



# Economic Institutional Change and Global Labour Relations

**September 26-27, 2014**

International Institute of Social History (IISH)  
Cruquiusweg 31, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

## Programme

Friday, September 26, 2014

- 8.30-9.00:**            **Welcome with coffee and tea**
- 9.00-9.30:            INTRODUCTION
- 9.00-9.30:            *Economic Institutional Change and Global  
Labour Relations*  
Pim de Zwart, Karin Hofmeester, Marcel van der  
Linden and Jan Lucassen (IISH Amsterdam).
- 9.30-13.00:        INSTITUTIONS FOR PROPERTY AND LAND  
Chair: Marcel van der Linden  
Discussants: Ulbe Bosma, Matthias van Rossum
- 9.30-10.15:        *TBC*  
Tine de Moor (Utrecht University)
- 10.15-11.00:       *Land regimes and economic development*  
Alessandro Stanziani (EHESS & CNRS Paris)
- 11.00-11.15:**       **Coffee and tea**

- 11.15-12.00: *European expansion and changes in the labour condition in Non-European societies: Sri Lankan experience from the eighteenth to twentieth centuries*  
Nirmal Dewasiri (University of Colombo)
- 12.00-12.45: *Paradoxes of Economic Rationality: The “Yeoman” Cotton Farmer in Southern Malawi, 1940s-2000*  
Elias C. Mandala (University of Rochester)
- 13.00-14.00: Lunch**
- 14.00-17.30: **COMMODITY MARKET INSTITUTIONS**  
Chair: Pim de Zwart  
Discussants: Johan Fourie, Lex Heerma van Voss
- 14.00-14.45: *The uneven development of export-processing industrialization, and related proletarianization, in the Global South, c. 1850 to c. 1950*  
William G. Clarence-Smith (SOAS London)
- 14.45-15.30: *The unity of diverse labour regimes in the global cotton industry*  
Sven Beckert (Harvard University)
- 15.30-15.45: Coffee and tea**
- 15.45-16.30: *Sugar and labour relations*  
Ulbe Bosma (IISH Amsterdam)
- 16.30-17.15: *Economic institutions and shifting labour relations in the Indian, Brazilian and South-African diamond mines*  
Karin Hofmeester (IISH Amsterdam)
- 17.30-18.00: Drinks**
- 18.00-Late: Dinner**

Saturday, September 27, 2014

- 9.00-12.30:            **SPLIT AND SEGMENTED LABOUR MARKETS**  
Chair: Jan Lucassen  
Discussants: Marcel van der Linden, Sven Beckert
- 9.00-9.45:                    *Untouchable commodity, 'suitable' labour':  
Labour markets and labour relations in the  
leather industry in India, ca. 1870s-1960s*  
Shahana Bhattacharya (University of Delhi)
- 9.45-10.30:                    *Threads of imperialism. Colonial connections and  
gendered labour relations in the textile industry,  
the Netherlands and the Netherlands Indies, ca.  
1830-1940*  
Elise van Nederveen Meerkerk (Wageningen UR)
- 10.30-10.45:            Coffee and tea**
- 10.45-11.30:                    *Maritime labour relations in Europe and Asia*  
Matthias van Rossum (IISH Amsterdam)
- 11.30-12.15:                    *Labour relations in South Africa before the  
emancipation of slaves, 1800-1834*  
Johan Fourie (Stellenbosch University) and Erik  
Green (Lund University)
- 12.30-13.30:            Lunch**
- 13.30-16.00:                    **CURRENCY AND THE PAYMENT OF WORK**  
Chair: Karin Hofmeester  
Discussants: Pim de Zwart, Ulbe Bosma
- 13.30-14.15:                    *Deep monetization in Eurasia and the payment of  
wages, ca. 1200- 1950*  
Jan Lucassen (IISH Amsterdam)
- 14.15-15.00:                    *Labour in Caribbean Plantation Societies in the  
Long Nineteenth Century*  
Rosemarijn Hoefte (KITLV Leiden)

