Ad Knotter

# Transformations of Trade Unionism

## Comparative and Transnational Perspectives on Workers Organizing in Europe and the United States, Eighteenth to Twenty-First Centuries

Amsterdam University Press

Transformations of Trade Unionism

# Work Around the Globe: Historical Comparisons and Connections

## Open Access Book Series of the International Institute of Social History (IISH)

Most human beings work, and growing numbers are exposed to labour markets. These markets are increasingly globally competitive and cause both capital and labour to move around the world. In search of the cheapest labour, industries and service-based enterprises move from West to East and South, but also, for example, westwards from China's east coast. People move from areas with few employment opportunities to urban and industrial hubs, both between and within continents. However, labour relations have been shifting already for centuries, labour migrations go back far in time, and changing labour relations cannot be comprehended without history. Therefore, understanding these developments and their consequences in the world of work and labour relations requires sound historical research, based on the experiences of different groups of workers in different parts of the world at different moments in time, throughout human history.

The research and publications department of the International Institute of Social History (IISH) has taken on a leading role in research and publishing on the global history of labour relations. In the context of Global Labour History, three central research questions have been defined: (1) What labour relations have emerged in parallel with the rise and advance of market economies? (2) How can their incidence (and consequently the transition from one labour relation to another) be explained, and are these worldwide transitions interlinked? (3) What are the social, economic, political, and cultural consequences of their changing incidence, and how do they relate to forms of individual and collective agency among workers? These three questions are interconnected in time, but also in space. Recent comparative Global Labour History research demonstrates that shifts in one part of the globe have always been linked to shifts in other parts.

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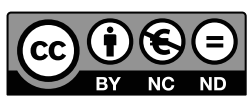

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# Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| ABM | American Building Maintenance (United States) |
| ABN AMRO | Algemene Bank Nederland-Amsterdam Rotterdam Bank (Netherlands) |
| AFL | American Federation of Labor (USA) |
| AMF | Algemeen Mijnwerkers Fonds (General Miners' Fund) (Netherlands) |
| ANDB | Algemeene Nederlandsche Diamantbewerkers Bond (General Diamond Workers' Union) (Netherlands) |
| ANMB | Algemeene Nederlandsche Mijnwerkersbond (General Dutch Miners' Union) (Netherlands) |
| ANTB | Algemeene Nederlandsche Timmerlieden Bond (General Dutch Carpenters' Union) (Netherlands) |
| ANTB | Algemeene Nederlandsche Typographen Bond (General Dutch Union of Typographers) (Netherlands) |
| ANWV | Algemeen Nederlands Werklieden Verbond (General Dutch Workers' Union) (Netherlands) |
| BARSORI | Bargaining for Social Rights (EU-funded research project) |
| BARSORIS | Bargaining for Social Rights at a Sectoral Level (EU-funded research project) |
| CIO | Congress of Industrial Organizations (United States) |
| CMB | Christelijke Mijnwerkersbond (Christian Miners' Union; short form of Algemeene Bond van Christelijke Mijnwerkers in Nederland) (Netherlands) |
| CMIU | Cigar Makers' International Union |
| CNRS | Centre national de la recherche scientifique (France) |
| CSU | Cleaning Services Uden (Netherlands) |
| FNV | Federatie Nederlandse Vakbeweging |
| IFSDRW | international Federation of Ship, Dock, and River Workers |
| ILO | International Labour Organization |
| ILU | International Labour Union |
| ISS | International Service Systems |
| ITF | International Transport Federation |
| J4J | Justice for Janitors (United States) |
| LA 300 | Local Assembly 300 (United States) |
| LHMU | Liquor Hospitality and Miscellaneous Union (Australia) |
| MAA | Municipal Archives Amsterdam (Netherlands) |
| MEGA | Karl Marx Friedrich Engels Gesamtausgabe |

| | |
|---|---|
| NAS | Nationaal Arbeids Secretariaat (National Secretariat of Labour) (Netherlands) |
| NS | Nederlandse Spoorwegen (Dutch Railways) (Netherlands) |
| NVV | Nederlandsch Verbond van Vakvereenigingen (Dutch Federation of Trade Unions) (Netherlands) |
| R&D | Research and Development |
| SDB | Sociaal Democratische Bond (Social Democratic League) (Netherlands) |
| SDV | Sociaal Democratische Vereniging (Social Democratic Union) (Netherlands) |
| SEIU | Service Employees International Union (United States) |
| SFWU | Service and Food Workers Union (New Zealand) |
| TGWU | Transport & General Workers Union (United Kingdom) |
| UNI | Union Network International (now UNI Global Union) |
| UWV | Uitvoeringsinstituut Werknemersverzekeringen (Netherlands) |
| VU | Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (Free University Amsterdam) (Netherlands) |

# Introduction

**Abstract**
The introduction explores the main theoretical positions taken in this book. Contrary to twentieth-century neoliberal or nineteenth-century wage fund theories, it starts from the assumption that trade unions are a necessary and integral part of the functioning of labour markets in societies based on wage labour. The case studies all depart from the concept of labour market control as the basic goal of union behaviour. As trade unions are 'the necessary instrumentability' (J.S. Mill) of wage labour markets, it is to be expected that they will arise whenever such a market is formed. This does not mean that through time workers organized uniformly, or that there was a continuous evolution from one form of trade unionism to another. A central argument in this book is that the regulatory function of trade unions was linked to and to a great extent determined by the way production was organized. In the three centuries covered in this book, labour relations changed fundamentally, and this was reflected in different forms of trade unionism. The chapters highlight the varieties and transformations of trade unionism from a comparative and transnational perspective. They all start from Dutch examples, or incorporate a Dutch element, but the comparative and transnational approach connects these histories to general developments in Europe and the United States (the original heartlands of trade unionism) from the eighteenth century to the twenty-first.

