

Introduction: African migrations. Historical perspectives and contemporary dynamics

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Generally speaking, “migration” in its broadest meaning – spatial mobility – can be regarded as part of the human condition. As with other social processes, forms, scale and directions of migration are heavily influenced by the political, economic, cultural, ecological and the social context in which migration occurs (Bade 2000, 11). Yet, not only are actual processes of migration shaped by broader historical forces; also the way migration (and spatial mobility more generally) is perceived, represented, and thus, socially (re-)constructed is similarly subject to history, or more precisely, historically, geographically and culturally variable “paradigms” of thought as well as specific “traditions” of thought within particular societies or social formations (e.g. science). Often, however, discourses on migration are more than just about migration; rather than employed as a factual reference to a particular more or less well defined social phenomenon, references to migration (or mobility in general) are also made to make sense of the world one lives in, to make political claims, claims over property, claims over one’s social status, and to express one’s own and others’ identities (See Kraler 2005, 4). Thus, neither “mobility” nor “migration” are just empirical categories: they are always also part of wider processes of the production of meaning and thus have important imaginary and symbolical dimensions that neat sociological definitions may ignore, but never entirely dispose of. Current discourses over autochthony and citizenship in various African contexts are a powerful reminder of how narratives over migration and mobility have recently moved to the centre of political discourse and how claims over past or present migrations have turned into a pretext for exclusion (Comaroff/ Comaroff 2001; Geschriere/ Nyamnjoh 2000; Nzongola-Ntalaja 2004).

Migration Research (and social sciences and the humanities at large) are not left unaffected from these wider social processes and similarly engage in the “construction of mobility” – and have done so in the past. Thus, scientific discourses on migration in Africa are closely correlated to wider social discourses about Africa in general, and about processes of economic and

social development in Africa in particular. Because research is so closely tied to general images, conceptions, assumptions and perceptions of the continent, the history of “migration research”¹ on Africa displays several idiosyncrasies that put Africanist research on migration somewhat apart from migration research elsewhere.

This does not mean that it is a priori illegitimate to hypothesise that migration dynamics in Africa display significant peculiarities and therefore call for explanations which explicitly take into account these differences and avoid imposing theoretical explanations derived from other migration contexts. However, the converse – to a priori posit the existence of specific African migration dynamics, in other words, the pitfall of essentialising “Africa” as a unit of analysis – also needs to be avoided.² Partly, the idiosyncrasies of Africanist research on migration and the very fact, that there are specific Africanist research traditions on migration in Africa, are due to the peculiarities of the history of research on migration issues in Africa and the history of social science research on Africa more generally. In particular, the way modern social sciences have been organised since their emergence in the 19th century and the dichotomy between “universalist” social sciences (geography, sociology, political science, economics) on the one hand and “particularistic” and therefore in a sense “ancillary” social sciences like anthropology and area studies, on the other (Wallerstein 2003) has tended to work against a “conversation” between Africanist and “mainstream” traditions of research. Indeed, it is only since relatively recently, that the various currents of Africanist research on migration engage with more mainstream traditions and vice versa. However, there are also important exceptions to the relative marginalisation of migration research in Africa. In particular, demographic studies of migration – albeit

¹ This, of course, is an anachronism. “Migration research” as it has become institutionalised at universities, is a relatively new field of research that has emerged as a multi- (and sometimes: inter- and transdisciplinary) field of research in the 1960s. Migration as a social phenomenon, on the other hand, has – to a certain extent, to be sure – always attracted the attention of social scientists since the emergence of modern social sciences in the late 19th century.

² As Immanuel Wallerstein has argued in three essays (1991a, b, c), the meaning of time and space – often assumed to be fundamental and objective categories of analysis - are similarly the result of contingent, historical processes, and in a way, are thus historical constructions that call for a reflexive use of time and spatial categories.

constrained by the lack of quantitative data - as well as studies of rural-urban migration in Africa have been firmly rooted in shared paradigms of research since the first studies on Africa appeared in the 1960s.³

But also migration studies as they have been institutionalised since the 1960s in Western countries with significant in-migration had their specific biases and blind spots. In particular, traditional studies of international migration rested on the tacit assumption that nation states can indeed be taken as the fundamental units of analysis and that they can be interpreted as bounded societies or as tantamount to *Society* at large. Recent approaches to the study of migration, in particular the literature on transnationalism, however, have challenged these traditional assumptions and have led to a fundamental reconsideration how migration is to be conceived, studied and explained (Wimmer/Glick-Schiller 2002).