**15.00-15.15**      **Coffee and tea**

15.15-16.00                      *Paying in cowries, paying in coins. Wages and currencies in early colonial British East Africa (1890-1920)*

Karin Pallaver (University of Bologna)

**16.00-16.15:**      **Coffee and tea**

**16.15-17.30:**      **Closing discussion**

Discussants:                      Lex Heerma van Voss (Huygens ING)  
   Marcel van der Linden (IISH Amsterdam)  
   Alessandro Stanziani (EHESS & CNRS Paris)

**17.30-18.30:**      **Drinks**

# Participants

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## Abstracts (per session):

### **1. Institutions for property and land**

Dewasiri, Nirmal: European expansion and changes in the labour condition in Non-European societies: Sri Lankan experience from the eighteenth to twentieth centuries.

Probably no other aspect of human life is under-explained by the hegemonic discourses on the European expansion in non-European areas than the impact of European expansion on labour relations, especially in relation to the exploitative relationships between the peasant producer and the European colonial ruler. This tendency is indeed well supported by dominant anti-colonial discourses as well. In the case of the latter, the exploitative relationship between the colonizer and the colonized is viewed through the prism of the nation state, i.e. as a subjugation of one nation by another. The objective of this study is to explain the ways in which labour was affected by the early European intrusions into the social formations in the Western and Southern part of Sri Lanka in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The ability to extract the surplus of the peasant producer by the ruling elite in the pre-capitalist economic formations in Sri Lanka was determined by the control the latter possessed over lands that the former cultivated. Although a portion of the peasant's surplus was also transferred to the hands of merchants, this portion could not have been very large as peasant producers' engagement in the market was significantly low. Therefore, the non-economic transfer of surplus into the hands of various ranks of the ruling elite through the hegemonized coercive relationship between them and the peasant producer was the major source of the accumulation of wealth. Factors that determined the quantity of extracted surplus were as follows: necessary labour of the peasant producer, which is significantly low, level of demand from the ruling class which fluctuated under varied circumstances (for example, rising demand for the surplus during war times), and the level of class struggle which was generally less intense.

A fundamental change occurred in the quantity of the surplus extracted from the peasant producer with the European interventions mainly due to the higher demand from European powers. While the major means of accumulation of wealth by Europeans in the East was the trade between Europe and the East, where a higher profit margin was yielded owing to the massive price differences between the West and the East, Sri Lanka was one of the few exceptions where Europeans could directly control the flow of the surplus of a larger portion of the peasant producer even in the earlier phases of the European expansion. This was achieved through the political control gained by the Portuguese, Dutch and, lastly, the English benefitting from internal clashes of the indigenous ruling elite.

Although the political domination of European powers was justified by establishing a continuity between pre-European rulers and European rulers which may have also required a continuation of the system of surplus extraction, including its quantity, there is evidence of significant increase of the quantity of surplus extracted. This could clearly be seen by the intensification of the class struggle, which significantly weakened equilibrium that existed in the pre-European hegemonic setting. The quantity of the surplus extracted was skilfully raised through the re-articulation of the pre-European modes of surplus extraction. Moreover, new techniques such as mapping, surveying and registering lands were carried out in order to accurately measure the quantity to be delivered to the ruling elite, where the existing practice provided ample opportunity for the peasant producer to manipulate the system for its benefit.

Therefore the new strategies adopted by European rulers diminished the peasant producer's ability to manipulate system and, thereby, intensified the tension between the peasant producer and the European colonial ruler, which was the root cause of the wave of peasant revolts which began in the first half of the eighteenth century.

