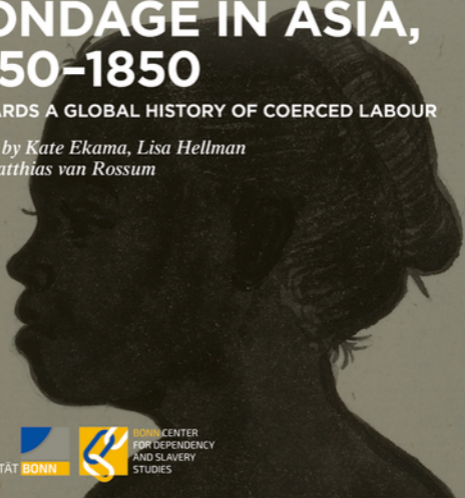


DE GRUYTER

SLAVERY AND BONDAGE IN ASIA, 1550–1850

TOWARDS A GLOBAL HISTORY OF COERCED LABOUR

*Edited by Kate Ekama, Lisa Hellman
and Matthias van Rossum*



UNIVERSITÄT **BONN**



BONN CENTER
FOR DEPENDENCY
AND SLAVERY
STUDIES

DEPENDENCY AND SLAVERY STUDIES

DE
G

Slavery and Bondage in Asia, 1550–1850

Dependency and Slavery Studies



Edited by
Jeannine Bischoff and Stephan Conermann

Volume 3

Slavery and Bondage in Asia, 1550–1850



Towards a Global History of Coerced Labour

Edited by

Kate Ekama, Lisa Hellman and Matthias van Rossum

DE GRUYTER

Gefördert durch die Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG) im Rahmen der Exzellenzstrategie des Bundes und der Länder – Exzellenzcluster Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies (BCDSS) EXC 2036/1-2020, Projektnummer: 390683433

Funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG, German Research Foundation) under Germany's Excellence Strategy – Cluster of Excellence Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies (BCDSS) EXC 2036/1-2020, Project No.: 390683433

ISBN 978-3-11-077612-6

e-ISBN (PDF) 978-3-11-077724-6

e-ISBN (EPUB) 978-3-11-077731-4

ISSN 2701-1127

DOI <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110777246>



This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License. For details go to <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>.

Creative Commons license terms for re-use do not apply to any content (such as graphs, figures, photos, excerpts, etc.) not original to the Open Access publication and further permission may be required from the rights holder. The obligation to research and clear permission lies solely with the party re-using the material.

Library of Congress Control Number: 2022941302

Bibliographic information published by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek

The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data are available from the Internet at <http://dnb.dnb.de>.

© 2022 with the authors, editing © 2022 Kate Ekama, Lisa Hellman and Matthias van Rossum, published by Walter de Gruyter GmbH, Berlin/Boston
This book is published with open access at www.degruyter.com.

Cover image: Silhouetportret van Bietja by Jan Brandes, 1780-85, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam.
Frontispiece: Silhouetportret van Bietja, Silhouetportret van Sara and Silhouetportret van Flora by Jan Brandes, 1780-85, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam.
Typesetting: Integra Software Services Pvt. Ltd.
Printing and binding: CPI books GmbH, Leck

www.degruyter.com



Contents

List of Maps — IX

Opening Thoughts

Kate Ekama, Lisa Hellman and Matthias van Rossum

Slavery and Labour Coercion in Asia – Towards a Global History — 3

Matthias van Rossum

Reflections on Comparing and Connecting Regimes of Slavery and Coerced Labour — 17

Claude Chevaleyre

Beyond Maritime Asia. Ideology, Historiography, and Prospects for a Global History of Slaving in Early-Modern Asia — 31

Coerced Mobilities

Samantha Sint Nicolaas

Maritime (Im)mobility: Reconstructing the Supply of Enslaved Labour to Batavia, 1624–1801 — 51

Hans Hägerdal

A Slave Economy in the East Indies: Seaborne Transportation of Slaves to the Banda Islands — 77

Mònica Ginés-Blasi

The ‘Coolie Trade’ via Southeast Asia: Exporting Chinese Indentured Labourers to Cuba through the Spanish Philippines — 97

Regimes

Kate Ekama

Boundaries of Bondage: Slavery and Enslaveability in VOC Ceylon — 121

James Fujitani

Government Slavery in Portuguese Melaka, 1511–1523 — 141

Lisa Hellman

The Eastward Routes: Swedish Prisoners and Overlapping Regimes of Coercion in the Russian, Chinese and Dzungar Empires — 161

Sanjog Rupakheti

Households, Family Politics, and Slavery in Nepal — 179

Vinil Baby Paul

Local Networks of the Slave Trade in Colonial Kerala — 199

Transformations

Rômulo da Silva Ehalt

Suspicion and Repression: Ming China, Tokugawa Japan, and the End of the Japanese-European Slave Trade (1614–1635) — 215

Amal Shahid

Famine Labour and Coercion in Relief-based Public Works Construction in Colonial India in the Late Nineteenth Century — 231

Bibliography — 251

List of Contributors — 273

Index — 275

List of Maps

- Map 1** The Indonesian Archipelago — 52
- Map 2** The Indian Ocean — 56
- Map 3** The Banda Islands and Maluku — 79
- Map 4** Chinese indentured labour migration flows to the Philippines and Cuba — 99
- Map 5** Central Asia in the eighteenth century — 162



Opening Thoughts

Kate Ekama, Lisa Hellman and Matthias van Rossum

Slavery and Labour Coercion in Asia – Towards a Global History

The study of slavery and coerced labour in a global perspective currently sparks new interest. The last years have shown how much we have to gain from wide-ranging comparisons and open-ended discussion about how coercion in the past should and could be understood.¹ In these new explorations of labour coercion and slavery where comparisons are made on a global scale, the world beyond the Atlantic, especially the Indian Ocean, Indonesian Archipelago, and East and Central Asia, has an important part to play in widening and enriching our understanding. Nevertheless, when discussing labour coercion, and slavery in particular, the dominant concepts and most commonly used examples are still derived from the Atlantic world and the histories of those societies seen as ‘classic’ slave-societies. For a long time, the history of coerced labour has suffered from a dual Eurocentric bias: Slavery has primarily brought to mind the images of Atlantic chattel slavery, and studies of work have either outright or implicitly been based on a model of the northern European wage labour.² This book constitutes an attempt to re-centre that story to Asia in order to explore how this can help us reassemble (global) histories of slavery and labour coercion.

On the cover of this volume we meet a woman.³ From the detail with which her portrait was drawn we can see that she is an individual, her unique features recorded by the artist. Her portrait is part of a series of three, and from the details accompanying each portrait, we know their (given) names: Flora, Bietja, and Sara. Their portraits are marked by a clear tension. They show the three women as types, or moulds, depicted in profile with no context, and unrecognisable to today’s viewers. The woman on the cover is someone, or anyone. Her likeness reminds us of the perhaps better-known silhouettes of African enslaved people, depictions that were

1 See for example: Michael Zeuske, “Historiography and Research Problems of Slavery and the Slave Trade in a Global-Historical Perspective,” *International Review of Social History* 57 (2012): 87–111; Marcel van der Linden, “Global Labor History: Promising Challenges,” *International Labor and Working-Class History* 84 (2013): 218–25; Hideaki Suzuki, *Abolitions as a Global Experience* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2015); Damian Alan Pargas and Felicia Roşu, *Critical Readings on Global Slavery*, 4 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 2017); Kostas Vlassopoulos, “Does Slavery Have a History? The Consequences of a Global Approach,” *Journal of Global Slavery* 1, no. 1 (2016): 5–27; Matthias van Rossum, “Slavery and Its Transformations: Prolegomena for a Global and Comparative Research Agenda,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 63, no. 3 (2021): 566–98.

2 Marcel van der Linden, “Dissecting Coerced Labor,” in *On Coerced Labor: Work and Compulsion after Chattel Slavery*, ed. Marcel van der Linden and Magaly Rodríguez García (Leiden: Brill, 2016): 291–322.

3 Silhouette portraits of Flora, Bietja and Sara, by Jan Bandes (1780–85). Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

part of Atlantic slavery's repertoire of domination.⁴ As we know, however, these three women were named Flora, Bietja, and Sara, and at the time they were being sketched they lived as enslaved persons in Batavia, the headquarters of the Dutch East India Company in Asia, in the household of the artist who painted them. We think the portrait of this enslaved woman presents an interesting, and perhaps fruitful, set of tensions that run through the chapters in this book. Trying to make sense of histories of slavery, we are aiming to understand coerced mobilities, regimes and transformations through everyday experiences and practices, but are engaging with and trying to read against the grain of the sources of states, companies and other elites that all too often left out enslaved and other people, or referred to them as unnamed, elusive individuals. And while attempting to move beyond a multitude of dichotomies ('Asian' versus 'Atlantic' slavery; 'free' versus 'unfree' labour), we are continuously confronted with the lingering shadows of greyscale or even black-and-white analytical schemes that they produced. This edited volume aims to use these tensions in such a way that they can form the starting point for fruitful contributions to globalizing perspectives.

The histories of slavery, bondage and labour coercion in Asian worlds still occupy too peripheral a place in these global debates on coercion and labour. This does not mean that there is a lack of historical studies of coercion for these parts of the world, but it certainly says something about the studies of slavery and coercion, and how area studies centred on Asia have treated these topics. In order to rethink slavery and labour coercion, and to incorporate it into a global history, we need to move beyond the current fragmentation of the field, in which the work within area studies and within nationally oriented history are less than seamlessly integrated into comparative debates of coercion.⁵ For this reason, the first challenge in creating a global history of labour coercion that includes Asia will be to build bridges between existing but to some degree separate historiographies, as well as to acknowledge both the value of such diverse historiographies and their current limitations. In traditional understandings of regimes of slavery and coerced labour, coercion in Asia has commonly been understood as being somehow softer and less brutal, or as a local or 'indigenous' phenomenon, compared to slavery in the Atlantic. This strand of thought can even be made to go so far as suggesting that it was somehow less disruptive to the societies involved than its supposedly European-driven counterpart in the maritime Atlantic world.

In the face of that view of Asian coercion, much can be gained by applying global historical approaches. We understand these as using comparisons as well as connections in order to see historical processes in a potentially different light.

⁴ Agnes Lugo-Ortiz and Angela Rosenthal, eds., *Slave Portraiture in the Atlantic World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

⁵ Titas Chakraborty and Matthias van Rossum, "Slave Trade and Slavery in Asia: New Perspectives," *Journal of Social History* 54, no. 1 (2020): 1–14.

This is where this book fits in. Some of the facets of coercion thought to be specific to certain regions are not, other things thought to be general throughout the continent, or for slavery globally, might not be. In this book, therefore, while the studies pay attention to local developments of slavery, they also connect them to intercultural exchanges and contacts.

To date, area studies focusing on these regions rarely put the theme of coercion at centre stage. For a long time, coercion and slavery were either ignored, or seen as traditional parts of Asian societies, for example in perspectives on the centrality of bondage in state formation in Southeast Asia, or the emphasis on the role of coercion in ‘oriental’ or tributary modes of production in the historiography of South Asia. As we increasingly have come to understand, the slave trade and slavery not only transformed Africa and the Americas, but slavery and wider forms of bondage and labour coercion were not simply static, traditional or unchanging phenomena in Asia either. Instead, slavery and coerced labour were at the root of major transformations throughout the Indian Ocean, the Indonesian Archipelago and East and Central Asia: before, after and especially during European colonial expansion.⁶

In this context it might be helpful to remind ourselves not only of the presence of European colonialism, but also of the Asian empires that effected the transformation and the upholding of coercive regimes. However, only in recent decades have Asian empires been included in historical debates of empire and colonialism. The European colonial expansion, especially in the Indian Ocean and the Indonesian Archipelago, led to the increase of coerced human mobility, most notable in the form of slave trading and to the expansion of slavery and *corvée* labour regimes.⁷ Slavery and coercion, however, were not limited to the European colonial spheres, and a one-sided emphasis on European regimes might lead to the danger of connecting slavery solely to European colonialism.⁸ This volume aims to apply a broad perspective on the development and transformations of slavery and coerced labour, and therefore includes contributions that study Asian cases of human trafficking, enslavement and coerced labour as well as colonial ones. These histories contribute

⁶ Jeff Eden, *Slavery and Empire in Central Asia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018); Pamela Kyle Crossley, “Slavery in Early Modern China,” in *The Cambridge World History of Slavery*, vol. 3, ed. David Eltis and Stanley L. Engerman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011): 186–214; Angela Schottenhammer, “Slaves and Forms of Slavery in Late Imperial China (Seventeenth to Early Twentieth Centuries),” *Slavery & Abolition* 24, no. 2 (2003): 143–54.

⁷ See for example: Paul E. Lovejoy, *Transformations in Slavery: A History of Slavery in Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); Richard B. Allen, *European Slave Trading in the Indian Ocean, 1500–1850* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2015). On the expansion of *corvée*, see for example: Matthias van Rossum and Merve Tosun, “Corvée Capitalism: The Dutch East India Company, Colonial Expansion, and Labor Regimes in Early Modern Asia,” *Journal of Asian Studies* 80, no. 4 (2021): 911–32.

⁸ See for example Geoff Wade, ed., *Asian Expansions: The Historical Experiences of Polity Expansion in Asia* (Abingdon, NY: Routledge, 2015).

to better situate trajectories of slavery and labour coercion regimes in Asian histories, as well as to highlight how the inclusion of cases of Asian histories can advance and benefit the study of slavery globally.

This book represents a shift in the history of coercion: it is part of a general attempt to overcome the fragmentation in the studies of slaveries in Asia – a state that to some degree remains despite the important studies we have seen produced in the last decade.⁹ This fragmentation has taken many shapes. There has been a geographic fragmentation in which certain regions – such as South Asia or the Western Indian Ocean – receive attention to the exclusion of inter-regional connections. There is a conceptual fragmentation, whereby e.g. slavery, serfdom, coolie trade and convict labour are treated separately and seen as unconnected phenomena. Finally, there is a fragmentation within the historiography based on temporal divides. Often driven by the different official timelines of formalisation and abolitions of slavery and other forms of coercion in specific places, the histories of different centuries have remained segmented.

Advancing the debates on slavery, coercion, and bondage it is vital to attempt to untangle some of the conceptual nuances. Although deeply connected, these are not the same, and in bringing together slavery, coercion and bondage within the scope of a single study and framework, it is not our intention thereby to conflate them. We regard slavery as a distinct social formation that is marked by a simultaneous claim over the bodies of enslaved individuals or groups (property rights) *and* over their actions and behaviour (usage right). Slavery as constituted by these two claims manifested itself in different ways, but was often accompanied by distinct, inferior social conditions in which enslaved people had fewer rights, or even none at all, than other segments of a society's population. In the 'classic' traditions of slavery, the claims and rights over enslaved people were formalized by legal frameworks and could be transferred through trade. This commodification of enslaved people was not limited to colonial contexts, but was certainly a central feature of colonial slavery and increased strongly with the expansion of European colonial empires across the globe. The subsequent abolitions of first the slave trade and later of legal slavery itself curbed the global expansion of legalized slave trading and slavery, but did not end the existence of slavery itself: it merely transformed its appearance.

⁹ Such works include Alessandro Stanziani, *Bondage: Labor and Rights in Eurasia from the Sixteenth to the Early Twentieth Centuries* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2014); Christoph Witzentrath, ed., *Eurasian Slavery, Ransom and Abolition in World History, 1200–1860* (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2015); Michael Zeuske, *Handbuch Geschichte der Sklaverei: Eine Globalgeschichte von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart*, 2 vols., 2nd ed. (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2020); and go back to early works including Anthony Reid, ed., *Slavery, Bondage, and Dependency in Southeast Asia* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1983).

In response to the waves of abolitions, old and new ways of coercing and binding labour were circulated, implemented, and expanded. Again, the role of Asian histories and developments are not to be ignored here. Long before being implemented in the Atlantic, the practice of indentured labour migrations developed in local and colonial contexts throughout South, Southeast and East Asia, with highly coercive contract forms that bound workers to employers, oftentimes through recruitment that was less than voluntary or through binding mechanisms rooted in debt relations. Simultaneously, *corvée* labour regimes were adapted and expanded under early European colonialism in Asia, for example in the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Dutch East India Company empire, where it became key to the production of global commodities such as cinnamon and later coffee. These *corvée* systems, in which those coerced to work were considered not property but subjects, were copied and implemented by colonial powers in nineteenth-century Africa. Such other forms of coercive labour regimes thus existed alongside slavery and the slave trade in early modern Asia, and were marked by distinct but deeply interconnected developments. It is thus crucial to distinguish between slavery and other forms of coercion and bondage while understanding how they developed in their local contexts, in the wider contexts of global and long-distance connections and processes, and in the interconnections between different manifestations of labour coercion.

These specific social formations are all part of a wider spectrum of relations that are marked by coercion and bondage. Perhaps we can best consider these relations as located within a triangle in which the three points represent the relative degree to which the elements coercion, dependency and autonomy constitute these relations. Coercion as a mechanism to make people act (or not act) in specific manners by the use or threat of force has in the past (and present) manifested itself in a variety of ways. Slavery as a relation is defined to a high degree by coercion in the various ways in which people are compelled to work and are controlled, in the ways in which ownership is organized, and so on. But it might be clear that not all coerced labour is slavery (think of convict labour, *corvée* labour). Coercion and slavery are often mentioned together with bondage as a way to signify the existence of and to conceptualize wider coercive relationships. What distinguishes bondage, however, is not so much a different or deeper manifestation of the element of coercion, but rather a link with the element of dependency. The condition of having to rely on someone, and the subsequent subordination, can result not only from coercion, but also for example from precarity. Both coercion and dependency constrain the autonomy of people but, even when strongly limited, degrees of autonomy and agency can remain within the most coercive and dependent states of human being.

We propose that to analyse and consider these three different elements – coercion, dependency and autonomy – will help to further develop our understanding of slavery and other forms of labour coercion. In doing so, we cannot ignore the ways in which these intersected in the past, with each element appearing in different and overlapping manifestations. Moving away from understanding slavery and other

labour regimes within a dichotomy of ‘free’ and ‘unfree’ labour, it can perhaps be tempting to consider the different sides of such a coercion-dependency-autonomy triangle as separate spectrums. We would instead argue that these elements overlap and coexist, and reappear in every manifestation of slavery and other coercive labour relation.

This approach, rather than confining ourselves to strictly defined manifestations of slavery or other coercions, proposes that attempts at untangling these concepts are a necessary part of trying to overcome the fragmentation that has characterised past scholarship. Investigating how slavery, coercion and bondage relate to one another and manifested in the past – within, between and connecting empires and polities, and over time – is exactly the task taken up by the contributors to this volume.

This book spans the period of early globalization, roughly from the early sixteenth to the late nineteenth century, and ranges from Russia to Japan, from China down to different parts of Indonesia. It includes maritime links and connections with European actors such as the Portuguese and the Dutch, but also overland regimes such as that of Nepal. Spanning a broad temporal and geographical scope, the chapters show dramatic events, such as abolitions and massacres, as well as the enduring patterns of coercion that precede – and succeed – such shifts. The examples of this book offer a comprehensive view into coerced labour in the Indian Ocean, Indonesian Archipelago and East and Central Asian worlds, regions that also need to form part of the global history discussion of slavery and coercion. What is more, their differences and similarities in approaches and findings help contribute to a general understanding of how to study and understand coercion in the past.

First, the studies underline the current position that a narrow understanding of slavery as the antithesis to ‘freedom’ obscures as much of past relations of power and oppression as it would illuminate: the authors in this book use various contextual definitions of coercion, slavery and imprisonment, all depending on their temporal and spatial contexts, while highlighting the similarities and connections between these contexts – and bringing them out in comparative sections at the end of each chapter.

Second, the book’s long chronological scope helps explore historical transformations across different types of coercion. Rather than considering any formal declaration of abolition, whether national, colonial or imperial, as the end of a regime of coercion, we are enabled to see how labour regimes and structures shifted and transformed, often preserving and remaking ethnic, racialised and gendered hierarchies of power, rather than abolishing them.

Third and finally, this book engages not only in a comparative exercise, but also takes connections into account. Connections are analysed in a regional, geographic sense, as well as in terms of identifying links and transfers between polities and across timeframes, for example through mercantile, cultural and discursive ties. Often these connections should also be considered as part of discursive means to understand and make sense of the self and the other, such as in the case of early missionaries in

Japan, or of the rulers of the Gorkhali state, who combined local and external norms to create something new. This could shape not only practices of coercion, but also the terms and concepts in which these were fashioned, or sometimes disguised. This is a book considering such connections between regions and regimes as much as it is offering thought-provoking comparisons; in both cases, it ties together cases and historiographies that have too often been considered separately.

1 A Global Approach to Slavery in Asia

In this volume, we hope to overcome geographical and conceptual fragmentation, as well as overly strict conceptual divides within the broad and elusive field of coercion in Asia. To bring together these past labour regimes, connections and transformations, we suggest a three-pronged approach that draws on the strengths of comparative research, the study of global connections and of (social) micro-historical approaches that understand slavery as a practice and explore historical developments and dynamics from the level of everyday interactions.

The chapters of this book explore three overlapping themes – coerced mobilities, regimes, and transformations – and interrogate how these play out and interact in different cases across time and space. Our approach to coerced labour thus comprises a dual path towards the definition of coercion itself, one that combines a thick local history, based on emic understandings and practices of coercion, with an entangled view of history, i.e. an understanding that interregional connections also change and shift historical developments.

To some extent this book is also an exercise in overcoming limitations generated by dominant trends in global history, limitations that include solely comparative studies, instead of studies that also explore connections between regions and systems, and top-down and institutionalist readings of history instead of moving to thick everyday levels and understandings of past historical realities.¹⁰ In order to balance these limitations, this book suggests an approach to the history of coercion inspired by global micro-history. Micro-historical studies, especially such that are combined with a global approach, represent a way to analyse coercion that requires a balanced dealing with different historical layers, with the human and individual perspective in relation to structures, and between the micro, meso and macro levels of historical development. The history of labour coercion is one of the domains in

¹⁰ Some of these criticisms are put forward in Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, “On Ignored Global ‘Scientific Revolutions’,” *Journal of Early Modern History* 21 (2017): 420–32; other of these critiques, as well as counter-arguments, can be found in Richard Drayton and David Motadel, “Discussion: The Futures of Global History,” *Journal of Global History* 13, no. 1 (2018): 1–21.

which the historian is forced upon the crossroads between these levels of analysis, and thus makes for a good case to work them out.¹¹

The authors in this book explore radically different contexts and understandings of coerced labour: some have been called slave labour, others not. Translation is a key and recognisably problematic part of the work of any scholar who examines slavery, coercion and bondage in their diverse manifestations in the past. How do we translate between different languages the labels given to practices, mechanisms and relationships in the past, whether they existed in the formal sphere of law or in the informal arena? The English language (as in this volume) has traditionally dominated the study and conceptual understanding of slavery and other forms of labour. To limit our study to a formally applied label of slavery might on the surface seem to produce coherency. Going into the thick local historical descriptions, however, such a limitation might actually obscure more than it reveals. For one thing, if we exclude everything that was not legally called slavery, we risk blinding ourselves to forms of coercion that might not neatly fit into the standard usage of that term. This would echo the biases in the study and definition of slavery that focus on its formal and ‘chattel’ form, but also often exclude female labour, reproductive labour, and specifically informal and female forms of coercion and exploitation.¹² To focus, as this book does, on the entire spectrum of coercion from plantation slavery in Banda to the ambiguous position of prisoners of war in the Dzungar Empire, allows also for a discussion of the limits, exit points and possible opportunities of systems of coercion. Most importantly, it sets the stage for a comparison of systems that might appear different, formally and legally, but that oftentimes produced similar practices.

Throughout this work, we use the term ‘regime’ to describe how coercion was organised in larger systems of joint conceptual understandings, and joint practices. This should not be understood as a parallel to a Wallersteinian world systems approach: rather, regimes of coercion are temporal as much as geographical, and could overlap – even be created by an overlap – in terms of polities involved, regions covered, or of the long and short-term historical developments they are used to describe.

Thereby, this book should be understood not only as an empirical contribution to the field of coercion in Asia, but also a methodological inspiration, demonstrating the importance and the value of both connecting different past labour regimes in Asia, and placing them side by side in a careful comparison. To do so brings with

¹¹ This is well argued in Christian G. de Vito and Anne Gerritsen, “Micro-Spatial Histories of Labour: Towards a New Global History,” in *Micro-Spatial Histories of Global Labour*, ed. Christian G. de Vito and Anne Gerritsen (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018): 1–28; 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; Mark Gamsa, “Biography and (Global) Microhistory,” *New Global Studies* 11, no. 3 (2017): 231–41; Natalie Zemon Davis, *Trickster Travels: A Sixteenth-Century Muslim between Worlds* (London: Faber & Faber, 2006).

¹² Van Rossum, “Slavery and Its Transformations.”

it theoretical and methodological concerns, demanding a nuanced discussion. For this reason, our book starts with a reflection by Matthias van Rossum on how to carry out global studies of coercion, and the pitfalls and opportunities that await us there. This thread is then picked up by Claude Chevalere who highlights the problematic nature of how to translate terms in studying slavery and coercion in China, and how these themes have, or rather have not, been developed in the historiography. Together, the opening contributions highlight the difficulties in combining fields that have so long developed separately.

2 Three Themes of Coercion in Asia

The empirical chapters in this book are grouped around the key themes of coerced mobilities, regimes, and transformations. As will be evident, many of these chapters could easily have fallen into more than one of those categories. The themes are not meant to be conclusive, delineate boundaries or act as closed containers for certain debates: they serve to group chapters in order to bring them into dialogue with each other. For that reason, the choice of themes intentionally resists temporal and geographical homogeneity, to instead produce comparisons, tensions and juxtapositions between contexts, regimes and periods that are otherwise rarely put side by side. The similarities, ruptures and contradictions are highlighted in the final section of each paper, where the authors offer a comparative outlook with other contributions in this volume.

The themes of coerced mobilities, regimes, and transformations help underline the three main arguments that run through this book. First, that coercion is not best understood in terms of a binary opposition between slavery and freedom, but as a continuum on which a person's experience and understanding of their position can shift over time. Secondly, that it is more rewarding to trace transformations and shifts between types of coercion, showing both dramatic rifts and lingering norms, than to focus on set points of formal abolitions. Thirdly, this book undertakes deliberate comparisons between regions and regimes rarely considered side by side. It does, however, combine this comparative approach with the notion of connections, showing the importance of considering ties between both regions and regimes to explain seemingly emic developments.

2.1 Coerced Mobilities

The chapters in the first section question how coerced mobilities tie together different places and contexts, and how these connect, impact and transform slavery and coercive labour regimes. The chapters explore coerced mobilities in two ways. On

the one hand, focusing primarily on maritime connections, they address the routes along which coerced people were transported, both at a regional level, as outlined in Hans Hägerdal's contribution on the Banda islands, and over larger distances, as brought to the fore in Mònica Ginés-Blasi's work connecting China, the Philippines and Latin America. On the other hand, the chapters address the impact of those routes on the places from which coerced men, women and children were transported as well as on their places of unchosen arrival. Thereby, global coerced mobilities and human trafficking alike are put forward as driving historical change.

The chapters all begin from the understanding that not all coerced mobilities are the same and thus try to distinguish different forms and their particular dynamics in specific times and places. Sometimes such coerced mobility was a practice driven by the expansion of early modern colonial regimes, such as that shown by Samantha Sint Nicolaas in Batavia, or Hägerdal in Banda. As Ginés-Blasi shows for the case of the Iberian empire, however, coerced mobility was also used within – and to consolidate – modern imperial regimes. This section thus explores not only the coerced mobilities in and of themselves, but also how they connected different places and contexts. That makes it possible not only to relate coerced mobilities to intercultural connections, that is to show when one was part of the other, but also to consider the *role* played by the intercultural contact, and to what degree we can consider intercultural contacts as possible causes or effects of coerced mobility. Such a question also necessitates methodological considerations, such as whether intercultural contacts and language differences could obscure transformations in coercive regimes, and blur analytical understandings both for contemporaries and for present-day scholars trying to unravel the social relations and practices. In short, the chapters all present examples of how to study coercive regimes in a framework that allows for both unifying and differentiating analyses.

Based on a new dataset of ship arrivals at Batavia, Sint Nicolaas' chapter shows the shifting and changing patterns of maritime coercive mobilities. By analysing the details of enslaved people on board vessels arriving at the port of Batavia, Sint Nicolaas augments Markus Vink's circuits of Indian Ocean slaving with the regional routes and changing flows of forced migrants who entered the city. Her chapter demonstrates the potential of the ongoing database creation for Indian Ocean slave voyages.

Turning our view further east in the VOC world, Hägerdal's chapter investigates the interconnections of European and local slaving through the case study of the Banda Islands. Hägerdal traces the maritime slave routes that were used to supply the nutmeg plantations with enslaved labourers, and analyses the demographics of the enslaved. In particular, he highlights the issues of gender and age, and how to trace these in the sources. Based on his analysis of slave registers, company *dagregisters*, and ship captains' logs, Hägerdal reveals the importance of regional slave trade routes and elements of continuities between slaving before and after the VOC conquest of the Banda Islands.

Finally, Mònica Ginés-Blasi turns our attention to a slightly later point in time, namely nineteenth-century forms of coercion that succeeded the formal commercial flows of slavery. Tracing flows of coolie labour and their coercive contracts, her study demonstrates long-distance coerced mobility within the Iberian empire, and how this simultaneously was an imperial affair and connected Chinese and middle American labour regimes.

2.2 Regimes of Coercion

The second section of the book deals with coercive regimes through five in-depth analyses. The chapters are guided by three questions: how do coercive regimes function; how do coerced mobilities connect and impact coercive regimes; and how do coerced regimes connect, interact with and influence each other?

A particular challenge of studying coercive regimes is the nature of the surviving source material. For many coercive regimes the most accessible material is often the official or normative view, that is the reading of past coercion through legal, political, official documentation. In this section, the chapters demonstrate ways in which such sources can be used to get beyond the normative view. Sanjog Rupakheti for example demonstrates that an 1854 legislation in Nepal was a conscious use of the legal idea and practice of slavery to consolidate a state. This new legal code has been presented as a natural culmination of societal and religious developments over a long time, but might in effect be best understood as a part of a power struggle within a particular time and place. Having established the societal role of the legalisation of slavery, Rupakheti's paper brings up the various entry points into slavery, and the characteristics they share with those in Nepal and Ceylon, despite their different ruling authorities, legal frameworks and time periods, notably how coerced labour was legally linked with certain groups and places.

Kate Ekama's chapter is based on similarly official, legal sources through which she explores the idea of enslaveability in coastal Ceylon under Dutch East India Company rule. Her reading of the Company's ordinances reveals routes into a condition of slavery that was regulated by the Dutch, as well as those routes which the Company periodically tried to close off. Familiar mechanisms of enslavement – such as, for instance, an inherited legal status or via debt – come to the fore in varied and unevenly applied ways in the specific context of VOC Sri Lanka. Ekama presents a thick description of the coercive regime which the company established in its ordinances, at least as an ideal.

Another way to get around this problem is to use sources that, while normative, are not part of that particular regime of coercion. Lisa Hellman's chapter uses the accounts of Swedish prisoners of war in Russia to provide accounts from the experience of coercion itself. Following the way these prisoners moved between systems of coercion, and encountered and reflected on other coerced actors, provides an on-the-

ground view of not only the Russian regime of coercion for prisoners, but also regimes of slavery in Central Asian polities, and of forced mobility in the Qing Empire.

Such on-the-ground studies also carry the potential to reconsider general historiographical claims. As Vinil Paul explores practices of slavery in Southwest India, he shows the long historical roots of slavery in the region, and how these need to consider the social structure of the caste system. What is more, he demonstrates, not only how Portuguese and Dutch slavers made use of and continued these local practices when establishing their settlements, but also how these foreign interventions shifted how caste hierarchies related to practices of slavery.

The shift from one system of coercion to another was not necessarily a smooth, or a clear one. As James Fujitani shows, the Portuguese went through several legal iterations when establishing a system of coercion in Maluka. Their poor understanding of the local norms of payment and hierarchies within the coerced groups made the system falter both in terms of stability and in securing labour. Yet, the colonial regime did not acquiesce, but eventually established a system different both from the precolonial system of slavery, and from that initially conceived, demonstrating the ongoing transformation of regimes of coercion, and their intercultural conception.

2.3 Transformations

The final section of the book takes as its theme transformations. We have resisted the inclination to consider abolition as the idea around which these chapters cohere. The reason behind this gets to our understanding of the multiple abolitions which unfolded in Asia: these should be understood as processes, sometimes with long and complicated prehistories, rather than single and fateful events. Only then can we understand the ways and forms in which some practices of coercion persisted. While abolitions of the slave trade and of slavery could signal the end – at least from a legal point of view – of certain slaving regimes, labour coercion often shifted and transformed. The multiple abolitions of the slave trade and slavery thus interacted with continuities in coerced mobilities and transformations of coercive regimes.

In this section, the chapter authors ask what new and different regimes of coercive labour mobilization emerged or became more prominent in the context of post-abolition. How did these regimes relate to earlier and continuing forms of bondage and slaving practices? To what extent were emergent regimes in fact transformations of practices rather than something new? These questions tie the chapters into the two preceding sections precisely because it is the changing connections and regimes which are the focus of this third section.

The chapters focus on three closely related issues, namely how the multiple abolitions of slave trade and slavery impacted coerced regimes and connections between them. Providing examples from very different contexts, the chapters explore

how these multiple abolitions, ranging from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries, impacted both global dynamics and local situations and contexts. This approach allows us to think about informalization and regulation of labour coercion outside the spectrum of slavery or non-slavery, as neither the temporal nor the legal boundary pre- and post-abolition is completely clear-cut. As a result, it becomes possible to include the histories of other coercive labour forms, and of the transformation of one form of coercion into another.

There have been many moments of abolition, targeting slavery and the slave trade in different contexts at different points in time. Rômulo Ehalt directs our attention to sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Japan and its early abolishment of slavery. He ties this closely not only to the intervention by European missionaries and their discussion on the nature of slavery, but also to the Japanese connections with China and Japanese national concerns, showing how abolition was neither a result of an outside force changing the Japanese system, nor was it a completely endogenous development: it is through connecting these factors that we understand the cultural background to the coerced regime, and how it changed.

Nor is it easy to pinpoint a definitive date for the end of abolition. We are reminded of this, of course, by the informalization and continuation of slavery practices into ‘modern slavery’, but the meaning and impact of abolitions can also be studied from the perspective of wider forms of coercive labour relations. With a focus on poor relief in the form of emergency work contracts, Amal Shahid explores forms of coerced labour in postcolonial India. With the laws abolishing slavery duly in place, colonial regimes of coercion shifted to other forms, sparking the question to what degree the regime had been replaced by the abolition, or merely transformed in shape and name while retaining many of the same practices, justifications and a focus on the same groups of labourers.

3 Looking ahead

This book demonstrates the continued importance of regulations on coercion, coerced mobilities and the parallel and intertwined dynamics of regimes of coercion. As shown from the spread in time and colonial circumstances within this book, such regimes of coercion, human trafficking and slavery were enacted, supported and changed by local elites and colonial actors alike – they were neither something natural and unavoidable in each culture, nor something that came entirely from outside.

Taken together, the chapters help to break down any binary understanding of slavery or coercion, to show transformations as well as slow-changing norms in the regulations of labour, and not only compare regimes of coercion but also show connections between them. It is through these kinds of unifying studies that we can show the specificities of coerced mobilities and regimes of coercion within different

Asian historical contexts, as well as discussing how such mobilities and regimes fit into discussions of the global developments of the same.

All authors conclude their chapters with a general reflection, tying the findings of the local thick descriptions to the general themes of the book. These reflections highlight not only the great differences we need to acknowledge between different regimes in different regions and times, but also the many similarities, such as the role intermarriage has played to conserve a labour force, the importance ascribed to caste and kinship ties, and the way that interregional connections have underpinned and changed human trafficking.

It is in deliberate comparisons like the ones presented in this book, breaking through perceived natural historical divisions of space and time – such as the early nineteenth-century abolition movement – that scholars have the opportunity to overcome the fragmented historiographies of early modern Asian history. As Chevalleyre points out in his chapter, one of the challenges in integrating examples from Asia into a global discussion of slavery is that the field has been driven forward as much by researchers within area studies as within history, making the conversation more based on regional and linguistic fault lines than on historical contingencies. Conversely, there has been a perceived rather than an analysed qualitative difference between coercion in Asia and that in the Atlantic world, one that has led the field of slavery to primarily focus on the latter.

The field studying slavery and coerced labour from global perspectives stands on the shoulders of giants, but has itself only just left the starting blocks. In a promising development, the field now witnesses a quickly increasing number of studies taking seriously Asian regimes of coercion. With this edited volume, we hope to contribute to facilitating and furthering joint discussions, spanning large regions and overcoming traditional analytical divisions of empires, lands or seas, and allowing for a truly global discussion.

Matthias van Rossum

Reflections on Comparing and Connecting Regimes of Slavery and Coerced Labour

1 Introduction

As we illustrated in the introduction, the growing interest in forms of slavery, serfdom and wider coercive labour relations in a global historical context make this a fruitful moment for rethinking slavery and labour coercion. Within that momentum there is clear need for a global and comparative agenda that can provide the basis for a systematic and bottom-up exploration that will contribute to renewing our understandings of slavery across regional, temporal and societal boundaries. This reflection intends to contribute to the development of such an agenda by discussing some of the conceptual implications and necessities.¹

In both public and academic domains, the history of slavery is still commonly understood through the lens of the so-called ‘classic’ periods of slavery, most notably those of the early modern Atlantic, the nineteenth-century United States, and the Greco-Roman world. The majority of people throughout history who faced conditions of slavery and labour coercion, however, did not live in these classic slavery societies, but in societies with a much wider range of slavery regimes. This was the case before the abolitions of the slave trade and legal slavery, but it remained so after these abolitions. Nowadays, informal ‘modern’ forms of slavery characterize the lives and working conditions of an estimated 40.3 million people around the globe. This has deep historical roots. The early modern Indian Ocean and Indonesian Archipelago worlds, for example, witnessed the rapid growth of commercial slavery systems during the period of colonial expansion, but these systems of long-distance slave trade and chattel slavery coexisted and interacted with a variety of other coercive regimes, ranging from debt and caste slaveries to exploitative *corvée* obligations.² And even in the early modern Atlantic world, gruesome classic chattel

1 This chapter is based on reflections written in May 2019 after the Lyon (and Kalmar and Amsterdam) Conferences on ‘Slave Trade and Forced Relocation, Slavery and Bondage in Asia’ of the Slavery in Asia Network. The arguments of these reflections have been further developed in Matthias van Rossum, “Slavery and Its Transformations: Prolegomena for a Global and Comparative Research Agenda,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 63, no. 3 (2021): 566–98, and Matthias van Rossum, “Global Slavery, Local Bondage? Rethinking Slaveries as (Im)Mobilizing Regimes from the Case of the Dutch Indian Ocean and Indonesian Archipelago Worlds,” *Journal of World History* 31, no. 4 (2020): 693–727.

2 For overviews of the rich historiography on the Indian Ocean and Indonesian Archipelago worlds, see Van Rossum, “Global Slavery,” and Van Rossum and Merve Tosun, “Corvée Capitalism,

slavery existed alongside local slavery and bondage regimes based on pawnship, debt or *corvée* in both West-Africa and the Americas.³

The focus on ‘classic’ formal slavery has de-historicized these other, informal types of slavery as static and unchangeable; or, in the words of Michael Zeuske, it has led to ‘smaller slaveries’ being ‘overlaid by hegemonic slaveries’ and ‘conceptualized as “special forms.”’⁴ This has limited our understanding of the adaptable and persistent nature of slavery regimes and their trajectories of development. And it is exactly in the study of histories of slavery and labour coercion outside the realm of the Atlantic that this becomes apparent.⁵ In a series of meetings, from Amsterdam (2016) to Kalmar (2017) and Lyon (2019), a growing network of scholars studying slave trade, slavery and bondage structures in the Indian Ocean, the Indonesian Archipelago and East Asia have engaged in confronting the challenge of comparing and connecting these histories of slavery. In these conversations, it was concluded that there was a need for more systematic comparisons based on more explicit frameworks for thick descriptions or in-depth analysis of different slavery systems.⁶

These reflections were written in order to follow up on these discussions and to contribute to developing an analytical model that can function as a tool for reconceptualising, comparing and connecting the wide range of different practices and manifestations of coercive asymmetrical dependencies. This attempt departs from the notion that we need to compare more closely and with new energy different systems or regimes of slavery, bondage or coercive asymmetrical dependencies, but instead need to understand these not as isolated local cases (that tend to be reified through comparisons), but to understand them in the light of the widespread connections and interactions. An approach that allows for integrating comparisons and connections can provide the basis for new explorations of local, regional and more

the Dutch East India Company and Labour Regimes in Early Modern Asia,” *Journal of Asian Studies* 80, no. 4 (2021): 1–22.

³ Paul E. Lovejoy and David Richardson, “The Business of Slaving: Pawnship in Western Africa, c. 1600–1810,” *Journal of African History* 42, no. 1 (2001): 67–89; Bram Hoonhout, *Borderless Empire: Dutch Guiana in the Atlantic World, 1750–1800* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2020); Angus Dalrymple-Smith and Matthias van Rossum, “Globalization and Coerced Labour in Early Modern Asia and Africa,” *Comparativ* 30, no. 5–6 (2020): 543–59.

⁴ Michael Zeuske, “Historiography and Research Problems of Slavery and the Slave Trade in a Global-Historical Perspective,” *International Review of Social History* 57 (2012): 106.

⁵ Kerry Ward, “Slavery in Southeast Asia, 1420–1804,” in *The Cambridge World History of Slavery*, vol. 3, ed. David Eltis and Stanley L. Engerman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011): 163–85; James L. Watson, ed., *Asian and African Systems of Slavery* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980).

⁶ Amsterdam, Kalmar and Lyon Conferences; the need for thick descriptions for renewed conceptualization was also explicitly stressed by Siyen Fei at the Lyon Conference. See <https://iisg.amsterdam/en/research/projects/slave-trade-asia>.

global systems, as well as their links through circuits of coerced mobility.⁷ Echoing the fruitful discussion of the Lyon conference, these reflections call for studying, connecting and comparing case studies of coerced labour in a global-local historical perspective as a way to explore the many-faced and pervasive history of slavery – during as well as before, after and beyond the trans-Atlantic slave trade.

2 Slavery, Serfdom and Bondage – Global Explorations

Understanding simultaneously the commonalities and the distinguishing features of different forms of coerced labour has been an important challenge that has kept recurring in the study of different forms of labour and coercion. One approach in earlier scholarship has been to analyse the many variants of coerced labour in a single broad category of ‘bondage’. Other approaches tend to juxtapose, and often study separately, forms of slavery with forms of serfdom, especially emphasizing the alienability of slaves versus the fact that serfs were tied to land or landlords. This type of contrasting serfdom with slavery could lead one to conclude that ‘in the history of slavery, the “true” slave societies were arguably confined to the Classic Societies and the Americas; in the history of serfdom, serf societies came into their own in early modern Central and Eastern Europe but perhaps at no other time.’⁸ In line with the work of Moses I. Finley, the ‘slave societies’ of the ancient and Atlantic worlds have been set apart from other ‘societies with slaves’, based most importantly on the fundamental importance of slave labour for those economies.⁹ Despite its influence, scholars have increasingly recognized that this model needs re-evaluation.¹⁰ In practice, however, the contrasts between different forms of labour coercion were not always clear-cut. The variety of forms slavery extended to variations of caste- and land-based slavery that showed similarities to *corvée* and serfdom regimes, while serfdom and *corvée* regimes could allow for hiring and selling subjects in ways comparable to slavery. The difficulties in creating a clear differentiating yet unifying analytical model have even led some scholars to conclude that ‘no single definition

⁷ This is a reminder that it is necessary not only to distinguish between different forms of coerced (labour) relations, but also between the different possible forms of coerced relocation.

⁸ M.L. Bush, *Serfdom and Slavery: Studies in Legal Bondage* (New York: Longman, 1996).

⁹ Moses I. Finley, *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology* (New York: Viking Press, 1980).

¹⁰ Paul E. Lovejoy, *Transformations in Slavery: A History of Slavery in Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); Zeuske, “Research Problems of Slavery”; Noel Emmanuel Lenski and Catherine M. Cameron, eds., *What Is a Slave Society? The Practice of Slavery in Global Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

has succeeded in comprehending the historical varieties of slavery or in clearly distinguishing the institution from other types of involuntary servitude.¹¹

The renewed attention in past decades to the many faces of (labour) coercion in human history urges us to reconsider the divisions and gaps that have developed in the vast historiography. In Atlantic historiography, attention has expanded from North America and the Caribbean to the (more diverse) historical range of experiences of South America and Africa. The perspective shifted from slavery as an institution to slaving as an historical practice.¹² It has raised attention for the impact of the slave trade on local slavery regimes, and of the ‘trajectories’ of change that slavery underwent under colonial rule and especially after abolition.¹³ Scholarship focussing on the world outside the Atlantic has brought to light the various forms of slavery, as well as the sometimes extensive slave trade, in the Mediterranean,¹⁴ the Western Indian Ocean world,¹⁵ South- and Southeast Asia,¹⁶ and Central Asia.¹⁷ This has inspired research that tries to understand the dynamics of slavery within different

11 David Brion Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988): 32–35.

12 Joseph C. Miller, *The Problem of Slavery as History: A Global Approach* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012).

13 Benedetta Rossi, ed., *Reconfiguring Slavery: West African Trajectories* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2009).

14 E.g. Doris Bulach and Juliane Schiel, eds., *Europas Sklaven*, WerkstattGeschichte 66–67 (Essen: Klartext Verlag, 2015).

15 E.g. Richard B. Allen, *European Slave Trading in the Indian Ocean, 1500–1850* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2015); Jane Hooper and David Eltis, “The Indian Ocean in Transatlantic Slavery,” *Slavery & Abolition* 34, no. 3 (2013): 353–75; Matthew S. Hopper, *Slaves of One Master: Globalization and Slavery in Arabia in the Age of Empire* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2015); Janet Ewald, “Slave Trade: The Indian Ocean, c. 1750–1880,” in *Oxford Encyclopaedia of the Modern World*, ed. Peter Stearns (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

16 E.g. Markus Vink, “‘The World’s Oldest Trade’: Dutch Slavery and Slave Trade in the Indian Ocean,” *Journal of World History* 14, no. 2 (2003): 131–77; Remco Raben, “Cities and the Slave Trade in Early Modern Southeast Asia,” in *Linking Destinies: Trade, Towns and Kin in Asian History*, ed. Peter Boomgaard, Dick Kooiman, and Henk Schulte Nordholt (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2008): 119–40; Matthias van Rossum, “‘Vervloekte goudzugt’. De VOC, slavenhandel en slavernij in Azië,” *Tijdschrift voor Sociale en Economische Geschiedenis / Low Countries Journal of Social and Economic History* 12, no. 4 (2015): 29–57; Linda Mbeki and Matthias van Rossum, “Private Slave Trade in the Dutch Indian Ocean World: A Study into the Networks and Backgrounds of the Slavers and the Enslaved in South Asia and South Africa,” *Slavery & Abolition* 38, no. 1 (2017): 95–116. Heather Sutherland, “Slavery and the Slave Trade in South Sulawesi, 1660s–1800s,” in *Slavery, Bondage and Dependency in Southeast Asia*, ed. Anthony Reid (St Lucia: St. Martin’s Press, 1983): 282–83; Kerry Ward, “Slavery in Southeast Asia, 1420–1804,” in *The Cambridge World History of Slavery*, vol. 3, ed. David Eltis and Stanley L. Engerman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011): 163–85; Bondan Kanumoyoso, “Beyond the City Wall: Society and Economic Development in the Ommelanden of Batavia, 1684–1740” (PhD diss., Universiteit Leiden, 2011).

17 E.g. Jeff Eden, *Slavery and Empire in Central Asia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

contexts and looks more closely at the impact, regulation, and contestation of enslavement and enslaveability.¹⁸ These studies emphasize the fact that beyond the Atlantic world there was widespread occurrence of commodified slavery fuelled by a multitude of slave trades and middle passages, as well as the simultaneous existence and interaction with a variety of non-commodified forms of bondage, most importantly *corvée*, caste- and debt-based slavery, in many regions across the globe.

This leads us to an important point. To understand the historical (and contemporary) dynamics of slavery and labour coercion, we should not limit ourselves to question *why slavery occurred*, but we need to expand our inquiries to a more comparative and contextualized approach that questions *why specific regimes* of coercion occurred, *why specific regimes did not occur or disappear* in specific contexts, and/or *why regimes occurred in specific combinations*. Exploring coerced labour regimes, their different manifestations and transformations, requires a clear delimitation of what we mean by slavery and wider coercive regimes. The introduction of this volume already presented an important starting point for defining the commonality of different manifestations of slavery – they all consist of a simultaneous *claiming rights over bodies* of enslaved individuals or groups (the *property rights* that can be expressed in different ways – which will be discussed below in the section on ‘Exploring elements for comparisons’) as well as *claiming rights over their actions and behaviour* (*usage rights* – again, see below). It is crucial to add that these claims are defined only in part through legal systems and must be primarily understood as a practice.

I would therefore propose a definition of slavery that includes all coercive relations that involve formal or informal possession or usage right claims over people (or groups of people) that bind them to what contemporaries see as distinct, inferior social conditions with fewer or even no rights. It is useful to think about the different manifestations of slavery as practices that are regulated by sets of organizing mechanisms that together make up regimes. This is important, because thinking about slaveries and other coercive relations as regimes that are organized or operated in specific ways forces us to name not only those who were targeted by these regimes (enslaved; coerced), but also who or what upheld, organized and mediated these regimes (actors; institutions), and how this shaped the coercive relations (forms). One key distinction that is as simple as it is crucial, but all too often overlooked, must be mentioned in that respect. Slavery regimes can be either ‘formal’, regulated by polities such as local chiefdoms, states, and empires, or they can be ‘informal’, which does not mean that they are unregulated but rather that they are

¹⁸ Juliane Schiel and Christian G. de Vito, eds., *Contextualizing the History of the Enslaved Modalities of Coercion and Shifting Labor and Power Relations*, special issue, *Journal of Global Slavery* 5, no. 2 (2020). Matthias van Rossum, Alexander Geelen, Bram van den Hout, and Merve Tosun, *Testimonies of Enslavement: Sources on Slavery from the Indian Ocean World* (London: Bloomsbury, 2020).

regulated by ‘other’, not-formal or formalized social entities, such as the community or households.

These basics enable some useful distinctions within and between slavery and wider regimes of coercive asymmetrical relations. Slavery can and should be distinguished, for example, from *corvée* labour regimes, because the latter extend to entire population groups based on their subjecthood (defined not through property rights but through sovereignty, control and belonging) although of course slaves could be used to perform or pay for such obligations on behalf of their masters. Slavery and *corvée* can in turn be distinguished from for example convict labour in societies where convicts generally retained many of their rights, and were confined for specific delimited periods of time, because those who were punished did not become formal property nor transferable. This contrasts with societies where convicted people lost most of their social rights, more or less permanently, and could become enslaved or slave-like through punishment.

3 Towards an Inductive Comparative Global Historical Research Agenda

These distinctions are useful to overcome and avoid blunt confluences of all forms of coercion, but instead of serving as an endpoint, or as a basis for reifying comparisons, they should serve as a starting point for new global historical explorations. Recent literature on coerced labour rightfully points out that we should aim to understand these different variants within the context of ‘the whole praxis of coerced labor’, not in order to bring them together in one broad category of bondage, but in order to ‘identify clearly the differences and similarities between various forms of exploitation and repression’.¹⁹ We should in this endeavour avoid static comparative approaches between different historical variations, but instead account for the fact that different systems existed simultaneously, functioning not just side by side, but actually had links and interacted with each other.

The development of a global-historical comparative agenda into slavery and wider coercive labour regimes should rely on the wealth of information that can be generated through in-depth case studies of different coercive labour regimes, their dynamics, developments and interactions. I propose here that any attempt to renew our framework and understanding of slavery and labour coercion should depart from an *inclusive open* (or *broad*) investigation into the whole spectrum of coercive labour regimes (i) that takes an *inductive* approach (ii) aiming to detect characteristics, differences and commonalities through *systematic comparisons* (iii) based on

¹⁹ Van der Linden, “Dissecting Coerced Labor”: 294, 322.

observations from *in-depth analysis* of different coercive labour regimes (or asymmetrical dependencies) (iv) as they were shaped by their local contexts, (v) as well as their *interconnections and interactions*.

This requires the use and formulation of a more or less explicit *framework* for interrogation of the multitude of historical cases to guide the thick descriptions by providing thematic intersections or points of comparison between them. For this, it will be useful – as I argue in these reflections – to rethink the underlying conceptual elements on which definitions and current approaches are built. In the remainder of these reflections I therefore aim to offer a first conceptual contribution to a (renewed) attempt to develop frameworks that allow us to bring together the different forms of slavery and coercive labour regimes into a common analytical model, in order to increase our understanding of (i) the different variations of historically existing coercive labour regimes, as well as (ii) their dynamics and (iii) trajectories of development. My aim is especially to provide initial stepping stones that can serve as a framework for interrogation. I do so by identifying the key elements for the thick descriptions of regimes that will enable this systematic inductive comparative analysis.

4 Exploring Elements for Comparisons

The vast and expanding historiography on different forms of coerced labour provides a wealth of possible ways to compare and analyse coercive labour regimes. Van der Linden recently emphasized the need to ‘go beyond’ limiting ‘discussions about general, but inevitably contentious, terms such as “slavery”’, proposing to analyse ‘all forms of coerced labor’ as relations characterized ‘by three “moments”: the entry into the labor relationship; the period during which the worker works; and the end of the labor relationship’.²⁰ Accounting for the possible coercive relations in this way provides a refined insight into the many manifestations of coerced labour. This ‘momentary’ approach to coerced labour relations is thus a useful starting point for further analysis. At the same time the shortcomings of a taxonomic approach lie in its revealing less about the dynamics and functions of these different coercive labour relations as social regimes. Although taxonomies help to chart the different positions and relations between the enslaved or subjected persons and the master, it is also crucial to understand the regime in which these are embedded with its (often) multiple claims and positions, assigned roles, norms and regulations.

Traditionally, one way to compare forms of slavery, especially by anthropologists and historians studying slavery and bondage in Africa and Southeast Asia, has developed around the distinction between ‘open’ and ‘closed’ systems. In this distinction, ‘open’ systems of slavery are based on social ties, providing opportunities for slaves

²⁰ Van der Linden, “Dissecting Coerced Labor”: 291, 298.

to become part of kinship structures of slave owners – in these systems the enslaved are ‘outsiders who are in the process of being incorporated as kinsmen’.²¹ Conversely, ‘closed’ systems of hereditary slavery are rooted in institutionalized relations of possession that ensure the enslaved ‘remain outside the dominant kinship system’, turning them into permanent outsiders.²² The problem, however, is that the concepts of ‘closed’ and ‘open’ have, at least in Southeast Asia studies, been used in two ways that are potentially conflicting. In the first, classical way of applying the closed-open model, the dichotomy refers to the status and social mobility of the enslaved, in essence the distinction between systems in which the enslaved are *excluded* versus *potentially included* in the slave-owning social structures. In the second, it is used to refer to limitations on cross-societal mobility through the slave trade, in essence the distinction between systems in which the enslaved are *not alienable* and are confined to their specific slave-owning society versus systems allowing for, or even built around, the transferability of the enslaved through the slave trade, either as an export or an import.

One solution has been to confine the definition of slavery to slaves as ‘property’, as either a means of production (slave labour) or capital good (the slave as commodity). This can be done in a strict legal way, or in a more broad and historic way. Nieboer, for example, defined slavery as the situation in which a person ‘is the property or possession of another man’, adding that this relation must be ‘beyond the limits of the family proper’, marked by low societal status, and that it served the purpose of coerced labour.²³ Historically, property claims and rights over other people and their actions have manifested in highly diverse ways.²⁴ Although slavery is often defined in legal terms of ownership, the (historical) legal definitions of property itself are not always clear-cut, but rather consist of a set of multiple elements with regard to the rights and duties of ownership.²⁵

In a recent ‘dissection’ of coerced labour, it was pointed out that property could be defined as the situation in which *most* (although not necessarily all) of the following elements are present: (i) the right to possess, (ii) the right to use, (iii) the right to manage, (iv) the right to the income of the object, (v) the right to the capital, (vi) the right to security, (vii) the right of transmissibility, (viii) the right of absence of term, (ix) the duty to prevent harmful use, (x) liability to execution, and (xi) the incident of

21 James L. Watson, “Introduction. Slavery as an Institution: Open and Closed Systems,” in *Asian and African Systems of Slavery*, ed. James L. Watson (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980): 6.

22 Watson, “Introduction”: 6.

23 Herman Jeremias Nieboer, *Slavery as an Industrial System: Ethnological Researches* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1900). See also Van der Linden, “Dissecting Coerced Labor.”

24 Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982): 22. Reflecting on the ‘conception of absolute ownership’, which he argued was introduced by Roman law, he defined ‘property’ as ‘claims and powers vis-à-vis other persons with respect to a given thing, person, or action’.

25 Van der Linden, “Dissecting Coerced Labor.”

residuarity'.²⁶ This leads to a range of types of properties which are connected through a so-called 'family resemblance'. Slavery can be defined as those situations in which humans are owned by other humans or institutions according to (most) of these elements. Some of these elements lead to crucial differences between different forms of slavery, for example the 'right of transmissibility' is a key distinction between commodified or chattel slavery (in which slaves can be bought and sold) and non-commodified coercive regimes, such as debt slavery or serfdom.²⁷

In contrast, it has been stressed that it is crucial to consider that systems of bondage and slavery are not only about the possession of people, but more generally about the *availability* of people, or in essence their bodies, for different possible *purposes* (such as obligated labour, social status, kinship, etc). This might lead to other ways of identifying specific clusters of relations of dependency within the wider continuum of slavery, serfdom and bondage. In his recent global history of slavery, Michael Zeuske, for example, speaks of *slaveries* in the plural, emphasizing the different and changing manifestations of slavery that he defines not by *alienability* but by the core element of the partial or complete *availability* (*Verfügbarkeit*) of people's bodies.²⁸ The notion of availability, in turn, has inspired the development of a framework built around the *function* (or object) of the different coercive labour regimes that are categorized under bondage, *corvée*, and slavery based on a distinction between the way in which coercive regimes organized the availability of coerced labour by either *mobilizing* or *immobilizing* people.²⁹ In this distinction, the key commonality of the many and pluriform *immobilizing* (or *localizing*) regimes was that these were oriented towards maintaining local orders of obligations and unfreedom, and aimed at keeping bonded subjects *inside* these social or political orders, tying down people *socially and spatially* to their community, polity, ruler, or land (as in caste-, land- and debt-slavery; *corvée*; serfdom). This contrasted with *mobilizing* regimes, such as commodified or chattel slavery, but often also war- and captive slavery, in which the coercion and control of

²⁶ Van der Linden refers to Anthony M. Honoré, "Ownership," in *Oxford Essays in Jurisprudence. A Collaborative Work*, ed. Anthony Gordon Guest (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961): 107–47.

²⁷ This distinction is not absolute, however, as in specific cases debt slaves or serfs could actually be transmitted or sold.

²⁸ Michael Zeuske, *Sklaverei: Eine Menschheitsgeschichte von der Steinzeit bis heute* (Ditzingen: Reclam, 2018): 11. Zeuske refers here to the concept of slaving as a historical process as set out by Joseph C. Miller, *The Problem of Slavery as History: A Global Approach* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2012). Original: 'die Verfügbarkeit der Körper von Menschen oder von Teilen der Körper von Menschen'.

²⁹ This echoes in part the distinction made by Nieboer between extratribal slavery, in which 'slaves are frequently acquired from without the community to which the slave's owner belongs', and intratribal slavery, in which 'the slave remains within the same community to which he belonged before being enslaved'. Nieboer, *Slavery*: 191.

people was based on their movement across the boundaries of communities and its *mobilizing* (and alienating) effect.³⁰

A framework for interrogation that aims to guide thick descriptions of coercive labour regimes should use and combine the different elements underlying these various perspectives. The elements of existing comparative frameworks do not exclude each other, but rather overlap and relate. The threefold distinction between ‘moments’ of coercion – entry, work/relation/extraction and exit – relates directly to the two key elements (in their double meaning) of the open-closed dichotomy, namely the *alienability* of the enslaved (entry and exit) and the *assimilability* of the enslaved (during the relation). The perspective directed more at the function of a dependency regime, as distinguished by *mobilizing* or *immobilizing* regimes, aims to scrutinize the depth of the dynamics of coercive relations. This takes a social-historical approach to the ‘relation’ (or ‘work’) moment of the coerced labour taxonomy, similarly to perspectives focussing on either the *assimilability* (during the relationship) or the *alienability* of the enslaved (during entry and exit).

5 Framework for Interrogation

For an inductive global-historical comparative agenda, in short, it seems relevant to bring these different key elements together within a single, renewed and open framework of inquiry. This allows for systematic interrogations and thick description of case studies across historic time and space. And it allows us to rebuild our perspective on what different forms of slavery and coerced labour meant as practice and regimes, and how these developed in different contexts.

The research framework I propose invites the description of practices and regulations of regimes of slavery as they were shaped by the different key elements. The following list is a first attempt to structure these elements of questioning in an integrated framework for analyzing slavery and coerced labour regimes. The elements are formulated as questions, clustered for the different elements, aiming to grasp the dynamics of regimes and their connections. An integrated framework for analyzing slavery and coerced labour regimes could entail these questions.

On the ‘entrance’ into coercive regimes this would entail:

- i. The *origins* and *entry* of the enslaved:
 - What are the origins of those who are coerced into specific regimes of bondage and enslavement?
 - a. What are the criteria for bondage or *enslaveability*? Under what conditions are people (allowed to) be bonded or enslaved?

30 Van Rossum, “Global Slavery.”

- b. What are the really existing practices of enslavement or bondage?
- c. Do these target or involve people of local origin or non-local origin? Were people bonded (or not) before?
- d. What was the type of entry into the host society:
How did people find their way into dependency – hereditary, tribute, impoverishment, sale, punishment, abduction, war or slave raid?

On the moment of the coerced ‘relation’:

- ii. The methods of *binding*:
What is the method of binding? Through what mechanism or criterium are the subjected tied to a master or ruler (or the enslaved bound to a master), and on what basis (legal property; land; debt; caste; status)?
- iii. The *function* of the labour regime or relationship:
What is the function or object of coercion, and the coerced labour relation? Is it social reproduction, subsistence, public (non-market production), or market-oriented (private or state)?
- iv. The regulation of *assimilability*:
How is the relation organized in terms of social mobility and integration into the host society? Are there specific regulations regarding assimilability and social mobility? What is the discourse or ideology, and what are the practices?
- v. The regulation of *alienability* or transferability:
How is the relation organized in terms of transferability? Is there formalization and regulation (or restriction) of transferability of subjected or bonded people?
 - a. What are the criteria for transferability? Under what conditions can people be transferred, and on what basis?
 - b. What are the really existing practices?
 - c. Does this involve commodified transfers (i.e. are people sold?), or other kinds of transfer, such as tribute?

On the ‘exit’:

- vi. The opportunities for legal or illegal *exit*:
What are the exits from specific regimes of bondage and enslavement?
 - a. Within the regime:
Are there exits from the bondage or enslavement, such as emancipation, buying freedom, upward social mobility, or escape, and what are the routes? Are these legal or illegal?

b. Outside the regime:

Are there exits from society, into other regimes of bondage or enslavement (this relates to aspect five), or otherwise? Are these legal or illegal?

With regard to the links or ‘connections’ between coercive regimes it is relevant to distinguish:

vii. The *paths* of coercion:

How are different types of entry (aspect one) and exit (aspect six) connected? What routes exist inside regimes as well as between different forms of coercion? And what are the consequences for people who (are) shift(ed) between different regimes?

viii. The *transfers* and *flows*:

What patterns of (coerced) mobility exist? What is the type of transfer or (coerced) mobility – is it commodified (slave trade) or non-commodified (e.g., tribute, war, or deportation)? What is the direction and size of the flow created by these transfers? And how does this impact the different slavery and coercion regimes involved?

Finally, it is relevant to explore the various (ix) local and external influences, including local and international political developments, as well as (x) cultural, economic and environmental developments that impacted slavery and labour coercion regimes.

A framework of interrogation for slavery and wider coercive labour regimes should be used, not for merely static or contrasting comparisons of supposedly different local variations, but as a tool for understanding through an integrative comparative analysis how slavery and coercion regimes functioned and developed over time.³¹ The slavery regimes of interest were not self-contained phenomena but were transformed in interactions with each other and with other external influences. This means that the slave trade and other exchanges between societies were crucial in shaping (local) regimes in both receiving and sending societies. Slaves moved between societies, though not always in the same way. The analytical framework therefore should not only compare, but also address the connections that came into being through the *paths* that channelled the internal and external mobility of enslaved people, as well as the *direction* of the coerced mobility (sending, receiving, or both) and the *type* of transfer, either commodified (slave trade) or non-commodified (e.g., tribute, war, or deportation). These connections between regimes of slavery and, most visibly, the external slave trade, influenced not only the spread of commodified and

³¹ On different methods of social historical investigation see Marcel van der Linden, “Het naderende einde van de vaderlandse geschiedenis en de toekomstige studie der sociale bewegingen” (Inaugural Lecture, University of Amsterdam, 1999).

other slavery regimes, but also impacted the wider set of internal and external political, economic, and social factors that shaped the trajectories and characters of those regimes.³²

6 To Conclude

These reflections, as well as this entire volume, aim to provide contributions that will help to move beyond the ‘formal’ and even ‘Atlantic’ bias in global slavery studies. It is time to take up this challenge if we want to develop a better understanding of the long-term global manifestations and transformations of slavery and labour coercion. I have argued that this will entail developing an agenda that explores the persistence of labour coercion and slavery beyond their classic and legal forms, and re-examines their highly diverse manifestations through a much wider spectrum of historical cases and trajectories. I have called for doing so through a bottom-up comparative and connecting approach that incorporates and analyses source-based observations of a multitude of case studies of slavery regimes, in relation to reconstructions and analyses of the connections or interactions forged through regional patterns of coerced mobility.

The excellent contributions to this edited volume address many important and oftentimes understudied cases, and provide a wealth of insights instrumental to the development of a collaborative global-historical research agenda that focuses on not only comparisons of different regimes, but also on the connections and interactions between them. The authors do not all take the same approach, nor were they able to cover all of the elements of interrogations I have mentioned, but their contributions correspond, interact and strengthen each other by addressing either *regimes*, *connections* or *transformations*. These reflections aimed to introduce some of the underlying (conceptual) issues that seem central to advancing our understanding of slavery and labour coercion regimes from a global (and local) historical perspective. Bringing together the myriad of cases of slavery and coerced labour regimes within a common framework of interrogation, we can start to locate, analyse and reconceptualise the different manifestations of these regimes, and their trajectories, within the long-term, extremely diverse, and global development of slavery and coerced labour.

³² Lovejoy, *Transformations*.

Claude Chevaleyre

Beyond Maritime Asia. Ideology, Historiography, and Prospects for a Global History of Slaving in Early-Modern Asia

1 A Decade of Significance

Ten years ago, I concluded my first publication with the following statement: ‘Time has come to reintegrate the Chinese experience in the world history of bondage.’¹ One decade later, significant progress has been made in the fields of slavery and forms of coerced labour in early-modern Asia. An active network of (global) historians exploring the dynamics of slavery and slave trading across the Indian Ocean World and Eurasia has emerged. Milestone monographs have been added to the short list of studies published since the 1980s² – like Richard Allen’s *European Slave Trading in Asia*, Tatiana Seijas’ *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico*, Jeff Eden’s *Slavery and Empire in Central Asia*, and Lúcio de Sousa’s *The Portuguese Slave Trade in Early Modern Japan*, to name only a few.³ In addition, collaborative research projects designed to further bridge the gaps in the history of slavery and coerced labour in early-modern Asia have been set in motion;⁴ conferences and workshops have been organized worldwide; and several edited volumes and special issues have been published or are in preparation.⁵ Noteworthy enough, early-modern Asia and the Indian

1 Claude Chevaleyre, “Acting as Master and Bondservant: Considerations on Status, Identities and the Nature of ‘Bond-servitude’ in Late Ming China,” in *Labour, Coercion, and Economic Growth in Eurasia, 17th–20th Centuries*, ed. Alessandro Stanziani (Leiden: Brill, 2012): 272.

2 James L. Watson, ed., *Asian and African Systems of Slavery* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980); Anthony Reid, ed., *Slavery, Bondage, and Dependency in Southeast Asia* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1983); Georges Condominas, ed., *Formes extrêmes de dépendance. Contributions à l’étude de l’esclavage en Asie du Sud-Est* (Paris: Éditions de l’EHESS, 1998); Gwyn Campbell, ed., *The Structure of Slavery in Indian Ocean Africa and Asia* (London: Frank Cass, 2006).

3 Richard B. Allen, *European Slave Trading in Asia, 1500–1850* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2014); Tatiana Seijas, *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico: From Chinos to Indians* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014); Jeff Eden, *Slavery and Empire in Central Asia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018); Lúcio de Sousa, *The Portuguese Slave Trade in Early Modern Japan: Merchants, Jesuits and Japanese, Chinese, and Korean Slaves* (Leiden: Brill, 2018).

4 E.g., “Exploring Slave Trade in Asia” (Amsterdam: International Institute of Social History), <https://iisg.amsterdam/en/research/projects/slave-trade-asia>. Samantha Sint Nicolaas, Matthias van Rossum, and Ulbe Bosma, “Towards an Indian Ocean and Maritime Asia Slave Trade Database: An Exploration of Concepts, Lessons and Models,” *Esclavages et Post-Esclavages* 3 (2020), <https://doi.org/10.4000/slaveries.2192>.

5 Gwyn Campbell, ed., *Bondage and the Environment in the Indian Ocean World* (Cham: Palgrave MacMillan, 2018); Alicia Schrikker and Nira Wickramasinghe, eds., *Being a Slave: Histories and Legacies*

Ocean World have made their way into historical handbooks of world slavery (like the *Cambridge World History of Slavery* and the recently-published *Les mondes de l'esclavage*),⁶ while East Asian studies seem to progressively acknowledge the necessity to engage with the questions raised by this emerging trend.⁷

Over the past decade, historians have thus shone new light on the ubiquity of slavery across the Indian Ocean World and Asia, and on its transcontinental connections; they have started to map and to quantify trades in enslaved people that may well have been numerically as important as the transatlantic slave trade;⁸ they have underlined the role of individual and private actors, in addition to states and companies; and they have singled out the multidirectionality of slave trading networks, as well as the complex articulations between the diverse regimes of coercion that these networks connected. By 'provincializing Europe'⁹ and the Atlantic, they also have significantly contributed to questioning the centrality of modern Europe (its experience and categories) as a universal reference for analysing slavery and coerced labour in a global perspective.

In light of the progress recently achieved, questions arise as to the directions that historians should take to further develop research on slavery and other forms of coercion in early-modern Asia. From my perspective as a historian of early-modern China (by training) with one foot in global slavery and labour history (by chance), the principal challenge will be the capacity to broaden the perspective beyond the spatialities and the temporalities shaped by the European presence. To obtain a truly global overview of the history of slavery and coerced labour in early-modern Asia requires that historians also investigate these dynamics in Asia before, beyond, and alongside the European presence. What is at stake is our ability to understand

of *European Slavery in the Indian Ocean* (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2020); Titas Chakraborty and Matthias van Rossum, "Slave Trade and Slavery in Asia. New Perspectives," *Journal of Social History* 54, no. 1 (2020): 1–14.

⁶ Volumes 3 and 4 of the *Cambridge World History of Slavery* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011 and 2017), for instance, include chapters on early-modern and modern Indian Ocean World, India, China, East and South-East Asia. Paulin Isnard, Benedetta Rossi, and Cécile Vidal, eds., *Les mondes de l'esclavage. Une histoire comparée* (Paris: Seuil, 2021). See also Gwyn Campbell and Alessandro Stanziani, eds., *The Palgrave Handbook of Bondage and Human Rights in Africa and Asia* (Cham: Palgrave MacMillan, 2019).

⁷ Johanna Ransmeier's *Sold People: Traffickers and Family Life in North China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017) is one of the rare publications engaging with the issue of slavery in modern China to have been published in the past years. More recently, the *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* endeavored to dedicate a special issue to the topic of slavery in Asia (vol. 81, forthcoming 2022).

⁸ Matthias van Rossum, "Towards a Global Perspective on Early Modern Slave Trade: Prices of the Enslaved in the Indian Ocean, Indonesian Archipelago and Atlantic worlds," *Journal of Global History* 17, no. 1 (2021): 1–27, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1740022821000139>.

⁹ Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference. New Edition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008).

not only the complexity of the networks of human trafficking and the multiplicity of coercion regimes that pre-existed and continued to exist alongside European networks, markets, and sites of coercion, but also the ways in which pre-existing and more distant regimes of coercion actually connected to, interacted with, were influenced by, and in return influenced European-driven dynamics. What is at stake, ultimately, is the chance of truly ‘decentering’ Europe by operating a further translation movement (in the Latin sense of *translatio*): to look at European history from an Asian perspective (and thereby contribute to properly recontextualize Europe and ‘unthink’ the universal categories inherited from its modern history).¹⁰

At an individual level, such a project may be utopian at best. At a collective level, however, it can serve as a guideline and an incentive to increase our engagement with other historiographies and with historians investigating ‘non-European’ slaving contexts – in particular through translations, closer collaborations, and sustained dialogue. Doing so also requires us to investigate the reasons for the relative absence of ‘non-European’ Asian contexts in the current trend of research about slavery in Asia. Why are Chinese regional and local contexts, for instance, so absent from the narrative, despite the salient presence of Chinese actors all across maritime Asia – not only as enslaved and coerced workers, but also as entrepreneurs, as slave-owners, and as middlemen and facilitators?¹¹

2 Ideology and Slavery in Early-Modern East Asian Historiography

The lack of ‘local’ sources only partly explains this situation. In some contexts, slavery and other forms of coercion are mainly documented by the massive paper trails produced by European companies, courts, and individual actors in the process of acquiring, exchanging, transporting, and using enslaved people. Yet, despite the many losses in primary documentation (due to destruction and the passage of time), historical archives from early-modern China still abound. One difference with European archives, though, is that data on enslavement remains scattered and fragmentary. The illicit nature of the commercial trade in human beings (which must be distinguished from the legitimate transactions which were at the core of the reproductive strategies of the Chinese family, like marriage and adoption) makes the identification of relevant information highly contingent on cases surfacing unpredictably in judicial archives

¹⁰ Christian G. de Vito, Juliane Schiel, and Matthias van Rossum, “From Bondage to Precariousness? New Perspectives on Labor and Social History,” *Journal of Social History* 54, no. 2 (2020): 644–62, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jsh/shz057>.

¹¹ E.g., Adam Clulow and Fei Si-yen, “The Slaves of Widow Tsieko: Chinese Slave Owners and the Enslaved in the Dutch Empire,” *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 81 (forthcoming 2022).

and other sources. Despite such differences and limitations, preliminary research demonstrates that reconstructing networks of human trafficking in early-modern China is possible, and that among the most far-reaching of these networks some were probably more directly connected to European slave-trading activities than is usually acknowledged.¹²

Another factor explaining the relative absence of ‘non-European’ contexts in the emerging trend of research about slavery in early-modern Asia might be sought in what Moses Finley called ‘ideology’.¹³ The recent eastward expansion of slavery studies has undoubtedly been made possible by an increased availability of European archives, in particular in digitized form. It is also an outcome of the flourishing field of global history, of which slavery and labour studies have been two major driving forces. But it is also undeniably a response and a contribution to current societal and political debates on the legacies of early-modern European expansionism.¹⁴ From this perspective, it is hardly surprising that the history of European slavery in (maritime) Asia has received little attention in societies less dramatically and less directly affected by European colonialism and slave trading (all things being relative). One cannot be surprised, for instance, that the topic is nowadays of lesser concern to Chinese historians and to the Chinese public than, for instance, the exactions committed on Chinese soil in the first half of the twentieth century by Japan’s military expansionism (which included the forced mobilization of workers, prisoners of war, and women for sexual exploitation). This, however, does not explain why research on early-modern ‘local’ forms of slavery and coercion remains so unprolific. One wonders, for example, why no large-scale comparative study of slavery across early-modern East Asia has been published so far – despite the crucial conceptual role that categories like ‘slaves’ (奴婢: read *nubi* in Chinese transliteration, *nuhi* in Japanese, and *nobi* in Korean) and ‘debased people’ (賤民: *jianmin*, *senmin*, *cheonmin*) played at different times and levels in the organization, the justification, and the perpetuation of the social hierarchies that allowed the slavery-like exploitation of individuals and communities in China, Japan, and Korea.

Ideological factors continue to play a significant role in overshadowing research about slavery in early-modern East Asia. Joy Kim perceptively demonstrated that Japanese ideologues manipulated references to slavery in the Chosŏn period (1392–1910) to legitimize the colonization of Korea, and that this manipulation contributed to the long ‘silencing’ of a historical phenomenon of major social and

¹² Claude Chevaleyre, “Human Trafficking in Late Imperial China,” in *Slavery and Bonded Labor in Asia, 1250–1900*, ed. Richard B. Allen (Leiden: Brill, 2021): 150–77.

¹³ Moses I. Finley, *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology* (New York: The Viking Press, 1980): chap. 1.

¹⁴ For instance, the acknowledgment that slavery in the Dutch colonial period (including Asia) ‘is an integral part of the history of the Netherlands’ was at the core of the ‘Slavery’ exhibition organized by the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam in 2021: <https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en/whats-on/exhibitions/slavery> (accessed 2 June 2021).

economic significance.¹⁵ Contemporary China has a different ‘problem with slavery’, to borrow a catchphrase recently used by Michael Zeuske (and before him by Eduard Erkes).¹⁶ Simply put, the debate about the importance of slavery in Chinese history was locked in the 1950s with the adoption of the Stalinist five-stage model of development as the historiographical doxa of the People’s Republic of China (PRC). The ‘slavery theory’ spearheaded by historian and politician Guo Moruo (1892–1978)¹⁷ made ‘slavery’ a necessary stage in China’s linear development path toward modernity and socialism, and thereby an exclusive feature of pre-imperial times, as illustrated in the introduction to a general *History of Slavery* published in 1973:

The slave-owning system is the first social mode of production established on class antagonisms. [It] developed into the feudal serfdom system, and the feudal serfdom system developed into the capitalist wage-labour system, which are the three successive forms of exploitation in the development path of class societies. [. . .] History is entirely a history of class struggles, and the slave society is the starting point of the history of class struggles. [. . .] The slave society is a necessary stage in the development of human societies. [. . .] The idea [. . .] that there was no slave society in China, is an anti-Leninist and anti-Maoist thought.¹⁸

Intrinsically tied to a ‘mode of production’, a ‘stage’, or a ‘system’, slavery could be of no significance in an imperial period characterized by ‘feudal’ relations. At best, one could recognize ‘remnants of slavery’ (*nulizhi canyu* 奴隸制殘餘) in early-modern China, but relations of ‘exploitation’ (*boxue* 剝削), ‘class contradictions’ (*jieji maodun* 階級矛盾), ‘class struggles’ (*jieji douzheng* 階級鬥爭), and ‘peasant movements’ (*nongmin zhanzheng* 農民戰爭) – which historians studied extensively in the second half of the twentieth century¹⁹ – were perceived as being in essence of a feudal nature. As a consequence, and despite ongoing debates about the nature of Chinese feudalism,²⁰ there was and still is no place for ‘slavery’ in early-modern China, either as a social reality or as an abstraction.

15 Joy Sunghee Kim, “Representing Slavery: Class and Status in Late Chosŏn Korea” (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2004): 38–60.

16 Eduard Erkes, *Das Problem der Sklaverei in China* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1952); Michael Zeuske, “Versklavte und Sklavereien in der Geschichte Chinas aus global-historischer Sicht. Perspektiven und Probleme,” *Dhau. Jahrbuch für außereuropäische Geschichte* 2 (2017): 25.

17 Guo Moruo, *Nulizhi shidai* (Shanghai: Xinwenyi Chubanshe, 1952).

18 Shi Xing, *Nuli shehui* (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1973): ii. The ‘slavery theory’ has been contested since the late 1970s, in particular by the ‘no-slave’ (*wunu*) historiographical school. See Huang Xianfan, *Zhongguo lishi meiyou nuli shehui* (Guilin: Guangxi shifan daxue chubanshe, 1981).

19 E.g., Gu Cheng, *Mingmo nongmin zhanzheng shi* (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1984).

20 Cf. Feng Tianyu, *Fengjian kaolun* (Wuhan: Wuhan Daxue chubanshe, 2006).

3 The ‘Problem’ with Slavery

To be clear, I am not arguing in favour of recklessly transposing the master narrative of slavery ‘as an institution’ onto every historical context where extreme forms of human subjugation can be observed. On the contrary, I would be more inclined to follow Joseph Miller’s exhortation to radically ‘historicize’ slavery and to pay greater attention to the contextualized dynamics of ‘slaving’ as a process, rather than to infinitely expand the scope and meaning of slavery as an abstract category (even for the purpose of broader global comparison).²¹ As a historian of bondage and servitude in early-modern China, I know only too well the inevitable distortions that the stereotypes conveyed by the invocation of ‘slavery’ introduce in contexts where it was not previously recognized (like early-modern China), whatever the degree of contextualization. I am also familiar with the utterly undesirable effects that avoiding such a central and paradigmatic analytical framework produces (among which are the risks of perpetuating unintelligibility, cultural relativism, and the marginalization of those same contexts within the field of global slavery studies). In this regard, my own attitude has often shifted from one position to the other, without finding satisfaction in any, but with a growing sense that the categories that we have learned to consider universal are historical constructs rooted in the recent past of the world-dominating West.

Nevertheless, in the case of early-modern China, the ideologically driven and unquestioned rejection of ‘slavery’ has led to a somewhat schizophrenic position. Despite their insistent reluctance to translate the above-mentioned *nubi* category as ‘slaves’, many historians still implicitly define *nubi* in reference to archetypal ‘slaves’, that is as saleable persons subjected to extreme social and legal discrimination, over whom masters exercised rights tantamount to ‘property’ for the sole purpose of their exploitation. Besides being the main cause for the relative absence of China from global narratives, this a priori rejection of the interpretative framework of ‘slavery’ has not only obliterated its heuristic value as a potentially fertile ground for critical debate and comparison. It has also hampered research on phenomena usually considered to be features of slavery.

To take one example, in the introduction to his comparative study of ancient ‘slave societies’ across the world (entitled ‘The slave-owning system is a necessity in the historical development of human societies’), the influential ethnologist and historian Hu Qingjun asserted that the fundamental difference between a slave and a feudal society is that the former mobilizes labour through the ‘abduction of people’, while the latter

²¹ Joseph C. Miller, *The Problem of Slavery as History: A Global Approach* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2012): chap. 1, esp. 4–10.

‘usually does not resort to the abduction and the selling of people’.²² As anachronistic ‘remnants of the slave system’, the abduction, trading, and trafficking of human beings in early-modern China have been deemed historically insignificant and have received only limited attention. Approaching *nubi* bondage through the prism of slavery – as distorting as it can be – would nonetheless have led historians to inquire about the existence of human trafficking, about its specific meaning in the imperial context, and about its possible connections with the wider Eurasian and Indian Ocean World slaving web.

The progressive opening and liberalization of the PRC since the 1980s has undoubtedly led to a relative toning down of the Marxian-inspired doxa in historical research which, combined with the increased availability of central and local archives, has permitted a revival of research on bondage in early-modern China (both in China and abroad). Numerous studies on local forms of bondage in Huizhou prefecture (Anhui province) have been published since the 1980s, thanks to the exceptional preservation of hundreds of thousands of ‘Huizhou documents’.²³ Bonded women in the early-modern period (concubines and maidservants in particular) have been the topic of important and innovative studies.²⁴ Human trafficking has also been explored, in more retrospective ways, by legal historians attempting to trace the evolution of the legal framework of the struggle against trafficking since the Chinese abolition of slavery in 1910.²⁵ Despite such progress, the weight of the feudal paradigm still seems to prevail in Chinese early-modern historical studies. Historians have not yet begun to address issues such as the dynamics of trafficking, let alone its global entanglements. Interest in social relations of exploitation and coerced labour also seems to have weakened in recent years, especially compared to the times when economic and social historians fully engaged with the (Marxian) study of class struggles as an historical driving force.

22 Hu Qingjun and Zhou Yongyi, “Nuli zhanyou zhi shi renlei shehui lishi fazhan de biran,” in *Zaoqi nuli shehui bijiao yanjiu*, ed. Hu Qingjun (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1996): 4.

23 Harriet T. Zurndorfer, *Change and Continuity in Chinese Local History. The Development of Huichou Prefecture 800 to 1800* (Leiden: Brill, 1989); Joseph P. McDermott, *The Making of a New Rural Order in South China, vol. 2, Merchants, Markets, and Lineages, 1500–1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020). On the ‘Huizhou documents’, see Li Bian “One Thousand Years of Historical Relics: The Huizhou Documents,” *Journal of Modern Chinese History* 10, no. 2 (2016): 248–68.

24 Wang Xueping, *16–18 shiji binü shengcun zhuangtai yanjiu* (Harbin: Heilongjiang daxue chubanshe, 2008); Li Qingrui, *Qianlong nianjian Sichuan guaimai furen anjian de shehui fenxi* (Taiyuan: Shanxi jiaoyu chubanshe, 2011); Bao-hua Hsieh, *Concubinage and Servitude in Late Imperial China* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2014); Matthew H. Sommer, *Polyandry and Wife-Selling in Qing Dynasty China: Survival Strategies and Judicial Interventions* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015); Wang Xueping, *Mingdai binü qunti yanjiu* (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2019).

25 Liu Xianquan, *Daji guaimai renkou fanzui de falü duice* (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 2003); Bonny Ling, “Human Trafficking and China: Past and Present” (PhD diss., National University of Ireland, Galway, 2014).

This being said, if the next step is to move beyond Europe in the study of slavery in early-modern Asia, it is necessary to carefully evaluate the recent contributions of Chinese scholarship in this domain. Since the accession of Xi Jinping to the highest office of General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in 2012, the PRC has entered a ‘New Era’ marked by new ideological paradigms emphasizing the ‘great rejuvenation of Chinese culture’ and the prevalence of ‘socialism with Chinese characteristics’. Chinese historians have unambiguously been called on to take part in the project of society designed and steered by the Party.²⁶ The question is thus whether the new ideological context is likely to boost or to impede research on slavery in early-modern China.

4 Slavery and Coercion in Recent Chinese Historiography (2011–2020)

To help answer this question, I attempted to evaluate the level of engagement of recent Chinese-language scholarship with the fields of slavery and coerced labour in China, Asia, and the Indian Ocean World by surveying articles published in PRC history journals between 2011 and 2020.²⁷ Although Chinese historians are in a crucial position to help fill important data gaps, their research seldom appears in international publications on global slavery. It is therefore important to try and understand whether this was the result of a lack of mutual communication or of diverging interests.

This extensive keyword-based survey revealed a very rich and lively scholarship. As a community, Chinese historians regularly engage with current historiographical debates and frequently report on leading publications in world and global history (mainly from the English-speaking academic world). Their research often resonates with societal and political concerns,²⁸ and shows a flourishing interest for world and global history (almost thirteen percent of the surveyed articles were attached to keywords relating to ‘global’, ‘world’, and ‘transnational’ history).

²⁶ Xi Jinping, “Xi Jinping zhi Zhongguo shehui kexueyuan Zhongguo lishi yanjiuyuan chengli de hexin,” *Lishi yanjiu* 1 (2019): 2.

²⁷ This survey was based on a keyword search of the content of Chinese-language history journals published between 1 January 2011 and 31 December 2020 and referenced by the *China National Knowledge Infrastructure* (CNKI, ‘most comprehensive gateway of knowledge’ in the PRC): <https://global.cnki.net/index/Support/en/Introduction.html> (accessed 6 June 2021). The sample surveyed contained 29,265 articles and the research was conducted by using 171 different keywords. I intend to publish detailed results in a later article.

²⁸ The year 2020 witnessed a surge of publications on pandemics and medicine history. Articles on the First World War (especially on the role of Chinese workers in the conflict) abound in a decade marked by centenary commemorations, as do articles on the history of anti-poverty policies (the eradication of poverty by 2020 being a major commitment of the CCP in the past decade).

However, according to this survey their interests seem to lie elsewhere than in slavery and coerced labour in early-modern Asia.

From the handful of articles published in the past decade on the ‘East India companies’, for instance, one would hardly learn anything about the early-modern trade in Asian slaves. Instead, Chinese historians working on European companies are much more concerned with the first economic globalization, European colonialism, and the early-modern trade in global commodities (opium, sugar, coffee, salt, spices, cotton, silk, and most importantly tea). Their production is particularly committed to ‘decentring’ Europe and putting China back at the centre of world history, both as a major actor of global trade and as a dominant vector of cultural influence across Eurasia and the Indian Ocean World long before the modern period (thanks to the maritime and continental ‘silk roads’).²⁹

One salient result of this survey was that even to Chinese scholarship, labour history is still predominantly a history of modern and contemporary Europe (three quarters of the surveyed articles on ‘labour’ dealt with the period between the nineteenth and the twenty-first centuries; one half was about labour in European history – versus 20 percent about Chinese history). Once narrowed down to publications on the pre-twentieth century era, the ‘labour’ sample hardly revealed any renewed interest in the study of forms of coerced labour in early-modern China and in continental and maritime Asia more widely. With very few exceptions (like an article exploring the transformations of the forced labour market throughout the Pacific between 1863 and 1911 and several papers dealing with premodern times),³⁰ most articles touched upon labour only in relation to incomes and GDP reconstructions, or endeavoured to compare China’s long development path with various countries (like England, Japan, and Holland).

