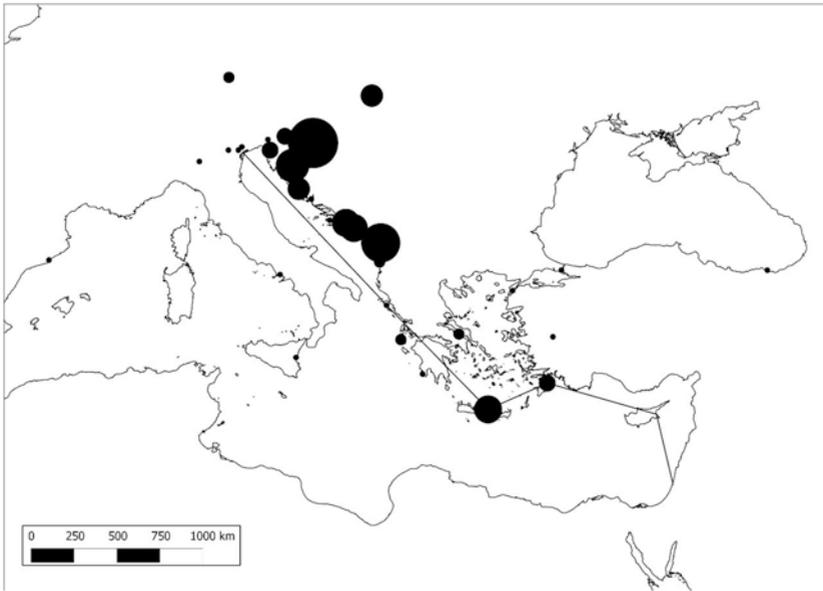


Fig. 2.4 Places of origin of oarsmen serving on the ship sailing from Venice to Jaffa in 1414 (sites scaled according to the number of oarsmen coming from there; graph: Johannes Preisser-Kapeller, *Civitas Thauris*)

This social network of the ship of 1414 is, of course, a mobile one (Fig. 2.5), so that this assemblage of people and their places of origin connects to all ports on its route from Venice to Jaffa, establishing a complex web of individual entanglements across the entire Mediterranean. The ship thus emerges as a ‘heterotopia’, capable ‘of juxtaposing different places that are in themselves incompatible in a single real place’ (Fig. 2.6).⁷²

This mobile poly-ethnic and poly-religious network, in turn, interacted and overlapped with the trans-frontier networks in the various ports and maritime contact zones, adding to their diversity and structural complexity. At the same time, this sample provides an impression of the possible number of life stories of labour mobility similar to that of

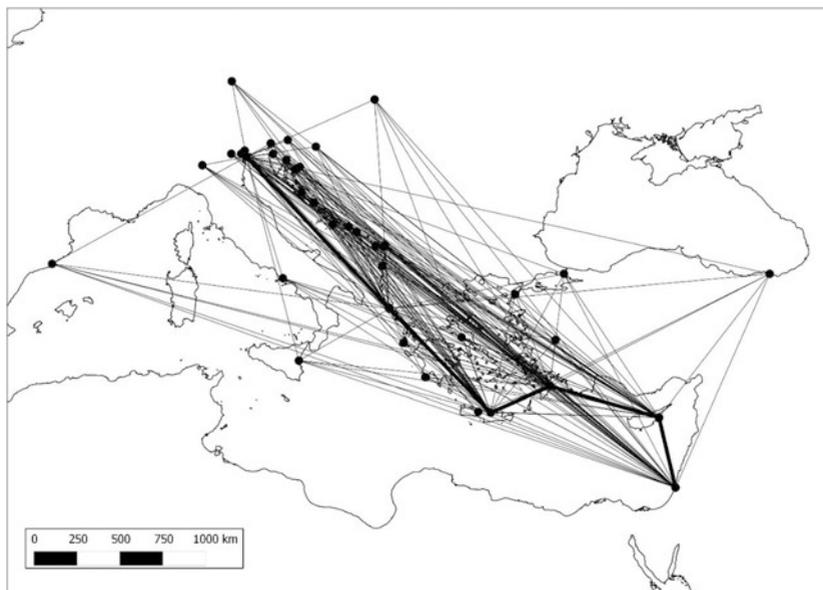


Fig. 2.6 The network between localities emerging because of the mobility of the oarsmen and of the ship sailing from Venice to Jaffa in 1414 (graph: Johannes Preiser-Kapeller, *Civitas Thauris*)

stimulate the commercial activity there, he, according to the historian Ibn Bibi, ordered ‘to select a well-funded merchant from every city and to send him to Sinop. His movable and immovable property should be bought by the privy purse with his consent and the full price should be handed over to him. In accordance with this order, respected merchants were sent to Sinop from the surrounding areas’. In such a case, authorities were, of course, interested to preserve both the financial and the human capital as well as the willingness to cooperate of those relocated to another place.⁷³

Less cautious authorities may have acted towards peasants or even villeins (which was the status of the majority of the rural workforce both in areas under Latin and Byzantine rule)⁷⁴; their mobility was a priori very much constricted if not executed with the approval or on the order of their landlords. But as Hoerder has illustrated for Western Europe (see above), the agency of this group as ‘economically informed actors’

should also not be underestimated.⁷⁵ Not only a rural workforce could actively seek more beneficial conditions of labour; both landlords and state authorities were actively attracting much-needed manpower by promoting such more beneficial conditions, especially in periods of demographic downturn due to epidemics, war or other calamities—and especially if such a movement of workforce was to the detriment of a direct neighbour and competitor. Under Emperor Theodore II Laskaris (1254–1258), the Byzantine exile state of Nicaea welcomed peasants migrating from the (then Latin-controlled) island of Samos to the region of nearby Ephesus and provided them with land and utilities as well as the status of free peasants (‘*eleutheroi*’).⁷⁶ On the other side, Theodore’s father John III Vatatzes (1221–1254) ordered the return of *paroikoi* (villeins), who had fled from villages near Smyrna (İzmir) in 1244 to nearby regions because of mistreatment by their landlords, whose interests as military personnel outweighed those of the peasants.⁷⁷ David Jacoby has observed similar tensions between desired and unwelcome mobility of rural workforces, especially for territories on the island of Euboea (Negroponte) and in the southwest of the Peloponnese (Methone and Korone). Both were areas of often overlapping and competing zones of authority (Venice, local Latin landlords, Byzantium), which provided ample opportunities for (in their majority, Greek) peasants to cross (nearby) borders in the search of or already attracted by promises of more beneficial conditions of service. Sometimes, the various polities negotiated a return of such groups, but in many cases, such agreements remained without effect or were deliberately ignored by local authorities. One ‘solution’ from the side of landlords on either side of a border was the establishment of ‘partitioned villages’ as in the region of Corinth in the thirteenth century, where the revenues of such villages would be shared by the local Frankish landlord and his Byzantine peer right beyond the border, who then both would have an interest in the stability of the peasants at their current place of residence—thereby limiting their ‘space of options’ considerably.⁷⁸ Yet, to cite David Jacoby: ‘The flight of villeins was a constant concern of individual landlords, landholders, and the Venetian government. The shortage in rural manpower and growing competition between lords striving to acquire it generated a growing mobility and instability of the peasantry from the 1340s onward, both in continental Greece and in Euboea. The villeins were clearly aware that once they crossed political boundaries separating Venetian, Frankish and Byzantine territories, their return required

complex diplomatic negotiations between political entities with contrasting interests. They took advantage of these factors to obtain concessions from their lords or to promote their chances to evade a forcible return to their former residence. It follows that territorial fragmentation generated an intensification of peasant mobility in the Peloponnese and between the mainland and Euboea.⁷⁹ Future research may produce similar results on this interplay between socio-political structures and individual agencies for other regions of the politically fragmented late medieval Eastern Mediterranean.

Slavery and Mobility: The 'Zero Point' of Agency?

The same political fragmentation constituted the framework of an intensive slave trade which can be observed on the coasts of Asia Minor as well as in the Aegean and also especially in the Black Sea.⁸⁰ The main sources of slaves were prisoners of the wars frequently fought among the many polities of the respective populations of conquered or raided areas sold by their captors.⁸¹ Slavery also implied the (from the perspective of the slave, unintended and often painful) establishment of new social connections and a modification and relocation of social networks, first via the exposure to the invading captors, then through those involved in the sale and transport of the slaves and (not necessarily) finally through the owners and their households (which could include also slaves from other or similar backgrounds), respectively, the entire society at the place of destination. Slaves of course could be resold, but also ransomed by kinsmen or fellow countrymen and (if possible) 'repatriated'. Integrating slaves of (sometimes, but not necessarily) very different religious, linguistic or ethnic backgrounds, of course, also affected the social environment of their owners;⁸² slave trade thus produced a series of recombinations of social networks across frontiers due to the (forced) mobility of individuals, which, coming from Asia Minor, the Balkans or the Black Sea, could end up in regions very near to their homeland, in the Latin colonies on the islands and in mainland Greece, but also in the centres of European commerce in Italy, in Ilkhan Persia or in Mamluk Egypt. The last destination, of course, provided peculiar conditions for the 'space of options' of slaves, since the ruling elite of the country since 1250 until the Ottoman conquest in 1517 recruited from the ranks of slave soldiers, originating especially from the coasts of the Black Sea. Individual trajectories of life stories could therefore lead from the 'zero point' of

individual agency to ruling one of the most powerful polities of the region in that period.⁸³

For many slaves, in contrast, enslavement was connected with a high degree of mobility, both from a spatial and cultural point of view, without such an enlargement of the ‘space of options’. Sources allow us to partly reconstruct the recombination of social networks inherent into this process for the port of Famagusta on Cyprus. For 1300/1, Ahmet Usta has systematically analysed the documents dealing with the trade of slaves in the acts of the Genoese notary Lamberto di Sambuceto, active in Famagusta between 1296 and 1307, at that time dominated by traders from his hometown. The documents, in most cases, register the ethnic/religious background of the slaves (at least as attributed to them by their sellers) and also of their sellers and buyers as well as the place(s) from or via which they came to Cyprus.⁸⁴ We used this data on the one hand to capture the ethnic/religious composition of the 37 slaves and of the 50 sellers and buyers as well as the gender composition of the slaves and then to create network models of slaves, owners and localities in order to survey and visualise the manifold entanglements emerging from the capture, relocation and sale of slaves. One ‘Turkish’ slave was Ali, who stemmed from Kayseri in Cappadocia and was transported to Famagusta, where he was sold by Gandulfus de Staeria (from Genoa) to Palmerio de Florenzola (from Florence) on 27 July 1301 (Fig. 2.7).

As his name indicates, Ali was (still) a Muslim—in contrast to other ‘Turkish’ slaves, who had been given a (literally) ‘Christian’ name and also may have been baptised already. We do not know if his new owner transported Ali to another locality within the Eastern Mediterranean or to his home city of Florence. Although the number of slaves from the East brought to Italy in the fourteenth and fifteenth century was not insubstantial, the number of ‘Turk’ slaves sold in Italy seems to have been relatively small, at least later in this period.⁸⁵ In any case, the document for the sale of Ali illustrates connections between inland Anatolia to Mediterranean commerce near (Cyprus) and far away (Genoa, Florence) from its coast. An even more impressive geographical range emerges if we visualise all connections between Famagusta and the Mediterranean world on the basis of links to the places or origin of merchants who came there to trade with slaves in 1300/1 (Fig. 2.8).

As expected, Genoa and cities in Northern Italy are predominant, but we also encounter traders from Asia Minor, Syria and Egypt as well as from the Crimea, Sicily, Libya, Southern France and the Iberian

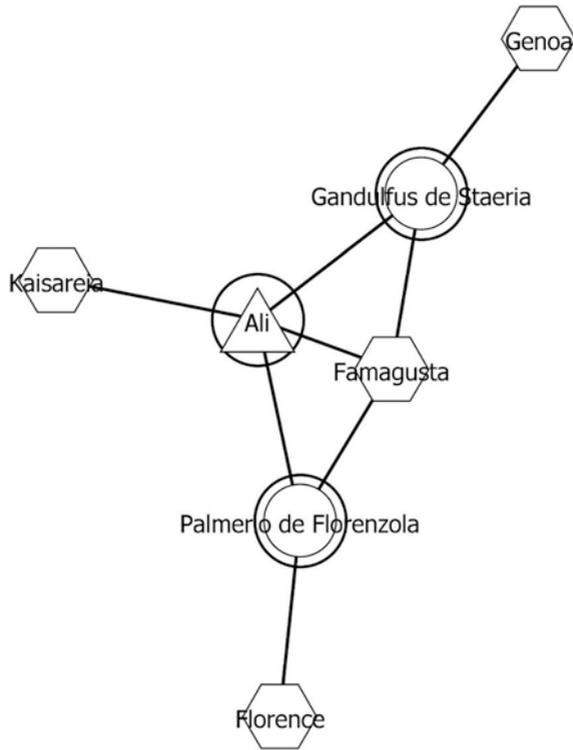


Fig. 2.7 The ‘ego-network’ of the ‘Turkish’ slave Ali from Kayseri, sold by Gandulfus de Staeria (from Genoa) to Palmerio de Florenzola (from Florence) in Famagusta on Cyprus, 27 July 1301 (graph: Johannes Preiser-Kapeller, *Civitas Thauris*)

Peninsula. Not less far ranging is the (forced) mobility of the slaves if we map the connections between Famagusta and the Mediterranean on the basis of links to the places from or via where slaves came who were traded in Famagusta: besides ‘nearby’ and ‘common’ markets such as Anatolia, the Black Sea, the Aegean, slaves from Dalmatia (via Italy) and from the Maghreb (via Spain) found their way from the West to the East.⁸⁶ All this adds up to a ‘multi-coloured’ web of connections between slaves and traders in the market of Famagusta in 1300/1: we find a Jewish merchant Raffael de Palermo from Sicily, ransoming five

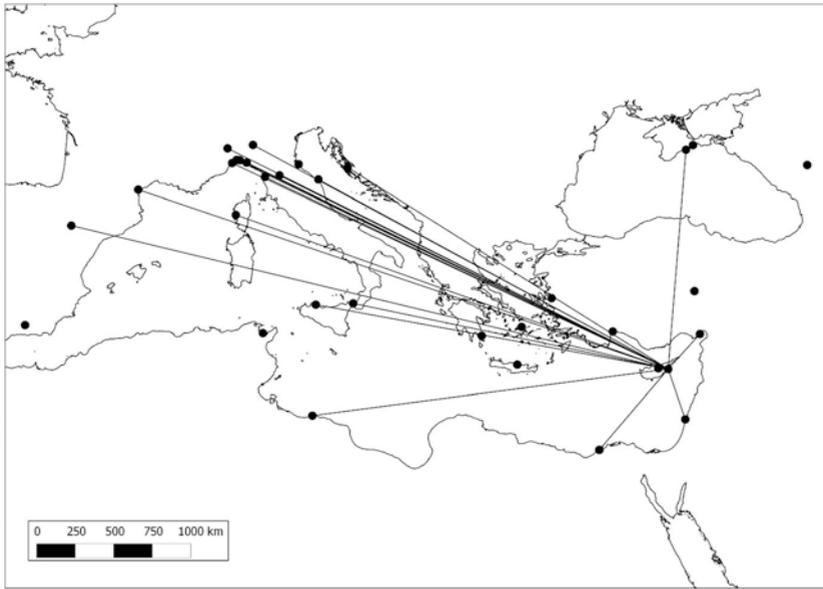


Fig. 2.8 Connections between Famagusta and the Mediterranean world on the basis of links to the places or origin of merchants who came there to trade with slaves in 1300/1301 (links weighted according to the number of merchants active in Famagusta from that city; graph: Johannes Preiser-Kapeller, *Civitas Thauris*)

Jewish slaves displaced from Candia on Crete from a Genoese trader (on the condition that they would repay Raffael's expenses). An Ugolinus from Messina sells an (unnamed) Muslim 'Moor' from the Maghreb, who came to Cyprus via Spain, to Iohannes de Pando from the same city, who also buys a 'Saracen' named Abraam from a Jewish merchant named Mossa from Tripolis in North Africa, who had bought Abraam in Alexandria in Egypt. We do not know what Iohannes de Pando did with his two slaves, but this example illustrates a 'recombination' also of individuals of very diverse Islamic backgrounds, not to speak of the general multiplicity of religious/ethnic/linguistic identities forced to reconnect and to modify within this framework.⁸⁷ Similar observations, both from an overall macro-perspective and for individual micro-histories of forced labour mobility (at which we only get a glimpse, albeit on maybe the most central episode within individual trajectories) could

be made by combining the background of traders and slaves for Tana at the Black Sea (see above). Most of the slaves (especially young girls) sold there originated from the immediate hinterland of the city (Tatars, Circassians, Alans), but we also encounter Russian, Greek, Armenian and Jewish slaves as well as one Chinese girl in 1359/60.⁸⁸ A comparable case study was also undertaken by us for the slave market of Candia on Crete for the years 1305/6.⁸⁹ In any case, it becomes evident that enslavement in the Eastern Mediterranean—similar to other forms of labour mobility—not only enforced a considerable degree of spatial, but also of cultural mobility on its victims. At the same time, other studies have highlighted the remarkable degree of adaptability, but also of resistance slaves were able to demonstrate within this framework.⁹⁰ Also, Stephen Greenblatt has called our attention to such phenomena: ‘mobility studies should account in new ways for the tension between individual agency and structural constraint. This tension cannot be resolved in any abstract theoretical way, for in given historical circumstances structures of power seek to mobilize some individuals and immobilize others. And it is important to note that moments in which individuals feel most completely in control may, under careful scrutiny, prove to be moments of the most intense structural determination, while moments in which the social structure applies the fiercest pressure on the individual may in fact be precisely those moments in which individuals are exercising the most stubborn will to autonomous movement. Mobility studies should be interested, among other things, in the way in which seemingly fixed migration paths are disrupted by the strategic acts of individual agents and by unexpected, unplanned, entirely contingent encounters between different cultures.’⁹¹ These observations, of course, pertain to several phenomena of labour mobility discussed in our paper—and open up perspectives for further in-depth analyses of micro-stories and macro-trends embedded in our sources.

CONCLUSION

As our case studies have highlighted, a flexible approach towards a survey of types, ranges, scales and especially networks of labour mobility in the pre-modern period has the potential to map both the entanglements emerging from micro-histories of individuals and to accumulate these individual trajectories into complex networks across spatial and temporal scales up to the ‘systemic macro approach’. At the same time,

it becomes evident that these two perspectives require each other: micro-history provides us with an in-depth perspective of the interplay between individual agency and structural constraints as well as opportunities and their specific dynamics in each case. Within the sum of these interactions and entanglements emerge the actual structural forces and socio-cultural phenomena we observe from a macro-historical point of view, showing also emergent properties not dependent on the agency (or design) of any individual, but on the complexity of the entirety of a system—phenomena such as the lingua franca of Medieval seafaring, for instance.⁹² The interplay between structure and culture⁹³ also entails the entanglement between labour mobility and cultural mobility highlighted in almost all cases we have inspected in this paper; therefore, an integration of concepts such as those developed by Stephen Greenblatt (see above) is equally necessary. Along these lines, the value of micro-historical and trans-local perspectives on the global history of labour in the period before 1500 becomes visible.

NOTES

1. Steven A. Epstein, *Purity Lost: Transgressing Boundaries in the Eastern Mediterranean, 1000–1400* (Baltimore, 2007), pp. 110–111, especially reflecting on the Aegean in the fourteenth century, a ‘period of maximum complexity’.
2. For some examples see the contributions in Michel Balard and Alain Ducellier, eds., *Migrations et diasporas méditerranéennes (Xe–XVIe siècles)* (Paris, 2002), and Élisabeth Malamut and Mohamed Ouerfelli, eds., *Les échanges en Méditerranée médiévale* (Aix-en-Provence, 2012).
3. Janet L. Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony: The World System A.D. 1250–1350* (New York and Oxford, 1989); Kate Fleet, *European and Islamic Trade in the Early Ottoman State: The Merchants of Genoa and Turkey* (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 1–12; Dirk Hoerder, *Cultures in Contact: World Migrations in the Second Millennium* (Durham and London, 2002), pp. 28–30. See also Philip D. Curtin, *Cross-cultural Trade in World History* (Cambridge, 1984), pp. 115–119, esp. on the notion of ‘trade diasporas’. For the far-reaching connections through the mobility of individuals across Eurasia after the Mongol conquest, see esp. Thomas T. Allsen, *Culture and Conquest in Mongol Eurasia* (Cambridge, 2001).
4. See Niklas Luhmann, ‘Interaktion in Oberschichten: Zur Transformation ihrer Semantik im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert’, in *Gesellschaftsstruktur und Semantik. Studien zur Wissenssoziologie der modernen Gesellschaft*,

- ed. Niklas Luhmann (Frankfurt am Main, 1993), vol. 1, pp. 72–161; Hoerder, *Cultures in Contact*, pp. 60–62; Johannes Preiser-Kapeller, *Webs of Conversion: An Analysis of Social Networks of Converts Across Islamic-Christian Borders in Anatolia, South-Eastern Europe and the Black Sea from the 13th to the 15th Centuries*, Working paper for the International Workshop: ‘Cross-Cultural Life-Worlds in Pre-Modern Islamic Societies: Actors, Evidences And Strategies’, University of Bamberg (Germany), 22–24 June 2012; Johannes Preiser-Kapeller, ‘Networks of Border Zones: Multiplex Relations of Power, Religion and Economy in South-Eastern Europe, 1250–1453 AD’, in *Revive the Past. Computer Applications and Quantitative Methods in Archaeology (CAA). Proceedings of the 39th International Conference, Beijing, April 12–16*, eds. Mingquan Zhou, Iza Romanowska, Zhongke Wu, Pengfei Xu and Philip Verhagen (Amsterdam, 2012), pp. 381–393, and for the example of the Seljuk-Byzantine border in Anatolia: Sara Nur Yildiz, ‘Reconceptualizing the Seljuk-Cilician Frontier: Armenians, Latin, and Turks in Conflict and Alliance during the Early Thirteenth Century’, in *Borders, Barriers, and Ethnogenesis. Frontiers in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, ed. Florin Curta (Turnhout, 2005), pp. 91–120 and Sara Nur Yildiz, ‘Manuel Komnenos Mavrozomes and His Descendants at the Seljuk Court: The Formation of a Christian Seljuk-Komnenian Elite’, in *Crossroads between Latin Europe and the Near East: Corollaries of the Frankish Presence in the Eastern Mediterranean (12th–14th centuries)*, ed. Stefan Leder (Würzburg, 2011).
5. Fleet, *European and Islamic Trade*, p. 141.
 6. Finbarr B. Flood, *Objects of Translation. Material Culture and Medieval “Hindu-Muslim” Encounter* (Princeton and Oxford, 2009), p. 11 and pp. 61–85; Anne E. Wardwell, ‘Panni Tartarici: Eastern Islamic Silks Woven with Gold and Silver (13th and 14th Centuries)’, *Islamic Art*, 3 (1988/9), 95–173; David Jacoby, ‘Silk Economics and Cross-Cultural Artistic Interaction: Byzantium, the Muslim World, and the Christian West’, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 58 (2004), 197–240; E. Jane Burns, *Sea of Silk: A Textile Geography of Women’s Work in Medieval French Literature* (Philadelphia, 2009).
 7. Henry Kahane, Renée Kahane and Andreas Tietze, *The Lingua Franca of the Levant: Turkish Nautical Terms of Italian and Greek Origin* (Urbana, Illinois, 1958); Georgios Makris, *Studien zur spätbyzantinischen Schifffahrt* (Genoa, 1988), pp. 112–117.
 8. For the far reaching connections through the mobility of individuals across Eurasia after the Mongol conquest, see esp. Allsen, *Culture and Conquest*.
 9. John Urry, *Mobilities* (Cambridge, 2007), p. 6.

10. See Sylvia Hahn, *Historische Migrationsforschung* (Frankfurt and New York, 2012), p. 27 and pp. 30–32, with further references.
11. Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony*; Hoerder, *Cultures in Contact*, pp. 28–30.
12. Robert A. McLeman, *Climate and Human Migration: Past Experiences, Future Challenges* (Cambridge, 2013).
13. Christiane Harzig and Dirk Hoerder, with Donna Gabbacia, *What is Migration History?* (Cambridge, 2009), pp. 78–114; Hoerder, *Cultures in Contact*, pp. 15–21; Hahn, *Historische Migrationsforschung*, pp. 21–36.
14. Harzig and Hoerder, *What is Migration History*, pp. 92–98.
15. *Ibid.*, pp. 102–10.
16. *Ibid.*, pp. 78–80.
17. Charles Tilly, ‘Transplanted Networks’, in *Immigration Reconsidered: History, Sociology and Politics*, eds. Virginia Yans and McLaughlin (New York and Oxford, 1990), pp. 79–95, 90 and 92; Hahn, *Historische Migrationsforschung*, p. 29.
18. Claire Lemerrier, ‘Formale Methoden der Netzwerkanalyse in den Geschichtswissenschaften: Warum und Wie?’ in *Historische Netzwerkanalysen*, eds. Albert Müller and Wolfgang Neurath (Innsbruck, Vienna and Bozen, 2012), pp. 16–41, at p. 22. See also Bonnie H. Erickson, ‘Social Networks and History: A Review Essay’, *Historical Methods: A Journal of Quantitative and Interdisciplinary History*, 30, 3 (1997), 149–157, and Lothar Krempel, *Visualisierung komplexer Strukturen. Grundlagen der Darstellung mehrdimensionaler Netzwerke* (Frankfurt and New York, 2005) (for the value of network visualisation). For an overview on tools of quantitative (historical) network analysis, see Johannes Preiser-Kapeller, ‘Letters and Network Analysis’, in *Companion to Byzantine Epistolography*, ed. Alexander Riehle (Leiden, New York and Cologne) (forthcoming). For samples see also Academia: <http://ocaw.academia.edu/TopographiesofEntanglements> (consulted on 27 October 2016).
19. Daniel Dorling, *The Visualization of Spatial Social Structure* (Chichester, 2012); Johannes Preiser-Kapeller, ‘Civitas Thauris. The significance of Tabrīz in the spatial frameworks of Christian merchants and ecclesiastics in the thirteenth and fourteenth century’, in *Beyond the Abbasid Caliphate: Politics, Patronage and the Transmission of Knowledge in 13th–15th Century Tabriz*, ed. Judith Pfeiffer (Leiden, 2014), pp. 251–300.
20. See Jan Fuhse and Sophie Mützel, *Relationale Soziologie. Zur kulturellen Wende der Netzwerkforschung* (Wiesbaden, 2010).
21. See also Betina Hollstein and Florian Straus, *Qualitative Netzwerkanalyse. Konzepte, Methoden, Anwendungen* (Wiesbaden, 2006).

22. Harrison C. White, *Identity and Control: How Social Formations emerge* (Princeton and Oxford, 2008); Johannes Preiser-Kapeller, 'Luhmann in Byzantium: A systems theory approach for historical network analysis', Working Paper for the International Conference 'The Connected Past: people, networks and complexity in archaeology and history', Southampton, 24–25 April 2012 (online: <http://oeaw.academia.edu/J.PreiserKapeller/Papers/>—consulted on 27 October 2016).
23. Flood, *Objects of Translation*, p. 3; see also Hoerder, *Cultures in Contact*, pp. 15–21, and Harzig and Hoerder, *What is Migration History*, pp. 79–82, for a network approach to migration history.
24. Flood, *Objects of Translation*, p. 24.
25. Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650–1815* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. IX–XV. See also Epstein, *Purity Lost*, p. 135, using this term for our period and region.
26. On this issue, see Stephen Greenblatt, *Cultural Mobility: A Manifesto* (Cambridge, 2009). See also Ekaterini Mitsiou and Johannes Preiser-Kapeller, 'Übertritte zur byzantinisch-orthodoxen Kirche in den Urkunden des Patriarchatsregisters von Konstantinopel (mit 10 Tafeln)', in *Sylloge Diplomatico-Palaeographica* I, ed. Christian Gastgeber and Otto Kresten (Vienna, 2010), pp. 233–288. For another phenomenon of spatial and cultural mobility across the Latin-Byzantine frontier; see also: Rustam Shukurov, 'The Byzantine Turks: An Approach to the Study of Late Byzantine Demography', in: *L'Europa dopo la caduta di Costantinopoli: 29 maggio 1453* (Spoleto, 2008), pp. 73–108; Rustam Shukurov, 'The Oriental Margins of the Byzantine World: A Prosopographical Perspective', in *Identities and Allegiances in the Eastern Mediterranean after 1204*, ed. Judith Herrin and Guillaume Saint-Guillain (Farnham, 2011), pp. 167–196 and Johannes Preiser-Kapeller, 'Conversion, Collaboration and Confrontation: Islam in the Register of the Patriarchate of Constantinople (14th Century)', *International Review of Turkish Studies*, 1, 4 (2011), pp. 62–79, for Christian-Muslim frontiers.
27. Hoerder, *Cultures in Contact*, pp. 59–91.
28. See Olivia Remie Constable, *Housing the Stranger in the Mediterranean: World, Lodging, Trade, and Travel in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 2003) (in general and in detail on this phenomenon), and Epstein, *Purity Lost*, pp. 102–103, as well as Elizabeth A. Zachariadou, *Trade and Crusade: Venetian Crete and the Emirates of Menteshe and Aydin (1300–1415)* (Venice, 1983), pp. 125–31; Andreas Külzer, 'Éphesos in byzantinischer Zeit: ein historischer Überblick', in *Byzanz – das Römerreich im Mittelalter, Part 2,2: Schauplätze*, ed. Falko Daim and Jörg Drauschke (Mainz, 2010), pp. 521–539, at pp. 529–30, for samples from our region and period.

29. See Constable, *Housing the Stranger*, pp. 265–269, and pp. 115–116, also for a fourteenth-century fatwa from the Egyptian jurist al-Subkī (d. 1355) on the legitimacy of the presence of foreign Christian merchants in Muslim lands, regarding their legal protection under the conditions of a safe-conduct (*aman*) or treaty as weaker than that of endogenous Christians possessing the status of *ahl al-dhimma*; see also Dominique Valérian, ‘Les marchands latins dans les ports musulmans méditerranéens: une minorité confinée dans des espaces communautaires?’ *Revue des mondes musulmans et la Méditerranée* 107–110 (2005), pp. 437–458. See also Zachariadou, *Trade and Crusade*, pp. 134–136 and pp. 153–158 for restrictions and taxation of trade by Muslim authorities. And see also David Jacoby, ‘Western Merchants, Pilgrims, and Travelers in Alexandria in the Time of Philippe de Mézières (ca. 1327–1405)’, in *Philippe de Mézières and His Age: Piety and Politics in the Fourteenth Century*, eds. Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski and Kiril Petkov (Leiden and Boston, 2012), pp. 403–425 for conditions and the growing number of *fondacios* of various polities in Alexandria in Egypt in the fourteenth century.
30. Constable, *Housing the Stranger*, pp. 112–126, pp. 133–147 and pp. 281–290 (on consuls and the administration of Christian *fondacios* in Muslim cities), pp. 275–276 (‘access to their own law, religion, and foodways while in a Muslim city’); Zachariadou, *Trade and Crusade*, pp. 125–131, pp. 137–139 (also on the Venetian consuls in Balat and the Genoese ones in Ayasoluk); Kate Fleet, ‘The Turkish economy, 1071–1453’, in *The Cambridge History of Turkey, Vol. I: Byzantium to Turkey 1071–1453*, ed. Kate Fleet (Cambridge, 2009), pp. 227–265, pp. 262–263. For a magisterial study on Venetian consuls in Alexandria in Egypt in the fifteenth century see Georg Christ, *Trading Conflicts. A Venetian Consul in Mamlūk Alexandria at the Beginning of the 15th Century* (Leiden, 2012), and also now Jacoby, *Western Merchants*.
31. See Constable, *Housing the Stranger*, pp. 112–126, for examples from various regions of the Islamic Mediterranean, esp. pp. 280–281, pp. 287–288, as well as Robert S. Lopez and Irving W. Raymond, *Medieval Trade in the Mediterranean World: Illustrative Documents* (New York, 2001), pp. 170–171 (no. 79); see also Dominique Valérian, *Les marchands latins* and Dominique Valérian, ‘Le recours à l’écrit dans les pratiques marchandes en contexte interculturel: les contrats de commerce entre chrétiens et musulmans en Méditerranée’, in *L’autorité de l’écrit au Moyen Âge (Orient-Occident). XXXIXe Congrès de la SHMESP (Le Caire, 30 avril–5 mai 2008)* (Paris, 2009), pp. 59–72, and for our region in particular many examples in Fleet, *European and Islamic Trade*, pp. 22–121, esp. p. 109 on one case of collaboration between a Muslim and an ‘infidel’ to circumvent the paying of customs on the import of

- cloth by Non-Muslims. For an interesting comparison with the strategies of ‘Ottoman’ merchants when entering the ‘Venetian’ sea of the Adria from the fifteenth century onwards, see Maria Pia Pedani, ‘Ottoman Merchants in the Adriatic: Trade and Smuggling’, *Acta Historiae* 16, 1–2 (2008), pp. 155–172. But see also Jacoby, *Western Merchants*, for indications of a stricter regime in Alexandria.
32. *Directorum ad passagium faciendum*, in *Recueil des Historiens des Croisades, publié par les soins de l’Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres. Documents Arméniens*, 2 Vols (Paris, 1869 and 1906), here vol. 2, pp. 490–495. See also Marino Sanudo Torsello, *The Book of the Secrets of the Faithful of the Cross. Liber Secretorum Fidelium Crucis*, transl. Peter Lock (Farnham, 2011), vol. 3, 8, 2, pp. 289–290; Epstein, *Purity Lost*, pp. 6, 14–15, 39 and 109–110. On the actual, also demographic significance of such groups on Venetian Crete, where children fathered by a free Latin man with a female slave automatically became free themselves, see for instance Sally McKee, ‘Inherited Status and Slavery in Late Medieval Italy and Venetian Crete’, *Past and Present* 182 (2004), 31–53, here pp. 33–44. For the image of Eastern Christianity in Western sources of the time see: Anna-Dorothee von den Brincken, *Die ‘Nationes christianorum orientaliū’ im Verständnis der lateinischen Historiographie. Von der Mitte des 12. bis in die zweite Hälfte des 14. Jahrhunderts* (Cologne and Vienna, 1973). On ‘transcultural identities’ see: Ekaterini Mitsiou, ‘Feinde, Freunde, Konkurrenten. Die Interaktion zwischen Byzantinern und “Lateinern” im Spätmittelalter’, *Historicum. Zeitschrift für Geschichte* (Sommer/Herbst 2011) (published 2012), pp. 48–55.
 33. *Guillelmus Ade, Tractatus quomodo sarracenos extirpandi*, ed. and transl. Giles Constable (Washington, D. C., 2012) (older edition in *Recueil des Historiens des Croisades*, II, pp. 521–555), here at pp. 78–79 (chapter IV); on pp. 28–29 (chapter I), he denounces the sale of ‘Greeks, Bulgars, Ruthenians, Alans, and Hungarians from lesser Hungary, who all rejoice in the Christian name’ by Genoese and other merchants to Muslims, esp. the Mamluks of Egypt. The large scale enslavement of Greek Orthodox by Latins was also cause for a complaint of the Byzantine delegate Barlaam before the Pope in Avignon in 1339, see: Zachariadou, *Trade and Crusade*, p. 160.
 34. Fleet, *European and Islamic Trade*, pp. 56–57; Epstein, *Purity Lost*, p. 114. See also Constable, *Housing the Stranger*, p. 284, for Mamluk protests in 1420 against Venetians capturing Muslims and selling them as slaves to the Duke of Naxos.
 35. Zachariadou, *Trade and Crusade*, p. 163, no. 683 (with sources); Fleet, *European and Islamic Trade*, p. 44.

36. Anthony Luttrell, 'Slavery at Rhodes: 1306–1440', *Bulletin de l'Institute historique belge de Rome*, 46–47 (1976/77), 81–100, at pp. 86–87; Fleet, *European and Islamic Trade*, p. 43.
37. Guillelmus Ade, transl. Constanble, pp. 2–3, 5–6, 26–35 (ch. I), 48–49 (ch. IV). See also Zachariadou, *Trade and Crusade*, pp. 8–9; Johannes Koder, *Aigaion Pelagos (Die nördliche Ägäis)* (Tabula Imperii Byzantini 10) (Vienna, 1998), pp. 144–145; Epstein, *Purity Lost*, pp. 67–70; Michael Carr, *Motivations and Response to Crusades in the Aegean: c. 1300–1350*, PhD thesis (Royal Holloway, University of London, 2011), pp. 86–103. See also: Charles Kohler, 'Documents relatifs a Guillaume Adam archevêque de Sultanieh, puis d'Antivari, et a son entourage (1318–1346)', *Revue de l'Orient latin* 10 (1903/4), 16–56. On Ade: Marino Sanudo Torsello II, 4, 13, esp. p. 117 (of the translation); Zachariadou, *Trade and Crusade*, p. 13; Hansgerd Hellenkemper and Friedrich Hild, *Lykien und Pamphylien* (Tabula Imperii Byzantini) (Vienna, 2004), p. 588. On this issue see also Angeliki Laiou, 'Marino Sanudo Torsello, Byzantium and the Turks: The Background to the Anti-Turkish League of 1332–1334', *Speculum* 45 (1970), pp. 374–392; Evelyn Edson, 'Reviving the Crusade: Sanudo's Schemes and Vesconte's Maps', in *Eastward bound. Travel and Travellers 1050–1550*, ed. Rosamund Allen (Manchester and New York, 2004), pp. 131–155; Epstein, *Purity Lost*, pp. 162–166, and Carr, *Motivations and Response*, pp. 10–12, on 'the interplay between religious and commercial motivations'.
38. Anthony Luttrell and Elizabeth A. Zachariadou, *Sources for Turkish History in the Hospitallers' Rhodian Archive 1389–1422* (Athens, 2008), pp. 100–101 (no. 13).
39. On multiplexity see. Preiser-Kapeller, 'Networks of border zones', pp. 381–393.
40. See Blumenfeld-Kosinski and Petkov, *Philippe de Mézières*. For another illustrative example: Damien Coulon, 'Lluís Sirvent, home d'affaires et ambassadeur barcelonais (vers 1385–1444)', in Malamut and Ouerfelli, *Les échanges*, pp. 215–239.
41. Hellenkemper and Hild, *Lykien und Pamphylien*, p. 313.
42. Flood, *Objects of Translation*, p. 4.
43. Agustí Alemany, *Sources on the Alans: A Critical Compilation* (Leiden, 2000), esp. pp. 403–434.
44. *Ibid.*, pp. 163–166, with further references.
45. Alemany, *Sources on the Alans*, pp. 416–418.
46. *Ibid.*, pp. 434.
47. *Ibid.*, pp. 163–166, with further references.
48. Alemany, *Sources on the Alans*.

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50. See also Preiser-Kapeller, *Civitas Thauris*.
51. Guillelmus Ade, ed. and transl. Constable, pp. 94–95 (chapter IV).
52. Eubel, *Dominikaner und Franziskaner*, pp. 184–185; Loenertz, *Frères pèrègrinants*, pp. 154–60, 163, 172–173; Richard, *La Papauté*, p. 177; Richard, *Die römische Kirche*, p. 883; Peter Jackson, *The Mongols and the West, 1221–1410* (Harlow and London, 2005), p. 268.
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- Hayez, 'Les correspondances Datini: un apport à l'étude des réseaux marchands toscans vers 1400', in Malamut and Ouerfelli, *Les échanges*, pp. 155–199.
54. Sergej P. Karpov, 'Tana – Une grande zone réceptrice de l'émigration aus Moyen Age', in *Migrations et diasporas*, eds. Balard and Ducellier, pp. 77–89; Sergej P. Karpov, 'Les Occidentaux dans les villes de la périphérie byzantine: la mer Noire "véniétienne" aux XIVe–XVe siècles', in *Byzance et le monde extérieur. Contacts, relations, échanges*, eds. Michel Balard, Élisabeth Malamut and Jean-Michel Spieser (Paris, 2005), pp. 67–76; see also Ievgen Khvalkov, 'Ethnic and Religious Composition of the Population of Venetian Tana in the 1430s', in *Union in Separation. Diasporic Groups and Identities in the Eastern Mediterranean (1100–1800)*, ed. Georg Christ et al. (Rome, 2015), pp. 311–328.
55. See also Epstein, *Purity Lost*, pp. 118–130.
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57. Cited after Robert Van de Noort, *North Sea Archaeologies: a Maritime Biography, 10,000 BC to AD 1500* (Oxford, 2011), p. 1.
58. Christer Westerdahl, 'The Maritime Cultural Landscape', *The International Journal of Nautical Archaeology* 21, 1 (1992), pp. 5–14; citation from Van de Noort, *North Sea Archaeologies*, p. 25.
59. *Shipping, Trade and Crusade in the Medieval Mediterranean. Studies in Honour of John Pryor*, ed. Ruthy Gertwagen and Elizabeth Jeffreys (Farnham, 2012), pp. 115–127.
60. Van de Noort, *North Sea Archaeologies*, pp. 33–35.
61. See also Johannes Preiser-Kapeller, 'Liquid Frontiers. A Relational Analysis of maritime Asia Minor as religious contact zone in the thirteenth–fifteenth centuries', in *Islam and Christianity in Medieval Anatolia*, eds. Andrew Peacock, Bruno De Nicola and Sara Nur Yildiz (Aldershot, 2015), pp. 117–146. The present paper contains some material from this article, especially several parts which have not be included into the final printed version for lack of space in the volume.
62. Bernard Doumerc, 'Cosmopolitanism on Board Venetian Ships (Fourteenth–Fifteenth Centuries)', *Medieval Encounters* 13 (2007), pp. 78–95. See also Diana Gilliland Wright, 'Vade, Sta, Ambula. Freeing Slaves in Fourteenth-century Crete', *Medieval Encounters* 7, 2 (2001), 197–237, here p. 208. On regulations and their breaking on board of such ships see also Sergei Karpov, 'Les vices et la criminalité des marins vénitiens à bord des navires voyageant vers la Mer Noire, XIVe–XVe

- siècles', in Gertwagen and Jeffreys, *Shipping, Trade and Crusade*, pp. 105–114.
63. *Medieval Encounters* 13 (2007), ed. Kathryn Louise Reyerson.
64. Doumerc, 'Cosmopolitanism'; Theresa M. Vann, 'Christian, Muslim, and Jewish Mariners in the Port of Rhodes, 1453–1480', *Medieval Encounters* 13 (2007), 158–173, esp. pp. 159–160.
65. *The Book of Michael of Rhodes. A Fifteenth-Century Maritime Manuscript. Volume 3: Studies*, ed. Pamela O. Long (Cambridge, MA and London, 2009), esp. pp. 2–3, and esp. Alan M. Stahl, 'Michael of Rhodes: Mariner in Service to Venice', in *The Book of Michael of Rhodes*, pp. 35–98, with the list of Michael's voyages pp. 47–48.
66. Stahl, *Michael of Rhodes*.
67. Benjamin Ravid, 'Venice and its minorities', in *A Companion to Venetian History, 1400–1797*, ed. Eric R. Dursteler (Leiden and Boston, 2013), pp. 449–485, esp. pp. 451–452 (on the citizenship *de intus*) and pp. 462–466; Stahl, *Michael of Rhodes*, esp. pp. 57–59.
68. *The Book of Michael of Rhodes*, pp. 15–20.
69. Stahl, 'Michael of Rhodes', pp. 97–98.
70. *Ibid.*, pp. 42–43.
71. For this geographical distribution see also Doumerc, 'Cosmopolitanism'; Stahl, 'Michael of Rhodes' and Ravid, 'Venice and its minorities'. For Greek sailors on Italian and on Turkish ships see also Makris, *Schiffahrt*, pp. 118–127.
72. Van de Noort, *North Sea Archaeologies*, pp. 33–34. On the common route from Venice to Cilicia, Cyprus or Syria, see also Doris Stöckly, *Le système de l'Incanto des gales du marché à Venise (fin XIIIe–milieu XVe siècle)* (Leiden, New York and Cologne, 1995), pp. 119–130.
73. Herbert W. Duda, *Die Seltschukengeschichte des Ibn Bibi* (Copenhagen, 1959), p. 68; Ekaterini Mitsiou, *Untersuchungen zu Wirtschaft und Ideologie im 'Nizänischen Reich'*, Unpublished Dissertation (Vienna, 2006), pp. 127–128.
74. David Jacoby, 'Peasant Mobility across the Venetian, Frankish and Byzantine Borders in Latin Romania, Thirteenth-Fifteenth Centuries', in *I Greci durante la venetocrazia: uomini, spazio, idee (13.–18. sec.): atti del Convegno internazionale di studi, Venezia, 3–7 dicembre 2007*, ed. Despina Vlasi, Chryssa Maltezou and Angeliki Tzavara (Venice, 2009), pp. 525–539, here pp. 524–525; Mitsiou, *Untersuchungen*, pp. 98–100.
75. See also John Mundy, 'Village, Town, and City in the Region of Toulouse', in *Pathways to medieval Peasants*, ed. James Ambrose Raftis (Toronto, 1981), pp. 141–190.
76. Mitsiou, *Untersuchungen*, pp. 68–69 (with sources) and p. 88.
77. Mitsiou, *Untersuchungen*, p. 104 (with sources).

78. David Jacoby, 'New Evidence on the Greek Peasantry in Latin Romania', in *Porphyrogenita: essays on the history and literature of Byzantium and the Latin East in honour of Julian Chrysostomides*, ed. Charalambos Dendrinos (Aldershot, 2003), pp. 239–256; David Jacoby, 'The Demographic Evolution of Euboea under Latin Rule, 1205–1470', in *The Greek Islands and the Sea*, ed. Julian Chrysostomides et al. (Camberley, Surrey, 2004), pp. 131–179 and Jacoby, 'Peasant Mobility', esp. pp. 532–533 on the 'partitioned villages'.
79. Jacoby, 'Peasant Mobility', p. 537.
80. For an overview of the significance of Kaffa and the Black Sea in slave trade see Epstein, *Purity Lost*, pp. 55–67; Nicola Di Cosmo, 'Mongols and Merchants on the Black Sea Frontier in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries: Convergences and Conflicts', in *Mongols, Turks and others. Eurasian Nomads and the Sedentary World*, eds. Reuven Amitai and Michal Biran (Leiden, 2005), pp. 391–424 (also for the relations between the Western merchants and the Mongol/Muslim overlords) and Annika Stello, 'La traite d'esclaves en Mer Noire au début du XVe siècle', published online in 2009 in *Medieval Mediterranean Slavery: Comparative Studies on Slavery and the Slave Trade in Muslim, Christian, and Jewish Societies (8th–15th Centuries)*, <http://med-slavery.uni-trier.de:9080/minev/MedSlavery/publications/TraiteEsclavesMerNoire.pdf> (consulted on 27 October 2016), for slave trade at the coasts of Anatolia esp. Fleet, *European and Islamic Trade*, pp. 37–58.
81. See also Makris, *Schiffahrt*, pp. 195–210.
82. See also Wright, 'Freeing slaves', p. 212, and Epstein, *Purity Lost*, pp. 81–82, on this issue.
83. See also Luttrell, 'Slavery at Rhodes'. See also the very useful website of the 'Medieval Mediterranean Slavery'-project at the University of Trier: <http://med-slavery.uni-trier.de/minev/MedSlavery> (consulted on 27 October 2016). For an overview on the Mamluks see Ulrich Haarmann, 'Das Herrschaftssystem der Mamluken', in *Geschichte der arabischen Welt*, eds. Heinz Halm and Ulrich Haarmann (Munich, 2004), esp. pp. 217–230.
84. Ahmet Usta, *Evidence of the Nature, Impact and Diversity of Slavery in 14th Century Famagusta as Seen through the Genoese Notarial Acts of Lamberto di Sambuceto and Giovanni da Rocha and the Venetian Notarial Acts of Nicola de Boateriis*. MA-Thesis, Eastern Mediterranean University, Gazimağusa, North Cyprus, 2011, esp. pp. 114–119 (Table 1). For Cyprus in this period, see also Epstein, *Purity Lost*, pp. 80–93.
85. Sally McKee has done a statistical analysis for the slaves traded in Genoa between 1390 and 1500 and found a total of 46 'Turkish' slaves, which

amounted to between 3 and 16% of all slaves sold (and registered by McKee) over these decades, see Sally McKee, 'Domestic Slavery in Renaissance Italy', *Slavery and Abolition* 29, 3 (2008), pp. 305–326. See also Luttrell, *Slavery at Rhodes*, pp. 83–84, about slaves traded in Rhodes ending up in the Western Mediterranean.

86. See also Epstein, *Purity Lost*, pp. 81–83.
87. See also *Ibid.*, pp. 82–3 and p. 90, on the various sales documented in by Sambuceto.
88. Karpov, 'Tana' and Karpov, 'Les Occidentaus'.
89. Preiser-Kapeller, 'Liquid frontiers'.
90. See for instance Suraiya Faroqhi, *Travel and Artisans in the Ottoman Empire. Employment and Mobility in the Early Modern Era* (London and New York, 2014), pp. 129–142, on the mobility of slaves documented in the sixteenth-century registers of the Kadi of Üsküdar, a town on the Asian site of the Bosphorus opposite of Constantinople.
91. Greenblatt, *Cultural Mobility*, pp. 250–253 (See also <http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~cardenio/mobility.html> – consulted on 27 October 2016).
92. See esp. Rudi Keller, *Sprachwandel: Von der unsichtbaren Hand in der Sprache* (3rd edn. Stuttgart, 2003), on the application of complex systems theory on linguistic phenomena.
93. See also Johannes Preiser-Kapeller, 'From Quantitative to Qualitative and Back Again. The Interplay Between Structure and Culture and the Analysis of Networks in Pre-Modern Societies, in *Multiplying Middle Ages. New methods and approaches for the study of the multiplicity of the Middle Ages in a global perspective (3rd–16th CE)*, eds. Ekaterini Mitsiou, Mihailo Popović and Johannes Preiser-Kapeller, Vienna 2018 (forthcoming).

Catholic Missions and Native Subaltern
Workers: Connected Micro-Histories
of Labour from India and Brazil,
ca. 1545–1560

Giuseppe Marcocci

INTRODUCTION

Pre-modern empires were political configurations in which both global and local interactions took place.¹ We should understand these interactions as the range of concrete connections that linked a specific place to a multiplicity of other places at a variable distance. This is why the attempts to identify the origin of impulses that had synchronic effects in seemingly separated localities prove extremely difficult, while only a study of the intersections that provided the ground for manifestations of simultaneity can disclose the real global nature of an empire. In particular, this

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chapter aims to show to what extent a micro-spatial approach to labour history allows us to disentangle a number of global connections that both framed and built imperial dynamics.

The transformation of the social and economic order in the territories affected by the presence of the Iberian overseas empires from 1500 onwards is still an open field of research. Although the new colonial rule involved domination and exploitation, a variety of reactions from the natives ensued, and the Portuguese and Spanish settlers constantly negotiated with the many different local contexts in which they acted.² Sometimes, Europeans simply tried to exploit pre-existing conditions, but more often they had to come to terms with local structures and resistance to change from the natives. The general picture emerging from the Spanish conquest of America, with the collapse of complex social organizations, the rapid demographic decrease of native populations, and the massive importation of slaves from West Africa, cannot be taken as representative of what happened elsewhere. This is particularly evident if we focus on labour relations. Historians have discussed the fact that the *encomienda* system, giving the holder (*encomendero*) the right to collect a tribute in money, goods or labour services from native Americans in return for protecting them and instructing them in the Catholic religion, had a basis in pre-colonial institutions like the *cuatequil* in Mexico or the *mita* in Peru.³ Surely the Iberian empires gave a remarkable contribution to the increasing conversion of the majority of labour relations on a world scale from reciprocal and tributary regimes to commodified ones, which characterized the early modern period.⁴ However, this general tendency depended on different factors originating from a number of places. Therefore, we need to focus on dissimilar but connected cases in order to properly understand the global character and the working of this non-linear, composite shift, which intersected the distinction between free and unfree labour as well.⁵

In this chapter I will focus on the development of labour relations in the context of the Portuguese overseas empire. Generally, scholars have taken specific regions into account separately, among which the case of slavery in Brazil is by far the best known.⁶ A book on forced and state-sponsored settlers examined the role of convicts and orphans in the making of the empire, but we still lack an overview of work conditions in the early modern Portuguese world.⁷ The purpose of this chapter is to counter this fragmentary picture and to highlight some trans-continental connections that linked India and Brazil in the mid-sixteenth century,

when colonial settlements were still at an early stage and their patterns were unstable and unpredictable. By following the traces of a churchman's global life, a micro-spatial analysis of four radically different contexts—Goa and Chorão in India, Salvador de Bahia and Piratininga in Brazil—should allow us to look at concrete interactions between settlers and natives. The micro-spatial approach places stress on the importance of considering together localities at distance and the connections existing among them in order to understand the very nature of their internal transformations. We need to include in the picture also the constant presence of missionaries and their active role in organizing subaltern workers, as we can define those natives who were obliged to carry out the most menial tasks under a colonial order.⁸ All this shows to what extent global patterns emerged from a multiplicity of specific and variable factors and contexts.

‘WORKERS IN THE VINEYARDS’: CATHOLIC MISSIONS AND GLOBAL LABOUR HISTORY

Recent historiography has extensively investigated early modern Catholic missions, with special regard to the Jesuits.⁹ Going beyond traditional approaches to church history, during the past two decades, scholars have studied many aspects of this particular overseas mobility: for instance, missionaries as go-betweens and cultural brokers, or the contribution of their networks, as well as the circulation of the knowledge they promoted, to early modern global exchanges.¹⁰ The reshaping of this field of research has involved macro-economic analysis, such as Dauril Alden's systemic study of the Society of Jesus as an ‘enterprise’.¹¹

Labour is one of the few issues which this historiographical trend has overlooked.¹² This can be explained as a consequence of the highly spiritualized concept of the clergy that the Council of Trent affirmed in the mid-sixteenth century, since it tended to remove the material dimension of the ecclesiastical life, as well as the fact that serving the church was also a way of earning a living. Historians seem to have ignored to what extent the tripartition of pre-modern European society into ‘prayers’ (*oratores*), ‘warriors’ (*bellatores*) and ‘workers’ (*laboratores*) was significantly complicated by the reality of daily life.¹³ In fact, missionaries were involved in the redefinition of labour relations within the Portuguese Empire and can be considered not only as prayers, but also as workers,

although they chose their occupation as a ‘vocation’ and, at least if they belonged to regular orders, did not earn any wage. Therefore, I suggest rethinking some missionary sources in the light of the analytical challenge of global labour history.¹⁴

Missionaries acted in the context of a pyramid structure, were obliged to obey superiors, and their activities were carefully regulated and standardized. Their exceptional spatial mobility was not a free choice, but depended on the assessment of what may be called the professional skills of each missionary. Especially in the case of the members of regular orders, we should consider missionaries as an evolution of the monastic clergy, in which the second part of the famous sentence ‘pray and work’ (*ora et labora*) moved from farm work into the cloister to evangelization around the world: the most recurring biblical metaphor used to describe missionaries was that of the ‘workers in the vineyard’ (Matthew: 20, 1–6), and they termed their activities among non-Christians and neophytes as ‘labour’ (*trabalho* in the Portuguese sources). Of course, the missionary rhetoric emphasized the ‘vineyard’, the fruit of missionary work, which was conversion. This conventional language portrayed the capability of a population of gaining salvation or not, by labelling them as ‘sterile’ or ‘fertile’ soil. There is convincing evidence that these rural adjectives had an immediate meaning for religious men.¹⁵ They were part of the missionary code of communication and reflected a particular work ethic.¹⁶

The self-representation of missionaries as ‘workers’ is telling in itself and shows the hybrid character of this ecclesiastical personnel. However, when we try to say what kind of workers missionaries were, things become more difficult. While ‘missionary church’ is an expression grouping together different types of figures and activities in the context of overseas empires and beyond, the distinction between regular ecclesiastics, who had made a vow of poverty, and secular priests, who earned a wage, also depended on specific conditions on the ground.

Jesuit missionaries belonged to a hierarchical institution. A general appointed for life led the Society of Jesus, which was organized into administrative units (assistancies) and subunits (provinces). Periodically, provincials, rectors, and other superiors took part in meetings and congregations, while a permanent circulation of correspondence allowed a widespread network of internal communication. Some authors look at the Society of Jesus as a military organization, as its internal discipline and several metaphors (‘military service for God’, ‘under the command

of the Vicar of Christ') would confirm. Others point to its patrimony of lands and commercial and economic activities, which included lending and borrowing, considering it as a prototype of modern multi-national corporations. More appropriately, it can be seen as a multi-level enterprise, which is hard to characterize as a single organism, given its malleable nature adapting to different cultural and material circumstances.¹⁷

The spiritual labour of Jesuits (confessing, preaching, disputing, visiting, etc.) required a continuous basis of work by lay coadjutors and financial support that, in the context of the Portuguese Empire, the crown and other benefactors guaranteed, at least during the first decades of the Society of Jesus' existence. However variable the material state of the overseas colleges and houses, labour relations inside them reproduced the pattern of the reciprocal regime: the relationship between the Jesuit missionaries, ordained priests, and those who were lay coadjutors was conceived as a 'spiritual household', with the former called 'fathers' and the latter 'brothers', while the economic aim of Jesuit residences was self-sufficiency; in this framework, the fathers could be equated with leading household producers, although they abstained from manual work, and the brothers with household kin producers; they also counted on household servants and slaves, who contributed to the maintenance of self-sufficient residences.¹⁸

Such a description does not apply to the other main component of the missionary personnel in the Portuguese Empire: the secular priests. In spite of significant differences among them, they were all wage earners employed by a typical non-market institution: the church. They did not have to face a comparable selection and preparation process as the Jesuits. Moreover, it was much more common for secular clergy to admit natives and mestizos, who played a special role in the interaction with their former coreligionists among the local population. This was not the case, however, of those who occupied higher positions in the hierarchy, such as bishops, vicar-generals, and their close collaborators, who led complex structures with priests charged with special activities and dozens of time-rate wage earners employed in multiple tasks, from finance administration and justice to domestic work.¹⁹

This chapter assumes not only that missionaries were workers, but that they also made a decisive contribution to the formation of new colonial societies arising from the European overseas empires, whose political authority those missionaries recognized and served. Be it sincere or not, conversion had a heavy impact on the legal order of pre-colonial

societies: it was a formal prerequisite for the natives to become full subjects of the new power.²⁰ Even more, all this aimed at radically altering former relations and hierarchies, by making a strict distinction between converts and non-converts, and supporting the social advancement of the former with respect to the latter: in this case, social mobility often depended on a new occupation that was made possible only by baptism. It is no accident that this prospect became a very persuasive tool, which reinforced the arguments used by missionaries in their preaching to local populations. More broadly, missionary ‘ethnographic’ observation of natives, including their work skills, was the basis for every disciplinary project regarding the natives’ position in new colonial societies, including forced labour and migration.²¹ Therefore, the importance of the traditional condemnation of work as God’s punishment against mankind for the sin of Adam and Eve, or the model of Christ’s passion, should not be emphasized in relation to the missionary discourse about native subalternworkers.²² If preachers sometimes evoked it to encourage slaves to accept a heavy workload in return for the possibility of gaining eternal salvation, it was much more usual to establish a direct link between labour and conversion. According to the famous Jesuit father José de Acosta, who wrote from Peru in the mid-1570s, especially in the case of Amerindians and black Africans, there was a clear connection between commitment to labour and chance of becoming good Christians. Therefore, he recommended, ‘they must be trained [...] so that by means of a healthy load of continuous work they will abandon their idleness and passions and, restrained by an induced fear, just carry out their duty’.²³ As the evidence provided in the previous lines show, it is difficult to overestimate the effect of the missionary enterprise in the reshaping of labour relations in the early modern Iberian empires.

LABOUR AND RELIGIOUS SEGREGATION: PÈRO FERNANDES SARDINHA IN GOA

The main hypothesis of this chapter is that, at least in the case of the Portuguese Empire, the history of missions is intertwined with global labour history in two connected ways: on the one hand, missionaries can be seen as a very peculiar typology of early modern global workers engaged in the spiritual transformation of the world; on the other hand, their consequential active presence at the settlers’ side contributed to

profound modifications in the labour relations among natives in the new colonial societies, which also affected the economic organization of the overseas Jesuit colleges and houses. The four micro-historical case studies I am going to discuss here below confirm this double connotation of a global history of missionary labour.

The Portuguese overseas empire encompassed a variety of processes of conversion and social transformation, including massive employment of native subaltern workers and forced labour, from the very beginning of the Atlantic slave trade.²⁴ This led to the emergence of different labour strategies across the empire. I will use the trans-local mobility of the little-known figure of Pêro Fernandes Sardinha, a secular priest who experienced both India and Brazil in the mid-sixteenth century, in order to connect different labour strategies existing in very dissimilar localities. Sardinha's global life led him to face multiple societies and remote regions, making significant comparisons among them and their inhabitants. His case allows us to consider together two distant areas of the Portuguese Empire, focusing on the circulation of people, patterns and ideas, as well as on the simultaneous effects of the Catholic missions on native subaltern labour.²⁵ It also shows the early emergence of connected histories of subjected or enslaved workers from three continents (Asia, America and Africa) in the Portuguese imperial space.

Born in Évora, Portugal, around 1495, Sardinha studied humanities and theology in Paris during the 1520–1530s, being in contact with highly important future Jesuits like Ignatius of Loyola and the Portuguese Simão Rodrigues, who would later become the first provincial of the Society of Jesus in Portugal.²⁶ It was a premonitory relationship. After spending a period at the court of King John III of Portugal as royal chaplain and preacher, in 1545 Sardinha continued his ecclesiastical career overseas, joining the missionary personnel as vicar-general of Goa, the capital of the Portuguese Empire in Asia.²⁷ His arrival in the city followed that of the first Jesuits, headed by father Francis Xavier, a missionary from Navarre who was among the founders of the Society of Jesus, in 1542. Sardinha found an atmosphere still marked by the destruction of the Hindu temples, recently ordered by the Portuguese authorities.²⁸ Moreover, factionary conflicts divided the imperial elites, and suspicion of poisoning, either by local Brahmans or by no less than the bishop of Goa, the Franciscan Juan Alfonso de Albuquerque, surrounded the death of Sardinha's predecessor, Miguel Vaz Coutinho.²⁹ At the time, Goa was

a large merchant city, inhabited by a majority of non-Christian natives, mainly Muslims and Hindus, and in whose streets it was usual to meet people from all over South Asia.³⁰

In this context, the new vicar-general wielded power peremptorily and developed his own view on the local population and the ways to make them good Catholics and good subjects of the Portuguese crown. Thus, he took up a position in the vibrant debate, rekindled by the Jesuit fathers, about the most effective method to convert Konkani Indians and other local inhabitants. In Sardinha's opinion, conversion went hand in hand with labour: the natives' entry into service of the empire was a decisive part of his proselytizing strategy. The main purpose of the Portuguese presence in Asia was trading.³¹ Consequently, they did not aim to substitute the whole pre-colonial social order with a completely new one, but to reconstruct it so far as was necessary to control the exchange of the most lucrative goods, so as to make the 'business of India' (*negócio da Índia*) profitable for the crown and the settlers (*casados*). In the case of an urban space like Goa, the missionary project to convert all its inhabitants was associated with the imposition of a new political order and the recruitment of commercial and cultural brokers.³²

Persuaded of the full intellectual capabilities of Konkani Indians, Sardinha sided with those Jesuits who opposed mass baptisms and demanded an adequate period of instruction before conversion, so that they might become sincere, committed Catholics.³³ However, his missionary ideas collided with the strategy of Portuguese officials, who needed to maintain order in the city by alternating campaigns of proselytism with guarantees of some toleration towards non-Christian inhabitants. By contrast, Sardinha relied on the transformation of the major urban centres into citadels of Catholicism. Therefore, he proposed the creation of houses of catechumens in Goa, Cranganore and Bassein, and supported the separation of neophytes from their former coreligionists, including blood relatives, even suggesting the expulsion of all Brahmans and the segregation of other Hindus within the islands of Divar and Chorão, next to Goa. At the same time, his ideal of a general conversion, understood as a 'a great way to make all those living in the other fortresses convert', rested on the enthusiastic approval of the imperial law issued in 1542 that, when possible, excluded non-Christian Indians from public offices to the advantage of neophytes.³⁴

Thus, in such a cross-cultural milieu, in which the support of natives' linguistic and administrative skills was fundamental to the Portuguese in order to exert their authority over a mixed population of tens of thousands of inhabitants, conversion emerged as an opportunity of social redemption through new labour relations for Indian converts. Sardinha was well aware of the consequence of this social mobility when declaring to King John III that 'since the majority of neophytes (*christãos*) here are poor, it is advisable to give them all public offices, as Your Highness often ordered, and not to ask them for money their acts of appointment'.³⁵

The promotion of the 'Christians of the land' (*cristãos da terra*) to public activities in the framework of the Portuguese Empire consisted of their transformation into interpreters, clerks and, if literate, scribes employed in the services intended for natives. If we take into account the wage earned working for non-market institutions, we can consider the inclusion of natives in the imperial administrative structure as a further step in the global move towards commodified labour relations. It is noteworthy, however, that Sardinha's stress on favouring converted workers involved strict control over their religious and moral behaviour. In his opinion, rectitude and discipline had to characterize every good Catholic official or serviceman, whether Indian or European: if in his preaching he censured those native soldiers of multiple ethnic origins, called *lascars* (*lascarins*), who, instead of serving the Portuguese Empire at war, 'wandered about the streets of Goa [...] getting lost with single women or provoking and dishonouring the married ones', in his letters he recommended King John III that 'none of the captains, soldiers or other officers of Your Highness receive a wage, or money, without first exhibiting a certificate attesting that every year he goes to confession and takes the holy communion, because there are men who serve in India living for 10 or 12 years a life of vice, without considering their conscience'.³⁶ Sardinha's plan was not fulfilled during his stay in Goa, but, in spite of his intention, it ended up contributing to setting the conditions for the policy of mass conversion that developed from the late 1550s onwards. In the urban space of the capital of the Portuguese Empire in Asia, religious concerns contributed to shaping the transformation of labour relations by allowing indigent natives access to commodified jobs in exchange for converting to Catholicism.

DE-STRUCTURING SOCIAL ORDER: JESUITS AND LABOUR RELATIONS IN CHORÃO

Missionary strategies also affected the island of Chorão, but in an opposite way than Sardinha expected.³⁷ He believed that ‘the son will not prevail in his faith in Christ, if he keeps talking with his gentile and idolater father, therefore the gentiles of Goa should live segregated in the island of Divar or in that of Chorão’.³⁸ There were two villages in the latter, one called Chorão with about 6000 inhabitants, the other Caraim. These villages differed from each other in their internal configurations, political relationship and economic dynamics. The activities of the members of a significant part of the families residing there, however, revolved around agriculture and the marketing of its produce. This was a sedentary population living in a regime of reciprocal labour, in which community-based redistributive workers performed different tasks for the local community in exchange for communally provided remuneration of many kinds. Such a system had proved capable of adapting to changing political authorities in the course of time, by means of taxation, tribute or military service. But this was not so under Portuguese rule, because after the Jesuit missionaries began their activities in Chorão, instead of becoming a place of segregation of Hindus exiled from Tiswadi, as Sardinha had hoped, the island went through a process of conversion. This de-structured the traditional social order, which was complex and stratified. Among the owners and keepers of the better lands, including palm trees and rice fields, there were *ganvkars* (descendants of the founders of the community, who claimed to be of Brahmanical lineage and sat in the village assembly), but also *kulacari* (literally ‘rent-payers’, who had a fixed status but had to provide free services to *ganvkars*), officials of the temples and artisans. Among the work activities, fishing was important. However, for the economy of the island, the most important labour was that of the *chaudarins*, those who collected coconuts from palms or extracted their sap. This group was not homogeneous. It included supervisors on site and peasants.

To sum up, these rural villages reproduced a typical labour division among those who controlled the lands and those who cultivated them. This social order, however, was based on a complex system of norms for which the Portuguese for the first time used the word ‘caste’.³⁹ Of course, they were unable to describe it in all its complexity, but understood its effect on social mobility. According to the chronicler João de

Barros, in India, ‘the peasant is distinct from the fisherman, the weaver from the carpenter etc., so that the occupations created among these people a kind of lineage according to which they cannot marry one another, nor exchange many things. And the carpenter’s son cannot be a tailor, since as it were a religion everyone must follow his father in his life and occupation’.⁴⁰ Of course, the subversion of this system had great importance in the process of conversion in Chorão. As the Jesuit visitor Alessandro Valignano wrote in 1574, ‘they do not take their conversion as a supernatural thing with a sincere desire to save their souls, but as a human one, as if it were no more than to change caste and life-style by leaving the caste of the gentiles and passing to the caste of the Christians’.⁴¹

Since the arrival of the first Portuguese in the island, there had been cases of land expropriation and, later on, this tendency had been ratified by legal contracts signed by *ganvkars* in exchange for the guarantee that they would conserve their properties. During the 1550s, the pressure of proselytism increased and things changed rapidly. While rich Portuguese started to build their own leisure farms on the island, including palm tree fields and other economic activities, a growing number of native peasants, especially *chaudarins* who lived in extreme poverty, converted to Catholicism. By doing so, they abandoned their social universe and the strict correspondence between family origin and occupation that it implied. Natives were attracted by the prospects that the full legal inclusion in the Portuguese imperial order offered them. Thus, they finally experienced a sought-after social mobility, which was associated with a transformation of labour relations: being now ‘Christians of the land’, these peasants were in a good position to aspire to receiving the fields expropriated from those who did not convert, or to take advantage of them as employees of the new churches built in place of Hindu temples; moreover, converts could also obtain public offices that had previously been held by coreligionist neighbours.

During the 1550s, a new area for the residence of Indian converts was realized in Chorão. Even for those who did not significantly improve their material conditions thanks to the new occupation, at least the transition to the protection of the Jesuits meant a daily ration of food—for this reason, in the Portuguese sources, they are sometimes called ‘rice-Christians’ (*crístãos de arroz*).⁴² At the end of the decade, the Hindu population of Chorão went through a mass conversion, whose dynamics confirm to what extent the missionary project was connected to labour

relations. In 1557, the *chaudarins* were the first to become Catholics. Their choice caused serious problems to the *ganvkars* and the *kulacari* since they ended up with no peasants farming their fields, and no right to ask people from lower castes to take on tributary services like cleaning the houses of the Brahmans or the streets of the village. A year later, in 1558, the Hindu elites of Chorão also succumbed to the Jesuits and converted *en masse*.

An exclusively local focus on the cases of Goa and Chorão as discussed above would make us conclude that the transformations in the regime of labour relations they went through had just a regional character in the context of the Portuguese Empire. However, moving from India to Brazil and focusing on the connections that existed among specific places, we can recover the global nature of these transformations, without giving up the peculiarity of their local manifestations.

ENSLAVING NATIVES: PÊRO FERNADES SARDINHA IN SALVADOR DA BAHIA

By the time Chorão and its inhabitants were experiencing such a deep religious and social transformation, with serious consequences on native labour relations, Sardinha was on the other side of the southern hemisphere. He had gone back to Portugal in 1549, after spending about four years in Goa, a significant junction of the trade networks in the Indian Ocean, facing chronic difficulties in earning a wage (*ordenado*). He had coped with different situations and a variety of peoples and cultures, while taking part in an imperial project, which included religious conversion and social reorganization. Labour had a special role in this project for three reasons: (a) it was a means of legal distinction between converts and non-converts; (b) it allowed social promotion of neophytes, who were considered impure by their former coreligionists because of the adoption of a lifestyle that contrasted with the traditional system of norms and customs; (c) natives could be employed in the service of the empire, entrusted with public offices and activities that the Portuguese were unable to assume, due to their ignorance of local languages, rules and etiquette in India.

In 1551, Sardinha was appointed first bishop of Salvador da Bahia, the capital city of the Portuguese Empire in Brazil. He was one of the first exponents of a new class of missionaries and imperial agents who spent

their life serving in multiple places and continents within the Portuguese world, with the possibility of contacting and comparing Konkani Indians, Tupi people and Africans from the sub-Saharan coast and the Gulf of Guinea.⁴³ His appointment was justified by his former experience as vicar-general in Goa. Thus, his biography followed a trans-local itinerary connecting the so-called East and West Indies. Strictly speaking, Sardinha might not have been a worker, but despite the title, his new position was not prestigious or sought-after, given the harshness of the colonization of Brazil, which was then at its outset, and the relative lack of means of the local church.⁴⁴

Sardinha's initial approach to America was probably influenced by some of the factors that had led the Portuguese to develop a uniform perception of the natives from India to Brazil, described both as 'gentiles' (*gentios*) and 'black' (*negros*).⁴⁵ Many of these people were on the move, due to the impact of conquest, commerce and conversion, on their own lands and societies, which had sometimes turned them into chattel slaves. The classic example is the forced migration of the Africans involved in the Atlantic slave trade, a brute reality Sardinha came in touch with during his journey to Brazil, when he stopped in the Cape Verde islands, labelled as a 'land richer in money than in virtue'.⁴⁶

Contrary to his expectations, in spring 1552, when Sardinha arrived in Brazil, he found a situation quite distinct from that of Goa.⁴⁷ Salvador da Bahia was a city under construction. A few years before, it had become the seat of the first central government of the Portuguese in America. Meanwhile, facing institutional confusion and material difficulties, Portuguese settlers (*moradores*) had started to subject local natives with very different methods to those used in India, that is, by massive, indiscriminating enslavement.⁴⁸ Of course, they found a number of pretexts to justify their actions. However, after the arrival of the first Jesuits in 1549, things became much more complex both from a moral and practical point of view. Some missionaries tried to limit the raiding (*resgate*) but in vain. The voice of father Manuel da Nóbrega, however, caused some stir at court in Lisbon, following the more effective protestation of the Dominican father Bartolomé de las Casas against the *encomienda* system, which had persuaded Emperor Charles V to forbid the enslavement of native Americans in the Spanish Empire. Perhaps influenced by Las Casas' arguments, soon thereafter father Nóbrega began to denounce the illicit methods of Portuguese settlers, as well as the prejudice against conversion caused by the wild conditions of forced labour and the

excessive workload they imposed on enslaved natives, some of whom were already stricken with disease. But Portuguese settlers, who soon developed a new sense of their social position, to the point that they considered themselves as ‘nobles’, were too attracted by the wealth they hoped to obtain from natives’ labour in the fields, the first sugar plantations and the mines discovered in the south. Their economic interest was stronger than any religious and moral admonition from missionaries, most of whom approved of slave raiding and the cavilling justifications the settlers advanced.⁴⁹

In line with the idea of a substantial continuity between East and West Indies, the first reaction of Bishop Sardinha to the situation of Salvador—a ‘flaming Babylon’, in the words of a contemporary Jesuit⁵⁰—was to associate it with Goa, calling for more rigorous catechization: ‘in this land I want to follow the same method as I did in India’, he told father Nóbrega, adding that ‘since in this land I am as a speculator of souls and I have great experience of India, [Jesuit missionaries] cannot do anything without my advice’.⁵¹ The equivalence Sardinha made between India and Brazil led him to oppose one particular catechistic method, which was based on preaching in Tupi languages (through an interpreter), the use of Tupi dances and rituals, and the creation of villages (*aldeias*) of neophytes under Jesuit custody.