A new equilibrium was established especially through an alliance with the lower and middle ranks of the ruling elite, which were transformed into a rural land owning class and, also, held political power in the early phase of the post-colonial history. This new equilibrium did not however entirely pacify the peasant. Peasant revolts in varying degrees became very much a part of the colonial history. It is also possible to establish a clear continuity between this tendency of peasant revolts and the insurgencies of rural youths in the post-colonial period. Two armed insurrections in 1971 and 1988 in Sri Lanka is a direct outcome of the landlessness among the peasantry and this problem has to be explained in terms of the changing structure of the extraction of peasant's surplus under European powers where control over lands played a decisive role.

### Mandala, Elias C.: 'Paradoxes of Economic Rationality: The "Yeoman" Cotton Farmer in Southern Malawi, 1940s-2000.'

From the time of Dr. David Livingstone's visit to the lands bordering the Tchiri River in the mid-nineteenth century, individuals, organizations, and especially government officials have sought to refashion the region through cotton production. And, although different promoters of the project may have entertained different agendas, all shared a common vision that the region's future lay in the creation of yeomen or capitalist farmers, who did nothing but grow cotton. The vision received its first major boost in the late 1940s, as part of Britain's efforts to make her colonies subsidize the reconstruction of her war-torn economy. Then after the country's independence in the mid-1960s, the new rulers re-launched the project with the support of the World Bank, which made the adoption of insecticides and spraying machines a condition for agricultural loans among prospective yeoman farmers. By the late 1990s, however, the typical cotton grower in the region did not live on the cotton industry alone, but produced the cash crop in combination with many other activities — including wage employment within and outside the country, maize growing, cattle-keeping, fishing and more. Significantly, the income from some of the non-cotton operations went to finance the high-tech cotton regime that consumed various forms of labor drawn from outside the household, including wage labor.

The new cotton economy thus became parasitic on other rural enterprises and stifled the emergence of the capitalist farmer for many reasons perfectly consistent with capitalist rationality, in particular, low market prices to the producers. The cost of cotton production exceeded income among cotton producers of every economic category, especially those who sprayed their crop with pesticides. That villagers have not abandoned cotton-growing altogether underscores the limited capacity of the other activities to satisfy rural needs. Laborers cannot fully support themselves and their families with their wages. Meanwhile, food cultivators have had to confront their own structural challenges above and beyond contingent threats like drought. They do not have a reliable market: partly because the region's transport system is primitive, but mainly because the poverty of those who most need their crops precludes their becoming a dependable source of income for others. Cotton agriculture has survived in this economic environment that disperses rural labor in all directions. Whether rich or poor, small or large, therefore, all cotton growers form part of the same peasantry, caught in the same vicious circle, albeit of differing dimensions.

Moor, Tine de: TBC

## Stanziani, Alessandro: Land regimes and economic development.

Unlike common views, the Russian specificity consisted in adopting extreme variations of Western solutions. Estate owners entered the proto-industrial and the cereal markets at the expense of urban merchants and producers and of occasional new “bourgeois” estate owners. This outcome was politically relevant and specific in that it expressed an extreme defence of old agrarian aristocracies in a context of progressive transformation of the peasantry. In terms of economic growth, this solution was far from being catastrophic: Russia experienced greater economic growth than is conventionally argued. It was rooted in the country’s previous development and in the ability of Russian economic institutions to meet increasing demand. Although labor intensive, Russian growth also made use of increasing quantities of capital. Yet although this solution helped to compete with the rate of growth of leading Western countries, it did not catch up to them and, most importantly, it failed to resolve the tensions between economic development and social and political inequalities. Implications are:

- Markets and capitalism do not necessarily stand upon democracy and free labor. Important rates of growth can be reached with forced labor as the history of slavery and serfdom confirms.
- Evolutionary forms of peasant communes and varieties of property rights solutions are also perfectly compatible with high rates of growth.
- In political and social terms: land aristocracies, slave owners and peasants are far from being hostile to development.
- If all this is true, then the evaluation of economic system cannot be made only on the ground of growth and efficiency. Economic history and economics need to discuss the political philosophy of their reasoning. Voice, rights and inequalities must be put at the very front stage of the historical economic analysis.