Despite the use of numerous keywords, the survey proved surprisingly unsuccessful to unearth even a small body of literature on slavery and coerced labour in early-modern China and Asia. ‘Debt’, for instance, returned no result at all. Other keywords related to ‘coercion’, ‘dependency’, and more specific categories of bonded workers returned very few relevant results – among which were articles on the Dutch *cultuurstelsel* (forced cultivation system) in nineteenth-century Indonesia,³¹ on ‘tenants’ and ‘serfs’ in ‘Ancient’ China (often in a comparative perspective),³² on enslavement in the

²⁹ As an example, see Zhu Lixia, “Haishang sichou zhi lu yu Zhonghua wenming zaoqi chuanbo,” *Remin luntan* 11 (2020): 142–44.

³⁰ Wang Hua, “Nan Taipingyang daomin qiangzhi laogong maoyi de fazhan, tedian he yingxiang,” *Shijie lishi* 3 (2018): 72–84.

³¹ Li Cong, “Helan zai Yinni qiangpo zhongzhi dui Huaren de yingxiang,” *Xiandai jiaoji* 12 (2017): 163–64; Ban Xiang, “Heshu Dong Yindu Gongsi,” *Sixiang zhanxian* 37, no. 1 (2011): 17–20.

³² E.g., Yu Jianing, “Qianxi Zhong-Xi fengjian shehui zhong diannong yu nongnu de tongyi,” *Wenhua xuekan* 2 (2019): 236–38.

Korean Koguryŏ period (37 BCE–668 CE),³³ and on the transformations of labour regimes in the *tusi* system (the ‘native chieftaincies’ used as proxies of indirect rule on China’s borders) in the Qing period (1644–1911).³⁴ ‘Slaves’ and ‘slavery’ did return a more substantial number of articles, albeit unsurprisingly focused in their great majority on the transatlantic slave trade and on slavery in the New World and in the Mediterranean world. The topic of slavery in Asian history represented almost ten percent of the ‘slavery’ sample. However, it showed an overemphasis on the premodern period (mostly on pre-imperial and medieval China, but also on premodern Japan and Korea, ‘feudal’ Vietnam, and the central Asian slave trade in the second half of the first millennium CE).

More surprising was the fact that idioms and categories of common use in early-modern China returned very few results. Usual expressions for ‘self-sales’, such as ‘enslavement contract’, ‘commendation’, ‘pawning’, and ‘trafficking’ returned no result at all; neither did the commonplace dyads ‘honourable-mean’ and ‘master-slave’. Interestingly enough, the term ‘mean people’ brought forth only one article on *yamen* servants in Qing China,³⁵ but pointed to several articles on *burakumin* in late-nineteenth and twentieth-century Japan, on the *yangban* (ruling) elite in Chosŏn Korea, on ‘slaves’ (*nubi*) and ‘household people’ (*iejin*) in Heian Japan (794–1185), and on castes in India.

Browsing through the relatively small number of articles published on *nubi* led to similarly mixed results. Besides several articles using the term to speak of bondspeople in ancient Rome, Greece, and medieval Europe, I found six articles on its early-modern Korean equivalent (*nobi*), three on premodern Japanese *nubi*, and one devoted to demonstrating how slavery developed within the Vietnamese ‘feudal’ society.³⁶ As for China, the term was foregrounded in eight articles on premodern history (from early Antiquity to the Song period), but only once in the early-modern context – in a study on the persistence of human sacrifices up to the late imperial period.³⁷ This manifest interest for the history of slavery in Korean and Japanese (and Vietnamese) history is a welcome development that could pave the way for comparative studies across Eastern Asia. The apparent decline of interest for this category in early-modern China, on the other hand, sounds like a significant step away from a formerly vivid research field.

The results of this brief exploration of recent Chinese-language scholarship demonstrated that, overall, coercion and coerced mobilities still hold an important

33 Liu Ju and Dong Jian, “Gaogouli youren yanjiu,” *Shehui kexue zhanxian* 12 (2017): 126–33.

34 Gong Yin, “Guanyu Zhongguo tusi zhidu yuanyuan fazhan yanjiu de shige wenti,” *Qinghai minzu yanjiu* 24, no. 1 (2013): 111–18.

35 Xie Jianping, “Gudai bukuai. Yiren congye, sandai buxu canjia keju,” *Wenshi tiandi* 5 (2013): 93.

36 Yu Junjun and He Anshun, “Yuenan zaoqi de shehui xingzhi he tedian yanjiu,” *Sixiang zhanxian* 39, no. 2 (2013): 203–5.

37 Li Ling, “Zhongguo gudai de renxunzhi,” *Shuwu* 7 (2012): 9–16.

place in it, especially for the modern period (where women, captives, and indentured workers appear constantly on the move on a Eurasian and global scale). As for the early-modern period, coercion is still a significant issue but one that remains subsumed in a paradigm that addresses it more in terms of regimes of immobilization and oppression of a peasant workforce tied to the land than in terms of forced mobilities and slavery-like exploitation. Pre-mid-nineteenth-century mobilities of enslaved people and captives within China and across continental and maritime Asia hardly ever surface in the surveyed corpus. Does this mean that there is no trafficking to look for in early-modern China? that there was no market for captives and trafficked people? and that transnational slaving networks stopped at the borders of China? In the next section, we shall see that early-modern Chinese sources point to the contrary.

5 A Case of Harboursing Traffickers and Runaways

In his *Peregrinations to the North*, Zhejiang historian Tan Qian (1593–1657) briefly describes the ‘market of human beings’ (*renshi* 人市) in Beijing as a place where buyers and sellers openly carried out transactions in people.³⁸ Tan Qian provides little detail about the ways in which people were brought to the market, their origins, and the transactions held in Beijing in the first years of the Sino-Manchu dynasty. One court record held in the No. 1 Historical Archives of China can help flesh out his depiction.³⁹ Entitled ‘Memoir on a case of harboursing traffickers and runaways’, this 5,881-character long document not only gives detailed information about one particular trafficking network. It also provides insights into the dynamics of trafficking in Northern China, possible wider entanglements, and the ways in which the introduction of Manchu slavery created opportunities for traffickers.

Drafted on 25 September 1656 by Udari (Ch. Wudali 吳達禮), Manchu Vice-President of the Office of Arrests (the *dubu yamen* 督部衙門, subordinate to the Board of War), the memoir contains more than 30 statements of cross-examinations held successively by the Beijing Southern Police Patrol (*nanying* 南營) and by the Office of Arrests.⁴⁰ At the centre of the case was a man by the name of Pi Si 皮四, accused with several others of harboursing two fugitive bannerwomen (named Er Jie 二姐 and Da Jie 大姐) and of abducting one man (named Yu Er 於二). Despite the

³⁸ Tan Qian, *Beiyou lu* [ca. 1660] (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 2006): 386.

³⁹ “Wudali ti yinni guaifan taoren shi ben,” in *Qingdai dang’an shiliao congbian*, ed. Zhongguo diyi lishi dang’anguan (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1984): vol. 10, 107–15.

⁴⁰ On the Office of Arrests and early-Qing regulations on runaways, see Hu Xiangyu, “The Juridical System of the Qing Dynasty in Beijing (1644–1900)” (PhD diss., University of Minnesota, 2011): chap. 6.

contradictions they contain, these statements allow us to reconstruct the ways in which Pi Si's trafficking network operated.

6 Running Away from the Banners in Early-Qing Beijing

In the beginning, the case had nothing to do with trafficking, but with the escape of a woman (Da Jie) from the Beijing Banner garrison – an issue that Manchu authorities took very seriously and against which harsh regulations had been promulgated in 1654.⁴¹ According to the statements, Da Jie – the ‘household slave’ (*jiaren* 家人) of a bannerman widow⁴² – had run away from the Beijing garrison in August 1654. Arriving in Tongzhou, a few miles east of Beijing, she met the shop owner Pi Si, who ‘took her with him’ (*daihuo* 帶伙) and soon became her lover. One month later, Da Jie was recognized on the streets of Tongzhou by the corporal (Man. *bošokū*, Ch. *boshiku* 撥什庫, also known as *lingcui* 領崔) of her mistress’ company (Man. *niru*, Ch. *niulu* 牛錄). As a fugitive slave, Da Jie was arrested, brought to the Office of Arrests, eventually granted a pardon (‘I was not beaten’, she said), and sent back to her mistress in Beijing. ‘Unwilling’ to abandon her, Pi Si sold his business a few months later and moved to the capital to commend himself (*tou* 投) to Da Jie’s mistress (at the request of the mistress, according to Pi Si’s statement) – as many non-banner commoners seeking protection or opportunities did in the first decades of the Qing dynasty despite repeated prohibitions. After discovering that he was of ‘commoner’ status, Pi Si was expelled from the household. What happened next is not wholly clear, due to contradictory statements.

In his statements, Pi Si claims that he had bought Da Jie in 1655 from her mistress’ ‘little uncle’ (presumably a brother of the mistress’ deceased husband and rightful heir to her late husband’s property) at the price of 24 taels. In order to do so, he claimed, Pi Si borrowed money and used one of his associates (Jin Chengyuan 金成元) as a middleman. Since leaving the banner system was prohibited, a member of the Bordered Yellow Banner named Li Fengchun 李逢春 was also used as a figurehead:

41 Xiangyu Hu, “The Juridical System of the Qing Dynasty in Beijing (1644–1900)”: 218–25. The Eight banners were the backbone of the Manchu social and military organization (which was also composed of Han Chinese, Mongols, and Koreans). A large number of bannermen were stationed in the ‘inner city’, also known as the ‘Tartar city’. See Mark C. Elliot, *The Manchu Way: The Eight Banners and Ethnic Identity in Late Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001).

42 In the context of the Eight banners, the term *jiaren* (lit. ‘household person’) is a polysemic one. It can refer to members of a household in general and to enslaved people in particular – also named ‘banner slaves’ (*qixia nupu* 旗下奴僕). See Guo Runtao, “Qingdai de jiaren,” *Ming–Qing luncong* 1 (1999): 376–95.

His name was recorded on the Banner registers as the rightful purchaser of Da Jie. After the widow remarried (on 22 February 1656), her new husband asked Pi Si to commend himself to him. Upon refusing, Pi was punched, insulted, and sent away.

The widow, however, had a very different version of the events (which was later confirmed). On the verge of being sent away to her birth family by her late husband's relatives, she had entrusted Jin Chengyuan with 24 taels to purchase Da Jie from her 'little uncle'. Once she had remarried, Pi Si visited Da Jie and her mistress with the intention of commending himself to the widow's new husband. The new husband refused and sent Pi Si away, on the grounds that he was not a member of the Banners. Eventually, Da Jie ran away on 16 June 1656 to join Pi Si. The couple then hid in a vagrants' house (*qiliusuo* 棲流所) near Dongbian Gate (east of Beijing), where Pi Si's younger brother Pi Er 皮二 had taken residence with another fugitive bannerwoman named Er Jie. There, the Pi brothers and their associates carried on with their trafficking business for a little more than ten days until they were arrested.

7 The Business of Human Trafficking

Pi Si's statements provide various details about his activities as a trafficker (*guaifan* 拐販). He apparently started to make a profession of trafficking people (*guaimai renkou* 拐賣人口) after selling his shop. His first victim earned him 18 taels, which he allegedly spent on purchasing Da Jie. From then onward, Pi Si regularly obtained people procured by a network of associates who 'specialized in abducting people everywhere' (*zhuan zai gechu guairen* 傳在各處拐人). His role in the organization was that of a receiver: He paid a fixed price of 4 taels per captive (approx. 150 grams of silver), whom he resold at an average price of 8 taels to Jin Chengyuan. Jin in turn resold the captives at prices varying from 16 to 30 taels. Between early 1655 and early 1656, Pi Si acknowledged the trafficking of a hundred persons whose names he couldn't all remember. For the first six months of 1656, he was nonetheless able to give the particulars of the 'trafficked' persons (*guailai* 拐來). His initial statement records the names and origins of 17 individuals procured by his associates from various locations. Among them, 12 were from Zhili province (i.e., from around Beijing); three from Zhejiang province; and two from Jiangsu. In addition, Pi confessed to having abducted two persons by himself: An 'old mother' from Tongzhou; and the fugitive bannerwoman Er Jie (abducted in the north of Beijing and given to his younger brother as a wife). His associates also reported the abduction of another individual from Yongping (also in Zhili province) and one from Huguang province (Tab. 1).

Tab. 1: List of the 21 persons funnelled into Pi Si's trafficking network in 1656, according to the information recorded in the case.

Victim Name	Origin	Abductor(s)	Outcome
Mrs. Sun 孫	Tongzhou 通州 (Zhili); an old lady (老媽媽, 老婆子)	Pi Si 皮四	Sold to banner carpenter named Li, in fact Li Fengchun
Bao'er 保兒	Huguang province 湖廣; a 'little child' (<i>xiaozhi</i> 小子)	Pi Er 皮二 (?)	Given to Jin Chengyuan
Chen Si 陳四	Jinhua 金華府 (Zhejiang)	Lan Yigui 藍一貴	Given to Jin Chengyuan
Er Jie 二姐	Abducted near Houzai Gate (Beijing); a fugitive enslaved woman, plain yellow banner	Pi Si 皮四	Given to Pi Er as wife
Hu Da 胡大	Kaiping 開平 (Zhili)	Lan Yigui 藍一貴	Given to Jin Chengyuan
Ma Da 馬大	Yangcun 楊村 (Zhejiang)	Liu Si 劉四, Ma Er 馬二	Given to Jin Chengyuan
Si'er 'the cripple' 四兒 (癱子); also Xiao Si'er 小四兒	Leting 樂亭 (Zhili)	Lan Yigui 藍一貴	Given to Jin Chengyuan; sold (16 taels) in Guandong 關東
Song Da 宋大	Caiyu 采育 (Zhili)	Lan Yigui 藍一貴	Given to Jin Chengyuan
Song Er 宋二	Kaiping 開平 (Zhili)	Lan Yigui 藍一貴	Given to Jin Chengyuan
Wang Da 王大	Suzhou 蘇州 (Jiangsu)	Lan Yigui 藍一貴	Given to Jin Chengyuan
Wang Er 王二	Hexiwu 河西務 (Zhili)	Liu Si 劉四, Ma Er 馬二	Given to Jin Chengyuan
Xiao Erdi 小二弟	Luanzhou 灤州 (Zhili)	Liu Si 劉四, Ma Er 馬二	Given to Jin Chengyuan
Xiao Erzi 小二子	Sanhe 三河縣 (Zhili)	Liu Si 劉四, Ma Er 馬二	Given to Jin Chengyuan
Xiao Ma'er 小馬兒	Yanjiao 煙角 (?)	Liu Si 劉四, Ma Er 馬二	Given to Jin Chengyuan
Xiao Run'er 小潤兒	Suzhou 蘇州 (Jiangsu)	Liu Si 劉四, Liu Huzi 劉胡子, Zhu Er 朱二, Ma Er 馬二	Given to Jin Chengyuan

Tab. 1 (continued)

Victim Name	Origin	Abductor(s)	Outcome
Xiao Si'er 小四兒	Sanhe 三河縣 (Zhili)	Liu Si 劉四, Liu Huzi 劉胡子, Zhu Er 朱二, Ma Er 馬二	Given to Jin Chengyuan
Yu Er 於二	Sanhe 三河縣 (Zhili); abducted in Tongzhou	Lan Yigui 藍一貴	Given to Jin Chengyuan; too old, remained at Jin's service
Zhang Da 'the bald' 張大 (禿子)	Baodi 寶坻 (Zhili)	Liu Si 劉四, Liu Huzi 劉胡子, Zhu Er 朱二, Ma Er 馬二	Given to Jin Chengyuan; sold (18 taels) to nomads (<i>sao dazi</i> 騷達子) 'beyond the passes'
Zhang Er 張二	Yongping 永平府 (Zhili)	Lan Yigui 藍一貴	Given to Pi Si
Zhang San 張三	Luanzhou 灤州 (Zhili)	Liu Si 劉四, Liu Huzi 劉胡子, Zhu Er 朱二, Ma Er 馬二	Given to Jin Chengyuan; sold (18 or 22 taels) to a bannerman in Beijing
Zhu Da 朱大	Ningbo 寧波府 (Zhejiang)	Lan Yigui 藍一貴	Given to Jin Chengyuan

Most of the victims therefore appear to have been from the wider area of the capital city (as far as Kaiping district, a hundred miles to the east). Six out of 21 were nonetheless described as coming 'from' distant locations, such as 'Chen Si from Jinhua' (*Jinhua ren* 金華人), 800 miles south in Zhejiang province. From the victims' origins (which might simply refer to their places of residence), one can hardly conclude that Pi Si's men travelled long distances to acquire people. Their victims may well have been travellers abducted near Beijing, like Yu Er 'from Sanhe district' (thirty miles east of Beijing), who was seized in Tongzhou (less than ten miles away). We nonetheless observe that the captives from southern provinces were mainly brought by the same traffickers, like Lan Yigui 藍一貴, who alone procured Pi Si with one person from Jiangsu and two from Zhejiang. Although this is not sufficient evidence to conclude that they actually 'abducted people everywhere', two elements suggest that Pi Si and his suppliers were probably links in a far-reaching commodity chain.

First, we know that the victims were not only men (like Yu Er) and women (like Er Jie and an 'old mother' surnamed Sun 孫), but also, and perhaps mostly, children, who might have been easier to control over long distances than adults. At least six of these captives can be identified as children by their nicknames (they are

called ‘Little . . .’, like Xiao Erdi 小二弟). A seventh one (named Bao’er 保兒) is unambiguously identified as ‘a little child’ (*xiao zi* 小子). The testimonies provided by the traffickers also make it clear that ‘older’ people were difficult to sell. Yu Er, for instance, is described as ‘too old’ to be sold: After ‘taking him to the market to be sold three or four times’ (*daizhi shishang maile san si ci* 帶至市上賣了三四次), Jin Chengyuan was left with no other choice, he said, than to keep him in his own service. From these elements, it can be inferred that there was an important proportion of children among the victims (at least one third). If Pi Si’s men did not travel long distances to kidnap children themselves, they probably acquired them from other traffickers.

Secondly, although the victims were often sold locally in or nearby Beijing, the reseller Jin Chengyuan admitted to selling people ‘anywhere’ (*fanmai qu gechu* 販賣去各處), and he provides two examples. ‘Little Four’ (Xiao Si’er 小四兒) from Leting (Zhili province) was for instance sold ‘to people from Guandong’ (*zhuanmai yu Guandongren* 轉賣與關東人) or ‘in Guandong’ (*mai zai Guandong* 賣在關東), meaning that the child probably ended up somewhere East of Shanhai Pass, in Manchuria. One Zhang Da ‘the bald’ (*tuzi Zhang Da* 禿子張大) was for his part sold to ‘rancid Tatars’ (*saodazi* 騷達子, i.e., to nomad Mongols) ‘beyond the walls’ (*zai qiangwai* 在牆外) or ‘beyond the passes’ (*zai kouwai* 在口外), which could mean anywhere north of the Great Wall, most likely in Mongolia. Thus, the picture that emerges places Pi Si and his associates at the centre of a regional market in captive men, women, and children, itself embedded in a wider web of coerced mobilities that reached as far as Jiangnan in the South and Mongolia in the North.

Unfortunately, the text says very little about the techniques and the level of violence involved to make the victims submit and accept their fate. All are simply said to have been ‘abducted’ (*guai* 拐). However, ‘abduction’ is as much a description of the actions taken to funnel people into trafficking as a legal incrimination.⁴³ In addition to kidnapping people, Pi Si and his associates resorted to ‘decoying’, as in the case of the fugitive enslaved bannerwoman Er Jie, whom Pi Si allegedly ‘seduced’ (*hongguai* 哄拐) away from the capital city before handing her over to his brother as a wife. They also resorted to deceit. The old lady Sun from Tongzhou was apparently sold by her husband willingly because of poverty (at the low price of 2.5 taels). According to her statement, Pi Si talked the husband into selling his wife on the pretence of marrying her himself (which was already illicit despite being a common practice). Yet, as she would later discover, the contract had been forged: Unstamped, it named a person other than her husband as the seller, and it made no mention of marriage. The case of Yu Er also illustrates the uses traffickers made of

⁴³ I have attempted to clarify the distinction between legal transactions in people (marriages, adoptions, and enslavement) and what was regarded as trafficking in early-modern China in another book chapter. See Claude Chevaleyre, “Human Trafficking in Late Imperial China.”

debt to trap their victims. En route to the capital, Yu Er fell ill in Tongzhou, where Lan Yigui 'lured' (*hong* 哄) him into accepting money to buy lifesaving medicine and food. Recovered but unable to pay off his debt, Yu Er was brought by Lan Yigui to the capital city and sold to Jin Chengyuan.

Finally, an interesting point can be made as to how their organization operated. Pi Si had become Jin Chengyuan's sworn brother and partner in early 1655. As a 'person of the household' (*jiaren*) of a banner officer (also named Jin), Chengyuan was an essential component in their lucrative business. Besides finding ultimate purchasers, his main function was that of a 'launderer' for their human merchandise. His connections within the banners' administration gave him access to population registers (*dangzi* 檔子), on which the trafficked persons were 'falsely recorded' (*jiachong* 假充) under the names of actual banner officers. The process – which also involved the payment of the relevant taxes to the Sales Tax Office (*shuikesi* 裡稅課司) – made the ownership of illicitly acquired people look genuine (although under the name of a figurehead owner) and their resale lawful. It ultimately allowed Jin Chengyuan to bring them 'to the market' (*shangshi* 上市) – maybe the same market described a few years earlier by Tan Qian – where they were sold legally.

The case of Pi Si and his associates is only one in a growing 'China Human Trafficking and Slaving Historical Database' project.⁴⁴ It demonstrates that available sources can be fruitfully mobilized to (partially) reconstruct the dynamics of human trafficking in early-modern China. It also gives an illustration of the wide-ranging, multidirectional, and potentially transnational dynamics of a phenomenon that flourished before the arrival of European traders and that persisted far into the twentieth century by adapting and taking advantage of the evolutions of the socio-normative environment. Association with a member of the Eight banners was clearly a facilitating factor in Beijing in the 1650s. Therefore, this case reminds us that the necessary expansion of the study of 'slavery in early-modern Asia' requires a fine-grained understanding of the various markets and changing contexts connected by slaving networks.

'Human trafficking' in late imperial China should not be conflated with 'slave trading' as we usually comprehend it and as European operators practiced it in the Indian Ocean World at the same period. As it already was to their Ming (1368–1644) predecessors, trafficking was a 'serious violation of the law' (*dagan faji* 大幹法紀) to the new Manchu authorities – who brought their own tradition of enslavement with them – and even more so when practiced in the 'restricted area of the capital city' (*Jingshi jindi* 京師禁地). Yet in a context where enslavability was regulated by the law and where saleability (especially of women and children) was socially constitutive of the productive and reproductive strategies of 'transactional families',⁴⁵

⁴⁴ "China Human Trafficking and Slaving Database" (Lyon: Institut d'Asie Orientale, CNRS), <https://iao.cnrs.fr/recherche/projets-de-recherche-2/china-human-trafficking-and-slaving-database/>.

⁴⁵ See Johanna Ransmeier, *Sold People*: 2–20.

trafficking took on a particular significance. ‘Trafficking’ did not encompass all transactions in human beings, nor was it restricted exclusively to transactions in slaves. Trafficking was the narrower, illegal side of a commonplace ‘market’ in people. It flourished within the interstices of a society that had a constant demand for people for a wide variety of purposes, and where selling people was a crucial part of survival and wealth strategies.

Without increased efforts to (re)contextualize ‘slaving’, the diverse manifestations of slavery and the variety of coerced labour regimes at the scale of maritime *and* continental Eurasia, no truly global history of slaving in early-modern Asia is likely to emerge. The task is nonetheless daunting. It does not simply require scholars to collect relevant sources and documentation. It also calls on us to reconsider dominant narratives, question current ideologies, and sometimes to think outside the boxes of universal categories and national historiographies. Bearing all of this in mind, early-modern China could be a promising field for the study of ‘slaving’ dynamics (as defined by Joseph Miller) rather than ‘slavery’, as the case study presented above suggests. Despite its richness and the diversity of the research questions it addresses, recent Chinese historiography, as a whole, does not seem to be on the brink of taking on the challenges raised by the growing field of research about slavery in early-modern Asia. As a last example, as of 14 July 2021, the *China National Knowledge Infrastructure* referenced no review of Joseph Miller’s *Slavery as History* in any Chinese history journal and only referenced one review for Johanna Ransmeier’s *Sold People* (written in English by Japanese scholar Kishimoto Mio).⁴⁶ There are even good reasons to assume that exploring the wider continental entanglements of maritime slavery does not fit with the narratives that Chinese historians are increasingly called on to support in order to sustain the development of ‘socialism with Chinese characteristics’.⁴⁷ This should nonetheless be taken as an incentive for historians of slavery in Asia to increase their engagement with (East-)Asian historiographies and historians. The time has come to bring Asian history fully into a dialogue with the world history of slavery.

⁴⁶ Kishimoto Mio 岸本美緒, “Review: Sold People: Traffickers and Family Life in North China, by Johanna S. Ransmeier,” *Zhongguo wenhua yanjiusuo xuebao* 67 (2018): 307–15.

⁴⁷ See the discourse pronounced in January 2019 by Xi Jinping to celebrate the foundation of the Institute of History of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences: Xi Jinping, “Xi Jinping zhi Zhongguo shehui kexueyuan.”



Coerced Mobilities

Samantha Sint Nicolaas

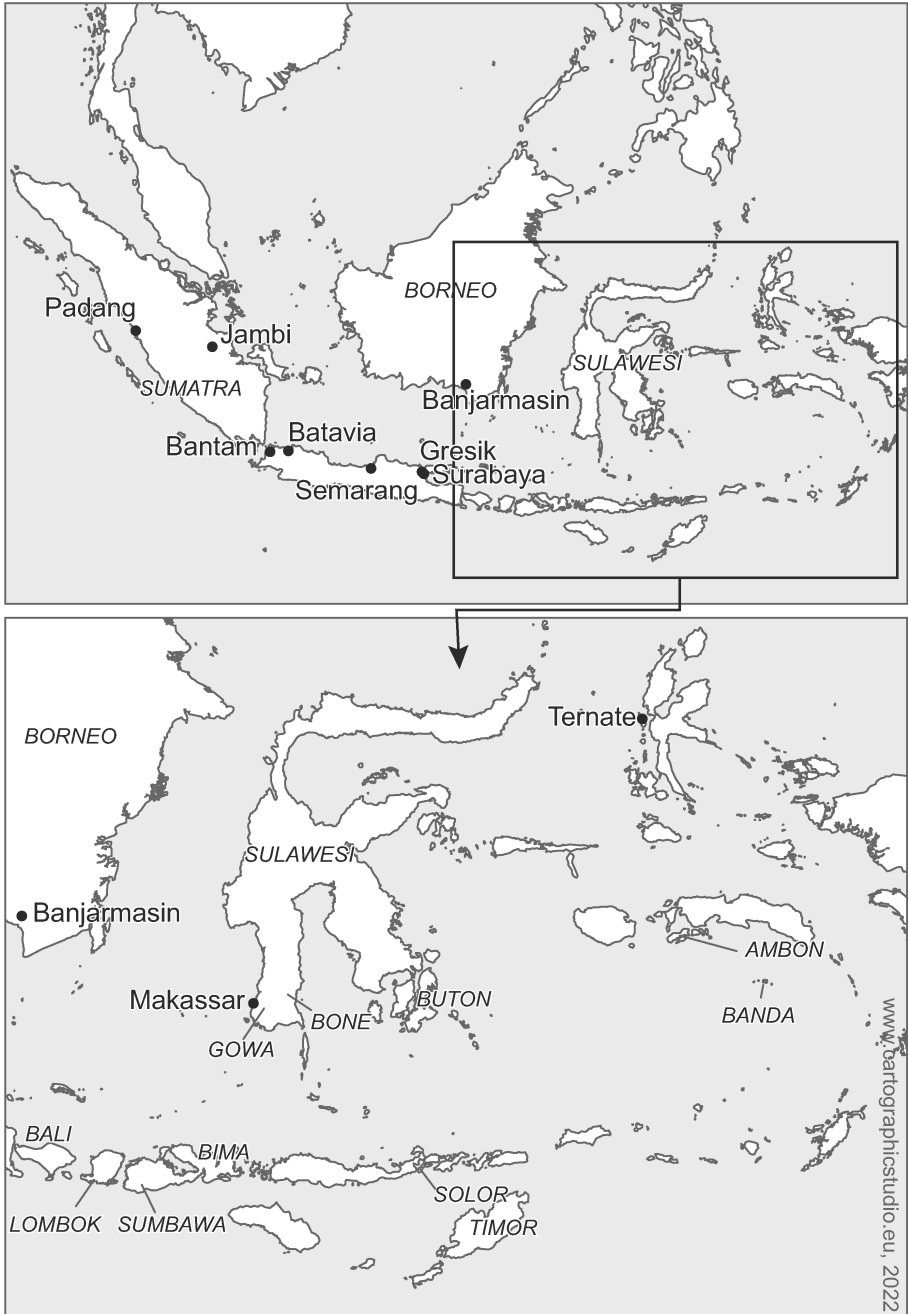
Maritime (Im)mobility: Reconstructing the Supply of Enslaved Labour to Batavia, 1624–1801

In 1619 the Dutch East India Company (VOC) conquered and demolished the port city of Jaccatra (present day Jakarta) on the island of Java. It was here in the colonial city, renamed Batavia by the colonisers, that the VOC built up what would become the core of its administrative power. Batavia expanded rapidly; so too did the population of enslaved inhabitants, which grew from roughly six thousand in 1623 to thirteen thousand within Batavia's city walls by 1673, and again from twenty-six thousand in 1689 to over forty thousand in 1779.¹ Batavia became an important centre for slave trade and ownership not only due to its prominent position as a political and administrative centre for the VOC, but also because of its economic importance. The areas surrounding the colonial city, known as the *Ommelanden*, were cultivated for the production of sugar, rice, coffee, cattle and wine. Crucial to the VOC's ability to supply Batavia with the necessary labour was the city's position within a long-distance and multidirectional slave trading system. In order to forcibly procure its workforce, the VOC drew heavily on its maritime links with India as well as the broader Indonesian archipelago, but also profited from established links with the Cape of Good Hope, Madagascar, and Ceylon (see Maps 1 and 2). Company and private ships alike exploited these networks to supply Batavia with slave labour, especially after the introduction of contracts to ensure the VOC quotas were met.

A growing body of research on slave trading in the Indian Ocean has revealed the characteristics of European involvement with the trade and reassessed the scale and geographical scope of these networks.² For some areas within the Indian Ocean

1 James Fox, "For Good and Sufficient Reasons": An Examination of Early Dutch East India Company Ordinances on Slaves and Slavery," in *Slavery, Bondage and Dependency in Southeast Asia*, ed. Anthony Reid (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press): 250; Marcus Vink, "The World's Oldest Trade": Dutch Slavery and Slave Trade in the Indian Ocean," *Journal of World History* 14, no. 2 (2003): 131–77.

2 Anthony Reid, ed., *Slavery, Bondage and Dependency in Southeast Asia* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press); Martin Krieger, "Der europäische Sklavenhandel auf dem Indischen Ozean (1500–1800)," in *Erzwungene Exile: Umsiedlung und Vertreibung in der Vormoderne (500 bis 1850)*, ed. Thomas Ertl (Frankfurt am Main: Campus Verlag, 2017): 221–38; Pedro Machado, *Ocean of Trade: South Asian Merchants, Africa and the Indian Ocean, c.1750–1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017); Bondan Kanumoyoso, "Beyond the City Wall: Society and Economic Development in the Ommelanden of Batavia 1684–1740" (PhD diss., Universiteit Leiden, 2011); Wim O. Dijk, "An End to the History of Silence? The Dutch Trade in Asian Slaves: Arakan and the Bay of Bengal, 1621–1665," *IIAS Newsletter* 46 (2008); Gerrit Knaap and Heather Sutherland, *Monsoon*



Map 1: The Indonesian Archipelago.

basin, such as the Western Indian Ocean, we have a solid understanding of the slave trading routes and connections that enabled and encouraged slave trading to develop.³ At present, however, little is known about many of the other, equally significant, routes that transported enslaved men and women throughout maritime Asia. The current use of ‘circuits’ to talk about the three main regions from which the VOC obtained enslaved workers has been crucial in indicating the geographical extent of slave trading in the region. At the same time it obscures some of the critical dissimilarities between the various slavery regimes and the proximity and vulnerability of different slave societies to European exploitation, as well as the transformative impact of integration into a global commercial slave trading system as revealed by recent scholarship.⁴ Expressing the relationship of different slave trading societies to each other in terms of their geographical similarities through the use of circuits suggests that these circuits were distinct from one another with little interaction between them. This chapter seeks to demonstrate that thinking about the slave trade in the Indian Ocean basin in terms of ‘connections’ over ‘circuits’ can clarify some of these remaining disparities. When we look at slave trading in the Indian Ocean beyond

Traders: Ships, Skippers and Commodities in Eighteenth-Century Makassar (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2004); Sinnappah Arasaratnam, “Slave Trade in the Indian Ocean in the Seventeenth Century,” in *Mariners, Merchants and Oceans: Studies in Maritime History*, ed. Kuzhippalli Skaria Mathew (New Delhi: Manohar, 1995): 195–208; Robert Shell, *Children of Bondage: A Social History of the Slave Society at the Cape of Good Hope, 1652–1838* (Hanover, NH and London: Wesleyan University Press, 1994); Michael Mann, *Sahibs, Sklaven und Soldaten: Geschichte des Menschenhandels rund um den Indischen Ozean* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2015); Richard B. Allen, *European Slave Trading in the Indian Ocean, 1500–1850* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2015); Matthias van Rossum, *Kleurrijke tragiek. De geschiedenis van slavernij in Azië onder de VOC* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2015); Matthias van Rossum, “‘Vervloekte goudzugt’. De VOC, slavenhandel en slavernij in Azië,” *Tijdschrift voor Sociale en Economische Geschiedenis* 12, no. 4 (2015): 29–58; Linda Mbeki and Matthias van Rossum, “Private Slave Trade in the Dutch Indian Ocean World: A Study into the Networks and Backgrounds of the Slavers and the Enslaved in South Asia and South Africa,” *Slavery & Abolition* 38, no. 1 (2017): 95–116; Ulbe Bosma, *The Making of a Periphery: How Island Southeast Asia Became a Mass Exporter of Labor* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2019); Richard B. Allen, “Ending the History of Silence: Reconstructing European Slave Trading in the Indian Ocean,” *Tempo* 23, no. 2 (2017): 294–313; Richard B. Allen, “Satisfying the ‘Want for Labouring People’: European Slave Trading in the Indian Ocean, 1500–1850,” *Journal of World History* 21, no. 1 (2010): 45–73; Jane Hooper and David Eltis, “The Indian Ocean in Transatlantic Slavery,” *Slavery & Abolition* 34, no. 3 (2013): 353–75.

3 Hooper and Eltis, “The Indian Ocean in Transatlantic Slavery”; Pedro Machado, “A Forgotten Corner of the Indian Ocean: Gujarati Merchants, Portuguese India and the Mozambique Slave-Trade, c. 1730–1830,” *Slavery & Abolition* 24, no. 2 (2003): 17–32; Edward Alpers, “The French Slave Trade in East Africa (1721–1810),” *Cahier d’Études africaines* 37 (1970): 80–124; Greville Stewart Parker Freeman-Grenville, *The French at Kilwa Island* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965).

4 Matthias van Rossum, “Global Slavery, Local Bondage? Rethinking Slavery as (Im)Mobilizing Regimes from the Case of the Dutch Indian Ocean and Indonesian Archipelago Worlds,” *Journal of World History* 31, no. 4 (2020): 693–727.

geographic circuits, and instead in terms of connections between places, societies and regimes through multi-directional and multi-layered slave trading routes, the complex and constantly evolving dynamics of slave trading in this region become more apparent.

To achieve this, new data will need to be collected and curated that reveals the mechanisms behind the different slave trade routes and regimes that converged within colonial hubs. This chapter will focus on one example of newly gathered data on the slave trade supplying Batavia between 1624 and 1780. First it will contextualise the nature of enslaved labour that sustained VOC expansion in the Indian Ocean. Second, the richness and potential of the dataset will be discussed, before moving on to the main body of the chapter, which analyses the data at four key chronological points in order to understand the development of the way in which VOC expansion connected different slave trading systems and slavery regimes. The chapter will end with a discussion of the need for a more sophisticated understanding of slave trading routes in the region, before reflecting on some of the similarities and differences with other chapters in this volume.

1 The VOC and Slave Labour in Batavia

After conquering Jaccatra, Company administrators feared the potential risks of using Javanese workers, but at the same time noted the primacy of slave labour to the survival and growth of Batavia as early as 1645.⁵ Initially the Company encouraged the immigration of European and Chinese inhabitants and imported large numbers of enslaved labourers from outside Java to work on the expansion of the fort as well as in the shipyards on the nearby island *Onrust*.⁶ The company primarily relied on two sources of labour: ‘*kettinggangers*’ who were either prisoners of war or convict labourers; and slaves, most of whom were relatively skilled craftsmen, primarily brought from India. These supplied much of the VOC’s need for labour until the 1660s.⁷ The enslaved labourers were directly acquired and transported by the VOC itself and regularly redistributed between the different parts of the VOC empire.⁸

Though slavery was not a new phenomenon at the time of the arrival of the VOC in Asia, the VOC was the first formal slaveholding corporation of its kind there, and as such was the first entity to introduce slaveholding as an institutional,

5 Kanumoyoso, *Beyond the City Wall*: 112.

6 Susan Abeyasekere, “Slaves in Batavia: Insights from a Slave Register,” in *Slavery, Bondage and Dependency in Southeast Asia*, ed. Anthony Reid (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press): 286.

7 Fox, ““For Good and Sufficient Reasons””: 248–49.

8 Matthias van Rossum, “The Dutch East India Company and Slave Trade in the Indian Ocean and Indonesian Archipelago Worlds, 1602–1795,” *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Asian History*, ed. David Ludden (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020).

rather than personal, enterprise. The VOC itself owned between 4,000 and 7,000 Company slaves across its empire. The majority of enslaved persons in Batavia, however, were owned by members of the local populations; the VOC could hire these enslaved workers as and when it needed the manpower for its construction and transport projects.⁹ Because slave labour was considered crucial for expansion, the VOC played a key role in the stimulation and regulation of the slave trading networks that converged in Batavia.¹⁰ The establishment of Batavia in 1619 laid the foundations for the settlement's emergent position at the nexus of a slave trade system in the Indonesian archipelago (see Map 1). With the conquest of Ambon (1605) and Banda (1621), the VOC firmly established itself in the Indonesian archipelago, asserting its control over the production of cloves, mace, and nutmeg, while seeking to expand its control to the trade in pepper. Expansion in Malacca (1641) and Formosa (1622) followed, with the VOC gradually establishing its power in Ceylon (Galle, 1641; Colombo and Jafnapatnam, 1654–1658), in South Africa (1652), and along the Malabar Coast (Cochin, 1663). As the VOC expanded it created an empire of forts, trading posts, urban settlements and agricultural production areas.¹¹

Slavery and the slave trade supporting VOC expansion did not exist solely in territories governed by the VOC. VOC slavery and slave trading took place within, and was dependent upon, different regimes of slavery across Asia which functioned within and as part of 'a dynamic of a continuously adapting, globally connected and increasingly capitalist economic system'.¹² The slave trade was not the only form of coerced mobility: it existed alongside other forms of coerced relocation, including deportation, repopulation, tribute and kidnapping. As the VOC connected its various hubs of empire through the establishment of a multidirectional and long-distance trading and slave-trading regime, these various systems of coerced labour and coerced mobility interacted, connected and transformed, becoming increasingly commodified and global.¹³ Though recent scholarship laid an important foundation for understanding the existence and co-existence of multiple forms of slavery and coerced labour in the Indian Ocean basin, more research is

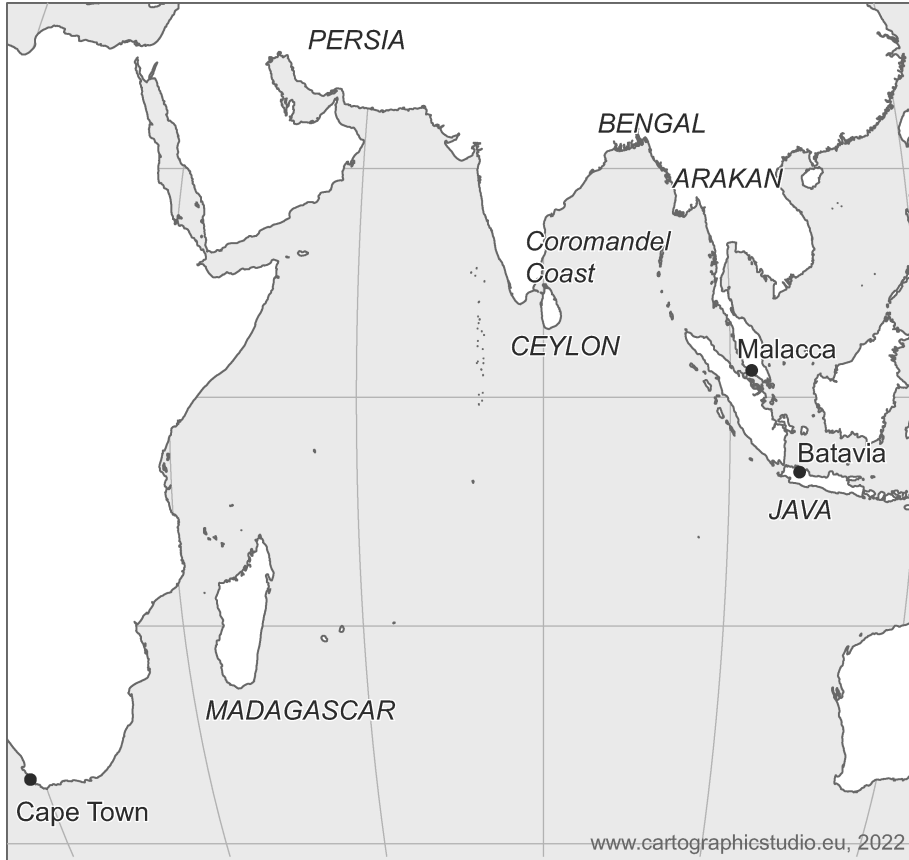
⁹ Van Rossum, "The Dutch East India Company and Slave Trade"; Kanumoyoso, *Beyond the City Wall*: 108.

¹⁰ Van Rossum, "Global Slavery, Local Bondage?".

¹¹ Van Rossum, "Global Slavery, Local Bondage?".

¹² Mann, *Sahibs, Sklaven und Soldaten*: 22. The idea of the Indian Ocean World as a justified historical region is set out in Gwyn Campbell, *Bondage and the Environment in the Indian Ocean World* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019).

¹³ Mbeki and Van Rossum, "Private Slave Trade in the Dutch Indian Ocean World": 4; Van Rossum, "Global Slavery, Local Bondage?"; Van Rossum, "The Dutch East India Company and Slave Trade."



Map 2: The Indian Ocean.

still needed to comprehensively understand the dynamics of and connections between local and global systems of coerced labour.¹⁴ This chapter seeks to challenge the analytical angle of existing studies on VOC expansion in maritime Asia; rather than studying the specific mechanisms of VOC imperial expansion, it uses the administrative sources of VOC imperial expansion to cast new light on the function and interaction of these coercive maritime links. Layered beneath the evidence of VOC expansion are hints and indications of the nature of the slave trade regimes and routes with which the VOC became increasingly entangled. As Batavia was a

¹⁴ For an overview of the literature and future directions for research see: Van Rossum, “Global Slavery, Local Bondage?”; Van Rossum, “The Dutch East India Company and Slave Trade”; Samantha Sint Nicolaas, Matthias van Rossum and Ulbe Bosma, “Towards an Indian Ocean and Maritime Asia Slave Trade Database: An Exploration of Concepts, Lessons and Models,” *Esclavages & Post-Esclavages* 3 (2020).

VOC stronghold in Asia concerned with the sourcing of labour from the outset, the colonial records that tracked and measured the flows of enslaved people into the city offer a lens through which we can explore the functioning of these various systems of slavery and coerced labour within a global slave trading system. Reorienting away from the development of the VOC towards what its development can reveal about the different labour regimes that became increasingly connected will simultaneously provide new insights into the flows and exchanges of coerced labour across the Indian Ocean basin, as well as the transformative and accelerative effects of European imperial presence in the region.

2 Reconstructing the Supply of Labour to Batavia, 1624–1801

As part of the collaborative initiative *Exploring Slave Trade in Asia* aimed at creating an Indian Ocean and Maritime Asia Slave Trade Database, new source material is being identified in order to further the creation of accurate estimates on the nature of slave trading within the Indian Ocean basin.¹⁵ This chapter will draw on data from one such new dataset, created by Matthias van Rossum and Mike de Windt at the International Institute of Social History.¹⁶ The dataset contains 1169 entries recording observations about incoming slaves on ships entering Batavia between 1624 and 1801. In total this dataset records the arrival of at least 40,061 enslaved people in Batavia, with many entries using quantifying indications of ‘some’ or ‘many’ enslaved individuals aboard, and other entries perhaps rounded up or down based on estimates.

The majority of the observations concerning slaves arriving in Batavia were recorded in three main sources: the *Generale Missiven*, the *Dagregisters Batavia* and the *Generaal journal gehouden door de boekhouder-generaal te Batavia*. These sources provide a detailed insight into the arrivals of groups of slaves at the port city of Batavia. These observations go beyond the tallying of numbers of enslaved bodies, also noting details of concern to Company officials such as the ethnic make-up of

¹⁵ Exploring Slave Trade in Asia (International Institute of Social History), <https://iish.amsterdam/en/research/projects/slave-trade-asia>.

¹⁶ Matthias van Rossum and Mike de Windt, *References to Slave Trade in VOC Digital Sources, 1600–1800*, International Institute of Social History (Amsterdam 2018) v1, <https://hdl.handle.net/10622/YXEN6R>. Part of the *Indian Ocean and Maritime Asia Slave Trade Databases*, IISH Dataverse, UNF:6:asGGWT0x0ev6osDx+eCoeg== [fileUNF]. This dataset was made as part of the project *Between local debts and global markets: Explaining slavery in South and Southeast Asia 1600–1800* (Matthias van Rossum, NWO Veni Grant, 2016–2019) funded by the Dutch Council of Scientific Research (NWO).

groups of incoming slaves, the violation of Company ordinances, occasional mortality rates, and sometimes even comments on Company relations with neighbouring potentates and sultans, which often had a direct impact on the availability of enslaved labour. What at first might appear as relatively straightforward data on the origin of ships arriving at a particular port actually holds a wealth of information about the underlying structures of slavery and the slave trade in the Indian Ocean basin. We might ask the question of what added value a dataset such as the one used in this chapter has when compared to the wide-ranging studies on the slave trade in the Indian Ocean. The data available in this source has implications beyond its original purpose for the governing elites of Batavia. As birds-eye observations – albeit from a fixed vantage point – on flows of the enslaved in and out of Batavia, the source reveals pieces of the jigsaw puzzle of slave trade routes and systems that connected or diverged at the hub of the port city of Batavia.

An important caveat to this chapter is that the observations recorded in this dataset do not cover the full body of observations made in Batavia during this period. This initial dataset has been constructed on the basis of digitised sources; it is expected that additional data will supplement and enrich the initial analysis of the data presented here. The information contained in the data will be analysed with the intent of shedding light on systematic characteristics of the slave trade routes that supplied the colonial city of Batavia with labourers from the early seventeenth to the late eighteenth centuries. This chapter will not, however, be able to provide a comprehensive outline of ethnicities and places of origin of the enslaved entering Batavia since the observations recorded at Batavia concern predominantly the origins of *ships* arriving. As such, indications of ethnicity are often ambiguous. Ships carrying enslaved workers from one departure point to their destination in Batavia were not necessarily carrying enslaved persons from that same point of departure; some may have arrived at the departure point as a midway stop in a longer journey, other ships may have picked up additional enslaved individuals along the journey to make up for being able to get fewer than expected prior to departure, or at a designated stop for purchasing more.¹⁷

These important sources cover the entire period of the presence of the VOC in Batavia and not only allow researchers to zoom in on the individual slave trading movements into the city, but also provide a significant amount of illuminating qualitative information on the functioning and regulation of the slave trade. Analysing this main body of data at this stage in the data collection process enables us to uncover important patterns and developments across the entire period, which can

¹⁷ For a more in-depth overview of the challenges of reconstructing the slave trade in the Indian Ocean region see Sint Nicolaas, Van Rossum, Bosma, “Towards an Indian Ocean Maritime Asia Slave Trade Database.”

later be further expanded and tested through the addition of more fragmented data from shipping logs, import taxes and individual licenses and passes.

3 Reconstructing the Catchment Area of Slave Labour Exported to Batavia

The VOC-sponsored slave trade took place in tandem with a widespread European presence in the Indian Ocean basin. The networks of slave trading established by Europeans played a crucial role in establishing, reinforcing and even transforming connections between slave societies in the Indian Ocean basin.¹⁸ As the European presence in early modern Asia expanded, the demand for the forced labour necessary to maintain expansion increased. In some cases, as in the *corvée* labour systems on Ceylon, colonial expansion encountered and adapted local forms of bondage and slavery to meet its own commercial needs; in other cases, such as in the mass deportation of people from along the Coromandel coast, the need to either directly supply slave labour to other colonies, or the opportunities to make a profit in supplying the colony with its labour needs, intensified the connections between early modern Asian slave societies, bringing regions long associated with debt-, war- or status-based servitude into direct contact with commodified forms of slavery and global expansion.¹⁹

Markus Vink identified three overlapping and interlocking circuits of subregions from which the VOC drew the captive labour needed across all its territories, namely: the African circuit (East Africa, Madagascar, Mascarene Islands), the South Asian circuit (the Indian subcontinent, especially the Malabar, Coromandel, Bengal/Arakan coasts); and the Southeast Asian circuit (Malaysia, Indonesia, New Guinea, and the southern Philippines). As well as being key regions for the sourcing of forced labour, many of these regions also had themselves a demand for forced labour. In Southeast Asia these markets included Malacca, Sumatra, Bantam, Batavia, Makassar, Ambon, Banda and the Moluccas; in South Asia forced labourers were needed in Surat, Malabar, Ceylon, Coromandel and Bengal, as well as at the Cape of Good Hope. For many of these areas it has been demonstrated how VOC actors made use of local events such as war and famine that were favourable to the mass exportation and relocation of cheap labour, thus integrating various forms of

¹⁸ Van Rossum, “Global Slavery, Local Bondage?”.

¹⁹ Van Rossum, “Global Slavery, Local Bondage?”.

slave systems and societies in early modern Asia into a globally connected European slave trade system.²⁰

If we map these three circuits or subregions identified by Vink directly onto the recorded observations of cargoes of enslaved people entering Batavia in the database, we see the following patterns emerge:

The South Asian circuit (the Indian subcontinent, especially the Malabar, Coromandel, Bengal/Arakan coasts): at least 12,863 arrivals in Batavia 1624–1760, with 10,661 of these slaves arriving in the seventeenth century.

The African circuit (East Africa, Madagascar, Mascarene Islands): 1,585 arrivals between 1657 and 1733.

The Southeast Asian circuit (Malaysia, Indonesia, New Guinea, and the southern Philippines): 22,811 between 1624 and 1800, with 21,996 of these slaves arriving after 1660.

While Vink's three circuits illustrate the VOC's far-reaching entanglement with regions where enslaved labour could be obtained, either through markets or through exploitation, such an overarching picture does not of itself illuminate the mechanisms and factors that kept these regions and systems connected. In order to understand more precisely the interconnections between these regions, we need to map how VOC reliance on and interaction with these different sources of enslaved labour changed through time, as the VOC established itself as an imperial power and key global player in slave trading in the region. There is a need to further unpack these circuits; what do they tell us about the flows of enslaved people between connected slave regimes, and how were already existing routes transformed and diverted by the introduction and expansion of European slave trading regimes in the area?

4 Maritime (Im)mobility: VOC Expansion and the Transformation of Coercive Connections

What a general analysis of circuits of forced relocations omits is a sensitivity to changes in the patterns of the sourcing and relocation of forced labour into specific imperial outposts with their own contexts, such as Batavia. The first record in the database is from as early as 1624 and the last as late as 1801. The VOC was not a stagnant entity in this period. The expansion of both the commercial and military weight

²⁰ Vink, “‘The World’s Oldest Trade’”; Anthony Reid, “Introduction: Slavery and Bondage in Southeast Asian History,” in *Slavery, Bondage and Dependency in Southeast Asia*, ed. Anthony Reid (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press): 1–43.

of VOC authority followed a chronological timeline, peaking in 1684, as the VOC increasingly took on the dual roles of both merchant and sovereign in its various spheres of influence. It follows, therefore, that as the VOC expanded territorially as well as in authority, the nature of its procurement of labour adapted to follow suit. When we compare these patterns of forced mobility with the expansion of the VOC empire, we gain insights into the dynamics of supplying a commercial empire with the labour force necessary to sustain this expansion. Beyond the impact of expansion on the VOC's ability to procure labour, these changing dynamics also reveal more about the processes of transformation as commercial slave trading regimes increasingly became entangled with non-commodified or localised slave trading regimes, drawing them into the web of connections accelerated by long-distance European commodified slave trading. The following section will take figures from three key phases in the expansion of the VOC empire across the seventeenth century, as well as an overall analysis of figures from the eighteenth century, as rough data points for identifying and understanding patterns in the slave trade supplying Batavia in relation to the broader expansion of the VOC and its increasing entanglement in a global web of connected slave trading routes and regimes.

5 Long Distance Slave Trade: Trading with the Kingdom of Arakan and Profiting from Conditions in the Indian Subcontinent, 1624–1640

Following the establishment of Batavia, VOC expansion centred on the subjugation of the Banda islands through genocidal measures in 1621, as well as the annexation of Formosa (1622). The early years of VOC expansion from Batavia were by no means straightforward; the VOC faced competition from the Chinese and the English in the pepper markets of Bantam (Java), as well as regular clashes with Bantenese soldiers.²¹ Mason Hoadley, in a chapter on pre-colonial systems of bondage in Java, stressed the transformative impact of the VOC's presence in Java: labour systems in the pre-colonial Cirebon-Priangan region of Java revolved around self-sufficient agricultural production and service to the Javanese potentates; slavery and bondage appear to have only affected 'an extremely small percentage of the population'.²² Early VOC mercantilism however developed a colonial economic structure that required large amounts of manpower for its construction projects and

²¹ Femme S. Gaastra, *Geschiedenis van de VOC* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2007): 40.

²² Mason C. Hoadley, "Slavery, Bondage and Dependency in Pre-Colonial Java: the Cirebon-Priangan Region," in *Slavery, Bondage and Dependency in Southeast Asia*, ed. Anthony Reid (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press): 108.

supply of agricultural goods including indigo, coffee and cotton.²³ From the early years of development then, VOC elites in Batavia faced the simultaneous challenge of procuring the labour necessary for the expansion of the colonial city and ensuring the security of the city from external threats.

During this period, the majority of enslaved people in Batavia were imported from Bengal, Malabar and other South Asian regions; they were often captured from the Portuguese and transported to Batavia since the VOC did not have control of the slave trade in the Archipelago, which was largely under the influence of private Asian and European traders.²⁴ Because of the high cost of ‘free’ labour (hiring available enslaved persons from their local masters), as well as the fragmented nature of Batavian society, enslaved workers were initially brought from as far away as possible, so as to prevent them from potentially fleeing the city.²⁵ These anxieties about the potential risks posed by negative reactions of the enslaved can also be seen in the early ordinances of the VOC, which in 1625 sought to regulate the treatment of slaves within Batavia’s walls, decreeing that no slave owner could impose more than ‘civil or domestic’ punishment on their slaves.²⁶

Of the twenty-five entries in the dataset for the period 1624–1640, the vast majority of forced relocations originated on the Indian subcontinent and were carried out directly by the VOC. Arakan and the Coromandel coast dominate these entries as places of departure for the VOC ships recorded as coming into Batavia (see Map 2). These twenty-five entries record the forced relocation of at least 2,276 people; the total number of enslaved persons aboard is unknown in three cases, while in one case VOC officials estimated the arrival of ‘some’ slaves. The data in the entries can be summarised as seen in Tab. 1.

The sample from this period highlights the overwhelming reliance of the VOC on the Coromandel coast as well as Arakan to obtain forced labour for Batavia. This appears to have been a systematic characteristic of early VOC trade in the Indian Ocean; Vink has calculated that in the period 1626–1662 the exportation of 150–400 slaves from the Arakan-Bengal coast annually was a regular occurrence.²⁷ Accounts of slave trading on the Indian subcontinent have drawn attention to the prolonged drought and famine conditions that resulted in the readily available exportation of at least 1,900 slaves from the Coromandel coast between 1622 and 1623 alone.²⁸ In

²³ Hoadley, “Slavery, Bondage and Dependency in Pre-Colonial Java”: 109.

²⁴ Kanumoyoso, *Beyond the City Wall*: 117; Reid, “Introduction”: 29; Heather Sutherland, “Slavery and the Slave Trade in South Sulawesi, 1660s–1800s,” in *Slavery, Bondage and Dependency in Southeast Asia*, ed. Anthony Reid (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press): 263–85.

²⁵ Reid, “Introduction”: 15.

²⁶ See Fox, ““For Good and Sufficient Reasons””: 256.

²⁷ Vink, ““The World’s Oldest Trade’.”

²⁸ Vink, ““The World’s Oldest Trade’.”

Tab. 1: Enslaved arrivals in Batavia, 1624–1640.

Place of departure	Total number of people relocated
Coromandel	1,254 (+ ‘some’)
Arakan	922
Solor	49
Borneo	25
Malacca	22
Masulipatnam	2
Bima	2
Buton	unknown

Vink’s original analytical circuits, Arakan and the Coromandel coast form the same geographic region. What this obscures, however, is the co-existence of two separate slavery regimes in the same area. Whereas the availability of cheap enslaved labour along the Coromandel coast was largely driven by the famine conditions mentioned above, those labelled as coming from ‘Arakan’ could in fact have originated from anywhere along the Bay of Bengal, as Arakan was a powerful kingdom with its own systems of slavery.²⁹ What we see here is the merging of two separate sources of enslaved labour, originally under two different regimes, and the transformation of these original slavery regimes as the VOC connected them into a web of long-distance slave trading routes that carried the enslaved across the Indian Ocean to Batavia.

Beyond these two main sources of labour, however, other markets where we know slave labour to have been available are not represented in the data. Slave trade in Southeast Asia was not unknown prior to the dominance of the VOC; ports like Malacca, Aceh, Banten and Makassar already functioned as hubs in connecting slave trading routes from Papua New Guinea to the Coromandel coast, as well as from Sumbawa to the Philippines.³⁰ It is unknown who carried out the transaction resulting in 25 enslaved persons arriving in Batavia from Borneo on the 14th of April 1636, but from the information available on slaves arriving from other parts of the Indonesian archipelago, it appears that the VOC had little direct access to these markets in this early phase of expansion. The two arriving from Bima on the 20th of November 1636 were brought in by ‘Maleijers’ (slave traders from Sulawesi), whereas the unknown number of enslaved persons entering Batavia from Buton in 1634 were brought and sold by Marten Jansen Vogel, a free burgher of Batavia, to various private persons in the city.

²⁹ S.E.A. van Galen, “Arakan and Bengal: The Rise and Decline of the Mrauk U Kingdom (Burma) From the Fifteenth to the Seventeenth Century AD” (PhD diss., Leiden University, 2008); Jaques P. Leider, “Le Royaume d’Arakan, Birmanie. Son histoire politique entre le début du XVe et la fin du XVIIe siècle” (PhD diss., Ecole française d’Extrême-Orient, 1998).

³⁰ Kanumoyoso, *Beyond the City Wall*: 117.

Here we see the differences in access to enslaved labour for the VOC directly, which focussed largely on the slave labour available from Arakan and the Coromandel Coast, and the smaller numbers of enslaved labour arriving from closer to Batavia, but indirectly, through other slave trade intermediaries. Though the 22 persons arriving from Malacca were purchased directly by the VOC, it is important to note the role of the Portuguese in forcing these slaves out of the besieged city in 1640 – an incident found worth noting down in the *Dagh-register*.

6 Increasing Involvement: Trading within the Indonesian Archipelago, 1641–1660

In 1641 the VOC took over the port of Malacca, shortly followed by expansion into coastal Ceylon (Galle, 1641; Colombo and Jaffnapatnam 1654–1658). The VOC also extended its authority to the Cape of Good Hope in 1652. For this period the dataset holds a larger sample of 85 entries, recording the relocation of at least 5,172 individuals, again with some unknown numbers and vague descriptions of ‘some’ enslaved people onboard. These details are shown in Tab. 2.

Tab. 2: Enslaved arrivals in Batavia, 1641–1660.

Place of departure	Total number of people relocated
Arakan	3,309
Coromandel	638
Banjarmassin (via Makassar)	200
Solor	175
Bali	136
Java (Japara, Grissee, Lassem, Tegal)	100
Bantam	92
Borneo	61 (+ ‘some’)
Timor	54
Bengala	28
Persia	13
Makassar	10 (‘Ceramse’) (+ ‘some’)
The Cape	3
Cambodia	unknown
Diange	unknown
Unknown or unclear	353

In the sample from this period, Arakan still clearly dominated as the main source of slave labour; similarly, the Coromandel coast, though less prominent in this sample than in the initial phase of VOC expansion, still provided a large share of the slaves arriving at Batavia. The presence of the Cape and Persia are notable in this sample,

although both entries refer to single-voyage transportations of Company slaves. These slaves were likely already enslaved under the VOC; the place of origin of the ships transporting them does perhaps not have a direct link to their ethnicity.

Noticeably, despite the VOC's conquest of Malacca in 1641, slaves arriving from this city are absent from this sample. Malacca had been one of the largest importers of slaves under Portuguese rule in the sixteenth century and had been a dominant slave market, especially for Javanese slaves.³¹ Though the conquest of Malacca represented a significant step for the VOC in terms of its position on the European spice market, it is striking that it appears not to have appropriated the city as a source of enslaved labour for Batavia, despite its previous prominent role under Portuguese colonial rule.³² Instead, in this period, VOC Malacca was supplied with slave labour from the much closer markets of the Malabar and Coromandel coasts. Some of these slaves might have been taken to Batavia in the later slave transports from Malacca in the early eighteenth century, but these transports account for less than 100 enslaved individuals in this dataset.

Though nowhere near the numbers arriving from Arakan and the Coromandel coast, the sample from this period clearly reflects the growing involvement of the VOC with indigenous chiefs and headmen on the Indonesian archipelago, forming a striking difference with the previous sample. The growing presence of these indigenous leaders in this sample was possibly a result of the slave-clause agreements the Dutch started to conclude in the eastern archipelago and Sulawesi from 1650 on.³³ The sample also records the arrival of 353 enslaved individuals in Batavia between 1648 and 1659 on '*inlandse*' (inland) vessels. The numbers recorded as arriving in Batavia were never above 50 and actually refer to total numbers brought on board these *inlandse* vessels organised according to months. Where these vessels were coming from, and which groups of people they were bringing into Batavia, remains unclear, but the data points to a steady, if small, trickle of enslaved persons entering Batavia from surrounding areas.

At the same time, the security of Batavia in relation to the surrounding Javanese polities remained of prime concern. Until peace contracts were signed with Mataram in 1677 and Bantam in 1683, Batavia's *Ommelanden* remained relatively precarious and vulnerable to Bantenese raids. The first census of 1673 recorded that only 9,311 people lived beyond the city walls, with slaves and *Mardijkers* (descendants of free slaves) making up over two-thirds of this group.³⁴ The anxieties around Batavia's precarity in relation to Java's sultans make a striking appearance in the observations on incoming slaves; in 1659, control over 36 slaves from Bantam was transferred from the Sultan of Bantam to VOC envoys. The record does not make

³¹ Reid, "Introduction": 31.

³² Gaastra, *Geschiedenis van de VOC*: 52.

³³ Vink, "The World's Oldest Trade'."

³⁴ Kanumoyoso, *Beyond the City Wall*: 111.

clear whether these slaves were a gift, had been bought by the Company or run away. What the observation does record however is that once in Batavia, all 36 were put on an old sampan which was set on fire – a drastic method of preventing ‘problematic’ slaves from entering the city.

What this sample suggests, in contrast to the previous one, is that as the VOC stabilised its position in Batavia, it increasingly sought access to the smaller circuit of intra-Asian slave trade transportations across the Indonesian archipelago. Whether this increase was due to a relaxation around allowing slaves from neighbouring territories to enter the slave systems of Batavia and its surrounding *Ommelanden*, or whether indigenous chiefs and slave traders became increasingly aware of Batavia as a potential market, remains an interesting question. What is clear from the execution of the slaves from Bantam, however, is that security remained a prime factor in the regulation of the admittance of slaves from the perspective of the VOC.

7 Establishment and Experimentation: Dominance in the Indonesian Archipelago and New Long-Distance Connections, 1661–1688

The 1660s saw the VOC empire extend its power to Cochin (1663), with settlements on the Malabar and Coromandel coasts (1663), and further within the Indonesian archipelago. 1684 is often cited as the height of the VOC’s military authority across its various spheres of influence.³⁵ Both Markus Vink and Robert Shell have accordingly used it as a sample year from which to calculate slave trade populations and the flows necessary to sustain the related growth rates. Shell calculated that the slave population of Batavia consisted of 22,570 adults in 1689. Vink argued that on the basis of the 4,000 Company slaves (who included 1,400 slaves in Batavia) in 1668, as well as the 66,000 total Dutch slaves in the various settlements across the Indian Ocean basin (26,000 slaves in Batavia), a total of between 3,730 and 6,430 slaves had to be imported across the Indian Ocean basin each year.³⁶ Vink assigns Batavia and Ceylon the status of ‘the two most important VOC settlements’ at this moment.

As a result of the VOC’s rapid expansion, the period from the 1660s onwards witnessed the introduction of a new category of slave to Batavia; whereas the Company’s work slaves up till now had mainly consisted of skilled labourers, ‘*kulis*’ increasingly took on the unskilled labour in Batavia such as unskilled building, loading and unloading in warehouses, or agricultural labour in the *Ommelanden*.³⁷

³⁵ Gaastra, *Geschiedenis van de VOC*: 37.

³⁶ Vink, “‘The World’s Oldest Trade’”: 167.

³⁷ Fox, “‘For Good and Sufficient Reasons’”: 250.

These '*kulis*' were mainly recruited from within the Indonesian archipelago – especially from places like Bali, the Celebes (Sulawesi), Banda and Timor.

The sample for this period is made up of 552 entries, recording a total of 19,437 slaves arriving in Batavia. Tab. 3 summarises the details.

Tab. 3: Enslaved arrivals in Batavia, 1661–1688.

Place of departure	Total number of people relocated
Makassar	4,940
Bali	2,637
Ceylon	2,635
Arakan	1,453
Timor	1,383
Buton	1,345
Madagascar/Mauritius (via Mozambique)	984
Ambon	472
Sumbawa	257
Celebes	250
Coromandel	216
Ternate	212
Manggarai	190
The Cape	178
Bima	167
Banda	153
Surabaya	137
Solor	129
Selayar	125
Borneo	101
Alita	100
Bantam	85
Gresik	71
Bone	51
Tegal	51
Jambi	44
Semarang	39
Lombok	28
New Guinea	11
Banjarmasin	10
Bengalen	unknown
Unknown or unclear	983

VOC military expansion in the Indonesian archipelago brought it into interaction with the existing systems of slave trade, vastly accelerating the steady trickle of labour represented by the *inlandse* vessels in the previous sample. We clearly see that in the space of just forty years, slaves from within the Indonesian archipelago formed

the bulk of enslaved labour arriving in Batavia, far outstripping the previously preferred markets of supply of Araccan and the Coromandel coast. The marked upsurge in the numbers arriving in Batavia from Timor can be directly attributed to the military expeditions staged by the VOC in the area; a quarter of all slaves arriving in Batavia from Timor in this period (367) were captured in one go and arrived as part of one flotilla following one such expedition in 1674.

The collapse of the kingdom of Makassar in 1669 and its subsequent impact on the slave trade supplying Batavia is also immediately obvious. The influx of enslaved people from Sulawesi following the redistribution of the land among chiefs favourable to the VOC which accounted for just under 25% of the total supply of slave labour to Batavia during this 27-year period, represents a peak in the slave trade flows entering Batavia. In the mid-seventeenth century, Makassar was a hub for the slave trade in the Indonesian archipelago; enslaved people from northern Sulawesi and eastern Borneo were exported there, as well as from eastern Indonesia including Manggarai, Timor, Alor and New Guinea, sometimes via eastern markets such as Buton or Tidore.³⁸ Makassarese slave traders engaged in large-scale raiding, such as the 200 armed vessels which sailed to the Sula islands (an archipelago in the Moluccas) in 1665 and brought back 1000–1500 enslaved people.³⁹ The dominance of Makassar in this period would remain a systematic characteristic of the slave trade supplying Batavia throughout the eighteenth century.

Enslaved people exported from the markets in Bali also make up a significant proportion of the slave labour entering Batavia. Studies like that of Van der Kraan have illuminated the social structures in Bali that, due to limited opportunities for the integration of slave labour within Balinese society itself, led to the availability of an 'exportable surplus' of slaves.⁴⁰ In the exportation of labour from Bali, both local hierarchies and the particular characteristics of demand for labour in Batavia appear to have played a significant role in shaping the patterns that exerted influence on this particular labour flow. Van der Kraan has emphasised the significance of gender in the risk of enslavement for Balinese people; the Balinese family system was strongly patrilinear as individual land rights could only be vested in men, and as a result women occupied a very low status in Balinese society. The enslavement of Balinese women could occur in a number of ways, including being sold into slavery by their husbands as a result of adultery, poverty or gambling debts.⁴¹ At the same time, ethnic prejudices in Batavia also influenced the demand for Balinese slaves; an ordinance of 25th September 1665 forbade the sale of enslaved males

³⁸ Reid, "Introduction": 31.

³⁹ Sutherland, "Slavery and the Slave Trade in South Sulawesi": 267–69.

⁴⁰ Alfons van der Kraan, "Bali: Slavery and Slave trade," in *Slavery, Bondage and Dependency in Southeast Asia*, ed. Anthony Reid (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press): 328.

⁴¹ Van der Kraan, "Bali": 323.

from Bali to all subjects of the company due to their ‘malevolent nature’.⁴² This interaction of factors affecting both the likelihood of who was to be enslaved in Bali as well as who could be purchased in Batavia is clearly reflected in the data: of the 3,167 enslaved persons arriving in Batavia from Bali between 1648 and 1719, at least 828 were female, exported as part of female-only cargoes aboard *inlandse* vessels, over 90% of whom arrived between 1666 and 1681, perhaps as a direct result of the ordinance against the importation of male Balinese slaves.

The systematic exportation of slaves from Arakan diminished rapidly in this period, after the depopulation of the coastal area led to war between the Mogul ruler and the Portuguese. As a result, other markets for enslaved workers were explored, with Madagascar and the African circuit largely replacing Arakan and Bengal.⁴³ The African circuit did not contribute significantly to the numbers of enslaved workers in Batavia as the distance and inhumane conditions had disastrous consequences for the lives of those on-board. In 1661, 350 slaves were delivered from Madagascar to Batavia as the result of one voyage. Yet the longer distance also resulted in higher mortality; after one voyage from Madagascar to Batavia on 7th February 1682, 139 slaves had died on board along the way. This was no one-off occurrence; a 1733 record on the arrival of a ship in Batavia noted that of the 334 enslaved persons on-board, the majority had died.

In this sample, we see the height of VOC military power also coincide with the height of VOC involvement with the indigenous slave trading regimes of the Indonesian archipelago. Contrary to the predominance of indigenous slave traders in the previous sample, in this sample we see the impact of direct VOC expansion in the area resulting in larger numbers of slaves entering Batavia from Timor. The impact of political association with chiefs in Sulawesi on flows of slaves to Batavia is also noticeable, enabling the VOC to access a slave market previously dominated by the kingdom of Makassar. The VOC cemented its access to the slave trading regimes of the Indonesian archipelago through both military expansion and political treaties. At the same time, the VOC benefitted from being an external presence in the region, as the numbers of ‘exportable surplus slaves’ entering Batavia from the usually separate slavery circuit of Bali demonstrate. VOC connections with local slavery regimes in this period appear not to have satisfied its need for slave labour. The reduction of Arakan as a reliable source of forced labour drew slavery regimes further afield in Africa into the web of routes connecting Batavia to the rest of the Indian Ocean basin, despite the disastrous results of such long-distance transportation of slaves.

⁴² Fox, “‘For Good and Sufficient Reasons’”: 258.

⁴³ Sutherland, “Slavery and the Slave Trade in South Sulawesi”: 266.

8 Regulating the Slave Trade to Batavia: Balancing Security and Labour Needs in the Eighteenth Century

In the immediate aftermath of the peaking number of slaves entering Batavia in the previous sample, the VOC increasingly sought to regulate the influx of slaves into the city. Concerns over security led the Company to tighten its control over the slave trade into Batavia; in October 1688 it became prohibited to import enslaved people from both the Eastern Archipelago and Bali without obtaining permission from the authorities, and the import of slaves by Indonesian traders was also outlawed.⁴⁴ In this way the Company attempted to bring the import of enslaved labour under its own control, closely guarding it through the issuing of private traders with exclusive licenses. By 1720 however the demand for slave labour dramatically increased, resulting in the relaxation of many of these restrictions.⁴⁵

The regulations appear to at least have been effective in reducing the flow of enslaved people into Batavia; prior to the relaxation of prohibitions in 1720, the dataset records only 2,771 slaves arriving in Batavia over a twenty-year period. The wider sample records the arrival of 12,580 persons throughout the eighteenth century, making up 479 entries – a marked decrease from the 19,437 in the period 1661–1688. This sample is reported in Tab. 4.

In this sample the most notable reflection of the effect of the prohibitions against the import of slaves can be seen in the data for Bali. The dominance of Chinese and non-Dutch slave traders in the Balinese trade to Batavia has been noted by Bondan Kanumoyoso, who states that the Company was not the ‘main player’ in the displacement of Balinese slaves.⁴⁶ The sharp decline in the number of slaves arriving from the Balinese markets in this period, when compared to the numbers in the previous sample, suggest that the VOC was at least partly successful in asserting its authority over the import of slaves to Batavia. Similarly, the *inlandse* vessels who had provided much of Batavia’s early labour supply from within the Indonesian archipelago are noticeably absent in the sample from this period. Interestingly, all 450 enslaved individuals arriving in Batavia from Bali in this period arrived prior to the relaxation of the prohibitions in 1720, but the impact of the regulations comes across clearly in the observations. 328 of these Balinese slaves were brought into Batavia by two key traders in the private slave trade supplying Batavia: Bappa Dien and Nachoda Daeoe. The remaining 122 Balinese slaves arrived in Batavia accompanied by transport licenses issued by Dewa Anom, king of Sukawati, and King Gusti Pamecutan of Badung.

⁴⁴ Kanumoyoso, *Beyond the City Wall*: 111.

⁴⁵ Kanumoyoso, *Beyond the City Wall*: 111.

⁴⁶ Kanumoyoso, *Beyond the City Wall*: 119.

Tab. 4: Enslaved arrivals in Batavia, 1700–1800.

Departure Place	Total number of people relocated
Makassar	4,844 (138 entries)
Timor	2,225 (106 entries)
Malabar (incl. Cochin)	1,425
Ceylon	514
Bali	450
Coromandel	407
Ternate	400 (66 entries)
Madagascar/Mauritius	382
Sumatra/Padang	299
Buton	230
Alas (Sumbawa)	200
Ambon	79
Banda	74
Bima	56
Bantam	51
Jambi	51
Malacca	45
Bone	36
Goa	36
Banjarmassin	13
Japan	5
Solor	4
Angola	'some'
Unknown or unclear	754

Traders with licences could thus profit enormously in this period. The dataset also records the fate of two VOC officials who attempted to trade slaves without the necessary permits: on the 21st of April 1719 Jacob Torant and Barend Block were dismissed from office for the illegal sale of an unrecorded number of Balinese slaves.

At the same time, however, work done by James Fox on the early Dutch East India Company ordinances reveals the need for the repeated reaffirmation of these prohibitions on the import of enslaved persons from Bali and the eastern Indonesian archipelago; reaffirmations were passed on 6th February 1714, 22nd January 1715 and 1st December 1719.⁴⁷ The ordinance was frequently overstepped, with Balinese slaves often taken to Batavia indirectly via Banten. The prelude to the renewal of the decree in January 1715 appears to have been the thirty Balinese slaves who ‘ran amok’ on the island of Edam.⁴⁸ Besides the infringement of the ordinances and the interconnected slave trade markets of the Indonesian archipelago that enabled the slaves of ‘problematic’ ethnicity to be exported to Batavia indirectly, a number of exceptions

⁴⁷ Fox, ““For Good and Sufficient Reasons””: 260–61.

⁴⁸ Fox, ““For Good and Sufficient Reasons””: 260–61.

granted by the Company itself further undermined the general restrictions on the import of slaves. In December 1700, enslaved people arriving from Banda were exempted from any restrictions, in February 1701 the Sultan of Buton was granted permission to bring 50–60 slaves annually to Batavia, and by October 1704, voyages to Timor and Makassar with the express intention of purchasing slaves were licensed by the Governor General.⁴⁹ As a result, these destinations account for the bulk of labourers arriving in Batavia in the eighteenth century, and so represented a stable and consistent source of workers.

The sample from this period is particularly interesting since it shows most clearly how the VOC attempted to influence and control the flow of slaves into the port city. In particular the monopoly granted to certain private traders for supplying Batavia's slave markets hints at this attempt to monitor and regulate the incoming slave trade, whilst at the same time perhaps revealing the VOC's dependence on private traders with their access to slave trade circuits in the eastern archipelago. The significance, and perhaps the separation, of indigenous slave trading circuits from VOC ones becomes even more apparent when we look at Balinese slaves, who nonetheless were taken to Batavia indirectly through the slave trade markets of Banten. More data would enable us to reconstruct a more precise picture of the ethnicities of slaves arriving in Batavia from across the Eastern Archipelago, paying particular attention to the slippages in categorising and regulating ethnicity that perhaps enabled private traders to still sell those enslaved labourers labelled 'problematic' by Batavia's governing elites.

9 Coercive Connections: Circuits Reconsidered

Let us return to Vink's three circuits of VOC slave trading and sourcing of forced labour. When we consider slave trading connections from this data, it becomes clear that the circuits do not adequately illustrate the changing connections and transformations that occurred as imperial expansion coincided and encountered existing slavery regimes. While Vink's circuits are helpful in understanding the geographic scope and grouping of the regions from which Dutch slave traders procured slave labour, their vastness belies the complexities and sub-circuits in constant interaction at their centres.

Rather than thinking of three distinct circuits, it may be helpful to reimagine the map of the Indian Ocean basin as dotted with slave societies, or 'nodes'. Prior to the European presence in the Indian Ocean, many of these nodes had already been connected. Examples would be the regions from which the Arakan kingdom obtained workers, as well as the territories connected by existing practices of slave

⁴⁹ Fox, "For Good and Sufficient Reasons": 259.

raiding and trading in the Indonesian archipelago. Here, Vink's circuits are useful in noticing the connection of these regions by the presence and growth of European slave trading. However, as this chapter has demonstrated, the various, increasingly interconnected nodes within this commodified global slave trade system cannot be grouped into three 'circuits' of similar nodes. The three circuits of 'African', 'South Asian' and 'Southeast Asian' confer only geographic similarity. Other defining characteristics of these slave societies dotted throughout all three regions differed not only as to culture, language and political structure, but also in terms of their relationship with the slave trade; whether they exported or imported slaves, or a combination of both; and whether they had their own slavery regimes or instead stood in relation to an external slave regime.

When we reorient away from empires and realms, vital as it has been in emphasising connection across the Indian Ocean basin, looking instead for nodes and connections, we can read the data in a new light. By focussing on the connections between various individual slave societies, we can better probe the underlying mechanisms and structures that allowed these slave trading routes to connect various slave societies into an increasingly global and commodified slave trade system. We thus gain more insights into the diversity of people connected by commodified slavery, and can analyse which connections were the thickest and made up the most significant flows. Accordingly, our understanding of the impact of diversity in these colonial nodes changes. By understanding better where people came from in terms of their previous relation to slavery and the slave trade, we can compare the impact of these differences on co-existence within colonies in contrast to differences only in terms of ethnicity, language or culture.

Clearly, the slave trade patterns operating in relation to Batavia, let alone the wider VOC empire, or even the European slave trading system as a whole, were complex. To propose a new model of circuits and sub-circuits would be to attempt to impose a (static) order on connections that were continually changing, the weights of which increased or decreased as the local contexts of both European demand for forced labour, and local capitalisation on this demand, co-operated or competed. For Batavia, thanks to the richness of the data, we can point to the importance of its connections with Arakan and the Coromandel coast in the initial stages of expansion, the gradual thickening of the arcs of connection between Batavia and the rest of the Indonesian archipelago, and the limited significance of its connections with West Africa and the Western Indian Ocean islands in obtaining a reliable, steady flow of forced labour. However, the precise weight of the connections between societies would likely shift significantly if we switched to another imperial outpost or port as the focal node. The value of such an approach is the ability to eventually be able to layer these varying maps of connections so as to compare the implications of a European slave trading presence in the Indian Ocean basin on the connections, and more importantly the weight of the connecting arcs, between different slave societies in the region.

Accordingly, the value of moving from larger static geographical circuits to the dynamic sub-circuits underlying the slave trade in smaller regions, allows us to return to the larger picture of the European colonial presence in maritime Asia with renewed awareness of the dynamic and transformational connections in the region that underpinned the increasing involvement of European commodified slave trade systems with the pluriform slave societies in the region. The European presence in the Indian Ocean world connected previously unconnected regions, slave trade regimes, slavery societies and actors that carried out the forced relocation of enslaved people within an increasingly global and interconnected system; by analysing the nature of these connections more closely, we can more clearly understand the dynamic development of slavery and the slave trade in this important region.

10 Reflection

How do the patterns illuminated by the data on slave trading to Batavia compare to patterns of slavery and bondage in the rest of the Indian Ocean world? Firstly, the data reveals the importance of pre-existing slavery regimes to European colonial expansion, as well as the ways in which the functioning of these regimes changed in response to European involvement. The chapters in this volume by James Fujitani and Vinil Paul clearly demonstrate the distinct and embedded systems of slavery already present in Melaka and the Indian subcontinent prior to European exploitation. Indeed, the intervention of European officials in existing systems of slavery and slave trading appears to have obscured more about slavery in these regions than the sources that were generated by European intervention have revealed. Fujitani and Paul both show that the Portuguese and the Dutch condensed the various hierarchies within indigenous systems of slavery in their regulation of exportable bonded labour. The integration of existing slave societies into a commodified global slave trade system is therefore not just about the connecting of disparate geographic locations, but also about the flattening and reshaping of social structures in the places of origin of the enslaved.

Secondly, the increasingly connected nature of slavery in the region not only reshaped social structures in the places of origin of the enslaved, but also directly shaped the social structures of the colonial societies that emerged as a result of European expansion. The chapters in this volume by Hans Hägerdal, Kate Ekama and Rômulo da Silva Ehalt demonstrate the impact of increasing connection and diversity on some of these distinct slave societies that were integrated within the wider commodified global slave trade system, while at the same time they continued to be shaped by their own direct contexts. The chapter by Hans Hägerdal on the seaborne transportation of slaves to the Banda Islands clearly demonstrates the entanglement of Western and local experiences of slaving, as well as the impact the development of

a slave-driven plantation economy had on pre-existing commercial networks. The chapter demonstrates the significance of maritime slave trading routes in supplying this previously unknown slave labour plantation system with enslaved men and women from the Indian subcontinent, the Indonesian archipelago and Timor-Leste and the ways in which these varying forms of ‘slavery’ met, and transformed each other. Ekama’s chapter on VOC-governed Ceylon reveals the tensions between the different forms of coerced mobility that supplied Ceylon with slave labour, demonstrating that connection into a global system did not necessarily entail conformity across the connected slave societies, even where European involvement accelerated the presence of slavery and slave labour in that society. The tension speaks clearly from the ways in which entry into slavery was strictly regulated within Ceylon, even as the status of individuals who entered slavery through those very same mechanisms outside of Ceylon was not questioned upon their arrival on the island. Finally, the chapter by Da Silva Ehalt highlights the resistance to European slave trading in East Asia, even as human trafficking was an endemic method of survival that gave rise to smuggling networks that had connected the coastlines of the East China Sea prior to the arrival of Europeans in the region. This chapter has demonstrated the ability of each of the societies connected by the commodified global slave trade to alter the web of connections; in this case, the response of Japanese and Chinese officials was decisive in determining the extent of European access to this indigenous system of slavery.

When held against the three moments of coercion of the framework proposed in the first chapter of this volume, slave trading routes do not appear to neatly fit within one of these categories. As this chapter has demonstrated, slave trading routes functioned as coercive connections between the slave societies dotted around the Indian Ocean basin, often accelerating processes of enslavement and transportation. As connections and routes they can lie anywhere between ‘entrance’, ‘relation’ or ‘exit’. What could be considered an ‘exit’ from a localised slavery regime was often an ‘entry’ into a globalised one. Similarly, where an existing slavery regime might have depended on particular methods of binding the enslaved for particular labour functions, entrance into a global system of commodified slavery could fundamentally alter these realities for the enslaved. As the chapter on the Banda Islands clearly illustrates, these connections played a decisive role in transforming the ways in which slave labour was organised and understood. The experiences of connection and long-distance coerced mobility should also be considered in relation to the organisation of labour beyond the ‘abolitions’ of slavery: The chapter by Amal Shahid reveals a certain preoccupation with binding people to the land, perhaps even as a result of the mass displacement of labour in the previous century.

Hans Hägerdal

A Slave Economy in the East Indies: Seaborne Transportation of Slaves to the Banda Islands

1 Introduction

In recent interventions in the historiography of bonded labor, slavery has been characterized not so much as a system or institution than a series of widely varying strategies used to respond to social, economic, and political challenges over time.¹ Though much of the attention has been devoted to the Atlantic world, this insight encourages us to look for cases in other parts of the world where Western and local experiences of slaving intermingle. The Banda Islands in what is today the province of Maluku, Indonesia, is an interesting case in point (see Map 3). The ten tiny and hilly islands have been a spot of inter-regional significance since at least the fourteenth century when they are mentioned in Chinese records and the Javanese *Nagarakṛtagama*. The spices made from the nut and aril (mace) of the nutmeg tree gave the islands an importance on a global scale while the islanders were part of a comprehensive commercial network long before Europeans arrived on the scene.² The key position of Banda eventually resulted in the infamous genocide at the hands of the Dutch East India Company (VOC) in 1621.³ A new order took shape afterwards, in which a slave-driven plantation economy was closely monitored by European soldiers and settlers. It was a monopoly system that was only wound down in the nineteenth century. While the circumstances of the genocide has been the subject of much scholarly attention, relatively little original research has been devoted to the post-conquest system. Not least, this applies to the category of people who actually carried the system on their shoulders: enslaved men and women from various corners of what is today India, Indonesia and Timor-Leste. According to Vincent Loth, “we know barely anything” of their lives.⁴ This study takes up the challenge and focuses on the involuntary migration of coerced labor to Banda in a Southeast Asian social context. The aim is to analyze how a plantation system that

1 Joseph C. Miller, *The Problem of Slavery as History: A Global Approach* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2012): 32.

2 Peter Lape, “Contact and Conflict in the Banda Islands, Eastern Indonesia, 11th–17th Centuries” (PhD diss., Brown University, 2000).

3 Willard A. Hanna, *Indonesian Banda* (Banda Naira: Yayasan Warisan dan Budaya Banda Naira, 1991): 46–58.

4 Vincent Loth, “Pioneers and Perkeniers: The Banda Islands in the 18th Century,” *Cakalele* 6 (1995): 23.

was managed by Europeans and is uncharacteristic of Asian labor regimes, also built on local or regional structures of slaving; in other words, this chapter aims to demonstrate how a local case and an inter-regional, in a sense global, process may inform each other. More specific questions are: how did a maritime landscape with a patchy colonial presence supply the plantations with enslaved labor? How did European/Atlantic and Asian forms of “slavery” (however the term is defined) communicate and change each other through a system of watery supply lines?⁵ And how did the colonial organization both profit from and foster a regional system that entailed elements of both stability and turbulence? The chapter explores how one may use European source material, however one-sided, to elucidate history from the purportedly voiceless underside, including gendered aspects. The method employed is to combine a study of data on the micro level with the wider experience of enslavement and forced labor, highlighting the intersection between different slavery regimes and stressing slavery as a process rather than a condition. The study of slavery in colonial Southeast Asia has seen great advances in recent years; scholars such as Markus Vink and Matthias van Rossum have shown the wealth of available data on slavery hidden in colonial archives, and novel ways of disclosing patterns through careful data curation.⁶ This deserves to be followed up by case studies, as will be discussed here.