Themes, paradigms and issues in Africanist research on migration

The following section discusses several themes and discourses in Africanist research on migration. Underlying this section is a very broad understanding of migration research and thus is not limited to “modern” migration studies as such. This section does not purport to give an overview of the state of the art of modern migration research in Africa, nor does it aim to provide an overview of migration in Africa as such.⁴ The aims of this section are more moderate: First, it seeks to show how research on migration as well as broader discourses on migration and mobility have long been at the centre of African studies, being linked to a variety of key themes addressed by modern African studies at large. Secondly, the overview aims to identify several particularities of Africanist research traditions on migration, both in terms of the questions asked and in terms of the larger interpretative frameworks and approaches used to study migration.

³ Indeed, one major theoretical contribution to mainstream migration research – migration systems analysis – came from a Nigerian geographer, Akin Mabogunje, based on observations of rural-urban migration in Nigeria (Mabogunje 1970).

⁴ See for a useful, if dated overview Adepouju 1995. For a recent overview of current issues concerning migration in Africa see Adepouju 2004. For an overview of patterns of migration in Africa based on available statistics see Zlotnik 2003.

Historical “great migrations”

In a way, migration and mobility have always been central themes in scientific discourses over Africa, since the continent became an object of study for the expanding modern sciences and humanities in the 19th century, in the course of European expansion and early colonial encounters. Initially, however, it was not migration in the rather limited sense it is understood today, but (largely) hypothetical historical waves of migration, which were drawn upon to explain the “racial” composition of African peoples and the distribution of language families across Africa. These “great migrations” – in particular the “Bantu expansion” and the (putative) north-south migration of “Hamites” – were very much imagined along the model of the “*Völkerwanderung*” the migration of Germanic tribes into the Roman Empire and closely linked to contemporary diffusionist theories about cultural change as well as general ideas about race shaped by “scientific racism” of the late 19th century.

Far from being merely of historical significance, these narratives have a strong resonance up to this date and have in various contexts, long since become part of ethnic identities and of mythico-historical narratives of “migration” in Africa (see Kraler 2005, Saunders 1969, Wirz 1997). Although there is now a substantial body of research providing counter-evidence to the arguments put forward by colonial theories about these “great migrations” as well as criticizing these arguments on fundamental, methodological grounds, the narrative of *Völkerwanderung* in Africa, continues to capture African intellectuals as well as academics, both in and outside Africa.

In many respects, scientific discourses about the “great migrations” in Southern Africa in the 19th century (the Mfecane and the Great Trek) resemble those about putative migrations in the more distant past, namely in the way these migrations have served as a basis for the construction of mythico-historical narratives, notably by Afrikaner and Zulu nationalism and (in the case of the Mfecane) as a justification for colonial expansion, for example by portraying missionaries and colonialists as “harbingers of peace after chaos” (see the contributions in Hamilton 1995).

A final example of a historical “great migration” is the slave trade, which has always been a central theme in Africanist research (Curtin 1997). Traditionally, research focused on the trans-atlantic slave trade, the middle-

passage and conditions of slavery in the Americas. In the past two or three decades, however, also the African dimensions of the Atlantic slave trade, "African slavery" and the "oriental slave" trade have been increasingly well researched. Recent accounts of slavery within Africa not only show the different meanings of slavery, the extent of enslavement and the related mass-displacement of people as well as the various linkages between "African slavery", the oriental and African slave trade, but also link slavery to wider social and political developments (See Curtin 1997, Diène 2001, Wirz 1984, Lovejoy 2000). Not only were numerous people enslaved and channelled to the new world and elsewhere, but there were also significant counterflows of freed slaves who were resettled along the West African Coast as well as Blacks from the Caribbean and the U.S. who came on their own accord (Swindell 1995, 197). Finally, slavery lies at the roots of the emergence of a peculiar type of "diaspora", the "Black Atlantic" which not only involved the circulation of ideas, but also of people (Geiss 1968).

Discourses on "mobile Africa"

Africa has long been described as an immensely mobile continent and continues to be viewed in this vein (Curtin 1997, de Bruijn et al 2001, IOM 2005). For example, the 2005 World Migration Report (IOM 2005, 33) describes Africa as "the continent with the most mobile populations in the world". At the same time, the same report also notes a decline of Africa's share of international migrants from 12% of the total number of migrants globally in 1970 to just 9% in 2000,⁵ an estimate which is rather plausible in view of widespread economic decline, especially since the 1980s, the still rather negligible share of African migrants in western countries of immigration⁶ and the recent stabilisation of the number of refugees after the

⁵ The total number of migrants was estimated at 81,5 Million in 1970 and 174,9 Million in 2000, of which the number of migrants in Africa was 9,9 million (1970) and 16,3 million (2000, respectively (IOM 2005, 396).