## 2. Commodity market institutions

Beckert, Sven: 'The unity of diverse labour regimes in the global cotton industry'.

Bosma, Ulbe: 'Sugar and labour relations'

In every historiographical survey on commodity production sugar figures as the typical 'plantation crop', which encompasses monocrop cultivation and total control over the entire production process ranging from land, technology and botany to labour. Even though the plantation model proved to be remarkably resilient over the past 800 years there are important changes in labour relations to report. Contrary to what some might have expected, slavery was not inexorably linked to the plantation. A variety of labour relations did occur, such as Chinese labour gangs, Indian indentured labour, debt contracts in Latin America, coerced cultivation on Java and smallholder cane production combined with sugar factory cooperations in Java and India. This paper will make imaginary site visits to plantations across the world over about 800 years and show how a single business model could employ rather different types of labour.

Clarence-Smith, William G.: 'The uneven development of export-processing industrialization, and related proletarianization, in the Global South, c. 1850 to c. 1950'

Contrary to vast swathes of writings about the modern colonial era, tropical dependencies did not merely specialize in producing 'primary goods' in a simplistic international division of labour. In reality, there was an intensifying wave of industrial processing of exports from the tropics from around 1850, which amounted to an early form of export-substituting industrialization. An uncritical, or even ideologically driven, analysis of misleadingly compiled customs statistics has concealed this phenomenon. Indeed, colonial export-substituting industrialization probably proved to be a more effective economic strategy than that of import-substituting industrialization, which was adopted by most newly independent states from the 1950s. What needs to be grasped, then, is how a new global manufacturing division of labour emerged and evolved in the age of 'high imperialism.'

That said, the industrial processing of 'primary goods' was a highly uneven process. Much more value was added, for example, to sugar than to coffee, to palm oil than to rubber, and to metals than to gems. Furthermore, Asia witnessed more processing than did Africa. For example, the vast smelters of the Malayan Peninsula exported almost pure tin by the interwar years, while massive Javanese sugar factories sent almost completely refined 'factory white' to Asian markets. Even within Africa, settler-dominated societies processed more than those dominated by merchants.

Technical concerns existed, but cannot explain all these divergences. Thus, sugar and palm oil were likely to deteriorate fast if not processed rapidly, and freight savings were much larger for metals than for gems. However, the same commodities were at times processed to differing degrees in different places. In the colonies themselves, the most significant variables were probably the strategies of firms, the skills of diasporic entrepreneurs and local workers, distances from markets, and local trade policies.

Protectionism in core capitalist countries probably did most to hold back tropical industrial processing, and Jacques Marseille long ago demonstrated the overall falsity of blaming Western

capitalists. Large concerns, wishing to produce where profits were greatest, generally had no hesitation in investing in the periphery, even if smaller firms worried about their administrative ability to do likewise. The greatest stumbling block was Western organized labour, seeking to protect jobs at home. That said, trade unions were less able to impose a protectionist agenda under authoritarian regimes. Salazarist Portugal or the Soviet Union, for example, pushed through colonial industrialization more effectively than democratic France or America.

In any event, the undoubted advance of industrial processing of exports in the global south led to qualitatively new labour relations, with a more precocious growth of proletarianization than is usually acknowledged. Colonial and settler regimes might try to halt or hamper this process, but they enjoyed only partial success.

### Hofmeister, Karin: Economic institutions and shifting labour relations in the Indian, Brazilian and South-African diamond mines.

'It is therefore the surface operations that more particularly need strict supervision though the employment of women and children entirely precludes the possibilities of such severe measures as are practiced in the South African mines'.

In 1904, when E.Vredenburg, the Superintendent of the Geological Survey of India, wrote his report on the possible exploitation of the Panna diamond mines in Northern India, he was aware of the existing forms of labour relations in the Indian mines and that they differed completely from the relations that prevailed in the South African mines, by that time also firmly in the hands of mostly British exploiters.