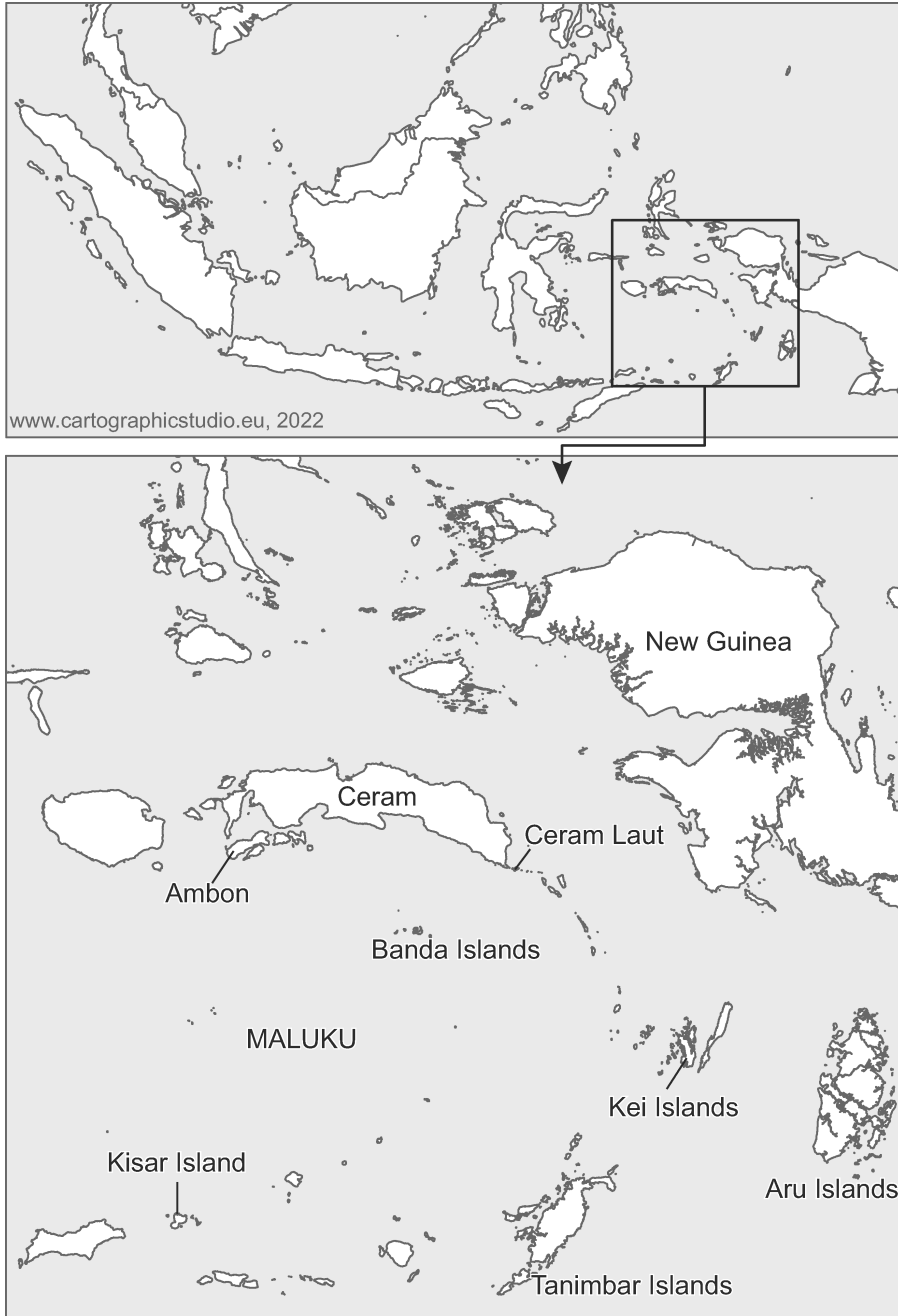
2 Background

The history of Maluku in the first half of the seventeenth century was characterized by large-scale violence as the Dutch East India Company (VOC) consistently fought Spanish, Portuguese, English and indigenous players in order to gain control over the trade in spices and secure a vital strategical foothold. In that sense the violent subjugation of Banda was part of a global maritime competition for cash-crop production sources that had been going on since the sixteenth century.⁷ Applying a labor-intensive system, the VOC established a set of nutmeg and mace plantations (*perken*) which were basically worked by slave labor and run by European and Eurasian settlers. The islands were vital to the early colonial economy of the Dutch Indies as the nutmeg was only allowed to be grown here. The system that emerged in

5 For the now-classical problem of defining slavery, see Anthony Reid, “Introduction: Slavery and Bondage in Southeast Asian History,” in *Slavery, Bondage, and Dependency in Southeast Asia*, ed. Anthony Reid (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1983): 1–43.

6 Markus Vink, “‘The World’s Oldest Trade’: Dutch Slavery and Slave Trade in the Indian Ocean in the Seventeenth Century,” *Journal of World History* 14, no. 2 (2003): 131–77; Matthias van Rossum, “‘Amok!’: Mutinies and Slaves on Dutch East Indiamen in the 1780s,” *International Review of Social History* 58 (2013): 109–30.

7 Leonard Y. Andaya, *The World of Maluku* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1993).



Map 3: The Banda Islands and Maluku.

post-genocide Banda was a mixture of individual enterprise and Company surveillance that draws some parallels with the plantation system of the West Indian islands. Vincent Loth characterizes it as “Caribbean cuckoo in an Asian nest” and a singular case of thorough colonial control.⁸ This view has been qualified by Phillip Winn, who argues from anthropological data that there was actually an inter-cultural transformation that gave colonial Banda distinctly “Asian” features.⁹ In fact it is important to note that slavery, in the sense of permanent coerced labor, was part of eastern Indonesian societies before the European impact; societies which often entailed a hierarchical division into nobles-commoners-slaves. A Chinese account of Banda from 1349 mentions a trade in black slaves (Papuan or dark-skinned Malukans). The first Dutch account from 1599 shows that the Bandanese had no qualms about taking their own kind as slaves, that anyone of standing kept slaves, and that the *kora-koras*, large outriggers for warfare, were rowed by slaves.¹⁰ The oldest Malukan chronicle *Hikayat Tanah Hitu* (c. 1650) emphasizes slaves as essential outsiders.¹¹ In a similar vein a report of pre-European Bandanese society gives an elaborate set of *adat* rules about the relations between slaves and free people and testifies to their omnipresence. On the other hand, these relations were not written in stone, since sexual-matrimonial relations could lead to manumission through payment.¹² Some of this has parallels in post-conquest society. The novel element in the Dutch order was the scale of coerced labor, rather than the existence of an organized coerced labor regime as such.

Up to 1628, VOC authorities divided up the spice-producing islands Lonthor, Ai and Neira into 68 plantations, or *perken*, among free burghers whose employment with the Company had ended. These *perkeniers* were not really free entrepreneurs, but rather tenant-vassals: they had to keep their plantations in order, were forbidden to alienate their land, and were obliged to deliver all the spices to the Company for fixed prices. In return, the VOC was to supply the planters with necessities, and guarantee an influx of slaves. The system eventually produced nutmeg harvests that exceeded the old pre-European system. Every year two or three merchantmen arrived from Batavia to load spices at the roadstead of one of the islands, Banda Neira. These vessels would carry rice, silver coins, and textiles brought from India to use for barter trade in the region.¹³ However, the low reproduction rate of the slave population meant that the system required a steady influx of coerced labor. In his voluminous

8 Loth, “Pioneers and Perkeniers”: 13, 35.

9 Phillip Winn, “Slavery and Cultural Creativity in the Banda Islands,” *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 41, no. 3 (2010): 365–89.

10 Lape, *Contact and Conflict in the Banda Islands*: 54, 67, 69.

11 Ridjali, *Historie van Hitu. Een Ambonsche geschiedenis uit de zeventiende eeuw* (Utrecht: Landelijk Steunpunt Educatie Molukkers, 2004): 94.

12 Artus Gijssels, “Beschrijvinge van de eijlanden Banda,” *Bijdragen tot de Taal, Land- en Volkenkunde* 3 (1855): 73–105.

13 Els Jacobs, *Koopman in Azië. De handel van de Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie tijdens de 18de eeuw* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2000): 25.

Oud en nieuw Oost-Indien (1724–26), François Valentijn only gives a very general sketch. As he puts it in the third book, “[t]he slaves in each *perk* [plantation] find their work fills the entire day,” contrasting with subsistence cultivator societies in Maluku and elsewhere, where people seem to have worked for something like six hours per day.¹⁴ Equipped with baskets, slaves were sent to the uphill forests early in the morning to pick the nuts at the time they began to ripen. Around five o’clock in the evening, they descended from the hills with the harvest, and some slaves then began the demanding work of splitting the nuts with a very sharp blade that could cost a slave a finger or two if they were not careful. The nuts and the reddish mace were then prepared in a lengthy process of storing and drying, and then sorted according to quality. The principal harvest time was in August–September, with a lesser one in March–April, with the final sorting taking place three months after that. Thus the work was hard and sometimes dangerous, but seasonal in terms of intensity.¹⁵ The extent of the work may best be seen from the amounts of produce sold in Europe each year: 0,25 million pounds of nutmeg and 85,000 pounds of mace, costing the European buyers a total of almost 1,5 million guilders.¹⁶

The question of enforced entry into the system by means of purchase and transportation, the origins of the laborers, and the work regime itself, have received limited scholarly attention so far. The rich colonial source materials nevertheless include data that may elucidate the demographic structure and patterns of acquisition. First, detailed tables of slaves per plantation were drawn up intermittently, including data about age, sex, origins and even personal names. Secondly, the local *dagregister* (daily log) of Banda kept track of in- and outgoing merchants and their goods including slaves. Third, captains on regional voyages dispatched by the authorities kept logs, which are partly preserved and can be very circumstantial. This detailed data will be used in order to map the structures of enslavement and transportation in the second half of the seventeenth century, putting it into a regional context of enslavement. A number of issues can be highlighted through a close reading of the materials.

3 Slave Demography

The slaves who worked the plantations were of various origins, and there was an apparent element of continuity with pre-European times. Pre-conquest Banda was at the center of a system of slaving circuits with coerced labor from Ceram, Papua,

¹⁴ Gerrit Knaap, *Kruidnagelen en Christenen: De Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie en de bevolking van Amboina 1656–1696* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2007): 163.

¹⁵ François Valentijn, *Oud en nieuw Oost-Indien*, vol. 3 (Dordrecht and Amsterdam: Van Braam & Onder de Linden, 1726): 11–2.

¹⁶ Jacobs, *Koopman in Azië*: 26.

Aru, Kei, Tanimbar, Timor and a multitude of other places. In one of the islands, Gunung Api, slaves were even in the majority.¹⁷ Given that the population before 1621 stood at about 15,000, slaves probably ran into the thousands. In 1638 the German visitor Wurffbain counted 3,842 inhabitants in Banda over the age of twelve, and the statistics give some insight in the social processes at the time. Some of the Bandanese survived the violent conquest and stayed on, either as slaves or freemen. 15 percent of the population or 560 persons are expressly counted as “Old Bandanese,” half of them being slaves. However, the effects of the conquest were clearly visible, as women outnumbered men by three to one. All in all, 2,230 slaves were found on the islands, about two thirds of the entire population. Of these, then, only 12 percent were Bandanese.¹⁸ A lot of enslaved people were brought from India via the Dutch coastal possessions, others came from the East Indies: Papua, Ceram, Buru, Timor, Borneo. The surviving Bandanese had a crucial role in teaching the newcomers the skills of tending, harvesting and drying the nuts and mace.¹⁹ Phillip Winn has recently argued that they were at the center of a “dynamic process of culture-building” that involved the original inhabitants, the enslaved newcomers, and ultimately the planters themselves.²⁰ This view challenges the common notion of complete Dutch control over Banda society, making it less “West Indian” and more “Southeast Asian,” perhaps with similarities to Batavia.²¹ In spite of this the highly disruptive ramifications of early colonial rule can be clearly seen in the changing ethnic profile of the slave population. An early reliance on Indian enslaved labor in the decades after the Dutch conquest gave way to the systematic acquisition of regional ethnicities. Among the three major circuits of slave trade that supplied the VOC – Africa, Southeast Asia and South Asia – the latter generally dominated up to the 1660s, due to internal warfare, famines and VOC conquests. After that date, increasing Dutch intervention in maritime Southeast Asia made for expanded opportunities for slaving in the central region of Company influence.²² As we shall see, VOC penetration of Sulawesi, Timor and Maluku was intensely intertwined with the transfer of enslaved people to Banda.

The minute detail of preserved slave registers allows us to follow this deployment of bonded labor in Banda. An analysis of the data has ramifications beyond the small group of islands, since it highlights gendered and ethnic features of interregional

17 Gijssels, “Beschrijuinge van de eijlanden Banda”: 76, 83.

18 Johann Sigmund Wurffbain, *Reise nach den Molukken und Vorder-Indien 1632–1646* (Haag: M. Nijhoff, 1931): 106–7.

19 Hanna, *Indonesian Banda*: 62.

20 Winn, “Slavery and Cultural Creativity”: 367.

21 Susan Abeyasekere, “Slaves in Batavia: Insights from a Slave Register,” in *Slavery, Bondage, and Dependency in Southeast Asia*, ed. Anthony Reid (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1983): 286–314.

22 Vink, “The World’s Oldest Trade”: 141–43.

slavery in the intersection between indigenous and early colonial societies. The register drawn up in 1699 includes 2,519 slaves in the various plantations.²³ The size of the workforce shifts vastly; from the 109 slaves of 12 different ethnic groups who toiled under the *perkenier* Caspar Thomas Carpan, to the single Papuan slave who worked for the local (non-European) burgher Mosis Pieterse. Enslaved people not employed in work in the nutmeg plantations, such as certain house or company slaves, are not included in the register.²⁴ What we get is, therefore, a profile of the enslaved groups brought for the purpose of productive work, at a time when the grip of the VOC over much of the East Indian Archipelago had stabilized, and particular routines of work regimes had been developed and adjusted.

Of these slaves, 1,054 are male and 1,145 female, while 320 are categorized as children with undetermined sex. In the register, slaves are counted as children up to the age of 12 or 13, while persons older than that (or sometimes as young as 12) are listed as adults. All this calls for some comment. With a normal rate of reproduction one would expect around 1,500–2,000 children, at least five times the actually indicated number. As with most historical slave regimes, with the American South as the major exception, natural reproduction was low and the plantations needed a steady acquisition of new enslaved manpower. The severe conditions of the work regime and limited possibilities for family life may have played a role here. This is accentuated by the ethnic profile of the children listed. As many as 215 were labelled as Bandanese, born on the islands to parents whose actual ethnicity might have become blurred through the process of assimilation – again underlining the argument by Winn about a continuing Bandanese cultural formation within the slave population.²⁵ The rest hailed from the Aru and Kei Islands, plus a few smaller categories. Allowing for the possibility that children were under-reported, it would still seem that few children were brought via the slave circuits of the East Indies. However, since slave children were often used in households, it might be that some children were simply separated from the adults and sold to other buyers in the VOC-controlled port towns. And, as will be seen below, high child mortality took a grim toll.

Among the adults, women are in a slight majority.²⁶ This is in stark contrast to several other documented systems of slavery-driven productive work. While female slaves are believed to have been in the majority in pre-colonial Africa,²⁷ the figures

²³ Archief van het Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie, Nationaal Archief, Access No. 1.04.02 (hereafter VOC), Inv. No. 1622, Report, Balthasar Coyett, 1699.

²⁴ Vink, ““The World’s Oldest Trade””: 166, gives 3,716 slaves in total in 1688, although in 1693 there was huge mortality (771 slaves) caused by volcanic activity.

²⁵ Winn, “Slavery and Cultural Creativity”: 367–71.

²⁶ The sex ratio for the children is not provided in the slave registers.

²⁷ Rudolph T. Ware, “Slavery in Islamic Africa, 1400–1800,” in *The Cambridge World History of Slavery*, vol. 3, ed. David Eltis and Stanley L. Engerman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011): 56.

for the Atlantic slave trade point to a large majority of enslaved males.²⁸ Ratios in the Indian Ocean world are more ambiguous; for example, the original preference for male slaves imported from Africa to India changed in the nineteenth century towards a demand for boys and women.²⁹ A combination of social and economic factors may explain such alterations. In the case of Banda, the ratio is somewhat unexpected, given the parallels to West Indian plantation regimes. Moreover, the sex ratio was heavily male-dominated in the nearby Ambon post, while it was even among the native Ambonese population.³⁰

A breakdown by ethnic categories sheds further light on the gendered pattern. As many as 47 ethnic groups are mentioned in the register, with the vast majority represented by just one or a few persons. Only one single African is included, a woman from Angola. Seven groups are substantial with more than 70 persons each, in descending order Arunese (427), Makassarese (389), Bandanese (387), Keiese (371), Timorese (217), Papuans (163) and Tanimbarese (73). The first five groups are also dominant in a similar register from 1694, though the order is different: Makassarese (383), Arunese (366), Keiese (265), Bandanese (264), Timorese (217). There are some interesting differences between 1694 and 1699 which merit attention; there is, for example, a strong decline in Ceramese and Indian slaves between these dates, and a great upsurge in Papuans.³¹ The Banda group is a composite category of original Bandanese who were enslaved in the 1621 conquest, and various indigenized segments – the great expansion of this group between the 1694 and 1699 registers may suggest its flexible nature. As might be expected, the ratio males-females-children is fairly regular (83 – 89 – 215). It is quite another matter with the Makassarese, which is also probably a composite group of people acquired from various places in Sulawesi and not just Makassarese speakers. Here the ratio is 236 males to 151 females, and no more than two children. Similarly, the relatively few South Asian slaves are predominantly male – 32 versus 24. However, when we turn to the groups from eastern Indonesia, the result is stunningly different. The majority Arunese, Keiese, Timorese and Papuan slaves are female; the exact ratio is shown in Tab. 1.³² After 1681 the VOC decreed that Malukan slaves were earmarked for Banda to the detriment of Ambon, which partly explains the contrasts in sex ratio

28 Paul E. Lovejoy, “Internal Markets or an Atlantic-Sahara Divide? How Women Fit into the Slave Trade of West Africa,” *Women and Slavery*, vol. 1, ed. Gwyn Campbell, Suzanne Miers and Joseph C. Miller (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2007): 259.

29 Pedro Machado, “A Forgotten Corner of the Indian Ocean: Gujarati Merchants, Portuguese India and the Mozambique Slave-Trade, c.1730–1830,” in *The Structure of Slavery in Indian Ocean Africa and Asia*, ed. Gwyn Campbell (London: Frank Cass, 2004): 26–27.

30 Knaap, *Kruidnagelen en Christenen*, 168.

31 VOC 1551, f. 248–304; see also Linette van ’t Hof, “Het kansrijke buitengewest Aru. Een analyse van hoe en waarom de VOC het beleid voor handel en religie uitvoerde op de Aru-eilanden in de periode 1658–1694” (MA thesis, Leiden University, 2019): 71.

32 The sum of the posts is not equal to the total slave population, since detailed data is missing for a few plantations.

Tab. 1: Ethnicity and gender among the Banda slave population in 1699.
Source: VOC 1622, f. 81–120.

Ethnicity	Males	Females	Children	Total
Aru	172	219	36	427
Makassar	236	151	2	389
Banda	83	89	215	387
Kei	155	194	22	371
Timor	84	131	2	217
Papua	55	95	13	163
Tanimbar	25	48	0	73
Malabar	17	11	0	28
Bengal	11	13	0	24
Ceram	13	8	0	21
Buton	6	4	0	10
Ternate	6	2	0	8
Banggai	5	0	0	5
Leti	2	2	1	5
Solor	1	4	0	5
Bali	4	0	0	4
Tioor	3	1	0	4
Gorom	2	1	0	3
Damar	1	2	0	3
Malaly	3	0	0	3
Java	1	2	0	3
Tobungku	2	0	0	2
Coromandel	2	0	0	2
Kur	0	2	0	2
Others	7	14	0	21

between these two places.³³ Actually the Banda authorities preferred the supposedly good-natured slaves from the South-western Islands (Kisar, Leti, Babar, etc.) rather than those from the South-eastern Islands (Aru, Kei, Tanimbar); thus they did not really get what they wished.³⁴

All this suggests that the gender profile of plantation labor is linked not only to the demand side, but also to the supply. The work of tending and harvesting the nutmeg trees was certainly demanding and comparable to plantation regimes in the Americas in a number of respects, and men were usually considered better suited for heavy labor.³⁵ We must therefore consider the characteristics of the different slave circuits in the East Indian Archipelago, and in particular the sources of

³³ Knaap, *Kruidnagelen en Christenen*: 173.

³⁴ VOC 7975, Report, Banda, May 1710, f. 7.

³⁵ Joseph C. Miller, "A Theme in Variations: A Historical Schema of Slaving in the Atlantic and Indian Ocean Regions," *The Structure of Slavery in Indian Ocean Africa and Asia*, ed. Gwyn Campbell (London: Frank Cass, 2004): 179.

enslavement. The high number of available “Makassarese” has to do with the large-scale violence that wrecked South Sulawesi after 1667, in combination with the widespread prevalence of bonded labor in the pre-VOC days.³⁶ The well-known “Notitie” by Admiral Speelman (1670) mentions enslavement and the slave trade indiscriminately over several hundred pages, conducted by indigenous as well as Dutch individuals. The trade probably arose in the fifteenth century due to outside demand.³⁷ The political landscape of South Sulawesi was characterized by small but developed kingdoms, and wars were fought on a scale that led to large numbers of captives. The latter ended up in many places in the archipelago, both within and outside of VOC auspices; a well-known case is the Sulu Sultanate to the north of Borneo. In some areas on Sulawesi, such as Maros, it is known that most of the exported slaves were female, though they were presumably not earmarked for back-breaking tasks such as plantation work.³⁸ That we find a large and male-dominated contingent from South Sulawesi is nevertheless somewhat unexpected: Makassarese and Balinese were officially considered “dangerous” groups who might create trouble, and measures were taken against their importation. However, practical needs soon seem to have overturned such reservations, and individual assessments such as that of François Valentijn even considered the skilled Makassarese to be the “best” slaves.³⁹

A distinct sense of continuity is discernable in the enslavement of the eastern groups, since Timorese, Malukuans and Papuans had already been imported to pre-conquest Banda, and the Dutch built on local knowledge.⁴⁰ A Portuguese report from 1695 attests to widespread Timorese slavery: “There are lots of slaves to good service [for the Portuguese], subject to whatever treatment the [owners] are inclined to.”⁴¹ VOC sources likewise attest to the omnipresence of slaves on the sizeable island, which at this time was mostly under Portuguese domination. Timor was wrecked by perpetual petty wars that consisted of raids and small-scale clashes, often aggravated by Dutch-Portuguese rivalry. Under these conditions, war captives could be readily sold to foreigners, in both the Dutch and Portuguese spheres.⁴² The “Lesser Timor” islands to the north and east of East Timor were moreover monitored by the Dutch Banda post, and a slave station existed for a while on Kisar,

36 Kathryn Anderson Wellen, *The Open Door: Early Modern Wajorese Statecraft and Diaspora* (DeKalb, IL: NIU Press, 2014): 30–38.

37 Christian Pelras, *The Bugis* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1996): 119.

38 Cornelis Speelman, “Notitie Speelman,” *The Oxis Group*, <https://oxis.org/resources-3/manuscripts/speelman-1670.pdf>.

39 Knaap, *Kruidnagelen en Christenen*: 163, 170.

40 Gijssels, “Beschrijuinge van de eijlanden Banda”: 76, 83.

41 Artur Teodoro de Matos, *Timor no Passado. Fontes para a sua história (Seculos XVII e XVIII)* (Lisboa: Universidade Católica Portuguesa, 2015): 39. My translation.

42 Hans Hägerdal, “The Slaves of Timor: Life and Death on the Fringes of Early Colonial Society,” *Itinerario* 34, no. 2 (2010): 19–44.

where people captured or purchased in the region awaited transport to Banda.⁴³ Some slaves were also brought via the Dutch hub in Kupang. There was, therefore, a slave circuit that directly tied the Banda plantations to the Timor area.

An important slave circuit went from Papua towards the west as far as Bali.⁴⁴ This had long roots, as seafarers from the Papuan Islands had been bringing slaves for Ceram Laut from c. 1580 onwards.⁴⁵ Apart from a few Islamized coastal polities, Papua was basically fragmented into tribal groups with an immense linguistic diversity. Some islands and coastal areas were tied to the Tidore sultanate, traditionally one of the “spice sultanates” of Maluku. With the advent of VOC subordination in 1657–63, Tidorese spice cultivation was abolished, and replaced by the import of Papuan sea and forest products.⁴⁶ Trade in enslaved people placed a great role here. Petty wars and raiding by seaborne Papuans ensured a traffic of mainly female victims. Similar to Timor, women were more likely to survive raiding, and probably considered easier to handle and transport over long distances. By and large these captives came from places where the VOC had no authority in any meaningful sense.

This is somewhat different from the groups of southern Maluku, who came from Aru, Kei and Tanimbar. Like Papua, they were politically fragmented, although the Kei Islands was a hierarchical society divided into small chiefdoms (*ratschappen*). Chiefs from Aru and Kei had signed contracts with the VOC as early as 1623, and Tanimbar was brought into contact with the VOC in 1645. While there was a Dutch post in Aru, the islands were largely left to their own devices.⁴⁷ Sporadic Dutch attempts at peace-making did not stop the familiar pattern of petty warfare in which the lives of mainly female captives were spared for the slave market. It might be added that the Timorese, Papuans and southern Malukans were mostly following ancestral religions, which made enslavement less objectionable in both Christian and Muslim eyes—although the prevalence of enslaved Makassarese shows that theoretical principles about the non-enslavement of Muslims were transgressed by suppliers in Sulawesi. In sum, the pattern of slaving entails a combination of long-distance transports on European keels, regional enterprise by private burghers, and indigenous shipping; in the latter category, the Papuan-Ceramese slaving was important with a long pre-VOC history.

⁴³ VOC 1374, Dagregister, J. de Hartog, sub 13 August 1681.

⁴⁴ Roy Ellen, *On the Edge of the Banda Zone: Past and Present in the Social Organization of a Moluccan Trading Network* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2003): 54–147.

⁴⁵ George Bryan Souza and Jeffrey Scott Turley, eds., *The Boxer Codex: Transcription and Translation of an Illustrated Late Sixteenth-Century Spanish Manuscript Concerning the Geography, History and Ethnography of the Pacific, South-east and East Asia* (Leiden: Brill, 2016): 512–13.

⁴⁶ Andaya, *The World of Maluku*: 155–56, 170–71.

⁴⁷ Hans Hägerdal, “On the Margins of Colonialism: Contact Zones in the Aru Islands,” *The European Legacy* 25, no. 5–6 (2020): 557–66.

4 Age and Mortality

Two factors that drove continuous slaving were high mortality and low birthrates. Mortality varied enormously among slave populations in the early-modern world. In notorious cases such as the sugar plantations of Portuguese Brazil and the West Indies, life expectancy was low due to overwork and harsh treatment, while slaves employed in household work were likely less vulnerable. The Banda slave registers routinely mention the allegedly exact age of slaves, which gives us a unique chance to determine the age profile of the enslaved. One suspects that these indications are often no more than the owners' estimates, since it is not self-evident that people in pre-modern societies keep track of their age. Such as it is, the 1699 register provides the following age profile, see Tab. 2:⁴⁸

Tab. 2: Age cohorts among the Banda slave population 1699.
Source: VOC 1622, f. 81–120.

Age cohort	Number of individuals
0–9 years	244
10–19 years	460
20–29 years	642
30–39 years	564
40–49 years	340
50–59 years	109
60–69 years	15
70–79 years	3
80–89 years	1
90–99 years	1

It looks as though not very many slaves lived to see their fiftieth birthday, and very few reached the age of sixty. It does not necessarily follow that the decline after the 20–29 cohort was merely due to mortality, since slaves could have been transferred from the plantations when their working faculties declined. We also know that quite a number of slaves were manumitted, and that female ones even married *perkeniers*, though numbers are hard to pinpoint.⁴⁹ The problem is also how to contextualize the figures, since comparable demographic data from the pre-modern East Indies is usually unavailable. Data from the late colonial era shows that contract laborers in Sumatra's plantation belt tended to be between twenty and 45 years, and that a 20-year-old laborer stood a 30 percent chance to die before the age

⁴⁸ The sum of the cohorts does not entirely correspond to the overall slave population, since a couple of plantations have no detailed data on age.

⁴⁹ V.I. van de Wall, "Bijdrage tot de geschiedenis der *perkeniers* 1621–1671," *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 74 (1934): 552–57.

of 50.⁵⁰ Judging from the age cohorts, the prospects of a Banda slave seem to have been infinitely worse.

In a normal year, Banda would lose more than a hundred slaves, who either died or managed to escape in small boats.⁵¹ Some years saw massive deaths due to volcanic eruptions and malaria.⁵² Figures for the year 1699 have not been found, but between September 1695 and August 1696, a total of 127 slaves passed away, 56 men, 49 women and 23 children, figures that are interestingly *not* in proportion to the entire slave population. Male mortality is slightly higher than expected in relation to female, but especially child mortality is staggering with perhaps seven percent (provided that the child cohorts in 1695–96 and 1699 were roughly similar). Overall, mortality would come to around five percent a year, which, in combination with the low rate of procreation, underlines the need to maintain continuous imports.

5 Forms of Acquisition

The topic of slave acquisition is almost omnipresent in Dutch accounts of scouting expeditions in the eastern archipelago. Whether they came to Lombok, Timor or Maluku, the VOC officers would routinely inquire about the availability of and prices for slaves. Where such existed, it indicates that routines of trade in humans were already in place. All this was part of the systematic mapping of commercial possibilities to the east of the Cape during the seventeenth century, and underscores how an interregional routinized slave trade co-opted local forms of bonded labor and enslavement. Banda is a case in point. In the early years of the Banda colony the Company carried out raids that tricked unsuspecting islanders from Kei and Aru, and took in shiploads of people from faraway places like India in order to quickly fill the need.⁵³ As the import of Indian slaves became less feasible, supplies from less distant places became increasingly important. The ostensible respectability of this can be seen from the fact that Christian preachers sometimes performed the double role of winning souls and make preparations for slave purchases. Thus, the Reverend Jacob Vertrecht visited the Kei Islands with two vessel in February 1646 and met with local chiefs, asking for slaves who could cut timber and build ships. These slaves were to be bartered for gold, elephant tusks and clothes, in other word goods of prestige character. The

⁵⁰ Hans Gooszen, *A Demographic History of the Indonesian Archipelago, 1800–1942* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 1999): 210. From another part of the world, African female slaves in Egypt in the 1830s are said to have reached their forties only rarely; George Michael La Rue, “African Slave Women in Egypt ca. 1820 to the Plague of 1834–35,” in *Women and Slavery*, vol. 1, ed. Gwyn Campbell, Suzanne Miers, and Joseph C. Miller (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2007): 183.

⁵¹ Jacobs, *Koopman in Azië*: 26.

⁵² Vink, “The World’s Oldest Trade”: 164.

⁵³ Van de Wall, “Bijdrage tot de geschiedenis der perkeniers 1621–1671”: 548–49.

Keiese replied that such slaves were available, but were here and there in the wilderness and not momentarily available, a remark that highlights the contrast to the strict European slave regime. However, there was also an element of resistance to the trade in locals. Later on Vertrecht found reason to curse the Bandanese – those of the original Muslim population of Banda who had managed to flee to other islands in 1621 – who spread unfavorable stories of Dutch atrocities so that the slave trade was delayed and even frustrated altogether.⁵⁴ In a similar vein, the Banda authorities sent a cleric, a schoolmaster and a sergeant to the allied western villages of Aru in 1670; the first two in order to spread Christianity and Christian knowledge, the third to purchase any slaves that the Arunese could sell.⁵⁵ Though the Dutch officials sometimes tried to mediate between warring factions in Aru and other Malukan dependencies, decrying the traditional Ulisiwa-Ulilima division of Malukan society, the reports also coldly note that the internal struggles made for increased opportunities for slaving. As another report from 1670 has it:

Generally speaking the land is a flat and fertile one. All sorts of provisions may be obtained there. However, they do not have large livestock or oxen, deer, etc. but do have good quantities of pigs, chicken, cassowaries and other animals. Thus, as nature has provided these people, they do not work much, and the easterners mostly live from robbing slaves whom they then sell; for the land in itself has no slaves, but they are obtained through warfare since anyone captured in war becomes a slave, and those are the ones they sell.⁵⁶

Considering that the Arunese were the largest ethnic category among the Banda slaves in the late seventeenth century, there is an interesting ambiguity in the VOC way of handling the affairs of Aru. The same goes for Kei, where the Dutch made very little effort to control the internal order of the various chiefdoms in spite of the formal contracts.⁵⁷ It is not far-fetched to assume that the demand for slaves from the Dutch and others contributed to engendering petty warfare. At the same time it must be stressed that inter-island transportation of slaves conducted by the Dutch was merely part of a complex of commercial relations in eastern Indonesia which sometimes converged, sometimes conflicted. The people of East Ceram and Ceram Laut were a hub on a dynamic trade route that carried forest and marine products, and slaves, from Papua and southern Maluku to islands further to the west, via Timor, Sumbawa, Bali and even Java. Again there is a duplicity in the way the VOC handled this: on one hand the Ceramese were instrumental in securing foodstuffs

⁵⁴ VOC 1159, Dagregister, J. Vertrecht, sub 18 February 1646, 21 March 1646.

⁵⁵ VOC 1275, Letter, 1670, f. 382–84.

⁵⁶ VOC 1275, Report, 20-3-1670, f. 379. My translation.

⁵⁷ Todd Hooe, “‘Little Kingdoms’: Adat and Inequality in the Kei Islands, Eastern Indonesia” (PhD diss., University of Pittsburgh, 2012): 38–39.

and slaves bound for Banda. On the other they were perceived as a threat who were less than obedient to the trade monopolies imposed by the Company.⁵⁸

Some of the actual circumstances of slave acquisition are well documented, and they point to another crucial aspect: the interconnectedness of the slave trade with other Dutch-controlled commercial flows in maritime Asia. While ship logs by private traders have only rarely been preserved, the general *dagregister* of Banda records in- and outgoing merchant vessels from day to day, with detailed inventories of their cargo. In the period from September 1695 to August 1696, a total of 418—mostly female—slaves arrived at the port, in general from the Southeastern Islands (Aru, Kei, Tanimbar) or from Ceram-Ceramlaut.⁵⁹ Given the small Ceramese slave population, the enslaved persons brought from there probably originated from Papua. In this year, the importation of slaves thus by far exceeded those who had passed away, though not all of the slaves may have ended up in the plantations. Imports were extremely uneven, with the majority of the slaves (348) arriving during May 1696, when the easterly monsoon allowed for sea travel from the islands in the east and southeast. Slaves were mostly part of extensive cargoes which also included sago, dried fish, betel nuts, pigs, tubers, and so on. While the new involuntary workforce was obviously welcomed by the European authorities, they were also wary that undue practices would cause disturbances. As a decree from 1695 had it, all the *nakhodas* (captains) who brought in slaves must be careful that these were really “effectively slaves” (*effektievelijk slaven*) and acknowledged the *nakhodas* as their masters.⁶⁰

These annotations do not reveal the actual modes and practices of purchase or enslavement. However, captains on official missions to the islands wrote sometimes circumstantial logs that allow us to track in detail the relative value of humans as commodities. Early VOC reports often noted down the prices for male and female slaves in areas they were scouting. Fluctuations in prices may conceivably reflect the supply of enslaved manpower, but also be interpreted culturally, as indicating the value of a human being in a local society. As an example of this we may quote the prices gleaned from a *dagregister* or log from 1668, written during an expedition that departed from Banda and toured Timor and the South-western Islands for both political-diplomatic and commercial purposes (see Tab. 3).

As we can see, the Dutch managed to acquire 9 males, 15 females and 9 children, again underlining the majority of women. In sum, thus, 33 slaves were brought on board in five weeks’ time, roughly comparable with the result of other known similar tours. It was however probably not quite sufficient for the *perkeniers*, whom the Banda authorities were obliged to provision; a somewhat later instruction expressly told the VOC agents to purchase male slaves aged between 16 and 25 in the south-

⁵⁸ Ellen, *On the Edge of the Banda Zone*: 85–86.

⁵⁹ VOC 8056, *Dagregister Banda*: 1695–96.

⁶⁰ VOC 8056, *Dagregister, Banda*, sub 21 December 1695, f. 183.

Tab. 3: Slave acquisition in 1668 during an expedition from Banda to the south-west. Source: VOC 1267, Dagregister, Maarten Roos, 1668.

Date	Place	Purchased persons	Price
28 May	Manatuto (East Timor)	1 boy, 1 girl	8 karikams, 8 small baftas, 4 parangs, 4 hatchets
29 May	Ade (East Timor)	4 females, 1 child	24 red and 26 blue baftas, 8 parangs, 6 hatchets
2 June	Waimaa (East Timor)	declined to buy 2 females	demanded 1 ivory tusk per female slave
3 June	Waimaa	1 female	6 red and 6 blue baftas, 5 parangs, 5 hatchets
13 June	Faturó (East Timor)	1 boy	13 bastas, 1 parang, 2 hatchets
14 June	Maili (East Timor)	2 girls	20 bastas, 3 parangs, 3 hatchets
17 June	Kisar	1 male	payment of debt
18 June	Kisar	2 males, 1 female, 1 child	payment of debt
19 June	Kisar	2 females, 1 boy	payment of debt
		1 male, 4 females	unspecified
20 June	Kisar	2 females	13 red and 14 blue baftas, 7 parangs, 7 hatchets
25 June	Leti	2 males	15 karikams, 15 baftas, 6 parangs, 6 hatchets
		2 males (escapees)	demanded from Letinese
27 June	Leti	1 male from Lakor	bestowed by Lakor chief
2 July	Lakor	1 male, 1 female, 1 boy	bestowed by Lakorese

western Islands.⁶¹ Prices would fluctuate considerably from case to case and also probably depended on the physical shape of the slave. The great importance of Indian cloth for commerce is evident here. *Karikams* were cotton cloths, mostly from Surat and the Coromandel Coast, and among the most popular in Maluku, while *baftas* (*baffetas*) were cotton textiles often woven with silver or gold thread, and produced in Gujarat and Coromandel.⁶² A *bafta* would often be valued at around 2.5

⁶¹ VOC 7975, Report, Banda, May 1710, f. 7.

⁶² Ruurdje Laarhoven, "The Power of Cloth: The Textile Trade of the Dutch East India Company (VOC), 1600–1780" (PhD diss., Australian National University, 1994): Appendix, 5–7, 35.

rijksdaalders and a *karikam* at around 1.5 *rijksdaalders*, which means that an adult male in south-western Maluku would go for some 30 *rijksdaalders* plus 3 parangs (cutlasses) and 3 hatchets. It should be recalled that the captain of the garrison in Banda received 80 guilders (32 *rijksdaalders*) as his monthly salary, together with some extra income and privileges.⁶³ Still, such human lives were cheap compared to Balinese and Makassarese who were generally taxed at 80–100 *rijksdaalders*.⁶⁴ In sum, the slave trade was a costly affair in the scattered and sparsely populated settlements of eastern Indonesia and East Timor, one that was deeply entwined with the comprehensive transfer of Indian textiles to insular Southeast Asia that the VOC developed. The pattern is somewhat similar to the notorious triangular trade in the Atlantic world.

6 The Human Consequences

The human consequences for the enslaved can be traced here and there in our extensive sources, but always as reflections of European concerns. In postcolonial terms, we can trace their discursive existence in the colonizers' perceptions. The statistical data presented above shows a multi-ethnic society that was constantly in flux due to high mortality and involuntary immigration; a society where a child took on an adult's work in early puberty and few people would survive their forties. Wurffbain, who witnessed the system in its early days in the 1630s, attests to the grim repression of the enslaved laborers, especially when they attempted to escape – even Indians did so, in spite of the near-impossibility of returning to their homeland.⁶⁵ Refugees from Banda and Ambon ended up in places like Buru and Ambelau, and maroon societies sprang up in the distant Banggai Islands off Sulawesi – an interesting parallel to strategies of escape in the West Indies and Surinam.⁶⁶ The anxiety of a small European or Eurasian population in a partly hostile region engendered a system of surveillance and punishment, again with West Indian parallels. At length, a distinct subculture evolved and power relations in the plantations became less obvious.⁶⁷ For example, a report from 1695 complains that the owners of two of the larger plantations were “careless” and managed things according to what the oldest slaves told them. Rather than working as scheduled, the slaves held many pleasure parties

⁶³ Hanna, *Indonesian Banda*: 71.

⁶⁴ Knaap, *Kruidnagelen en Christenen*: 170.

⁶⁵ Wurffbain, *Reise nach den Molukken und Vorder-Indien 1632–1646*: 143. Edward Alpers, “Escape to Freedom: Escape from Slavery among Bonded Africans in the Indian Ocean World, c.1750–1962,” *Slavery & Abolition* 24, no. 2 (2003): 52. Alpers notes the accumulating evidence for maroonage in the plantation islands of the Indian Ocean World.

⁶⁶ Knaap, *Kruidnagelen en Christenen*: 172.

⁶⁷ Winn, “Slavery and Cultural Creativity”: 377–85.

in the forest where they reveled with food and *sageru* (an alcoholic drink). Too much confidence was placed in the slaves, concluded the report.⁶⁸ While such remarks suggest that the lives of slaves were not always wholly bleak, there is enough evidence of a deep resentment that built up over the years. Unlike in Jamaica or Haiti, no slave revolt escalated, but an ambitious plot that was hatched in 1710 must have demanded a great deal of organizing skills. During a joyful nightly ceremony, the slaves were to carry around a *cor-cor* (kora-kora, a type of outrigger). In the midst of celebration, they would set houses on fire, kill all Europeans they encountered, make themselves masters of a few ships, and then flee to other islands. The conspiracy was however discovered in the last minute “through the particular grace of God,” and the 13 foremost ringleaders were apprehended and duly punished.⁶⁹ The curious and harsh system of nutmeg production was in fact destined to survive for over two centuries, as it was in place until far into the nineteenth century.⁷⁰ Its reputation in the surrounding islands, whose inhabitants saw their sons and daughters sent to the dreaded *perken*, is perhaps best revealed by a saying in Malay that was heard among the descendants of Bandanese refugees on the Kei Islands, centuries after the tragedy of 1621: “Betul Banda kitaorang punya negeri, tetapi kitaorang tiada mau tinggal lagi disitu, sebab takut Compania” (Truly, Banda is our land, but we dare not settle there again, out of fear for the Company).⁷¹

7 Reflection

The VOC did not invent long-distance slave trading in insular Southeast Asia, let alone large-scale enslavement, features which are attested by early writers such as Tomé Pires, Duarte Barbosa, and the authors of the Boxer Codex in the 1500s. As remarked in the chapter by James Fujitani, European exploitation readily coexisted with local traditions of coerced labor even in the very early contact zones. However, the highly regulated and inter-continental organization of the Company made for predictability and consistent prices that may have spurred local efforts to provide an increasing supply of enslaved people. Kate Ekama points out in this volume how Company slavery functioned within multiple and overlapping forms of coercion. Similar to the argument by Samantha Sint Nicolaas in her chapter, we see how such multiplicity also influenced the gendered profile of imported slave populations.

⁶⁸ VOC 8056, Report, Banda, 1695, f. 224.

⁶⁹ W.P. Coolhaas, ed., *Generale missiven van gouverneurs-generaal en raden aan heren XVII der Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie*, vol. 6 ('s-Gravenhage: M. Nijhoff, 1976): 668.

⁷⁰ Hanna, *Indonesian Banda*: 105. For slave mutinies, see also Van Rossum, ““Amok!””.

⁷¹ Een Perkenier, *Banda: in het verleden, in het tegenwoordige en in de toekomst* (Rotterdam: Nijgh & van Ditmar, 1870): 3.

Added to this are the wars fought or started by the VOC that affected most of the seventeenth century and often afflicted Maluku. The extreme level of violence brought to the local East Indonesian societies by European – and not only Dutch – interventions transformed patterns of slaving and slave trading. Of the three main circuits of slaving in the Indian Ocean world – Africa, South Asia and the East Indies – the latter increasingly became the dominant one, as the VOC's hold on commerce in maritime Southeast Asia deepened, enabling it to exploit vulnerable East Indonesian societies. This process, as seen in Maluku, parallels that analyzed by Sint Nicolaas in the context of Batavia, though with significant variations. It also intertwines Dutch Atlantic experiences of what slavery meant with local understandings of bonded labor which did not exactly match European juridical concepts of freedom-unfreedom, a theme taken up by several authors in this book. The Banda Islands are small by any standard, but a detailed study of the dynamics of the plantation system increases our understanding of these connectivities.

Mònica Ginés-Blasi

The ‘Coolie Trade’ via Southeast Asia: Exporting Chinese Indentured Labourers to Cuba through the Spanish Philippines

1 Introduction

This chapter explores various Spanish state-promoted and private commercial strategies regarding the use of the Philippines as an alternative route for the export of Chinese indentured labourers to Cuba in the midst and decline of the ‘coolie trade’.¹ With this study, I aim at setting a starting point from which to develop future research on the interconnections between the transoceanic coolie trade and human trafficking to Southeast Asia. In a previous article, titled ‘Exploiting Chinese Labour Emigration in Treaty Ports’, I suggested that the exportation of Chinese indentured labourers to Cuba was one of the Spanish government’s main objectives in China to satisfy Cuban demand for cheap labour, and also driven by the private and individual interests which Spanish consular officers in China had in this business. Following this previous postulate, in this chapter I argue that the strategy of exporting Chinese immigrants via Manila was a shared operation between private agents – mainly coolie traffickers – and the Spanish state. This further implies that the coolie trade to Cuba and Chinese emigration to the Philippines were interconnected, state-promoted enterprises, and a priority of Spain’s international relations in China.

¹ ‘Coolie’ is a pejorative and sensitive term referring to servile Chinese labour immigrants, usually employed using indenture contracts. In this chapter I will use this term in reference to the trafficking of Chinese labourers, often known as the ‘coolie trade’, and when referring to sources which label certain Chinese immigrants as ‘coolies’. For recent contributions to the problematization of the ‘coolie question’, see Diane Kirkby and Sophie Loy-Wilson, eds., *Labour History and the Coolie Question*, special issue, *Labour History* 113 (2017): iii–v; Mae M. Ngai and Sophie Loy-Wilson, “Thinking Labor Rights through the Coolie Question,” *International Labor and Working-Class History* 91 (2017): 5–7. Key works in the field of indentured labour are Arnold J. Meagher, *The Coolie Trade: The Traffic in Chinese Laborers to Latin America 1847–1874* (Philadelphia: Xlibris Corporation, 2008); David Northrup, *Indentured Labor in the Age of Imperialism, 1834–1922* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); Walton Look Lai, *Indentured Labor, Caribbean Sugar: Chinese and Indian Migrants to the British West Indies, 1838–1918* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993).

Note: This research has been funded by the Gerda Henkel Stiftung Research Scholarships within the framework of the research group ‘ALTER: Crisis, Otherness and Representation’, at the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya, as part of the project ‘*Taphonomies of Cross-Cultural Knowledge: Interactions between Europe and East Asia in the 19th and 20th centuries (TACK)*’, Spanish Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities (PID2019-108637GB-I00), 2020–2023.

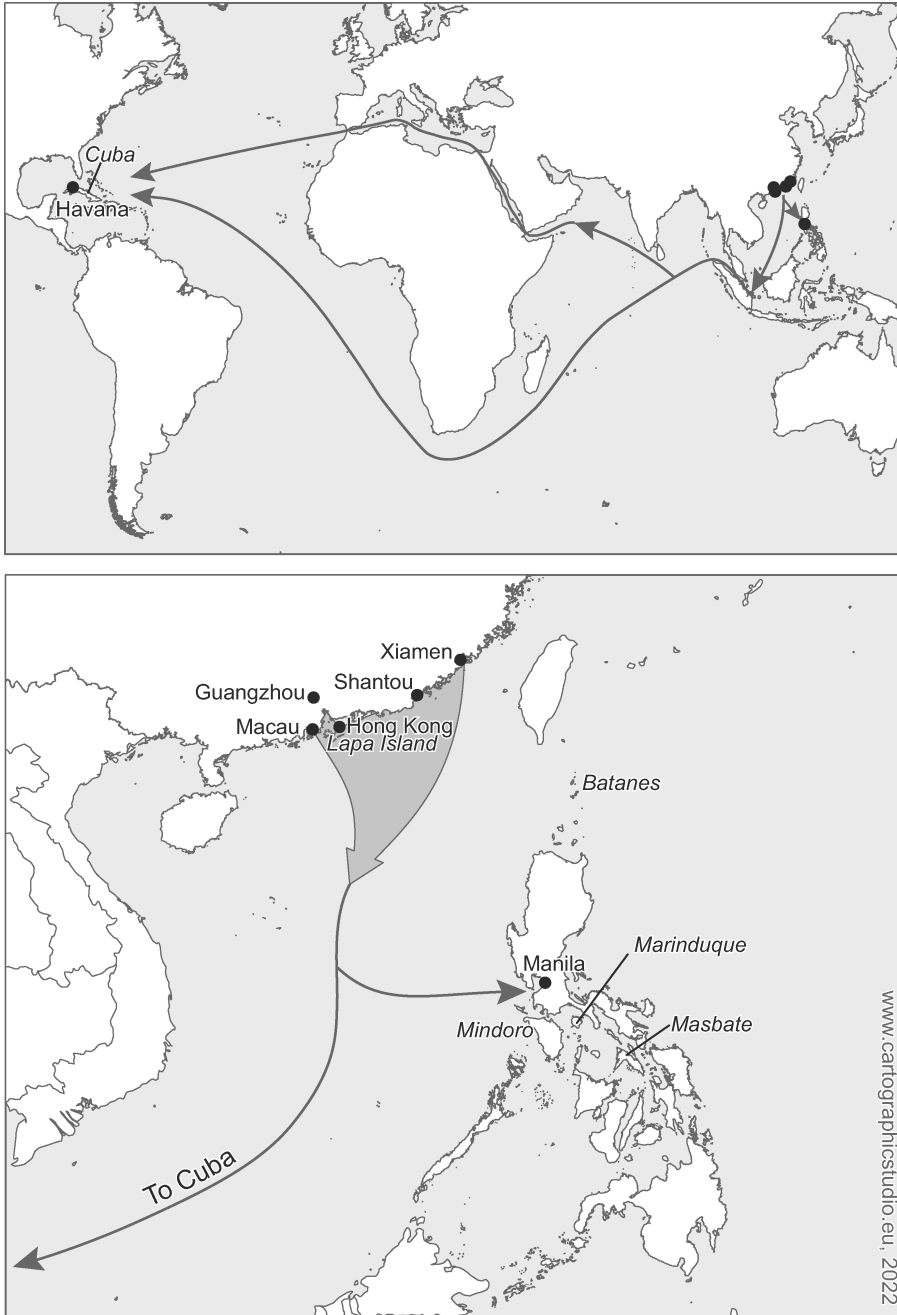
At a local level, this research tackles a long-unanswered question regarding whether there was a prearranged attempt to organize a trade in Chinese immigrants to the Philippines or, conversely, whether the influx of immigrants from the 1850s onwards just responded to a natural process of Chinese international mobility.² In particular, instead of focusing on whether there was a trade in indentured labour to the Philippines, as Elliott C. Arensmeyer, Charles J. McCarthy and I have done in previous publications, in this chapter I explore exclusively the strategic use of this colony in the transoceanic coolie trade.³ In addition, in the context of the global coolie trade, this chapter portrays the deliberate use of colonial possessions to divert maritime migratory flows and transform them into sources of forced labour, drawing attention to the significant role of go-betweens. Through their actions, Western consuls and coolie agents, as well as Chinese brokers, were crucial in the transformation of ‘free’ emigrants into indentured coolies, revealing the processes which took place through the relationship between private agents and the state. The Spanish government’s disregard for human exploitation to satisfy the commercial interests of its colonies overseas is due to the late entry of this country into the slavery business, coinciding with the pressure from the abolitionist movement.⁴ From a global-historical perspective, Spain’s late incorporation in the international slavery business – at the moment of its decline – pushed the Spanish government and entrepreneurs to seek alternatives to African slaves who might supplement them in slave-like conditions.

Certainly the fact that the silent and silenced agencies involved in the trade in humans – traders and migrants – were inconspicuous is a hindrance to researching the international and transoceanic migration of Chinese labourers. Moreover, the smuggling of emigrants to Southeast Asia, an unregistered trade, was common, and therefore the number, conditions, origin, and destination of these migrants are often difficult to assess. There is also a lack of reliable sources, since not only conflicts of interest often intervened in clearing up corruption around this trade, but official sources on this type of migration to the Philippines and Latin America are often erratic or incomplete. In particular, sources regarding the Spanish colonial government in the Philippines are either fragmentary or currently inaccessible. To elude these obstacles,

2 Elliott C. Arensmeyer, “British Merchant Enterprise and the Chinese Coolie Labour Trade, 1850–1874” (PhD diss., University of Hawaii, 1979): 274–75.

3 Elliott C. Arensmeyer, “The Chinese Coolie Labor Trade and the Philippines: An Inquiry,” *Philippine Studies* 28, no. 2 (1980): 187–98; Charles J. McCarthy, “Chinese Coolie Labor Minimal in the Philippines,” *The Annals of the Philippine Chinese Historical Association* 5 (1975): 8–29; Mònica Ginés-Blasi, “A Philippine ‘Coolie Trade’: Trade and Exploitation of Chinese Labour in Spanish Colonial Philippines, 1850–98,” *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 51, no. 3 (2020): 1–27.

4 Josep Maria Fradera and Christopher Schmidt-Nowara, “Introduction: Colonial Pioneer and Plantation Latecomer,” in *Slavery and Antislavery in Spain’s Atlantic Empire*, ed. Josep Maria Fradera and Christopher Schmidt-Nowara (New York: Berghahn Books, 2013): 1–12.



Map 4: Chinese indentured labour migration flows to the Philippines and Cuba.

I have used a variety of multinational primary sources – some of which remain unpublished – scattered in archives in Spain, the Philippines, the UK, and Portugal.⁵

Beyond reaching for a wide range of archival material, I also challenge these research obstacles by looking into the various state-promoted policies and private commercial strategies that confronted the international condemnation of indentured trade to Cuba. I will first elaborate on how bondage and coercion manifested in the Chinese emigration systems to Cuba and the Philippines. Secondly, I will portray the earliest commercial endeavours to import Chinese indentured labour into the Philippines. I will afterwards focus on how the first Spanish representative in China and the Spanish metropolitan government planned on using Manila as a route for the export of Chinese labourers in the 1860s, and assess the success of their strategies. Finally, I will show how coolie traffickers still explored the Manila route in the 1870s to reinitiate the halted trade, and how they received the help and support of the Minister of Overseas Affairs through his extended network.

2 Chinese Emigration to Spanish Colonies

The migratory flow from the south China coast to Manila was long-standing and there were established maritime routes which British and Spanish naval commerce used for Chinese passenger conveyance.⁶ The Spanish central government planned to use Manila for the supply of indentured labourers in order to avoid international condemnation of the trade when it became stagnant in the late 1860s. In the 1850s there were failed initiatives to introduce Chinese agricultural labourers to the Philippines. Spanish agents associated to Cuban planters, with the support of the Spanish Minister of Overseas Affairs (Ministro de Ultramar), also explored this possibility when planning to reinitiate the trade when it was officially restricted in 1874. This case highlights interconnections between the ‘coolie trade’ and the ‘credit-ticket’ or ‘assisted migration’ systems, stressing the permeability between these forms of labour mobility used for

⁵ These sources consist of correspondence between the Spanish legation and consulates in China with the Ministry of State and the Office, the Ministry of Colonial Affairs, ship captains and owners, and immigration agents, preserved at the Archivo Histórico Nacional (AHN) in Madrid and at the Library Balaguer (LB) in Vilanova i la Geltrú, Barcelona; the British Foreign Office (FO) and Colonial Office (CO) preserved at the National Archives (BNA). To a lesser extent, I am also citing sources consulted at the Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino (AHU), in Lisbon, and records of the Spanish colonial government in the Philippines kept at the National Archives of the Philippines (NAP). Access restrictions to the NAP’s Spanish Section have compromised the availability of primary sources. Further research has been postponed in the hope of future accessibility to this Section.

⁶ I have recently researched the introduction of Chinese labourers to the Philippines in Ginés-Blasi, “A Philippine ‘Coolie Trade’”.

Cuba and the Philippines respectively.⁷ Both originated in the same recruiting settings in treaty-port China's gathering stations – such as Xiamen – and developed bondage mechanisms. This chapter considers the role of intermediaries – the Spanish state and human traffickers – in the creation of an interconnected system of forced labour migration between China, Cuba, and the Philippines (Map 4). This transoceanic connection through the Spanish Empire serves as a case study of the transformation of bondage, from African slavery in Cuba, through Chinese indentured labour, and to 'free' emigration to the Philippines.⁸

Indentured labourers from China were the main workforce sought by Cuban planters to supplement African slaves in the second half of the nineteenth century. The abolitionist movement and the subsequent increase in the cost of slaves drove Cuban planters to look for an addition to African slave labour, which they found in the form of Chinese indentured contract labourers, who became indispensable to the Cuban economy.⁹ Between 1847 and 1874 about 125,000 Chinese men were transported to Havana through a transnational mass-migration business venture, to work mostly on sugar cane plantations, providing reinforcements to African labour while slavery was being 'gradually abolished'.¹⁰ Between 1850 and 1898, there was also an unparalleled inflow of Chinese immigrant labourers to the Philippines, which raised the number of Chinese residents to 100,000. As in the trade to Cuba, Chinese brokers and foremen, Spanish institutions and authorities in Manila, consuls in China, and Spanish and British ship captains obtained abundant profits from this migratory movement by overcharging extra fees and taxes to the labourers for their own personal economic benefit. The import to and abuse of Chinese immigrant labourers in the Philippines was constant throughout the second half of the

7 Philip A. Kuhn, *Chinese among Others: Emigration in Modern Times* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2008); Ei Murakami, "Two Bonded Labour Emigration Patterns in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Southern China: The Coolie Trade and Emigration to Southeast Asia," in *Bonded Labour and Debt in the Indian Ocean World*, ed. Alessandro Stanziani and Gwyn Campbell (London: Routledge, 2015): 153–64.

8 Oliver Tappe and Ulrike Lindner, "Introduction: Global Variants of Bonded Labour," in *Bonded Labour: Global and Comparative Perspectives*, ed. Sabine Damir-Geilsdorf, Ulrike Lindner, Gesine Müller, Oliver Tappe, and Michael Zeuske (Bielefeld: transcript, 2016): 9–34; Richard B. Allen, "Asian Indentured Labor in the 19th and Early 20th Century Colonial Plantation World," *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Asian History*, ed. David Ludden (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017); Ulbe Bosma, Elise van Nederveen Meerkerk, and Aditya Sarkar, "Mediating Labour: An Introduction," *International Review of Social History* 57, no. S20 (2012): 1–15.

9 Evelyn Hu-DeHart, "Chinese Coolie Labor in Cuba in the Nineteenth Century: Free Labor of Neoslavery," *Contributions in Black Studies: A Journal of African and Afro-American Studies* 12 (1994): 38–54; Juan Pérez de la Riva, *El barracón: Esclavitud y capitalismo en Cuba* (Barcelona: Editorial Crítica, 1978); Juan Pérez de la riva, *La república neocolonial* (Havana: Ciencias Sociales, 1975); Juan Jiménez Pastrana, *Los Chinos en la historia de Cuba: 1847–1930* (Havana: Ciencias Sociales, 1983).

10 The official abolition of slavery in Cuba took place in 1886. See Arthur F. Corwin, *Spain and the Abolition of Slavery in Cuba, 1817–1886* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2014).

nineteenth century.¹¹ The export of labourers to Cuba via Manila was somewhat successful, as some Chinese labourers in Cuba declared coming from the Philippines.¹² The interconnection between these two migratory flows has remained unexplored despite its potential to contribute to current discussions on the global coolie trade, as well as transitions between various forms of bondage. Yet while this chapter focuses on the interconnections between these two systems of mobility, further research needs to be done to ascertain the extent of emigration to Cuba via the Philippines, as well as where and how the workers were engaged – either before their departure from China or in the Philippines.

The recruitment and departure sites of Chinese indentured labourers on the south China coast underwent transformations throughout the period of the ‘coolie trade’ to Latin America to evade restrictions. For instance, Xiamen (also known as Amoy) changed from a port of departure to a gathering station in the 1860s, and Macau authorities suggested using the nearby island of Lapa to continue dispatching emigrants after the official halt of the traffic in 1876.¹³ Authors Lisa Yun and Ricardo René Laremont have pointed to the use of the Philippines to smuggle coolies when their procurement became increasingly difficult due to British opposition in Xiamen.¹⁴

The Spanish government and immigration agents in China explored the use of the Philippines as a secondary route to avoid the international condemnation of the trade to Cuba and to ensure its continuity. This took place in two particular moments: after the trade’s decline in 1868, and before its official halt in 1874, when agents and *hacendados* in Cuba foresaw the incoming restrictions to the trade.¹⁵ Previously, Spanish entrepreneurs, with the support of authorities in the Philippines and representatives in China, considered the recruitment of Chinese indentured labourers to develop Philippine agricultural production. The Spanish government and human traffickers took advantage of the strategical maritime dominion of the Philippines to provide a substitute for the increasingly declining supply of slave labour in a subversive manner. This strategy had been used before, for instance to move the bulk of the trade from Xiamen to Macau, yet introduced unprecedented colonial connections in the coolie trade.

11 Ginés-Blasi, “A Philippine ‘Coolie Trade’.”

12 *Chinese Emigration: Report of the Commission Sent by China to Ascertain the Condition of Chinese Coolies in Cuba* (Shanghai: Imperial Maritime Customs Press, 1876): 8.

13 Mònica Ginés-Blasi, “Exploiting Chinese Labour Emigration in Treaty Ports: The Role of Spanish Consulates in the ‘Coolie Trade’,” *International Review of Social History* 66, no. 1 (2021):1–24. Secretaria de Estado da Marinha e Ultramar, Direção geral do Ultramar, Correspondencia de Macau e Timor, 1876, AHU-ACL-SEMU-DGU-005, Cx. 45.

14 Lisa Yun and Ricardo René Laremont, “Chinese Coolies and African Slaves in Cuba, 1847–74,” *Journal of Asian American Studies* 4, no. 2 (2017): 112–13; Lisa Yun, *The Coolie Speaks: Chinese Indentured Laborers and African Slaves in Cuba* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2008): 21.

15 José Luis Luzón, “Chineros, diplomáticos y hacendados en La Habana colonial. Don Francisco Abellá y Raldiris y su proyecto de inmigración libre a Cuba (1874),” *Boletín Americanista* 39 (1989): 147.

3 Bondage, Coercion and Chinese Emigration

The mechanism operating the emigration of Chinese labourers to Cuba and the Philippines was similarly abusive in many respects, particularly regarding their recruitment, transport, and in the entrance into conditions of involuntary debt bondage.¹⁶ Bondage in Chinese indentured labour in Cuba has been portrayed in the historiography for more than five decades, from the work of established Cuban historians Juan Pérez de la Riva and Jiménez Pastrana in the 1970s and 1980s,¹⁷ to more recent authors such as Evelyn Hu-DeHart, Lisa Yun, Kathleen López, Michael Zeuske, and Benjamin Nicolas Narváez.¹⁸ Parallelisms with the previous and ongoing system of African slavery which indentured labourers experienced in Cuba have also been widely discussed by these authors. In contrast, the exploitation of Chinese emigrant labourers to and in the Philippines has only been recovered recently in Jely Agamao Galang's dissertation and in my article 'A Philippine "Coolie Trade": Trade and Exploitation of Chinese Labour in Spanish Colonial Philippines, 1850–1898', and also previously tackled by McCarthy and Arensmeyer in two articles published in 1975 and 1980 respectively.¹⁹

Coercion and bondage in the Cuban case are clear as they were inflicted in the three 'moments' which Marcel van der Linden has identified as characteristic of coerced labour: recruitment, the period of work, and the end of the labour relationship.²⁰ Chinese prospective immigrants were victims of many abuses inflicted in the

16 Marcel van der Linden, "Dissecting Coerced Labor," in *On Coerced Labor: Work and Compulsion after Chattel Slavery*, ed. Marcel van der Linden and Magaly Rodríguez García (Leiden: Brill, 2016): 300–301.

17 Jiménez Pastrana, *Los Chinos en la historia de Cuba: 1847–1930*; Juan Pérez de la Riva, "La situación legal del culí en Cuba: 1849–1868," *Cahiers Du Monde Hispanique et Luso-Brazilien* 16 (1971): 7–32.

18 Lisa Yun, "Chinese Freedom Fighters in Cuba: From Bondage to Liberation, 1847–1898," in *Afro Asia: Revolutionary Political and Cultural Connections Between African Americans and Asian Americans*, ed. Fred Ho and Bill V. Mullen (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2008): 33; Kathleen López, *Chinese Cubans: A Transnational History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013); Michael Zeuske, "Coolies – Asiáticos and Chinos: Global Dimensions of Second Slavery," in *Bonded Labour: Global and Comparative Perspectives (18th–21st Century)*, ed. Sabine Damir-Geilsdorf et al. (Bielefeld: transcript Verlag, 2016): 35–57; Benjamin Nicolas Narváez, "Chinese Coolies in Cuba and Peru: Race, Labor, and Immigration, 1839–1886" (PhD diss., University of Texas, 2010); Benjamin Nicolas Narváez, "Abolition, Chinese Indentured Labor, and the State: Cuba, Peru, and the United States during the Mid Nineteenth Century," *The Americas* 76, no. 1 (2019): 5–40.

19 Jely Agamao Galang, "Vagrants and Outcasts: Chinese Labouring Classes, Criminality, and the State in the Philippines, 1831–1898" (PhD diss., Murdoch University, 2019); Ginés-Blasi, "A Philippine 'Coolie Trade'"; McCarthy, "Chinese Coolie Labor Minimal in the Philippines"; Arensmeyer, "The Chinese Coolie Labor Trade and the Philippines".

20 Van der Linden, "Dissecting Coerced Labor": 298.

process of recruitment and embarkation: mostly coming from the provinces of Guangdong and Fujian, they were frequently enticed deceitfully with false promises of good wages and forced to sign up for emigration – and even tortured until they agreed to do so.²¹ Sometimes, they were plainly kidnapped. Once taken to the port of departure – mainly Xiamen, Shantou (also known as Swatow), Macau, and Guangzhou – they were held in guarded receiving stations, known as ‘barracoons’ (a term derived from the barracks used to keep slaves in the African slave trade), where they were locked and banned from withdrawing their ‘consent’.²² The signing of contracts and embarkation had to be certified by Western authorities and consuls. In this process, when contracts had to be read to prospective emigrants, they were often misinformed as to the translation, or the Chinese translation was just not read to them. Sometimes, emigrants were misled into thinking that they were migrating to other sites in Southeast Asia, such as Annam or Singapore, and were not aware that they were being taken as far away as Latin America.²³ The abuses committed during recruitment and embarkation stirred up mutinies on board of ships as well as riots and conflicts against Westerners in treaty ports, such as the Amoy riot in 1852.²⁴

Transoceanic voyages of Chinese migrant vessels stand out for the high average death rates on board – sixteen per cent in the Cuban case. They later suffered abuse in their working and living conditions, where they lived with a constant threat of physical harm or imprisonment if they decided to flee. They were confined in the same way as slaves – even shackled together –, with the same methods of physical control, such as shackles, traps, whippings, and lockups – tools of repression also employed on the vessels in these transoceanic voyages. The costs of transport, food, taxes, clothes, agency, passport, and legalizations had been advanced to the emigrant in China, so at the end of the eight-year contracts they had accumulated a debt with the *patrón* or *patrono* (the employer in Cuba) – who had bought their contracts from the contracting agency – which they could seldom pay back, and thus were obliged to enter a new contract.²⁵

21 Oriol Regué-Sendrós is currently conducting in-depth research about the origin of Chinese immigrants in Cuba. He presented some of his preliminary findings in the talk ‘Spanish Colonial Rule and the forced Chinese migration to Cuba (1850s–1860s)’ at the 11th International Convention of Asian Scholars (ICAS11) in Leiden, 15 July 2019.

22 *Chinese Emigration: Report of the Commission Sent by China to Ascertain the Condition of Chinese Coolies in Cuba*, 6–8; Meagher, *The Coolie Trade*, 66–82.

23 *Chinese Emigration: Report of the Commission Sent by China to Ascertain the Condition of Chinese Coolies in Cuba*, 11.

24 Elliott Young, *Alien Nation: Chinese Migration in the Americas from the Coolie Era through World War II* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2014): 34–46.

25 Hu-DeHart, “Chinese Coolie Labor in Cuba in the Nineteenth Century”; *Chinese Emigration: Report of the Commission Sent by China to Ascertain the Condition of Chinese Coolies in Cuba*. Regarding the racialization of the Chinese in Cuba and the deprivation of their rights as ‘free white settlers’, see Oriol Regué-Sendrós, “Chinese Migration to Cuba: Racial Legislation and Colonial

As in the Cuban case, Chinese immigrants in the Philippines became tied to their creditors through debt, and this abuse persisted because it was financially fruitful for many actors. Despite the parallelisms between the Cuban and Philippine migratory movements, few authors have explored whether there was trade in indentured labourers to the Philippines. McCarthy and Arensmeyer looked into this possibility more than three decades ago, and focused on the lack of a contract labour system to disprove that there was coolie trade.²⁶ In contrast, I highlight the similarities in the arrangement of the two migratory fluxes in treaty ports and the use of debt bondage in the Philippines to argue that they were interconnected. The abusive emigration mechanism to Manila was also prearranged and tied these emigrants to bondage by debt from which it was difficult to break free.²⁷ Chinese brokers and foremen, Spanish institutions and authorities in Manila, consuls in China, companies operating in the Philippines, as well as Spanish and British ship captains and owners, all took advantage of these immigrants in China and in the colony, leading to an unprecedented inflow of immigrants. Thus, the flow of Chinese immigrants to both colonies was steady because a wide range of actors obtained pecuniary profits from it. These agents' actions, however, often remained in the shadows to protect their obscure business interests.²⁸

Chinese immigrant labourers in the Philippines were also victims of bondage and coercion under a system of 'assisted migration'. Migrants entered debt bondage with their *cabecillas* ('gang leaders'), and would remain 'unfree' until they paid back all these advances from their wages – which the *cabecillas* retained.²⁹ The abusive taxes which they had to pay during the issuing of passports and legalizations in China significantly increased the debt with their creditors. Transportation to Manila was also a source of abuse. Chinese emigrants travelled in such overcrowded vessels – particularly the Spanish ones – that acting British consul Herbert A. Giles felt obliged to intervene. In 1881, Giles denounced how Spanish consuls in Xiamen obtained significant revenue from every Chinese citizen shipped to Manila through the issuing of passports. It was therefore in their personal interest to em-

Rule in the Mid-Nineteenth-Century Spanish Empire," *Journal of Iberian and Latin American Studies* 24, no. 2 (2018): 279–92.

26 McCarthy, "Chinese Coolie Labor Minimal in the Philippines"; Arensmeyer, "The Chinese Coolie Labor Trade and the Philippines."

27 Ginés-Blasi, "A Philippine 'Coolie Trade'."

28 McCarthy, "Chinese Coolie Labor Minimal in the Philippines"; Arensmeyer, *British Merchant Enterprise and the Chinese Coolie Labour Trade, 1850–1874*; Ginés-Blasi, "A Philippine 'Coolie Trade'."

29 For the use of monetary taxes to enter bondage see van der Linden, "Dissecting Coerced Labor": 303.

bark as many immigrants as possible, which led to overcrowding these steamers, a situation which led to ‘much dissatisfaction’ among the general public.³⁰

The issue which remains the most unclear is the process by which a prospective emigrant went from a journey to the Philippines to ending up in Cuba. Those Chinese emigrants in Cuba who declared coming from the Philippines could have either been recruited in China and travelled via the Philippines; or they could have been recruited in the Philippines after emigrating there, or they could have been misled into believing that they were travelling to the Philippines, but were taken to Cuba instead.

The most significant difference between emigration to Cuba and to the Philippines is the use of contracts of indenture in Cuba, and the lack thereof – with some exceptions – in the Philippines. McCarthy and Arensmeyer thought that the assisted migration and credit-ticket systems that applied in the Philippines – which some contemporary witnesses confused with indenture contract labour – were less open to abuse. As in Cuba, in other situations where indenture was also practiced, such as Assam for instance, contracts gave planters the sought-after protection and rights over the workers, whom they perceived as an investment, as they had paid for their recruitment and journey to the plantations.³¹ However, migrating to the Philippines without signing a contract of labour in China did not assure these emigrants’ freedom in their place of destination. Chinese labour migration to the Philippines consisted in a kinship-based Chinese broker and foreman system. Richard T. Chu has indicated how the reliance on hometown networks, while sometimes helping newly arrived immigrants to settle quickly, was also a frequent source of exploitation, as the debt generated through the credit-ticket system left immigrants at their recruiters’ mercy.³² The lack of regulations was, therefore, the source of exploitation. In 1883, the British consul in Xiamen still complained how, although many Chinese departed from there without indentures, they would later become ‘involved in the meshes of some kind of contract of which they have no information here’; thus, becoming recruited elsewhere for Latin America was possible.³³ At least some of the labourers migrating to the Philippines with contracts of indenture – such as for mining jobs – are reported to have been recruited in Macau through the

30 Herbert A. Giles to Thomas F. Wade, Xiamen, 12 Mar. 1881, in *To and from Amoy*, 1883, BNA, FO 228/721. Regarding the economic profits extracted from emigration and the overcrowding of vessels, see Ginés-Blasi, “A Philippine ‘Coolie Trade’”: 15–26.

31 Nitin Varma, *Coolies of Capitalism* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017): 1.

32 Richard T. Chu, *Chinese and Chinese Mestizos of Manila: Family, Identity, and Culture, 1860s–1930s* (Leiden: Brill, 2010): 110–11. Marcel van der Linden has identified kinship and community pressure as a form of entry into bondage, see van der Linden, “Dissecting Coerced Labor”: 302.

33 *To and from Amoy*, 1883, BNA, FO 228/721. I am grateful to Douglas Fix for providing this reference to me.

same system as migrants engaged for Cuba and Peru. They shared the same vessels as their Cuban counterparts, and stopped over in the Philippines.³⁴

4 Early Projects to Introduce Indentured Labourers into the Philippines

In the mid-nineteenth century, just when the coolie trade to Cuba and Peru began gaining momentum, some entrepreneurs in the Philippines also started to consider the mass introduction of Chinese indentured labourers for plantation development and mining. Primary sources indicate that leading human traffickers in the Latin American trade also provided the emigrating arrangements to the Philippines from Xiamen. This highlights the interconnection between the two systems, although in comparison with Cuba, efforts were made to provide fairer working conditions. Nevertheless, climate and geographical conditions – with the frequent threat of typhoons and shipwrecks – seemed an inexorable impediment to these plantations, and so these projects seemed to be generally unsuccessful in the long term.³⁵

One particular merchant, Juan Bautista Marcaida – an energetic entrepreneur of Basque origin who held several official public positions in the Philippine administration – stands out for trying to develop the importation of Chinese labour as a means for speculation in the 1850s. During those same years, the Philippine Governor Urbiztondo had precisely facilitated the import of groups of Chinese agricultural workers.³⁶ In his book *Empresas agrícolas, con chinos, en Filipinas, tomando por tipo lo que podrían producir en la isla de Mindoro*, Marcaida devised a plan for the introduction of more than 65,000 Chinese within ten years in Mindoro. The company would advance half of the emigration costs to the emigrant, who would work as a tenant farmer for 300 days a year and be paid 1.5 reales, the same as the locals' salary, as well as obtaining half the profits from their crops.³⁷ Marcaida was finally able to found and manage four farms based on Chinese labour on the islands of Batanes, Mindoro, Masbate, and Marinduque, although the first two had to be abandoned due to bankruptcy.³⁸ McCarthy

³⁴ Galang, "Vagrants and Outcasts": 105–6.

³⁵ See, for instance, the delays in the introduction of Chinese migrants to Batanes and Babuyan due to severe weather conditions and a shipwreck. *Introducción de colonos chinos en Batanes y Babuyanes*, AHN, ULTRAMAR, 5162, Exp.48.

³⁶ John Bowring, *A Visit to the Philippine Islands* (London: Smith, Elder & Company, 1859): 315.

³⁷ Juan Bautista Marcaida, *Empresas agrícolas, con chinos, en Filipinas, tomando por tipo lo que podrían producir en la isla de Mindoro* (Manila: Amigos del País, 1850): 3–15.

³⁸ *Ensayo de la aplicación de filamentos del plátano por Juan Bautista Marcaida*, AHN, ULTRAMAR, 435, Exp. 3; *Erección de pueblo de Bohol, 1837. Exp. 4, S13–24. Oficio de Don Juan Bautista Marcaida, director de la Hacienda de Naro, de la Isla de Masbate al Excelentísimo Sr. Gobernador y Capitán General de Filipinas suplicándole vuestra Excelencia se ordene al Gob. Político Militar de*

suggests that the wealthy entrepreneur Mariano Rojas also imported unskilled Chinese labourers to work his estates in 1848.³⁹

James ‘Santiago’ Tait, a British merchant who moved from Manila to Xiamen in 1846, provided the workers for Marcaida’s project from Xiamen. Tait & Company was the main firm dedicated to the trafficking of Chinese emigrants to Latin America. Tait created this business in Xiamen after working for the Spanish company Eugenio de Otadui y C^a in Manila. When Tait moved to Xiamen in 1846, he also became acting vice-consul for Spain in Xiamen, a position which he used to obtain the monopoly of the trade in labourers and to commit abuses. Being the main supplier of workers to Latin America, Tait’s business and the involvement in Marcaida’s project strengthens the idea of Manila as a point of departure of Chinese emigrants to Cuba. Aside from being Marcaida’s agent on that occasion, Tait also appears in some documents which connect him and Philippine companies to Chinese emigration to the Philippines and to Cuba. For instance, Tait hired a number of Chinese recruited for Cuba together with the Manila company Matia Menchacatorre, and he also appears in a document regarding the emigration of a hundred Chinese men on board of the ship *Juno* to Batanes, contracted for five years by a Manila company.⁴⁰

In 1855 Tait was at the centre of a scandal involving the Spanish Consul General, Nicasio Cañete y Moral, who – like Tait – used his position to obtain personal profit from ship duties, legalizations and certifications in the embarkation and departure of coolie ships to Cuba. This episode shows how ferociously Spanish authorities in China fought to defend their private business profits while holding official responsibilities, and even using their position of authority to obtain the most benefit out of international human trafficking.⁴¹ After a long quarrel between the consul and vice-consul, Tait was finally dismissed, and another Spanish merchant with business in Chinese emigration took over his position.⁴² There is still one last piece of news that connects Tait and Chinese immigration to Manila, as it places him on the shipwrecked British steamship *Luzon* in December 1864. This vessel was sailing from Xiamen to Manila, and on board there were only Tait, a Spaniard named Rentería, and seventy Chinese

Bohol no se ponga obstáculo y se facilite la traslacion de los naturales de aquella provincia a la Hacienda de Naru de su propiedad, NAP, SDS 13936, Exp. 4, S13–24. Edgar Wickberg, *The Chinese in Philippine Life, 1850–1898* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1965): 57.

39 McCarthy, “Chinese Coolie Labor Minimal in the Philippines”: 15–16.

40 Ginés-Blasi, “A Philippine ‘Coolie Trade.’” See Juan Pérez de la Riva, *Documentos para la historia de las gentes sin historia: El tráfico de culíes chinos* (Havana: Biblioteca Nacional, 1965): 82. *Embajadas y legaciones, China, 1836–1865*, AHN, M^o_EXTERIORES_H,1445. Ander Permanyergartemendia, “La Participación española en la economía del opio en Asia Oriental tras el fin del Galeón” (PhD diss., Universitat Pompeu Fabra, 2013): 394.

41 Ginés-Blasi, “Exploiting Chinese Labour Emigration in Treaty Ports.”

42 Tait, *Santiago*, AHN, M^o_Exteriores_PP1013.

people. The conditions in which these Chinese were travelling, and their relationship with Tait, however, is still unknown.⁴³ All passengers survived the shipwreck.

Aside from these projects, female and male infant smuggling into the Philippines was systematic from every Chinese port and particularly common from Ningbo and via Macau – the main centre of the coolie trade – in the 1850s. The export of Chinese male infants to Cuba was also common, an aspect of the history of China's human trafficking which has not yet been researched in connection to the coolie trade.⁴⁴ One representative case of the connection of female infant smuggling with both the Philippines and Cuba is the case of the British vessel *Inglewood*, discovered in Xiamen to be harbouring forty-four little Chinese girls thought to be under eight years of age. The girls' final destination was an unsolved mystery, and it was never clear if they were bound for Manila or for Cuba, to join male coolies in Cuban plantations.⁴⁵

In the second half of the nineteenth century, Chinese women were in high demand in both Spanish colonies, as these were significant destinations for the export of male Chinese labourers. This is because the objective of some Spanish authorities was providing these colonies with labourers who would settle and work on plantations long term. Spanish authorities in Asia and the Spanish metropolitan government were interested in the emigration of women and, better yet, of whole families. The intense demand for women from a country which presented sociocultural obstacles to their emigration stimulated the international smuggling of female infants.⁴⁶

The export of females to Cuba, and the conveyance of female children to the Philippines were also state-supported initiatives. To promote the emigration of women to Cuba, the Spanish Royal Decree of 22 March 1854 established that one fifth of emigrants embarking for that destination had to be women; however, this had little success.⁴⁷ Furthermore, the demand for women in the Philippines sparked plans for using an orphanage, the Santa Infancia sisterhood in Fujian, to provide the Philippines with female Christian children, an idea which the Spanish Minister

⁴³ *La Correspondencia de España. Diario Universal de Noticias*, Madrid, 19 March 1865. I am grateful to John Shufelt for providing me with this reference.

⁴⁴ The recruitment into indenture of male children under the age of ten could have been a common practice also for the Atlantic coolie trade, see BNA, CO 885/1/19.

⁴⁵ Meagher, *The Coolie Trade*: 82–91; Arensmeyer, "The Chinese Coolie Labor Trade and the Philippines": 192.

⁴⁶ *Expediente general sobre colonización asiática en Cuba*, AHN, ULTRAMAR, 85, Exp. 3; Nicasio Cañete y Moral to the First Secretary of State and the Office, Macau, 9 April 1855, *Consulado de Macao*, AHN, M^o_EXTERIORES_H1949. Júlia Martínez has already shown how the reliance of European colonialism upon Asian male migrant labour encouraged the trafficking of Asian women to Southeast Asia for prostitution, see Julia Martínez, "Mapping the Trafficking of Women across Colonial Southeast Asia, 1600s–1930s," *Journal of Global Slavery* 1, no. 2–3 (2016): 224–47.

⁴⁷ *Expediente general sobre colonización asiática en Cuba*, AHN, ULTRAMAR, 85, Exp. 3.

Plenipotentiary in China, Sinibald de Mas, supported.⁴⁸ Mas believed that by 1858 2,500 children would arrive annually. He was in favour of developing a system of Chinese labour emigration to the Philippines, and supported Marcaida's project. According to John Bowring, however, this orphanage system was unsuccessful, and by 1859 not a single child had been supplied through the sisterhood's institution.⁴⁹ Nevertheless, the purchase of Chinese female children by *criollo* families in the Philippines – that is, Philippine-born families of Spanish origin – where they would be educated and work as servants, was common, as it was also common for girls to be bought by other women who would introduce them into prostitution.⁵⁰

5 A Spanish State-Sponsored Strategy

The export of Chinese indentured labourers to Cuba via Manila became official by Spanish Royal Order on 12 December 1867, which approved the regulations for hiring Chinese immigrants in the Philippines to work on Cuban plantations.⁵¹ This policy was a reaction to the latest British, French, and Chinese governments' agreement of 1866, which introduced new items regarding the payment of the return voyage and the number of years stipulated in the contracts – the latter were to run for five years instead of eight, as they had until then. These were important hindrances to Spanish business on the south China coast, as coolie traffickers would have to provide return tickets back to China and engage workers for shorter periods. Spanish representatives in China were concerned that if the business stopped being profitable to emigration agents and companies on the south China coast, the entire emigration enterprise would collapse and no more workers from China would be exported, thus endangering the Cuban economy.⁵² Furthermore, the Sino-Western agreement was very untimely for Cuban planters: the African slave trade was diminishing, with the last shipment arriving in 1866. It was precisely in 1866 and 1867 that the coolie trade saw one of the most spectacular intensifications since its beginnings in 1847: 12,391 in 1866 and 14,263 in 1867.⁵³ Cutting

⁴⁸ On Sinibald de Mas see David Martínez-Robles, *Entre dos imperios: Sinibaldo de Mas y la empresa colonial en China (1844–1868)* (Madrid: Marcial Pons Historia, 2018).

⁴⁹ Bowring, *A Visit to the Philippine Islands*: 311.

⁵⁰ Sinibald de Mas, *La Chine et les puissances chrétiennes* (Paris: Hachette, 1861): 135. I am grateful to David Martínez-Robles for pointing this reference to me.

⁵¹ Miguel Rodríguez Bériz, *Diccionario de la administración de Filipinas* (Manila: Establecimiento tipo-litográfico de M. Perez (hijo), 1887): 186; Joaquín Rodríguez San Pedro, *Legislación Ultramarina, concordada y anotada por J. Rodríguez San Pedro*, vol. 10 (Madrid: Imprenta de Manuel Minuesa, 1868). Sinibald de Mas to the Minister of State (confidential copy), Paris, 20 June 1868, in *Expediente general sobre la colonización asiática en Cuba*, AHN, ULTRAMAR, 86, Exp. 3.

⁵² Sinibald de Mas, Macau, 13 September 1866, BNA, FO 697/2.

⁵³ Hu-DeHart, "Chinese Coolie Labor in Cuba in the Nineteenth Century": 40–41.

down the supply of Chinese labourers was an important business obstruction to Cuban planters just when there was no other supply of labour. From 1867, the trade from the south China coast to Cuba began a critical decline.⁵⁴

The use of Manila as a port of departure to Cuba was not new, and it had served this purpose before 1867. However, the number of indentured labourers sailing from the Philippines, and the question whether the flow increased from there after the application of this policy is, as of yet, difficult to assess. For instance, some of the Chinese labourers interviewed for the Chen Lanbin Cuban Commission in 1874 reported having sailed from Manila, and this city is also on the list of ports of departure for labourers who arrived in Cuba between 1847 and 1874.⁵⁵ However, the Cuban Commission Report does not provide comprehensive information on the dates of departure or the number of emigrants arriving from the Philippines.

At least one ship, the French vessel *Orixa*, is recorded to have conveyed 96 coolies from Manuelita, at Manila, to Cuba in 1851.⁵⁶ Also, according to Gely Galang, Chinese indentured labourers recruited for mine work were engaged in Macau using the same system as the ones for Cuba. He even alludes to one particular case in which the latter were transported together in the same vessel as indentured labourers recruited for Cuba, stopping in Manila on their way to Havana.⁵⁷ Arensmeyer also makes reference to some tentative efforts to connect Chinese ports, Manila, and Cuba.⁵⁸ Other historians have also pointed to the smuggling of Chinese immigrants into Cuba from tertiary sites, such as the US. For instance, Juan Pérez de la Riva claims that, between 1865 and 1875, thousands of Chinese from California entered Cuba via Mexico and New Orleans.⁵⁹

One of the authorities supporting the 1867 Royal Order was Sinibald de Mas, whose main goal in China had been the signing of the Sino-Spanish Treaty, a mission which he achieved after long negotiations in 1864. While Spanish consuls in south China were fully involved in the coolie trade to the Caribbean, in 1865 Mas still knew nothing about this issue, and informed the Secretary of State in Madrid that he was going to study the question of Chinese immigration to Cuba for the first time.⁶⁰ By 1868, however, he had become rapidly implicated, as he declared that he had done much to bring about emigration to Cuba via the Philippines. He had pushed through

54 Hu-DeHart, "Chinese Coolie Labor in Cuba in the Nineteenth Century": 41.

55 *Chinese Emigration: Report of the Commission Sent by China to Ascertain the Condition of Chinese Coolies in Cuba*, 8.

56 Meagher, *The Coolie Trade*: 372.

57 Galang, "Vagrants and Outcasts": 105–6.

58 Arensmeyer, *British Merchant Enterprise and the Chinese Coolie Labour Trade, 1850–1874*: 274–75.

59 Meagher, *The Coolie Trade*: 206; Juan Pérez de la Riva, *Demografía de los coolies chinos en Cuba* (Havana: Biblioteca Nacional "José Martí," 1967).

60 Mas to Primer Secretario de Estado y del Despacho, Tianjin, October 1865, in *Embajadas y legaciones, China, 1836–1865*, AHN, M°_Exteriores_H1445.

the emigration of more than 15,000 Chinese workers to Cuba between 1866 and 1867. This trade, however, had to be undertaken very carefully to avoid compromising the lucrative commerce between the Philippines and China. According to Mas, previously only Chinese persons engaged without contracts, by other Chinese, and transported in small numbers, had been going to the Philippines.⁶¹

Mas had a special interest in the development of commercial relations between the archipelago and China, which he had expressed in his book *Informe sobre el estado de las islas Filipinas en 1842*, and also in his correspondence with Marcaida. In the 1850s, he had agreed to promote Chinese emigration to the Philippines to foster the islands' agricultural development. He believed that '[a] Chinese peasant was as valuable as four Indian ones' (referring to indigenous Philippine inhabitants), that plantation owners in the Philippines would obtain as many thousands of them as they wished for a monthly salary of two pesos, and that 'a man who had 200 or 300 black men, or Chinese', at his disposal – paying them the arranged salary – could surely make a fortune.⁶²

6 Francisco Abellá's Project to Reinitiate the Coolie Trade via the Philippines

Sinibald de Mas had given his support to these plans from China: a decade later, the Spanish Minister of Overseas Affairs, Víctor Balaguer i Cirera, still supported this scheme to solve the lack of labour in Cuba, and encouraged a coolie trafficker's project to reinitiate the trade via Manila. Spanish immigration agent Francisco Abellá y Raldiris, representative of the Cuban society of *hacendados*, or plantation owners, in China, also explored the use of the Xiamen-Manila route to reinitiate the traffic of Chinese immigrants to Cuba after 1874. However, his project was not successful, as Spanish consular officials in Xiamen – who had pecuniary interests from the fees charged to Chinese emigrants to the Philippines – never allowed this plan to take place.⁶³ They were cautious that their business might be uncovered and –

⁶¹ Sinibald de Mas to the Minister of State (confidential copy), Paris, 20 June 1868, in *Expediente general sobre la colonización asiática en Cuba*, AHN, ULTRAMAR, 86, Exp. 3. I am grateful to David Martínez-Robles for providing this reference to me.