**Keywords:** trade unionism, labour market control, labour regimes, industrial relations, transnationalism, internationalism

Born in 1952, I belong to the generation of labour historians who as university students had the privilege of participating in the great social upheaval of the late 1960s and the early 1970s. Coinciding with the apogee or 'high tide' of

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trade unionism,[1] working-class organizations seemed to be potential allies in the struggle for social justice and the politics of social change. Rank-and-file militancy boosted industrial action and drove up membership figures.[2] Like so many of my generation, as a student I developed an interest in the history of trade unions as mass labour movements. While the waning of the 1960s/1970s cycle of protest, the fall in union membership and density in many countries, and the growing ideological impact of neoliberalism may have caused trade unions to become less pre-eminent in their original heartlands in Europe and the United States, both as a social force and as an object of historical research, my interest in trade union history continued to exist and even revived when the 'transnational turn' in labour history opened new perspectives of research.[3]

Trade unions have historically been, and will be in the future, indispensable to protect workers against the vagaries of the so-called free market. There can be no doubt that the weakening of union density and power was one of the main causes of the steady decline of the wage share in advanced capitalist countries since the 1970s/1980s.[4] In the future, a revival of trade union militancy and mobilizing power – in whatever form or configuration – would be crucial for this tendency to be reversed. From this perspective it would be unwarranted, in my opinion, to dismiss trade unions because they are pursuing 'narrow economic interests', as opposed to a 'broader social agenda'.[5] This book is not, however, about what trade unions should or should not do, socially or politically, but about what they actually did, historically. Based on comparisons of long-term developments and focusing on transnational connections, its main contentions are that historically there have been many varieties of trade unionism, emerging independently or crucially transforming older ones, and that these varieties and transformations can be explained by specific and changing labour regimes. In short: new situations created new kinds of trade unionism.

The historical experiences of workers organizing in Europe and the United States in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries are just one among the many forms of workers' resistance resulting from the variety of labour relations in the global past, as becomes clear from the recent 'global turn'

1 Pigenet, Pasture, and Robert (eds), *L'apogée des syndicalismes en Europe*; Campbell, Fishman, and McIlroy (eds), *The High Tide of British Trade Unionism.*

2 For contemporary analyses: Crouch and Pizzorno (eds), *The Resurgence of Class Conflict.*

3 Cf. Fink (ed.), *Workers across the Americas.*

4 Bengtsson and Ryner, 'The (International) Political Economy of Falling Wage Shares'.

5 As in Gumbrell-McCormick and Hyman, *Trade Unions in Western Europe*, 1.

in labour history.[6] They cannot and will not be uniformly duplicated or copied from their present form in the global transformations of labour and workers' movements we are witnessing today.[7] Nevertheless, in the twentieth century, trade unionism as a form of collective agency among workers became a global phenomenon, be it in very different national and political contexts.[8] As of today growing numbers of workers are exposed to labour markets, so is it to be expected that new labour regimes based on wage labour will result in new varieties of trade unionism. The cases of workers organizing in the original heartlands of trade unionism in Europe and the United States, as analysed in this book, can provide a background for future prospects and transformations.

While the insight that supply and demand in the labour market have to be mediated by collective bargaining prevailed in most studies of trade unionism since Sidney and Beatrice Webb published their *History of Trade Unionism* in 1894 and *Industrial Democracy* in 1897,[9] hard-core neoliberals argue that regulation of labour markets in this way can only result in distortions of the 'natural' or 'equilibrium' wage, defined as the outcome of the unmediated interplay of supply and demand. Departing from a rigorous interpretation of neoclassical economic theory, they assert that 'the market' will adjust wages and employment levels to an equilibrium, which by definition has to be considered just or natural. Trade unions can enforce wage rises in excess of this competitive level only at the expense of consumers by raising prices and inflation, or of other workers by passing unemployment and low pay to less powerful sections of the wage-earning class, not at the expense of capital or profits.[10]

Contrary to neoliberal beliefs, however, a 'free' labour market, or indeed any market, cannot exist, and has never existed, without some form of regulation by countervailing powers. As soon as we abandon the assumption that the so-called competitive level of wages is the optimal outcome of supply and demand in the labour market, but instead accept that it can also result from an imbalance between these two, another perspective on trade

6 Cf. Hofmeester and Van der Linden (eds), *Handbook Global History of Work*.

7 Cf. Silver, *Forces of Labor*.

8 Phelan (ed.), *Trade Unionism since 1945*.

9 Webb and Webb, *History of Trade Unionism*, and idem, *Industrial Democracy*.

10 For the origins of anti-unionism in neoliberal thinking: Steiner, 'The Neoliberals Confront the Trade Unions'; Jackson, 'An Ideology of Class'; idem, 'Hayek, Hutt and the Trade Unions'; idem, 'Neoliberalism, Labour and Trade Unionism'. Mancur Olson later incorporated this idea into a general theory of the detrimental effects of 'distributional coalitions' (such as trade unions) and the need for 'market-augmenting governments': Olson, *The Rise and Decline of Nations*.

unionism arises. Trade union pressure is needed to redress the imbalance of market power between employers and workers, to set wages above their 'competitive level' and to forge a redistribution of income between wages and company profits. The denial of an overall positive outcome of these efforts by neoliberals is reminiscent of the theory of the so-called wage fund, which dominated economic thinking about wages and trade unions until the late 1860s.[11] Indeed, one of the original contributors to neoliberal anti-unionist thinking, the British-South African economist W.H. Hutt, started from a kind of rehabilitation of nineteenth-century wage fund theory and a dismissal of later economists who had refuted it, including the Webbs.[12]

Until the late 1860s, in different formulas including Ferdinand Lassalle's 'iron law of wages',[13] the wage fund theory was even held in the nascent labour movement,[14] until it was discredited by the strike wave in those years. The famous address on 'Value, Price, and Profit' by Karl Marx, given before the General Council of the First International in 1865, was a refutation of the theory of the wage fund, as defended by one of its members, the Owenist carpenter John Weston. Weston argued that a general rise in the rate of wages would be of no use to the workers, and that therefore the trade unions had a harmful effect. He shared a view held by many trade unionists in this 'artisanal phase of the labour movement' (see Chapter 3) that only producer-cooperatives could increase workers' standard of living. Marx thought it was important to dispute this idea because, if it were accepted by the International, 'we should be turned into a joke both on account of the trade unions here and of the infection of strikes which now prevails on the Continent'.[15] For him wage determination was 'a question of the respective powers of the combatants'.[16] Trade unions were necessary to counteract the tendency of wages in an unregulated labour market to fall.