A little less than a century earlier, a Mr Christy (surgeon in service of the East India Company (EIC)), had suggested a more profitable way of exploiting one of the mines on the Deccan plateau (recently 'ceded' to the British), using a very specific form of unfree labor. He suggested that the convicts of the Cuddapah district could be put to work in the mines nearby, this would save the expenses on wages. He attached a detailed account of the profit rates he expected for the next ten years, and also added an extra encouragement: 'the government of Brazil employs all its convicts and many slaves in digging and searching for diamonds'. The Board of Directors of the EIC did not support the plan, they feared the convicts would steal the diamonds and – more importantly – they felt that individuals should invest in the exploitations of the mines, not the EIC.

Both quotes tell us a number of things. First, it shows us that British officials had a good knowledge of the type of labour relations that prevailed in the diamond mines in India, Brazil and South-Africa and that they compared the various forms and norm of labour relations. Secondly, it shows that existing labour relations mattered, albeit that Vredenburg adapted his program to the existing labour relations, whereas Christy unsuccessfully suggested to introduce convict labour in the Indian mines. Finally, not unsurprisingly, they show that next to labour, capital was an important factor to take into account when a change of labour regime was considered.

Since the early 16th century the Portuguese, Dutch and British had 'hunted' for diamonds in India. How did they respond to the existing political and economic institutions, such as property rights of both mines and the diamonds found in it, tax laws, and rules that helped the owner of the mine to monopolize not only the exploitation of the mine but also the sale of rough diamonds? More importantly, how did this response affect the labour relations in the mines? For India we can compare the situation in pre-colonial times when Deccan sultans, Mughal Emperors and Raja's of 'successor states' ruled over the mines, with the period during which the British started to gain control over areas where mines were located.

The same questions could be answered for the exploitation of the Brazilian mines that started in the 1720s, when the Portuguese first allowed a large number of entrepreneurs to exploit the mines and trade their products and then quickly established a state monopoly on mining and trading. In practice this meant that Anglo-Dutch financial partners often managed to gain these monopoly rights. The history of the South-African mines is perhaps most well known in this respect. In the late 1860s the exploitation of the mines started with local capital and local workers soon to be followed by a period of increasing control of big merchants companies, often based in London, culminating in the establishment of the De Beers Company that created a near monopoly on the mining and trading of South African diamonds.

As I hope to show the institutions created to control mining and trading had a deep impact on labour relations in and near the mine, sometimes also determining where the location of a (sometimes nascent) diamond polishing industry would be and which people could profit from the jobs and income this would generate.

### 3. Split and segmented labour markets

Bhattacharya, Shahana: 'Untouchable commodity, 'suitable' labour': Labour markets and labour relations in the leather industry in India, ca. 1870s-1960s'

This paper explores the relationship between caste, labour and work-process in the the leather industry in India from the 1870s to the 1960s. This is examined in the context of the transformation in the organization of production of primarily raw hides and skins and to an extent to semi-finished leather that was brought about, by their linkage to international markets and an exponential growth in their export under the colonial economic regime in the late 19th century, in addition to military demands and, to a much lesser degree, domestic needs.

Central to this transformation was the need to mobilise 'raw materials' and labour on an unprecedented scale. Hides and skins had been previously commoditized, but on a relatively limited scale. They were largely considered wastes that were marked by an extremely high degree of stigma. A labour market had to be created, to ensure that these could be extracted and mobilized rapidly before they perished. This peculiarity of hides, skins and leather, their 'untouchability' thus meant that modern leather production in the colonial period, came to be based primarily on labour traditionally stigmatized by extremely low caste status. Their extreme perishability meant the need to ensure that these workers had to be strategically located and transportation networks operationalized.