⁶² Marcaida, *Empresas agrícolas, con chinos, en Filipinas, tomando por tipo lo que podrian producir en la isla de Mindoro*, 14–15; Sinibald de Mas, *Informe sobre el estado de las Islas Filipinas en 1842* (Madrid: Imprenta de I. Sancha, 1843).

⁶³ I have recently explored the role of consul-merchants in "Exploiting Chinese Labour Emigration in Treaty Ports."

like the coolie trade to Cuba – condemned by the international community and terminated by Chinese authorities.

Abellá had been experiencing difficulties in carrying out his business in China since 1872, when together with another agent of the planter Francisco F. Ibáñez, he had requested a permit to open an immigration house in Xiamen. However, they were unsuccessful and had to delay until the year after.⁶⁴ Moreover, in 1873, his coolie ship *Fatchoy* was directly targeted by British authorities and retained in Hong Kong using the new shipping ordinance, which prohibited ships equipped with restraining and imprisonment material, such as shackles, poles, iron nets, and prisons, from stopping in Hong Kong. British authorities were aware of the extreme abuses committed on this ship in the transport of Chinese indentured labourers to Havana, where the latter experienced 'the most unimaginable sufferings' and were treated 'with the greatest brutality'.⁶⁵ Upon its arrival in Hong Kong, as it was equipped with such items, it was retained and obliged to dispose of them, with the consequent great complaints by Abellá to the Spanish authorities about the immense economic losses he had suffered.⁶⁶

That same year, when the multinational commission led by Chen Lanbin travelled to Cuba to assess the treatment given there to Chinese immigrants, *hacendados* in Cuba, expecting a negative review, looked for strategies to reach a new immigration agreement with the Chinese government. With this interest in mind, they created a society for the import of 'free workers', named *Sociedad de Importación de Trabajadores Libres*, which named Abellá their agent in China. Abellá designed a new system of emigration to Cuba, with suggestions on how to increase the benefits of the *hacendados*, and how to establish a new agreement between Spain and the Chinese government.⁶⁷

Abellá's project consisted of a new system by which immigrants would be considered 'free workers', but continue to be indebted to the Society of *Importación*. Abellá investigated the possibility of emigration to Cuba from Hong Kong, Macau, or Manila, in order to avoid the control of the Chinese government. Abellá was given attention and encouragement by the powerful politician Víctor Balaguer, who held the position of Minister of Overseas Territories in Madrid discontinuously during the 1870s and 1880s. Abellá approached him in 1874 to present his free emigration project. In 1878,

⁶⁴ Letter from Juan Ortiz to the Minister of State, Xiamen, 18 February 1872, in *Consulado de Emuy*, AHN, M^o EXTERIORES_H1885.

⁶⁵ *Correspondence Respecting the Macao Coolie Trade, and the Steamer 'Fatchoy'* (London: Harrison and Sons, 1873): 4.

⁶⁶ *Consulado de Hong Kong*, AHN, M^o EXTERIORES_H1925.

⁶⁷ Francisco Abellá, *Proyecto de inmigración y colonización libre para fomentar la Isla de Cuba presentado al Excmo. Sr. Ministro de Ultramar* (Barcelona: Imprenta y Litografía C. Verdaguer y C^a, 1875). *Colección de documentos sobre emigración china ofrecidos por Francisco Abellá á la Biblioteca Museo Balaguer*, 1888, LB, Manuscript. 9.

he also presented a plan to the Governor of the Philippines which suggested a connection between the archipelago and the coolie trade to Havana. The Governor, however, turned a blind eye, probably protective of the human trade already going on between Xiamen and Manila.⁶⁸ Precisely for this reason, Abellá encountered formidable obstacles which blocked this project: the Spanish consulate in Xiamen – the main port of departure for Chinese emigrants to the Philippines – generated significant revenue from issuing Chinese passports for travel there.⁶⁹ Consular duties produced between 30,000 and 40,000 pesos for the public treasury annually from emigration to Manila. Not only the consulate, but also – and particularly – the consulate’s staff obtained abundant emoluments from every Chinese citizen shipped to Manila. Furthermore, concerned that these abuses could be disclosed by the international community and discovered by the Chinese government if it was ever connected to the infamous coolie trade, the Spanish consul in Xiamen, Emilio de Pereda, refused to grant permission for Abellá’s last emigrant shipments to Cuba via Manila.

By the 1880s, the Spanish consulate was still obtaining significant revenues, which led to overcrowded Spanish steamers, as Giles denounced to Wade. When Giles confronted the Spanish Consul Lozano in Xiamen about a case of overcrowding on board the *Emuy* carrying emigrants to Manila, the Spanish consul answered that ‘if he chose to clear vessels ‘with forty or fifty over the authorised number’, the responsibility was his’, and not that of the British consul. In his letter to Wade, Giles acknowledged what lay at the root of the matter:

For every Chinese emigrant shipped to Manila, the Spanish Government charges a fee of three dollars which goes into the Consulate chest. In addition to that, there is an unauthorised fee of, formerly sixty cents but now, one dollar per passenger, which is divided between the Consul-General, the Vice-Consul (when there is one), and the Chinese Linguist. Consequently, it is to the advantage of the members of the Spanish Consulate that all vessels for Manila should have as many on board as possible.⁷⁰

Still, Abellá carried on with his project, and between 1879 and 1880 tried to embark more than 800 Chinese passengers in the German steamer *Hesperia* from Xiamen. However, his project was unsuccessful, even after counting with the help of Spanish Vice-Consul, Eduard Toda i Güell, of offering Chinese emigrants free passage to Cuba, and of paying a \$25,000 commission to Xiamen’s maritime customs to guarantee the vessel’s return to China.⁷¹ The end of the coolie trade to Cuba, and especially

⁶⁸ Luzón, “Chineros, diplomáticos y hacendados en La Habana colonial”: 155. LB, Ms. 9.

⁶⁹ Chal Alabaster to Hugh Fraser, Quarterly intelligence report, Beijing, 26 Feb. 1878, in *To and from Amoy*, 1878, BNA, FO 228/606; Emilio de Pereda to the Spanish Ministry of State, Xiamen, 29 May 1879, *Consulado de Emuy*, AHN, M^o EXTERIORES_H, 1885.

⁷⁰ Herbert A. Giles to Thomas F. Wade, Xiamen, 12 Mar. 1881, in *To and from Amoy*, 1883, BNA, FO 228/721.

⁷¹ Mònica Ginés-Blasi, “Eduard Toda i Güell: From Vice-Consul of Spain in China to the Renaissance in Barcelona (1871–84),” *Entremóns: UPF Journal of World History* 5 (2013): 8.

the last failed investment in the *Hesperia*, represented an enormous economic toll on Abellá, who ended up losing his business and going into bankruptcy.⁷²

7 Conclusion

Chinese emigration to the Philippines and the global coolie trade were undeniably interconnected. The Philippines, a colony not usually connected with Chinese emigration to Cuba by historians of indentured labour migration, was the alternative sought by Spanish authorities and merchants to adjust the trade's route and shield it from international condemnation. The strategic location of the Philippines, close to China, with a long-standing and continuous flow of human transportation from Xiamen – marked also by the smuggling of Chinese migrants – was the ideal solution to avoid international regulations and maintain the flow of cheap labour to the Cuban archipelago.

The Spanish government and Spanish representatives in China clearly supported the coolie trade and encouraged its reestablishment in the two periods of decline of the trade, after 1867 and 1874, when international regulations and policies hindered the trafficking of labourers to Cuba. The use of the Philippines as an alternative route was, thus, a joint business strategy between human traffickers, Spanish representatives, consuls, and politicians in Spain, China, and the colonies. These, in vain, strived to keep Cuba's sugar economy afloat in the last throes of Spanish capitalist imperialism. This chapter highlighted the significance of intermediaries in the development of different forms of bondage, to the point of shaping institutional regulations and even defying them when these opposed their personal interest.

The powerful role of Xiamen's consular staff in keeping the smuggling of Chinese into the Philippines undetected to avoid international admonishment, as well as the obstruction of Chinese and international regulations, represented important deterrents to rerouting the trade to Latin America via the Philippines. While the latter attempt led by Francisco Abellá in the 1870s was unsuccessful, some sources indicate that some shipments via Manila to Latin America had been successful in previous decades. Further research is needed to ascertain the extent of these voyages and whether they were the result of Spanish policies, or conversely, if Spanish policies tried to normalize or intensify an existing maritime route.

The system used by these intermediaries to organize bonded labour to the Philippines and to Cuba always operated by means of debt and transport abroad. Coercion was applied interchangeably using indenture in the Cuban case or through the ties of

⁷² Abellá to Joan Oliva, Yokohama, 8 June 1896, LB, Ms. Oliva/1857; Oliva to Víctor Balaguer, Vilanova i la Geltrú, 13 August 1896, LB, Ms. Oliva/1921; Abellá to Oliva, Yokohama, 4 December 1896, LB, Ms. Oliva/2483.

Chinese kinship-assisted migration in the Philippines.⁷³ The difference between the two was the social context and the level of alienability in the two colonies. In Cuba, the workers were tied to a plantation through a contract from which it was difficult to break free by the imposition of unavoidable accumulative debts. In the Philippines, the kinship mechanism allowed them to eventually break free from the debts accumulated through assisted migration, but at the same time left them vulnerable to their creditors' mercy.

8 Reflection

This case study adds to the new theoretical tendencies which highlight the porosity between coexisting local and global systems of bondage – recently delineated by Matthias van Rossum – and in so doing joins other studies featured in this volume, such as those by Samantha Sint Nicolaas, Kate Ekama, and Hans Hägerdal.⁷⁴ To be sure, this chapter differs from the rest in this book in its chronological and geographical frameworks, as well as in the forms of coerced labour discussed. Most of the contributions have at least one of these aspects in common: they either focus on slavery; they are set in the Indian Ocean world, or in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Yet there are significant points of encounter which suggest the need to consider the global and local interdependence found in these coercive labour regimes in a broader frame of reference in space and time. The relationship between Chinese immigration to the Philippines and Chinese indentured labour to Latin America shows how East Asian post-abolition coerced labour circulated not only within the western Pacific, but also to the Atlantic, and across the Indian Ocean. Lisa Hellman's chapter reminds us that interregional forced mobility also took place across overland routes.

With the exception of Hellman's contribution, other regimes portrayed in this volume are set in colonial contexts where Western powers coordinated coercive labour structures. The British Empire in India and the Dutch colonial regime present parallels in the coordination of coerced labour, both in its local and imported forms, as both were heavily institutionalized. Thus, their capitalist objective was – generally – aligned throughout the entire structure. For instance, in Amal Shahid's contribution, the East India Company investments and British policies were managed to achieve the

⁷³ Christian G. de Vito, Juliane Schiel, and Matthias van Rossum, "From Bondage to Precariousness? New Perspectives on Labor and Social History," *Journal of Social History* 54, no. 2 (2019): 1–19.

⁷⁴ Matthias van Rossum, "Global Slavery, Local Bondage? Rethinking Slavery as (Im)Mobilizing Regimes from the Case of the Dutch Indian Ocean and Indonesian Archipelago Worlds," *Journal of World History* 31, no. 4 (2020): 693–727.

common goal of colonial control and justification of power. Similarly, in the case studies portrayed by Sint Nicolaas and Ekama's chapters in Batavia and Ceylon, the coordination of enslaving practices was subject to a common agenda. As Ekama shows, this was enclosed within a distinct and complex legal framework which also affected the circulation of enslaved people within the Dutch East India Company (VOC) Empire. For instance, regulating against the enslaving of locals spurred the importation of enslaved people.

In comparison with the British and Dutch regimes, the organization of coerced labour mobility to Spanish colonies was more fragmentary. The Spanish state, instead of functioning as an institutionalized coercive regime, supported a network of private businesses – from the agents in China to the *hacendados* in Cuba – providing the necessary legal frameworks to achieve a common capitalist enterprise.⁷⁵ Institutional support was expressed in multiple ways, from the work of representatives in China facilitating this emigration, through the political support of Spanish politicians, and, officially, with the 1867 Royal Order. The trafficking of indentured labourers acted more as a transnational network linked by intermediaries with disperse geographical interconnections, who were decisive in determining the circulation of labour.⁷⁶ In the long term, this led to a lack of control of the colonial territory.

This horizontal fragmentation is also visible in other contexts with multiple legalities, such as in the Euro-Japanese slave trade covered in Rômulo da Silva Ehalt's chapter. The Western colonial presence in Asia generated a complex setting for the development of territorialities which fomented the juxtaposition of various legal settings, for instance, in the extraterritorial legal order in treaty-port China. Together with Ehalt and Ekama's works, this research points to the importance of juridical frames – or the lack thereof – to create conditions of bondage and human trafficking. Human trafficking presents parallelisms with the trade of illicit commodities across the borders of colonial states, such as the importation and smuggling of opium on the south China coast and in Southeast Asia.⁷⁷

⁷⁵ Zeuske, "Coolies – Asiáticos and Chinos: Global Dimensions of Second Slavery."

⁷⁶ Although from a sociological point of view, Mark Granovetter's mapping of network structures can be useful to define these commercial interactions, see "The Impact of Social Structure on Economic Outcomes," *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 19, no. 1 (2005): 33–50.

⁷⁷ On extraterritoriality in China and its juridical consequences see Pär Cassel, "Extraterritoriality in China: What We Know and What We Don't Know," in *Treaty Ports in Modern China: Law, Land and Power*, ed. Robert Bickers and Isabella Jackson (London: Routledge, 2016): 23–42. Regarding the smuggling of goods and people in Southeast Asia, see Eric Tagliacozzo and Wen-Chin Chang, *Chinese Circulations: Capital, Commodities and Networks in Southeast Asia* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2011).

Regimes

Kate Ekama

Boundaries of Bondage: Slavery and Enslaveability in VOC Ceylon

1 Introduction

When the Dutch East India Company (VOC) captured Colombo from the Portuguese, they adapted, among other legacies, slave ownership in the city. Of course, this was not foreign to the Company, which not only condoned slave ownership among the populations of its towns and factories, but was itself involved in the trade and transport of human cargo around the Indian Ocean, and a corporate slave holder in its own right. This form of commodified, legal slavery existed alongside other forms of coerced labour in the Indian Ocean generally and, as is the focus of this chapter, specifically in Sri Lanka, the island then known as Ceylon.

The VOC used a variety of terms to designate different conditions of bondage and bonded labour on the island. *Slaven* and *lijfeigenen* appear in the ordinances as interchangeable labels for those individuals and groups of people who were slaves in terms of Roman, or Justinian, law: they were legally categorised as immoveable property, over whom another person or the Company itself claimed possession and access to their labour. As a defining opposite, the ordinances also use the language of freedom, and in particular the designation *vrijgeboorne* (freeborn) to distinguish the enslaved from others. While this binary appears simple in theory, it was certainly not as clear-cut as the legal provisions would indicate, as addressed in this chapter. Moreover, this legal binary existed in a landscape of unfreedom of various forms. This complex landscape is reflected in the ordinances in the terms *dienst* (service), *schuld* (debt) and *verplicht* (obligated) and the regulations regarding access to coerced labour through *corvée* and caste.¹

Chandima Wickramasinghe is critical of the ‘careless rendering’ into English as ‘slaves’ or ‘slavery’ of labels for indigenous forms of servitude which encompass various circumstances and varieties of unfreedom. Problematically – teleologically – Wickramasinghe then settles on ‘pre-colonial’ and ‘colonial slavery’ as designations, which entrenches the brutal European slavery vs mild indigenous (Sinhalese) divide and

¹ It is worth noting that the source editor, Lodewijk Hovy, uses the Dutch term *horigheid* in the brief titles which he gives to the ordinances, however this term is not used in the original ordinances themselves. For example, ‘Plakkaat verbiedende om vrijgebooren inwoners tot horigheid of slavernij te brengen [. . .]’. ‘Horigheid of slavernij’ can be translated as ‘serfdom or slavery’ perhaps signalling Hovy’s unwillingness to label practices with laden terms. Lodewyk Hovy, *Ceylonees Plakkaatboek. Plakkaten en andere wetten uitgevaardigd door het Nederlandse bestuur op Ceylon, 1638–1796*, vol. 1 (Hilversum: Verloren, 1991): ordinance 59 (1660), 62.

masks the slippage between coercive regimes.² Wickramasinghe continues to refer to indigenous forms of unfreedom as slavery but sets up a sharp contrast between the indigenous and the foreign: Sinhalese slavery existed from the second century, while European slavery was introduced from the Portuguese period in the sixteenth century; Sinhalese slavery was mild, non-commercial and for the purposes of rank and prestige, while European slavery was the opposite – brutal, profit-driven and focussed on the extraction of labour from the enslaved. Caste played an important role in how slavery operated, and the dignity and status of caste remained the more important social distinction than slave or freeborn, which, Wickramasinghe suggests, contributed to the mildness of pre-colonial slavery.³

The focus of this chapter is how the VOC regulated the boundaries of bondage. I will examine how the Company allowed certain routes into slaving and closed off others by establishing, or at least attempting to establish, the boundary between slave and free status. I address the questions of who could be enslaved, and how, in order to better understand slavery in VOC Ceylon from a legal, normative point of view. Recent research on the enslaved themselves has focussed on those imported into the island along Indian Ocean trade routes which connected the island to the nearby subcontinent, the islands of archipelagic Southeast Asia, and the distant east coast of Africa. Through this oceanic transport of enslaved individuals, thousands were forcibly relocated and entered new coercive regimes in their unchosen destinations. Among those transported around the Indian Ocean were enslaved designated *van Ceilon* (of Ceylon), whose ‘ambiguous identities’ and acts of resistance Marina Carter and Nira Wickramasinghe explore in a recent article.⁴ VOC regulations against the enslaving of populations present in the areas the Company conquered or claimed, for instance the Khoikhoi at the Cape and the Javanese in the area of Batavia, underpinned the importation of enslaved people.⁵

Slavery, understood as a condition characterised by possession, and, stemming from that possession of one person by another, claims over labour, existed alongside other coercive regimes in VOC Ceylon: *corvée*, caste and convict labour. *Corvée* entailed a claim (or partial claim) over labour without possession. The Company drew on *corvée* labour from the *Salāgama* caste (*Chalias*) who were obliged to peel cinnamon and deliver it to the Company; similarly, in the north of the island, some people of the *Caddeas* caste were obliged to deliver dye roots (*sāyavēr* in Tamil) to the

2 Chandima Wickramasinghe, “The Abolition of Colonial and Pre-Colonial Slavery from Ceylon (Sri Lanka),” *Cultural and Social History* 7 (2010): 315–35, 317.

3 Wickramasinghe, “The Abolition of Colonial and Pre-Colonial Slavery.”

4 Marina Carter and Nira Wickramasinghe, “Forcing the Archive: Involuntary Migrants ‘of Ceylon’ in the Indian Ocean World of the 18–19th Centuries,” *South Asian History and Culture* 9, no. 2 (2018): 194–206.

5 Nigel Worden, *Slavery in Dutch South Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985): 7.

Company.⁶ Caste too shaped labour obligations between groups and relationships of dependence. None of these categories was homogenous, nor were the hierarchies static.⁷ Company courts in Ceylon and across the VOC world convicted criminals to hard labour, and put these convict labourers to work locally and, via Company shipping routes which also functioned as routes of forced migration, elsewhere in the VOC world.⁸ Slavery in VOC Ceylon was at least in theory a condition distinct from other forms of unfreedom or bondage on the island.

As ruler and judge, the VOC in coastal Ceylon regulated enslavement via its ordinances and thereby legislated the boundaries of bondage on the island. The ordinances also regulated access to coerced labour through limits on mobility and marriage for instance, but that remains a separate question for a separate study. My focus here is the Company's ordinances pertaining to slavery and, specifically, the routes into slavery which the Company condoned and those which it condemned.

The next section of this chapter sets the legal scene, placing the Ceylon ordinances within the wider legal framework of VOC regulations. The third section deals with the Roman legal principle that 'that which is born follows the womb', by which the Company allowed enslavement by birth. However, the Company also diverged from this principle out of expediency. Following a discussion of slave castes in section four, section five addresses the necessary corollary to this principle which was protecting the freedom of the freeborn. The Company condemned enslaving free people and bureaucratized the boundary between slavery and freedom by requiring documentary evidence of slave status; criminalising slave transport; and forbidding self-sale into slavery. While together these regulations seem to indicate that the VOC prized freedom, it was the Company's own commercial and labour priorities which informed policy. The specificities of time and place often outlined in the ordinances themselves shape this reading. Section six continues on the issue of routes into slavery which the Company tried to close off, focussing on debt. Through ordinances against individuals pawning themselves, the Company tried to close off debt as a route into slavery on the island. This, however, was not applied to slave imports, many of whom had likely entered slavery through impoverishment and debt. Finally,

6 Cinnamon Peelers: Nirmal Dewasiri, *The Adaptable Peasant: Agrarian Society in Western Sri Lanka under Dutch Rule, 1740–1800* (Leiden: Brill, 2008): 78–79. See Alicia Schrikker, *Dutch and British Colonial Intervention in Sri Lanka, 1780–1815* (Leiden: Brill, 2007): 33–34, 43 on service labour including cinnamon peeling *corvée* and *oeliam* tax (service labour). Thanks to Lodewyk Wageenaar for the details regarding *Caddeas'* obligations.

7 Nira Wickramasinghe and Alicia Schrikker, "The Ambivalence of Freedom: Slaves in Jaffna, Sri Lanka, in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," *Journal of Asian Studies* 78, no. 3 (2019): 1–23. See also Dewasiri, *Adaptable Peasant*.

8 Kerry Ward, *Networks of Empire: Forced Migration in the Dutch East India Company* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Matthias van Rossum, "The Dutch East India Company in Asia, 1595–1811," in *A Global History of Convicts and Penal Colonies*, ed. Clare Anderson (London: Bloomsbury, 2018): 157–82.

in section seven, I address an uncommon route into slavery in Sri Lanka: judicial enslavement. In contrast to penal labour, enslavement was a rare punishment in VOC Ceylon, but nevertheless existed.

2 *Plakkaten* and the Legal Setting

Reflecting on a past relatively more recent to him than to us, the nineteenth-century British imperial official Stamford Raffles stated that the VOC ‘carried with them into their eastern empire, the Roman law regarding slavery in all its extent and rigour’.⁹ In Dutch Ceylon, a colony under Company rule, criminal law bore a close relationship to that of the United Provinces. With regards to slavery, however, the law of the United Provinces was silent. Because slavery did not exist in the United Provinces and there was no body of slave law to transplant from the metropole to the colony, Company authorities looked elsewhere to regulate slaving.¹⁰

Nigel Worden and Gerald Groenewald explain that in response to a 1619 query from Batavia, the Company headquarters in the Indian Ocean, the Gentlemen Seventeen (*Heeren Zeventien*) announced that the laws and practices in effect in the provinces of Holland should be in effect in Batavia too, and specifically local issues were to be dealt with in an *ad hoc* manner via ordinances (*plakkaten*) following common civil and Roman law.¹¹ Slavery was one such local issue, ubiquitous in Company settlements and factories. In 1642, the numerous ordinances that had already been issued in Batavia were gathered together and adopted as the foundation of government in

⁹ Thomas Stamford Raffles, *The History of Java*, vol. 1 (London: John Murray, 1830): 84. The continuation of this passage is considered in Lodewyk Wagenaar, “‘Bred up under Our Roofs’: Domestic Slavery in Ceylon, 1760–1834,” *HumaNetten* 47 (2021): 78.

¹⁰ Vink states: ‘While servitude was virtually non-existent in the territory of the Dutch Republic except for some vestiges of seigniorial duties in parts of the eastern land provinces, in the Indian Ocean world slavery found almost universal acceptance among the self-righteous civil, military and religious officials of the “Honourable” Dutch East India Company.’ Markus Vink, “Freedom and Slavery: The Dutch Republic, the VOC World, and the Debate over the ‘World’s Oldest Trade’,” *South African Historical Journal* 59 (2007): 21.

¹¹ Interestingly, the English (later British) Empire diverged from colonial rivals in not basing slave law on Roman precedent. Hoffer argues for the spreading influence of the 1661 Barbados ‘Black Code’, developed when planters were confronted with the problem of developing and justifying slave law – imperative considering their reliance on slaves for the increasingly profitable production of sugar. According to Hoffer, planters ‘simply assumed that slavery existed [. . .] and then passed laws to deal with disorders expected of slaves. In effect, they reformatted what was a category of labor relations as a subject of criminal law, the latter of which their assembly was legally competent to treat.’ Peter C. Hoffer, *The Great New York Conspiracy of 1741: Slavery, Crime and Colonial Law* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2003): 15. Similar to the Dutch ordinances, the contingent and piecemeal nature of the development is also notable in British slave law.

all Company territories.¹² Schrikker and Lyna point out that along with the implementation of Roman Dutch law, the Batavia ordinances were part of the Company's attempts at creating a uniform legal framework over the diversity of place, custom and circumstance in VOC ports, settlements and factories. Yet at the same time and in tension with that, ordinances were issued in the Company world outside of Batavia in response to specific local circumstances. They incorporated and codified local customary law, and were publicized in Dutch and local languages.¹³

Legal matters in Ceylon, therefore, were dealt with according to the Statutes of Batavia augmented with local regulations drawn up in response to local issues which arose throughout the Company period. The Ceylon ordinances were by nature reactive, and regulated all aspects of life from trade and commerce to marriage and religion, and set out punishments ranging from fines to hanging. The fact that Dutch colonial law was a civil code – as opposed to the common-law tradition in Britain – made the ordinances all the more important. As Jones points out,

In a civil law tradition, judges viewed the law code as a comprehensive body of rules and regulations, always referring the facts in a given case back against that original corpus. Juries and defense attorneys, for example, were deemed unnecessary because justice in the form of the court, far from being blind, looked directly at the accused and decided if and to what extent they stood in violation of the statutes.¹⁴

This indicates that the statutes were paramount.

In some of the Statutes of Batavia it is difficult, as Fox points out, to separate the general rules for all Company territories from the specific conditions in Batavia.¹⁵ From the point of view of slavery, one of the most significant of the general Statutes of Batavia dealt with the subject of punishment. First issued in 1625, the ordinance limited the owner to domestic correction of his slave, warning that he was not allowed to chain his slave and that the punishment for maltreatment consisted of both a fine and confiscation of the abused slaves. This ordinance also established the enslaved's right to complain against their master, but included the warning that unfounded accusations would be punished by a severe public whipping.¹⁶

12 Nigel Worden and Gerald Groenewald, eds., *Trials of Slavery: Selected Documents Concerning Slaves from the Criminal Records of the Council of Justice at the Cape of Good Hope, 1705–1794* (Cape Town: Van Riebeeck Society, 2005): xx.

13 Alicia Schrikker and Dries Lyna, "Threads of the Legal Web: Dutch Law and Everyday Colonialism in Eighteenth-Century Asia," in *The Uses of Justice in Global Perspective, 1600–1900*, ed. Griet Vermeesch, Manon van der Heijden, and Jaco Zuijderduijn (London: Routledge, 2018): 45.

14 Eric A. Jones, "Fugitive Women: Slavery and Social Change in Early Modern Southeast Asia," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 38, no. 2 (2007): 221.

15 James Fox, "'For Good and Sufficient Reasons': An Examination of Early Dutch East India Company Ordinances on Slaves and Slavery," in *Slavery, Bondage and Dependency in Southeast Asia*, ed. Anthony Reid (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1983): 252.

16 Fox, "'For Good and Sufficient Reasons'": 256; NA VOC 638 'Leijfeigenen en vrijgemaekten nevens derselver afkomelingen', Article 11, f. 730.

The core principles embedded in the Statutes of Batavia were applied to the specifics of the local situation in Ceylon via ordinances. Lodewijk Hovy collected, transcribed and published these ordinances as the *Ceylonees Plakkatboek* (1991). The seventeenth- and eighteenth-century ordinances operated with the Statutes of Batavia to govern all aspects of life in coastal Ceylon, interaction with the Company world in the Indian Ocean, and relations with the independent Kingdom of Kandy in the interior of the island. They can be read as the Company's rule book and at the same time, as a window onto day-to-day life in coastal Ceylon. Regarding slavery, the Ceylon ordinances reveal both the legal theory and the everyday practice. They touched on all aspects of slaving, from importation and transportation of the enslaved, to concubinage and sumptuary laws.¹⁷ My focus here is on those regulations which dealt with enslavement.

3 That Which is Born Follows the Womb

In the VOC world across the Indian Ocean, the Roman legal principle that that which is born follows the womb (*partus sequitur ventrem*) established birth as a legitimate entrance into the condition of legal slavery. This system is known as uterine descent in the comparative slavery studies literature. Robert Shell notes that in the North American colonies uterine descent was introduced as a reversal of English common law according to which the status of the father defined the child. In the North American colonies, as at the Cape, uterine descent was 'the final solution to the problem of mixed unions with the slave population'.¹⁸ In Ceylon, as at the Cape of Good Hope, Batavia and various other Company places, uterine descent applied to the wombs of enslaved women who were owned by private individuals, as well as by the Company itself. That is, the VOC's own slaveholdings increased through birth in the same way that private slaveholdings did.

The principle was handled somewhat flexibly in the VOC world as the Batavian Statutes and Ceylon ordinances on concubinage indicate, albeit in different directions. We can read into the Statutes of Batavia 'that that which is born follows the womb' had limits of ethnicity and religion. According to the Statutes, concubinage was declared a crime in December 1620. J. Fox concludes that the laws were ineffective, despite the severe punishments promised for contravention. When the idea of importing Dutch women as marriage partners was abandoned in 1633, authorities

¹⁷ Alicia Schrikker and Kate Ekama, "Through the Lens of Slavery: Dutch Sri Lanka in the Eighteenth Century," in *Sri Lanka at the Crossroads of History* ed. Alan Strathern and Zoltan Biedermann (London: University College London Press, 2017): 186–87.

¹⁸ Robert Shell, *Children of Bondage: A Social History of the Slave Society at the Cape of Good Hope, 1652–1838* (Hanover, NH and London: Wesleyan University Press, 1994): 293–98 (quote: 295).

encouraged mixed marriage and turned a blind eye to concubinage. However, the regulations against concubinage were never revoked.¹⁹ A very telling issue dealt with in the Statutes was what should happen to the children of slave owners and their enslaved concubines. Initially, it was decided that a child of such a union could not be sold by the executors of the will in the event that the father/slave owner died.²⁰ If the child was born to a Christian man and his slave, the child could be sent to a willing family to be brought up in a Christian way, but if no such families were available and the child's father was European, the child could be sent to the orphanage.²¹ It is possible that the same limits on the heritability of slave status were in force in Ceylon, by virtue of the applicability of the Statutes across the VOC world.²²

When it was expedient to do so, the Company abandoned the principle that that which is born follows the womb. This is revealed in ordinances against concubinage which established the ownership of children born to slave fathers. Numerous Ceylon ordinances dealt with sexual relations between enslaved and free people, framed in the language of concubinage. The first of these, issued in 1704, prohibited male Company slaves from living in concubinage with free indigenous women or with privately-owned female slaves. The children of those unions, as the ordinance pointed out, were not Company slaves because of the principle that that which is born follows the womb. However, the Company established that free women who contravened the prohibition of concubinage would have their hair cut off, be chained, and put to labour on the Company works for a period of three years. The children of unions between Company slave men and free women would be declared Company slaves.²³ Thus, that which was born did not follow the womb.

Interestingly, the ordinance did not address the matter of female Company slaves who lived as concubines of free men or privately-owned male slaves, perhaps because it was not a common occurrence, or because the labour needs of the Company were served by such arrangements in which the offspring would inherit their mother's slave status. The regulation instructed slave men to choose their wives or concubines from among the Company's slave women, so that their children would remain with the slave-owner.²⁴

19 Fox, ““For Good and Sufficient Reasons””: 254–55.

20 NA VOC 638, Article 35, f. 737.

21 NA VOC 638, Article 36, ff. 737–38.

22 Alexander Geelen explores the role of religion – specifically conversion to Christianity – in protecting people otherwise vulnerable to enslavement because of caste in Cochin. See Alexander Geelen, “Defining Slavery in Cochin: Social Backgrounds, Tradition and Law in the Making of Slaafbaarheid in Eighteenth-Century Dutch Cochin” (MA thesis, Leiden University, 2018). Baptism is a topic that has received a lot more attention in the historiography of slavery at the Cape, particularly in the context of manumission: Shell, *Children of Bondage*.

23 Hovy, *Ceylonees Plakkaatboek* I: 206 (14 June/14 October 1704), 309–310.

24 Hovy, *Ceylonees Plakkaatboek* I: 206 (14 June/14 October 1704), 309–310.

Twenty-eight years later the ordinance was reissued, but this time the prohibition was turned around – free indigenous people were forbidden to sleep with Company slaves.²⁵ Of course the intended outcome of the law was exactly the same, however it was worded and to whomever it was addressed. It was issued in a very specific context: as part of a regulation which required all indigenous inhabitants who had made their homes in the slave quarter, situated outside the Rotterdam Gate, to move out.²⁶

A century later issues of sexual relations resurfaced in the ‘Announcement against all possible crimes’. Article 12 set out the punishments for slaves caught in inappropriate – according to the authorities – sexual relationships. A slave found to be in a sexual relationship with a woman of free origin would be clapped in chains and set to labour on the Company works for the rest of his life. A slave found to have committed adultery with his master’s wife or daughter would be put to death.²⁷ Once again, the regulations applied to male slaves belonging to the Company.

The principle of uterine descent established birth as a legitimate entrance into the condition of legally sanctioned slavery. Yet, as the Statutes of Batavia indicated, the principle was limited by the ethnicity and religion of free men who fathered children with enslaved women. At the same time, it was flexible enough to extend the heritability of slave status to the paternal line when a Company slave man fathered a child with a free woman. It appears that Company labour concerns were at the centre of this: the child did not follow the womb when it could provide the Company with labour.

Decades later the principle that that which is born follows the womb was abandoned in order to achieve gradual emancipation of the enslaved in Sri Lanka.²⁸ The process of gradual emancipation by freeing the children of enslaved women at birth was also discussed at the Cape, albeit a few years later, but was dismissed because of the lack of compensation to slave owners for freeing otherwise enslaved people.²⁹

4 Slave Castes and Enslaveability

In the north of the island, in Jaffna, a complex situation of caste-based service labour and slavery emerged under the VOC, visible at least in part through the VOC’s codification of customary law. In the Thesalawamai we can read both Dutch adaptation to

²⁵ Hovy, *Ceylonees Plakkaatboek* I: 259 (30 April 1732), 394–395.

²⁶ Hovy, *Ceylonees Plakkaatboek* I: 259 (30 April 1732), 395.

²⁷ Hovy, *Ceylonees Plakkaatboek* II: 530/12 (1 July 1773), 770.

²⁸ Wickramasinghe and Schrikker, “The Ambivalence of Freedom”; Wagenaar, “Bred up under Our Roofs.”

²⁹ George Theal, *Records of the Cape Colony*, vol 17 (London: William Clowes and Sons, 1903): 50.

local practice and imposition of their own norms.³⁰ In their recent article, Nira Wickramasinghe and Alicia Schrikker show that Dutch/European conceptions of slavery in the Justinian sense were applied to caste groups whom the Dutch perceived as slaves, labelling the *Chandos*, *Coviyar*, *Nalavar* and *Pallar* castes as slave castes. The latter two groups in particular entered into legal slavery as Company slaves, owned by the VOC. The effect of this was of course not limited to the Company's supply of labour, but influenced caste and social hierarchies in Jaffna: in establishing the slave status of the *Nalavar* and *Pallar* castes through codification of practices and norms as established through Dutch-*Vellalar* 'synergy', the VOC bolstered the position of the high-caste *Vellalar* masters over the subjugated *Nalavar* and *Pallar*. Yet at the same time these processes opened up spaces for negotiation and resistance, including disputing property in civil proceedings in court.³¹

The 'Jaffna Compendium' of ordinances from 1704 – published three years before the codification of customary law in the Thesalawamai and a contributor to it³² – referred to the *Nalavar* and *Pallar* people of Jaffna as 'inlandse slaven' (indigenous slaves). As Wickramasinghe and Schrikker have stated, 'the Dutch preferred to equalize the legal status of the *Nalavar* and *Pallar* to the enslaved they imported from overseas'.³³ This is seen very clearly in the Jaffna Compendium, where the VOC stipulated prices for the sale of *Nalavar* and *Pallar* slaves. Article 22 of the Compendium set out a maximum price for *Nalavar* and *Pallar* slaves, who could be sold for no more than 10 *Rijksdaalders* (Rds) but could be sold for less. The VOC also established that these *inlandse slaven* could not be removed from Jaffna by purchasers, on forfeit of the slave and value in money for the Company.³⁴ Forfeit was one way in which the Company's holding of *Nalavar* and *Pallar* slaves could have increased. Partial application of the principle of uterine descent was the other: the Company claimed ownership of some of the children born to *Nalavar* and *Pallar* Company slave men and slave women from the countryside.³⁵ It is not clear whether the enslaved women were also owned by the Company, but if they were privately owned, as seems probable from the context, Company ownership of the children of enslaved men was a reversal of the usual line of ownership whereby uterine descent enlarged the slaveholdings of the person who claimed ownership over the mother of the children.

30 Schrikker and Ekama, "Through the Lens of Slavery": 188–91, esp. 190.

31 Wickramasinghe and Schrikker, "The Ambivalence of Freedom."

32 Wickramasinghe and Schrikker suggest that the compendium contributed to the Thesalawamai; the latter was the product of consultative processes between the VOC and *mudaliyars* (headmen) of the *Vellalar* in Jaffna. But the relationship between the 1704 ordinances and the 1707 Thesalawamai is not crystal clear. Wickramasinghe and Schrikker, "The Ambivalence of Freedom": 8–9.

33 Wickramasinghe and Schrikker, "The Ambivalence of Freedom": 10.

34 Hovy, *Ceylonees Plakkaatboek* I: 205/22 (1704), 293.

35 Schrikker and Ekama, "Through the Lens of Slavery": 190.

5 Closing off Routes into Slavery

If birth was a legitimate entrance into slavery in the Roman sense in which the VOC defined it, then being freeborn was of great significance, at least in theory. This is clear in the ordinances which deal with enslaving free people, and passing them off as enslaved people, which was a grave crime from the Company's point of view. The VOC ordinances consistently forbid enslaving people who were freeborn. The Company tried to regulate this through insisting on formal proof of ownership of enslaved people; criminalising the slave trade and transport; forbidding self-sale into slavery and later setting up a mortgage system in place of the sale of children.

While on the one hand, much recent scholarship has shown the importance of resisting the urge to impose a slave-free binary onto a landscape where these legal categories were not only contested but also existed in a context of multiple forms of possession and labour (and revenue) obligation, on the other hand, in reading the legal texts penned by Company officials, one cannot avoid the contrast between slavery and freedom which they established in law. In theory, individuals fell into one of the two legal categories, slave or free, but in practice – including before the law – legal status was not nearly so clear-cut. Cases of disputed slave status and manumission bear this out.³⁶ The VOC was not against slavery per se, nor was it opposed to enslavement to fulfil its own labour needs, but the specificities of time and place shaped the way the Company regulated enslavement, and its necessary accompaniment, protected freedom.³⁷ In regulating enslavement then, the Company protected certain sections of the population by establishing their freeborn status as inviolable. As is already clear in the way in which the principle that that which is born follows the womb was used and altered, being born to a non-slave woman alone was not sufficient to protect one from enslavement.

5.1 Proof of ownership

The VOC repeatedly issued ordinances which required slave owners to have documentary evidence that the enslaved over whom they claimed possession were properly registered. Registration, the ordinances imply, was the process by which slave status was supposed to be fixed.³⁸ An ordinance from 1673 referred to earlier regulations (1659) by which slave owners were required to prove their ownership of enslaved people, with the express purpose of distinguishing between the enslaved

³⁶ Kate Ekama, "Precarious Freedom: Manumission in Eighteenth-Century Colombo," *Journal of Social History* 54, no. 1 (2020): 88–108.

³⁷ Schrikker and Ekama, "Through the Lens of Slavery."

³⁸ On colonial categories and the Company's population registration processes see work by Remco Raben and on Sri Lanka specifically by Dries Lyna.

and free.³⁹ An ongoing concern for the Company was that free people were being held as slaves, and formal proof of ownership – especially accompanying the sale of enslaved people – was intended to establish the boundary between slave and free status. The ordinances were not framed in religious terms, as many others were; the 1673 and 1683 ordinances closed with the statement that the regulations were for the ‘good of the population’ (*welstandt van de gemeente*),⁴⁰ perhaps assuming both a general consensus on and the desirability of the idea of freedom embedded in the regulations.

The 1757 regulation, which again required slave owners to obtain proof of ownership of their slaves, took the step of declaring that persons over whom owners could not prove legal ownership would be considered free until such time that the slave owners could document their claim. The ordinance which established that, published in Colombo, included the provision that the person of undocumented slave status would provide labour for the Company in return for their upkeep. In addition to addressing slave owners, the ordinance addressed auctioneers: they were prohibited from selling enslaved people without proper proof of their slave status and certificates.⁴¹

In 1773, the same concern over free people being enslaved was raised in an ordinance which dealt with various crimes. The crime of enslaving free people and selling them as slaves was punishable by death, the regulations stated.⁴² This might have been a situation where imported enslaved people and bonded or dependent Sinhalese people lived and worked alongside one another, for the same master, and the distinction between their situations of bondage blurred. If this was the case, the Company’s regulations intended to restore the legal distinction between slave and free, even if there was little by which to distinguish their conditions. Taken together then, the Company ordinances regarding proof of ownership and the sale of free people into slavery were intended to maintain the boundaries between the free and enslaved.

³⁹ Hovy, *Ceylonees Plakkaatboek* I: 109 (7 October 1673), 167. Hovy notes that the ordinance from 1659 referred to in the 1673 ordinance could not be found. Hovy, *Ceylonees Plakkaatboek* I: 167 n. 72. Similar regulations were issued in 1683, 1749, 1757, 1772 and 1787. See Hovy, *Ceylonees Plakkaatboek* I: 152 (13 March 1683), 221; II: 378 (20 June 1749), 547; II: 413 (13 May 1757 Colombo/ 4 June 1757 Galle), 584–85; II: 523 (15 August 1772), 764; II: 619 (23 July 1787), 888–89.

⁴⁰ Hovy, *Ceylonees Plakkaatboek* I: 109 (7 October 1673), 167; I: 152 (13 March 1683), 221.

⁴¹ Hovy, *Ceylonees Plakkaatboek* II: 413 (1757), 584–85.

⁴² Hovy, *Ceylonees Plakkaatboek* II: 530/20 (1773), 771. It is worth noting that this ordinance as well as a later one uses the language of theft to frame illegal enslavement and trade. Hovy, *Ceylonees Plakkaatboek* II: 608/9 (1786), 869.

5.2 Self- sale

The sale of family members or oneself into slavery has long been recognised as an entry into slaving practiced in the VOC world. Markus Vink's well-known article 'The World's Oldest Trade' identified the importance of famine cycles and poverty on the subcontinent in increasing the number of people sold into slavery and transported to Ceylon and elsewhere in the VOC Indian Ocean world.⁴³ VOC regulations show that the same phenomenon was happening in Ceylon, that is, individuals in the jurisdiction of the Company sold themselves into slavery. When it was disconnected from the maritime slave trade, the VOC Ceylon officials tried to close off this route into slavery. At the same time, the Company in Ceylon received imported enslaved people from the subcontinent, who had probably entered slavery by the same route.

One of the earliest Colombo ordinances dealt with the matter of sale into slavery. Passed in December 1660, the ordinance opened with a description of how people were being enslaved within Company jurisdiction: freeborn people (*vrijgeboorne*) found themselves in situations of dire need, and out of necessity, due to debt, poverty and misfortune, sold themselves or went into service of other inhabitants, thus falling into a sorry state of servitude and slavery. Individuals sold their fixed property, their lands, themselves and their entire families into bondage.⁴⁴ The Company found this wholly unacceptable: they forbade enslaving or taking into service any freeborn inhabitant, regardless of their poverty.

Yet this cannot be read as an anti-slavery statement nor even as a general statement against sale into slavery through poverty. By the 1660s the VOC not only sanctioned private slave-ownership across its empire but was also a slave owner itself. Enslavement through poverty and sale was a common feature of cycles of famine on the Coromandel Coast, an area from which numerous enslaved people in the VOC world originated, and it is likely that many of the thousands of enslaved people imported into Ceylon in the years following the Dutch capture of Colombo from the Portuguese had entered slavery by that same combination of debt and poverty.⁴⁵ So the 1660 ordinance was against enslaving free people in Ceylon for a reason other than principled opposition to poverty as a route into slavery. The concern that was foregrounded in the ordinance was inheritance. But why, we might wonder,

⁴³ Markus Vink, "The World's Oldest Trade': Dutch Slavery and Slave Trade in the Indian Ocean in the Seventeenth Century," *Journal of World History* 14, no. 2 (2003): 131–77; Matthias van Rossum, "Global Slavery, Local Bondage? Rethinking Slavery as (Im)mobilizing Regimes from the Case of the Dutch Indian Ocean and Indonesian Archipelago Worlds," *Journal of World History* 31, no. 4 (2020): 693–727.

⁴⁴ Hovy, *Ceylonees Plakkaatboek* I: 59 (1660), 62–63.

⁴⁵ Remco Raben, "Batavia and Colombo: The Ethnic and Spatial Order of Two Colonial Cities, 1600–1800" (PhD diss., Leiden University, 1996); Vink, "The World's Oldest Trade'."

was the Company concerned with inheritance? It was quite possibly an issue of working inherited lands, especially given the context of the recently concluded war against the Portuguese and the need to cultivate the decimated lands around Colombo. It might also have been a means of securing access to labour obligations owed to the Company. Van Rossum suggests that Company ordinances which prohibited marriage and child-raising practices were used to secure the Company's access to the caste labour, in particular the obligations of the cinnamon peelers, upon which the VOC relied for its supply of cinnamon. The regulations around self-sale and the sale of family members could be read in the same way. In that sense entry into enslavement could have been used as an exit from other labour obligations.⁴⁶ If cinnamon peelers were enslaved, they would no longer fulfil their caste duties to the Company and the Company's trade would suffer. Perhaps that was the motive behind the regulations against sale of self or family into slavery. Whatever the case, the ordinance closed with the restoration of freedom and possessions to those who had been enslaved.

A court case which arose in a VOC court in 1780 gives some insight into how this regulation was enforced. A Company court tried a Sinhalese woman from Kandy who had tried to sell her child into slavery within the Company's jurisdiction. While we cannot access the woman's conceptions of the bondage into which she sold her child, the Company was against this enslavement of a freeborn person, treated it as a crime, and sentenced the woman to corporal punishment and five years of chained labour.⁴⁷ By criminalising the sale into slavery and enforcing the regulations in court, the Company attempted to close off this route into slavery in Ceylon.

The instructions passed in 1789 for headmen and inhabitants of Batticaloa dealt with the issue of enslavement very clearly. Article 21 opened with the statement that 'No free person who has come from the interior or elsewhere, whatever nation or caste he may [be], shall be made a slave of by anybody whomsoever or under any pretence whatsoever'.⁴⁸ Whether or not this was voluntary sale into slavery or coerced enslavement (for instance kidnapping or theft) is not addressed specifically. The punishment which the Company approved applied to both buyer and seller of wrongfully enslaved free people: corporal punishment would be meted out without regard to status, based on the severity of the case. The person wrongfully enslaved would be 'immediately liberated' according to the ordinance.

Unlike other ordinances, this one does not open with a statement of how frequently illegal enslavement was taking place in the Batticaloa area. But in the writing of the ordinance the authorities reveal their knowledge and view of contemporary

⁴⁶ In 1661 the Company prohibited marriage to persons of other castes and the sending of children to be raised by persons of other castes, which strategies had been used by cinnamon peelers to escape caste duties. Van Rossum, "Global Slavery, Local Bondage?".

⁴⁷ Schrikker and Ekama, "Through the Lens of Slavery": 185.

⁴⁸ Hovy, *Ceylonees Plakkaatboek* II: 627/21 (1789), 901.

issues of bondage and freedom. While enslaving free people was a punishable offence, as had been established in various other ordinances earlier in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the regulations provided a mechanism of binding children to others for their upkeep. The context of such arrangements was poverty and dire need – ‘when there is no other means left’ – in which circumstance parents or close relations were permitted to make agreements, signed by the headman, for the upkeep of the children for up to twenty years. The process was set out as a formal one involving the headman, the signing of a mortgage *ola*, and the announcement of the arrangement at the council meeting.⁴⁹ That the arrangement is framed as a mortgage, for a set period of time, distinguishes such a legal provision from slavery. At the same time, it is reminiscent of indenture practices elsewhere in the VOC world: under the *inboekstelsel* at the Cape, children born to (ostensibly free) Khoikhoi women and enslaved men were bound to masters until they reached their twenties.⁵⁰

6 Slavery and Debt

The issue of debt has already been raised in the context of poverty; referred to as a pair, the Company understood these as factors which led some individuals to enter slavery, which, as discussed above, the Company prohibited. But debt as a route into slavery warrants closer inspection: mortgaging or pawning of self, family, or possessions could lead individuals into slavery.

The Company permitted the use of enslaved people as collateral on loans. Classed as immovable property, the enslaved were used to secure credit, not only in Sri Lanka but also at the Cape, where recent research documents the networks built on slave collateral in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.⁵¹ The focus here is how individuals mortgaged themselves or, in the case of a manumitted (formerly enslaved) family, their proof of manumission, which compromised their legal status as free people.

Until the 1760s the Statutes of Batavia permitted the sale of a debtor in default, if that person was a non-Christian. This presumably refers to a form of debt slavery, although what exactly the condition of bondage entailed is not spelt out. The Colombo ordinance which referred to this provision confirmed the Council of the Indies’ (*Hooge Regeering*) decision to abolish the article, establishing that only the

⁴⁹ Hovy, *Ceylonees Plakkaatboek* II: 627/21 (1789), 902.

⁵⁰ On indenture of children born to free (Khoikhoi) women and enslaved men at the Cape of Good Hope see Shell, *Children of Bondage*: 26–34.

⁵¹ Johan Fourie and Christie Swanepoel, “‘Impending Ruin’ or ‘Remarkable Wealth’? The Role of Private Credit Markets in the 18th-Century Cape Colony,” *Journal of Southern African Studies* 44, no. 1 (2018): 7–25; Kate Ekama, “Bondsmen: Slave Collateral in the 19th-Century Cape Colony,” *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 47, no. 3 (2021): 437–53.

debtor's possessions could be sold. This was presented as a legal formality for VOC Ceylon rather than an alteration which would influence practice: the Colombo ordinance clearly stated that the sale of possessions only was practiced in Ceylon, as per Ceylon law framed as 'our law'.⁵² Here then was another route into slavery that the VOC in Batavia had attempted to close off, and in their confirmation of the regulation, the VOC Ceylon authorities continued to separate the debtor and their debts and close off debt as a route to enslavement. At least in the formal world of credit and debt, then, a creditor could not enslave a debtor, no matter what the debtor's religion, to recoup a loan.

Yet as ordinances discussed earlier attest, poverty – which often went hand in hand with debt in the wording of the ordinances – was a route into slavery, which the Company tried to close off through its legal pronouncements. The VOC used the language of pawning (*verpanding*) to describe how people in circumstances of dire need bound themselves to others. The VOC was aware of and tried to stop this practice in the district of Matara on the southern coast of the island. There, indebted inhabitants had already sold off their land to repay creditors, and 'many poor desolate/bankrupt people' were persuaded by their creditors and dire circumstances to pawn their wives and children, and fell into slavery. To prevent this, the *dessave* (administrative head of a province under the Company) had to see to it that no-one sold the land or property they needed for their upkeep, and that sales which contravened the regulation would be voided and the money forfeit. Regarding pawning people, the VOC stated that through this indirect means free people were being held as slaves, and that the *dessave* should investigate the matter with the goal of restoring freedom to those in bondage. It was, according to the regulation, a matter of conscience, because 'everyone's freedom is the greatest good on earth'.⁵³ The language of the ordinance is that of restoring freedom to those who are born free. And while we can identify in that incipient ideas of liberty, as Schrikker and I argued, these were secondary to Company priorities which in this case was protecting Company revenue by preventing the depopulation of the lands in the area of Matara.⁵⁴

An eighteenth-century civil case highlights the role of debt in disputed slave status and gives insights into what pawning a person meant for one specific individual, the freed woman Sabina and her children. It reveals the slippage between slavery, indebtedness and freedom for a freed woman whose husband used her proof of manumission (letter of freedom, *vrijbrief*) to raise a loan. The freed woman Sabina claimed that she and her children were free; creditors claimed that they were slave property due to the pledge of her *vrijbrief*. It was debt that endangered Sabina and her family's status as freed people. For this particular family, pledging

52 Hovy, *Ceylonees Plakkaatboek* II: 500 (1767), 748.

53 Hovy, *Ceylonees Plakkaatboek* I: 65/20 (1661), 97–98; translated in Schrikker and Ekama, "Through the Lens of Slavery": 187.

54 Schrikker and Ekama, "Through the Lens of Slavery": 187.

a person's freedom in the form of a *vrijbrief* was a way to raise credit but also a risky choice which led to a long drawn out civil dispute.⁵⁵

7 Judicial Enslavement

VOC ordinances established another entrance into legal slavery in Sri Lanka: punishment. But unlike the general principle that that which is born follows the womb, enslavement as punishment was exceptional. I have found only one ordinance which established enslavement as a punishment and it applied to one specific group of people – the children of Christian concubines of non-Christian men. Convict labour, in contrast, was a common form of punishment for enslaved and free transgressors in the VOC world across the Indian Ocean. It involved being sentenced to labour on the Company's works, ranging from a period of months to a lifetime, and sometimes in chains. The Company's works were often urban sites where convicts worked alongside the enslaved. A sentence could also include transportation to one of the Company's penal sites across its empire, including penal islands, for instance the notorious Robben Island off the Cape of Good Hope.⁵⁶

In addition to the various ordinances which the Company issued against concubine involving the enslaved, the Company attempted to regulate sexual relationships between free people of different religions. In 1760, the VOC in Ceylon set out the punishments for Christian women and non-Christian men who were found to be living in public concubinage relationships. They were subjected to corporal punishment followed by a lifetime of convict labour. What is relevant to the matter of enslavability is the way in which the Company dealt with the children of these unions. The ordinance states that children would be declared Company slaves and indicates that they would be removed to live among the enslaved.

As already mentioned, this is the only example I have found of what constitutes penal enslavement, yet the children were enslaved as a result of their parents' crime. Nowhere in the ordinance does it indicate or suggest that the non-Christian men and Christian women whose sexual relationships were being regulated were themselves enslaved.⁵⁷ Where the ordinance's wording is very clear, is in communicating the Company's strong disapproval of concubinage between Christian women and non-Christian men. Men and women suspected of such relationships were to be punished with 25 years of labour in chains.⁵⁸ It is possible that the ordinance

⁵⁵ Ekama, "Precarious Freedom."

⁵⁶ Ward, *Networks of Empire*; van Rossum, "The Dutch East India Company in Asia."

⁵⁷ Hovy, *Ceylonees Plakkaatboek* II: 457 (1760), 673–74.

⁵⁸ Hovy, *Ceylonees Plakkaatboek* II: 457 (1760), 674.

provided for the Christian women's children to be enslaved rather than subject to convict labour along with their parents because children would not be used as convict labourers. Court cases from the Colombo Court of Justice archive indicate that some enslaved people lived and worked alongside convicts in the Company's *materiaalhuis* (storage house) and laboured together on the Company's public works.⁵⁹ Whether or not this specific ordinance was enforced through sentences of the Court of Justice remains to be seen. If it was, the enslaved children might have ended up in the *materiaalhuis*, or perhaps were placed with Company officials to serve within the household.

So if we return to the principle that that which is born follows the womb, by which the Company established birth as a legitimate entrance into the condition of slavery, we see again a matter of concubinage in which the Company violated that principle. The children of free women were not themselves free, but as a result of their mothers' crimes, were enslaved.

8 Conclusion

Slavery in VOC Ceylon existed within a context of multiple forms of coercion, with differing characteristics and points of intersection. By focussing on enslavement as read in the VOC ordinances for Ceylon – where slavery is distinguished by claims of possession and access to labour – we can see how the Company regulated entrances into slavery through the uterine descent principle of Roman law and diverged from it to include the children of enslaved men at a particular point in time. The Company continually prohibited concubinage between different groups identified under its jurisdiction, and made decisions on the status of the children of these 'mixed' relationships – whether to enslave them or not in the case of slave parentage, and which caste designation to attach to them in the case of hereditary caste-based labour obligations.

The boundaries between slavery and freedom which the ordinances were intended to establish with clarity were particularly blurry in practice when it came to entrance into slavery through sale and through pawning or mortgaging. The Company continually legislated against the enslavement of free people on the island through these two entry points, both of which were bound up in debt and poverty.

This exploration of enslavement through the Company's ordinances brings to the fore the tensions, intersections and specificities of slavery in Sri Lanka, contributing to a deeper understanding of coercive regimes in the VOC world.

⁵⁹ Kate Ekama, "Connected Lives: Experiences of Slavery in VOC Colombo," in *Being a Slave: Histories and Legacies of European Slavery in the Indian Ocean*, ed. Alicia Schrikker and Nira Wickramasinghe (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2020): 99–121.

In reflecting on the legal regime and enslavement in VOC Ceylon the issue of mobility is a pertinent one. It was the (forced) mobility of the enslaved elsewhere in the Indian Ocean which underpinned slavery in Ceylon, as the island was part of the slaving networks which Samantha Sint Nicolaas discusses in her chapter. In her work, Ceylon is a source of slaves, quite possibly a transshipment place rather than one of origin as enslaved persons from the subcontinent were transported to Batavia. These flows were part of the globalizing, commodified slaving that Matthias van Rossum discusses in his chapter. Whatever way these individuals entered into slavery – through debt, poverty, (self) sale, war and raiding – once part of the VOC legal world, the enslaved were subject to the Roman legal slave code of the Statutes of Batavia and local ordinances, the *Ceylonees plakkaten*. What seems to emerge is tension between the local and the foreign – enslavement in Ceylon was regulated through the ordinances, prohibiting entrances into slavery which the Company accepted outside of its jurisdiction. Thus, according to the ordinances individuals in Ceylon could not sell themselves into slavery, no matter what their situation of poverty or need; however, people who had entered slavery that way elsewhere were accepted as enslaved in Ceylon once transported there, and taken on as private and Company-owned slaves. Was the fact that people had been enslaved outside of VOC jurisdiction the important element? Was there something in the transportation and dislocation – whether by means of Company ships or Asian slave traders – that made the entry into slavery less pertinent after arrival? Once in Ceylon, mobility was a pertinent issue for a different reason. The distinction between slave castes and imported enslaved people was eroded in terms of the saleability of the enslaved, but maintained in different rules of mobility. *Nalavar* slaves could not be removed from Jaffna; in contrast, with the proper permissions in place, imported enslaved people could be removed from the island (barring certain periods in which the trade was banned). Who then were the enslaved who arrived in places such as the Cape of Good Hope and Batavia with designations ‘of Ceylon’? It is this question which Nira Wickramasinghe and Marina Carter explore, suggesting that last port of call explains the toponym rather than place of origin, while more specific references to place (such as inland areas of Ceylon rather than the littoral) could be revealing of the overlap between what they refer to as indigenous slavery and the Company’s networks.⁶⁰

The question that follows on from this is how forms of coerced labour intersected. There are hints in the ordinances, which I have explored above – slavery and caste, and there also service labour; and slavery, convict labour and crimes. Recent and ongoing research on slavery and caste in Jaffna is most revealing of these local and global entanglements.

60 Carter and Wickramasinghe, “Forcing the Archive.”

9 Reflection

As Sanjog Ruphakeri states in his chapter, and the various contributions on South Asia in this volume show, slavery in that region was heterogeneous. Detailed case studies reinforce the importance of specific context and local dynamics while at the same time highlighting overarching themes and resonances. One area where this is clearly visible is the flexibility of law. While the rising Gorkha put that to the use of nascent state-building in the context of multiple strong and powerful houses, the VOC was operating in the context of multiple competing empires and power holders, Asian and European. Through the *Ceylonees plakkaten* we see something of the flexibility and reactivity of law in the way the Company dealt with who could be enslaved and by what means. The intention of securing a labour force was clear in the VOC's ordinances but Ruphakeri's chapter suggests another aspect to explore: state-building. He shows that the legal framework established by the rising Gorkha of Nepal was used to bolster their position, in part through securing military labour by outlawing the sale of children into slavery. What are the implications of Company regulations if considered in the context of Company authority and state-building in Asia? Through the ordinances the Company secured caste labour by preventing enslavement, labelled castes slave castes and drew them into legal slavery in Jaffna, and attempted to establish the boundary between free and slave status. Was this part of the Company's attempts to categorise and register populations at the heart of colonial rule? As Remco Raben wrote, '[c]olonial rule depends on the management of diversity'.⁶¹ Can we thus read Company ordinances on enslavability in light of Company state-building in Asia?⁶² As the VOC inserted itself into slave-trading routes of different scale and scope, as Samantha Sint Nicolaas' and Hans Hägerdal's chapters show, the Company also set about extending and exercising its jurisdiction over people, including the enslaved who were imported and those enslaved on the island. The Company ordinances which regulated enslavability in Ceylon were one outworking of this.

⁶¹ Remco Raben, "Colonial Shorthand and Historical Knowledge: Segregation and Localisation in a Dutch Colonial Society," *Journal of Modern European History* 18, no. 2 (2020): 179.

⁶² Whether or not Philip Stern's English East India Company company-state argument can or should be applied to the VOC is a matter of some debate among scholars: Arthur Weststeijn, "The VOC as Company-State: Debating Seventeenth-Century Dutch Colonial Expansion," *Itinerario* 38, no. 1 (2014): 13–34; Erik Odegard, "A Company of State: The Dutch East India Company and the Debates on the Company-States in Asia, 1660s–1690s," in *Mechanisms of Global Empire-Building*, ed. Amélia Polónia and Cátia Antunes (Porto: CITCEM, 2017): 127–143.

James Fujitani

Government Slavery in Portuguese Melaka, 1511–1523

This chapter studies the state-owned slaves in the city of Melaka, in the years following the Portuguese conquest in 1511. It was the first time that a Western European country took control of a Southeast Asian city, a moment of enormous and troubled intercultural exchange. I will specifically focus on how colonization affected the compensation and social class (status) of local slaves and labourers.

The effect of colonization upon slavery regimes in Asia remains poorly understood. On the one hand, many scholars have noted that European colonists often maintained local slavery systems and took advantage of them.¹ On the other hand, many have also noted that the Europeans often made significant changes, not only to slavery specifically, but also to the entire labour structure.² There was clearly a mixture of both continuity and change. However, while this mixture is well noted, it is less well understood. It is often unclear what exactly about slavery changed, how it changed, or who precisely changed it. To some extent, this is due to ideological obstacles, for example the colonial distortion of perspectives on slavery, but also the notorious problem of defining ‘slavery’ (a problem which this volume amply explores). In addition, there is also a basic lack of sources. In many regions, pre-colonial Asian sources on slavery are fragmentary or lacking. The European sources can also be sparse, not to mention biased. There are thus many information gaps, making it hard to continuously track the evolution of slavery practices.

I will examine a case in which the documentary record is unusually rich, a case in which it is possible to get a certain sense of the ‘before and after’, at least with regard to one aspect of slavery: that of income. On the Malay side, we have the Melakan law codes, most notably the *Undang-Undang Melaka*, as well as those of Perak and Johor, dating to the seventeenth century. These law codes contain numerous comments on slaves. On the Portuguese side, there are a number of reports from the captains of Melaka which describe the slavery situation. In addition, there are a few extant notebooks of the *almojarife dos mantimentos*, the officer charged with food

1 See Markus Vink, “‘The World’s Oldest Trade’: Dutch Slavery and Slave Trade in the Indian Ocean in the Seventeenth Century,” *Journal of World History* 14, no. 2 (2003): 149–60; Nigel Worden, “Indian Ocean Slaves in Cape Town, 1695–1807,” *Journal of Southern African Studies* 42, no. 3 (2016): 397–402.

2 See, for example, Richard B. Allen, *European Slave Trading in the Indian Ocean, 1500–1850* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2015): 19–24; Rafaël Thiébaud, “Some Thoughts Concerning the Effects of the European Slave Trade on the Dynamics of Slavery in Madagascar in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries,” in *Slaving Zones*, ed. Jeff Fynn-Paul and Damian Alan Pargas (Leiden: Brill, 2017): 169–204.

supply (who will henceforth be called ‘the rations officer’).³ These documents give detailed information on slave salaries. In comparing these Malay and Portuguese documents, it is possible to reconstruct some of the structural changes that happened during the transition into colonization.

I will argue for a specific way of understanding the relationship between precolonial and colonial slavery regimes, what I will refer to as ‘the framework approach’. The basic idea is that while the colonists did maintain various local practices, they changed the meaning of these practices when they placed them into their own socio-economic framework. In our case, the Sultanate of Melaka and the Portuguese Empire approached slavery using very different ideologies. The former based the master-slave relationship upon the model of patron and client. The latter, in contrast, based it upon the model of employer and employee – a much more commercial mindset. Accordingly, although the Portuguese did indeed adopt the basic labour remuneration system of the Sultanate, they used this system in a very different way. The result was that many slaves and labourers (though not all) were adversely affected, falling into poverty, losing social status.

1 The Melakan Framework: Slavery as a Form of Clientelism

Let us first note the social structure within the Sultanate of Melaka. It has often been said that Early Modern Malay society was built upon the patron-client relationship.⁴ The upper classes built up political and social power by accumulating dependents and subordinates.⁵ Each of these subordinates, in turn, accumulated their own clients. The pattern extended from the Sultan (the greatest patron), down

³ For the period of this study, the records of three rations officers have been preserved: Francisco Cardoso (1513–1514), Juzarte Homem (1519), and Francisco Bocarro (1523–1524). Note that in the case of Homem and Bocarro, their documents are not listed under their own names in the bibliography. For Juzarte Homem, the documents are under the name of Afonso Lopes da Costa, captain of Melaka in 1519. For Francisco Bocarro, they are under the name of Jorge de Albuquerque, captain in 1521–1524. It was the captain who issued the distribution order to the rations officer, and who was thus the official author of the document.

⁴ Dean Messinger, “Slavery, Dependency, and Obligation in the Early Modern Malay Archipelago: Towards a Refashioned ‘Slave Mode of Production’,” *Footnotes: A Journal of History* 4 (2020): 27–28.

⁵ Anthony Reid, “The Structure of Cities in Southeast Asia, Fifteenth to Seventeenth Centuries,” *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 11, no. 2 (1980): 243–47.

to the village chiefs.⁶ ‘Malay society’, wrote Matheson and Hooker, ‘functioned through a system of formalized obligations, the prime obligation being owed to the ruler who was the source of life, and to whom a subject could surrender himself, and in return expect everlasting protection’.⁷ That is to say, dependency was built into the social structure.

The slavery was one element within this structure. The master took the role of patron, and the slave that of client.⁸ The analogy between slavery and clientelism can be seen in the language, in the way that citizens referred to themselves as ‘domestic slaves (*sahaya*)’ of the Sultan, as a sign of deference and loyalty.⁹ Ideologically, this implied a reciprocal relationship between slave and master, one with mutual (although unequal) duties: the master offering benevolence and the slave responding with loyalty. This perhaps shows the influence of the medieval Muslim tradition, in which the master-slave relationship was compared to the father-son relationship.¹⁰ While the reality of slave labour was doubtless not so beautiful, the foregoing gives a sense of the ideological framework of slavery.

I should also offer a warning. It was nineteenth-century Britain which largely forged the image of a hierarchical, rather feudal Malaysia.¹¹ To some extent, this stereotype shaped, and continues to influence, scholarly views of the Melakan Sultanate. This makes it difficult to distinguish between historical facts and colonial prejudices. I have sought to avoid oversimplifications in this chapter, but I know that there may be blind spots. I invite other researchers to correct any unjust assumptions that I may have made.

6 The most comprehensive study on pre-colonial Malay political systems is John Michael Gullick, *Indigenous Political Systems of West Malaya* (rev. ed., Abingdon, NY: Routledge, 2020). However, it should be noted that Gullick focuses on Malay cities in the nineteenth century that had not yet been subjected to England.

7 Virginia Matheson and M. B. Hooker, “Slavery in the Malay Texts: Categories of Dependency and Compensation,” in *Slavery, Bondage and Dependency in Southeast Asia*, ed. Anthony Reid (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1983): 200.

8 Luís Filipe F.R. Thomaz, “A escravatura em Malaca no século XVI,” *Studia* 53 (1994): 264–66.

9 Such polite usage of the word survives up to this day. See Thomaz, “Escravatura”: 266. See also the humorous anecdote in the annals in which a Melakan envoy refers to himself in this way: *Malay Annals*, trans. John Leyden (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Ormf, and Brown, 1821): 181.

10 Paul G. Forand, “The Relation of the Slave and the Client to the Master or Patron in Medieval Islam,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 2, no. 1 (1971): 59–66.

11 This point is forcefully made by Cheah Boon Kheng, “Feudalism in Pre-Colonial Malaya: The Past as a Colonial Discourse,” *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 25, no. 2 (1994): 243–69.

2 Four Types of Dependency in the Sultanate of Melaka

I will now introduce four different groups of dependent labourers in the Sultanate of Melaka. I will try to explain two things about each group: 1) their social status, and 2) their income. We will track these four groups over the course of this chapter, and see what happened to them after the Portuguese took over the city.

First, there was the large, diverse group of ‘regular slaves’ – slaves who did not have any special privileges. In this chapter, we will mainly see the domestic slaves (*hamba sahaya*),¹² the elephant caretakers, and the enslaved war captives (*hamba tawanan*).¹³ These people were of the lowest social class.

In regard to income, it seems that they functioned within the traditional cliental framework. They were not remunerated specifically for their work. At least, the *Undang-Undang Melaka* never says that this was required. However, the text does mention that masters were expected to feed their slaves.¹⁴ The Portuguese sources affirm this, saying that the Sultan had previously distributed rice and clothing to them – that is to say, the basic necessities.¹⁵ In other words, it seems that the master had a general moral duty to provide for the slaves, like a father for his children.

Second, there were the royal slaves (*hamba raja*).¹⁶ The term ‘royal slave’ is probably a general term for all the more honored slaves of the Sultan. It included various sub-classes. For example, the *Malay Annals* seem to equate them with *bi-duanda* (court attendants).¹⁷ In contrast, various Portuguese sources, in describing battles with other Malay states, say that royal slaves led troops into battle.¹⁸ For his part, the Renaissance historian João Barros, using an unidentified source, says that they served as administrators in the Melakan trade bureau.¹⁹ One might also add that if they were war commanders and trade administrators, then it is likely that

¹² See Matheson and Hooker, “Slavery in the Malay Texts”: 192–93.

¹³ Aminuddin bin Baki, “The Institution of Debt-Slavery in Perak,” *Peninjau sejarah* 1 (1966): 1–2; Matheson and Hooker, “Slavery in the Malay Texts”: 193–94.

¹⁴ *Undang-Undang Melaka: The Laws of Melaka*, trans. Liaw Yock Fang (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1976): 118–19.

¹⁵ Diogo Lopes de Sequeira to King Manuel I, December 28, 1519, in *Diogo Lopes de Sequeira*, ed. Ronald Bishop Smith (Lisbon, 1975): 38; João de Barros, *Da Ásia: Década Terceira, Parte Primeira* (Lisbon: Regia Officina Typografica, 1777): Livro 1, Cap 9, 88.

¹⁶ See Matheson and Hooker, “Slavery in the Malay Texts”: 195–98.

¹⁷ *Malay Annals*: 97 (also quoted below); Matheson and Hooker, “Slavery in the Malay Texts”: 192–99.

¹⁸ Thomaz, “Escravidura”: 270–71. Barros also seems to describe them in the battle for Muar, Livro 3, Cap. 2, 257.

¹⁹ Barros, Livro 1, Cap. 9, 88. This practice is also discussed in Daniel Perret, “From Slave to King,” *Archipel* 82 (2011): 171–72.

they were also the captains of the Sultan's trade ships, which were reportedly run completely by slaves.²⁰

It seems likely that the royal slaves functioned within the cliental framework as well in regard to income. Like the regular slaves, they received their basic necessities from the Sultan, rice and clothing. This can be inferred from the fact that the Portuguese distributed such things to the royal slaves, and said that they were following local custom in doing so.²¹ That said, receiving such gifts was probably more a symbolic recognition of vassalage than a financial necessity for them. Many probably had significant incomes, based upon their duties within the administration (court attendant, ship captain, trade officer, etc). This income was probably not an official salary, but rather a benefit derived from their privileged social position. For example, trade administrators and captains were perfectly positioned to engage in private trade and investment (not to mention corruption).

Third, there were the debt bondsmen (*hamba berhutang*).²² These were people who had either voluntarily given themselves into slavery in exchange for money, or who had forcibly been enslaved after defaulting on a loan.²³ Accordingly, this group also must have been very socially diverse, with people from many different walks of life. In this study, we will mainly see bondsmen in the roles of sailors, dockworkers, carpenters, and blacksmiths, though there must have been many other types of labourers as well.²⁴ In addition, they might have also been ethnically

20 Afonso de Albuquerque himself described the Sultan's slave-run merchant fleet, in "Afonso de Albuquerque to King Manuel I, April 1, 1512," in *Cartas de Affonso de Albuquerque*, vol. 1, ed. Raymundo Antonio de Bulhão Pato (Lisbon: Academia Real das Sciencias, 1884): 50. This practice of slave sailors is also mentioned in Perret, "From Slave to King": 172–74.

21 Lopo Vaz, "Rol de vários pagamentos e compras que fez o feitor Lopo Vaz," entry for January 26, 1518, Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, Corpo Cronológico PT/TT/CC/2/72/111, fol 28v (<https://digitarq.arquivos.pt/details?id=3796934>). In this passage, the slaves who receive the cloth are working in the *feitoria*, and as mentioned above, those slaves were royal slaves.

22 See Matheson and Hooker, "Slavery in the Malay Texts": 194–95. Thomaz, "Escravidura": 285–91.

23 The law code of Perak contains the most detailed discussion of the conditions under which enslavement could happen (voluntarily or involuntarily through debt). The relevant passages are translated in William Edward Maxwell, "The Law Relating to Slavery among the Malays," *Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 22 (1890): 283–86.

24 See the two extant general salary rate documents for 'escravos e negros': Afonso Lopes da Costa, "Mandado de Afonso Lopes da Costa, capitão e governador da fortaleza de Malaca, para Juzarte Homem, almoxarife dos mantimentos, pagar aos escravos cativos," April 1, 1519, Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, Corpo Cronológico PT/TT/CC/2/80/211, <https://digitarq.arquivos.pt/details?id=3798366>; and Jorge de Albuquerque, "Mandado do Capitão . . . Jorge de Albuquerque, para o almoxarife Francisco Bocarro e o escrivão André de Chaves pagarem aos negros e escravos do rei," August 1, 1521, Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, Corpo Cronológico PT/TT/CC/2/97/70, <https://digitarq.arquivos.pt/details?id=3801313>. The dockworkers are mentioned in Barros, Livro 1, Cap. 9, 88.

diverse. João Barros says that these slaves were procured from ‘outside of Melaka’.²⁵ In regard to their social status, the debt bondsmen retained certain privileges associated with freedom. For example, the *Undang-Undang Melaka* says that while debt bondsmen are slaves, their wives and children are not, unless they have contractually agreed to it.²⁶ This is in contrast to regular slaves, whose family belonged to the master as well. As Thomaz has noted, the general assumption seems to be that debt bondsmen would eventually pay off their debts and return to freedom, even if in practice this rarely happened.²⁷

In regard to income, the debt bondsmen seem to have straddled the line between cliental and commercial systems. On the one hand, it seems that they did receive their basic necessities from the Sultan, like other slaves.²⁸ On the other hand, they also received a salary specifically for their work. This can be inferred from a 1521 letter by the governor of India, Diogo de Sequeira. He described what seem to be the debt bondsmen:

In the time of the King of Melaka, there were many slaves, both married and single, with their wives and children, who had salary [*mantimento*]²⁹ when they served, whether on land or on sea. And when they did not serve, they did not have anything except cloth for festivals.³⁰

These people received pay when they worked, but nothing when they did not work – that is to say, the pay was a direct compensation for their labour. Furthermore, it seems that this payment was made in cash. We can infer this from the fact that their debt, and the interest on the debt, was calculated monetarily.³¹ In this same commercial spirit, the bondsmen apparently had considerable autonomy. Some legal texts distinguish between bondsmen who had to work full-time for their masters, and those who could work independently to pay off their debts.³² The *Undang-Undang Melaka* gives the impression that these latter often worked for third

²⁵ Barros, Livro 1, Cap 9, 87. Similarly, Afonso de Albuquerque, 50, said that these ships were run by Javanese slaves.

²⁶ *Undang Undang*: 169. See also Matheson and Hooker, “Slavery in the Malay Texts”: 188–89.

²⁷ See Thomaz, “Escravatura”: 285–91.

²⁸ Barros, Livro 1, Cap. 9, 87–88, directly says that the *ballâtes* received rice and cloth on a regular basis. These *ballâtes* are probably the same as the *batos* mentioned in Costa, “Mandado . . . pagar aos escravos”: fol. 2a, and also in Jorge de Albuquerque, “Mandado . . . pagarem aos negros e escravos do rei”: fol. 2a. My assumption is that these people are none other than the former debt bondsmen. *Ballâtes* and *batos* would thus be corruptions of the word *hamba berhutang* (debt slave). My reason for believing this is that the *ballâtes* were reported to live independently and have their own businesses (Barros, Livro 1, Cap. 9, 87–88). This fits with what is known about the autonomous debt bondsmen.

²⁹ See below on the confusion between the food ration (*mantimento*) and the salary.

³⁰ Diogo Lopes de Sequeira to King Manuel I, December 28, 1519, in *Diogo Lopes de Sequeira*, ed. Ronald Bishop Smith (Lisbon: Silvas, 1975): 38.

³¹ Thomaz, “Escravatura”: 285–91.

³² Matheson and Hooker, “Slavery in the Malay Texts”: 195.

parties without consulting their masters.³³ Clearly, the bondsmen did not conform to the traditional ‘father-son’ model of slavery.

Fourth and finally, there were many free Melakan citizens who lived in conditions that might be called semi-dependent. Neither the *Malay Annals* nor the laws tell us much about these people, but we will see them among the labourers of Portuguese Melaka. These were presumably poorer folk, perhaps former debt bondsmen, who still depended on their patrons (the Melakan court) for work, for protection, for advocacy. They were legally free, but socially and financially dependent.

To summarize, these were the four groups of dependents under the Sultanate whom we will track in this chapter: 1) the regular slaves, 2) the royal slaves, 3) the debt bondsmen, and 4) the free clients. Broadly, the first two classes functioned within the cliental framework, receiving provisions and honours, but not a salary (in the sense of ‘pay in exchange for labour’). While the master did give payments to them, and while the slaves did indeed provide labour for the master (and often hard labour), there was not necessarily a direct, one-to-one relationship between the payments and the labour. There were other moral and social factors that were also intervening. The major exception was that of the debt bondsmen, who did receive a work-based salary. Their existence perhaps reflects the changing culture of the Sultanate as it developed during the age of commerce.

3 The Portuguese Conquest: Maintaining the Basic Slavery Practices

First of all, it should be recognized that the Portuguese did indeed maintain certain aspects of Melakan slavery. In 1518, Francisco de Faria wrote that the Governor of India, Afonso de Albuquerque, wishing to secure the city’s labour force, had promised to the slaves that ‘all those who wished to come and live in Melaka would live freely (*eram em sua liberdade*) and would only serve in that which they had served in the time of the King [of Melaka]’.³⁴ That is to say, they retained their preexisting rights and job duties. Similarly, João Barros, who probably had not only Faria’s letter, but also others which are no longer extant, wrote that Albuquerque ‘ordered to send out announcements that all who returned to the city to repopulate its houses, would be guaranteed good treatment of their persons by him, and he would maintain them legally in the manner that they had lived previously.’³⁵

³³ *Undang-Undang*: 91.

³⁴ Francisco de Faria to King Manuel I, August 14, 1517, Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, Corpo Cronológico PT/TT/CC/1/22/62, fol. 3r (<https://digitarq.arquivos.pt/details?id=3769930>).

³⁵ Barros, Livro 1, Cap. 9, 87.

These claims are not untrue. The Portuguese continued the Sultanate's general practice of distributing rice. The ration documents amply testify to that fact. Similarly, just as the Sultanate had distributed cloth to the slaves, so also did the Portuguese. The city's warehouse records contain entries showing such distributions.³⁶ And as we will see, slaves do seem to have continued working in the same areas as before. For example, we will see slaves continuing to appear within the trade bureau, within the ships, etc. In short, at least at a rudimentary level, the Portuguese did respect their promise to maintain preexisting Melakan slavery practices.

4 Consequences of the Transition: Loss of Income

The Portuguese economic and social framework was different from that of the Sultanate. It was fundamentally commercial. The Portuguese Empire has been described as a form of state capitalism, an enterprise whose primary goal was not territory, but rather profit.³⁷ The fortress of Melaka very much embodied this spirit. Writing to the King, Afonso de Albuquerque justified the conquest of Melaka based upon the trade revenue that it would generate: 'Melaka is a very great thing, it is in a place where, even if there were no Melaka there, due to the trade in those parts, it would be good for you to make a fortress there.'³⁸ Thus, the fortress of Melaka was run somewhat like a business, constantly trying to minimize expenses and maximize profits. This 'business model' determined the treatment of slaves. The government slaves were basically viewed as low-class state employees.

In concrete terms, one of the main consequences of this commercial framework was that it caused many slaves to lose income. One reason for this was that the Portuguese streamlined the remuneration system. We have seen that under the Sultanate, some slaves had been receiving both a food ration for basic necessities, and a separate income for their work (sometimes official, sometimes unofficial). Initially, the Portuguese might have been planning to do something similar, with a ration in rice and a salary in money.³⁹ But then the fortress ran into considerable currency

³⁶ Vaz, fol 28v.

³⁷ See, for example, Bailey W. Diffie and George D. Winius, *Foundations of the Portuguese Empire, 1415–1580* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977): 301–37.

³⁸ Afonso de Albuquerque, 53.

³⁹ This can be seen from Afonso Lopes da Costa's 1519 general order, which set salary rates. It prescribes both a ration and a monetary salary for slaves, citing tradition. See Costa, "Mandado . . . pagar aos escravos." The practice was allowed in some other fortresses in the colonies. The fortress of Sofala, for example, distributed food rations and salaries separately. See Bartolomeu Perestrelo, "Rol do milho que o almoxarife dos mantimentos de Sófala havia de dar aos moradores," March 1, 1511, Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, Corpo Cronológico PT/TT/CC/2/25/172, <https://digitarq.arquivos.pt/details?id=3787812>.

problems. Unable to provide a stable currency, it began to pay the Portuguese citizens a salary in rice.⁴⁰ In essence, it merged the salary and the ration into one single payment. The administration applied this same principle to the slaves. The ration records of 1513–1514 show that the slaves were either receiving rice or money, but not both.⁴¹

For many slaves, this merging of salary and ration was unfortunate. As we have seen, the debt bondsmen had previously received both a salary and a food ration. They now effectively lost one of them. They found themselves eating through their salary each day, quite literally, making it difficult to build up funds to purchase their own freedom. Those who had large families to feed certainly struggled. On the other hand, this merging probably did not affect the domestic slaves much. Having previously only received basic necessities from the Sultan, without any salary, a single rice payment from the Portuguese was not much of a change.

The administration also streamlined the remuneration system by setting one standard salary rate for almost all slaves: one day of work was paid with a half-ganta of rice. (The ganta is an earlier Malay measure of volume, equal to 1.75 liters.) This comes out clearly in the 1513–1514 records of daily ration distributions. As an example, here is one entry from the records of Rations Officer Francisco Cardoso, from November 30, 1513:

Item, on the thirtieth day of the aforementioned month, the aforementioned rations officer, in accordance with the aforementioned general order of the aforementioned trade officer, distributed one hundred and twenty gantas and a half of the aforementioned rice, which he gave to the black men (*negros*⁴²) who serve in construction of the fortress and docks: namely, to four carpenters and four blacksmiths, at the rate of one ganta to each, and to two hundred and twenty five other black men, at the rate of a half ganta to each, among whom are included the ninety-nine of the jailhouse.⁴³

40 On the early currency problems of the Portuguese administration in Melaka, see, for example, Francisco de Albuquerque to King Manuel I, December 18, 1512, in *Cartas de Affonso de Albuquerque*, vol. 3 (Lisbon: Academia Real das Sciencias de Lisboa, 1903): 361.

41 The source is Francisco Cardoso, “Receita e despesa do vinho, vinagre, arroz, azeite e outros, que o almoxarife de Malaca, Francisco Cardoso, recebeu e despendeu,” December 5, 1514, Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, Corpo Cronológico PT/TT/CC/2/53/93, <https://digitarq.arquivos.pt/details?id=3793515>. In Cardoso’s ration documents, rice is distributed almost every day. However, for two days, January 23 and 24, 1514 (399b–400a), Cardoso issued coins to the slaves – sometimes using the locally minted tin coin called the *bastardo*, and sometimes using Portuguese *réis* – instead of rice. On those two days of monetary payment, no rice ration is recorded. The document explicitly says that Cardoso was giving the coins for ‘their food (*mantimento*) and daily salary (*journal*).’ Thus, the slaves either received either rice or cash, but not both at the same time.

42 The Portuguese used the term *negro* for all non-Europeans with a dark complexion. The term often indicates local Malays.

43 Francisco Cardoso, “Receita e despesa do vinho, vinagre, arroz, azeite e outros, que o almoxarife de Malaca, Francisco Cardoso, recebeu e despendeu,” December 5, 1514, Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, Corpo Cronológico PT/TT/CC/2/53/93, photo no. m0389 (<https://digitarq.arquivos.pt/details?id=3793515>).

The labour classes mentioned in this passage will be explained later. For the moment, let us just note the salary rates: the free artisans (carpenters and blacksmiths) received one ganta per day, and the slaves (the ‘others’) received a half-ganta per day. For both of these groups, salary was paid on a day-by-day basis. When the workers did not work, they were not paid.

This salary system caused financial loss for the debt bondsmen, royal slaves, and free clients. We have seen that the Sultan had distributed basic necessities regularly, as a general patronal duty, regardless of the actual work done. In contrast, the Portuguese directly linked payment to work. To make matters worse, they did not have slaves work on a consistent basis. For example, Francisco Cardoso’s records show that on January 24, 1514, pay was distributed to 27 unchained slaves.⁴⁴ In contrast, on August 14, 1514, pay was distributed to 182 unchained slaves.⁴⁵ The numbers seem to swing wildly from day to day. One suspects that certain slaves, such as the court attendants, who had been serving almost every day under the Sultanate, now found themselves rather idle – without work and without rice.

The royal slaves also lost income for another reason. They had formerly run the Sultanate’s bureaucracy, led troops, and captained the ships. But now Portuguese lackeys took over these positions. (The nepotism of the successive Portuguese administrations was a topic of endless complaint in the city.⁴⁶) While the royal slaves continued to work in the same administrative offices, and while they continued to help aboard the ships, they no longer had official leadership. They apparently dropped from the status of administrator to that of assistant. This demotion probably eliminated much of their supplemental income: the former slave trade administrators could no longer cut private deals; the former slave captains could no longer rent out cargo space. While their official salary was maintained, their unofficial income, which was much more important, was taken away.

Perhaps less intentionally, the Portuguese also caused the debt bondsmen and the free clients to lose income for still another reason. As mentioned, under the Sultanate, it was common for bondsmen to independently work for third parties. Presumably the free clients were doing the same. However, it seems that under the Portuguese administration, such third parties largely ceased to exist. It is not entirely clear why. We only know this from later problems that arose, which we will see later in this chapter. Perhaps one major issue was that the Portuguese formed a cultural and economic bubble within the city, a European enclave within a Southeast Asian

⁴⁴ Cardoso, photo no. m0400v.

⁴⁵ Cardoso, photo no. m0409r.

⁴⁶ See, for example, Pero de Faria, 1517, 342; see also Costa, 1518, 476–77.

port.⁴⁷ The debt bondsmen seem to have committed themselves to this enclave, many converting to Christianity.⁴⁸ They were thus rather cut off from the surrounding Muslim community, and consequently from their former business contacts. In any case, it seems that many could no longer supplement their salary by working for others. Increasingly, they were trapped in a cycle of poverty.

In summary, we can see the problem of ‘frameworks’ generating the salary crisis. The Portuguese officers, doubtless with some hypocrisy, insisted that they were maintaining the basic rice distribution that the Sultan had instituted. Only, they wanted to make the system more efficient, to make the employees earn their salary: no work, no pay. From the slaves’ perspective, however, the Portuguese were morally failing as patrons. They were not supporting and taking care of their clients as they should.

Facing such conditions, the slaves and labourers began fleeing. In 1517, a disgruntled officer of the city, Pero de Faria, wrote that ‘Malaca has now been completely depopulated’.⁴⁹ Similarly, the officer Simão de Andrade, who arrived in Melaka with a relief force in June 1518, reported that he had found the city ‘almost unpopulated of all the merchants and people from there, due to the tyranny and robbery that was being done there’.⁵⁰

Some of the slaves had fled in order to find a better income. In 1515, Pero de Faria had already reported that the former Sultan of Melaka, from his new base in Bintam, was trying to draw sailors away from the Portuguese by offering them higher salaries.⁵¹ And again in 1517, Faria cried out with urgency:

This persecution that the local people have, it is more from the Portuguese than from the King of Bintam! [. . .] Furthermore, they [the forces of Bintam] are their countrymen, and they receive better jobs than what they receive from us, which moreover is not much. Since they are their countrymen, they flee to them and leave Your Highness. Because clearly Nuno Vaz [one of the city officials] persecutes them [. . .] principally by taking away their salary [*mantimentos*].⁵²

47 See, for example, Pierre-Yves Manguin, “Of Fortresses and Galleys: The 1568 Acehnese Siege of Melaka, after a Contemporary Bird’s-Eye View,” *Modern Asian Studies* 22, no. 3 (1988): 607–28. Jorge dos Santos Alves and Nader Nasiri-Moghaddam, “Une lettre en persan de 1519 sur la situation à Malacca,” *Archipel* 75, no. 1 (2008): 154.