⁶ Kimberley Hamilton, writing in 1997, notes in respect to African migration to Europe that "[o]f the Africans in Europe, Moroccans are the largest population (...). Sub-Saharan African migration to Europe, on the other hand, is nascent if not largely absent" (Hamilton 1997, 555). Similarly, the share of Africa-born immigrants in the U.S. was about 2.4% in 2003 (up from 1.1% in 1995), see <http://www.migrationinformation.org/GlobalData/countrydata/data.cfm>. However, the

all-time high in the context of the Rwanda crisis in the mid-1990s (IOM 2005, 391; on refugees see UNHCR 2000). It is clear that “international migration” is something quite different from mobility in general and a decline of international migration may well go hand in hand with rising mobility levels nationally and regionally, as indeed is posited by several recent studies (see for example de Bruijn et al. 2001). Indeed, the extent of “routine” forms of mobility in Africa (e.g. commuting, short-term circular migration, educational migration, short term mobility linked to selling of agricultural goods, etc.) may well be exceptional, albeit African countries are probably not so different in this regard from other developing countries in Asia, Latin-America and the Caribbean. Most importantly, forms and types of mobility are deeply embedded in wider socio-economic structures and thus, mobility need to be analysed in the specific forms and context in which it occurs. Rather than levels of migration or mobility in general, it is types and forms of mobility that need to be studied and which are subject to historical changes.

The image of Africa as a tremendously mobile continent also points to much older discourses over Africa which are closely tied to ideas about Africans and development in general, and conceptions of “traditional” land tenure and patterns of settlement in particular. For example, numerous European 19th century travellers deplored the “elusiveness” and instability of African settlements and villages, which according to these accounts, were as quickly established as they were abandoned (von Oppen 1997, 232f). The instability of African settlements and related practices of extensive land use and shifting cultivation were also frequently cited for the “low level of development” of African agriculture and the (apparent) lack of clear conceptions of land ownership. For example, Lord Hailey noted in his “African Survey”: “The effects of physical and economic environment write themselves more readily on land customs than on any other form of social observance, and not only is there great variety of such environment in Africa, but the ebb and flow of migration has tended to prevent the stabilization of custom in regard to land” (Hailey 1938, 830). The assumed mobility of Africans provided an important rationale for “forced sedentarisation policies”, while the assumed lack of clear conceptions of

number of African immigrants in western receiving countries has risen dramatically in recent years as data compiled by Black (2004) shows.

land tenure and the related “finding” that Africans tended to make inefficient use of land lay at the heart of policies aiming at “more rational” and more “advanced” forms of land use and, of state led processes of “peasantisation” more generally. At the same time, the related assumptions also provided an important justification for the alienation of land, in particular in the settler colonies of Southern Africa. In a highly intriguing study John Noyes (2000), for example, shows how German imaginations of the Herero as a “wandering tribe” and “nomads” tied to their cattle rather than their land, served as a pretext for land alienation.

The political economy of migration

Colonisation and the colonial twin projects of state building and development led to the emergence of entirely new forms of migration that were firmly rooted in the political economy of the colonial state and which were highly gendered. Of these, labour migration to the centres of the colonial economy: the emerging towns, mining and industrial sites, commercial farms, was probably the most conspicuous form of migration.

In general, labour migration can be seen as an expression of imbalances in development and spatial differentiation and in this sense, patterns of labour migration in Africa are no different from patterns of labour migration elsewhere. In particular, however, patterns of labour migration in Africa can be interpreted as expressions of a peculiar kind of “peripheral capitalism”, characteristic for the global periphery at large (Amin 1995, Amin/Forde 1974). What is peculiar in the colonial context, however, are the deliberate policies adopted and the massive force used to ensure a sufficient supply of (cheap) labour. This is most evident in the Southern African context, where labour migration took the form of oscillating, temporary, circular migration accompanied by specific legal framework and state policies. State policies in South Africa were not limited to indirectly forcing Africans to seek employment as mine or agricultural workers (as for example through taxes) or by organising the recruitment of workers. Rather state policies also deliberately created labour reserves and actively “destroyed” the African peasantry, a process which Marxist writers like Giovanni Arrighi and others have called “proletarianisation” (Arrighi 1970; see also Bundy 1972; Marks/Rathbone 1982). Indeed, the transformation of rural South Africa and Rhodesia, as well as of Lesotho and Swaziland, into labour reserves for the