Within a few months, Sardinha developed new ideas about the natives, particularly as regards slavery. His opposition to Nóbrega’s method led him, once more, to impose a harsher separation between converts and non-converts, forbidding the latter to enter the church during the Mass. He not only took converted slaves away from the Jesuits’ catechization, but he also ended up siding with the settlers in favour of enslaving the Tupi.⁵² In so doing, he became a strong supporter of a project of colonial society, shared by settlers and the majority of Jesuits, but not by Nóbrega and a few imperial high officials. His negative view of Tupi people rested on the prejudice that they were inconstant by nature. This view produced an association that gave rise to an enduring representation of a supposed ‘American character’: as the conversion of Tupi people was difficult and uncertain, due to their natural inclination to both embrace and abandon a new faith, just as they showed little propensity to labour and extraordinary indolence.⁵³

The reverse side of this portrayal of Tupi people was the idea that by means of labour and discipline they might become good Catholics. Jesuits too shared this view, but not all of them believed that it should be

stretched to the point of approving enslavement as a way to conversion, as in the case of the Wolofs in West Africa.⁵⁴ Here again, as in the case of Goa, we can see a direct link between change of religion and transformation of labour relations, though any impulse to social promotion was absent in the case of Salvador da Bahia.

AFRICAN SLAVES AND TUPI WORKERS: JESUITS AND LABOUR RELATIONS IN PIRATININGA

The massive enslavement of Tupi people provoked a violent reaction, particularly from the tribes of Caeté and Tamoio, which gave rise to serious attacks against the first farms (*fazendas*) Portuguese settlers had organized outside urban centres.⁵⁵ The latter were aware that there were many different and conflicting groups among Tupi people. They also knew that commodified work, as we can define the labour relation these slaves entered being sold in the market and being forced to work the land for the market, was something absolutely new in a region inhabited by semi-nomadic people, who did not reside for more than a few years in the same place and lived by subsistence agriculture and fishing on community property. Despite their enormous distance from the Konkani Indians living in rural villages, their pre-colonial organization, too, can be subsumed in the category of reciprocal labour, as community-based redistributive workers.

Initially, Nóbrega's opposition to the enslavement of native Brazilians resulted in the freeing of those assaulted (*negros salteados*), especially if they had already converted to Catholicism before capture, as in the case of the Carijó people. Moreover, in a letter addressed to King John III in July 1552, he claimed provocatively that, as Brazil was a poor land, it was expedient 'that Your Highness sends settlers who farm and grow fond of the land, and calls back so many officials who receive so much money and do not expect anything else than finishing their period here and earning their wage'.⁵⁶ What happened, however, was quite different. Before the resistance of Tupi people, settlers opted for an alternative forced labour that already characterized the Portuguese Atlantic world. In a letter written from Salvador da Bahia in 1556, local inhabitants asked the crown to allow a peculiar slave trade: sending Tupi to the archipelagos of São Tomé and of Cape Verde in exchange for black Africans 'from Guinea' (*da Guiné*). The settlers inaugurated an

ethnographic comparison grounded on practical considerations, by arguing in particular that Wolofs were much more useful and reliable than native Brazilians (*naturais*), because, while the latter were ‘very inconstant’ (*muito incertos*), the former tolerated a much heavier workload and provided significant assistance in military defence against rebel Tupi.⁵⁷

Whatever the king’s answer, while a huge number of African slaves were forcibly transported to the Americas, some Tupi and mestizos from Brazil actually ended up working as slaves in West Africa and its Atlantic islands.⁵⁸ The beginning of this long-distance and bidirectional migration of forced labour was a result of the social project Sardinha helped formulate. The increase in the Atlantic slave trade and the massive use of Africans as chattel slaves that marked colonial Brazil so heavily were still to come, but the first steps of the introduction of African slaves in Brazil reproduced what was going on in Spanish America, where even Bartolomé de las Casas suggested using them in place of freed natives to carry on forced labour in the *encomienda* system. The main difference was that the enslavement of Tupi people in Brazil was not completely prohibited before the eighteenth century, and the first royal legislation regulating it dated only to 1570.⁵⁹

Nóbrega and the Jesuits who shared his position were not against the arrival of enslaved Wolofs either.⁶⁰ As early as 1551, they sent an explicit request for ‘some slaves from Guinea’ to be used in a house to be built in Bahia for the catechization of native young boys (*meninos*), ‘because the land is so fertile that many children will be easily supported and dressed, if they will have some slaves who plant field with food and cotton (*roças de mantimentos e algodais*)’.⁶¹ Nóbrega, however, also showed appreciation for Tupi slaves, on condition that their capture had been lawful and they were non-converts. In a letter sent from Salvador in 1552, he announced that he had purchased some Brazilian slaves for the house of native young boys. His description of their labour organization casts light on both gender relations and the indirect involvement of religious men in managing this contingent of reciprocal household slaves: ‘A few slaves of those I ordered to buy for the house are women, and I made them marry the (enslaved) men. They live secluded in the fields (*roças*), with their own houses, and I found a layman who takes care of, rules and governs all of them, while we do not look after them and we interact with the layman and he did so with them. We had to get women because otherwise it is not possible to have fields in this land, since they make

flour and do all the service and work, while the men just clean land, go fishing and hunting, and little more'.⁶²

This experience influenced the organization of the Jesuit house of native young boys in Piratininga, the future São Paulo, established in the following years by Nóbrega and his fellows.⁶³ The material subsistence of the house was entrusted to the Jesuit brother Mateus Nogueira, a blacksmith (*ferreiro*) who 'supports these young boys with his labour, because he crafts some objects thanks to which they buy some food'. 'This land', Nóbrega remarked in a letter to a Jesuit father in Portugal, 'is very poor and it is not possible to relate to the local gentile (*este gentio*) without hooks and knives that make it easier to attract them'.⁶⁴ In a difficult and isolated context like that of Piratininga, labour and barter were a fundamental part of the missionary strategy in order to guarantee self-sufficiency to Jesuit residences, as well as to come into contact with the local population and, if possible, convert them. A few years later, while supporting new patterns of settlement for local natives, allowing them to be reunited in bigger villages with better conditions to farm and fish, Nóbrega also argued for intense use of African slaves in the house of Piratininga, 'without our looking after them, because we all confess that we cannot live without someone who gathers the wood, brings the water, cooks the bread that we eat and does other services that, being just a few, the brothers cannot do'.⁶⁵

CONCLUSION: THE SPECTRE OF PÊRO FERNANDES SARDINHA

The second half of the 1550s and the 1560s saw a wild period of unlimited enslavement of Tupi people, especially from the Caeté tribe, until the first law concerning native slavery in Brazil (1570) distinguished between those living in villages under Jesuit custody (*índios aldeados*) and those wandering in the inland (*sertão*), called 'rogue gentiles' (*gentios bravos*), who were out of the control of the Portuguese Empire, but could be enslaved in the case of just war.⁶⁶ In the previous years, Nóbrega had contributed to this legal agreement, which, however, the settlers contested. He had disputed publicly against the reasons by which the assaults and captures against Tupi people were justified. For a long time, Nóbrega had criticized the use of native slaves (*escravos da terra*), however they had been captured, in Jesuit colleges and houses, but the brute spectacle of the mass enslavement of Caeté people in the area of Bahia led him to question openly the whole legitimacy of this action.⁶⁷

In this circumstance, however, Nóbrega had first considered the possibility of importing the *encomienda* system from Spanish America, as some settlers also asked the general governor of Brazil. Finally, he rejected it for he was sure that Portuguese *encomenderos* would not take care of the catechization and conversion of natives. He ended up by feeling the concrete realization of this model of tributary labour as the opposite of his project to gather neophytes in separated villages under Jesuit custody: ‘now that they [i.e., the Brazilian converts] live together with churches to indoctrinate them, they [i.e., the settlers] want to distribute them (*os quem repartidos*). Thus, there is no lack of those who go kidnapping our Indians, whom we gathered with a lot of labour (*trabalho*) and take them to live in their fields’.⁶⁸

Nóbrega’s defence hid the fact that the material conditions of the neophytes living in the Jesuit villages, while certainly better than the Spanish *encomiendas* or the settlers’ plantations in Brazil, were not those of community members working in a regime of reciprocal labour relations, but rather of a kind of spiritualized tributary system that was to draw harsh criticism not only from settlers, but also from royal councils.⁶⁹ Actually, Nóbrega was still dealing with the spectre of Sardinha and the legacy of his missionary ideas, which included the rejection of Jesuit villages. The bishop was also unintentionally responsible for the atmosphere of a ‘native-hunt’, in which Nóbrega fought his battle against the settlers and those missionaries who supported the legitimacy of the mass enslavement of Caeté. The decree issued in 1562 by the general governor of Brazil that allowed the capture of everyone belonging to this tribe in the area of Bahia followed the circumstance in which Sardinha was said to have died. According to a report, after his departure to Portugal, ‘the ship on which he was travelling was wrecked along the coast of Brazil and the Indians killed and ate all those who were on board, with the exception of the few who spread the news (of the accident)’.⁷⁰

Rumours of acts of cannibalism may appear as psychological suggestion, partly due to the violence the bishop had permitted against Tupi people during his stay in Salvador. Be that as it may, this story must be seen as a successful attempt to exploit Sardinha’s passing to improve his own view of a new colonial society, based on the alternative for natives between conversion and segregation on the one hand and forced labour on the other. As the connected micro-histories of labour discussed in this chapter show, spatial differences matter and there was a great distance

between the social project Sardinha had developed for West India and the one he supported for Brazil. In life and death, however, he was a true example of the multiple intersections between Catholic missions and native subaltern workers in a globalizing world.

NOTES

1. For an introduction to this approach see Jane Burbank and Frederick Cooper, *Empires in World History: Power and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton, 2010).
2. See for the Americas Jack P. Green, *Negotiated Authorities: Essays in Colonial Political and Constitutional History* (Charlottesville, 1994); Christine Daniels and Michael V. Kennedy, eds., *Negotiated Empires: Centers and Peripheries in the Americas, 1500–1820* (New York and London, 2002).
3. There is an abundant bibliography on this topic. See Silvio Arturo Zavala, *La encomienda indiana*, 2nd ed. (México, 1973); Lesley Byrd Simpson, *The Encomienda in New Spain: The Beginning of Spanish Mexico*, revised ed. (Berkeley, 1982); José de la Puente Brunke, *Encomienda y encomenderos en el Perú: Estudio social y político de una institución colonial* (Sevilla, 1992); Julián B. Ruiz Rivera and Horst Pietschmann, eds., *Encomiendas, indios y españoles* (Münster, 1996). For a recent analysis see Raquel Gil Montero, ‘Free and Unfree Labour in the Colonial Andes in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries,’ *International Review of Social History*, 56, 19 (2011), pp. 297–318.
4. I follow here the terminology presented in Karin Hofmeester and Christine Moll-Murata, ‘The Joy and Pain of Work: Global Attitudes and Valuations, 1500–1650: Introduction,’ *International Review of Social History*, 56, 19 (2011), pp. 1–23.
5. Tom Brass and Marcel van der Linden, eds., *Free and Unfree Labour: The Debates Continues* (Bern 1997). For the Atlantic world see Colin A. Palmer, ed., *The Worlds of Unfree Labour: From Indentured Servitude to Slavery* (Aldershot and Brookfield, VT, 1998). Examples from Asia and Africa are discussed in David Northrup, ed., ‘Free and Unfree Labor Migration, 1600–1900,’ *Journal of World History*, 14 (2003), pp. 125–241.
6. Douglas Cole Libby and Júnia Ferreira Furtado, eds., *Trabalho livre, trabalho escravo: Brasil e Europa, séculos XVII e XIX* (São Paulo, 2006).
7. Timothy J. Coates, *Convicts and Orphans: Forced and State-Sponsored Colonizers in the Portuguese Empire, 1550–1755* (Stanford, 2001). A recent overview relating to the western empires can be found in Clare

- Anderson and Hamish Maxwell-Stewart, 'Convict Labour and the Western Empires, 1415–1954,' in *The Routledge History of Western Empires*, eds. Robert Aldrich and Kirsten McKenzie, (Abingdon and New York, 2014), pp. 102–117.
8. Clare Anderson, *Subaltern Lives: Biographies of Colonialism in the Indian Ocean World, 1790–1920* (Cambridge, 2012).
 9. Pierre-Antoine Fabre and Bernard Vincent, eds., *Missions religieuses modernes: Notre lieu est le monde* (Rome, 2007).
 10. Alida C. Metcalf, 'Disillusioned Go-Betweens: The Politics of Mediation and the Transformation of the Jesuits Missionary Enterprise in Sixteenth-Century Brazil,' *Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu*, 77, 154 (2008), 282–320; Luke Clossey, *Salvation and Globalization in the Early Jesuit Missions* (New York and Cambridge, 2008); Charlotte de Castelneau-L'Estoile, Marie-Lucie Copete, Aliocha Maldavsky and Ines G. Zupanov, eds., *Missions d'évangélisation et circulation des savoirs, XVIe-XVIIIe siècles* (Madrid, 2011).
 11. Dauril Alden, *The Making of an Enterprise: The Society of Jesus in Portugal, Its Empire, and Beyond, 1540–1750* (Stanford, 1996).
 12. Isolated pioneering studies are Robert Archibald, 'Indian Labor at the California Missions: Slavery or Salvation,' *Journal of San Diego History*, 24, 2 (1978), 172–183; Janet M. Charnela, 'Missionary Activity and Indian Labor in the Upper Rio Negro of Brazil, 1680–1980: A Historical-Ecological Approach,' in *Advances in Historical Ecology*, ed. William Balée (New York, 1998), pp. 313–333.
 13. The classic study of the tripartite model of *oratores*, *bellatores* and *laboratores* is Georges Duby, *The Three Orders: Feudal Society Imagined*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago, 1980).
 14. Marcel van der Linden, 'Introduction,' in idem, *Workers of the World: Essays toward a Global Labour History* (Leiden and Boston, 2008), pp. 1–14.
 15. See Charlotte de Castelneau-L'Estoile, *Les ouvriers d'une vigne stérile: Les jésuites et la conversion des Indiens au Brésil, 1580–1620* (Lisbon, 2000).
 16. Marcel van der Linden, 'Studying Attitudes to Work Worldwide, 1500–1650: Concepts, Sources, and Problems of Interpretation,' *International Review of Social History*, 56, S 19 (2011), pp. 25–43.
 17. I follow here the discussion provided by Alden, *The Making of an Enterprise*, 8–10, and his analysis of the financial administration and economic activities of the Society of Jesus, at pp. 321–429, 528–570.
 18. Alden, *The Making of an Enterprise*, pp. 11–13, 502–527.
 19. Charles R. Boxer, *Militant Church and Iberian Expansion, 1440–1770* (Baltimore, 1978).

20. This point is presented for the Portuguese empire in Asia in Ângela Barreto Xavier, 'Conversos and *Novamente Convertidos*: Law, Religion, and Identity in the Portuguese Kingdom and Empire,' *Journal of Early Modern History*, 15, 3 (2011), 255–287.
21. On the importance of Iberian missions for the development of pre-modern ethnographic observation, with special regard to native Americans, see Anthony Pagden, *The Fall of Natural Man: The American Indian and the Origins of Comparative Ethnology*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge and New York, 1986). A fundamental collection of essays on migration of forced workers in the early modern world is: Patrick Manning, ed., *Slave Trades, 1500–1800: Globalization of Forced Labour* (Aldershot and Brookfield, VT, 1996).
22. Alfredo Bosi, *Dialética da colonização* (São Paulo, 1992), pp. 142–147.
23. José de Acosta, *De Procuranda Indorum Salute*, ed. Luciano Pereña et al. (Madrid, 1984), vol. 1, p. 146 (original in Latin).
24. Luiz Felipe de Alencastro, *O trato dos viventes: Formação do Brasil no Atlântico Sul, séculos XVI e XVII* (São Paulo, 2000).
25. Anthony J. R. Russell-Wood has gathered the missionary personnel under the label 'servants of Christ', including their mobility among the factors of cohesiveness of the Portuguese world, but he has not put in relation their service to the ways in which native labour was reorganized. See Anthony J. R. Russell-Wood, *The Portuguese Empire, 1415–1808: A World on the Move*, 2nd ed. (Baltimore, 1998), pp. 87–94.
26. Serafim Leite, 'Introdução geral,' in *Monumenta Brasiliae*, ed. Serafim Leite, (Rome, 1956–), vol. 1, pp. 46–52.
27. King John III of Portugal to the governor of India, João de Castro, Évora, 13 February 1545, published in *Documentação para a história das missões do padroado português do Oriente: Índia*, ed. António da Silva Rego (Lisbon, 1991–2000), vol. 3, doc. 45 (original in Portuguese). The ecclesiastical career of Sardinha is summarized in José Pedro Paiva, *Os bispos de Portugal e do Império, 1495–1777* (Coimbra, 2006), p. 328.
28. Délio de Mendonça, *Conversions and Citizenry: Goa under Portugal, 1510–1610* (New Delhi, 2002), pp. 255–266.
29. Cosme Anes to King John III of Portugal, Bassein, 30 November 1547, published in *Documenta Indica*, ed. Josef Wicki and John Gomes (Rome, 1948–1988), vol. 1, doc. 32 (original in Portuguese).
30. Teotónio de Souza, *Medieval Goa: A Socio-Economic History* (New Delhi, 1979).
31. Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *The Portuguese Empire in Asia, 1500–1700: A Political and Economic History*, 2nd ed. (Chichester and Malden, MA, 2012), pp. 78–85.

32. Catarina Madeira Santos, *Goa é a chave de toda a Índia: Perfil político da capital do Estado da Índia, 1505–1570* (Lisbon, 1999).
33. For an overview see Mendonça, *Conversions and Citizenry*, pp. 122–60. The disputations about instruction and baptism are discussed by Ângela Barreto Xavier, *A invenção de Goa: Poder imperial e conversões culturais nos séculos XVI e XVII* (Lisbon, 2008), pp. 145–269.
34. The text of the law, extended to the whole of Asia in 1571, is published in *Arquivo Português Oriental*, ed. Joaquim Heliodoro da Cunha Rivara (New Delhi, 1992), vol. 2, doc. 30. In my opinion, the application of this law was slow and not automatic.
35. Pêro Fernandes Sardinha to King John III of Portugal, c. 1548–1549, published in *Documentação para a história das missões*, vol. 4, doc. 101 (original in Portuguese).
36. The passage about the lascars is quoted from the letter of Pêro Fernandes Sardinha to the governor of India, João de Castro, Goa, 14 February 1547, published *ibid.*, vol. 3, doc. 99 (original in Portuguese), while that about the Portuguese officials and soldiers is from the letter quoted in the previous footnote.
37. This section relies on the reconstruction provided by Xavier, *A invenção de Goa*, pp. 271–296.
38. See the document quoted in footnote 35.
39. Susan Bayly, *Caste, Society and Politics in India from the Eighteenth Century to the Modern Age* (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 25–63.
40. João de Barros, *Ásia... Dos feitos que os portugueses fizeram no descobrimento e conquista dos mares e terras do Oriente*, ed. Hernâni Cidade and Manuel Múrias (Lisbon, 1945–1946), dec. 1, bk. 9, 3 (original in Portuguese). The importance of the contact with the Iberian racial categories, due to the Portuguese penetration in India, is highlighted by Sumit Guha, *Beyond Caste: Identity and Power in South Asia, Past and Present* (Leiden and Boston, 2013), pp. 19–25.
41. Alessandro Valignano to General Everardo Mercuriano, Goa, 25 December 1574, in *Documenta Indica*, vol. 9, doc. 99 (original in Italian).
42. Charles R. Boxer, *The Portuguese Seaborne Empire, 1415–1825* (London, 1969), pp. 65–66.
43. In this perspective see Ananya Chakravarti, ‘In the Language of the Land: Native Conversion in Jesuit Public Letters from Brazil and India,’ *Journal of Early Modern History*, 17 (2013), pp. 505–524.
44. Jorge Couto, *A construção do Brasil: Ameríndios, Portugueses e Africanos do início do povoamento a finais de Quinhentos* (Lisbon, 1997).

45. See now Giuseppe Marcocci, 'Blackness and Heathenism: Color, Theology, and Race in the Portuguese World, c. 1450–1600,' *Anuario Colombiano de Historia Social y de la Cultura*, 43, 2 (2016), 33–57.
46. Pêro Fernandes Sardinha to King John III of Portugal, Santiago of Cape Verde, 11 April 1551, in Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo (Lisbon), Corpo Cronológico, pt. 1, maço 86, doc. 45 (original in Portuguese).
47. The case of Brazil has a special place in the comparative analysis provided by Anthony J. R. Russell-Wood, 'Patterns of Settlements in the Portuguese Empire, 1400–1800,' in *Portuguese Oceanic Expansion, 1400–1800*, eds. Francisco Bethencourt and Diogo Ramada Curto (New York, 1998), pp. 161–196.
48. More than in Spanish America, in Brazil 'the Indians were widely considered an expendable commodity of no redeeming value save as brute laborers,' Dauril Alden, 'Indian versus Black Slavery in the State of Maranhão during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries,' in *Iberian Colonies, New World Societies: Essays in Memory of Charles Gibson*, eds. Richard L. Farnier and William B. Taylor (University Park, PA, 1986), pp. 71–102, quotation at p. 100.
49. Carlos Alberto de Moura Ribeiro Zeron, *Ligne de foi: La Compagnie de Jésus et l'esclavage dans le processus de formation de la société coloniale en Amérique portugaise, XVIe-XVIIe siècles* (Paris, 2009).
50. João Gonçalves to the fathers and brothers in Coimbra, Salvador, 12 June 1555, published in *Monumenta Brasiliae*, vol. 2, doc. 38 (original in Spanish).
51. Pêro Fernandes Sardinha to Provincial Simão Rodrigues, Salvador, July 1552, published *ibid.*, doc. 49 (original in Spanish).
52. Manuel da Nóbrega to Provincial Simão Rodrigues, Salvador, August 1552, published *ibid.*, doc. 54 (original in Portuguese).
53. Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, *A inconstância da alma selvagem e outros ensaios de antropologia* (São Paulo, 2002), p. 186.
54. Giuseppe Marcocci, *A consciência de um império: Portugal e o seu mundo, sécs. XV a XVII* (Coimbra, 2012), pp. 41–71.
55. A famous episode is analysed in Rolando Vainfas, *A heresia dos índios: Catolicismo e rebeldia no Brasil colonial* (São Paulo, 1995) and Alida C. Metcalf, 'Millenarian Slaves? The Santidade de Jaguaripe and Slave Resistance in the Americas,' *American Historical Review*, 104 (1999), 1531–1559. For a general discussion see John M. Monteiro, 'Rethinking Amerindian Resistance and Persistence in Colonial Portuguese America,' in *New Approaches to Resistance in Brazil and Mexico*, eds. John Gledhill and Patience A. Schell (Notre Dame, 2012), pp. 25–43.
56. Published in *Monumenta Brasiliae*, vol. 1, doc. 47.

57. Letter of the municipality and inhabitants of Salvador, 18 September 1556, published in António da Silva Rego, ed., *As Gavetas da Torre do Tombo*, (Lisbon, 1960–1977), vol. 10, pp. 433–437.
58. Alberto da Costa e Silva, ‘Africa-Brazil-Africa during the Era of Slave Trade,’ in *Enslaving Connections: Changing Cultures of Africa and Brazil during the Era of Slavery*, eds. José C. Curto and Paul E. Lovejoy (Amherst, NY, 2004), pp. 21–28.
59. From the mid-1570s on, the number of African slaves began to exceed that of Indian ones in the sugar plantations. See Stuart B. Schwartz, *Sugar Plantations in the Formation of Brazilian Society: Bahia, 1550–1835* (Cambridge, 1985), pp. 65–72.
60. For a valuable discussion of the Jesuits’ position in this context see Alida C. Metcalf, *Go-Betweens and the Colonization of Brazil, 1500–1600* (Austin, 2005) pp. 157–193.
61. Manuel da Nóbrega to King John III of Portugal, Olinda, 14 September 1551, published in *Monumenta Brasiliae*, vol. 1, doc. 37.
62. Letter quoted in footnote 49.
63. Vitorino Nemésio, *O campo de São Paulo: A Companhia de Jesus e o plano português do Brasil* (Lisbon, 1954).
64. Manuel da Nóbrega to Luís Gonçalves da Câmara, São Vicente, 15 June 1555, published in *Monumenta Brasiliae*, vol. 1, doc. 69 (original in Spanish). Interestingly, Nogueira is one of the two speakers of Nóbrega’s *Diálogo sobre a conversão do gentio* (1556), published in Manuel da Nóbrega, *Cartas do Brasil e mais escritos*, ed. Serafim Leite (Coimbra, 1955), doc. 27. On Indian slavery and the development of São Paulo see John M. Monteiro, *Negros da terra: Índios e bandeirantes nas origens de São Paulo* (São Paulo, 1994).
65. Manuel da Nóbrega to Miguel de Torres, Salvador, 2 September 1557, published in *Monumenta Brasiliae*, vol. 2, doc. 61 (original in Portuguese).
66. Beatriz Perrone-Moisés, ‘Índios livres e índios escravos: Os princípios da legislação indigenista do período colonial (séculos XVI a XVIII),’ in *História dos índios no Brasil*, ed. Manuela Carneiro da Cunha (São Paulo, 2000), pp. 115–132.
67. The reference is to the disputation with the Jesuit Quirício Caxa, which took place in Salvador in the second half of 1560s. The sources are published in Nóbrega, *Cartas do Brasil*, doc. 41.
68. Letter of Manuel da Nóbrega to the governor of Brazil, Tomé de Sousa, Salvador, 5 July 1559, published in *Monumenta Brasiliae*, vol. 3, doc. 13 (original in Portuguese).
69. I disagree with scholars who maintain that natives lived in a reciprocal labour relation within Jesuit communities, like Tarcísio R. Botelho,

'Labour Ideologies and Labour Relations in Colonial Portuguese America, 1500–1700', *International Review of Social History*, 56, 19 (2011), pp. 275–296. The *Mesa da Consciência* claimed that those residing in these villages were 'true slaves, who laboured as such not only in the colleges but on the so-called Indian lands, which in the end became the estates and sugar mills of the Jesuit fathers'. Quoted in Benjamin Keen and Keith Haynes, eds., *A History of Latin America* (Boston, 2009), vol. 1, p. 125.

70. Luís da Grã to Ignatius of Loyola, Piratininga, 7 April 1557, published in *Monumenta Brasiliae*, vol. 2, doc. 55 (original in Spanish).

Prisoners of War, Captives or Slaves? The Christian Prisoners of Tunis and La Goleta in 1574

Cecilia Tarruell

INTRODUCTION

The study of early modern Mediterranean bondage, understood here as the various forms of dependence and coerced labour experienced by individuals in this area, stretching from captivity to slavery, has an extremely long tradition.¹ The burgeoning number of articles and books published every year reflect the vitality of this field of research.² Over the past decades, scholars have sought to complexify our understanding of these phenomena. However, the depiction of Mediterranean bondage as an ordeal suffered exclusively by Christians, who became victims of the Barbary corsairs, still remains a prevailing notion in a certain number of studies.³

Two aspects of this representation are especially worth pointing out: first, the presumed existence of a unilateral phenomenon and, secondly, the fact that it was a consequence of low-intensity warfare driven by privateers from North Africa. In reality, as many studies have convincingly shown, the dynamics that defined the early modern Mediterranean were

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reciprocal, albeit frequently asymmetrical.⁴ Captures related to warfare were no exception. Therefore, bondage affected Christians seized by Muslims as well as Muslims and Jews captured by Christians.⁵

With regard to the importance of corsairing, the picture is considerably more complicated. In the past decades, a strand of the scholarly debate has emphasized the role of Christian privateers in the Mediterranean, especially since the beginning of the seventeenth century.⁶ In parallel, some of the most interesting recent works on Mediterranean bondage have focused on the development of an economy of ransoming.⁷ At this stage, there is no doubt that low-intensity warfare was not the monopoly of corsairs from the Maghreb. Yet the prevalent role of corsairing as the main cause for the capture of Christian populations has frequently been presented as a certainty.

Were all Christian detainees indeed seized during actions carried out by corsairs? The aim of this essay is to call into question this historiographical trope. To this end, the following pages discuss the case of prisoners of war in the Mediterranean during the second half of the sixteenth century. In so doing, the purpose is not to dismiss the importance of corsairing, but to show that there were other complementary circumstances in which people were deprived of their freedom.

At the same time, this chapter explores the different status that detainees could experience during detention. Scholars such as Michel Fontenay have emphasized the need to distinguish between the categories of captive and slave.⁸ Yet these terms are frequently used as synonymous in studies revolving around early modern Mediterranean bondage. As such, some scholars have preferred to maintain the apparent similar meaning that contemporaries conferred on various situations of lack of freedom. However, this choice implies mixing very different realities and labour relations between owners and detainees. This essay aims to clarify these distinctions and to show the diverse fates prisoners of war lived through depending on whether they were held as captives or slaves. Moreover, this chapter aspires to stress the existence of a continuum between life before, during and after detention, and a gradation of situations of dependence experienced by detainees and former detainees.

In focusing on a phenomenon—imprisonment on the battlefield—that was neither specific to the early modern Mediterranean nor to confrontations between Muslim and Christian powers, this research is motivated by three main concerns. First, the need to set Mediterranean bondage within a broader frame of analysis, namely the existence of

shared cultures of dependence and the treatment of defeated populations following the codes of warfare. From this perspective, the second concern is to analyse what made the Mediterranean case different from similar situations encountered in other geographic areas. Finally, based on the conception of bondage as a process with a beginning and, hopefully, an end leading to detainees' liberation, this essay studies the shifting conditions that individuals might experience over the course of their lives and the uncertain limits between free and unfree labour.

In its methodology, this chapter proposes to tackle these issues using a prosopographical approach and, specifically, through the analysis of the fate of prisoners of war of one single event: the loss of Tunis and La Goleta by the Spaniards in 1574. This episode was one of many in which the military forces of the Spanish Monarchy opposed those of the Ottoman Empire. The outcome was a crushing defeat of the Christian forces: between late August and mid-September, the North-African *presidio* of La Goleta, conquered by Charles V in 1535, and the city of Tunis, recently incorporated into the Spanish Monarchy in October 1573, became definitively part of the Ottoman Empire.⁹

The choice to select only one case study has the advantage of combining a micro-historical study of the fate of a group captured in a specific place at a given time—i.e. Tunis and La Goleta in 1574—with an analysis of their subsequent careers, which were characterized by an intense geographical mobility, both during and after their period of detention. Contrary to some works dealing with 'global lives', I do not focus on the trajectory of an exceptional individual or a small set of individuals.¹⁰ Instead, I seek to reconstruct the trajectories of the largest possible number of actors who were seized by the Ottomans in Tunis and La Goleta in 1574.¹¹

In order to do this, the following pages are rooted in an in-depth analysis of primary sources. Scholars have traditionally relied on two kinds of archival materials in studying Christian bondage in Islamic lands: the records of the religious orders dedicated to redeeming captives (Mercedarians and Trinitarians), and the Inquisitorial trials, when detention was followed by a religious conversion to Islam. Instead, my research is based on a study of the so-called *informaciones de méritos y servicios*. These 'reports of merits and services' were petitions sent by individuals to the king in order to request a reward for their services to the Crown. They were routinely sent along with a cache of supporting documents supplied to buttress their claims, which offer historians rich

materials with autobiographical content, overlooked until now by scholars interested in Mediterranean bondage.¹² These sources provide a window into many human experiences that would otherwise be difficult to access, since the majority of petitioners were not elite actors and left very few other traces.

In particular, my reconstruction of the trajectories of prisoners of Tunis and La Goleta is based on a systematic investigation of petitions sent by former prisoners—and their families—which were processed by the councils of State, of War and of Italy between 1574 and 1609. These petitions have been read alongside subsequent administrative documentation generated by these petitions. In addition, I have carried out selective surveys of documentation from the Chamber of Castile, the councils of Castile, of Aragon and of the Indies and, occasionally, from the Council of Finance during the same period.¹³ This has allowed me to reconstruct 328 life trajectories related to the events. Of these 328 individuals, 267 were captured during the loss of Tunis and La Goleta, 51 were the relatives of prisoners and 10 were killed during the sieges. Whereas the total number of Christian survivors is estimated at 770, this sample covers a significant percentage of the prisoners taken after the Spanish defeat.¹⁴

THE LOSS OF TUNIS AND LA GOLETA IN 1574 AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE IN MEDITERRANEAN WARFARE

From the late fifteenth century onwards, the Mediterranean became a scene of imperial and confessional competition between the Spanish Monarchy and the Ottoman Empire.¹⁵ This rivalry inevitably forced the remaining powers in the area, and those that gradually came to play a role in it, to take sides in the on-going conflict.¹⁶ The result was a situation of permanent and multifaceted warfare which certainly adopted the form of clashes between regular armies. Examples such as the battle of Preveza (1538) or the battle of Lepanto (1571) are paradigmatic of this form of war. However, in a more durable way, warfare in the Mediterranean was an irregular and privatised war driven both by Muslim and Christian corsairs—termed the ‘little war’ by Fernand Braudel, which attained its ‘Golden Age’ precisely during this period.¹⁷ Importantly enough, these hostilities occurred in an area with a long tradition of interactions between Christian Europe and North Africa,

and between the Eastern and Western Mediterranean. Contrary to the Americas—and other parts of the globe—there was no discovery of the ‘Other’. Instead, tensions arose between enemies who were also neighbours and who had long experience of implementing mechanisms for coexistence and for the regulation of daily violence.¹⁸

In these circumstances, the loss of Tunis and La Goleta in 1574 has traditionally been considered one of the highlights of the *histoire événementielle* of the Mediterranean front during the second half of the sixteenth century. It was preceded by other military defeats of the Hispanic forces in North Africa—such as the loss of Bugia (1555), the expedition to Mostaganem (1558) and the disaster of Djerba (1560)—and would be followed by the famous battle of Alcazar (1578), during which the two Moroccan contenders, Muhammad al-Mutawakkil and ‘Abd al-Malik, as well as the Portuguese king, dom Sebastião, died. The loss of Tunis and La Goleta was also the event that closed the victorious cycle of Lepanto (1571) and don John of Austria’s activities in the Mediterranean.

Nevertheless, this episode did not represent a mere military setback, but an event with long-standing consequences. The Spaniards lost a strategic position in the central Maghreb which had been vital in ensuring the defence of the South of Italy, the control of trade and the isolation of focal points of Barbary privateering. Traditionally, the historiographical interpretation has considered 1580 to be the conclusive date for the changing rhythms and dynamics on the Mediterranean front. Hence, 1580 would have been the turning point that signalled the transition from the open conflict between the forces of the Spanish Monarchy and the Ottoman Empire to a form of warfare driven by corsairs and privateers, in which a large number of powers, including English and Dutch vessels, participated.¹⁹ In reality, the signing of the truce between the Catholic king and the Ottoman sultan only consolidated the *status quo* that had been established in 1574.²⁰ From September 1574 onwards, the central Maghreb conclusively swung to the Ottoman side. With this conquest, and the Portuguese defeat of Alcazar four years later, the sultans considered their Mediterranean objectives achieved.²¹ Henceforth, there were no significant territorial gains by either of the two hegemonic Mediterranean powers. Their naval strength gradually declined and their strategic priorities changed: the Spanish Monarchy shifted to the Atlantic while the Ottoman Empire turned its attention to the wars against the Safavids.²²

As for the human consequences of the events of 1574, both Christian and Muslim sources highlight the bloody nature of the sieges. The Ottoman and Barbary forces suffered heavy losses, while most of the besieged population died during the assaults or shortly after as a result of their injuries.²³ The majority of the few survivors were professional soldiers; there were also some sailors who had probably arrived during the summer of 1574, coming from the galley squadrons of Naples and Sicily.²⁴ In addition, at the moment of the attacks, there were a considerable number of civilians living in the city of La Goleta and, to a lesser extent, in Tunis. We should remember that La Goleta was not only a military post but a real city, where soldiers' families had lived—in some cases for more than a generation²⁵—and where all kinds of activities, besides the military, took place. Therefore, there were many women and children among the prisoners, as well as different categories of workers, medical personnel, some ecclesiastics and several merchants.²⁶

PRISONERS OF WAR, CAPTIVES OR SLAVES?

Human bondage resulting from warfare was a common practice in the early modern Mediterranean (and beyond). Obviously, it coexisted with other forms of bondage: bondage by birth, the African slave trade—before it became primarily oriented towards the American territories—as well as slavery resulting from raids in Central and Eastern Europe. Moreover, it is important to underline the fact that early modern Mediterranean bondage did not represent a qualitative break with medieval times, even if it reached an unprecedented scale from a quantitative point of view.²⁷

In order to distinguish Mediterranean bondage from other forms of enslavement—in particular, from the Atlantic chattel slavery—Giovanna Fiume has characterized its main features in the following way. First, it was a reciprocal—albeit not necessarily symmetrical—phenomenon that affected Christians captured by Muslims as well as Muslims and Jews imprisoned by Christians. Its duration was generally limited, since detainees had the chance of being redeemed or exchanged with other prisoners. Besides this reversibility, bondage had an iterative nature. In other words, there was a real chance of becoming captive several times over a lifetime. Finally, this phenomenon gave rise to the creation of dense financial networks of merchants, redeemers and all sorts of intermediaries who were sometimes more interested in speculating on the amount of ransoms than in liberating the detainees.²⁸

In general, contemporary accounts and propaganda from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, alongside most of the scholarly works on Christian Mediterranean bondage, have focused on the victims of the Barbary corsairs. This emphasis has tended to obscure the fact that a considerable percentage of detainees held in the Ottoman Empire and Morocco were actually prisoners of war captured on the battlefield.²⁹ In reality, the figure of the prisoner of war is as old as warfare itself. The payment of ransoms and exchange of prisoners were part of the codes and practices of war.³⁰ Moreover, the expectation of taking booty, as much material as human booty, was one of the main motivations for soldiers who participated in military campaigns and was also a primary source of remuneration.³¹ Surprisingly, the analysis of the treatment and fate of the prisoners of war is a field of research overlooked by early modern historians. Unlike the fate of their twentieth-century counterparts, this topic has scarcely attracted scholars' attention.³² In most cases, the interest in early modern prisoners of war has been placed in *longue durée* collective endeavours, from antiquity to contemporary times, which has targeted to explain, explicitly or implicitly, the background of the experience of the two world wars.³³ Yet, there are certainly numerous examples of early modern prisoners of war, with some famous cases such as the king of France Francis I, captured at the battle of Pavia (1525).³⁴

From a global perspective, it becomes apparent that the capture of prisoners was a common procedure throughout time and space. Bondage related to warfare was neither an exclusively early modern phenomenon nor specific to Mediterranean (or to Christian-Islamic) conflicts. It is from this approach, which challenges the assumed 'exceptionalism' that sometimes arises from works on early modern Mediterranean bondage—especially those dealing with Christian captivity in Islamic lands—that we should understand the experience of the prisoners of Tunis and La Goleta.

The question remains, however, of how to explain the essential differences that we can observe between the fate of the prisoners of war held in intra-European conflicts and those who were captured during clashes involving extra-European powers in contexts of cross-confessional difference, namely, for the purposes of this essay, in conflicts between the Spanish Monarchy and the Ottoman Empire. While prisoners in intra-European conflicts were generally held for short periods of time and their liberation was granted, at the latest, during the peace agreements between contenders, this was not necessarily the case for the servants of

the Spanish Monarchy seized by the Ottomans. The treatment of these two categories of prisoners thus differed widely.

In order to understand the reasons for such differences, it is crucial to take into account the prisoners' legal status, i.e. whether their legal status was that of captive or slave. Both in Christian and Islamic law, the enslavement of prisoners of war was permitted when there was a religious difference between contenders.³⁵ Related to this, we have to keep in mind the distinctions between captivity and slavery. Michel Fontenay has proposed a differentiation between these two categories of analysis based on the exchange value and use value of detainees, to which we should also add different temporalities. Hence, captives were held until the payment of a ransom and were assessed according to their exchange value. On the contrary, slaves were estimated by their use value and so were kept by their owners until they fulfilled their duties.³⁶ In addition, captives were not expected—at least in theory—to work, whereas slaves were owned in prospect of their capacity to work, whether that work was physical, intellectual or sexual. Nonetheless, these two conceptual realities were not immutable, since a captive could easily become a slave when his prospects for redemption faded away.³⁷ Moreover, these taxonomies should be verified empirically since there could be a broad spectrum in these situations of dependence in addition to the theoretical differences that were contingent on distinct legal status.

Concerning the prisoners of war seized during military conflicts between the Ottomans and Spaniards, many elements could intervene in order to determine whether they would become captives or slaves. Nevertheless, a considerable number of prisoners were directly held as slaves. As stated previously, the cross-confessional setting legally allowed this outcome. In such circumstances, it is easy to understand why the fate of those prisoners was so different from their counterparts in Europe.

However, the religious difference was not the only element that explained these differences. The nature of the diplomatic relations between contenders also played a crucial role, probably even more decisive than the former. The instrumentalisation of prisoners was a common fact; they could become an important part of negotiations, often used as bargaining chips to free respective prisoners.³⁸ Normally, most of the prisoners were not destined to permanently remain in this situation; they were held for the duration of the conflict that had caused their imprisonment. Yet, the total absence of official relations could prevent any kind of agreement for mutual exchange of prisoners, which is precisely

what happened to the subjects and servants of the Spanish Habsburgs who were captured by the Ottomans. In addition, elements such as who was the owner, the place of detention, the social status of prisoners, their symbolic value, etc., could also influence the fate of the prisoners of war seized in fights against the Ottomans.

THE PRISONERS' FATE DURING DETENTION

In the aftermath of the assaults of Tunis and La Goleta, the over 770 survivors were divided up between the winning forces. This was the normal process on these occasions. The most significant and valuable prisoners were handed over to the sultan and the main figures of the besieging armies. The majority of the prominent prisoners were held as captives in the prospect of getting a ransom for them. The rest of the prisoners, sometimes heavily injured—to the extent of not knowing whether they would survive or die in the following days—were distributed among the remaining participants. Some were taken as captives, others directly as slaves.

Algiers and Istanbul were the main destinations of the prisoners. However, some remained in Tunis and the neighbouring areas, or were sent to other Ottoman dominions. For instance, a significant percentage found themselves in the province of Egypt, especially in Alexandria. This geography was related to the owners of the prisoners and the place where they were living or serving the sultan. Moreover, it was linked to the activities to which prisoners were devoted.

Even if it is difficult to generalise, an important number of the defeated population was held as slaves and used as oarsmen. In the early modern Mediterranean, both in Christian and Islamic lands, the propulsion of galleys was one of the more demanding activities in terms of employment of slave labour.³⁹ The high number of rowers that was needed, together with their high rate of mortality and the continuous flow of fugitive slaves and those who were disabled, explain this huge demand. Therefore, it is not surprising that the map of the prisoners' destinations is a perfect match with the geography of the main ports where the Ottoman Empire maintained galley squadrons, such as Istanbul, Alexandria, the islands of Rhodes, Cyprus, Chios, Mytilene and Negroponte.⁴⁰

It is worth pointing out, however, that the use of slaves in the galleys has benefited to some extent from good documentary visibility, both

in Christian and Ottoman sources and propaganda, which has attracted considerable historiographical attention. Conversely, we know very little about the Christian slaves employed in agricultural activities, artisan tasks or domestic service. This fact, which is common to the whole phenomenon of Christian enslavement in Islamic lands, is also applicable to the particular example of the prisoners of Tunis and La Goleta. Furthermore, the employment of slave rowers in galleys was subject to the seasonal calendar of sea navigation. Hence, during the winter, owners often used their slaves for other tasks, such as building infrastructure, construction or carrying water or wood.

Finally, there is no indication regarding the activities of the women and children imprisoned in 1574. We can assume that their fate did not substantially differ from the treatment of these social groups in the Maghreb and in the rest of the Ottoman Empire. It is probable then that they were employed in domestic service, in combination with meeting sexual demands.⁴¹

The example of the prisoners of Tunis and La Goleta is also interesting since it offers new insight into the phenomena of early modern Mediterranean bondage. In particular, two elements are especially important in adding nuance to some of the general assumptions about Christian captivity—and enslavement—in the Islamic lands: the prisoners' geography of detention and the duration of this ordeal.

With regard to the first aspect, we have already seen that the places of detention were not limited to the Maghrebi coast, but encompassed a larger portion of the domains of the Ottoman Empire, especially in the Eastern Mediterranean and, in particular, in Istanbul. This contradicts the traditional image of a phenomenon reduced to the main cities of the Barbary Coast, where the victims of the North African corsairs suffered all sorts of ill treatment until they were ransomed. More importantly, the prisoners of Tunis and La Goleta frequently enjoyed considerable spatial mobility during their detention. This might be due to the move of their owner or their sale to another master.

This mobility within—and outside of—the Ottoman dominions, both across the Barbary Coast and the Levant, can be illustrated by Jerónimo de Pasamonte's trajectory. During his 18-year detention, Pasamonte lived in Tunis, Bizerte, Alexandria, the Peloponnesus, Rhodes and several times in Istanbul.⁴² Meanwhile, the Cordoban soldier subsequently renamed Soliman Pacha was sold to 'Abd al-Malik, the future

Moroccan sharif (1576–1578), who attended the sieges of Tunis and La Goleta as Ottoman *protégé*. Our character followed his master to Morocco, where a few years later he converted to Islam and started a promising career in the Moroccan sharifs' entourage. With Ahmad al-Mansur, he obtained the charges of equerry and 'viceroy' of Gao, capital of the recently conquered Songhay Empire.⁴³ Soliman Pacha died during the civil war among the successors of al-Mansur at the beginning of the seventeenth century.⁴⁴

The second element that the case study of the prisoners of Tunis and La Goleta allows us to enlarge upon is the length of the prisoners' captivity or enslavement. The majority of works, based on records of the religious orders dedicated to redeeming Christian captives in the Barbary Coast, have observed that the average time of detention barely exceeded 5 years.⁴⁵ Yet, a careful analysis of the prisoners' petitions to the Spanish Crown offers a different picture, which is summarized in the tables below:⁴⁶ (Table 4.1) (Fig. 4.1).

Thus, even if the duration of detention varied considerably, we can observe a relative predominance of cases lasting more than the supposed average length of detention. The majority of the captives held in the Islamic lands remained for between 5 and 15 years. Multiple reasons explain these long detentions. First, many prisoners were held directly as slaves, especially among those who were not prominent figures. In addition, the possession of Philip II's subjects could have a special symbolism for some owners, as they represented a constant victory against the enemy. On other occasions, long captivities were related to

Table 4.1 Duration of detention

<i>Duration of detention</i>	<i>Number of individuals</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
≤1 year	14	6
>1 year to <5 years	38	18
≥5 years to <10 years	52	24
≥10 years to <15 years	51	24
≥15 years to <20 years	17	8
≥20 years to <25 years	9	4
≥25 years to <30 years	15	7
≥30 years	20	9
Total	216	100

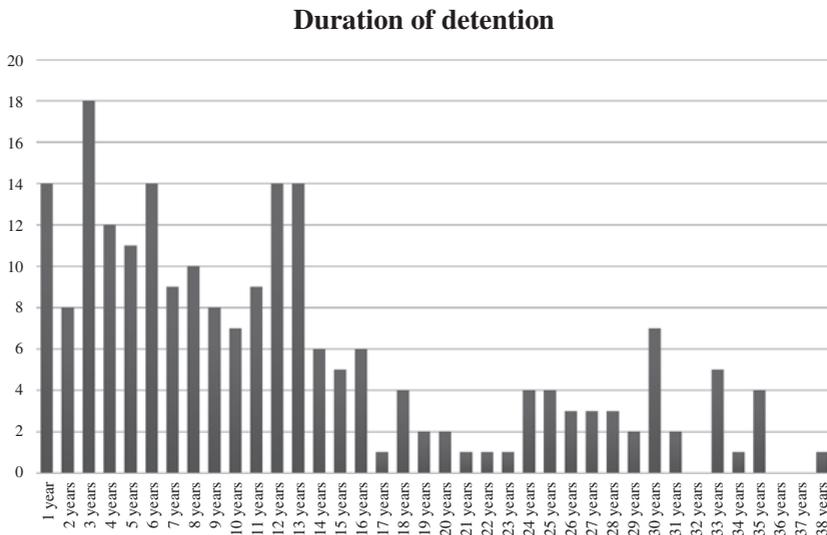


Fig. 4.1 Duration of detention

difficulties that arose in negotiating the liberation of these individuals. For instance, Manuel Pérez was a surgeon from the fort of Tunis. He was captured with his brother Antonio, who was also a surgeon, and who was released on payment of a ransom at Istanbul shortly thereafter. In contrast, Manuel was sent to Algiers and remained captive for more than 10 years. His master would only free him in exchange for Hassan Desmir, who was detained as an oarsman on the Lisbon galleys. Although the Spanish Crown was willing to relinquish this slave, in 1584 the parties had not yet reached an agreement. The exchange presumably took place a year later.⁴⁷

Moreover, the duration was closely related to the place of detention and, therefore, to the possibility of being liberated. 80% of prisoners were held in the Levant (essentially in Istanbul), where they had fewer chances of being freed than in North Africa, since the Orders of Redemption did not operate there. There were also fewer networks dedicated to ransoming. The following graph shows us the variation in the duration of captivity depending on the place of detention (Fig. 4.2).

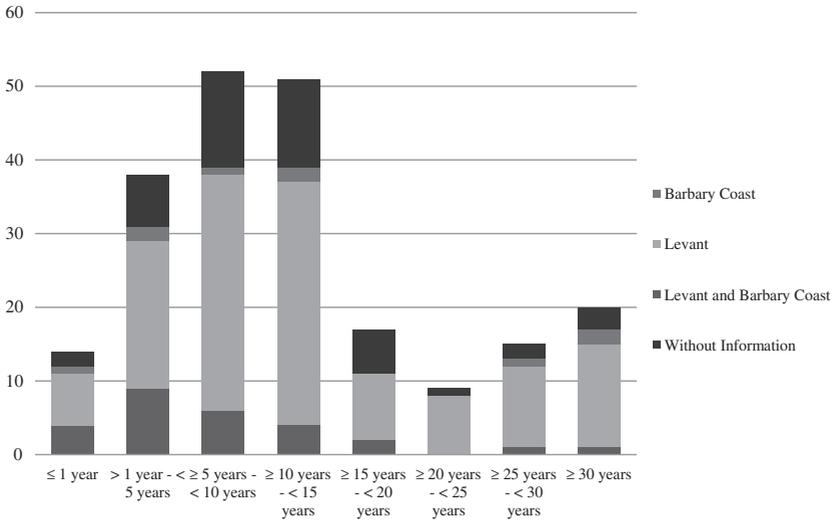


Fig. 4.2 Areas of detention

THE LIBERATION AND POSSIBLE RETURN TO CHRISTIAN LANDS

The likely possibility of being freed after a given amount of time is one of the major aspects that differentiate Mediterranean bondage from that of the Atlantic slave trade. Whether the liberation occurred a few months after the events of 1574 or several decades later, as discussed in the previous section, a considerable percentage of the prisoners of Tunis and La Goleta managed to become free persons again. Indeed, the 267 trajectories studied here correspond to individuals who were lucky enough to recover their freedom.

There were several paths to obtain freedom. Of course, many of the prisoners were liberated after the payment of a ransom. Yet, relatively few of them benefited from the mediation of the Mercedarians and Trinitarians in the Maghreb.⁴⁸ Instead, the majority defrayed the ransom themselves after settling the terms with their masters. Often, they relied on the mediation of intermediaries who acted as negotiators or advanced the necessary sums of money. Rosa Carta's path is a good example of this. Rosa Carta was the wife of the *maestre de campo* Luis de Segura. Her husband, severely wounded, died shortly after the surrender of

La Goleta. She was captured together with her 3-year-old son and 6-year-old daughter; all three were sent to Istanbul. In 1585, after 11 years of being held captive, she finally managed to arrange their ransom for the price of 400 *escudos*. Her master allowed her to return to Christian lands with the stipulation that this sum, plus interest, would be paid within a year and a half. Therefore, she had to leave a guarantor as well as her children as hostages. In the meantime, her relatives had probably concluded that she was dead. In 1584, her sister-in-law Juana de Segura had already asked for the overdue wages of her brother, Juan de Segura, and her son, the *alférez* Jerónimo de Valdés, who had both died during the sieges. The fact that Rosa Carta asked a notary to authenticate the will that her husband had made in La Goleta on 20 August 1574 immediately after she arrived at Court, proves that she needed to reclaim what was hers.⁴⁹

Others financed their freedom through their own work, after establishing a contract (*mükâtebe*) with their owners.⁵⁰ This modality was frequent within the dominions at the heart of the Ottoman Empire, especially in Istanbul, whereas it remained quite rare in the Maghrebi provinces. This solution certainly demanded several years work before becoming effective—on average between 10 and 15 years—but it guaranteed liberation. At the same time, it helped to foster bonds between the slave and the master, since many freed slaves continued to work for their former owners, showing the continuity between forms of ‘unfree’ and ‘free’ labour. Furthermore, although their numbers remain difficult to evaluate through the sources used for this study, it is important to note that freedom did not necessarily imply a direct return to Christian lands. On the contrary, many of the prisoners of Tunis and La Goleta probably remained in the Ottoman Empire once they were manumitted; they got married and never felt the need—or perhaps were unable—to return home.⁵¹

One of the main tropes about Mediterranean Christian bondage is that many slaves and captives were freed thanks to their religious conversion to Islam.⁵² Even though the figure of the ‘renegade’ has retained so much attention in the scholarly debate, the truth is that renegades are barely visible in the inquiry I have conducted on the prisoners of Tunis and La Goleta. I am inclined to think that this is essentially due to documentary visibility, rather than corresponding to a historical reality. Invariably, all renegades that I have found were children when they were captured, or they were relevant spies working on behalf of the Hispanic

authorities. In the first case, authorities were willing to forgive conversions that had occurred when the actors were too young to be able to discern their mistake. In the last case, the utility of these spies made it possible to minimise the problem of apostasy.

Nevertheless, almost half of the sample gathered for this research gained their freedom by running away. This was sometimes an individual escape, and sometimes a small group enterprise. For instance, the Valencian Juan Bautista Navarro was captured in La Goleta when he was 10 years old. He was brought to Algiers and converted to Islam. In August 1583, he made a small boat with which he fled to Oran accompanied by twelve Christian captives.⁵³ Antonio de Lucía was also captured in La Goleta when he was fifteen. After becoming a renegade, he rose to the post of captain of janissaries. Throughout the almost 30 years he lived as a Muslim, he helped the Christian captives as much as possible and secretly baptized his son in Istanbul. Finally he escaped in the company of fifteen captives and three renegades, reaching Palermo.⁵⁴ Sometimes, these escapes required extremely long journeys. Juan de Arenas was captured in the fort of Tunis and was sent to Istanbul. After eighteen years of captivity, he fled on a trip that led him through Poland, Germany, Austria, Bohemia, Milan, Rome and the Iberian Peninsula.⁵⁵

Taking part in a slave rebellion in a galley was another escape route for the Christian prisoners of Tunis and La Goleta. These extraordinary actions, which allowed the release of a large number of Christian captives at once, were also endowed with a great symbolic and propagandising power. They were a tangible sign of victory against the political and religious enemy and possessed a strong exemplary value. In the years after the events of 1574, several collective escapes of this type occurred. For instance, Alonso Fernández de Salamanca, the author of a chronicle of the events, was released in January 1577. He took part in the mutiny of a galley of Alexandria in which 270 rowers were freed.⁵⁶ Curiously, it was the same galley from which John Fox was also liberated, the author of the first English account of captivity.⁵⁷

The degree of difficulty in returning and reintegrating into Hispanic society generally depended on the duration of captivity and the conditions under which these individuals returned. Oversimplifying, trajectories after bondage followed two major patterns. On the one hand, there is the model corresponding to relatively short captivities, where individuals were still young, in good health and had gathered useful insight into the enemy, especially in terms of geography and languages. As paradoxical as it may

seem, for some prisoners, bondage was an opportunity for social advancement. When they returned home, they had acquired skills that were appreciated and needed by authorities. Many became specialised in espionage and intelligence activities that were indeed risky but were also well paid. The Greek Jorge de Amodeo was captured in La Goleta and taken to Istanbul. Four years later, he participated in the revolt of Caragiali's galley, which reached Sicily. Shortly thereafter he took part in the campaign of Portugal, being in the galleys of Sicily that had been transferred there. Back in Sicily, he began serving as a spy in the Levant on the express order of the viceroy.⁵⁸ Juan Domingo de Rosa, captured in Tunis, did the same in the service of the viceroys of Naples: during the vicerealty of the Count of Miranda, he remained for 6 years in Istanbul as an agent, 3 more years with the Count of Olivares, and he travelled again to the capital of the Sublime Porte under orders of the VI Count of Lemos.⁵⁹

Not all returned prisoners specialised in intelligence activities. Many came back to the army. They served wherever the Spanish Monarchy needed men. Some did so immediately after their release. I have already noted the case of Jorge Amodeo, who participated in the campaign of Portugal. A few years later, Miguel Ruiz did something similar; freshly returned from fourteen years of captivity at Istanbul he enrolled for the *Gran Armada* of 1588 against England.⁶⁰

Furthermore, the military trajectories of prisoners of Tunis and La Goleta serve to illustrate the different theatres of the Spanish Monarchy and the enormous mobility of their servants. A path like Francisco Rugero's perfectly exemplifies the changing priorities in the foreign policy of the Crown and the shift towards the Atlantic. In 1602, he was granted a monthly military allowance of 10 *escudos* in the kingdom of Naples. He had a 38-year career on his shoulders. He had served in the war of Grenada against the Morisco Revolt (1568–1571) and during the actions of the Holy League in Lepanto (1571) and Navarino (1572). He was captured in the fort of Tunis. After 11 years of detention at Istanbul, from where he managed to escape, he still had the force to continue his service in England, Ireland, Flanders and France. Finally, he finished his career in Naples.⁶¹

The captain Juan de Mérida represents another example. Mérida participated in Lepanto and was captured 3 years later during the loss of Tunis and La Goleta. He remained a prisoner for 30 months until he managed to flee, arriving in Oran. He also participated in the *Gran Armada* of 1588 against England. During the following years, he made

several trips to Ireland and the North Sea in order to collect information (*'tomar lengua'*) about enemy movements. In so doing, he was captured a second time in Scotland, where he remained for nine months until he managed to run away again. Thereafter, he served in France, in the *Carrera de Indias* and at the head of an infantry company and of four ships with which he seized several enemy ships along the coast of Galicia and the English Channel. He died during a failed mission to Ireland, leaving a widow and two children who were living in Sicily.⁶²

This last example is interesting because it stresses the iterative nature of bondage. Like Juan de Mérida, other prisoners of Tunis and La Goleta were captured again in subsequent years and not necessarily on the Mediterranean front. The *alférez* Francisco Gallo de Andrada was captured during the events of 1574 and remained in Istanbul for 6 years. Thereafter, he was imprisoned again at the defeat of the *Gran Armada* in 1588. After being held in London for 3 years, he was exchanged for an English prisoner who remained in the galleys of Spain.⁶³ The captain Lope Sanz de Bolea was also brought to Istanbul, where he remained for 13 years until he paid his ransom. In 1597 he was captured again, this time by the French in the Gulf of Lion when he was travelling to Sardinia in order to serve as a regular infantry captain.⁶⁴

If all these cases correspond to the first model of returning, there is a second one perfectly exemplified by the trajectory of Jerónimo de Pasamonte. This pattern corresponded to men with serious health problems, who had suffered a long-lasting detention and had been used as slaves. After their return, they were compelled to continue their military careers more out of necessity than conviction. Such soldiers proved to be of little use to the Crown, but authorities could not deny them a way of living, especially when they had been captured while serving the Monarchy. Pasamonte was sent to serve in Italy, a frequent destination among former prisoners in his condition. Among the prisoners taken at Tunis and La Goleta who remained in detention for 15 or more years, over 80% were sent to the Italian dominions and, in particular, to the kingdom of Naples: this is exactly the trajectory followed by Pasamonte.

CONCLUSIONS

Whether victims of corsairing were—and still are—the quintessential image of the Christian captives held in the Ottoman Empire and Morocco, this essay has sought to highlight the importance of detentions

resulting from regular warfare. Although prisoners of war are rarely taken into account in general narratives about Mediterranean bondage, it is likely that their case was similar from a quantitative point of view to those imprisoned during attacks driven by corsairs and privateers.⁶⁵

The figure of the prisoner of war was not exclusive to the confrontations between Christian and Muslim powers. It was part of a shared culture of dependence and their treatment corresponded to the codes of warfare. However, as the case study of the prisoners of 1574 illustrates, the fate reserved for the subjects of the Spanish Monarchy who were captured in conflicts with the Ottoman Empire could be exceptionally difficult. The main reason remained the total absence of official relations between the two powers. This meant that their subjects could not benefit from eventual agreements for the mutual release of prisoners, as could happen for Venetians, for instance.

Importantly, bondage represented an occasion for exceptional geographic mobility. Furthermore, the example of the prisoners of Tunis and La Goleta allows us to underline the existence of a continuum between the mobility held before, during and after detention, as well as a gradation of the situations of dependence experienced by these men and women. Detainees who continued to work for their former masters once they were redeemed illustrate this reality. Likewise, those who came back to Christianity did not necessarily become ‘free’ in the sense we now understand it. Bernardino de Soma was a carpenter who was seized in La Goleta in 1574. He remained a captive for only one year; he was freed by a merchant who advanced the amount of 400 *reales*. However, unable to repay this price and the interest to his creditor, Soma spent the following 3 years in the prison of Messina, in Sicily.⁶⁶ This sad irony, although it certainly represents an extreme example, alerts us to the different degrees of dependence experienced by former captives and slaves after they were freed.

Relations between Christian and Islamic lands in the early modern Mediterranean were shaped by violence and severe tensions. At the same time, everyday life was characterized by practices of accommodation and coexistence. Inhabitants of both sides of the Mediterranean were not only enemies, they were also neighbours who had known each other for a long time. In these circumstances, the possibilities of becoming master or captive were equal on both sides.

The anecdote recounted in the papers of ‘*méritos y servicios*’ of a certain Francisco Hernández Garzo is a fitting conclusion to this chapter.

The dossier submitted by Hernández Garzo to the Council of State in 1603 aimed to report the services he had rendered to the Crown. Hernández Garzo had been captured in La Goleta and was taken to Algiers, where he remained for over four years before running away. Later he served in the campaign of Portugal and in the infantry in Sicily. In 1597, he made a report with witnesses to prove these actions. Among these witnesses, the testimony of a soldier named Francisco Hernández de Córdoba is particularly interesting. He had only known Hernández Garzo since 1581. Since that time, they had continued serving together in the kingdom of Sicily. Unlike other witnesses who had been fellow prisoners during the loss of Tunis and La Goleta in 1574, he could not act as an eye-witness to this captivity. However, he considered that it was relevant to relay a conversation that he had around 1587 with an Ottoman slave, named Ibrahim, who rowed on one of Cesare della Torre's galleys belonging to the squadron of Sicily. Ibrahim had told him that Hernández Garzo became his prisoner after the conquest of La Goleta, recounting how he had treated him for an arrow wound in the stomach—an injury, indeed, which was also described by other witnesses to the battle.

This episode, which was probably not so exceptional, depicts the everyday relations between the two shores of the Mediterranean: a Spanish soldier and an Ottoman slave who conversed while aboard a Sicilian galley, the subject revolving around a former prisoner who became free, while the old master was, a few years later, enslaved.⁶⁷ Like Francisco Hernández Garzo and Ibrahim, many other anonymous men and women suffered the ordeal of captivity and enslavement. Their lives provide a lens through which we can glimpse the shifting conditions that individuals might experience over the course of their lives, as well as the geographical mobility that bondage entailed.

NOTES

1. On the use of the term 'bondage' in the humanities and social sciences, Alessandro Stanziani, *Bondage. Labor and Rights in Eurasia from the Sixteenth to the Early Twentieth Centuries* (New York, 2014).
2. Salvatore Bono, *Schiavi. Una storia mediterranea (XVI–XIX secolo)* (Bologna, 2016). This very recent book reviews in depth the vast literature on these topics, which has been dominated by studies dealing with Christian captivity in the Maghreb. Among some of the

- most representative works, see Nabil Matar, *British Captives from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic, 1563–1760* (Leiden, 2014); Gillian Weiss, *Captives and Corsairs: France and Slavery in the Early Modern Mediterranean* (Stanford, 2011); *Le commerce des captifs. Les intermédiaires dans l'échange et le rachat des prisonniers en Méditerranée, XV^e–XVII^e siècles*, ed. W. Kaiser (Rome, 2008); José Antonio Martínez Torres, *Prisioneros de los infieles. Vida y rescate de los cautivos cristianos en el Mediterráneo musulmán (siglos XVI–XVII)* (Barcelona, 2004); Enrica Lucchini, *La merce umana: schiavitù e riscatto dei Liguri nel Seicento* (Rome, 1990); Ellen G. Friedman, *Spanish Captives in North Africa in the Early Modern Age* (Wisconsin, 1983).
3. For instance, Robert C. Davis, *Christian Slaves, Muslim Masters. White Slavery in the Mediterranean, the Barbary Coast, and Italy, 1500–1800* (Basingstoke, 2003).
 4. Jocelyne Dakhli, 'Extensions méditerranéennes. Europe et Islam au contact durant les siècles modernes (XVI^e–XVIII^e siècles)', in *Faire des sciences sociales. Généraliser*, eds. E. Désveaux and M. de Fornel (Paris, 2012), pp. 263–292.
 5. Giovanna Fiume, *Schiavitù mediterranea: corsari, rinnegati e santi di età moderna* (Milan, 2009) and Maximiliano Barrio Gonzalo, *Esclavos y cautivos: conflictos entre la Cristiandad y el Islam en el siglo XVIII* (Valladolid, 2006), as examples of works bringing together the two sides of the same coin.
 6. Molly Greene, *Catholic Pirates and Greek Merchants: A Maritime History of the Mediterranean* (Princeton, 2010).
 7. Wolfgang Kaiser and Guillaume Calafat, 'The Economy of Ransoming in the Early Modern Mediterranean: A Form of Cross-Cultural Trade between Southern Europe and the Maghreb (Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries)', in *Religion and Trade: Cross-Cultural Exchanges in World History, 1000–1900*, eds. F. Trivellato, L. Halevi and C. Antunes (Oxford, 2014), pp. 108–130; Daniel Hershenzon, 'The Political Economy of Ransom in the Early Modern Mediterranean', *Past & Present*, 231/1 (2016), 61–95.
 8. Michel Fontenay, 'Esclaves et/ou captifs: préciser les concepts', in *Le commerce des captifs*, pp. 15–24.
 9. Salvatore Bono has dedicated several articles to the analysis of this event: 'Documenti inediti e rari sulla storia della Tunisia negli anni 1573–1574', *Studi Maghrebini*, 1 (1966), 91–101; 'Tunisi e La Goletta negli anni 1573–1574', *Africa*, 31 (1976), 1–39; 'L'occupazione spagnuola e la riconquista musulmana de Tunisia (1573–1574)', *Africa*, 33 (1978), 351–381 and 'Documents italiens sur la Reconquête Musulmane de Tunis (1574)', in *Actes du Premier Congrès d'Histoire et de la Civilisation*

du Maghreb (1974) (Tunis, 1979), vol. II, pp. 29–35. More recently, see Enrique García Hernán, ‘La conquista y la pérdida de Túnez por don Juan de Austria (1573–1574)’, *Annali di storia militare europea*, 2 (2010), 39–95, and Gianclaudio Civale, ‘Tunisi spagnola tra violenza e coesistenza (1573–1574)’, *Mediterranea. Ricerche storiche*, 21 (2011), 51–88.

10. Some representative studies of this trend are: Jonathan D. Spence, *The Question of Hu* (New York, 1988); Mercedes García-Arenal and Gerard Wiegers, *A Man of Three Worlds: Samuel Pallache, a Moroccan Jew in Catholic and Protestant Europe* (Baltimore, 2003 [1999]); Carlo Ginzburg, ‘Latitude, Slaves, and the Bible: an Experiment in Microhistory’, *Critical Inquiry*, 31/3 (2005), 665–683; Natalie Zemon Davis, *Trickster Travels: A Sixteenth-Century Muslim between Worlds* (New York, 2006); Linda Colley, *The Ordeal of Elizabeth Marsh: a Women in World History* (London, 2007); Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Three Ways to Be Alien: Travails and Encounters in the Early Modern World* (Waltham, 2011); John-Paul Ghobrial, ‘The Secret Life of Elias of Babylon and the Uses of Global Microhistory’, *Past & Present*, 222/1 (2014), 51–93.
11. Among studies which have studied the ‘global lives’ of groups of people, though with very different approaches, see, for instance, Miles Ogborn, *Global Lives: Britain and the World, 1550–1800*, (Cambridge, 2008); Tatiana Seijas, *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico: From Chinos to Indians* (New York, 2014); Nancy E. van Deusen, *Global Indios: The Indigenous Struggle for Justice in Sixteenth-Century Spain* (Durham, 2015).
12. The only exception is Daniel Hershenzon, *Early Modern Spain and the Creation of the Mediterranean: Captivity, Commerce, and Knowledge*, unpublished dissertation, University of Michigan, 2011, though he has not used these sources in a systematic way.
13. For a synthesis of the polisynodial system, i.e. the governmental system of the Spanish Monarchy based on several councils, see José Antonio Escudero, *Felipe II: el rey en el despacho* (Madrid, 2002).
14. This estimation has been calculated based on the numbers stated in the following accounts, which were written by eye-witnesses to the events: *Memorias del cautivo en La Goleta de Túnez (el alférez Pedro de Aguilar)*, ed. P. de Gayangos (Madrid, 1875), pp. 64, 81–82 and 237–239; Ricardo González Castrillo, ‘La pérdida de Túnez y La Goleta en 1574, y otros sucesos de historia otomana, narrados por un testigo presencial: Alonso de Salamanca’, *Anaquel de Estudios Árabes*, 3 (1992), p. 251; *Une relation inédite sur la prise de Tunis par les Turcs en 1574, Sopra la desolazione della Goleta e forte di Tunisi de Bartholomeo Ruffino*, ed. P. Sebag (Tunis, 1971), fol. 111r–112r.