48 On the question of conversion, see Thomaz, “Escravidura”: 291–97.

49 Pero de Faria, 1517, 340.

50 Simão de Andrade, Letter of Simão de Andrade to King Manuel I, August 10, 1518, in *Gavetas da Torre do Tombo*, vol. 5 (Lisbon: Centro de Estudos Históricos Ultramarinos, 1965): 125.

51 Pero de Faria to King Manuel I, January 4, 1515, in *Cartas de Affonso de Albuquerque*, vol. 3 (Lisbon: Academia Real das Sciencias de Lisboa, 1903): 130–31.

52 Pero de Faria, 1517, 340.

While there were also other factors causing the population to flee, the salary/ration problem was clearly one major factor.⁵³ It was perhaps a matter of survival.

5 Consequences of the Transition: Loss of Social Status

Another major consequence of the Portuguese salary system was that many slaves lost not only salary, but also social status. Perhaps unintentionally, the Portuguese salary policy challenged the preexisting social hierarchy. Looking back at the sample entry from November 30, 1513, quoted above, one can see that it does not use the traditional Malay categories, such as royal slave, debt bondsman, etc. The Portuguese knew of such categories, but they seem to have chosen to ignore them in this document.⁵⁴ Instead, the entry refers to labourers using a new set of categories. It speaks of three types of labourers: 1) eight free artisans (four carpenters, four blacksmiths), 2) ninety-nine ‘black men’ who were kept in the jailhouse, and, by inference, 3) one hundred and twenty six ‘black men’ who were not kept in the jailhouse. (Henceforth, I will refer to the latter two groups as ‘chained’ and ‘unchained’ slaves.⁵⁵) The reason why the document uses these new categories was probably financial. The rations officer was trying to keep track of the payroll, and accordingly, he grouped the various labourers according to their salary rate – for free labourers, unchained slaves, and chained slaves each had slightly different salaries.

The following table summarizes the pay rates of the different labour classes during that time:⁵⁶

53 There are many other reasons for slaves fleeing which go beyond the scope of this study. On these other reasons, see Thomaz, “Escravatura”: 274–77.

54 The Portuguese were somewhat aware of the different social classes of slaves in the Melakan system. João de Barros speaks of two classes of slaves: the *ambarages* (*hamba raja*) and the *ballâtes* (*hamba berhutang*) – that is to say, the royal slaves and the debt bondsmen. Barros, Livro 1, Cap 9, 87.

55 In regard to the terms ‘chained *afferolhados*’ and ‘unchained *aliberdados*’, see Thomaz, “Escravatura”: 266–69. Note that this distinction between chained and unchained slaves apparently continued under the seventeenth-century Dutch regime. See Messinger, “Slavery, Dependency, and Obligation”: 36.

56 This table has been simplified to emphasize each general labour category. For a more detailed chart, see Pierre-Yves Manguin, “Manpower and Labour Categories in Early Sixteenth Century Malacca,” in *Slavery, Bondage and Dependency in Southeast Asia*, ed. Anthony Reid (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1983): 212–13.

Tab. 1: Salary Rates for Labourers.

Primary Labour Classes	A. 1511 system ⁵⁷	B. 1519 sea system ⁵⁸	C. 1523 land system
Free labourers	1 ganta per workday ⁵⁹	Official employee of crown: 30 gantas per month	30 gantas per month ⁶⁰
Supervisor slaves (<i>tuções</i>)	20 gantas per month, regardless of total workdays ⁶¹	Chief <i>tução</i> : 30 gantas per month Secondary <i>tuções</i> : 22 gantas per month	<i>Tução</i> of unchained slaves (<i>batos</i>): 1 ganta per day <i>Tução</i> of the elephant caretakers: 20 gantas per month
Unchained slaves (<i>aliberdados</i>)	Half-ganta per workday	Scribes and pilots 24.5 gantas per month ‘ <i>Gerennendes</i> ’ 18.5 gantas per month ⁶² Interpreters 17.5 gantas per month ‘ <i>Aves paraos</i> ’ 15 gantas per month ⁶³	Carpenters and blacksmiths: 1 ganta per workday, half ganta per rest day Other unchained slaves (<i>batos</i>): fifteen gantas per month
Chained slaves (<i>afferlhados</i>)	Half-ganta per day, paid every day	15 gantas per month	15 gantas per month

⁵⁷ All of the salary rates in column A are from the records of Francisco Cardoso. The categories of ‘chained’, ‘unchained’, and ‘free artisan’ appear throughout the record, almost every day. The one exception is the category of *tuções*, which appears less frequently, and which has a footnote of its own, below.

⁵⁸ All of the salary rates in column B are from Costa, “Mandado . . . pagar aos escravos.” The one exception is the salary rate of the free Malay sailors, which changed in 1521 (see below).

⁵⁹ From Cardoso. See, for example, the entry of November 29, 1513, fol 389, which, as always, lists their salary rate as ‘uma ganta’.

⁶⁰ All of the salary rates for Column C come from Jorge de Albuquerque, ‘Mandado . . . pagarem aos negros e escravos do rei’.

⁶¹ See, for example, Cardoso, photo no. m0391r, photo no. m0392r.

⁶² The *gerennendes* have never been identified. They appear in the list of slaves who work aboard ships in both Lopes da Costa’s “Mandado . . . pagar aos escravos,” 2v, and in Jorge de Albuquerque’s “Mandado . . . pagarem aos negros e escravos do rei,” 1r. In the latter document, their title is spelled *jurunudes*. As the table indicates, their pay scale is slightly higher than that of interpreters, which suggests that they were highly skilled. Lacking solid evidence, I tentatively suggest that they were perhaps *berunding*: (trade) negotiators.

⁶³ The *aves paraos* have never been identified. They appear in the list of slaves who work aboard ships in both Lopes da Costa’s “Mandado . . . pagar aos escravos,” 2v, and in Jorge de Albuquerque’s “Mandado . . . pagarem aos negros e escravos do rei,” 2v. Some fairly probable conjectures can be made as to their role. Their title clearly includes the word for ship (*perahu*). As the table indicates, their pay scale is the same as that of chained slaves – the lowest labour class. Most likely, they were basic sailors.

In other words, perhaps unwittingly, the Portuguese were creating a new social structure, one built within a commercial framework. This structure was not based upon proximity to the patron, but rather upon salary. It was much flatter than the previous social structure, for almost all slaves had the same basic pay rate: a half-ganta per day. This included royal slaves: for example, the clerks within the trade bureau who were not in supervisory roles.⁶⁴ It included the majority of debt bondsmen, such as the unskilled dock workers.⁶⁵ And it included regular domestic slaves, such as the elephant caretakers.⁶⁶ All of them received the same half-ganta per day. One can sense the Portuguese tendency to view ‘slave’ as a single social class.

The one class of slaves who received a higher salary rate were the supervisors (*tuções*). This was also a mixed group. It seems to have included some royal slaves (such as the ship captains⁶⁷), some debt bondsmen (such as the chief carpenters⁶⁸), and some domestic slaves (such as the chief elephant caretaker⁶⁹). The common denominator between them was that, at the worksite, they acted as directors. While such leadership roles must have existed in the days of the Sultanate, they apparently did not have any particular legal status back then, for they are not discussed in the Malay law codes. Again, it seems that the Portuguese prioritized the concrete work duties, whereas the Sultanate prioritized proximity to the patron.

For those debt bondsmen who were not supervisors, this new social structure probably felt like an insult. They had previously been slightly higher than the domestic slaves, slightly closer to freedom. However, the Portuguese abolished such privileges. In the chaos following the invasion, the Europeans did not know who was a slave and who was not.⁷⁰ One can safely infer that they did not know how

64 As mentioned, Barros, Livro 1, Cap. 9, 88, says that royal slaves were working in the trade factory. Yet Afonso Lopes da Costa’s general order of April 1, 1519, which gives the salary rates of slaves, does not mention any separate salary category for slaves of the factory. We can only assume that they were being paid at the same rate as other ‘unchained slaves’ (the *ballâtes* – see note below).

65 That is to say, the ‘ballâtes’ / ‘batos’. See note 28, above. We can presume that they were unskilled labourers from Albuquerque, “Mandado . . . pagarem aos negros e escravos do rei”: fol 2v, which says that the *batos* are ‘slaves who are not officials’, and gives them a lower salary rate than artisan slaves such as carpenters.

66 The half-ganta salary rate of the elephant caretakers is already specifically mentioned in Costa, “Mandado . . . pagar aos escravos”: 1.

67 The chief *tução* of ships is mentioned in Costa, “Mandado . . . pagar aos escravos”: 2v, and also in Jorge de Albuquerque, “Mandado . . . pagarem aos negros e escravos do rei”: fol.1.

68 Two *tuções* of carpenters are mentioned in Jorge de Albuquerque, “Mandado . . . pagarem aos negros e escravos do rei”: fol.1: *tução Agimar* and *tução Mangana*.

69 A *tução* of the elephant caretakers is already mentioned in Cardoso, photo no. m0392r.

70 As is clear from a 1516 incident, in which the Portuguese administration accused various Melakan residents of being false freemen: of being slaves who had lied about their status at the time of the conquest in 1511, claiming to be free when they were in fact bonded. In 1516, the Portuguese arrested and enslaved these people. But the accusations were sometimes incorrect, and the local population was scandalized. See Barros, Livro 1, Cap. 9, 88–89.

much money any given bondsman owed either – especially since they did not understand the Melakan currency system. They thus demoted the debt bondsmen to being regular, unchained slaves, with the same salary and the same privileges as domestics. The former debt bondsmen could still hope to purchase their manumission, but this was just a general opportunity, open to all slaves.

This loss of status was particularly rude for those bondsmen who possessed specialized skills. As mentioned, many of them were sailors, and some were carpenters and blacksmiths. These were high-demand professions that doubtless had brought greater prestige under the Sultanate. One can assume that skilled artisans had received higher salaries for their work as well, and could pay off their debts more quickly. In any case, the *Undang-Undang Melaka* remarks that slaves' skills could raise their selling price.⁷¹ In contrast, under the Portuguese salary system, the skilled debt bondsmen received the same amount as other slaves: a half-ganta per workday. The carpenter bondsmen must have felt especially unappreciated. They worked side-by-side with the Portuguese carpenters (who usually received 40 gantas per month) and free client carpenters (who received about 30 gantas), and yet they were paid considerably less (about 15 gantas).⁷²

To summarize, the Portuguese did not directly oppose the preexisting social hierarchy. However, they had different priorities, and paid employees according to their work duties rather than by their status. This switch to a commercial framework indirectly created an alternate hierarchy.

The Portuguese sources contain scattered evidence of the anger and shock of the former royal slaves. One early testimony comes from Francisco de Albuquerque, a client of Afonso de Albuquerque. In his letter of 1514, he describes how he forcibly gathered slaves from the various private merchants to help build the fortress of Melaka. However, he mentions that as he did so, one high-ranked slave became angry with him. This was a slave of the *Bendahara* Nina Chatu,⁷³ the prime minister, and also chief of the Tamil merchant community:

None of the men whom I brought to work in this fortress were offended by me, except for one slave [*escravo*] of Nina Chatu [. . .], who was jealous of me, because, rightfully, all the services that I was doing, in bringing over these slaves [*negros*] and increasing the commerce of your highness, [. . .] rightfully, he should be doing them. Because he had been in the region for two years, and I had never been to Melaka in my whole life, except then.⁷⁴

⁷¹ *Undang Undang*: 139.

⁷² The salary rate of regular Portuguese carpenters is already given in Bocarro's ration documents. See, for example, 395b–396a (entry for December 11). The pay rates for Portuguese employees basically remain stable throughout the period of this study. On the pay rate of the free labourers, see Tab. 1, Column A.

⁷³ On Nina Chatu, see Luís Filipe R. Thomaz, "Nina Chatu e o comércio português em Malaca," in *De Ceuta a Timor*, ed. Luís Filipe R. Thomaz (Lisbon: Difel, 1994): 487–512.

⁷⁴ Francisco de Albuquerque to King Manuel I, December 18, 1512, in *Cartas de Affonso de Albuquerque*, vol. 3 (Lisbon: Academia Real das Sciencias de Lisboa, 1903): 362.

The slave in question here was probably not a traditional Melakan royal slave. Most likely, he was from Coromandel, like his master, Nina Chatu. Still, he held considerable power in the local administration, and one can see his confusion at being stripped of his authority. Francisco de Albuquerque had supplanted him.

There is an interesting case of theft by royal slaves as well. It is described by Pero de Faria, in his furious letter of 1517. The Captain of Melaka in 1519, Afonso Lopes da Costa, seems to refer to it obliquely as well.⁷⁵ Faria says that the crime was committed by slaves at the trade factory – that is to say, by royal slaves.⁷⁶ He says that one of the city officials, Diogo da Guilhem, was selling sugar from his house, while the slaves were selling sugar ‘in the city’.⁷⁷ That is to say, da Guilhem was handling large-scale sugar transactions (for example, with merchant ships), while the slaves were dealing with small-scale, local sugar-selling. The slaves broke through ‘the wall made of straw matting and stole sugar from there, as well as other fine things, such that the theft was so great that it became known’.⁷⁸

We can only speculate on the motivations of the slaves. It is certainly possible that they were engaging in opportunistic thievery. We know that this happened under the Sultanate, since the *Undang-Undang Melaka* discusses punishments for royal slaves who are caught stealing.⁷⁹ Still, I would argue that retaliation was also a motive. Faria seems to imply that the slaves primarily stole sugar. This is curious, since sugar was not the most precious commodity in the warehouse. Presumably the slaves wanted sugar, specifically, because they themselves were also selling it. That is to say, they perhaps wished to take back what belonged to them – what Diogo da Guilhem had taken from them to run his own sugar business.

There is also a second case of theft among royal slaves, though fewer details are given. It is reported in the account book of the chief trader, Lopo Vaz. On January 25, 1518, he reported that three slaves who worked for the trade factory broke into the storage of the customs house and stole trade goods which belonged to certain merchants from Coromandel.⁸⁰ On a highly speculative level, it is possible that there was an element of dissent involved here as well. On January 26 – the day after Vaz recorded the crime – he distributed clothing to the remaining slaves of the trade factory.⁸¹ Was this to appease other angry royal slaves in the factory? Was there perhaps a broader sedition taking place? There is not enough evidence to say, but the conjunction of events hints at something more complex than just simple thievery.

⁷⁵ Costa, 1518, 475.

⁷⁶ It is Barros who wrote that the slaves of the *feitoria* were royal slaves: Barros, Livro 1, Cap 9, 88.

⁷⁷ Pero de Faria, 1517, 348.

⁷⁸ Pero de Faria, 1517, 348.

⁷⁹ *Undang-Undang*: 75.

⁸⁰ Vaz, fol. 26r.

⁸¹ Vaz, fol. 28r.

6 The Portuguese Concessions to the Slaves, 1518–1523

By 1517, the fortress of Melaka was experiencing a labour crisis. Many slaves and workers had fled, and those who remained were becoming increasingly dissatisfied and prone to criminality. This crisis functioned much like a labour strike: it forced the Portuguese to make concessions. Those concessions are what we will now examine. One major reform was that the Portuguese loosened the equation between work and pay. Looking at Tab. 1, columns B and C, one can see that by 1523, all workers received rice every day, whether or not they worked. This was true for all the classes: slaves (both chained and unchained, both land-based and sea-based), and free labourers. Clearly, this must have been one of their most urgent demands.

Although the Portuguese administration began paying workers on rest days, this does not mean that it ideologically renounced the work/pay equivalency. It did not treat this change as a return to the traditions of the Melakan Sultanate, nor did it recognize a legal duty of masters to provide basic necessities to slaves on an unconditional basis. Rather, the administration explained this shift as an expression of charity. For example, in 1523, Jorge de Albuquerque, captain of Melaka, gave the following explanation for paying free labourers even on rest days: ‘they have wives and children who are also of the King [of Portugal], and they do not have any other food source [*mantimento*]’.⁸² Albuquerque does not say that he is fundamentally changing the salary system in order to settle a labour dispute. Rather, he says that he is showing compassion to the workers’ families, to the women and children, who need the king’s mercy.

The same notion of Christian charity comes out in another method that the administration used to meet the food needs of the population: alms-giving. The first extant case of this was in April 23, 1519, when the rations officer was ordered to provide rice to the vicar of Melaka. The church was then to give one ganta to each of the ‘poor Christians, natives of the land’.⁸³ In this case, it might have been a special donation, related to the recent Easter celebrations, for there are no other records of any such alms-giving that year. However, starting in June 1522, this practice became a regular, monthly distribution.⁸⁴ It seems that alms-giving shifted from being a special donation

⁸² Jorge de Albuquerque, “Mandado . . . pagarem aos negros e escravos do rei”: fol. 3v.

⁸³ Afonso Lopes da Costa, “Mandado de Afonso Lopes da Costa . . . para o almoxarife dos mantimentos dela dar ao vigário . . .” April 23, 1519, Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, Corpo Cronológico PT/TT/CC/2/81/86, <https://digitarq.arquivos.pt/details?id=3798469>.

⁸⁴ Jorge de Albuquerque, “Mandado do Capitão . . . Jorge de Albuquerque, para o almoxarife . . . Francisco Bocarro, dar 1320 gantas de arroz ao vigário,” June 1, 1522, Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, Corpo Cronológico PT/TT/CC/2/101/88, <https://digitarq.arquivos.pt/details?id=3801975>.

to being something akin to social welfare, for the rations officer began including the monthly alms-giving within the monthly salary distribution.⁸⁵ Again, although the administration basically was reverting to a policy closer to that of the Sultanate (and closer to the demands of the workers themselves), it did not explain it that way. Giving out ‘unearned’ rice was a form of charity, rather than of patronal duty.

The Portuguese administration also addressed the crisis over social status. For example, let us note the shipping industry (see column B of Tab. 1), and in particular, the free sailors. The Portuguese granted both more rice and more honour to them. Starting in 1519, they were given a raise to a salary of thirty gantas per month. There was some social affirmation in this figure of thirty gantas. That was the same salary rate that lower-class Portuguese sailors received. A similar recognition can also be seen in the monthly payroll documents. In 1521, the Rations Officer stopped including the free sailors in the payroll for ‘escravos e negros’, shifting them instead to the payroll of ‘servants of the King’ – that is to say, the regular payroll for Portuguese employees of the Crown.⁸⁶ This was a status that was closer to what they had known prior to the conquest, when they were considered normal sailors rather than subalterns. Let us note, however, that this recognition was only offered to the free sailors, not to other free labourers.

Similarly, the royal slaves who worked in shipping, the *tuções* of ships (the former slave captains), also received a significant payroll increase. It seems that they had previously received twenty gantas per month – the same as other *tuções*. In 1519, their salary was increased to thirty gantas per month – the same as the free sailors (Tab. 1, Column B). That is to say, although they were slaves, they were nonetheless paid the same amount as entry-level free sailors (both Portuguese and non-Portuguese). That was probably not coincidental, since it is very possible that the *tuções* still commanded the free sailors aboard the ships, as they had prior to the conquest. The *tuções* also seem to have received a certain social recognition from the Portuguese. A document from 1521 speaks of a certain ‘*tuçã*

85 See, for example, Jorge de Albuquerque, “Mandado de Jorge de Albuquerque . . . para o almoxarife . . . Francisco Bocarro, pagar adiantado a 277 homens o mantimento de arroz,” October 1, 1523, Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, Corpo Cronológico PT/TT/CC/2/111/44, <https://digitarq.arquivos.pt/details?id=3803510>.

86 This is not stated directly, but it can be inferred. In the 1521 slave salary document (Jorge de Albuquerque, “Mandado . . . pagarem aos negros”), the free sailors are not mentioned at all. This is in contrast to the free carpenters, who are mentioned. However, the general salary document orders the distribution of the regular salary ‘to all men of arms, of whatever status and condition.’ That is to say, being Portuguese was no longer a condition for being paid as a regular employee. The Malay free labourers had probably passed from the slave salary payroll to the regular employee payroll. See Jorge de Albuquerque, “Mandado de Jorge de Albuquerque . . . para Francisco Bocarro . . . pagar o mantimento . . . às pessoas que na dita fortaleza serviam ao rei,” September 30, 1521, Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, Corpo Cronológico PT/TT/CC/2/98/47, fol. 1 (<https://digitarq.arquivos.pt/details?id=3801444>).

Laçana, quartermaster (*mestre*).⁸⁷ That is to say, this document attributes to Laçana both the Malay title of *tuçãõ* and the Portuguese title of *mestre*. The administration apparently had begun treating him like a full ship's officer, rather than simply as a leader slave. This was not as high a status as ship's captain, but it was better than before.

Similar benefits were given to another key profession: carpenters. The free labourers who worked as carpenters eventually received a pay raise to thirty gantas per month (see Tab. 1, Column C). The debt bondsmen who worked as carpenters also received a raise to one full ganta per workday, and a half-ganta per non-workday. This meant that there was slightly more parity between the enslaved and the free carpenters, with equal salaries on workdays, though not on rest days. In short, the Portuguese did begin to recognize qualifications, offering better salaries and more honours to the workers.

Still, this was not a return to the Melakan social hierarchy. Not all the slaves received as many benefits as the sailors and carpenters. In pre-conquest Melaka, the royal slaves, such as the court attendants, had been at the top of the hierarchy – a reflection of the priorities of the Melakan Court. Now, in contrast, the sailors and carpenters occupied the summit – a reflection of the priorities of the Portuguese commercial enterprise. Indeed, the Portuguese honoured these privileged labourers by treating them more like Europeans – including them in the Portuguese payroll, giving them Portuguese job titles, etc.

7 Conclusion

This chapter has explored the transition from the slavery system of the Sultanate of Melaka to that of the Portuguese. I have particularly focused on the government slaves. It should be noted that the private slaves, who belonged to the local Portuguese citizens, would undergo a very different historical evolution. Many aspects of Melakan slavery that did not survive in the government system – the father-son model, the effort to accumulate clients – would flourish in the private one.⁸⁸

In this chapter, we have seen that there certainly was a tension between continuity and change. I have tried to show that while the Portuguese did adopt many elements of the Melakan slavery system, they always adjusted these elements to fit their own commercial framework. This process of 'fitting' radically altered each element, giving it different meaning and impact. In principle, the slaves had the same

⁸⁷ Garcia Chainho, "Mandado de Garcia Chainho para o almoxarife do armazém de Malaca," June 10, 1521, Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, Corpo Cronológico PT/TT/CC/2/96/169, <https://digitalq.arquivos.pt/details?id=3801183>.

⁸⁸ On the private slaves, see Thomaz, "Escravidura": 282–83.

salary in post-conquest Melaka that they had had in pre-conquest Melaka, but in practice, they were impoverished. In principle, the slaves maintained their previous job classes, but in practice, the nature and status of each job shifted dramatically.

It is not completely clear if the Portuguese made these changes intentionally. In some cases, they seem to have been willfully trying to save money and exploit the slaves. In other cases, they seem to have been proverbial sorcerer's apprentices, trying to manipulate cultural and social forces that they did not understand. In both cases, it was the slaves themselves who generally paid the price.

8 Reflection

In regard to the tension between continuity and change in European colonial slavery, this chapter can be fruitfully compared with those of Hägerdal and Shahid. Many similar themes run through all three. The Dutch, the British, and the Portuguese all handled labour using a fundamentally European approach. Our three chapters show how the colonists dramatically shifted the regional economy to fit their economic frameworks: the Dutch importing plantations, the British importing public works projects. And yet our three chapters also show how the colonists adopted and incorporated many local customs: some local Bandanese were kept alive to work on the islands for the Dutch, and the caste system was not, in fact, eliminated from the British aid policies. Doubtless, many colonial labour regimes which have previously been considered European will reveal similar complexities upon closer reexamination.

In my chapter, I have tended to emphasize, perhaps excessively, the commercial aspect of Portuguese slavery policy. Only towards the end of the piece did I touch upon broader socio-cultural matters, such as religion and ethics (Christian charity, etc). From this perspective, this chapter can also be compared with that of Ekama. The Dutch, the British, and the Portuguese all used religious ideals to justify their slavery policies, pairing morality with finances. The Dutch used moral denunciations of fornication among slaves in order to deal with economic problems such as property rights. The British used relief for enslaved women and children as a pretext for strengthening their control over the labour force. In these chapters, there is a blurry line between ruthless religious hypocrisy, and sincere but ignorant good intentions. Perhaps future research might shed more light upon this sensitive question.

Lisa Hellman

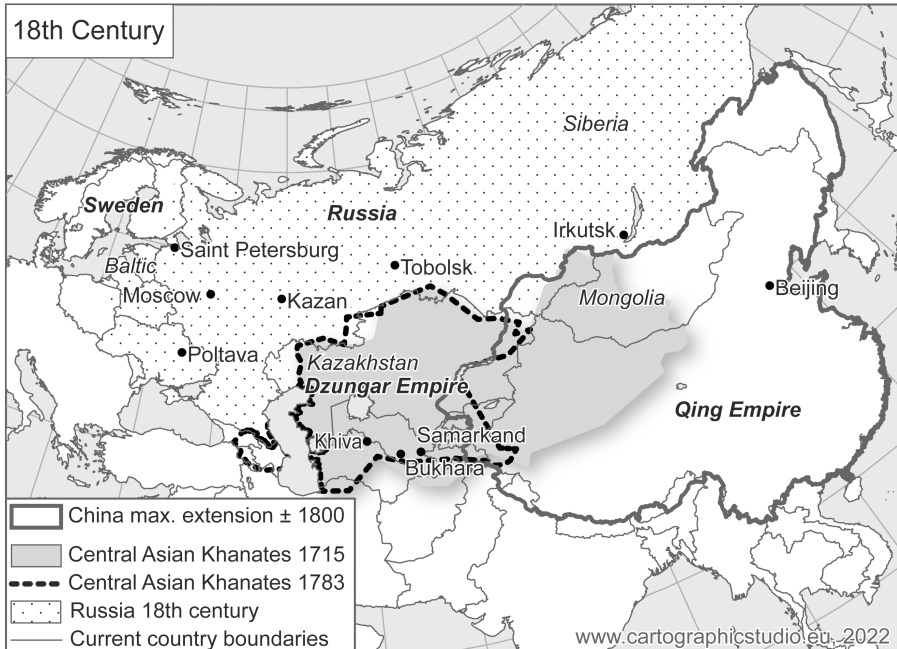
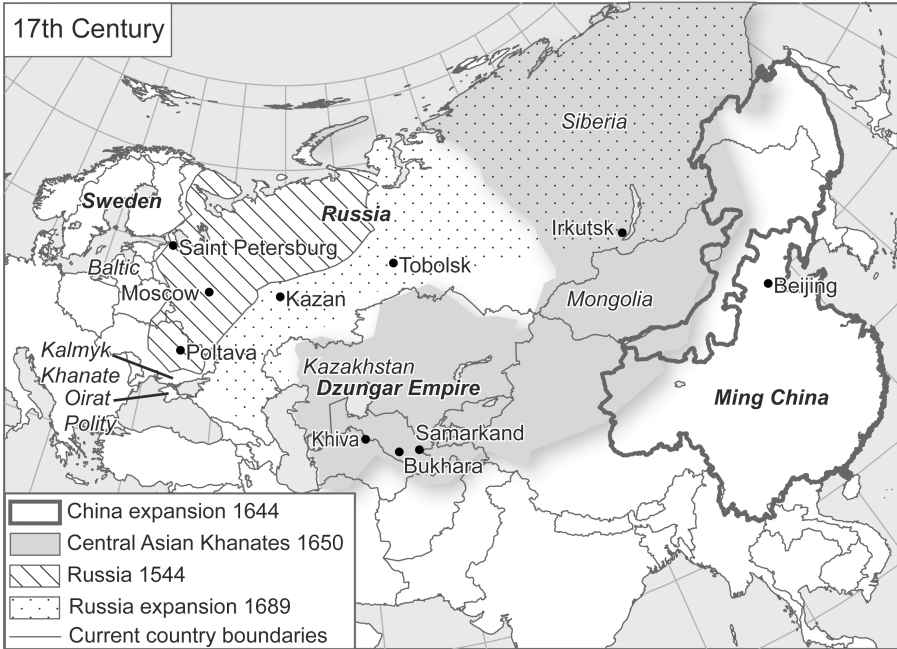
The Eastward Routes: Swedish Prisoners and Overlapping Regimes of Coercion in the Russian, Chinese and Dzungar Empires

When it comes to forced migration and long-distance slave trade, the bulk of the attention has been paid to the Atlantic world, and to maritime routes. In contrast, this chapter uses prisoners in early modern Central Asia to re-centre the story of past coercion to Asia, and might serve as a reminder to include overland slave trade routes and inland regimes in discussions of coerced labour in the past.

In the eighteenth century, Russia, the Qing Empire, a number of large and small nomadic and seminomadic polities as well as the nomad Dzungar Empire all had claims on the Central Asian borderlands – and all had separate and overlapping regimes of coercion. As a second contribution, this chapter presents an attempt to approach the history of coerced labour both from within and without: that is, simultaneously as a comparative history based on emic categories, and as an effect of inter-regional entanglements. The groups active in Central Asia offer a great variety of both notions and strategic uses of coercion, including technical and manual labour and large-scale migration, a use that stretched from the steppe and all the way to the imperial courts. These notions and systems can be considered *regimes* of coerced labour, regimes that at times worked in parallel, at times overlapped – and at other times affected each other.

To illuminate how diverse the experiences of coercion could be in this region, this chapter will be centred around a specific group: Swedish prisoners of war, moving in and out of several regimes of coercion, and producing sources as they went. In the early eighteenth century, Russia was involved in the Great Northern War (1700–1721). As a result of this war, which Sweden lost along with its Baltic empire, over 25,000 Swedes were captured by the Russian army. This group was diverse in terms of age, class and gender, origin and native language: it included officers, common soldiers, their wives and children, as well as servants and prostitutes. These male and female prisoners of war were gradually moved further and further eastwards, away from the western front, and some ended up in Dzungaria, the Qing Empire, Mongolia and the Kazak state. The Swedish prisoners' regional spread, their diverse status and the wildly differing paths they took make them ideal to capture the multiplicity of coerced regimes of this region.

To capture both the regimes and the entanglements between them, this chapter will use the prisoners' mobility – forced mobility, mobility as an imperial strategy, restricted mobility, and mobility as an opportunity – as a lens through which to



Map 5: Central Asia in the eighteenth century.

study the Central Asia borderlands.¹ The experiences of the prisoners will relate and nuance Marcel van der Linden's three 'moments of coercion', i.e. entry, work, and exit. In the sources, parallel to the word 'prisoner', the terms 'serf', 'slave' and 'captive' are used, and I attempt to mirror how they are used by the coerced actors themselves. Unavoidably, this means that the meaning and use of terms shift, depending on the actor, and over time. During the early modern period, the prisoner-of-war system included enslavement and captivity, in parallel with camps and formal exchanges.² While the Swedish prisoners of war constitute a small part of the flows of coerced labour moving across the Eurasian land mass, their mobility and immobility illuminate the diversity of such coerced groups, and their conditions.

Thematically and analytically, this relatively small group of prisoners offers an entry point into larger debates: a focus on prisoners' mobility and entanglements of regimes of coercion might allow for the reconsideration of the notion of separate regimes of coercion altogether, and might show the importance of integrating the eighteenth-century Central Asian borderlands into histories of coercion on a global scale.³

1 Mobility and Immobility within Regimes of Coercion

The entry into bondage, the entry-point into coercion as it were, is relatively straightforward: most of the men and women at the centre of this story were captured at the catastrophic (for the Swedes) battle of Poltava in 1709. In order to accommodate the influx of tens of thousands of prisoners, the Russian administration organised an increasing number of camps in which to intern the prisoners; the largest camp was in Tobolsk, which housed about 800 officers, not counting their families. The formation of the Russian camp system relied on older Russian models for dealing with prisoners. What differed in this case was the diverse skill sets of the prisoners, their sheer number, and the way camps were set up further and further east.⁴

1 A key work for mobility studies is Tim Cresswell, *On the Move: Mobility in the Modern Western World* (New York: Routledge, 2006).

2 For views on the Russian and Swedish side, see Joachim Östlund, *Saltets pris: svenska slavar i Nordafrika och handeln i Medelhavet 1650–1770* (Lund: Nordic Academic Press, 2014): 26–28; Sergei Aleksandrovich Kozlov, *Russkie Plennye Velikoi Severnoi Voiny. 1700–1721*, ed. Zoja V. Dmitrieva. (St. Petersburg: Istoricheskaja illjustracija, 2011).

3 Marcel van der Linden, "Dissecting Coerced Labour," in *On Coerced Labor: Work and Compulsion after Chattel Slavery*, ed. Marcel van der Linden and Magaly Rodríguez García (Leiden: Brill, 2016).

4 Galina Shebaldina, *Shvedskie Voennoplennye v Sibiri: Pervaia Chetvert' XVIII Veka* (Moscow: RGGU, 2005).

During their imprisonment, the Swedish prisoners were subject to ongoing and forced mobility; mobility and bondage were two sides of the same coin. If we turn to the diary of the captured officer Leonard Kagg, the number and variety of their movements are striking. Kagg's capture at the battle of Poltava led to a long forced march first to Moscow, and then to Tobolsk.⁵ In Tobolsk, hundreds of officers gradually arrived at the camp. The decade that followed was far from static. From the very beginning, prisoners came and went every week: sometimes arriving from other camps, and sometimes passing through Tobolsk, having been ordered even further away. At times, officers and their wives could receive permission to stay at Russian settlements, a *sloboda*, outside of the camps – at times, they were ordered to such settlements.⁶ Within months of first arriving in Tobolsk, two prisoners were dispatched all the way back to Moscow, a journey that took them a month on horseback. Their task was to arrange alimonies for the prisoners from the Swedish war fund.⁷ Every so often prisoners were offered service in the Russian army.⁸ Even those who refused Russian service altogether could be assigned to missions. Kagg's diary tells the story of ensign Petter Damitz and quartermaster Lundgren who were sent out to inspect Russian mines, and captain Johan Müller, who took part in a three-month-long mission to Christianise the so-called Ostiaks.⁹ However, such tasks were reserved for officers and those with special skills. Kagg does not take down the names of 'commoners', he simply notes their arrival in large numbers, and records how they were sent to work sites around the camp, and to other camps.¹⁰ Punishment could also lead to mobility between camps: when a prisoner committed an offence, they were moved elsewhere.¹¹ This kind of exile was even more common for the Russian population: many of the settlers in Tobolsk had been sent eastwards as a punishment.¹² Several forms of coerced mobility, for prisoners and common citizens, coexisted in these camp sites.

There were recurring attempts to organise exchanges of prisoners between Sweden and Russia.¹³ A spectacular example of the mobility of the prisoners is that of Johan Adolph Clodt von Jürgensburg. He was captured as Riga capitulated in 1710, but through negotiations with prince A.D. Menshikov secured a promise to work towards a prisoner exchange – an exchange that would include himself. To travel, he had to give his 'word of honour' and pay bail. Most importantly, he had to give over

5 Leonhard Kagg, *Leonhard Kagg's dagbok 1698–1722*, ed. Adam Lewenhaupt (Stockholm: Nord. bokh., 1912): 130–33, 145, 186.

6 Kagg, *Dagbok*: 189, 191, 194, 196, 203, 218–19.

7 Kagg, *Dagbok*: 186.

8 Kagg, *Dagbok*: 135.

9 Kagg, *Dagbok*: 206, 213–16.

10 Kagg, *Dagbok*: 189, 197.

11 Kagg, *Dagbok*: 202, 222, 226.

12 Kagg, *Dagbok*: 158, 187, 260.

13 Shebaldina, *Shvedskie Voennoplennye v Sibiri*: 115–16.

his sons 'to serfdom', should he abscond – demonstrating another possible route into coercion. Clodt worked hard for his own release but, as he would experience first-hand, few prisoner exchanges were carried out in this war. While King Charles XII created Clodt a baron, he refused an exchange, wherefore Clodt had to return to Russia in 1714 and spend the rest of the war, until 1720, with the other prisoners of war.¹⁴

Throughout the war, there were reports of how Swedish prisoners were treated in Russia, and of how Russian prisoners were treated in Sweden. Both sides attempted to use reprisals against prisoners in their own land to alter the treatment of their countrymen abroad: the systems of coercion affected each other.¹⁵ There were not two, but at least three systems involved here: one of Sweden's allies in the war against Russia was the Ottoman Empire, and Swedes went into Russia (and were subsequently captured) across the Ottoman-Russian borders.¹⁶ Over the course of the eighteenth century, Will Smiley argues, the Ottoman-Russian conflicts, and the ensuing problem of how to organise, treat and exchange these prisoners, led to the development of the modern prisoner-of-war system.¹⁷ Following the Swedish prisoners of war can show the diversity of systems of bondage, and also reveal the formation of the modern system for prisoners of war.¹⁸

This prison system existed side by side with other systems, for example raids in the Baltic provinces of the Swedish empire, during which thousands of civilians were captured and deported. Also in this case, social standing was key. Those of a higher standing, such as aristocrats, but also civil servants and priests were quite well received by the local societies to which they were brought. Captured Baltic peasants, however, were sold into serfdom or into the slaving systems of the Ottoman and Central Asian empires.¹⁹ The Swedish prisoners are a marginal group in the history of Russia compared to the various forms serfdom in the Russian empire.²⁰ However, as the examples from the Baltic make clear, these regimes might not be as separate as they first appear. The Swedes were well aware of the status of

14 Bertil Boéthius, "J. Adolph Clodt von Jürgensburg," in *Svenskt Biografiskt Lexikon*, vol. 8, ed. Bertil Boéthius (Stockholm: A. Bonnier, 1929): 653.

15 See for example *Sannfärdig berättelse, angående ryssarnes ochristelige och hårda förfahrande emot kongl. may:tz af Sverige högre och ringare fångne officerare, betiente och undersåtare, samt deras qvinnor och barn* (Stockholm, 1705).

16 See Hans Henrik Sylvius in Kagg, *Dagbok*.

17 Will Smiley, *From Slaves to Prisoners of War: The Ottoman Empire, Russia, and International Law* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

18 Arnold Krammer, *Prisoners of War: A Reference Handbook* (Westport, CT: Praeger Security International, 2008); Juliette Pattinson, Lucy Noakes, and Wendy Ugolini, "Introduction: Incarcerated Masculinities: Male POWs and the Second World War," *Journal of War and Culture Studies* 7 (2014): 179–90.

19 Alf Åberg, *Karolinska kvinnoöden* (Stockholm: Natur och kultur, 1999): 15.

20 For an overview, see Christoph Witzernath, ed., *Eurasian Slavery, Ransom and Abolition in World History, 1200–1860* (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2015).

and conditions for Russian serfs, but still used the terms serf and serfdom as a simile to describe their own situation.²¹

In Tobolsk, as in many other camps, the prisoners could walk around and move relatively freely – just not leave town without permission. Those who did try to escape, which a fair number of prisoners did, could be freely killed by farmers in the countryside, or captured anew after a few days.²² The strategy of binding the prisoners to the camp was thereby twofold: isolation and poverty. In the prison camps, a labour regime awaited that kept the prisoners tied to the camps, and made use of their skills. This was not unique to Russia: in Sweden, Russian prisoners were an important source of labour, in a land drained from the long war.²³ There was some tension between their employment for public building works, such as mines and shipyards, constituting a nearly free work force for hard and dangerous labour, and times when they took part in market-oriented production, such as beer-brewing and international trade. There were ongoing attempts by the authorities to clamp down on this trade: if we return to the diary of Kagg, prisoners are over and over being ‘sent away in disgrace’ to other camps, away from Tobolsk, having been caught carrying on ‘forbidden trade’, most commonly brewing and selling alcohol.²⁴ However, the alternative sources of income for the prisoners were few, and the trade kept going.

It is crucial to consider the different social standing of the prisoners. Officers were afforded a fairly high degree of freedom of movement and trade within and around the camps, which could lead them to compete commercially with Russians, causing conflicts. For the common soldiers, hard manual labour awaited. In the mines particularly, the survival rates were low. Different classes had different survival rates. Only 5,000 of the 25,000 prisoners made it back to Sweden, and of the survivors, a great proportion were either officers or skilled craftsmen.²⁵

To place the prisoners in Siberia killed two birds with one stone: it made the prisoners part of Russia’s eastwards push, and it removed them from the western frontier. If we consider Map 5, we see how dramatically Russia expanded eastwards, and the multiple polities it clashed with in that expansion. The prison camps, researchers now argue, helped the Russian expansion militarily, economically and intellectually.²⁶ They underpinned the local economy, and made the camps high-functioning small

²¹ A typical example is the poetry collection of Georg Henrik von Borneman, “Sånger af en svensk fånge i Simbirsk” (1711), Lund University Library.

²² Kagg, *Dagbok*: 142, 183, 179, 186, 193.

²³ Alf Åberg, *Fångars elände: karolinerna i Ryssland 1700–1723* (Stockholm: Natur och kultur, 1991): 18–21, 51–53; Gustaf Jonasson, “Krigsfångar som resurs,” in *Historiska etyder*, ed. Janne Backlund (Uppsala: Historiska institutionen, Uppsala University, 1997).

²⁴ Kagg, *Dagbok*: 207, 208, 233.

²⁵ Carl Piper and Carl Gustaf Rehnschiöld, *Carl Pipers och Carl Gustaf Rehnschiölds mottagna brev 1709–1713*, ed. Lars Otto Berg (Stockholm: Kungl. Samf. för utgivande av handskrifter rörande Skandinaviens historia, 1997); Åberg, *Fångars elände*: 41–48.

²⁶ Shebaldina, *Shvedskie Voennoplennye v Sibiri*.

towns. One tenth of the population in Tobolsk were Swedish prisoners. Furthermore, the camps functioned as rest stops between trade hubs, and helped connect the Russian market to that of Persia and the Central Asian city states. Finally, the camps were information hubs for Russian diplomats, traders and explorers going east, northeast, and southeast into China and the Central Asian border states.²⁷

In the early eighteenth century, a large proportion of the Russian colonisers had arrived in Siberia either as punishment or as a form of exile. As argued by Dariusz Kołodziejczyk, who has traced the experiences of Polish, Lithuanian and Crimean prisoners of war, Siberia and Central Asia were to a significant degree colonised by exiles and prisoners from the west who were moved east.²⁸ Thus, the prison camps constituted hubs for mobility, points of connection with other regions, and part of the Russian colonisation of Siberia.²⁹

2 Mobility between Systems of Coercion

Prisoners of war were subject to mobility due to coercion, but could also see mobility as an opportunity. The Swedish prisoners in Russia could be captured anew, lent to foreign powers, or be sent to the borders of the Russian empire – and beyond. A few prisoners' experiences can illuminate how interactions between regimes of coercion took place across the Eurasian steppe.

In a Swedish history of war, written by the Finnish scholar Arvid Moller, the battle of Sangaste in modern-day Estonia in 1702 is described. Following the defeat of the Swedish army, 'Kalmyks and Tatars swarmed the land' and 'took many hundreds of children to Tartary, to sell'.³⁰ This is part of the general trend to underline Asian minority groups or Asian allies to the Russian empire when attempting to stress the opponents' cruelty.³¹ That said, there were cases when those in the Swedish army

27 Vladimir Stepanovich Miasnikov, ed., *Russko-kitaiskie otnosheniia v XVIII veke. Dokumenty i materialy. 1729–1733*, vol. 5 (Moscow: Pamjatniki istoricheskoe mysli, 2016).

28 Dariusz Kołodziejczyk, "Captive Colonizers: The Role of the Prisoners of War from Poland Lithuania and the Crimean Khanate in the Russian Subjugation of Eastern Siberia," *Journal of World History* (forthcoming 2022).

29 Peter C. Perdue, *China Marches West: The Qing Conquest of Central Eurasia* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005): 88.

30 Arvid Moller, *Kort beskrifning öfwer Est- och Lifland, jemte undersökning om dessa Länders Inbyggares, i synnerhet det estniska och finska folckslagets ursprung* (Johan Laur. Horn, 1755): 86; see Michael Khodarkovsky, *Where Two Worlds Met: The Russian State and the Kalmyk Nomads, 1600–1771* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006): 217.

31 A typical example is *Ett uttag af några ifrån Steinau uthi Schlesien den 20 Julij 1707 daterade bref, om dhe muskowitziske callmuckers och cossakers grufweliga förfarande, med mördande, skiöflande och brännande, kring Lissa i Stor-Pohlen och de där wid gräntzande orter* (Stockholm: Johan Henr. Werner, 1707).

were captured by Kalmyks. One example is in 1709, when the captains Eric Reutenstierna and Gabriel Gyllenanckar were both ‘captured by the Kalmyks’.³² These two men were sent to Siberia, and made it back to Sweden after the war.³³ But not all captives found their way into the structure of prisoner-of-war camps and prisoner exchanges. There was a stream of prisoners of war going east, either as ransom slaves or labourers. Traditionally, war captives made up the greater part of the slave populations of Central and Inner Asia, including Poles, Ukrainians, Russians, and other Slavs, who had been seized by Tatars and others on the southern frontier and dispatched to Central Asian markets at Bukhara, Samarkand, Khiva or in the Crimea. These markets were primarily aimed towards the Mediterranean and the Ottoman Empire, but also provided Central Asia with slaves.³⁴ These prisoners, regardless of ethnicity, fed into one and the same regime.³⁵ In the context of coerced labour at large, the Swedish prisoners were but drops in a much larger stream.

The streams to Central Asia could take many forms. On one occasion, a foreign observer at the court of the tsar noted how a Bukharan emissary asked to receive – or buy – Swedish women. The tsar denied this request, but did ‘gift’ him two Swedish ‘whores’.³⁶ As this example shows, both voluntary and forced mobility depended on gender and class. For some, notably male and educated officers with the necessary language skills, mobility could equal greater freedom to for example make money or to carry out scholarly investigations. For others, notably unmarried women, such movement or slippage was a marker of the vulnerable position they occupied within their system – from their precarious position they could slip into other regimes of coercion.

The mobility forced upon Swedish prisoners can provide an outside view of these other regimes. An example is Johan Christian Schnitser, who was imprisoned in Tobolsk as a Chinese mission to the Kalmyks passed through. He was then dispatched by the Russian governor to accompany and safeguard this Chinese mission. As is clear from the Qing reports, this mission illustrates both the growing diplomatic connections between the Qing Empire and Russia at this time, and the importance for both to establish and retain their relationships with Central Asian polities, such as the Oirat polity of the Kalmyk Khanate.³⁷ In his own travelogue, Schnitser remarks on the local slavery regimes. Initially, he mentions how they take people,

32 Kagg, *Dagbok*: 125.

33 Reutenstierna *Diplomatica Muscovitica* 143, *Beskickningshandlingar 1721–1723*, Riksarkivet; Gyllenanckar *Svenskt Biografiskt lexikon*, vol. 17 (1967–1969): 523.

34 Richard Hellie, “Migration in Early Modern Russia, 1480s–1780s,” in *Coerced and Free Migration: Global Perspectives*, ed. David Eltis (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002): 307–10.

35 See Kołodziejczyk, “Captive Colonizers.”

36 Friedrich Christian Weber, *Das veränderte Russland* (Frankfurt, 1721).

37 Tulišen, *Lakcaha jecen de takūraha babe ejehe bithei/Man Han Yi yu lu jiao zhu*, ed. Zhuang Jifa (Taipei: Wen Shizhe Publishing House, 1983).

cattle and horses from their neighbours, but that ‘the people, who they do not themselves need, they sell to other Kalmyks’.³⁸ Indeed, while the Kalmyks theoretically were allied with Russians at this time, and together with the Russians caused the Swedish defeat at Poltava in 1709, still in 1714 Schnitser noted the Kalmyk practices to secure bail from captive Russians (‘against 50 to 60 good horses’). If someone was deemed guilty of an offence in this context, Schnitser claims he is ‘given to the other as an eternal serf’.³⁹ Schnitser says the Kalmyk serfs were Bashkirs, Karalpakians, Kubans, and captured Russians.⁴⁰ These snippets demonstrate how ubiquitous these practices were, even for an outside observer. In several of the Central Asian polities, prisoners of war were sold into slavery if they could not be bailed out. This practice was well known in Russia, and for a long time complicated the border relations.⁴¹

In several places, Schnitser’s travel writing has comments correcting the translation of local words, and titles.⁴² The man who could confidently correct such terms was Johan Renat, who spent almost two decades in an ever-larger Oirat polity: the Dzungar khanate. In 1716, Renat, together with several other Swedish mining engineers, Swedish officers in Russian service, and Russian troops, was sent to the borders of Dzungaria. They were captured by Dzungar troops, and enslaved in this khanate. One of the women of the group, Birgitta Scherzenfeldt, describes the state of the Swedish prisoners as ‘pitiful’.⁴³ The experiences of the Swedish prisoners were far from unusual: Dzungar society was built on the capture of slaves and military conquest – Michael Khodarovsky sees it as a key to understanding this entire region.⁴⁴

In addition to the foreign captives, there was an in-group system of coercion, akin to serfdom. Peter Perdue argues that serfdom in the Dzungar Empire was set to solve similar structural problems as within the Russian empire, and that the differences between the two should not be exaggerated.⁴⁵ In both cases, the majority of the coerced labourers were agricultural workers, some of them Dzungar, others Kazak, Kirghiz and Chinese captives. The largest group were Muslim men and women forcibly transported

38 Johan Christian Schnitser, *Berättelse, om ajuckiniska Calmuckiet* (Stockholm, 1744): 18.

39 Schnitser, *Berättelse, om ajuckiniska Calmuckiet*: 19.

40 Schnitser, *Berättelse, om ajuckiniska Calmuckiet*: 26.

41 Khodarkovsky, *Where Two Worlds Met*: 206.

42 Schnitser, *Berättelse om ajuckiniska Calmuckiet*: 5–11, 20, 27–29, 31, 34, 42–44.

43 Brigita Scherzenfeldt, “Personalier öfwer lieutenantens herr Johan Gustaf Renats maka, fru Brigitta Schersenfeldt” (1736), 6–7, C.R. Berch’s Collection, The Library of the Swedish Royal Academy of Letters; Kagg, *Dagbok*: 236.

44 Michael Khodarkovsky, *Russia’s Steppe Frontier: The Making of a Colonial Empire, 1500–1800* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2002); these practices are also found in the Kazak state, see Jin Noda, *Ro-Shin teikoku to Kazafu hankoku* (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 2011); see also James Millward, *Eurasian Crossroads: A History of Xinjiang* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007): 83.

45 Perdue, *China Marches West*.

to the Yili valley, a group known as the *tariyachin*.⁴⁶ When justifying the Qing conquest of this region, arguing that he saved the Muslim minority, the Qianlong emperor said that this group ‘were made to work like slaves’.⁴⁷ The group of Swedes and Russians seems not to have primarily been put into agricultural labour. A Russian report, together with Swedish letters, suggest that they were employed in the weapons industry.⁴⁸ Dzungar military strength was a question of the khanate’s survival: there were ongoing struggles with the Khalka Mongols, and the Russian and the Qing empires, and the latter intensified in the 1740s. In 1757, the khanate was wiped out. Many Dzungars were killed, but more were forced into slavery – constituting another type of entry into forced mobility and coercion. The Qing administration moved the enslaved Dzungars into other regions, and embarked on an ambitious settling campaign for the land, where exiles, convicts, rebels, entrepreneurs and merchants moved in.⁴⁹ No Swedish prisoners remained to see this shift. The last group of Swedish prisoners, together with a large group of Russians, around 150 people, left the Dzungars in 1734.⁵⁰

The experience of the prisoners in Dzungaria does bring us to a final example of the mobility of the prisoners, namely the prisoners who went to the Qing Empire. For some of them, we know very little. For example, in December in 1712, the cornet Gustaf Neibau is only noted to have ‘travelled with voivode Lubauski to the city of Nalim on the Chinese border’.⁵¹ For others, we know significantly more. The prisoner Lorenz Lange, who took part in several Russian diplomatic missions to Beijing during the war, gathering as much information as he could for his Russian masters, wrote several books about his experiences. During the first of his journeys to China, in 1715–1716, he was questioned by the Chinese officials he met about Moscow, Sweden, and the Swedish-Russian war.⁵² On this first journey, Lange wrote down observations of the nomadic and semi-nomadic people he encountered. After entering the Qing Empire, his notes become more sparse, and mention nothing of the coercive regimes in the places he passed. This is despite the fact that there was much to be observed. The regions he travelled through were in the middle of a great shift: not only were the north-eastern regions of the Qing empire used for exile, just like

⁴⁶ James Millward, *Eurasian Crossroads*: 92–93.

⁴⁷ Ma Dazheng, “The Tarim Basin,” in *History of Civilizations of Central Asia: Development in Contrast: From the Sixteenth to the Mid-Nineteenth Century*, ed. Chahryar Adle and Irfan Habib, vol. 5 (Paris: UNESCO Publishing, 2003): 200.

⁴⁸ Miasnikov, *Russko-kitaiskie otnosheniia. 1729–1733*, vol. 5: 509, 838; ‘Letter from Johan Renat’ (23 August 1739), the Archive of Gunnar Jarring, Lund University Library; ‘Letter from Johan Renat’ (25 April 1743), Brev till o från Andr. Norrenius g. 190, Uppsala University Library.

⁴⁹ Khodarkovsky, *Russia’s Steppe Frontier*.

⁵⁰ Scherzenfeldt, “Personalier”: 17–18.

⁵¹ Kagg, *Dagbok*: 197.

⁵² Lorenz Lange, “Journal du voyage de Laurent Lang a la Chine,” in *Recueil de voyages au Nord, contenant divers memoires très-utiles au commerce & la navigation*, vol. 5 (3rd ed., Amsterdam, 1735): 395.

Siberia in the Russian empire, they were increasingly settled – a process that was partly voluntary, partly coerced.⁵³

The Swedish prisoners do not give the full picture of the multiple and complex regimes they encountered – not the least because they saw and understood such limited parts of the regimes. What they saw depended on their class, gender, and to some degree their own luck, and what they wrote about it depended on their own aims for the diary, report or letter. Nevertheless, despite normally being written into a completely different history, that of (a failed) European empire building, the Swedish prisoners of war give an ant’s-eye view of the forced migration across the Eurasian steppe, as part of the Qing, Dzungar and Russian expansion. That forced migration was key to early modern empire building has been demonstrated for European and maritime cases, but is more rarely connected to its Asian counterparts.⁵⁴

3 Social Mobility

The Swedish prisoners can also illustrate a different kind of mobility altogether: that of moving between social circumstances, or out of the state of coercion altogether. Slavery and coercion took many forms during this time and in this region, from the Oirat law on penal enslavement, to Chinese debt slavery and Russian serfdom. All of these forms allowed for very different opportunities for social mobility.⁵⁵ Social, perhaps even more than physical, mobility and immobility therefore illustrate not an overview of the many regimes of coercion that overlapped and interacted in Central Asia, but rather a view from one specific group.

In 1711, the Ottoman offensive against the Russian empire ended. At this point, the Russian administration initiated a conscious effort to make use of the tens of thousands of Swedish prisoners of war, and to encourage in particular the officers to enter Russian service.⁵⁶ Their perceived usefulness to the Russian administration was an effect of the training in mapping, engineering and modern languages that Swedish officers were required to undergo. An equally helpful fact was that this highly trained personnel was also highly expendable, and eager to escape life in

⁵³ Perdue, *China Marches West*: 328.

⁵⁴ See for example Kerry Ward, *Networks of Empire: Forced Migration in the Dutch East India Company* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

⁵⁵ See for example Angela Schottenhammer, “Slaves and Forms of Slavery in Late Imperial China (Seventeenth to Early Twentieth Centuries),” *Slavery & Abolition* 24, no. 2 (2003): 143–54; Khodarkovsky, *Where Two Worlds Met*; Alessandro Stanziani, “Esclaves et captifs en Russie et en Asie Centrale (xvie-xixe siècles),” in *Les esclavages en Méditerranée: Espaces et dynamiques économiques*, ed. Fabienne P. Guillén and Salah Trabelsi (Madrid: Casa de Velázquez, 2017): 195–211.

⁵⁶ Polnoye sobraniye zakonov Rossiyskoy Imperii [Complete Collection of Laws of the Russian Empire], vol. 5, no. 3208, 11.06.1718.

the camps. Many Swedish officers chose to join Russian ranks.⁵⁷ Most often we know little of their justifications. An exception is Birgitta Scherzenfeldt, who argued that while her husband Michael Ziems had been captured while in service of the Swedish army, the fact that he was a German national meant that he did not owe any loyalty to the Swedes.⁵⁸ Once in Russian service, prisoners could attain high-ranking positions. An example is the aforementioned Lange, who accompanied several Russian expeditions to Beijing. Little is known about Lange, other than that he was born in Stockholm, and at some point before 1714 entered Russian service.⁵⁹ After the war with Sweden was over, Lange was lent out from Russia to the Qing, to join a Chinese diplomatic mission to the Mongols.⁶⁰ Eventually, he became vice governor of Irkutsk, a position he held for ten years.⁶¹ To enter Russian service could be a start of a successful new career.

Russian service as an 'exit' from captivity was not an alternative available to all prisoners, however. Most in the rank and file were used for hard, manual labour and were not sought after for their training or skill, nor were all of the officers of use to the Russian administration or army. Their skills notwithstanding, some prisoners attempted to use this opportunity to escape Siberia. In March 1717, two Swedes who reported for service were soon found to be useless at Russian, and were incarcerated anew.⁶²

For some prisoners, the time in Siberia meant the start of a new life: they married and stayed in Russia. The prisoners' diaries commonly mention marriages between Swedish prisoners and prisoners' widows and daughters in the camps, but also intermarriages between Swedish men and Russian women. The prisoners were free to practice their own faith in Russia, but were supposed to convert to the Orthodox faith if they married. That choice, however, meant that they would no longer be welcome in Sweden, as only the protestant faith was allowed there. To prove their loyalty to their king and faith, some prisoners even produced accounts of how repulsive they found Russian women.⁶³ Some imprisoned couples returned to Sweden after the war, yet others stayed. The prisoners' accounts mirror the disparity of their experiences. On the one hand, there is the Swedish couple Ebba Catarina Sabelhierta and lieutenant Anders Hästesko, who were both prisoners in Siberia. At the time of the armistice, however, he returned to Sweden, while she chose to stay in

57 For examples see Kagg, *Dagbok*: 135, 197, 202, 204.

58 Scherzenfeldt, "Personalier": 6.

59 Lorenz Lange, *Tagebuch zweier Reisen, welche in den Jahren 1727, 1728 und 1736 von Kjachta und Zuruchaitu durch die Mongoley nach Peking gethan worden* (Leipzig, 1781): 3.

60 Lange, *Tagebuch zweier Reisen von Kjachta nach Peking*.

61 Mark Mancall, *Russia and China: Their Diplomatic Relations to 1728* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971): 202–3, 218.

62 Shebaldina, *Shvedskie Voennoplennye v Sibiri*: 124.

63 Von Borneman, "Sånger af en svensk fånge i Simbirsk."

Russia, and to keep her two children with her. On the other hand, both daughters of John Berner, an officer in Russian service close to Kazan, married Swedish officers, and then shared the destinies of their husbands in camp.⁶⁴ To marry a free woman was not a certain way out of imprisonment.

Some Swedish women were subjected to forced marriage and conversion, and the civilians of the Baltic provinces were particularly vulnerable. The Swede Thomas Funck, trying to underline any and all signs of Russian cruelty, claimed to have walked around the slave markets of Constantinople, and found young Swedish women and whole families captured and sold by Cossacks and Kalmyks. Similarly, captain Carl von Roland claims to have ‘taken over’ his Finnish wife from his friend, the Livonian captain Jacob Johan Tiesenhausen, who ‘bought her in the market like a piece of cattle’.⁶⁵ One example that has had much attention is that of Lovisa von Burghausen, who was kidnapped at the age of seven, was forced to convert, and to marry into first a Turkish and then an Armenian household, before being married to a Russian. Many years later, she was identified by a group of imprisoned Swedes, who ‘bought her freedom’.⁶⁶ Such abductions of children, especially girls, were a common fear and a recurring theme in stories of captivity. However, despite the dramatic eighteenth-century presentation of von Burghausen’s tale, where the Swedish girl represents purity and the foreign men are consistently blackguards, this was neither an unusual nor a solely Swedish experience. The forced removal of young girls for marriage and household labour can be found in multiple contexts in the Russian realm. In Siberia, young Central Asian girls were married off to Russian colonisers – something that the Russian administration long turned a blind eye to.⁶⁷ There is even evidence that women were disproportionately exiled to Siberia. Andrew Gentes interprets this as a conscious administrative strategy on the Russian part, forcing fertile women to help settle the borderlands, and thus help ‘domesticate’ the border.⁶⁸

These practices of marriage, exile, and abduction show the gendered layer of the experience of captivity. For Swedish men, marriage to Russian women is presented in the literature as a way to integrate into Russian society. In contrast, for the Swedish, Russian, and Central Asian women supposedly forced into marriage, the union is presented as an entry point into another type of coercion, not as a road to a different society. That difference could reflect the actual gendered difference of the experience of intercultural marriage. One can also consider how this presentation

64 Åberg, *Karolinska kvinnoöden*: 115, 120.

65 Åberg, *Karolinska kvinnoöden*: 15–16.

66 Lovisa von Burghausen, “Rättelig Berättelse” (1733), Biografica, Riksarkivet; Åberg, *Karolinska kvinnoöden*: 20–29.

67 Andrew Gentes, “‘Licentious Girls’ and Frontier Domesticators: Women and Siberian Exile from the Late 16th to the Early 19th Centuries,” *Sibirica: Journal of Siberian Studies* 3, no. 1 (2003): 3–20.

68 Perdue, *China Marches West*; Gentes, “‘Licentious Girls’ and Frontier Domesticators.”

ascribes an agency to men that is denied the women.⁶⁹ This is one of many reasons why it is necessary to bring together an understanding of the early modern labels, such as when von Burghausen talks of herself as being ‘abducted’ and ‘forced’, with an analysis of how the social relations at the time worked – and for that, analytical terms, such as coercion, are useful.

Swedish prisoners who ended up in Mongol polities like the Dzungar Empire, were, just like in the Russian empire, used both for manual labour, and for their skills, such as engineering. The prisoners were employed to produce military machinery, for example, side by side with captives from Russia and from other parts of Turkish and Mongol polities of Central Asia.⁷⁰ The rights and duties of the captives were regulated in the Oirat law regarding ‘foreign specialists’, as they were called.⁷¹ It seems possible that the Swedes might have had more opportunities than captured Russians, on the basis of their perceived exoticism. Having been captured at the Dzungar border, Scherzenfeldt claims to then have been gifted to the khan ‘as she was from a strange and in this land unknown nation’.⁷² Similarly, the reason why the Bukharan emissary was interested in buying Swedish women specifically, was the things he had heard about this nation.⁷³ At the same time, there are few signs of Swedes settling and integrating in any of the Mongol polities.

Coercion was not limited to captives of war, nor was it limited to manual labourers: the Dzungar rulers kept family members of their high-rankings retainers with them in the capital.⁷⁴ This guarantee for their loyalty is somewhat akin to the Tokugawa *sankin kōtai*-system in Japan. Central Asian traditions did not always conflate slave status with a loss of social identity – enslaved artisans produced advanced craftsmanship and pursued trades.⁷⁵ Several of the Swedish prisoners achieved a relatively good position with the empire, and stayed after the end of the war with Russia. Having secured their release, one group managed to return to Sweden. Among these, prisoners such as Mathias Brandt brought home a Dzungar wife and settled

69 For a longer discussion, see Claire Robertson and Marsha Robinson, “Re-Modeling Slavery as If Women Mattered,” in *Women and Slavery: The Modern Atlantic*, ed. Gwyn Campbell, Suzanne Miers, and Joseph C. Miller (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2007): 253–83.

70 Peter C. Perdue, “Crossing Borders in Imperial China,” in *Asia Inside Out: Connected Places*, ed. Eric Tagliacozzo, Helen F. Siu, and Peter C. Perdue (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015): 205–7.

71 Roman J. Pochekaev, “Rossiiskie Puteshestvenniki o Pravovykh Otnosheniyakh v Dzhungarskom Khanstve XVIII v.,” *Oriental Studies* 12, no. 1 (2019): 28–40.

72 Scherzenfeldt, “Personalier”: 9.

73 Weber, *Das veränderte Russland*.

74 Jin Noda, *Ro-Shin teikoku to Kazafu hankoku*: 63; Dazheng, “The Tarim Basin”: 193.

75 Pamela Kyle Crossley, “Slavery in Early Modern China,” in *The Cambridge World History of Slavery*, vol. 3, ed. David Eltis and Stanley L. Engerman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011): 199–200.

with her in Sweden, and Scherzenfeldt brought home slaves of her own.⁷⁶ Interestingly, Russian slaves who were captured and sold on to Central Asia, became freedmen if they returned to Russia – ‘because of their suffering in captivity’.⁷⁷ A circuitous way out of one regime of coercion could be enslavement in another. In short, the prisoners’ social mobility depended on their class, their gender, and where they had the fortune or misfortune to be moved.

4 Beyond Isolated Regimes of Coercion

The Swedish prisoners of war in the eighteenth century moved from northern Europe to eastern Asia. The prisoners were part of, left, entered, or observed systems of serfdom, prisoners of war, exile, enslavement, captives, hostages, as well as forced migration. While labels changed, some practices they experienced would remain long after they were gone, including punitive labour, forced migrations to north-eastern China – and using Siberia for exile. Placing mobility at the centre of the analysis shows the danger of equating mobility with freedom or, for that matter, equating a state of coercion with a state of immobility. Forced mobility was a hardship the prisoners endured, but mobility also provided them with opportunities. In this way, mobility highlights that coercion could be a whole spectrum.

Some, perhaps most, regimes of coerced labour were not located in one place only: regimes can span several regions, or depend on connections between regions. Prisoners of war are a natural example of a system that requires such connections, but so is the Central Asia trade enslaving prisoners. As Alessandro Stanziani has argued, coercion was rarely a strictly imperial or national phenomenon: there were multilateral imperial corridors between systems of coercion in both Europe and Asia.⁷⁸ Prisoners taken from the eastern or southern frontier of Russia could end up in the coerced settlement of the Fergana valley. The focus on coerced mobility and the transformation and entanglements of regimes of coercion allow for the reconsideration of the notion of separate regimes of coercion altogether.

The prisoners are somewhat complicated examples of all of Linden’s three ‘moments of coercion’, i.e. entry, work, and exit: once captured, they could be captured again by other powers, which could lead either to a state of weaker, or of even stronger dependency. Their work could be a road to exit, even a successful career, or it could mean gradually being worn down, and not surviving to the end of the

⁷⁶ Scherzenfeldt, “Personalier”; “Consistorii Ecclesiastici Protokoll, §. 2” (30 September 1736), vol. AI:13, Domkapitlets i Lund arkiv.

⁷⁷ Khodarkovsky, *Russia’s Steppe Frontier*: 23.

⁷⁸ Alessandro Stanziani, *Sailors, Slaves, and Immigrants – Bondage in the Indian Ocean World, 1750–1914* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

war. The social standing of the prisoners is key to understanding their work circumstances. Similarly, while many officers and skilled craftsmen were offered the chance to join Russian service, this not only meant giving up on their homeland, but also entering into a strict military contract. Rather than finding a clear exit or entry point for those who moved within and between systems of coercion, it might be more useful to – as proposed by Noel Lenski and Catherine Cameron – consider an actor's degree of freedom or coercion over his or her lifetime. To do so offers a notion of higher and lesser degrees of intensity of coercion, and does not presume a distinct line when an actor enters or leaves a state of dependency.⁷⁹

The difficulty of balancing bondage and opportunity is apparent in the ambivalence in previous studies on the Swedish prisoners. On the one hand, there is a focus on their lack of freedom and the ill-treatment they suffered at the hand of the Russians. On the other hand, there is a focus on their skills as translators and scholars, and their influence – in particular those who went beyond the Russian borders are presented as adventurers and scholars, not prisoners or captives.⁸⁰ These trends of seeing them as either completely unfree or as civilising adventurers, live on in parallel, sometimes even in the same works. However, the mortality rate of the prisoners is significant: part of what made them useful as colonial agents and go-betweens might have been their combination of education and expendability. The understanding of this spectrum of coercion, and a nuanced view of coercion, requires attention to the actors' social standing (class) as well as their gender.

The intercultural usage of terms is indeed a hard nut to crack for a historian. Using a word such as prisoners, instead of slave, can mask asymmetric dependencies and regimes of coercion, but also underline the severity of coercion; terms can both mask and exaggerate. The use of the word serf, the labelling of others as slaves, and calling rulers tyrants or despots, were all ways to orientalise and evaluate other polities and systems, a practice that went far beyond the early modern period.⁸¹ The use of slavery and freedom, for the others and the self, is especially stark in discourses of the status of women: coercion of women is something that exists elsewhere, while the women at home are presented as free.⁸² As such,

⁷⁹ Noel Emmanuel Lenski and Catherine M. Cameron, *What Is a Slave Society?: The Practice of Slavery in Global Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

⁸⁰ Typical examples include Alf Åberg, "Karolinska Forskningsfärder," *Svensk Tidskrift*, December 1970, 257–61; Lena Jonson and Tamara Alekseevna Torstendahl Salytjeva, *Poltava: krigsfångar och kulturutbyte* (Stockholm: Atlantis, 2009); Christer Kuvaja, *Karolinska Krigare 1660–1721* (Helsingfors: Schildt, 2008); Gunnar Jarring, "Svenska folket genom tiderna : vårt lands kulturhistoria i skildringar och bilder," in *Svenskt kulturarbete i Österled* (Malmö: Allhem, 1939): 377–88.

⁸¹ Alessandro Stanziani, *After Oriental Despotism: Eurasian Growth in a Global Perspective* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014).

⁸² Carmen Nocentelli, *Empires of Love: Europe, Asia, and the Making of Early Modern Identity* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013): 12, 84; Mrinalini Sinha, *Colonial Masculinity: The 'Manly Englishman' and the 'Effeminate Bengali' in the Late Nineteenth Century* (Manchester: Manchester

prisoners – in particular female prisoners or those writing about them – were simultaneously contributors to this epistemology of coercion, and assigned a particular symbolic place in it. Even if endemic categories for coerced labourers are used, these categories still depended on international connections and global intellectual currents of exchange.

The web of regimes presented in this chapter raises two analytical challenges. The first is the question of how to understand endemic terms. If a label such as prisoner, or serf, can only be understood as endemic categories, i.e., as a concept used within a society or system, what is the best way to approach intercultural forced mobility? Are historical actors moved between regimes, or does the whole coerced flow constitute a regime in and of itself? This leads to a different issue, that of when a regime stops or ends. The second challenge, based on the assumption that intercultural connections are key to a thick description of how regimes of coercion worked, is to overcome the fragmentation of our historiographies. There is perhaps a risk that the word regime brings to mind a notion of separate systems overlapping and interacting akin to world systems theory. Rather, regimes should be seen as webs, webs with thick threads of connections, nodes of exchange, and gaps with no exchanges at all. There is a wealth of excellent studies within Asian studies, and as part of the history of labour, and in the history of the Swedish, Russian, Kazak and the Qing empires. The intervention needed for the field to advance might be to combine hitherto separate historiographies, and lay supposedly separate regimes of dependency side by side.

5 Reflection

This volume offers multiple examples of the complex connections and intertwining routes of coercion in Asia during the last centuries. While many of the routes studied here are primarily maritime, not all were. The Swedish prisoners of war became part both of systems of coercion close to home, and in distant lands. As shown by James Fujitani, Rômulo Ehalt and Hans Hägerdal, Asian systems of coercion – whether those before, after or parallel to the European ventures – were not only local phenomena, but included far-reaching chains of human trade. The cases where the coerced groups were not from far away were not necessarily less complex: the chapters by Sanjog Rupakheti and Vinil Paul highlight the different ways population groups within a region could be constructed as enslavable – and indeed, as Rupakheti stresses, such a

University Press, 1995): 44; Leonard Blussé, *Strange Company: Chinese Settlers, Mestizo Women and the Dutch in VOC Batavia* (Dordrecht: Foris, 1986): 159; Felicity A. Nussbaum, *Torrid Zones: Maternity, Sexuality, and Empire in Eighteenth-Century English Narratives* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995): 11–57.

construction could be ascribed long historical roots and religious properties it did not have. Similarly, Hägerdal paints a picture of early modern Banda where the coercion involved dozens of ethnic groups, indigenous, from Southeast Asia, and from further abroad. He shows that who could be forced into a dependent situation was not necessarily a simple matter. This awareness helps us to understand the in-between positions of the prisoners of war: some prisoners were forced into hard manual labour with little chance of survival, some were sold into slavery, while others – such as those in Central Asia – could benefit from the relative exoticism of their origin, or even integrate into the society in which they were taken prisoner.

The rules regulating the prisoners, whether the Swedish, Russian or Dzungar law, only tell part of the story. As both Kate Ekama and Rupakheti show, once regulations are put in a societal and historical context, they reveal power relations. However, the regulations say little about their implementation – or adherence to them – and more about who chose a certain phrasing and term. Therefore, attention to the practices might help us overcome the difficulties that legal sources present. In doing so, finally, the diverse labour opportunities and demands of the Swedish prisoners of war connect to the general, and difficult, question put forward by Amal Shahid: when should work be seen as coercion, and when is it relief? For the prisoners in the Siberian camps, finding paid work was the only way to survive more than a decade of imprisonment. At the same time, it is not necessarily easy to place that work on a clear-cut scale of opportunity or coercion – the labour in the camps might well have to be understood as both.

Sanjog Rupakheti

Households, Family Politics, and Slavery in Nepal

1 Introduction

In 1854, upon return from his diplomatic sojourn across Europe, Nepali Prime Minister Jung Bahadur Rana oversaw one of the most ambitious legal codifications undertaken by a South Asian ruler.¹ No indigenous South Asian rulers had hitherto sought to comprehensively regulate their polity through written laws of this scope.² At slightly over fourteen hundred pages, the Nepali codification of 1854, popularly known as the *Ain*, brought various aspects of socio-economic life under the disciplinary gaze of the new Rana power. The temporality of the text is also significant, for it preceded the official British legal codification of 1861. Scholarly debates on the text have mostly focused on whether the *Ain* was a codification of tradition devoid of democratic values, or an extension of Hindu shastric laws with its fulcrum resting on caste purity. In doing so, such debates have overlooked several distinctive features of the 1854 codification project.³ One key feature is the methodical regulation of slavery envisaged by it. The text outlined specific rules as to who could be enslaved and under what conditions, including price structures for different categories of slaves, recovery and manumissions of slaves, as well as marital relations with slaves. Most importantly, these particular legal developments took place at a time when such regimes of slavery were outlawed both in the European empires and in the British-controlled parts of South Asia. Why was the family-based regime in Nepal keen on codifying slavery? What insights can we gain by examining the intersection between law and a household-based regime of coercion in Nepal? Can the Nepali case study expand our understandings of both South Asian and global histories of slavery? These are some of the questions this chapter seeks to explore.

1 For an account of Jung Bahadur's European travels, see John Whelpton, *Jang Bahadur in Europe: The First Nepalese Mission to the West* (Kathmandu: Sahayogi Press, 1983), which is a translation of Kamal Dixit's *Jang Bahadur ko Belayat Yatra* (Lalitpur: Madan Puraskar Pustakalaya, 1958). The latter work drew heavily on the narrative composed by one of Jang Bahadur's travelling companion.

2 Study for some of the earlier attempts at codifications in the Himalayan region, see Dinesh Raj Pant, ed., *Nayabikashini: Manavnayashastra* (Kathmandu: Kanoon Byabasahi Club, 2008); Theodore Riccardi, "The Royal Edicts of King Rama Shah of Gorkha," *Kailash* 5, no. 1 (1977): 29–65.

3 Sanjog Rupakheti, "Beyond Dharmashastras and Weberian Modernity: Law and State Making in Nineteenth-Century Nepal," in *Law Addressing Diversity: Pre-Modern India and Europe in Comparison*, ed. Thomas Ertl and Gijs Kruijtzter (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017): 169–96.

Despite its potential to expand our understanding of the history of slavery in South Asia, the *Ain* remains understudied in the regional scholarship.⁴ One of the reasons for this being the scholarship on South Asian legal systems is disproportionately focused on colonial law and sees the latter as a defining aspect of the regional historical experience. Historians and anthropologists of Nepal have offered divergent explanations on the origins and significance of slavery in Nepal. Mahesh Regmi, one of the leading voices on Nepali economic history, argued that since the “system of compulsory and unpaid labor made it possible for the government to meet its need” for various labor services, it “was seldom short of labor resources for any purposes it deemed necessary.”⁵ Such an explanation presupposed slavery being detached from the state-building project and “limited primarily to domestic needs.”⁶ Regmi and the subsequent generation of Nepali historians, however, did not historicize the “domestic,” leaving us with little information on who the slaves were and what roles they performed in those spaces. Anthropologists, for their part, projected the caste status provisions of the *Ain* of 1854–5 back into an earlier period to argue that the slave system in the Himalayan kingdom had always been dictated by Hindu notions of purity and ritual status. For instance, Lionel Caplan argued that given the disjunction between power and status, the slaves could not be recruited from the untouchable groups in Nepal and were taken exclusively from clean castes only.⁷ However, slavery prior to 1854 was not tied exclusively to a particular caste status. If historians dissociated slavery from state and its “productive” economic realm, anthropologists, in making slavery synonymous with the caste system, embraced the proverbial Dumontian argument of the disjunction of ritual and political status. Together, both rendered the Nepali regime of the political inexplicable.

This essay contends that enslavement – and manumission – were both significant components of political authority exercised by the Rana family. In tracing the making and unmaking of slavery during the nineteenth century, or rather, the establishing of vulnerabilities to, and exemptions from, enslavement by means of decrees, as well as by acts of manumission, it shows that the Rana family successfully consolidated its claim to be the source of all legitimate political authority. These developments subsequently refashioned various kinds of households and family

⁴ See Michael Anderson and Sumit Guha, eds., *Changing Concepts of Rights and Justice in South Asia* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000).

⁵ Mahesh Chandra Regmi, *A Study in Nepali Economic History 1768–1846* (New Delhi: Manjusri Publishing House, 1978): 117.

⁶ Regmi, *A Study in Nepali Economic History 1768–1846*: 117.

⁷ Lionel Caplan, “Power and Status in South Asian Slavery,” in *Asian and African Systems of Slavery*, ed. James L. Watson (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980): 169–94. Also see, Andras Hoesfer, *The Caste Hierarchy and the State in Nepal: A Study of the Muluki Ain of 1854* (Lalitpur: Himal Books, 2004): 97–105.

relations at the same time that the Rana clan transformed its own powers into that of a centralized state. In the discussion to follow, I outline some key historic developments central to the story of the codification of slavery and the attendant centralization of state power in Nepal.

2 Family Politics and the Changing Status of Slaves

The Himalayan terrain was distinctive for its widespread prevalence of labor-pooling and labor-exchange systems, most of which were centered on households. Having labor obligations towards one's own family and friends as well as to masters and lords, made belonging in a household and clan network extremely important throughout this region.⁸ Control of both domains (households and labor relations) thus became synonymous with consolidating power for any ambitious groups. In the mid-eighteenth-century Himalaya foothills, different clans claimed political authority over different parts of the region that eventually became the modern Nepali state. In the central hills were the followers of men called Gorkhali. On the plains were the Sens. To the far west there was Jumla; the extreme east was dominated by the Limbus; and in Kathmandu were the Mallas. Gorkhali territorial consolidation took place at the expense of these competing powers, including Tibet, China and over time with the forces of the East India Company between 1760 and 1811. When the House of Gorkha began to dominate the region from the mid-eighteenth century, some of the first steps they took in administration was to control labor services owed to them by various social groups.

The Gorkhali clan consolidated its clan authority by defining and redefining the vulnerabilities and exemption from enslavement of others. The definitions, exemptions and emancipations were all driven by the political-economic imperatives of certain coalitions of families in Kathmandu. As the coalitions interacted with other equally powerful local households, clans and lineages, they sought to control their access to laborers. Under these conditions, a series of orders and decrees was issued to control those households, which maintained dependent laborers for various needs. In 1773 Prithvi Narayan Shah (patriarch of the House of Gorkha) issued an order prohibiting slaveholding in seven villages adjoining the Kathmandu valley.⁹ However, representing such decrees as benevolence misses the origins of this order in Gorkhali anxiety over local excesses in the region. These villages sat on the strategic trade routes connecting Tibet to the plains of India and were vitally important. Instead of outlawing slavery, the Gorkhali rulers gradually brought the institution of slavery

⁸ Indrani Chatterjee, *Forgotten Friends: Monks, Marriages, and Memories of Northeast India* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2013).

⁹ Dinesh Raj Panta, "Swami Maharaj Rana Bahadur Shah ko 1862 VS ko Bandobasta" *Purnima* 6 no. 4 (2026 VS [1969]): 238–244.

under the purview of the Kathmandu Durbar and turned it into an important source of revenue and labor for itself, and its affiliated groups and families. They frequently used threats of enslavement to suppress competing clans and groups. For instance, when the people of Jumla resisted the Gorkhali occupation in 1794, Kathmandu Durbar in return threatened them with enslavement as a punishment.¹⁰

As the regime in Kathmandu annexed parts of Kumaun and Himachal Pradesh, a market in prisoners of war developed in Kathmandu. Several hundred slaves with origins in Kumaun and Garhwal were sold in the Gorkhali kingdom between 1805–1815.¹¹ Such markets in people indicated the regime's need for labor. While the regime promoted an inflow of slaves, all potential flight of labor from the Himalayan foothills was treated very severely. For instance, in 1809 when rumors of widespread transactions in children along the border regions (to British India, Sikh Panjab and Kashmir, and Tibet) circulated, the rulers in Kathmandu issued strict directives to halt such sale and purchase of children immediately.¹²

Labor specifically was so scarce in the southern Terai that the palace authority in 1826 issued a rather unusual order to attract settlers. As per this order, individuals and families who had earlier fled to India for various criminal offences were requested to return and settle new territories.¹³ Even those involved in the severest of offences were pardoned under the condition that they return with their families to work on the land. It is evident that the Shah rulers took the unregulated slave market and the large-scale emigration to foreign territories very seriously. Another order issued to attract labor in the southern plains the same year disallowed the local merchants and moneylenders from enslaving the returnees under the pretext of recovering their loans.¹⁴ The control of the trade and transactions in people within the Shah kingdom remained a contentious issue between the Kathmandu-based rulers and local elites. When the central rulers learnt that the local potentates, under the guise of collecting sexual violation fines, had resorted to extra-judicial enslavement, the former issued a strict ban on enslaving the sexual offenders and required that the fines only be collected in cash, not in the form of compulsory labor.¹⁵

Gradually even local customs were regulated directly from the center. For instance, effective from 1836 all Magars living between the west of Marsyandi River and Pyuthan were barred from mortgaging and selling their daughters to

¹⁰ See Regmi Research Collection, V. 24: 288–92.

¹¹ See Edwin T. Atkinson, *Kumaun Hills* (New Delhi: Cosmo Publications, 1980): 620; Mahesh C. Regmi, *A Study of Nepali Economic History 1768–1846* (New Delhi: Manjushri Publishing House, 1978): 120.

¹² See Jahar Sen, "Slave Trade on the Indo-Nepal Border in the Nineteenth Century," *Kailash* 1 no. 2 (1973): 159–66.

¹³ *Regmi Research Collection*, V. 34: 45.

¹⁴ *Regmi Research Collection*, V. 34: 45.

¹⁵ *Regmi Research Collection*, V. 40: 349. For a sexual offence committed by a man the fine was set at Rs. 12, and Rs. 14 for a woman.

moneylenders.¹⁶ Given the importance of Magar labor in the military market at the time, it may be surmised that the Gorkhali regime was keen on protecting a crucial reproductive pool to ensure the supply of a specific labor force. In the process, they consolidated their own clan authority, and created allies and dependents by defining and redefining the vulnerabilities and exemption from enslavement of others.

In most cases, individuals were enslaved to the ruling families. There are only a few instances of enslaved individuals being handed out as salaries and gifts to “state” officials or dependents.¹⁷ Individuals reduced to slavery through penal or judicial methods were brought under the control of the ruling families, and the enslaved worked in various capacities within the Durbar or in other “state” installations.¹⁸ Despite the power differentials, being a slave of the palace at the same time accorded certain status and exemptions from certain dues and labor requirements, including protection against arbitrary sale and violence. This system was similar to labor arrangement in the Muslim households where female slaves had greater likelihood of being incorporated into the ruling families.¹⁹ Most importantly, prior to 1854 slavery was not particularly tied to any caste rank. After 1854, the ruling family crafted new parameters of “moral and social” order to create specific groups of slaves for the violations of bodily and ritual purity.

Various sources suggest that numerically there were many more women slaves in service positions of royal and rural households than there were male slaves.²⁰ Thus a greater portion of contests over the proprietorship of slaves was over female slaves, who were in such high demand that powerful families resorted to stealing or enticing slaves from other households. This led to complicated litigations regarding ownership.²¹ Particularly when joint property was divided, family members competed with each other to claim female slaves as a share of their respective property.²²

16 Chitranjan Nepali, *General Bhimsen Thapa ra Tatkalin Nepal* (Kathmandu: Ratna Pustak Bhandar, 2022 VS [1965]): 191.

17 Regmi Research Collection, V. 25: 49 & 111.

18 Regmi Research Collection, V. 24: 288–292.

19 See Indrani Chatterjee, *Gender, Slavery, and Law in Colonial India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2002).

20 See 1910–1918 [1854–1861] *Saal ko Lambari Kitab ko Nakkal*. For the list of slaves freed by the members of the ruling families in 1901 upon the initiative of Krishna Kumari (wife of the erstwhile Rana Prime Minister Dev Shumsher), see Balram Dangol et al., “Amalekh Gariyeka Kamara Kamariko Lagat,” *Abhilekha* 2 (1984): 115–20. Also, the records located at Lagat Phat, Kathmandu, which give the names and ages of slaves freed after 1924, support this. For the latter see 1980 [1924] *Saalma Lagat Bhayeka Kariya Ko Sakal Lagat Utar*, Lagat Phat, Kathmandu.

21 See Royal Decree of 1906–1907 VS [1849–1851], Lagat Phat, Kathmandu.

22 See Tek Bahadur Shrestha, *Parbat Rajya ko Etihashik Ruprekha* (Kathmandu: Center for Nepal and Asian Studies, 2002): 114.

Prominent regional households used female slaves to extend their lineages. Nepali evidence corresponds with the other pre-colonial records of the Indian subcontinent that reveal the centrality of female slaves to the constitution of social and ritual rank of the masters' households. For example, we learn that an influential palace official, Bir Keshari Pandey, had children from the palace slave woman Ram Shova.²³ Other records about slave women reveal that they were especially prized because of the double gains (of work and children) they brought. But such proximity to royal power carried a price. This price was that of life itself: sati or immolation. As with the evidence uncovered by Ramya Sreenivasan of the sati performed by slave-concubines in Rajput ruling houses in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, Indu committed sati when the grand uncle of the king died in 1807.²⁴ Nor was this practice of slave-concubines performing sati an exception in Nepal. Such evidence extended to older records as well. In 1777, when the reigning King Pratap Singh Shah died, eight palace girls (read slave girls) burnt themselves on the royal pyre.²⁵

Perhaps for these reasons, the slave girls of the palace were considered royal dependents and were not allowed to be married to "outsiders."²⁶ Even when these women were married to individuals outside of the palace (only after royal authorization), they were still considered royal dependents and were protected from further violence and sale. A soldier belonging to a Kalibaksh company was accused of selling a slave girl of the palace, Nayankala, earlier given to him by the king. In his affidavit, the accused soldier pledged to search for the girl and present her in the palace, failing which he agreed to face physical punishment and confiscation of his property.²⁷

This makes clear that the condition and experience of slaves were entirely determined by the fluctuations in power and status of the holders' families. Disputes often arose when free-born children contested slave-born children for status and inheritance rights. In 1835, Kathmandu Durbar was called on to resolve an inheritance dispute involving a slave child in the kingdom of Tanahu.²⁸ King Tej Pratap Sen of Tanahu had died, survived by a wife, but without an heir. His younger brother Amar Pratap Sen and his three wives had also died. The lone surviving male in the family was Rana Mardan Sen, a son of Amar Pratap from a palace slave woman. When Rana Mardan claimed the throne for himself, the House of Palpa and

²³ *Regmi Research Collection*, V. 34: 147.

²⁴ See Nepal National Archives/*DNA Series*/13/86. Indu even pledged a donation of land to Brahmins at the time of her sati immolation, which was confirmed by the royal order. For the discussion on sati, see Ramya Sreenivasan, *The Many Lives of a Rajput Queen: Heroic Pasts in India c. 1500–1900* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2007).

²⁵ Nepal National Archives/*DNA Series*/14/41.

²⁶ Bhotu Pandey was instructed to acquire a royal authorization prior to marrying palace girls to anyone. See *Regmi Research Collection*, V. 36: 281.

²⁷ Nepal National Archives/*Foreign Ministry Documents*/3/5/322.