In this period of heightened union activity Marx put his faith in trade unions as the means of the formation and consolidation of class identity:

11 For an overview: Webb and Webb, *Industrial Democracy*, 603-617.

12 Hutt, *The Theory of Collective Bargaining*. Throughout this book, Hutt devotes a lot of space to discrediting W.T. Thornton, cited below (notes 22 and 23), who induced J.S. Mill to recant the wage fund theory. See also Jackson, 'Hayek, Hutt and the Trade Unions'. Interest in Hutt's argument that trade unions were inimical to working-class prosperity revived in the Thatcher years. His *Theory of Collective Bargaining* (originally published in 1930) was republished by the Thatcherite Institute of Economic Affairs in 1975.

13 For the popularity of Lassalle's 'iron law' in the early labour movement, see Chapters 2 and 3 in this volume.

14 Cf. Biagini, 'British Trade Unions and Popular Political Economy'.

15 Letter by Karl Marx to Friedrich Engels, 20 May 1865, cited in Marx, *Value, Price and Profit*, 2.

16 Ibid., 28. Cf. Donoghue, 'Marx on the Wages Fund Doctrine'.

in their 'daily struggle against capital', unions could become 'a bastion against the power of capital' and 'schools of socialism'.[17] He was well aware, however, of the exclusiveness of the British craft unions that had initiated the International. At the London conference of the International in 1871 he was very critical:

> The Trade Unions [...] are an aristocratic minority – the poor workers cannot belong to them; the great mass of workers whom economic development is driving from the countryside into the towns every day – has long been outside the trade unions – and the most wretched mass has never belonged; the same goes for the workers born in the East End of London.[18]

In the early 1870s for various reasons the British trade unions started to distance themselves from the General Council of the International.[19] An example is the attitude of the London cigar-makers' union, which now tried to ally itself with other cigar-makers' unions on the continent in a separate international union (see Chapter 2).

During and after the strike wave of the 1860s, the theory of the wage fund was abandoned by liberal economists as well, most famously by John Stuart Mill, who originally had been one of its staunchest defenders. His recantation in 1869, later described as 'one of the most curious episodes in the development of economic thought',[20] is also one of the most debated.[21] Mill abandoned the traditional image of the labour market as a self-regulating mechanism after reading a defence of trade unionism by his friend W.T. Thornton,[22] who had motivated this defence by referring to 'Labour's causes of discontent':

> The upper myriads may cry Peace, but there will be no more peace for them, on the old terms, with the lower millions. Among these already widely exists, and is rapidly spreading, a profound dissatisfaction with labour's social position, and a firm determination to readjust it.[23]

17 Cited by Stedman Jones, *Karl Marx*, 472.

18 Cited ibid., 530.

19 Ibid., 529.

20 Ekelund, 'A Short-run Classical Model', 85.

21 Cf. Vint, *Capital and Wages*; Donoghue, 'Mill's Affirmation'.

22 Ibid., 96; idem, 'William Thomas Thornton and John Stuart Mill'; Mill, 'Thornton on Labour', 517-518, bluntly concluded: 'The doctrine hitherto taught by all or most economists (including myself), which denied it to be possible that trade combinations can raise wages [...] is deprived of its scientific foundation, and must be thrown aside.'

23 Thornton, *On Labour*, 36.

The episode makes clear that theories of wage formation not only influence, but also reflect practices of trade unionism.[24] In the preface to the 1871 edition of his *Principles of Political Economy*, Mill wrote 'there has been some instructive discussion on the theory of Demand and Supply, and on the influence of Strikes and Trade Unions on wages'.[25] He did

> not hesitate to say that associations of labourers, of a nature similar to trade unions, far from being a hindrance to a free market for labour, are the necessary instrumentability of that free market; the indispensable means of enabling the sellers of labour to take due care of their own interests under a system of competition.[26]

Another prominent and influential opponent of the wage fund theory was the German liberal economist and social reformer Lujo Brentano, who in 1872 in a publication on British trade unionism supported the argument against the wage fund offered by Thornton.[27] Like Mill, Brentano considered trade unions indispensable to arrive at regular industrial relations, a view which would later become pre-eminent in German social science.[28]

This book is not about theory, however, but about the historical varieties of trade union practices exemplified by case studies over the course of three centuries. With Marx and Mill, and contrary to neoliberal or wage fund theories, it starts from the assumption that trade unionism is not an anomaly or a distortion, nor harmful, but a necessary and integral part of the functioning of labour markets in societies based on wage labour.

24 According to Donoghue, 'Mill's Affirmation', 95, 'Mill's support for trade unionism grew out of an evolving sympathy for the British Labour Movement in the 1860s.' This is the reverse of W.H. Hutt's contention that wage bargaining in Britain developed only after John Stuart Mill and others had debunked the wage fund theory, as cited in Jaffe, *Striking a Bargain*, 20 and 103, note 6.

25 Donoghue, 'William Thomas Thornton and John Stuart Mill', 90.

26 Mill, *Principles of Political Economy*, 937.

27 Brentano, *On the History and Development of Gilds*, translation of *Die Arbeitergilden der Gegenwart* (2 vols, Leipzig 1871-1872), as referred to by Thompson, 'The Reception of Lujo Brentano's Thought'; see also Hennock, 'Lessons from England'.

28 Cf. Rudischhauser, *Geregelte Verhältnisse*, 257, 262-263; on the rejection of the wage fund doctrine by the German Historical School, see ibid., 217. In France, where classical political economy continued to be the dominant paradigm, this kind of theory remained *en vogue*, in spite of the criticisms in Britain itself: ibid., 233, 245.

## Trade unions and labour market control

From a sociological perspective, neoclassical and neoliberal economic theories can be criticized for ignoring institutionalizing tendencies in labour markets through both formal and informal social practices.[29] Informal 'weak ties', social norms, group formation, and differences in skill, cultural preferences, gender, or social background cause a subdivision of the market into segments that are more or less separate. Social institutions and networks of social relations are needed to allow labour market transactions in different segments to take place. Trade unions belong to the institutionalizing forces that minimally act to regulate the labour market in their own segment, occupation, or industry, but historically they have been perceived in other roles as well, as instruments of class struggle, social control, or social dialogue, for instance. Trade union history has often been incorporated in (national) labour histories from such broader societal perspectives.[30] This collection of essays does not cover all these aspects, but concentrates on trade unions as workers' collective agencies to enforce regulation of wages and to control labour supply.