15. The two classical works are Fernand Braudel, *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II* (Paris, 1966), 2 vol., and Andrew C. Hess, *The Forgotten Frontier: A History of the Sixteenth-century Ibero-African Frontier* (Chicago, 1978).
16. As the Venetian ambassador in the Spanish Monarchy Tommaso Contarini reported in 1593: 'E per cominciar [...], chi considera lo stato delle cose presenti, senza dubbio potrà con facilità osservare come le potenze e gl'imperi del mondo si sono la maggior parte uniti sotto quei due gran monarchi, il turco e il re di Spagna. [...] Questi due grandi principi, ambidue ricchi per il denaro, potenti per le forze marittime e terrestri, non solo hanno occasione, per la gelosia di tanti stati [...], di sospettar l'uno del altro, ma ancora di temersi reciprocamente, non mancando molti stimoli agli odii, molte cause all'ingiurie, molte comodità alle offese'. *Le relazioni degli ambasciatori veneti al Senato durante il secolo decimosesto*, ed. E. Albèri (Florence, 1861), serie I, vol. V, pp. 427–428. On the role of new powers in the Mediterranean area, Molly Greene, 'Beyond the Northern Invasion: the Mediterranean in the Seventeenth Century', *Past & Present*, 174 (2002), 42–71; Colin Heywood, 'The English in the Mediterranean, 1600–1630: A Post-Braudelian Perspective on the "Northern Invasion"', in *Trade and Cultural Exchange in the Early Modern Mediterranean: Braudel's Maritime Legacy*, ed. M. Fusaro, C. Heywood and M.-S. Omri (London, 2010), pp. 23–44.
17. Michel Fontenay and Alberto Tenenti, 'Course et piraterie méditerranéennes de la fin du Moyen Âge au début du XIX^e siècle', in *La Méditerranée entre la Croix et le Croissant. Navigation, commerce, course et piraterie (XVI^e–XIX^e siècle)* (Paris, 2010 [1975]), pp. 211–275.
18. J. Dakhliya and W. Kaiser, eds., *Les musulmans dans l'histoire de l'Europe. II, Passages et contacts en Méditerranée*, (Paris, 2013), pp. 7–31.
19. For a critical review of the traditional periodization of warfare on the Mediterranean front during the sixteenth century, Bernard Vincent, 'Philippe II et l'Afrique du Nord', in *Felipe II (1527-1598). Europa y la Monarquía Católica*, ed. J. Martínez Millán (Madrid, 1998), vol. I, issue 2, pp. 965–974.
20. María José Rodríguez Salgado, *Felipe II, el 'Paladín de la Cristiandad', y la paz con el Turco* (Valladolid, 2004); Rubén González Cuerva, 'Mediterráneo en tregua: las negociaciones de Ruggero Margliani con el Imperio otomano (1590–1592)', in *El mar en los siglos modernos*, ed. M.-R. García Hurtado (Santiago de Compostela, 2009), vol. II, pp. 209–220.
21. Andrew C. Hess, 'The Battle of Lepanto and its Place in Mediterranean History', *Past & Present*, 57 (1972), 70–73; Pál Fodor, 'Between Two Continental Wars: the Ottoman Naval Preparations in 1590–1592', in

- In the Quest of the Golden Apple. Imperial Ideology, Politics and Military Administration in the Ottoman Empire* (Istanbul, 2000), pp. 172–173 and ‘The Organization of Defence in the Eastern Mediterranean (End of the Sixteenth Century)’, in *The Kapudan Pasha, his Office and his Domain*, ed. E. Zachariadou (Crete, 2002), pp. 87–94.
22. Miguel Ángel de Bunes Ibarra, ‘La defensa de la Cristiandad; las armadas en el Mediterráneo en la Edad Moderna’, *Cuadernos de Historia Moderna. Anejos*, 5 (2006), 87–91; Irving A. A. Thompson, ‘Las galeras en la política militar española en el Mediterráneo durante el siglo XVI’, *Manuscripts*, 24 (2006), 95–124; Evrim Türkçelik, *Cigalazade Yusuf Sinan Pasha y el Mediterráneo entre 1591–1606*, unpublished dissertation, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 2012, pp. 42–58.
 23. A Genoese report noted that over 50,000 Muslims were killed during the events, in addition to 15,000 who died of disease. Those numbers are clearly overstated. Braudel, *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen*, vol. 2, p. 427. In general, other Christian sources point to between 15,000 and 33,000 losses among the Ottomans and local population. Regarding the Christian population who was in the places when the sieges were held, estimates vary from 4,000 to 5,000 inhabitants. Bono, ‘L’occupazione spagnuola’, p. 369; *Memorias del cautivo en La Goleta*, p. 222; AGS, GA, leg. 78, doc. 7. Among them, only 15% survived.
 24. This was, for example, the case of the Cypriot Juan Capón, who had previously served as a sailor in the fleet of Naples and remained captive for 24 years. AGS, E, leg. 1695, s.f.; AGS, E, leg. 1704, doc. 83; AGS, E, leg. 1978, s.f.; AHN, E, lib. 328, fol. 134r and 181v (1605–1606). Bartholomeo Ruffino reports that 200 sailors were left on the ground to work as sappers during the summer of 1574. *Une relation inédite sur la prise de Tunis*, fol. 24r and 39v. See also Jerónimo Torres y Aguilera, *Crónica y recopilación de varios successos de guerra que ha acontecido en Italia y partes de Levante y Berbería, desde que el Turco Selin rompió con venecianos y fue sobre la isla de Chipre año de MDLXX hasta que se perdió La Goleta y fuerte de Túnez en el MDLXXVIII* (Zaragoza, 1579), fol. 110v–112v.
 25. This is an aspect that distinguished soldiers serving in presidios (in North Africa or the Iberian Peninsula), compared to those who were in the mobile armies serving in Flanders, Milan, Naples or Sicily, who preferably were to remain single. Diego Suárez Montañés, *Historia del Maestre último que fue de Montesa y de su hermano don Felipe de Borja: la manera como gobernaron las memorables plazas de Orán y Mazalquivir, reinos de Tremecén y Ténez, en África, siendo capitanes generales, uno en pos del otro, como aquí se narra*, ed. B. Alonso Acero and M. A. de Bunes Ibarra (Valencia, 2005), pp. 410–412. Regarding the presence and participation

- of women in the defence of La Goleta and Tunis, see *Une relation inédite sur la prise de Tunis*, fol. 25r and 106r; *Memorias del cautivo en La Goleta*, pp. 58–59.
26. Ruffino recounts that there were around 120 merchants in the fort of Tunis, essentially Neapolitans and Sicilians, and they were also numerous in La Goleta. *Une relation inédite sur la prise de Tunis*, fol. 24r–v. Concerning the ecclesiastical staff, see *Memorias del cautivo en La Goleta*, p. 87 and 91.
 27. In recent years, several special issues and collective books have been dedicated to this topic. See ‘La schiavitù nel Mediterraneo’, *Quaderni Storici*, 107 (2001); ‘Schiavi, corsari, rinnegati’, *Nuove Effemeridi*, 54 (2001); ‘L’esclavage en Méditerranée à l’époque moderne’, *Cahiers de la Méditerranée*, 65 (2002); ‘La Méditerranée’, *Cahiers des Annales de la Mémoire*, 13 (2010); *Les esclavages en Méditerranée: espaces et dynamiques économiques*, ed. F. Guillén and S. Trabelsi (Madrid, 2012); *Schiavitù e servaggio nell’economia europea. Secc. XI–XVIII/Serfdom and Slavery in the European Economy. eleventh–eighteenth Centuries: atti della ‘Quarantecinquantesima settimana di studi’, 14–18 aprile 2013*, ed. S. Cavaciocchi (Florence, 2014), 2 vol.; S. Hanß and J. Schiel, eds., *Mediterranean Slavery Revisited (500–1800)/Neue Perspektiven Auf Mediterrane Sklaverei (500–1800)* (Zürich, 2014).
 28. Fiume, *Schiavitù mediterranea*, p. X.
 29. This trend, fairly accurate concerning the early modern period, differs from the approach of medieval historiography, as many works analyse together the fate of individuals captured in low-intensity wars and those taken during battles. For instance, see José Manuel Calderón Ortega and Francisco Javier Díaz González, *Vae Victis: Cautivos y prisioneros en la Edad Media Hispánica* (Alcalá de Henares, 2012); *El cuerpo derrotado: cómo trataban musulmanes y cristianos a los enemigos vencidos*, ed. M. Fierro and F. García Fitz (Madrid, 2008).
 30. Fritz Redlich, *De Praeda Military: Looting and Booty, 1500–1815* (Wiesbaden, 1956); Philippe Contamine, ‘Un contrôle étatique croissant. Les usages de la guerre du XIV^e au XVIII^e siècle: rançons et butins’, in *Guerre et concurrence entre les États européens du XIV^e au XVIII^e siècle*, ed. P. Contamine (Paris, 1998), pp. 199–236. Cf. *The Laws of War: Constraints on Warfare in the Western World*, ed. M. Howard, G. Andreopoulos and M.R. Shulman (New Haven, 1994).
 31. Besides references already mentioned in the note above, see René Quatrefages, *Los Tercios españoles: 1567–1577* (Madrid, 1979), pp. 251–259.
 32. Among the few exceptions, see the on-going research of Renaud Morieux on prisoners of war of France and England during the long eighteenth

- century. First results have been published in ‘French Prisoners of War, Conflicts of Honour, and Social Inversions in England, 1744–1783’, *The Historical Journal*, 56/1 (2013), 55–88, and ‘Patriotisme humanitaire et prisonniers de guerre en France et en Grande-Bretagne pendant la Révolution française et l’Empire’, in *La politique par les armes. Conflits internationaux et politisation (XV^e–XIX^e siècle)*, ed. Laurent Bourquin et al. (Rennes, 2014), pp. 299–314.
33. *In der Hand des Feindes: Kriegsgefangenschaft von der Antike bis zum Zweiten Weltkrieg*, ed. Rüdiger Overmans (Cologne, 1999); *Les prisonniers de guerre dans l’histoire: contacts entre peuples et cultures*, ed. S. Caucanas, R. Cazals and P. Payen (Toulouse, 2003); *Prisoners in War*, ed. S. Scheipers (Oxford, 2011); *How Fighting Ends: A History of Surrender*, ed. H. Afflerbach and H. Strachan (Oxford, 2012).
 34. Jean-Marie Le Gall, *L’honneur perdu de François I^{er}. Pavie, 1525* (Paris, 2015).
 35. For instance, in his dictionary of Spanish Sebastián de Covarrubias proposes the following definition of captive: ‘*Captivo. El enemigo preso y habido en justa guerra [...]. Hase de advertir que entre captivo y esclavo hay mucha diferencia, porque captivo es el enemigo de cualquier condición que sea, habido en buena guerra, esclavo el mesmo siendo infiel, prisionero el que es católico y de rescate*’. Sebastián de Covarrubias Orozco, *Tesoro de la lengua castellana o española*, ed. I. Arellano and R. Zafra (Madrid–Frankfurt, 2006 [1611]). Cf. Yusuf Hakan Erdem, *Slavery in the Ottoman Empire and its Demise, 1800–1909* (Houndmills, 1996), pp. 29–33.
 36. Fontenay, ‘Esclaves et/ou captifs’, pp. 15–24.
 37. Fontenay rightly points out: ‘[...] *le captif est un esclave en attente d’être racheté, tandis que l’esclave est un captif qui n’espère plus être racheté (s’il n’a jamais pensé l’être)*’. *Ibid.*, p. 22.
 38. Will Smiley, ‘“After being so long Prisoners, they will not return to Slavery in Russia”: An Aegean Network of Violence between Empires and Identities’, *The Journal of Ottoman Studies*, 44 (2014), 221–234; ‘Let Whose People Go? Subjecthood, Sovereignty, Liberation, and Legalism in Eighteenth-Century Russo-Ottoman Relations’, *Turkish Historical Review*, 3 (2012), 196–228; and ‘The Meanings of Conversion: Treaty Law, State Knowledge, and Religious Identity among Russian Captives in the Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Empire’, *The International History Review*, 34 (2012), 559–580.
 39. Luca Lo Basso, *Uomini da remo. Galee e galeotti del Mediterraneo in età moderna* (Milan, 2003).
 40. On the organisation of the Ottoman navy, see Colin Imber, ‘The Navy of Süleyman the Magnificent’, *Archivum Ottomanicum*, 6 (1980),

- 211–282; Fontenay, ‘Chiourmes turques au XVII^e siècle’, in *Le genti del mare Mediterraneo*, ed. R. Ragosta (Naples, 1981), vol. 2, pp. 877–903; Palmira Brummett, *Ottoman Seapower and Levantine Diplomacy in the Age of Discovery* (Albany, 1994), pp. 89–121; Fodor, ‘Between Two Continental Wars’, pp. 171–190; *The Kapudan Pasha, his Office and his Domain*, ed. E. Zachariadou (Crete, 2002); Daniel Panzac, *La marine ottomane: de l’apogée à la chute de l’Empire, 1572–1923* (Paris, 2009).
41. Madeline C. Zilfi, *Women and Slavery in the Late Ottoman Empire: the Design of Difference* (Cambridge, 2010); Marc Baer, ‘Islamic Conversion Narratives of Women: Social Change and Gendered Religious Hierarchy in Early Modern Ottoman Istanbul’, *Gender & History*, 16/2 (2004), 425–458.
 42. Jerónimo de Pasamonte is the author of an autobiographical account: Pasamonte, *Autobiografía*, prefaces M. A. de Bunes Ibarra and J. M. de Cossío (Seville, 2006). Moreover, see AGS, SP, leg. 1796, doc. 150. San Lorenzo, 17 August 1594; and Wipertus Hugo Rudt de Collenberg, *Esclavage et rançons des chrétiens en Méditerranée (1570–1600). D’après les ‘Litterae hortatoriae’ de l’Archivio Segreto Vaticano* (Paris, 1987), pp. 172–173.
 43. Gao was the capital of the Songhay Empire. About its conquest by Ahmad al-Mansur, see Nabil Mouline, *Le califat imaginaire d’Ahmad al-Mansúr: pouvoir et diplomatie au Maroc au XVI^e siècle* (Paris, 2009), pp. 332–354 and Mercedes García-Arenal, *Ahmad al-Mansur: the Beginnings of Modern Morocco*, (Oxford, 2009), pp. 97–110.
 44. Jorge de Henin, *Descripción de los reinos de Marruecos (1603–1613). Memorial de Jorge de Henin*, ed. Torcuato Pérez de Guzmán (Rabat, 1997), pp. 49, 56–59, 64, 69–73. See also Jerónimo de Mendoça, *Iornada de Africa composta por Hieronymo de Mendoça, natural da cidade do Porto, em a qual se responde à Ieronymo Franqui, & outros, & se trata do successo da batalha catiuero, & dos que nelle padecerão por nao serem mouros, com outras cousas dignas de notar* (Lisbon, 1607), fol. 139v; Mouline, *Le califat imaginaire d’Ahmad al-Mansúr*, pp. 216–218, 237, 304, 350.
 45. Friedman, *Spanish Captives in North Africa*, p. 5; Martínez Torres, *Prisioneros de los infieles*, p. 145.
 46. Within the corpus of 267 captives whose trajectories I have been able to reconstruct, the tables correspond to the 216 cases (i.e. 77%) for which I have information about the exact duration of captivity.
 47. AGS, CC, leg. 499, doc. 325 and leg. 592, doc. 503; AGMM, LR, lib. 6, fol. 141v and 172r–v, and lib. 7, fol. 18v–19r and 230r–v; AGS, GA, lib. 39, fol. 44v–45r; AHN, Cs, leg. 4416, doc. 122 and leg. 4417, doc. 112 y 164 (1579–1606); BZ, Altamira, Carpeta 184, D. 91 [Mentioned in

- García Hernán, 'La conquista y la pérdida de Túnez', pp. 90–91]. About the exchange of prisoners see Daniel Hershenzon, "[P]ara que me saque cabeza por cabeza...": Exchanging Muslim and Christian Slaves across the Mediterranean', *African Economic History*, 42 (2014), 11–36.
48. Between 1575 and 1591, 67 prisoners of Tunis and La Goleta were ransomed by the Mercedarians and Trinitarians in Algiers. BNE, Mss. 2963; AHN, Códices, lib. 118, 119, 120 and 121.
 49. AGS, GA, leg. 181, doc. 399; IVDJ, Envío 81, caja 108, doc. 580; AGS, SP, leg. 983, s.f. and lib. 853, fol. 35v and 102r (1585–1589); *Memorias de la Real Academia Española: Noticias y documentos relativos a la historia y literatura españolas*, ed. C. Pérez Pastor (Madrid, 1910), vol. 10, p. 356.
 50. Nur Sobers-Khan, *Slaves Without Shackles: Forced Labour and Manumission in the Galata Court Registers, 1560–1572* (Berlin, 2014); Suraiya Faroqhi, 'Manumission in Seventeenth-century Suburban Istanbul', in *Mediterranean Slavery Revisited*, pp. 381–402; Hayri Göksin Özkoray, 'Une "culture de la résistance"? Stratégies et moyens d'émancipation des esclaves dans l'Empire ottoman au XVI^e siècle', in *Mediterranean Slavery Revisited*, pp. 408–410; Yvonne J. Seng, 'A Liminal State: Slavery in Sixteenth-Century Istanbul', in *Slavery in the Islamic Middle East*, ed. S. E. Marmon (Princeton, 1999), p. 29; Halil Sahillioğlu, 'Slaves in the Social and Economic Life of Bursa in the Late fifteenth and Early Sixteenth Centuries', *Turcica*, 17 (1985), 53–57.
 51. For instance, Luis de Miranda lived for 33 years in Istanbul: thirteen as a slave and the ensuing twenty as a free person. The reason for his return to Christian lands was to escape the Sultan's reprisals when Miranda's involvement in a network of espionage—managed by the viceroy of Naples in the capital of the Sublime Porte—was discovered. It is probable that he would never have returned otherwise. AGS, E, leg. 1984, s.f. Madrid, 21 June 1611.
 52. About the phenomenon of renegades, some of the most representative works are Bartolomé and Lucile Bennassar, *Les chrétiens d'Allah: l'histoire extraordinaire des renégats, XVI^e et XVII^e siècles* (Paris, 1989); Lucetta Scaraffia, *Rinnegati. Per una storia dell'identità occidentale* (Rome, 1993); *Conversions islamiques. Identités religieuses en Islam méditerranéen*, ed. M. García-Arenal (Paris, 2002).
 53. AGS, E, leg. 1087, doc. 79 and leg. 1088, doc. 48.
 54. AGS, E, leg. 1955, s.f. Valladolid, 29 September 1603.
 55. AGS, SP, leg. 7, s.f.; AGS, GA, leg. 530, doc. 130 and AGS, GA, lib. 80, fol. 71Bv–72Br and 78Br–v (1595–1598).

56. González Castrillo, 'La pérdida de Túnez y La Goleta', pp. 283–285; Miguel Martínez, *Front Lines: Soldiers' Writing in the Early Modern Hispanic World* (Philadelphia, 2016).
57. Nabil Matar, 'English Accounts of Captivity in North Africa and the Middle East: 1577–1625', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 54-2 (2001), 553–572; *Piracy, Slavery and Redemption. Barbary Captivity Narratives from Early Modern England*, ed. D. Vitkus (New York, 2001), pp. 55–70. About John Fox see also AGS, GA, lib. 32, fol. 184r and lib. 33, fol. 383r–v.
58. AGS, SP, lib. 751, fol. 86r–87r, lib. 851, fol. 169r and lib. 853, fol. 208r, 226r–v; AGS, SP, leg. 984, s.f. (1586–1610).
59. AGS, E, leg. 1710, doc. 182; AGS, E, leg. 1974, s.f.; AHN, E, lib. 310, fol. 15r–v (August–October 1602).
60. García Hernán, 'La conquista y la pérdida de Túnez', p. 91; Ricardo González Castrillo, 'Cautivos españoles evadidos de Constantinopla en el siglo XVI', *Anaquel de Estudios Árabes*, 22 (2011), pp. 275–277.
61. AGS, E, leg. 1692, s.f. and leg. 1967, s.f.; AHN, E, lib. 309, fol. 206v (August–October 1602).
62. AGS, SP, leg. 3, doc. 78 and AGS, SP, lib. 749, fol. 161r–162v (1576–1607).
63. BZ, Altamira, Carpeta 184, D. 91; AGS, E, leg. 1086, doc. 99; AGS, GA, leg. 343, doc. 312; AGMM, LR, lib. 13, fol. 145v and AHN, Cs, lib. 7, fol. 116v (1574–1608).
64. AGS, E, leg. 1983, s.f. Valladolid, 11 November 1602.
65. This conclusion comes from an inquiry into the former captives and slaves who received military pensions from the Hispanic Crown between 1574 and 1609. From the total of 2,491 trajectories that I have been able to reconstruct, we do know the conditions of detention for 1,699 individuals. Among them, 874 were victims of corsairing, 798 were prisoners of war, while 27 individuals experienced both situations since there were seized more than once in their lives. Cecilia Tarruell, *Circulations entre Chrétienté et Islam: captivité et esclavage des serviteurs de la Monarchie hispanique (ca. 1574–1609)*, unpublished dissertation, EHESS-Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 2015, especially p. 124.
66. AGS, SP, leg. 987, s.f. Madrid, 8 April 1597.
67. '[...] Di più dice esso testigo che anni dieci in circa, si fanno andando esso testigo imbarcato sopra le galere di Cesare La Torre, si pose a ragionare con un turco, nome Ebraim, nal al quale esso testigo conobbe et nel diccorso del parlare, li disse detto Ebraim qualmente nella presa della Goletta, havia havuto in mano et scavo al detto Francisco Hernandez Garzo, producente, et che si havia tenuto scavo et che l'havia curato et guarito di una flecciata che havuto nel ventre'. AGS, E, leg. 1577, doc. 58. November 1603.

Making the Place Work: Managing Labour in Early Modern China

Anne Gerritsen

The collection of Asian art in the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam holds this ‘peculiar waterjug’ in the shape of a half moon (Fig. 5.1).¹

Generally known as *kendi*, such waterjugs were made in many sizes and shapes. This example was made around 1500 in the city of Jingdezhen in the southeast of China, where some of the finest-quality porcelains in the world were made at that time. Since before the year 1000, emperors had ordered porcelain goods from here, both for their private use and for the rituals of state, but scholarly connoisseurs, wealthy merchants, and large numbers of ordinary people also bought Jingdezhen’s porcelains. In fact, the production of porcelain at Jingdezhen was so vast that its goods were distributed all over the empire.² This half-moon-shaped object, standing on four tiny feet, with a spout in the middle, two small openings at opposite ends of the crest, and four ridges or ribs along the sides, is a most unusual shape, of which only a few examples remain, and most are damaged, as indeed this object is. It seems to have been made in imitation of an object in an entirely different material, perhaps leather, but more likely metal.³ Most probably, it was not intended for a consumer within China

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Fig. 5.1 Blue-and-white glazed moon-shaped porcelain water-jug, made in Jingdezhen, *ca.* 1475–*ca.* 1525. H 15,5 cm x L 21 cm. Rijksmuseum, AK-RAK-1982-2

at all, but made for export, and in all likelihood for export to an Islamic country like Indonesia.⁴

Why would a worker in the sixteenth-century ceramics industries of Jingdezhen make an object that probably looked different from anything he or she (but most likely he) had ever seen before, for someone probably unknown, located somewhere where the potter had probably never been nor would ever go? These are assumptions and unanswerable questions, not least because we cannot know who exactly made this object. The production of porcelain in Jingdezhen was done in clearly separated stages, and thus numerous individuals would have been involved in its manufacture, and all of these remained anonymous. The potters of the sixteenth century did not leave any traces other than the objects they made. Not only do we not have signed objects, but we also have no records penned by sixteenth-century potters in Jingdezhen, and therefore no descriptions of individual workers making something specifically for export.⁵ But this crest-shaped object and the material record of this period more generally do tell us a number of things. Large numbers of workers in Jingdezhen manufactured porcelains of all kinds: finest wares for imperial consumption, medium-quality goods for regional distribution, low-quality goods for local consumption, and objects with

the designs and shapes that were favoured outside of the Chinese empire. Those workers who produced for both nearby (i.e. local and regional) and worldwide (i.e. global) markets and the ways in which their labour was organised in early modern China are the subject of this chapter.

The period I refer to here as early modern China coincides more or less with the early modernity of European history, and Britain specifically, in other words, the period between 1500 and 1750. In China, this is a dynamic period of economic growth, social mobility, urbanisation, intellectual developments including a questioning of the orthodox sources of political, moral and religious power, and artistic freedom.⁶ Specifically, the sixteenth century was a time of unprecedented growth in China. The fourteenth-century upheavals of the violent transition from Yuan (1279–1368) to Ming (1368–1644) rule overcome, the fifteenth century saw a series of expansive projects come into being: the overseas campaigns led by the eunuch Zheng He (also known as Cheng Ho; 1371–1433), the movement of the capital from the south to the north, and the expansion of the Great Wall in response to the severe and ongoing threat from the Mongols to the north of the Ming borders. By the sixteenth century, the Ming emperors, who had taken personal responsibility for these major projects and campaigns, started to take a back seat, thereby creating space for economic recovery and growth.⁷ The population expanded, regional production and trade grew, and urbanisation increased, as did the commercial manufacture of consumer goods. A range of (hand-craft) industries began to emerge; copper coins and iron, silk and cotton, bricks, tiles, porcelain, and paper were all produced on a substantial scale and distributed throughout the empire and beyond.⁸

By the time the Europeans arrived on the scene, during the course of the sixteenth century, they found a rich and complex empire with a silverised economy and highly desirable commodities for sale. Perhaps unsurprisingly, scholars have paid a great deal of attention to the period after the founding of Manila in 1571, when Ming China was drawn into networks of trade that spanned the entire globe, and Spanish silver flooded into the empire.⁹ Because of that, the late Ming, a period generally considered to start in the sixteenth century, is no longer seen as a place of isolation and stagnation as it once was, but as a crucial part of the early modern world.¹⁰

My interest in this chapter, however, is not so much in the macro-level economic changes of the sixteenth century themselves, but in the perspective of a single locality: the city of Jingdezhen, where the vast majority of the porcelains that circulated throughout the early modern world

were manufactured. What kind of place was this city of porcelain manufactures? Who lived there, and more importantly, who worked there? How was their labour organised? My questions are not so much aimed at producing a history of the locality *per se*, but to understand the locality in the perspective of the changes in the wider world, of which the Ming empire and the flows of silver formed an important part. In that sense, then, it is a micro-spatial approach to labour: drawing on both micro-historical and spatial methodologies to understand how the broad category of ‘work’ shaped both this single location itself and its connections to the wider world.

To understand the role and organisation of labour in the fiscal structures of the Ming dynasty and the manufacture of luxury commodities and other consumer goods, especially porcelain, we need to begin with the structure put into place by the first emperor of the Ming dynasty. Only then will the significance of the fiscal reforms and the socio-economic transformations of the late Ming, and the transition from a system where the emperor held most of the power to a more devolved economic system become clear.¹¹ As I hope to show below, a micro-spatial approach allows us to see not only how the global connectedness of the Ming empire had an impact on the management of labour in general, but also how this played out at the local level. The discussion below will argue that it was through the management of labour in clearly segregated tasks that such a wide variety of goods could be made locally in Jingdezhen. Only then can we understand how something as unfamiliar to local workers as a crescent-shaped flask intended for consumers geographically and culturally removed from the local production space could come about.¹²

ZHU YUANZHANG AND THE HOUSEHOLD REGISTRATION SYSTEM

In 1368, with the defeat of the Mongols and the establishment of a new dynasty known as the Ming, the emperor decided to take stock of his population. Exact population figures would provide him with information about his tax income, the size of his labour force, and the number of conscripts to be recruited for his armies.¹³ After all, the land, the people, and the resources they yielded, including their labour, were ideologically speaking all in the possession of the emperor of China.¹⁴ The basic unit for counting the population was the household; those who lived behind one shared door counted as one household.¹⁵ For many

consecutive dynasties before the Ming (and afterwards, up to the land reforms of the 1950s), household registers served as the basis for the determination of tax obligations.¹⁶ These included land tax, calculated on the basis of landholdings, ‘capitation’ tax, calculated per adult in the household, tax on commercial interactions, and labour services (also known as *corvée* labour), including military service.¹⁷ Each household, thus, was registered, and on the basis of that registration obliged to provide both tax payments and labour services to the imperial government. The nature of this labour service depended on the classification of the household, so when the first emperor of the Ming came to the throne, one of his first commands was to issue the instruction that ‘each household must enrol with the authorities just as they had previously been enrolled. Any change of their registers is forbidden’.¹⁸ The Ming’s predecessors, the Mongol Yuan dynasty, had similarly allocated labour duties to each household, and the first Ming emperor was intent on maintaining the same division of the populations into separate categories of households.

The main categories were farming households (*min*), military households (*jun*), and artisan households (*jiang*), but there were also numerous small categories of households, such as physicians (*yi*), geomancers (*yinyang*), salt workers (*yan*), and butchers (*tu*), up to at least 45 different categories.¹⁹ The physical registration process of each household was, of course, a major logistical enterprise in the first decades of the dynasty. The Ming government began by creating a household registration form, on which the head of the household had to fill in the full details of the names and ages of the adult members of the household, the property of the household (i.e. land, buildings, and cattle), and, importantly, the labour service registry of the household. These records then had to be submitted, approved, and stamped, and the information entered into governmental records. In the years that followed this first demand for registration, the system underwent several adjustments, including the creation of units of ten households (*jia*) and 110 households (*li*) to facilitate the implementation of all these tax and labour duties, and a new archive to store all this information, the so-called Yellow Books (*huangce*) of land levies and labour service.²⁰ The registration of each household into a specific category of labour service, however, did not change. The *Great Ming Commandment* (*Da Ming ling*), printed and issued to officials in 1373, stated that the categories of household ‘shall permanently register according to what they originally reported. This

may not be casually altered or confused. Violators will be punished. They must remain in their original registration'.²¹ The first Ming emperor wanted to pre-empt his successors by insisting his laws ('which I have fixed forever') may never be changed.²²

Already in the mid-fifteenth century, the option existed of paying off one's labour duties by means of a payment in copper, but in practice, the segments of the population eligible for *corvée* labour did not always have the financial means to buy themselves out of this obligation.²³ There were also numerous other ways of evading labour service, including by holding a semi-official administrative post, registering for civil service examinations and entering into the official ranks of scholar-officials, although even these households maintained their official labour registration status, and only a predetermined number of people in the household were freed from this obligation.²⁴ But, on the whole, the percentage of Ming households that could boast a member of the family employed in the imperial civil service was extremely small, and the vast majority of the population had an obligation to provide labour service, which could be classified as unfree labour.²⁵

It was this vast labour force, recruited from the population on the basis of the labour obligations attached to each household, that constructed the city walls around the capital and built the new capital when the first Ming emperor's successor moved the capital from the south (Nanjing) to the north (Beijing), that restored and maintained the Grand Canal that connected the grain-rich lower Yangzi region to the imperial capital in the north, and that rebuilt and defended the Great Wall to stave off the attacks of Mongols in the north.²⁶ It was also this labour force that manufactured the goods that were demanded by the imperial state: weaponry of all kinds, textiles such as wool, felt, silk, and cotton, tapestries, and of course, porcelains. These manufactured commodities formed, in fact, the final category of tax obligations that were in varied proportions imposed upon the Chinese population. We already mentioned the land, capita, and trade taxes, as well as the labour service (*corvée*) obligation; tribute formed the final category of tax obligation. Tribute demands were imposed by the emperor upon all areas that produced something of value or use for the emperor, his household, and the extended court apparatus: the grain transported from the south to the capital via the Grand Canal was known as tribute grain, but vast quantities of goods like tea, fur, sugar, and silk, to name but a few, were also shipped north.

The best known and most extensively documented of this kind of tribute payment is the porcelain tribute, imposed on various kiln sites to furnish the imperial household with the porcelain goods it needed. Already around the year 1000 (during the reign of the third emperor of the Song dynasty, which lasted from 997 to 1002), the emperor demanded that porcelains from the southern kiln site of Jingdezhen and several other kiln sites throughout the empire were delivered to the imperial court.²⁷ In the twelfth century, when the Song empire lost control over the north and thereby access to the porcelains manufactured in the north, the demand for porcelain from Jingdezhen increased steeply. During the Ming dynasty, developments in kiln technology, specifically the building of so-called dragon kilns on an upward slope, with a fire on one end of the kiln and a tall chimney all the way at the other end, meant that thousands of pieces could be fired in one load. Of course, not all the pieces fired in one kiln load would come out as intended, and only a small quantity would pass the quality-control tests for imperial tribute. Nonetheless, in one year in the early fifteenth century (1436), 50,000 porcelain vessels were delivered to the imperial court from Jingdezhen, and in 1459, an order was placed for 133,000 pieces. In recognition of the excessive burden this placed on the workers in the kilns, the order was subsequently reduced by 80,000 pieces.²⁸ Orders for such vast quantities were placed a number of times during the sixteenth century, but often the demands took years to fill. The production quantities (also known as quotas) varied from year to year, ranging from just over 900 pieces in 1537 to 120,000 pieces in 1547, depending in part on environmental factors, and in part on the size and complexity of the vessels demanded.²⁹ The production of such vast quantities of porcelain required, just like maintaining the Grand Canal and building the new capital, the availability of a large workforce. For much of the history of Jingdezhen, households based around the town of Jingdezhen and registered as artisans supplied this specialist workforce employed in a variety of roles in the imperial kilns.

THE 'SINGLE WHIP' REFORMS OF THE LATE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

Between 1572 and 1582, a man named Zhang Juzheng (1525–1582) served as head of the Grand Secretariat, the most powerful body in the central government.³⁰ The various reforms Zhang Juzheng instituted were all significant, but none more so than the commutation to

silver of all taxes and labour duties. Instead of the variety of tax obligations demanded at different times of the year and payable in kind, every household now faced only a single payment in silver, which included a fee demanded in lieu of labour service. All artisans who had rotating labour obligations, for example, were instructed to commute their labour service to a payment of 1.8 silver *tael* once every 4 years (i.e. as often as they would have performed their labour duty).³¹ Known as the Single Whip reforms (*yi tiao bian fa*), they were intended to fill the imperial coffers with silver bullion.³² As has been widely documented, the impact across the board in late-sixteenth-century China was significant: before any household could pay its tax obligations, goods had to be converted to silver, usually by taking them to local or regional markets.³³ Artisans were in a position to manufacture goods and sell these on the market to obtain the cash to buy themselves out of their labour obligations. Of course, this increased all economic activity throughout the empire, and the demand for silver rose very substantially.³⁴ What has been far less closely investigated is the impact of this process of commercialisation and silverisation of the economy on the workings of the state manufactories of porcelain in Jingdezhen in the sixteenth century.

THE GAZETTEER OF JIANGXI PROVINCE

The source that will provide most of the information here is the 'Great gazetteer of Jiangxi province' (*Jiangxi sheng dazhi*), an extensive document compiled over a period of several decades and published in several editions in the late sixteenth century.³⁵ Like all local gazetteers (*difangzhi*), it contains extensive information on the province as a whole, including the main administrative divisions of the province, the main geographic and cultural features of each of the administrative units (counties and prefectures), lists of office holders and successful examination candidates in each county, as well as transcriptions of the documentary and literary record produced locally. Local office holders in all administrative units sought to edit and reissue the gazetteer for the place they served at least once during their tenure, largely for administrative purposes, but probably blended with a certain amount of local pride.³⁶ The information contained in gazetteers is often difficult to date precisely, because compilers usually drew on now not always extant previous editions of the same document. The sixteenth-century gazetteer for Jiangxi Province includes an extensive document about the manufacture

of porcelain in Jingdezhen in the imperial kilns, and informs our discussions below, supplemented by a small number of relevant contemporary and later sources.³⁷

RECRUITMENT OF THE WORKFORCE IN EARLY MING JINGDEZHEN

The general workforce required to work in the kiln complex had originally (i.e. at the start of the Ming dynasty) been drawn from the local battalion.³⁸ Sometimes referred to as chiliarchy, and literally ‘thousand-household station’ (*qianhu suo*), the battalions were an early Ming invention. They had been conceived of as military bases established in frontier areas as the first Ming emperor gained ground, and after the establishment of the Ming empire, combined farming and military duties, nominally in a 70% farming—30% military duties division.³⁹ The vast majority of the men in the battalion, then, were not engaged in military training, but free to be dispatched for farming duties or, in the case of the region surrounding Jingdezhen, for service in the ceramic industries. In principle, the unit dispatching the workers would usually also be responsible for paying the cost of subsistence for the workers.⁴⁰

The labour forces conscripted from the surrounding battalions were known as workers (*gongfu*) or labourers (*shatufu*), and they coexisted with those providing service because of their hereditary status as artisans (*jiangyi*).⁴¹ When the ‘Great gazetteer of Jiangxi province’ was first produced, in the middle of the sixteenth century, there were only just over three hundred workers with the hereditary designation of artisan serving in the ceramics manufactures.⁴² However, for the production of enough porcelain to fulfil the demand from the imperial court, never mind for supply to the commercial stream, other supplementary kiln workers had to be hired, and these surely had to have a certain amount of skill in the making of pots. The author of the gazetteer observed that ‘[t]here are relatively few craftsmen with refined skills. This is especially problematic in the case of painting.’⁴³ Many of the goods manufactured for the imperial court were decorated by using a brush to apply the pigment (cobalt) to the surface of the dried but unbaked shapes (known as bodies), which required skills not dissimilar from painting and calligraphy, and thus were hard to come by. This raises an important question about how the sixteenth-century kiln complex of Jingdezhen worked: how was it possible to hire enough workers to make porcelain, not only to the standard

required for the personal use of the emperor and his court, his imperial household, and the ritual ceremonies of state, but also in such quantity and variety as was demanded by local, regional, and overseas consumers?

The answer to this question is two-fold; firstly, the kiln complex worked by separating out the different tasks, and assigning workers with different skill levels to the multitude of separate tasks, and secondly, the kiln complex facilitated the integration of private kilns into the imperial production system. Both of these underscore the significance of understanding micro-history not merely as a focus on the local impact of empire-wide level policies concerning methods of taxation, categorisation of the population, and recruitment of workers for large-scale work projects, but also as a way of seeing the interconnectedness of global, regional, and local scales. Working within a system of separated tasks, and between imperial and private kilns, the labour force in Jingdezhen facilitated and embodied the interconnectedness that made this place work.

THE SEPARATION OF TASKS

The separation of tasks is one of the long-standing clichés about Jingdezhen.⁴⁴ Instead of employing hundreds or thousands of highly skilled potters who were individually responsible for the manufacture of a piece of porcelain starting with the preparation of the clay, and ending with the finished piece, the Jingdezhen kiln complex employed workers who each performed separate tasks, from clay kneaders, body shapers, and glaze makers, to firewood choppers, kiln firers, and pot packers, with a multitude of workers involved in the production of a single pot, not unlike an assembly-line production system. All aspects of the production process were clearly set out as separate tasks in the ‘Great gazetteer of Jiangxi province’.

Even the output of the workers in the kilns was very carefully set out in the prescriptive documentation. For example, a potter working on the largest type of vessel the kilns produced was expected to work on five vessels at the same time (see Fig. 5.2).⁴⁵ These were very substantial vats, usually referred to as fishbowls, and used if not specifically for fish, for water storage (in case, for example, of fire hazard) or plants.

A set amount of time was allocated for the various tasks involved in the manufacture of such large vessels: shaping them in clay (up to 18 days), tidying the edges of the leather-hard vessel with a knife (at least



Fig. 5.2 Porcelain fishbowl, decorated in *wucai* style with underglaze cobalt blue and overglaze enamels. H 37,8 cm, D 55,2 cm, weight: 32.3 kg. Jingdezhen, 1567–1572. Inv. no. PDF.778. © Sir Percival David collection, the Trustees of the British Museum

two days), rinsing the vessel and smoothing the surface (two days), and adding slip glaze (two days), with time between the different phases to allow the clay to harden and dry.⁴⁶

In the case of the smaller vessels, there were clear guidelines on the number of items a worker should produce each day. For large vessels (though not the very largest mentioned above), a single worker could shape ten bodies a day, and then required a further day each for tidying the edges, rinsing and repairing, and slip glazing. So one worker still took three whole days to make ten of these large vessels. For the size below that, a worker could make 50 in three days, 100 in three days for the third variety, and so on and so forth.⁴⁷ Engraving or carving added significantly more time to the process, increasing the labour costs.

To ensure that the workers produced pieces at the required productivity rate, set numbers of supervisors were appointed per workshop. So, for example, in a type of kiln known as ‘fire and wind kilns’, there were 29 workers, led by four appointed heads or leaders (*ton*), while in the much smaller muffle kilns, where enamel colours were applied and fired at a lower temperature, there were only ten workers, supervised by

two heads. The supervisor-to-worker ratio was different in each of the workshops, and this presumably tells us something about the level of skill and supervision required. The highest ratios (i.e. few supervisors to many workers) were to be found in the workshop where the slip was prepared (*nishui zuo*), and in the iron works (*tie zuo*), the workshop that made many of the iron objects required both inside the workshops and for securing the wadding and wrapping of the porcelains as they were prepared for travel. In both, each head was in charge of about ten workers, with the iron works, which had 30 workers, also the biggest workshop of them all. On the other end of the spectrum was the ‘character writing workshop’, where one worker was supervised by one head. The kind of work that was done by large numbers of workers supervised by small numbers of heads included the auxiliary workshops where they made the ropes and barrels that were part of most well-equipped kilns, made saggars, and worked with bamboo and wood. The kind of workshops where few workers were supervised by large numbers of heads included the workshops where decorations were added by using an awl, and where they prepared the lacquer used in preparing transport boxes. Tasks like shaping bowls, dishes and plates, and decorating them all had the average sort of ration, of roughly one head to every five workers.⁴⁸ Of course, these are only ideal figures, but they give some indication of the required skill levels and the planning, organisation, and supervision that formed part of the porcelain production.

The allocation of specific timings to these different tasks shows not only the level of organisation, but also the clear separation into distinct tasks. If the work on a large fishbowl was done by a single person, then, still there was the distinction between shaping, tidying, and smoothing, but separate workers were identified for things like kiln-building, saggaring, and barrel-making. The separation of different tasks matters for understanding how workers without extensive training in the craft of ceramics manufacture could still manufacture an item with a shape or design that was entirely unfamiliar to them.

Out of all these workers, the number of individuals who had specific skills like the ability to paint fine decorations was relatively small. The vast majority of the workforce in Jingdezhen did not have what the gazetteer refers to as ‘refined skills’. In fact, by the middle of the Ming dynasty, most individuals with the hereditary status of artisan were in a position to commute their labour service by means of a set payment.⁴⁹ By the time of the first edition of the ‘Great gazetteer of Jiangxi province’, the

provision for paying off one's labour duties was certainly in place; hence the statement that '[t]he work done by hired labour and by government artisans is the same.' On that basis, it was possible for those with artisan status either to make a cash payment in lieu of their service, or to hire someone else to provide the same service in their place. It was an issue that Hsu Wen-chin also discussed in a 1988 study of the social and economic conditions of late imperial Jingdezhen.⁵⁰ Artisans were only recruited for the work that required a higher level of skill, and these artisans only worked in shifts or rotations (*lun ban*).⁵¹ This meant that those who served in Jingdezhen with hereditary status of artisan in fulfilment of their corvée duties, served here only once every three years.

Of course, skill did matter: 'If clay and glazing materials are of a fine quality, and the workers (*gongfu*) have refined skills (*jingxi*), then you need not have any concern over coarseness or contamination [of the wares].'⁵² And of course skill levels could be problematic: 'Whenever craftsmen are employed, if their technical skills and artistry are both refined and based on extensive experience (*jiyi jingshu*), then they will have no difficulty in achieving success in firing pots, and they can make anything from the largest vessels to saggars. If you have workers that are just good enough, then the biggest vessels they can make are winecups.'⁵³ This will be a familiar issue for anyone who has ever tried their hand at throwing pots: the bigger the size, the higher the required skill. A beginner can only make small items; to make anything big requires experience and skill. The risk with workers with low pottery skills was that their pots failed, and that one did not find this out until after the pots had already been fired; much better, then, to supplement the workers with low skill with additional recruits with high skills (*dian zhaomu gaoshou*), so none of the pots turned out a disaster (*shu qi bu kuyu*).⁵⁴ But on the whole, these reflections show that the work in the imperial kilns was carried out by workers who were paid for their services, and workers who gained their skills as part of the labour services they performed here.

The division of the production of porcelain into segregated processes has been hailed as one of the key innovations of the production in Jingdezhen. But it is worth thinking briefly about the implications of this division for the workforce. In general, the more divided the tasks are, the lower the skill set required to complete the tasks. The preparation of the raw material as a whole initially required a high level of skill to identify the best sites for mining stone and clay, the best methods for pulverisation and purification in water, and for obtaining the required fineness

of the materials. But once sites had been identified, water-powered mills and pits for pulverisation had been built, and vats for washing the materials had been set up, the vast majority of the work involved digging, carrying, pouring, stirring, and more carrying. Such tasks required and transmitted certain skills and strengths, but little or no dedicated training or schooling. Similarly, the making of the protective cases in which fine porcelains were fired, known in English as saggars or saggars, and in Chinese as *xiabo*, required some skill, namely turning the clay to form roughly potted bowls, and firing these on a high enough temperature that they could withstand the high temperatures of the porcelain kilns without falling apart, but not the refined skills required to work the porcelain clay. Even throwing pots on the wheel required different kinds of workman with varying skill levels. The potter throwing the larger pieces, including bowls, cups, and plates, was different from the potter who only worked on the smaller pieces (i.e. less than one foot in diameter).⁵⁵

Throwing was only one of the ways in which vessels were formed; they were also made by using moulds, which was especially useful when numerous items of identical size and shape had to be produced. More unusual shapes, i.e. square or polygonal, fluted or ribbed, gourd-shaped or even animal—or human-shaped, were created by forming individually cut pieces in the required shape, and connecting these with slip (i.e. the same material used for the body of the vessel, but mixed with water to make it more mouldable). While the task of forming the required shape would have been performed by a skilled worker, the multitude of tasks that prepared the ground for this one worker could be completed by unskilled workers: making thin slabs, cutting these into pieces, preparing the slip, holding the pot, washing the pot down, moving it, and drying it. All such tasks could be learned on the job, and supervised by a worker with only a marginally higher level of skill than the unskilled workers. No worker was working in isolation, and no worker would have failed to acquire at least some of the skills of the tasks in his or her immediate surroundings. This last observation is important for several reasons. Firstly, the required entry level of skill was low, and new workers could be brought up to speed with the small area of work they were assigned to in a matter of days if not hours. Secondly, the transmission of knowledge happened by osmosis and proximity. A worker with next to no skill could not only pick up an individual task easily, but could acquire enough skill from the tasks performed nearby to import that skill to his own area of work.

Overall, then, we see a production process with a division into clearly distinct tasks, requiring varying levels of skill, executed in a series of sequential steps. The steps can be grouped in separate stages, such as the preparation of the clay, the shaping of bodies, the application of decorations, firing in the kiln, and preparing for transport. This is by no means a complete list, and each of these groups of steps has large numbers of associated tasks, such as the trimming of the edges of the shaped bodies, or the pulverisation of the cobalt for the preparation of the pigment. The tasks are all necessary, and all have to be performed in sequence for the creation of the final product. When we look at the crescent-shaped *kendi* (Fig. 5.1) and the fishbowl (Fig. 5.2), the differences in size and purpose are immediately obvious, but there are also significant similarities: the clay used would have been sourced in the same place and prepared in the same way, both were shaped manually, both were decorated with cobalt, both were glazed with a transparent glaze, and both were fired in a wood-fired kiln. The *kendi* would have been made in a private kiln and the fishbowl in an imperial kiln, but most likely the hands that prepared the clay, shaped the objects, and prepared the fire for the kiln belonged to the same workers. The separation into different tasks meant that only a small part of the entire sequence of production had to be adapted to make something for an invisible consumer in an overseas market: the shaping of the object and the style of the decorations painted on the surface. Everything else could more or less proceed along the predetermined sequence of events. Very little needed to change in the organisation of labour and the process of manufacture to accommodate the desires of very different consumers.

THE EMERGENCE OF PRIVATE KILNS

During the first half of the Ming dynasty, broadly speaking until the start of the sixteenth century, all human labour and all the goods manufactured by this labour force were part of the monopoly of the emperor, who could at all times lay a claim on them.⁵⁶ With the silverisation of the economy, and the growth of demand from both regional and global markets during the course of the sixteenth century, the production of porcelain had to increase dramatically. From the middle of the Ming onwards, we see the emergence of two parallel systems: an imperial kiln system, managed by the central administration and intended to create a steady

supply of imperial-quality porcelain for the emperor, his household, and his administration in the capital, and a private production system, where ceramics both for domestic trade and for export were manufactured. What is at stake is not so much whether there was a distinction or not. As the written sources tell us, in the sixteenth century, there were 58 imperial kilns (*guanyao*) and roughly 20 private kilns (*minyao*).⁵⁷ Some 30 of the 58 imperial kilns were for the firing of large cisterns (fish-bowls), which, as we saw earlier, might be as large as 86 cm high and 94 cm in diameter, and thus required a dedicated type of kiln that is left out of consideration. The remaining 28 imperial kilns were both for firing blue-and-white wares and for enamelware.

The key difference between the imperial and the private kilns was not just their shape (the imperial kilns were built in a narrow, rounded shape, while the private kilns tended to be long and wide), but also in their size. They used roughly the same quantity of firewood per firing (80–90 shoulder-loads or *gang* of firewood), but the imperial kilns could only hold around 300 pieces, while more than 1000 vessels would be fired in the private kilns in one firing.⁵⁸ This, obviously, significantly brought down the unit price of each vessel fired at the private kilns. When the official kilns were fired, they only placed wares of one colour in the kiln, protected from the flames by a row of empty saggars. In the private kilns, every row was occupied, with some of the coarser wares placed in the very front and back protecting the good wares in the middle rows from the flames. Moreover, the brick walls of the imperial kilns were sturdier, and covered with a dense layer of mud, so that no air could get in or out during the firing process. Overall, then, the text concludes that ‘the reason that the vessels from the imperial kilns are pure and the vessels from the private kilns are of a more mixed quality is because of this difference in systems’.⁵⁹

So clearly there was a difference between these two types of kilns; there were *guanyao*, usually translated as ‘imperial kilns’, and *minyao*, for which a number of different terms circulate, including ‘folk kilns’, ‘popular kilns’, or ‘private kilns’. The nature of the relationship between the imperial kilns and private businesses has given rise to a great deal of discussion. One of the sites where the nature of the relationship between imperial and private kiln production was articulated was in administrative policy documentation. In the sixteenth century, during the Jiajing reign period, a policy was initiated referred to as ‘*guan da min shao*’, translated as ‘official partnership with private kilns’.⁶⁰ Their description is very insightful: ‘it was a means of broadening the base of procurement of

porcelain for the court'.⁶¹ When the production quotas for the imperial goods were too high to manage for the imperial kilns, then the ordinary wares for daily use in the palace could be fired at those private kilns that were deemed to produce wares of high enough quality.⁶²

The coexistence of imperially managed and privately managed kilns, operating in a mutually supportive production system, goes some way towards explaining how the kiln complex of Jingdezhen could cope with changes in demand from the imperial administration and from the market. The imperial demand or quota was a kind of tax system, and there was little flexibility here: the demand from the court had to be supplied. In order to safeguard the production process of the highest quality wares for the imperial court, the court prescribed specific timings for specific tasks. Of course, the skills these workers gained could then easily be transferred to the private kiln production, and in that sense, the two systems operated in mutually supportive ways. If we think of this official partnership with private kilns in spatial terms, then the *guan da min shao* system highlights both a vertical or hierarchical connection between top and bottom (or imperial centre and provincial periphery) and a horizontal, or sideways connection between the centre of production and the peripheral production sites (or between imperial kiln and private kilns).

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

As we said earlier, the crescent-shaped kendi we started with raises a number of questions we cannot answer. It is not possible to name an individual creator for this object, and we know nothing about the thoughts and emotions of the potters who worked together in crafting this piece of ceramics in a shape that meant very little to them. But I hope the discussion above has clarified a number of aspects of the production process that do help us to understand better how it came into being: the (proto-)industry in sixteenth-century Jingdezhen was very substantial: hundreds of thousands of pieces, probably millions of pieces were manufactured here each year, both for delivery to the imperial court, for distribution throughout the empire, and for the overseas trade. The exported goods were shaped and decorated to appeal to their different markets in Japan, Islamic Southeast Asia, the Indian Ocean including the African coast, and to Europe via Portuguese shipments. The labour force that worked in the ceramics manufactures (including all its related industries) was made up of a mixture of corvee labourers and hereditary

artisans, skilled and unskilled labourers, local residents, and migrant workers. The segregation of the manufacturing process into clearly defined and circumscribed separate stages both made it easier to accommodate this fluctuating and mobile labour force, and made it possible to adopt and respond to the desires for specific shapes and designs of very diverse markets, without having to change the whole production process. To understand this *kendi*, then, we need both to see the spatial dimensions of the nearby and the distant (or local and global), and to explore the organisational processes and economic structures that create meaning within this specific society.

NOTES

1. A similar item, listed as ‘A Rare and Blue and White Porcelain Pilgrim Flask Made For The Islamic Market, China, Ming Dynasty, fifteenth Century’ as part of the Arts of the Islamic World was sold by Sotheby’s in 2011 (lot 349). <http://www.sothebys.com/en/auctions/ecatalogue/lot.349.html/2011/arts-of-the-islamic-world>, last consulted on 31 October 2016.
2. The evidence for the vast circulation of ceramic goods from Jingdezhen comes not only from the numbers of objects remaining in museums and private collections, but also from archaeological excavation, which allows us to see the whole range of consumers of Jingdezhen from emperors and high officials to the lower socio-economic groups.
3. Metal flasks in the shape of a crescent moon are known as *kashkul*. See A. S. Melikian-Chirvani, ‘From the Royal Boat to the Beggars Bowl’, *Islamic Art* 4, 1990–1991, pp. 3–111.
4. Pauline Lunsingh Scheurleer, ‘Een Eigenaardige Chinese Waterkan [a Peculiar Chinese Waterjug]’, *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 32, 4 (1984), 208–214. See also R. H. Pinder-Wilson and M. Tregear, ‘Two Drinking Flasks from Asia’, *Oriental Art* 16 (1970), 337–341, pl. 6 en 7; and Robert Finlay, *The Pilgrim Art: Cultures of Porcelain in World History* (Berkeley, 2010), p. 299.
5. The absence of ego-documents about labour tasks is also discussed in Christine Moll-Murata, ‘Work Ethics and Work Valuations in a Period of Commercialization: Ming China, 1500–1644’, *International Review of Social History* 56, S19 (2011), 165–195 (167).
6. Compare the opening pages of Craig Clunas, *Empire of Great Brightness: Visual and Material Cultures of Ming China, 1368–1644* (London, 2007). The term ‘early modern’ is used for many places other than Britain, and often refers to slightly different social and economic

- developments. See the discussion in Mary Louise Nagata, *Labor Contracts and Labor Relations in Early Modern Central Japan* (London, 2005), 2–12.
7. For a general overview of the era, see Frederick W. Mote, *Imperial China, 900–1800* (Cambridge, Mass., 1999), especially pp. 517–684. See also Timothy Brook, *The Troubled Empire: China in the Yuan and Ming Dynasties* (Cambridge, Mass., 2010).
 8. I am leaving aside for the time being the discussion about whether this period should be seen as revealing ‘the sprouts of capitalism’, as one might argue in a Marxist discourse. The classic study in English is Xu Dixin and Wu Zhengming, *Chinese Capitalism, 1522–1840* (Basingstoke, 2000), a translation of the first volume of a three-volume series on Chinese capitalism first published in 1985. See especially pp. 65–80.
 9. On the influx of silver, and the economic consequences of this silver flow, see André Gunder Frank, *Reorient: Global Economy in the Asian Age* (Berkeley, 1998). For the comparability of the European and Chinese economies, see Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence: China, Europe, and the Modern World Economy* (Princeton, 2000). For a divergent view, and a critique of the arguments by Pomeranz and Frank, see Li Xiantang, ‘The Paradoxical Effect of Silver in the Economies of Ming and Qing China’, *Chinese Studies in History* 45, 1 (2011), 84–99.
 10. This is implicit, for example, in the organisation and contributions of Stephan R. Epstein, Maarten Prak, and J. L. van Zanden, *Technology, Skills and the Pre-Modern Economy in the East and the West: Essays Dedicated to the Memory of S.R. Epstein* (Leiden, 2013). See also John E. Wills, *China and Maritime Europe, 1500–1800: Trade, Settlement, Diplomacy, and Missions* (Cambridge, 2011).
 11. In that sense, it is possible to observe similarities with the European early modern period. For a study on artisans and work in early modern Europe, see Thomas Max Safley and Leonard N. Rosenband, eds., *The Workplace before the Factory: Artisans and Proletarians, 1500–1800* (Ithaca and London, 1993).
 12. In that sense, this essay is part of a conversation about global labour. For a recent example of a study in this field, see Marcel van der Linden, *Workers of the World: Essays toward a Global Labor History* (Leiden, 2008).
 13. Endymion P. Wilkinson, *Chinese History: A New Manual* (Cambridge, Mass., 2013), 285.
 14. In fact, over the course of the Ming dynasty, land would gradually shift from ownership by the empire to ‘freely alienable’ land, owned privately, worked by tenant farmers, and taxable by the state. Madeline Zelin, ‘Economic Freedom in Late Imperial China’, in William C. Kirby, *Realms of Freedom in Modern China* (Stanford, 2004), 57–83 (64). See also

- Prasannan Parthasarathi, 'Agricultural Labor and Property: A Global and Comparative Perspective', in *Global Labour History: A State of the Art*, ed. Jan Lucassen (Bern, 2006), 455–477; Wang Yuquan, 'Some Salient Features of the Ming Labor Service System', *Ming Studies* 21 (1986), 1–44, p. 1. See also Heinz Friese, *Das Dienstleistungs-System der Ming-Zeit (1368–1644)* (Hamburg, 1959), 13–15.
15. Francesca Bray, *Technology and Gender: Fabrics of Power in Late Imperial China* (Berkeley, 1997), 93.
 16. For a study of the household registration system under Communist reforms, see for example, Hein Mallee, 'China's Household Registration System under Reform', *Development and Change* 26, 1 (1995), 1–29.
 17. Wilkinson, *Chinese History*, 288. See also Zheng Zhongbing, Meng Fanhua and Zhou Shiyuan, *Zhongguo gudai fushui shiliao jiyao* [Selected materials on taxes in ancient China], 4 vols. (Beijing, 2003).
 18. Wang, 'Some Salient Features', 3. Wang refers to *Da Ming huidian* (1587, rpt. Taiwan, 1964), vol. 1, 350. Zhu Yuanzhang's first order to register the population was issued on the first day of the 11th month of the 18th year of the Zhizheng reign (i.e. 1 December 1358). See *Ming shi lu*, vol. 1, 70.
 19. For a full listing of these 45 categories, see Wang, 'Some Salient Features', 25–29.
 20. Wang, 'Some Salient Features', 6. On these yellow books or registers, see Zhang Wenxian, 'The Yellow Register Archives of Imperial Ming China', *Libraries & the Cultural Record* 43, 2 (2008), 148–175.
 21. Edward Farmer, *Zhu Yuanzhang and Early Ming Legislation: The Reordering of Chinese Society Following the Era of Mongol Rule* (Leiden, 1995), 161. See also Friese, *Das Dienstleistungs-System*, 28–29.
 22. Farmer, *Zhu Yuanzhang*, 17.
 23. Martin Heijdra, 'The Socio-economic Development of Rural China during the Ming', in *The Cambridge History of China*, eds. Denis Twitchett and Frederick Mote, Volume 8 (Cambridge, 1998), 417–578, p. 456. See also Friese, *Das Dienstleistungs-System*, 14, 128–129.
 24. Friese, *Das Dienstleistungs-System*, 34–36, 90 ff.
 25. The key distinction between free and unfree labour in the field of labour history is the ability to seek employment and wages in enterprises competing for profit in the market. See the discussion in the chapter entitled 'Why "free" wage labor' in Van der Linden, *Workers of the World*, 39–61, especially 39. See also Karin Hofmeester and Christine Moll-Murata, 'The Joy and Pain of Work, 1500–1600: Introduction', *International Review of Social History* 56, S19 (2011): 1–23, p. 7.
 26. For the building of the new capital in the north during the reign of the Yongle emperor in the early fifteenth century, a workforce of hundreds

- of thousands of artisans, soldiers and common labourers was assembled in Beijing, including 7000 captured Annamese artisans. The Grand Canal was also reconstructed during this period. The channel had to be cleared and a series of locks had to be constructed, and to complete this task, 300,000 corvée labourers were employed for 100 days. Hok-lam Chan, 'The Chien-wen, Yong-lo, Hung-his, and Hsüan-te reigns, 1399–1435', in *The Cambridge History of China*, eds. Frederick Mote and Denis Twitchett, vol. 7 'The Ming Dynasty, 1368–1644, Part I' (Cambridge, 1988), 182–304, pp. 239–241, 252.
27. *Jingdezhen taolu*, juan 5.1b. See also *Ching-te-Chen T'ao-lu or The Potteries of China*, Geoffrey R. Sayer, trans. (London, 1951), 39–40.
 28. Kerr, *Ceramic Technology*, 198.
 29. Kerr, *Ceramic Technology*, 199. See also Lee, 'The artisans of Ching-te-chen', 29.
 30. A great deal has been written about Zhang Juzheng. See Goodrich, L. Carrington and Chao-ying Fang, *Dictionary of Ming Biography, 1368–1644* (New York, 1976), 53–61. A full listing of biographical sources for Zhang can be found in Lin Li-chiang, 'The Creation and Transformation of Ancient Rulership in the Ming Dynasty', in Dieter Kuhn and Helga Stahl, *Perceptions of Antiquity in Chinese Civilization* (Heidelberg, 2008), 321–359, p. 322.
 31. Friese, *Das Dienstleistungs-System*, 129. The artisans that were resident in or near the capital and served in the *Jiangzuoyuan* (artisans known as residential artisans or *zhuzuo renjiang*) were not allowed to commute their service to payment. See also Robert Lee, 'The Artisans of Ching-Te-Chen in Late Imperial China', Ph.D. dissertation, University of British Columbia (1980), pp. 4, 8–13.
 32. Ray Huang, *1587, a Year of No Significance: The Ming Dynasty in Decline* (New Haven, 1981). See also Ray Huang, *Taxation and Governmental Finance in Sixteenth-Century Ming China* (Cambridge, 1974) and Liang Fangzhong, *The Single-Whip Method (I-T'iao-Pien Fa) of Taxation in China* (Cambridge Mass., 1956).
 33. Heijdra, 'The socio-economic development', 456–457.
 34. The demand for silver in China from the sixteenth century onwards has been widely documented. The work of Dennis Flynn and Giraldez is a good starting point, and a number of their studies have been brought together in Dennis Flynn and Arturo Giraldez, *China and the Birth of Globalization in the sixteenth Century* (Farnham, Surrey, 2010). For a strong argument in favour of seeing China's demand for silver as shaping factor for the world economy, see Frank, *Reorient*.
 35. *Wanli Jiangxi sheng gazhi* [Great gazetteer of Jiangxi province] (8 juan). Wang Zongmu, comp. (Beijing, 2003).

36. Joseph R. Dennis, *Writing, Publishing, and Reading Local Gazetteers in Imperial China, 1100–1700* (Cambridge, Mass., 2015).
37. This forms the seventh chapter (*juan*) of the gazetteer. For a study, see Margaret Medley, ‘Organization and Production at Jingdezhen in the Sixteenth Century’, in Rosemary E. Scott, ed., *The Porcelains of Jingdezhen* (London, 1993).
38. *Jiangxi sheng dazhi* 7.6b.
39. The decree establishing military units like the battalion dates from 1364, 4 years before the establishment of the Ming dynasty. Edward L. Dreyer, *Early Ming China: A Political History, 1355–1435*, pp. 78–80. Each province had guards (*wei*) of 5000 men, made up of five battalions of a thousand men each.
40. See Ray Huang, *Taxation and Governmental Finance in Sixteenth-century Ming China*, 53. In this case, the cost of labour payable by the battalion is listed as amounting to a total of 33 *liang* and 6 *qian*. It is obviously not appropriate to refer to this payment as a wage, as it was merely intended to cover the costs of keeping the worker alive.
41. Robert Lee translates the first term, *gongfu*, as journeymen, and describes these as the assistants to the artisans, and the second term, *shatufu*, as labourers, ‘toilers of sundry works’. Lee, ‘The artisans of Ching-te-chen’, 26.
42. Christine Moll-Murata, ‘Guilds and Apprenticeship in China and Europe: The Case of the Jingdezhen and European Ceramics Industries’, in *Technology, Skills and the Pre-modern Economy in the East and the West. Essays Dedicated to the Memory of S.R. Epstein*, eds., Maarten Prak and Jan Luiten van Zanden (Leiden, 2013), 227–257, pp. 228–230.
43. *Jiangxi sheng dazhi* 7.21a.
44. In one translation of a famous seventeenth-century text by Song Yingxing, the oft-quoted statement from *Tiangong kaiwu* reads: ‘Without counting the minute details, a portion of clay must pass through 72 different processes before it is finally made into a cup’. Sung Ying-hsing, *Chinese Technology in the Seventeenth Century*, translated from the Chinese and annotated by E-tu Zen Sun and Shiou-chuan Sun (Mineola, NY, 1966), 154. See also Dagmar Schaefer, *The Crafting of the 10,000 Things: Knowledge and Technology in Seventeenth-Century China* (Chicago, 2011).
45. There is a very similar fishbowl in the collection of the National Museum of Scotland. See also A. du Boulay, *Christie’s Pictorial History of Chinese Ceramics* (New Jersey, 1984), p. 132. Another is illustrated by R. Krahl, *Chinese Ceramics in the Topkapi Saray Museum* (London, 1986), vol. II, p. 668, no. 1062.
46. *Jiangxi sheng dazhi* 7.23a.

47. *Jiangxi sheng dazhi* 7.23a-b.
48. *Jiangxi sheng dazhi* 7.22b-23a.
49. It is worth noting that, as Robert Lee has shown in 1979, the Jingdezhen conscripted labour service continued to exist well beyond the mid-Ming, and was still in evidence in the late sixteenth century. Robert Lee, 'The Artisans of Ching-te-chen'.
50. Hsu argues that this transition from conscript or corvée labour to hired labour, or wage labour, should be seen as part of the emergence of capitalism, especially in the handicraft industries of the late Ming. Hsu Wen-Chin, 'Social and Economic Factors in the Chinese Porcelain Industry in Jingdezhen During the Late Ming and Early Qing Period, ca. 1620–1683', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (New Series) 120, 1 (1988), 135–159, especially p. 139.
51. *Lun ban* literally means work in rotation. The other category were the settled artisans, the *zhuzuojiang*, who were all registered in and around the capital, and all served within the imperial household, and fell under the jurisdiction of the eunuchs in the imperial palace. See Friese, *Dienstleistungs-System*, 118–122.
52. *Jiangxi sheng dazhi* 7.18b.
53. *Jiangxi sheng dazhi* 7.23b.
54. *Jiangxi sheng dazhi* 7.24a.
55. Tichane, *Ching-te-chen*, 144.
56. Friese, *Das Dienstleistungs-System*, 126.
57. For a further discussion of these numbers, see Kerr, *Ceramic Technology*, 197.
58. *Jiangxi sheng dazhi* 7.17a.
59. *Jiangxi sheng dazhi* 7.17a-b.
60. Kerr, *Ceramic Technology*, 200.
61. Kerr and Wood, *Ceramic Technology*, 200.
62. Yip Hon Ming, 'The Kuan-Ta-Min-Shao System and Ching-Te-Chen's Porcelain Industry', *Papers on Society and Culture of Early Modern China*, 1992. See also the discussion in Lee, 'The Artisans of Ching-te-chen' and Yuan Tsing. 'The Porcelain industry and Ching-te-chen 1550–1700', *Ming Studies* 1 (1978), 45–54.

Woollen Manufacturing in the Early Modern Mediterranean (1550–1630): Changing Labour Relations in a Commodity Chain

Andrea Caracausi

Since 2007, I have had the great opportunity to participate in the *Global Collaboratory on the History of Labour Relations, 1500–2000* held by the International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam (<https://collab.iisg.nl/web/labourrelations>). Therefore, the article has largely benefited from the continuous exchange of ideas with the group members over these years and, in particular, with Karin Hofmeester, Gijs Kessler, Jan Lucassen and Christine Moll Murata to whom I would like to address a special thanks. For the Global Collaboratory approach and the taxonomy of labour relations, see: Karin Hofmeester, Jan Lucassen, Leo Lucassen, Rombert Stapel, Richard Zijdeman, ‘The Global Collaboratory on the History of Labour Relations, 1500–2000: Background, Set-Up, Taxonomy, and Applications’, <http://hdl.handle.net/10622/4OGRAD>, IISH Dataverse, VI (last accessed 30 October 2016). Finally, I gratefully acknowledge the editors of the book for their patience during my writing of this text and Christian De Vito in particular for our long discussions on micro-history and the history of labour relations. The article was also carried out within the ambit of the research project FIRB 2012RBF12GBQZ_002 financed by the Italian Ministry of Education, Research and University.

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INTRODUCTION

Woollen cloth was one of the most commonplace clothing possessions in many areas of the pre-industrial world.¹ Large sections of the population in Continental Europe, the Mediterranean, the Middle East and, from the seventeenth century onwards, the Americas bought locally made woollen products.² These encompassed a wide range of low-, medium- and high-quality products, including caps and knitted goods, which were generally made and marketed on the spot for their end consumers.³ The substantial division of labour in the woollen-cloth production chain required workers with different qualities and manual skills, and the labour force included both local and migrant workers.⁴ Clothes were rarely produced in one place; wool, dyes and other raw materials came from different regions, and operations such as spinning, weaving and refining were performed in multiple sites. A village of spinners had various links with other cities, towns, and even across and beyond state borders, and therefore spinning was incorporated in a trans-local chain of economic processes.⁵ The way in which this commodity chain worked is, thus, of relevance for global labour history.

In recent years, interest in the latter has grown, primarily as a result of the doubt it has cast on paradigms founded largely on a Eurocentric perspective. Several studies have, for example, questioned the linearity of the evolution of labour relations, especially the transitions from non-free to free labour, and from servile to salaried labour, processes in which the Industrial Revolution is teleologically seen as the determining factor. Labour commodification, global labour historians insist, occurred in diverse historical periods and forms part of a multiplicity of labour relations.⁶

This chapter seeks to test the usefulness of combining a micro-historical analysis centred on the manufacture of woollen cloth with the heuristic tool of commodity chain analysis derived from sociology but recently used also in historical studies.⁷ The first objective is thus to see if and how these two approaches together can move the project of global labour history forward.⁸ Second, I shall demonstrate that categories like 'labour relations', 'space', 'time-framing' and 'historical periodisation', can be identified better when they emerge from the investigation of a single place.⁹ My final goal is to add a further subject of study—the production of goods—to this experiment of global history on a small scale beyond global lives and the circulation of goods and objects.¹⁰

I will focus on the woollen cloth manufactures of Padua in the early modern Mediterranean, approximately from the 1550s to the 1630s.

Rather than taking a large and famous manufacturing centre like Venice or Florence as my starting point, I intend to focus on an apparently 'remote' location, placed outside the main routes of commerce. The main challenge, in fact, is to demonstrate the potential of a micro-historical analysis without any reference to the potential 'global' dimensions of a subject-town, suburb or remote country village.¹¹ To this end, I propose to see this town and the manufacture of an allegedly non-'global' product as a dynamic space, criss-crossed by numerous vectors from the same or other towns that all had an impact both on internal labour relations and on the structure of the commodity chain. The chapter begins with some methodological issues and a reconstruction of the ethnography of the Padua-based wool commodity chain. I then focus on two specific 'boxes'¹² (spinning and weaving) that highlight the changes in geographical distribution and labour relations, followed by a discussion of the reasons behind these changes. The final section offers some concluding comments, showing the implications from a methodological and historical point of view.

THE ETHNOGRAPHY OF A COMMODITY CHAIN

The starting point of a commodity chain-based approach is to conceive of a 'commodity' as the outcome of a labour- and production-process network. Each single production process can be viewed as a 'box' or 'nodal point', which is in turn connected to other nodal points within the network. Production, distribution and consumption are thus shaped by the social relations (including organisations) that characterise each sequential phase of input acquisition, production, distribution, marketing and consumption.¹³ A series of questions can be posed for each single nodal point, ranging from the degree of monopoly within it to its geographical scope, from the number of goods chains into which the box fits to the type of ownership regulating production, and from labour control methods to the bonds linking the various nodal points. Cyclical economic changes are one of the key points in the building of a commodity chain, prompting vertical integration phenomena or geographical convergence/divergence in proportion to the will to reduce transaction and labour costs.¹⁴

In my analysis of this pre-industrial commodity chain, I started by exploring the place in which the main operations (especially weaving) were carried out. This required using a great variety of sources, including

legislative, judicial, notarial and fiscal materials, to extract the quantitative data to identify the interactions between the different actors over a long period.¹⁵ For the purposes of retracing this goods chain, it proved useful to ‘follow the traces’ of this production and to link the information acquired in the Padua archive with data from other repositories.¹⁶ The spatial dimensions of this kind of analysis depend on the geographical scope of the industry, or the focus of the analysis. As my focus here is on spinning and weaving, I chose to focus on Venice, which served as the nodal point of the trade with the Near East and the Iberia, and where the main legislative decisions were taken.¹⁷ I have identified nine main segments, each of which represents a distinct nodal point: wool production; wool preparation; spinning; weaving (including warping); refining; dyeing; distribution; tailoring; and consumption.

Below, I analyse each nodal point in the commodity chain by highlighting three elements: geographical scope, labour control methods and links between the various boxes.

Wool production. Wool production took place in different areas corresponding to diverse jurisdictions and, as a consequence, three different categories of wool: wool ‘*born and raised*’ within the Padua district; wool ‘*born*’ in other areas but sheared within the district (and thus subject to local jurisdiction); and wool from outside the guild’s jurisdiction and from other Mediterranean regions (Kingdom of Naples, Lombardy, the Papal States and, above all, Spain).¹⁸ In rural areas, sheep breeding was generally organised around small independent firms who managed flocks. These independent workers were, however, bound to the sheep owners in contracts (*soccida*), which involved sharing the profits from the sale of wool equally.¹⁹ Breeding involved considerable mobility, much of which was seasonal (from the mountains to the plains in the winter and the reverse in summer). Company contracts frequently involved paying cash advances to travelling shepherds at the beginning of the season, often leading to debts at the end of the contract when the winter was over.²⁰

This kind of labour control was affected by a number of factors. Firstly, the geo-morphological characteristics of the area: smaller flocks on the plains, where livestock was combined with extensive farming; larger flocks in the hills and mountains, where livestock was done in an intensive way. Secondly, the social and financial profile of the sheep owners: merchants, aristocrats and ecclesiastical bodies directly managed the production of raw materials, employing many salaried workers at the expense of independent workers and small- to medium-scale owners.²¹

The sale of raw materials, and thus the link to the wool-preparation phase, was managed by several groups of merchants, according to the type and provenance of the wool. For wool coming from outside the guild's jurisdiction and from other Mediterranean regions, the main intermediaries between Spain and Italy were Genoese, Florentine and Spanish merchants.²² Other specific groups can be detected in other areas, such as Jews from the Polesine region.²³ As far as wool 'born and raised' in the district was concerned, the guild institutions maintained a monopoly on behalf of their members.²⁴

Wool preparation. The main wool preparation phases were usually centralised within the town. Merchants managed the operations within their workshops, employing teams of workers on weekly or annual contracts. Contracts were managed by foremen, who acted as intermediaries between entrepreneurs and workers. Here, too, cash advances were commonplace, as the majority of the workforce came from outside the town. Merchants required a guarantee issued on behalf of the workers or those who acted for them. The degree of monopoly, thus, was minimal in the sense that each firm only employed those workers it needed for this phase.²⁵

Spinning. As was common in many other Italian towns, spinning was managed predominantly at home by a female labour force. A spinning woman could only be allotted a limited volume of cloth, and centralisation of this phase was forbidden. Spinning women were self-employed, or sometimes employed by their husbands, who acted as middlemen for the suppliers of the raw material suppliers. In other cases, women contracted salaries and duties with businessmen directly.²⁶

Warping and weaving. These operations were normally managed by self-employed workers, assisted by fewer than two helpers. Weavers were generally responsible for collecting semi-worked goods from merchants and delivering finished cloth. Here, too, payment involved cash advances by merchants which bound merchants and workers together more closely.²⁷ Sometimes, more workers had to be employed in such workshops, and in other cases work was contracted out to additional merchants.²⁸ The presence of migrant labour was limited in particular to occasions in which it was necessary to import new manufacturing technologies or in the aftermath of wars. In such cases, entrepreneurs ensured continuity in the supply of work for a specific period of time, but normally this was a matter of non-seasonal labour.

Refining. This nodal point encompassed four separate operations: scouring, pressing, tentering and nap-raising. These operations shared several elements, most notably the control exerted by the guilds over these operations. The guilds owned the buildings in which these operations were carried out, and rented these out to the small- to medium-scale artisans (in the case of raisers) or small-businesspeople (in the other three cases), who managed them. Geographically, these operations were limited to the town of Padua. Many salaried employees on daily or seasonal contracts worked within such buildings. The employees were usually local; although they moved around the urban area, their operations took place in the town or the surrounding area, and almost always fell under the guild's jurisdiction.²⁹

Dyeing. The next phase of work was dyeing. This could be done before or after the refining phase, or even after the product was sold. The geographical scope of the work was very wide and took place in various contexts according to the relevant market. Dyeing was not limited to the town of Padua but was also done in other towns such as Venice or places where the finished product was sold (Southern Italy, Central and Eastern Europe, Eastern Mediterranean and the Near East), and where overseas agents and other intermediaries selling the product were based.³⁰ Cloth could be sold 'white' or undyed precisely so as to enable buyers (or sometimes those making the product) to choose the colour of the cloth at a later stage.³¹ This is an extremely important element precisely because these were market strategies, which could impact significantly on the commodity chain. In any event, such operations were largely left to self-employed or small businessmen with a limited number of salaried employees. Large agglomerations did exist, but they were sporadic and depended on the type of commodity chain type concerned.³²

Distribution. The merchants who manufactured the cloth generally distributed their products themselves. They sold it on in retail outlets locally or sent it to distant markets. Such retail sellers were called drapers where cloth of various quality was concerned, or mercers in the case of mixed products or knitwear. Drapers also received foreign cloth, which they retailed in local markets. Self-employed individuals, in turn hiring one or more permanent workers within their workshops, formed the predominant model. This phase had close links to consumption and spread over multiple geographical areas, including Venice, the Ottoman Empire, central-southern Italy, Iberia and, in the early seventeenth century, central and eastern Europe.³³

Tailoring. This was perhaps the central manufacturing phase, although its importance has generally been underestimated or detached from the specific study of wool working, which has tended to concentrate on the finished product. After being cut to the length required by buyers, cloth was ready to be worked by tailors. In some cases, merchants played a direct role in this phase but this was rare. Tailors made whole garments or just parts of them (sleeves, tunics). Most frequently they made hose finished off with leather soles at the bottom. Tailors measured buyers and cut and sewed the various parts in accordance with client tastes. They were based in Padua or in the other market places where the products were sold. Merchants often sent long pieces of cloth abroad, which were tailored according to local uses and consumers' preferences.³⁴

Consumption. This might be viewed as both the last and the first phase of the chain. Consumers, of course, received the final product, but their preferences simultaneously conditioned the production of wool. Woollen clothes were bought by a wide range of people, in local and long distance markets, from the Middle East to Southern Italy, and from Spain to central and eastern Europe.³⁵ Consumers varied widely: rich, sophisticated clients bought luxury products whereas average or poor clients had to content themselves with standardised and cheap clothes.³⁶ Accordingly, clothes were divided into fine, low-quality and mixed, depending on the buyer. The quality of clothes depended firstly on the quality and quantity of the raw material (wool) and secondly, on the number of working phases it had undergone.