²⁸ Nepal National Archives/*Foreign Ministry Documents*/5/30, 5/42, 5/43, 5/87.

the House of Reesing, citing their kinship ties to the House of Tanahu, made their own counter claims on the throne.²⁹

As the dispute dragged on, the surviving wife of King Tej Pratap sought the help of Kathmandu Durbar in resolving the case. The latter ruled that only those with established equality in caste status amongst the competing kin groups be given the throne.³⁰ The House of Reesing argued that it was the next in line of descent. But Rana Mardan claimed that only he was the rightful heir to the throne as a direct descendant of Amar Pratap. To bolster his case, Rana Mardan in 1838 claimed that both his mother and maternal grandfather had been Rajputs.³¹ However, the other claimants continued to challenge his right to the throne. The widow queen of Tej Pratap backed Rana Mardan, and in 1840 the Kathmandu Durbar ruled in favor of Rana Mardan.³² But when the House of Palpa and the House of Reesing challenged the decision by invoking caste purity and new notions of kinship ties, she subsequently withdrew her support for Rana Mardan, likely fearing that she would lose out in the wake of neo-orthodox values sweeping the region.³³

The matter got more complicated when the House of Reesing in 1841 forcefully took over Tanahu. Soon after, the House of Reesing sought consultations with experts well versed in Shastras, including various regional rulers in Tirhut, Banares and Gorakhpur, on the rightful heir.³⁴ In the new petition sent by the widow queen to the Kathmandu Durbar in 1841, she skillfully skirted around the earlier decision of 1840 by invoking the “truth effects” of Shastra and learned priests. She argued that since there was a wider consensus within Shastra and amongst the learned scholars in the region on the inheritance rule, the same should be followed by the Kathmandu Durbar. The queen pointed out that as per the consensus, the right to govern the state reverted to her and would remain so until she decided to transfer the authority to the nearest kin belonging to a pure caste; under no circumstances could the son of a slave woman be an eligible heir. The widow queen demanded that the Kathmandu Durbar to validate this provision. In her concluding remarks, the queen reminded the Kathmandu Durbar of its duty to protect cows, Brahmins and women, and urged it to seek the advice of Brahmin pandits in authorizing the new inheritance rule.

This inter-family inheritance dispute shows that slave status and caste purity were deployed with the specific political aims of consolidating power by rival elite

29 Nepal National Archives/Foreign Ministry Documents/5/30.

30 Nepal National Archives/Foreign Ministry Documents/5/87.

31 Nepal National Archives/Foreign Ministry Documents/5/48.

32 Nepal National Archives/Foreign Ministry Documents/5/46.

33 In the petition of 1838, the House of Reesing argued that since they had performed all the required funeral rituals, they were the rightful claimants to the throne. Nepal National Archives/Foreign Ministry Documents/5/87.

34 It is mentioned that the House of Reesing had asked between twenty and twenty-two thousand kings and chiefs to consult the matter with their pandits. Nepal National Archives/Foreign Ministry Documents/5/30.

families after 1840, as neo-orthodox values gained traction in the region.³⁵ Therefore, any clan attempting to consolidate power in the Kathmandu Durbar had to be mindful of these pressures from the rival houses, their claims of greater social orthodoxy and their ability to challenge Kathmandu over its social and moral, textual and legal laxities. The Ranas in particular understood the significance of family and slavery in the making of political power. In 1846 the Rana clan itself went on the rampage against the established ruling families in what is known as the Kot Massacre. After assuming power, the Ranas began to restructure the older system of flexible social-sexual relationships.³⁶

A major attempt in regulating slavery occurred in 1851 when the Rana regime issued two directives to their subordinates. First, to return the slaves purchased through state offices between the years 1846–1851 to their respective natal homes. Second, to emancipate all the slaves who had married a free person (*ajaputra*).³⁷ This affected the political authority of the state-office holders, who had earlier used their offices to buy people as slaves. The slaves who were being manumitted came from various caste groups.³⁸ Most importantly, the order reveals that slaves could use marriage transactions with free women as a means to social incorporation. The order lists a total of eight hundred forty-nine slaves from one hundred ninety-two households who were freed because they had established marriage relations with free people. Since slaves were identified as *kamara* (masculine term for a slave) it is safe to assume that the free persons, not otherwise identified by gender and caste in the document, were most likely women. It was certainly not uncommon for male slaves, regardless of their caste status, to marry free women and form their own families and lineages. From the order we can also map the social and physical locations of female slaves. All female slaves were identified by their respective places of birth and in some cases also by their parent's names. Such detailed personal records of these slave women's origins meant that the Ranas knew something about the households from which such females

35 See Susan Bayly, *Caste, Society, and Politics in India from the Eighteenth Century to the Modern Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Sumit Guha, *Beyond Caste: Identity and Power in South Asia, Past and Present* (Leiden: Brill, 2013).

36 *Royal Decree of 1910 [1854]*, Poka No: 35, SN 3384, f. 29. From this royal order it can be gleaned that the locals in Dang-Deukhuri had pursued a liberal policy regarding sexual relations with blacksmiths, leather workers, tailors and Muslims. Tharu women maintaining sexual relations with the aforementioned groups were neither excommunicated nor barred from commensality, and all clean caste groups accepted water from the Tharus. This practice was discontinued after 1854 and those continuing to maintain sexual relations were excommunicated and fined.

37 Nepal National Archives/Foreign Ministry Documents/1851/1/99.

38 This can be identified by the last name of the slave households listed in the document. Some common last names were: Thapa, Mahar, Bali, Bohara, Dhama, Lohar, Bhul, Kadayat, Bista, Bala-iyar, Khadka, Kami.

had been bought. This was an informal record of those populations that had supplied both sexual and economic laborers to previous ruling groups and rival households.

Seen in this broader context, the 1851 order was seemingly driven by the Rana regime's attempt to claim "righteous" rulership after it had massacred the ruling families in 1846. The return of slave households was part of a conscious deployment of codes of Brahminic Hindu law centered on the cultivation of bodily and ritual "purity." Rana vigilance about such matters was reflected in the order's emancipation of all the male slaves and their potential *pratiloma* (hypogamous) marriages. Sending them away from the ruling household also removed physical evidence of such unions. Equally importantly, the slaves were being driven out from the center of power so that they would not continue to exercise authority.

But one may wonder at the reasons for the Rana regime returning all these slave households to their old villages. Was this an act of emancipation free of politics? While there is an active historiographical controversy over the meaning of such delegalization of slavery in South Asia, the evidence from Nepal suggests a different picture. Delegalization of slavery was not the unmixed blessing that the liberal colonial law proclaimed. Membership in a household and claims to provisions from it were important to subsistence. Being turned out of the household meant a loss of subsistence as well as a loss of social status for those "returned slaves." Part of the politics addressed by these proclamations was that of the growing strength of rival clans and powerful families both in Kathmandu and in the regional centers of power. They used slaves for many different functions. Some employed personal male slaves in overseeing general social regulations around the village.³⁹ Slaves were also entrusted as guardians of younger members of a family in situations of the untimely death of parent figures.⁴⁰ Slaves even rose to high ranks in administrative and military services. Nonetheless, the order to "return" eighty-eight female slaves to their kinsmen is intriguing on its own terms given that the Ranas also deployed a large number of female slaves in their households.

So why did these females not get absorbed by the Rana households? The women's caste- and location identities provides the clues. They all suggest that the kinlessness that Orlando Patterson had taken as the essential characteristic of the first

³⁹ Royal Decree of 1918 VS [1862], BN 20 PN 17 SN 79, f. 67.

⁴⁰ Royal Decree of 1906–1907 VS, BN 6 PN 2 SN 3, f. 49. One Rishi Ram Jaisi of Sarangkot prepared a will authorizing his slaves—two male and one female to look after his children upon his death. He specifically instructed his children not to sell these slaves ever. The fact that slaves acted as guardians in various households was also underscored in Chandra Shumsher's speech. See Government of Nepal, *Sambat 1981 Saal Marga 14 Sukrabar Ka Din Shree 3 Maharaja Chandra Shamsher Bata Bhardar, Officer ra Bhaladmiharu Jamma Gari Kariyako Amalekh Garne Barema Bichar Garnalai Tundikhelma Bakseko Speech* (Kathmandu, 1925).

generation of slaves simply did not apply to first-generation slaves in Himalayan South Asia.⁴¹ Kinlessness was not a permanent condition or experience for these women. In fact, it was the very opposite. Since these females were identified with rival social and political families, the Rana regime did not try to absorb them into their own substantial slave-using households; they were returned to their natal places. Such emancipations simultaneously achieved symbolic and political ends for the Ranas. Alongside suggesting that the Ranas were upholding Hindu social order by sending such households back to their original villages, these actions also provided the Ranas with the freedom to act against their rivals – sometimes by depriving rival families of the labor of their female and male slaves by extravagant acts of liberation.

3 Codifying Slavery

Before 1846, slaves were considered intimate members of a household and central to the power structures of the clan (very much like the Mughal and Rajput households in India).⁴² But after 1846, the Rana family tried to change the very meaning of slavery by realigning it with the emergent caste order. In some instances, it involved undoing the exemptions from enslavement enjoyed by certain groups under the previous dispensation. A group that had provided military labor for the Shah families – the Magars – had their daughters exempted from enslavement in 1837. When the Ranas came to power, they specifically demanded that the young and beautiful girls of the Magars be supplied to the Rana households. The categorization and reshuffling of diverse social groups in the 1854 *Ain* was driven by the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century need of labor and the centralization of state power.

The *Ain* allowed higher caste males to grant the male children they had with slave women the right to wear the sacred thread. Such a thread was worn only by men of higher-status castes – the Brahman and the Kshatriya. This was a significant privilege, made more significant in the Rana period since such a privilege required the slave-mother to be of what was called a “clean” caste. Freeborn men who married slave women from an unclean caste, and male slaves who married higher-caste women, did not however enjoy the same privilege. In comparison to the North American plantation-based slave systems, what we find in Nepal is a calibration of slave systems depending on the caste status of both the mother and the father. This was evident in the emancipation of the households in 1851 discussed earlier.

⁴¹ Indrani Chatterjee, “The Locked Box in Slavery and Social Death,” in *On Human Bondage: After Slavery and Social Death*, ed. John P. Bodel and Walter Scheidel (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2017): 151–66.

⁴² See Indrani Chatterjee, *Gender, Slavery, and Law in Colonial India*.

Such emancipations also cleared the debris of customs past in another field of realpolitik. It strengthened the hands of the Rana family vis-à-vis other rival powers by allowing the Rana regime to develop ways in which its rivals could or could not deploy female slaves to extend their lineages and connections in the countryside. This was especially important when the slave-using household happened to be that of the high-status Brahmins, as revealed in a dispute from 1850. A son of Anirudra Upadhaya filed a case against his cousin for trying to take away a daughter of a slave woman Icchhi. The petitioner highlighted that only the slave woman was sold by his father to his uncle, and not the daughter.⁴³ But following the death of Anirudra, his nephew came forward to lay a claim to the slave daughter. In another case from 1851, two brothers within a Brahman family moved the state to settle a competing claim over a slave girl.⁴⁴ The elder brother, Purnananda Upadhaya, presented a case in which he claimed that when his late father discovered that a child born to a slave woman in fact was his own granddaughter, he had decided to emancipate her before he passed away.⁴⁵ But given that the younger brother, Laxmi Ballav Upadhaya, was away for study in Benares (plains of India) at the time, the father had requested the respected individuals in the village to relay the information upon his return. After nineteen years, the younger Brahman brother came forward to claim that the girl in question had not been emancipated and thus remained a family slave. The judicial arm of the state ruled in favor of the elder brother, recognizing her free status as a daughter of Purnananda, rather than refer the matter to the local community. Such regulatory checks allowed the state to limit an otherwise widespread practice of unregulated slavery.⁴⁶ The *Ain* in responding to a large volume of disputes related to slave ownership, brought the practice away from the per-view of family to state control.

The growing frequency of such family disputes over slaves in the intervening years further added to the need for an organized political and judicial approach to the question of slavery.⁴⁷ The 1854 *Ain* represented a kind of answer to these political tensions and demands confronting the Ranas. The latter had to both clarify the qualifications for enslavement as well as monitor more closely the exemptions therefrom. They thus had to simultaneously monitor lower-caste rank and labor-dues as well as the

43 Royal Decree of 1906–1907 VS [1850–1851] BN 6 PN 2 SN 3, f. 31.

44 See *Royal Decree* 1851, BN 6 PN 2 SN 3, f. 121.

45 Nothing is said of the status of the slave mother.

46 In 1812, powerful families in Jumla stole hundreds of slaves from different parts of the kingdom and refused to hand them over to their rightful owners. See RRC 39, 577.

47 To deal with cases like that of Icchi, the *Ain* explicitly stated that when a pregnant slave woman was sold, the purchaser had the right to the child unless that had been excluded in the transaction deed. See *Ain*, “Kamara Kamari Bechanyako”: 10 Numberko, 149.

exemptions from enslavement that constituted the sign of higher-caste status.⁴⁸ After the promulgation of the *Ain* in 1854, the state extended its judicial reach into the households to calibrate slavery by tying it exclusively to caste membership, age and different classes of criminal offences. The *Ain* categorically disallowed parents from mortgaging children who were under the age of sixteen. Though mortgaging of those above sixteen was still allowed, the children entering into bond service had to voluntarily agree to the terms and conditions of the contract.⁴⁹ Any wrongful mortgaging without prior consent of the individuals made both transacting parties punishable, and the person coerced into debt bondage was released by the state.⁵⁰ The mortgaging of daughters was prohibited and only allowed under special circumstances.⁵¹ To further limit the transactions in children the state stipulated that only the transactions carried through the court were legal.⁵² This meant that the cases which were not registered at the court did not have a legal standing if disputes over ownership, runaway cases and non-compliance emerged. All aimed at discouraging private transactions in slaves.

With these restrictions on individuals and groups from participating in slave markets,⁵³ the state turned to the political deployment of caste ranking as a new source of slave recruitment. But it was not exclusively the lowest castes from which the fresh supply of slave labor was secured. Different ethnic groups who otherwise were not qualified to provide military labor, and who had been categorized under a new caste ranking called *masine matwali* (but considered clean), supplied the majority of the slaves under various judicial arrangements.⁵⁴ The state sanctioned hypergamy between higher-caste males and female members of the enslavable caste,

48 *Ain*, “Kamarako”: 1 Numberko, 396.

49 Royal Decree of 1918 VS [1862], BN 20 PN 17 SN 79.

50 *Ain*, “Kamara Kamari Bechanya Ko”: 4 Numberko, 146.

51 The state ruled that since daughters do not inherit family property, they could not be taken as bond-servants against the loan borrowed by the family members. However, if there were no sons in the family and the daughters above the age of sixteen voluntarily agreed to repay the family loan, they could be taken into bond-service. See *Ain*, “Jiu Masnya Bechanyako”: part I, 6&10 Numerko, 151–52.

52 Those involved in such transactions without using the court were liable to be fined Rs. 5. See *Ain*, “Jiu Masnya Bechanyako”: 9 Numberko, 152.

53 Male members of both higher and lower castes (up to water-acceptable but enslavable) were barred from selling wives belonging to lower castes as slaves. See *Ain*, “Swasni Bechanyako”: 2 Numberko, 155.

54 *Masine matwali* (enslavable alcohol drinker) along with *namasine matwali* (non-enslavable alcohol drinker) were both considered clean even though the latter did not provide the crucial military labor. The state even allowed hypergamy between higher castes (Brahmins, Rajput, Khas, Chhetri) and *masine matwali* to the extent that children born of such unions were allowed to receive a sacred thread regardless of whether the slave mother was freed or not. See *Ain*, “Janai Dinyako”: 2–4 Numberko, 233–34.

suggests that slaves were recruited for a wide range of productive and reproductive labor needs.

The Rana regime's monitoring of both ends of the social strata was particularly illustrated in clauses involving sexual relations between slaves and members of the kin group. In such cases the same legal provisions that applied to Bhote (a term for "Buddhist" Bod/bhot, translated as an ethnic classification, and hence understood as "enslavable caste" in the mid-nineteenth century) were applicable.⁵⁵ At the same time, the rule of sexual impropriety was decisively gendered. Because while the men were generally let go, "good-looking" women were mostly enslaved. When two male slaves of Narad Upadhyaya and Chabilal Upadhyaya had sexual relations with a daughter of one Setya Bhotyani (female for Bhote), the daughter was enslaved and given to a state official Khariddar Dilli Ram Neupane as a part of his income.⁵⁶ The *Ain* assumed that slaves mostly belonged to the Bhote caste.⁵⁷ However, slavery prior to 1854 was not tied exclusively to a particular caste membership. The acting British Resident in Nepal in a letter from 1877 to the Secretary of the Government of India highlighted the large number of high-caste slaves in the ruling households.⁵⁸ After 1854, fresh enslavement of higher castes was prohibited. But why did the *Bhote* term become synonymous with slavery?

Scholars have variously theorized that Bhote and Murmi were ranked lower in caste ranking because of their beef-eating habits.⁵⁹ But this fails to explain why Magar and Gurung were ranked higher despite similar dietary practices. Or why, after giving up beef consumption, did Bhote and Murmi not see a change in their caste ranking, unlike the Gurungs, who were allowed to serve in the military. The answers to these questions, I argue, lie in the different kinds of labor extracted from these groups by the Kathmandu-based regime.

Magars and Gurungs were categorized as non-enslavable caste because of the historic importance of the military labor they provided to the ruling Shah and Rana family. On the other hand, castes which did not provide soldiers were categorized as enslavable and were mobilized for other sets of essential labor services. After all, eating beef did not render Bhote into untouchables. They were considered a clean caste with whom legitimate hypergamous marriage was legally allowed.

55 The *Ain* that states that in cases involving sexual relations amongst the slaves the provisions applicable to Bhotes should be considered in reaching the decisions. This clause suggests that a majority of the slaves were from the Bhote caste. See *Ain*, "Kamarako": 1 Numberko, 396.

56 Royal Decree of 1906–1907 VS [1849–1851], f. 89.

57 Bhote and Murmi terms carry pejorative meanings today. Groups identified with this nomenclature prefer to be identified as Tamang in contemporary Nepal.

58 Jahar Sen, "Slave Trade on the Indo-Nepal Border in the Nineteenth Century."

59 Hofer, *The Caste Hierarchy and the State in Nepal*: 120; David Holmberg, *Order in Paradox: Myth, Ritual, and Exchange among Nepal's Tamang* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1989): esp. chap. 2.

The Kathmandu regime and its households depended on the crucial labor of Bhote and Murmi, who inhabited the hills around Kathmandu Valley, for a range of vitally important services.⁶⁰ These included but were not limited to supplying milk, fruits, vegetables, herbs, and paper, fodder and portage services.⁶¹

The unique geographic location and history of the region made it even more expedient to bring both people and place under direct control of the central authority. It was through Nuwakot that the Gorkhali troops had first entered Kathmandu Valley in the mid-eighteenth century. The control of Nuwakot had allowed the Gorkhals to put a trade embargo on the Kathmandu Valley and eventually starve the erstwhile Malla power into surrender. Similarly, much of the entrepot trade linking India, Nepal and Tibet passed through this region. The Ranas had long eyed the strategic location of the area along the Nepal-Tibet border.⁶² However, Bhote and Murmi populations of this district did not welcome the centralizing state power and revolted on several occasions.⁶³

While Shah rulers had taken a conciliatory approach to similar local resistance in eastern Nepal, military and vital trade interests near the seat of power meant the Rana family was unwilling to compromise.⁶⁴ The proximity of this place to Kathmandu allowed the ruling family to mobilize forces promptly to suppress any disturbances. Eventually, controlling trade, mobilizing people for various essential labor needs, and preventing future military incursions led to the inhabitants being reduced to into enslavable status. The history of the place, and its importance in the overall state-making scheme, came to define the relation between the Rana regime and the local Bhote and Murmi inhabitants.⁶⁵

60 The earliest census from 1971 show that more than eighty percent of the population in Rasuwa District was still Tamang. See Central Bureau of Statistics, *Population of Nepal* (Kathmandu: CBS, 1971).

61 See David Holmberg and Kathryn March with Suryaman Tamang, "Local Production/Local Knowledge: Forced Labour from Below," *Studies in Nepali History and Society* 4, no. 1 (1999): 5–64.

62 Since the seventeenth century Gorkha rulers had sought to control Nuwakot and the adjoining areas. See Dinesh Raj Panta, *Gorkha ko Itihas*, 4 vols. (Kathmandu: Dinesh Raj Pant, 1985); Dhana-vajra Vajracharya and Tek Bahadur Shrestha, *Nuwakot ko Etihashik Ruprekha* (Kathmandu: Center for Nepal and Asian Studies, 1975).

63 Regmi Research Collection, V. 36: 11–16, 36. Royal orders were sent out to local officials to execute the Bhote and Murmi who had taken part in such rebellions. While male rebels were often killed, women and children were given out to local officials as slaves.

64 In 1855, Jung Bahadur led a major military campaign against Tibet along this route. For a historic discussion of the war and Nepal-Tibet relations, see Prem Raman Upreti, *Nepal-Tibet Relations 1850–1930: Years of Hope, Frustrations and Challenge* (Kathmandu: Puga Nara, 1980).

65 For a more detailed discussion on this, see Ben Campbell, "The Heavy Loads of Tamang Identity," in *Nationalism and Ethnicity in a Hindu Kingdom: The Politics of Culture in Contemporary Nepal*, ed. David Gellner, Joanna Pfaff-Czarnecka, and John Whelpton (Amsterdam: Hardwood Academic Publishers, 1997): 205–35.

Their enslavable status allowed powerful families in Kathmandu and the adjoining areas to ensure uninterrupted labor supply for various household needs.⁶⁶ The persistent need for slave labor in the palace was met by thousands of enslaved men and women from the region, who served the royal households in various capacities.⁶⁷ The Durbar officials repeatedly requested the local functionaries to search for girls in the adjoining areas.⁶⁸ The official records speak clearly of the availability of slave girls for sexual and reproductive needs in Kathmandu Durbar from time to time.⁶⁹ In an order of 1887 signed by the Rana Prime Minister, the local officials in the eastern region were mobilized to search for beautiful slave girls in the age range of 13–14 to be sent to the Durbar. The language of this order is worth exploring. The order details the modes by which slave girls were to be transported to the Durbar within the allocated time. Most importantly, it stresses that if the Rana Prime Minister did not like the girls they would be returned.⁷⁰ The creation of an enslavable category under various judicial rules thus ensured an uninterrupted supply of both productive and reproductive labor to the regime and land-holding groups.

If the appropriation of female slave bodies for family formations had been known to Brahman (upper caste) and other royal households in the eighteenth century, the Ranas' insistence on consolidating this practice for themselves suggests that far from ending slave-keeping in all households, they safeguarded their own privilege by assimilating to the Brahmanical household model. It was therefore no surprise that regulations about wages emanating from the Rana family palaces reveal that many slave women serving in the palace quarters were successful in forming families. Though we do not know the exact composition of such families owing to the paucity of evidence, we do know that second- and third-generation female slaves were regularly identified as daughters of so and so.⁷¹ These slave women inherited titles and positions of their mothers and were employed within the royal households, thus keeping them in proximity of the family. We do not however see a

66 In the year 1887 Rana families in Kathmandu demanded that local officials search for beautiful slaves to be sent to the Durbar.

67 Following is a sample of labor performed: wet-nurses, general servants, house servants, cooks, door attendants, etc.

68 An order from the year 1867 particularly asks the functionaries in the regions around the Kathmandu to look for girls needed in the palace.

69 In 1866 state officials deputed between the region of Trishuli and Pyuthan were ordered to look for ten to fifteen beautiful slave girls and boys each, including one mute slave to be sent to the palace immediately.

70 A few years earlier, in 1879, a similar order had been sent to Parbat to look for female slaves between the ages of eleven and twenty one for Rana family members in Kathmandu. See Tek Bahadur Shrestha, *Parbat Rajya ko Etihashik Ruprekha*: 266.

71 1910–1918 Saal ko Lambari Kitab ko Nakkal.

similar inter-generational incorporation of male slaves. At the same time, bestowal of exemptions was also dependent on the political and social contests of each period.

Despite the linking of slavery to lower caste, slave status itself was not fixed and underwent changes with the changing matrix of labor needs and caste ranking. Judicial provisions were repeatedly manipulated to meet the labor needs of the Rana family. A case from the year 1855 is noteworthy in this regard.⁷² One slave woman named Chamya had fled from her master's home. After eleven years she was found to be residing in a village near Helumbu. When the slave owner approached the state with this information, the latter dispatched soldiers to bring back Chamya so she could be rightfully restored to her original owner even though a decade had elapsed since she first fled. However, when the Rana family members acquired large tracts of land in the Tarai as a *birta* grant after 1860,⁷³ slaves fleeing to Naya Muluk were protected from being extradited to their owners, provided the "fugitives" agreed to settle there. This did not however apply to those slaves who fled to India or to any privately-owned land held by other subjects. In the latter cases, the *Ain* explicitly categorized runaway slaves as the private property of their owners and outlined specific provisions to recover them.

The pattern of Durbar-determined order of exemption from enslavement continued to be the path to social and political elevation. A prominent example was the transformation of the Limbus from an enslavable caste in the 1830s-50s to a non-enslavable caste in 1860. Eastern Nepal, like many other regions that became a part of the larger Gorkhali domain, had remained outside the direct control of Kathmandu up to the second half of the nineteenth century. After the initial attempts to take over the region by force ended unsuccessfully, the Shah rulers brokered an agreement with the Limbus. In return for loyalty to the Gorkhali state the Limbus were granted considerable autonomy, including their authority to regulate and oversee internal societal order.⁷⁴ When the *Ain* was promulgated, the Limbus were categorized as an enslavable group. During the Gorkha-Tibet War (1856) a large number of them were recruited in the military and fought on behalf of the Rana state. Upon return from the battlefield, the Limbus became vulnerable to enslavement at

72 Regmi Research Collection, V. 29, 232–33.

73 Naya Muluk, which includes the present districts of Banke, Bardia, Kailali and Kanchanpur, was given back to Nepal as a token of thanks in return for Jung Bahadur's assistance to the British in suppressing the Indian Rebellion of 1857. Nepal had lost this land to the British during the Anglo-Gorkha War (1814–1816). For the relevant historical documents on this, see Charles Umpherston Aitchison, *A Collection of Treaties, Engagements, Sunnuds Relating to India and Neighboring Countries*, vol. 2 (Calcutta: Bengal Printing Company Ltd., 1863): 223–24.

74 See Nepal National Archives/*DNA Series*/7/60. Some of the key parts in the Royal Order dated 1831 VS [1774–1775] read, "Enjoy the land from generation to generation and in case we confiscate your lands, may our ancestral gods destroy our kingdom." (Translation mine).

the hands of money lenders and local potentates, and many fled to Sikkim. But as they had become a valuable prop to the centralizing Rana power, their elevation in caste ranking followed. Effective 1860 the Limbus were elevated to non-enslavable category.⁷⁵ The order cited the bravery displayed by the Limbus during the Nepal-Tibet War of 1856 as the principal reason for their elevation in caste ranking. Interestingly, no appeal was made to religious ethos, nor were the Brahmans called on to ritually corroborate the new rank. The administrative power of the state was sufficient to change the caste ranking of an entire group. Regulation of slavery and slave trade under various administrative-judicial provisions in turn became the conduit through which the Rana center realized its powers vis-à-vis both rival power holders and subordinate social clans and groups.

4 Conclusion

Historians have overlooked that slavery was a significant contributor of labor, and its control an important part of the growing legitimacy of the Rana family as “state” power. The historiographical shadow cast by the North American plantation-based model of slavery on the one hand, and the anthropological equation of slavery with low caste status on the other are inadequate in understanding different strata of obligations in the production and reproduction of slave systems in South Asia. The fact that so many slaves were bought by the erstwhile ruling families clearly suggests that officers of the oligarchical state held a variety of slaves for a variety of jobs and functions. Contrary to what Nepali historians argued, slavery was both pervasive and varied, and intimately linked to the state-building project both in terms of lineage expansion and the labor needs of the ruling families. The examples discussed in this chapter reflect the heterogeneity in practices of “slavery” across South Asia.⁷⁶ As the evidence shows, it is rather futile to speak of a single category called slaves. It is better to identify the category by owners. Thus slaves of the palace versus slaves of the Brahman or the low-caste commoner household are the categories that make sense of the South Asian evidence. After all, we can speculate about the meanings and condition of slavery only if we speak about the particulars of the respective slave-owning households and their politics in any given time and place. More importantly, we simply cannot speak of slaves without distinguishing by

⁷⁵ The royal order stressed the various positions occupied by the Limbus since 1851 in the Gorkhali army as further evidence of their unwavering loyalty to the Gorkhali state. See Yogi Naraharinath, ed., *Itihas Prakashma Sandhi Patra Sangraha* (Dang: Yogi Naraharinath, 1966): 611.

⁷⁶ For the South Asian examples, see Indrani Chatterjee and Richard Eaton, eds., *Slavery and South Asian History* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2006). Similar discussions of slavery can also be found in Anthony Reid’s edited work on Southeast Asia. For the latter, see Anthony Reid, *Slavery, Bondage and Dependency in Southeast Asia* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1983).

gender. For unlike the British Orientalist imagining of the female slave in the Ottoman or equivalent harem, the Nepali evidence like the eastern Indian Muslim households and the Rajput households of western India, suggests that female slaves in the ruling households had the greatest likelihood of being incorporated into a family.

This essay and the evidence it calls up complicate Orlando Patterson's formulation that all slaves were permanently alienated from their natal homes and kinship ties experiencing institutionalized liminality.⁷⁷ As the examples discussed here suggest, the projection of African-American experience as a universal model of slavery is not supported by Nepali evidence. This fluidity and variability in laws throws up two key issues for scholars of South Asia, which can be studied comparatively. First, it suggests that slavery cannot be understood through the Enlightenment model of free vs unfree labor. The second and even more important aspect of recognizing the fluidity of the regimes of coercion is the impossibility of a single and fixed notion of slavery in South Asia.

A revolution in the government amongst the competing clans led to women, slavery, and households being joined together in refashioning at once a deeply modernizing codification of laws and a privatization of labor in Nepal. By establishing new definitions of marriage through a constantly changing system of hierarchical rank, and reorganizing the labor-time and services of various groups through an exceedingly modern legal codification, the Rana family in Nepal made caste and rank extremely fluid grids of power. Neither caste nor slavery was a static frozen system that locked people into inherited status from which they could not move.

The history of slavery from Nepal also lays bare a remarkable continuity in the social-political histories of the Himalayan region with that of the peninsular societies in greater South Asia.⁷⁸ South Asia scholars often think of this recently-made Hindu kingdom in Nepal as a form of oriental despotism. This chapter, on the other hand, shows that the kingdom of Nepal could not become one without reinventing caste and providing slaves for itself. But most significantly, this chapter asks scholars to be sensitive to households and families to understand the nineteenth-century processes by which legal codes came to be invested with great authority. As I have demonstrated above, the legal codification of 1854 allowed the Rana state to project its political-juridical claims over laboring groups. In other words, "moral law" in the *Ain* was intended to establish clear claims of one group to the labor and fealty of others. The most significant aspect of the history of slavery in Nepal therefore boils down to a radical paradox in legal history. In mid-nineteenth century Nepal, law was codified to confirm the dominance of one clan to the claims of the labor services of others. As such, the codification of law, one of the great

77 Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982).

78 Nira Wickramasinghe and Alicia Schrikker, "The Ambivalence of Freedom: Slaves in Jaffna, Sri Lanka, in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," *Journal of Asian Studies* 78, no. 3 (2019): 1–23.

projects of the European Enlightenment, had a peculiar career in mid-nineteenth century Nepal. Moreover, the temporality of the Nepal case is particularly significant from the perspective of global history because at the time, when slavery threatened to dissolve and break apart the United States, it became a pivotal tool in organizing and consolidating a household-based state in the Himalayan world of the mid-nineteenth century.

5 Reflection

Chapters in this volume show remarkable diversity in practices of coerced labor across Asia. In being attentive to local archives as well as trans-national histories, these chapters underscore the multifarious histories of slavery that cannot be contained either within the Atlantic plantation model or that of maritime routes of slavery. Lisa Hellman in highlighting the contested claims by various state and imperial authorities over the Swedish prisoners of war following the Great Northern War shows that the experience of coerced labor was far from universal. It was contingent on class, gender, and the professional status of the prisoners. Moreover, Hellman demonstrates that gendered aspects of such coerced labor was frequently utilized by the authorities to expand settlements and push for the presence of the state in otherwise remote parts of the Russian empire. These developments echo similar attempts by the nascent Nepali state to use gendered and coerced labor both as forms of incentive and punishment to expand its administrative footprints along the Himalayan corridor. Similarly, Kate Ekama sheds important light on how the state and imperial authority categorized, codified, and extracted coerced labor in the former Dutch colony of Ceylon. As in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Nepal, laws governing coerced labor were deliberately fluid and flexible under Dutch rule. Such flexibility, Ekama illustrates, enabled the Dutch authority to manipulate slave status as needed, and thereby respond to various labor needs at different stages of the imperial expansion in the island by constantly shifting the parameters of who could be enslaved and under what criteria. One central aspect of this fluidity in law was the jealous regulation of sexual relationships between free and enslaved subjects in the colony by the Dutch authority. Like the Nepali case explored in this chapter, both Hellman and Ekama highlight the entanglements of local and trans-national forces in the making of a distinctive coerced labor regime with temporal specificity. Despite these overlapping features, there is yet not one model of slavery that can be projected outward from these studies. Instead, what emerges is histories of slavery and bondage that are similar yet unique to each place and time.

Vinil Baby Paul

Local Networks of the Slave Trade in Colonial Kerala

The existing historiography on slavery and its abolition in India claims that these were quite different from their counterparts in other parts of the world. Especially in south India, it is asserted, the relationship between the master and the slave was determined by caste norms; caste was the only factor in determining hierarchies of bondage and a person's social position in society. The region of Kerala, in the southwest of India, has been seen as a typical example for this view of Indian slavery. In parallel with the debate on such 'native' forms of slavery, there is a growing interest in the slave trade of European trade ventures, such as the Dutch East India Company (VOC). This chapter brings these strands of research together. By combining focused, local studies on Kerala with studies of global networks, I provide a more nuanced view of slavery within Kerala society and the way that it fit into the pre-modern world.

Scholars have long disagreed about the attributes of Indian slavery, and a number of theories have been presented by different historiographical schools in South Asia.¹ However several other scholars tried to explore the complex relationships between caste, class, indenture, slave experience, debt bondage, and slavery within India itself, blurring the boundaries previously constructed by nineteenth-century discourses of slavery.² New research, as also outlined by Amal Shahid in this volume, examined how British colonial famine polices shaped coercive conditions for labour in the North-Western Provinces of India in the late nineteenth century. Historians already noted the different labour structures that existed throughout Asia. James Fujitani's work in this volume shows that different dependency systems existed in the Melaka area. In the case of India, most scholars have argued that the term 'slavery' does not accurately describe the many forms of traditional bondage on the subcontinent, and within India's own peculiar institution of the caste system. At the same time, there is a wealth of south Indian vernacular materials that talk about owning, selling, and transfer of slaves.

1 Tanika Sarkar, "Bondage in the Colonial Context," in *Chains of Servitude: Bondage and Slavery in India*, ed. Utsa Patnaik and Manjari Dingwaney (Madras: Sangam, 1985): 97–126; Dharma Kumar, *Colonialism, Property and the State* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998); Gyan Prakash, *Bonded Histories: Genealogies of Labor Servitude in Colonial India*, Cambridge South Asian Studies 44 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Ravi Ahuja, "Labour Relations in an Early Colonial Context: Madras, c. 1750–1800," *Modern Asian Studies* 36, no. 4 (2002): 793–826.

2 Indrani Chatterjee and Richard M. Eaton, eds., *Slavery and South Asian History* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2006); Andrea Major, *Slavery, Abolitionism and Empire in India, 1772–1843* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2012); Sanal Mohan, *Modernity of Slavery: Struggles Against Caste Inequality in Colonial Kerala* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2015).

This tension between the wealth of material, and the debate of how to interpret it, makes this region particularly well suited for a localised study. That slavery and slave transactions existed in Kerala already before the arrival of European powers clearly indicates that transactions in humans were not a colonial institution. A wide variety of vernacular and colonial sources inform us that men, women, and children from the lower castes were bought and sold from the fifth century onwards for agricultural and non-agricultural purposes.³

The buying and selling of people from slave castes legally established the bondage that was guaranteed either by custom or by caste laws. The slave castes were an integral part of the master's landed property; slaves were attached to the land and then bought or sold together or independently.⁴ Addressed variously as 'agrestic slavery' or 'caste slavery' by historians, such trades were usually confirmed by a deed of purchase. In most areas, the nature and workings of the slave caste system was thus closely linked to the control of land. However, its nature cannot be fully understood in relation to the nature of capitalism or the question of political economy in the form that emerged in Europe. Instead, one should focus on the local society. There are records in Malayalam, the language of the region, as well as colonial writings, that detail the processes of owning, selling, and transfer of slaves in Kerala.

In a parallel research debate, new trends and studies seem to be more interested in interpreting the slave trade that was under the control of the Dutch East India Company.⁵ These studies have made a conscious and systematic attempt to move away from the paradigmatic history of Indian slavery. Especially Linda Mbeki and Matthias van Rossum have shed light on the actors involved in the mostly private slave trade that existed in the Dutch empire (predominantly VOC employees),

3 Noboru Karashima, "The Untouchables in Tamil Inscriptions and Other Historical Sources in Tamil Nadu," in *Caste System, Untouchability and The Depressed*, ed. Hiroyuki Kotani (New Delhi: Manohar, 1997).

4 William Saunders Hunt, "Slavery in Kerala," in *Kerala Society Papers*, vol. 1, ed. T.K. Joseph (Trivandrum: Kerala Gazetteers, [1928] 1997): 275–85.

5 Markus Vink, "'The World's Oldest Trade': Dutch Slavery and Slave Trade in the Indian Ocean in the Seventeenth Century," *Journal of World History* 14, no. 2 (2003): 131–77; Anjana Singh, *Fort Cochin in Kerala, 1750–1830: The Social Condition of a Dutch Community in an Indian Milieu* (Leiden: Brill, 2010); Alexander Geelen, Bram van den Hout, Merve Tosun and Matthias van Rossum, "Between Markets and Chains: An Exploration of the Experiences, Mobility and Control of Enslaved Persons in Eighteenth-Century South-West India," in *Being A Slave: Histories and Legacies of European Slavery in the Indian Ocean*, ed. Alicia Schrikker and Nira Wickramasinghe (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2020): 75–98; Alexander Geelen, Bram van den Hout, Merve Tosun and Matthias van Rossum, "On the Run: Runaway Slaves and Their Social Networks in Eighteenth-Century Cochin," *Journal of Social History* 54, no. 1 (2020): 66–87; Matthias van Rossum, Alexander Geelen, Bram van den Hout and Merve Tosun, *Testimonies of Enslavement: Sources on Slavery from the Indian Ocean World* (London: Bloomsbury, 2020).

but also focus on the identity of the enslaved.⁶ Their study breaks the stereotyped Marxian notion of Kerala slave's past, placing the sale of slaves in Kerala in relation to global networks.

Unfortunately, most studies have not engaged with the local trading networks and have excluded the life world of local slaves. Thereby, they fail to address the complexity of the caste system and the concept of pollution among the local – in fact, caste laws are key to understanding southwest Indian slavery. The arrival of European traders in the seventeenth century, and their interventions in local society, increased the demand for slaves and led to the start of a mass enslavement process among the natives. Colonial sources and recent studies alike show that non-slave castes were also being enslaved and sent to other European colonies.⁷ While enslavement in Kerala was closely connected with caste laws, available sources show how slavery did not only affect lower caste groups: persons of all castes,⁸ from the Brahmin to the Sudra, could be enslaved. In the history of Kerala, this kind of enslavement phenomenon emerged only after the arrival of European companies. Despite this breaking down of the traditional customs of slavery, however, caste-based local networks continued to play an important role in the process of enslavement. The history of local networks is thereby an important element to include in the writings on slavery in India, as it contests any tendencies to homogenise the history of this diverse subcontinent. It is from this historiographical viewpoint, that is the combination of research on native and colonial slavery, and careful attention to the local society, that this chapter will discuss the history of slave sales in Kerala.

1 Epigraphic Evidence of Kerala Slave Sales

According to archival and published material, a number of slave markets existed in different parts of Kerala, and even Christian churches were used for the sale of slaves.⁹ In the eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth century, there were local

⁶ Linda Mbeki and Matthias van Rossum, "Private Slave Trade in the Dutch Indian Ocean World: A Study into the Networks and Backgrounds of the Slavers and the Enslaved in South Asia and South Africa," *Slavery & Abolition* 38, no. 1 (2017): 95–116.

⁷ *Slavery in India, Return to an Address of The Honorable House of Commons, dated 13th April 1826* (Ordered by The House of Commons to be Printed 12 March 1828); see Mbeki and van Rossum, "Private Slave Trade": 109.

⁸ The Indian caste system was generally modeled on the fivefold division of society into Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas, Shudras and Chandalas.

⁹ Francis Day, *The Land of the Perumals, or Cochin, Its Past and Present* (Madras: Gantz Brothers, 1863): 171; K.K. Kusuman, *Slavery in Travancore* (Trivandrum: Kerala Historical Society, 1973): 40; Ignatius Payyappilly, "Man Slaving to Divine: A Socio-Religious Custom Gleaned from the Nineteenth Century Palm Leaves," *Artha* 11, no. 4 (2012): 1–23; Kunjukutty Kozhuvanal, *Aanikad Adhima*

slave markets in Kerala in places like Kottayam Thirunakkara, Palai, Changanachery, Alleppey, Kayamkulm, Cochin, Chetwai, Trivandrum Pulimood, Kovalam, Mathilakam, Purakadu, Quilon, Cranganore and Ponnani, from where slaves in large numbers were purchased and sold to meet the demands of the French and Dutch markets.¹⁰ Narratives, songs and memories of such slave trading and slave markets are still prevalent among the Dalit communities in Kerala today.¹¹ British colonial ethnographers, evangelical missionaries, as well as court records, all directly reported the activities of the local slave markets in Kerala.¹² As is clear from these records, slavery and the slave trade were major institutions in Kerala society. The intervention of European powers, especially the Portuguese and the Dutch, led both to transformation and structural changes of the pre-colonial forms of caste slavery and of the transaction of slaves in colonial Kerala. However, slavery was still part of the local society, not just international trade: lower-caste slaves in Kerala were the primary producers sustaining the economy of Kerala.

Epigraphic sources like inscriptions and manuscripts, including those on bamboo plates and palm leaves discovered in various parts of Kerala, reveal precise details about the practice of human transactions in Kerala. Some such sources in Kerala have been already transcribed and published in modern Malayalam.¹³ This material constitutes important primary sources for Kerala slave transactions and provides a broad view of Kerala's past, and the local networks for the slave trade. For instance, the *Mathilakom Rekhakal* (Mathilakom Records, compiled and edited by S. Uma Maheswari) were originally written on palm leaves, and pertain exclusively to the Travancore Temple and the Travancore region.¹⁴ While such sources throw light on the

Janathayum, Lagu Charithravum (Ponkunnam: Indian Educational Development Charitable Society Aanikad, 2006).

10 See more details in K.K.N. Kurup, *Aspects of Kerala History and Culture* (Trivandrum: College Book House, 1977): 71–73; Adoor K.K. Ramachandran Nair, *Slavery in Kerala* (New Delhi: Mittal Publications, 1986): 22; Kunnukuzhi S. Mani, *Pulayar Nootandukalil* (Trivandrum: Mythri Books, 2014): 214.

11 Vinil Baby Paul, “Dalit Conversion Memories in Colonial Kerala and Decolonisation of Knowledge,” *South Asia Research* 41, no. 2 (2021): 187–202.

12 *Slavery in India, 12 March 1828*; James Forbes, *Oriental Memoirs*, vol. 2 (London: Richard Bentley, 1834): 251; Robin Jeffery, *The Decline of Nayar Dominance, Society and Politics in Travancore; 1847–1908*, (New Delhi: Vikas Publication, 2014): 45.

13 M.R. Raghava Variar, *Keralolpatti Granthavari* (Calicut: Calicut University, 1984); Muttayil Govindamenon Sankara Narayanan, *Vanjeri Grandhavari* (Calicut: Calicut University, 1987); P. Unnikrishnan Nair, *Thiruvalla Granthavari* (Kottayam: Mahatma Gandhi University, 1998); S. Uma Maheswari, *Mathilakom Rekhakal* (Trivandrum: Kerala Book Store, 2018); Eledeth Santhosh, “Kin Groups, Agrarian Slavery and Land Ownership in Eighteenth Century Central Kerala: Deciphering New Koleluttu Palm Leaf Documents,” *Social Orbit* 5, no. 1 (2021): 143–62.

14 Mathilakom Records is a collection of around 30 lakh palm leaf manuscripts. See for more details A.S. Vysakh, “The Mathilakom Records: Untold Vignettes from Travancore History,” *ALA – A Kerala Studies Blog*, 15 November 2019, <http://ala.keralascholars.org/>.

conditions of life in a slave caste, on participants in the local networks, and the sale system, some of these records have met with little scholarly attention.

Kerala society was divided and arranged, based on caste, in a hierarchical order that ranged from the ‘sacred’ to the ‘untouchable’ slaves, or from the Brahmin to the *Pulaya*. A number of vernacular documents throw light on the transactions of members of a slave caste. The purchase, sale, or gifting of a Kerala slave was usually confirmed by a Malayalam title deed (in the old Malayalam language). Most of the slave deeds use the word *Adima*, the Malayalam word for slave; slavery can be translated as *Adimatham*. This practice stretches far back in history. Even the *Keralolpathi*, a mythological version of Kerala history, supports slavery. It is not possible to exactly date the *Keralolpathi*; historians have noted that it evolved over centuries, gaining ever more layers and variations at different levels – it was not the product of one period or one person.¹⁵ The story begins with Parasurama (the sixth avatar of Lord Vishnu in Hinduism) flinging his axe to reclaim the land called Kerala lying between Gokarna and Kanyakumari (both in southwest India) from the sea. Parasurama gave away the reclaimed land to the Brahmins as a gift and enabled them to live as its permanent landlords. He promptly established other branches of the population, too, to serve the Brahmins or as slaves to cultivate the reclaimed land. This creation story legitimizes local power and status, as well as the access to resources. However, few historians interpret the story of *Keralolpathi* as a sign of the origin of agrestic slavery in Kerala.¹⁶

Until the nineteenth century, the agrestic slaves in Kerala belonged to communities such as *Pulayas* and *Parayas*, and were at the very bottom of the social scale. Indeed, the majority of the slave sale deeds state, ‘you may sell or kill him or her’.¹⁷ In the caste-ridden Kerala society, the various injunctions imposed on social relations stipulated that the lower castes and slave castes should not approach the higher castes, and that they keep a prescribed distance. They were not allowed to use public roads, local courts, markets, or other public spaces. Kerala slaves were employed in raising the staples of the country, including rice, pulses, pepper and coconut.¹⁸ At night, their work included howling to drive off wild animals and irrigation works in the paddy fields.¹⁹ They lived together in the fields and outer parts of the villages, in huts that were little better than large baskets. Normally, slaves

¹⁵ Kesavan Veluthat, “Political History of Kerala: A Status Report,” *International Seminar on Kerala History* (Trivandrum: KCHR, 2006): 9.

¹⁶ Nair, *Slavery in Kerala*: 9.

¹⁷ L.A. Krishna Iyer, “Slavery in Kerala,” *Man in India* 17, no. 3 (1937): 119.

¹⁸ Indian Law Commission, Reports of the Indian Law Commission Upon Slavery in India, January 15, 1841, vol. 2, 218.

¹⁹ Samuel Mateer, *Native Life in Travancore* (London: W.H. Allen & Co., 1883): 41; O.T. Govindan Nambiar, “Serfdom in Malabar,” *The Indian Review* (June 1912): 487.

were paid wages. However, it is difficult to obtain any information of these wages that is reliable or extensive enough to enable a comparison with slave wages in other parts of India.²⁰ In addition, as the oral history and folksongs say, Kerala society was infamous for the cruel punishments meted out to low-caste offenders; slaves especially were cruelly treated everywhere in Kerala.

In some ways, the transactions in people belonging to a slave caste were legally established dealings that involved several cultural mechanisms and institutions that are reminiscent of slavery elsewhere. For one thing, the land-owning and slave-holding upper castes had the explicit support of the local rulers in maintaining slavery. Furthermore, the selling of slaves led to the separation of family members of the slave caste communities, and customs guaranteed that a slave could neither claim their freedom nor refuse their master. Several inscriptions also testify to the existence of transactions in members of a slave caste in Kerala in the remote past. The Tarisapalli copper plates from 849 AD are the earliest inscriptions available in Kerala.²¹ The inscriptions record that in the year 849, the Venad Raja, Ayyan Adikal Thiruvadikal, had granted certain privileges to the congregation of Tarsapalli in the Kollam district. The plate notes that the *Adimakasu* (the levy on slaves) need not be extracted from Christian residents of the Tarisapalli. This shows how long such a levy on slaves had been exacted. Tarsapalli inscriptions also show that male slaves were priced at 100 *fanams* (a local currency) and female ones at 70 *fanams*.²² Similarly, in different parts of Kerala, devotees surrendered their property such as paddy fields and lands to the temple together with the slaves attached to that property. As a result, there were slaves attached to the temple grounds and considered to be temple property. A notable feature of the Kerala agrarian system was the formation of groups of primary producers like *Pulaya* who could be transferred along with land. Sometimes, people within this group could be consigned land for their services, and settle on it. Consequently, the term *Pulaya* also came to denote a generic group of agricultural labourers.²³ *Pulaya* labourers were mortgaged along with land when the land was pawned. Vernacular lease deeds and other tenure documents also speak about the *Pulaya* labourers.

Another valuable source for tracing the history of transactions in people of the lower castes are the granthavaries. They are a collection of local chronicles, valuable

²⁰ Francis Buchanan, *A Journey from Madras Through the Countries of Mysore, Canara and Malabar*, vol. 2 (Madras: Higginbotham & Co., 1870): 67.

²¹ The Tarsapalli copper plates of the ninth century AD exempt the trading corporations of Anjuvannam and Manigramam from payment of *Ulku*. The word *Ulku* is a corrupt form of the Sanskrit *Sulka* which means customs duty, see K.P. Velayudhan, "Trade Guilds and the Character of State in Early South India," *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 39, no. 1 (1978): 200–207.

²² Nair, *Slavery in Kerala*: 12.

²³ K.S. Madhavan, "Primary Producing Groups in Early and Early Medieval Kerala: Production Process and Historical Roots of Transition to Castes (300–1300CE)" (PhD diss., University Of Calicut, 2012): 180–81.

for tracing the medieval history of economic transactions, especially the sale of slaves and other local customs and conventions that are deeply rooted within the cultural fabric of the society.²⁴ These records were kept by persons who wrote day-to-day accounts of the events in relation to temples and certain families. Therefore, they are helpful for illuminating cases when slaves were forced to separate from their families and made to join the household of a new slaveholder. Another important vernacular source on slave sales are bamboo plates, even though they only provide a fragmented picture. RaghavaVarrier and K. K. N. Kurup have recovered some bamboo plates from Malabar that detail slave transactions.²⁵ One such plate from 1672 (Malayalam era 847), obtained from Kolathunad (North Malabar), is the best example on slavery during the seventeenth century. In addition, many Palmyra leaf sale deeds are found in different parts of Kerala. One such deed of a slave sale found in central Kerala reads:

On 9 Meenam Sunday, 938 ME (1763 AD) Mathunni, Thoppil house, Thottackad (Kurakkanni Kollam Christian) purchased the slave ThazhathuThevuthan, son of the *Pulaya* slave woman Azhaki, belonging to Eapen *Mappila* [Syrian Christian], Kollettu house, Putuppally, at a price fixed by four people, and executed this document after giving the price. In the same way Eapen *Mappila* Kollettu house, Puthupally sold the slave ThazhathuThevuthan, son of the slave woman Azhaki at a price fixed by four people and wrote this sale deed after receiving the price. Eapen *Mappila* who had the right to tie, chain or kill the slave if necessary, transferred these rights and privileges to Mathunni Mathunnu.²⁶

These kinds of transaction deeds show that the practice of slave sale was a common phenomenon among the Kerala people. The written slave deeds gave legal authority to the transaction. Such deeds also indicate the role of Syrian Christians in the local networks of Kerala slavery. Family records are another major vernacular source, and can highlight important aspects of slavery – particularly those related to the agrarian system. An important example are the Kavalappara family records, now preserved in the Archives of Calicut University. They deal mostly with the period from 1746–1934 and events relating to the political, social, economic, and cultural aspects of the Kavalappara Nair family, which claims to have held an independent chieftainship after the fall of the Chera Kingdom.²⁷ One Kavalappara family record from early 1770 states that

24 P. Unnikrishnan Nair, *Thiruvalla Granthavari* (Kottayam: Mahatma Gandhi University, 1998).

25 K.K.N. Kurup, “Malabarile Adima Kachavadam,” *Mathrubhoomi Weekly*, (2 June 1974): 16–17; Raghava Varrier, “Malabarile Adimathathinte Oru Charithrarekha,” *Vijnanakairali* 25, no. 3 (1994): 183–87.

26 V. Mathew Kurian, *The Caste-Class Formation (A Case Study of Kerala)* (New Delhi: B.R. Publishing Corporation, 1986): 12.

27 The Kavalappara papers were originally filed as exhibits in O.S, no. 46 of 1934 in the sub-court of Ottappalam, Palaghat. The family house is located in Kavalappara Desam in Karakkatamsom of former Valluvanadu taluk. K.K.N. Kurup, *Kavalappara Papers* (Calicut: Department of History Calicut University, 1984).

[. . .] at Thennilapuram Mannam, Pannithiruthilittinu Kumaran received twelve thousand and seven hundred new fanams from the hands of Abhiseka Rama Patter, son of deekshn Patter of Padurgramam, in this manner [. . .] in all the lands for 450 para, together with Thevaraparamba and Nedumparamba and Kovi [slaves], KammanathuChakkan[slave], Kannan[slave] and Chathan [slave] from among the Valliyalars [labourers] constituting that these lands are a pattom and the pattom of 1,270 paras of paddy may be appropriated for interest.²⁸

This kind of vernacular source shows the slave labour distribution in the agricultural fields. It also tells us that their lives were closely attached to the land. Based on the evidence of epigraphic sources, the practice of slave trading was well-established all over Kerala. One important thing about these documents is that they show transactions in slaves within the Kerala region itself. This chapter argues for the need to understand these various forms of foreign and native bondage as distinct, but connected and interacting. While there is evidence here of the sale of slaves and transaction deeds that go far back into history, the dominant social historical perspective of the research in South India has manifestly failed to understand the richness and nuances of slave caste histories, especially concerning how Dalits remember their slave pasts. In the future, there is a need to rethink our interpretations and knowledge on native slavery in South India.

2 Reshaping Caste Slavery

The history of native slavery in Kerala needs to be connected to the arrival of European trading companies such as Portuguese and Dutch in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and how it led to slaves from the southwestern part of India being transported to distant regions of the world. The European companies reshaped and expanded the existing slave systems of Kerala. India's southwestern part had been engaged in inter-ocean trade for many centuries. With the arrival in 1498 of Vasco da Gama, the first Portuguese captain, at Calicut, Kerala, opened a new epoch in the history of India. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, southwest India was divided into about fifty principalities, each of which was under a lesser chief who enjoyed complete independence in internal affairs.²⁹ While the rigid caste laws and untouchability were important features of Kerala society, the most striking feature of the political scene of Kerala in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was the absence of a unifying central power.³⁰ Gradually, Portuguese traders became one of the most powerful groups on the Kerala coast. Nevertheless, the Portuguese

²⁸ Kurup, *Kavalappara Papers*: 5.

²⁹ Joseph Thekkedath, *History of Christianity in India*, vol. 2, *From the Middle of the Sixteenth to the End of the Seventeenth Century (1542–1700)* (Bangalore: Church History Association of India, 1988): 19.

³⁰ Thekkedath, *History of Christianity*: 19.

never established an ‘empire’ in South India. They had a few coastal settlements, but their authority never extended beyond a few miles of the coastal area.³¹ The arrival of the Portuguese merchants strengthened international slave trading networks, as they exported and imported slaves: the slave trade was profitable and flourished in the Portuguese territories in India.³² The Portuguese began their slave trade right from the beginning of the sixteenth century, kidnapping men and women from African coastal lands, especially from Guinea, and selling them both locally and abroad for a huge profit.³³ During the Portuguese period, a great number of African slaves were uprooted from their homeland and transplanted to India, including Kerala, and we know some details about this community’s social history.³⁴ Historian K.S. Mathew noted that by the second half of the sixteenth century, the number of slaves sent from India rose; sometimes over 5,000 to 6,000 slaves were exported from India a year.³⁵ In Cochin, the Portuguese sold linen and other commodities, and in exchange purchased large numbers of slaves.³⁶ Eventually, Cochin became the main center of the Portuguese traders, and most of the African slaves also lived in Cochin. According to the Dutch traveler Canter Visscher, Portuguese houses in Cochin had empty chambers underneath in which the Portuguese lodged their slaves.³⁷ During the eighteenth century, local Indian rulers also imported African boys. For instance, Sakthan Thampuran (1751–1805), one of the local kings, felt the need to keep African slaves for the purpose of prestige.³⁸ There was no high demand for African slaves, however, because they were not considered part of the normal working force. The Portuguese could thus incorporate themselves into the existing system of slavery; several parts of Kerala are dotted with remnants of the slavery practiced by the Portuguese. Early foreign records such as that of Duarte Barbosa (1480–1521) note this Portuguese export and import of slaves

31 K.M. Panikkar, *A History of Kerala 1498–1801* (Annamalainagar: The Annamala University, 1960): 143.

32 Shadab Bano, “Slave Markets in Medieval India,” *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 61, no. 1 (2001): 361.

33 K.S. Mathew, *Maritime Trade of the Malabar Coast and the Portuguese in the Sixteenth Century* (New Delhi: Manohar, 2016): 158; Jeanette Pinto, “The African Native in Indiaspora,” in *Uncovering the History of Africans in Asia*, ed. Shihan de Silva Jayasuriya and Jean-Pierre Angenot (Leiden: Brill, 2008): 139–54.

34 D.K. Bhattacharya, “Indians of African Origin,” *Cahiers d’Études Africaines* 10, no. 40 (1970): 579–82; Abdulaziz Y. Lodhi, “African Settlements in India,” *Nordic Journal of African Studies* 1, no. 1 (1992): 83–86; Pashington Obeng, *Shaping Membership, Defining Nation, The Cultural Politics of African Indian in South Asia* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2007).

35 K.S. Mathew, *Maritime Trade of the Malabar Coast*: 159.

36 Heber Drury, ed., *Letters From Malabar, by Jacob Canter Visscher* (Madras: Gantz Brothers, 1862): 37.

37 Drury, *Letters From Malabar*: 20.

38 J. Rejikumar, ed., *Sakthan Thampuran: Thiranjedutha Bharana Rekhakal*, vol. 1, no. 2 (Trivandrum: Kerala State Archives Bulletin, 1998): 26–27.

to Kerala, and state that the Malabarics brought great stores of rice and coconuts, and took away shiploads of slaves.³⁹ Portuguese traders also circulated Kerala slaves to their own settlements in India. The African slaves were kept in inhuman conditions and cruelly treated. In contrast to the Indian rulers, the Portuguese merchants used their slaves only for profit and not for the purpose of prestige.

Just as in Kerala, there are remnants of slavery practiced by the Portuguese in several parts of Cochin today. As an example, the genealogy of *Kaders*, a tribal group in Kerala, supposedly starts from imported African slaves. One colonial ethnographer in the nineteenth century argued that *Kaders* were ‘a stout dark race with African features and crispy hair, and are supposed to be descendants of Portuguese slaves who had taken refuge on the Travancore hills’.⁴⁰ Another example is the *Kappiri*, which is the Malayalam slang word for African slaves shipped to Kerala in the sixteenth century by Portuguese traders. In Cochin, many stories and beliefs have evolved around these Black slaves, and a number of *Kappiri* narratives circulate among the local people.⁴¹ Today the *Kappiri* is a famous deity in that area.⁴² It is a common phenomenon in western Indian states. Neelima Jeychandran’s study shows that in the city of Ahmadabad in Gujarat and coastal areas of Cochin, there are small shrines dedicated to deceased African martyrs and saints.⁴³ In the history of slavery in Kerala, the Portuguese phase is still not adequately explored. Research into the Portuguese interventions in this region and the life experiences of the

39 Barbosa was a Portuguese officer in India. He was an important scribe in the Kannoor factory and an interpreter of the local language. Mansel Longworth Dames, ed., *The Book of Duarte Barbosa*, vol. 2 (London: Hakluyt Society, 1921): 125.

40 J.D. Munro, *The High Ranges of Travancore* (Peermed: Unknown, 1880): 13–14.

41 *Ore Pro Nobis* (1984), *Maya* (2008), *Adiyalapretham* (2019) are famous Novels about the *Kappiri* Muthappan. Ponjikkara Raphi, *Ore Pro Nobis* (Kottayam: DC Books, 1984), George Thundiparambil, *Maya* (Pondicherry: Gauli, 2008), P.F. Mathews, *Adiyalapretham* (Thrissur: Green Books, 2019).

42 The sacred places of *Kappiri Mathil* (the *Kappiri* wall) and *Kappiri Muthappan* (a deity) are important living evidence of the African slave past. *Kappiri Muthappan*, believed to be an African slave of the Portuguese traders, is worshipped in Mattancherry, near Cochin. In 1663, the Dutch army attacked the Portuguese settlement in Cochin. During the war, the Portuguese, who had treasures in niches in their thick walls, tied up black slaves in them, placed their treasures beneath the tied-up slaves and made them promise that the treasures would be kept safe until their descendants came to claim them. The niches were then plastered up with mortar. These sacrificed slaves became the god *Kappiri Muthapan* and the wall known as *Kappiri Mathil*. Another version of this story also circulated among the local people states that when the Dutch army attacked Cochin, the Portuguese traders buried their riches under a large tree and sacrificed their African slaves so that their ghosts would be around to guard the treasure. The belief is that these ghosts still linger to protect the lost treasures of the Portuguese and lead the masters back to it when they return (K.L. Bernard, *History of Fort Cochin* [Kochi: Historical Study and Research Centre, 1991]: 32).

43 Neelima Jeychandran, “Geographies of Death Memory: Shrines Dedicated to African Saints and Spectral Deities in India,” *South Asian History and Culture* 11, no. 4 (2020): 143–62.

Kerala slaves brought by the Portuguese – as well as their influence on the local communities – could enable new questions within the social history of South Asia.

After the decline of Portuguese rule, the Dutch East India Company (VOC) became the next major foreign power in Kerala. The VOC would expand the global networks of slavery, which the Portuguese had established in Kerala. On 8 January 1663, the Portuguese settlement in Cochin was taken over by the VOC, along with all its dependencies, papers, artillery, ammunition and all types of articles for trading, goods – and slaves.⁴⁴ Cochin was a large fortified town, in which all Dutch employees, their slaves, and their families lived from the takeover in 1663 to the end of the Dutch rule in 1795.⁴⁵ Cochin was an important fort for the VOC, because of its large roadstead, where vessels from all parts of the world would cast anchor. According to the observations of a later visitor, Jacob Canter Visscher, Cochin was very useful as a provisioning station for vessels sailing from Batavia to Mocha, or returning from Surat and Persia to Batavia. Here, he wrote, it was possible to obtain ‘not only very good water [. . .] but also [an] abundance of victuals at a cheap rate, such as poultry, pigs, cattle, fish and fruit. For these reason European vessels visiting the Indian coasts always put in at Cochin for provisions.’⁴⁶ These kinds of socio-economic changes gradually changed the standard of living in Cochin. And also it increased the demand for slaves, especially domestic slaves.

This international trade was closely tied up with networks of slavery. The engagement in the slave trade cut across Dutch society in India: various groups of Dutch citizens were able to fit out a ship to engage in slave trading, others could use their voyages within Asia on board company ships to transport slaves.⁴⁷ A recent study of VOC intervention in the slave trade in Cochin has provided details both of the participants in the trade and the slaves of the port of Cochin.⁴⁸ Slavery was not just a matter of foreign trade but also of life within the settlement. Slaves made up a large percentage of all people living in Fort Cochin. Indeed, as noted by historians, domestic slavery was perhaps the central feature of Dutch colonial society in the Indian Ocean World. In Cochin, the average slave holdings of the households fluctuated roughly between four to six slaves.⁴⁹ Slaves working in the domestic sphere could be employed as for example cooks, housemaids, and seamstresses. A colonial historian noted the prevalence of slaves in Dutch everyday life in Cochin:

[Dutch people’s] habits were grossly animal; rising at about six the Dutchman took a stroll or lounged in his verandah with a huge pipe in his mouth until seven, when coffee, meat etc.,

⁴⁴ Singh, *Fort Cochin*: 4.

⁴⁵ Singh, *Fort Cochin*: 6.

⁴⁶ Drury, *Letters from Malabar*: 39.

⁴⁷ Mbeki and van Rossum, “Private Slave Trade”: 98.

⁴⁸ Mbeki and van Rossum, “Private Slave Trade.”

⁴⁹ Rik van Welie, “Slave Trading and Slavery in the Dutch Colonial Empire: A Global Comparison,” *New West Indian Guide* 82, no. 1/2 (2008): 85.

were brought him by a slave, his pipe replenished and his abstruse meditations resumed. With the assistance of his menials he was at length inserted into cloth garments of a style Dutchmen only can admire. Business occupied him for an hour or two [. . .] Then he dined, generally with a vigorous appetite [. . .] As soon as his plate was removed he returned to his pipe [. . .] At three his slave handed him a cup of tea or coffee, and again made him tidy [. . .] Supper over, and pipe smoked, he now sought a nights [sic] rest after such distressing mental and bodily exertion.⁵⁰

The Dutch and Portuguese colonial intervention thus led to the transformation of pre-colonial forms of slavery, transaction and regimes of labour control, but it also led to a shift of which groups were involved in the slave trade: the largest group selling slaves during the Dutch era in Kerala was local Syrian Christians and soldiers employed by the VOC.⁵¹ In Kerala, Syrian Christians were traditionally identified as one of several upper castes. During the Dutch period, Christian churches often acted as warehouses for slaves during emergencies. On weekdays, when they were not required for religious purposes, these buildings were used to keep lower-caste Kerala slaves.⁵² According to Malayalam sources, church buildings also played an important part in the sale of slaves, as slave auctions were often conducted there.⁵³

There were also other groups selling slaves in Kerala, including the Muslim and the Jewish community.⁵⁴ The Cochin raja played an important role for the local slave networks; not only did he take part in this profitable business; he was the authority on local slave transactions and certified who was a slave and who was not. On one occasion, for example, a Dutch subject purchased two slave children from a Jonakan (Muslim). As the children ran away immediately, the purchaser was left without a document to prove the transaction, and turned to the raja to certify whether the two children were slaves or not.⁵⁵ According to local Kerala custom, the persons of all castes, from the Brahmin to the Sudra or Nair could be enslaved, and existing literature confirms that upper-caste people were being enslaved and sent to different continents.⁵⁶

⁵⁰ Charles Allen Lawson, *British and Native Cochin* (Cochin: The Courier Press by B. Fernandes, 1860): 13.

⁵¹ Mbeki and van Rossum, "Private Slave Trade": 105.

⁵² Day, *The Land of the Perumals*: 171.

⁵³ The private archives of Mulamthuruthi Church in Ernakulam district in central Kerala possesses a document that throws light on a typical slave transaction (year unknown). In it, one Varky Chacko pledged a *Paraya* slave woman called Kochu to the church, as a guarantee for the ten *parahs* (bushels) of paddy secured from the church. He agreed to leave her in the service of the church in case he failed to return the paddy by a stipulated date. K.K. Kusuman, *Slavery in Travancore*: 40.

⁵⁴ Singh, *Fort Cochin*: 41; L.A. Krishna Iyer, *The Cochin Tribes and Castes*, vol. 3 (New Delhi: Cosmo Publications, 1981): 405.

⁵⁵ Cochin State Archives, Series Files (1684–1869), Series I, No 326/20, List LXIII, 20 September (year unknown).

⁵⁶ Mbeki and van Rossum, "Private Slave Trade": 109.

The foreign influence on the slave trade must however be placed in relation with the local system of caste, and in particular with the specific Kerala notion of untouchability. Sociologists have noted that Kerala's caste practices were different from those in other parts of India.⁵⁷ The way unapproachability was conceptualized was also unique to the caste formation in Kerala caste society. In the rest of India, caste pollution was transmitted only by touch, but in Kerala it could be communicated over a distance. The specific enslavement system existed in different parts of Kerala society until the legal abolition of slavery there.⁵⁸ Nineteenth-century evangelical missionary workers' ethnographic reports gave details of enslaving process. Indeed, as evidence from colonial archives shows, slavery was not an affair of caste in Kerala. In the Kerala caste structure, 'violation of caste rules incurs ceremonial pollution, which is contracted principally in three ways; viz. by approaching, touching, or eating with an inferior; defilement by either of the two first methods may be removed by bathing or prayer, but by eating with a low caste man loss of caste irrecoverably follows'.⁵⁹ In this situation, local slavers used food traps: stolen upper-caste children and women were compelled to eat food with *Pulayas*. After that, upper caste people had become slaves, and objects of transactions, either within Asia or to other destinations, including Europe. During the colonial period in Kerala, untouchable slaves were 'uplifted' to the touchable condition or domestic slave status. However, native landlords continued to consider their slaves untouchable, and did not use slaves for certain jobs, especially in the household.

In Kerala, we can see one group of slaves under the European system of slavery on the one side and a caste-based untouchable slave system actively working on the other side. This complex and parallel system contests the homogenization tendencies in the writings on slavery in southwest India. The evidence of slaves being transported outside of Kerala, however, begins only with the arrival of the Portuguese and the Dutch. Then we also see an important change in how the caste system was approached during this period, the demand for slaves increased and children from non-slave castes were caught and sold. Similarly, under the supremacy of European rule, 'polluted' slave castes were made to enter other workplaces than before. While it is difficult to speak with certainty about the nature and structure of slave trading in ancient Kerala, scholars agree that buying and selling of lower-caste people was a

57 Marriott McKim, "Caste Ranking and Community Structure in Five Regions of India and Pakistan," *Bulletin of the Deccan College Research Institute* 19, no. 1/2 (1958): 56.

58 At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Kerala was divided into three administrative units: British Malabar in the northern part and the princely states of Cochin and Travancore in the center and southern extreme. Slavery was abolished in British Malabar in 1843, but continued in the princely states of Travancore and Cochin. It was finally abolished in Travancore and Cochin in 1855 with the persistent efforts of the Protestant missionaries.

59 A.H., *Day Dawn in Travancore: A Brief Account of the Manners and Customs of the People and the Efforts that are Being Made for their Improvement* (Cottayam: C.M. Press, 1860): 9.

common phenomenon. The European intervention reshaped this system. In other words, slavery and slave trading was not introduced in the Indian Ocean by the European colonial powers, but it was transformed and reshaped by them.⁶⁰ Based on available sources and current research, we can conclude that the colonial intervention led to the transformation of the forms of slavery, as well as the way the transactions functioned and the labour control regime.

3 Reflection

The findings of this chapter on the impact of European expansion on local regimes of slavery in Kerala fit well with the analysis in several other chapters of this book, showing that the policies of European colonial companies dramatically changed the local or regional economy to fit their European economic framework. Especially Hägerdal and Shahid's works analysed the Dutch and British intervention in plantation and public works and also show how the European colonists adopted and incorporated many local customs. James Fujitani's work shows, similar to the findings of this chapter, the distinct and embedded systems of slavery already present in Melaka prior to Portuguese intervention, as well as the transformations forged by European intervention. Many of the studies in this book show that European companies' capitalist objectives permeated and reshaped local labour structures. At the same time, the southwest Indian case is complex and perhaps somewhat different to some of the more pronounced examples of this impact, because early European intervention did not completely change the agricultural domain and wider labour relations. The social impact of early European colonialism did already become visible however during this period, with a complex relation to a changing caste-based untouchable slave regime, while at the same time eroding local social hierarchies through the expansion of the enslavement of different groups.

⁶⁰ Alessandro Stanziani, *Labor on the Fringes of Empire: Voice, Exit and the Law*, Palgrave Series in Indian Ocean World Studies (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018): 39.



Transformations

Rômulo da Silva Ehalt

Suspicion and Repression: Ming China, Tokugawa Japan, and the End of the Japanese-European Slave Trade (1614–1635)

1 Introduction

In the spring of 1644, a mother decided to sell her son. After four years of famine, the woman could not support the child and herself anymore. In a last attempt to guarantee their survival, she took 9-year-old Gyūnosuke to local lord Shimosaka Kyūzaemon's manor and begged him to take the boy. The offer was accepted, the agreed price paid, a contract signed. The document established that the child would become a servant in perpetuity at the Shimosaka household.¹ Transactions similar to the one between Gyūnosuke's mother and Shimosaka Kyūzaemon are endemic in Japanese history. For many in the country, human trafficking was a means to overcome financial difficulties, avoid capital punishment, or survive the consequences of natural disasters – in sum, to stay alive. In addition to these interpersonal transactions, there were networks of human traffickers. In 1579, a woman in Kyoto was arrested and executed after confessing to having deceived, kidnapped, and sold about eighty young women.² Besides the internal trade, human trafficking was also part of the smuggling networks of the *wōkōu* (as they were known in Chinese), *wakō* (in Japanese), or *waegu* (in Korean) marauders who raided coastlines of the East China Sea between the thirteenth and

1 The case of Gyūnosuke is briefly discussed in Hasegawa Yūko, “Chūkinsei Ikōki no Hitouri Kankō ni miru Dogō no Yūzū: Seimei Iji to Mura no Naritachi no Shiten kara,” in *Shōen to Mura wo Aruku II*, ed. Fujiki Hisashi and Kuramochi Shigehiro (Tokyo: Azekura Shobō, 2004): 95–96. Interestingly enough, the document that records the sale of the boy condemns his mother to anonymity.

2 Ōta Gyūichi, *Shinchō Kōki*, ed. Nakagawa Taiko (Tokyo: Kadokawa, 2019): 301.

Note: The research for this chapter was possible thanks to an International Research Fellowship offered by the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) during the academic years of 2019 and 2020, when I enjoyed a post-doctoral stay at Sophia University, in Japan, while the later stages of revising took place at the Max Planck Institute for Legal History and Legal Theory in Germany. All Japanese words were transcribed using Hepburn diacritics, while all Chinese words – except for names of historians – were transliterated according to the *pīnyīn* system. I would like to extend my gratitude to Liam Matthew Brockey (Michigan State University), James Fujitani (Azusa Pacific University), and Stuart McManus (Chinese University of Hong Kong) for their invaluable feedback in various stages of writing this chapter. I also want to thank the careful comments and feedback from the editors and proof-readers of this volume.

sixteenth centuries.³ On occasion, these groups would kidnap people from coastal areas, selling them elsewhere or returning them to their villages upon the payment of ransom. As pointed out by Shimojū Kiyoshi, the arrival of the Portuguese and other Europeans in the sixteenth century soon allowed the emergence of a Japanese-European slave trade that connected local East Asian networks to the worldwide slave trade of the early modern period.⁴

As highlighted by Tatiana Seijas, early modern slave trading networks operated ‘at the limits of the law of a number of nations’.⁵ That certainly was the case with the ships that transported bonded Japanese, Chinese, and Korean people from Japan to the rest of the world. They worked under a myriad of different legal situations and frameworks built by the expectations and enforcing capacities of several actors, including but certainly not restricted to ecclesiastical and civil authorities in places such as Macau, Manila, Malacca, Goa, Lisbon, Seville, Rome, and Mexico City. Beyond the spheres of influence of European powers, the authorities on both sides of the East China Sea were the ones who actually regulated the rhythm of the trade in the region. Basically, these included the Tokugawa Bakufu, the complex structure of the Nagasaki authorities (formed by magistrates, governor, and street and ward administrators), local lords or *daimyō* and their own enforcing powers, the Ming imperial government, and Canton mandarins, military, and bureaucrats. While studying the networks connecting Asia, Europe and the Americas forces researchers to deal with a plethora of laws and regulations enacted by various authorities, little scholarly work has been done on the local legal conditions of the Japanese-European slave trade network, despite the fact that the trade itself was a complex network carefully built on and dependent on a delicate balance of all aforementioned legal frameworks. Recently, it has been argued that the trade became purportedly illegal because of the action of Jesuit missionaries who, in 1598, gathered in Nagasaki and decided to excommunicate Portuguese slave traders and pressure the Portuguese crown to outlaw the activity. That same argument claims that the year of 1607 marked the end of the trade of enslaved Japanese in Portuguese territories.⁶ In spite of this assertion, the

³ The scholarship on piracy in the region is vast, but the monumental work of Ōta Hiroki is still the most reliable resource on the topic. Ōta Hiroki, *Wakō: Shōgyō, Gunji Shiteki Kenkyū* (Yokohama: Shunpūsha, 2002).

⁴ Shimojū Kiyoshi, *Miuri no Nihonshi: Jinshin Baibai kara Nenki Hōkō he* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2012): 83. As the reader will notice, I reserve the terms ‘slave’ and ‘slavery’ to refer to the historical European regime of coerced labour, while ‘bondage’ is used in reference to local or Asian regimes.

⁵ Tatiana Seijas, *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico: From Chinos to Indians* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014): 56.

⁶ Lúcio de Sousa, *The Portuguese Slave Trade in Early Modern Japan: Merchants, Jesuits and Japanese, Chinese, and Korean Slaves* (Leiden: Brill, 2018): 542.

fact is that the Japanese-European slave trade continued for a number of years beyond this date.⁷

In order to access this lacuna, I turn my attention to those local legal frameworks that allowed the emergence and continuation of the trade of enslaved Japanese on European ships in the first place: Ming China and Tokugawa Japan. In China, Portuguese merchants had settled in the peninsula of Macau in the mid-sixteenth century. By the early 1600s, the growing number of Japanese brought to the port city led the Ming authorities to act in order to contain what they considered a threat to the security of the area. Meanwhile, Japan was going through a process of gradual substitution of previously hegemonic forms of unfree and subaltern labour such as the *genin*, often associated with slavery in Japanese historiography, by the *hōkōnin*, or hired servants. This process allowed increasingly more dynamic forms of human bondage due to the limitation imposed by contracts on the years of bondage.⁸ Seemingly intensified by the sale of enslaved Japanese to foreigners, this process resulted in labour depletion in the fields, especially in Southern Japan.⁹ The problem was addressed for the first time in July 23, 1587, when Toyotomi Hideyoshi enacted an eleven-article memorandum that criminalized the slave trade. It was the first of a series of laws issued by the Japanese ruler until the early 1590s that addressed the topic.¹⁰ Two years after Hideyoshi's death in 1598, the Tokugawa

7 Despite showing the continuity of Japanese slavery, Sousa insists on the importance of the 1607 Portuguese law for the end of the trade. Lúcio de Sousa, *Escravidura e Diáspora Japonesa nos Séculos XVI e XVII* (Braga: NICPRI, 2014): 156–61; Sousa, *The Portuguese Slave Trade*: 426, 538, 542. As for numbers, for instance, the presence of Japanese individuals in Mexico City seems to have increased sharply after 1617, while records of Asians spread throughout the world suggest that there were enslaved or formerly enslaved Japanese in the Americas until the late seventeenth century. Out of the 35 Japanese Oropeza Keresey lists as living in Mexico City in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, only four arrived prior to 1617. Sousa's lists of 28 Japanese individuals spread around the globe between 1599 and 1642, which he claims to have been enslaved, suggests a similar pattern. Sousa, *The Portuguese Slave Trade*: 210–59; Deborah Oropeza Keresey, "Los 'indios chinos' en la Nueva España: la inmigración de la nao de China, 1565–1700" (PhD diss., El Colegio de México, 2007): 257–91.

8 Mizukami Ikkyū, *Chūsei no Shōen to Shakai* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1969); Minegishi Kentarō, *Kinsei Mibunron* (Tokyo: Azekura Shobō, 1989): 23–25; Isogai Fujio, *Nihon Chūsei Doreishi* (Tokyo: Azekura Shobō, 2007): 561–64. Japanese historiography spent decades of the twentieth century discussing whether *genin* were slaves or serfs. See Minegishi Sumio, "Chūsei no Mibunsei Kenkyū to Genin Mibun no Tokushitsu," in *Chūseishi Kōza 4: Chūsei no Hō to Kenryoku*, ed. Kimura Shōsabarō et al. (Tokyo: Gakuseisha, 1985): 238–53. Needless to say, however, that this process of substitution did not erase perpetual forms of bondage in Japan, as shown by the example that opens this chapter.

9 Maki Hidemasa, *Kinsei Nihon no Jinshin Baibai no Keifu* (Tokyo: Sōbunsha, 1960): 31.

10 For more on the series of legal actions taken by Hideyoshi in 1587 and beyond against perpetual forms of bondage and the slave trade see Rômulo da Silva Ehalt, "Jesuits and the Problem of Slavery in Early Modern Japan" (PhD diss., Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, 2017): 315–53. The 1587 memorandum has been, along with the 1570/1571 Portuguese law on Japanese slavery and the 1598

clan won the Battle of Sekigahara. The victory marked the beginning of their efforts to establish themselves as the new central authority of the country. The Tokugawa Bakufu was consolidated in 1615, when the last resisting forces of the Toyotomi clan were defeated in the two Sieges of Osaka. In the following year, the new shogunate resumed policies against human traffickers. Internal economic dynamics and changes to hegemonic forms of labour led Japanese rulers, namely Toyotomi Hideyoshi and the first three Tokugawa shōgun, to address the situation as two different problems: human trafficking, and the prevention of Japanese people leaving the archipelago.

My purpose here is to show that the sale and transport of Japanese people out of the country ended as a result of four concomitant regional processes: first, Ming policies against the ownership of enslaved Japanese in Macau, which made it difficult for Portuguese merchants to use the city as a hub for their local slave trade network; second, a series of restrictive decisions by the shōgun regarding the movement of Japanese people in and out of the country; next, shogunal policies repressing human traffickers inside Japan; and, finally, increased regulations on limited-time contracts of servants, which gradually superseded perpetual bondage as the most common form of labour in Tokugawa Japan.

2 Tigers and Refugees

The arrival of Portuguese merchants in the waters to the East of the Malay Peninsula can be traced to the early sixteenth century. In 1513, the first Portuguese arrived in southern China, although it would take another three decades for them to disembark in Japan. In 1549, Jesuit Francis Xavier became the first missionary to reach the archipelago, beginning a century of complex relations between the Japanese and Europeans, the tone of which was largely set by the activities of the Society of Jesus.¹¹ On the other side of the East China Sea, the Portuguese presence in China was intensified in the 1550s with the foundation of Macau, a Portuguese settlement established by merchants between 1554 and 1557. In the following decades, the port was gradually incorporated by the Portuguese crown to the roster of

Jesuit conference on Japanese and Korean slavery, one of the legal statutes that framed the way scholars understood Japanese slavery and the Japanese-European slave trade for years. Thomas Nelson, "Slavery in Medieval Japan," *Monumenta Nipponica* 59, no. 4 (2004): 463–92; Sousa, *The Portuguese Slave Trade*.

¹¹ The most representative work describing this period is still Charles Ralph Boxer, *The Christian Century in Japan, 1549–1650* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1951).

colonial fortresses and factories of the so-called *Estado da Índia*, the colonial polity of the Portuguese empire in Asia.¹²

After a few isolated cases in previous decades, the number of Japanese arriving in Macau rose significantly from 1592 onwards.¹³ Upon inspecting the port in 1610, the Chinese visitor Wáng Yíning informed his superiors that, to defend the city against Dutch raids, the Portuguese residents had brought about two to three thousand bonded Japanese, or *wōnú*, to the city.¹⁴ Three years later, the group had already grown to five or six thousand individuals. The sudden increase made the Cantonese authorities wary of a Portuguese attack, leading officials to start suggesting the return of Japanese individuals to the archipelago.¹⁵ The general nervousness was sparked by a clash in 1605 between armed Japanese and Ming soldiers in Macau that ended with numerous dead Chinese, an event that was still referred to by the authorities in later years.¹⁶ According to Charles R. Boxer, rumours of a Luso-Japanese attack against the Chinese started spreading around this time, when the Portuguese reportedly began fortifying Macau ‘and an auxiliary force of Japanese Christian samurai was said to be hourly expected’.¹⁷

Among the Chinese authorities, especially in Canton, there was broad consensus on whether enslaved Japanese should be allowed in Macau. Their earlier warnings

12 In English, the most comprehensive and recent work on the history of the enclave is Geoffrey C. Gunn, *Encountering Macau, A Portuguese City-State on the Periphery of China, 1557–1999* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996). However, scholarship in Portuguese is essential. Some comprehensive works on the early history of Macau include (but are not restricted to): Rui M. Loureiro, *Fidalgos, missionários e mandarins: Portugal e a China no século XVI* (Lisbon: Fundação Oriente, 2000); Jin Guo Ping and Wu Zhiliang, *Revisitar os primórdios de Macau: para uma nova abordagem da História* (Macau, Instituto Português do Oriente, 2007); and A. H. de Oliveira Marques, ed., *História dos Portugueses no Extremo Oriente*, vol. 1, no. 1 (Lisbon: Fundação Oriente, 1998).

13 Tang Kaijian, *Setting Off from Macau: Essays on Jesuit History during the Ming and Qing Dynasties* (Leiden: Brill, 2016): 92. Seijas also briefly alluded to the Ming opposition to Japanese slaves in Macau. Seijas, *Asian Slaves*: 55–56.

14 According to Brook, the term “Japanese slave” or “Wo slave” was a derogatory phrase that implied foreignness in general, although in other contexts not all Wo slaves were actually Japanese. See Timothy Brook, “Japan in the Late Ming: The View from Shanghai,” in *Sagacious Monks and Bloodthirsty Warriors: Chinese views of Japan in the Ming-Qing period*, ed. Joshua Fogel (Norwalk, CT: Eastbridge, 2002): 47.

15 Kong Ying, “Mindai ni okeru Makao no Nihonjin Dorei ni tsuite,” *Journal of East Asian Cultural Interaction Studies* 6 (2013): 495; Tang, *Setting Off*: 94, 112–13.

16 Kong, “Mindai ni okeru Makao”: 495; Tang, *Setting Off*: 101–2, 108–12. There was a general anxiety towards the very existence of Macau, since it was a “striking anomaly in the Ming policy of either absorbing or rejecting foreigners.” See Timothy Brook, “The Early Jesuits and the Late Ming Border: The Chinese Search for Accommodation,” in *Encounters and Dialogues: Changing Perspectives on Chinese-Western Exchanges from the Sixteenth to Eighteenth centuries*, ed. Wu Xiaoxin (Sankt Augustin: Institut Monumenta Serica; San Francisco: Ricci Institute for Chinese-Western Cultural History, 2005): 21.

17 Boxer, *The Christian Century*: 269–70.

told the Portuguese that by relying on the Japanese, and especially by raising them from childhood, they were raising tigers – meaning the practice would ultimately lead to Macau’s demise.¹⁸ Chinese panic culminated in 1613, when the provincial admiral (*hǎidào*) of Canton, Yú Ānxìng, ordered the expulsion of 98 enslaved Japanese from the enclave.¹⁹ The following year, 123 more people were sent back to Japan.²⁰ Chinese sources, however, do not necessarily agree. The *Jiènxíálóu wénjí* (The Collected Works of Jièn Xiálóu) counts more than two hundred enslaved individuals being surrendered by the Portuguese in 1614 to the Ming authorities, while the *Kāngxī Xiāngshān Xiànzhì* (The Kāngxī Era Xiāngshān County Gazetteer) confirms the previously mentioned number of 98 expelled Japanese.²¹

Back in Japan, a different expulsion took place that same year. In 1614, the Tokugawa Bakufu decided to expel all Christians and missionaries from Japan, with many refugees sailing to Manila and Macau. The event marked a complete change in the profile of the Japanese entering the Luso-Chinese enclave, which up to that point comprised mainly enslaved Japanese.²² The Cantonese authorities addressed the increasingly tense situation by enacting a five-article code for Macau, which included a prohibition on enslaved Japanese in Macau and a clause forbidding Japanese children to be raised in the city.²³ It is unclear, however, how the decision affected the arriving refugees. Two years later, *hǎidào* Yú Ānxìng sent a stone tablet with the 1614 code to the city, showing the issue was still of deep concern to the Ming administrators.²⁴

Due to their fragile situation in the enclave, Portuguese authorities were keen to observe their hosts’ decisions. The law closed the door on the open slave trade between Japan and Macau, consigning subsequent transactions to smuggling. Portuguese chronicler António Bocarro recorded that the people of Macau reacted cautiously to the enactment of the maritime code. In an attempt to distinguish

18 Kong, “Mindai ni okeru Makao”: 495. The comparison was a reference to a phrase coined in Simā Qiān’s *Shǐjì* (The Records of the Grand Historian), which claimed that “to raise tigers is to invite suffering.” The expression became commonplace in East Asia, appearing in the *Hànshū* (*Book of Han*, finished in 111 AD), the *Tàipíng Yùlǎn* (*Imperial Reader*, compiled between 977 and 983), and even in the fourteenth-century Japanese historical epic *Taiheiki*. Jesuits in Japan included the phrase in their 1603–1604 Japanese-Portuguese dictionary.

19 Dai Yixuan, *Míngshǐ, Fólǎngjīchuán, Jiānzhèng* (Beijing: China Social Science Press, 1984): 99.

20 Kong, “Mindai ni okery Makao”: 495–96.

21 Tang, *Setting Off*: 114–15.

22 Tang, *Setting Off*: 98.

23 Kong, “Mindai ni okeru Makao”: 496; António Bocarro, *Década 13 da História da Índia, Parte II*, ed. Rodrigo José de Lima Felner (Lisbon: Typographia da Academia Real das Ciências, 1876): 724–25; Takase Kōichirō, *Monsūn Monjo to Nihon – Jūnana Seiki Porutogaru Kōmonjo Shū* (Tokyo: Yagi Shoten, 2006): 284.