Since the defining work of Sidney and Beatrice Webb on British trade unionism, the view that unions seek to control and regulate labour markets has been widely held in various disciplines.[31] This is not to deny that unions can pursue a much broader agenda, and in the twentieth century have increasingly done so, covering a wide area of social and political concerns, but their core business was and remains the protection of workers against the inherent risks and uncertainties of work relationships mediated by the market. In twentieth-century social science this view has been incorporated into a broader institutional approach of 'industrial relations', for instance in the American ('Wisconsin') Institutional School and the British so-called Oxford School, both of which were heavily influenced by the Webbs.[32] In historical research the work of the Webbs, itself based on a thorough historical analysis of the British case, is still useful as a starting point. Eric Hobsbawm considered their main work, *Industrial Democracy*, 'the best

29 There is an extensive literature on this issue; for an overview: Streeck, 'The Sociology of Labor Markets'.

30 Cf. Hyman, *Understanding European Trade Unionism*.

31 Ibid., 6-17; Gahan, 'Trade Unions as Regulators'.

32 Kaufman, 'The Early Institutionalists'; Farnham, 'Beatrice and Sidney Webb'; Kaufman, 'History of the British Industrial Relations Field'. This is not to deny that the Webbs were also criticized by representatives of the Oxford School, most predominantly by Allan Flanders: see Jaffe, *Striking a Bargain*, 84-85, and Fox, 'Collective Bargaining, Flanders, and the Webbs'.

book about unions ever written in our country',[33] and industrial relations specialist Dave Lyddon concluded that 'for a theoretical framework, both Marxists and non-Marxists have had no choice but to look to the Webbs'.[34]

In the American institutionalists' view, a labour union resembles a cartel of firms in the product market in that both use their control of supply to exert market power over buyers and gain a higher price than a 'free' market would sustain.[35] In the German literature on industrial relations a trade union is considered a 'price-setting cartel of labour power' as well.[36] Even if the Webbs themselves did not invoke the term 'cartel' in this context, they certainly saw unions as price-fixing agencies which seek to modify market forces.[37] In most cases labour markets tend to be unfavourable to workers, and when there is no way out ('exit') by leaving an employer and looking for a better job elsewhere, workers can only try to balance the process of wage determination by cartel-like union power ('voice').[38] In *Industrial Democracy*, Sydney and Beatrice Webb developed a typology of (historic) trade union action starting from this view. Unions try to control labour markets in basically three ways: by enforcing their own union rules on labour supply, by collectively negotiating 'common rules' with employers, and by demanding government regulation of labour standards.[39]

'The device of restriction of numbers', as the Webbs call it, aimed at controlling labour supply by workers in skilled trades to maintain a privileged position and a relatively high standard of living, mainly by regulating the entry to an occupation by fixing the numbers of apprentices. By the time the Webbs were writing, this method, typically used by craft unions of skilled workers, had become obsolete because of the levelling of skills and working conditions in industrial societies. The cases of eighteenth-century cloth shearers and nineteenth-century glass-workers, described in Chapters 1 and 4 respectively, are clear examples of the effectiveness of this trade union device among skilled workers.

33 Hobsbawm, 'Trade Union Historiography', 33, cited by Lyddon, 'Industrial-Relations Theory', 136.

34 Ibid., 125; see also idem, 'History and Industrial Relations', 97-99.

35 Kaufman, 'The Early Institutionalists', 191.

36 Müller-Jentsch, *Soziologie der Industriellen Beziehungen*, 69.

37 Fox, 'Collective Bargaining, Flanders, and the Webbs', 159-160.

38 Albert Hirschman's dichotomy of 'exit' and 'voice' has been used in a much-debated analysis of union behaviour in the United States by Freeman and Medoff, *What Do Unions Do?* Cf. Hirschman, *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty*.

39 Webb and Webb, *Industrial Democracy*, 704-740.

By 'the device of the common rule', the Webbs argue, trade unions aim to negotiate a standard rate of pay and other working conditions with the employers, in order to enforce these regulations collectively. Such a collective agreement (a term the Webbs did not use) results in 'the exclusion from influence, on the contract, of all degradation of price', i.e., a lower rate of wages.[40] In this way, industries are forced to uphold a standard of work and to prevent the use of low pay by less efficient outsiders to compete. Such 'regulatory unionism' taking wages out of the competition has historically been, and still is, an important element of trade union practice. As is shown in Chapter 4 in the cases of glass and diamond workers in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and in Chapter 7 for building cleaners in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, it was used to force employers to regulate product markets as well, and these are just a few examples among many. The leader of the French union of textile workers, Victor Renard, for instance, argued in 1904 that collective agreements could force employers to form cartels to uphold prices and to stabilize markets.[41] And in 1907 the German industrial relations pioneer Fanny Imle proposed to combine the regulation of wages in tariff agreements in the printing industry with the setting of market prices.[42]

Summarizing the mainly American literature on this issue, Peter Swenson calls this type of unionism 'negotiated cartelism': in sectors where competitors can enter easily, firms can turn to labour unions as an enforcement mechanism against cheaters and new entrants.[43] In German this is called *Schmutzkonkurrenz*.[44] Union power is used to stabilize competition by imposing a floor under wages paid by competing firms. Low-wage entrants to the trade are blockaded. In this way, minimum wage standards can prevent the destabilization of product markets. The union performs a function similar to that of a monopolistic supplier. As Swenson argues, in some industries – he mentions coal mining, clothing, and construction as US examples – employers had an interest in enlisting unions as the enforcers of a jointly managed cartel.[45] This 'cross-class alliance' does not eliminate class conflict, however. Strikes remain the union's mechanism of enforcement on recalcitrant employers, and unions may use their power to impose

40 Ibid., 716. On debates on this issue in Germany and on the reception of the Webbs' ideas in France (by François Simiand): Rudischhauser, *Geregelte Verhältnisse*, 290-301.