This ethnography (and Fig. 6.1) should not be viewed as a general 'model' for the Mediterranean or other woollen industries. Indeed, in each context, configurations varied widely depending on the degree of integration and dissemination of production, guild monopoly and the specific areas of supplying raw materials and markets.³⁷ For the reconstruction of the composition of the workforce within each box and the evolution of labour relations, it is crucial to focus on a single nodal point, even taking into account the evolution of a commodity chain as a whole and the links between the various changes. This choice certainly enables us to better appreciate, on one hand, the role of individuals and domestic households (in particular in reference to labour relations) and, on the other, the ways in which the forces of monopoly and competition can influence, condition and manipulate the commodity chain.

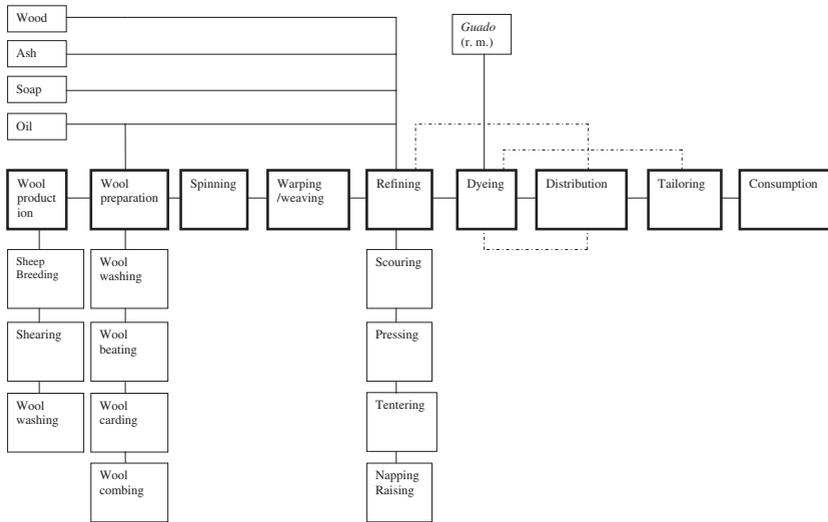


Fig. 6.1 The Padua-based wool commodity chain, 1550–1630

INSIDE THE BOXES: SPINNING AND WEAVING

How did shifts in labour relations occur? Did the changes in one box depend on changes in other boxes? In order to address these questions, I will draw on some examples from two specific commodity chain boxes: spinning and weaving. In this section I will analyse the changes within the two boxes, while the following section will address the reasons for such transformations.

In the second half of the sixteenth century, and particularly after 1570, spinning underwent significant changes in both manufacturing geography and labour relations. From the point of view of work distribution, spinning, especially in the case of bobbin spinning, shifted progressively to the countryside along north and north-eastern axes and in the direction of the capital city, Venice (Tables 6.1, 6.2).

This shift was not simply geographical in nature but also related to labour relations, techniques of labour control and the contractual power of spinning women. Most women worked at home until the 1570s. Their relationships with the merchant-manufacturers were two-fold. Some spinning women went directly to the merchants' homes to

Table 6.1 Places of residence of the bobbin spinners, 1530–1669

<i>Period</i>	<i>Padua</i>		<i>Paduan district</i>		<i>Paduan districts (intermediaries)</i>		<i>Total</i>	
	<i>No. of observations</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>No. of observations</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>No. of observations</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>No. of observations</i>	<i>%</i>
1530–1559	125	72.7	47	27.3	0	0.0	172	100
1560–1589	110	46.6	126	53.4	0	0.0	236	100
1590–1669	0	0.0	1	12.5	7	87.5	8	100
Total	235	56.5	174	41.8	7	1.7	416	100

Sources: ASP, UL, bb. 297–304 (a. 1529, 1543, 1556, 1557, 1565, 1566, 1572, 1575, 1577, 1578, 1579, 1583, 1589, 1591, 1598, 1659)

Table 6.2 Places of residence of the wheel spinners, 1530–1669

<i>Period</i>	<i>Padua</i>		<i>Paduan district</i>		<i>Paduan districts (intermediaries)</i>		<i>Total</i>	
	<i>No.</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>%</i>
1530–1559	216	97.7	5	2.3	0	0.0	221	100.0
1560–1589	316	97.8	7	2.2	0	0.0	323	100.0
1590–1569	12	80.0	1	6.7	2	13.3	15	100.0
Total	544	97.3	13	2.3	2	0.4	559	100.0

Sources: ASP, UL, bb. 297–304 (a. 1529, 1543, 1556, 1557, 1565, 1566, 1572, 1575, 1577, 1578, 1579, 1583, 1589, 1591, 1598, 1659)

collect the goods, and thus had a direct relationship with the latter and were paid directly.³⁸ Others were paid via their husbands or fathers, who in turn were oftenworkers in the merchants' workshops or within the putting out system. An analysis of the declarations issued by merchants shows that just over 50% of the 'wheel'-spinning women were in fact married to wool makers (combers and beaters), while almost 60% of the 'bobbin' spinners were married to combers, raisers or weavers (Table 6.3).

Therefore, until the 1570s, labour relations within the spinning trade were determined by the market, but in part mediated by family members who already worked along the production chain, a state of affairs which led some spinners to a hybrid form of independent labour within the

Table 6.3 Survey of the trades of the spinning women's husbands, sixteenth century

<i>Husband's trade</i>	"Wheel" (%)	"Bobbin" (%)
Raisers	1.9	3.4
Wool combers	20.0	31.0
Wool <i>scartesini</i>	28.4	6.9
Weavers	0.6	17.2
<i>Jobs inside the wool workshop</i>	51.0	58.6
<i>Unknown trade</i>	39.4	3.4
<i>Other trades</i>	9.65	37.95
Total	100.0	100.0

Sources ASP, UL, bb. 297–301 (a. 1529, 1543, 1556, 1557, 1565, 1566, 1572, 1575, 1577, 1578, 1579, 1583, 1589, 1591, 1598)

household economy. This distinction is significant as far as labour control is concerned, and in particular in relation to salaries. On 20 September 1527, spinning woman Lucrezia Vicentina, wife of Bernardino Rosso, obtained from the wool merchant Giacomo da Monton the payment for a quantity of wool produced over the previous weeks on the basis of the fact that 'her husband was not living with her and was ruining all her goods and that she did not want to be held to account for this husband in any way at all'. In fact, her husband had received a number of pieces of cloth as payment of his wife's salary but his wife reaffirmed her independence and control over her work.³⁹ Credits and bonds were frequently intertwined in the relations between employers and employees.

This situation changed radically in the 1570s when spinning moved to the countryside. Indeed, as that process unfolded, an intermediary was brought into the relationship between merchant-manufacturers and spinning women. Whilst the latter were now independent workers at home, their salaries were now paid via an intermediary, instead of directly by the merchant-manufacturer or through a family member. Reduction in salaries and control of labourtime frames were an inevitable consequence.⁴⁰

It may be worth briefly reflecting on a related methodological issue. 'Macro' approaches would define these spinners as 'self-employed producers' (in the case of women working at home for a weaver) or as 'wage earners' (with remuneration at piece rates). These predefined categories do not capture the specific circumstances here. The main elements which characterized their position in the commodity chain and their bargaining power were not labour relations but labour mediation and the specific forms of their wage-payments. These depended on their contract with

Table 6.4 Places of residence of the weavers, 1530–1669

<i>Period</i>	<i>Suburbs</i>		<i>Padua</i>		<i>Total</i>	
	<i>No.</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>No.</i>	<i>%</i>
1530–1559	44	31.2	97	68.8	141	100.0
1560–1589	149	59.4	102	40.6	251	100.0
1590–1669	40	95.2	2	4.8	42	100.0
Total	233	53.7	201	46.3	434	100.0

Source ASP, UL, bb. 297–304 (a. 1529, 1543, 1556, 1557, 1565, 1566, 1572, 1575, 1577, 1578, 1579, 1583, 1589, 1591, 1598, 1659); bb. 48–70 and 77–88 (aa. 1525–1560, 1570–1582, 1584–1589, 1594–1599, 1609, 1612, 1614–1618, 1620–1630, 1635–1636, 1638, 1640, 1642)

the merchant-manufacturer, which established the nature of their work and how they received their salary, including credit operations and forms of bondage. In this case, the ‘micro’ approach invites us to ask not only about the evolution of labour relations, but also the forms of control on labour within the *same* labour relation.⁴¹

Transformations in the weaving ‘box’ closely resembled these shifts in spinning. Here too, during the 1570s and 1580s, weaving workshops shifted to the suburbs (i.e. still within the town ‘fiscal’ limits), while those within the home disappeared altogether (Table 6.4).

Changes in labour relations followed accordingly. In the case of urban workshops pre-1570s, it is not unusual to find weavers who simultaneously produced and sold cloth autonomously *and* received services commissioned by merchant-entrepreneurs as wage earners. In the case of the non-urban weavers post-1570s, labour relations depended almost exclusively on commissions given by the merchant-entrepreneurs. Like their pre-1570s counterparts, they were both ‘wage earners’ *and* ‘producer groups’, especially when they worked as a group with family and non-family members, receiving cash advances and prizes for their production.⁴² Their work was neither seasonal nor intermittent, in contrast to what has often been argued by the proponents of the ‘proto-industrial’ model.⁴³ Indeed, some weavers were consigned cloth all year round from winter to the following autumn,⁴⁴ while others did not work at home but managed full-blown workshops located in villages, which in certain cases were home to more than 1500 people.⁴⁵ Once again, as we saw in the case of spinning, the more relevant shift was not in labour relations, but in labour mediation and, therefore, wage formation even within the same labour relation.

WHY THIS CHANGE IN LABOUR RELATIONS?

In the previous section I foregrounded some shifts that took place in the geography and labour relations of manufacturing within two 'boxes': spinning and weaving. These changes were sometimes imperceptible, but nonetheless replete with implications for the host of small producers within the commodity chain. The questions that now need to be answered include what prompted these changes and, especially, where they emerged.

It is important to underline that such changes originated both in other boxes of the commodity chain, such as in distribution and consumption, as well as in other places, located at various distances from the production centre. Two product innovations led to a significant transformation of consumption patterns all over Europe. Firstly, the emergence of the *sarze* or *grisi* cloth, and the better-known new draperies, which from the mid-sixteenth century increasingly supplied the market with low-quality cloth.⁴⁶ Secondly, a popularisation of silk cloth took place. This range of cloth satisfied an ever-wider market.⁴⁷ Cloth also included 'mixed' products such as German or French-made canvas, linen and cotton such as twill, *grograni* (made with camel hide), *oeillets* and *stametti* (stammets).⁴⁸ Finally, the more significant change in consumption patterns as far as the commodity chain is concerned was the dissemination of knitwear, which transformed the clothing market and created a new European fashion.⁴⁹ From the 1570s, the Padua merchant-manufacturers adapted their supply including all these new woollen items (mixed cloth, *stametti*, *grograni* and hosiery).⁵⁰

These consumption changes had an impact on the distribution side too. Geographically, retailing in Padua diminished while foreign trade levels remained stable, particularly in the direction of the Near East, in trading places such as Aleppo or Alexandria of Egypt.⁵¹ Merchant-manufacturers had various commercial interests in these areas (and were not simply linked to the textile sector) and continued to stimulate the production of high-quality wool.

Changes in consumption and distribution also affected the geographical distribution and the labour relations in other commodity chain boxes. The main consequence was the geographical relocation to the countryside of spinning and weaving with the shift in labour relations (and, especially, the changes in labour mediations) discussed above. Lower demand for such products in the Padua market, in particular low-quality

cloth, and manufacturing integration between Padua and Venice led to the disappearance of the small-scale micro-firm sector, sometimes individual 'independent' weavers, which had been a feature of the pre-1570s. This shift is therefore linked to processes outside Padua's jurisdiction (the integration with another wool production chain with its centre in another place, such as Venice), and beyond state borders, such as the changes in consumption at the European level and the rising demand of clothes for the Levantine markets).⁵²

A further consequence was the increase in the number of female entrepreneurs managing urban knitwear workshops. The knitting sector boomed during the late sixteenth century. From a labour relations perspective, this was not household production or piece-wage payment. Sometimes women worked at home, or outside, for merchants, receiving a piece-rate wage. Other times, they had a number of boys and girls working for them and paid them with a time-rate wage. Piece-rate wages paid by merchants to the women constituted a form of sub-contracting; women were the owners of small workshops, where children and girls worked for them. The rise of the knitting industry and consumption also stimulated the use of unfree labour (in the form of apprenticeships) or forced labour within hospitals, house of charity and orphanages, where number of boys and girls worked for the merchant-entrepreneurs under the supervision of one or more supervisors.⁵³

The third consequence was the monopoly within the industry. Both level and size of production saw an increase in this period. While small cloth producers completely disappeared after the 1570s, an oligopoly of a few merchants emerged, which led to a concentration of production capacity.⁵⁴ By the early seventeenth century, the sector was controlled by only a few merchants manufacturing in bulk for long-distance markets.⁵⁵ Greater quantities of capital enabled these merchants to look eastwards, which boosted other commercial interests and set in motion the intensification of high-quality wool manufacturing. Certain manufacturing phases thus underwent a powerful centralisation process involving the direct management of wool production, fulling, tentering, dyeing, and the warping and finishing phases. This centralisation was a response to a need for ever-more uninterrupted *production* and, above all, greater product *quality* monitoring (especially of high-quality cloth). The merchants were also able to maintain their labour control, using the guild institution to block entry into the sector and limit competition among producers.⁵⁶

CONCLUSIONS

The combination of the commodity chain approach with the micro-historical approach offers useful insights for global labour history, and especially for the study of the evolution of labour relations. Much remains to be done, but I would argue that certain encouraging preliminary results have emerged in this chapter on the potential for micro-analytical and spatially aware analysis.

From a methodological point of view, the combination between the commodity chain approach and micro-history has many implications. Observation is not 'preordained', but varies according to the subject of research, allowing a focus on concrete relations and interactions between economic agents over time. This perspective facilitates an open approach to 'space'. Each segment within the commodity chain is 'localised', but also part of a wider nexus. In this context, it is possible to better analyse interactions emerging locally in relation to processes that unfold elsewhere. Finally, it avoids the construction of general 'models' for industrial sectors, but allows us to 'spatialise' the commodity chain, limiting the investigation to one place and following the traces of production, commercialisation and consumption.

From an historical point of view, the approach is promising too. First, it allows us to address historical processes imbricated in the changes of labour relations. In the case I presented here, for example, without a careful analysis of the singularity of the context, the relocation into the countryside of weaving and spinning could have been interpreted as a simple process of 'delocalisation' in order to escape the high costs of labour, as has often been argued in the 'proto-industrial' model,⁵⁷ or in response to the desire to acquire new products on the market, as seen in the industrious revolution model.⁵⁸ Conversely, the geographical change depended on processes, which appeared inside and outside the manufacture and beyond state borders, and these changes caused a partial, but significant, reconfiguration of the position of workers and their labour relations within the commodity chain.

The second major insight provided by this approach is that shifts in labour relations depended simultaneously on the interweaving of wool product manufacturing, trade and consumption. In particular, the process of labour commodification emerged by combining forms of wage labour, forced labour (especially in charitable institutions) and unfree labour (such as apprenticeships), and at the expense of independent

labour (in the case of urban weavers).⁵⁹ Moreover, labour commodification was not related exclusively to blind market-forces, but a response of specific strategies made first by certain groups (merchant-manufacturers) within the commodity chain.⁶⁰ The evolution of the single commodity chain from a micro-perspective is therefore a vantage point from which analyse labour relation changes.

Third, this approach can unveil questions that could be hidden by macro-analysis. The role of labour mediation and wage formation is indeed an equally important feature that emerges from this chapter. Within the same labour relation, we witness several forms of labour mediation (directly, via parents or via intermediaries), which included credits and bonds. As Michael Sonenscher has underlined: ‘Master and journeyman were sometimes employers and employees, but sometimes they were patrons and client, or father and sons, or father-in-law and sons-in-law ... There was a legal dimension of the work which overlapped the general conditions in which productive activity took place.’⁶¹ Payment forms could have a great impact on wage formation, not merely because they were piece-wage or time wage, but because credit, advances on wages, and time payments bound the counterparts together (masters and journeymen, merchants and women, etc.), transforming a bargain into a promise and making a ‘simple transaction a more complex dialogue over rights and obligations’.⁶² Therefore, the bargaining power depended less on the labour relation and more on other elements, as the individual action of actors and their social position within the community.⁶³ Given the singularity of the context, the main implication could be not the change in labour relations, but the forms of labour mediation and the agency of the individual worker.

The commodity chain approach allows us to better choose the spatial units under analysis. For instance, instead of taking one spatial unit as given (the town, the district, the state), it allows us to appreciate the interaction between trade and manufacturing, even outside the commodity chain. Labour relations could shift in response to changes in distribution and consumption, as was the case of the changing equilibriums in the Mediterranean trade for the Levant and the demand for cloth at a European level. In order to sustain a growing demand for long-distant markets, the merchant-manufacturers adapted the modes of labour control and labour relation in two key boxes of the commodity chain, as spinning and weaving. Their influence was, however, sustained considerably by the political and institutional context which contributed to

shaping labour relations. In particular, their ability to rely on the guild institutions and their privileges enabled merchants to maintain their monopoly position and control over the workforce.⁶⁴

Finally, this approach is also useful to discuss time framing and periodisation in history. Some scholars have argued that in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, competition from the most advanced commercial institutions such as the (British) Levant Company affected the commercial and manufacturing costs of the woollen manufacturing of early modern Italian cities, causing the ‘marginalization’ of the Mediterranean during the ‘early modern globalization’.⁶⁵ Commodity chains invite us to see productive markets as interwoven webs of investors, traders, producers and workers crossing the borders of territories and beyond the state or corporate jurisdictions. Working with micro-history invites us to redefine the rise and decline of industries, looking within the single boxes to understand what happened in terms of labour relations, labour mediation and wage inequality.

NOTES

1. For woollen production and consumption in the ancient era, see: Margarita Gleba, *Textile Production in Pre-Roman Italy* (Oxford, 2008); Margarita Gleba and Ulla Mannering, *Textiles and Textile Production in Europe: From Prehistory to AD 400* (Oxford, 2012); for the medieval and pre-modern Europe, see: Marco Spallanzani, *Produzione commercio e consumo dei panni di lana, nei secoli 12.–18.: Atti della seconda Settimana di studio, 10–16 aprile 1970* (Firenze, 1976); Giovanni Luigi Fontana and Gerard Gayot, eds., *Wool: Products and Markets (13th–20th century)* (Padova, 2004); David Jenkins, ed., *The Cambridge History of Western Textile* (Cambridge, 2003), vol. 2.
2. For the Americas, where woollen industry was sometimes mixed to cotton industry, see Fernando Silva Santisteban, *Los obrajes en el Virreinato del Peru* (Lima, 1964); Richard J. Salvucci, *Textiles and Capitalism in Mexico: An Economic History of the Obrajes, 1539–1840* (Princeton, 1987); Manuel Miño Grijalva, *Obrajes y tejedores de Nueva España, 1700–1810* (Madrid, 1990).
3. Hermann van der Wee, ‘The Western European’, in *The Cambridge History of Western Textile*, pp. 397–472; Joan Thirsk, ‘Knitting and knitwear, c. 1500–1780’, in *The Cambridge History of Western Textile*, pp. 562–583.

4. On textile workers, see Lex Heerma van Voss, Els Hiemstra-Kuperus, Elise van Nederveen Meerkerk, eds., *The Ashgate Companion to the History of Textile Workers, 1650–2000* (Farnham, 2010).
5. I quote here the example made by Marcel van der Linden concerning mining villages. See Marcel van der Linden, *Globalizing Labour Historiography: The IISH Approach* (Amsterdam, 2002), p. 3.
6. Jan Lucassen, ed., *Global Labour History: A State of the Art* (Bern, 2008); Marcel van der Linden, *Workers of the World: Essays Toward a Global Labor History* (Leiden, 2008); Karin Hofmeester and Christine Moll-Murata, eds., ‘The Joy and Pain of Work: Global Attitudes and Valuations, 1500–1650’, *International Review of Social History, Supplement, 19 - 2011*, (Cambridge, 2011); Jan Lucassen, *Outline of a History of Labour* (Amsterdam, 2013).
7. On commodity chain analysis in sociology, see especially: Terence K. Hopkins and Immanuel Wallerstein, ‘Commodity Chains in the World-Economy Prior to 1800’, *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)* 10, no. 1 (July 1986), 157–170; Gary Gereffi and Miguel Korzeniewicz, *Commodity Chain and Global Capitalism* (Westport, 1994); Immanuel Wallerstein, ‘Introduction’, *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)* 23, 1 (2000), 1–13; Immanuel Wallerstein, ‘Next Steps’, *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)* 23, 1 (2000), 197–199; Y. Eyüp Özveren, ‘Shipbuilding, 1590–1790’, *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)* 23, 1 (2000), 15–86; Sheila Pelizzon, ‘Grain Flour, 1590–1790’, *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)* 23, 1 (2000), 87–195. See also Robert Salais and Laurent Thevenot, *Le travail: marches, règles, conventions* (Paris, 1986). On historical studies, see especially the innovative work by Karin Hofmeester: ‘Working for Diamonds from the sixteenth to the twentieth Century’, in *Working on Labor. Essays in Honor of Jan Lucassen*, eds. Marcel van der Linden and Leo Lucassen (Leiden and Boston, 2012), pp. 19–46; Karin Hofmeester, ‘Les diamants, de la mine à la bague: pour une histoire globale du travail au moyen d’un article de luxe’, *Le Mouvement Social*, 241, 4 (2012), 65–68; Karin Hofmeester, ‘Shifting Trajectories of Diamond Processing: From India to Europe and Back, from the Fifteenth Century to the Twentieth’, *Journal of Global History* 8, 1 (2013), 25–49. See also: Carlos Marichal, Steven C. Topik and Frank L. Frank, *From Silver to Cocaine: Latin American Commodity Chains and the Building of the World Economy, 1500–2000* (Durham, 2006).
8. Leo Lucassen, ‘Working together: new directions in global labour history’, *Journal of Global History*, 11, 1 (2016), 66–87.
9. See Christian G. De Vito, ‘New Perspectives on Global Labour History: Introduction’, *Workers of the World*, special issue on ‘New Perspectives on Global Labour History’, 1, 3 (2013), 7–31; Christian G. De Vito, ‘Verso

- una microstoria translocale (micro-spatial history)', *Quaderni Storici*, 3 (2015), 815–833.
10. On these topics see Francesca Trivellato, 'Is There a Future for Italian Microhistory in the Age of Global History?', *California Italian Studies* 2, 1, 1 (2011); Filippo de Vivo, 'Prospect or Refuge? Microhistory, History on the Large Scale: A Response', *Cultural and Social History* 7, 3, 1 (2010), 387–397; and the introduction of this volume. On the 'micro-history on a small scale', see Francesca Trivellato, *The Familiarity of Strangers: The Sephardic Diaspora, Livorno, and Cross-Cultural Trade in the Early Modern Period* (New Haven, 2009), esp. pp. 7–10.
 11. Van der Linden, 'Globalizing Labour Historiography', pp. 2–3; Van der Linden, *Workers of the World*, p. 6.
 12. I use the term boxes with reference to commodity chain analysis. See Gereffi, Korzeniewicz, *Commodity Chain and Global Capitalism*, 2.
 13. Gereffi, Korzeniewicz, *Commodity Chain and Global Capitalism*, 2.
 14. Hopkins and Wallerstein, 'Commodity Chains', pp. 19–20.
 15. On this point see also A.W. Carus and Sheilagh Ogilvie. 'Turning Qualitative into Quantitative Evidence: A Well-Used Method Made explicit', *The Economic History Review* 62, 4 (2009), 893–925.
 16. See Marcel van der Linden, 'Enjeux pour une histoire mondiale du travail', *Le Mouvement Social*, 4 (2012), pp. 241, 16; and the introduction of this volume.
 17. For the other elements of the commodity chain, I have largely relied on secondary literature. Of course, one could multiply the archives, depending on the 'boxes' under investigation. In the case of the Padua-based wool commodity chain, they could span from the areas of supplying the raw materials (in Valencia and Granada in Spain, or Foggia and Naples in Southern Italy) or where the finished products were sold (Graz, Innsbruck and Wien in Austria).
 18. For Spanish wool: State Archive of Padua (henceforth ASP), Università della lana (henceforth UL), 49, c. 401r; 390, c. 96r; 385, c. 87v; 395, c. 86r; 406, c. 262r; 279, cc. 88r–v; for other Italian wools, see ASP, UL, 387, c. 12r; 279, cc. 104v–105r; 282, c. 322r; 191, cc. 6v–7r. For wool production in these areas, see also: John A. Marino, *Pastoral Economics in the Kingdom of Naples* (Baltimore, 1988); Walter Panciera, 'La transumanza nella pianura veneta (secc. XVI–XVIII)', in *Le Migrazioni in Europa, secc. XIII–XVIII*, ed. Simonetta Cavaciocchi (Firenze 1994), pp. 371–382; Roberto Rossi, *La Lana nel Regno di Napoli nel 17. secolo: Produzione e Commercio* (Torino, 2007); Rafael María Girón Pascual, 'Los lavaderos de lana de Huéscar (Granada) y el comercio genovés en la edad moderna', in *Génova y la Monarquía Hispánica (1528–1713)*,

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Connected Singularities: Convict Labour in Late Colonial Spanish America (1760s–1800)

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WHY CONVICT LABOUR?

Throughout history, the forced labour performed by individuals under penal and/or administrative control (i.e. convict labour) has been a seemingly ubiquitous phenomenon. At the same time, scratching below the apparently uniform surface of convict labour reveals fundamental differences related to the social construction of crime, ‘the criminal’

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and punishment, and the role it had within distinct labour regimes. In a recent publication, Alex Lichtenstein and I have suggested that, rather than seeking to provide an abstract definition of convict labour, scholars may want to address ‘the historical conditions under which convict labour has been produced and exploited in the larger process of the commodification of labour’.¹ In other words, we have proposed a move away from answering the question ‘what is convict labour?’ through a universal definition and taxonomy, and towards an interrogation of the function that convict labour played within specific contexts and amongst other labour relations—that is, ‘why convict labour?’ In our view, this approach presents a two-fold advantage: on the one hand, it foregrounds discontinuities in the role of convict labour in space and time; on the other, it allows for understanding convict labour as part of an integrated labour market, in dialectic with other (coerced and ‘free’) labour relations.

The shift from a ‘universal’ definition of convict labour to the study of its contextual and relational function raises broad epistemological issues. In particular, it highlights the tension between the universality of categories and the singularity of sites, and it foregrounds the dialectics between the specificity and connectedness of each site.² In other words, the double problem emerges of how to deal with the uncountable variety of historical circumstances and processes hidden beneath the apparently flat surface of the concept ‘convict labour’; and how to fully acknowledge that prisoners performed their work in very diverse, yet connected, localities. In undertaking this task, two pitfalls seem inevitable: abstracting from historical complexity can marginalize the specificity of contextual configurations; conversely, focusing exclusively on singularities involves the risk of being trapped in localism, and losing the broader spatial scope of social processes. Joining the endeavour of this volume, this chapter suggests that both issues can be overcome by taking a micro-spatial perspective that integrates the following elements: a micro-analytical approach which highlights discontinuity in time and space, and implies the rejection of macro-analytical procedures of generalization and comparison based on predetermined categories and units; and a spatially aware perspective which foregrounds specific connections between contexts, instead of focusing exclusively on either the local or the global scope.

In this chapter I take up these issues by investigating the experiences of convict labour in the *presidios*, or military outposts, of Spanish Havana (Cuba) and Puerto de la Soledad (Malvinas/Falklands) in the four decades that followed the Seven Years’ War (1754–1763). Prisoners in both sites were sentenced to the same punishments—penal transportation

and impressment in the army or the navy—and were first and foremost occupied in building and repairing military and non-military infrastructure. However, the two sites had distinct characteristics, were differently viewed by historical actors, and diversely connected with other places and regions within and beyond the Spanish dominions. Consequently, in each site convict labour took on a separate function, transported convicts entered into contact with distinct networks of free and unfree labour and penal transportation itself created multiple ‘networks of Empire’.³

The distinct configurations and roles of convict labour in Havana and Puerto de la Soledad, described in the next section, warn us against the use of macro-analytical categories and methodologies. Indeed, if we contented ourselves with describing convict labour as a phenomenon with universal characteristics, we would easily categorize Havana as ‘centre’ and Puerto de la Soledad as ‘periphery’ in the geopolitics of Spanish American convict labour. Consequently, we would postulate the work of the thousand prisoners who rebuilt the fortresses of Havana in the early 1770s to be more representative of convict labour in Spanish America than the one performed by the twenty-two non-military convicts that forcibly lived in the Malvinas in the same period. In so doing, the diversity of the convicts’ contributions to empire building and economic development would be lost. Micro-history provides an alternative perspective. In particular, Grendi’s concept of the ‘exceptional normal’ allows us to acknowledge that each context is a unique configuration and that singular configurations construct the discontinuous fabric of history.⁴ This means that the context of Havana was as exceptional as the one in the Malvinas; indeed, that every site of convict transportation was unique, and that the historical ‘normality’ of convict labour was made up of innumerable singular configurations such as those presented here. Paraphrasing what Schiel and Hanß have recently written about slavery, I am arguing that convict labour is ‘a context-specific social relationship’⁵: convicts may have performed similar tasks across various sites, but the function of their work can only be understood by studying its entanglements with other labour relations within specific contexts. More generally, I contend that the concept of ‘representativeness’ and the ‘centre’/‘periphery’ divide in historical research and social sciences should be questioned, as they imply the postulation of an abstract standard by which historical complexity is ‘purified’ from its specific determinations.⁶ Radeff’s suggestion to substitute the duality ‘centre’/‘periphery’ with the concepts of ‘centralities’ and ‘de-centralities’

offers an alternative way to addressing the shifting relationships that exist between the multiple nodes of extended networks, depending on time, changing power relationships and the specific object being researched.⁷ Regarding the contexts discussed in this chapter, it highlights that both Havana and Puerto de la Soledad simultaneously played ‘central’ and ‘de-central’ roles vis-à-vis other sites of convict transportation and convict labour. This is arguably a more accurate conceptualization of the shifting relationship among sites, which additionally allows for a thorough analysis of their connected nature, as I will show in the third section.

THE ‘EXCEPTIONAL NORMAL’

In the aftermath of the Seven Years’ War, the Spanish empire underwent major changes as a result of the growing threat foreign imperial powers posed to the Crown’s dominions.⁸ In particular, the shock caused by the British occupations of Havana (August 1762–July 1763) and Manila (November 1762–January 1764) triggered fundamental military reforms that encompassed the creation of local militias, considerable relocation of troops from peninsular Spain to fixed battalions in the Viceroyalties overseas, and the rationalization of the defense system in the borderlands. The need to prevent illegal trade along the Spanish American coasts and reduce the political power of monopolist merchants in the peninsula additionally prompted the gradual liberalisation of trade (*comercio libre*), that is, a de facto state-controlled system of trade permits which allowed for the multiplication of maritime routes and destinations. At the same time, voyages of exploration and colonisation by France, Britain, Russia and Portugal in the Pacific and the Atlantic, coincided with similar activities by the Spanish Crown. The latter included expeditions to Tahiti, Fernando Poo (Gulf of Guinea) and Australia, the occupation of foreign enclaves such as the former Portuguese Colonia do Sacramento (1777), and the creation of new settlements along the coasts of North California, Araucanía and Patagonia. Not only was the impact of these processes different in each site, but each locality also contributed distinctly to their making. Consequently, the work performed by prisoners also took on different functions, as the figures of standing convicts, their position in the workforce and the shifts in the composition of the workforce reveal.

Convicts in Havana were part of a dynamic urban site that by the late eighteenth century numbered approximately fifty thousand inhabitants

Table 7.1 Composition of the workforce in the construction sites of Havana, 1763–1777

<i>Date</i>	<i>Soldiers</i>	<i>Civilians (paisanos)</i>	<i>Convicts (desterrados)</i>	<i>Free mulattoes</i>	<i>Free blacks</i>	<i>King's slaves</i>	<i>Slaves</i>	<i>Total</i>
1763						795*		
1764						1967*		
1765			538*			1396*		2249*
1766								
1767			964*			1158*		2309*
1768			773*			1072*		2004*
20.6.1772	149	160	1130	24	31	447	8	1949
20.1.1773	152	155	1077	17	23	418	5	1847
26.6.1773	156	179	1065	15	26	383	5	1829
28.2.1774	168	132	995	17	28	346	7	1693
3.4.1774	174	145	974	16	26	343	7	1685
3.5.1774	176	145	903	16	26	339	7	1612
3.6.1774	172	137	905	17	27	339	6	1603
8.7.1774	176	145	903	16	26	339	7	1612
6.8.1774	169	166	1045	20	37	337	9	1783
1774			980*			321*		1517*
1775			837*			319*		1318*
8.11.1776	162	101	1131	12	33	289	6	1734
8.12.1776	172	101	1122	13	35	289	6	1738
6.3.1777	184	101	1159	13	28	282	5	1772

and had been shaped by nearly 300 years of colonial encounters and conflicts. The major fortresses and castles they (re)built in this period symbolized the importance of Havana as a hub for trade routes connecting peninsular Spain, the Caribbean and the Philippines (the *Carrera de Indias* and the *Galeón de Manila*). In those construction sites, convicts worked side by side with impressed and voluntary soldiers, free *paisanos*, slaves and king's slaves,⁹ in overlapping and multiple networks of free and unfree migration. Table 7.1 integrates data from various sources:¹⁰

In the early 1770s, all categories of workers included in the table were employed in the construction of the fortress complex of San Carlos de la Cabaña, on the high ground whose seizure had proved essential to the British conquest of Havana;¹¹ after its completion in 1776, they worked in the fortification of the Castillo del Príncipe on the hill of Arostegui. As the priority shifted from one building site to another, convicts were moved too, and provided on average from one third to half

of the workforce in those building sites, which in turn employed more than half of the total workforce involved in the reconstruction program. Moreover, with the exception of some king's slaves and a few free workers from Campeche and Cuba, who were sometimes employed in the warehouses, on boats and as builders, the prisoners were the only group that performed all other kinds of works, such as other building operations (e.g. the Castles of Matanzas and Jagua), service work in the warehouses and on boats for transporting water, food and passengers, and skilled work (coopers, gunsmiths, postmen). Furthermore, approximately 8–9% of them were employed, on average, in timber extraction for the building process and c. 5–6% in the transportation of lime and other building materials—in the latter case they were employed by private contractors. At least until the beginning of 1777, prisoners held in the military fortifications also illegally worked for private employers during their free time, a job that was remunerated and apparently sought after, but also at the origin of considerable conflict with the authorities and among the convicts.¹² At the same time, prisoners provided the workforce for highly visible non-military public works, most notably the construction of the Alameda de Extramuros (today's Paseo del Prado), initiated by Governor Marques de la Torre and modelled after those of the European capitals.¹³ Finally, when recaptured, escapees from the Havana fortifications, who amounted to approximately 4% of the total convicted workforce in February 1774, often ended up working in the sites across the island they had fled to, such as Matanzas and the new settlement named Filipina.¹⁴

As the table shows, by the early 1770s, *desterrados* were the most important component of the workforce inside the Havana military outposts, surpassing the number of the king's slaves that had formed its majority in the second half of the previous decade. Conversely, the number of privately owned slaves always remained marginal among this workforce, mirroring a division of labour that accompanied Cuba's irresistible rise to the rung of world leader in sugar cane production in the subsequent decades.¹⁵ The division between privately owned enslaved labour, occupied in the growing agricultural (and the domestic) sector(s), and convict labour and state-owned slaves, employed in the defense and development of an urban centre that functioned as a hub for long-established networks of migration and trade. As I have suggested elsewhere, direct state control of prisoners and king's slaves allowed for a high level of spatial mobility during the relative short time of the sentence of the

former group (from 2 to 10 years on average) and made convict labour especially suited for military labour and the building of military and non-military infrastructures. Conversely, chattel slavery was a lifelong and hereditary legal status and labour relation that entailed the immobilization of the workforce on specific sites, and therefore responded better to the planters' economic needs.¹⁶

A close connection existed between convicts and those that were labelled as 'soldiers' in the official statistics. Indeed, descriptive sources indicate that these were military convicts themselves, who became part of the workforce of the Havana fortifications because of their repeated desertion from their battalions (Lombardy, Seville, Ireland, Louisiana and Havana, among others). Following a Royal Order dated 30 March 1773, they were assigned to the public works in the Cuban capital for a standard period of 6 or 8 years.¹⁷

In the same years, the prisoners transported to Puerto de la Soledad were similarly occupied in building and repairing military and non-military infrastructures. However, the presence and work of these *presidarios* (or *forzados*) in that tiny Spanish colony on the Eastern Malvinas/Falklands were constructed out of the tension between the need to prevent foreign occupation and the growing awareness of the lack of economic relevance of that new settlement. Whereas the exploitation of convict labour in Havana was a means to maintain major infrastructures of commerce and defense, in the Malvinas it had the function to affirm the sovereignty on, and minimize the costs of, a settlement deprived of any economic significance but of great geopolitical importance.

As Buschmann has observed, in the second half of the eighteenth century, the Malvinas became 'the gateway to the Pacific' for their strategic position along the important route of Cape Horn in a period that marked the end of the Pacific as a 'Spanish Lake'.¹⁸ Convict labour played a major role in keeping that 'gateway' and the surrounding area in Spanish hands.

In April 1758, in the midst of the Seven Years' War, the Viceroy of Peru Manuel Amat y Junient called the attention of Secretary of the Indies Julián de Arriaga to 'the whisper that goes around in those territories, that an English settlement has been established and populated' in the Malvinas, and on the 'disastrous' military and economic consequences that such a colony might have had on the Spanish Dominions.¹⁹ In the short term his fears were unmotivated, for no settlement existed

in the region at that time. However, in the aftermath of the conflict, the islands did become a target for competing powers seeking new areas of colonial expansion. Their strategies of colonization of that territory with no indigenous population differed greatly, and so did the role of convicts within them. No convicts were ever transported to the French and the British settlements in the islands. The former, founded on 17 March 1764 in Port Louis, Eastern Malvinas, was a settler colony with a striking non-military character; its population was largely formed by Acadians from Western Canada, descendants of the seventeenth-century French settlers and who during the Seven Years' War had been massively deported to North American territories, Spanish Louisiana and France after the British took hold on the region.²⁰ The British settlement founded in 1765 in Port Egmont, Western Malvinas, was a tiny military outpost, and totally dependent on the metropole: in December 1769, seventy-eight men lived there, all of them belonging to the crews of the frigates *Famer* and *Favorite*.²¹ Conversely, the composition of the population in the Spanish settlement created on 2 April 1767 in Port Louis and renamed Puerto de la Soledad, mirrored the attempt to balance geopolitical and financial imperatives by mixing military and civil settlers, and free and unfree labour. In that context, convicts played an important role from the start, and their number—albeit relatively low—increased as the settlement became more stable. The available data are synthesized in Table 7.2.²²

The constant presence of *presidarios* reduced the financial risks involved in settlement, by providing a relatively cheap workforce for building and repairing the infrastructures. Due to the climate, the poor quality of the construction materials and the difficulties involved in procuring them, this was truly Sisyphus' work, which explains why, fluctuations, amnesties and releases notwithstanding, a bulk of prisoners were always kept in the settlement. Between April 1767 and March 1768, convicts contributed to the building of twenty-seven barracks and huts, including one chapel, two rooms and one kitchen for the chaplains, four warehouses, a ten-room hospital, two blacksmith's forges, two ovens, the houses of the officers and the military barracks that the convicts shared with soldiers, artisans and mariners.²³ The subsistence of those buildings, as governor Felipe Ruiz Puente noticed, 'was the result of perpetual care' and of relatively frequent periods of major works such as those undertaken in May and November 1771, and September 1773.²⁴ The military infrastructure, however, remained largely insufficient at least until April

Table 7.2 Population of Puerto de la Soledad, Malvinas, 1767–1785

	24.2.1767	13.10.1768	19.6.1771	4.4.1774	15.2.1777	20.2.1781	22.5.1785
Top officers	5	13	12	9	7	8	8
Lower officers*	5		16	11	10	17	12
Soldiers and artillerymen	30	32	58	33	28	24	46
Mariners		16	12	18	8	27	23
Artisans (<i>maestranza</i>)		18	10	8			
Settlers (<i>hacendados</i>)			2				
Domestic servants (<i>criados</i>)		18	8			10	10
Convicts (<i>presidarios</i>)	5	6	15	22	22	13	30
King's slaves		1					
Women		20	?	3	1		
Children			?	11	2		
Total population	45**	124	133	115	86	99	129
Percentage convicts/total population (%)	11	4.8	11.3	19.1	25.6	13.1	23.2

1774, when it consisted only of a ‘ruined wall of turf’.²⁵ Probably as a consequence of the increased number of *presidarios*, the state of the buildings considerably improved by 1777. By then, wooden military infrastructures had been built on three locations, and new stone houses, a warehouse and a hospital existed.²⁶

In their correspondence with Madrid, colonial officers referred to the employment of *forzados* (convicts) and mariners as the ‘common way’ to perform those tasks in the islands.²⁷ The association between the two groups of workers points to the practice of impressment in the royal navy of smugglers (*contrabandistas*) and vagrants from the Rio de la Plata territories, often as a substitution for *presidio* sentences.²⁸ Impressment in the army, as a punishment in itself and as an alternative to a *presidio* sentence, was also an ordinary form of recruitment throughout the Spanish empire, and especially affected destinations like Puerto de la Soledad which were not attractive to voluntary soldiers.

Important changes in the composition of the population took place in the Spanish settlement between June 1771 and February 1777: a shift in the model of colonization resulted from the growing awareness of the unproductive nature of the colony, and the deterioration of the living conditions in it. That transition had a considerable impact on the role of convicts in the settlement.²⁹

Just a few months after the colony was established, it became clear that ‘the soil and the climate offer nothing’, as Ruiz Puente wrote in March 1768.³⁰ Indeed the ‘sterility of the island’ and the ‘cruel’ climate became a *leitmotiv* in the officer’s correspondence with his superiors in Spain.³¹ The climax was reached in a dramatic letter the governor sent to Arriaga on 10 February 1769, in which he referred to his presence in Puerto de la Soledad as an ‘exile’, and implored: ‘Enough, my Lord, enough of the Malvinas... No similar outpost exists in the populated world; it’s the most ruined and useless site that can be thought of’.³² Geopolitical imperatives made it impossible to abandon the islands,³³ but living conditions in the settlement deteriorated. The Acadian families had all left by 1770.³⁴ Ruiz Puente and other officers did their best to be transferred to other postings, albeit with doubtful success in the short term.³⁵ In the autumn of 1771, facing the failure of the authorities in Buenos Aires to provide vital support, and as the first signs of an epidemic of scurvy appeared, all *presidarios*, most of the troops and a few officers planned a mutiny: once discovered, they were punished with a transfer to the mainland that to most of them must have appeared a desirable outcome.³⁶

A longer-term solution was set up jointly by the out-going governor Ruiz Puente and his successor Francisco Gil y Lemos at the end of April 1773, and was implemented one year later, on the eve of the British abandonment of Port Egmont.³⁷ The key points were that no formal settlement should be kept and that settlers and artisans were to be repatriated. All inhabitants were to be replaced annually, so that ‘the consolation of the limited time [they will have to reside there] will dispel their terror for that navigation and destination’. The artisans would be substituted with mariners with skills as carpenters, blacksmiths and bricklayers, among others,³⁸ in a clear attempt to reduce the total costs of the settlement.

The ‘new method’—as it was called in the official correspondence³⁹—increased the absolute number and the percentage of non-military convicts and at the same time augmented the number and percentage of mariners and soldiers, both groups including a variable proportion of military convicts. All in all, the new system of colonization, which was shaped by the tension between geopolitical and financial imperatives, foregrounded convicts as a cheap and flexible workforce, in striking contrast with their absence in the French settler colony and the British military-only settlement of the second half of the 1760s. Accordingly, the system of annual replacement (*relevo*) did not apply to the convicts, whose length of stay on the islands depended on labour requirements as well as, and usually rather than, on legal motivations.

CONNECTIONS

The shortage of workforce in Havana and the need to populate the new settlement in the Malvinas activated distinct networks of migration. In turn, different migration flows affected the mix of labour relations that existed in each location. In the building sites, convicts therefore worked side by side with king’s slaves in Havana and with sailors in Puerto de la Soledad: two diverse combinations that influenced the (self-)perceptions and representations of convict labour. Moreover, each local convict population had specific characteristics, depending on the multiple routes on which the provision of prisoners was based. Indeed, fundamental differences existed between the peninsular vagrants, the Mexican *bandoleros* and the Apache prisoners of war transported to Havana, and between them and the *contrabandistas* (smugglers) and the *indios pampas* deported to the Malvinas.

Acknowledging the contextual diversity of convict labour does not amount to accepting a post-modernist narrative of history as a juxtaposition of irreducibly singular fragments.⁴⁰ Conversely, in this section I view the unicity of Havana and Puerto de la Soledad, and of the experience of convict labour within them, as the result of the differentiated connections of each site.

Between the late 1760s and the early 1770s, a complex administrative process unfolded, with the goal to provide a constant flow of convicts to Havana and San Juan (Puerto Rico).⁴¹ In peninsular Spain, this mobilization of hundreds of prisoners entailed the forced impressment of vagrants (*vagos*)⁴² and the transportation of second- and third-time deserters and non-military convicts from inland barracks, prisons and arsenals to the coastal *depositos* of Cadiz, El Ferrol and La Coruña. Furthermore, it required accurate medical controls in all *depositos*, in order to select out prisoners ‘of robust constitution and not of advanced age’ for the Caribbean *presidios*, and send the rest to the North African military outposts.⁴³ Finally, it implied the organization of the seventy-days-long sail from Cadiz and El Ferrol to Havana and San Juan. Due to security reasons, an attempt was also made to differentiate the destinations of military and non-military convicts: the former were usually transported to Puerto Rico, for this ‘island with a small garrison, and so close to foreign colonies’ was not deemed apt to host ‘thieves [*ladrones*], murders and other delinquents [*malhechores*]⁴⁴; the latter were mainly shipped to Havana, where ‘sufficient troops, and good militia [existed] to restrain this people’.⁴⁵

Deaths, sicknesses, desertions, budget shortages and the difficulty of finding war-, mail- and private ships considerably hampered the operation.⁴⁶ The consequences were especially felt in San Juan, where the number of convicts remained constantly well under the 600 that were considered necessary to attend the ongoing works.⁴⁷ As far as the availability of the workforce is concerned, things went considerably better in Havana, so much so that in January 1773, the Irish engineer Thomas O’Daly wrote an enthusiastic report on the progress of the works he supervised.⁴⁸ The difference between the two sites can be explained by looking at the distinct flows of penal transportation they were imbricated in. Whereas San Juan depended almost exclusively on local prisoners and convicts transported from peninsular Spain, the Cuban capital lay at the heart of a much larger network of convict transportation, including individuals sentenced by legal institutions in New Spain, Venezuela, Panama

(*Tierra Firme*) and Guatemala, and the (quantitatively less relevant) flow of natives deported from Northern New Spain as a consequence of military operations in those borderlands (see map 7.1).⁴⁹

As the map shows, convicts were transported to Havana from various locations across the Spanish empire. The same holds true for the slaves, king's slaves, free blacks, free mulattoes and groups of *paisanos* they worked with in the Castle of San Carlos de la Cabaña and in the Castillo del Príncipe. Those labourers arrived there through different networks of free or coerced migration, as did the soldiers who oversaw them. The fact that those networks were more numerous and distinct from those that intersected in San Juan contributed to differentiate the two contexts, notwithstanding their mutual entanglements.

Havana was not only a destination of convict transportation from various sites across the Great Caribbean and beyond. It was also the origin of multiple flows of convicts. Among them, some connected the Cuban capital with the North African *presidios* of Ceuta, Melilla and, until 1792, Oran. Such flows tended to be quite infrequent though, and were usually



Map. 7.1 Connected Havana: Origins of the convicts, 1760s–1800s

limited to repeated deserters destined to the 'fixed' garrisons (*fijos*) that existed in those sites.⁵⁰ Conversely, convict transportation from Havana created more stable and quantitatively broader connections with the Caribbean. This was especially the case for the *presidios* of the territories that starting from 1753 directly fell under the military jurisdiction of the Havana 'fixed' garrison, the most important being the one located in San Agustín in Spanish Eastern Florida. Individual records (*filiaciones*) held at the *Archivo General de Indias* in Seville, for example, list 950 repeated deserters being deported there from Cuba between 1784 and 1820—a noticeable figure and certainly one that does not include all those sent along that route in those decades.⁵¹ Non-military convicts were the protagonists of the flows from Havana to Western Florida and Louisiana during the periods in which part of those territories belonged again to the Spanish Crown, respectively 1783–1819 and 1762–1800. They were present in tiny military outposts such as the one of San Marcos de Apalache, where a fixed quota of five *forzados* was established in 1794, and in the larger *presidio* of Pensacola, where their number fluctuated between 165 and 219 in the two years following April 1794.⁵² In the latter location, between one fourth and one half of the convicts were employed in the works of Fort San Bernardo across that period, the rest performing a wide range of tasks for both the Crown and private contractors: among others, they were cooks and bakers, apothecaries and carpenters, blacksmiths and farmers, with a considerable number among them being involved in the riverine and coastal transportation and in the making of bricks. A dozen of *forzados* were additionally employed as servants of the Governor, the military engineer and other officers.

In the aftermath of the Seven Years' War, the population of the settlement in Puerto de la Soledad was entirely made of migrants, due to the absence of indigenous peoples in the islands. Behind the continuous presence of prisoners in the Malvinas stood a complex infrastructure of penal transportation that only partly overlapped with the flows of other settlers. The available royal or private ships transported weapons, cattle and all groups of the population at once in their voyages. However, the officers and missionaries usually came from peninsular Spain; the soldiers were detached from the garrison in Buenos Aires and Montevideo, originally recruited both locally and in Spain; the mariners and the skilled labourers mostly came from other areas within the Captaincy/Viceroyalty of the Rio de la Plata. Convicts were

equally transported along the only available route connecting Puerto de la Soledad with Buenos Aires, Montevideo, and the island of Martín García. Their origins varied significantly though, including inhabitants of the two main urban centres of the Captaincy/Viceroyalty (Buenos Aires and Montevideo)⁵³ and individuals from three other areas: the ‘frontier of Buenos Aires’ (*frontera de Buenos Aires*), that is, the line of military outposts that served as a defense against ‘hostile’ native populations to the south of the capital city; the settlements north of Montevideo, on the eastern coast of the river, which functioned as a *cordón sanitario* around the Portuguese colony of Sacramento until its seizure by the Spaniards in 1777 and as a broader frontier with Portuguese Brazil after that date; and the fortlets in Tucumán, Chaco, and other internal areas, which defended that frontier from the equestrian native groups of the region.⁵⁴ At least one case of transportation to Puerto de la Soledad is reported from as far away as Charcas, La Paz and Cuzco in 1809, a few months before the May Revolution in Buenos Aires.⁵⁵ In addition to those flows within the Captaincy/Viceroyalty of the Rio de la Plata, impressment in the army and secondary punishment for deserters created a circulation of military convicts from peninsular Spain.⁵⁶ Map 7.2 synthesizes the main flows.

Each flow was mainly associated with distinct types of convicts, showing the multiple goals that penal transportation served even when directed to a tiny settlement such as Puerto de la Soledad. In particular, the Malvinas served as one of the sites for long-term and lifelong sentences for the perpetrators of those perceived as major crimes, such as murder, (attempted) insurrections, ‘sodomy’ and adultery.⁵⁷ This flow might include elite convicts such as don Felipe Gonzalez as much as black prisoners like Domingo Silva Ramon and the *moreno* Roque Sanchez, all transported between 1776 and 1781. At the same time, the removal and punishment of smugglers was the most frequent reason for deportation from the borders with the Portuguese empire. Conversely, transportation to Puerto de la Soledad from the frontier of Buenos Aires included a considerable number of ‘barbarian Indians’ (*indios bárbaros*), that is, native peoples hostile to the Spaniards.⁵⁸ The latter was the case of Manuel Garfios, considered a ‘spy of his nation’ and transported to the Malvinas in October 1779 in order to prevent his escape from the fortress of San Carlos in Montevideo, to which he had originally been sentenced; and of the *indio pampa* Lorenzo, who was sentenced to



Map. 7.2 Connected Malvinas: Flows of penal transportation, late-eighteenth century

the outpost of Puerto de la Soledad one month later for having been a ‘guide during the invasion of the frontiers of Buenos Aires’.⁵⁹ For the same crime, another indigenous man named Felipe had been sentenced for life to that destination in 1774.

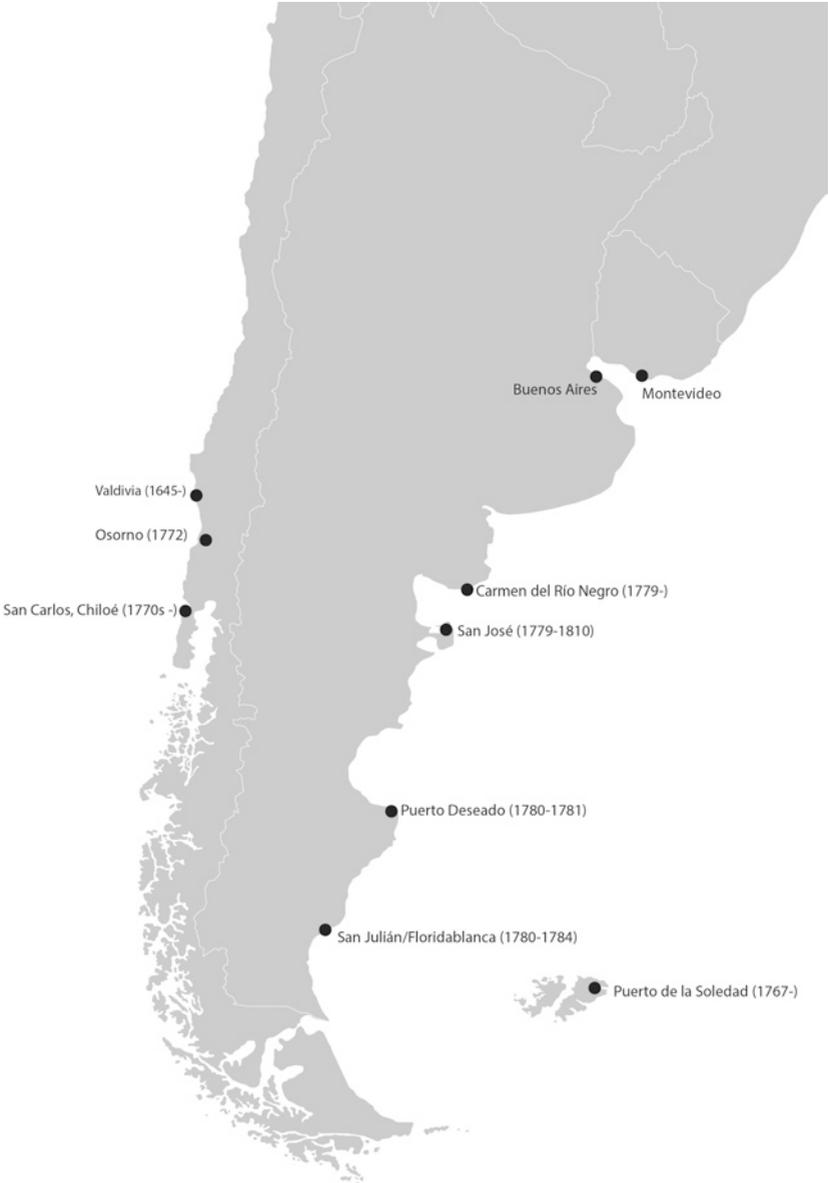
The geopolitical reasons that made the Malvinas a necessary site for settlement also made it a hub in the regional and imperial networks that gradually emerged in the last decades of the eighteenth century. The creation of these connections expanded the networks of penal transportation and simultaneously impacted on the status and function of convict labour within each site.

During the 1760s and early 1770s, the ‘whisper’ about the British presence in the area stimulated a constant activity of geographical exploration centred in the Malvinas and especially directed to the coasts of Patagonia, the Strait of Magellan and the *Tierra del Fuego*.⁶⁰

Convicts and impressed soldiers and sailors were directly involved in these activities. Moreover, even after the British abandoned Port Egmont in April 1774, the need to prevent them from settling elsewhere in the region induced a process of direct colonization in the southern borderlands.⁶¹ As a result, Puerto de la Soledad was gradually integrated in a network of tiny but strategic outposts spanning the southern coasts of the Atlantic and the Pacific, respectively, by the creation of four settlements along the coast of Patagonia (1779–1781),⁶² the foundation of Osorno (1792), and the related ‘pacification’ of the region between Valdivia and Chiloé. Map 7.3 provides an overview of such new colonies.

Although some of those settlements were soon discontinued—most importantly, the one in San Julián/Floridablanca, the closest to the Malvinas along the Patagonian coast—others remained, and by the last decades of the century the Cape Horn route became a major trade route as part of the gradual process of trade liberalisation. Official sources now referred to the ‘*Carrera de Malvinas y Costa Patagonica*’, implying a relatively regular maritime connection across the southern Atlantic.⁶³ Accordingly, not only did the ex-governor of the Malvinas, Juan de la Piedra, become governor of the settlement of Carmen de Patagones, but convict circulation expanded to these areas as well. For example, in 1780, Andres Ynzahualde (or Ysaurralde) and Josè Cayetano de la Cruz, deserters of the military campaign in the region of Río Negro, ended up in Puerto de la Soledad after a brief incarceration in Montevideo. Similarly, when the settlement in San Julián was closed in 1784, prisoner don Josè de la Serna was transferred to the settlement in the Malvinas.⁶⁴

The strengthening of the ties across the southern Atlantic was favoured by the continuing existence of the settlement in the Malvinas. In turn, it allowed for the consolidation of the outpost in Puerto de la Soledad. Indeed, the increasing connectedness of that settlement shaped work and labour within it. Between 1781 and 1784, major works took place there, involving the reconstruction of old buildings and the expansion of the number and specialization of the buildings.⁶⁵ This was first and foremost the work of convicts and depended on their multiple transportation routes. In fact, in May 1785, the non-military convicts formed nearly one fourth of the total 129 inhabitants, and made up virtually the whole manual workforce in the building sites and in the ranches. Their quantitative growth and the relative diversification of their occupations also accounted for differentiations among the



Map. 7.3 Connected Malvinas: New settlements, late-eighteenth century

convicts, and between convicts and other residents. In particular, those few prisoners who had special skills or were assigned to particular works were able to earn up to four or five times the basic cost of living of 25 *reales* and 13.5 *maravedís*. Although their income remained incomparably lower than the one of high rank officers—ranging between 221 and 2632 *reales* in 1779—it positioned them above the mass of unskilled convicts, soldiers and sailors, and allowed them to buy extra clothes (shoes, linen), food and drink (fat, garlic, wine, aguardiente, mate, tobacco), soap, and even gunpowder and bullets for hunting.⁶⁶ Parallel to this process, a spatial differentiation was gradually introduced between the unskilled convicts and the other inhabitants of the settlement. In March 1787, the prisoners completed the construction of the new barracks which, for the first time since the creation of the settlement, separated them from the troops at night.⁶⁷

Convict transportation created links between diverse sites at the same time as it contributed to construct their very distinctiveness. No convict was directly transported from Havana to Puerto de la Soledad, or the other way round. Yet, the two distinct regional systems of penal transportation to which the Cuban capital and the Malvinas settlement belonged were not entirely isolated from each other either. Together, they were part of broader connected histories, such as those of the Crown's military and commercial reforms, and new expansionism, after the Seven Years' War.⁶⁸ From this perspective, Julia Frederick's analysis of the distinct paths of the Bourbon military reform in Havana and Spanish Louisiana⁶⁹ might be extended to include the Malvinas and foreground the forgotten role that repeated deserters and other military convicts played as agents of Madrid's new policies. In fact, the crew of the royal ships that temporarily dislodged the British from Port Egmont in 1770 was largely made of sentenced smugglers from the northern side of the Rio de la Plata.⁷⁰ This action nearly ignited a new military conflict between Spain and Britain, and as the Malvinas crisis unfolded in 1770–1771, in order to prevent a planned British attack to New Spain through Louisiana, recruits were sent from Havana to New Orleans, most of them deserters and military convicts previously transported from peninsular Spain.

Imperial careering also produced penal transportation-related links between Havana and Puerto de la Soledad and beyond.⁷¹ After his return in Madrid in 1773, the first governor of the Malvinas, Felipe Ruíz Puente, became a trusted counsellor of the Secretary of the Indies for all

matters regarding those South Atlantic islands, including the management of their convicts. At the same time, in June 1774, he signed a letter that shows his direct commitment in the organization of the transportation of 132 convicts from Cadiz to Havana and Puerto Rico.⁷² His successor in the Malvinas, Francisco Gil y Lemos, became Viceroy of New Granada in 1788 and Viceroy of Peru two years later: both were highly prestigious positions that entailed decision-making on the regional flows of penal transportation.⁷³ The networks of convict transportation eventually spread also beyond the border of the Spanish empire. Irish military engineers served in Havana and Puerto de la Soledad and were responsible for the works convicts were involved in.⁷⁴ Portuguese smugglers and deserters were frequently caught into the system of convict transportation based in Montevideo and Buenos Aires.⁷⁵ And the fifty-five military convicts held in the Castle of Santa Catalina in Cadiz in February 1771 awaiting their passage to Ceuta, San Juan, Havana and Buenos Aires were born in eighteen European polities.⁷⁶

CATEGORIES, CONTEXTS AND CONNECTIONS

Understanding why convict labour has been produced and exploited in the larger process of the commodification of labour implies addressing, at the same time, the distinctiveness of the work of prisoners in each site and the multiple connections produced by convict transportation. From a methodological point of view, this means that ‘convict labour’ as a universal category has to be deconstructed and subsequently reconstructed as a history of connected singularities. In this chapter, I have taken a micro-analytical perspective and considered convict labour in Havana and Puerto de la Soledad as unique and equally complex within a discontinuous historical fabric. By explicitly avoiding postulating the homogeneity of the experiences included under the category ‘convict labour’, I have refused to construct a hierarchy between allegedly ‘central’ and ‘peripheral’ sites of convict labour. This move has allowed me to address each context in its own right, highlight the specific function of convict labour in each site and pay attention to (shifting) configurations of labour relations in each locality. The second section has foregrounded how and why convicts became necessary in Havana and Puerto de la Soledad. In the Caribbean urban centre, they served as the key workforce for the reconstruction and maintenance of the military

and non-military infrastructures; as such, convict labour additionally allowed for specialization of (privately and state-owned) slave labour in the growing agricultural sector. Conversely, in the economically deprived but geopolitically strategic new settlement in the Malvinas, convicts made up a considerable percentage of the total population and contributed to guaranteeing the material and symbolic presence of the Spanish crown in the region. Shifts in the strategies of colonization impacted on the role assigned to them as part of a highly mobile workforce.

Building on this micro-analytical deconstruction of the category of 'convict labour', in the third section I have taken a trans-local perspective to address the dialectics between sites and connections. Here, the need for labour and settlers in Havana and Puerto de la Soledad has been recognized as the starting point of multiple flows of people and commodities. In particular, convicts in those sites have emerged as imbricated in networks of penal transportation that spanned the Spanish empire, albeit with distinct characteristics and significant disentanglements. Moreover, I have foregrounded the role of those penal connections in constructing broader social processes, such as the Bourbon reforms and the renewed Crown's expansionism, and eventually in linking up Havana and Puerto de la Soledad themselves and beyond. Indeed, penal transportation contributed to construct connected histories of labour across distinct contexts, and this can be understood neither by addressing each site of convict transportation in isolation nor by adopting a universal definition of convict labour.

The theoretical and methodological framework of this chapter can be further expanded in three directions. First, empirical research on convict labour highlights the need to acknowledge both the wide scope of the connections produced by penal transportation and the substantial differences among those connections (e.g. various types of convicts and distinct duration of voyages) and among sites linked by means of convict transportation. Consequently, since any site of convict labour is both unique and imbricated in multiple networks, the analysis of any other site of convict labour in any other period can be approached through the methodology I propose in this chapter. Second, the points I have made here on convict labour may be applied to the study of any other labour relations, e.g. slavery, wage labour and indentured work. All labour relations are context-related social processes whose functions can only be understood vis-à-vis other labour relations within specific contexts, provided that, in

turn, contexts are understood as contact zones of multiple circulations rather than in isolation. As such, the question ‘why convict labour?’ that opened this chapter stands out as an example of where asking ourselves ‘why slavery?’ or ‘why wage labour?’ may lead us to in future research. Third, the need to address the history of ‘connected singularities’ is not specific to labour history, but regards the historical field as a whole. Similarly to the concepts of ‘convict labour’ and ‘slavery’, this chapter suggests that all seemingly universal concepts indicating historical processes, such as ‘reform’, ‘war’ and ‘revolutions’, may be usefully deconstructed and then re-constructed as histories of connected singularities. From this perspective, like the volume as a whole, this chapter has tested the potential of the micro-spatial approach in the field of labour history with the aim to indicate its broader relevance to other sub-disciplines as the basis for alternative paths to global history.

NOTES

1. Christian G. De Vito and Alex Lichtenstein, ‘Writing a Global History of Convict Labour’, *International Review of Social History*, 58, 2 (August 2013), 292. See also: Christian G. De Vito and Alex Lichtenstein, *Global Convict Labour* (Leiden and Boston, 2015).
2. Another possible direction, which is not taken in this chapter, is the study of how ‘universality’ itself was constructed. In the case of convict labour in the Spanish empire, for example, this would entail the investigation of legal and punitive pluralism across the empire, especially in connection with policies that favoured the coerced employment and migration of the convicted workforce. For a key reference on legal pluralism: Lauren Benton and Richard J. Ross, eds., *Legal Pluralism and Empires, 1500–1850* (New York and London, 2013).
3. Kerry Ward has referred to penal transportation and banishment as creating ‘networks of empire’ for the Dutch East India Company (VOC). See her *Networks of Empire. Forced Migration in the Dutch East India Company* (Cambridge, 2012).
4. The first use of the expression ‘exceptional normal’ (eccezionale normale) is in: Edoardo Grendi, ‘Micro-analisi e storia sociale’, *Quaderni storici*, 35 (1977), 506–522. Grendi used the concept to foreground the heuristic value of ‘exceptional’ sources and cases. In this chapter, I use it to highlight the discontinuous nature of the historical fabric, more generally. For other interpretations: Edward Muir, ‘Introduction: Observing Trifles’, in *Microhistory and the Lost People of Europe*, eds. Edward Muir

- and Guido Ruggiero (Baltimore, 1991), xiv–xvi; Matti Peltonen, ‘Clues, Margins, and Monads’: The Micro-Macro Link in Historical Research, *History and Theory*, 40, 3 (2001), 356–358; Magnússon and Szijártó, *What is Microhistory? Theory and Practice* (Abington, 2013), pp. 19–20; Jacques Revel, ‘Micronalisi e costruzione del sociale’, in *Giochi di scala. La microstoria alla prova dell’esperienza*, ed. Jacques Revel (Rome, 2006), pp. 36–37.
5. Juliane Schiel and Stefan Hanß, ‘Semantics, Practices and Transcultural Perspectives on Mediterranean Slavery’, in *Mediterranean Slavery Revisited (500–1800). Neue Perspektiven auf Mediterrane Sklaverei (500–1800)*, eds. Juliane Schiel and Stefan Hanß (Zürich, 2014), p. 15.
 6. Angelo Torre, ‘Comunità e località’, in *Microstoria. A venticinque anni da L’eredità materiale. Saggi in onore di Giovanni Levi*, ed. Paola Lanaro (Milano, 2011), p. 55.
 7. See esp. Anne Radeff, ‘Centres et périphéries ou centralités et décentralités?’, in *Per vie di terra*, ed. Angelo Torre (Rome, 2007), pp. 21–32.
 8. On convict labour in the post-Seven Years war period, see esp. Ruth Pike, *Penal Servitude in Early Modern Spain* (Madison, 1983), Chap. 8. On military reform and the reconstruction of the defense: Allan J. Kuethe, *Cuba, 1753–1815: Crown, Military, and Society* (Knoxville, 1986); Juan Marchena Fernández, ‘El ejército de América y la descomposición del orden colonial. La otra mirada en un conflicto de lealtades’, *Militaria*, 4 (1992), 63–91, esp. Section 2; Juan Marchena Fernández, *Ejército y milicias en el mundo colonial Americano* (Madrid, 1992), Chap. 4; Carmen Gómez Pérez, *El sistema defensivo americano. Siglo XVIII* (Madrid, 1992); Celia María Parcero Torre, *La pérdida de la Habana y las reformas borbónicas en Cuba, 1760–1773* (Ávila, 1998). On the geopolitical consequences of the explorations in the Pacific, see esp. R.F. Buschmann, *Iberian Visions of the Pacific Ocean, 1507–1899* (Houndmills, 2014).
 9. The King’s slaves (*esclavos del rey*) were those slaves directly owned by the Spanish Crown. Their enslavement usually followed their capture as prisoners of war, or alienation from their masters as a consequence of punishment. For a detailed study of the role of the King’s slaves in the works, see Evelyn Powell Jennings, ‘War as the “Forcing House of Change”: State Slavery in Late-Eighteenth-Century Cuba’, *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, 62, 3 (2005), 411–440.
 10. Data in the table and in the text are taken from the statistic tables held in Archivo General de Indias, Seville (henceforth AGI), Indiferente General, 1907 and entitled ‘Estado que comprehende los Soldados de los Reximientos de Lombardia...q.e se hallan destinados en los travaxos y demas parages q.e se expresaran anexos a ellas’. Data marked with an asterisk are published in Powell Jennings, *War as the “Forcing House of*

- Change*”, p. 434, and are based on statistics in AGI, Santo Domingo, 1211, 1647 and 2129. For data on February 1774: AGI, Cuba, 1152, ‘Estado que comprehende los soldados... que se hallan destinados en los trabajos de fortificación y demás parajes q.e se expresan anexos a ella’, 28.2.1774.
11. Parcero Torre, *La pérdida de la Habana*, p. 102. Notes to the original tables in AGI, Indiferente General, 1907, clarify that only around 70% of those included in the statistics for works in San Carlos de la Cabaña were actually employed there. The rest were either hospitalized, employed in the other works mentioned in the text and in the construction of public roads, or leased out to private contractors as carriers.
 12. AGI, Cuba, 1155, Marques de la Torre to Urriza, n. 1293, Havana 11 January 1777.
 13. See esp. AGI, Cuba, 125, and Indiferente General, 1907.
 14. For figures of escapes: AGI, Cuba, 1152, ‘Estado que comprehende los soldados... que se hallan destinados en los trabajos de fortificación y demás parajes q.e se expresan anexos a ella’, 28.2.1774. For two examples of the employment of recaptured convicts: AGI, Cuba 1155: Marques de la Torre to Rapun, n. 826, Havana 31 May 1775; Marques de la Torre to Urriza, n. 1074, Havana 29 April 1776.
 15. See esp. Evelyn P. Jennings, ‘The Sinews of Spain’s American Empire: Forced Labor in Cuba from the Sixteenth to the Nineteenth Centuries’, in *Building the Atlantic Empires: Unfree Labor and Imperial States in the Political Economy of Capitalism, ca. 1500–1914*, eds. John Donoghue and Evelyn P. Jennings (Leiden and Boston, 2016), pp. 25–53. For a classic account of the later stages of this process: Rebecca J. Scott, *Slave Emancipation in Cuba. The Transition to Free Labor, 1860–1899* (Pittsburgh, 2000 [first ed. 1985]).
 16. Christian G. De Vito, ‘Precarious pasts. Labour flexibility and labour precariousness as conceptual tools for the historical study of the interactions among labour relations’, in *On the Road to Global Labour History*, ed. Karl-Heinz Roth (Leiden and Boston, forthcoming). For a similar argument on the importance of the State in the mobilisation and migration of coerced labour: John Donoghue and Evelyn P. Jennings, ‘Introduction’, in *Building the Atlantic Empires*, pp. 1–24.
 17. See especially: AGI, 1155, Marques de la Torre to Rapun, n. 756, Havana 4 March 1775.
 18. Buschmann, *Iberian Visions*, p. 156.
 19. AGI, Buenos Aires, 552, ff. 1–11, Amat to Arriaga, 8 April 1758. For an overview of the explorations and settlements in the Malvinas/Falklands between the 16th century and 1833, see: British Library, Additional Ms.

- 32,603, Papers of the Government of Buenos Ayres. Falklands Islands [BL, Falklands], Moreno to Palmerston, London, 17 June 1833. On the subsequent period of British rule: Stephen A. Royle, 'The Falkland Islands, 1833–1876: The establishment of a colony', *The Geographical Journal*, 151, 2 (1985), 204–214.
20. Louis-Antoine de Bougainville, *Voyage autour du monde par la frégate du Roi La Boudouse et la flûte L'Étoile* (Paris, 1982), pp. 75–85.
 21. See especially: AGI, Buenos Aires, 552, Ruiz Puente, Malvinas, 31 December 1769. On further exploration of Port Egmont, and the correspondence between the two captains: BL, Falklands: Letter to Arriaga, Buenos Aires, 31 January 1770 (and annex); Rubalcava to Bucareli, Malvinas, 4 March 1770; Rubalcava to Hunch, on board de Frigate Santa Cathalina, 20 February 1770; Hunt to Rubalcava, [Port Egmont], 21 February 1770. The same correspondence is in: AGI, Buenos Aires, 552, ff. 345–346.
 22. Legend of the table: * *Capitán, subtheniente, sargento, alferes, cavo, tambor*. ** Spanish population only. The table integrates all available demographic data held at the *Archivo General de Indias* in Seville. Its sources are: AGI, Buenos Aires, 552: Ruiz Puente, Fragata Liebre en la Ensenada de Montevideo, 24 February 1767; Amat to Arriaga, Lima, 13 October 1768, n. 126; AGI, Buenos Aires, 553: Ruiz Puente to Arriaga, Malvinas, 19 June 1771; Gil y Lemos to Arriaga, Puerto de la Soledad, 4 April 1774 (annex); Carassa to Galvez, Puerto de la Soledad, 15 February 1777 (annex); Vertíz to Galvez, Buenos Aires, 24 December 1781; Altolaguirre to Galvez, Malvinas, 20 February 1781; Clairac, Puerto de la Soledad, 22 May 1785. Additional data on the wage labourers (thus excluding the convicts) are in: BL, Falklands, Ruiz Puente to Bucareli, Malvinas, 25 April 1767 (annex entitled 'Presupuesto del Caudal de R.l Hacienda...').
 23. AGI, Buenos Aires, 552, Ruiz Puente to Julián de Arriaga, 22 March 1768.
 24. AGI, Buenos Aires, 553: Vertíz to Arriaga, Buenos Aires, 11 May 1771; Bernarani to Arriaga, Malvinas, 15 November 1771; Reggio, Ruiz Puente and Cartejón, Isla de León, 10 September 1773.
 25. AGI, Buenos Aires, 553, Ruiz Puente, Puerto de la Soledad, 4 April 1774.
 26. AGI, Buenos Aires, 553, Carassa to Galvez, Puerto de la Soledad, 15 February 1777.
 27. See for instance AGI, Buenos Aires, 553, Ruiz Puente to Arriaga, Isla de León, 2 August 1774. In the same *legajo* see also: Ruiz Puente, Puerto de la Soledad, 4 April 1774.