24 JapSin 17, 19a–19bv; Tang, *Setting Off*: 116, 122–25. See also Tang Kaijian and Zhang Zhongpeng, “Míngcháo Yěshìrén duì Àomén Púrén de Tàidù, Cèlüè jí Liúbiàn,” *Journal of Macau Studies Quarterly* 3 (2012): 96.

themselves from the bellicose Japanese and convince the Ming authorities that there was no alliance between the two parties, the Portuguese drew attention to the skirmish they had had with merchants from Japan a few years earlier, during the incident that became known as the ‘affair of the Madre de Deus’.²⁵ Bocarro chronicles how three Chinese fishing vessels with Japanese and Fujianese merchants arrived secretly in the Portuguese port in 1608. The Japanese on board were merchants who had survived the shipwreck of their vermilion-seal ship, a commercial vessel with special authorization by the Tokugawa Bakufu to sail overseas. Imposed in 1604, the vermilion-seal system prevented ships from freely leaving the archipelago for trading purposes. Returning from Southeast Asia, the shipwrecked vessel belonged to Arima Harunobu, a Christian warlord from southern Japan who despite his declared faith had a difficult relationship with the Portuguese. When the residents of Macau tried to arrest the castaway Japanese, a brawl broke out – the fracas ended with deaths on both sides. In retaliation, when Portuguese captain André Pessoa tried to leave the port of Nagasaki in January 1610 with the *Madre de Deus*, he was attacked by Arima forces and sunk. Referring to the enmity resulting from the incident, Macau Portuguese defended themselves against accusations of affiliation with the Japanese, arguing they were also afraid of a Japanese rebellion in the enclave. As for those expelled in 1613 and 1614, the enclave residents claimed that the enslaved Japanese had not been brought to Macau by the Portuguese. They also alleged that the only Japanese left in the port were ‘casados, mulheres e filhos e gente de serviço’ (residents, wives, children, and servants). The Portuguese also told the Ming authorities that they, too, had decided to disallow Japanese people from boarding their ships or residing in Macau. Furthermore, they accused Chinese merchants of bringing Japanese people to Macau, claiming the solution was for the Ming to ban Chinese vessels from making the crossing to Japan and bring Japanese slaves to Macau.²⁶ It is unclear to what extent the Portuguese defence is to be believed, but one can surely appreciate their attempt to seize on recent developments as proof of their disassociation with the Japanese and to reduce the Chinese presence in the China-Japan trade.

Kōng Yǐng argues that the small number of Japanese expelled in 1613 and 1614 suggests that the Ming government understood that this population lived peacefully

25 For more on the case, see Charles Ralph Boxer, “The affair of the Madre de Deus,” in *Papers on Portuguese, Dutch, and Jesuit Influences in 16th- and 17th-Century Japan: Writings of Charles Ralph Boxer*, ed. Michael Moscato (Washington, DC: University Publications of America, 1979): 4–94; Charles Ralph Boxer, ‘*Antes quebrar que torcer*’ ou *Pundonor Português em Nagasaqui, 3–6 de Janeiro de 1610* (Macau: Imprensa Nacional, 1950); Boxer, *The Christian Century*: 487. According to Japanese sources, the incident was the catalyst for the Portuguese adopting the smaller *galeotas* instead of the larger galleon ships. See Junshin Joshi Tanki Daigaku and Nagasaki Chihō Bunkashi Kenkyūjo, ed., *Nagasaki Jikkai, Kaban Yōgen* (Nagasaki: Junshin Joshi Tanki Daigaku, 1987): 40.

26 Bocarro, *Década 13*: 730–31. Boxer, “The Affair”: 50–53. Boxer, *The Christian Century*: 270.

in Macau. This would also explain the non-violent methods used to reduce the group's size.²⁷ Tang Kaijian, however, contends that only enslaved people who were surrendered by their masters were expelled; those who had wives and children in Macau, or enslaved people over whom the Portuguese claimed ownership were allowed to stay. This would be indicative of the success of the Portuguese defence.²⁸ Decades later, the decrease of enslaved Japanese was obvious. By the late 1630s, the majority of enslaved men in Macau was comprised of Black Africans. A contemporary observer describes the preference for Black Africans as due to Portuguese preconceptions regarding their strength, pugnacity, and usefulness as bodyguards, echoing the view held by Europeans in previous decades regarding the Japanese. By that time, most of the Japanese living in the port were described as Christian refugees rather than enslaved people.²⁹

3 The Tokugawa Moment

On the other side of the East China Sea, the Tokugawa Bakufu cemented its authority after the victory at the Siege of Osaka in 1615, when the last members of the Toyotomi clan were killed and all remaining resistance to the emerging power eliminated. Recasting Hideyoshi's policies in new terms, the now-strengthened shogunate enacted laws forbidding various practices of human trafficking and regulated practices of limited-term servitude, possibly as a means to secure enough labour locally. Traditionally, Japanese scholarship indicates a 1616 law as the earliest prohibition against Japanese slavery enacted by the Bakufu. The text forbade the enslavement of human beings and human trafficking. These prohibitions must not, however, be taken at face value. Cases such as the one that opened this chapter show that perpetual bondage was still a possibility, although it now depended heavily on the consent of local authorities. At the same time, these restrictions incentivized the widespread use of limited-time labour contracts.³⁰

Earlier cases of hired labour involved long periods of labour that became *de facto* bondage for life. In order to avoid this, the same law put a limit of three years to the span a *hōkōnin* or temporary servant could be hired. The law was re-enacted

²⁷ Kong, "Mindai ni okeru Makao": 504.

²⁸ Tang, *Setting Off*: 119.

²⁹ Charles Ralph Boxer, *Macau na Época da Restauração (Macao Three Hundred Years Ago)* (Lisbon: Fundação Oriente, 1993): 73.

³⁰ Sekiguchi Hiroo, "Edo Bakufu Jinshin Baibai Kinrei Kenkyū no Seika to Kadai," in *Nihon Chiiki Shakai no Rekishi to Minzoku*, ed. Kanagawa Daigaku Nihon Keizaishi Kenkyūkai (Tokyo: Yūzankaku, 2003): 135–53; Sekiguchi Hiroo, "Edo Bakufu no Jinshin Baibai Kinrei wo Megutte," *Rekishi Minzoku Shiryōgaku Kenkyū* 24 (2019): 231–63; Sekiguchi Hiroo, *Kinsei Sonraku no Ryōiki to Mibun* (Tokyo: Yamakawa Kōbunkan, 2021): 124–30.

in 1618 and 1619, suggesting that the Bakufu had a hard time enforcing it.³¹ In January 30, 1620, the Bakufu decreed a new, more detailed regulation on human trafficking, posting it on wooden boards all over Japan. It specifically addressed acts such as selling kidnapped people, profiting from selling people who had been previously purchased, selling one's own children, brokering the sale of slaves and hiring temporary servants for abusively long periods. This law was referenced and repeated numerous times and, according to Tanno Isao, it was one of the most important pieces of legislation prohibiting human trafficking of the Tokugawa Bakufu.³² Later, in 1625, the limit was changed to ten years, in order to deal with a famine crisis and labour shortage, although it was not uncommon to have servants hired for ten or even twenty years.³³ Eventually, the restriction would be lifted altogether by the end of the century.³⁴

Until the 1616 law, both perpetually enslaved Japanese and those temporarily subjected to servitude contracts could be legally transported overseas. That was, of course, in spite of the 1598 Jesuit decision to excommunicate slave traders.³⁵ In 1616, however, Japanese slave traders came under pressure from the prohibition. Meanwhile, bonded people under limited-time contracts, who could be hired for only three years, were unable or unwilling to cross the ocean for long journeys across the globe due to these limits.³⁶ The lack of reactions from the part of foreigners in Japan at the time, however, suggests that there was no noticeable change for the Japanese-European slave trade. About three years later, however, things started to change. According to a 1619 report written in the Philippines, some Japanese in Manila declared they had absconded from their archipelago, and if discovered they would be summarily executed. Takase Kōichirō understands the account given by the Japanese as a reference to some sort of prohibition against Japanese people being taken away from Japan to be used in piracy.³⁷ As no Bakufu law from this period makes mention of such restriction, it could be a local decree, imposed either by the lord of the domain the Japanese were originally from, or by magistrates in Nagasaki.

31 Maki, *Kinsei Nihon no Jinshin Baibai*: 51, 57, 104; Isao Tanno, "Edo Jidai no Hōkōnin Seido to Nihonteki Kan'yō Kankō," *Kokusai Keiei Ronshū* 41 (2011): 60.

32 Tanno, "Edo Jidai no Hōkōnin Seido": 60.

33 Maki, *Kinsei Nihon no Jinshin Baibai*: 58–60; Tanno, "Edo Jidai no Hōkōnin Seido": 61.

34 Japanese scholarship suggests that lifting the ten-year limit for temporary servants by the end of the century aimed at allowing the trading of enslaved children, such as Gyūnosuke in the case at the beginning of this chapter. Sekiguchi, "Edo Bakufu Jinshin Baibai": 135, 144.

35 Ehalt, "Jesuits and the Problem of Slavery": 463–82. Sousa, *The Portuguese Slave Trade*: 513–22.

36 The Japanese-European slave trade was very much based on negotiations between hired and hiring parties. See, for instance, the refusal of the parents of a boy in Hirado in 1613 to allow him being rehired by an Englishman on the grounds that the European 'would continually be beating him'. *Letters Received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East*, vol. 2, 1613–1615 (London: Sampson Low, Marston & Company, 1897): 22–23.

37 Takase Kōichirō, *Kirishitan Jidai no Bunka to Shosō* (Tokyo: Yagi Shoten, 2001): 113–15.

Soon after, the Bakufu decided to address the issue directly. In 1621, the shōgun forbade Japanese persons from leaving the country. Not coincidentally, Japanese scholarship sets the end of Japanese emigration – forced or not – to this date.³⁸ Indeed, for European merchants based in Japan, this was the most consequential legal action by the Tokugawa Bakufu against the trade of Japanese persons with foreigners. In September of 1621, English merchant Richard Cocks wrote that the *daimyō* of Hirado, Matsura Takanobu, called upon the Dutch and the English to inform them of the new law. According to Cocks’ diary, they were instructed that the Bakufu had completely banned foreigners from procuring enslaved Japanese. Specifically, they were not allowed to ‘buy any slaves, either men or woamen [sic], [or] to send them out of the cuntrey [sic]’, on neither English or Dutch ships.³⁹

The Dutch were also caught by surprise by the decision. Captain Jacques Specx, based at the Dutch trading factory Hirado at the time, claimed the law was the result of Portuguese lobby, in an attempt to hinder other Europeans. In the previous year, Specx said, the Portuguese had visited the shōgun Tokugawa Hidetada to ask for restrictions on commercial activities by the Dutch and the English in Japan. The resulting law included the ban on slave trading not because of good-willed Portuguese, but because Hidetada himself was, according to Specx, afraid the Japanese were dying in foreign wars. The Dutch captain then explained he had already asked the head of the Dutch factory numerous times to establish a system of licenses for the export of enslaved Japanese, but his appeals met deaf ears. Specx’s translation of the law indicates that Chinese junks were also targeted, thus making it virtually impossible to legally transport slaves out of Japan.⁴⁰

The Portuguese in Southeast Asia received news of the decision through letters sent by Jesuits in Japan. On February 22, 1622, a report by Malacca-resident Domingos da Fonseca described how the Japanese ‘king’ had ordered that no Japanese should be allowed to embark on Dutch vessels, and that this decision was to be publicly displayed on tablets. This, of course, suggests that the new law was announced through wooden boards across the archipelago. The law also determined Japanese were not to ‘lend [the Dutch] money or fabrics or give them ammunitions or food-stuffs to take out of the Kingdom’. According to Fonseca, Jesuits had also reported that violators of the new law were being crucified in Japan.⁴¹

38 Iwao Seiichi, *Shoku Nanyō Nihon-machi no Kenkyū* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1987): 9–10; Katō Eiichi, “Sakoku to Bakuhansei Kokka,” in *Kōza Nihon Kinseishi 2: Sakoku*, ed. Katō Eiichi and Yamada Tadao (Tokyo: Yūhikaku, 1981): 77–78.

39 Richard Cocks, *Diary of Richard Cocks, Cape-Merchant in the English Factory in Japan, 1615–1622*, vol. 2, ed. Edward Maunde Thompson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010): 191.

40 *Hirado Shōkan, Igrisu Shōkan Nikki – Hekigan no Mita Kinsei no Nihon to Sakoku he no Michi*, ed. Nagazumi Yōko and Takeda Mariko (Tokyo: Soshiete, 1981): 26.

41 Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal, Cod. 11410, f. 95.

Even though Cocks, Specx and Fonseca seem to share a slightly different understanding of specifics of the law, they were all referring to the same Bakufu decision. The original Japanese text of the legislation reveals that Tokugawa Hidetada's anti-slave trade policy was a continuation of Tokugawa Ieyasu's policies, which aimed at maintaining the conditions that allowed trade with the Portuguese and the Chinese in Nagasaki.⁴² Japanese historian Nagazumi Yōko understood this law as an attempt on the part of the Japanese central authority to make it clear for all involved parties – the Portuguese, the Dutch, the English, the Spanish, the Chinese, and the Japanese – that the shōgun's authority extended to all foreigners in the archipelago and surrounding seas.⁴³ Nagazumi believes, however, that the Bakufu was favouring Portuguese and Spanish merchants over other foreigners, such as the Dutch, thus hinting that the former would not be affected by such a provision.

It is difficult to subscribe to Nagazumi's reading since the first and second articles do not name the Dutch and the English as specific targets of the prohibition against the export of enslaved Japanese. Rather, following Richard Cocks' diary, the rules were to be followed by all foreigners. Even though two of the five articles of the law – a restriction on piracy and an order to investigate suspicious cases – had the Dutch and the English as their object, the other three were not aimed at specific groups. So, why did Specx write that the prohibition had the Dutch, the English and the Chinese as its target? One must not forget that the Dutch captain sat down to pen his report while living in Hirado, where these were the three main groups of foreign merchants active in the port. For that reason, this law in fact reinforced previous determinations – the prohibition against human trafficking and restrictions to temporary servitude – while making clear the consequences of such a decision regarding the export of labour and the limits to foreign access to Japanese servants.

⁴² See Nakamura Tadashi, "Hirado Matsura Shiryō Hakubutsukan Shozō 'Shinshutsu Hōsho, Gonaisho Mokuroku' no Sakusei," in *Okinawa no Rekishi Jōhō Kenkyū* (Tokyo, 1998). Available at <http://www.tulips.tsukuba.ac.jp/limedio/dlam/B95/B952215/1/vol02/pdf/3701.pdf> (accessed 21 November 2020).

⁴³ *Hirado Shōkan, Igrisu Shōkan Nikki*: 28–29. In contemporary Japanese thought, legal jurisdiction extended to all those who held a permanent residence in the country. It also meant that the very concept of 'Japanese' was less bound to race or ethnicity and had more to do with one's permanent residence in the country. Thus, foreign-born people, even foreign-looking Europeans, if residing in Japan, were also subject to legislation addressed to Japanese. Matsui Yōko, "Jendaa kara Miru Kinsei Nihon no Taigai Kankei," in *Nhon no Taigai Kankei 6: Kinseiteki Sekai no Seijuku*, ed. Arano Yasunori, Ishii Masatoshi, and Murai Shōsuke (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2010): 93–121; Yokota Fuyuhiko, "Kinsei no Mibunsei," in *Iwanami Kōza Nihon Rekishi Dai 10 Kan, Kinsei 1*, ed. Ōtu Tōru et al. (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten): 285–88.

4 Closing the Door

The Japanese authorities had severely restricted their subjects' freedom to cross the sea, but there was always the possibility of smuggling men and women out of the country. Takase Kōichirō reminds us that even after these prohibitions there were still Japanese people going out of the archipelago on board of the Bakufu-approved vermilion-seal ships. While overseas, Japanese people could still be dragooned into some form of bondage.⁴⁴ Since the 1621 law discussed previously, it had not been possible anymore for foreigners to legally purchase enslaved Japanese and take them out of the country. Soon, a series of incidents involving Japanese ships overseas would make things worse: in 1628, a vermilion-seal ship was sunk in Siam by the Spaniards. Since Japanese people knew that Portuguese and Spaniards were ruled by the same king due to the Iberian Union, the Bakufu treated them as a single group. In retaliation, Japanese authorities confiscated the cargo of a couple of Portuguese ships in Nagasaki, as well as halting relations with the Iberians until 1630. Meanwhile, while building a factory in Taiwan, the Dutch decided to tax Japanese ships coming to the island. The ensuing conflict made the Bakufu suspend its relations with the Dutch between 1628 and 1632. Because of these and other incidents, the Bakufu realized it could not protect its vermilion-seal ships overseas, despite a provision often included in the vessels' documents. To avoid the obligation, it changed the system in 1631, when the permits started being signed by high-ranking officials of the government – elders or *rōjū* and the Nagasaki magistrate or *Nagasaki bugyō* – rather than the shōgun. Nevertheless, Japanese ships could not avoid the crossfire between the Dutch and the Portuguese. In a response to this conundrum, the Bakufu reformed the Nagasaki administration in 1633. Until then, Nagasaki magistrates were always chosen from among powerful local lords, known by the label *tozama daimyō*. The central administration decided then to appoint lords in direct service of the shogunate, or *hatamoto*. Each time a pair of *bugyō* was nominated, they would be given new general laws to rule Nagasaki, thus making the administration and its rules more reactive to present circumstances.⁴⁵

In 1633, the code given to the first two *hatamoto* appointed to administer the port, Imamura Masanaga and Soga Hisasuke, determined that no ships, except official vessels with permits enacted by the government, could go overseas. The instructions also included provisions determining that any Japanese secretly embarking on official ships were to be executed, and that Japanese who had gone and established a residence overseas would be killed if they attempted to return to Japan, unless they came

⁴⁴ Takase, *Kirishitan Jidai*: 114.

⁴⁵ Yokota Fuyuhiko, *Nihon no Rekishi 16 – Tenka Taihei* (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 2002): 107–8.

back within five years or less after leaving the country.⁴⁶ With a total of 17 articles, the 1633 code severely restricted the chances of Japanese people to leave the archipelago. The same rules concerning Japanese leaving the country or trying to come back were given to the Ōmura clan, who ruled the area surrounding Nagasaki. The Ōmura lord was not supposed to allow Japanese to even disembark on his lands, being obliged to hand any case over to the Bakufu authorities in Nagasaki.⁴⁷ This was the beginning of the Japanese seclusion policy based on the strengthening of restrictions on trade and religion that lasted until the second half of the nineteenth century.⁴⁸

The Bakufu radically harshened its policy a couple of years later. In 1635, the passing of Japanese people beyond the country's borders was completely forbidden. The official ship system was suspended. Those attempting to leave the archipelago or trying to come back were to be unconditionally executed. Even powerful merchants with strong ties to the Bakufu who had already received permits to trade in Southeast Asia were forced to give up their plans. Dutch documents of the period show these merchants tried to lobby for less severe rules, but the Tokugawa administration was determined to not allow any exceptions. That year, four Japanese merchants who came back from overseas were executed by the authorities, while nine others were arrested in connection with this case.⁴⁹ Because of these legislative acts, Japanese communities overseas would increase only by new births and occasional arrivals from other Japanese settlements.⁵⁰ Undoubtedly, the same applies to groups of enslaved Japanese overseas, although the sporadic waves of Christian refugees expelled from Japan could contribute to altering these numbers.

Meanwhile, the Portuguese of Nagasaki were forced to move to a new artificial island, Deshima or Dejima, built in front of the city's port. All those who were not in Japan to trade were expelled. A total of 805 people were put on ships bound for Macau, including mixed-race Luso-Japanese residents of Nagasaki and Japanese serving the Portuguese in the city.⁵¹ In other words, although the Portuguese could not export enslaved Japanese, those residing in Japan were still up to the very end using hired Japanese labour. The new restrictions also prevented them from using

46 Shimizu Kōichi et al., eds., *Kinsei Nagasaki Hōsei Shiryōshū 1: Tenshō Hachinen kara Kyōhō Ganen* (Tokyo: Iwata Shoin, 2014): 148–49; Iwao Seiichi, *Nihon no Rekishi 14 – Sakoku* (Tokyo: Chūkō Bunko, 1974): 350.

47 Shimizu, *Kinsei Nagasaki*: 158.

48 Katō Eiichi, *Bakuhansei Kokka no Seiritsu to Taigai Kankei* (Tokyo: Shibunkaku Shuppan, 1998): 54. Wooden boards displayed the general rules countrywide. See Shimizu, *Kinsei Nagasaki*: 156.

49 Shimizu, *Kinsei Nagasaki*: 168; Iwao, *Nihon no Rekishi*: 350–53.

50 Murakami Naojirō, “The Japanese at Batavia in the XVIIth Century,” *Monumenta Nipponica* 2, no. 2 (1939): 358.

51 Junshin Joshi Tanki Daigaku and Nagasaki Chihō Bunkashi Kenkyūjo, eds., *Nagasaki Jikkai, Kaban Yōgen* (Nagasaki: Junshin Joshi Tanki Daigaku, 1987): 46. See also Yokota Fuyuhiko, “Konketsuji Tsuihōrei to Ijin Yūkaku no Seiritsu,” in *Ibunka Kōryūshi no Saikentō*, ed. Hirota Masaki and Yokota Fuyuhiko (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 2011): 27–96.

Japanese servants indiscriminately, even if internally. According to Iwao Seiichi, Dutch sources reveal that the new rules for the Portuguese in the artificial island prohibited them from using Japanese to hold their parasols – they could use their black servants instead, though. Portuguese were allowed to hire Japanese for other services, but could not rehire those who had worked for them before.⁵² Certainly, foreigners residing in the country had the necessary means to negotiate their ways in procuring local labour by leveraging the complexity of bondage categories in Japan.

5 Conclusion

In Michael Zeuske's classification of 'small' and 'great slaveries', the slave trading network that emerged in the mid-sixteenth century between Europeans and Japanese was one of the many small facets of what later became the hegemonic regime of the early modern period.⁵³ But despite the long history of Japanese regimes of bondage, the country is not often brought up in discussions on early modern slavery.⁵⁴ However, the history of bondage in the country, as well as its encounter with European notions of slavery – particularly colonial slavery – can be an excellent point of comparison to better understand the various uses of the concept of slavery by scholars as well as differences regarding historical process concerning labour and dependency. Following the lead of previous scholarship on Asian bondage, this chapter tried to employ these conceptual differences by adopting 'bondage' to refer to the various regimes of often unfree, coerced, subaltern or dependent labour in Asia, while reserving 'slavery' to deal with the historical regime of bondage practiced in the Mediterranean and the early modern colonial worlds.⁵⁵ From this perspective it was possible to underline the effects of East Asian legislation on local regimes of bondage and on the regional slave trade.

As a network linking Macau to Nagasaki, with various nodes spread throughout South and Southeast Asia, the Japanese-European slave trade depended on the acquiescence of both Chinese and Japanese authorities. Triggered by different reasons in the 1610s, both sides adopted policies that resulted in the gradual restriction of the alternatives available to slave traders. Sure enough, these policies did not share the same weight in the process. While Ming administrators reacted to the growing

⁵² Iwao, *Nihon no Rekishi*: 354–55.

⁵³ Michael Zeuske, "Historiography and Research Problems of Slavery and the Slave Trade in a Global-Historical Perspective," *IRSH* 57 (2012): 105–6.

⁵⁴ Japanese historiography is essential to understand these regimes. See: Isogai Fujio, *Nihon Chūsei Doreishi* (Tokyo: Azekura Shobō, 2007); and Fujiki Hisashi, *Zōhyō no Senjō: Chūsei no Yōhei to Dorei gari* (Tokyo: Asahi Shinbunsha, 2005).

⁵⁵ Gwyn Campbell, *Bondage and the Environment in the Indian Ocean World* (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018): 2.

population of enslaved Japanese in Macau by imposing restrictions on their presence in the port, the Tokugawa Bakufu was much more concerned with internal forms of bondage, human trafficking, and the maintenance of its agricultural production. The little attention the shōgun gave to the slave trade resulted in few legal measures taken towards curbing the departure of Japanese men and women on board European vessels, with most of the restrictions to this network being owed to secondary effects of internal policies. Repression of human trafficking limited the options for Europeans procuring bonded Japanese, contracts with shorter periods of bondage meant greater difficulty in traversing longer distances with those hired from the archipelago, while restrictions to the departure of people from Japan meant all traded enslaved individuals had to be smuggled. With the strengthening of enforcing authorities in Nagasaki in the seventeenth century, European traders had little to no option when trying to take hired servants out of the country.⁵⁶ By the late 1630s, when smuggling became virtually impossible, the Portuguese and the Spanish were expelled and forbidden to return to Japan. The harsh 1635 prohibition against the departure of Japanese people meant that not even Dutch ships could carry them overseas. Under these conditions, a complete collapse of the network was unavoidable.

6 Reflection

The history of early modern slavery in Japan, as a particularly colonial regime of bondage, did not end with thunderous abolitionism. Instead of a purported moral concern with the well-being of enslaved individuals, whether caused by the treatment they received or their being taken away from their country, all signs point to mostly economic motives behind the measures that eventually led to the end of the Japanese-European slave trade. For that reason, the whole process can only be properly appreciated by considering all of the local historical actors and polities involved.

In this volume, James Fujitani argued that the Portuguese colonial enterprise was characterized both by exploitative imperialism and intercultural hybridism. The reflections presented in this chapter, however, highlight the importance of the legal regimes that informed the trading networks born out of the encounter between imported (European) and local (Asian) notions of coercion, dependence and labour. By focusing on the series of events that led to the end of one specific arm of the early modern global slave trade, the focus of this chapter fell on the limits imposed on the general movement of individuals targeted by slavers. Considering that European

⁵⁶ On the development of the Nagasaki authorities and their enforcing powers in the seventeenth century and beyond, see Yasutaka Hiroaki, *Kinsei Nagasaki Shihō Seido no Kenkyū* (Kyoto: Shibunkaku Shuppan, 2010).

merchants could not care less about how local Asian societies such as the Chinese and the Japanese defined local regimes of bondage, their activities were mostly informed by legal frameworks determined by local powers. In that sense, the case of Japan is similar to the case put forward by Vinil Paul's chapter on Kerala, where people from all social backgrounds could also be enslaved and traded by Europeans. The way things developed from then led to encounters such as those described by Lisa Hellman in this book. But despite being subjected to a complex matrix of different jurisdictions and legal frameworks, bonded Japanese, regardless of the social status they retained in Japan before or after being hired or procured by Europeans, were subsequently seen as enslaved persons once outside of the country. That was particularly true in colonial societies, where local powers put them into the category of slave under its many banners, such as *moços*, *cativos*, and *bichos*.

In the end, Japanese anti-emigration legislation was much more significant for the collapse of the trade and the eventual end of Japanese slavery than any European anti-slavery law. This conclusion highlights the need to better understand how local legal frameworks and economic dynamics shaped trading networks often seen as subjected to the authority and wons of European colonial enterprises. Unarguably, that was the case of the Japanese-European slave trade – squeezed between Ming suspicion and Tokugawa repression, it gradually faded away into the mists of history.

Amal Shahid

Famine Labour and Coercion in Relief-based Public Works Construction in Colonial India in the Late Nineteenth Century

1 Introduction

Post-abolition literature on various forms of slave-like labour in India has concentrated on mainly indentured labour on tea plantations and in island colonies abroad.¹ Debates on abolitionism in India, according to Alessandro Stanziani, have included comparisons and differences between chattel slavery in the US and ‘mild’ forms of slavery in India.² Proletarianism among workers and wage labour is also seen as slavery in a different form. Labour historians of India have attempted to highlight the presence of other co-existing regimes of coerced labour within the subcontinent post-abolition, such as convict labour, industrial labour, casual and nomadic labour, and indentured labour.³ This chapter adds to the corpus of studies that bring out the various forms of

1 Some examples include: Madhavi Kale, *Fragments of Empire: Capital, Slavery, and Indian Indentured Labour Migration in the British Caribbean*, Critical Histories (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998). Clare Anderson, “Convicts and Coolies: Rethinking Indentured Labour in the Nineteenth Century,” *Slavery & Abolition* 30, no. 1 (2009): 93–109. Amit Kumar Mishra, “Indian Indentured Labourers in Mauritius: Reassessing the ‘New System of Slavery’ vs Free Labour Debate,” *Studies in History* 25, no. 2 (2009): 229–51. Rana P. Behal, *One Hundred Years of Servitude: Political Economy of Tea Plantations in Colonial Assam* (New Delhi: Tulika Books, 2014). Rana P. Behal and Prabhu P. Mohapatra, “‘Tea and Money versus Human Life’: The Rise and Fall of the Indenture System in the Assam Tea Plantations 1840–1908,” *Journal of Peasant Studies* 19, no. 3–4 (1992): 142–72. Agricultural bondage has been covered by Benedicte Hjejle, “Slavery and Agricultural Bondage in South India in the Nineteenth Century,” *Scandinavian Economic History Review* 15, no. 1–2 (1967): 71–126.

2 Alessandro Stanziani, *Labor on the Fringes of Empire: Voice, Exit and the Law*, Palgrave Series in Indian Ocean World Studies (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018): 6.

3 Aparna Vaidik, “Working an Island Colony: Convict Labour Regime in the Colonial Andamans, 1858–1921,” in *Labour Matters: Towards Global Histories: Studies in Honour of Sabyasachi Bhattacharya*, ed. Marcel van der Linden and Prabhu P. Mohapatra (New Delhi: Tulika Books, 2009). Clare Anderson, “British India, 1789–1939,” in *A Global History of Convicts and Penal Colonies*, ed. Clare Anderson (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018). Chitra Joshi, *Lost Worlds: Indian Labour and Its Forgotten Histories* (Delhi: Permanent Black; Orient Longman, 2003). Gyan Prakash, *Bonded Histories: Genealogies of Labour Servitude in Colonial India*, Cambridge South Asian Studies 44 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990). G. Balachandran, “Making Coolies, (Un)Making Workers:

Note: I am grateful to the Department of International History and Politics at the Graduate Institute, and the Swiss National Science Foundation doc.mobility grant for their financial support during the year this paper was edited.

coercion in labour regimes that resulted after slavery was abolished. It attempts to foreground the utilisation of cheap labour, readily available due to famine vulnerability, for colonial projects.

This chapter will use the case of famine public works in the North-Western Provinces (NWP) of India in the late nineteenth century as an entry point to examine how colonial famine policies shaped coercive conditions for labour. Public works, in the form of infrastructures such as roads, railways, and irrigation canals, occupied a central role in shaping the colonial state's attempt to develop new systems of extraction and control over resources, while legitimising its presence in the colonies. Colonial projects, whether in agriculture or industry, employed large numbers of labourers without whom these projects could not be executed or reach their fruition. In order to establish better infrastructure to facilitate trade in the subcontinent or obtain raw material from agricultural areas, there was an expansion in the construction of roads, railways and the irrigation system, collectively called public works or infrastructures of public utility. Public works were a major employer of casual workers since employment on these projects lasted for a short duration. Moreover, their construction during the nineteenth century had two major interdependent motives: to facilitate trade and allow development in the 'traditional economy' of India, and to protect the population from famines. The East India Company invested in the construction of roads, canals, bridges, and water tanks. India's railway system expanded from 1853 onwards, when the first railway line in India commenced⁴ and the Public Works Department (PWD) was formally created in 1854.

Famines were not unknown to the Indian subcontinent; Markus Vink shows how exports of slaves increased during droughts and famines in the 17th century from the Coromandel coast.⁵ In fact, as Samantha Nicolaas and Rômulo da Silva Ehalt also show in their contributions to this volume, famine conditions exacerbated the process

'Globalizing' Labour in the Late-19th and Early-20th Centuries," *Journal of Historical Sociology* 24, no. 3 (2011): 266–96. Sabyasachi Bhattacharya and Jan Lucassen, eds., *Workers in the Informal Sector: Studies in Labour History, 1800–2000* (Delhi: Macmillan India Ltd, 2005). Ian J. Kerr, "Labour Control and Labour Legislation in Colonial India: A Tale of Two Mid-Nineteenth Century Acts," *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies* 27, no. 1 (2004): 7–25. M. Anderson, "India 1858–1950: The Illusion of Free Labour," in *Masters, Servants, and Magistrates in Britain and the Empire, 1562–1955*, ed. Douglas Hay and Paul Craven (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2005). Ashutosh Kumar, *Coolies of the Empire: Indentured Indians in the Sugar Colonies, 1830–1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017). Nitin Varma, *Coolies of Capitalism: Assam Tea and the Making of Coolie Labour, Work in Global and Historical Perspective 2* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017).

⁴ John Hurd, "Railways," in *The Cambridge Economic History of India*, vol. 2, c. 1757 – c. 1970, ed. Dharma Kumar, Meghnad Desai, and Tapan Raychaudhuri (Hyderabad: Orient Longman; Cambridge University Press, 1991).

⁵ Markus Vink. "'The World's Oldest Trade': Dutch Slavery and Slave Trade in the Indian Ocean in the Seventeenth Century," *Journal of World History* 14, no. 2 (2003): 131–77.

of enslavement and increased the amount of the slave trade. International and internal migration as well as the selling of children remained features of famines as the frequency of droughts and scarcity conditions increased in the second half of the nineteenth century.⁶ In an attempt to tackle the issue of recurring famines, the Famine Commission met in the late 1870s to compile the Famine Codes by the 1880s, which attempted to reduce mortality and unrest that resulted from droughts, scarcities, and famines.⁷ These codes prescribed the steps to be taken by the provincial administrations once famine was imminent. Putting affected populations to work on the construction of roads, railways and canals was borne out of the assumption that famine poverty was a result of a lack of wages rather than food.⁸ As a result, this policy established a closer relationship of the colonial administration with labour management.⁹ Although inspired by the Poor Laws in England,¹⁰ as well as drawing upon the experience of the Irish potato famine (1845–1849), the famine relief policy in India emphasized colonial difference with its ‘subjects’.¹¹ Given the aspirations to reduce the costs of relief provision, the famine administration attempted to closely monitor the labour extracted from the famine-affected population.¹² The colonial famine administration in the provinces consisted of British officials and some appointed ‘respectable’ Indians.

The aim of this chapter is to investigate how stressors such as famines impact histories of wage labour and coercive labour practices. To show how famines and famine policy created conditions for labour exploitation and coercion, this chapter

6 Famine relief strategies were also employed under the East India Company rule. See Sanjay Sharma, *Famine, Philanthropy, and the Colonial State: North India in the Early Nineteenth Century*, SOAS Studies on South Asia (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001).

7 See Lance Brennan, “The Development of the Famine Code,” in *Famine as a Geographical Phenomenon*, GeoJournal Library 1, ed. Bruce Currey and Graeme Hugo (Dordrecht: D. Reidel Pub. Co, 1984).

8 S. Ambirajan, *Classical Political Economy and British Policy in India*, Cambridge South Asian Studies 21 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978). David Hall-Matthews, *Peasants, Famine and the State in Colonial Western India* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005). Mike Davis, *Late Victorian Holocausts: El Niño Famines and the Making of the Third World* (New York: Verso, 2017).

9 See Amal Shahid, “Re’constructing’ Informality: Famine Labour in Late 19th Century Colonial North India,” *Journal of Labour and Society* 24 (2021): 16–43.

10 In particular, the New Poor Law of 1834 in the Victorian era. Sharma, *Famine, Philanthropy, and the Colonial State*: 140.

11 Partha Chatterjee discusses the ‘rule of colonial difference’ that impeded the establishment of modern regimes in the colonies. Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Post-colonial Histories*, Princeton Studies in Culture/Power/History (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993). See also Peter Gray, “Famine and Land in Ireland and India, 1845–1880: James Caird and the Political Economy of Hunger,” *The Historical Journal* 49, no. 1 (2006): 193–215.

12 I have discussed wages and productivity for famine labour in: Amal Shahid, “Wage Payments and Labour Productivity: the 1896–7 Famine in North Western Provinces and Oudh”, in *Wage Earners in India 1500–1900: Regional Approaches in an International Context*, ed. Jan Lucassen and Radhika Seshan (New Delhi: Sage Publishing, 2022).

will draw upon sources from the NWP and Oudh, one of the most populous and fertile areas in the subcontinent that generated high revenues from grain and commercial crops, and hence attracted high investment in public works. The chapter focuses on the late nineteenth century, when two major famines occurred in the subcontinent between 1896–7 and 1899–1901. First, the paper will outline the different regimes of public works construction and the co-existing forms of famine relief. Next, the chapter discusses how famine public works were organised, followed by an examination of control over labour and discipline in work. The final section concludes with reflections on famine labour within histories of coercive labour.

2 Public Works Construction and Famine Relief: A Background

Chattel slavery and indentured labour provide a violent picture of coercion, also involving pecuniary threats. However, coercion of labour can also occur in a non-pecuniary sense and may not involve direct physical violence. Studies on post-abolition wage labour, whether involving contracts or without agreement, have explored the use of multiple coercive ways of labour exploitation.¹³ ‘Coercion’ may imply a lack of ‘freedom’ to choose, or a notion of freedom and development as adopted in colonial British ideologies. The colonial state saw the performance of labour for its imperial goals as having redeeming qualities, also implying a natural movement towards freedom for labourers through discipline inculcated by labour. The idea of a linear progression from being bonded in ‘traditional’ ties to ‘freedom’ of movement for labourers enabled by colonial projects not only undermined dependent relations in the Indian society, but also ruptured agrarian relations in India due to imposition of colonial policies based on Eurocentric models.¹⁴ Thus, the empire that espoused liberty and civilisation drew its political and industrial power from slave and wage labour.¹⁵

For famine labour, the association of labour with industriousness and rational development, an echo of the Poor Laws in Britain, formed the basis of employing

¹³ For instance, see Robert J. Steinfeld, *Coercion, Contract, and Free Labour in the Nineteenth Century*, Cambridge Historical Studies in American Law and Society (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001). Gunther Peck, *Reinventing Free Labour: Padrones and Immigrant Workers in the North American West, 1880–1930* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

¹⁴ Gyan Prakash shows how the colonial discourse represents history as a progression from unfreedom to freedom, whereas in the case of Kamias, identity was derived from the opposition it posed to free labour. See Gyan Prakash, *Bonded Histories: 2–3*.

¹⁵ Padraic Scanlan, *Slave Empire: How Slavery Made Modern Britain* (London: Robinson, 2020).

vulnerable members of the famine-affected population on construction work.¹⁶ Moreover, as mentioned earlier, the colonial administration insisted that there was no lack of food but a lack of wages to buy it, and hence the grain trade should not be interfered with; interference was viewed as a market distortion. However, the land revenue systems imposed in British India have been linked to peasant indebtedness, increasing cash crop production, and thereby intensifying the impact of famines.¹⁷ The introduction of land revenue systems as well as an increase in trade diminished the capacity of local landlords to provide personal loans.¹⁸ Many merchants engaged in speculative grain trading which decreased buffer stocks. Furthermore, due to cost considerations during famines, minimal relief was provided so that when the harvest season resumed, the labourers would return to their respective occupations. Employment on famine relief works thus represented two motivations of the colonial state: to save lives given the increasing international attention to famine mortality in India but not to reduce poverty, and to build irrigation systems and railways with famine labour to protect against the incidents of famine and to provide relief.

3 Construction of Public Works: An Overview

The term ‘public works’ signified construction works of permanent public utility.¹⁹ Public works became an employer of casual labour on a large scale, attracting investment from private companies and fulfilling the military and economic needs of the colonial state. The patron-client relationships that existed in rural areas generally broke down when famine occurred, hence the labourers dependent on landlords for work found themselves without support from traditional systems during such severe conditions.²⁰ One example of this was the *jajmani* system, that is, a reciprocal system between upper and lower caste families in the village where the

16 Shahid, “Wage Payments and Labour Productivity”; Shahid, “Re’constructing’ Informality.”

17 The Drain of Wealth argument advocated by contemporary writers linked the causes of famines to British economic policies: Dadabhai Naoroji, *Poverty and Un-British Rule in India* (London: Swan Sonnenschein & co., 1901). Romesh Chunder Dutt, *The Economic History of India in the Victorian Age*, vol. 2, *From the Accession of Queen Victoria to the Commencement of the Twentieth Century* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench Trubner, 1904). Romesh Chunder Dutt, *The Economic History of India under Early British Rule*, vol. 1, *From the Rise of British Power in 1757 to the Accession of Queen Victoria in 1837* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench Trubner, 1902).

18 Dutt, *The Economic History of India under Early British Rule*.

19 Ravi Ahuja, *Pathways of Empire: Circulation, ‘Public Works’, and Social Space in Colonial Orissa (c.1780–1914)*, *New Perspectives in South Asian History* 25 (Hyderabad: Orient BlackSwan, 2009): 94.

20 Paul R. Greenough, “Indian Famines and Peasant Victims: The Case of Bengal in 1943–44,” *Modern Asian Studies* 14, no. 2 (1980): 218–20.

latter performed tasks for the former in exchange for ‘rewards’ such as grain.²¹ Due to this, and the inability of landlords to invest in construction of public works or support subordinate classes during famines, wage workers had fewer reasons to stay in agriculture for work.²²

Different forms of labour regimes co-existed alongside famine labour for public works construction. The colonial state used the term ‘ordinary’ to refer to non-famine periods, in order to suggest that famines were exceptional events rather than processes with long-drawn causes. Construction of roads and of irrigation systems in ordinary times was carried out by *begar*, compulsory and unremunerated labour as part of the village system; by convicts; or by casual labour especially during non-harvest times, usually recruited through an intermediary. Convict labour was utilised for road construction as it was considered cheaper and easier to obtain than hired labour, especially in the instances where military engineers hurriedly built roads.²³ The use of convict labour declined because convict labour was more expensive due to costs of supervision, while contract labour could be obtained for much cheaper rates.²⁴ Furthermore, prisoners were considered to be less efficient and worked fewer days of the month.²⁵ The use of convict labour declined by the 1850s as its legitimacy was questioned alongside the growing liberal and utilitarian discourse.²⁶ Frequent famines from 1860s onwards expanded the pool of cheap labour for public works construction. Chitra Joshi also explores the use of hill tribes on the construction of a few roads, intended by the state to reduce the practice of *begar*; however, the mobilisation of tribute labour on mountain roads intensified *begar*.²⁷ Tribute labour far away from villages was doubly exploitative due to the lack of access to subsistence resources; yet its use continued due to its cheap cost.²⁸ Labourers on railways included artisans like carpenters, potters and blacksmiths.

21 Greenough, “Indian Famines and Peasant Victims”: 218–20. Some studies on the *jajmani* system are Simon Commander, “The Jajmani System in North India; An Examination of Its Logic and Status across Two Centuries,” *Modern Asian Studies* 17, no. 2 (1983): 283–311. Peter Mayer, “Inventing Village Tradition: The Late 19th Century Origins of the North Indian ‘Jajmani System’,” *Modern Asian Studies* 27, no. 2 (1993): 357–95.

22 Greenough, “Indian Famines and Peasant Victims”: 222.

23 Chitra Joshi, “Fettered Bodies: Labouring on Public Works in Nineteenth-Century India,” in *Labour Matters: Towards Global Histories: Studies in Honour of Sabyasachi Bhattacharya*, ed. Marcel van der Linden and Prabhu P. Mohapatra (New Delhi: Tulika Books, 2009): 8.

24 Joshi, “Fettered Bodies”.

25 Joshi, “Fettered Bodies”.

26 Joshi, “Fettered Bodies”: 13.

27 Chitra Joshi, “Public Works and the Question of Unfree Labour,” in *Labour, Coercion, and Economic Growth in Eurasia, 17th–20th Centuries*, ed. Alessandro Stanziani (Brill: Leiden, 2012): 273–87.

28 Joshi, “Public Works and the Question of Unfree Labour”: 276.

Besides being commissioned by the colonial administration or taken up by private contractors, there were also some village works which were built during non-famine periods at the cost of private individuals or communities.

During 'ordinary' times, labour for construction work included a hierarchy of workers: skilled engineers, bureaucrats, senior foremen, contractors, sub-contractors and the hired manual workers.²⁹ Even though India began to make a gradual transition to industrial capitalism from about the mid-nineteenth century, most of the workers remained unskilled. Manual labourers, contractors and gangers (foremen) were predominant in the composition of the workforce at railway construction sites. Men, women, and children were employed for manual construction work. Gendered hierarchies spilled over from family units to construction work in non-famine times, with women expected to manage household chores.³⁰ The supply of labour included the so-called 'unreliable workers' who had strong links with the village economy and power structure, and were therefore likely to abandon work when agricultural demand for work arose. On the other hand, the 'reliable' workers included the more circulatory wage labour that came to the work-site from a distance.³¹

The need to build railways in a cost-saving, 'economical' manner increased as the nineteenth century progressed, reflecting changes in the management of construction work and consequently also raising the demand for cheap labour.³² According to Ian Kerr, The added layer of Indian intermediaries implied an interaction of Indian workers with their Indian supervisors. As a result, construction workers often had extra-economic relationships with the petty contractors who commanded their labour.³³ These contracts were often confirmed by verbal agreement rather than through writing. Indian intermediaries and sub-contractors could be employed and discharged at the discretion of European engineers, but in practice dependence on them for labour procurement was essential due to fluctuating labour supply and delegating costs of supervision. The issue of cheap labour supply for public works construction was largely resolved due to famine conditions.

4 Famine Relief and Public Works

Recurring famines from the mid nineteenth century onwards led to a discussion among the British authorities, who eventually decided to form an Indian Famine Commission in the late 1870s. The Commission put forward the proposal for an

²⁹ Ian J. Kerr, *Building the Railways of the Raj, 1850–1900* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1995): 2.

³⁰ Kerr, *Building the Railways of the Raj, 1850–1900*: 89.

³¹ Kerr, *Building the Railways of the Raj, 1850–1900*: 91.

³² Kerr, *Building the Railways of the Raj, 1850–1900*: 9–10.

³³ Kerr, *Building the Railways of the Raj, 1850–1900*: 5.

Indian Famine Code to aid the mitigation of famines in India. A provisional code was formed in 1883, and later each province had its own provincial famine code. The famine policy was eventually based on certain assumptions: first, that the essential problem was a shortage of work rather than food, hence people should be given work; second, if the pay was enough, even the non-needy would come and the poor would stay longer than required, thus wages were to be kept at subsistence level; third, that relief works supervision would be under British officials; and finally, that the growth of the railway system would ensure grain imports into famine-afflicted areas and thus private trade should not be interfered in.³⁴

Besides famine public works, relief was available in other forms: kitchens set up in selected areas provided cooked food, poorhouses were established away from towns for those unable to work, and village relief was provided in homes to the 'respectable poor'. However, inequalities of class but especially caste pervaded the distribution of relief. Cooked food provided in state kitchens and poorhouses is one example. Persons already in positions of power, such as landlords, accountants, and the 'respectable poor', benefited most by either being a part of the famine administration or receiving gratuitous relief over those expected and accustomed to manual labour. Those admitted to poorhouses were subject to strict discipline: the officer in charge regulated time and work discipline for each inmate, with the expectation that some would be eventually employed on famine public works.³⁵ Thus, labouring became the main form of obtaining relief from the colonial government. The Famine Commissions noted how mortality was highest in areas where the code and famine policy had been applied too rigorously by restricting the number of people on gratuitous relief and strictly supervising outcome of tasks on relief works.³⁶

Sanjay Sharma discusses why it was public works in particular that were utilised for famine relief rather than other forms of employment.³⁷ The colonial administration felt that building infrastructure could reduce the incidence of famine. That is, railways would encourage inter-regional grain trade, and canals and tanks would increase production and protect during droughts. British officials blamed the

34 Brennan, "The Development of the Famine Code": 105.

35 See Sanjay Sharma, "Poorhouses and Gratuitous Famine Relief in Colonial North India," in *A Cultural History of Famine: Food Security and the Environment in India and Britain*, Routledge Environmental Humanities, ed. Ayesha Mukherjee (New York: Routledge, 2019). Sanjay Sharma, "Famine, Relief, and Rhetoric of Welfare in Colonial North India," in *An Economic History of Famine Resilience*, Routledge Explorations in Economic History 84, ed. Jessica Dijkman and Bas van Leeuwen (New York: Routledge, 2019).

36 Ira Klein, "When the Rains Failed: Famine, Relief, and Mortality in British India," *The Indian Economic & Social History Review* 21, no. 2 (1984): 185–214.

37 Sharma, *Famine, Philanthropy, and the Colonial State*.

lack of transportation for scarcities and famines.³⁸ Works of public utility were considered as works of charity by the colonial state.³⁹ These infrastructures also reflected its power as well as its gestures of benevolence to the population. Moreover, since the beginning of the nineteenth century, the colonial state recognised the need for better transportation for movement of military and linking of markets. Especially after the mutiny in 1857, the colonial state required better movement of the military around the subcontinent. The opening of such public works also brought the government ample revenue to repay its investments and even substantial profits. Thus, the construction process diversified, accelerating the transition to the ‘more encompassing presence of the capitalist mode of production’.⁴⁰ Public works, according to Ravi Ahuja, were also structures of political legitimacy that enabled consent among the colonised population.⁴¹ Furthermore, this was a mode of reinforcing colonial rule by allowing an increased military presence. Public works thus served three purposes: they increased and created new sources of revenue; they offered attractive interest rates for British finance and private investors; and finally, they generated a market for raw materials for trade.⁴²

The aim behind public works construction as relief work was to protect the population from famines. Therefore, the increasing frequency and intensity of famines in the latter half of the nineteenth century raises questions on the intentions and the capacity of the state. Analysing the statistics recorded for food production after the Famine Commission Report of 1881, Commander notes that, for the Doab as a whole, productivity for major crops declined over the nineteenth century.⁴³ Most of the British sources blame natural causes such as a failure of monsoons for the failure of harvest. However, in the case of the 1896–7 famine, George Buell, wrote a pamphlet in which he, pointed out:

The British Indian Government and Sir William have made the civilized world believe that the crops in these provinces [North Western Provinces and Bombay] were an utter failure, and given this as a cause for millions dying of starvation, and have appealed to the world for subscriptions from year to year to aid the sufferers, at the same time permitting millions of bushels of wheat to be exported to England for great profit.⁴⁴

38 W.H. Sleeman, *Rambles and Recollections of an Indian Official*, rev. annotated ed. by Vincent A. Smith (London, 1915): 159–60, quoted in: Sharma, *Famine, Philanthropy, and the Colonial State*: 66.

39 Sharma, *Famine, Philanthropy, and the Colonial State*: 136.

40 Kerr, *Building the Railways of the Raj, 1850–1900*: 9.

41 Ahuja, *Pathways of Empire*: 66–118.

42 Ahuja, *Pathways of Empire*: 93–4.

43 Simon Commander, “The Mechanics of Demographic and Economic Growth in Uttar Pradesh; 1800–1900,” in *India’s Historical Demography: Studies in Famine, Disease and Society*, *Collected Papers on South Asia* 8, ed. Tim Dyson (London: Curzon, 1989): 60–61.

44 George Buell, *Yearly Famines in India: Their Cause and the True Remedy* (New York: Rochester, 1900): 7.

Buell questioned not only the intention of the colonists to build a ‘false’ narrative, but also to provide relief in the form of building this infrastructure which fell short of sufficiently protecting people from famines.⁴⁵ If minimising labour costs was the objective, construction during famine times would have been more intensified than in non-famine periods. Buell thus stated that famines were profitable to the government; to build railroads and other works, the labourers demanded higher wages during non-famine times than famine periods.⁴⁶ Furthermore, he claimed that the government built ‘very little during non-famine times’, and waited until a famine started to build infrastructure, ‘in order to pay the labour two cents per day as opposed to the average nine cents, and the labourer must accept this or starve’.⁴⁷ Afterwards, people were taxed to ‘recover the expenses spent on these works in the name of famine relief expenditure.’⁴⁸ Famines were thus a result of colonial economic policies, while flaws in famine relief policies exacerbated the impact of the famine on the population.

5 How Was Construction on Public Works Organised during Famines?

The Famine Codes laid down details of tasks, wages, and organisation of work for famine relief works. During famines, work for relief started with ‘test works’ which were public works used to test the need and extent for relief in the area by ascertaining how many people arrived for work. Subsequently test works were transformed into relief works if many people came for work.⁴⁹ Three tests were applied to assess whether the population arriving at the famine public works was in need of relief: the ‘distance test’ or how far people were willing to travel; the ‘labour test’ that assessed whether the people were willing to perform the strenuous tasks allotted to them, and the ‘wage test’ or the acceptance of a subsistence-level wage for work.

Earthwork such as digging and carrying, and metal work on construction sites during famines was the major form of work for the affected population. Diggers were paid more than carriers, usually digging work being allotted to men while women and children formed the bulk of carriers.⁵⁰ Labour was divided into gangs, the number in

⁴⁵ Buell, *Yearly Famines in India*: 9.

⁴⁶ Buell, *Yearly Famines in India*: 14.

⁴⁷ Buell, *Yearly Famines in India*: 15.

⁴⁸ Buell, *Yearly Famines in India*.

⁴⁹ Report of the Indian Famine Commission 1901: 17.

⁵⁰ There were instances when women negotiated their tasks as well as wages. See Madhavi Jha, “‘Men Diggers and Women Carriers’: Gendered Work on Famine Public Works in Colonial North India,” *International Review of Social History* (2019): 1–28. See also Jocelyn Kynch and Maureen

each gang depending upon the total numbers on relief works, headed by a gang 'mate' who aided in distributing wages. Famine public works differed from public works construction in ordinary times in two ways: lower wage rates, and the prohibition of the use of an intermediary or ganger. 'Ordinary' works were public works construction projects carried out in non-famine times and involved use of contractors and subcontractors. The Famine Code forbade use of contracts and contractors for famine public works.⁵¹ The reasoning behind this was the assumption that the contractor may try to derive profit by employing healthy workers to finish the contract in a fixed time, implying an exclusion of famine-stricken weak workers.⁵² In practice, the colonial administration had to depend upon local persons in power, such as landlords or the 'respectable poor' to assist with daily administrative tasks.⁵³ The heavy presence of Indians in the famine administration demonstrates that any coercion emanating from the state machinery included both British and Indian officials. These included clerks to keep accounts, sub-overseers, foremen with special duties, or watchmen. In this manner, the colonial administration depended upon their knowledge of labour management from industries in Britain.

Yet, in several ways relief works were a continuation of ordinary public works and drew upon their legacy. Three areas where this was evident was in the use of overseers for supervision; the organisation of 'coolie' workers; and in the division of labour according to skill and task which intersected with gendered labour expectations. The case of the construction of the Grand Trunk Road in NWP shows that the use of an overseer for regulation, as well as ganging of labourers for construction work, was carried over to famine work organisation.⁵⁴ The famine administration also enforced a strict discipline on relief works to avoid 'shirking' by labourers. Supervision of work on the site was carried out by both Indian and European overseers. They noted if each person and the gang as a whole performed the required task for the day. Similarly, the famine administration included a rough replication of the organisation of 'nowkur (servant) coolies' who were labourers appointed for petty repair works. For instance, 'nowkur coolies' were stationed at every few miles of the Grand Trunk Road during its construction. They included the *mohurrir* (Indian accountant) at every 50 miles, a *sirdar* (supervisory 'coolie,' head of all gangs) 'coolie' at 16.67 miles, a mate (gang head) 'coolie,' and between ten and fifteen 'mile coolies'

Sibbons, "Famine Relief, Piecework and Women Workers: Experiences in British India," in *A World without Famine?*, ed. Helen O'Neill and John Toye (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1998).

51 Jha, "'Men Diggers and Women Carriers'": 15.

52 Narrative of the drought and famine which prevailed in the North-Western Provinces during the years 1868, 1869 and the beginning of 1870 . . . 23 December 1871, no. 205, Home Department Public Branch, 33. National Archives of India.

53 Shahid, "Wage Payments and Labour Productivity"; Shahid, "Re'constructing' Informality."

54 Selections from the records of the government, North-Western Provinces (NWP), vol. 5, Allahabad: Government Press NWP, 1869, (54 UP 24) LSE Library Government Publications: 50.

set at every 5.5 miles for manual construction work.⁵⁵ In some cases, ‘coolie’ huts were also set up near the construction site, just as camps accompanied famine relief work sites. Another feature carried over to the famine public works from public works construction in non-famine times was the division of labour by skills and task. As mentioned earlier, women and children were expected to perform less physically strenuous and more unskilled tasks such as carrying earth, compared to men who were expected to dig, though in practice this varied.⁵⁶ There was a further distinction between men effective at earthwork, that is, those who had the experience and greater physical strength for more earthwork than others.⁵⁷ They were called ‘efficient’ labourers during famine times, as distinct from ‘inefficient’ labour who were unaccustomed or too weak to carry out earthwork.⁵⁸

6 Labour Conditions in Famine Work

Drawing upon Marcel van der Linden’s framework, this section will outline some features of labour control and discipline in famine public works construction. Van der Linden outlines various stages of work in which coercion may take place in different forms.⁵⁹ That is, upon entry and exit in work, as well as during the labour extraction process. Specifically, this section discusses constrained choice for ‘free wage labour’ upon and entry and exit, labour extraction through control of wages and work discipline.⁶⁰

Rational choice theory assumes an economic actor to be rational, that is, making the best choice given the potential options. Entry to famine public works was open to anyone seeking relief from famine distress, although choices were constrained between potential starvation and access to poorhouses or famine public works construction at the discretion of the famine officials. Admission to relief work could be denied by the officers in charge due to a stringent application of the distance, labour or wage tests. Moreover, due to the frequent occurrence of famines, certain famine officials ordered that admission to a poorhouse be only temporary

55 Selections from the records of the government, North-Western Provinces (NWP), vol. 5, 51.

56 Jha, “Men Diggers and Women Carriers’.”

57 Kerr, *Building the Railways of the Raj, 1850–1900*: 89.

58 Shahid, “Wage Payments and Labour Productivity.”

59 Marcel van der Linden, “Dissecting Coerced Labour,” in *On Coerced Labour: Work and Compulsion after Chattel Slavery*, Studies in Global Social History, ed. Marcel van der Linden and Magaly Rodriguez Garcia (Leiden: Brill, 2016): 291–322.

60 Van der Linden, “Dissecting Coerced Labour.”

until the inmates were healthy enough to labour on the famine public works.⁶¹ Therefore, the argument that the famine-affected population ‘voluntarily’ migrated to the site of famine works requires further reflection.

Exit from work was sometimes considered desertion and at other times was in fact encouraged by famine officials, depending on the circumstances. Exit from work was possible once harvest resumed, and workers did desert the work site once the rains had returned, or if the conditions of work were too harsh, that is ‘exit despite impediment’ or ‘conditional exit’.⁶² The famine officials kept a close check on declining numbers of labourers on relief works. It was difficult to follow up on runaways, although ‘beggars’ and ‘vagrants’ were brought to poorhouses through patrolling operations lest they created unrest. Exit was encouraged, especially after the rains resumed, by making the ‘distance test’ stricter and reducing wages especially when famine public works would compete with private contractors or agricultural production once famine started to subside.⁶³ Hence, while there were no physical penalties for leaving the camp site, financial and disciplinary constraints allowed for exit from the famine work site. However, resumption of cultivation was gradual and therefore labourers forced to leave the relief works could find themselves without earnings.⁶⁴ Residence on the famine relief camp was compulsory in some places, such as in Bengal and Ajmere-Merwara.⁶⁵ Taking the case of Bombay famine and plague relief camps, Aidan Forth shows how residence of labourers on the work site was enforced through attendance rolls.⁶⁶ In NWP, however, camps were smaller in comparison even for works far away from the villages, as many labourers could potentially find shelter in neighbouring villages.⁶⁷ Whether this difference was due to financial unavailability for large-scale camps, or an attempt by labourers at escaping camp ‘discipline’ is unknown.

61 Letter from H. W. Gordon to the Officiating Secretary to the Government of Bengal, March 23, 1874, in *Further Correspondence between the Government of India and the Secretary of State in Council Relative to the Famine in Bengal, Part IV* (London: HMSO, 1874) (PP C. 955-III): 95. Quoted in: Nadja Durbach, *Many Mouths: The Politics of Food in Britain from the Workhouse to the Welfare State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020): 95.

62 Durbach, *Many Mouths*: 313. van der Linden, “Dissecting Coerced Labour.”

63 Report of Famine Commission Appendices 1881–1882. IOR/L/PARL/2/175, India Office Records, British Library: 207.

64 Report of Famine Commission Appendices 1881–1882. IOR/L/PARL/2/175.

65 Bengal Famine Code, 1897, 27, IOR V/27/831/11; Ajmere-Merwara Famine Code, 1897, 27, IOR V/27/831/6. Quoted in: Durbach, *Many Mouths*: 96.

66 Aidan Forth, *Barbed-Wire Imperialism: Britain’s Empire of Camps, 1876–1903*, Berkeley Series in British Studies 12 (Oakland: University of California Press, 2017): 108.

67 Note of an Inspection of Famine Relief works in the NWP and Oudh by Mr T. Higham, C. I. E. on Special Duty. In: *Further Papers regarding Famine and the Relief Operations in India during the years 1897–98*, no. VII, London: Darling & Son, IOR/L/PARL/2/178, India Office Records, British Library: 257.

At the same time, workers also left famine relief works to migrate to more remunerative public works. In April 1897, it was found that labourers were being provided higher wages and daily payments on ordinary public works construction in Champaran, leading to falling numbers of labourers on famine relief works in Gorakhpur, at the border of NWP and Bengal Presidencies.⁶⁸ However, in the famine camp, the colonial government controlled the movement of migrants such as work gangs in transit and wanderers seeking relief.⁶⁹ Famine officers were authorised to remove them against their will if necessary.⁷⁰ In Madras for instance, ‘wandering classes’ were subject to ‘discipline’ through forceful detention and confinement in famine camps.⁷¹

As far as the process of labour extraction is concerned, the strict discipline followed on famine public works, and the penal provisions accompanying such rules, made working conditions coercive for famine labour. As demonstrated by Forth, the discipline seen in colonial camps, including famine labour camps, was akin to the industrial factory regime which enforced ‘synchronized labour, panoptic surveillance, and rigid time discipline on mass scales’.⁷² This form of discipline aimed at a ‘reform’ of the famine wanderers through the act of labouring. The motivations behind famine relief policy were to prevent starvation only, with no obligation to extend relief towards eliminating poverty. Therefore, following the famine codes, famine administrators reduced the famine wage scale to subsistence point, rigorously controlled both gratuitous and famine labour relief, exacted full tasks from labourers, and replaced small village works with the ‘discipline and incommunities of large works’.⁷³

68 W. Hoey, Collector of Gorakhpur to Gorakhpur Commissioner, 24 April 1897, NWP and Oudh Proceedings, for May 1897, vol. 6, Scarcity Department, Uttar Pradesh State Archives (UPSA), Lucknow: 48–49.

69 Durbach, *Many Mouths*: 96.

70 Durbach cites a number of sources too detailed to be included here to show that this was the case in many provinces, including NWP: North-West Provinces and Oudh Famine Code, 1895, xxix; Forth, *Barbed-Wire Imperialism*: 43–73. Quoted in: Durbach, *Many Mouths*: 96.

71 Forth, *Barbed-Wire Imperialism*: 43–73.

72 Forth, *Barbed-Wire Imperialism*: 19.

73 “The Famine” Unknown Author, *The Pioneer Mail and Indian Weekly News*, Allahabad, January 5, 1900, Proquest Historical Newspapers, British Library: 3.

7 Famine Work, Precarity, and Coercion

Wage labour regimes in the nineteenth century were signifiers of progress towards industrialisation.⁷⁴ But as the Indian economy became more vulnerable to the effects of the colonial state's policies, so did Indian labour and ecology. This section shows how the colonial state and its famine administration created conditions that pushed the famine-affected population into precarious work.⁷⁵ By precarious work, I mean unstable, short-term, project-based work characterised by low pay. Thus, working conditions on the famine relief site such as starvation wages, fines, and instances of fraud had a coercive effect.

Conditions of work for the labourers differed vastly with each district and *tehsil*.⁷⁶ While deviations from the Famine Code were common in each province and rules adapted to local conditions, inconsistencies and loopholes in the relief system were visible when Famine Code rules were applied in practice. For instance, the Collector of Allahabad district noted during the 1896–7 famine that, in sharp contrast to the trans-Jumna districts, and even though 2.5 percent of the population of Chail *tehsil* was on relief works, each village still had between ten and twenty people in starvation.⁷⁷ This was a result of omitting people from gratuitous relief on the grounds that they could be employed as carriers on relief works and should thus join famine public works as labourers.⁷⁸ People were unacquainted with their allotted tasks, and some diggers were also too weak to perform their task. Due to repeated heavy fines deducted from wages, the workers looked emaciated and hence their condition worsened rather than improved.⁷⁹

In general, the conditions at the work site were bleak, leading to mortality on the relief works as well. *Natya Patra*, a newspaper of Allahabad, reported in February 1897 that, beyond issues of wage payment, there were shortages of clothing, water, fire, and sheds.⁸⁰ As a result, the weaker workers would succumb to the cold during winter. Moreover, the famine administration could suspend wages on some relief works for Sundays observed as a rest day. The *Oudh Akhbar*, a Lucknow-based newspaper

74 Andrea Komlosy, "Work and Labour Relations," in *Capitalism: The Reemergence of a Historical Concept*, ed. Jürgen Kocka and Marcel van der Linden (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016): 34.

75 I discuss informality and its relation to precarity for famine relief works in Shahid, "Re'constructing' Informality."

76 A *tehsil* was an administrative subdivision roughly translatable as township.

77 J.B. Fuller to Commission of Allahabad, 25 April 1897, NWP & Oudh Proceedings Vol. 9, Scarcity Department, UPSA: 60.

78 NWP & Oudh Proceedings Vol. 9, Scarcity Department, UPSA.

79 NWP & Oudh Proceedings Vol. 9, Scarcity Department, UPSA: 60–61.

80 *Natya Patra*, February 1897, Selections from the Vernacular Newspapers, IOR/L/R/5/74, India Office Records, British Library: 116.

complained that the wage itself was insufficient for a full meal on working days, therefore without a wage on Sunday the labourers would starve.⁸¹ Some local newspapers also reported that due to the rigorous nature of the tasks for labourers who were weakened by famine conditions, abandoning the works and taking to begging became commonplace.⁸² The famine administration, particularly associated with poorhouses, struggled to regulate increasing numbers of wanderers.

Wages became the main tool of control during ordinary times.⁸³ Therefore, one of the ways to cut the costs of famine relief was to keep wages at subsistence level. As mentioned above, wages on famine relief works were kept at a minimum as a 'test' to ensure those who were employed were in actual need of relief, called the 'wage test'. The famine construction works were under the supervision of the Public Works Department, which had an additional incentive to complete construction projects more quickly and cheaply than would be possible under ordinary conditions, thereby resulting in an excessive expectation of labour productivity from a famine-affected population.⁸⁴ As a result, wage cuts were common if a worker failed to show up, was absent for half a day, or did not complete the given task for the day. If only a few diggers in the gang did not complete their tasks, they were fined individually, but any more than a few incomplete digging pits would incite a fine for the whole gang.⁸⁵ Accusations of idleness and an inability to work led to deferred payments for the whole gang, which further implied a reduction in wages.⁸⁶ In case of repeated defaults, the mate could be dismissed. Many labourers left the famine works as they were fined too heavily for incomplete tasks.⁸⁷

Wages were paid in cooked food or grain doles as well as cash, in *pice* (64 *pice* = 1 *rupee* [Rs.]) or in *chataks* (about 2 ounces or 1/16 of a *seer*).⁸⁸ The minimum wage was based on arbitrary calculations of nutritional needs of the average Indian.⁸⁹

81 *Oudh Akhbar*, 10 February 1897, Selections from the Vernacular Newspapers, IOR/L/R/5/74, India Office Records, British Library: 116–17.

82 *Karanamah* Lucknow, 10 March 1897, Selections from the Vernacular Newspapers, IOR/L/R/5/74, India Office Records, British Library: 266–67.

83 Kerr, *Building the Railways of the Raj, 1850–1900*: 10. Shahid, "Wage Payments and Labour Productivity."

84 Shahid, "Wage Payments and Labour Productivity."

85 Note of an Inspection of Famine Relief works in the NWP and Oudh by Mr T. Higham, IOR/L/PARL/2/178.

86 Report of the Indian Famine Commission 1901: 34.

87 J.B. Fuller to Commission of Allahabad, 25 April 1897, NWP Proceedings vol. 9 Scarcity Department, UPSA: 60–1.

88 A *seer* equaled to about 933 gms.

89 The debate between W.R. Cornish and Richard Temple is demonstrative of concerns to keep costs low by lowering wages to below subsistence level, and increase efficiency and control, resulting in exploitative conditions. David Hall-Matthews, "Inaccurate Conceptions: Disputed Measures of Nutritional Needs and Famine Deaths in Colonial India," *Modern Asian Studies* 42, no. 6 (2008): 1189–212. See also, Durbach, *Many Mouths*: 100–101.

Given the fluctuating supply of currency, payments to labourers were at times made every three to four days instead of daily.⁹⁰ Payments were also made in the form of tickets that could be redeemed for grain by the nearby *bania* (grain merchant). Wages were calculated in accordance with the prevailing grain prices, but in practice would be insufficient to buy a full meal if the grain seller did not sell at the reported grain rates.⁹¹ Instances of fraud by grain sellers were rampant, resulting in grain riots on multiple occasions.⁹² If convicted, labourers would face physical forms of punishment such as flogging, and fines were deployed for famine labourers.⁹³

The colonial penchant for discipline, control, and financial parsimony was also visible in the treatment of famine relief administrators. Indians employed in the famine administration were held accountable for cases of ‘fraud’, resulting in imprisonment or dismissal. A common way to commit fraud in the eyes of the colonial state was by entering incorrect information on the muster rolls. These instances not only show the excessive regulation over Indian members of the famine establishment, despite their higher position in the hierarchy of those employed on relief works, but also that those Indians in relative positions of power were able to take advantage of their role. Some examples include the following stories from the late nineteenth century. In May 1897, a gang *muharrir* (clerk) employed on the relief work project of Budokhar tank was accused of paying short wages to the gangs and misappropriating the balance. He was sentenced to a year in prison.⁹⁴ The same year, the officer in charge of the relief works project of Gurkha tank and his entire staff was accused of ‘defrauding the government’ of money drawn under the name of bogus gangs and tasks. At the same time, they were alleged to have paid a full wage to the gangs for short tasks and then appropriated a *pice* per adult labourer from their wage.⁹⁵ In this case the officers were dismissed, but it demonstrates that the famine administration closely regulated cases of labourers who were paid full wages for incomplete tasks.

Besides *patwaris* (record keeper/collector) and *muharrirs* (clerk), gang mates also came under fire for ‘fraud’ and ‘embezzlement’. A gang mate called Chandika who was charged with embezzlement of one *anna* (one *anna* = 1/16 of a *rupee* [Rs.])

⁹⁰ Fortnightly progress reports of relief operations Allahabad Division, No. 346–466, File 58/1, 1897, Scarcity Department, UPSA: 212.

⁹¹ *Nasim-i-Agra*, 23 March 1897, Selections from the Vernacular Newspapers, IOR/L/R/5/74, India Office Records, British Library: 227.

⁹² Plunder of banias’ shops on relief works in the NWP and Oudh. File no. 167, Box 35, Scarcity Block Department. UPSA.

⁹³ Plunder of banias’ shops on relief works in the NWP and Oudh.

⁹⁴ NWP Proceedings vol. 14 Scarcity Department UPSA, 17. See also: Reports of Fraud and Dishonesty in connection with famine relief operations in NWP and Oudh, 1898, nos. 1–70, File 185. Scarcity Department, UPSA.

⁹⁵ Reports of Fraud and Dishonesty in connection with famine relief operations in NWP and Oudh.

was convicted of six months of imprisonment and a fine of Rs. 5.⁹⁶ There were other instances where on payday, the gang mate would pass off his own children – brought only on that day – as labourers, or the mate would appropriate one or two *pice* from the workers in his gang by threatening them with expulsion from the gang.⁹⁷ This form of intra-hierarchical coercion and exploitation was also visible in ‘ordinary’ times and in the form of extra-economic coercion. Such coercive elements ‘represented the persistence of pre-capitalist relations in mobilising labour and in exercising authority over labour at work-sites’.⁹⁸

Reliance on famine relief-based public works continued into the early twentieth century.⁹⁹ By then, private charitable relief by various socio-religious organisations had increased. At the same time, the famine policies became more liberal in their approach.¹⁰⁰ Moreover, the existence of infrastructure had little impact on famine mortality; Klein takes the example of Gujarat to show that ample infrastructure still resulted in high famine mortality in the 1890s because of the inadequacy of the British famine policy.¹⁰¹ Little is known of famine management between the world wars, a period accompanied by a rise of nationalist movements and industries, until the Great Bengal Famine of 1944.¹⁰²

8 Conclusion

Historically, control over labour materialised in various ways, such as physical coercion as well as penalties. The example of famine labour illuminates ways of managing labour in large numbers under tests of circumstantial factors. This chapter showed how workers functioned, negotiated, and endured contextually-induced precarity worsened by colonial state policies. By tracing the stages of entry, exit, and labour extraction, this chapter brought forth how famine administration hindered entry and exit for work, and enforced discipline through the imposition of penalties. Famine public works organisation borrowed from public works construction in non-famine

96 Reports of Fraud and Dishonesty in connection with famine relief operations in NWP and Oudh: 20.

97 Reports of Fraud and Dishonesty in connection with famine relief operations in NWP and Oudh: 24.

98 Kerr, *Building the Railways of the Raj, 1850–1900*: 194.

99 Klein, “When the Rains Failed”: 207.

100 Klein, “When the Rains Failed”: 206.

101 Klein, “When the Rains Failed”: 208.

102 For studies of famine management during the Bengal famine of 1944, see Paul R. Greenough, “Indian Famines and Peasant Victims”; Joanna Simonow, “The Great Bengal Famine in Britain: Metropolitan Campaigning for Food Relief and the End of Empire, 1943–44,” *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 48, no. 1 (2020): 168–97. Janam Mukherjee, *Hungry Bengal: War, Famine and the End of Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015).

times, but adapted accordingly with fluctuating supplies and labour management, and thus evolved over time with new experiences in famines.

Intervention in labour markets for production for the colonial economy was a key goal of colonial administration. Due to a need for maximum labour productivity, forms of wage labour regulation and extraction such as outlined above were common across colonial plantations and industries. This chapter broadly examined conditions on famine public works, which were akin to contexts of labour exploitation for wage labour regimes that followed the abolition of slavery. Through the control of wages, tasks, and work discipline, working conditions on famine public works intensified labour extraction. The case of famine relief-based work thus adds to instances of co-existing coercive colonial labour regimes that allowed for exploitative working conditions for labourers and top-down hierarchical control, with the difference that the famine labourers were already vulnerable due to effects of famine.

Employment opportunities in the colonial era became outlets for many indebted labourers and those looking for additional work, but were also sites for coercive working conditions, such as those of factories and plantations. In famine times, due to the increased vulnerability of starvation, people were forced to sell or abandon their children, while many found ways to escape to plantation islands. Famine work was intended to keep the population from dying from starvation as well as reserving labouring hands for production in agriculture. It was also a way of curbing the possibility of popular action against the administration.¹⁰³ Public works construction hence became the ideal project in that it not only represented ‘modernity’ and allowed the colonial state to entrench itself in the subcontinent, but also because construction work did not always attract sufficient cheap labour for certain projects in non-famine periods.

9 Reflection

Colonial laws and codes were intended to represent ‘modernity’ and ‘development’ for colonies by moving beyond slavery. However, colonial disregard for local conditions and norms had disastrous consequences for Indian labour. In fact, coercion and control over the labour of slaves is comparable with that of wage labour as seen in the context of famine relief. That is, while ownership of people as property was made illegal, post-abolition wage labour regimes continued to be characterised by entitlements over the workers’ labour power by the employer. Under both slavery and famine-relief works, women and children formed the majority. In fact, the bulk of the slaves from India and beyond were women and children, with women

103 Sharma, *Famine, Philanthropy, and the Colonial State*.

being in demand for reproduction and prostitution.¹⁰⁴ Under the famine relief-works system as well, women were active participants in the labour force, with women and children outnumbering men in famine camps.¹⁰⁵ At the same time, women retained their dependent status on men within the household unit, remained the primary caregivers of children, and were the first to return to villages.

Similarities in coercive practices between wage labour regimes and slavery was exemplified in colonies. As Mònica Ginés-Blasi demonstrates in her chapter as well, migration to the sites of coercive work was not necessarily a ‘free choice’ for labourers; rather, in the famine labour case, vulnerability shaped the labouring experience of the people. Many people died on their way to the colonial relief works due to weakness and starvation in the nineteenth century, whereas in the pre-colonial era, private and public charity from local sources as well as state policies provided respite to the famine-affected population. Nogues-Marco shows that under the East India Company rule from the late eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth centuries, land revenue and fiscal spending policies exacerbated famine conditions in India.¹⁰⁶ In sum, although famine relief-works aimed at providing relief, the colonial capitalism surrounding its implementation and goals resulted in labour precarity and harsh ‘disciplining.’

104 See the contributions of Mònica Ginés-Blasi, Kate Ekama and Lisa Hellman in this volume.

105 Report on the Famine in the Bombay Presidency 1896–7: cxlix. Quoted in: Forth, *Barbed-Wire Imperialism*: 64.

106 Pilar Nogues-Marco. “Measuring Colonial Extraction: The East India Company’s Rule and the Drain of Wealth (1757–1858),” *Capitalism: A Journal of History and Economics* 2, no. 1 (2021): 154–95.

Bibliography

- Abellá, Francisco. *Proyecto de inmigración y colonización libre para fomentar la Isla de Cuba presentado al Excmo. Sr. Ministro de Ultramar* (Barcelona: Imprenta y Litografía C. Verdaguer y C^a, 1875).
- Åberg, Alf. "Karolinska Forskningsfärder," *Svensk Tidskrift*, December 1970, 257–61.
- Åberg, Alf. *Fångars elände: karolinerna i Ryskland 1700–1723* (Stockholm: Natur och kultur, 1991).
- Åberg, Alf. *Karolinska kvinnoöden* (Stockholm: Natur och kultur, 1999).
- Abeyasekera, Susan. "Slaves in Batavia: Insights from a Slave Register," in *Slavery, Bondage and Dependency in Southeast Asia*, ed. Anthony Reid (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1983): 286–314.
- Ahuja, Ravi. *Pathways of Empire: Circulation, 'Public Works', and Social Space in Colonial Orissa (c.1780–1914)*, *New Perspectives in South Asian History* 25 (Hyderabad: Orient Black Swan, 2009).
- Ahuja, Ravi. "Labour Relations in an Early Colonial Context: Madras, c. 1750–1800," *Modern Asian Studies* 36, no. 4 (2002): 793–826.
- Aitchison, Charles Umpherston. *A Collection of Treaties, Engagements, Sunnuds Relating to India and Neighboring Countries*, vol. 2 (Calcutta: Bengal Printing Company Ltd, 1863).
- Allen, Richard B. "Satisfying the 'Want for Labouring People': European Slave Trading in the Indian Ocean, 1500–1850," *Journal of World History* 21, no. 1 (2010): 45–73.
- Allen, Richard B. *European Slave Trading in the Indian Ocean, 1500–1850* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2015).
- Allen, Richard B. "Asian Indentured Labor in the 19th and Early 20th Century Colonial Plantation World," *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Asian History*, ed. David Ludden (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190277727.013.33>.
- Allen, Richard B. "Ending the History of Silence: Reconstructing European Slave Trading in the Indian Ocean," *Tempo* 23, no. 2 (2017): 294–313.
- Alpers, Edward. "The French Slave Trade in East Africa (1721–1810)," *Cahier d'Études africaines* 37 (1970): 80–124.
- Alpers, Edward. "Escape to Freedom: Escape from Slavery among Bonded Africans in the Indian Ocean World, c.1750–1962," *Slavery & Abolition* 24, no. 2 (2003): 51–68.
- Ambirajan, S. *Classical Political Economy and British Policy in India*, Cambridge South Asian Studies 21 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978).
- Andaya, Leonard Y. *The World of Maluku* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1993).
- Anderson, Clare. "Convicts and Coolies: Rethinking Indentured Labour in the Nineteenth Century," *Slavery & Abolition* 30, no. 1 (2009): 93–109.
- Anderson, Clare. "British India, 1789–1939," in *A Global History of Convicts and Penal Colonies*, ed. Clare Anderson (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018).
- Anderson, M. "India 1858–1950: The Illusion of Free Labour," in *Masters, Servants, and Magistrates in Britain and the Empire, 1562–1955*, ed. Douglas Hay and Paul Craven (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2005).
- Anderson, Michael, and Sumit Guha, eds. *Changing Concepts of Rights and Justice in South Asia* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000).
- Andrade, Tonio. "A Chinese Farmer, Two African Boys, and a Warlord: Toward a Global Microhistory," *Journal of World History* 21, no. 4 (2010): 573–91.
- Arasratnam, Sinnappah. "Slave Trade in the Indian Ocean in the Seventeenth Century," in *Mariners, Merchants and Oceans: Studies in Maritime History*, ed. Kuzhippalli Skaria Mathew (New Delhi: Manohar, 1995): 195–208.
- Arensmeyer, Elliott C. "British Merchant Enterprise and the Chinese Coolie Labour Trade, 1850–1874" (PhD diss., University of Hawaii, 1979).

- Arensmeyer, Elliott C. "The Chinese Coolie Labor Trade and the Philippines: An Inquiry," *Philippine Studies* 28, no. 2 (1980): 187–98.
- Atkinson, Edwin T. *Kumaun Hills* (New Delhi: Cosmo Publications, 1980).
- Baki, Aminuddin bin. "The Institution of Debt-Slavery in Perak," *Peninjau sejarah* 1 (1966): 1–11.
- Balachandran, G. "Making Coolies, (Un)Making Workers: 'Globalizing' Labour in the Late-19th and Early-20th Centuries," *Journal of Historical Sociology* 24, no. 3 (2011): 266–96.
- Balram Dangol et al. "Amalekh Gariyeka Kamara Kamariko Lagat," *Abhilekha* 2, no. 2(1984): 115–20.
- Ban Xiang 班翔. "Heshu Dong Yindu Gongsu. Qiangpo zhongzhi zhidu dui Yindunixiya de shehui jingji yingxiang 荷屬東印度公司。強迫種植制度對印尼的社會經濟影響 [Dutch East India Company. The Socio-Economic Influence of the Forced Cultivation System on Indonesia]," *Sixiang zhanxian* 37, no. 1 (2011): 17–20.
- Bano, Shadab. "Slave Markets in Medieval India," *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress*. 61, no. 1 (2001): 365–73.
- Barros, João de. *Da Ásia: Década Terceira, Parte Primeira* (Lisbon: Regia Officina Typografica, 1777).
- Bayly, Susan. *Caste, Society, and Politics in India From the Eighteenth Century to the Modern Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).
- Behal, Rana P. *One Hundred Years of Servitude: Political Economy of Tea Plantations in Colonial Assam* (New Delhi: Tulika Books, 2014).
- Behal, Rana P., and Prabhu P. Mohapatra. "'Tea and Money versus Human Life': The Rise and Fall of the Indenture System in the Assam Tea Plantations 1840–1908," *Journal of Peasant Studies* 19, no 3–4 (1992): 142–72.
- Bernard, K. L. *History of Fort Cochin* (Kochi: Historical Study and Research Centre, 1991).
- Bhattacharya, D.K. "Indians of African Origin," *Cahiers d'Études Africaines* 10, no 40 (1970): 579–82.
- Bhattacharya, Sabyasachi, and Jan Lucassen, eds. *Workers in the Informal Sector: Studies in Labour History, 1800–2000* (Delhi: Macmillan India-SEPHIS, 2005).
- Bian Li, "One Thousand Years of Historical Relics: The Huizhou Documents," *Journal of Modern Chinese History* 10, no. 2 (2016): 248–268.
- Blussé, Leonard. *Strange Company: Chinese Settlers, Mestizo Women and the Dutch in VOC Batavia* (Dordrecht: Foris, 1986).
- Bocarro, António. *Década 13 da História da Índia, Parte II*, ed. Rodrigo José de Lima Felner (Lisbon: Typographia da Academia Real das Sciencias, 1876).
- Boéthius, Bertil. "J. Adolph Clodt von Jürgensburg," in *Svenskt Biografiskt Lexikon*, vol.8, ed. Bertil Boéthius (Stockholm: A. Bonnier, 1929): 653.
- Borneman, Georg Henrik von. "Sånger af en svensk fånge i Simbirk," 1711, Lund University Library.
- Bosma, Ulbe. *The Making of a Periphery: how Island Southeast Asia Became a Mass Exporter of Labor* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2019).
- Bosma, Ulbe, Elise van Nederveen Meerkerk, and Aditya Sarkar. "Mediating Labour: An Introduction," *International Review of Social History* 57, no. S20 (2012): 1–15.
- Bowring, John. *A Visit to the Philippine Islands* (London: Smith, Elder & Company, 1859).
- Boxer, Charles Ralph. *'Antes quebrar que torcer' ou Pundonor Português em Nagasaki, 3–6 de Janeiro de 1610* (Macau: Imprensa Nacional, 1950).
- Boxer, Charles Ralph. *The Christian Century in Japan, 1549–1650* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1951).
- Boxer, Charles Ralph. "The affair of the Madre de Deus," in *Papers on Portuguese, Dutch, and Jesuit Influences in 16th- and 17th-Century Japan: Writings of Charles Ralph Boxer*, ed. Michael Moscato (Washington, DC: University Publications of America, 1979): 4–94.
- Boxer, Charles Ralph. *Macau na Época da Restauração (Macao Three Hundred Years Ago)* (Lisbon: Fundação Oriente, 1993).

- Brennan, Lance. "The Development of the Famine Code," in *Famine as a Geographical Phenomenon*, ed. B. Currey and H. Graeme (Dordrecht: D. Reidel Pub. Co, 1984): 91–111.
- Brook, Timothy. "Japan in the Late Ming: The View from Shanghai," in *Sagacious Monks and Bloodthirsty Warriors: Chinese views of Japan in the Ming-Qing period*, ed. Joshua Fogel (Norwalk, CT: Eastbridge, 2002): 42–62.
- Brook, Timothy. "The Early Jesuits and the Late Ming Border: The Chinese Search for Accommodation," in *Encounters and Dialogues: Changing Perspectives on Chinese-Western Exchanges from the Sixteenth to Eighteenth centuries*, ed. Wu Xiaoxin (Sankt Augustin: Institut Monumenta Serica; San Francisco: Ricci Institute for Chinese-Western Cultural History, 2005): 19–38.
- Buchanan, Francis. *A Journey From Madras Through the Countries of Mysore, Canara and Malabar*, vol. 2 (Madras: Higginbotham and Co, 1870).
- Buell, George. *Yearly Famines in India: Their Cause and the True Remedy* (New York: Rochester, 1900).
- Bulach, Doris, and Juliane Schiel, eds. *Europas Sklaven*, WerkstattGeschichte 66–67 (Essen: Klartext Verlag, 2015).
- Bulhão Pato, Raymundo Antonio de, ed. *Cartas de Affonso de Albuquerque*, vol. 1 (Lisbon: Academia Real das Sciencias, 1884).
- Bulhão Pato, Raymundo Antonio de, ed. *Cartas de Affonso de Albuquerque*, vol. 3 (Lisbon: Academia Real das Sciencias, 1903).
- Bush, M.L. *Serfdom and Slavery: Studies in Legal Bondage* (New York: Longman, 1996).
- Campbell, Ben. "The Heavy Loads of Tamang Identity," in *Nationalism and Ethnicity in a Hindu Kingdom: The Politics of Culture in Contemporary Nepal*, ed. David Gellner, Joanna Pfaff-Czarnecka, and John Whelpton (Amsterdam: Hardwood Academic Publishers, 1997).
- Campbell, Gwyn, ed. *The Structure of Slavery in Indian Ocean Africa and Asia* (London: Frank Cass, 2006).
- Campbell, Gwyn, ed. *Bondage and the Environment in the Indian Ocean World* (Cham: Palgrave MacMillan, 2018).
- Campbell, Gwyn. *Bondage and the Environment in the Indian Ocean World* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019).
- Campbell, Gwyn, and Alessandro Stanziani, eds. *The Palgrave Handbook of Bondage and Human Rights in Africa and Asia* (Cham: Palgrave MacMillan, 2019).
- Cañizares-Esguerra, Jorge. "On Ignored Global 'Scientific Revolutions,'" *Journal of Early Modern History* 21 (2017): 420–32.
- Captan, Lionel. "Power and Status in South Asian Slavery," in *Asian and African Systems of Slavery*, ed. James L. Watson (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980).
- Carter, Marina, and Nira Wickramasinghe. "Forcing the Archive: Involuntary Migrants 'of Ceylon' in the Indian Ocean World of the 18–19th Centuries," *South Asian History and Culture* 9, no. 2 (2018): 194–206.
- Cassel, Pär. "Extraterritoriality in China: What We Know and What We Don't Know," in *Treaty Ports in Modern China: Law, Land and Power*, ed. Robert Bickers and Isabella Jackson (London: Routledge, 2016): 23–42.
- Chakrabarty, Dipesh. *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008).
- Chakraborty, Titas, and Matthias van Rossum. "Slave Trade and Slavery in Asia: New Perspectives," *Journal of Social History* 54, no. 1 (2020): 1–14.
- Chatterjee, Indrani. *Gender, Slavery, and Law in Colonial India* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2002).