New geographies of production emerged, and networks of procuring hides linked village flayers of hides and skins with hide contractors, merchants and markets in small towns and tanneries in tanning clusters on the outskirts of bigger cities, finally through shipping yards and shippers' agents in Calcutta, Madras, Bombay or Karachi to buyers in London, Boston, Hamburg and other cities. In the concentrated tanning clusters that emerged as nodes in these networks, large numbers of outcaste workers, officially characterized as 'suitable labour', were recruited and deployed in the continuous, brutal and stigmatizing labour processes involved the 'dirty' work of tanning – the pre-tanning operations e.g., soaking, liming, scudding, bating, deliming, fleshing and 'half' tanning, to prepare perishable hides and skins for export in small manual tanneries.

Probing the nature of labour relations and negotiation of traditional and modern hierarchies at these sites of production, the paper examines the ways in which the labour process in the modern leather industry contributed to the reproduction of stigma and 'untouchability.' It further examines how with the introduction chemical tanning in the early 20th century, state-organised industrial training in leather production began, seeking to reinvent tanning and leather work as a 'science.' This was linked to the emphasis on recruiting a 'better quality' of 'skilled' worker – effectively, higher caste, educated workers, capable of earning higher wages – albeit unable, by moral restrictions, to handle hides and skins. The paper, in its exploration of labour markets and relations, discusses the implications of this peculiarly segmented labour market. While studying particular work-spaces historically, and understand the textures of production relations, everyday organisation of work and negotiations and disputes in particular shop-floors in the leather industry, the paper continuously seeks to operate with a dual gaze, highlighting the larger connections that linked these workspaces, with markets, and manufacturing and production sites, and workers in other parts of the world. This connection crucially influenced the everyday dynamics of production, the operation of capital and of the state. It was this complex grid through which domination and exploitation was exercised in this industry, in addition to caste and stigma.

The paper will further indicate how this labour process itself became, historically, the basis of caste-based solidarities of workers making 'the politics of production' the site of

'production of politics' in this industry. Through a close reading of historical sources, the paper will discuss how workers on the shop-floors – pit workers, knifemen etc. – negotiated dominant paradigms of stigma and work and hybrid regimes of power in the making of their own history and that of the leather industry.

#### Fourie, Johan and Erik Green: Labour relations in South Africa before the emancipation of slaves, 1800-1834.

How did settler farmers in the Cape colony react to the ban on slave imports in 1807? It is generally agreed that the farmers faced difficulties because of the increasing costs of labour towards the end of the eighteenth century (Ross 1986, Dooling 2008, Feinstein 2005, Giliomee 2003), yet preliminary evidence suggest that farmers did not replace slaves with alternative forms of labour. On the contrary, the proportion of slaves remained fairly constant during the period (Fourie and Green 2014). In earlier research we proposed that previous scholars failed to grasp the effects of the ban as they assume that slavery substituted alternative forms of labour (Green 2013, Fourie and Green 2014). Instead, we argue that slavery in the late 18th century Cape was a complement and not a substitute. It implies that we cannot understand the effects of the early 19th century ban by focusing on the supply of slaves only, but also the supply, prices and price elasticities of various forms of non-slave labour. We exploit two previously unknown sources to investigate this proposition: First, newly transcribed tax censuses of the early British colonial period in South Africa's Cape Colony allow us to quantitatively investigate changes in the labour force of settler farms. Cape settlers employed household labour, European knechts, imported slaves, slaves born in the Colony, and the native Khoe labour on farms throughout the Colony. As far as we are aware, these are the first sources to provide accurate micro-level evidence on the contribution of the Khoe, revealing the nature of the complementary between slave and indigenous forms of labour. Second, a compilation of letters written by farmers and only recently discovered in the Cape Archives provide a fascinating glimpse into the labour disputes between settler farmers, colonial officials and enslaved and free labour.

#### Nederveen Meerkerk, Elise van: Threads of imperialism. Colonial connections and gendered labour relations in the textile industry, the Netherlands and the Netherlands Indies, ca. 1830-1940.