28. AGI, Buenos Aires, 552: Arriaga to Madariaga, Aranjuez, 6 June 1769; Bucareli to Arriaga, Buenos Aires, 27 October 1769; Madariaga to Arriaga, Montevideo, 1 January 1770.
29. Three considerations reinforce this point. First, data regarding 10 January 1767 include the Spanish population only. However, because no convicts existed among the French settlers, their percentage on the total population was considerably lower than what it appears in the table. Second, the figure regarding 23 February 1767 exclude the Spanish women and children, who were transported from Buenos Aires only after February 1767 (see BL, Falklands, Bougainville, Buenos Aires, 8 February 1767). Third, based on the correspondence, it seems safe to assume that on 19 June 1771 some women and children were also present in Puerto de la Soledad, thus lowering the ratio of prisoners/total population.
30. AGI, Buenos Aires, 552, Ruiz Puente to Bucareli, Malvinas, 22 March 1768.
31. See for instance: AGI, Buenos Aires, 552, Ruiz Puente to Arriaga, 22 March 1768; AGI, Buenos Aires, Ruiz Puente to de Arriaga, 10 February 1769.
32. AGI, Buenos Aires, 552, Ruiz Puente to Arriaga, Malvinas, 10 February 1769. On the same date, in another note to the same recipient, the governor asserted that 'with the exception of the port and the pasture, this island is nothing, nothing worth'.
33. The abandonment of the settlement was discussed among high-rank colonial officials between October 1779 and January 1781, during the Anglo-Spanish War (1779–1783). The discussion is especially relevant for its being contemporary with the creation of the four settlements along the coast of Patagonia (end 1779–beginning 1781). Unsurprisingly, one of the main sponsor of the Patagonian colonization, the Count of Floridablanca, was the main opponent of the abandonment of the Malvinas. The motivations contained in his letter were finally accepted by the Viceroy of the Río de la Plata, Vertíz, who had originally favoured the abandonment. For related documents see AGI, Buenos Aires, 553: Vertíz to Galvez, Buenos Aires, 8 October 1779; Floridablanca to Galvez, El Pardo, 10 February 1780; Muzquiz to Galvez, El Pardo, 4 February 1780; Vertíz to Galvez, Buenos Aires, 26 January 1781. For an earlier warning about the danger of a British invasion of the islands, and the state of that 'open, and almost undefended, settlement': AGI, Buenos Aires, 553, Carassa to Galvez, Puerto de la Soledad, 15 October 1778.
34. AGI, Buenos Aires, 552, Vertíz to Arriaga, Buenos Aires, 13 May 1770. The two male adults are described respectively as 'carpenter/peasant' (*carpintero labrador*) and 'sawyer/peasant' (*aserrador labrador*).

35. For the insistent requests of transfer made by governor Felipe Ruiz Puente: AGI, Buenos Aires, 553: Ruiz Puente to Arriaga, Malvinas, 29 March 1771; Ruiz Puente to Arriaga, Malvinas, 24 July 1771; Ruiz Puente to Arriaga, Malvinas, 14 November 1771. For request by the Extraordinary Engineer Esteban O'Brien: AGI, Buenos Aires, 552, O'Brien to Ruiz Puente, Malvinas, 12 February 1769. For the Second Captain Antonio Catani: AGI, 553, O'Reilly to Arriaga, Madrid, 20 October 1773 (and annex).
36. AGI, Buenos Aires, 553: Vertíz to Arriaga, Buenos Aires, 1 March 1772, 15 March 1772 (three letters); Arriaga to Vertíz, Madrid, 2 July 1772. On the state of the colony before the attempted mutiny: AGI, Buenos Aires, 553: Bernarani to Vertíz, Malvinas, 19 June 1771 (and the same letter to Arriaga on the same date); Bernarani to Arriaga, Malvinas 15 November 1771.
37. AGI, Buenos Aires, 553, Ruiz Puente and Gil y Lemos to Vertíz, Buenos Aires, 30 April 1773. The plan was transmitted to the Secretary of the Indies in September 1773: AGI, Buenos Aires, 553, Reggio, Ruiz Puente and Cartejon, Isla de León, 10 September 1773. The following report on the expenses of the colony arguably influenced the decision to elaborate a new system: AGI, Buenos Aires, 553, Piedra to Arriaga, Puerto de la Soledad, 16 March 1773 (and annex). On the link between the British abandonment of Port Egmont and the implementation of the new method in Puerto de la Soledad: AGI, Buenos Aires, 553: Letter to Ruiz Puente, Araneuz, 12 April 1774; Ruiz Puente, Isla de Leon, 22 April 1774 (and annexed 'Plan de los medios que considero oportuno para la conserbacion de la Ysla, y Puerto de la Soledad de Malvinas'). The new plan was re-proposed by former governor Ruiz Puente, who had by this time been transferred in Spain, and was regularly consulted regarding the Malvinas. Ruiz Puente's plan was approved by the King on 6 March 1775, and the decision was subsequently confirmed by the Viceroy of the Rio de la Plata. See AGI, Buenos Aires, 553: Letter to the Governor of Buenos Aires, San Ildefonso, 9 August 1776; Vertíz to Galvez, Buenos Aires, 7 November 1776.
38. This point appears especially important for the colonial officers, since complaints about the shortage of skilled workers had been constant in the previous years. See for instance: AGI, Buenos Aires, 552: Ruiz Puente to Arriaga, Malvinas, 22 March 1768 and 10 February 1769.
39. See for example: AGI, Buenos Aires, 553, Gil y Lemos to Arriaga, Puerto de la Soledad, 3 June 1774. The governor refers to 'the colony's new method to subsist'. In the same *legajo*, see also: Vertíz to Galvez, Buenos Aires, 7 November 1776.

40. An explicitly post-modernist interpretation of micro history can be found in Magnússon and Szijártó, *What is Microhistory*, p. 115. Magnússon presented similar arguments in: “The singularization of history’: social history and microhistory within the postmodern state of knowledge’, *Journal of Social History*, 36, 3, 2003, pp. 701–735; ‘Social History as “sites of memory”?’ The institutionalization of history: microhistory and the grand narrative’, *Journal of Social History*, 39, 2006, 891–913. For a discussion of the relationship between microhistory and post-modernism: Richard D. Brown, ‘Microhistory and the post-modern challenge’, *Journal of Early Republic*, 23, 1, 2003, 1–20; Magnússon and Szijártó, *What is Microhistory*, pp. 18–19 (for Szijártó’s point of view).
41. Similar patterns to the one referred to in the text can be observed for Veracruz and its forts of San Juan de Ulúa. See for instance: Leonardo Pasquel, ed., *Forzados de Veracruz 1755* (Veracruz, 1969).
42. For the deportation of 100 vagrants from Galicia to the works in Puerto Rico in 1770: AGI, Indiferente general, 1907, O’Reilly to Ordeñada, Madrid 7th October 1770.
43. AGI, Indiferente general, 1907, Conde de Aranda to Julian de Arriaga, Madrid 18th December 1769.
44. AGI, Indiferente general, 1907, Communication of the Conde de Aranda, Madrid 19th May 1770. Here the record summarizes a previous communication of Alejandro O’Reilly.
45. Both citations in the text are taken from AGI, Indiferente general, 1907, O’Reilly to Arriaga, Madrid 10th August 1770.
46. For example, see the case of 400 convicts shipped to Puerto Rico in December 1769, 100 of whom died either during the transportation or during the first months after arrival. AGI, Indiferente general, 1907, Communication of the Conde de Aranda, Madrid 19th May 1770.
47. The ‘banished’ (*desterrados*) or ‘forced labourers’ (*forzados*), as the convicts were referred to, totaled 412 on 3rd November 1770, 463 on 7th April 1772, 480 on 7th January 1773, 463 on 1st July 1774, 515 on 1st July 1777 and 530 on 1st January 1778. All statistics are from records held in AGI, Indiferente general, 1907.
48. The report is attached to the letter of Muelas to Arriaga, Puerto Rico, 26th January 1773, in AGI, Indiferente general, 1907.
49. On prisoners transported to Havana from New Spain, usually called ‘guachinangos’: Jorge L. Lizadi Pollock, ‘Presidios, presidiarios y desertores: Los desterrados de Nueva España, 1777–1797’, in *El Caribe en los intereses imperiales, 1750–1815* (San Juan Mixcoal, 2000), pp. 17–28; Isabel Marín Tello, *La importancia de los presidios como lugar de castigo: el caso de Cuba en el siglo XVIII*, paper presented at the 22nd Simpósio Nacional de História, ANPUH, João Pessoa, 2003, available on-line

- at: <http://anpuh.org/anais/wp-content/uploads/mp/pdf/ANPUH.S22.474.pdf> (consulted on 27 October 2016). See also: AGI, Cuba, 1152, 1156, 1190, 1207 and 1260. On the Tribunal of the Acordada, see esp. Colin M. MacLachlan, *Criminal Justice in Eighteenth Century Mexico: A Study of the Tribunal of the Acordada* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, 1974).
50. See esp. AGI, Cuba, 1155, n. 756, Marques de la Torre to Rapun, Havana 4 March 1775. For an individual example of transportation: AGI, Cuba, 1155, n. 1048, Marques de la Torre to Urriza, Havana 25 March 1776.
 51. See AGI, Cuba, 365B. On the *presidio* of Saint Agustin, see especially: Juan Marchena Fernández and María del Carmen Gómez Pérez, *La Vida de Guarnición en las Ciudades Americanas de la Ilustración* (Madrid, 1992), Chap. 2; James Coltrain, 'Constructing the Atlantic's Boundaries: Forced and Coerced Labor on Imperial Fortifications in Colonial Florida', in *Building the Atlantic Empires*, pp. 109–131.
 52. For detailed figures on the standing convicts in both sites: AGI, Cuba, 126.
 53. On 20 September 1770 the governor of Buenos Aires issued an ordinance (*bando*) prescribing that 'all vagabonds and individuals who do not live of their work, nor have a profession or Masters, leave this city by the third day; in case they are caught after this date, they will be legally punished, if not recidivists, to 4 year exile in the Malvinas islands'. Quoted in: Alejandro Agüero, *Castigar y perdonar cuando conviene a la República. La justicia penal de Córdoba del Tucumán, siglos XVII y XVIII* (Madrid, 2008), p. 231.
 54. Together with Buenos Aires and Montevideo, the Malvinas islands are mentioned as a 'usual destination' of penal transportation from Córdoba del Tucumán in: Agüero, *Castigar y perdonar*, p. 182.
 55. Quoted in Rossana Barragán, *Miradas a la Junta de La Paz en 1809* (La Paz, 2009).
 56. For the Malvinas as destinations for deserters who failed to appear within three months from the issue of the Royal amnesties, see Rafael Salillas, *Evolución penitenciaria de España* (Madrid, 1918), vol. 2, p. 493. On p. 444 the author additionally reports the case of fifteen non-military convicts transported in 1803 from Cadiz to the Malvinas islands via Buenos Aires on board the frigate *Eulalia*, after having their sentences of transportation to the Philippines commuted.
 57. For a rare list of prisoners including information on the crimes for which they were sentenced: Archivo General de la Nación, Buenos Aires (henceforth AGN), 9.16.09.05, Altolaguirre, Puerto de la Soledad de Maluinas, 6 April 1782, 'Noticia de los Precidiarios que existen en el Precidio

- de esta Colonia con las de sus Condenas el tiempo que tiene cada uno vencido, y el que les queda’.
58. AGI, Buenos Aires, 553: Gil y Lemos to Arriaga, Puerto de la Soledad, 4 April 1774 (and annex); Carassa to Galvez, Puerto de la Soledad, 15 February 1777.
 59. In AGN, 9.16.09.05, respectively: Vertíz to the Governor of Malvinas, Buenos Aires, 13 October 1779; and Medina to Vertíz, Colonia de la Soledad de Maluinas, 14 January 1780. On the *indio* Felipe, see the same file, Altolaguirre, Puerto de la Soledad de Maluinas, 6 April 1782, ‘Noticia de los Precidarios que existen...’.
 60. Among other sources: AGI, Buenos Aires, 552: Bucareli to Arriaga, Buenos Aires, 9 April 1767; Ruiz Puente to Arriaga, Malvinas, 22 March 1768; Horozco to Arriaga, Ferrol, 16 October 1769; Letter to Ruiz Puente, Buenos Aires, 30 November 1769. AGI, Buenos Aires, 553: Ruiz Puente to Arriaga, Malvinas, 29 March 1771. BL, Falklands: Bucareli to Ruiz Puente, 30 November 1767; Conde de Aranda to Bucareli, Madrid, 25 July 1769; Marques de Grimaldi, Buenos Aires, 22 February 1769 (and annex); *Relacion que hace el Theniente de Navio y Capitan de la Fragata Santa Rosa D.n Fran.co Gil*, March 1769. For an example of the circulation of ‘whispers’ about the British plan to settle in the Falklands: AGI, Buenos Aires, 553, Principe de Masserano to the Governor of Malvinas, Madrid, 2 April 1776 (and annex). Another input for explorations came from the will to establish new settlement in the Tierra del Fuego, as different sources referred to the friendly attitude of the natives of the area: BL, Falklands: Bucareli to Ruiz Puente, Buenos Aires, 30 November 1767 (and annex); Pando to Arriaga, Buenos Aires, 30 January 1769 (and annex); Bucareli to Madariaga, Buenos Aires, 28 October 1769; Arriaga to Bucareli, Madrid, 7 February 1770; AGI, Buenos Aires, 553, Ruiz Puente to Arriaga, Malvinas, 19 June 1771. This continuous regional activity of exploration produced an extended maritime and cartographic knowledge, with considerable global political impact. See for example: AGI, Buenos Aires, 552, Arriaga to Ruiz Puente, Madrid, 16 July 1770; AGI, Buenos Aires, 553, Ruiz Puente to Arriaga, Malvinas, 29 March 1771.
 61. For example: AGI, Buenos Aires, 553, Carassa to Galvez, Puerto de la Soledad, 6 February 1777.
 62. On the Patagonian settlements see esp.: Juan Alejandro Apolant, *Operativo Patagonia. Historia de la mayor aportación demográfica masiva a la Banda Oriental* (Montevideo, 1999, 2nd edition); Carlos M. Garla, *Los establecimientos españoles en la Patagonia. Estudio institucional* (Sevilla, 1984); Dora Noemi Martínez de Gorla, ‘El primer asentamiento de colonos en el Río Negro en Patagonia’, *Temas Americanistas*,

- 6 (1986), 42–56; Perla Zusman, ‘Entre el lugar y la línea: la constitución de las fronteras coloniales patagónicas 1780–1792’, *Fronteras de la Historia*, 6 (2001), 41–67; María Ximena Senatore, *Arqueología e Historia. Arqueología e Historia en la Colonia Española de Floridablanca* (Buenos Aires, 2007); Marcia Bianchi Vilelli, *Cambio social y prácticas cotidianas en el orden colonial. Arqueología histórica en Floridablanca (San Julián, Argentina, Siglo XVIII)* (Oxford, 2009). The circulation of information had a still further reach, as for Governor Phelipe Ruiz Puente’s letters for the Viceroy of Peru, transported to El Callao (Lima) by the frigates *Liebre* and *Aguila*: AGI, Buenos Aires, 552, Manuel Amat to Julián de Arriaga, Lima, 13 October 1768, n. 126.
63. AGI, Buenos Aires, 553, Junta Superiore de la Real Hacienda, Buenos Aires, 1 March 1792.
64. AGN, 9.16.09.05, petition signed by Juan Josef Ysaurralde, to Vertíz, undated [1780]; AGN, 9.16.09.06, Vertíz to the Governor of Malvinas, Buenos Aires, 16 February 1784. See also AGN, 9.16.09.05, Altolaguirre, Puerto de la Soledad de Maluinas, 6 April 1782, ‘Noticia de los Precidarios que existen...’
65. See esp. AGN, 09.16.09.05, Altolaguirre, Maluinas, 8 April 1782, ‘Estado que manifiesta... con respecto a la explicación de la adjunta Relación’.
66. AGN, 9.16.09.05, Ministerio de la Hazienda de la Yslas Maluinas, Año de 1779, Ajustam.to de Raciones de los Yndividuos de esta Colonia, Maluinas, 31 October 1779.
67. AGN, 9.16.09.06, Clairac to the Marques de Loreto, Soledad de las Islas Malvinas, 20 March 1787.
68. On connected history see esp.: Sanjay Subrahmanyam, ‘Connected Histories: Notes Towards a Reconfiguration of Early Modern Eurasia’, *Modern Asian Studies*, 31, 3 (1997), 735–762; Subrahmanyam, *Explorations in Connected History*. See also: Giuseppe Marcocci, ‘Gli intrecci del mondo. La modernità globale di Sanjay Subrahmanyam’, in Sanjay Subrahmanyam, *Mondi connessi. La storia oltre l’eurocentrismo (secoli XVI–XVIII)* (Roma, 2014). The vision proposed here also connects to Sandra Curtis Comstock’s ‘incorporating comparisons’: ‘Incorporating Comparison’, in *The Handbook of World-System Analysis: Theory and Research*, eds. Christopher Chase-Dunn and Salvatore Babones (Routledge, 2011), pp. 375–376; ‘Incorporating Comparisons in the Rift. Making Use of Cross-Place Events and Histories in Moments of World Historical Change’, in *Beyond Methodological Nationalism. Social Science Research Methodologies in Transition*. eds. Anna Amelina, Devrimsel D. Negriz, Thomas Faist and Nina Glick Schiller (Routledge, 2012), pp. 176–197.

69. Julia Frederick, 'In Defense of Crown and Colony: Luis de Unzaga and Spanish Louisiana', *Louisiana History: The Journal of the Louisiana Historical Association*, 19, 1 (2008), 389–422.
70. See: AGI, Buenos Aires, 552: Bucareli, Buenos Aires, 30 March 1770 (with annex); Bucareli to Madariaga, Buenos Aires, 29 April 1770.
71. On the concept of 'imperial careering': David Lambert and Alan Lester, *Colonial Lives Across the British Empire: Imperial Careering in the Long Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, 2006).
72. AGI, Indiferente General, 1907, Ruiz Puente to Arriaga, Isla de León, 14 June 1774.
73. For another example, before becoming vice-governor of Puerto de la Soledad in February 1767, coronel Antonio Catani had: served in Granada; participated in a siege of Oran and the campaign in Nice and Savoy (1747); 'disciplined the troops' in Buenos Aires; guided three punitive expeditions against the natives of the Tucuman region (1755–1760); repeatedly 'dislodged' the Portuguese from the surrounding of Río Pardo; and fought in the Seven Year's War against the *indios infieles* in New Spain. See AGI, Buenos Aires, 553, Conde O' Reilly to Julián de Arriaga, Madrid, 20 October 1773 [annex].
74. Respectively, Thomas O'Daly and Esteban O'Brien.
75. For various examples, see AGN, 9.16.09.05.
76. AGI, Indiferente general, 1907, 'Relación de los reos que con asistencia del Zirujano Mayor de la Armada... fueron conducidos de Cartagena de Lebante en los Navios de S. Mag.d', attached to the letter of Marques de la Victoria to Julián de Arriaga, Isla de León, 7 February 1771.

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Keeping in Touch: Migrant Workers’ Trans-Local Ties in Early Modern Italy

Eleonora Canepari

INTRODUCTION

In 1594, Luca Bartolo borrowed 230 *scudi* from Giacomo Corsetto. Luca and Giacomo had a close relationship: they were both grocers and came from the same village in the diocese of Novara, more than 600 km north of Rome. In the following months, Luca paid back approximately half of the amount he had borrowed and then, in 1597, he returned to his birthplace for several months. Taking advantage of Luca’s absence, Giacomo tried to fool his friend: he managed to convince Luca’s brother—Antonio—to sign a notary deed stipulating that the debtor still had to reimburse the entire sum, without mentioning the payment that had already been made. Antonio agreed to sign because, as Francesco Simonetta (Giacomo’s apprentice) testified, he was ‘an idiot who can neither read nor write’.¹ When Luca came back from his village in 1598, Giacomo immediately visited him at his home, asking him to approve the notary deed made out on his behalf by his brother Antonio, and Luca did so. As a consequence, a few days later Giacomo demanded that Luca

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give him the entire sum of the loan; Luca sued him, and in 1599 the trial commenced.

In his deposition at the Governor of Rome's tribunal, Francesco Simonetta was critical of Antonio and Luca because they could not read, but he also pointed out that Luca's absence from Rome was the real reason for the conflict:

The above mentioned Luca and Antonio are two men who run their shop and manage their businesses, but they don't do it as they should, because they need advice, and if Luca had been in Rome the notary deed wouldn't have been made because he would have claimed that the money already paid should be remitted. [...] Someone who can neither read nor write is a Zanni, and he can be fooled in written records.²

This declaration of Francesco's provides another relevant detail of the story when he adds that Antonio, Luca's brother, was in their village at that time. Interrogated by the Governor, Giacomo stated that Luca had never paid him back, and as a result he was unable to pay his niece's dowry.

He [that is Luca] owes me some money that I lent him *amore dei* a long time ago, but I never got it back, and it caused me a lot of problems because I couldn't provide a dowry for my niece, with whom I had come down from the village, and that money was for her.

The depositions provided by Francesco and Giacomo were somewhat counterbalanced by the interrogation of Giovanni Battista Citoia. Having arrived in Rome from the same village four years earlier, Giovanni Battista, Luca's nephew, testified to the good reputation of his uncle, who provided him with housing. Giovanni Battista pointed out that he was as comfortable 'as my peers', and that he owned several houses and fields in their home village worth 2000 *scudi*. Indeed, the hospitality his uncle offered was even more valuable in that Giovanni Battista was not really in need of such charity.

The story of Luca Bartoli and Giacomo Corsetto is a story of a conflict between two grocers who came to Rome from a distant village. They were ordinary people who migrated for work and nevertheless maintained strong ties with their birthplace. In doing so, they lived in a 'transnational', multi-sited dimension and experienced what has been

called 'simultaneity'. The story of these immigrant grocers tells a great deal about multi-local ties and the 'transnational' dimension of ordinary migrants' lives in early modern society. First of all, we can observe a form of circular mobility. The fight began because Luca had gone back to the village for several months between 1597 and 1598 and, at the time of the trial in 1599, it was his brother Antonio's turn to go back home. As I will show, these examples are not exceptional. Rather, many migrants travelled back and forth on a regular basis even when their birthplace was located at a considerable distance from the host city. The connection between the two places made it possible for migrants to have their relatives come to Rome, as in the case of Giacomo's niece, who got married in her uncle's host city. Besides kinship, migrants can also be seen to have maintained a bond with their birthplace because they continued to own goods and properties there even after having emigrated. At the same time, however, this story also tells us about the establishment of ties in other places that were neither Rome nor the village: specifically, Giacomo also lent some money which, to collect, required that he go to Bracciano.³

The disagreement between Giacomo and Luca is only one example of the wealth of information historical sources can provide about the multi-sited dimension of ordinary people's mobility. In relation to the preindustrial context, historians have mainly used notions of 'transnationalism' and the global labour market to describe the mobility of the migrant *élite* comprising merchants and travellers.⁴ Nevertheless, migratory flows in preindustrial Europe were composed in large part of labour migrants who moved across cities and national borders in search for work and the means to survive. Although harder to track, their familial ties were often rooted in more than one place, as studies by Angiolina Arru and Laurence Fontaine on credit and debit have demonstrated.⁵ Indeed, the two historians have pointed out that lending and borrowing relationships were often incorporated into trans-local networks.

Although ordinary migrants (neither merchants nor aristocrats) comprised the majority of people on the move in early modern societies, the multi-local dimension of their mobility still remains largely unknown. Indeed, while some studies—such as those by Laurence Fontaine and Angiolina Arru—have investigated the remittances and other economic activities of multi-sited families, many other aspects have been granted less consideration than they deserve. This paper thus aims to explore the geographically multi-sited dimension of ordinary people's migrations,

a dimension deriving not only from circular mobility but also from migrants' enduring bonds with their places of birth, where they often owned property and had living relatives. It is a well-known fact that the mobility of ordinary migrants is harder to track than that of merchants and aristocrats; however, it is not impossible: in sources such as notary deeds, judiciary documents (such as the above-mentioned trial) and testaments, we find the 'traces' left by multi-local ties. Thanks to these sources, with this paper I seek to shed light on the 'transnationalism' and multi-locality of labour migrants in the early modern age.

‘TRANSNATIONALISM’ AND MULTI-LOCALITY IN A PREINDUSTRIAL CONTEXT

Before I begin, it is necessary to first address the notion of ‘transnationalism’ applied to a preindustrial context. According to Linda G. Basch, Nina Glick Schilier and Cristina Blanc-Szanton, ‘transnationalism’ is defined ‘as the processes by which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement. (...) An essential element is the multiplicity of involvements that transmigrants sustain in both home and host societies’.⁶ The notion of transnationalism is obviously related to that of transnational migration, which implies the existence of the state and its national borders as a necessary condition. Moreover, it is also inextricably linked to the globalisation of production, exchange and, above all, the division of labour. Some scholars have claimed that transnationalism is a novel development representing a specific characteristic of contemporary societies—for instance, as Katy Gardner and Ralph Grillo argue: ‘Recent theories of transmigration suggest that in the past migrants (unless they were ‘guestworkers’ recruited for specific periods of employment) were expected to settle in the countries of reception. Nowadays, however, they are more likely to retain significant, ongoing ties with their countries of origin’.⁷ There is no doubt that transnationalism comprises ‘phenomena which, although not entirely new, have reached particular intensity at a global scale at the end of the twentieth century’.⁸ According to some scholars, this increase in transnational migrations marks the beginning of a new age of migration, characterised by mobility of people in search of work and refuge.⁹

The intensification of transnational migration over the past two centuries notwithstanding, world-systems theory has described globalisation

not as a recent phenomenon but rather as a process with its historical roots in the early modern age, namely, the birth of world capitalism in the fifteenth century, 'absorbing in the process all existing mini-systems and world-empires, establishing market and production networks that eventually brought all peoples around the world into its logic and into a single worldwide structure'.¹⁰ The opportunity to 'backdate' an approach that goes beyond states and nations is linked not only to the early birth of capitalism but also to the high rates of mobility that characterised early modern societies. Historians of migration have criticised the concept of 'mobility transition' according to which twentieth-century modernisation was the key event that produced a sharp increase in individual migration, as opposed to pre-modern societies, which are cast as stable and self-sufficient. Jan Lucassen and Leo Lucassen have argued that a high incidence of mobility actually dates back much further than the twentieth century, and that people moved for many reasons, but not because they were left with no other choice. 'Most basic decisions by human beings—the choice of a profession or a partner—often entail leaving their place of birth or residence. While they may not go far, their moves nevertheless lead them to other social and sometimes geographical environments.'¹¹ In a recent article, they point out that increased mobility is due more to improvements in transportation than to so-called 'modernisation':

This increase in migration rates, however, was not so much caused by the 'modernisation process', a paradigm dominant since the birth of the social sciences at the end of the nineteenth century. At most, the jump after 1850 should be considered primarily as an acceleration of cross-community migration. This was facilitated by cheaper and faster transport, which dramatically increased possibilities for people to find permanent and temporary jobs farther away from home, notably in an Atlantic space. We conclude that it was not the underlying structural causes of migration that changed, but rather its scale.¹²

Indeed, as the two historians argue, early modern societies (at least in Western Europe) were driven by temporary and permanent migrations of various kinds.¹³

Although scholars have convincingly demonstrated that a high rate of mobility characterised early modern societies and the existence of significant 'transnational' migratory flows, this notion has yet to be applied

to examining migration within the Italian peninsula. In this paper, I use samples composed of migrants coming to Rome from other countries (i.e. France), other ancient Italian states (for example the Duchy of Parma) and other cities/villages in the Pontifical State. While only the first two examples of these migrations can properly be defined as ‘transnational’, I would like to emphasise, as some authors have argued, that the distinction between intra—and international mobility is often arbitrary and difficult to apply to the early modern age.

[...] national borders historically were not fixed. Thus, internal movers in the past would now be considered as international migrants due to the presence of modern national borderlines. The notion that international migration connotes long-distances moves is also problematic. Movement of people across borders can be very short and still includes a change of national territory (e.g., job mobility in the border regions of France, Belgium, Germany and Luxembourg), whereas internal movement within large countries such as the USA or China can be over a very long distance.¹⁴

Thus, the specificity of the early modern period does not imply the impossibility to use concepts created to describe modern societies and mobilities, such as ‘global’ and ‘trans-local’. It rather suggests that the dynamics of multi-locality present striking similarities, no matter the short or long distances travelled, and the kind of borders that were crossed. From this perspective, the use of such concepts in this chapter resonates with sociologist Michael Eve’s insightful comment regarding the fact that certain dynamics of mobility are inherent to migration as a process (e.g. keeping ties, reconstructing networks at destination, the initial difficulties following arrival), rather than to the distance migrants actually travel.¹⁵

While the adjective ‘transnational’ will be used only when appropriate, it should be noted that my use of this notion is meant to stress the fact that many ordinary migrants lived ‘here and there’, in a ‘multiplicity of involvements’ spanning their hometowns and the arrival city. In other words, for the purposes of this paper, the crucial aspect of ‘transnationalism’ is the notion of simultaneity. This notion calls into question the dichotomy between departure place and arrival city and asserts the multiplicity of individual belonging. In a recent volume on transnational

families, the anthropologist Élodie Razy and geographer Virginie Baby-Collin explain the shift from assimilation to multiplicity of identities:

Moving beyond a vision of migration understood in dichotomous terms on the spatial and temporal level, the transnational perspective is dynamic, privileging the point of view of migrant actors no longer seen as here *or* there but rather here *and* there, between two worlds or, even more so, articulated through multiple networks—a reformulation of a key concept. The issues of assimilation and integration are thus shifted toward the potential deployment of multiple identities and loyalties.¹⁶

The practice of maintaining bonds with the birthplace led to a double form of belonging which was not in contradiction with full social insertion in the arrival place. In their article on simultaneity, Peggy Levitt and Nina Glick Schiller argue that ‘Once we rethink the boundaries of social life, it becomes clear that the incorporation of individuals into nation-states and the maintenance of trans-national connections are not contradictory social processes’.¹⁷ As a matter of fact, incorporation into a new city and connection to the birthplace can be simultaneous processes:

Simultaneity, or living lives that incorporate daily activities, routines, and institutions located both in a destination country and transnationally, is a possibility that needs to be theorized and explored. Migrant incorporation into a new land and transnational connections to a homeland or to dispersed networks of family, compatriots, or persons who share a religious or ethnic identity can occur at the same time and reinforce one another.¹⁸

The notion of simultaneity also relates to what Paul André Rosental calls *espace investi* (‘invested space’), which can be much broader than the actual living place (*espace vécu*). Indeed, Rosental asserts the importance of migrants’ chosen reference space, wherein they project their individual expectations and plans. Rosental defines this as a space ‘in which individuals’ objectives are supposed to become concrete. It may be physical (seeking to acquire residency, purchasing a house or piece of land) or social (trying to become part of a group for instance through endogamy, the network of conviviality or the aspiration to represent a community, etc.)’.¹⁹ By sustaining connections to their homelands, migrants participate in two geographically distinct worlds; as a consequence, their

invested space is usually broader than that of native residents. Because it allows migrants to draw on two distinct sets of resources, this ‘double horizon’ can constitute an advantage that migrants have over native individuals.²⁰ As Rosental points out, the invested space can be broader not only as a consequence of individuals’ migration, but also due to the influence of mobility on migrants’ children. Thanks to this dynamic, which the historian defines as *finalisme urbain*, the bonds between migrants and their homeland can be very useful for the next generation:

[...] without knowing it, the migrants who are able to implement their project of maintaining ties and even return to their villages end up changing their children’s potential expectations. Indeed, the information that their children have about the city even before migrating is very different than the information that was available to their parents. Even when they were born in the village after their parents returned, this space—though unknown to them—forms a part of their potential spaces, the spaces in which they might potentially project their expectations.²¹

As we will see in the next section, many ordinary migrants lived in such a double space, a broader ‘invested space’ that characterised their biographies and their kinship relations even many years after they had left their home villages.

A BROADER ‘INVESTED SPACE’: MULTI-LOCAL KINSHIP RELATIONS

On January 1693, Carlo Palazzino, a 30-year-old migrant from the Duchy of Parma, was interrogated by the officers of San Sisto hospital in Rome, where he had requested admittance, in order to ascertain his eligibility. When asked about his family, Carlo stated that he was not married, and that he had two brothers. They did not live in Rome; however, one lived in their hometown of Luzzano, where he ran a grocery, while the other lived in Civitavecchia and worked as an innkeeper. The three brothers owned two houses in the village. Carlo Palazzino was one of the many migrants whose families continued a multi-sited group. In his case, the family was ‘scattered’ across three locations: Rome, Luzzano and Civitavecchia. It is important to note that the ‘multi-sitedness’ of familial bonds was more complex than a simple ‘country of origin vs. host city’ dichotomy. Familial bonds actually suggest a picture of both individual

and familial migration that goes beyond simply relocating from the home village to the destination city as the first and last step in the migratory trajectory; instead, trajectories potentially included other movements and relocations as well. Indeed, in both samples (San Sisto and testaments) the component of relatives living outside Rome includes a small percentage of individuals who no longer lived in the hometown because they had moved somewhere else. Besides brothers and sisters, the children of immigrants could also become migrants themselves for various reasons, leaving their parents' arrival city for other new destinations. The painter Giovanni Battista Bussolino, a native of Bergamo, had five daughters and two sons: one was a soldier and the other lived in Naples;²² one of the sons of Filippo Lavazzolo, a cardinal's servant who had arrived in Rome from Nice, moved to Sicily;²³ while one of the sons of the tailor Pompilio Serangelo, from Velletri, had become a priest of San Carlo dei Catinari in Bologna.²⁴ For all of these migrants, the 'invested space', rather than narrowing, potentially broadened from generation to generation.

In order to study multi-local relations, San Sisto pauper hospital's records are very useful. The *ospizio di San Sisto* was built in 1596 by Pope Sixtus V; it was a shelter for the poor, both Romans and foreigners.²⁵ To be admitted to the hospice, people had to pass a selection process, which consisted of some questions about their age, their job, their families and the goods they own. The volumes of *Esami dei poveri*, containing these interrogations, are available from the second half of the seventeenth century (starting in 1647) and they go on continuously until the nineteenth century. To find out who were the poor and their families, I collected a sample of 500 people, women and men, Romans and immigrants, admitted to the hospital from 1694 to 1701.²⁶ These volumes are a very important source, allowing us to know the personal situations of San Sisto's poor. Moreover, they provide data about the migration process, seldom available in other sources. In the most complete version of the interrogation,²⁷ the following pieces of information were indeed asked and provided: name, surname, father's name (husband's name for married women and widows), birthplace, profession, age, years already spent in Rome, reason for the immigration, last parish of residence, relatives (both in Rome and in their birthplace), goods owned and reason for the application to enter the hospital.

Out of a sample of 380 male and female migrants who requested admittance to the San Sisto pauper hospital between 1694 and 1701,

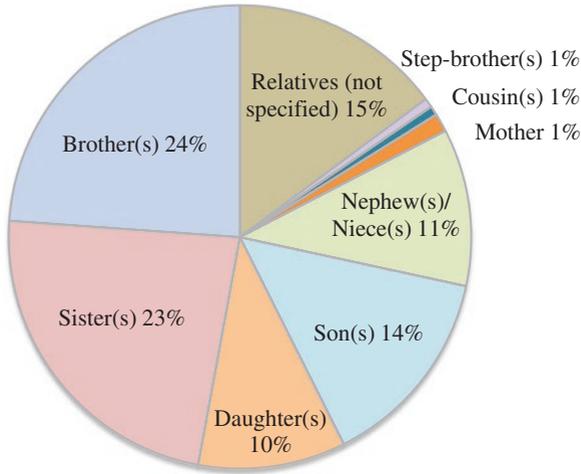


Fig. 8.1 Foreigners' relatives in the birthplace and elsewhere. *Source* ASR, *Ospizio Apostolico di San Michele*, part II, vol. 204, 1694–1702

approximately one third (29%) had one or more relatives in the birthplace.²⁸ This figure rises to 43% if we redraw the sample to exclude migrants who declared that they had been left alone. As Fig. 8.1 shows, these relatives were mainly brothers and sisters (representing almost 50%), but sons and daughters are quite numerous as well (24%).

It is worth noting that the 109 migrants who declared having relatives in their birthplace had an average age of 63.5 years, and had been living in Rome for an average of 32.5 years. Nevertheless, they were still connected to their relatives living in their homeland, even many years after their departure.

Although the extended length of time spent outside the homeland does not seem to have affected the maintenance of multi-local relations, we might expect these relations to have become less important in migrants' networks as the years went on. Indeed, the sociologist Michel Bozon, in his investigation into today's regional migration in the city of Villefranche-sur-Saône, describes a two-step process of integration and relates the intensity of certain local practices to the number of years the migrant had spent in the new setting.²⁹ Since the San Sisto records indicate the number of years each applicant had spent in Rome, is it possible to relate this information to the 'intensity' of bonds with the homeland (Fig. 8.2).

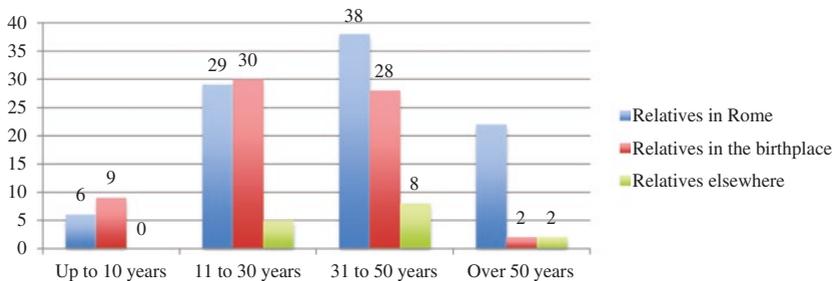


Fig. 8.2 Percentages of relatives living in Rome, the birthplace or elsewhere, related to the number of years the migrants had spent in Rome (tot. 128). *Source* ASR, *Ospizio Apostolico di San Michele*, part II, vol. 204, 1694–1702

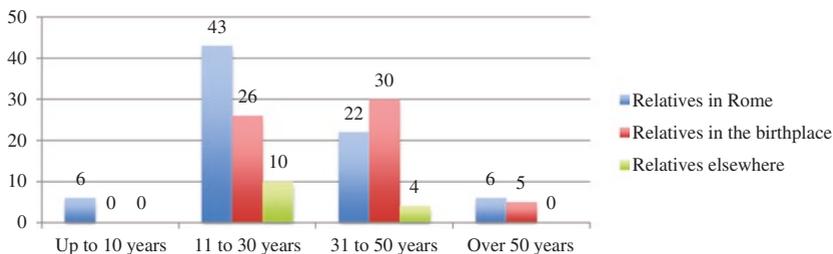


Fig. 8.3 Percentages of relatives living in Rome, the birthplace or elsewhere, related to age at migration (tot. 127). *Source* ASR, *Ospizio Apostolico di San Michele*, part II, vol. 204, 1694–1702

It is clear that the number of relatives in the birthplace continued to be high even when the migrant had been in Rome for more than 30 years (28 vs. 38), becoming much less significant only when residence in the city lasted more than 50 years (22 vs. 2). I would thus conclude that, while there is a relationship between the number of years spent in the arrival city and the intensity of migrants' bonds in this place, the bonds with relatives in the birthplace were not severed until very late in life.

In Fig. 8.3, the presence of relatives is related to age at migration. Not surprisingly, in this case the data display an opposite trend as compared to Fig. 8.2, with the number of migrants having relatives in the homeland tending to increase with age at migration. Indeed, the older the migrant was when he/she left the birthplace, the stronger were the ties in the homeland.

And yet, how is it possible to know if these ties were truly maintained? Part of the answer lies in the fact that migrants who had broken their bonds with relatives living outside Rome promptly reported this fact to the officers because one of the criteria for admittance to San Sisto was a solitary state, lacking relatives who might take care of the pauper in question. In other words, individuals seeking admission to the hospital had an interest in minimising their connections with relatives, especially male ones. Despite this fact, only a small number of them described these bonds as weakened or broken.³⁰ While we cannot estimate how frequently migrants made contact with their relatives, we certainly know that most of these connections survived the departure of the migrants. Interrogated in 1674 by the officers of San Sisto about his family, Carlo Migliorio, a 35-year-old French man from Burgundy, replied that he left his village when he was 19 years old, and that he had a brother who lived there, but he had not heard from him for one year. This statement suggests that, previously, the two brothers had been in touch, probably on a regular basis.³¹ The longevity of these bonds is also demonstrated by the fact that many migrants used their wills to bequeath a portion of their belongings and/or money to heirs living in the birthplace. Out of 174 wills made in Rome between 1610 and 1650, 41 mention at least one relative living in the homeland, which corresponds to a percentage of 23.5%.³²

The analysis of this body of records highlights some important characteristics of migrants' multi-local bonds. Firstly, as we have already seen in the San Sisto sample, many of these ties connected migrants with their brothers/sisters and nephews/nieces: in most cases, they were horizontal kinship relations. Giovanni Bozzi from Valtellina, in his will drawn up in 1615, bequeathed an annuity of 20 golden Spanish *scudi* to his nephew Gregorio, the orphaned son of his brother Stefano, who was to receive the money in his birthplace.³³ In exchange, two masses—one for the soul of the testator and one for that of his wife—were to be performed in the church of San Maurizio, located in the home village. It was the responsibility of the universal heir—the great-nephew Giovanni—to send the money to Gregorio. It is worth noting that Giovanni was appointed as universal heir of all the goods the testator owned in Rome. In the case of Giacomo Conagiosi, a furrier who arrived in Rome from a village in Genovese dioceses, the bond with his nephew, the orphaned son of his brother Carlo, was established after the migrant departed the hometown.³⁴ Indeed, the testament specifies that the child was 'born in the homeland after the testator had already left'.³⁵ The bequest consisted of

100 *scudi*, which the child was to receive when he turned 18. A similar case is that of Pasquino Pasinetto, a sharpener (*arrotatore*) from the diocese of Bergamo. In 1649, he made out a will in which he left 200 *scudi* in Bergamo currency to his brother Giovanni, and bequeathed all of his properties located in the birthplace to his other brother, Bartolomeo.³⁶ He left 200 Bergamo liras to Caterina, the orphaned daughter of his sister Margherita, for her dowry. The fact that the girl is called 'Caterina (or whatever her name will be)' suggests that Pasquino had never seen his niece, who was probably a child at the time of his departure.³⁷ The will of Roberto Nari, a French servant to Cardinal Antonio Maria Salviati, expresses an uncle's wish that his nephew come to Rome. The testament (1620) set forth that the heirs living in Rome must send 1100 *scudi* to Roberto's nieces and nephews living in Paris within 6 months of their uncle's death.³⁸ Accustomed to moving around, like many servants of cardinals and aristocrats who followed their masters, Roberto sought to 'relocate' various family members, suggesting that some leave Rome and others come to live there. Madonna Pasqua and Vittoria, his wife's aunt and niece, were invited to return to Florence, 'their home, where they were born, with their relatives and so make their lives there'. In contrast, Roberto left 100 *scudi* and wool clothing to Giovanni, the son of his niece Maria, 'on the condition, however, that this Giovanni come to Rome as the testator has written he should, otherwise this bequest is null'.

Another characteristic of multi-local bonds is the fact that they coexist with local ties, which migrants had or created in the arrival city. This condition of simultaneity is especially evident when migrants appointed two universal heirs, one for goods and money acquired in Rome, the other for properties owned in the hometown. Pietro Seitarelli from Monte San Leone, in the Duchy of Urbino, was a vineyard sharecropper who named as his universal heirs his brother Marino, for the goods he owned in Rome, and his mother, for those in San Leone.³⁹ The same solution was adopted in 1619 by Bartolomeo de Longhi, a carpenter from Mapello, in the dioceses of Bergamo. He appointed as universal heirs his brothers: Donato, who lived in the homeland, and Giovanni Antonio, who had migrated to Rome.⁴⁰ Even when there was only one universal heir, many testaments provide evidence of the double belonging of their migrant authors. Indeed, the division of goods in many wills appears to follow a precise logic: goods that remained in the birthplace were left to the relatives still living there, while goods owned in the city were left to family members who migrated to Rome or other individuals with whom

the testator had established new relationships after arriving in the city. For instance, Perpetua Petrella, a widow from L'Aquila, left 10 *scudi* to her cousin in their home village and bequeathed all her property located in her birthplace to her two nieces, who had likewise remained there.⁴¹ Perpetua had thus maintained personal connections and property in her hometown while at the same time establishing relationships in Rome that were completely independent of her kinship ties. Indeed, Perpetua left 5 *scudi* each to her goddaughters Marta and Porzia, the daughters of a bricklayer named Pietro; moreover, she willed all the furniture and 'decorations' she owned in Rome to her friend, the girls' mother.

In these wills, it appears that the 'invested space' of the migrants—to borrow Rosental's expression—continued to extend to the hometown even while new relationships were created in the arrival city. These bonds were not limited to social relationships; they also included 'spiritual ties' linking the migrant to a church in the home village. Indeed, wills often include bequests to one or more churches in exchange for masses to be said for the testator's soul. These cases display the same logic of double belonging described above. Tomasso dalla Chiesa, from Morbio in the dioceses of Como, appointed his mother as universal heir, left some money to his sisters (one of whom lived in the home village) for their dowries, and bequeathed 200 *scudi* to the church of San Giovanni Evangelista in Morbio.⁴² According to the intentions of Tomasso, the sum was to have been invested in real estate, in order to perpetuate the bequest.⁴³

The double belonging of migrants, the condition of being at once 'here and there', is further enhanced by the fact that they maintained not only social and 'spiritual' bonds in their hometowns, but also property. The importance of studying the circulation of goods has been underlined by George E. Marcus, who stresses the fruitfulness of 'the 'follow the thing' mode of constructing the space of investigation':⁴⁴ 'This mode of constructing the multi-sited space of research involves tracing the circulation through different context of a manifestly material object of study (at least as initially conceived), such as commodities, gifts, money [...]'.⁴⁵ As the wills show, the maintenance of familial ties was closely linked to the possession of goods at home: houses, land and vineyards that migrants continued to own even many years after migrating. Returning to the San Sisto paupers, it can be seen that all the properties they owned were located in their birthplaces. It should be noted that the specificity of this particular source—San Sisto pauper hospital records—implies that most of the individuals in the sample belonged to the lower classes, and

could not afford to acquire real estate in Rome.⁴⁶ Nevertheless, it is clear that migrants continued to own property in their birthplace even when many years had passed since their departure (Fig. 8.4).

As Fig. 8.4 shows, migrants continued to own property in their birthplace even when they had been in Rome for more than 30 years. On this subject, Angiolina Arru underlines that migrants very seldom sold off the goods they possess that were located at home:

Migration studies have neglected to analyze [...] relationships with the material goods of varying importance that migrants left behind in the home village. As the sources show, in these cases it was even more evident that the significance of wealth lay not so much in economic logics as in the need to preserve ties, identities and, above all, a presence in the community from which they had departed momentarily or permanently. Following migration, it was common for goods owned in the home village to be abandoned, often for long periods, but never sold.⁴⁷

As we have seen, property in the birthplace was usually bequeathed to fellow villagers, while the heirs living in Rome more frequently inherited moveable possessions, objects and furnishings. As the wills of non-Romans and the declarations of the San Sisto paupers illustrate, the practice of holding on to the real estate owned at 'home', even many years after departure, was made possible by a form of 'plural' management. Indeed, migrants often owned these goods together with their brothers and sisters (or other relatives). For instance, Antonio Vestri from Velletri, who

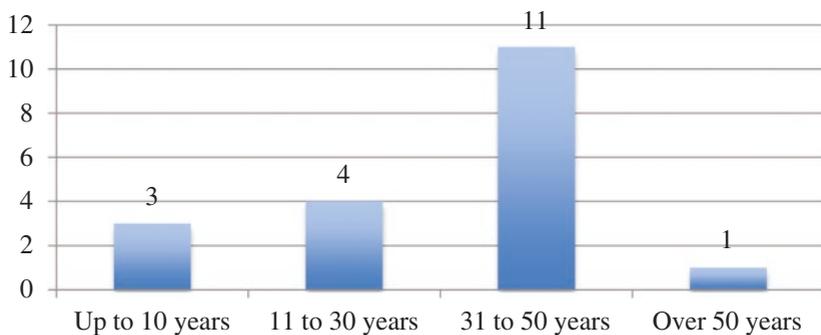


Fig. 8.4 Possession of property at home and years spent in Rome (tot. 19). Source ASR, *Ospizio Apostolico di San Michele*, part II, vol. 204, 1694–1702

worked as a cook for the Duke Strozzi, owned a house in his hometown together with his sister, and this half-share of the property was her dowry.⁴⁸ Lorenzo Marchiono from Urbino had two brothers and two sisters in his place of origin, where they collectively owned a vineyard and a house.⁴⁹ Andrea Ricci, a 50-year-old porter from Valtellina, owned several parcels of land and a share of three houses together with his brothers, ‘in addition to nine goats and a cow’.⁵⁰ While on the one hand, the fact that property was often ‘shared’ partially explains the reluctance to sell such possessions, on the other hand, it underlines the key role these goods played in helping migrants maintain symbolic and concrete bonds with their home villages. Despite the distance and years separating migrants from their places of origin, familial relationships and the collective management of these possessions mutually reinforced and preserved one another.

In order to manage possessions at a distance, migrants drew on geographical community networks and, more specifically, on those members of the community who travelled between the home village and the arrival city on a regular basis. As I have shown elsewhere, in cases where this network was less developed and the migration was essentially an individual trajectory, it was more difficult for migrants to gain possession of money they had inherited or manage goods at a distance.⁵¹ Owning property at a distance was only possible within a dense and long-standing migratory network including individuals who, thanks to their frequent mobility, were capable of acting in both the Roman environment and the home village. These dense and long-standing networks, along with the creation of a multi-local space that extended beyond individual cities and villages, are the focus of the next section.

BEYOND DISTANCE: AN EARLY MODERN ‘TRANSNATIONAL COMMUNITY’

Surprisingly enough, if we look once again at the will samples and analyse the testators’ places of origin, we discover that the maintenance of bonds with the home village had nothing to do with the distance from Rome. Indeed, the maintenance of multi-local ties appears to have been a common practice, especially among those migrants who came from the villages of the dioceses of Bergamo, Como and Milan. These three dioceses were outside of the Pontifical State: it is thus appropriate to define such bonds as ‘transnational’. Figure 8.5 illustrates the relationship between the percentage of places of origin as a share of the sample total (A) and,

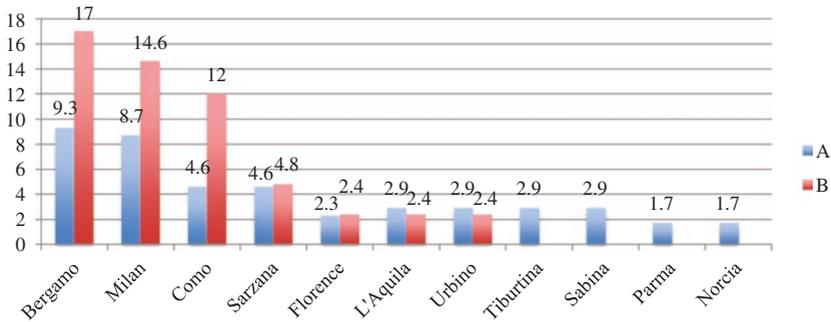


Fig. 8.5 Places of origin of the migrants included in the wills sample (tot. 173). *Source* ASR, *Trenta notai capitolini*, uff. 13, Testamenti, volumes 904–911, 1610–1653

for each place of origin, the share of migrants who had relatives and/or goods in the birthplace (B). Only the main places of origin (places that contributed at least three migrants) have been taken into account.

It is immediately clear that there is a sharp disconnect between column A and column B for the categories Bergamo, Milan and Como, while in the other categories, the A and B columns represent a very similar value—and, in the Tiburtina, Sabina, Parma and Norcia categories, column A is greater than B. This means that migrants from the dioceses of Bergamo, Milan and Como are overrepresented among those migrants who had heirs in the home village. For instance, the migrants from Como dioceses make up 4.6% of total testators, while their portion rises to 12% if we take into account only those testators who sent money/goods as bequests to the home village or town.

The maintenance of multi-local bonds is thus independent of the geographical distance between hometown and arrival city; it is likewise independent of whether or not the two places are located within the same country. In a study I carried out on migrant women in Rome, it emerged that being part of a multi-local network was much more important than geographical proximity for the maintenance of bonds with the place of origin.⁵² In this study, I observed that some women who did not return to their home village for years, and who had nobody to act as agent on their behalf, appear to have lost their property when relatives or other villagers took ‘illegal’ possession of it. I have concluded that the lack

of a dense, multi-local network made it virtually impossible to maintain bonds in the birthplace, regardless of distance. The data outlined in Fig. 8.5 suggest the same conclusion: despite the fact that circular mobility was common practice among these migrants, it cannot be assumed that all of them returned home on a regular basis. It is much more likely that the maintenance of bonds of the community ‘scattered’ between Rome and the home village relied upon the mobility of a limited number of individuals, who acted as intermediaries.

In order to study these communities, it is necessary to adopt a multi-sited, micro-historical approach and ‘track’ the mobility and biographies of migrants both in the birthplace and in the arrival city: an approach that is closely connected to the multi-sited ethnography suggested by George E. Marcus.⁵³ In the trial mentioned in the introduction, I noted that both the plaintiff and his brother had temporarily returned to Gattinara, their home village. Another trial provides an example of this practice within a ‘transnational’ community living between Rome and Borgo Sessia, in the diocese of Novara.⁵⁴ In 1624, Giovanni Moglia had a disagreement with Pietro Godio. Just as in the other trial, the conflict revolved around a loan. Pietro, who owed 25 *scudi* to Giovanni, told him that his uncle, Giuseppe Progliano, who lived in Borgo Sessia, would pay back the sum. When Giovanni went to the village, however, Giuseppe refused to pay him. Back in Rome, Giovanni asked Pietro for the money, but Pietro continued to claim that Giovanni had collected his money at the home village, until one day they were both eating at a tavern and the fight broke out. The two trials provided as examples show that circular mobility was a common practice for these migrants, even over long distances. If we adopt a multi-sited approach taking into account not only Roman sources but also the notary deeds drawn up in the places of origin, the sources confirm the existence of a pattern of circular mobility between Rome and these far-distant villages.

In October 1622, in the village of Gattinara, dioceses of Vercelli, Giorgio Calza appointed as his agents his cousin Antonio Calza and his friend Giovanni Duco, both living in Rome, in order ‘to collect from Luca, the son of the late Giacomino Sodano, also from Gattinara, living in the same city [of Rome], the sum of 25 *scudi*, bequeathed to him by the late Michele Floretta from Gattinara, in his will made about 2 years ago’.⁵⁵ Michele Floretta was the same migrant who had married the niece of Giacomo Corsetto—mentioned in the trial cited in the

Introduction—whose uncle had come from the home village. Michele had also left some money to several confraternities in Gattinara, including the confraternity of the Santissimo Rosario, to which the testator bequeathed 50 *scudi*. The prior and sub-prior of the confraternity were Giorgio Calza and Lorenzo Bardoni; in 1623, they appointed as agents their brothers—both named Antonio and both living in Rome—in order to collect the money from Michele's universal heir, Luca Sodano.⁵⁶ If Lorenzo Bardoni appointed his brother as his agent, it is not because he lived in Gattinara; in reality, he was only staying in the home village temporarily. Indeed, Lorenzo travelled between Rome and Gattinara on a regular basis, as a comparison of sources recorded in the two places shows. From 1611 to 1618, Lorenzo is mentioned in several notary deeds recorded in Rome, and from 1619 to 1620, his name is listed in the *status animarum* (parish census records) of Santa Maria ai Martiri, but at the same time, Lorenzo also signed several notary deeds in Gattinara, where he was present in 1621–1623. We can thus maintain that Lorenzo's movements followed a pattern of circular mobility, which enabled him to maintain bonds in both places, including membership to confraternities in Rome and Gattinara.

Lorenzo and the other migrants who travelled on a regular basis were often appointed as agents by their relatives and fellow 'villagers'. As we have seen, circular mobility was an essential condition for the existence of a 'transnational' community, as agents played a key role in the maintenance and management of goods. Moreover, exchanges related to marriages and the payment of dowries always involved agents: as a matter of fact, they held a particularly important role in managing the funds that went into dowries. For example, Lorenzo Bardone made it possible for Pietro Antonio Sodano to arrange the payment of his sister Caterina's dowry. He is reported to have been present when Caterina's husband took receipt of 100 *scudi*, whereas Pietro Antonio is defined as 'absent' due to his being 'resident in Rome'.⁵⁷ In the case of Bernardina Regaglietto, even though all the individuals involved in the operation lived in Rome, the dowry was paid through an agent. Both the girl and Gabriele Pastorino, her husband, were residents of Rome, as were her brothers Francesco and Giacomo. Another brother, Giovanni, lived in Gattinara, and he was the one who paid the dowry for his sister, giving the money over to an agent appointed by the future husband.

Giovanni Battista Buggio of Gattinara, the agent of Gabriele Pastorino of Gattinara living in Rome, as this power of attorney attests [...], in the name of this Gabriele has declared to have had and received from Giovanni Regalietto of Gattinara the present payment in his name and from Francesco and Giacomo, her brothers resident in Rome, for the dowry of their sister Bernardina [...] the sum of 100 *scudi*, worth 9 florins each [...].⁵⁸

The dowry was thus paid in the hometown, even though the bride, groom and brothers had migrated to Rome, an operation that was made possible by the fact that the payment did not involve cash but rather an income (*censo*)⁵⁹ from a piece of land located in the home village: Giovanni had placed the *censo* on his property in Gattinara and then transferred it to the groom in Rome.

Giovanni Regalietto of Gattinara, in his own name and in the name of his absent brothers Giacomo and Francesco, and to endow Bernardina their sister, the wife of Gabrielle Pastorino, both residents of Rome, has imposed and assigned a *censo*, that is a perpetual yearly income of 12 *scudi* at 9 florins each, on a lot in the village of Gattinara in the neighbourhood of Porta di Santo Pietro [...] and another on a piece of land located in Gattinara in a place called Bozalla [...], this *censo* is to be sold to Giovanni Battista Bugio of Gattinara, the agent of the above-named Gabriele Pastorino [...].⁶⁰

The case of Bernardina's dowry shows that migrants' economic base often remained in their home village; this property, as I outlined earlier, consisted of 'immovable' goods—real estate and lands—which accounted for the most significant portion of many migrants' wealth. It can thus be argued that the goods owned in the hometowns served as 'backup' resources, whose possession was preserved as long as possible, and which might be exploited by imposing forms of income such as the *censo*. Besides the symbolic ties, this economic function of 'backup' appears to have represented a further motivation for migrants to hold on to possessions despite long periods spent outside the place of origin. As we have seen, this required being part of a network of villagers who might be interested in purchasing (as in the example of Bernardina) an income on a property located far from Rome. In other words, one of the conditions for the existence of these 'transnational' communities, besides the circular mobility of some of their members, is the fact that individuals

participating in these networks did share a common, multi-local space that bound the home village to the arrival cities. This was a multi-local space overlapping the *espace investi* of each of its members that represents the spatial framework in which the lives of these ordinary migrants' coming from distant villages unfolded.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

In conclusion, drawing from commonly used sources such as notary deeds and hospital records, it is possible to shed light on the conditions of common people whose 'invested space' comprised more than one site. Kinship relations, property management, economic exchanges, 'spiritual' belongings, the circulation of money, and social networks—whose sources I have used for this paper—provide information and detail on all of these topics. Even without adopting a multi-sited (micro-)historical approach, as I have done for the Gattinara community, a great deal of information can be found in the arrival city's sources. This investigation highlights the fact that, despite the significant differences between contemporary migrants and those of the past, the categories of 'transnational', multi-locality and simultaneity enable us to describe the 'simultaneous' dimension that characterises many ordinary migrants' lives. Moreover, it points to the necessity of taking into account the multiplicity of identities and forms of belonging not only within the arrival city, but also outside. The dichotomy between birthplace and arrival city thus gives way to an approach that goes beyond individual cities and villages and calls into question the notion of integration as assimilation (i.e. the loss of contact with one's hometown and 'adhesion' to the society of the host place). As the case of the Gattinara community has shown, far from being contradictory processes, insertion in the arrival city and the maintenance of bonds at 'home' might be two complementary strategies. To return to the example of the dowries, it is clear that marriage with a 'villager' resident in Rome was possible thanks to the possession of land in the hometown, exploited as 'backup' resource to pay the dowry. It also emerges that being part of the community network, while not incompatible with full social insertion in Rome, enabled migrants to manage property and kinship relations and to carry out their associations in two places simultaneously. As a matter of fact, these dense and long-standing networks were the main actors in the making of a 'transnational' space.

NOTES

1. Archivio di Stato di Roma (ASR), *Tribunale Criminale del Governatore*, Processi, 1599, n. 318.
2. *Idem*.
3. Bracciano is a village in the region of Lazio, located 30 km northwest of Rome.
4. On multi-sited ties and kinship in the early modern age see J. F. Chauvard, C. Lebeau, eds., *Eloignement géographique et cohésion familiale (XVe–XXe siècle)* (Strasbourg, 2006); C. H. Johnson, D. W. Sabean, S. Teuscher, F. Trivellato, eds., *Transregional and Transnational Families in Europe and Beyond: Experiences since the Middle Ages*, (New York and Oxford, 2011).
5. A. Arru, 'Reti locali, reti globali: il credito degli immigrati (secoli XVII–XIX)', in *L'Italia delle migrazioni interne. Donne, uomini, mobilità in età moderna e contemporanea*, eds. A. Arru and F. Ramella (Rome, 2003), 77–110.
6. L. G. Basch, N. Glick Schilier, C. Blanc-Szanton, *Nations Unbound: Transnational Projects, Post-colonial Predicaments, and De-territorialized Nation-States* (Langhorne, PA, 1994), p. 6.
7. K. Gardner and R. Grillo, 'Transnational households and ritual: an overview', *Global Networks*, 2, 3, (2002), 179–190, p. 181.
8. L. E. Guarnizo and M. P. Smith, 'The Locations of Transnationalism', in *Transnationalism from Below: Comparative Urban and Community Research*, eds. M. P. Smith and L. E. Guarnizo (New Brunswick, 1998), 3–34, p. 4.
9. S. Castles and M. J. Miller, *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World* (London, 1993).
10. W. I. Robinson, 'Theories of Globalization', in *The Blackwell Companion to Globalization*, ed. G. Ritzer (Malden MA et al., 2007), 125–143, p. 128–129.
11. J. Lucassen and L. Lucassen, eds., *Migration, Migration History, History: Old Paradigms and New Perspectives* (Bern, 1999), p. 8.
12. J. Lucassen and L. Lucassen, 'The Mobility Transition Revisited, 1500–1900: What the Case of Europe Can Offer to Global History', *Journal of Global History*, 4, 3 (2009), 347–377, p. 371.
13. 'A high level of early modern mobility resulted largely from ubiquitous local and regional moves from parish to parish, both temporary and permanent. There was also the demand for large numbers of seasonal migrants over longer distances, and the development of an international labour market for soldiers and sailors. Finally, there was the constant draw of cities, which needed many migrants. In other words, the unruly

- phenomenon of migration has now been placed centre stage'. *Ibid.*, p. 349.
14. C. M. Aybek, J. Huinink, and R. Muttarak, 'Migration, Spatial Mobility, and Living Arrangements: An Introduction', in *Migration, Spatial Mobility, and Living Arrangements*, eds. C. M. Aybek, J. Huinink, and R. Muttarak (Cham, 2015), 1–19, p. 3.
 15. M. Eve, 'Established and Outsiders in the Migration Process', *Cambio*, 2 (2011), 147–158; M. Eve, 'Una sociologia degli altri e un'altra sociologia: la tradizione di studio sull'emigrazione', *Quaderni storici*, 106 (2001), 233–259.
 16. E. Razy and V. Baby-Collin, 'La famille transnationale dans tous ses états', *Autrepart*, 57–58 (2011), 7–22, p. 8.
 17. P. Levitt and N. Glick Schiller, 'Conceptualizing Simultaneity: A Transnational Social Field Perspective on Society', *International Migration Review*, 38, 3 (2004), 1002–1039, p. 1004.
 18. *Idem.*
 19. P. A. Rosental, 'Maintien/rupture: un nouveau couple pour l'analyse des migrations', *Annales. Économies, Sociétés, Civilisations*, 45, 6 (1990), 1403–1431, p. 1408.
 20. In addition to credit, we might also note legal status: as Simona Feci has shown, the different legal statuses individuals simultaneously held as citizens in their home countries and foreigners in the place where they lived (or even as holders of dual citizenship), constituted an important resource for migrants' economic and social practices. This is especially clear in relation to the legal rights of women, which differed from one Italian city to another, thus giving rise to practices that in some cases actually changed the laws of host cities. S. Feci, 'Cambiare città, cambiare norme, cambiare le norme. Circolazione di uomini e donne e trasformazione delle regole in antico regime', in *L'Italia delle migrazioni interne*, 3–31.
 21. Rosental, 'Maintien/rupture', p. 1424.
 22. ASR, *Ospizio Apostolico di San Michele*, part II, vol. 204, 20/4/1695.
 23. *Ibid.*, 20/2/1696.
 24. *Ibid.*, vol. 201, 20/9/1672.
 25. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, Pope Clement XI (1700–1721), gathered together in the new hospital of San Michele (built in 1686), all the poor of San Sisto and the Lateran hospitals. For this reason, San Sisto's records are part of the Ospizio Apostolico di San Michele's archival fund.
 26. The sample was collected with data from ASR, *Ospizio Apostolico di San Michele*, vol. 204, 1694–1702.

27. As we will see, in charts and tables the sample changes depending on which information we are focusing on. The total was 500, but not all of the applicants were asked the same questions: it depended on the person in charge of examining them. Not all the pieces of information are thus available in all cases.
28. ASR, *Ospizio Apostolico di San Michele*, vol. 204 (1694–1702).
29. M. Bozon, *Vie quotidienne et rapports sociaux dans une petite ville de province. La mise en scène des différences* (Lyon, 1984), p. 52.
30. These include Carlo Canali, a 77-year-old Milanese man who had arrived in Rome 43 years before. He was a cook and innkeeper, and he had several male relatives: a son who had lived in Naples for 1 year, a brother and two stepbrothers. However, his connections with these last two relatives appear to have been severed, since Carlo stated: ‘They are loose in the world and I don’t know if they are dead or alive’ (ASR, *Ospizio Apostolico di San Michele*, part II, vol. 203, 1st December 1694.). Anna Zocchina, a French widow who came to Rome from Burgundy, had a son named Domenico who had apparently left the city without bothering to inform either his mother, who declared that she did not know what country her son was living in, or his wife and young son, Anna’s only remaining relatives (*Ibid.*, vol. 202, 10 August 1691). Maria Capassoni from Florence, also widowed, had a son named Bartolomeo who had left Rome (*Ibid.*, vol. 203, 18 January 1693). Her account of him remained quite vague, stating only that he had lived ‘outside of Rome for a handful of years, and I don’t know where he is presently, and he works as a grocer’.
31. ASR, *Ospizio Apostolico di San Michele*, part II, vol. 201, 24 August 1674.
32. This sample has been built from data drawn from the following sources: ASR, *Trenta notai capitolini*, uff. 13, Testamenti, volumes 904–911, 1610–1653.
33. ASR, *Trenta notai capitolini*, uff. 13, 10 October 1615.
34. *Ibid.*, 9 June 1621.
35. ‘nato in patria post ipsius testatoris discessum a dictae eius patriae’, *Idem.*
36. *Ibid.*, 18 April 1649.
37. ‘Caterina (vel alio quovis nomine appelletur)’, *Idem.*
38. *Ibid.*, 5 February 1620.
39. *Ibid.*, 8 December 1612.
40. *Ibid.*, 19 September 1619.
41. *Ibid.*, 7 June 1617.
42. *Ibid.*, 7 October 1610.
43. In only one case, the bequest was made not to a church but rather to the school of the home village: Girolamo Falabretti, a sharpener (*arrotatore*) from Bortanugo in the dioceses of Como, left 6 *scudi* to the school of his birthplace. *Ibid.*, 30 January 1615.

44. G. E. Marcus, 'Ethnography in/of the World System: The Emergence of Multi-Sited Ethnography', *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 24 (1995), 95–117, p. 108.
45. *Ibid.*, p. 106.
46. However, in reality this population is not so different from the rest of Rome's residents, whether migrants or natives. Individuals requesting aid from the hospital were not only beggars and 'needy' individuals, rather, they represented a range of social statuses: they were men and women who were experiencing periods of serious difficulty for various reasons (the loss of a source of income, death of a spouse, illness, etc.).
47. Arru, 'Reti locali, reti globali', p. 103.
48. ASR, *Ospizio Apostolico di San Michele*, part II, vol. 204, 23 September 1695.
49. *Ibidem*, vol. 203, 18 January 1693.
50. *Ibidem*, vol. 204, 13 June 1694.
51. E. Canepari, "In my home town I have...". Migrant women and multi-local ties (Rome, 17th–18th centuries)', *Genesis. Rivista della Società Italiana delle Storiche*, 13 (2014), 11–30.
52. E. Canepari, "In my home town I have...": Migrant women and multi-local ties (Rome, 17th–18th centuries)', *Genesis*, 13 (2014), 11–30.
53. Marcus, 'Ethnography in/of the World System'.
54. ASR, *Tribunale Criminale del Governatore*, Processi, 1624, n. 189.
55. Archivio di Stato di Vercelli (ASVC), *Insinuazione di Gattinara*, vol. 9, 24 October 1622.
56. ASVC, *Insinuazione di Gattinara*, vol. 10, 15 December 1623.
57. *Ibid.*, vol. 15, 6 March 1629.
58. *Ibid.*, vol. 7, 12 November 1620.
59. The *censo* consisted of a loan issued by a private individual (or even the state), the yield for which was associated with the income from a piece of land, for example. Over time, the *censo* became a yearly payment on the basis of which the seller received a sum of money and agreed to pay the buyer interest on an annual basis. The *censo* could take the form of an annuity, perpetuity or perpetual loan, similar to a mortgage. In the majority of cases it could be redeemed at the request of either party.
60. ASVC, *Insinuazione di Gattinara*, vol. 7, 13 November 1620.

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Spatiality and the Mobility of Labour in Pre-Unification Italy (Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries)

Laura Di Fiore and Nicoletta Rolla

INTRODUCTION

In the course of a single century, between 1620 and 1720, the city of Turin experienced significant demographic and urban growth, to which immigration contributed decisively. Urban development in Turin, marked

This chapter is the product of shared reflections between the two authors, who co-wrote the introduction and the conclusions. Laura Di Fiore is the author of paragraphs *The countryside between the Papal State and the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies* and *Space practices and rights of use along the border between the Papal State and the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies*, while Nicoletta Rolla is the author of paragraphs *Construction sites in Turin* and *Mobility management and conflict resolution in Turin*.

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as it was by three successive enlargements of its walls (1620, 1673 and 1719), attracted entrepreneurs and labour employed on construction sites, which became the contact zones for immigrants from different regions. A century later, in the countryside between the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies and the Papal State, the local populations, especially shepherds, peasants and seasonal workers, continued to move at will on either side of the border as they had been accustomed to do since the beginning of the early modern era. Nevertheless, something had changed, as in the nineteenth century, state borders underwent a process of increasing stabilisation, being more meticulously traced and policed than in the past.

What did the eighteenth-century workers on construction sites in Turin and the nineteenth-century peasants of the Roman Campagna have in common, save perhaps their calloused hands and bruised and battered bodies? The answer is the capacity, we would argue, to define particular social spaces through their experience of migration. The construction sites in Turin in the eighteenth century and the countryside between the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies and the Papal State in the nineteenth century offer a perfect vantage point from which to observe workers' mobility in pre-unification Italy and to consider its characteristics in terms of several crucial questions. In such contexts of high population mobility, how do migrations define social spaces? An analysis of the phenomenon focusing on the capacity of foreign workers to integrate into a given social context seems inappropriate, not least because it fails to show the active role played by immigrants in the definition of social space. On building sites in Turin and in the countryside across the border between two states in Southern Italy, in fact, what developed was the construction of trans-local and trans-national spaces rather than a process of integration.

Indeed, the creation of such spaces was due on the one hand to work-related mobility, and, on the other hand, to conflicts over access to local resources. Furthermore, in both cases, these trans-local and trans-state spaces were produced through an intense interplay between workers and institutions.

Therefore, some significant points in common, revealed through scrutiny of the two case-studies, make it of interest to bring together events that took place against the background of pre-unification Italy during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Firstly, both the entrepreneurs and labourers at construction sites in Turin, as well as the seasonal shepherds and day labourers migrating between the Neapolitan mountains

and Roman Campagna did much through their work-related mobility to carve out specific spaces of a trans-local and trans-state nature. Indeed, both the Kingdom of Naples-Papal State border and the building sites in Turin that attracted workers from Alpine areas represent spaces that cannot properly be analysed within a nation-state framework. This is because they represent places of transition, of seasonal mobility and of a convergence between long-term migration and flows of workers who maintained enduring relationships with their communities of origin. They did so despite putting down deep roots in the socio-economic fabric of their places of destination, thus circulating within trans-local contexts, which in any case cannot be reduced to a national dimension.¹

In this sense, both cases show that it is possible—and indeed necessary—to create frameworks of historical analysis that go ‘beyond methodological nationalism’.² What we have in mind are frameworks where acceptance of the spatial turn³ does not of itself entail a macro-analytical approach.⁴ For here the original spatial dimensions underlying the two studies allow us to reconstruct connective networks marked out by the movement of workers within integrated economic systems and by the inter-connection of their familial, economic and social relations.

Secondly, both cases show how the workers in question gained access to local resources within their respective environments, once again, to this end, creating specific spaces. The latter could be marked out through putting down deep roots within the territory—as in the case of entrepreneurs and master builders vying for public and private contracts in Turin, and in that of Neapolitan and Papal State shepherds and agricultural workers competing over co-grazing rights and the communal use of woodlands and cultivated fields. Or they could be marked out by short- and long-distance migration organised through intermediaries—as in the case of salaried workers at construction sites in Turin.