- Chatterjee, Indrani. "The Locked Box in Slavery and Social Death," in *On Human Bondage: After Slavery and Social Death*, ed. John P. Bodell and Walter Scheidel (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2017).
- Chatterjee, Indrani, and Richard Eaton, eds. *Slavery and South Asian History* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2006).
- Chatterjee, Partha. *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories*, Princeton Studies in Culture/Power/History (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993).
- "China Human Trafficking and Slaving Database" (Lyon: Institut d'Asie Orientale, CNRS), <https://iao.cnrs.fr/recherche/projets-de-recherche-2/china-human-trafficking-and-slaving-database/>.
- Chevalyere, Claude. "Acting as Master and Bondservant. Considerations on Status, Identities and the Nature of 'Bond-servitude' in Late Ming China," in *Labour, Coercion, and Economic Growth in Eurasia, 17th–20th Centuries*, ed. Alessandro Stanziani (Leiden: Brill, 2012): 237–72.
- Chevalyere, Claude. "Human Trafficking in Late Imperial China," in *Slavery and Bonded Labor in Asia, 1250–1900*, ed. Richard B. Allen (Leiden: Brill, 2021): 150–77.
- China National Knowledge Infrastructure, <https://global.cnki.net/index/Support/en/Introduction.html>.
- Chinese Emigration: Report of the Commission Sent by China to Ascertain the Condition of Chinese Coolies in Cuba* (Shanghai: Imperial Maritime Customs Press, 1876).
- Chu, Richard T. *Chinese and Chinese Mestizos of Manila: Family, Identity, and Culture, 1860s–1930s* (Leiden: Brill, 2010).
- Clulow, Adam, and Fei Si-yen. "The Slaves of Widow Tsieko. Chinese Slave Owners and the Enslaved in the Dutch Empire," *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 81 (forthcoming 2022).
- Cocks, Richard. *Diary of Richard Cocks, Cape-Merchant in the English Factory in Japan, 1615–1622*, vol. 2, ed. Edward Maunde Thompson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).
- Commander, Simon. "The Jajmani System in North India: An Examination of Its Logic and Status across Two Centuries," *Modern Asian Studies* 17, no. 2 (1983): 283–311.
- Commander, Simon. "The Mechanics of Demographic and Economic Growth in Uttar Pradesh; 1800–1900," in *India's Historical Demography: Studies in Famine, Disease and Society*, Collected Papers on South Asia 8, ed. T. Dyson (London: Curzon, 1989): 49–72.
- Condominas, George. *Formes extrêmes de dépendance. Contributions à l'étude de l'esclavage en Asie du Sud-Est* (Paris: Éditions de l'EHESS, 1998).
- "Consistorii Ecclesiastici Protokoll, §. 2" (30 September 1736), vol. Al:13, Domkapitlets i Lund arkiv.
- Coolhaas, W.P., ed. *Generale missiven van gouverneurs-generaal en raden aan heren XVII der Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie*, vol. 6 ('s-Gravenhage: M. Nijhoff, 1976).
- Cooper, Frederick. *Decolonization and African Society: The Labour Question in French and British Africa*, African Studies Series 89 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996).
- Correspondence Respecting the Macao Coolie Trade, and the Steamer 'Fatchoy'* (London: Harrison and Sons, 1873).
- Corwin, Arthur F. *Spain and the Abolition of Slavery in Cuba, 1817–1886* (University of Texas Press, 2014).
- Cresswell, Tim. *On the Move: Mobility in the Modern Western World* (New York: Routledge, 2006).
- Crossley, Pamela Kyle. "Slavery in Early Modern China," in *The Cambridge World History of Slavery*, vol. 3, ed. David Eltis and Stanley L. Engerman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011): 186–214.
- Dai Yixuan. *Mingshǐ, Fólǎngjīchuán, Jiānzhèng* (Beijing: China Social Science Press, 1984).
- Dalrymple-Smith, Angus, and Matthias van Rossum. "Globalization and Coerced Labour in Early Modern Asia and Africa," *Comparative* 30, no. 5–6 (2020): 543–59.

- Dames, Mansel Longworth, ed. *The Book of Duarte Barbosa*, vol. 2 (London: Hakluyt Society, 1921).
- Davis, David Brion. *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988).
- Davis, Mike. *Late Victorian Holocausts: El Niño Famines and the Making of the Third World* (New York: Verso, 2017).
- Dewasiri, Nirmal. *The Adaptable Peasant: Agrarian Society in Western Sri Lanka under Dutch Rule, 1740–1800* (Leiden: Brill, 2008).
- Day, Francis. *The Land of the Perumals, or Cochin, Its Past and Present* (Madras: Gantz Brothers, 1863).
- Dazheng, Ma. "The Tarim Basin," in *History of Civilizations of Central Asia: Development in Contrast: From the Sixteenth to the Mid-Nineteenth Century*, ed. Chahryar Adle and Irfan Habib (Paris: UNESCO Publishing, 2003): 182–207.
- Diffie, Bailey W., and George D. Winius. *Foundations of the Portuguese Empire, 1415–1580* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977).
- Dijk, Wim O. "An End to the History of Silence? The Dutch Trade in Asian Slaves: Arakan and the Bay of Bengal, 1621–1665," *IIAS Newsletter* 46, 2008.
- Dixit, Kamal. *Jang Bahadur ko Belayat Yatra* (Lalitpur: Madan Puraskar Pustakalaya, 1958).
- Dos Santos Alves, Jorge, and Nader Nasiri-Moghaddam. "Une lettre en persan de 1519 sur la situation à Malacca," *Archipel* 75, no. 1 (2008): 145–66.
- Drayton, Richard, and David Motadel. "Discussion: The Futures of Global History," *Journal of Global History* 13, no. 1 (2018): 1–21.
- Drury, Heber, ed. *Letters From Malabar, by Jacob Canter Visscher* (Madras: Gantz Brothers, 1862).
- Durbach, Nadja. *Many Mouths: The Politics of Food in Britain from the Workhouse to the Welfare State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).
- Dutt, Romesh Chunder. *The Economic History of India under Early British Rule*, vol. 1, *From the Rise of British Power in 1757 to the Accession of Queen Victoria in 1837* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench Trubner, 1902).
- Dutt, Romesh Chunder. *The Economic History of India in the Victorian Age*, vol. 2, *From the Accession of Queen Victoria to the Commencement of the Twentieth Century* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench Trubner, 1904).
- Eden, Jeff. *Slavery and Empire in Central Asia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).
- Een Perkenier, *Banda: in het verleden, in het tegenwoordige en in de toekomst* (Rotterdam: Nijgh & van Ditmar, 1870).
- Ehalt, Rômulo da Silva. "Jesuits and the Problem of Slavery in Early Modern Japan" (PhD diss., Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, 2017).
- Ekama, Kate. "Connected Lives: Experiences of Slavery in VOC Colombo," in *Being a Slave: Histories and Legacies of European Slavery in the Indian Ocean*, ed. Alicia Schrikker and Nira Wickramasinghe (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2020): 99–121.
- Ekama, Kate. "Precarious Freedom: Manumission in Eighteenth-Century Colombo," *Journal of Social History* 54, no. 1 (2020): 88–108.
- Ekama, Kate. "Bondsmen: Slave Collateral in the 19th-Century Cape Colony," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 47, no. 3 (2021): 437–53.
- Ellen, Roy. *On the Edge of the Banda Zone. Past and Present in the Social Organization of a Moluccan Trading Network* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2003).
- Elliot, Mark C. *The Manchu Way: The Eight Banners and Ethnic Identity in Late Imperial China* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001).
- Eltis, David, and Stanley L. Engerman, eds. *The Cambridge World History of Slavery*, vol. 3 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).
- Eltis, David, Stanley L. Engerman, Seymour Dresher, and David Richardson, eds. *The Cambridge World History of Slavery*, vol. 4 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).
- Erkes, Eduard. *Das Problem der Sklaverei in China* (Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1952).

- Ett Uttag Af Någre Ifrån Steinau Uthi Schlesien Den 20 Julij 1707. Daterade Bref, Om Dhe Muskowitiske Callmuckers Och Cossakers Grufweliga Förfarande, Med Mördande, Skiöflande Och Brännande, Kring Lissa i Stor-Pohlen Och de Där Wid Gräntzande Orter (Stockholm: Johan Henr. Werner, 1707).
- Ewald, Janet. "Slave Trade: The Indian Ocean, c. 1750–1880," in *Oxford Encyclopaedia of the Modern World*, ed. Peter Stearns (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).
- Exploring Slave Trade in Asia (Amsterdam: International Institute of Social History), <https://iisg.amsterdam/en/research/projects/slave-trade-asia>.
- Feng Tianyu 馮天瑜. *Fengjian kaolun 封建考論* [About 'Feudalism'] (Wuhan: Wuhan Daxue chubanshe, 2006).
- Finley, Moses I. *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology* (New York: Viking Press, 1980).
- Forand, Paul G. "The Relation of the Slave and the Client to the Master or Patron in Medieval Islam," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 2, no. 1 (1971): 59–66.
- Forbes, James. *Oriental Memoirs*, vol. 2 (London: Richard Bentley, 1834).
- Forth, Aidan. *Barbed-Wire Imperialism: Britain's Empire of Camps, 1876–1903*, Berkeley Series in British Studies 12 (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2017).
- Fourie, Johan, and Christie Swanepoel. "'Impending Ruin' or 'Remarkable Wealth'? The Role of Private Credit Markets in the 18th-Century Cape Colony," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 44, no. 1 (2018): 7–25.
- Fox, James. "'For Good and Sufficient Reasons': An Examination of Early Dutch East India Company Ordinances on Slaves and Slavery," in *Slavery, Bondage and Dependency in Southeast Asia*, ed. Anthony Reid (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1983): 246–62.
- Fradera, Josep Maria, and Christopher Schmidt-Nowara. "Introduction: Colonial Pioneer and Plantation Latecomer," in *Slavery and Antislavery in Spain's Atlantic Empire*, ed. Josep Maria Fradera and Christopher Schmidt-Nowara (New York: Berghahn Books, 2013): 1–12.
- Freeman-Grenville, Greville Stewart Parker. *The French at Kilwa Island* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965).
- Fujiki Hisashi. *Zōhyō no Senjō: Chūsei no Yōhei to Dorei gari* (Tokyo: Asahi Shinbunsha, 2005).
- Gaastra, Femme S. *Geschiedenis van de VOC* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2007).
- Galang, Jely Agamao. "Vagrants and Outcasts: Chinese Labouring Classes, Criminality, and the State in the Philippines, 1831–1898" (PhD diss., Murdoch University, 2019).
- Galen, S.E.A.van. "Arakan and Bengal: The Rise and Decline of the Mrauk U Kingdom (Burma) From the Fifteenth to the Seventeenth Century AD (PhD diss., Leiden University, 2008).
- Gamsa, Mark. "Biography and (Global) Microhistory," *New Global Studies* 11, no. 3 (2017): 231–41.
- Gavetas da Torre do Tombo*, vols. 5–6 (Lisbon: Centro de Estudos Históricos Ultramarinos, 1965–1967).
- Geelen, Alexander. "Defining Slavery in Cochin: Social Backgrounds, Tradition and Law in the Making of Slaafbaarheid in Eighteenth-Century Dutch Cochin" (MA thesis, Leiden University, 2018).
- Geelen, Alexander, Bram van den Hout, Merve Tosun, and Matthias van Rossum. "Between Markets and Chains: An Exploration of the Experiences, Mobility and Control of Enslaved Persons in Eighteenth-Century South-West India," in *Being A Slave Histories and Legacies of European Slavery in the Indian Ocean*, ed. Alicia Schrikker and Nira Wickramasinghe (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2020): 75–98.
- Geelen, Alexander, Bram van den Hout, Merve Tosun, and Matthias van Rossum. "On the Run: Runaway Slaves and Their Social Networks in Eighteenth-Century Cochin," *Journal of Social History* 54, no. 1 (2020): 66–87.
- Gentes, Andrew. "'Licentious Girls' and Frontier Domesticators: Women and Siberian Exile from the Late 16th to the Early 19th Centuries," *Sibirica: Journal of Siberian Studies* 3, no. 1 (2003): 3–20.

- Gijssels, Artus. "Beschrijvinge van de eijlanden Banda," *Bijdragen tot de Taal, Land- en Volkenkunde* 3 (1855): 73–105.
- Ginés-Blasi, Mònica. "Eduard Toda i Güell: From Vice-Consul of Spain in China to the Renaiença in Barcelona (1871–84)," *Entremóns: UPF Journal of World History* 5 (2013), <https://raco.cat/index.php/Entremons/article/view/266753/354375>.
- Ginés-Blasi, Mònica. "'A Philippine 'Coolie Trade': Trade and Exploitation of Chinese Labour in Spanish Colonial Philippines, 1850–98," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 51, no. 3 (2020): 1–27.
- Ginés-Blasi, Mònica. "Exploiting Chinese Labour Emigration in Treaty Ports: The Role of Spanish Consulates in the 'Coolie Trade,'" *International Review of Social History* 66, no. 1 (2020): 1–24.
- Gong Yin 龔蔭. "Guanyu Zhongguo tusi zhidu yuanyuan fazhan yanjiu de shige wenti 關於中國土司制度淵源發展研究的十個問題 [Ten Issues About the Research of the Original Development in Chinese *tusi* System]," *Qinghai minzu yanjiu* 24, no. 1 (2013): 111–18.
- Gooszen, Hans. *A Demographic History of the Indonesian Archipelago, 1800–1942* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 1999).
- Granovetter, Mark. "The Impact of Social Structure on Economic Outcomes." *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 19, no. 1 (2005): 33–50.
- Gray, Peter. "Famine and Land in Ireland and India, 1845–1880: James Caird and the Political Economy of Hunger," *The Historical Journal* 49, no. 1 (2006): 193–215.
- Greenough, Paul. "Indian Famines and Peasant Victims: The Case of Bengal in 1943–44," *Modern Asian Studies* 14, no. 2 (1980): 205–35.
- Gu Cheng 顧誠. *Mingmo nongmin zhanzheng shi* 明末農民戰爭史 [A History of Peasant Warfare in the Late Ming] (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1984).
- Guha, Sumit. *Beyond Caste: Identity and Power in South Asia Past and Present* (Leiden: Brill, 2013).
- Gullick, John Michael. *Indigenous Political Systems of West Malaya*, rev. ed. (Abingdon, NY: Routledge, 2020).
- Gunn, Geoffrey C. *Encountering Macau, A Portuguese City-State on the Periphery of China, 1557–1999* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996).
- Guo Moruo 郭沫若. *Nulizhi shidai* 奴隸制時代 [The Slave Period] (Shanghai: Xinwenyi Chubanshe, 1952).
- Guo Runtao 郭潤濤. "Qingdai de jia ren 清代的家人 ['Household People' in the Qing Dynasty]," *Ming–Qing luncong* 1 (1999): 376–95.
- H. A. *Day dawn in Travancore: A Brief Account of the Manners and Customs of the People and the Efforts that are Being Made for their Improvement* (Cottayam: C.M. Press, 1860).
- Hägerdal, Hans. "The Slaves of Timor: Life and Death on the Fringes of Early Colonial Society," *Itinerario* 34, no. 2 (2010): 19–44.
- Hägerdal, Hans. "On the Margins of Colonialism: Contact Zones in the Aru Islands," *The European Legacy* 25, no. 5–6 (2020): 557–66.
- Hall-Matthews, David. *Peasants, Famine and the State in Colonial Western India* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).
- Hall-Matthews, David. "Inaccurate Conceptions: Disputed Measures of Nutritional Needs and Famine Deaths in Colonial India," *Modern Asian Studies* 42 no. 6 (2008): 1189–212.
- Hanna, Willard A. *Indonesian Banda* (Banda Naira: Yayasan Warisan dan Budaya Banda Naira, 1991).
- Hasegawa Yūko. "Chūkinsei Ikōki no Hitouri Kankō ni miru Dogō no Yūzū: Seimei Iji to Mura no Naritachi no Shiten kara," in *Shōen to Mura wo Aruku II*, ed. Fujiki Hisashi and Kuramochi Shigehiro (Tokyo: Azekura Shobō, 2004): 92–118.
- Hellie, Richard. "Migration in Early Modern Russia, 1480s–1780s," in *Coerced and Free Migration: Global Perspectives*, ed. David Eltis (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002).

- Hoadley, Mason C. "Slavery, Bondage and Dependency in Pre-Colonial Java: the Cirebon-Priangan Region," in *Slavery, Bondage and Dependency in Southeast Asia*, ed. Anthony Reid (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1983): 90–118.
- Höefer, András. *The Caste Hierarchy and the State in Nepal: A Study of the Muluki Ain of 1854* (Lalitpur: Himal Books, 2004).
- Hof, Linette van 't. "Het kansrijke buitengewest Aru. Een analyse van hoe en waarom de VOC het beleid voor handel en religie uitvoerde op de Aru-eilanden in de periode 1658–1694" (MA thesis, Leiden University, 2019), <https://studenttheses.universiteitleiden.nl/handle/1887/75553>.
- Hoffer, Peter C. *The Great New York Conspiracy of 1741: Slavery, Crime and Colonial Law* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2003).
- Holmberg, David. *Order in Paradox: Myth, Ritual, and Exchange Among Nepal's Tamang* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1989).
- Holmberg, David and Kathryn March with Suryaman Tamang. "Local Production/Local Knowledge: Forced Labour from Below," *Studies in Nepali History and Society* 4, no. 1 (1999): 5–64.
- Hooe, Todd. "'Little Kingdoms': Adat and Inequality in the Kei Islands, Eastern Indonesia" (PhD diss., University of Pittsburgh, 2012).
- Hoonhout, Bram. *Borderless Empire: Dutch Guiana in the Atlantic World, 1750–1800* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia University Press, 2020).
- Hooper, Jane, and David Eltis. "The Indian Ocean in Transatlantic Slavery," *Slavery & Abolition* 34, no. 3 (2013): 353–75.
- Hopper, Matthew S. *Slaves of One Master: Globalization and Slavery in Arabia in the Age of Empire* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2015).
- Hovy, Lodewyk. *Ceylonees Plakkaatboek. Plakkaten en andere wetten uitgevaardigd door het Nederlandse bestuur op Ceylon, 1638–1796*, 2 vols. (Hilversum: Verloren, 1991).
- Hsieh, Bao-hua. *Concubinage and Servitude in Late Imperial China* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2014).
- Hu-DeHart, Evelyn. "Chinese Coolie Labor in Cuba in the Nineteenth Century: Free Labor of Neoslavery," *Contributions in Black Studies: A Journal of African and Afro-American Studies* 12 (1994): 38–54.
- Hu Qingjun 胡慶鈞 and Zhou Yongyi 周用宜. "Nuli zhanyouzhi shi renlei shehui lishi fazhan de biran 奴隸佔有制是人類社會歷史發展 [The Slave-Owning System is a Necessity in the Development of Human Societies]," in *Zaoqi nuli shehui bijiao yanjiu 早期奴隸社會比較研究*, ed. Hu Qingjun (Beijing: Zhongguo shehui kexue chubanshe, 1996).
- Hunt, William Saunders. "Slavery in Kerala," in *Kerala Society Papers*, vol. 1, ed. T.K. Joseph (Trivandrum: Kerala Gazetteers, [1928] 1997): 275–85.
- Hurd, John. "Railways," in *The Cambridge Economic History of India*, vol. 2, C. 1757 – c. 1970, ed. Dharma Kumar, Meghnad Desai, and Tapan Raychaudhuri (Hyderabad: Orient Longman; Cambridge University Press, 1991).
- Hu Xiangyu. "The Juridical System of the Qing Dynasty in Beijing (1644–1900)" (PhD diss., University of Minnesota, 2011).
- Huang Xianfan 黃現璠. *Zhongguo lishi meiyou nuli shehui 中國歷史沒有奴隸社會 [There Is No Slave Society in the History of China]* (Guilin: Guangxi shifan daxue chubanshe, 1981).
- Indian Law Commission. Reports of the Indian Law Commission Upon Slavery in India, January 15, 1841, with Appendices, vol. 2.
- Ismard, Paulin, Benedetta Rossi, and Cécile Vidal, eds. *Les mondes de l'esclavage. Une histoire comparée* (Paris: Seuil, 2021).
- Isogai Fujio. *Nihon Chūsei Doreishi* (Tokyo: Azekura Shobō, 2007).
- Iwao Seiichi. *Nihon no Rekishi 14 – Sakoku* (Tokyo: Chūkō Bunko, 1974).
- Iwao Seiichi. *Shoku Nanyō Nihon-machi no Kenkyū* (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten, 1987).
- Iyer, L.A. Krishna. "Slavery in Kerala," *Man in India* 17, no.3(1937).

- Iyer, L.A. Krishna. *The Cochin Tribes and Castes*, vol. 3 (New Delhi: Cosmo Publications, 1981).
- Jacobs, Els. *Koopman in Azië. De handel van de Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie tijdens de 18de eeuw* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 2000).
- Jarring, Gunnar. "Svenska folket genom tiderna: vårt lands kulturhistoria i skildringar och bilder," in *Svenskt kulturarbete i Österled* (Malmö: Allhem, 1939): 377–88.
- Jeffery, Robin. *The Decline of Nayar Dominance, Society and Politics in Travancore: 1847–1908* (New Delhi: Vikas Publication [1976], 2014).
- Jeychandran, Neelima. "Geographies of death memory: Shrines dedicated to African saints and spectral deities in India," *South Asian History and Culture* 11, no. 4 (2020): 143–62.
- Jin Guo Ping and Wu Zhiliang. *Revisitar os primórdios de Macau: para uma nova abordagem da História* (Macau, Instituto Português do Oriente, 2007).
- Jin Noda. *Ro-Shin teikoku to Kazafu hankoku* (Tokyo: Tokyo Daigaku Shuppankai, 2011).
- Jha, Madhavi. "Men Diggers and Women Carriers': Gendered Work on Famine Public Works in Colonial North India," *International Review of Social History* 16 (2019): 1–28.
- Jiménez Pastrana, Juan. *Los Chinos en la historia de Cuba: 1847–1930* (Havana: Ciencias Sociales, 1983).
- Jonasson, Gustaf. "Krigsfångar som resurs," in *Historiska etyder*, ed. Janne Backlund (Uppsala: Historiska institutionen, Uppsala University, 1997).
- Jones, Eric A. "Fugitive Women: Slavery and social change in early modern Southeast Asia," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 38, no. 2 (2007): 215–45.
- Jonson, Lena, and Tamara Alekseevna Torstendahl Salytjeva. *Poltava: krigsfångar och kulturutbyte* (Stockholm: Atlantis, 2009).
- Joshi, Chitra. *Lost Worlds: Indian Labour and Its Forgotten Histories* (Delhi: Permanent Black; Orient Longman, 2003).
- Joshi, Chitra. "Fettered Bodies: Labouring on Public Works in Nineteenth-Century India," in *Labour Matters: Towards Global Histories: Studies in Honour of Sabyasachi Bhattacharya*, ed. Marcel van der Linden and Prabhu P. Mohapatra (New Delhi: Tulika Books, 2009).
- Joshi, Chitra. "Public Works and the Question of Unfree Labour," in *Labour, Coercion, and Economic Growth in Eurasia, 17th-20th Centuries*, ed. Alessandro Stanziani (Leiden: Brill, 2012): 273–87.
- Junshin Joshi Tanki Daigaku and Nagasaki Chihō Bunkashi Kenkyūjo, eds. *Nagasaki Jikkai, Kaban Yōgen*. (Nagasaki: Junshin Joshi Tanki Daigaku, 1987).
- Kagg, Leonhard. *Leonhard Kaggs dagbok 1698–1722*, ed. Adam Lewenhaupt (Stockholm: Nord. bokh., 1912).
- Kale, Madhavi. *Fragments of Empire: Capital, Slavery, and Indian Indentured Labour Migration in the British Caribbean*, Critical Histories (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998).
- Kanumoyoso, Bondan. "Beyond the City Wall: Society and Economic Development in the Ommelanden of Batavia 1684–1740" (PhD diss., Universiteit Leiden, 2011).
- Karashima, Noboru. "The Untouchables in Tamil Inscriptions and other Historical Sources in Tamil Nadu," in *Caste System, Untouchability and The Depressed*, ed. Hiroyuki Kotani (New Delhi: Manohar, 1997).
- Katō Eiichi. "Sakoku to Bakuhansei Kokka," in *Kōza Nihon Kinseishi 2: Sakoku*, ed. Katō Eiichi and Yamada Tadao (Tokyo: Yūhikaku, 1981): 54–115.
- Katō Eiichi. *Bakuhansei Kokka no Seiritsu to Taigai Kankei* (Tokyo: Shibunkaku Shuppan, 1998).
- Kerr, Ian. *Building the Railways of the Raj, 1850–1900* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1995).
- Kerr, Ian. "Labour Control and Labour Legislation in Colonial India: A Tale of Two Mid-nineteenth Century Acts," *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies* 27, no. 1 (2004): 7–25.
- Kheng, Cheah Boon. "Feudalism in Pre-Colonial Malaya: The Past as a Colonial Discourse," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 25, no. 2 (1994): 243–69.

- Khodarkovsky, Michael. *Russia's Steppe Frontier: The Making of a Colonial Empire, 1500–1800* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002).
- Khodarkovsky, Michael. *Where Two Worlds Met: The Russian State and the Kalmyk Nomads, 1600–1771* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006).
- Kim, Joy Sunghhee. “Representing Slavery: Class and Status in Late Chosŏn Korea” (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2004).
- Kirkby, Diane, and Sophie Loy-Wilson, eds. *Labour History and the Coolie Question*, special issue, *Labour History* 113 (2017).
- Kishimoto Mio 岸本美緒. “Review: Sold People: Traffickers and Family Life in North China, by Johanna S. Ransmeier,” *Zhongguo wenhua yanjiusuo xuebao* 67 (2018): 307–15.
- Klein, Ira. “When the Rains Failed: Famine, Relief, and Mortality in British India,” *The Indian Economic & Social History Review* 21, no. 2 (1984): 185–214.
- Knaap, Gerrit. *Kruidnagelen en Christenen: De Verenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie en de bevolking van Ambon 1656–1696* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2007).
- Knaap, Gerrit, and Heather Sutherland. *Monsoon Traders: Ships, Skippers and Commodities in Eighteenth-Century Makassar* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2004).
- Kołodziejczyk, Dariusz. “Captive Colonizers: The Role of the Prisoners of War from Poland Lithuania and the Crimean Khanate in the Russian Subjugation of Eastern Siberia,” *Journal of World History* (forthcoming 2022).
- Komlosy, Andrea. “Work and Labour Relations,” in *Capitalism: The Reemergence of a Historical Concept*, ed. Jürgen Kocka and Marcel van der Linden (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016).
- Kong Ying. “Mindai ni okeru Makao no Nihonjin Dorei ni tsuite,” *Journal of East Asian Cultural Interaction Studies* 6 (2013): 493–504.
- Kozhuvanal, Kunjukutty. *Aanikad Adhima Janathayum, Lagu Charithravum* (Ponkunnam: Indian Educational Development Charitable Society Aanikad, 2006).
- Kozlov, Sergei Aleksandrovich. *Russkie Plennye Velikoi Severnoi Voiny. 1700–1721*, ed. Zoja V. Dmitrieva (St. Petersburg: Istoricheskaja illjustracija, 2011).
- Kraan, Alfons van der. “Bali: Slavery and Slave trade,” in *Slavery, Bondage and Dependency in Southeast Asia*, ed. Anthony Reid (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1983): 315–40.
- Krammer, Arnold. *Prisoners of War: A Reference Handbook* (Westport: Praeger Security International, 2008).
- Krieger, Martin. “Der europäische Sklavenhandel auf dem Indischen Ozean (1500–1800),” in *Erzwungene Exile: Umsiedlung und Vertreibung in der Vormoderne (500 bis 1850)*, ed. Thomas Ertl (Frankfurt am Main: Campus Verlag, 2017): 221–38.
- Kuhn, Philip A. *Chinese among Others: Emigration in Modern Times* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2008).
- Kumar, Ashutosh. *Coolies of the Empire: Indentured Indians in the Sugar Colonies, 1830–1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).
- Kumar, Dharma. *Colonialism, Property and the State* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998).
- Kurian, V. Mathew. *The Caste-Class Formation (A Case Study of Kerala)* (New Delhi: B.R. Publishing Corporation, 1986).
- Kurup, K.K.N. Malabarile Adima Kachavadam, *Mathrubhoomi Weekly*, (2 June 1974): 16–17.
- Kurup, K.K.N. *Aspects of Kerala History and Culture* (Trivandrum: College Book House, 1977).
- Kurup, K.K.N. *Kavalappara Papers* (Calicut: Department of History Calicut University, 1984).
- Kusuman, K. K. *Slavery in Travancore* (Trivandrum: Kerala Historical Society, 1973).
- Kuvaja, Christer. *Karolinska Krigare 1660–1721* (Helsingfors: Schildt, 2008).
- Kynch, Jocelyn, and Maureen Sibbons. “Famine Relief, Piecework and Women Workers: Experiences in British India,” in *A World without Famine?*, ed. Helen O’Neill and John Toyne (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 1998): 128–59.

- Laarhoven, Ruurdje. "The Power of Cloth: The textile trade of the Dutch East India Company (VOC), 1600–1780" (PhD diss., Australian National University, 1994).
- Lange, Lorenz. "Journal du voyage de Laurent Lang a la Chine," in *Recueil de voyages au Nord, contenant Divers memoires très-utiles au commerce & la navigation*, vol. 5, 3rd ed. (Amsterdam, 1735).
- Lange, Lorenz. *Tagebuch zweoer Reisen, welche in den Jahren 1727, 1728 und 1736 von Kjachta und Zuruchaitu durch die Mongoley nach Peking gethan worden* (Leipzig, 1781).
- Lape, Peter. "Contact and Conflict in the Banda Islands, Eastern Indonesia, 11th–17th Centuries" (PhD diss., Brown University, 2000).
- La Rue, George Michael. "African Slave Women in Egypt ca. 1820 to the Plague of 1834–35," in *Women and Slavery*, vol. 1, ed. Gwyn Campbell, Suzanne Miers, and Joseph C. Miller (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2007): 169–89.
- Lawson, Charles Allen. *British and Native Cochín* (Cochin: The Courier Press By B Fernandes, 1860).
- Leider, Jaques P. "Le Royaume d'Arakan, Birmanie. Son histoire politique entre le début du XVe et la fin du XVIIe siècle" (PhD diss., Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient, 1998).
- Lenski, Noel Emmanuel, and Catherine M. Cameron, eds. *What Is a Slave Society? The Practice of Slavery in Global Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).
- Letters Received by the East India Company from its Servants in the East*, vol. 2, 1613–1615 (London: Sampson Low, Marston & Company, 1897).
- Li Cong 李聰. "Helan zai Yinni qiangpo zhongzhi dui Huaren de yingxiang 荷蘭在印尼強迫種植對華人的影響 [The Influence of Forced Cultivation on Chinese People in the Dutch Indies]," *Xiandai jiaoji* 12 (2017): 163–64.
- Li Ling 李凌. "Zhongguo gudai de renxunzhi 中國古代的人殉制 [Human sacrifices in Ancient China]," *Shuwu* 7 (2012): 9–16.
- Ling, Bonny. "Human Trafficking and China: Past and Present" (PhD diss., National University of Ireland, Galway, 2014).
- Liu Ju 劉炬 and Dong Jian 董健. "Gaogouli youren yanjiu 高句麗遊人研究 [Research on *youren* in Korguryo]," *Shehui kexue zhanxian* 12 (2017): 126–33.
- Liu Xianquan 劉憲權. *Daji guimaimai renkou fanzui de falü duice 打擊拐賣人口犯罪的法律對策 [Legal Strategies in the Fight Against Human Trafficking]* (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 2003).
- Linden, Marcel van der. "Het naderende einde van de vaderlandse geschiedenis en de toekomstige studie der sociale bewegingen" (Inaugural Lecture, University of Amsterdam, 1999).
- Linden, Marcel van der. "Global Labor History: Promising Challenges," *International Labor and Working-Class History* 84 (2013): 218–25.
- Linden, Marcel van der. "Dissecting Coerced Labor," in *On Coerced Labor: Work and Compulsion after Chattel Slavery*, ed. Marcel van der Linden and Magaly Rodríguez García (Leiden: Brill, 2016): 291–322.
- Lodhi, Abdulaziz Y. "African Settlements in India," *Nordic Journal of African Studies* 1, no.1 (1992): 83–86.
- Look Lai, Walton. *Indentured Labor, Caribbean Sugar: Chinese and Indian Migrants to the British West Indies, 1838–1918* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993).
- López, Kathleen. *Chinese Cubans: A Transnational History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013).
- Loth, Vincent L. "Pioneers and Perkeniers: The Banda Islands in the 18th Century," *Cakalele* 6 (1995): 13–35.
- Loureiro, Rui M. *Fidalgos, missionários e mandarins: Portugal e a China no século XVI* (Lisbon: Fundação Oriente, 2000).
- Lovejoy, Paul E. *Transformations in Slavery: A History of Slavery in Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

- Lovejoy, Paul E. "Internal Markets or an Atlantic-Sahara Divide? How Women Fit into the Slave Trade of West Africa," in *Women and Slavery*, vol. 1, ed. Gwyn Campbell, Suzanne Miers and Joseph C. Miller (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2007): 259–80.
- Lovejoy, Paul E., and David Richardson. "The Business of Slaving: Pawnship in Western Africa, c. 1600–1810," *Journal of African History* 42, no. 1 (2001): 67–89.
- Lovisa von Burghausen. "Rättelig Berättelse" (1733), Biografica Riksarkivet.
- Lugo-Ortiz, Agnes, and Angela Rosenthal, eds. *Slave Portraiture in the Atlantic World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).
- Luzón, José Luis. "Chineros, diplomáticos y hacendados en La Habana colonial. Don Francisco Abellá y Raldiris y su proyecto de inmigración libre a Cuba (1874)," *Boletín Americanista* 39 (1989): 143–58.
- Machado, Pedro. "A Forgotten Corner of the Indian Ocean: Gujarati Merchants, Portuguese India and the Mozambique Slave-Trade, c. 1730–1830," *Slavery & Abolition* 24, no. 2 (2003): 17–32.
- Machado, Pedro. "A Forgotten Corner of the Indian Ocean: Gujarati Merchants, Portuguese India and the Mozambique Slave-Trade, c.1730–1830," in *The Structure of Slavery in Indian Ocean Africa and Asia*, ed. Gwyn Campbell (London: Frank Cass, 2004): 17–32.
- Machado, Pedro. *Ocean of Trade: South Asian Merchants, Africa and the Indian Ocean, c. 1750–1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).
- Madhavan, K.S. "Primary Producing Groups in Early and Early Medieval Kerala: Production Process and Historical Roots of Transition to Castes (300–1300CE)" (PhD diss., University Of Calicut, 2012).
- Maheswari, S. Uma. *Mathilakom Rekhakal* (Trivandrum: Kerala Book Store, 2018).
- Major, Andrea. *Slavery, Abolitionism and Empire in India, 1772–1843* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2012).
- Maki Hidemasa. *Kinsei Nihon no Jinshin Baibai no Keifu* (Tokyo: Sōbunsha, 1960).
- Malay Annals*, trans. John Leyden (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Ormf, and Brown, 1821).
- Manguin, Pierre-Yves. "Manpower and Labour Categories in Early Sixteenth Century Malacca," in *Slavery, Bondage and Dependency in Southeast Asia*, ed. Anthony Reid (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1983): 209–15.
- Manguin, Pierre-Yves. "Of Fortresses and Galleys: The 1568 Acehnese Siege of Melaka, after a Contemporary Bird's-Eye View," *Modern Asian Studies* 22, no. 3 (1988): 607–28.
- Mancall, Mark. *Russia and China: Their Diplomatic Relations to 1728* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1971).
- Mani, Kunnukuzhi S. *Pulayar Noottandukalil* (Trivandrum: Mythri Books, 2014).
- Mann, Michael. *Sahibs, Sklaven und Soldaten: Geschichte des Menschenhandels rund um den Indischen Ozean* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2015).
- Marcaida, Juan Bautista. *Empresas agrícolas, con chinos, en Filipinas, tomando por tipo lo que podrian producir en la isla de Mindoro* (Manila: Amigos del Pais, 1850).
- Martínez-Robles, David. *Entre dos imperios: Sinibaldo de Mas y la empresa colonial en China (1844–1868)* (Madrid: Marcial Pons Historia, 2018.)
- Martínez, Julia. "Mapping the Trafficking of Women across Colonial Southeast Asia, 1600s–1930s," *Journal of Global Slavery* 1, no.2–3 (2016): 224–47.
- Marques, A. H. de Oliveira, ed. *História dos Portugueses no Extremo Oriente, 1º Volume, Tomo 1* (Lisbon: Fundação Oriente, 1998).
- Mas, Sinibald de. *Informe sobre el estado de las Islas Filipinas en 1842* (Madrid: Imprenta de I. Sancha, 1843).
- Mas, Sinibald de. *La Chine et les puissances chrétiennes* (Paris: Hachette, 1861).
- Matheson, Virginia, and M. B. Hooker. "Slavery in the Malay texts: Categories of Dependency and Compensation," in *Slavery, Bondage and Dependency in Southeast Asia*, ed. Anthony Reid (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1983): 182–208.

- Mathew, K.S. *Maritime Trade of the Malabar Coast and the Portuguese in the Sixteenth Century* (New Delhi: Manohar [1983], 2016).
- Mathews, P.F. *Adiyalapretham* (Thrissur: Green Books, 2019).
- Matos, Artur Teodoro de. *Timor no Passado. Fontes para a sua história (Seculos XVII e XVIII)* (Lisboa: Universidade Católica Portuguesa, 2015).
- Matsui Yōko. "Jendaa kara Miru Kinsei Nihon no Taigai Kankei," in *Nihon no Taigai Kankei 6: Kinseiteki Sekai no Seijuku*, ed. Arano Yasunori, Ishii Masatoshi, and Murai Shōsuke (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2010): 93–121.
- Maxwell, William Edward. "The Law Relating to Slavery Among the Malays," *Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 22 (1890): 247–97.
- Mayer, Peter. "Inventing Village Tradition: The Late 19th Century Origins of the North Indian 'Jajmani System'," *Modern Asian Studies* 27, no. 2 (1993): 357–95.
- Mbeki, Linda, and Matthias van Rossum. "Private Slave Trade in the Dutch Indian Ocean World: A Study into the Networks and Backgrounds of the Slavers and the Enslaved in South Asia and South Africa," *Slavery & Abolition* 38, no. 1 (2017): 95–116.
- McCarthy, Charles J. "Chinese Coolie Labor Minimal in the Philippines," *The Annals of the Philippine Chinese Historical Association* 5 (1975): 8–29.
- McDermott, Joseph P. *The Making of a New Rural Order in South China*, vol. 2, *Merchants, Markets, and Lineages, 1500–1700* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).
- McKim, Marriott. "Caste Ranking and Community Structure in Five Regions of India and Pakistan," *Bulletin of the Deccan College Research Institute* 19, no. 1–2 (1958).
- Meagher, Arnold J. *The Coolie Trade: The Traffic in Chinese Laborers to Latin America 1847–1874* (Philadelphia: Xlibris Corporation, 2008).
- Messenger, Dean. "Slavery, Dependency, and Obligation in the Early Modern Malay Archipelago: Towards a Refashioned 'Slave Mode of Production'," *Footnotes: A Journal of History* 4 (2020): 25–42.
- Miasnikov, Vladimir Stepanovich, ed. *Russko-kitaiskie otnosheniia v XVIII veke. Dokumenty i materialy. 1729–1733*, vol. 5 (Moscow: Pamjatniki istoricheskoe mysli, 2016).
- Michael, Bernardo. *Statemaking and Territory in South Asia: Lessons From the Anglo-Gorkha War (1814–1816)* (London: Anthem Press, 2014).
- Miller, Joseph C. "A Theme in Variations: A Historical Schema of Slaving in the Atlantic and Indian Ocean Regions," in *The Structure of Slavery in Indian Ocean Africa and Asia*, ed. Gwyn Campbell (London: Frank Cass, 2004): 169–94.
- Miller, Joseph C. *The Problem of Slavery as History: A Global Approach* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2012).
- Millward, James. *Eurasian Crossroads: A History of Xinjiang* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007).
- Minegishi Kentarō. *Kinsei Mibunron* (Tokyo: Azekura Shobō, 1989).
- Minegishi Sumio. "Chūsei no Mibunsei Kenkyū to Genin Mibun no Tokushitsu," in *Chūseishi Kōza 4: Chūsei no Hō to Kenryoku*, ed. Kimura Shōsabarō et al. (Tokyo: Gakuseisha, 1985): 238–53.
- Mishra, Amit Kumar. "Indian Indentured Labourers in Mauritius: Reassessing the 'New System of Slavery' vs Free Labour Debate," *Studies in History* 25, no. 2 (2009): 229–51.
- Mizukami Ikkyū. *Chūsei no Shōen to Shakai* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1969).
- Mohan, Sanal. *Modernity of Slavery: Struggles Against Caste Inequality in Colonial Kerala* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2015).
- Moller, Arvid. *Kort Beskrifning Öfwer Est- Och Lifland, Jemte Undersökning Om Deßa Länders Inbyggjares, i Symerhet Det Estniska Och Finska Folckslagets Ursprung* (Johan Laur. Horn, 1755).
- Mukherjee, Janam. *Hungry Bengal: War, Famine and the End of Empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015).
- Munro, J. D. *The High Ranges of Travancore* (Peermmed: Unknown, 1880).

- Murakami, Ei. "Two Bonded Labour Emigration Patterns in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Southern China: The Coolie Trade and Emigration to Southeast Asia," in *Bonded Labour and Debt in the Indian Ocean World*, ed. Alessandro Stanziani and Gwyn Campbell (London: Routledge, 2015): 153–64.
- Murakami Naojirō. "The Japanese at Batavia in the XVIIth Century," *Monumenta Nipponica* 2, no. 2 (1939): 355–73.
- Nagazumi Yōko and Takeda Mariko. *Hirado Shōkan, Igrisu Shōkan Nikki – Hekigan no Mita Kinsei no Nihon to Sakoku he no Michi* (Tokyo: Soshiete, 1981).
- Nair, Adoor K. K Ramchandran. *Slavery in Kerala* (New Delhi: Mittal Publication, 1986).
- Nair, P. Unnikrishnan. *Thiruvalla Granthavari* (Kottayam: Mahatma Gandhi University, 1998).
- Nakamura Tadashi. "Hirado Matsura Shiryō Hakubutsukan Shozō 'Shinshutsu Hōsho, Gonaisho Mokuroku' no Sakusei," in *Okinawa no Rekishi Jōhō Kenkyū* (Tokyo, 1998), <http://www.tulips.tsukuba.ac.jp/limedio/dlam/B95/B952215/1/vol02/pdf/3701.pdf>.
- Nambiar, O.T. Govindan. "Serfdom in Malabar," *The Indian Review* (June 1912): 482–88.
- Naoroji, Dadabhai. *Poverty and Un-British Rule in India* (London: Swan Sonnenschein & co., 1901).
- Naraharinath, Yogi, ed. *Itihas Prakashma Sandhi Patra Sangraha* (Dang: Yogi Naraharinath, 1966).
- Narayanan, Muttayil Govindamenon Sankara. *Vanjeri Grandhavari* (Calicut: Calicut University, 1987).
- Narváez, Benjamin Nicolas. "Abolition, Chinese Indentured Labor, and the State: Cuba, Peru, and the United States during the Mid Nineteenth Century," *The Americas* 76, no. 1 (2019): 5–40.
- Narváez, Benjamin Nicolas. "Chinese Coolies in Cuba and Peru: Race, Labor, and Immigration, 1839–1886" (PhD diss., University of Texas, 2010).
- Nelson, Thomas. "Slavery in Medieval Japan," *Monumenta Nipponica* 59, no. 4 (2004): 463–92.
- Nepali, Chitaranjan. *General Bhimsen Thapa ra Tatkalin Nepal* (Kathmandu: Ratna Pustak Bhandar, 1965).
- Ngai, Mae M., and Sophie Loy-Wilson. "Thinking Labor Rights through the Coolie Question," *International Labor and Working-Class History* 91 (2017): 5–7.
- Nieboer, Herman Jeremias. *Slavery as an Industrial System: Ethnological Researches* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1900).
- Nocentelli, Carmen. *Empires of Love: Europe, Asia, and the Making of Early Modern Identity* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013).
- Nogues-Marco, Pilar. "Measuring Colonial Extraction: The East India Company's Rule and the Drain of Wealth (1757–1858)," *Capitalism: A Journal of History and Economics* 2, no. 1 (2021): 154–95.
- Northrup, David. *Indentured Labor in the Age of Imperialism, 1834–1922* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).
- Nussbaum, Felicity A. *Torrid Zones: Maternity, Sexuality, and Empire in Eighteenth-Century English Narratives* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995).
- Obeng, Pashington. *Shaping Membership, Defining Nation, The Cultural Politics of African Indian in South Asia* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2007).
- Odegard, Erik. "A Company of State: The Dutch East India Company and the Debates on the Company-States in Asia, 1660s–1690s," in *Mechanisms of Global Empire-Building*, ed. Amélia Polónia and Cátia Antunes (Porto: CITEM, 2017): 127–43.
- Oropeza Keresey, Deborah. "Los 'indios chinos' en la Nueva España: la inmigración de la nao de China, 1565–1700" (PhD diss., El Colégio de México, 2007).
- Östlund, Joachim. *Saltets pris: svenska slavar i Nordafrika och handeln i Medelhavet 1650–1770* (Lund: Nordic Academic Press, 2014).
- Ōta Gyūichi. *Shinchō Kōki* (Tokyo: Kadokawa, 2019).
- Ōta Hiroki. *Wakō: Shōgyō, Gunji Shiteki Kenkyū* (Yokohama: Shunpūsha, 2002).
- Panikkar, K. M. *A History of Kerala 1498–1801* (Annamalainagar: The Annamala University, 1960).
- Panta, Dinesh Raj. *Gorkha ko Itihas*, vol. 4 (Kathmandu: Dinesh Raj Pant, 1985).
- Pant, Dinesh Raj. *Nayabikashini: Manavnyashastra* (Kathmandu: Kanoon Byabasahi Club, 2008).

- Panta, Naya Raj. *Sri 5 Prithvi Narayan Shah ko Upadesh*, 5 vols. (Patan: Jagadamba Prakashan, 1968).
- Pargas, Damian Alan, and Felicia Roşu. *Critical Readings on Global Slavery*, 4 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 2017).
- Patterson, Orlando. *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982).
- Pattinson, Juliette, Lucy Noakes, and Wendy Ugolini. "Introduction: Incarcerated Masculinities: Male POWs and the Second World War," *Journal of War and Culture Studies* 7 (2014): 179–90.
- Paul, Vinil Baby. "Dalit Conversion Memories in Colonial Kerala and Decolonisation of Knowledge," *South Asia Research* 41, no. 2 (2021): 187–202.
- Payyappilly, Ignatius. "Man Slaving to Divine: A Socio-Religious Custom Gleaned from the Nineteenth Century Palm Leaves," *Artha* 11, no. 4 (2012): 1–23.
- Peck, Gunther. *Reinventing Free Labour: Padrones and Immigrant Workers in the North American West, 1880–1930* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000).
- Pelras, Christian. *The Bugis* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1996).
- Perdue, Peter C. *China Marches West: The Qing Conquest of Central Eurasia* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005).
- Perdue, Peter C. "Crossing Borders in Imperial China," in *Asia Inside Out: Connected Places*, ed. Eric Tagliacozzo, Helen F. Siu, and Peter C. Perdue (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015): 195–218.
- Pérez de la Riva, Juan. *Documentos para la historia de las gentes sin historia: El tráfico de culíes chinos* (Havana: Biblioteca Nacional, 1965).
- Pérez de la Riva, Juan. *Demografía de los culíes chinos en Cuba* (Havana: Biblioteca Nacional "José Martí," 1967).
- Pérez de la Riva, Juan. "La situación legal del culí en Cuba: 1849–1868," *Cahiers Du Monde Hispanique et Luso-Brésilien* 16 (1971): 7–32.
- Pérez de la Riva, Juan. *La república neocolonial* (Havana: Ciencias Sociales, 1975).
- Pérez de la Riva, Juan. *El barracón: Esclavitud y capitalismo en Cuba* (Barcelona: Editorial Crítica, 1978).
- Permanyer-Ugartemendia, Ander. "La Participación española en la economía del opio en Asia Oriental tras el fin del Galeón" (PhD diss., Universitat Pompeu Fabra, 2013).
- Perret, Daniel. "From Slave to King," *Archipel* 82 (2011): 159–99.
- Pinto, Jeanette. "The African Native in Indiaspora," in *Uncovering the History of Africans in Asia*, ed. Shihan de Silva Jayasuriya and Jean-Pierre Angenot (Leiden: Brill, 2008): 139–54.
- Piper, Carl, and Carl Gustaf Rehnschiöld. *Carl Pipers Och Carl Gustaf Rehnschiölds Mottagna Brev 1709–1713*, ed. Lars Otto Berg (Stockholm: Kungl. Samf. för utgivande av handskrifter rörande Skandinaviens historia, 1997).
- Pochekaev, Roman J. "Rossiiskie Puteshestvenniki o Pravovykh Otnosheniyakh v Dzhungarskom Khanstve XVIII v.," *Oriental Studies* 12, no. 1 (2019): 28–40.
- Prakash, Gyan. *Bonded Histories: Genealogies of Labour Servitude in Colonial India*, Cambridge South Asian Studies 44 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).
- Raben, Remco. "Batavia and Colombo: The Ethnic and Spatial Order of Two Colonial Cities, 1600–1800" (PhD diss., Leiden University, 1996).
- Raben, Remco. "Cities and the slave trade in early modern Southeast Asia," in *Linking Destinies: Trade, Towns and Kin in Asian History*, ed. Peter Boomgaard, Dick Kooiman, and Henk Schulte Nordholt (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2008): 119–40.
- Raben, Remco. "Colonial Shorthand and Historical Knowledge: Segregation and Localisation in a Dutch Colonial Society," *Journal of Modern European History* 18, no. 2 (2020): 177–93.
- Raffles, Thomas Stamford. *The History of Java*, vol. 1 (London: John Murray, 1830).
- Ramachandran Nair, Adoor K.K. *Slavery in Kerala* (New Delhi: Mittal Publications, 1986).

- Ransmeier, Johanna S. *Sold People. Traffickers and Family Life in North China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2017).
- Raphi, Ponjikkara. *'Ore Pro Nobis'* (Kottayam: DC Books, 1984).
- Regmi, Mahesh Chandra. *A Study in Nepali Economic History 1768–1846* (New Delhi: Manjusri Publishing House, 1978).
- Regué-Sendrós, Oriol. “Chinese Migration to Cuba: Racial Legislation and Colonial Rule in the Mid-Nineteenth-Century Spanish Empire,” *Journal of Iberian and Latin American Studies* 24, no. 2 (2018): 279–92.
- Reid, Anthony. “The Structure of Cities in Southeast Asia, Fifteenth to Seventeenth Centuries,” *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 11, no. 2 (1980): 235–50.
- Reid, Anthony, ed. *Slavery, Bondage and Dependency in Southeast Asia* (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1983) [US edition New York: St Martin’s Press, 1983].
- Reid, Anthony. “Introduction: Slavery and Bondage in Southeast Asian History,” in *Slavery, Bondage and Dependency in Southeast Asia*, ed. Anthony Reid (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1983): 1–43.
- Riccardi, Theodore. “The Royal Edicts of King Rama Shah of Gorkha,” *Kailash* 5, no. 1 (1977): 29–65.
- Rejikumar, J., ed. *Sakthan Thampuran: Thiranjedutha Bharana Rekhakal*, vol. 1, 2 (Trivandrum: Kerala State Archives Bulletin, 1998).
- Ridjali. *Historie van Hitu. Een Ambonsche geschiedenis uit de zeventiende eeuw* (Utrecht: Landelijk Steunpunt Educatie Molukkers, 2004).
- Robertson, Claire, and Marsha Robinson. “Re-Modeling Slavery as If Women Mattered,” in *Women and Slavery: The Modern Atlantic*, ed. Gwyn Campbell, Suzanne Miers, and Joseph C. Miller (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2007): 253–83.
- Rodríguez Bériz, Miguel. *Diccionario de la administración de Filipinas* (Manila: Establecimiento tipo-litográfico de M. Perez [hijo], 1887).
- Rodríguez San Pedro, Joaquín. *Legislación Ultramarina, concordada y anotada por J. Rodríguez San Pedro*, vol. 10 (Madrid: Imprenta de Manuel Minuesa, 1868).
- Rossi, Benedetta, ed. *Reconfiguring Slavery: West African Trajectories* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2009).
- Rossum, Matthias van. “‘Amok!': Mutinies and Slaves on Dutch East Indiamen in the 1780s,” *International Review of Social History* 58 (2013): 109–30.
- Rossum, Matthias van. *Kleurrijke tragiek. De geschiedenis van slavernij in Azië onder de VOC* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2015).
- Rossum, Matthias van. “‘Vervloekte goudzugt’. De VOC, slavenhandel en slavernij in Azië,” *Tijdschrift voor Sociale en Economische Geschiedenis* 12, no. 4 (2015): 29–58.
- Rossum, Matthias van. “The Dutch East India Company in Asia, 1595–1811,” in *A Global History of Convicts and Penal Colonies*, ed. Clare Anderson (London: Bloomsbury, 2018): 157–82.
- Rossum, Matthias van. “Global Slavery, Local Bondage? Rethinking Slaveries as (Im)Mobilizing Regimes from the Case of the Dutch Indian Ocean and Indonesian Archipelago Worlds,” *Journal of World History* 31, no. 4 (2020): 693–727.
- Rossum, Matthias van. “The Dutch East India Company and Slave Trade in the Indian Ocean and Indonesian Archipelago Worlds, 1602–1795,” *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Asian History*, ed. David Ludden (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190277727.013.403>.
- Rossum, Matthias van. “Slavery and Its Transformations: Prolegomena for a Global and Comparative Research Agenda,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 63, no. 3 (2021): 566–98.
- Rossum, Matthias van. “Towards a Global Perspective on Early Modern Slave Trade: Prices of the Enslaved in the Indian Ocean, Indonesian Archipelago and Atlantic worlds,” *Journal of Global History* 17, no. 1 (2021): 1–27, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1740022821000139>.

- Rossum, Matthias van, Alexander Geelen, Bram van den Hout, and Merve Tosun. *Testimonies of Enslavement: Sources on Slavery from the Indian Ocean World* (London: Bloomsbury, 2020).
- Rossum, Matthias van, and Merve Tosun. "Corvée Capitalism: The Dutch East India Company, Colonial Expansion, and Labor Regimes in Early Modern Asia," *Journal of Asian Studies* 80, no. 4 (2021): 1–22, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0021911821000735>.
- Rupakheti, Sanjog. "Beyond Dharmashastras and Weberian Modernity: Law and State Making in the Nineteenth Century Nepal," in *Law Addressing Diversity: Pre-Modern India and Europe in Comparison*, ed. Thomas Ertl and Gijs Kruijtzter (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017): 169–96.
- Sannfärdig berättelse, angående ryssarnes ochristelige och hårda förfahrande emot kongl. may: tzaf Sverige högre och ringare fångne officerare, betiente och undersåtare, samt deras qvinnor och barn* (Stockholm, 1705).
- Santhosh, Eledeth. "Kin Groups, Agrarian Slavery and Land Ownership in Eighteenth Century Central Kerala: Deciphering New Koleluttu Palm Leaf Documents," *Social Orbit* 5, no. 1 (2021): 143–62.
- Sarkar, Tanika. "Bondage in the Colonial Context," in *Chains of Servitude: Bondage and Slavery in India*, ed. Utsa Patnaik and Manjari Dingwaney (Madras: Sangam, 1985): 97–126.
- Scanlan, Padraic. *Slave Empire: How Slavery Made Modern Britain* (London: Robinson, 2020).
- Scherzenfeldt, Brigita. "Personalier öfwer lieutenantens herr Johan Gustaf Renats maka, fru Brigitta Scherszenfeldt" (1736), C.R. Berch's Collection, The Library of the Swedish Royal Academy of Letters.
- Schiel, Juliane, and Christian G. De Vito, eds. *Contextualizing the History of the Enslaved Modalities of Coercion and Shifting Labor and Power Relations*, special issue, *Journal of Global Slavery* 5, no. 2 (2020).
- Schnittscher, Johan Christian. *Berättelse, om ajuckiniska Calmuckiet* (Stockholm, 1744).
- Schottenhammer, Angela. "Slaves and Forms of Slavery in Late Imperial China (Seventeenth to Early Twentieth Centuries)," *Slavery & Abolition* 24, no. 2 (2003): 143–54.
- Schrikker, Alicia. *Dutch and British Colonial Intervention in Sri Lanka, 1780–1815* (Leiden: Brill, 2007).
- Schrikker, Alicia, and Dries Lyna. "Threads of the Legal Web: Dutch Law and Everyday Colonialism in Eighteenth-Century Asia," in *The Uses of Justice in Global Perspective, 1600–1900*, ed. Griet Vermeesch, Manon van der Heijden, and Jaco Zuijderduijn (London: Routledge, 2018): 42–56.
- Schrikker, Alicia, and Kate Ekama. "Through the Lens of Slavery: Dutch Sri Lanka in the Eighteenth Century," in *Sri Lanka at the Crossroads of History*, ed. Alan Strathern and Zoltan Biedermann (London: University College London Press, 2017): 173–93.
- Schrikker, Alicia, and Nira Wickramasinghe, eds. *Being a Slave: Histories and Legacies of European Slavery in the Indian Ocean* (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2020).
- Sen, Jahar. "Slave Trade on the Indo-Nepal Border in the Nineteenth Century," *Kailash* 1, no. 2 (1973): 159–66.
- Seijas, Tatiana. *Asian Slaves in Colonial Mexico: From Chinos to Indians* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).
- Sekiguchi Hiroo. "Edo Bakufu Jinshin Baibai Kinrei Kenkyū no Seika to Kadai," in *Nihon Chiiki Shakai no Rekishi to Minzoku*, ed. Kanagawa Daigaku Nihon Keizaishi Kenkyūkai (Tokyo: Yūzankaku, 2003): 135–53.
- Sekiguchi Hiroo. "Edo Bakufu no Jinshin Baibai Kinrei wo Megutte," *Rekishi Minzoku Shiryōgaku Kenkyū* 24 (2019): 231–63.
- Sekiguchi Hiroo. *Kinsei Sonraku no Ryōiki to Mibun* (Tokyo: Yamakawa Kōbunkan, 2021).
- Shahid, Amal. "Re'constructing' Informality: Famine Labour in Late 19th Century Colonial North India," *Journal of Labour and Society* 24 (2021): 16–43.
- Shahid, Amal. "Wage Payments and Labour Productivity: the 1896–7 Famine in North Western Provinces and Oudh," in *Wage Earners in India 1500–1900: Regional Approaches in an International Context*, ed. Jan Lucassen and Radhika Seshan (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publishing, 2021): 275–97.

- Sharma, Sanjay. *Famine, Philanthropy, and the Colonial State: North India in the Early Nineteenth Century*, SOAS Studies on South Asia (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2001).
- Sharma, Sanjay. "Poorhouses and Gratuitous Famine Relief in Colonial North India," in *A Cultural History of Famine: Food Security and the Environment in India and Britain*, ed. Ayesha Mukherjee (New York: Routledge, 2019).
- Sharma, Sanjay. "Famine, Relief, and Rhetoric of Welfare in Colonial North India," in *An Economic History of Famine Resilience*, Routledge Explorations in Economic History 84, ed. Jessica Dijkman and Bas van Leeuwen (New York: Routledge, 2019): 162–82.
- Shebaldina, Galina. *Shvedskie Voennoplennye v Sibiri: Pervaia Chetvert' XVIII Veka* (Moscow: RGGU, 2005).
- Shell, Robert. *Children of Bondage: A Social History of the Slave Society at the Cape of Good Hope, 1652–1838* (Hanover, NH and London: Wesleyan University Press, 1994).
- Shi Xing 史星. *Nuli shehui 奴隸社會 [The Slave Society]* (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe, 1973).
- Shimizu Kōichi et al. *Kinsei Nagasaki Hōsei Shiryōshū 1: Tenshō Hachinen kara Kyōhō Gannen* (Tokyo: Iwata Shoin, 2014).
- Shimōjū Kiyoshi. *Miuri no Nihonshi: Jinshin Baibai kara Nenko Hōkō he* (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 2012).
- Shrestha, Tek Bahadur. *Nuwakot ko Etihashik Ruprekha* (Kathmandu: Center for Nepal and Asian Studies, 1975).
- Shrestha, Tek Bahadur. *Parbat Rajya ko Etihashik Ruprekha* (Kathmandu: Center for Nepal and Asian Studies, 2002).
- Simonow, Joanna. "The Great Bengal Famine in Britain: Metropolitan Campaigning for Food Relief and the End of Empire, 1943–44," *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 48, no. 1 (2020): 168–97.
- Singh, Anjana. *Fort Cochin in Kerala, 1750–1830: The Social Condition of a Dutch Community in an Indian Milieu* (Leiden: Brill, 2010).
- Sinha, Mrinalini. *Colonial Masculinity: The 'manly Englishman' and the 'Effeminate Bengali' in the Late Nineteenth Century* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995).
- Sint Nicolaas, Samantha, Matthias van Rossum, and Ulbe Bosma. "Towards an Indian Ocean and Maritime Asia Slave Trade Database: An Exploration of Concepts, Lessons and Models," *Esclavages & Post-Esclavages* 3 (2020): 1–30.
- Slavery in India, Return to an Address of The Honorable House of Commons, dated 13th April 1826* (Ordered by The House of Commons to be Printed 12 March 1828).
- Sleeman, W.H. *Rambles and Recollections of an Indian Official*, rev. annotated ed. by Vincent A. Smith (London, 1915).
- Smiley, Will. *From Slaves to Prisoners of War: The Ottoman Empire, Russia, and International Law* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).
- Smith, Ronald Bishop, ed. *Diogo Lopes de Sequeira* (Lisbon: Silvas, 1975).
- Sommer, Matthew H. *Polyandry and Wife-Selling in Qing Dynasty China: Survival Strategies and Judicial Interventions* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015).
- Sousa, Lúcio de. *Escravidura e Diáspora Japonesa nos Séculos XVI e XVII* (Braga: NICPRI, 2014).
- Sousa, Lúcio de. *The Portuguese Slave Trade in Early Modern Japan: Merchants, Jesuits and Japanese, Chinese, and Korean Slaves* (Leiden: Brill, 2018).
- Souza, George Bryan, and Jeffrey Scott Turley, eds. *The Boxer Codex: Transcription and Translation of an Illustrated Late Sixteenth-Century Spanish Manuscript Concerning the Geography, History and Ethnography of the Pacific, South-east and East Asia* (Leiden: Brill, 2016).
- Speelman, Cornelis. "Notitie Speelman," *The Oxis Group*, <https://oxis.org/resources-3/manuscripts/speelman-1670.pdf>.

- Sreenivasan, Ramya. *The Many Lives of a Rajput Queen: Heroic Past in India c. 1500–1900* (Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 2007).
- Stanziani, Alessandro. *After Oriental Despotism: Eurasian Growth in a Global Perspective* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014).
- Stanziani, Alessandro. *Bondage: Labor and Rights in Eurasia from the Sixteenth to the Early Twentieth Centuries* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2014).
- Stanziani, Alessandro. *Sailors, Slaves, and Immigrants – Bondage in the Indian Ocean World, 1750–1914* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).
- Stanziani, Alessandro. “Esclaves et captifs en Russie et en Asie Centrale (xvie – xixe siècles),” in *Les esclavages en Méditerranée: Espaces et dynamiques économiques*, ed. Fabienne P. Guillén and Salah Trabelsi (Madrid: Casa de Velázquez, 2017): 195–211.
- Stanziani, Alessandro. *Labor on the Fringes of Empire: Voice, Exit and the Law*, Palgrave Series in Indian Ocean World Studies (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018).
- Statement Exhibiting the Moral and Material Progress and Condition of India during the Year 1891–92 and the Nine Preceding Years* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1894).
- Steinfeld, Robert J. *Coercion, Contract, and Free Labour in the Nineteenth Century*, Cambridge Historical Studies in American Law and Society (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001).
- Sutherland, Heather. “Slavery and the Slave Trade in South Sulawesi, 1660s–1800s,” in *Slavery, Bondage and Dependency in Southeast Asia*, ed. Anthony Reid (St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1983): 263–85.
- Suzuki, Hideaki. *Abolitions as a Global Experience* (Singapore: NUS Press, 2015).
- Tagliacozzo, Eric, and Wen-Chin Chang. *Chinese Circulations: Capital, Commodities and Networks in Southeast Asia* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2011).
- Takase Kōichirō. *Kirishitan Jidai no Bunka to Shosō* (Tokyo: Yagi Shoten, 2001).
- Takase Kōichirō. *Monsūn Monjo to Nihon – Jūnana Seiki Porutogaru Kōmonjo Shū* (Tokyo: Yagi Shoten, 2006).
- Tan Qian 談遷. *Beiyou lu* 北遊錄 [Peregrinations to the North] [ca. 1660] (Beijing: Zhonghua Shuju, 2006).
- Tang Kaijian and Zhang Zhongpeng. “Míngcháo Yěshìrén duì Àomén Púrén de Tàidù, Cèlùè jí Liúbìàn,” *Journal of Macau Studies Quarterly* 3 (2012): 75–98.
- Tang Kaijian. *Setting Off from Macau: Essays on Jesuit History during the Ming and Qing Dynasties* (Leiden: Brill, 2016).
- Tanno, Isao. “Edo Jidai no Hōkōnin Seido to Nihonteki Kan'yō Kankō,” *Kokusai Keiei Ronshū* 41 (2011): 57–70.
- Tappe, Oliver, and Ulrike Lindner. “Introduction: Global Variants of Bonded Labour,” in *Bonded Labour: Global and Comparative Perspectives*, ed. Sabine Damir-Geilsdorf, Ulrike Lindner, Gesine Müller, Oliver Tappe, and Michael Zeuske (Bielefeld: transcript, 2016): 9–34.
- Theal, George M., ed. *Records of the Cape Colony*, 36 vols. (London: Clowes, 1897–1905).
- Thekkedath, Joseph. *History of Christianity in India*, vol. 2, *From the Middle of the Sixteenth to the End of the Seventeenth Century (1542–1700)* (Bangalore: Church History Association of India, 1988).
- Thiébaud, Rafaël. “Some Thoughts concerning the Effects of the European Slave Trade on the Dynamics of Slavery in Madagascar in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries,” in *Slaving Zones*, ed. Jeff Fynn-Paul and Damian Alan Pargas (Leiden: Brill, 2017): 169–204.
- Thomaz, Luís Filipe F.R. “A escravatura em Malaca no século XVI,” *Studia* 53 (1994): 253–316.
- Thomaz, Luís Filipe F.R. “Nina Chatu e o comércio português em Malaca,” in *De Ceuta a Timor*, ed. Luís Filipe R. Thomaz (Lisbon: Difel, 1994): 487–512.
- Thundiparambil, George. *Maya* (Pondicherry: Gaudi, 2008).
- Tulišen. *Lakcaha jecen de takūraha babe ejehe bithei/Man Han Yi yu lu jiao zhu*, ed. Zhuang Jifa (Taipei: Wen Shizhe Publishing House, 1983).

- Undang-Undang Melaka: The Laws of Melaka*. Trans. Liaw Yock Fang (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1976).
- Upreti, Prem Raman. *Nepal-Tibet Relations 1850–1930: Years of Hope, Frustrations and Challenge* (Kathmandu: Puga Nara, 1980).
- Vaidik, Aparna. “Working an Island Colony: Convict Labour Regime in the Colonial Andamans, 1858–1921,” in *Labour Matters: Towards Global Histories: Studies in Honour of Sabyasachi Bhattacharya*, ed. Marcel van der Linden and Prabhu P. Mohapatra (New Delhi: Tulika Books, 2009).
- Vajracharya, Dhanavajra, and Tek Bahadur Shrestha. *Nuwakot ko Etihashik Ruprekha* (Kathmandu: Center for Nepal and Asian Studies, 1975).
- Valentijn, François. *Oud en nieuw Oost-Indien*, vol. 3 (Dordrecht and Amsterdam: Van Braam & Onder de Linden, 1726).
- Variar, M.R. Raghava. *Keralolpatti Granthavari* (Calicut: Calicut University, 1984).
- Variar, M.R. Raghava. “Malabarile Adimathathinte Oru Charithrarekha,” *Vijnanakairali* 25, no. 3 (1994): 183–87.
- Varma, Nitin. *Coolies of Capitalism* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017).
- Velayudhan, K.P. “Trade Guilds and the Character of State in Early South India,” in *Proceedings of the Indian History Congress* 39, no. 1 (1978): 200–207.
- Veluthat, Kesavan. “Political History of Kerala: A Status Report,” in *International Seminar on Kerala History* (Trivandrum: KCHR, 2006).
- Vink, Markus. “‘The World’s Oldest Trade’: Dutch Slavery and Slave Trade in the Indian Ocean in the Seventeenth Century,” *Journal of World History* 14, no. 2 (2003): 131–77.
- Vink, Markus. “Freedom and Slavery: The Dutch Republic, the VOC World, and the Debate over the ‘World’s Oldest Trade,’” *South African Historical Journal* 59 (2007): 19–46.
- Vito, Christian G. de, and Anne Gerritsen. “Micro-Spatial Histories of Labour: Towards a New Global History,” in *Micro-Spatial Histories of Global Labour*, ed. Christian G. de Vito and Anne Gerritsen (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018): 1–28.
- Vito, Christian G. de, Juliane Schiel, and Matthias van Rossum. “From Bondage to Precariousness? New Perspectives on Labor and Social History,” *Journal of Social History* 54, no. 2 (2019): 1–19.
- Vlassopoulos, Kostas. “Does Slavery Have a History? The Consequences of a Global Approach,” *Journal of Global Slavery* 1, no. (2016): 5–27.
- Vysakh, A.S. “The Mathilakom Records: Untold Vignettes from Travancore History,” *ALA – A Kerala Studies Blog*, 15 November 2019, <http://ala.keralascholars.org>.
- Wade, Geoff, ed. *Asian Expansions: The Historical Experiences of Polity Expansion in Asia* (Abingdon, NY: Routledge, 2015).
- Wagenaar, Lodewyk. “‘Bred Up under Our Roofs’: Domestic slavery in Ceylon, 1760–1834,” *HumaNetten* 47 (2021): 56–90.
- Wall, V.I. van de. “Bijdrage tot de geschiedenis der perkeniers 1621–1671,” *Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 74 (1934): 516–80.
- Wang Hua. “Nan Taipingyang daomin qiangzhi laogong maoyi de fazhan, tedian he yingxiang 南洋島民強制勞工貿易的發展、特點和影響 (1863–1911) [The Forced Labor Trade of South Pacific Islanders (1863–1911): Its Development, Characteristics and Impact],” *Shijie lishi* 3 (2018): 72–85.
- Wang Xueping 王雪萍. *16–18 shiji binü shengcun zhuangtai yanjiu* 16–18 世紀婢女生存狀態研究 [The Condition of Maidservants, 16th–18th Centuries] (Harbin: Heilongjiang daxue chubanshe, 2008).
- Wang Xueping 王雪萍. *Mingdai binü qunti yanjiu* 明代婢女群體研究 [Research on Maidservants as a Group in the Ming Dynasty] (Beijing: Renmin chubanshe, 2019).

- Ward, Kerry. *Networks of Empire: Forced Migration in the Dutch East India Company* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009).
- Ward, Kerry. "Slavery in Southeast Asia, 1420–1804," in *The Cambridge World History of Slavery*, vol. 3, ed. David Eltis and Stanley L. Engerman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011): 163–85.
- Ware, Rudolph T. "Slavery in Islamic Africa, 1400–1800," in *The Cambridge World History of Slavery*, vol. 3, ed. David Eltis and Stanley L. Engerman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011): 47–80.
- Watson, James L., ed. *Asian and African Systems of Slavery* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980).
- Watson, James L. "Introduction. Slavery as an Institution: Open and Closed Systems," in *Asian and African Systems of Slavery*, ed. James L. Watson (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980): 1–15.
- Weber, Friedrich Christian. *Das veränderte Russland* (Frankfurt, 1721).
- Welie, Rik van. "Slave Trading and Slavery in the Dutch Colonial Empire: A Global Comparison," *New West Indian Guide* 82, no. 1–2 (2008): 47–96.
- Wellen, Kathryn Anderson. *The Open Door: Early Modern Wajorese Statecraft and Diaspora* (De Kalb, IL: NIU Press, 2014).
- Weststeijn, Arthur. "The VOC as Company-State: Debating Seventeenth-Century Dutch Colonial Expansion," *Itinerario* 38, no. 1 (2014): 13–34.
- Whelpton, John. *Jang Bahadur in Europe: The First Nepalese Mission to the West* (Kathmandu: Sahayogi Press, 1983).
- Wickberg, Edgar. *The Chinese in Philippine Life, 1850–1898* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1965).
- Wickramasinghe, Chandima. "The Abolition of Colonial and Pre-Colonial Slavery from Ceylon (Sri Lanka)," *Cultural and Social History* 7 (2010): 315–35.
- Wickramasinghe, Nira, and Alicia Schrikker. "The Ambivalence of Freedom: Slaves in Jaffna, Sri Lanka, in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," *Journal of Asian Studies* 78, no. 3 (2019): 1–23.
- Witzenrath, Christoph, ed. *Eurasian Slavery, Ransom and Abolition in World History, 1200–1860* (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2015).
- Winn, Phillip. "Slavery and Cultural Creativity in the Banda Islands," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 41, no. 3 (2010): 365–89.
- Worden, Nigel. *Slavery in Dutch South Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).
- Worden, Nigel. "Indian Ocean Slaves in Cape Town, 1695–1807," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 42, no. 3 (2016): 389–408.
- Worden, Nigel, and Gerald Groenewald, eds. *Trials of Slavery: Selected Documents Concerning Slaves from the Criminal Records of the Council of Justice at the Cape of Good Hope, 1705–1794* (Cape Town: Van Riebeeck Society, 2005).
- "Wudali ti yinni guaifan taoren shiben 吳達禮題隱匿拐販逃人事本 [Memoir on Harboring Traffickers and Runaways by Wudali]," in *Qingdai dang'an shiliao congbian* 清代檔案史料叢編, ed. Zhongguo diyi lishi dang'anguan 中國第一歷史檔案館 (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1984): 107–15.
- Wurffbain, Johann Sigmund. *Reise nach den Molukken und Vorder-Indien 1632–1646* (Haag: M. Nijhoff, 1931).
- Xi Jinping 習近平. "Xi Jinping zhi Zhongguo shehui kexueyuan Zhongguo lishi yanjiuyuan chengli de hexin 習近平致中國社會科學院中國歷史研究院成立的賀信 [Congratulatory Letter From Xi Jinping for the Institution of the Academy of History]," *Lishi yanjiu* 1 (2020): 2.
- Xie Jianpig 謝建平. "Gudai bukuai. Yiren congye, sandai buxu canjia kej 古代捕快: 一人從業三代不許參加科舉 [Constables in Ancient China. One Man's profession, Three Generations Barred From Access to Imperial Examinations]," *Wenshi tiandi* 5 (2013): 93.

- Yasutaka Hiroaki. *Kinsei Nagasaki Shihō Seido no Kenkyū* (Kyoto: Shibunkaku Shuppan, 2010).
- Yokota Fuyuhiko. “Kinsei no Mibunsei,” in *Iwanami Kōza Nihon Rekishi Dai 10 Kan, Kinsei 1*, ed. Ōtu Tōru et al. (Tokyo: Iwanami Shoten): 277–312.
- Yokota Fuyuhiko. “Konketsuji Tsuihōrei to Ijin Yūkaku no Seiritsu,” in *Ibunka Kōryūshi no Saikentō*, ed. Hirota Masaki nad Yokota Fuyuhiko (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 2011): 27–96.
- Yokota Fuyuhiko. *Nihon no Rekishi 16 – Tenka Taihei* (Tokyo: Kōdansha, 2002).
- Young, Elliott. *Alien Nation: Chinese Migration in the Americas from the Coolie Era through World War II* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2014).
- Yu Junjun 虞俊俊 and He Anshun 何安順. “Yuenan zaoqi de shehui xingzhi he tedian yanjiu 越南早期的社會性質和特點研究 [Research on the Characteristics and Nature of Early Vietnamese Society],” *Sixiang zhanxian* 39, no. 2 (2013): 203–5.
- Yu Jianing 喻佳寧. “Qianxi Zhong-Xi fengjian shehui zhong diannong yu nongnu de tongyi 淺析中西封建社會中佃農與農奴的異同 [Similarities and Differences Between Serfs and Tenants in Chinese and Western Feudal Societies. An Analysis],” *Wenhua xuekan* 2 (2019): 236–38.
- Yun, Lisa. *The Coolie Speaks: Chinese Indentured Laborers and African Slaves in Cuba* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2008).
- Yun, Lisa. “Chinese Freedom Fighters in Cuba: From Bondage to Liberation, 1847–1898,” in *Afro Asia: Revolutionary Political and Cultural Connections Between African Americans and Asian Americans*, ed. Fred Ho and Bill V. Mullen (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2008): 30–54.
- Yun, Lisa, and Ricardo René Laremont. “Chinese Coolies and African Slaves in Cuba, 1847–74,” *Journal of Asian American Studies* 4, no. 2 (2017): 99–122.
- Zemon Davis, Natalie. *Trickster Travels: A Sixteenth-Century Muslim between Worlds* (London: Faber & Faber, 2006).
- Zeuske, Michael. “Historiography and Research Problems of Slavery and the Slave Trade in a Global-Historical Perspective,” *International Review of Social History* 57 (2012): 87–111.
- Zeuske, Michael. “Coolies – Asiáticos and Chinos: Global Dimensions of Second Slavery,” in *Bonded Labour: Global and Comparative Perspectives (18th – 21st Century)*, ed. Sabine Damir-Geilsdorf, Ulrike Lindner, Gesine Müller, Oliver Tappe, and Michael Zeuske (Bielefeld: transcript, 2016): 35–57.
- Zeuske, Michael. “Versklavte und Sklavereien in der Geschichte Chinas aus global-historischer Sicht. Perspektiven und Probleme,” *Dhau. Jahrbuch für außereuropäische Geschichte* 2 (2017): 25–51.
- Zeuske, Michael. *Handbuch Geschichte der Sklaverei: Eine Globalgeschichte von den Anfängen bis zur Gegenwart*, 2 vols., 2nd ed. (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2020).
- Zhu Lixia 朱麗霞. “Haishang sichou zhi lu yu Zhonghua wenming zaoqi chuanbo 海上絲綢之路與中華文明早期傳播 [The Early Dissemination of Chinese Culture and the Early Maritime Silk Roads],” *Remin luntan* 11 (2020): 142–44.
- Zurndorfer, Harriet T. *Change and Continuity in Chinese Local History. The Development of Hui-chou Prefecture 800 to 1800* (Leiden: Brill, 1989).

List of Contributors

Claude Chevaleyre is CNRS researcher at the Institute of East Asian Studies in Lyon. He is also affiliated to the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies. He holds a PhD in Chinese history from EHESS (Paris) and an MA in Chinese studies from INALCO (Paris). He has published numerous articles and book chapters on bondage and trafficking in early modern China and is currently heading a project entitled 'China Human Trafficking and Slaving Database'.

Rômulo da Silva Ehalt is a researcher at the Max Planck Institute for Legal History and Legal Theory in Frankfurt am Main, Germany. A historian trained in Brazil and in Japan, his interests are the history of slavery and bondage in Asia and the history of the Society of Jesus in Asia. Currently, he is preparing a book manuscript based on his doctoral dissertation. He is also working on a project on the development of moral theology and casuistry in the Portuguese and Spanish empires in Asia. His recent publications include articles in the journals *Itinerario* and *Anais de História de Além-Mar*.

Kate Ekama is a postdoctoral fellow in History at Stellenbosch University, South Africa. Her research focuses on slavery in Sri Lanka and at the Cape of Good Hope from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century. Kate's recent publications include "Precarious Freedom: Manumission in eighteenth-century Ceylon," *Journal of Social History* (2020) and "Bondsmen: Slave Collateral in the 19th-Century Cape Colony," *Journal of Southern African Studies* (2021). Her current research focuses on the financial underpinnings of slavery in the Cape Colony.

James Fujitani is an associate professor at Azusa Pacific University. His research area is East-West relations in sixteenth-century East Asia.

Mònica Ginés-Blasi is a postdoctoral fellow at the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies, University of Bonn, and is also affiliated to the research group ALTER: Crisis, Otherness and Representation at the Open University of Catalonia (UOC). Her research focuses on the international networks operating Chinese indentured labour migration, the trafficking of children and of women in treaty-port China. She has published various articles on this topic in journals such as the *International Review of Social History* and the *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*.

Hans Hägerdal is a Professor in History at Linnaeus University, Sweden, and is affiliated with the Centre for Concurrences in Colonial and Postcolonial Studies. He has done work on historiographical problems, contact zones and colonial processes in East and Southeast Asia, in particular eastern Indonesia and Timor-Leste. Among his books is *Lords of the Land, Lords of the Sea: Conflict and adaptation in Early Colonial Timor, 1600–1800* (2012). He is also the author of several articles about the history of slaving in Timor and Maluku. Hägerdal is presently involved in a project about diplomatic history in Southeast Asia 1700–1920.

Lisa Hellman is a Research Leader for the group 'Coerced Circulation of Knowledge' at the Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies, and a Pro Futura fellow at the Swedish Collegium for Advanced Study. She works at the intersection between social, cultural, maritime and global history in East and Central Asia. Her publications include "Enslaved in Dzungaria: What an eighteenth-century crocheting instructor can teach us about overland globalisation," *Journal of Global History* (2021), and the monograph *This House is Not a Home: European Everyday Life in Canton and Macao 1730–1830* (Brill: 2018).

Vinil Baby Paul received his PhD from Jawaharlal Nehru University New Delhi, India in 2021. His PhD work focuses on the abolition of slavery in Southwest India, examining how British rule and evangelical workers globalised the Kerala slavery. Another major area of his academic interest in Dalit Christians concerns the study of changing lifestyles, songs, revival movements and Dalit prophets in Kerala.

Matthias van Rossum is Senior Researcher at the International Institute of Social History (IISH) in Amsterdam. He specializes in global (labour) history, slavery, colonialism and intercultural relations. He is project leader of the digital infrastructure GLOBALISE <https://globalise.huuygens.knaw.nl/>, co-lead of Exploring Slave Trade in Asia (<https://iisg.amsterdam/nl/research/projects/slave-trade-asia>) and vice-chair of the European Labour History Network.

Sanjog Rupakheti is an Assistant Professor of History at College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, MA. His research interests and publications focus on eighteenth century comparative studies of kingship, caste, gender, law, slavery, and state formation in South Asia. He is currently completing a book project tentatively titled, *Making of a Hindu Kingdom: Family, Law, and Power in Nepal*.

Amal Shahid is a PhD Candidate at the Department of International History and Politics, Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva. Her research interests include the history of imperialism and development, labour studies, and political economy. She is currently researching famine relief provision in the North-Western Provinces of colonial India, c.1870–1920.

Samantha Sint Nicolaas is a PhD candidate at the International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam and Leiden University. Between 2019 and 2020, she was a junior researcher at the IISH on the project ‘Exploring Slave Trade in Asia’. During this time, she worked on the development of a collaborative database infrastructure on slave trading in the Indian Ocean and Indonesian Archipelago. Since April 2020, she has been working on her PhD project on the position of migrants before the criminal justice courts of early modern Amsterdam and Delft, as part of the NWO-funded project ‘Tolerant Migrant Cities? The Case of Holland, 1600–1900’.

Index

- Caste 14, 16, 17, 19, 21, 25, 27, 40, 121, 122, 123, 127–129, 133, 137–139, 160, 179, 180, 183, 185–191, 193–196, 199–204, 206, 210–212, 235, 238
- Cinnamon 7, 122, 123, 133
- Coffee 7, 39, 51, 62, 209, 210
- Coolie see also Indenture 6, 13, 97–100, 102, 105, 107–115, 241, 242
- Corvée 5, 7, 17–19, 21, 22, 25, 59, 121–123
- Courts of justice see also legal codes and legal courts 33, 41, 123, 125, 129, 133, 137, 144, 145, 147, 150, 159, 161, 168, 185, 190, 202, 203, 205
- Debt 7, 13, 17, 18, 21, 25, 27, 39, 47, 59, 68, 92, 103–106, 113, 115, 116, 121, 123, 132, 134, 135, 137, 138, 145–147, 149–152, 154, 155, 159, 171, 190, 199, 235, 249
- Deportation 28, 55, 59
- Desertion see also runaways 243
- Dutch East India Company (VOC) 5, 7, 12, 13, 51, 53–73, 75, 77, 78, 80, 82–95, 117, 121–130, 132–139, 199, 200, 209, 210
- English East India Company (EIC) 139
- Enslavement, *enslaveability* 5, 13, 21, 26–28, 33, 39, 40, 46, 47, 68, 75, 78, 81, 86, 87, 89, 91, 94, 121, 123, 124, 126–128, 130–133, 135–139, 145, 163, 171, 175, 180–183, 188–191, 194, 195, 201, 211, 212, 222, 233
- Forced mobility 14, 61, 116, 161, 164, 168, 170, 175
- Human trafficking 5, 12, 15, 16, 33, 34, 37, 40–48, 75, 97, 100–102, 107–110, 112, 115, 117, 215, 218, 222, 223, 225, 229
- Indenture see also coolie 7, 41, 97–103, 105–107, 109–111, 113, 115–117, 134, 199, 231, 234
- Legal codes, legal codification 13, 179, 196, 197
- Legal courts see courts of justice
- Nutmeg 12, 55, 77, 78, 80, 81, 83, 85, 94
- Plantation(s) 10, 12, 75, 77, 78, 80, 81, 83–88, 91, 93, 95, 101, 106, 107, 109, 110, 112, 116, 160, 188, 195, 197, 212, 231, 249
- Prisoners 10, 13, 14, 34, 54, 144, 161–172, 174–178, 182, 197, 236
- Resistance 75, 90, 122, 129, 192, 222
- Runaways see also desertion 41, 190, 194, 243
- Servitude 20, 36, 59, 121, 124, 132, 222, 223, 225, 231
- Slave (trade) markets 65, 69, 71, 72, 87, 173, 182, 190, 201, 202
- Slave raiding 68, 73, 87, 138
- Sugar 39, 51, 88, 101, 115, 124, 156
- Traffickers see also human trafficking 41, 43, 45, 46, 97, 100–102, 107, 110, 112, 115, 215, 218
- War 10, 13, 25, 27, 28, 34, 38, 41, 54, 59, 69, 80, 82, 86, 87, 90, 95, 133, 138, 144, 161, 163–172, 174–178, 182, 192, 194, 195, 197, 208, 221, 224, 248

- Ambon 55, 59, 67, 71, 84, 93
 Arakan 59–65, 67, 69, 72, 73
 Aru Islands 82–85, 87, 89, 90, 91

 Bali 64, 67–72, 85–87, 90, 93
 Baltic 161, 165, 173
 Banda 10, 12, 55, 59, 61, 67, 71, 72, 75,
 77–95, 160, 178
 Banjarmasin 67
 Bantam (Banten) 59, 61, 63–67, 71, 72
 Batanes (island) 107, 108
 Batavia (Jakarta) 4, 12, 51, 54–74, 80, 82, 95,
 117, 124–126, 128, 134, 135, 138, 209
 Beijing 41–47, 170, 172
 Bengal 59, 60, 62–64, 67, 69, 85, 243,
 244, 248
 Bima 63, 67, 71
 Bone 67, 71
 Borneo 63, 64, 67, 68, 82, 86
 Bukhara 168, 174
 Buton 63, 67, 68, 71, 72, 85

 Canton 216, 219, 220
 Cape Town 51, 59, 64, 126, 136, 138
 Ceram 64, 81, 82, 84, 85, 87, 90, 91
 Ceylon 13, 51, 55, 59, 64, 66, 67, 71, 75, 117,
 121–127, 132, 133, 135–139, 197
 China see also Qing Empire 8, 11, 12, 15,
 32–41, 46–48, 75, 97, 100–102, 104–106,
 108–115, 117, 167, 170, 175, 181, 215–218,
 221, 222
 Cochin (Kochi) 55, 66, 71, 127, 202, 207–211
 Colombo 55, 64, 121, 131–135, 137
 Coromandel 59, 60, 62–68, 71, 73, 85, 92, 132,
 156, 232
 Crimea 167, 168
 Cuba 97, 99–117

 Deshima (Dejima) see also Nagasaki 227
 Dzungar Empire 10, 161, 169–174, 178

 Formosa see also Taiwan 55, 61

 Garhwal 182
 Gresik 67
 Guandong 46
 Guangzhou 104

 Havana 101, 111, 113, 114

 Irkutsk 172

 Jaccatra (Jakarta) see also Batavia 51, 54
 Jambi 67, 71
 Japan 8, 9, 15, 31, 34, 39, 40, 48, 71, 75, 117,
 174, 215–230
 Java 51, 54, 61, 64, 65, 77, 85, 90, 122, 146
 Johor 141

 Kalmyk Khanate 167–169, 173
 Kashmir 182
 Kathmandu 181–187, 191–194
 Kazakhstan 161
 Kazan 173
 Kei islands 83, 87, 89, 94
 Khiva 168
 Kumaun 182
 Kyoto 215

 Lapa (island) 102
 Lombok 67, 89

 Macau 102, 104, 106, 109, 111, 113, 216–222,
 227–229
 Madagascar 51, 59, 60, 67, 69, 71
 Makassar 59, 63, 64, 67–69, 71, 72,
 84–87, 93
 Malabar (Kerala) 55, 59, 60, 62, 65, 66, 71, 85,
 205, 208, 211
 Malacca 55, 59, 63–65, 71, 216, 224
 Manila 97, 100–102, 105, 108–115, 216,
 220, 223
 Marinduque (island) 107
 Masbate (island) 107
 Mindoro (island) 107
 Mongolia 46, 161
 Moscow 164, 170

 Nagasaki 216, 221, 223, 225–229
 Nepal 8, 13, 139, 179–181, 183, 184, 187, 188,
 191, 192, 194–197
 New Guinea 60, 63, 67, 68
 Nuwakot 192

 Oirat 168, 169, 171, 174

 Padang 71
 Perak 141
 Persia 64, 167, 209

- Philippines 12, 59, 60, 63, 97–103, 105–112,
114–116, 223
Poltava 163, 164, 169
Qing Empire 14, 161, 168, 170, 177
Riga 164, 203
Russia 8, 13, 161–178, 197
Samarkand 168
Sangaste 167
Semarang 67
Shantou 104
Siberia 166–168, 171–173, 175, 178
Solor 63, 64, 67, 71, 85
Stockholm 172
Sulawesi 63, 65, 67–69, 82, 84, 86, 87, 93
Sumatra 59, 71, 88
Sumbawa 63, 67, 71, 90
Surabaya 67
Sweden 161, 164–166, 168, 170, 172,
174, 175
Taiwan see also Formosa 226
Tanimbar Islands 82, 84, 85, 87, 91
Ternate 67, 71, 85
Tibet 181, 182, 192, 195
Timor 64, 67–69, 71, 72, 75, 77, 82, 84–87,
89–93
Tobolsk 163, 164, 166, 168
Xiamen 101, 102, 104–109, 112–115