41 Ibid., 376.

42 Cited by Stein, 'Die Schriften Fanny Imles', 117.

43 Swenson, *Capitalists against Markets*, 22-24.

44 Rudischhauser, *Geregelte Verhältnisse*, 154.

45 Swenson, *Capitalists against Markets*, 142-166.

and maintain wage standards higher than the employers wish to go. But conflictual relations do not imply the absence of negiotiable alliances to regulate an industry, as the examples of the glass and diamond workers in Chapter 4, and the building cleaners in Chapter 7, testify.

Apart from the 'Trade Union Methods of Collective Bargaining and Legal Enactment', the Webbs distinguish a third one of 'Mutual Insurance', important, but often neglected in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century trade union history. They mention out-of-work benefits as one of the crucial functions of trade union insurance. The object was to prevent unemployed union members under stress of starvation from accepting employment below standard wage rates agreed to or common in an industry, so this was another instrument to restrict and regulate labour supply.[46] The importance of out-of-work benefits for union policy is clearly established in Chapter 5 on the changing role of unions in labour intermediation in several European countries. Upholding this device even caused the abandonment of another closely related method of regulating labour supply: labour market intermediation by trade unions themselves.

The exercise of different forms of market control by trade unions, both by regulating labour supply and by collective bargaining, is a common theme in the case studies presented in this book. Each chapter is focused on specific trades or occupations to highlight the regulatory effects of trade union action in very different times and circumstances. They all depart from the concept of labour market control as the basic goal of union behaviour.

## Historical varieties of trade unionism and their transformations

Through time the regulatory function of unions was linked to and to great extent determined by the way production was organized.[47] How unions operated was reflective of the social and institutional contexts in which they emerged and developed. In the three centuries covered in this book labour relations changed fundamentally, and this is reflected in different forms of trade unionism. The chapters in this book are case studies of the

46 Webb and Webb, *Industrial Democracy*, 161-172; see on this issue also Dreyfus, et al.,'Les bases multiples du syndicalisme'.

47 In this context I deliberately avoid the concepts of 'mode of production' or 'regime of production', as the first (in the Marxian vocabulary) refers to societal formations as a whole (as in the 'feudal' or 'capitalist' mode of production), while the second is introduced in the debate on the 'varieties of capitalism' and refers to national differences: Soskice, 'Divergent Production Regimes', 101-134; Hall and Soskice, *Varieties of Capitalism*.

transformations of trade unionism as a reaction to changes in production and labour regimes. As argued in Chapter 1, in the eighteenth century combinations of workers took the form of what I propose to call 'manufactural unionism', associated with the period of manufacture between independent producers and the factory age. Cloth shearers, whose frequent industrial action is the subject of this chapter, tried to establish combinations and representations to negotiate collectively with employers and to communicate with the authorities about a regulation of labour regimes. Manufactures in cloth shearing based on wage labour can be discerned already in Antwerp in the sixteenth century and in Amsterdam and Leiden in the seventeenth, as were industrial action and workers organizing in this period. The second half of the eighteenth century witnessed the apogee of this kind of 'manufactural unionism' by cloth shearers in Yorkshire and Wiltshire in England, in Sedan in northern France, and in the Verviers and Aachen region in today's Belgian-German borderlands. The case supports the argument by labour historians of the early modern period that there were 'unions before the unions'.[48] Journeymen and other wage earners organized numerous strikes and built trade union-like structures to undertake collective negotiations well before the nineteenth century.

As there are few signs of a continuous evolution, I consider this kind of 'manufactural unionism', as exemplified by the cloth shearers, a separate episode in trade union history, not a kind of proto-unionism developing into unionism of a more permanent kind. In accordance with the Webbs' definition of trade unions, these 'manufactural unions' can be considered 'continuous' organizations of wage earners, but their existence contradicts the Webbs' assertion that there were no union-like structures of this kind before the nineteenth century.[49] Nevertheless, in the nineteenth century a new kind of trade unionism emerged, initially not primarily in the factories developing out of manufactures, but among artisans in urban industries, such as tailors, shoemakers, cabinet-makers, and carpenters, whose formerly independent position was being undermined by middlemen, contractors, and other entrepreneurs. Labour historians distinguish an 'artisanal phase of the labour movement', when trade unions tried to restore artisan independence collectively by organizing producers' associations.[50] Drawn into the market as wage labourers, they formed cooperative businesses to

48 As Lis and Soly argue in, '"An Irrestistible Phalanx"'; see also Rule, 'Review Essay: Proto-Unionism?'

49 Webb and Webb, *History of Trade Unionism*, 1.

50 Lenger, 'Beyond Exceptionalism', 1-23.

control that market. Radicalized artisans became the standard bearers of a specific 'associational socialism' based on this solution. Starting from an international discussion and comparison of this issue in Chapter 3, I show that such an artisanal phase can be clearly discerned in the early labour movement in Amsterdam. Trade unions as bargaining agents 'pure and simple' emerged only in the 1890s as a reaction by a new generation of workers to changing labour regimes.

The artisanal origins of the early trade unions in the nineteenth century did not preclude them from operating as wage-bargaining agencies as well, in strikes and other forms of industrial action. A specific case is the early formation of trade unions among cigar-makers, as described in Chapter 2. This cannot be explained by a loss of artisanal status and independent position, as there was no artisan background or tradition in this trade. When cigar factories sprang up in European port cities in the first half of the nineteenth century, cigar-makers were recruited as wage labourers from the poorest strata of the population. They did not have an independent artisanal status to defend, but from an early date they realized that they had to combine to defend wages and working conditions.