However, the procedures for accessing these resources were not managed in a completely independent manner by the workers in question, but through discussion, conflict and negotiation with the relevant institutions. And these were the dynamics responsible for engendering or redefining spaces through which to access local resources.

Consequently, the bringing together of such cases set against the background of these two shared dimensions makes it possible to formulate a broader and undoubtedly more complex overview of worker mobility in the Italian peninsula between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and of spaces alternative to those defined at a

political-institutional level, marked out as such spaces by movements associated with the labour process.

This overview also benefits from the fact of there being two distinct methodological approaches in play, one based mainly on a perspective focusing on social actors (the first case) and the other relying chiefly on institutional sources (the second case). Our vantage point thus offers, we believe, a more comprehensive vision of the topic under examination, bringing together as it does approaches traditionally kept separate by the tendency to focus either on provisions made at an institutional level, or on social practices adopted at an individual or collective level.

However, intense interaction between institutional agencies and social actors emerges in both cases, despite this complementary equilibrium. The institutional agencies—worker confraternities, the Vicariate of Turin, the Bourbon police force and Border Commission—took steps to regulate in various ways worker mobility, procedures for accessing local resources, disputes and labour conflicts. The social actors, for their part, did not fail to turn provisions and measures related to these matters to their own advantage, availing themselves of them in a completely instrumental manner, as well as to defend their own interests, as an integral part of the construction of those alternative spaces organised on the basis of their own working experience.

This chapter focuses on two main issues. In the first part, the two case studies will highlight the social actors' ability to construct original trans-local and trans-state spaces, marked out by the routes of worker mobility. The second part of this chapter will then focus on the role played by institutions in the construction of these trans-local and trans-state spaces in relation to their regulation of access to local resources, and on the resulting dialectical exchange between institutions and social actors.

TRANS-LOCAL AND TRANS-STATE SPACES IN EUROPE'S CITIES AND COUNTRYSIDE

Italy's cities and countryside prior to industrialisation were witness to significant migratory movements of their population. Internal and external migration served constantly to redefine spaces in a manner quite at odds with political borders, in some cases, contributing to the organisation of specific trans-local and trans-state spaces marked out by the movements of migrant workers. Cross-border worker mobility, the

maintenance of strong ties with places of birth and the construction of extensive networks of social relations and migratory chains helped, on the one hand, to link different local contexts in a permanent manner. On the other, they served to transform spaces straddling political borders into cohesive territorial entities which thereby came to constitute a spatial continuum.

Construction Sites in Turin

At the beginning of the seventeenth century, Turin, at that date, still a relatively small city, had only recently become the capital of the Duchy of Savoy, which extended from the southern shore of Lake Geneva to the Po Valley and was a predominantly mountainous area astride the western Alps. One hundred years later, Turin was the capital of a kingdom and its surface area had increased significantly after three successive expansions in 1620, 1673 and 1719.⁵

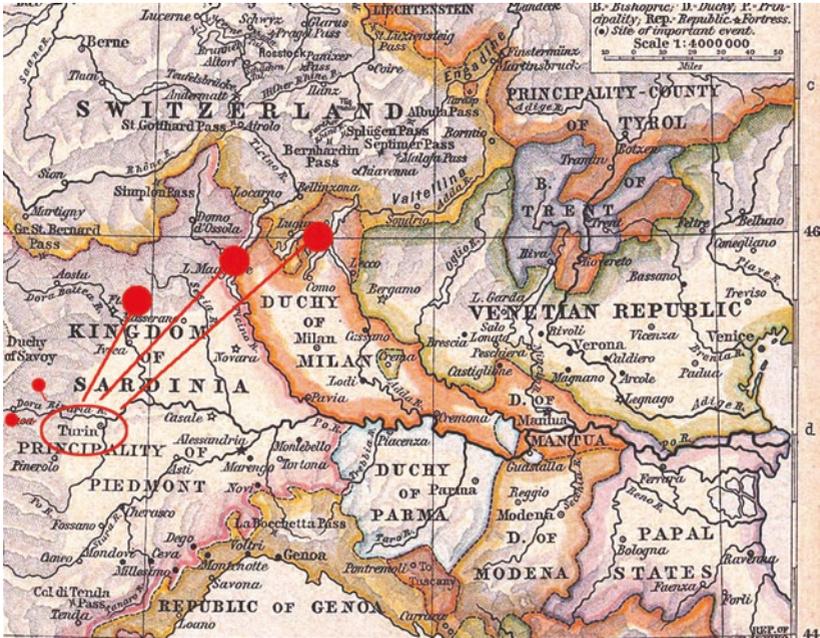
As in many other European cities, so too here urban development was the practical consequence of demographic growth, due in no small measure to the presence of immigrants from different areas within the Duchy and nearby States. Between the first and the third expansion, the number of inhabitants rose from 14,244 in 1614 to 47,433 in 1719.⁶ During both the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, there were a considerable number of foreigners living in Turin. Giovanni Levi's study of the geographical origins of married couples in the first half of the eighteenth century showed that foreign couples represented 51.6% of all married couples in Turin during the first decade (1700–1709) and 68.1% during the middle decade (1740–1749).⁷ These data roughly match those used in the analysis of the 1705 population census drawn up on the occasion of a military levy. In 1705, some of Turin's neighbourhoods were inhabited mainly by foreigners: for example, 65% of householders residing in the San Cristoforo area and 60% of those residing in the San Giovenale area were not originally from Turin.

Due to the presence of so many foreigners, Turin became a point of contact for people coming from all corners of the State and indeed from more distant regions. Many of them stayed in touch with their place of origin, where they may still have had family and property and, as seasonal workers, returned periodically or in the last years of their lives. All of them could call upon assets, comprising social relationships and material interests that served to sustain strong bonds with their place of origin.

Indeed, Levi stressed the fact that foreigners entering the city—to judge by the data relating to married couples—would not necessarily settle in Turin permanently. Conversely, in most cases, the habit of returning periodically to their communities of origin was common to nearly all incomers, as in the case of innkeepers, porters and *brentadori* (wine carriers from Viù, in the Lanzo valley).⁸

At the height of its urban development, Turin attracted many entrepreneurs and construction workers: master bricklayers, master carpenters, stonecutters, sculptors, brick kiln masters, stucco decorators and painters, just to mention some of the professions employed on construction sites at the time. The Savoy capital attracted many people, mostly because of the numerous building sites found within the city walls: the three successive expansions mentioned above represented an opportunity for significant private investment and profitable property speculation. At the same time, the king's concern with the embellishment and decoration of the city, along with his preoccupation with military matters, gave a boost to many new public construction sites, particularly after Turin became the capital (1713). However, the lure of living in Turin did not depend solely on the possibility of being involved in construction of the city through private or public commissions. Turin was also where the negotiations for all of Piedmont's public construction sites took place.

Most master builders and entrepreneurs working in Turin during the second half of the eighteenth century were not originally from the city (Map 9.1). In 1742, the names of all craftsmen working in Turin were, for fiscal reasons, entered on to a list: many of the master builders, master carpenters and master stonecutters were originally from Lugano, Milan and Biella.⁹ Most master builders had migrated from the Alpine areas of southern Switzerland¹⁰ and from the State of Milan. The majority came from a particular area near Lake Lugano. Swiss and Milanese master builders are reported to have been in Turin since the sixteenth century and their presence was to become so regular and constant a feature during the 1620s that a confraternity under the protection of Saint Anna was founded,¹¹ an early example of a trade association in Turin.¹² Most master carpenters were from the Piedmontese western Alps, especially from specific villages around Biella: the earliest surviving documents regarding a confraternity in Turin, once again under the protection of Saint Anna, comprising master carpenters from Graglia and Muzzano (two villages near Biella) date from the early 1700s, almost 100 years after the foundation of the Company of Saint Anna by



Map 9.1 Origin of entrepreneurs and construction workers active in Turin in the eighteenth century

architects and master builders from Lugano and Milan.¹³ Therefore, the leading protagonists on the Turin construction scene were not actually from the city itself, but were master builders from two Alpine regions, one of which lay outside the state. The same was true of other masters. Turin was full of stonecutters and stucco decorators from Lugano, painters from Milan and sculptors from Chieri. The situation was similar in many other Italian and European cities where the presence of specialised masters from Lugano and Milan is documented. At the same time, ‘Lombard’, although actually Swiss and Milanese, master builders were united in Rome and Florence in Rome’s Archconfraternity of Saints Ambrogio and Carlo and in Florence’s Company of Saint Carlo dei Lombardi. These two companies brought together Swiss and Milanese practicing different professions, linked through relations of mutual aid.¹⁴

Despite their foreign origins, entrepreneurs and master builders laid claim to their membership of the city’s social and economic fabric on a

number of different occasions. And, indeed, the existence of trade associations that brought together master craftsmen from the same Alpine villages was the result of a constant, organised presence within the territory. Generations of master builders followed on one from the other during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This shows how some families put down roots in the urban social fabric, a presence capped by the purchase of real estate and consolidated through marriages with local families.

A quite different situation pertains in the case of the salaried workforce and the processes of urbanisation to which they were subjected. The information available to historians attempting to reconstruct the paths taken and professional choices made by the salaried workforce is, unfortunately, scant and fragmentary. We know only of great numbers of day labourers, to whom we can rarely attach any names. As the name suggests, journeymen or day labourers were defined by the way in which their wages were quantified—by the day. The labourer sold his time, and a day's work was paid according to skill and experience. This generic definition conceals a wide variety of trades, abilities and roles that included—in the construction industry alone—building measurers, master craftsmen, labourers and apprentices. They were all paid according to the number of days worked, although they each held markedly different positions on site which translated into different salary brackets.¹⁵ The differences between craftsmen, labourers and apprentices were not especially rigid within this hierarchy and no single position on a construction site was definitive.

The duration of a period of employment on a construction site depended on various factors, beginning with the amount of work commissioned and the weather conditions. Construction site requirements varied from day to day as works progressed, resulting in different numbers of workers: craftsmen, labourers and apprentices were continuously hired and fired, and there was a rapid turnover. Given the flexibility of construction sites and the precarious nature of contracts, workers themselves needed to have alternative sources of income and to carry out various jobs which cannot be defined in a more precise manner given the paucity of information available with regard to individual workers. We used workforce payment records in order to monitor the activities of a number of construction sites. Master craftsmen and contractors drew up monthly or weekly lists of working days, organised in terms of the different types of worker and with a view to calculating the total wages owed.

An analysis of various construction sites within the city, for example that of Superga in the 1730s¹⁶ and the Royal Gardens in the 1750s,¹⁷ reveals considerable flexibility on the part of the contractors in hiring and firing the workforce in accordance with a project's shifting requirements and changes in the weather.

As a result, construction sites defined dynamic areas within cities where salaried workers, from various regions inside and outside the kingdom, were hired and fired with a quick turnover. Their extreme geographical and work-based mobility was offset by the still greater—and much vaunted—stability of a number of master builders and contractors required for the awarding of important tenders.

Master builders and labourers maintained close ties with their place of birth. Migration was in fact an intrinsic part of the specific economic and social systems of Alpine villages,¹⁸ based on the integration of two elements: the economy of those who remained behind and who were generally women working in subsistence agriculture, and the economy of those who left, the men, who provided the remittances needed to buy essential goods. As well as yielding a meagre harvest, the land represented a guarantee which the close network of credit that sustained the local economy and consolidated social relations was based upon.¹⁹

Many of these specialised labourers made their way from one European city to another. The letters left by some of them allow a reconstruction, at least in part, of their journeys along the highways and byways of Europe. Giovanni Antonio Oldelli, a plasterer from Meride, near Lugano, sent letters to Giovanni Oldelli from Münster, Steinfurt, Bensberg, Cologne, Dusseldorf, Rotterdam, Mannheim, Vienna, Olmutz, Prague, Turin, Zurich, Genoa and Bergamo between 1707 and 1757. This itinerary also took in the Savoyard capital where, in 1732, Giovanni Antonio bid for a contract for 'faux marbling at the Royal Gallery'.²⁰ Like Oldelli, many specialised labourers brought with them a wealth of technical knowledge, experience and trans-local social relations that linked them to their native villages and, from there, opened up the roads and cities of all Europe.

The Countryside Between the Papal State and the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies

Moving southwards down the Italian peninsula, we can discern the crystallisation of a specific space during the nineteenth century along the



Map 9.2 “Carta generale del Regno delle Due Sicilie”, Gabriello De Sanctis, 1840

border between two other pre-unification states—the Papal State and the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies—on the basis of work-related mobility (Map 9.2). Agricultural labourers were the protagonists of this process, having been responsible for centuries, through seasonal movements, for

agropastoral activities in the vast rural area stretching along either side of the border between the two states.

Indeed, the Roman Campagna (Papal State) was a vast, sparsely populated area, where the huge latifundia relied chiefly on seasonal labour for cultivating and harvesting wheat and for grazing livestock.²¹ Numerous flows of workers from the Abruzzi mountains or the Terra di Lavoro countryside thus travelled along the seasonal migratory routes towards destinations where the agricultural calendar and the demand for labour power offered greater economic opportunities throughout the whole of the modern period.

So, in the months of ice and snow, Abruzzo's mountain dwellers led their flocks to winter pastures in the plains where the climate was milder. Many agricultural workers also travelled along the same 'sheep tracks', in other words, the transhumance trails, in specific seasons of the year. Indeed, for approximately 8 to 9 months of the year, from October to May, they found employment in a farming context with a significant labour shortage.

These intense migratory flows were managed through a rather complex system, the linchpin of which was the mediation performed by so-called *caporali* (foremen) and *locatori d'opera* (principals). In fact, the *mercanti di campagna*—in other words the tenants of the vast areas of land belonging to aristocrats and ecclesiastics mostly living in urban settings—relied on the above-mentioned intermediaries who were responsible for recruiting workers in their places of origin and forming the 'companies' subsequently brought to the Roman fields.²² Nevertheless, in addition to these more systematically organised work groups, there were also independent flows of individuals comprising teams of harvesters and reapers during the summer months, as well as various types of workers not directly linked to agropastoral activities. They accompanied the myriad shepherds and day labourers, performing the most diverse activities including, for example, services offered to the itinerant country population,²³ the transportation of grapes during harvest time,²⁴ or land drainage, construction and road maintenance, and a wide range of commercial activities.

A very extensive and detailed overview of these figures is offered by the Napoleonic survey of seasonal migrants conducted by the departments annexed to the Empire during 1811–1812.²⁵ The report drawn up by the Department of Rome's prefect²⁶ included great numbers of woodcutters and coal merchants, shoemakers from Amatrice and

individuals from Leonessa responsible for keeping livestock clean, alongside skilled workers from Abruzzo specialising in road construction and those from Terra di Lavoro responsible for clearing ditches. The prefect ended his report by listing the number of seasonal migrants in the Roman Campagna between October and June 1812 as approximately twenty-five thousand.²⁷ It is possible that the prefect's calculations slightly underestimated the number of citizens of the Kingdom of Naples within the territory of Rome if we consider that, at the end of the 1700s and for the Aquilan part of Abruzzo only, the number of seasonal workers travelling to the Roman Campagna was reckoned to be some 20,000.²⁸

In any case, it is certain that, as can also be seen from archive records, sizeable migratory flows continued to cross over the kingdom's border to the Roman state at seasonal intervals and for the whole of the 1800s. This occurred within an integrated economic system, featuring a reasonable level of structuring and, above all, backed up by an age-old tradition, not least in the minds of the protagonists.²⁹

However, in the 1800s, and specifically during the Napoleonic era, the customary circuits of shepherds and day labourers came up against the new personal identification procedures employed in controlling population movement, introduced into the Kingdom of Naples during the decade of French rule (1806–1815). This situation was similar to that recorded in the vast international historiography for the rest of continental Europe under Napoleon's command.³⁰

So, for the first time, seasonal workers were obliged to hold a specific travel document—the passport—to circulate within a physical space that had hitherto been experienced as unitary. This was the result of a complementary economy having fostered and consolidated interdependency between two portions of territory located within two different state bodies and regarded throughout the modern period as a single 'transhumance area'. This cross-state territorial entity, built on centuries-old economic relations and physically marked out by the movements of migrants abiding by the 'nature of the seasons',³¹ now found itself up against the Napoleonic administrative organisation, which placed greater emphasis on the state border's power to divide than on its capacity to connect.

On a more strictly material level, the obligation to hold travel documents represented a by no means minor problem for all those who had to cross over the border for work-related needs given that the procedure

entailed applying to the Papal representative residing in Naples (the apostolic nuncio) for a visa on the passport. This meant that the labourers of the border provinces had to undertake an arduous journey to the capital which, in many cases, was longer than the journey that would have brought them to their destination across the border.

Agricultural workers, in particular, were not slow to inform the authorities of the difficulties caused by the new regulations regarding documents. Their own experience was, after all, of a ‘lived frontier’³² in its areal configuration, one that by and large cleaved to the coordinates of migrant worker routes. These objections were accepted and codified at a legislative level in the form of a law promulgated in 1821 to regulate the mobility of subjects of the Kingdom of Naples in a complete and exhaustive manner. Based on agreements with the papal government, the law absolved the shepherds and day labourers of Neapolitan provinces bordering with the Papal State from the obligation to hold a passport in order to travel abroad, granting the said individuals the right to cross the border with a less ‘formal’ document, in other words, a simple *carta di passo* (pass card). This was the same document as was used by these groups for internal mobility and issued by the Mayor of their municipality free of charge, valid for a period of one year (and not just for one journey). Thus the card-holder was exempt from the preliminary police check required for the issuing of a passport.

It is thus clear that this was an especially significant exception, and one that increased the porosity of a state border which, otherwise, was in the process of being rendered as impermeable as possible. Nevertheless, state institutions—in this case, the police responsible for controlling population movements—regarded cross-border mobility needs as a priority and, hence, created a special area along the border between the two states, founded on laws that often differed from those in force in the rest of the state territory.

Indeed, during the decades stretching from the Restoration and the end of the Kingdom up to Italian unification, a series of administrative circulars and ad hoc regulations were issued. These were the result of a process of directly dealing with the area’s social practices by the police, measures whose ‘governmental’ character and propensity to adapt to the actual situation on the ground and to the prevailing social reality has been highlighted in the most original research to have been published in recent years.³³ Indeed, these measures tended to foster a gradual extension of movement-related concessions granted to various categories of

labourer leading a cross-border existence. These included, for example, ‘individuals who, for property or trade’ needed to sustain ‘ongoing communication’³⁴ between the two states, *viaticali*—in other words, individuals driving vehicles hauled by horses, mules or oxen³⁵—‘traders of retail goods, fish sellers and oil traders in the district of Gaeta’³⁶ and day labourers from Sora ‘who go to recite novenas in the Roman state’.³⁷

So, what came to light was a complex tension between, on the one hand, the notion of an administrative boundary—which (between the Napoleonic era and the Restoration) was set to be tightened both through more systematic control of the movement of goods and people and (as we shall see) through negotiations conducted at a diplomatic level with the Papal State in order to stabilise the boundary—and, on the other hand, a border in the zonal sense. A zonal border, conceived not in terms of its linear, political-juridical essence but rather in its areal dimension,³⁸ could also be defined as ‘regional’.

Indeed, the survival of a border region that transected the border itself, and that the state, to some extent, helped mark out in a novel way at an administrative level through conceding numerous exceptions to the laws then in force, can be set against the nineteenth-century administrative state’s move towards a more marked territorialisation of the kingdom. An essential part of this process was reinforcement of the external perimeter and definition of a fully homogeneous internal space, separate from what extended beyond the border.

During an age witnessing the construction of a new type of ‘territoriality’³⁹ by nation-states in the process of emerging or consolidating their identity, the case in question points to the evident co-existence of a number of cross-state ‘territorialisation systems’.⁴⁰ These were the result of social actors living in and occupying space in a manner that differed greatly from, but tended to overlap with, the concept of political-administrative ‘territoriality’. Such a space was marked out by the movement of seasonal workers (including a considerable number of women) and identifiable with existing cross-border territorial entities. The latter were mainly linked to the abovementioned space’s established social practices and consolidated network of economic and social relations, but now they were defined anew by virtue of an interaction between state institutions and social actors.

In this way, the geographies of the local communities along the border clashed dialectically with the geographies of the central power engaged in building the state territory, thereby engendering a more

complex areal dispensation than the demand for the most homogeneous regulation possible of a political-institutional space might be thought to have envisaged. The geographies of the local communities were organised in a trans-local dimension through the border's interstitial space,⁴¹ around the key locations of the Abruzzi mountains and the Roman Campagna up to Dogana dei Pascoli del Patrimonio di San Pietro, from the gates of Rome (where crowds gathered at the Neapolitan representative's office with requests for documents to re-enter the Kingdom) to the borders with Tuscany.

INSTITUTIONS AND ACCESS TO RESOURCES

Studies devoted to the history of police institutions and the history of mobility have highlighted the focus placed on the mobility of the population by institutions during various historical periods. Control of mobility, and more specifically of non-regulated mobility, gradually became one of the major concerns of city and state authorities during the period in question.

Mobility also posed the problem of access to local resources by foreigners, for competition over resources generated conflicts that had to be limited, resolved and managed. It is therefore of key importance to examine the role of institutions in managing and controlling worker mobility, regulating access to local resources and resolving the resulting conflicts and, lastly, in creating trans-local and trans-state spaces for migrant workers. Indeed, what comes to light is the dialectical exchange among actors and between actors and institutions, at times conflictual and at times involving negotiations, which actively helped construct or redefine spaces, the latter activity proving to be highly dynamic, provisional at all times and in constant development.

Mobility Management and Conflict Resolution in Turin

The close ties which master craftsmen and labourers maintained with their place of origin did not prevent them from successfully embracing urbanisation and establishing strong economic and social ties with the Piedmont's capital. The latter were essential in order to guarantee access to local resources, or indeed to public and private contracts and the labour markets. The ability to successfully assert themselves is evident in the case of entrepreneurs and master builders and can be seen

from their well-established presence at construction sites in cities and throughout Piedmont. In 1742, a year taken as a cross-section/sample, most contracts were assigned to foreign entrepreneurs (30.9% from the State of Milan, 16.1% from Biella, 9.1% from Lugano and 18.3% from the Piedmont area), 90% of whom were permanent residents in Turin.⁴² This clearly demonstrates their ability to forge strong links with the capital. Above all, an evident eagerness to reside in Turin reflected the need to maintain direct contact with the place where negotiations for public contracts in Turin and Piedmont took place. The *Azienda generale di fabbriche e fortificazioni* (General Office for Buildings and Fortifications), based in Turin, was responsible for managing the king's civil and military building sites in Turin and Piedmont, awarding works and signing contracts with contracting firms. The procedure involved the publication of an invitation to bid, or *riletto*, in Turin and in the locations directly affected by the proposed works. The intendant chose the firm able to guarantee implementation of the works requested at the best price and in compliance with the consignment timeframe from among those responding to the invitation. Generally speaking, the firms received an advance payment against the total cost of works and undertook to comply with the terms of the contract while, at the same time, declaring their liability as regards the *Azienda generale* for any delays or damages incurred. The risks and costs related to the performance of works could only be borne thanks to the setting up of companies among entrepreneurs that, as a result, were able to operate on several sites contemporaneously. A guarantor and approver of the guarantor were always named alongside company partners and undertook to cover any debts incurred by the contracting company. Therefore, contracts with the *Azienda generale* implied a credit relationship and included the signing of a guarantee. So, permanent residency in Turin offered the chance to create the network of stable social relations required to set up companies and seek out guarantors and approvers. Lastly, it generated the conditions needed to acquire sufficient wealth to be able to guarantee undertakings, which was a fundamental prerequisite to access public contracts.

If, as regards contracting companies, it is possible to assess their presence at construction sites in Turin and Piedmont, it is more difficult to reconstruct the paths followed by salaried workers to access local resources, or the labour markets.

In some cases, recruitment was performed in the places of origin through the drawing up of apprenticeship contracts or *pacta ad artem*.

According to Marco Dubini, who has studied the *pacta ad artem* stored in Bellinzona's archives, these contracts may be compared to emigration documents—an emigration over a short distance, that which separated the apprentice's place of birth from the location of the master craftsman's workshop.⁴³ This could be transformed, for some, into a migration over a long distance when the young person was committed to following their master when they needed to travel in the course of their professional duties. It is likely that some of the journeys made by construction workers from Alpine regions to cities in Piedmont began with the signing of an apprenticeship contract. Consequently, regulation of a part of the initiation into a profession took place at a great distance from the workplace.

As regards Turin, current research has not revealed apprenticeship contracts that throw any light on the transfer of knowledge and entry into the world of employment through workshops active in the city. Giovanni Craveri⁴⁴ and Onorato Derossi,⁴⁵ who respectively have described the city as it was in the middle and at the end of the eighteenth century, tell us of the existence of two labour markets, one in Piazza San Giovanni where construction craftsmen and labourers gathered, and the other in Piazza Susina where farm labourers looked for work. The scene was much the same in other old city squares, beginning with Place de Grève in Paris.

The forms of entry into the workplace which we are aware of—the *pacta ad artem* and public city squares—represent the two extremes of a wide variety of forms of recruitment. The role of intermediaries must have been equally important: not only master builders—who, as we shall see, managed and distributed the workforce at construction sites together with master carpenters—but also stewards and custodians, whose role as intermediaries for work supply and demand has been demonstrated in other employment contexts.⁴⁶

During the first half of the eighteenth century, competition to access local resources resulted in a period of conflict among master craftsmen, voiced by trade associations, confraternities and universities. One of the most acrimonious disputes involving construction sites in Turin was the one that caused strife between master joiners, or master carpenters, and fine wood carvers, and that was brought in front of the courts of the Consulate of Commerce and the Piedmont Senate.⁴⁷ The charge levelled at the carpenters, accused of performing fine wood carving without belonging to their university and, hence, without having passed the

admission examination to exercise this profession, lay at the root of the dispute. The dispute ended in 1733 following an edict issued by Carlo Emanuele III approving the setting up of a university for master carpenters and establishing their monopoly as regards certain specified works.⁴⁸ In order to avoid any kind of objection, the edict included a detailed list of works reserved for carpenters and those reserved for fine wood carvers, drawn up by the architect, Filippo Juvarra.

The monopoly granted to master carpenters excluded all other master craftsmen and entrepreneurs from performing the works included in the list drawn up by Juvarra, including master builders, laying the foundations for a subsequent conflict. Ten years on from the setting up of the university of master carpenters and the publication of the document defining its functions, organisation and skills, the master carpenters, concerned to defend their professional status, accused the master masons of failing to respect their monopoly. In 1748, the Consulate's judge, called upon to voice an opinion on the dispute, confirmed the master carpenters' monopoly over all works included in the list compiled in 1733 and promised to punish any offenders.⁴⁹

Thus, during the first half of the eighteenth century, following a period of conflict between confraternities and universities, the conditions for accessing local resources were defined by attributing monopolies to individual specialist craftsmen.

How did the specialised labourers from remote Alpine villages manage to find their bearings, organise themselves and gain access to local city resources, be they important tenders or temporary employment? Clearly, the answer is the sum of a number of factors where all those informal social relations that elude archival investigation play a fundamental role. Documents, for their part, can tell us about the role played by city institutions and the relationships the elements in question were able to establish with them.

A first, clear contribution on the part of city and state institutions was that of managing and supporting the arrival of specialist craftsmen in Turin through the according of privileges, such as those granted to Luganese residents in Piedmont.⁵⁰ The latter enjoyed exemption from paying a number of taxes and suspension of the *aubaine* law.⁵¹ These obvious advantages undoubtedly played a part in influencing the choice of specialised labourers who left their native villages to practise their crafts.

Defence of the privileges enjoyed by the Swiss in Piedmont appears to be strongly linked to the establishment of the Company of Saint Anna by architects and master builders from Lugano and Milan. Whenever it proved necessary to negotiate with the Piedmontese authorities regarding the Swiss presence in the region, the Company presented itself as the legitimate counterpart representing the interests of all Swiss residents in the states of the Duchy of Savoy, whatever their profession.⁵²

Alongside defending the privileges and monopolies enjoyed by master craftsmen, the confraternities also performed the all-important task of supervising and managing workforce mobility. They provided assistance to master craftsmen and labourers temporarily without employment, distributed labourers among the city's various construction sites and met the travel expenses of workers wishing to return to their place of origin. The assistance provided to unemployed master craftsmen represents one of the main activities of confraternities and universities that we are aware of.

Assistance consisted mainly of the distribution of small sums of money (generally 5 lira) to those craftsmen who, for one reason or another, were unable to work, or to the widows of deceased master builders. As regards the Company of Saint Anna, 150 appeals were accepted, assisting 122 people with an average of ten people assisted per year and an overall total of 908 lira dispensed (just over 75 lira per year) during the period analysed to date, which runs from 1726 to 1737.⁵³ There were a number of reasons for turning to the Company of Saint Anna for assistance: from temporary states of ill-health to requests for money to cover the cost of travelling back to native villages.

As regards distribution of the workforce among the city's workshops and construction sites, the conflict that set master carpenters against master masons provides us with some information. The monopoly granted to master carpenters was easily bypassed by using figureheads. Master masons performed carpentry works and hired working carpenters in agreement with their masters who limited themselves to acting as figureheads, asking for a percentage of the wage paid to workers in return.⁵⁴ The practice of using figureheads made it possible to manage the workforce distributed among the city's various construction sites against payment of a percentage of the salaries.

Simona Cerutti has illustrated the guilds' interest in, and capacity to manage, the mobility of salaried workers. This was effected through the efforts of custodians and stewards, who were paid to distribute workers

around the city's workshops and to provide financial support to workers who were temporarily unemployed. The collection of alms to celebrate the feast of patron saints provided master craftsmen with the means—through custodians and stewards—to manage and control the mobility of workers.⁵⁵ Strife within confraternities, dividing, for example, the Milanese and Swiss members of the Company of Saint Anna, was closely linked to the collection of alms.⁵⁶ This conflict, which lasted throughout the first half of the eighteenth century, was centred on ownership of the chapel dedicated to the patron saint, the control of which provided access to management of the Company's funds. Alms made it possible for the Company—among other initiatives—to come to the aid of impoverished master craftsmen and their families, succouring them while in Turin and paying the necessary travel costs for them to return to their places of origin. So, once again, the collection of alms provided the Company with the resources needed to manage the mobility of workers.

The city's authorities were also responsible for controlling the mobility of workers, especially district captains, under the authority of the Vicariate of Turin. They were appointed to draw up lists, updated on a monthly basis, of those dwelling in the groups of buildings they were responsible for, paying special attention to changes of address of salaried workers and servants.⁵⁷

The Vicariate of Turin, just like other city courts, represented, at various different levels, an instrument for accessing local resources. We have seen how disputes between fine wood carvers, master carpenters and master masons were brought before the Consulate of Commerce and the Senate. In the event of disputes between master builders and salaried workers, the court of jurisdiction was the Vicariate of Turin. This was a court of the first instance whose responsibilities also included the salaries of domestic workers and day labourers, including many builders, and lawsuits involving the sale and purchase of construction materials. When looking at the lawsuits brought before the Vicariate, what is surprising is the speed with which judgements were passed and the sheer number of trials held each year. An average of approximately 1100 lawsuits were brought before the Vicariate every year during the 1720s, which is the period for which the most records are available.⁵⁸ The desire on the part of the judge and litigants to reach a consensual resolution of the lawsuit contributed to the speed with which trials were completed, as well as application of summary procedure, «*simpliciter et de plano, ac*

sine strepitu et figura iudicii». ⁵⁹ The latter guaranteed short, inexpensive trials, without the production of written records, based solely on fact and on the general principles of *aequitas*, *ratio* and *iustitia*. This was a procedure specifically targeted at those classed as ‘*miserabili*’ by the legal culture of that period, a category that also included foreigners. ⁶⁰ The Vicariate’s legal practice saw the parties directly involved illustrating the reasons behind appeals, without the mediation of professionals, be they prosecutors or attorneys, and without the facts being translated into legal cases. Thus, master craftsmen and workers came into direct contact with one of the city’s most important courts, bringing their claims before the court without legal mediation.

The most frequent reason for having recourse to the Vicariate court was a request for payment of a debt. It was mainly master builders who turned to the Vicariate when awaiting in vain a payment for work performed or for their share in the division of the profits of a company in which they had participated. There were many lawsuits brought by day labourers waiting for their salaries. In this regard, the Vicariate’s civil decrees provide valuable information for understanding the salary conditions of day labourers, contractual forms and payment of salaries. So, study of the civil decrees reveals how negotiations between employers and labourers could begin before the start of their employment on site or, as in most of the cases looked at, even after the termination of the working relationship. Agreements between master builders and labourers were mainly verbal, as shown by the total lack of written evidence, and backed up by the lawsuits brought by day labourers in the Vicariate’s courts. Contracts remained open up until the end of the working relationship and could be renegotiated. The ambiguity surrounding the agreement which persisted until the end of the working relationship did not refer solely to financial questions such as the amount of salary, but also concerned the very nature of the relationship, the role performed on site and the responsibilities undertaken within the company. These aspects of contracts were not clarified from the outset but remained open, subject to discussion, renegotiation and redefinition at the end of the relationship. So, in addition to the professional mobility generated by the flexibility of construction sites and the brevity of employment, there was also the flexibility which workers’ contracts were subject to.

Therefore, the Vicariate court became the place where the terms of a contract were renegotiated and defined once and for all, and where they received appropriate certification by means of a deed such as a civil

decree. Given these uncertain working conditions, the Vicariate court offered a tool for consolidating professional relationships and certifying labour agreements.

*Space Practices and Rights of Use Along the Border Between
the Papal State and the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies*

The procedures for accessing resources—woods, pastures, cultivated fields, rivers for fishing—regulated by age-old agreements also played a role in the organisation of specific spaces and geographies for the agropastoral communities located along the border between the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies and the Papal State. However, these agreements had already been the cause of violent territorial disputes along the border when the governments of the two states decided at long last to bring them to an end by stabilising the border, which was still uncertain and undefined at some points in the mid-1830s.

So, the two states entered into diplomatic negotiations which resulted in a stable, shared border line, in accordance with a procedure similar to that entered into by most European states that undertook a more precise definition of borders from the second half of the eighteenth century onwards, and especially during the transition from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century.⁶¹

The border between the two pre-unification states was ratified by a treaty signed in 1840, but which only came into effect 12 years later—for reasons which we will explain below. However, the process of stabilising the border was not limited to an exchange between government representatives of maps marked by lines drawn on the basis of measurements taken by military topographers and engineers. An alternative spatiality to the one the two states were deciding on, influenced above all by some collective uses of the land, came to light along the border both during the four years of negotiations prior to the signing of the treaty, and during the period between the signing of the treaty and its coming into effect.

The agreements regarding these rights of use, dating back to previous centuries, were reproduced at the commencement of border negotiations and brought together in the so-called ‘*Sunto delle controversie*’ (Summary of disputes),⁶² since they were the subject of bitter wrangling. At the time when the two governments decided to take action to separate the two state entities on the basis of the sole principle of territorial

sovereignty, the disputes, which tended to develop at a distinctly local level, with state membership playing only a secondary role, actually became intertwined with the negotiations conducted by the central power. For example, in 1838, the inhabitants of Tonniconda, in the province of Abruzzo Ulteriore II (Kingdom of the Two Sicilies), complained that the community of Ricetto (Papal State) failed to acknowledge their right to 'mixed' grazing, established under age-old agreements.⁶³ As can be seen from material collected in relation to the two municipalities' territories, included among those where the border was disputed,⁶⁴ a judgement probably issued in 1579 listed the borders between the two communities on the basis of some waterways, acknowledging however the right of the inhabitants of Ricetto to graze and water animals in the Kingdom's districts and likewise the equivalent right for the population of Tonniconda on papal land. However, in 1838, these mutual grazing rights were blocked by the community of Ricetto, the result being that, while Papal State inhabitants continued to graze their herds in the Kingdom without any problems, the inhabitants of Tonniconda had their animals confiscated as soon as they set foot in the Papal State and were obliged to pay a ransom in order to get them back.

So, in order to gain advantage from the transition phase as regards border definition, the Papal State's customs officers opposed the principle of state sovereignty to 'other forms of possession',⁶⁵ in other words, to rights acknowledged in relation to a different concept of territory. More specifically, the debate was centred on two ways of conceiving 'property': one more in line with the canons of 'possessive individualism' that had prevailed from the start of the nineteenth century; the other tending to maintain a more complex form of property, of medieval ascendancy, and to envisage a *dominium utile*, that is, a power of enjoyment⁶⁶ alongside direct property, in the sense of power of disposal.

The rights of use were at the core of the lengthy negotiations that took place between the two governments in order to formulate the 'Border legislation', a specific body of laws for regulating life along the border. Indeed, if this legislation opened with an affirmation of the primacy of private property, rights regarding 'grazing and collection of wood', which ought to have been maintained even when moving funds from one state to another, were matters of fierce debate. These rights were questioned because they contrasted with the construction of homogeneous territorial spaces pursued by the two pre-unification states, rather than as such. Indeed, far from fully embracing the 'possessive

individualism' referred to above, 'as regards property and other material rights, the historical arena of the first half of the nineteenth century (and a good part of the second half) was a unique transition space in almost all of Europe, and as such was filled with contradictions and unvoiced misoneisms, or covertly voiced misoneisms that were able to resist in an extraordinarily obstinate manner'.⁶⁷ A compromise formulated by Neapolitan plenipotentiaries was incorporated within the legislation in question at the end of lengthy, complex negotiations: for the parts of each municipality's territory that, based on the new borders, had passed from one state to the other and where the municipality's inhabitants 'collected wood and grazed animals, where the loss of the said practice [was] significant, ... the two governments [would reach] an agreement as regards a way to not deprive them of this, either through compensation, or by allowing them to continue with the practice, setting limits and bans'.⁶⁸ While, in those cases where maintenance of the rights in question did not prove to be indispensable, and hence 'the said exception to the border principle was not necessary', the border would remain 'intact'.⁶⁹

So, even if recognised as being in conflict with the plan to create a sovereign-state space unaffected by the vagueness that was the cause of so many disputes regarding the border, the existence of extra-state spaces linked to the local communities' needs to access agropastoral resources, was acknowledged in relation to specific cases. The local context intersected here with the construction of a broader statehood which it made an active contribution to. For example, in addition to becoming targets for acts of vandalism and explosions of anger as regards a frequently contested border, the new border's provisional symbols, in the form of wooden poles, were removed and arbitrarily repositioned on numerous occasions by inhabitants involved in territorial disputes. These inhabitants, intent on marking out the border as they wished, resorted to a 'creative' use of the border. One such example in this regard is the case of the territory between Oricola, a municipality in Abruzzo in the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies and the papal municipalities of Riofreddo and Vallinfredda.⁷⁰ Indeed, in 1845, the inhabitants of the papal municipalities diverted the watercourse known as Riotorto, which the temporary border between the two states ran along, gaining five *modii* of land in an area of specific interest for the inhabitants, in other words in the Sesera wood, whose possession had been long disputed.⁷¹

What was being claimed was a concept of territory linked not only to habits and age-old conventions, but also to the memory of ‘very old men’,⁷² the credibility of local people, and the existence of trees and other specific natural features with evocative names. These were all elements that continued to be called upon to support the various territorial claims throughout the process of defining the border and even after this was completed, ‘in a kind of ‘popular’ geography that tells of the uses, well-established habits, movements and existential practices deeply rooted in the territory’.⁷³

An analysis of the border space thus offers historians the chance to integrate the ‘big stories’ of nation-building with the ‘small narratives’ of local experience.⁷⁴ This shows how, by accessing resources linked to agropastoral activities, local people marked out cross-state spaces that differed in part from the political-institutional border in the process of being defined, spaces with which state institutions had to deal in any case, at times by acknowledging their existence and at times by looking for solutions through compromise.

CONCLUSION

Juxtaposition of two cases that are far removed one from the other in space and time can entail numerous interpretational difficulties. To start with, the settings of the events under discussion differ markedly. In the first case, we are concerned with the urban setting of Turin in the eighteenth century, an actual European capital at that date. While in the second case, we have to do with a rural, nineteenth-century setting extending along the border between the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies and the Papal State.

Furthermore, the protagonists of the events described are also different, belonging to quite distinct and distant worlds of work—in other words, urban construction in the first case and agro-pastoral activities in the second.

Besides these differences, the research perspectives adopted also differ in many respects. Nevertheless, the experiment has made it possible to answer some shared questions through two approaches which, though distinct, are not necessarily incompatible.

Worker mobility created trans-local spaces both at construction sites in Turin and Piedmont and in the countryside along the border between the Papal State and the Kingdom of Naples. The presence in

Turin of workers coming from at least three different Alpine areas, who maintained close relations with their place of origin and with migrants from other European cities, created figurative trans-local spaces. A specific, circumscribed working space such as a construction site became a contact zone that looked towards the outside world thanks to frequent journeys back home and networks of trans-local relations that connected it to places of origin and to other European cities. In the case of the Roman Campagna, a space which from an administrative perspective was crossed by a border, was regarded as a unitary, trans-state space—the ‘transhumance space’—by thousands of migrants, agricultural workers and shepherds. Every year they arrived at the Roman *latifundia* and pastures from the Abruzzi mountains and Terra di Lavoro countryside, together with other workers not directly connected with agropastoral activities, but nevertheless involved in the same integrated economic system. In both cases, the seasonal movements or definitive transfer of workers marked out figurative or real spaces that differed from the political-institutional frameworks.

Furthermore, it is of the utmost importance that, if we are ever to reconstruct the internal dynamics that regulated these spaces, we grasp which instruments allowed a migrant population to access local resources. In the case of Turin, this involved on the one hand retracing the process that led some master craftsmen to gain privileged access to private and public contracts through acknowledgement of a monopoly with regard to specific works, and on the other, reconstructing the paths taken by salaried workers in order to access the labour markets. In the case of the Roman Campagna, the focus was placed on negotiations between social actors and institutions that guaranteed migrant workers access to the territory’s resources—woodland, pastures, rivers and fields—during a period of major political and administrative change.

In both cases, the focus was placed on the key role played by institutions in regulating access to resources. In Turin, the city’s courts regulated disputes between guilds and confraternities regarding the assignment of monopolies, and hence the definition of respective professional spaces. Guilds and confraternities there played an important role in regulating the access of salaried workers to the labour markets and in managing workforce mobility. As regards the cross-border territory between the Papal State and the Kingdom of Naples, access to resources during a period of ever stricter administrative definition of the border area was guaranteed for seasonal workers, firstly through the granting of

some exceptions to border movement regulations such as the *carta di passo* (pass card), and subsequently through ‘border legislation’ designed to regulate life along the border thanks to a series of agreements regarding rights of use.

What emerges in both cases is the capacity of institutions to heed society’s requests and to adapt to them. In Turin, this was done by providing courts with instruments such as summary procedure that allowed litigants to take part directly in lawsuits without any intermediaries and without reference to local positive law. In Naples, it was accomplished by introducing exceptions and provisions differing from those for the rest of the state territory in order to meet borderers’ needs. Therefore, the definition of procedures to access resources was the result of negotiations between institutions and social actors or between litigants in the case of judicial proceedings. Trans-state spaces—figurative or real—were by their very nature highly dynamic, not only because they bore witness to migratory flows and were connected to a broader geographical horizon through social networks, but also because they were regulated in accordance with legislation and social practices that were constantly redefined through negotiations among social actors, and between social actors and institutions.

This chapter has brought together two analytical perspectives that are normally kept apart—one viewpoint concerned with the actors’ activities and the other focusing on institutional action. Within the methodological framework suggested in this volume, observing the same question from two different viewpoints has foregrounded the process of constructing trans-local and trans-state spaces in all its complexity and intricacy, whereas keeping them apart would have rendered the picture incomplete and superficial. Bringing the two perspectives together also sheds light upon the negotiations and discussions between actors and institutions. By the same token, actors and institutions emerge not simply as counterposed or independent but as equally involved and active in the process of constructing spaces for worker mobility and in regulating and organising them.

NOTES

1. See the introduction to this volume as regards the concept of trans-locality and its variations in various fields.
2. Anna Amelina et al., eds., *Beyond Methodological Nationalism: Research Methodologies for Cross-border Studies* (New York, 2012).
3. Barney Warf and Santa Arias, eds., *The Spatial Turn: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (New York, 2009).

4. For further discussion of this specific interpretation of global history, we would refer the reader to the introduction to this volume.
5. There are numerous studies regarding architectural and urban development in Turin in the 1600s and 1700s. Among these, see Vera Comoli Mandracci, *Torino* (Bari, 1983), pp. 29–92.
6. Giovanni Levi, *Centro e periferia di uno stato assoluto. Tre saggi su Piemonte e Liguria in età moderna* (Turin, 1985), pp. 13 and 35.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 39.
8. *Ibid.*, pp. 50–57.
9. Turin State Archive (hereinafter ASTo), S. R., Regie Finanze, I archiviazione, Commercio, mazzo 1, Fasc. 23, ‘Stato de Negozianti e Artisti della presente Città di Torino’ (1742). A comparison between the signatories of contracts with *Azienda fabbriche e fortificazioni* and the documents of the confraternities of master carpenters and the master builders show the incompleteness of the list drawn up in 1742.
10. The presence in Turin of people from the Lugano area is documented from the sixteenth century when they obtained a series of tax exemptions from the Duke of Savoy, which were renewed over the following century; in this regard see Dante Severin, *Per la storia della emigrazione artistica della Svizzera italiana. Privilegi sabaudi agli architetti e mastri da muro luganesi (XVII secolo)* (Bellinzona, 1933).
11. Vera Comoli Mandracci, *Luganesium Artistarum Universitas: Parchivio e i luoghi della Compagnia di Sant’Anna tra Lugano e Torino* (Lugano, 1992); Maria V. Cattaneo, Nadia Ostorero, *L’Archivio della Compagnia di Sant’Anna dei Luganesi in Torino. Una fonte documentaria per cantieri e maestranze fra architettura e decorazione nel Piemonte sabaudo* (Turin, 2006).
12. As Simona Cerutti has shown, the history of associations in the Piedmontese capital contrasted markedly with that of their counterparts from the other Italian cities: the guilds failed to develop in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries despite attempts made by the authorities on several occasions to promote their foundation, and experienced rapid development during the 1720s when they were in decline in the rest of Italy. See, Simona Cerutti, *La ville et les métiers. Naissance d’un langage corporative (Turin 17^e–18^e siècle)* (Paris, 1990).
13. ASTo, Corte, Archivio Mastri da Bosco, m.1, *Ordinati* (1710–1733).
14. Chiara Orelli, *I migranti nelle città d’Italia*, in *Storia della Svizzera italiana. Dal Cinquecento al Settecento* (Bellinzona, 2000), pp. 282–288.
15. The same master builders received from clients remuneration calculated on the basis of days of work, alongside a lump sum upon completion.
16. ASTo, S. R., Real Casa, *Libro mastro*, vol. 374 (1733), vol. 375 (1734), *passim*.

17. ASTo, S.R. Azienda della Casa di S. M., *Registro fabbriche*, vol. 412 (1750), *passim*.
18. Laurance Fontaine, *Histoire du colportage en Europe. XV–XIX siècle* (Paris, 1993).
19. Raul Merzario, *Adamocrazia. Famiglie di emigranti in una regione alpina. Svizzera italiana. XVIII secolo* (Bologna, 2000); Luigi Lorenzetti, Raul Merzario, *Il fuoco acceso. Famiglie e migrazioni alpine nell'Italia d'età moderna* (Rome, 2005).
20. Giuseppe Martinola, *Lettere dai paesi transalpini degli artisti di Meride e dei villaggi vicini (XVII–XIX)* (Bellinzona, 1963), p. 144.
21. Giuseppe Orlando, *Le campagne: agro e latifondo, montagna e palude*, in *Storia d'Italia, Le Regioni dall'Unità a oggi, Il Lazio* (Turin, 1991), pp. 83–165.
22. Angela De Matteis, *Terra di mandre e di emigranti: l'economia dell'Aquilano nell'Ottocento* (Naples, 1993) and Orlando, *Le campagne*.
23. Antonella Sinisi, 'Migrazioni interne e società rurale nell'Italia meridionale (secoli XVI–XIX)', *Bollettino di demografia storica*, 19 (1993), 41–63.
24. De Matteis, *Terra di mandrie e di emigranti*.
25. The survey has been analysed in Carlo Corsini, *Le migrazioni stagionali di lavoratori nei dipartimenti italiani del periodo napoleonico (1810–1812)*, in *Saggi di demografia storica*, eds. Carlo Corsini et al. (Florence, 1969), pp. 89–157.
26. Archives Nationales de France (ANF), F20/435, Annexed offices: report by Prefect of Rome's Office, 1812.
27. ANF, F20/435, Annexed offices: report by Prefect of Rome's Office, 7 January 1813. It must be taken into account that the estimate in question also included individuals from the Kingdom of Italy and some Tuscan areas that featured in almost all the categories looked at, albeit in a smaller percentage.
28. De Matteis, *Terra di mandrie e di emigranti*.
29. For a more detailed analysis of these issues, see Laura Di Fiore, *Alla frontiera. Confini e documenti d'identità nel Mezzogiorno continentale preunitario* (Soveria Mannelli, 2013).
30. See at least Ilsen About, Vincent Denis, *Histoire de l'identification des personnes* (Paris, 2010) and Jane Caplan, John Torpey, *Documenting individual identity: The development of state practices in the modern world* (Princeton and Oxford, 2001).
31. Naples State Archive (ASN), Ministero degli Affari Esteri, fascio 6211: memorandum by Cardinal Busca Secretary of State to Marchese del Vasto, September 1796.
32. James C. Scott, *The art of not being governed: An anarchist history of upland Southeast Asia* (New Haven & London, 2010), p. 335.

33. Paolo Napoli, *Naissance de la police moderne. Pouvoir, normes, société* (Paris, 2003).
34. ASN, Ministero degli Affari Esteri, fascio 6214: correspondence between Cardinal Della Somaglia and Marquis di Fuscaldo Minister at Royal Legation in Rome, October– November 1826.
35. ASN, Ministero degli Affari Esteri, fascio 6214: September 1841.
36. ASN, Ministero degli Affari Esteri, fascio 6214: 18 October 1841.
37. ASN, Ministero degli Affari Esteri, fascio 6214: 29 November 1844.
38. Paola Sereno, *Ordinare lo spazio, governare il territorio: confine e frontiera come categorie geografiche*, in *Confini e frontiere nell'età moderna: un confronto fra discipline*, ed. Alessandro Pastore (Milan 2007), pp. 45–64. For a different interpretation of this terminology, Massimo Quaini, *Ri/tracciare le geografie dei confini, Confini: costruzioni, attraversamenti, rappresentazioni*, ed. Silvia Salvatici (Soveria Mannelli, 2005), pp. 187–198.
39. Charles Maier, *Transformations of territoriality, 1600–2000*, in *Transnationale Geschichte: Themen, Tendenzen und Theorien*, eds. Gunilla Budde, Sebastian Conrad, Oliver Janz (Göttingen 2006), pp. 32–56.
40. Matthias Middell, Katja Naumann, 'Global history and the Spatial Turn: From the Impact of Area Studies to the Study of Critical Junctures of Globalization', *Journal of Global History*, 5 (2010), 149–170.
41. Katherine Brickell and Ayona Datta, eds., *Translocal Geographies: Spaces, Places, Connections*. (Farnham, 2009), p. 4.
42. ASTo, S.R., Ministero della guerra, Azienda generale fabbriche e fortificazioni, *Contratti*, vol. 38 (1742).
43. Marco Dubini, 'Pacta ad artem, una fonte per la storia dell'emigrazione', in *Con il bastone e la bisaccia per le strade d'Europa. Atti di un seminario di studi (Bellinzona, 8–9 settembre 1988)*, *Bollettino storico della Svizzera italiana*, CIII (1991), pp. 73–81.
44. Giovanni Craveri, *Guida de forestieri per la real città di Torino* (Turin, 1753).
45. Onorato Derossi, *Nuova guida per la città di Torino* (Turin, 1781).
46. Simona Cerutti, 'Travail, mobilité, légitimité. Suppliques au roi dans une société d'Ancien Régime (Turin, XVIII siècle)', *Annales, HSS*, 3 (2010), 571–611.
47. ASTo, Corte, Archivio Mastri da Bosco o di Grosseria, m. 1, fasc. 1/8: *Atti e scritture delli mastri da bosco di grosseria contro l'università de mastri minusieri ebanisti ed altri*; ivi, fasc. 1/10, *Atti dell'università dei mastri di grosseria contro l'università dei minusieri ebanisti ed altri*.
48. Ivi, fasc. 1/1, *Mastri da bosco di grosseria 6 manifesti del regolamento* (1733); ivi, fasc. 1/6, *Copie di pareri sulle specifiche mansioni di ogni arte* (1712–1731);
49. ASTo, Corte, Commercio, cat. IV, m. 5, fasc. 1, *Sentimento del Consolato di sovra la supplica de Mastri falegnami di Grosseria, contro supplica dei*

Mastri da Muro per l'ampliamento di alcuni privilegi riguardanti tall'arte (1748).

50. ASTo, Corte, Materie politiche per rapporto all'estero, *Negoziazioni con gli Svizzeri*, m. 5, fasc. 13; Severin, *Per la storia della emigrazione artistica*.
51. As regards application of the aubaine law in Turin and its meaning, see Simona Cerutti, 'A qui appartiennent les biens qui n'appartiennent à personne? Citoyenneté et droit d'aubaine à l'époque moderne', *Annales, HSS*, 2 (2007), 355–383.
52. Severin, *Per la storia della emigrazione artistica*, p. 9.
53. Archives of the Company of Sant'Anna dei Luganesi in Turin, (hereinafter ACSALT), *Ordinati e verbali*, II, 1, *passim*.
54. ASTo, Commercio, Categoria IV, m. 5, fasc. 1.
55. Cerutti, *Travail, mobilité et légitimité*.
56. References to the conflict that divided the Swiss and the Milanese can be found in ACSALT, *Liti*, IV, f.9 (s.d.); *ivi*, *Ordinati e verbali*, II, f. 34; ASTo, S.R., Notai di Torino, I versamento, vol. 4193, *Transazione tra i signori capimastri da muro luganesi ed i signori capimastri valsoldesi e milanesi* (5 May 1762).
57. ASTo, I sez., Materie economiche, m. 2 d'addizione, f. 10, *Viglietto di S. M. Re Carlo Emanuele al Vicario di Torino di stabilimento di 50 Capitani Cantonieri* (17 May 1752).
58. ASTo, S.R., Vicariato di Torino, *Atti e ordinanze civili*, vol. 6–12 (1724–1731).
59. 'Simply and plainly, without clamor and the forms of procedure'. As is well known, the definition is taken from the decretal *Saepe contingit* by Pope Clement V (1305–1314), issued to streamline trials, eliminating the production of an introductory *libellus* and limiting the possibility of delaying tactics. As regards summary procedure see also Alain Bureau, 'Droit naturel et abstraction judiciaire. Hypothèse sur la nature du droit médiéval', *Annales, HSS*, 57, 6 (2002), 1463–1488; Simona Cerutti, 'Nature des choses et qualité des personnes. Le Consulat de commerce de Turin au XVIIIe siècle', *Annales, HSS*, 57, 6 (2002), 1491–1520; Simona Cerutti, *Giustizia sommaria. Pratiche e ideali di giustizia in una società di Ancien Régime*, Milan 2003; Faramerz Dabhoiwala, 'Summary Justice in Early Modern London', in *English Historical Review*, CXXI, 492 (2006), pp. 798–822; Alessandro Lattes, *Studi di diritto statutario*, vol. I, *Il procedimento sommario o planario negli statuti*, (Milan 1886); Charles Lefebvre, 'Les origines romaines de la procédure sommaire au XII et XIII siècle', *Ephemerides Juris Canonici*, 12 (1956), 149–197; Giovanni Minnucci, «*Simpliciter et de plano, ac sine strepitu et figura iudicii*». *Il processo di nullità matrimoniale vertente fra Giorgio Zaccarotto*

- e Maddalena di Sicilia (Padova e Venezia 1455–1458): una lettura storico-giuridica* in *Matrimoni in dubbio. Unioni controverse e nozze clandestine in Italia dal XIV al XVIII secolo*, eds. Silvana Seidel Menchi, Diego Quaglioni (Bologna, 2001), pp. 175–197. As regards its application to trade disputes brought before the Vicariate of Turin, mention should also be made of Nicoletta Rolla, *La piazza e il palazzo. I mercati e il vicariato di Torino nel Settecento* (Pisa, 2010).
60. For a definition of ‘miserabili’ see Cerutti, *Giustizia sommaria*.
 61. Alessandro Pastore, *Introduzione*, in *Confini e frontiere nell’età moderna: un confronto fra discipline*, pp. 7–20, p. 15.
 62. ASN, *Sunto delle voluminose e molteplici memorie esistenti nel deposito della guerra intorno alle annose reclamazioni di confine tra Il Regno di Napoli e lo Stato Pontificio* (Naples, 1837).
 63. ASN, Archivio Borbone, busta 964: report by Captain De Benedictis to Marchese Del Carretto, 31 August 1838.
 64. *Sunto delle controversie*, Dispute 20, between the university of Tonnicoda in the Kingdom (Abruzzo Ulteriore II, District of Cittaducale) and the community of Ricetto in the Papal State, pp. 38–41.
 65. Paolo Grossi, *Un altro modo di possedere. L’emersione di forme alternative di proprietà alla coscienza giuridica post-unitaria* (Milan, 1977).
 66. Paolo Grossi, *Naturalismo e formalismo nella sistematica medievale delle situazioni reali*, in Paolo Grossi, *Il dominio e le cose: percezioni medievali e moderne dei diritti reali* (Milan 1992), pp. 21–55, pp. 21–28.
 67. Paolo Grossi, *Tradizioni e modelli nella sistemazione post-unitaria della proprietà*, in Grossi, *Il dominio e le cose*, pp. 439, 569, here pp. 440–441. See also Grossi, *Un altro modo di possedere*.
 68. ASN, Archivio Borbone, busta 979: May 1852.
 69. *Ibid.*
 70. *Sunto delle controversie*, Dispute 16 between Oricola (Province of Abruzzo Ulteriore II, District of Avezzano) and Riofreddo and Vallinfredda in the Papal State, pp. 26–29.
 71. ASN, Archivio Borbone, busta 973: 1845.
 72. ASN, Archivio Borbone, busta 971: letter by a papal priest transmitted to the Neapolitan police force by the papal government on 12 September 1843.
 73. Paolo Marchetti, *Spazio politico e confini nella scienza giuridica del tardo Medioevo*, in *Confini e frontiere nell’età moderna*, pp. 65–80, p. 77.
 74. Anssi Paasi, *Territories, boundaries and consciousness* (Chichester, 1996), p. 303.

Oil and Labour: The Pivotal Position of Persian Oil in the First World War and the Question of Transnational Labour Dependency

Touraj Atabaki

A WAR THAT CHANGED THE WORLD

The world coming out of the first world war and its catastrophic practices was emphatically a different world. Eastern and Western Asia, Europe, and North Africa were transformed regions by the end of the carnage. The changes in Britain, as one of the major imperialist powers present in Asia, came as a result of several factors: first, the war itself, which was

This chapter partially draws on previous research, a revised version of which has appeared in the International Encyclopaedia of the First World War, published by the Friedrich-Meinecke-Institut, Freie Universität Berlin and “Oil and Beyond Expanding British Imperial Aspirations, Emerging Oil Capitalism, and the Challenge of Social Questions in the First World War”, co-author Kaveh Ehsani, in Helmut Bley and Anorthe Kremers (eds), *The World During the First World War* (Essen: Klartext Verlag, 2014), pp. 261–287.

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the first instance of total warfare involving entire populations and new technical means of destruction; second, the mounting crisis of capitalism (especially after the 1890s) and the transition to a new regime of accumulation; and third, the far-reaching and slower consequences of what has been called 'the Second Industrial Revolution'.

Militarily, the first world war was the culmination of the industrialisation of warfare under mounting capitalist competition and technological development. It brought to an end the somewhat ironically labelled 'long peace of the nineteenth century', when major European powers fought each other directly on the continent on only a few occasions, while being constantly involved in colonial skirmishes and wars.¹ By the end of the nineteenth century, industrial technology had already transformed the nature of warfare, with railroads, steamships, and the telegraph making total warfare possible and involving whole populations. Instead of long marches or limited troop transport by sea, these technologies allowed coordinated mass movement of soldiers and created fronts instead of skirmishes and isolated battles.²

During the war, the ensuing malaise in Britain created a link in political culture between war and social policy. It was felt that the empire's destiny was in the hands of the masses, which needed to be better educated and physically fitter.³ Improved public health, municipal reform, educational improvement, and various schemes of social insurance were proposed and weighed up by segments of the political elite as necessary measures for addressing debilitating poverty, but without much result.⁴ At the same time, the importance of propaganda and moulding public opinion became evident, as was the conviction that the empire needed to invest in military technological innovation. The Russo-Japanese war of 1905 and the emergence of Japan as a rival to British colonial interests in the Indian and Pacific Oceans, together with German military advances, prompted a costly arms race, especially in the construction of new heavy battleships (dreadnoughts). Ironically, these costly battleships never played a large role in sea battles, but they became a major conduit for the ascendancy of petroleum as the preferred fuel and internal combustion engines as the new primary means of locomotion.

In 1911, the United States adopted oil-fired boilers for its new heavy warships. In 1914, Admiral John Fisher returned as the head of the British admiralty for the second time and succeeded in getting the British navy to convert all its boilers from coal to oil.⁵ Oil had significant advantages over coal. It weighed less per thermal unit, was easier to transport, had twice the thermal energy of coal by bulk, and did not require stokers

to feed the boilers as it could be fed automatically via pipes into engines. This released a significant amount of space in battleships, expanded the range of their operations, and reduced labour requirements.⁶ In addition, internal combustion engines were less bulky, and more economical than steam power during off-peak use since they could be turned on or off with ease. Oil burned more cleanly than coal and produced less smoke, a major advantage in sea warfare, which relied on covertness.

The strategic problem with oil was its uneven geographic distribution since, aside from the United States and Russia, all the major protagonists in the first world war were oil importers. For Britain, oil was far more costly (four to twelve times more) than coal, especially since the country had significant coal deposits and was itself a major exporter.⁷ The opportune discovery of oil in the Persian southern province of Khuzestan in 1908 removed that major obstacle for Britain, which had already acquired shares in the company exploiting Persian oil and smoothed the way for the eventual conversion.⁸

Unlike the conventional European chronology of the first world war, which began in 1914 and ended in 1918, for Iranians, the war period lasted longer, at least within its own national frontiers. Following the Constitutional Revolution (1905–1909), in 1911 Russian military forces, by occupying the northern provinces of Iran, imposed an ultimatum on the government of Iran to observe the Russian interest in Iran, an ultimatum which concluded with the closure of the Second Parliament. The end of the war in Iran was also 3 years later than the Armistice in Europe. The last British troops withdrew from southern Iran, and the Russian Red Army from northern Iran, only in 1921. The outbreak of the war coincided with a period in Iranian history when, following the Constitutional Revolution, the Iranians were poised to refashion the constitutional order and establish an independent, accountable, and effective government. The global conflict between the great powers, which embraced Iranian social, economic, and political establishments, deepened political factionalism and rigorously undermined this effort. What was initiated merely as a European war reached Iran when the Ottoman Empire joined the Central Powers, making Iran a direct neighbour to combatants from both camps: Russia joined Britain in a fight against the Ottoman Empire, which in turn allied with Germany. For Iranians, the declaration of war in Europe meant more foreign pressure to take sides in a conflict in which Iran had no national interest.

In November 1914, the war on the eastern front escalated when British forces marched toward Mesopotamia and landed in Basra.

The British now aimed to control Mesopotamia to secure the route to Baghdad, as a way station to the Russian army already stationed in northern Iran, and to establish a line of defence against incursions by the Central Powers in central and southern Asia. It also wanted to secure the control of oil from Persia, which had gradually evolved into a cornerstone of their geopolitical and military strategy. Khuzestan's oilfields and the Abadan oil refinery were located a mere 60 kilometers from Basra, and only the Shatt al-Arab River separated Khuzestan from Ottoman Mesopotamia.⁹

The Iranian government's early reaction to the outbreak of the war was to declare Iran's strict neutrality with a royal decree on 1 November 1914.¹⁰ One might well ask what sense there could be in Iran's announcement of its neutrality, when Russian troops were already occupying a sizeable part of Iranian northern territory. When Iran's Prime Minister Mostowfi al-Mamalek approached the Russian authorities, demanding the withdrawal of their troops from Azerbaijan on the grounds that their presence would give the Ottomans a pretext for invading Iran, the Russian ambassador in Tehran replied laconically that he 'appreciated the Iranian view-point but inquired what guarantees could be given that after the withdrawal of Russian forces, the Turks would not bring in theirs'.¹¹

In the absence of a powerful central government in Iran to resist the Russian and British burden, some Iranians came to the conclusion that aligning with Germany was the best option for guaranteeing Iran's national sovereignty and territorial integrity. The interests of the powerful neighbouring empires of the Russians, the Ottomans, and the British (whose Indian dominion bordered Iran) automatically led them to meddle and to intervene in Iran. By contrast, Germany, a powerful but geographically remote power, seemed at first sight to present no direct threat to Iran. When the Third Iranian Parliament was convened in December 1914, 30 of a total 136 deputies were members of the pro-German Democrat Party.¹² Britain viewed the pro-German activities of the Democrats with mistrust and dismay, as did the Russians, who decided to increase their occupying forces in Iran. The situation became so tense that Russian troops stationed in Qazvin, 160 kilometres northwest of Tehran, began marching toward the capital, threatening to occupy the city. The cabinet of Mostowfi al-Mamalek seriously considered moving the capital from Tehran to Isfahan, with support from the majority of the Democrat deputies as well as a number of influential journalists and politicians. While the Prime Minister under the British and the Russian pressure finally retreated from moving the capital, nevertheless, some

prominent politicians and political activists hurriedly set out on a 'long march' to Isfahan to relocate the legitimate government there. Unable to reach Isfahan, the marchers finally established themselves in Kermanshah, where they called themselves *Dowlat Movaqat Melli* (the Provisional National Government).¹³ However, this provisional government, which obtained the official recognition of the Central Powers as the sole legitimate government of Iran, could not survive the ever-escalating pressure from Britain and Russia. In 1916, Kermanshah fell to Russian forces, and the Provisional National Government collapsed.¹⁴

Having defeated the Ottoman army in southern Mesopotamia, the British were able to secure the oilfields of Khuzestan. They established a stronghold in the Ottoman-occupied territories, and from there, gradually wrested control of the rest of Mesopotamia and the Arabian Peninsula from the Ottomans.¹⁵ The 'Arabs Revolt' against the Ottoman Empire in 1916, initiated by the British military officer T.E. Lawrence, better known as Lawrence of Arabia, was eventually followed by the capture of Baghdad, Kirkuk, Mosul, and finally Jerusalem in 1917. The successive defeats of the Ottomans certainly changed the theatre of war in Iran. Nevertheless, it was the Russian Revolution of February 1917 that appears to have had the more significant impact.

A whole year after the second Russian revolution in 1917, the last phase of the war began in Iran. On 30 October 1918, the Armistice of Mudros was concluded, and in Istanbul the cabinet of the Committee of Union and Progress resigned. Ahmed Izzet Pasha formed his new cabinet, and called on all Ottoman troops to return home. Yet the departure of foreign troops from Iran—first the Russians, then the Ottomans—did not strengthen the Iranian government's stand. The population was impoverished, the economy was ruined and almost bankrupt, and the treasury coffers were empty. Soon the government was besieged by centrifugal forces, as regional protest movements began to challenge the status quo. In the northern provinces of Azerbaijan, Gilan, and Khorasan, there were reform-minded and revolutionary individuals who believed that, if they could succeed in launching campaigns to initiate change in their own region, the same reforms would gradually spread through the rest of the country. The regional campaigns of Kuchek Khan Jangali in Gilan, Sheikh Mohammad Khyabani in Azerbaijan, and Colonel Mohammad Taqi Khan Pesyan in Khorasan were not territorially separatist, but aimed to establish stable yet accountable political arrangements that would redress local grievances about an unfair distribution of power

between central government and local authorities throughout Iran.¹⁶ Apart from these regional protest movements, there were other local insurgencies and movements in the south and west of the country, which were not politically reformist in character, and aimed at weakening the authority of the central government in favour of local magnates.

The bleak atmosphere in Iran during those years was not limited to the political scene. For most of Iran's working poor, the First World War brought nothing but misery. Hunger, famine, drought, insecurity caused by armed violence, price inflation, and unemployment forced many to abandon their homes in search of a safer existence in other parts of the country, or even beyond its borders. Tens of thousands of migrant Iranians were employed in factories, oilfields, mines, and construction works in the Caucasus. When they returned home after the 1917 Russian revolutions, they added to the army of the unemployed.¹⁷ Nor was nature benevolent to the country's poor: successive seasonal droughts caused widespread famine in 1917–1918. Requisition and confiscation of foodstuffs by occupying armies to feed their soldiers exacerbated the famine.¹⁸ In November 1915, when the total granary of the southeast province of Sistan was sold off to the British troops, it was reported that 'the price of one *kharvar* (100 kilos) of wheat was raised to 20 *tomans*, if there is any to be found.'¹⁹ In the northeast province of Khorasan, Russian troops blockaded all roads and prohibited any transfers of grain, except those destined for the Russian army.²⁰ The requisitioning of pack animals, mules, and camels for the oil industry in Khuzestan, and for the British and Russian armed forces, left the country's transport network in serious disarray, and disrupted the distribution of foodstuffs and other goods throughout the country with disastrous consequences.²¹ During the war, in many parts of Iran, it often cost more to transport grain than to grow it, causing very difficult living conditions, especially for the poor.²²

A series of severe droughts from 1916 onward further decimated agricultural supplies. By early February 1918, famine had spread across the country, and panicked crowds in major cities began to loot bakeries and food stores. In the western city of Kermanshah, confrontations between the hungry poor and the police ended in casualties. In Tehran, the situation was 'aggravated by hoarding and short-selling to the customers by bakers.'²³ Adulteration of bread as well as exorbitant prices charged by some bakers outraged Tehran's working poor. Thus, for example, the printing-house workers, who had recently formed a union, staged a demonstration in Tehran in 1919, during which crowds attacked the bakeries

and granaries, and called on the government to increase food rations, to standardise the price of bread, and to regulate the quality, supply, and sale of foodstuffs. Nevertheless, in this turbulent post-war era, neither the national government nor foreign powers were in a position to do much to alleviate the human crises. The devastation caused by famine and contagious diseases continued for many years.

Beyond deaths from starvation, epidemics also killed many people.²⁴ The colossal food crisis, plus a large number of soldiers, refugees, and destitute people constantly on the move in search of work and survival, facilitated a deadly combination of pandemics and contagious diseases. Cholera, the plague, and typhus spread with terrifying speed across the country, claiming huge numbers of lives every day. From 1915, cases of cholera were reported in Azerbaijan.²⁵ In the following year, the disease was widespread not only in all northern provinces; it also reached the south.²⁶ Typhoid, too, spread through many parts of the country, and caused so many deaths that, according to an eyewitness, ‘the high mortality in Tehran was not due to famine, but rather because of typhoid and typhus’.²⁷ By the end of the war in Europe, Spanish influenza had also reached Iran. The foreign diplomatic missions in the capital registered reports of the devastation across the country, the most horrendous in Hamadan.²⁸ A British officer in northwest Iran and south Caucasus refers in his eyewitness account to the devastating famine and disease in Hamadan, which brought 30% of the city’s 50,000 inhabitants to the verge of starvation, causing many deaths. Cases of cannibalism were reported as well.²⁹ In Iranian historical memory, the First World War is remembered as a period of carnage—not primarily because of combat deaths, of which there were certainly many, but much more because of famines and epidemics that claimed far more victims.

WARTIME CHALLENGES FACING THE PERSIAN OIL INDUSTRY: SECURITY OF OIL SUPPLY

The outbreak of the First World War coincided with a major global shift in technology, industry, and defence, in which coal was replaced by oil, making oil a pivotal strategic commodity, a status sustained for a century to follow. The rise of oil to such an elemental status resulted in the British government, which already held 51% share in the Anglo-Persian Oil Company (APOC), becoming the largest supplier, expanding the oil

industry under its direct management.³⁰ With the completion of a pipeline carrying oil from Masjid Suleiman to Abadan and the construction of the Abadan refinery, the APOC was able to supply up to two-thirds of the British Royal Navy's fuel needs. This was in addition to some 200,000 tons of refined petroleum product that the APOC offered to the British military in Mesopotamia.³¹ The British military's mounting dependency on Persian oil can be better assessed if one considers that in Mesopotamia alone, the British had up to 450,000 troops,³² the majority of them foot soldiers, recruited from India.³³ If one adds to this military setup the 6400 motorised vehicles running on internal combustion engines and 45 airplanes deployed in Mesopotamia, then the voracious demand for the Persian oil becomes clear. During the war, next to petroleum products, the British war machine, by commissioning some 900 thousand people, enrolled the majority of the manpower available in the region.³⁴

Political security and labour scarcity were two major challenges facing the APOC during the war. While the belligerent powers looked on Iran as one battlefield among many, the pivotal position of oil for the war industry and the proximity of the Persian oilfields and refinery to the warfront of Mesopotamia turned Persia into one of the major theatres of operations, if not an enduring combat zone. Furthermore, the same proximity caused a large number of workers, especially skilled workers, to abandon work in the oil industry, when the industry was expanding its production. Even the supply of local unskilled labour became scarce, and caused a major hurdle for the company.³⁵

On 1 November 1914, a military contingent made up mainly of Indian infantry landed in the south of Iran to secure the oilfields and Abadan refinery.³⁶ While the British warship *Odin* patrolled the Shatt al-Arab River, deploying this contingent was a preventive measure against likely Ottoman and German attacks on the oil refinery. There were reports of 30,000 Ottoman troops stationed in Basra.³⁷ According to Christopher Sykes, the Germans (with the help of Niedermayer, their secret agent in Iran) planned to set fire to the Abadan refinery and then to sink the German cargo steamer *Ekbatana* and other vessels south of Abadan to block the British from travelling up the river to rescue their European employees at the burning refinery.³⁸ The British premonition was partly realised on 6 November 1914, when the Ottoman army's coastal batteries opened fire on the British navy sloop *Espiegle*, which had embarked up the Shatt al-Arab in September 1914. The Ottomans

then made a futile attempt to block the river above Mohammareh (later Khoramshahr), by sinking *Ekbatana* and three smaller ships.³⁹ After this failed offensive, there were some more sporadic exchanges of fire in the following days, which finally concluded with the retreat of the Ottomans.⁴⁰

The retreat of the Ottomans and the British seizure of Basra on 22 November 1914 were followed by British advances to Amara and Tigris. Basra became the bastion of British forces in Mesopotamia, which stopped the Ottomans from mounting any direct offensive against the oil industry in southern Iran. Yet for the Oil Company, Ottoman and German intrusions and acts of sabotage remained a major threat. Moreover, the Ottoman offensives in northern Mesopotamia forced APOC to adopt various precautionary measures. In January 1915, the Oil Company decided to move all its European employees from Ahwaz and Abadan to Mohammareh. On the eve of the war, the number of staff and labour in the Persian oil industry reached 4277, including 64 Europeans, 2744 Persians, and 1074 Indians.⁴¹

The Ottoman defeat in Basra was still considered minor compared to what they suffered in the north. It was indeed following their military failure on the northern front that the German–Turkish alliance focused once more on the south. However, instead of pursuing direct military confrontation, they tried to stir up populist uprisings in the region from below and to negotiate deals with the tribal chiefs from above.