South African economy has triggered a large number of studies, predominantly in a Marxist tradition. The labour reserve system had tremendous social and political effects and also lay of the heart of South Africa's Bantustan's policy. Socially, the labour reserves were characterised by large numbers of absentees, increasing poverty and landlessness (Murray 1981). Economically, labour reserves served to keep wages down, as the costs of the "reproduction of labour" could be externalised, while politically, they served to prevent the emergence of an African urban proletariat, albeit unsuccessfully. A dominant interpretation of labour migration in South Africa saw the system of circular labour migration as a direct expression of the racist Apartheid state and as a form of outright exploitation. It was left to studies published during transition in South Africa in the 1980s and after to show that in many respects labour migration under Apartheid was not so different from labour migration elsewhere occurring under less repressive conditions. Also, patterns of labour migration often were initiated long before colonial states deliberately adopted policies aiming at ensuring sufficient labour supplies. Thus, labour migration in Southern Africa was often an option deliberately chosen by migrants for motives similar to those of migrants elsewhere, rather than as a mere response to direct or indirect force (see Crush et al. 1991, Harries 1996, James 1992, Moodie 1994). As Thaddeus Sunseri has argued, the South African historiography of labour migration has deeply shaped, and in a sense, overshadowed studies of labour migration elsewhere in Africa. These studies similarly often interpreted labour migration as a result of the deliberate proletarianisation of the African peasantry, as following a similar logic ("kraal to compound") and as displaying similar gender patterns (male dominated) as in Southern Africa (Sunseri 1996). In his seminal study of Soninke labour migration between the middle of the 19th century and 1960, François Manchuelle equally sees research on labour migration in Africa as dominated by a paradigm, that interpreted modern labour migration as an "uprooting" of Africans from "traditional" village life (Manchuelle 1996, 6). In his case study, he shows that rather than forced by the introduction of taxes, differences in wages are by far the most important factor explaining labour migration in early colonial French Sudan.

Migration as revolt

However, force often did indeed play an important role in triggering labour migration. In many contexts, various forms of force were far more important than other factors to engage in labour migration. As Audrey Richards (1973) has documented in the case of Banyarwandan immigrants to Buganda, evading the various repressive tenets of Belgian colonial rule (colonial forced labour, “traditional” forced labour, the authoritarianism of indirect rule, etc.) were important motives cited by Rwandan migrants to venture abroad. Indeed, migration as revolt (Asiwaju 1976) has been an important feature of migration under colonialism. As Jeffrey Herbst (1990) argues, however, “exit” rather than voice, in Albert O. Hirschmans terminology, has been characteristic of state – society relations also in the pre-colonial period and were closely related to patterns of state formation in Africa (see also Kopytoff 1987).

Labour migration, modernisation, and ethnicity

While colonial governments across Africa deliberately adopted policies aiming at the capitalist transformation of African rural subsistence economies and at ensuring a sufficient supply of labour to the colonial centres of production, colonial attitudes towards colonial labour were not unambiguous. Indeed, migration, in particular, however, spontaneous migration, was often interpreted as a danger to the colonial order, as disruptive and detrimental to the wider colonial objective of development. For example, in Tanganyika, colonial authorities feared that migration and resulting absenteeism from homelands would endanger the collection of hut taxes, increase the desire for monetary income and thus would undermine the declared policy to massively expand crop cultivation (Chaulia 2003, 149). Colonial fears about the negative effects of migration, however extended beyond practical concerns. Thus, the potential disruptive effects of migration on the “traditional” order and on order as such was a central concern of colonial authorities.⁷

⁷ In the context of the discussion of migrant labour, the authoritative source on colonial policies, Lord Hailey notes that “[t]he disintegration of social life is an almost inevitable result of the contact of primitive peoples with European civilization, and every consideration dictates the need for avoiding the undue disturbance of their existing social

Colonial concerns over the disruptive effects of migration and related processes of modernisation and urbanisation, were echoed by early anthropological literature of the time and the dominant paradigm was that of “detrribalisation” (Moore 1993, 15). A range of anthropological studies on migrants in urban settings, carried out in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s (Banton 1957, Cohen 1969, Epstein 1978, Kuper 1965, Meillassoux 1968, Schapera 1947), however, increasingly moved away from this perspective and showed that urban areas were not places of social anomy. Instead, urban spaces were structured spaces, in which migrants maintained numerous linkages with their home areas and made use of ethnicity as a resource, in this process also reinventing it.