This paper explores the changes in labour relations in the textile industries in the Netherlands and the Netherlands Indies from the perspective of colonial entanglements following from economic fluctuations and policies. It is presupposed that colonial connections not only influenced developments in the indigenous textile industry of the Netherlands Indies, but that in turn also labour relations in the Netherlands were significantly affected.

Colonial policies such as the Cultivation System (c. 1830-1870) led to an intensification of labour and a monetization of the Javanese economy in the first half of the nineteenth century. This not only led to changing labour and consumption patterns for Indonesian households, who had less time to produce their own textiles, and more money and opportunity to buy their cotton cloth in the market. Moreover, the import monopoly of cottons into Java by the Dutch Trading Company (Nederlandsche Handel-Maatschappij) led to rapid industrialization in the Netherlands, in particular the mechanization of textile production and the concentration of labour

in factories. This in turn greatly affected (gendered) labour relations in the Netherlands, particularly in industrial centres.

Nevertheless, this paper also aims to show that Javanese textile producers were not pure victims of colonialism without any agency. First of all, substituting hand spun-yarn by factory yarn could actually result into the saving of labour and time for many Javanese women, who for a while continued to weave their own cloth and sold surpluses in the local market. Moreover, once Javanese textile producers discovered that cheaper, lesser quality cotton cloth, were popular among Javanese households, they moved from higher quality to lower quality fabrics, by which they were, at least for a while, quite able to compete with the Dutch factory-made cotton cloth. This in fact led to anxiety by the colonial officers, who in the late 1860 lamented the warehouses filled with Dutch textiles in Batavia.

Around the turn of the twentieth century, however, the colonial authorities proved particularly effective in stimulating especially agricultural export crops such as coffee, sugar and later palm oil, and the extraction of minerals such as oil, rather than stimulating home industry. Import substitution industrialization, such as for instance introduced in India or Latin America in the early twentieth century, was not a real option in the Netherlands Indies. Only in the 1930s, the Indonesian textile industry was increasingly protected, not, as argued by Van Zanden and Marks (2012, 101) because of indigenous developments, but because of the deterioration of the Dutch textile industry. These examples show how the Dutch and Indonesian textile industries were very much intertwined in the colonial period, and how important it is to investigate the impact of these mutual influences on gendered labour relations in both parts of the world.

## Rossum, Matthias van, 'Maritime labour relations in Europe and Asia'

Shipping was crucial to early modern and modern global trade. The international and mobile character of the industry had an important impact on maritime labour in various ways. The international character of the sector not only effected maritime culture and sailors' cosmopolitan worldview. With increasingly global shipping, different local and regional maritime labour markets became entangled from the early modern period onwards. European shipping companies operating in the intercontinental and overseas trade were able to employ European, Asian and Atlantic maritime labour markets. From mid nineteenth century onwards, renewed waves of internationalization increased this process. The maritime sector – shipping and its adjoining industries – not only brought together sailors of different origins, it also linked groups working under different labour relations. In the past centuries, the consequent internationalization of competition for both employers and employees interacted with changing patterns of recruitment and institutional solutions for the complex (or 'imperfect') character of the maritime labour market – resulting from the difficulty and irregularity in the way supply and demand of labour meet. This paper / presentation will address the 'long' internationalization of maritime labour markets in Europe and Asia (1500-2000) in relation to developments in maritime labour relations and (segmented) labour markets.

## 4. Currency and the payment of work

Hoefte, Rosemarijn: Labor in Caribbean Plantation Societies in the Long Nineteenth Century.

With the abolition of slavery in the Caribbean (between 1804 and 1886) wage laborers entered the plantations. Needless to say, this was a radical change for employees and employers; particularly the latter group found it difficult to accept the former enslaved as free agents. As a result, the transition from slave to free labor was complex and the division between free and unfree labor more nuanced than often assumed.