In January 1915, the Germans deployed a major infiltration campaign in southern Iran. They dispatched a number of agents to the region, whose mission it was to instigate popular rebellion against the Allied forces, and to sabotage and destroy British installations and interests.⁴² Wilhelm Wassmuss, initially the German Acting Consul at Bushehr, later nicknamed the *Lawrence of Persia*, became the most celebrated of these secret agents, partly because of his dashing and adventurous lifestyle. Other German and Ottoman agents were sent to Isfahan, Kermanshah, Hamadan, Najaf, and Karbala, and the oil province of Khuzestan. Their general objective was to obtain a Jihadi decree from the Shiite and Sunni ‘ulama, and rally the local population to the Central Powers. There were also reports that ‘the Ottomans had dispatched some 2000 foot soldiers and cavalry and a number of canons in order to cross Mohammareh, and reach Basra’.⁴³

Finally, in February 1915, the German and Ottoman lengthy campaign to persuade local Arab tribes to sabotage APOC installations was

realised.⁴⁴ The tribes attacked pipelines and some oil installations north of Ahvaz. They set fire to the oil spilled from the broken pipelines, cut telephone lines between Abadan and the oilfields, and looted the Oil Company's stores.⁴⁵ The impact of the February disruption lasted until June of the same year, causing Abadan's output to fall from 23,500 tons to 5,600 tons. 'At the field, large quantities of oil had to be burned, since all available storage was soon filled and the producing wells could not be completely shut off.'⁴⁶

The sabotage of February 1915 was the only significant, direct attack on oil installations in Khuzestan during the wartime. In the following months and years, no other major incident was recorded and somehow the security of oil installations in Khuzestan was preserved.⁴⁷ This result was largely due to protection offered by the Bakhtiyari khans, the chiefs of the local Bakhtiyari tribe,⁴⁸ 'securing the Oil Company's employees and properties within the limits of their jurisdiction.'⁴⁹ The Bakhtiyari Khans affirmed their commitment to protecting British interests in the south, including the oilfields, the refinery, and transport networks, and to cooperate with the Sheikh Khaz'al (1861–1936), the British government's most trusted Arab tribe chief in the south.⁵⁰ Furthermore, on a request by APOC, Nasser Khan Sardar Jang (1864–1931), the Bakhtiyari tribe chief, sent a message of reprimand to the chiefs of Bavi and Bani-Turuf tribes, ordering them to evacuate the lands of Bakhtiyari at once. Facing such a setback, the Bavi and Bani-Turuf accepted the authority of the rival tribe, the Ka'bian tribe headed by Sheikh Khaz'al, who enjoyed British support. The Bavi and Bani-Turuf subsequently turned their back on the Ottoman and Germans, and took on the new task of guarding APOC pipelines and installations in the region.⁵¹

After an agreement was signed by the Bakhtiyari Khans and the Arab tribes, it appeared that the threat to the strategic interests of the British in the south and the lives of its employees had ended. However, given the reality of local politics in the region, this expectation was soon proven to be overly optimistic. Within the Bakhtiyari establishment, rivalry existed between the old chiefs and the younger generation, who did not miss an occasion to challenge the authority of the old guard. The war and the great powers contesting one another's presence in the region offered them an opportunity to raise their status within the tribal hierarchy. Furthermore, when the total disruption of the Khuzestan oil installation failed, German and Ottoman agents began to track the activities of the APOC beyond the borders of Khuzestan.

Following the first discovery of oil in southern Iran, at Masjid Suleiman on 26 May 1908, APOC intended to extend exploration to the west and south of Iran. The limited oil deposits in the west, and difficulties in excavation, caused the British to focus once more on the south.⁵² A group of geologists from Britain and Burma arrived in Iran, first visiting Ahvaz and Haftkel, which harboured extensive boiling springs of white oil. Later, however, on advice of the British navy, they extended their discovery mission to southeastern Iran, in a region along the sea shore of Mokran from Baluchistan to Bushehr, covering the island of Qeshm. The geologists' expedition, followed by APOC's gradually expanding excavation activities in Qeshm, led the Oil Company to conclude that Qeshm would soon become another major oilfield, next to Naftoun in Masjid Suleiman. These new developments obviously could not escape the attention of German and Ottoman agents, who followed APOC's activities in the region with interest and concern.

Having assessed the British presence in the region, and following their limited success in rousing the Arab tribes in southwestern Iran against the British, the Germans and Ottomans decided to leave Khuzestan, and to prioritise other regions instead. Thus, except for the western front in Kurdistan, the main zone of German and Ottoman presence during the war was to the west of a line between Isfahan and Bandar Abbas, including Shiraz, Bushehr, Tangestan, and Dashtestan. By exploiting traditional rivalries among local tribes, and encouraging the local Muslim 'ulama to call for a Jihad against the British and Russians, they opened a new front in southeastern Iran for their political and military sponsors. Once again, the Germans became political and military advisors to the tribal chiefs, and the agents of the *Taşkilat-i Mahsusa*, the Ottoman secret service, dispatched the Najaf and Karbala decrees, as well as local Muslim 'ulama's Jihadi Fatwas, among the southern population of Iran.⁵³

After scrutinizing the subversive activities of their enemies, the British sent troops to Bushehr in August 1915.⁵⁴ The occupation of Bushehr was followed by the establishment of a special military proxy unit in the spring of 1916, known as the South Persia Rifles (SPR). It comprised locally recruited troops, whose task it was to put down tribal insurgencies and local resistance.⁵⁵ The establishment of the SPR was supported by a number of local tribal chiefs who were close allies of the British, but the Iranian government strongly objected to it and resented the violation of its territorial sovereignty, which it implied.⁵⁶

In June 1915, local tribes in Qeshm, with the support of the Ottoman secret agents of *Taşkilat-i Mahsusa*, organised a surprise attack against the APOC installations in Salkh on Qeshm. The immediate result of this *camisado* was the end of APOC's work on the island.⁵⁷ The spring attack on the British enterprise in Qeshm was followed by an even tougher setback for Britain.⁵⁸ In early summer, the British military forces in Bushehr came under siege by the local tribes. In retaliation, the British introduced martial law and declared the total subjugation of the port. According to the witness account of Mehdi Qoli Khan Hedayat (1864–1955), the Iranian government representative in Bushehr, the British troops in the port even printed a postal stamp with the wording of 'Bushehr under British Occupation.'⁵⁹

The British military presence in Bushehr caused major grievances amongst the population. Public protests were staged against the British and its war ally, the Russians, which extended to Isfahan, Ramhormoz, and Bushehr, and once more the local 'ulama called on their people to rise up in a Jihad against the Allied troops. In a number of incidents, even local APOC offices were set on fire.⁶⁰ However, once more, the British regional command opted for confrontation over compromise. By founding the SPR unit and suppressing local protests (in particular, the revolt of Tangestan in August 1915), the British authorities generally attempted to placate the local tribal chiefs, even if they could not win them over to their side.

WARTIME CHALLENGES FACING THE PERSIAN OIL INDUSTRY: SCARCITY OF LABOUR AND THE QUESTION OF LABOUR RECRUITMENT AND DEPENDENCY

Next to operational security issues, the persistent scarcity of labour, both skilled and unskilled, was the APOC's major concern during the war. Oil production continued to increase, and the Abadan refinery expanded to meet the ever-increasing demand for petroleum products. Yet, at the very time that more labour was needed, it was in short supply. In addition to the high wages offered by the British Army, which caused many highly skilled and unskilled employees to leave the oil industry and join the army as casual labour,⁶¹ the proximity of the oilfields and refinery to the warfront also resulted in the exodus of a large number of workers. Therefore, recruiting and retaining labour, together with negotiating with the army to alter its own manpower recruitment policy, became the priority of the APOC during the war. The situation became so serious that APOC pleaded with the British military to issue an order that would prohibit army and naval units from hiring former oil industry employees,

and to establish a labour corps to serve and assist the oil industry. The British Army was also called upon to assist in forcing APOC employees to stay on the job for the duration of the war. The Admiralty consented, and issued an order on 6 August 1915 which classified the Abadan refinery as ‘a munitions factory and [declared] that those working there could not, under the King’s Regulations, leave the Company’s service.’⁶²

APOC additionally approached the government of India ‘to issue instructions through the Bombay Government to all concerned to facilitate recruitment and dispatch’ of labourers for the Persian oil industry, an industry run by a company in which ‘the majority of shares are held by the British Government which has full power of control and of British Indian subjects, being under the British jurisdictions.’⁶³ APOC claimed that the biggest obstacle in obtaining labour for the Persian oil industry was a formality in the Indian Emigrations Act of 1883, which restricted labour migration to specified destinations, including Persia.⁶⁴ In March 1915, the APOC board proposed that restrictions imposed by the act be waived so that APOC could recruit more skilled labourers:

‘Owing to the non-existence of such [skilled] labour in Persia, and the impossibility of training Persians in sufficient number for their requirements, the Company is compelled to depend largely on India for skilled labourers of many kinds, such as riveters, engine drivers, assembling machine men, iron and brass moulders, solders, core makers and others. At the present time the number of Indian employees in Abadan and the oil fields is about 1020. It is found nevertheless that it is very difficult to induce men of these classes to leave Bombay, Rangoon, Karachi or the other ports where they are recruited and to accept employment in Persia ... [due to the] Indian Emigration Act, which is unduly magnified in the emigrant’s imagination, and consequently acted as a serious deterrent to obtaining and inducing men to leave for Persia.’⁶⁵

To strengthen its argument, APOC emphasised its patriotic credentials, which included its special status as a British company in which the British government had acquired majority shareholding, providing ‘full power of control and of British Indian subjects being under the jurisdiction of His Majesty’s Consul.’ APOC accordingly petitioned the government of India to apply the same emigration rules to Persia as those used for Ceylon and the Straits Settlement. According to APOC, the administrative power of the government of India should be extended to the new territory:

‘... under the provisions of the Persian Coast and Islands Order of 1907, British Indian subjects in the Persian littoral are entirely under the jurisdiction of the Consul-General and Political Resident and his subordinate officers. British Indian law is in force and under the provision of the Order, the Indian Code of Criminal and Civil Procedure have effect *‘as if the Persian Coast and Islands were a neighbourhood in the province of Bombay’*. In these circumstances the position of Indian emigrants in the Gulf approximates to their position in Ceylon and the Straits Settlements, which are expressly exempted from the operation of the Emigration Act, and the object of this letter is to enquire whether a similar exemption cannot be accorded to the areas occupied by the Company’s Work at Abadan, Mohammareh and the oilfields.⁶⁶

The Persian Coast and Islands Order of 1907 mentioned in APOC’s petition refers to an appendix of the aforementioned Anglo-Russian Convention signed in August 1907 in St Petersburg. This convention aimed to consolidate, in terms of international agreements, various political changes that had occurred in the Far East, the Middle East, and Europe after the Russo-Japanese War and the Russian Revolution of 1905. Since 1903, the territorial integrity of Persia had been recognised by both Russia and Britain, except for the Persian Gulf, which was considered a ‘British lake’. However, the 1907 Convention effectively rejected Persia as a sovereign territory, although formally it was still regarded as a sovereign state. The core of the Convention was its first section, which created Russian and British territorial spheres in northern and southern Persia, while leaving the central part as a buffer zone between the two imperial powers.⁶⁷

In April 1915, India’s Department of Commerce and Industry reacted to APOC’s petition in the following terms:

‘The Government of India are very reluctant to extend the exemption to other countries. The conditions mentioned above do not apply to the Persian Gulf. Emigration of artisans to the Persian Gulf is of very recent date and living very expensive. It is possible that on account of these reasons artisans are unwilling to proceed to the Persian Gulf even on the high Burma rates and not because of the restriction imposed by the Emigration Act. The artisan class is not so ignorant as the ordinary coolie class and are not likely to be frightened by requirements of the Act, which are not of a harassing nature.’⁶⁸

However, the Indian government did not completely close the door to further negotiations with APOC, and in the same memorandum, it was considered that if ‘His Majesty’s Government would consent to be

Table 10.1 Employment in the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, 1914–1921

<i>Year</i>	<i>Iranians</i>	<i>Indians</i>	<i>Europeans</i>	<i>Others</i>	<i>Total</i>
1914	2744	1074	64	395	4277
1915	2203	979	80	187	3449
1916	2335	1366	120	104	3925
1917	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.
1918	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.
1919	3979	2641	117	47	6784
1920	8447	3616	244	35	12,342
1921	9009	4709	271	51	14,040

n.d. no data available.

Source R.W. Ferrier, *The History of the British Petroleum. The Developing Years 1901–1932* (London, 1982)

a party to the agreement’, then it would consider the desirability of an exemption, provided that ‘the Governments of Bombay, Punjab—where the emigrants proceed mostly from—United Province, Bengal, and Bihar and Orissa [were] consulted’⁶⁹ (Table 10.1).

The dispute between APOC and the government of India about whether Persia could be a legal destination for Indian labour migrants was not settled until February 1918. At that time, the government finally agreed to a temporary suspension of the Emigration Act restrictions for territories under the APOC aegis. By then, it had recognised the strategic importance of maintaining oil supplies in war-time, and as a result, extended the scope of its cooperation with APOC, so that oil production would not be hindered by labour scarcity.⁷⁰ APOC remained very insistent about the importance of a continuing labour supply from India, and despite the persistent problem of desertions by workers in pursuit of better pay, or the restrictions imposed by the government’s Emigration Act, it continued the recruitment of migrant workers from India.

During the war, with expansion of the Persian oil industry, the recruitment process of labour altered practically. In the early years of its operation, following the oil discovery in 1908, the company was mainly concerned with establishing the basic infrastructure, constructing roads, laying pipelines, and building refineries. Enjoying absolute monopoly over the extraction, production, and marketing of the oil, the APOC embarked on a massive labour recruitment campaign. The composition of the workforce in the early stages of recruitment was loosely regulated by the terms of the Oil Concession of 1901, known as the D’Arcy Agreement.

According to Article 12 of the agreement, ‘the workmen employed in the service of the company shall be subject to His Imperial Majesty the Shah, except the technical staff, such as the managers, engineers, borers and foremen.’⁷¹ In the terms of this article, APOC was free to recruit skilled and semi-skilled labour beyond Iran’s borders, which it did—mainly from India. To obtain un-skilled labour, APOC looked primarily to the region adjacent to the oilfield. The Bakhtiyari peasants and pastoral nomads living there became the main source of the workforce. However, in a region where human needs were few and cheap, it was no easy task to persuade young men to leave their traditional mode of life in exchange for industrial milieu with radically different work patterns.

Moreover, because of the discrepancy between the lifestyle of the pastoralists and the employee requirements of APOC, recruiting labour from the Bakhtiyari pastoralists soon became a major burden for APOC. The Bakhtiyari pastoralists migrated seasonally twice a year. In the late spring, they left the scorching desert plains in the South with their flocks and herds and headed for the Northern highlands and the snow-clad mountain range of Zagros, where fresh pastures could be found. That was their *yaylaq* or summer quarter. In late autumn, when the grass died in the freezing weather of the elevated Zagros plateau, the Bakhtiyaris descended to the lowlands again, in search of grazing pastures and fresh grass on the plain, which provided plenty of food for their flocks of sheep and goats. That was their *qeshlaq*, or winter quarter. The *qeshlaq* was also the season for marketing their surplus and buying what they needed in market towns of Dezful, Shushtar, Ramhormoz, and Isfahan.

The seasonal migration was not compulsory for all members of the Bakhtiyari tribe. For example, when periodic droughts occurred and when the weather in *yaylaq* or *qeshlaq* was not favourable, a member of the tribe, usually from the lower rank of *‘amalehjat*, would go to the khan and ask for permission to stay behind. Permission was usually granted. It was among these *‘amalehjat* that the APOC enlisted its early unskilled labour employees, first in the elementary operations of rig-building and drilling or in road-building and transport, and later in laying the oil pipes or constructing the Abadan oil refinery. Since the Oil Company operated year-round, the major challenge was obviously in retaining the recruited labour in the off-season, for more than 6 months at a time.

The labour recruits gradually adopted the new industrial lifestyle. Some of them formed a new cluster of the workforce known as *sarkar*,

an abridged form of *sar-kargar* (headworkers). The *sarkars* were distinct from the foremen; the latter represented a labour category exclusively reserved for European skilled workers in the early days of APOC's activities. Among other functions, the *sarkar* recruited labour for the company. In the early days of oil excavation, it was the Bakhtiyari khans who, through negotiations with the Oil Company, acted as the main provider of labour. But now there were *sarkars* who not only supervised the performance of the new recruited labour, but also took charge of recruiting new workers. They were paid bonuses per head of each new recruit hired. Thus, in the formative years of the oil industry in Persia, the function of the intermediary, the *sarkar*, was not only to conscript men for the new workforce of the expanding industry, but also to ensure their loyalty in performing their new tasks. It was a dual mission: *sarkar* was both a recruiter and, effectively, a foreman.

With the expansion of the oil industry, and especially with the construction of the Abadan refinery, the practice of recruitment by Bakhtiyari khan and *sarkar* ended,⁷² and as the APOC was poised to consolidate and extend its activities by acting as merchants, bankers, and traders; commission, commercial, and general agents; and ship-owners, carriers, and dealers in all kind of commodities, a new labour recruitment process was needed. Within these terms, the new labour office was established on the premises of the Abadan Refinery. One of the main tasks of this new office was to bring seasonal work to an end in favour of permanent employment. To reach this goal, the labour office utilised ancestral bonding in organised networked migration. It encouraged the employment of workers' descendants in an elementary apprenticeship in the use of lathes and simple machine tools.⁷³ In the long run, this preferred employment policy reshaped social relations among oil workers by encouraging successive generations to work in the oil industry. The impact of this policy went beyond the shop floor, and gradually fashioned a new culture in the public space of Iranian oil towns.

The establishment of the new labour office in Abadan was able to address the question of mass recruitment of unskilled labour, but it could not tackle the demand for skilled and semi-skilled labour, now becoming more pressing with the inauguration of the refinery. For the clerical skilled and semi-skilled manual professional, the APOC turned to migrant workers from India and Burma.⁷⁴ In India, the British Indian trading company Shaw Wallace & Co. Ltd, with Strick, Scott & Co. as its representative in Persia, was the intermediary agent recruiting labour

for Persia. Shaw Wallace worked closely with the Burma Oil Company and APOC, and its mission as labour recruitment agency lasted until 1926, when APOC decided to take over the task and recruit Indian labour via its office in Bombay. In India, Shaw Wallace was the sole agent of these oil companies, providing various services in addition to labour recruitment.

The majority of migrant workers recruited to the Persian oil industry from Burma were Indians employed by the Burma Oil Company. Their extensive experience working at the Burma oilfields and the Rangoon Oil Refinery made them an attractive labour source. Using a free-contract system, Shaw Wallace arranged for the passage of these workers from Burma to Persia. They were mainly Chittagonian Sunni Muslims who had joined the Burmese oil industry in the 1890s.⁷⁵ In APOC administrative records or British colonial archives, the social, territorial, ethnic, and religious background of Indian migrant workers was never separately identified. The same applied to Iranian workers. Thus, all migrant workers from India employed by the Persian oil industry were simply classified as 'Indians'. However, by collating data found in the national archives of India, Iran, and Britain, sources in the APOC and British Petroleum Company archives, and records from the community of Indian migrant workers living in Iran, additional distinctions can be made. In Persia, workers originating from Burma, for example, were categorised as *Rangoony* (from Rangoon), so distinguishing them from other Indian migrants. In the city of Abadan, the Rangoony community had its own mosque, segregated from other Indian Sunni and Shiite Muslims. Still standing, it is known as the 'Rangoony Mosque', no doubt a reference to a substantial Burmese population in Abadan.

In addition to recruiting Indian migrant workers from Burma for work in the Persian oil industry, Shaw Wallace recruited both skilled and semi-skilled workers from Bombay and Karachi through subsidiary or subcontractor offices. Subcontractors like I.A. Ashton & Sons and Bullock Brothers specialised in recruiting fitters, oil and diesel engine drivers, marine signalmen, marine raters, boilermakers, and pipe fitters.⁷⁶ Recruiters often advertised in Bombay papers, especially for clerical employment. However, there are also references to the fact that intermediaries such as I.A. Ashton posted notices, posters, and wallpapers in the Punjab.⁷⁷ All workers who applied for the announced positions first had to undergo a qualification examination. Those recruited in Punjab were interviewed in Lahore, and Bombay recruits were interviewed in

Mazagaon Dock Bombay, before joining the mass of employees departing for Persia. The intermediary companies charged each new recruit 25% of their first month's pay. Those who had previously worked for the Oil Company in Persia and had returned to India within the past 2 years were required to pay an admission fee of 10 rupees.⁷⁸ The same rule applied to workers hired for household and domestic services, such as butlers, cooks, domestic servants, hospital ward orderlies, and sweepers (these were chiefly recruited by Osborn & Co., affiliated with the Parsee enterprise based in Bombay).⁷⁹

During the war and in the immediate years after, recruitment of migrant labour from India continued and even increased significantly despite the desertions by workers in pursuit of better pay and the restrictions of the Emigration Act, which remained in force during the war. By the end of the war, the enlarged army of Indian migrants at work in the Persian oil industry was sourced from all across India: Chittagonian labourers worked in harbour engineering and naval transport, while the Punjabi Sikhs were chiefly employed as drivers, technicians, and security agents. Migrants from the Madras Presidency occupied clerical functions, the Gazars from Punjab working as dhobis (washermen), while Goans served as cooks and servants.⁸⁰

It is interesting to note that, according to the signed contract, migrant Indian employees were not allowed to take their families to Persia. While this was of major concern to some workers who wanted to bring their families, the Oil Company considered the ban on family reunion as strictly non-negotiable, except for some high-ranking clerks. However, reports in Iranian archives state that some Indian Muslim migrant workers approached the Persian authorities to intervene on their behalf, calling on APOC to grant permission for family living arrangements.⁸¹

As mentioned before, months before the final armistice of November 1918, the government of India suspended the application of its Emigration Act to Persia, and liberalised migration traffic. However, this suspension was short-lived. In 1920, the government reversed its policy, and once again restricted labour migration to the Persian oil industry. Two years later, in 1922, the old Emigration Act was restructured via an amendment. The amendment intended to end the practice of indentured labour, extensively practised during the war. The new labour recruitment policy was influenced by political factors—both at the top, through the tripartite relations of APOC, the government of India, and the Persian

government, and from below, through labour activism aimed at improving the situation of workers. Consequently, APOC opted to open its own labour recruitment office in Bombay, and began to tap the local labour market for its Persian industry. In November 1925, APOC instructed Shaw Wallace & Co. to end its labour recruitment mission for the Persian oil industry in India as of January 1926.

WORKING AND LIVING CONDITIONS OF OIL WORKERS IN WARTIME

New measures in work discipline were introduced during the war to ensure the continuity of work mainly for European employees and Indian skilled workers. In the early days of oil discovery, there were no standard working days, and employees had to work from sunrise to sunset, seven days a week, throughout the year, in the harsh climate of southern Persia. During the war, however, a modified workday regime was implemented: 6 days were worked per week, from 9 to 12 hours per day, depending on the season. Work typically started at 6:00 in the morning and ended at 6:00 in the evening during the winter, and continued from 6:00 in the morning until 3:00 in the afternoon during the summer. It was only after several labour protests in the 1920s that APOC eventually adopted fixed working hours throughout the year, commencing at 6:00 in the morning and finishing officially at 5:30 in the afternoon, with an hour and a half for breakfast and one hour for lunch. In the early days, the Oil Company designated Sunday as a day off; however, during the war, the 'weekend' started at noon on Thursday, and included Friday.⁸²

While APOC tried to refashion working conditions in the oil industry by introducing a new working day, the fear of disease and contamination remained a major concern that deterred new recruits from seeking employment in Khuzestan. Their apprehension was well-founded. The deadly effect of the pandemic was made worse by the endemic warfare of marauding armies and warlords, famine, drought, and debilitating poverty, especially in the west and south of the country. British troops were not spared either. The Indian infantry, which constituted the bulk of the British troops, suffered particularly large losses.⁸³ Although APOC imposed quarantines and had well-equipped hospitals and medical facilities, the overall casualties were devastating. In Mohammareh alone, 6000 people fell ill, and 240 deaths were recorded.⁸⁴

The living conditions of the workmen did not improve much during the war. Prior to the discovery of oil, Abadan was an agrarian island with a scattered population of Maniuhi and Nassar Arab tribes, who had settled in several villages. Masjid Suleiman was a newly founded Oil Company town, built around oilfields that straddled the migratory routes and spring pasture of the Bakhtiyari nomads. Migration to Masjid Suleiman, either to seek employment in the oil industry or to provide services to its employees, pushed the new city's frontiers outward. An oilfield town originally accommodating a mere 523 employees in 1910,⁸⁵ it grew by leaps and bounds into a company town with a population of 17,000 around 1920.⁸⁶ The population of Abadan grew to an even greater extent. In 1917, 5000 residents were reported in the town of Abadan—a figure that 'included the Oil Company's employees, local people, shopkeepers, and petty traders who had recently migrated to provide services to oil employees.'⁸⁷ By the end of the war, the inward migration to Abadan of people seeking work in the oil industry or providing services to employees in the oil industry had caused Abadan to grow beyond all expectations. By the mid-1920s, the population of Abadan Island had reached 50,000–60,000⁸⁸ and by the early 1930s, the town of Abadan alone numbered 30,000–40,000 residents, of which about half—17,370 men—worked at the oil refinery.⁸⁹

During the war, there were three distinct and separate classes of accommodation for APOC employees. While APOC offered exclusive company housing for its European staff in furnished brick bungalows with gardens, the Indian employees were housed in large, semi-furnished common barracks. The Persian unskilled recruits lived in shelters made of sticks or bamboo, latched loosely together, and roofed with palm leaves. It was only after the war, during the 1920s, following the Oil Company's new social policy toward recruitment, employment, and welfare that the question of urban planning and housing began to be considered more seriously by the company.⁹⁰

The oil towns of Masjid Suleiman and Abadan were tripartite cities, in which urban space was divided spatially according to the social stratification principles imposed by British colonialism.⁹¹ A highly stratified racial hierarchy existed, which APOC's British employees had brought with them from home and from India, with Europeans at the top, Indians in the middle, and native Persians at the bottom. This racial partitioning was reflected in the areas occupied by each group. It was consistently imposed, even when new neighbourhoods were added to the city,

as the oil industry grew, the refinery was extended, and employment policies were modified.⁹² Crossing this very rigid racial partition was possible when higher-ranking Indians (and later, Persians) were invited to attend official ceremonies, congregations, or services of worship with the European community.⁹³ However, mixing across racial borders was 'specifically discouraged, and segregation was held up as the best alternative.'⁹⁴ Such segregation remained in force for years to come and was lifted only in 1951 when the Iranian oil was nationalised.

CONCLUSION

The First World War exalted the status of oil as a critical strategic commodity. The expeditious shift from coal to oil in technology, defence, and industry was concomitant with the exorbitant expansion of the oil industry, itself reliant on massive recruitment of skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled labour.

The global shift to oil had enormous implications for the strategic significance of West Asia; Persia, the Persian Gulf, and Mesopotamia, a region that contains the world's largest oil deposits. Although Iran's pivotal oil position during the first world war caused it to become a battlefield for the belligerent powers, the major challenge for the expanding oil industry, in addition to political security, was the scarcity of labour in all categories. Given that the British government held a 51% share in APOC, it first appeared as though the scarcity of skilled and semi-skilled labour would soon be overcome through recruitment of labour from other industries in the British Empire, namely the Rangoon oilfields and refinery. However, for the Oil Company, the recruitment process became more convoluted than was earlier anticipated. The complexity in the process of labour recruitment from the British Raj, as examined in this paper, reveals the degrees of inaccessibility of labour within the British Empire. During the First World War, this complexity was not limited to skilled and semi-skilled labour. The scarcity of unskilled labour led the Oil Company to exploit all possible means for the enrolment of labour, including the Labour Corps, founded in British India.

The end of the war resulted in the combatant labour departing from the military camps and joining the camps in the labour market. The new politico-economic regime of Fordism, which was characterised by mass industrial production and consumption under scientific labour management, ushered in a new social policy toward recruitment, employment,

and welfare, where the question of urban planning and housing began to be considered more seriously. The Oil Company, by setting up new quarters for skilled and semi-skilled workers in oil towns, spatially divided the urban space according to the social stratification principles imposed by British colonialism. In the present study, the old and widely perceived practice of colonial dual cities, dividing urban spaces between the binary of colonised and coloniser settlers, was challenged by the advancement of tripartite cities, where the European management, the Indian skilled and semi-skilled migrant labour, and the Iranian unskilled labour became permanent residents.

In the present work, the contribution of the micro-spatial history of labour in the Iranian oil industry to global labour history is refashioned by highlighting the labour dependency of the oil industry not only on labour markets beyond Iranian national frontiers, but also within the larger trans-local context of empire, colonial, and semi-colonial settings. Furthermore, by referring to the regional political development during the First World War and global economic development in the post-war era, this study reveals the historical complexity of centre and periphery in local, regional, and global contexts.

NOTES

1. The adjective “European” needs to be appended to “hundred years’ peace”, otherwise the notion would be Eurocentric. During this “hundred years”, the world witnessed many colonial wars outside Europe. Between 1803 and 1901 British troops were fighting continuously in some 50 colonial wars. Giddens, *The Nation State and Violence* (Berkeley, 1987), p. 233.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 223–232.
3. Asa Briggs, *A Social History of England* (London, 1983), pp. 251–252.
4. Pat Thane, ‘Government and Society in England and Wales: 1750–1914’, in *Cambridge Social History of Britain: 1750–1950*, ed. F.M.L. Thompson, Vol. 3 (Cambridge, 1990), pp. 1–62.
5. Nicholas A. Lambert, *Sir John Fisher’s Naval Revolution* (Columbia, 2002), pp. 274–304.
6. According to Landes, half of the naval ship crews were stokers and half of the cargo space was taken up for coal storage. David Landes, *The Unbound Prometheus; Technological Change and Industrial Development in Western Europe from 1750 to the Present* (Cambridge, 2003), pp. 279–281.

7. Landes, *The Unbound Prometheus*, p. 281.
8. Marian (Kent) Jack, 'The Purchase of British Government's Shares in the British Petroleum Company 1912–1914', *Past and Present*, 39 (1968), 139–68.
9. Stuart Cohen, 'Mesopotamia in British Strategy, 1903–1914', *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 9, 2 (1978), 171–181; Lev Ivanovich Miroshnikov, 'Iran in the World War I, Lecture read at Harvard University in November 1962' (Persian translation by A. Dokhanyati, *Iran dar Jang Jahani Avval* (Tehran, 1965).
10. Ahamd Ali Sepher (Movarekh al-Dowleh), *Iran dar Jang-e Bozorg 1914–1918* (Tehran, 1983), p. 102.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 15.
12. *Kaveh*, nos. 29 and 30, July 1918.
13. Ahamd Ali Sepher (Movarekh al-Dowleh), *Iran dar Jang Bozorg 1914–1918*, p. 239.
14. For the Provincial National Government see: Mansoureh Etehadiyyeh, 'The Iranian Provincial Government', in Touraj Atabaki (ed.), *Iran and the First World War, A Battleground of the Great Powers* (London, 2006) pp. 9–27; 'Alireza Malaii Tavani, *Iran va Dowlat Melli dar Jang jahani Avval* (Tehran, 1999); Hossein Sami'i and Amanollah Ardalan, *Avvalin Qiyam Moqadas Melli dar Jang Beynolmelel Avval* (Tehran; 1953); 'Abdolhossein Shaybani Vahid al-Molk, *Khaterat Mohajerat. Az dowlat Movaqqat Kermanshah ta Komiteh Meliyyoun Berlan* (Tehran, 1999).
15. For a British account of the impact of the Russian Revolution on the eastern front in the First World War, see: Arnold T. Wilson, *Loyalties: Mesopotamia, 1914–1917* (London: 1931).
16. Touraj Atabaki, *Azerbaijan: Ethnicity and the Struggle for Power in Iran*, 2nd ed. (London, 2000), pp. 39–51.
17. For a study of the migrant Iranian labourers in the Caucasus see: Touraj Atabaki, 'Disgruntled Guests, Iranian Subaltern on the Margins of the Tsarist Empire', *International Review of Social History*, 48, 3 (2003), pp. 401–426.
18. Iran National Archive, 240–3920, 293–3828, 240–1493, 240–6246, 240–5161.
19. Archive of Documents and Diplomatic History, Iran Ministry of Foreign Affairs. GH–133–58–4–91, GH–1333–58–4–68.
20. Iran National Archive, 293–003828.
21. British Petroleum Archive (hereafter 'BP Archive'), ARC141294, January 1938. Laurence Lockhart, *Record of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, vol. I, 1901–1918*, p. 268.
22. Iran National Archive, 240–18279.

23. Willem Floor, *Labour Unions, Law and Conditions in Iran (1900–1941)* (Durham, 1985), p. 12.
24. For an eyewitness account of the famine and epidemics spreading across Iran during the first world war, see: Qahreman Mirza Salour, *Rouznameh Khaterat 'Ayn al-Saltaneh*, Vol. 7 (Tehran, 1999) pp. 5275–5277.
25. Iran National Archive, 360–1569.
26. Archive of Documents and Diplomatic History, Iran Ministry of Foreign Affairs. GH–1334–25–1–305.
27. 'Abdollah Mostowfi, *Sharh Zendegi Man*, Vol. 2 (Tehran, 1964), p. 513.
28. Report from the US Legation in Tehran, 1 November 1918, US National Archive 891.00/1072.
29. Majid Foroutan, *Oza' Siyasi va Ejtema'i dar Jang Jahani Arval* (Tehran, 2011); L.C. Dunsterville, *The Adventure of Dunsterforce* (London, 2009).
30. Stuart Cohen, 'Mesopotamia in British Strategy, 1903–1914', *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, 9, 2, May 1978.
31. R.W. Ferrier, *History of the British Petroleum Company*, vol. 1, *The Developing Years 1901–1932* (London, 1982), pp. 288–290.
32. Between 1914 and 1918, British troops in Near East and Middle East numbered nearly 3 million. At maximum strength, there were 1.3 million. They suffered 303,000 casualties during this period, i.e. one out of every ten men. See: Roger Adelson, *London and the Invention of the Middle East, Money, Power, and War, 1902–1922* (New Haven, 1995), p. 171.
33. For the presence of the Indian workers in the Persian oil industry and Persian Gulf in wartime period see: Touraj Atabaki, 'Far from Home, But at Home: Indian Migrant Workers in the Iranian Oil Industry', *Studies in History*, 31(1): 85–114. Radhika Singha, 'Finding Labour from India for the War in Iraq: The Jail Porter and Labour Corps, 1916–1920', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 49, no. 2 (2007): 412–45; Stefan Tetzlaff, 'The Turn of the Gulf Tide: Empire, Nationalism, and South Asian Labour Migration to Iraq, c. 1900–1935', *International Labour and Working-Class History* 79: 7–27; I.J. Seccombe and R.I. Lawless, 'Foreign Worker Dependence in the Gulf, and the International Oil Companies: 1910–1950', *International Migration Review* 20, no. 3 (1986): 548–74.
34. Roger Adelson, *London and the Invention of the Middle East, Money, Power, and War, 1902–1922*, p. 171.
35. BP Archive, ARC 68779, Strick, Scott & Co. to Wilson, October 7th 1916.
36. BP Archive, ARC 141294, p. 265.

37. 'Abbas Mirza Farman Farmian–Salar Lashkar (ed. Mansoureh Ettehadiyyeh and Bahman Farman), *Jang-e Engelis va 'Osmani dar Beyn al-Nabrain va 'Avaqeb-e An dar Iran* (Tehran, 2007), pp. 27–28.
38. Christopher Sykes, *Wassmuss, 'the German Lawrence'* (London, 1936), p. 51.
39. BP Archive, ARC141294, January 1938. Lockhart, *Record of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, Volume I, 1901–1918*, p. 262.
40. BP, ARC 176338; George Thomson, 'Abadan During the World War', *Naft*, 8.5 (September 1932), p. 8. Miroshnikov, *Iran dar Jang-e jahani-e Avval*, p. 37.
41. R.W. Ferrier, *History of the British Petroleum Company*, p. 276.
42. Ulrich Gehrke, *Persien in der deutschen Orientpolitik während des Ersten Weltkrieges*, Darstellungen zur Auswärtigen Politik, Volumes 1 & 2. (Stuttgart, 1960), translated into Persian, Parviz Sadri, *Pish beh Sou-ye Sharq. Iran dar Siyasat Sharqi Alman dar Jang Jahani Avval* (Tehran, 1998), pp. 133–136; Dagobert von Mikusch, *Wassmuss, der deutsche Lawrence* (Berlin, 1938); translated into Persian by Keykavous Jahandari, *Wasmus* (Qom, 1998), pp. 77–84. Oliver Bast, *Almani-ha dar Iran. Negahi be Thavolat Iran dar Jang Jahani Avval bar Asas Manbe'Diplomatik Faranseh* (Tehran, 1998), pp. 35–43. See also: Christopher Sykes, *Wassmuss, 'the German Lawrence.'*
43. *Ibid.*
44. *Ibid.*, p. 97.
45. BP Archive, ARC141294, January 1938. Lockhart, *Record of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, Vol. I, 1901–1918*, p. 269. R.W. Ferrier, *History of the British Petroleum Company*, p. 280. Ulrich Gehrke, *Pish beh Sou-ye Sharq. Iran dar Siyasat Sharqi Alman dar Jang Jahani Avval*, p. 163.
46. BP Archive, ARC141294, January 1938. Lockhart, *Record of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, Vol. I, 1901–1918*, p. 265.
47. Archive of Documents and Diplomatic History, Iran Ministry of Foreign Affairs. GH-132-66-35-014.
48. Archive of Documents and Diplomatic History, Iran Ministry of Foreign Affairs, GH-132-66-35-075.
49. BP Archive, ARC 141294, January 1938. Lockhart, *Record of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, Vol. I, 1901–1918*, p. 270.
50. BP Archive, ARC 70297, April 24 1915. See also: 'Alireza Abtahi, *Naft va Bakhtiyari-ha* (Tehran, 2005), p. 39.
51. BP Archive, ARC 141294, p. 272. See also 'Abbas Mirza Farman Farmian–Salar Lashkar (ed. Mansoureh Ettehadiyyeh and Bahman Farman), *Jang-e Engelis va 'Osmani dar Beyn al-Nabrain va 'Avaqeb-e An dar Iran*, p. 64.

52. R.W. Ferrier, *The History of the British Petroleum Company 1901–1932* (London, 1982), p. 282.
53. For a study of *Taşkilat-i Mahsusa* in Iran, see: Touraj Atabaki, ‘Going East, The Ottomans’ Secret Service Activities in Iran’ in Touraj Atabaki (ed), *Iran and the First World War. Battleground of the Great Powers* (London, IB Tauris, 2006) pp. 29–42.
54. For the political geography of the region during the first world war, see: Seyyed Qasem Yahusseini, ‘Parkandegi Qodrat dar Jonoub Iran dar Astaneh Jang Jahani Avval’ in Safa Akhavan (ed), *Iran dar jahani Avval* (Tehran, 2005) pp. 311–317. If the landing of British troops in Bushehr in 1909 was as result of 1907 treaty between Britain and Russia, dividing Iran into their zone of interest, the landing in 1915 was mainly linked with the APOC’s interests in the region.
55. Archive of Documents and Diplomatic History, Iran Ministry of Foreign Affairs. GH–1302–27–19–19; GH–1320–27–19–20. F.J. Moberly, *Operations in Persia, 1914–1919*, Reprint (London, 1987). For a comprehensive study about the South Persia Rifles, see: Florida Safiri, *Polis Jonoub Iran* (Tehran, 1985). The history of the popular resistance against the British in the region has been the subject of series of studies. See, for example: Seyyed Qasem Yahusseini, Reis ‘Ali Delvari. Tajavoz Nezami Britania va Moqavemat Jonoub (Tehran, 1997).
56. Archive of Documents and Diplomatic History, Iran Ministry of Foreign Affairs, GH–1336–48–14–89.
57. BP Archive, ARC 141294, p. 273.
58. ‘Abbas Mirza Farman Farmian-Salar Lashkar (Mansoureh Ettehadiyyeh and Bahman Farman eds.), *Jang-e Engelis va ‘Osmani dar Beyn al-Nahrain va ‘Avaqeb-e An dar Iran*, p. 90.
59. Mehdiqoli Hedayat, *Khaterat va Khatarat*, p. 270.
60. BP Archive, ARC 141294, p. 270.
61. BP Archive, ARC 176338; *Naft*, 8, 5, (September 1932), p. 9. BP Archive, 176338.
62. BP Archive, ARC141294, January 1938. Lockhart, *Record of the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company, Vol. I, 1901–1918*, p. 264. BP Archive, ARC 176338.
63. National Archive of India, General Department 689, 1915; Department of Commerce and Industry 332–12, 1915.
64. Indian Emigrations Act of 1883, in: *Royal Commission on Labour. Foreign Reports. Vol. 2. The Colonies and the Indian Empire*. House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, C. 6795–XI, 1892, p. 234. Stefan Tetzlaff, *Entangled Boundaries, British India and the Persian Gulf Region during the Transition from Empires to Nation States, c. 1880–1935*, Magisterarbeit

- (Berlin, 2009), <http://archiv.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/savifadok/3202/>, p. 30.
65. National Archive of India, ARC. 332–12, 1915. See also Tetzlaff, *Entangled Boundaries*. pp. 68–70.
 66. Ibid.
 67. For the Anglo-Russian 1907 Convention, see: Firouz Kazemzadeh, *Russia and Britain in Persia, 1864–1914* (New Haven, 1968) Chap. 7. For a detailed study of this convention, and the reaction of the Iranians, see: Mahmoud Mahmoud, *Traikh Ravabet Siyasi Iran va Engelis dar Qarn Nouzdahom Miladi*, Vol. 8 (Tehran, 1954), pp. 2228–2266.
 68. National Archive of India, ARC. 332–12, 1915.
 69. Ibid.
 70. Tetzlaff, *Entangled Boundaries*, pp. 68–70.
 71. J. C. Hurewitz, *Diplomacy in the Near East and Middle East: A Documentary Record* (New Haven, 1975), 249.
 72. Ferrier, *The History of the British Petroleum*, 151.
 73. Ferrier, *The History of the British Petroleum*, 128.
 74. I.J. Seccombe and R.I. Lawless, ‘Foreign Worker Dependence in the Gulf, and the International Oil Companies: 1910–1950’, *International Migration Review*, 20 (3) 1986, p. 549.
 75. Willem van Schendel, ‘Spatial Moments: Chittagong in Four Scenes’, in Helen Siu and Eric Tagliacozzo (eds.), *Asia Inside Out: Connected Places* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014). I am grateful to Willem van Schendel for providing me with valuable information on the categorisation of the Chittagonian workforce.
 76. BP Archive, ARC 68877.
 77. Ibid.
 78. During the war period, the average salary of Indian workers was between 80 and 100 rupees per month. In the same period, the salary of Iranian workers was on average about one-third of the salary of Indian workers. Ibid.
 79. Ibid.
 80. Michael Edward Dobe, *A Long Slow Tutelage in Western Ways of Work: Industrial Education and the Containment of nationalism in Anglo-Iranian and ARAMCO, 1923–1963*, PhD thesis (Graduate School-New Brunswick, Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey) p. 62; Rasmus Christian Elling ‘On Lines and Fences: Labour, Community and Violence in an Oil City’ in *Urban Violence in the Middle East: Changing Cityscapes in the Transition from Empire to Nation State*, Ulrike Freitag (Ed.) (Forthcoming); Henry Longhurst, *Adventure in Oil* (London: 1959), pp. 72–73.
 81. National Archive of Iran, File no. 240017531, 17 December 1927.

82. BP Archive, ARC 176326, George Thomson, 'Abadan in its Early Days', *Naft*, 7, 4, (July 1931), p. 17.
83. Ibid.
84. Op.cit., p. 384.
85. R.W. Ferrier, *History of the British Petroleum Company*, p. 276.
86. The figure for the population of Masjid Suleiman around 1920 is based on an estimate derived from data in the British Petroleum Archive and the National Library and Archive of Iran.
87. Archive of Documents and Diplomatic History, Iran Ministry of Foreign Affairs, GH-1337-2-14-2.
88. The figure for the population of Abadan in the early 1920s is based on an estimate derived from data in the British Petroleum Archive and the National Library and Archive of Iran.
89. BP Archive, ARC 71879.
90. For the making of Masjid Suleiman and Abadan as company towns, see: Kaveh Ehsani, 'Social Engineering and the Contradictions of Modernization in Khuzestan's Company Towns, A Look at Abadan and Masjid Suleiman', *International Review of Social History*, 48, 3 (2003), pp. 361-390.
91. For the tripartite cities, see: Touraj Atabaki, 'Far from Home, but at Home. Indian Migrant Workers in the Iranian Oil Industry', *Studies in History*.
92. For the city planning of Abadan, see: Mark Crinson, 'Abadan, Planning and Architecture under the Anglo-Persian Oil Company', *Planning Perspectives*, 12, 3 (1997), pp. 341-60; Kaveh Ehsani, 'Social Engineering and the Contradiction of Modernization in Khuzestan's Company Towns, A Look at Abadan and Masjid Soleyman', *International Review of Social History*, 48, 3 (2003), pp. 361-390.
93. BP Archive, ARC 71183, *Naft*, 2, 3 (1926).
94. Reidar Visser, *The Gibraltar That Never Was* (www.historiae.org/abadan.asp) [Paper presented to the British World conference, Bristol, 11-14 July 2007], p. 9.

‘On the Unwary and the Weak’: Fighting Peonage in Wartime United States: Connections, Categories, Scales

Nicola Pizzolato

The focus of this chapter is two-fold: the problem of the political and cultural representation of a local phenomenon within teleological narratives of modernisation as well as the use and construction of local events by actors to impinge on global political projects and policies. Using multiple scales, I attempt here to refocus the question of American peonage, a condition of ‘involuntary service or labour’ enforced in ‘liquidation of a debt’ widespread in the American South from the late nineteenth century to mid-twentieth century.¹ Starting from an episode in Oglethorpe County, Georgia, I follow the transformation of its meaning beyond the local level to become one of the most significant, though rapidly forgotten, causes of mobilisation against social injustice for a generation of leftist activists. ‘Following the traces’ where they lead, I restore the historical complexity of this little-known campaign against peonage during the New Deal, which led to the involvement of actors and institutions in different locales, across the world (Georgia, Chicago, New York,

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Geneva), operating at different geographical scales and with different agendas.² My intent is also to address the construction of ‘peonage’ as a socio-juridical category in the language and practices of individuals and institutions—an interpretation that requires the investigation of how this term was negotiated by individuals and institutions. I adopt a notion of context that assumes that ‘localities are connected to wider geographical histories and processes’, as well as Italian micro-history’s idea that individuals are inscribed in multiple contexts and processes, at different geographical scales, entangled through causal relationships.³ This is not meant to assume a discontinuity between the local and the global level but rather to emphasise a spatial dimension that is constructed through the multiple connections established by historical actors.⁴

Another underlying methodological premise of this chapter derives from Italian micro-history (especially authors such as Carlo Ginzburg, Osvaldo Raggio, Franco Ramella, Angelo Torre and others⁵): its practice to challenge sweeping historical narratives by focusing on the study of episodes occurring on a small scale—in this case, originating at the small scale. Italian ‘micro-historians’ have emphasised the discontinuity of processes of modernisation, such as the development of capitalism or the formation of a centralised state, while often concentrating on ‘peripheries’ and fragmentation of power. Their work has therefore offered me insights on how to interpret unfree labour in a peripheral area (a low-income southern county) of a twentieth century modern capitalist and liberal nation (the United States). Indeed, micro-history has challenged notions such as modernisation, proletarianisation, or state-formation as overarching narratives of historical change by showing that they are often sweeping generalisations that do not hold their coherence in front of the complexity of specific contexts.

THE PLACE

On 13 October 1939, Oglethorpe County, Georgia, made headlines in the African American newspapers when planter William Cunningham demanded the arrest and attempted to indict and extradite from Chicago three workers escaped from his plantation, Santa Cross, and return them to what the defendants claimed was a condition of slavery or forced labour.⁶ Testimonies revealed that Cunningham kept a sizeable number, probably close to a hundred, of unfree labourers in his farm, rounded up in a variety of ways, though mainly by hiring blacks convicted for small

crimes from the county jail, using a form of convict leasing that was still legal at the county level, even if banned at the state level. Working with no pay, the workers did not have the chance to pay back the small fee that Cunningham had disbursed to 'release' them and would labour in his farm for as long as 18 years. Other times the recruitment of unfree workers resembled more a kidnapping, as in the case of African American Will Fleming who had met Cunningham while walking on the road, was offered a drink, a decent pay and then brought to the plantation to work without pay and unable to leave for the following two decades.⁷

Cunningham's violence and brutality seemed to know no restraint: old men, pregnant women, as well as men and children were beaten and lashed. Runaways were captured by sympathetic sheriffs and returned to the plantation under the threat of convict labour sentence. Worker Solomon Mccannon related that, during 15 years, 'he [Cunningham] would tell me that I would have to continue working whether I liked it or not, threatening to send me back to the chain gang if I left while this debt was still charged against me'.⁸ Cunningham and his men could also maim and kill with impunity, according to the investigation of the Abolish Peonage Committee, whose pre-eminent goal was to mobilise political support in favour of the prosecution of Cunningham and his accomplices. Notwithstanding the horror stories told by some fugitives who had escaped to Chicago, Cunningham received the solidarity of fellow planters, among whom was Georgia Congressman Paul Brown, who went on record saying that 'there is no section of the South where Negroes are treated better or [are] more generally contented than Oglethorpe County'.⁹ The FBI, under the direction of J. Edgar Hoover, also declined to investigate the case, and Assistant General Attorney Rogge initially refused to press charges. A meeting with a delegation of activists concerned about this blatant peonage case only led to the declaration that 'the Department of Justice will take cognizance of the fact presented in regard to peonage conditions in the plantation of William T. Cunningham'.¹⁰ However, the Department of Justice did initiate prosecution after the campaign gained momentum. In 1941, the district federal court indicted and prosecuted Cunningham for the crime of peonage, but did not convict him and his accomplices. Encouraging as the indictment might have been, there was no chance that a court in Georgia, even a federal one, would condemn Cunningham. Predictably, Cunningham produced an array of testimonies in his favour that depicted idyllic labour conditions in his farm and which showed that the

most prominent citizens of his county supported him.¹¹ However, in the preceding 2 years, the question of peonage, so well exemplified by the fraudulent recruitment and coerced labour routines of his Santa Cross plantation, acquired a larger significance that went well beyond the lives of the men and women of Oglethorpe County.

THE SYSTEM

Between the accession of President Roosevelt in 1933 and the end of the Second World War, hundreds of letters, pamphlets, newspaper articles, investigations, affidavits as well as indictments and court cases provided evidence of numerous cases of unfree labour, especially concentrated in the cotton plantation of the Black Belt (with a peak in Georgia and Mississippi) and in the turpentine and timber industry in Florida. While it was expected that, in a segregated society, African Americans would be in a state of economic subordination, never before had the extent of coercion to which many rural black workers were subjected been revealed and denounced in such moving details. The Santa Cross plantation represented only one particularly graphic example of labour practices both tolerated and supported in the American South. While some cases became publicly known, many others remained confined to the hundreds of letters that African Americans across the American South addressed to labour and civil rights organisation, to the Department of Justice, and, sometimes, to President Roosevelt himself.

Entry points to American peonage were similar to pathways to forced labour in colonial Africa or in Latin American plantation economies. Comparative elements were never systematically investigated, but ‘American Congo’ was an expression sometimes used by activists to highlight the analogy of parts of the American South with the worst excess of colonial supremacy in Africa. ‘If we take the Mississippi Valley’, wrote in 1919 W.E.B. DuBois in an unpublished paper, ‘from Memphis to New Orleans, we have a region whose history is as foul a blot on American civilisation as Congo is a blot on Belgium and Europe.’¹²

Was the American South really the ‘last outpost of slavery’ in twentieth-century US as DuBois claimed? When landlords advanced money for food, housing, tools, and clothes in return for a share of the crop that paid the debt with interest, they were often binding the sharecropper and his family for a long period, as the account books would be fixed so that the debt would increase.¹³ This was common in Mississippi,

Arkansas, Georgia and Alabama, but the degree and the length of this debt bondage varied from county to county, from case to case, and according to the circumstances of the victim. The premise was that it involved actors of unequal standing in a racist society. Black sharecroppers lacked the cash to pay for their own provisions at the beginning of the year; they had no independent access to credit or financial support, and they usually were forced by the circumstances and societal pressure to enter such unfavourable agreements with white farmers. Although both white and black sharecroppers would fall into debt, the system was in particular rigged against African Americans who could not challenge the bookkeeping (or lack of it) without further economic, social, or even penal sanctions. It was, in the restrained words of James Weldon Johnson, 'a system that lent itself to gross exploitation of the tenant'.¹⁴

Often presented as an exception to the rule, American peonage was instead structurally inscribed in the political economy of the American South, justified and rationalised in both economic and ideological terms by its practitioners and supporters: it provided cheap labour and buttressed the racial hierarchy. It went against the explicit letter of the law, but it conformed to what cultural theorist Slavoj Žižek calls the 'unwritten code', that is, 'a set of implicit and unspoken, obscene injunctions and prohibitions, which taught the subject how not to take some explicit norms seriously and how to implement a set of publicly unacknowledged prohibitions'.¹⁵ This unwritten code sustained unfree labour in spite of its formal unconstitutionality because it remained the norm in the community. 'We have been very careful to obey the letter of the Federal Constitution', declared Senator Walter F. George from Georgia, 'but we have been very diligent in violating the spirit of such amendments and such statutes as would have a Negro to believe himself equal of a white man. And we should continue to conduct ourselves in that way.'¹⁶

American peonage in the 1930s must be seen in a continuum with practices of coerced labour since the Reconstruction, including chain gangs and convict leasing, which was used to cheapen the cost of work of modernisation and of building of infrastructure.¹⁷ In practice, convict leasing and peonage were sometimes overlapping when prisoners were handed over to private employers to work out a debt (usually a fee) that they owed to the state. The state convict lease system ended throughout the south by the 1920s. Alabama was the last state to abolish it in 1928.¹⁸ But in its wake, the leasing of convicts by counties continued to prosper. As an illegal practice, peonage could hardly exist without

collusion with public officials. Sometimes, private employers took it in their hands to 'arrest' African Americans for vagrancy, without the help of public officials, but this too presupposed collusion. Peonage should be interpreted as one of many ways in which employers and public officials of the American South attempted to restrict the labour market, in old as well as innovative ways. The spectrum included anything from societal pressure to actual captivity. In light of the remarkable changes that the US had undergone in the previous half-century, it is extraordinary that this system survived well beyond the 1940s, but this is testimony to the high malleability of a structure of labour coercion which, although not exposed in its details, was evident to any casual observer of the rural south.

CONSTRUCTION OF A CATEGORY

According to a disgusted white observer who wrote to the Department of Justice in 1937, 'I met a condition that I did not think existed anywhere in the United States, the negro share cropper in my opinion and observation, was just as much in bondage as they was (sic) before the war between the states'.¹⁹ What made this bondage peonage? As it was applied in the United States, peonage was a rather imprecise label for a number of situations in which white employers, mostly southern, compelled with violence African Americans to work without or with very little pay. For most of the 1930s, outside of the legal profession, it was used interchangeably with terms like slavery, bondage and, sometimes, forced labour. The Oglethorpe County case shows that peonage is not a classification that, although used in the sources and in the language of the protagonists, can be considered as the most legally accurate, nor a blanket category that can indiscriminately form the basis of comparison with the way this term is used in other settings elsewhere. Its connotations have to be understood as the result of a process of negotiation between individuals, groups and institutions and as result of a relationship between rule of law and social practice.²⁰ 'Peonage' is thus a category generated in a specific context and which historical actors will strategically deploy in other contexts and localities, where its political meaning would become multi-layered by being construed not only to a condition of labour but as an element of a wider system of political oppression.

By 1939, at the onset of the Oglethorpe County case, there existed a sizeable federal jurisprudence which placed peonage within the remit of Federal criminal justice. A practice was defined as violating the federal statute of peonage when it 'established, maintained, or enforced, directly or indirectly, the voluntary or involuntary service or labor of any persons as peons, in liquidation of any debt or obligation, or otherwise.'²¹ (More punchy, and accurate, was the informal characterisation of a NAACP organiser, that peonage consisted in 'working without pay under threat of prosecution for an imaginary offense', which recognised that the actual presence of a debt played little role in perpetuating the condition.²²) This definition had been endorsed by a number of Supreme Court sentences that went back to the turn of the century when, for the first time, federal district attorneys had utilised the 1867 Peonage Act to prosecute a narrow range of coercive labour practice in Georgia and other southern states.²³ However, 'Compulsory service based upon the indebtedness of the peon to the master', in which the link between compulsion and a debt had to be demonstrated with evidence, made the scope of the judicial definition of peonage too narrow to have an impact. In 1905, for instance, the Supreme Court ordered a reversal of judgement in *Clyatt v. United States*, in which the defendant had been accused of arresting two African Americans in Florida to return them to a condition of peonage in Georgia. The majority of justices agreed that the defendant aimed to force the plaintiffs to work out a debt, but there was no evidence that they had been peons before the event. Debt and compulsion were present, but the link between the two had not been demonstrated, according to the court.²⁴ If anything, this convoluted argument made grand juries very cautious in returning indictments for peonage. It is interesting to note that no official definition of peonage made reference to its racial component, even though the totality of 'peons' were African Americans.

How did this narrow conception of peonage come to encompass the situation at the Santa Cross plantation? Because many of Cunningham's forced labourers were neither indebted to their master nor had a contractual relation with him, 'peonage' was redefined, or, if you prefer, reinvented, so that district attorneys could initiate prosecution also in cases where the contracted debt did not exist or could not be demonstrated and coercion was instead the result of violence or threat of violence. Actors therefore used a category already present in the federal jurisprudence (as opposed to state jurisprudence) and altered its scope

in order to protect civil and labour rights, under the broad mandate of the Thirteenth Amendment (abolition of slavery and involuntary servitude). Until 1942, the Department of Justice refused to prosecute individuals who violated the Thirteenth Amendment on the technicality that no statute existed to enforce it. As a result, throughout the 1930s, victims of coercive employers, their relatives and friends, and civil rights activists used ‘peonage’, a category on which a sizeable federal jurisprudence existed, as a way to draw the attention of a reluctant Department of Justice to labour and civil rights violations that involved the restriction of personal freedom. For instance, when in 1936, in another famous case, J.D. Peacher had arrested some African Americans to work in his sawmills overseen by armed men with rifles—a simple case of kidnapping—activists called for the federal government to act to redress a violation of the Peonage Act.²⁵ Relatives and victims in their correspondence and affidavits would alternatively use the words peonage or slavery according to the circumstances.²⁶ In this way, social actors modified the meaning of legal categories through their strategic use.

Initially, requests for prosecutions under the rubric of peonage were routinely turned down after a perfunctory investigation when the absence of debt emerged, with the stock phrase ‘there is no violation of a federal statute of which this department could take cognizance’.²⁷ However, at the same time, its use obliged federal agencies to take stock of the extensive presence of ‘peonage’, in the wider sense of unfree labour, and the need for a different strategy of prosecution. This came to fruition for the first time in the indictment of William Cunningham of Oglethorpe County.

The Thirteenth Amendment, which prohibited slavery or involuntary servitude, lacked in effect a solid legislative apparatus to enforce it, and until the 1940s was narrowly construed to apply only to the abolition of slavery as it existed in the Antebellum South.²⁸ Federal prosecutors used a number of dormant Reconstruction acts as the basis for forms of bondage that were not based only on debt—for instance, the slave kidnapping law of 1866 and the Peonage Act of 1867, as well as the Supreme Court decisions that in the Progressive era had upheld those statutes. Historian Risa Goluboff has told the story of the understaffed Civil Rights Section of the Department of Justice, established in 1939, whose lawyers experimented with ‘different ways of practicing and framing civil rights in the 1940s’.²⁹ The innovation in their legal practice that Goluboff has unveiled was crucial to create a momentum in tackling

unfree labour during the New Deal. However, her account neglects to investigate how the changing legal practice had been shaped by the social actors' manipulation of the category of peonage as well as by the constant pressure of leftist groups and civil rights organisations. This widening of the category of peonage to encompass a range of forms of coercion and exploitation, as noted by political scientist Howard Devon Hamilton, had gained usage as an instrument for actors to advance legal claims.³⁰ In December 1941, Attorney General Biddle issued a federal order that recommended prompt investigation and vigorous prosecution of cases of peonage, now finally inscribed in a new legal discourse that linked back to the Thirteenth Amendment. In January 1942, in *Taylor v. Georgia* (1942), the Supreme Court overturned a Georgia contract law that peonage overlords such as Cunningham had often invoked to justify the capture of men who fled work. By then, however, 'peonage' had become the shorthand for any situation of unfree labour, whether or not it involved debt.

NARRATIVES

Major protagonists of the campaign to indict William Cunningham were the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the Workers Defense League (WDL) and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), as well as a number of labour, civil rights and religious organisations. They lobbied for legislative change, stimulated legal action, and assisted plaintiffs with individual grievances and complaints. In some cases, political and civil rights activists secretly helped the victims of peonage to escape the labour camps. These associations were all located in the Northeast and Midwest, away from the world of cotton plantations. They had different political agendas and a different notion of what peonage meant in their vision of history. What they shared was the political opportunity provided by the New Deal, with its rhetorical emphasis on labour rights, to use the struggle against peonage to advance progressive political change.

The political language adopted by the campaigners was powerful because it stretched along a vast ideological spectrum drawing from patriotism ('cementing national unity') to Marxism to that of human rights—as when African American Communist William Patterson, wrote, in an open letter to Roosevelt, 'if you, as agent of the economic royalists are permitted to proceed further against my people, you will bring about

conditions even more inhuman than persisted in 1860'—to the tropes of American exceptionalism, such as the US being the land of unfettered freedom of opportunity, in this case, betrayed.³¹ What made the labour practices of Oglethorpe County a political weapon to disparate groups was that peonage disturbed one or the other of these narratives of modernity—maybe all of them.

The International Labor Defense (ILD), a Communist organisation, brought to the struggle against peonage what it had learned from two *causes célèbres* of the 1930s, the Angelo Herndon (a black labour activist imprisoned after a strike) case and, in particular, the Scottsboro boys case. The latter involved a group of nine teenagers falsely accused of rape whom the ILD saved from execution. In those instances, the ILD had refined its method of battling the American legal system with mass political mobilisation rather than with legal efforts only (which was a style more congenial to the NAACP and other similar civil rights organisations).³² The ILD read the indictment of African Americans as a politically motivated act of a capitalist state which should have been countered with a movement for political change. In the communist reading, after all, the courts were simply one of the places where the bourgeois state exercised its political oppression over the working class. And no American worker was more oppressed and exploited (and, of course, at the same time allegedly ripe for revolution) than the southern black farm worker. The ILD saw in the battle to prevent a small number of African Americans to be returned to servitude a cause worthy of national attention, an occasion for putting the spotlight on the social relations of production in the rural south, and an opportunity to broaden its political base.

For the communists, peonage was a local, particularly virulent, manifestation of the general exploitation to which workers were subject under American capitalism. This framework, proposed by William Patterson, Bob Wirtz and Vito Marcantonio, three prominent anti-peonage Communists of their time, was aligned to a book by another party member, Walter Wilson, who, in *Forced Labour in the United States* (1933), analysed industrial wage labour alongside peonage to argue that in any case, under capitalism, labour is bound to be exploited, and while the form varies, the principle remains the same. The ILD construed the struggle against peonage as moment of class solidarity, preliminary to a process of unification of the American working class. Communist labour activists in industrial trade unions wrote to Department of Justice, and

ILD's Wirtz travelled to Washington to meet the Attorney General with the support of Chicago North Side's unemployed workers and activists, who, reports a pamphlet, 'chipped in their pennies' in aid of the cause.³³ The campaign against peonage in Oglethorpe County, the ILD claimed, would lead to an interracial uprising of sharecropper, farmers, miners, and industrial workers across the south: 'the colour line is crumbling along with the plantation and the company town'.³⁴

The theme of interracial class solidarity was present also in the narrative proposed by the socialists, with whom the Communists both cooperated and competed in this instance. In fact, it was the socialists who had been the champions of the cause of sharecroppers (the main victims of peonage) up to the Oglethorpe County case. Since 1934, the Socialist-leaning Southern Tenant Farmers Union (STFU) had done much to arouse the sympathy and the indignation of liberals to the cause of black, as well as white, sharecroppers. Anti-union violence in Arkansas against the STFU had attracted national attention and the support of a congressional committee to investigate anti-labour violence in the South.³⁵ One of the STFU's outspoken members, Howard Kester, had published a well-known pamphlet called *Revolt among Sharecroppers* (1936), with details about the sharecroppers living conditions and the union's success in organising them. Norman Thomas, six-time presidential candidate for the Socialist Party, had written a pamphlet titled *The Plight of the Share-Cropper* (1935).

At the onset of the Cunningham case, while American Communists were encumbered by the embarrassing Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact, the Socialists were better positioned to portray American peonage as a hurdle in the worldwide battle of progressive forces against fascism. In their representation, the battle against peonage was but one instance of anti-totalitarianism; it fitted both the vision of America as champion of individual and national liberties, drummed up in the media in the years before the US entry into the war, and the socialist emphasis of resistance against the fascist aggression on workers' rights and prerogative. The Abolish Peonage Committee argued that peonage was 'an expression of Hitlerism in our country' and it compared it to a 'Nazi tyranny'.³⁶ This sort of comparison became even more cogent when it emerged that the Nazi regime itself made extensive use of unfree labour. In lobbying the Department of Justice to investigate peonage cases, the Abolish Peonage Committee argued that it 'would strengthen the faith of millions of Negro people in the democracy for which they are loyally fighting

against the aggressor fascist power.³⁷ The Communists joined this rhetorical strategy after Hitler's invasion of the Soviet Union. 'It is our belief', wrote New York Communist Congressman Vito Marcantonio in 1942, 'that the hand of the Attorney General will be greatly strengthened in this prosecution [Cunningham's], so important in cementing of national unity in this time of all-out defense of our democracy against fascist aggression, by public support of his policy of fighting peonage'.³⁸ In Washington, these arguments resonated with the wartime anxiety about the threat of totalitarianism to the American ideal of safeguarding individual rights as well as the political liability of having a discontent internal minority possibly susceptible to the enemy's propaganda.³⁹ In the context of wartime politics, the protection of individual rights peonage at the Santa Cross plantation was recontextualised in a wider framework and elevated to national and international significance.

Outside the left, as the cause of sharecroppers gained credit among liberals in the mid-1930s, the middle-class NAACP provided, initially reluctantly and eventually more assiduously, cash and publicity. Up to that point, the foremost African American civil rights organisation had been little attuned to the cause of the black worker, whether industrial or rural, but in 1940, Oglethorpe County sharecroppers and peonage were featured for the first time extensively on *The Crisis* Magazine, their publication for a membership which was overwhelmingly urban and northern. Unsurprisingly, the emphasis of the NAACP was on the marked continuity with slavery and the framing of the struggle within a neo-abolitionist discourse, something picked up also by other groups. For the NAACP, the moral lesson was clear, 'Human slavery with all its unspeakable brutality is something we have been taught to think of as hideous, but of the past, in the history of our country. The fact that it still exists makes those of us who abhor injustice, inequality, and cruelty, only more determined to do everything in our power to wipe it out.'⁴⁰ The abolitionist narrative was essentially a Whig narrative of delayed, but inevitable, victory of justice over injustice, humanity over brutality and freedom over bondage. It borrowed the lexicon and tropes of nineteenth-century anti-slavery literature—tropes which still resonated with the mainstream public opinion. This narrative eschewed the language of class conflict in favour of that of humanitarian struggle, using a vivid, sentimental and graphic rhetoric in which the theme of economic exploitation intertwined with images of exploitation and physical suffering of the black worker and with the theme of the mission of moral redemption of the nation. 'It is

a tale of suffering and of struggle born of suffering', explained one pamphlet, while in another account, a planter was characterised as a 'human monster who kicked pregnant women [and] forced children to work.'⁴¹ Peonage was a story of 'unspeakable brutality' but a prominent part of this rhetorical strategy was precisely to broadcast and divulge the sentimental themes of pain and suffering which were associated with nineteenth-century abolitionism and with novels such as *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (which the anti-peonage campaign literature often quoted). At the time, the coalition made explicit comparisons with pre-Civil War abolitionists. Secretary Davis of the National Negro Congress predicted that the rally against peonage organised in Washington would be 'as historic as William Lloyd Garrison's first anti-slavery meeting in the Old South Church, Boston'.⁴² Referring to the efforts of undercover activists on the field in Oglethorpe County, the NAACP announced that it amounted to 'a modern replica of the pre-Civil War Underground Railroad'.⁴³ The point is not whether these comparisons were precise, but that the coalition understood the persuasiveness of presenting themselves as continuators of nineteenth-century abolitionists and drew on this as a source of legitimisation.

FROM LOCAL TO GLOBAL

Unfree labour in Oglethorpe County touched the imagination of a number of individuals inspired by compassion for its victims, a sense of justice, and their own political goals, whether to advance individual and minority rights within a liberal framework or to build a more democratic society, of a Marxist matrix, in which egalitarianism would defeat racism. In so doing, these individuals and groups constructed a meaning of unfree labour that transcended what social actors attributed to it at the local level. In the 1950s, even after the acquittal of William Cunningham and the formal end of the court case, activists and groups linked to the Oglethorpe campaign, such as Stetson and Kay Kennedy and the WDL further pursued the battle against peonage—now shorthand for unfree labour—at an international level. Their focus was solely political. They did so by leveraging international organisations such as the United Nations and the International Labour Organisation. They failed to transform policy, spur international or government intervention or change the political focus of those institutions, but the attempt showed that peonage in a rural county in Georgia was connected to the larger phenomenon of

unfree labour worldwide as well as to the workings of institutions international in scope.

Peonage represented a key part of a report prepared by the president of the WDL, Rowland Watts, on 'legal and illegal forms of forced labour in the US' presented in 1951 to the Ad Hoc Committee on Slavery of the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. The committee took the report into consideration but ultimately did not 'accept' it as part of their proceedings.⁴⁴ During the late 1930s, the WDL had been one of the organisations at the forefront of the campaign to denounce peonage in Georgia.⁴⁵ In 1949, the WDL had set up a Commission of Inquiry on Forced Labor which had established that '76,000 Americans lived in peonage'.⁴⁶ The report focused mainly on the legal aspects of unfree labour in the US. It highlighted the persistent southern defiance, both in the legislation and in the courts, in front of repeated, though little-enforced, assertions of the Supreme Court that laws aiding peonage violated the US Constitution. In a passage that impressed the committee, Rowland Watts remarked that such laws 'remain on the statute books to intimidate the ignorant (...) to be enforced on the unwary and the weak'.⁴⁷ The scarce commitment of the federal government, denounced the report, was exemplified by the miniscule staff (six lawyers) of the Department of Justice (DOJ) Civil Rights Section (CRS), the only one interested in peonage, compared to the staff of other federal agencies, which counted in hundreds. At the same time, concluded Watts in an optimistic tone that contradicted the earlier statements, 'such agencies [like the CRS] can go forward with their investigations and their exposure with confidence of success in the knowledge that the law and the government will support them in their efforts'.⁴⁸ As I stated above, the federal government had actually a patchy record in terms of committing to defeat peonage.

The boldest attempt to move the debate about peonage onto a global stage is, however, represented by the memo presented to (and accepted by) the UN Ad Hoc Committee on Forced Labor by Stetson Kennedy (with the aid of his wife Kay) in 1952. Stetson Kennedy was an essayist and an activist who had collected a sizable amount of evidence about peonage while researching books denouncing the racist society and the racial political economy of Florida, Georgia and Alabama.⁴⁹ Judging from his correspondence and the clippings collected throughout the previous decade, Kennedy's understanding of peonage had been shaped by the leftist discourse of the 1940s, driven by the campaign against

peonage of the WDL and ILD, *in primis* the Oglethorpe County case.⁵⁰ In the book *Southern Exposure*, Kennedy had utilised some of the material collected on peonage workers in Georgia and turpentine workers in Florida to argue for the existence of a new 'method of enslavement' that produced, in his view, results akin to antebellum slavery.⁵¹ Kennedy called the Oglethorpe case 'one of the most complete exposés of the scope and character of slavery in the South today'.⁵²

The report, which included testimonies from the Oglethorpe County case, claimed that the changes wrought by the Second World War had not eradicated forced labour. At the mid-twentieth century, peonage persisted in the industries and geographical regions where it had always existed: in farming, the turpentine and lumber industries and in the South and Southwest United States. As in the past, it affected predominantly African Americans, but also Mexicans, Puerto Ricans and West Indians. The report echoed in certain aspects the one from Rowland Watts; it pressed the federal government for the intervention, while severely criticising it for not enforcing the constitutional protections against involuntary servitude. 'While the U.S. Department of Justice has occasionally seen fit to prosecute isolated instances of forced labour (generally after they have been brought to public attention by non-governmental agencies), its refusal to take more resolute action has given, indispensable aid and comfort to the exploiters of forced labor.'⁵³ Thus, Kennedy sought to leverage the influence of a United Nations body to correct the lenient approach of the federal justice and of the federal agencies, in particular the FBI, reluctant to investigate claims on the field. A reprimand from Geneva, where Kennedy went to state his case on 7 November 1952, would have reverberated, he hoped, down to a labour camp in Florida or Georgia.