To some extent, the ambivalence which characterised colonial attitudes vis-à-vis spontaneous migration, continued in the post-colonial period, sometimes in the form of the adoption of aggressive population control policies (e.g. policies aimed at preventing or combating urbanisation), more often, however, in the form of critical discourses over the disruptive and negative effects of rural-urban migration.

The contributions to this volume

The essays in this volume are grouped along four themes: (1) economic development and globalization; (2) perceptions and discourses; (3) the politics of migration, the politics of migrants; and (4) constructions of spatiality.

The contributions in the first part of the volume, *Economic development and globalisation*, explore various linkages of migration to broader processes of economic development and globalization and related state policies. That global patterns of migration and processes of globalisation are linked in various ways has long been recognised (See Castles/Miller 2003). The literature on globalisation suggest that rather than as a straightforward expansion of global flows (including the increased circulation of labour), globalisation needs to be understood as a complex and at times contradictory process, which not only involves flows of goods, capital, and labour, but also the flows of ideas. While global flows (including migratory

equilibrium if we are to be able to assist them to adjust themselves in a healthy manner to the new social and economic systems thrust upon them” (Hailey 1938, 699).

flows) have indeed risen considerably during the last decades, most of these (financial, trade, and other) flows are between the developed triangle constituted by Europe, the “core” countries of “Australasia” and its semi-periphery and the U.S. Thus, for the global periphery, globalisation is a paradoxical process: while the periphery is only marginally important to the global economy, globalisation and the global economy are central for the former. However, the periphery is not simply “subject” to global processes, but global processes interact in complex ways with regional and local dynamics. It is these complex interlinkages between various globally unfolding processes at different geographical scales which the contributions to this section address.

In his essay “*New patterns of migration in West Africa*”, **Adama Konseiga** presents an overview over patterns of migration in the post-colonial period in West Africa. Focusing on Burkina Faso (as a major sending country) and Côte d’Ivoire (as one of the main regional receiving countries), he describes the main characteristics of regional patterns of migration and the relationship between migration and economic and political developments in the region. In a context where free movement has been increasingly restricted and political and economic crises have forced to return to their countries of origin or to seek alternative places of destination, Konseiga stresses that migration is likely to continue to be an important feature in the region, not least since it is an expression of disparities of regional development that contribute to interregional mobility. At the same time, migration is also an expression of regional integration which governments are well advised to promote, rather than to disrupt, Konseiga concludes.

Based on a case study of a rural district in Niger, the contribution, *Le projet migratoire des migrants touaregs de la zone de Bankilaré: la pauvreté désavouée* by **Florence Boyer** uses the concept of “migratory project” to analyse livelihood strategies of a particular group of migrants (young, male labour migrants, and descendants of slaves) in the administrative zone of Bankilaré in Niger. Boyer shows that migration not only constitutes a central livelihood strategy, but also a strategy to evade relations of dependence and the control of young men’s labour by elders and others. In this sense, migration, Boyer argues, also constitutes a challenge to the established social order and authority, resulting in increased tensions between migrants and non-migrants. In one example she gives for how these conflicts play out, Boyer shows how in the context of a poverty reduction programme funded by

international donors migration is increasingly seen as disruptive and aggravating poverty.

Concluding this section is the contribution *Du savoir faire sénégalais en matière de pêche sur les côtes mauritaniennes: une approche historique* by **Laurence Marfaing**, in which she traces the history of Mauritania's fishing industry from its colonial origins to the present day. Marfaing shows how the globalisation of the Mauritanian fish industry has marginalised once independent Senegalese fishermen and denigrated them to an increasingly vulnerable immigrant workforce, again highlighting the complex interplay of local, regional and global dynamics.