Artisanal unionism of the kind described above, though originating in handicrafts, cannot be equated to the much broader English-language concept of 'craft unionism'. This refers to a model of trade unionism in which workers' organizations are based on a particular craft or trade in which they work, in contrast to 'industrial' or 'general' unions, in which all workers in the same branch or industry are organized into the same union, regardless of differences in skill. Again, the origins of craft unions were closely related to specific labour regimes. In nineteenth-century factories, the organization of the labour process often took the form of internal subcontracting by semi-independent craftsmen, who in their turn engaged auxiliary workers themselves. So, in the 1870s in the American steel industry, a roller 'was not a supervisory worker – not a part of management, as his twentieth-century counterpart would be. He was an inside contractor, and often a prominent member of a union that regulated the terms under which work was subcontracted from the employers.'[51] In US engineering, inside contracting encouraged workers to become employers of other workers; a contractor took the contract at so much per unit, hired others on day rates, and pocketed the margin between his helpers' wages and the price the company had paid him.[52] In his extensive comparative study of industrial relations in German

51 Montgomery, *The Fall of the House of Labor*, 12.

52 Ibid., 187-188.

and American iron and steel manufacturing, Thomas Welskopp underlines the exploitive character of this form of subcontracting.[53] Subcontractors were 'entrepreneurs rather than head workmen in their work team', and their relationship with the team was like a class relation '*en miniature*'.[54]

Subcontracting craft workers were the first to organize in craft unions, excluding their underlings. This kind of union emerged in the nineteenth century, but from the end of that century and in the first decades of the twentieth it was increasingly replaced by industrial unions. While these processes have been clearly established in the steel and engineering industries, especially in Britain and the United States, research on this issue in other industries is rare. In Chapter 4 I analyse this process comparatively in the Amsterdam diamond industry and in the Belgian and US window-glass industry. The importance of internal subcontracting in these industries was reflected in conflicts between different categories of workers. They often organized in different unions. However, overcoming these original divisions, a transition from 'craft' to 'industrial unionism' can be recognized in all three cases, be it in a very different way.

Mass industrial unions of workers in mining, textiles, construction, engineering, steel, automobile, shipbuilding, and other heavy industries, became dominant in the European and American trade union movement from the inter-war years, for instance in the American Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), but also in the French Communist Party, which (from 1936) had its main social base among mass industrial workers, like those in the mines and steel industries in the north and in the metal industries around Paris.[55] These industrial unions were at the heart of the post-war so-called Fordist class compromise, based on industrial mass production and mass consumption in industrialized capitalist countries. Under pressure of industrial mass unionism, governments and employer organizations tried to reconcile industrial interests with collective rights of predominantly male workers with permanent jobs in industry.[56] During the phase of steady economic growth between the end of the Second World War and the mid-1970s, forms of labour market regulation and protection of regular jobs came to dominate the industrial system in the North Atlantic industrialized countries.

53 Welskopp, *Arbeit und Macht*, 144.

54 Cited ibid., 126. See on this issue also Elbaum and Wilkinson, 'Industrial Relations and Uneven Development', 288-294.

55 Cf. Noiriel, *Les ouvriers dans la société française*.

56 Koch, 'Employment Standards in Transition'.

From the mid-1970s business and governments turned against this kind of regulation and started to demand more flexibility in the labour market. To cut labour costs, employers sought to more easily adjust their workforce to supply and demand conditions by creating non-standard work arrangements, such as contracting out to subcontracting firms or self-employed workers, and temporary work on fixed time schedules. Under the impact of neoliberal labour market reforms, changes in employment relations have become structural: the so-called flexible fringe has grown substantially, and an increasing part of the labour force has to work and live under precarious conditions. From a broader historical perspective derived from Polanyi's *Great Transformation*, authors such as Guy Standing, formerly an economist for the International Labour Organization (ILO), and the American sociologist Arne Kalleberg analysed these developments as a process of 'recommodification' of labour after its 'decommodification' in the post-war welfare states.[57] Pierre Bourdieu wrote about 'a mode of domination based on the institution of insecurity, domination through precariousness. […] Institutionalized precariousness inside the firm of the future becomes a principle of work organization and a style of life.'[58] Precarious work has, however, elicited new forms of resistance by different societal and union-like organizations.[59]

The pervasiveness of this phenomenon is illustrated by a sample of establishments collected by Kalleberg in the United States in the mid-1990s: more than half of them had externalized or outsourced some of their activities.[60] The cleaning industry is a paradigmatic example of this development. The symbolic value attached to its outsourcing by die-hard neoliberals can be illustrated with the forced dismissal of cleaners and school janitors by the Greek government as one of the 'reforms' demanded by the infamous 'troika' of the International Monetary Fund, the European Union, and the European Central Bank in 2012. In spite of the evidently marginal financial gains of this operation, their rehiring by the Syriza government in 2015 was one of first things the troika took issue with in its negotations with Syriza's finance minister Yanis Varoufakis.[61] In Chapter 7, I analyse new forms of

57 Standing, *Work after Globalization*; Kalleberg, *Good Jobs, Bad Jobs*, 24-26; cf. Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*. On the 'decommodification' of labour in post-war welfare states, see also Esping-Andersen, *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*, and Frade and Darmon, 'New Modes of Business Organization and Precarious Employment'.

58 Bourdieu, *Firing Back*, 29.

59 Lambert and Herod (eds), *Neoliberal Capitalism and Precarious Work*.

60 Kalleberg, *Good Jobs, Bad Jobs*, 89.

61 Varoufakis, *Adults in the Room*, 151-154, 233-234, 522 note 6.

trade union action to organize and empower precarious workers in this outsourced industry in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

## Comparative and transnational perspectives

In contemporary sociological literature, the idea of 'varieties of unionism' departs not from changing labour regimes through history, but from varieties in trade union practices in the context of national 'varieties of capitalism'.[62] These 'varieties' are broadly differentiated in 'liberal' (mainly in Anglo-Saxon countries) and 'coordinated' market economies (such as the Netherlands, Germany, Austria, Sweden). Class relations, as expressed in industrial relations, cannot be conceptualized only nationally, however. While in the twentieth century national institutions have clearly become important in shaping social and industrial relations,[63] national labour movements have to cope with international class relations as well, as firms increasingly operate transnationally, linking production and work across borders. Under pressure of globalization, labour regimes converge. National states, both those with 'liberal' and those with 'coordinated' labour regimes, have implemented neoliberal reforms, resulting in a common neoliberal trajectory towards flexibilization of labour markets, precariatization of a growing number of workers, and a falling share of wages.[64]

This is not to say that nation-states have been outplayed in trade union action. They are still important in regulating labour markets and social security arrangements (as is also shown in Chapter 7), but they have rather been reconfigured as only one of the spatial dimensions trade unions have to operate in. As a result there has been a growing interest in labour internationalism and transnational trade unionism.[65] The rise of global networks and transnational movements since the late twentieth century has (re)opened our eyes for transboundary developments and transnational connections in the history of labour movements as well. Rather than being a recent offspring of globalization, transnationalism appears to be an important aspect in the history of trade unionism, hidden from a view that was captured by 'methodological nationalism' (the assumption – mostly

62 Frege and Kelly (eds), *Varieties of Unionism*; Gumbrell-McCormick and Hyman, *Trade Unions in Western Europe*, 4; Hall and Soskice, *Varieties of Capitalism*.