The report argued, controversially, that American peonage fell entirely within the scope of the UN Ad Hoc Committee on Forced Labour. In the post-war context, the debate on forced labour had shifted a great deal from colonial administrations and the racial economic regimes to the 'political victims' of forced labour, that is, those coerced to work in reason of their political views towards a government system. The reference was not only to the Nazi labour camps, but also, more poignantly at the onset of the Cold War, to Soviet and Eastern Europe corrective camps.⁵⁴ It was the first time that an international organisation was asked to consider the American peonage on a par with other instances of unfree labour occurring worldwide, which would have in effect eroded

the relevance of one propaganda weapon in the arsenal of the western front of the Cold War. By redefining peonage as belonging to the political as well as to the economic realm, Stetson and Kay Kennedy reiterated a central tenet of the Oglethorpe County campaign: that forced labour was part of an overall system of political subordination of poor African Americans that included disenfranchisement and racial violence, as well as economic coercion. The Kennedy report was much more detailed in comparison to some of the other accusations against the US presented to the committee. Poland, for instance, claimed that the sharecroppers' 'cash income was so low and their debts to the operators so high that they were virtually tied to the land', but this was a very general assertion, not accompanied by evidence, and on which the US government could not be brought to account.⁵⁵ Kennedy's report was at times emphatic and provocative, producing a dramatic account more in the vein of a political agitator than of a social scientist—more 'shrillness' than 'sober fact-finding', as a southern correspondent noted in private.⁵⁶ However, it did provide evidence, both of individual cases and of a structural nature, of a political economy systematically geared to subdue thousands of black people to a condition of unfree labour. Together with the evidence produced by the WDL (which the committee labelled 'unofficial' even if commissioned by the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations), it put forward a convincing case, or at least one worthy of international attention.⁵⁷ Unfortunately, this representation clashed with the mandate of the Committee, one that had been shaped by the aim of targeting the dictatorial regimes of the Eastern Bloc. The origins of the Committee in fact lay in a request of the American Federation of Labor in 1947 for the ILO to undertake a comprehensive study of coercive labour as form of political correction in communist countries.⁵⁸ This was reflected in the terms of references of the Committee: to 'study systems of forced or 'corrective' labour which are employed as a means of political coercion or punishment for holding or expressing a political views and on which are on such scale as to constitute an important element in the economy of a given country, by examining the texts and laws and regulations and their application'.⁵⁹ The last clause was crucial: the Committee bound itself to accept as evidence only what was revealed by legislative and administrative texts. This in turn excluded all the evidence against the US, which was factual, not legalistic, in nature. The Committee could, in fact, quote the existence of the Peonage Act of 1867 as confirmation that unfree labour was abhorred and that

instances of it were prosecuted under the law. While racial segregation was inscribed in southern statutes explicitly, the racialised labour regimes inflicted upon some black southerners were hidden from view.

Peonage subverted the idea of the inexorable march to freedom at the core of American exceptionalism by suggesting comparisons and metaphors that aligned unfree labour in the US with unfree labour anywhere else, even, according to Kennedy, to totalitarian communist regimes. In fact, he argued, in the South, too, the oppressive labour regime was a form of 'political correction', in the sense that it ensured that African Americans would not become full-fledged participants in an otherwise democratic system. The US government's response to the allegations presented to the Committee followed the demands of terms of reference. The American representatives claimed that the US Constitution was an 'effective safeguard' against unfree labour.

The ambitious effort of Stetson Kennedy, building on almost two decades of activism against peonage, did not bear fruit. With leftist organisations retreating fast at the height of the Cold War, Stetson Kennedy was arguing the case for the government's complicity to unfree labour when the political momentum was lost. The focus of civil rights activism would soon shift from labour issues to equal access to education and public services.⁶⁰ In regard to the accusations (dismissed as 'allegations') of the American activists, the Committee concluded that there was no evidence that African Americans were coerced into a particular type of work or that they were arrested in order to subject them to forced labour.⁶¹ However, as we have seen, this ignored the established practices by which state legislators wrote racially coded labour legislation in a way that read colour blind, and the way courts and the law enforcement authorities coalesced to abet the unconstitutional practice.⁶² Unfree labour was extraordinarily resilient in the Black Belt, in spite of Constitutional guarantees of personal freedom and of a score of Supreme Court sentences that voided legislation used to buttress peonage. Furthermore, apart from the exposés of political activists, this conclusion contradicted the hundreds of files of prosecutions and investigations held in the archive of the Department of Justice, open to scholars in the 1960s.

In its journey from a condition of labour and a criminal activity in Oglethorpe County, to a court case in Chicago and Atlanta, to a political cause in the headquarters of political groups in New York and finally to a claim to international attention in Geneva, peonage had transformed

its meaning in the way outlined above. In fact, each spatial dimension embedded a different understanding of this category based on the actions and aims of the historical actors. Overall, the story of peonage and the campaign against it belies any simplistic divisions between the local and the global by suggesting how such a socially constructed category was recontextualised in different spatial dimensions.

NOTES

1. Peonage Abolition Act (1867).
2. From an expression by Marcel van der Linden, quoted in Chap. 1 of this volume.
3. Jacques Revel (eds.), *Giocchi di Scala. La microstoria alla prova dell'esperienza* (Roma, 2011), p. 31; Katherine Brickell and Ayona Datta, 'Introduction', *Translocal Geographies: Spaces, Places, Connections* (London, 2011), p. 3. See also Ulrike Freitag and Achim von Oppen, 'Translocality: An Approach to Connection and Transfer in Area Studies' in Freitag and Von Oppen (eds), *Translocality: The Study of a Globalising Process from a Southern Perspective* (Leiden, 2010), pp. 1–24.
4. For an overview of the methodological perspective in this chapter is inscribed see De Vito and Gerritsen, 'Micro-spatial History of Global Labour: Towards a New Global History', in this volume.
5. Angelo Torre, *Stato e Società nell'ancien régime* (Torino, 1983); Franco Ramella, *Terra e telai. Sistemi di parentela e manifattura nel Biellese dell'Ottocento* (Torino, 1984); Carlo Ginzburg, *Il formaggio e i vermi. Il cosmo di un mugnaio nel Cinquecento* (Torino, 1976); 'Spie. Radici di un paradigma indiziario', in A. Gargani, ed., *Crisi della ragione* (Torino, 1979); Osvaldo Raggio, *Faide e Parentele. Lo Stato Genovese visto dalla Fontabuona* (Torino, 1990).
6. Some aspects of this case are also mentioned in Daniel, *Shadow of Slavery*; Risa L. Gobuloff, *The Lost Promise of Civil Rights* (Cambridge, 2010); and Erik S. Gellman, *Death Blow to Jim Crow: The National Negro Congress and the Rise of Militant Civil Rights* (Chapel Hill, 2012), pp. 131–133.
7. 'He offered me several drinks of whiskey, gave me five dollars, and asked me to work on his plantation, promising to pay me \$12 a month with board and room. For 18 years, Fleming had not received any pay and had been unable to leave the farm. (Preece, 'Peonage—1940 style slavery', p. 9).
8. *Ibid.*
9. *Ibid.*

10. NAACP Papers Part 13, Series C, Reel 12, 0723.
11. NAACP Papers Part 13 Series C, reel 12, 0521.
12. WEB DuBois, Papers of the NAACP, part 11, Series B, 0038–0039.
13. On the subject of American peonage see the work of Pete Daniel, in particular *In the Shadow of Slavery: Peonage in the South, 1901–1969* (Urbana, 1972); Risa L. Gobuloff, *The Lost Promise of Civil Rights*; Nan Elizabeth Woodroff, *American Congo: The African American Freedom Struggle in the Delta*, (Cambridge, 2003); Douglas Blackmon, *Slavery by Another Name: The Re-enslavement of Black Americans from the Civil War to World War II* (New York, 2008). On sharecropping, among others, Theodore Rosengarten, *All God's Dangers: The Life of Nate Shaw* (New York, 1974); Joseph Reidy, *From Slavery to Agrarian Capitalism in the Cotton Plantation* (Chapel Hill, 1992); Jonathan Wiener, 'Class Structure and Economic Development in the American South, 1865–1955', *The American Historical Review*, 84, 4 (1979), 970–992; Contemporary texts that described the unfree conditions of black sharecroppers in the Black Belt are: Arthur Raper, *Preface to Peasantry. A Tale of Two Black Counties* (Chapel Hill, 1936); Charles D. Johnson, *Shadow of the Plantation* (Chicago, 1934); Howard Kester, *Revolt among Sharecroppers* (Knoxville, 1997); Norman Thomas, *The Plight of the Share Cropper* (The League of Industrial Democracy, 1934); Howard W. Odum, *Southern Regions of the United States* (Chapel Hill, 1936).
14. James Weldon Johnson and Herbert J. Seligmann, 'Legal aspects of the Negro Problem', Papers of the NAACP part 11, Series B, 00127–00128.
15. Slavoj Zizek, *Violence: Six Sideways Reflections* (London, 2008), p. 170.
16. Senator Walter F. George, in *Liberty*, 21 April 1928, quoted in Walter Wilson, *Forced Labor in the United States* (New York, 1933), p. 99.
17. See Alex Lichtenstein, *Twice the Work of Free Labor: Political Economy of Convict Labor in the New South* (New York, 1996).
18. See Lichtenstein, *Twice the Work*; Matthew Mancini, *One Dies, Get Another: Convict Leasing in the American South, 1866–1928* (Columbia, S.C., 1996).
19. Department of Justice, Peonage Files, Reel 19, p. 7.
20. I apply here to a socio-juridical category the insights of microhistorian Simona Cerutti in regards to construction of socio-professional categories in the language of social groups. See Simona Cerutti, *Mestieri e privilegi. Nascita delle corporazioni a Torino secoli XVII–XVIII* (Torino, 1992), pp. vii–xxiv.
21. Peonage Act (1867) then 42 U.S.C. § 1994.
22. Department Of Justice, Reel 9, 0246, 6 October 1936.
23. *Baley v. Alabama* (1911), *United States v. Reynolds* (1914).
24. *Samuel M. Clyatt v. United States* (1905).

25. Southern Tenant Farmers Union Collection, reel 2, 23-5-1936, Henry Mitchell to U.S. Attorney General.
26. National Negro Congress Papers, Part I, reel 25, 0619; National Negro Congress Papers, Part I, Reel 24, 0007.
27. National Negro Congress Papers, Part I, Reel 24, 0061.
28. Alexander Tsesis, *The Thirteenth Amendment and American Freedom. A Legal History* (New York, 2004).
29. Risa Goluboff, 'The Thirteenth Amendment and the Lost Origins of Civil Rights', *Duke Law Journal*, 50 (2001), 1609–1685; More emphasis on social actors' agency is provided in Risa L. Goluboff, "'Won't You Please Help Me Get My Son Home': Peonage, Patronage, and Protest in the World War II Urban South', *Law and Social Inquiry* 24, 4 (1999), 777–806, pp. 777, 780.
30. Howard Devon Hamilton, 'The Legislative and Judiciary History of the Thirteenth Amendment', *National Bar Journal*, 10 (1952), 7–85.
31. Patterson to Roosevelt, Department of Justice, Peonage files, Reel 9, 0896, 22 October 1940.
32. Charles H. Martin, 'The International Labor Defense and Black America', *Labor History*, 26, 2 (1985), 165–194.
33. 'Wirtz in Washington for Preliminary Conference on the Peonage Question', DOJ, Peonage Files, Reel 9, 0935.
34. Harold Preece, '1940s Style Slavery', p. 26, Aptheker Collection, Series 3, Box 153, folder 8, Department of Special Collections, Stanford Libraries.
35. Donald H Grubbs, *Cry from Cotton: The Southern Tenant Farmers Union and the New Deal* (Chapel Hill, NC, 1971).
36. Preece, '1940s Style Slavery'.
37. William Huff to Attorney General Biddle, NAACP Papers Part 13 Series C reel 12.
38. Vito Marcantonio to NAACP's White, 3 March 1942, NAACP Papers Part 13, Series C, Reel 12, 0518.
39. Risa L. Goluboff, 'The Thirteenth Amendment and the Lost Origins of Civil Rights', p. 1620; Gary Gerstle, 'The Protean Character of American Liberalism', *American Historical Review*, 99, 4 (1994), 1043–1073.
40. William Henry Huff, '1940 Slavery in Georgia', *The Crisis*, January 1941; see also Charles Rowan, 'Has Slavery Gone with the Wind in Georgia?', *The Crisis*, February 1940.
41. Preece, '1940s Style Slavery', p. 5.
42. Department of Justice, Peonage Series, Reel 9, 0935.
43. 'Facts in the Oglethorpe County Peonage case', NAACP Papers Part 13 series C, Reel 12, 0520.

44. 'Report on Legal and Illegal Forms of Forced Labor in the United States', Prepared by Rowland Watts, National Secretary Workers Defense League 19971-14, 1951, United Nations Ad Hoc Committee on Slavery records, 1918-1956 Collection, Box 3, Rubinstein Library, Duke University.
45. Folder 'George peonage, 1936-1938', Box 171, Workers Defense League Collection, Walter Reuther Library, Detroit.
46. 'Peonage and Other Forms of Forced Labor in the US', folder 3, Box 128, Workers Defense League Collection, Walter Reuther Library, Detroit.
47. 'Report on Legal and Illegal Forms of Forced Labor in the United States'. p. 2.
48. Ibid., p. 3.
49. These books are *Southern Exposure* (New York, 1946), *I Rode with the Ku Klux Klan* (London, 1954), *Jim Crow Guide: The Way it Was* (1956) (Boca Raton, 1990).
50. Workers Defense League folder, Stetson Kennedy Papers, 1933-1981, Special Collection, Stanford.
51. Kennedy, *Southern Exposure*, p. 48.
52. Kennedy, *Southern exposure*, p. 54.
53. 'Governmental, legalistic and political aspects of forced labor in the United States of America', p. 3, 'Peonage Testimony' Folder, Stetson Kennedy Papers, Georgia State University.
54. Sandrine Kott, 'The Forced Labor Issue between Human and Social Rights, 1947-1957', *Humanity: An International Journal of Human Rights, Humanitarianism, and Development*, 3, 3 (2012), 321-335.
55. United Nations and International Labour Office, 'Report of the ad hoc committee on forced labor', 1953, E/2431, p. 121.
56. George S. Mitchell of the Southern Regional Council to Stetson Kennedy, 28 August 1952, Georgia State University, Stetson Kennedy Papers, folder Correspondence, 1952, p. 62.
57. United Nations and International Labour Office, 'Report of the ad hoc committee on forced labor', 1953, E/2431, p. 122.
58. Daniel Maul, *Human Rights, Development and Decolonization: The International Labour Organization, 1940-1970* (Basingstoke, 2012), pp. 203-205.
59. United Nations and International Labour Office, 'Report of the ad hoc committee on forced labor', 1953, E/2431, p. 4.
60. Goluboff, *The Lost Promise of Civil Rights*.

61. United Nations and International Labour Office, 'Report of the ad hoc committee on forced labor', 1953, E/2431, p. 116–117.
62. Testimony given by Stetson Kennedy before the UN Ad Hoc Committee on Forced Labor at Geneva, Switzerland, 7 November 1952, Georgia State University, Stetson Kennedy Papers, folder, 'Peonage Testimony'.

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From Traces to Carpets: Unravelling Labour Practices in the Mines of Sierra Leone

Lorenzo D'Angelo

INTRODUCTION¹

The awareness of the complexity and contradictions of the contemporary world labour organisation—at once local and global; fragmented and heterogeneous, but coordinated and integrated at multiple levels and scales—urges the elaboration of increasingly sophisticated methodologies and theoretical models capable of making sense of the multitude of spatial and temporal connections between events, people, places, and commodities. One of the difficulties for anthropologists and historians interested in grasping this complexity lies in finding ways to think and write about connections that embrace moving between micro and macro, and zooming in and out, in order to examine situations at multiple scales.²

For those scholars who define and know from the very beginning their categories and objects of investigation—for example, who are the workers or what is labour—it is relatively simple to understand and identify the boundaries of their field of analysis, and the ways to trace the

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historical and geographical links that exist between them. If the goal is, for example, to reconstruct the origins of a working practice, it might be sufficient to search in different places and times for that same practice and make the necessary explanatory or causative connections and comparisons. However, if the definitions of objects and categories of analysis are part of the investigation itself, and if these definitions are primarily related to what social actors actually *do*, and not to what they are or they should be, then things become considerably more complicated.³

In this paper, the challenge is to think about labour and its specific practices not as predefined objects, eternal and strictly governed by the logic of global capital, but as the results of contingent encounters between countless numbers of events, people, and other working and non-working practices. Thinking about labour in this way means recognising the fact that things are the way they are, but that the potential exists for them to be otherwise. Hence, the causes and effects of the capitalist mode of production do not arise by chance; at the same time, they are not the inevitable results of an alleged universal history.

This paper explores an approach that oscillates between the 'fine-grained analysis'⁴ of micro-history and transnational labour history by examining a set of practices and working agreements among a specific group of workers: diamond miners operating in Sierra Leone. Many people of different backgrounds and a variety of experiences have worked in the alluvial diamond mines of Sierra Leone. Since the discovery of diamantiferous deposits in 1930 and the colonial concession to extract this mineral at the artisanal level in late 1950s, miners have had to deal with environmental risks, political instability, epidemics, and above all the random distribution of gems in the soil. In other words, alluvial diamond mining has always been a very risky and uncertain activity.⁵ Consequently, the division of potential profits is a crucial issue for these workers. As I came to realise during my fieldwork in Sierra Leone conducted intermittently between 2007 and 2011, the variety and complexity of mining practices and agreements is astonishing. Taken together, these agreements are practical solutions to contingent or contextual problems; they are heterogeneous but, to an extent, consistent: an assemblage of practices that embody the experiences of long-time miners. The key issue is understanding how this set of situated working practices has taken shape historically.

One way to answer this question is to trace the origins of this assemblage. Following the traces to the origins is a common strategy that

seems to unite historical approaches as diverse as the micro-history of Carlo Ginzburg and the Global Labour History (GLH) of Marcel van der Linden. However, these scholars invoke ‘following the traces’ in different ways. For van der Linden, following the traces is a way of expressing the position that GLH should deal with connections between various contexts at different scales. In fact, van der Linden’s recurring use of the phrase in his essays is more an exhortation than representative of the systematic employment of a methodology. As I will show in this paper, his study of the origins of modern labour management reveals the limits of this proposal based on the problematic concept of origin.

For Ginzburg, the metaphor of the trace is central to the understanding of the evidential paradigm, that is, the epistemological model that emerged in the social sciences at the end of the nineteenth century.⁶ On closer examination, this model also reveals some weaknesses and inconsistencies that Ginzburg does not fully resolve even when he relies on the concept of ‘family resemblances’ that he borrows from Wittgenstein.

I begin by highlighting the limits of these two proposals. Then I propose the replacement of the metaphor of following the traces with the textile metaphor of the carpet which considers connecting as a form of weaving.⁷ Using this metaphor, I explore the spatial and temporal threads that make up the tapestry of widespread mining practices among the diamond-seekers of Sierra Leone.

My goal is to show the heterogeneity of mining experiences and the continuity between past and present forms of labour exploitation, and between mining and non-mining activities. I argue that unilinear and teleological hypotheses about the morphogenesis of mining labour practices cannot convincingly account for their historical complexity as well as their ability to change and continually adapt to different contexts.

FROM TRACES TO CARPETS

For many historians and anthropologists, explaining the social means connecting events, people, and places by following or tracking the terms of these same relationships.⁸ In practice, there are many ways to implement this approach. For this reason, it is worth considering two proposals ostensibly focused on two very different scales of analysis: the GLH of van der Linden and the micro-history of Ginzburg.

According to van der Linden, GLH is primarily a field of research that deals with the ‘description and explanation of the intensifying

(or weakening) connections (interactions, influences, transfers) between different world regions.⁹ When referring to 'world regions', this scholar does not mean that GLH should deal only with large-scale analyses, and explicitly states that this field of research includes micro-historical approaches. Indeed, he affirms that one of the objectives of GLH is precisely '[t]o identify the big picture in small details (and vice versa, to discover microrealities in macrospace)—that is what it is all about!'¹⁰ Given that the distinguishing feature of GLH is not scale, the focus of the aforementioned definition is on the *type* of connections that global historians discuss. The central concern, thus, becomes identifying which particular connections or types of relationships and transactions require attention.¹¹

GLH is well suited to a wide range of topics. As van der Linden writes, '[t]he important thing is that we should *follow the traces* of interest to us wherever they may lead: across political and geographic frontiers, time frames, territories, and disciplinary boundaries.'¹² It is not by chance that this is a recurrent expression in van der Linden's essays.¹³ However, what is meant here by 'following the traces'? More specifically, what is a trace? How should we think about the links between traces? In another essay, van der Linden offers some answers to these questions by proposing an exploratory analysis of the origins of the modern management of labour.¹⁴ Here, the Dutch scholar highlights the limitations of historical perspectives that 'situate the origins of modern labor-management techniques in the first and second industrial revolutions in Western Europe and North America.'¹⁵ Left out from these perspectives are those historical experiences of unfree labour in non-Western contexts (prior to the industrial revolution) that had an important role in shaping the modern management of labour. Taking into consideration the invention of the gang system on sugar cane plantations in seventeenth-century Barbados, and the management techniques developed in Australia in the early nineteenth century to regulate convict labour, van der Linden affirms that 'modern labor management has many roots.'¹⁶ Moreover, contrary to Eurocentric assumptions, some of the most important labour innovations originated in the European colonies, namely, those territories considered to be at the margins of Western industrial development. To van der Linden, therefore, 'following the traces' means identifying the origins of a technique that we assume has changed and, at the same time, has remained recognisable in its historical development and its geographical transfers.

The idea of trying to identify the origins of a phenomenon, however, raises some problems. The concept of ‘origin’ introduces the possibility of a teleological interpretation of history and an essentialist view of what constitutes a working practice. The underlying idea of origin is that the identity of an object remains more or less the same despite any changes that take place: what changes is in continuity with what it has been and what it will be, so that the origin contains an embryo of its future forms. Talking about the ‘origins’ of the modern management of labour using the plural (to suggest multiple roots), lowers the risk of the assumption of a linear and orientated vision of history. However, it does not prevent misunderstandings that may arise around this concept.¹⁷

Similar conceptual difficulties are also addressed by Ginzburg when he confronts the theme of following the traces. In the Preface to *Myths, Emblems, Spies*, Ginzburg acknowledges that his method is ‘much more morphological than historical.’¹⁸ He declares that he came to this conclusion through the study of Morelli’s method and after reading Wittgenstein’s *Remarks on Frazer’s ‘Golden Bough’*.¹⁹ Here, Wittgenstein argues that historical explanation ‘is just a way to collect data—their synopsis.’ Hence, he highlights the possibility of summarising the phenomena in a ‘general image that does not have the form of a chronological development.’ This general image is what Wittgenstein calls a ‘perspicuous representation’, that is, a representation that does not establish nonexistent and unprovable historical ties—such as those that can be imagined ‘between the ellipse and the circle.’²⁰ In line with Goethe’s morphology, for the author of the *Remarks* it is all about seeing connections and searching for ‘intermediate links.’²¹

Ginzburg shares Wittgenstein’s scepticism regarding naïve evolutionary positions. At the same time, he is sceptical about the possibility of applying his philosophical approach to history.²² Ginzburg emphasises that, unlike Wittgenstein, Propp considers morphology a useful tool with regard to history.²³ In *Ecstasies*, Ginzburg’s gratitude to the Soviet formalist is perhaps more evident than elsewhere. Here, the micro-historian begins his analysis by stating that he is searching for the roots of the Sabbath in folk culture.²⁴ At the end, however, he comes to the conclusion that what he has tried to analyse is the ‘matrix of all possible stories.’²⁵ In this erudite and fascinating pathway, between morphology and history, Wittgenstein apparently ends up in the shadows. However, he still plays a crucial role.

In *Ecstasies*, Ginzburg offers an impressive range of comparable cultural phenomena in which there is no single element common to all. Seeking this common element would be unproductive and would limit an analysis either on the synchronic and/or on the diachronic level. In this sense, the Wittgensteinian notion of ‘family resemblances’²⁶ appears to solve the problem faced by Ginzburg: connecting similar phenomena without falling into the essentialist trap of rigidly defining the boundaries of a class or group of examined elements. The use of this notion raises another problem, however. Wittgenstein’s anti-essentialism is strictly related to the impossibility of distinguishing what is inside from what is outside, what is on the surface from what is underneath.²⁷ But a key assumption of the evidential paradigm, on which the metaphor of the trace is also based, is the denial of the transparency of reality.²⁸ As a consequence, access to the truth which underlies the appearances of things—the *real* author of a painting traced through the details of an ear, or the unconscious desire that lies *behind* the daily lapses—is necessarily indirect. To use Ginzburg’s example, Hippocrates read the symptoms and told the stories of diseases, but ‘the disease is, in itself, unattainable.’²⁹ Thus, it is not clear how Ginzburg could reconcile the use of family resemblances with his belief in the existence of a hidden reality that historians should reveal.³⁰ It seems that the notion that initially appears to bring Ginzburg closer to Wittgenstein is the one that marks how *deeply* different they are. Despite Ginzburg’s reasonable concerns, is it possible to take Wittgenstein as a starting point when exploring alternatives to following the traces without resorting to problematic notions such as ‘origin’?

There is a textile metaphor employed by the author of *Philosophical Investigation* that can be of use here. The image of the thread, introduced in section 67, is atypical Wittgensteinian thought-image that can help us to think metaphorically, not only about what holds different things together—sometimes, things so far removed from one another as to seem completely unrelated—but also to think (in parallel) about multi-causality and plural spatiotemporalities. So, what is a thread? A thread is a set of interwoven fibres. None of the fibres that make up a thread are as long as the thread itself. Some fibres overlap and intertwine with one another, others touch lightly, and some are very far from each other despite being part of the same thread. None, individually, are essential to the thread itself. No one fibre represents the origin. Not all fibres are equal. Some are thin and long; others are thick and short. It is

the interweaving of the fibres—their ability to create friction and therefore relationships—that matters.

The image of the thread helps us to think about the multiple connections between different places as well as the polychronism of the events, such as the plurality of time in the mines which is made up of different rhythms or cycles (the long rhythms of capitalism, the life cycles of miners, and so on). In short, this image helps us to represent the plural spatio-temporalities of every specific context, a plurality that defies a teleological interpretation of history as well as the tyranny of a chronological order.

This textile metaphor can be made more complex by imagining that the threads composed of fibres, in turn, make up a temporal carpet (or a tapestry) traversable in different directions: vertically, horizontally, and diagonally—just like the carpet described by Ginzburg to explain his evidential paradigm.³¹ As a carpet extends across a surface, this metaphor should help to prevent, at least in part, the temptation to think about hidden truths. In this perspective, micro-history can be regarded as a movement of the eye's focus that, guided by the actors' perspectives, alternately sees the interweaving of the fibres in a thread, the texture of that portion of the carpet of which that specific thread is part, or a larger part of the whole carpet. There is not a point of view which is, in itself, privileged. It is the specific patterns, textures, and variations in colour that, from time to time, direct the focus of the eye. Sometimes a detail may capture our attention; other times it is the whole or that part of the whole that the eye of our historical vision can grasp that arouses our interest. However, the detail commands our attention because it is in a particular relation to the whole (or better, a part thereof) and vice versa, not because it reveals in itself something more real or deeper.

SUBALTERN WORK IN THE DIAMOND MINES

At this point, let us examine the practices of the miners working in Sierra Leone—in more detail. In this West African country, the alluvial miners are organised into teams or gangs. The gangs are composed of a variable number of people, usually ranging from a minimum of three to a maximum of about thirty. The number involved depends primarily on the economic resources of the owners of mining licenses, as well as the constraints imposed by the Ministry of Mineral Resources. The gangs are financed by one or more supporters who make available to the boss (the

head of the gang or the owner of the mining license) the financial capital necessary for the purchase of mining equipment (shovels, sieves, buckets, etc.) and to cover the direct and indirect costs of mining operations such as purchasing the mining license and remunerating the labour force. The supporters can be bosses or miners who work for themselves. More often than not, they are local diamond traders who decided to invest part of their earnings in the most promising mines. It is not unusual for the wealthiest diamond dealers to fund more than one gang in order to diversify their investment and reduce their risk. It should be noted that the diamond trade in Sierra Leone is mainly controlled by members of the Lebanese community, which has been present in the country for several generations.³²

There are different types of economic agreements for the distribution of the gains from the sale of diamonds that involve the owner of the mining license, the supporter(s), chiefs, and the landowner (that is, the individual holding land rights to the excavation site). In particular, there are two main methods or systems for allocating earnings or potential earnings. Before starting operations, the miners and the local actors involved can decide a) to split, according to precise percentages, the profits obtained by selling any discovered diamonds, or b) to divide the gravel extracted according to specific portions.

As for the relations between supporters and labourers, there are two prominent kinds of agreements. The 'contract system' or 'wage system' is, in fact, the main form of payment in the small-scale mines—those in which gem-seekers are authorised by the Ministry to use machines such as excavators, hydraulic pumps, and other mechanised machines. In this case, each miner employed as a labourer receives a fixed level of remuneration.³³ Those who accept this agreement with the boss waive any other benefits and any percentage of the diamonds discovered.

Alternatively, the 'supporting system' or 'contributing system' is a form of compensation prevalent among artisanal miners; that is, miners who use artisanal technologies such as buckets, shovels, and sieves to find diamonds. In this case, the labourer receives two or three cups of rice and a small monetary reward for each day worked.³⁴ Each miner is then also entitled to a percentage of each diamond discovered. In this system of distribution, typical ratios are 50-50, 60-40, 70-30, and 80-20. For example, a supporter makes an agreement with a landowner. After a period of negotiation, the two parties agree on an 80-20 split. This means that 80% of the money earned by selling the diamonds will go

to the supporter while the remaining 20% will go to the landowner. In the event that the supporter has negotiated an agreement based on a percentage share with the labourers, they will have to split their 80% with them. If the miners choose, for example, a '60-40', then 40% of the money generated from the sale of diamonds, minus the fee for the landowner and other expenses incurred to the license owner, goes to the gang. The members of the gang, in turn, split this into shares. Usually, the division of labour occurs in equal parts. It should be emphasised that each miner may also receive some additional benefits (e.g., cigarettes and medicine) from their supporter.

These last two types of arrangements—the contract or wage system and the supporting or tributing system—can take hybrid forms. This is more evident at the level of small-scale extraction. The supporter can agree to a system of remuneration based on fixed payment and, yet, behave as a patron of the tributing system by providing benefits and food. A 'hybrid system' assumes that the supporters have the ability to take on a greater amount of expenditure than those who adhere to the standard agreements of the contract system. However, this has a double advantage: on the one hand, labourers are excluded from any ownership rights over the diamonds recovered in the pits, which is the benefit of the contract system for supporters. On the other, it builds a relationship of loyalty and trust with labourers, which is the primary objective of the tributing or supporting system. In this way, the supporter can prevent thefts and increase worker productivity.

Finally, miners can decide, in particular circumstances, to divide the extracted gravel rather than splitting the money from diamond sales. This system is often used when, for example, the license owner or the supporter does not have enough money to complete mining operations over the entire area at its disposal. In this case, they may decide to engage other bosses and divide the land into as many parts as there are bosses. Instead of paying a 'sub-lease', each boss offers a portion of their gravel to the boss/licence owner. Only infrequently is this system used between a supporter and their labourers.³⁵

To sum up, it can be said that these agreements are attempts to distribute earnings or potential earnings among the parties involved in the extractive processes taking into account the risks, and hierarchies, as well as the economic expectations of each miner. In other words, they are practical attempts to find a flexible but carefully predetermined balance between available resources and social positions in order to avoid

possible tensions and conflicts among workers and facilitate the operation's success. But how to explain the morphogenesis of the different systems of compensation and distribution of gains that coexist in this specific working context? Instead of seeking an explanation by tracking the stages of development of the mining industry, I outline from within a field of action that is a spatial and temporal carpet without defined margins or origins. For this reason, the following account is only one possible way to describe this carpet and unravel the knots and fibres that comprise it. At the same time, this sort of unravelling in part follows the contingent logics of the internal intertwining and, therefore, does not proceed randomly.

Given the enormous complexity of this subject, in what follows, I focus on key aspects of the colonial history of Sierra Leone's mining industry. In so doing, I endeavour to tie together possible spatio-temporal fibres of analysis to shed light on current mining practices. My intent is to tease apart mining contexts and practices to show the heterogeneity of mining experiences, the resemblances between past and present forms of labour organisation, and the continuities between mining and non-mining activities.

THE INTERNATIONAL DIAMOND MONOPOLY AND MINERAL DISCOVERIES IN AFRICA

A spatio-temporal fibre key to understanding the context of diamond mining in Sierra Leone is the one that stretches across the history of the monopoly developed around this mineral and the history of geological discoveries on the African continent. The monopoly was established by De Beers Consolidated Mines in the late nineteenth century. De Beers took control of the main South African mines and established a sales agreement with the Diamond Syndicate, an organisation of diamond traders operating out of London.³⁶

Until the 1920s, South African mines were the main producers of diamonds in the world. This primacy, however, was questioned when several other deposits were discovered elsewhere on the African continent. Deposits in the Belgian Congo were discovered in 1909 but extractive operations began only in 1913 when the Belgian company Forminieré obtained an exclusive mining concession. The discovery of deposits in the southern region of Congo activated the Portuguese exploration in

neighbouring Angola. The Companhia de Diamantes de Angola was founded in 1917 and immediately afterward obtained an exclusive concession for 50 years³⁷ that lasted until the early 1970s.³⁸

In 1924, a number of engineers employed by Forminieré, including Chester Betty and C.W. Boise, founded the Consolidated African Selection Trust (CAST) to extract diamonds discovered in the Gold Coast a few years earlier. CAST created a subsidiary in the mid-1930s—the Sierra Leone Selection Trust (SLST)—to extract diamonds discovered in Sierra Leone in 1930. This discovery, in the eastern region of Sierra Leone, activated the search for diamondiferous deposits in neighbouring French Guinea. Here, extraction was carried out by a French company, Songuinex, controlled by CAST. Between the 1930s and mid-1940s other significant discoveries were made in Liberia, the Ivory Coast and Tanganyika.³⁹

In response to these findings and the concomitant international economic crisis of the 1930s, De Beers refined its monopoly by convincing the world's main diamond producers to sell their output to the Central Selling Organisation (CSO), an umbrella organisation created in 1934 by Ernest Oppenheimer, chairman of De Beers. The CSO realised the dreams of the managers of De Beers for a single channel for the distribution and sale of diamonds from all around the world. In this way, it was possible to maintain high profits as the diamond industry depended (and still does) on strictly controlling the amount of gems available on the market at any particular time.⁴⁰

The discovery of Sierra Leone's alluvial diamond deposits created considerable anxiety for De Beers.⁴¹ These diamonds were, on average, of a high quality, and suitable for the jewellery industry or for economic investment. During the interwar period, there was much uncertainty about marketing opportunities for this type of gem. For this reason, De Beers reduced its production—to the point of closing down some of its major mines—with the intention of waiting to sell the accumulated reserve in better times. In reality, between the 1920s and 1930s, the market for industrial diamonds dropped but remained fairly robust for gemstones. Although CAST joined CSO and slightly reduced its operations, it continued its mining operations in West Africa to support the war efforts of the Allies.⁴² Thus, the company took advantage of the strong demand for diamond jewellery before the Second World War and, during and after the war, took advantage of the demand for industrial diamonds.⁴³

MONOPOLISATION AND ILLEGALISATION OF ARTISANAL MINING IN SIERRA LEONE

In Sierra Leone, mineral explorations began around the 1920s. At the end of the First World War, the British government promoted geological surveys in several African territories of the Empire in order to locate mineral resources for military purposes. Between 1919 and 1922, Frank Dixey conducted the first geological surveys of Sierra Leone, but with meagre results.⁴⁴

A few years later, thanks to the efforts of the Director of the Geological Survey of the Gold Coast, the Colonial Office decided to resume geological investigations in Sierra Leone. This time, colonial officers were looking for resources to strengthen the weak economy of the colony which was mainly based on agricultural exports (in particular, kola nuts and palm kernel). With this aim, geologist Norman R. Junner was sent to Sierra Leone in 1926. He found mineral deposits of platinum, chrome, ilmenite, rutile, gold, and iron. In 1930, during a survey in Kono District, Junner and his colleague John D. Pollet discovered the presence of diamonds.

The Anglo-American mining company CAST was informed of the discovery a year later by Junner—who played an important role in making connections between the mines of Sierra Leone and those of the Gold Coast. CAST had been working for several years in the Gold Coast, extracting diamonds in Atwakia. Its engineers immediately realised the importance of Junner and Pollett's discovery. In 1934, CAST created a subsidiary, the Sierra Leone Selection Trust (SLST) that obtained exclusive rights from the Government of Sierra Leone to explore and extract diamonds found all over the territory for a period of 99 years.⁴⁵

From the Gold Coast, the managers of SLST imported experienced workers, engineers, and managers. From the beginning, these managers knew that they would soon face a serious problem: illegal mining. In order to prevent the illicit extraction and trafficking of gemstones, they took action to try and control the territory and its population. Restrictive measures on people's movements were first put into effect in 1936. To enter Kono District, for example, it was necessary to obtain a special permit: the entry of 'strangers' without official authorisation was banned or severely restricted.⁴⁶

By the 1950s, however, the reputation of Sierra Leone an diamonds had spread around the world. The strict measures of control over the territory and the threat of arrest for possession of diamonds and mining

equipment were not sufficient to curb the arrival of migrants, especially from the neighbouring regions of West Africa (including French Guinea, Liberia, Gambia, Nigeria, Gold Coast, Mali, and Mauritania). The movement of African miners to the company's protected areas went on day and night.⁴⁷ The monopoly and the legalisation of artisanal mining certainly had a profound impact on the technical and organisational choices of African miners. The miners aimed for the most superficial deposits requiring the digging of only shallow pits in order to extract the gravel containing diamonds in the shortest time possible, that is, before the police and SLST security forces might be alerted to their presence. It is likely that, in some cases, miners preferred to share the gravel on the spot, without waiting for the completion of gravel washing. This important operation could be carried out quietly, once the material was transported to less visible and more protected areas.⁴⁸

In 1955, SLST made an agreement with the Government to give up their monopoly while preserving some of the most productive mineral areas. In return, the company obtained lavish compensation from the Government. The latter pledged to intensify efforts to combat lawlessness. At the same time, starting in 1956, Sierra Leonean miners were allowed to extract precious gems through a licensing system called the Alluvial Diamond Mining Scheme (ADMS). For everyone else, the only alternative was to abandon or continue illegal mining, seeking the protection of the local authorities.⁴⁹

In 1959, SLST created the 'Contract Mining Scheme.' With this, the company committed itself to buying diamonds from miners who dug and sold diamonds recovered in the concession areas abandoned after the 1955 agreement, that is, those areas considered unproductive for the use of large-scale mining technology.⁵⁰ The scheme, described as 'a form of tributing inside the SLST lease and controlled by SLST',⁵¹ lasted until 1970 when SLST was nationalised by the independent government of Sierra Leone and renamed the National Diamond Mining Company.⁵² Before turning attention to 'tributing', it is useful to examine the interweaving of temporal fibres to shed light on labour relations in the mines of Sierra Leone.

LABOUR RELATIONS IN (AND AROUND) THE MINES

Working relations among the miners employed in Sierra Leone exist in relationship with, and against, the background of the historical context of the global diamond industry and of Sierra Leone. Although

slavery was outlawed in the colony—Freetown was established in 1808 as a settlement for freed slaves transported from North America—in the Protectorate of Sierra Leone, the practice remained active and unhindered until 1928.⁵³ The British promoted a smooth and gradual transition toward abolition,⁵⁴ convinced that a sudden change of local customs would cause unmanageable conflicts. Thus, the Forced Labour Ordinance of 1932—which was enacted following the amendment of the 1930 Geneva Convention on Forced Labour—authorised chiefs to employ labour for public works or for specific personal services.⁵⁵ In some regions of the Protectorate, forms of forced labour persisted until the late 1950s. In fact, it was only after the 1955 riots and the subsequent investigation by the Cox Commission that in 1956, the Government decided to enact the Prohibition of Forced Labour Ordinance. The Commission noted in its report that the right of chiefs to force young people to perform unpaid work was a major cause of the riots. However, while the 1956 Ordinance repealed forced labour, it still gave the chiefs some prerogatives on the use of unpaid community labour.⁵⁶

This was the context in which early labour relations in the mines emerged. In January 1928, men and women previously considered servants or slaves became formally 'free'. In a 1931 report,⁵⁷ the British geologist Pollet included images of large groups of people waiting to obtain employment in the alluvial gold mines. The first companies to obtain mining licenses for the exploitation of gold deposits—the British Coastal Exploration Syndicate Limited and Messrs Maroc Limited⁵⁸—typically offered monthly jobs. Some miners were put on contract and paid according to the amount of work done.⁵⁹ Taking into account the recent abolition of slavery, it is not surprising that the engineer in charge of company's camp found 'there [were] always more applicants for work than he can employ'.⁶⁰ On average, about half of the miners came from villages neighbouring the mining sites. The remainder was mainly made up of men from different regions of the Protectorate: Mende, Limba, Temne, and Koranko were the most well-represented ethno-linguistic groups. Employers generally considered people from further afield more reliable than those coming from nearby villages. According to the reports of colonial officials, the local workers did not come to the mines on a regular basis, and often devoted part of their working day to pursuing other activities such as trading, farming, or hunting.⁶¹ Production costs and international uncertainties over the trends in commodity prices

pushed the gold mining companies to keep wages as low as possible. Thus, in many instances, the local workforce showed preference for the often more lucrative agricultural work in the fields. Some companies used 'feed money'⁶² to compensate miners in an attempt to improve stability of their labour force. In the early 1930s, for example, the Messrs Maroc sold rice to its workers at cost in order to keep down the prices of basic commodities in nearby villages. By selling rice to their miners at no profit to themselves, the company sought to discourage harvesting in the fields and to encourage working in the mines.

SLST made similar choices a few years later in the diamond district of Kono. Initially, the company managers brought in skilled labour from Nigeria, and especially from the Gold Coast in order to teach the local workforce extraction techniques adopted in the CAST diamond mines at Atwakia.⁶³

Although SLST offered better payment terms than other companies, in Kono District, the sale of palm kernels was, at times, less arduous and better paid than work in the diamond mines. The problem of local labour force recruitment became most acute during the harvest season, between January and February.⁶⁴ In 1937 in particular, the demand for agricultural production increased due to the expansion of the international cosmetic industry. At the same time, there was a shortage in rice production, resulting in part from the increased migrant population present in the mining areas and the reduction of agricultural labour devoted to this staple. To address this specific problem, SLST imported quantities of rice that it sold to the company's employees at a regulated price. In exchange for rice, however, the workers had to give up any increase in wages.

It should be noted that this type of non-wage benefit was not simply a reaction to the specific difficulties of that period. Rather, it was part of a broader and paternalistic labour policy which aimed to increase productivity, and minimise theft and illicit mining.⁶⁵

THE SUPPORTING SYSTEM IN TIN, GOLD, AND DIAMOND MINING

The diamond industry of Sierra Leone did not emerge in isolation from other extractive industries. Its history is intertwined from the moment it emerged with the simultaneously emergent gold mining industry. This, in turn, was interwoven with other mining and non-mining experiences in West Africa.

After the first discoveries of alluvial gold deposits, between the mid-1920s and early 1930s, the colonial government of Freetown preferred to grant mining licenses to large-scale British operations.⁶⁶ The uncertain nature of the alluvial deposits, however, was problematic for large-scale investors, and in fact favoured small-scale miners. Many companies went bankrupt after a few years and others took their place and experienced mixed results.⁶⁷

Early small-scale miners managed to obtain licenses for gold extraction in 1934. They were mostly made up of educated members of the Krio community of Freetown who obtained mining licenses as individuals or syndicates.⁶⁸ Among them, there were a few goldsmiths, money-lenders, and professionals, but no one with mining experience.⁶⁹ Most probably, the only ones who possessed some knowledge of gold were A.B. Sillah and J.A. Lasite, two known Freetown goldsmiths. Before becoming miners themselves, it is said that they bought gold from illicit dealers.⁷⁰ Among small-scale miners, members of the Lebanese community were the most successful. They entered into the mining industry in 1935, just after the Krio. The Lebanese were mainly traders and, as far as is known, also had no mining experience. They were able, however, to address the risks of this sector by employing local miners as tributors.⁷¹ As under the *abusa* system adopted by gold miners in the Gold Coast,⁷² tributors did not receive a salary, but a share of the gold. Among these workers there were often men who had worked for European companies. Indeed, tributing offered the chance to earn more than employees of the large operations. From the point of view of patrons, one of the main advantages of the tributing was that workers were only paid if the mine produced gold. In addition, the supervision of a patron was not always necessary. Tributors self-organised and patrons could carry on other professional activities.⁷³ It is clear, then, that both Krio and Lebanese learned the basics of gold mining from their 'boys' and, particularly, from those who had worked for European companies.⁷⁴

By analysing the reports of the colonial government's Geological Department, van der Laan argues that tributing was first introduced in the gold mines in 1935 by the company Gold and Base Metal Mines of Nigeria.⁷⁵ This company mainly mined tin and other base metals in northern Nigeria. The international economic crisis of the early 1930s, the resulting drop in the price of tin, and the rising price of gold were some of the reasons that likely prompted this company to explore the opportunities offered by the alluvial deposits recently discovered in

Sierra Leone.⁷⁶ In Nigeria, as in other West African colonies, tributing was a common practice adopted especially in alluvial gold and tin mining.⁷⁷ Unsurprisingly, Gold and Base Metal Mines of Nigeria replicated in Sierra Leone what had been common in Nigeria.

The small-scale miners of the Shamel Brothers group were among the first to imitate the methods of work, recruitment, and payment of Gold and Base Metals of Nigeria. Despite lacking mining experience, this partnership of Lebanese traders came to employ more than a thousand men in 1936. The following year, van der Laan notes, 'all companies derived part of their gold from tributors and many small miners relied entirely on them.'⁷⁸

The official production of gold began to decline during the Second World War but the number of migrants in the diamondiferous south-eastern area of Sierra Leone grew considerably after the war. Among these gem seekers were men with experience in gold mining, like Alhaji Sesay. Sesay was a gold miner in the northern part of Sierra Leone from 1934 until 1941, the year he was conscripted into the army. In 1945, he resumed mining. In 1956, he began to look for diamonds by taking advantage of the licence scheme for the artisanal extraction of diamonds just introduced by the government.⁷⁹ Sesay's professional trajectory was not unusual. Many miners arrived in the diamond areas during the 1950s, particularly the Temne, had worked in the gold mines of the northern region. Others, like the Mandingo people,⁸⁰ came mainly from the French colonies, in particular, from Guinea where there were both gold and diamond mines.⁸¹ Among the ranks of the gem-seekers there were also many Kono and Mende people, some of whom possessed knowledge and technical skills acquired while working for SLST.⁸²

As a result, between the gold and diamond mining sectors there were numerous adaptations and exchanges derived from the local and transnational labour force,⁸³ and also the local entrepreneurs, particularly the Lebanese merchants who played a crucial role in the development of the Sierra Leonean mining industry.⁸⁴

SHARING AND TRIBUTING IN FARMING AND MINING

To understand the morphogenesis of the practices of diamond miners, it is necessary at this point to extend our gaze towards working and agreement practices that go beyond the mines. In particular, striking 'family resemblances' exist between farming and mining. To examine them, it is useful to focus on gold mining.

Though pre-colonial mining in Sub-Saharan Africa is, to say the least, as old as the Malian (from c. 1230 to c. 1600) and Ashanti Empires (from c. 1700 to 1957),⁸⁵ in the territory of Sierra Leone, there is no clear historical evidence of extractive activities predating colonial discoveries.⁸⁶ Van der Laan's historical reconstruction of how tributing may have been introduced in Sierra Leone's mines presupposes an exogenous (and unilinear) movement of practices and ideas. However, if tributing was immediately accepted and rapidly became a widespread practice among Sierra Leone's miners, this has to do with the fact that it was a practice culturally recognised by both transnational and local labourers. That is to say that van der Laan's hypothesis does not consider the possibility that miners' practices, particularly at the level of artisanal or small-scale operations, involved interwoven and multiple historical and geographical encounters between working experiences and cultural norms across this West African region. To clarify, it is worth briefly exploring and further unravelling other spatio-temporal threads which can shed light on cultural practices common in many rural societies of the Upper Guinea Forest.⁸⁷ To this end, two practices deserve particular attention: the *abusa* system and the *tutorat*.

As historian Raymond Dumett points out in his work on the development of the Gold Coast's mining industry at the end of nineteenth century, European companies based in Wassa had difficulty recruiting local workers.⁸⁸ Often, they preferred to employ unskilled workers from Liberia and Sierra Leone's coasts.⁸⁹ Local Wassa people, in fact, preferred to look for gold using traditional methods tested locally for centuries by generations of African miners,⁹⁰ or to alternate 'whites' jobs' in the mines with agricultural activities in the villages. Therefore, their presence was not always guaranteed. In Wassa, the solution for the mining companies to the so-called native labour problem⁹¹ 'was to hire Akan 'tributors' based on the traditional *abusa* share system.'⁹²

In the Twi language, *abusa* means 'one-third', but in the twentieth century, among Gold Coast farmers engaged in the production of cocoa, *abusa* became a way to refer to the portion of the harvest that the supplier of labour had to offer to the supplier of the land.⁹³ *Abusa* is thus a form of tribute related to the traditional duty of offering a portion of the product obtained from the ground, or from the forest to the rulers and local traditional authorities.⁹⁴ In this sense, the *abusa* system for gold miners was mainly an adaptation of the share cropping system.⁹⁵ In the late nineteenth century, this system was successfully applied and

accepted by Gold Coast's miners and European companies because it seemed to provide benefits for all parties. Tributors held a third, or even a half of the material extracted. In this way, they often managed to earn more than they could as tributors of the chiefs and of local stool holders. The remainder belonged entirely to the company or it was further divided with local traditional authorities. Thus, in Wassa, the gold company was not required to take care of labourers' housing and feeding.⁹⁶ Besides that, it did not have to spend money to import labourers from Liberia nor did it have to worry about the organisation and recruitment of miner gangs.⁹⁷

To return to the case of Sierra Leone, we cannot exclude the possibility that the *abusa* system—or similar tributing systems based on patronage relationships such as the *tutorat*⁹⁸—had been, at different times, a practical model from which Sierra Leone's miners drew ideas and solutions for organising their work. Once again, it is worth stressing the crucial role played by migrant workers in translating such experiences from one context to another.

However, it is also possible that local miners, faced with the uncertainty of alluvial deposits and the danger of being arrested by the colonial security forces, adopted and developed existing local sharing systems which resulted in arrangements similar to those of *abusa*. In this regard, it should be noted that the traditional Akan law of the Gold Coast has many family resemblances with the customary tenure law common to most of the territory of Sierra Leone. In both contexts, the concept of ownership is different from that of private property.⁹⁹ In many regions of West Africa, land is owned collectively and is managed by traditional authorities. Because of this, one of the privileges still retained by Paramount Chiefs¹⁰⁰ of Sierra Leone is to receive tributes from both foreign residents and from various subjects who occupy the land over which they rule. Thus, Paramount Chiefs are entitled to receive as a tribute, portions of the harvested rice and palm oil produced in their chiefdoms, as well as portions of the game captured and the trees cut in forests. Paramount Chiefs also have the right to receive one-third 'of all rents paid by non-natives in respect of lands occupied or leased in the chiefdom.'¹⁰¹ Miners are not exempt from this type of contribution which is well-regulated.

As it might be clear from the discussion above, it is not possible to fully understand the labour practices of artisanal miners without taking into account the social institutions that shape relations between

'autochthons and strangers',¹⁰² 'first comers and later comers',¹⁰³ or between 'landowners and strangers' in the Upper Guinea Forest.¹⁰⁴ As Bolay points out, the artisanal mining sector 'is intimately related to soil property and strongly structured by autochthony relations'.¹⁰⁵

In the rural societies of this extended West African region, the *tutorat* 'regulates both the transfer of land rights and the incorporation of the 'strangers' in the local community'.¹⁰⁶ Strangers, as 'later comers', gain access to the land from the landowners ('first comers') who then become their sponsors or *tuteurs*. In return, strangers show their gratitude by offering, for example, agricultural products or monetary compensation for the use of land. They also contribute to the reproduction of the community social order.¹⁰⁷ Therefore, *tutorat* is a kind of patron–client relationship that regulates the rights and obligations between landowners and strangers on the basis of the principles of a local moral economy.¹⁰⁸ In Ivory Coast, for example, the *tutorat* played a significant role in regulating migrant access to the cocoa and coffee farms which developed in the 1920s.¹⁰⁹ In different ways, past and present migrants working in the farms or in the artisanal small-scale gold mines of Guinea,¹¹⁰ Mali,¹¹¹ Burkina Faso,¹¹² and Benin¹¹³ have established mentoring relationships, particularly, with residents.

Tutorat and the 'landlord–stranger system' have several family resemblances.¹¹⁴ Concerning Sierra Leone's diamond mines, Jean-Pierre Chauveau and Paul Richards have stressed how 'Land-owning lineages are essential partners in alluvial operations'.¹¹⁵ For this reason, diamond miners divide part of their earnings with them.

To return to van der Laan's unilinear and exogenous hypothesis, it certainly cannot convincingly account for the historical complexity of these social practices as well as their ability to change and constantly adapt to different contexts. The tributing system, like all social practices, has a social life: it changes over time and it adapts to changing cultural, political, and historical scenarios.¹¹⁶

CONCLUSION

As noted by the anthropologist Michael Jackson, spinning, weaving, binding, threading braiding, and knotting are at same time some of the oldest techniques and metaphors known by human beings.¹¹⁷ No wonder that it in many societies around the world, social relations are conceived as 'bonds, ties or strings, while wider fields of relationship

are compared to networks, webs, and skeins, or the warp and woof of woven cloth'.¹¹⁸ I have endeavoured to show how textile metaphors are also good to think through nonlinear causal relationships, as well as the spatio-temporal entanglement specific to each historical and cultural context.¹¹⁹ The historical and anthropological analysis of diamond miners' working practices shows that there is not an origin that can explain their subsequent development. There is also no single causal explanation. If anything, what these practices reveal are the many spatial and temporal twists that connect, in complex ways, events, people and contexts. In other words, the practices of the miners appear to be an assemblage of heterogeneous and, in some respects, conflicting elements. This assemblage is not the result of an omniscient hand that has wisely chosen and ordered the temporal threads according to a precise final design. On the contrary, it is the result of a number of incongruent, and sometimes contradictory interventions.

If we want to bring our textile metaphor to another level, we may ask ourselves who weaves the threads and who makes the carpet. The answer is that there is a multiplicity of social actors, each with different levels of ability and power to act.

In the mines of Sierra Leone, the exchange of knowledge and experiences among workers, company executives, and other social actors involved in this industry (e.g., chiefs and colonial rulers), has contributed significantly to the hybridisation of mining practices. This helps to understand their innumerable 'family resemblances'.¹²⁰ Indeed, I have suggested that these practices come not only from different types of extractive contexts (for example, gold and tin mining), but also from non-mining contexts such as agriculture. The tributing system described by van der Laan in the case of gold mining has strong resemblances with those common in diamond mining. In a similar vein, the share crop system has significant resemblances with the practice of dividing extracted material between miners, companies, and traditional authorities in both gold and diamond mining.

Each idea or mining practice is a particular combination of knowledge and experiences that has changed in response to specific problems embedded in specific historical and political situations. To emphasise the contingency of encounters between these practices and experiences is to recognise that capitalism cannot be thought to have a single repeatable model of development.¹²¹ That is to say that diamond miners' practices are the unpredictable result of the continuous efforts of the global

mining industry to articulate different modes of production. The carpet is the living metaphor of this spatio-temporal assemblage with no origin.

NOTES

1. I would like to thank the participants of the writing workshop 'Translocal- and microhistories of global labour' organised by Christian G. De Vito and Anne Gerritsen at the University of Warwick (23–24 January 2015), as well as Toby Boraman and Emma Battell Lowman for comments and criticisms. I discussed some thoughts contained in this paper during the Fifth Annual Conference organised by IGK Work and Human Lifecycle in Global History in Berlin, 9 July 2014. For this reason, I thank re:work's staff and fellows for their useful comments. The final stage of writing this paper has greatly benefited from a fellowship granted by the Italian Academy for Advanced Study, Columbia University, New York (Spring 2015).
2. On the difficulties of writing about connections, see Frederick Cooper, 'Back to Work: Categories, Boundaries and Connections in the Study of Labour', in *Racializing Class, Classifying Race: Labour and Difference in Britain, the USA and Africa*, eds. Peter Alexander and Rick Halpern (London, 2000), pp. 213–235.
3. See De Vito (in this volume).
4. Cooper, 'Back to work', p. 213.
5. Since the end of the civil war (1991–2002) the extraction of this mineral has come from two types of sources in this West African country: alluvial and kimberlite deposits. The alluvial diamonds are extracted mainly with artisanal technologies such as shovels and sieves (artisanal level) or with machinery such as hydraulic pumps, bulldozers, and mechanised sieves (small-scale level). In 2005, it was estimated that there were more than 200–300,000 people engaged at these two levels of extraction (artisanal and small-scale mining). Conversely, diamond extracted from the kimberlite rock requires large-scale technology usually owned by foreign mining companies capable of huge investments. As a consequence of high capital investment in technology, large-scale mining does not employ as much labour as artisanal and small-scale mining. These differences in technologies and investments largely reflect the characteristics of the different types of deposits. From a geological point of view, kimberlite deposits are ancient volcanic conduits which can be localised in specific areas. Once experts have identified these deposits, it is possible to estimate their productivity. On the contrary, alluvial diamonds are scattered underground over vast areas. Ascertaining their location (or quantity) is far from simple.

6. Carlo Ginzburg, *Miti, emblemi, spie. Morfologia e storia* (Torino, 1986).
7. As noted by the philosopher Vittorio Morfino, the Latin etymology of the word ‘to connect’ (*connectere*) refers to the meaning of ‘to weave’ (Vittorio Morfino, *Il tempo della moltitudine. Materialismo e politico prima e dopo Spinoza* (Roma, 2005), p. 29).
8. Bruno Latour reminds us that the etymology of the word ‘social’ has roots in ‘following’ (Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory* (Oxford, 2005).
9. Marcel van der Linden, ‘The Promise and Challenges of Global Labour History’, *International Labor and Working Class History*, 82 (2012), 57–76, cit. p. 62.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 62.
11. Andreas Eckert, ‘What is Global Labour History Good For?’, in *Work in a Modern Society. The German Historical Experience*, ed. Jürgen Kocka (New York–Oxford, 2010), pp. 169–181.
12. Van der Linden, ‘The Promise and Challenges’, p. 62.
13. Christian G. De Vito, ‘New Perspectives on Global Labour History: Introduction’, *Workers of the World*, 3, 1 (2013), 7–31, see p. 16.
14. Marcel van der Linden, ‘Re-constructing the Origins of Modern Labor Management’, *Labor History*, 51, 4 (2010), 509–522.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 510.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 516.
17. Different philosophers criticise the notion of origin (i.e., Louis Althusser, *Lire le Capital, Vol. 1 & 2* (Paris, 1965); Michael Foucault, *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews* (Ithaca, NY, 1980).
18. Ginzburg, *Miti, Emblemi, Spie*, p. xiv.
19. Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Remarks on Frazer’s ‘Golden Bough’* (Retford, 1979).
20. Carlo Ginzburg, *Storia notturna. Una decifrazione del sabba* (Torino, 1989), p. xxix. See also Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* (Oxford, 1953), esp. §122.
21. For a comparison between Goethe’s and Wittgenstein’s philosophy, see Fritz Breithaupt, Richard Raatzsch, and Bettina Kremberg, eds., *Goethe and Wittgenstein: Seeing the World’s Unity in its Variety* (Frankfurt am Main, 2003).
22. Ginzburg, *Storia notturna*, p. xxix.
23. Ginzburg, *Miti, emblemi, spie*, p. xv.
24. Ginzburg, *Storia notturna*, p. xxviii.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 289.
26. Wittgenstein clarifies this notion with an example. What do board games, card games, ball games, and the Olympic Games have in

- common? The answer Wittgenstein gives is apparently simple: 'If you look at them you will not see something that is common to all, but similarities, relationships, and a whole series of them at that' (Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, p. 31). As among family members, we can see similarities between the various games, or rather 'a complicated network of similarities overlapping and criss-crossing: sometimes overall similarities, sometimes similarities of detail' (Ibid., p. 32). However, there is nothing that unites them all under a single definition.
27. Giuseppe Di Giacomo, 'Art and perspicuous vision in Wittgenstein's Philosophical Reflection', *Aisthesis. Pratiche, linguaggi e saperi dell'estetico*, 6, 1 (2013), 151–172.
 28. Ginzburg, *Miti, emblemi, spie*, p. 170.
 29. Ibid., p. 169.
 30. See John Martin, 'Journeys to the world of the death: The work of Carlo Ginzburg', *Journal of Social History*, 25, 3 (1992), 613–626, esp. p. 623.
 31. Ginzburg, *Miti, emblemi, spie*, p. 184.
 32. H. Laurens van der Laan, *The Lebanese Traders in Sierra Leone* (The Hague, Paris, 1975).
 33. This is usually between 5000 and 10,000 Leones, the equivalent of about 2–3 USD—for a working day of about eight hours.
 34. This reward can vary, usually, from a minimum of 500 to a maximum of 3000 Leones (about 1 USD a day).
 35. The miners without a license can be organised in so-called 'gado gangs', that is, in groups of miners who equally share the extracted gravel. The gain of each is related to the probability of finding diamonds in ones' own pile of gravel. For more details, see Estelle Levin, 'From Poverty and War to Prosperity and Peace? Sustainable Livelihoods and Innovation in Governance of Artisanal Diamond Mining in Kono District, Sierra Leone', MA thesis, University of British Columbia, 2005.
 36. Edward J. Epstein, *The Death of the Diamond: The Coming Collapse in Diamond Prices* (London, 1983).
 37. J. L. Burke, 'A Short Account of the Discovery of the Major Diamond Deposits', *Sierra Leone Studies*, 12 (1959), 316–328, esp. p. 322.
 38. Peter Greenhalgh, *West African Diamonds 1919–1983: An Economic History* (Manchester, Dover, 1985), p. 24.
 39. Ibid.
 40. Colin Newbury, *The Diamond Ring: Business, Politics, and Precious Stones in South Africa, 1867–1947* (Oxford, 1989).
 41. Greenhalgh, *West African Diamonds*, p. 61.

42. Raymond E. Dumett, 'Africa Strategic Minerals During the Second World War', *Journal of African History*, 26 (1985), 381–408.
43. Greenhalgh, *West African Diamonds*, pp. 27–33.
44. Lorenzo D'Angelo, 'The Art of Governing Contingency: Rethinking the Colonial History of Diamond Mining in Sierra Leone', *Historical Research*, 89, 243 (2016), 136–157.
45. H. Laurens van der Laan, *The Sierra Leone Diamonds* (Oxford, 1965).
46. Alfred Zack-Williams, *Tributors, Supporters and Merchant Capital. Mining and Underdevelopment in Sierra Leone* (Aldershot-Brookfield USA–Hong Kong–Singapore–Sydney, 1995), p. 181.
47. William Reno, *Corruption and State Politics in Sierra Leone* (Cambridge, 1995), p. 62.
48. Tilo Grätz interprets the system of sharing clumps of soil containing gold between the miners of Northern Benin as a strategy to reduce the risk of being caught by police before they can split their gains (Tilo Grätz, 'Gold-Mining and Risk Management: A Case Study from Northern Benin', *Ethnos*, 68, 2 (2003), 192–208). In this case the gold miners prefer to divide the stones and clumps extracted underground rather than the gold actually recovered. As far as we can tell from the brief description provided by Grätz, the method chosen by the miners is apparently simple: half of the stones potentially containing gold is taken by the *chief d'équipe* and the other half is divided among his *secrétaire* and other workers (Tilo Grätz, 'Moralities, Risk and Rule in West African Artisanal Gold Mining Communities: A Case Study of Northern Benin', *Resource Policy*, 34 (2009), 12–17).
49. Reno, *Corruption*.
50. Zack-Williams, *Tributors*, p. 120.
51. Greenhalgh, *West African Diamonds*, p. 167.
52. Zack-Williams, *Tributors*, p. 123.
53. The Colony of Sierra Leone was founded in 1808 to receive the slaves freed by the British in their fight against the Atlantic trade in human beings. However, the current borders of Sierra Leone were established only in 1896 when the British decided to annex a portion of the African territory surrounding the Freetown Peninsula. While the Colony was ruled under the British legal system, the hinterland was ruled as a British Protectorate and was indirectly controlled through local chiefs (Christopher Fyfe, *A Short History of Sierra Leone* (London, 1967)).
54. John Grace, *Domestic Slavery in West Africa with Reference to the Sierra Leone Protectorate, 1896–1927* (London, 1975), p. 491.
55. Richard Rathbone, 'West Africa, 1874–1948: Employment Legislation in a Nonsettler Peasant Economy', in *Masters, Servants, and Magistrates in*

- Britain and the Empire, 1562–1955*, eds. Douglas Hay and Paul Craven (Chapel Hill–London, 2004), p. 488.
56. Colonial Office, *Sierra Leone: Report for the Year 1956* (London, 1957), p. 74. For an analysis of the impact of these colonial decisions on the agrarian order of the Upper Guinean Forest, and its recent conflicts, see Jean-Pierre Chauveau and Paul Richards, 'West African Insurgencies in Agrarian Perspective: Côte d'Ivoire and Sierra Leone Compared', *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 8, 4 (2008), 515–522, and Krijn Peters and Paul Richards, 'Rebellion and Agrarian Tensions in Sierra Leone', *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 11, 3 (2011), 377–395.
 57. John D. Pollett, *Report on the Gold Areas by the Acting Chief Inspector of Mines, Mr. J. D. Pollett*: The National Archives (T. N. A.), London, U.K., CO 267/635/11, Enclosure to Sierra Leone Confidential despatch, 12 Oct. 1931.
 58. Van der Laan, *The Lebanese Traders*, p. 145.
 59. Pollett, *Report*, p. 14.
 60. *Ibid.*
 61. *Ibid.*
 62. *Ibid.*, p. 28.
 63. Letter of the Governor D. J. Jardine to W. G. A. Ormsby Gore, 3 May 1938: T. N. A. CO267/665/3.
 64. Greenhalgh, *West African Diamonds*, p. 125.
 65. *Ibid.*, pp. 127–132.
 66. On the contrary, French administrators favoured artisanal mining in the gold mines of the Haut-Niger (see Sabine Luning, Jan Jansen, and Cristiana Panella, 'The *Mise en Valeur* of the Gold Mines in the Haut-Niger, 1918–1939', *French Colonial History*, 15 (2014), 67–86, esp. p. 75.
 67. Martin H. Y. Kaniki, 'The Economic and Social History of Sierra Leone, 1929–1939', PhD Thesis, Birmingham, 1972, p. 167; Van der Laan, *The Lebanese Traders*, pp. 147–149.
 68. The Krio are the descendants of the 'Liberated Africans' and other ex-slaves rehabilitated in Sierra Leone since the end of Eighteenth Century. See Akintola Wyse, *The Krio of Sierra Leone: An Interpretative History* (Washington, D.C., 1991).
 69. Kaniki, *The Economic and Social History*, p. 170.
 70. *Ibid.*
 71. Van der Laan, *The Lebanese Traders*, p. 149.
 72. Raymond E. Dumett, *El Dorado in West Africa: The Gold-Mining Frontier, African Labor, and Colonial Capitalism in Gold Coast, 1875–1900* (Oxford, 1998).
 73. *cf.* Van der Laan, *The Lebanese Traders*, p. 150.

74. Kaniki, *The Economic and Social History*, p. 171.
75. Van der Laan, *The Lebanese Traders*, p. 150.
76. Kaniki, *The Economic and Social History*.
77. William Freund, 'Theft and Social Protest Among the Tin Miners of Northern Nigeria', *Radical History Review*, 26 (1982), 68–86, esp. p. 75; Greenhalgh, *West African Diamonds*, p. 175; B. W. Hodder, 'Tin Mining on the Jos Plateau', *Economic Geography*, 35, 2 (1959), 109–122; esp. p. 115; J. H. Morrison, 'Early Tin Production and Nigerian Labour on the Jos Plateau', *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 11, 2 (1977), 205–216, esp. p. 208.
78. Van der Laan, *The Lebanese Traders*, p. 150; cf. Kaniki, *The Economic and Social History*, p. 176.
79. Zack-Williams, *Tributors*, p. 154.
80. In Sierra Leone, 'Mandingo' can refer to a wide range of people of different origins (see Chauveau and Richards, 'West African Insurgencies', p. 525, note 19).
81. Sylvie Bredeloup, *La Diams'pora du Fleuve Sénégal. Sociologie des Migrations Africaines* (Paris, 2007), p. 71.
82. Van der Laan, *The Lebanese Traders*, pp. 158–159.
83. Bredeloup, *La Diams'pora*.
84. Caspar D. Fithen, 'Diamonds and War in Sierra Leone: Cultural Strategies for Commercial Adaptation to Endemic Low-Intensity Conflict', Ph.D. Thesis, London, 1999; see also Reno, *Corruption*; Van der Laan, *The Lebanese Traders*.
85. Eugenia W. Herbert, 'Elusive Frontiers: Precolonial Mining in Sub-Saharan Africa', in *Mining Frontiers in Africa: Anthropological and Historical Perspectives*, eds. Katja Werthmann and Tilo Grätz (Köln, 2012), pp. 23–32; Jan Bart Gewald, 'Gold the True Motor of West African History: An Overview of the Importance of Gold in West Africa and its Relations with the Wider World', in *Worlds of Debts. Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Gold Mining in West Africa*, ed. Cristiana Panella (Amsterdam, 2010), pp. 137–151.
86. See Kaniki, *The Economic and Social History*, p. 166. This observation is based mainly on colonial sources. It is worth noting, however, that neither geologists, nor British colonial administrators were interested in investigating pre-existing native extractive activity. Geologists were eager to prove that they were the first to discover the deposits. Sometimes, competition led to disputes such as the one between geologists Junner and Pollett about who was first to discover a diamond in Sierra Leone. For British colonial officials, documenting any precolonial mining activity risked precluding, or complicating, their creation of a legal apparatus for the exploitation of mineral resources. In Sierra Leone, the first

- mining ordinance was enacted in 1927 and was based on the assumption that native people had no knowledge or established use of minerals in their lands. See Lorenzo D'Angelo, 'L'Arte dello Sposseamento. Un'Archeologia Coloniale del 'Furto' della Terra in Sierra Leone', in *I conflitti per la terra. Tra accaparramento, consumo e accesso indisciplinato*, eds. Cristiana Fiamingo, Luca Ciabbari, and Mauro Van Aken (Lungavilla, 2014), pp. 177–190.
87. Jean-Pierre Chauveau, Jean-Pierre Colin, Jean-Pierre Jacob, Philippe Lavigne Delville, and Pierre-Yves Le Meur, *Changes in Land Access and Governance in West Africa: Markets, Social Mediations and Public Policies* (London, 2006).
 88. Raymond E. Dumett, *El Dorado in West Africa. The Gold-Mining Frontier, African Labor, and Colonial Capitalism in the Gold Coast, 1875–1900* (Oxford, 1998).
 89. *Ibid.*, pp. 144, 150–151, 222.
 90. Jim Silver, 'The Failure of European Mining Companies in the Nineteenth-Century Gold Coast', *Journal of African History* 22, 4 (1981), 511–529, see p. 511.
 91. Dumett, *El Dorado*, p. 144.
 92. *Ibid.*, p. 153.
 93. A. F. Robertson, 'On Sharecropping', *Man*, 15, 3 (1980), 411–429; A. F. Robertson, 'Abusa: The Structural History of an Economic Contract', *Journal of Development Studies*, 18, 4 (1982), 447–478.
 94. Dumett, *El Dorado*, pp. 69, 122.
 95. Silver, 'The Failure of European Mining Companies in the Nineteenth-Century Gold Coast', p. 512; Dumett, *El Dorado*.
 96. *Ibid.*, p. 153.
 97. *Ibid.*, p. 222.
 98. Chauveau et al., *Changes in Land Access*.
 99. cf. Raymond E. Dumett, 'Parallel Mining Frontiers in the Gold Coast and Asante in the late 19th and Early 20th Centuries', in *Mining Frontiers in Africa*, pp. 33–54, esp. p. 40; and Ade Renner-Thomas, *Land Tenure in Sierra Leone. The Law, Dualism and the Making of a Land Policy* (Central Milton Keynes, 2010).
 100. In Sierra Leone, Paramount Chiefs are, by definition, the custodians of the land. See Renner-Thomas, *Land Tenure*.
 101. *Ibid.*, p. 172.
 102. Chauveau and Richards, 'West African Insurgencies'.
 103. Igor Kopytoff, *The African Frontier: The Reproduction of Traditional African Societies* (Bloomington, 1987).
 104. For the Sierra Leone's case, see Fenda A. Akiwumi, 'Strangers and Sierra Leone Mining: Cultural Heritage and Sustainable Development Challenges', *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 84, 1 (2014), 773–782;

- V. R. Dorjahn and Christopher Fyfe, 'Landlord and Stranger: Change in Tenancy Relations in Sierra Leone', *Journal of African History*, 3, 3 (1962), 391–397; Bruce L. Mouser, 'Landlords-Strangers: A Process of Accomodation and Assimilation', *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 8, 3 (1975), 425–440. For a broader historical and geographical perspective on this region, see George E. Brooks, *Landlords and Strangers: Ecology, Society and Trade in Western Africa, 1000–1630* (Boulder, 1993).
105. Matthieu Bolay, 'When Miners Become "Foreigners": Competing Categorizations Within Gold Mining Spaces in Guinea', *Resource Policy*, 40 (2014), 117–127, see p. 120. Sabine Luning shows the complexity of the interaction among multiple actors (from international mining companies to 'earth priests') in present Burkina Faso's gold mines (Sabine Luning, 'Beyond the Pale of Property: Gold Miners Meddling with Mountains in Burkina Faso', in *Worlds of Debts. Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Gold Mining in West Africa*, ed. Panella (Amsterdam, 2010), pp. 25–48. See also Sabine Luning, 'Processing Promises of Gold: A Minefield of Company-community Relations in Burkina Faso', *Africa Today*, 58, 3 (2012), 23–39.
 106. Chauveau and Richards, 'West African Insurgencies', p. 525.
 107. *Ibid.*, p. 525.
 108. Chauveau et al., *Changes in Land Access*, pp. 11, 15; Chauveau and Richards, 'West African Insurgencies', p. 525.
 109. Chauveau and Richards, 'West African Insurgencies', p. 527.
 110. See, for example, Bolay, 'When Miners Become "Foreigners"'.
111. See, for example, Jan Jensen, 'What Gold Mining Means for the Malinke, and How it was Misunderstood by the French Colonial Administration', in *Worlds of Debts. Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Gold Mining in West Africa*, ed. Cristiana Panella (Amsterdam, 2010), pp. 95–110, esp. p. 97.
 112. See, for example, Katja Werthmann, 'Gold Mining in Burkina Faso since the 1980 s', in *Mining Frontiers in Africa*, pp. 119–132.
 113. See, for example, Tilo Grätz, 'Gold Mining in the Atakora Mountains (Benin): Exchange Relations in a Volatile Economic Field', in *Mining Frontiers in Africa*, pp. 97–118.
 114. cf. Chauveau and Richards, 'West African Insurgencies', p. 545.
 115. Chauveau and Richards, 'West African Insurgencies', p. 539; see also p. 537.
 116. cf. Robertson, 'Abusa'.
 117. Michael Jackson, *Life Within Limits: Well-Being in a World of Want* (Durham–London, 2011), p. 158.
 118. *Ibid.*

119. Cf. Morfino, *Il tempo della moltitudine*, pp. 29, 125.
120. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*.
121. Frederick Cooper, 'African Labor History', in *Global Labour History: A State of Art*, ed. Jan Lucassen (Bern 2006), pp. 91–116, esp. p. 93.



Erratum to: Connected Singularities: Convict Labour in Late Colonial Spanish America (1760s–1800)

Christian G. De Vito

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