Part II of this volume, *Perceptions and discourses*, presents three case studies elaborating on specific discourses on migration in general and migrants in particular. As argued above, migration is indeed more than an empirical phenomenon and has important symbolical, and thus, discursive dimensions. Each of the contributions in this section seeks to investigate how discourses about migration express wider social values, including understandings of moral obligations. Each of the articles focus on different aspects of migration discourses linked to different stages of the migration process. In his contribution *Talkin' about migration*, **Bruno Riccio** analyses the various ways migrants feature in public discourses in Senegal. On the basis of interviews he conducted with both migrants and non-migrants in migrants' home regions and their destination Italy, Riccio shows how public discourses about migration are firmly embedded in contemporary Senegalese popular culture as well as migrants' broader social environment. **Vanessa Prinz** takes a different perspective, focusing in her contribution *"Imagine Migration"* on how potential migrants view migration and their intended destination, Europe. On the basis of interviews she conducted with Tanzanian students she shows that these perceptions are based on a variety of information sources, which students consciously or unconsciously use to build their image about Europe. Finally, **Ibrahima Amadou Dia** analyses in his contribution *Déterminants, enjeux et perceptions des migrations scientifiques internationales africaines; le cas du Sénégal* how Senegalese researchers and students he interviewed in Geneva justify their emigration in the light of the implicit understanding of moral obligations towards their home country, Senegal, conveyed by dominant discourses on brain drain.

The focus of part III of the volume *The politics of migration, the politics of migrants* are various political dimensions of migration. Migration is related

to politics and to the state in various ways: above all, the very notion of international migration is intricately tied to the modern nation state: Only in a world neatly divided into nation states is there international migration – immigration and emigration. But the state, or more precisely, the nature of the state often also is a major factor giving rise to migratory flows in the first place, which is most evident in respect to refugee migration but also applies to more “voluntary” forms of migration. In his contribution *Forced Migration in Africa: a challenge to Development*, **Egide Rwamatwara** provides a general overview over forced migration in Africa, focusing on post-colonial refugee flows. After analysing causes of refugee flows in Africa and describing patterns of refugee flows, he explores why African States have become increasingly unwelcoming to refugees. Finally, he identifies several factors (changed ideological and geopolitical context, strains on resources, unwillingness of donors to support African host countries.) contributing to this shift in policy. States are also important actors in regard to migration in that they seek to shape and to control migration through migration policies. However, as **Axel Kreienbrink** shows in his contribution *A Country of Emigration and New Country of Immigration*, policies may themselves be shaped by interest of third parties. Focusing on Morocco, Kreienbrink shows how EU concerns about the increasing number of irregular migrants transiting the country have indeed shaped recent Moroccan migration policy, but, as Kreienbrink argues, with questionable results. Finally, migrants also participate politically in their host countries and may, as the essay by **Helene Trauner** shows in her contribution *Dimensions of West-African immigration to France: the example of Malian immigrant women in Paris*, not only seek to influence and shape host countries’ migration policies, but as Trauner also shows other policy areas, notably development policy. Essentially, migration is a spatial phenomenon. But not only does migration involve movement from one place to another, but migration itself may lead to new forms of spatiality, as the contributions in part IV of the volume, *Constructions of spatiality*, show. **Julien Brachet’s** *Constructions of territoriality in the Sahara: the transformation of spaces of transit* analyses how the migratory streams through the Sahara desert leave their socio-spatial imprint on places of transit. Such spaces are shaped by characteristic forms of territoriality as they are transformed into lively locations but also by the infrastructures that emerge in response to the increased trans-Saharan traffic. **Pedro Gois’** contribution *Low intensity transnationalism*, focuses on transnational

practices Cape Verdian migrants engage in. He analyses the historical evolution of Cape Verdian transnationalism and argues that Cape Verdian transnational practices can only be understood against the background of various networks linking different places of Cape Verdian immigration with each other and with Cape Verde itself. Based on family histories of important Indian business family in Mozambique *Susana Pereira Bastos'* contribution *Indian Transnationalisms in colonial and postcolonial Mozambique* traces the emergence of a strong transnational culture, rooted in commercial activities of Indian trading houses. In particular, Pereira Bastos highlights the importance of transnational ties in the volatile post-colonial context when the continuing Indian presence in East Africa was increasingly put into question. Finally, the essay *The state, Labour Migration and the Transnational Discourse* by *Corrado Tornimbeni* shows how the political economy of Portuguese colonialism, and especially, the forced labour regime prevailing in Mozambique was an important factor determining migrants' decision to migrate abroad, and hence for the development of strong transnational ties across international borders. He argues that despite the "weakness" of African international borders as mechanisms of migration control, they were nevertheless important because they delineated different types of political economy linked to different political opportunity structures and thus were important factors in structuring migration flows, in the case of Mozambique, to channel migration flows abroad.

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