63 Van der Linden, 'The National Integration of the European Working Classes'.

64 Baccaro and Howell, 'A Common Neoliberal Trajectory'.

65 Cf. Fairbrother, Hennebert, and Lévesque (eds), *Transnational Trade Unionism*.

implicit – that the nation-state is the natural unit of social practices and of social research).[66]

Until recently, labour history could not escape 'methodological nationalism' and was mostly written within a national framework. Comparisons often started from discrete nation-states as units of comparison and from there were easily bound up with the idea of national exceptionalisms. Whatever the merits of these studies, several conceptual and theoretical contributions on the 'transnational turn' in labour history and a growing number of empirical studies showed how promising a transnational approach could be, also in making comparisons.[67] The chapters in this book all start from a comparative and transnational perspective, based on two assumptions. The first is that developments in labour relations in the advanced capitalist countries (essentially western Europe and North America) followed a similar pattern and, although outcomes could be quite different, general tendencies in trade union reactions to these developments can best be studied from a comparative perspective 'beyond [national] exceptionalism'.[68] This is achieved by making comparisons – not from a national perspective, but from the perspective of specific industries. A second, closely related assumption is that what at first seemed to be national developments in trade union history were in fact the result of intricate transnational connections and relations.

'Transnational' refers to the interaction between individuals, groups, and organizations across national borders, and to structures that extend beyond the nation-state. Transnational history has been focusing on border crossings and circulations, connecting people in cross-border social networks. These do not necessarily have to be worldwide, and in fact connect particular localities rather than nations. In cross-border studies the 'transnational' often dissolves into the 'translocal'.[69] As the studies in this volume make clear, transnationalism in trade union history connected places rather than nations, at least before trade union internationalism was institutionalized in the cooperation of national unions in the twentieth century. Cloth shearers moved and transferred their traditions of industrial action from place to

66 Wimmer and Glick Schiller, 'Methodological Nationalism'; Chernilo, 'Methodological Nationalism'; Amelina, et al. (eds), *Beyond Methodological Nationalism.*

67 Van der Linden, *Transnational Labour History*; Hanagan, 'An Agenda for Transnational Labor History'; Kirk, MacRaild and Nolan, 'Introduction: Transnational Ideas' and 'Transnational Labour'; Fink (ed.), *Workers across the Americas;* McIlroy and Crouch, 'The Turn to Transnational Labor History'.

68 As is argued for in the case of the 'artisanal phase' of the labour movement by Lenger, 'Beyond Exceptionalism'.

69 French, 'Another World History Is Possible'.

place: from Antwerp to Amsterdam, from Leiden to Sedan, and from there to Verviers; cigar-makers at the time of the First International connected Amsterdam and London, or Hamburg and New York, rather than Holland and England, or Germany and the United States; Belgian window-glass workers moved from Charleroi to Pittsburgh and localities in West Virginia, and Amsterdam diamond workers to Antwerp. Dutch and German miners met each other in Kerkrade and Kohlscheid, just across the border. The cleaners' campaigns in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries were based locally as well: in downtown Los Angeles and Houston, at London's Canary Wharf, and at Amsterdam Airport Schiphol.

## Transnationalism and trade union internationalism

In one of the few theories of trade union internationalism, published in 1980, John Logue argued that this originally developed from concrete material self-interest grounded in the patterns of international mobility in the skilled trades prior to the First World War. Early trade unionists were receptive to the idea of internationalism because their personal experience made them feel part of an international working class. It was a rational choice to organize internationally to prevent wage cutting by migratory journeymen and to support wage demands in other countries. After the First World War internationalism declined, because unions gained strength nationally and were able to achieve on the national plane what they had previously sought to realize internationally. They supported various welfare state measures and protection of wages and working standards by restricting international labour mobility.[70] This argument runs parallel to later arguments in economic history about a first globalization stretching from the nineteenth century until the First World War, followed by a period of nationalization (or 'deglobalization') in international economic relations, and a second phase of economic globalization (or 'reglobalization') in the 1990s and 2000s.[71]

Logue's argument has been picked up and extended by Marcel van der Linden in reflections upon the national integration of the working classes in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[72] So, well before

70 Logue, *Toward a Theory*, 10, 24-25, 46-49.

71 Broadberry and O'Rourke (eds), *The Cambridge Economic History of Modern Europe, Vol. 2*; Strikwerda, 'World War I in the History of Globalization'.

72 Van der Linden, 'The Rise and Fall of the First International'; idem, 'The National Integration of the European Working Classes'.

'transnationalism' was coined as a concept to describe cross-border social relations, Logue and Van der Linden in fact argued that nineteenth-century trade union internationalism was based on the transnational mobility of workers and the existence of transnational labour markets. A salient example of international trade unionism based on such a transnational labour market is the International Federation of Ship, Dock, and River Workers (IFSDRW), founded in 1896 on the initiative of the British dockworkers' union, two years later to be renamed the International Transport Federation (ITF). It originated from a British attempt to coordinate strike action and organize solidarity with Rotterdam dockworkers. Its founders encouraged continental unions to join the British one to control the closely connected transnational labour markets of dockers and seamen, primarily in port cities around the North Sea. It organized members in local branches in both British and continental ports such as Hamburg, Rotterdam, and Antwerp, and supported strikes there, also by preventing strike breakers to be recruited by employers in those ports.[73] During strikes in Antwerp in 1900-1901 and 1907, for instance, employers tried to import thousands of English workers to act as strike breakers.[74] In the twentieth century the ITF developed into an international federation of national unions in the transport sector as a whole.