Even though the profitability of Caribbean large-scale agriculture declined appreciably, and production transferred to other regions, the need for a disciplined and cheap labour force continued to exist. Planters, often supported by their colonial governments, searched for alternative sources of labor. In the Caribbean, indentured labor was the preferred solution; it generally meant that recruits from Asia (India, China, and Java) were transported to the Caribbean, where they were put to work for a specified number of years. The system of indenture curtailed the freedom and mobility of workers, who were unable to withdraw from the labor process as the employer could resort to the criminal law to enforce the labor contract.

Importantly, however, the formerly enslaved were often reluctant to break social and cultural ties established at the estates, and alternative employment was not always readily available. Despite the fact that planters now generally denounced the former enslaved as unsuitable for agricultural work, most plantations still employed freedman, and even paid them relatively good wages as they were experienced and skilled workmen.

This paper focuses on (plantation) labor after the abolition of slavery in the British and Dutch Caribbean in particular. Indentured migration really took off in the 1830s, when the British transported thousands of workers from India to their colonies in the Caribbean, including British Guiana (in total 239,000 migrants), Trinidad (144,000), and Jamaica (36,500). Later, British Indians were indentured also in the French colonies and the Dutch colony of Suriname.

The paper has two, related objectives. The first concerns the supposed monolithic nature of the system of indenture. By looking at indentured labor and payment regimes, I hope to show that not only time, but also the prevailing political economy seem to have been of crucial importance in the various arrangements of the indentured labor system. Second, I question whether there is a clear-cut division between enslaved, indentured, and free labor.

Lucassen, Jan: Deep monetization in Eurasia and the payment of wages, ca. 1200- 1950

Wage labourers and small independent producers not only are paid out in coins in the period under scrutiny, they also need to dispose of small change ("deep monetization"). Thus, patterns of coin circulation may function as guide fossils for shifts in labour relations, in particular of wage labour. This hypothesis of the link between long-term shifts in coin circulation and labour relations may be tested both for Europe, India and China since about 1200 to the mid-twentieth century when other ways of payment came into general use.

Pallaver, Karin: 'Paying in cowries, paying in coins. Wages and currencies in early colonial British East Africa (1890-1920)'

In the early colonial period the intensity of the labor demand in East Africa was rather exceptional, with portage absorbing much energy at the same time as the plantation enterprise and the railway construction started to develop (Clayton and Savage, 1974; Iliffe, 1979; Kitching, 1980). The analysis of the shifts and continuities in labour relations in East Africa has shown that wage labour increased, but not on a permanent basis, being often combined with other labour relations, mainly reciprocal labour (Pallaver, forthcoming).

One of the most significant institutional changes of this period was the introduction of a single currency centrally issued by the colonial state. This was aimed at reducing transaction costs and at increasing the control on macroeconomic conditions in the colonies. At the same time, building one, single currency in the place of regional, locally circulating African currencies was a necessary step towards "civilization", as its use implied the recognition of the institution that had issued it (Helleiner, 2003; Hogendorn and Johnson, 1986). The colonial monetization was, however, a more complex and nuanced transition than it is generally assumed, with African commodity currencies, like cowries, beads and cloth, circulating along colonial coins and notes for a long time.

This paper focuses on this transitional period and looks at the ways in which wages were paid in order to assess how money rhythms and wealth circulation influenced the development of labour relations. In what currency work was paid? In Uganda, for instance, payments made by the colonial government were monthly made in rupees, whereas unskilled labour was daily paid in cowries. How did these variations in monetary rhythms change opportunities of accumulating wealth? The accumulation of and access to wealth had obvious consequences on the availability of wage labour, that became particularly evident when it was tax collection time.

The paper uses evidence on wage payments for porters and troops, unskilled and skilled labourers, but also chiefs employed by the colonial government, in order to explore how the economic and institutional changes brought by colonialism were assimilated or embraced within African communities (Guyer, 1995).