Logue's idea that trade union internationalism was a corollary of transnational labour migration is corroborated by the examples of the cigar-makers', window-glass workers', and miners' organizations described in Chapters 2, 4, and 6. As I show in these cases, their internationalism was not (primarily) motivated by an internationalist (socialist) ideology, but was intended to regulate transnational (and in the first two cases even transatlantic) labour markets: in the early 1870s, English, Dutch, Belgian, and German cigar-makers broke away from the First International to establish their own international cigar-makers' union (Chapter 2); in the 1880s Belgian, English, and American window-glass workers organized internationally in the US-based Knights of Labor to control migration between the centres of window-glass making in these countries (Chapter 4); and, in spite of its anti-socialist and anti-internationalist ideology, the Dutch Christian Miners' Union became a branch of the German Christliche Gewerkschaft for pragmatic reasons, as before the First World War Dutch and German mining labour markets were fully integrated (Chapter 6). Its transnational

73 Simon, *Die Internationale Transportarbeiter-Föderation*, 85-92; Koch-Baumgarten, *Gewerkschaftsinternationalismus*, 48-53.

74 Vanfraechem, *Een sfeer om haring te braden*, 32 and 50.

orientation supports Logue's argument that trade union internationalism was primarily based on practical considerations, not on ideology.

The post-First World War 'national turn', as described by Logue and Van der Linden, is exemplified by the development of the Dutch Christian Miners' Union as well. After the First World War it severed its connections with the German union and reoriented towards the Dutch state and mining district, even to the extent of campaigning against cross-border labour migration by German miners. National institutions continue to be important in trade union action even today. In Chapter 7 on the late twentieth- and early twenty-first-century 'Justice for Janitors' campaigns, the tension between transnational trade unionism and the national regulation of labour markets is a central theme. The case is illustrative of the limited value of so-called International Framework Agreements, as propagated by the International Labour Organization,[75] which were concluded for cleaners/janitors by the international union of service workers, UNI Global Union.

After the First World War trade union internationalism primarily consisted of cooperation of national unions and federations, institutionalized in international federations of which the social democratic International Federation of Trade Unions (the so-called Amsterdam International, established in 1919) was the most important.[76] The communist Red International (or Profintern, 1921) and the International Federation of Christian Trade Unions (1920) were federations of national unions as well.[77] This kind of internationalism presupposed workers organizing on a national basis and differed fundamentally from the earlier international unionism originating from cross-border mobility and social connections of the workers themselves. After the Second World War, the emergence of welfare states as part of the 'Fordist class compromise' based on the power of mass industrial unionism reinforced the national orientation of trade unions. Although there can be no doubt that there was intensive international exchange of ideas about welfare arrangements (as is attested in Chapter 5, for example, in the case of labour market intermediation), this resulted in a strengthening of national labour market institutions, thereby effectivily hindering transnational mobility on which pre-welfare state international unionism had been based. This co-construction of state welfare and national trade unionism came under strain from the late 1960s because of mass migration of both labour and

75 Cf. Fichter and McCallum, 'Implementing Global Framework Agreements'.

76 Cf. Van Goethem, *The Amsterdam International.*

77 Cf. Tosstorff, *The Red International of Labour Unions*; Pasture, *Histoire du syndicalisme chrétien international.*

capital, a development which lies outside the scope of my research. However interesting a comparative study of mass industrial unionism and its demise in the twentieth century would have been, these developments fall outside the cases I present in this book, focused on transnational connections from a social perspective.

## A social interpretation of trade unionism

Many trade union histories tend to be written from an institutional perspective: they analyse membership figures, organizational structures, splits and/or mergers, leadership changes, participatory practices and bargaining results. Other histories concentrate on unions as social movements in strikes and other repertoires of industrial action. There is nothing wrong with that, but in the chapters of this volume I intend to go beyond these kind of institutional and events-based histories and look for social circumstances and conditions to explain changes in union structures and strategies. Transformations of trade unionism will be related to specific social developments. Adding to their comparative and transnational perspectives, the case studies in this volume are illustrative of a social interpretation of trade unionism. Key variables are the social base and composition of union membership, labour market segmentation, varieties of skill, workplace organization and the labour process, generational change, transnational migration, and cross-border social relations. As unions were a predominantly male domain and as it was only in the twentieth century that women started to organize, hesitantly, as industrial workers (which does not mean that they were absent in industrial or other actions),[78] most of these studies concern male workers only. Women became important, however, and even leaders, in the transnational 'Justice for Janitors' campaigns in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries (as described in Chapter 7), a clear sign that female trade unionism – especially in the service sector – is on the rise and one of the new transformations we can expect in the future.[79]

78 In 2015 Silke Neunsinger (Stockholm) and Susan Zimmermann (Budapest) started a project on 'Women and Trade Unions in Europe, 19th to 21st centuries', but as of mid-2018 there have been no publications. See http://history.ceu.edu/women-and-trade-unions-europe-19th-21st-centuries (accessed 14 September 2017). For Britain see Boston, *Women Workers and the Trade Unions*.

79 On the situation in the United States: Milkman, 'Two Worlds of Unionism'.

## On the origins of this volume: transnationalizing Dutch trade union history

Just like in other countries, until recently Dutch labour history suffered from 'methodological nationalism', and, as it was almost exclusively written in Dutch, it was virtually unknown to an international readership (with some exceptions). All chapters in this book incorporate a Dutch element from a comparative or transnational perspective: Leiden cloth shearers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries figure next to Amsterdam cigar-makers, diamond workers, carpenters, and typographers in the nineteenth, Limburg miners in the early twentieth, and Dutch cleaners in the twenty-first century. In this way the book offers an opportunity to get acquainted with aspects of Dutch labour history for readers who are not familiar with the Dutch language.[80]

At the start of my research, my perspective on trade unionism was heavily influenced by the work of my thesis supervisor Theo van Tijn (1927-1992), a professor of social and economic history at Utrecht University between 1967 and 1992. Originally an urban historian of nineteenth-century Amsterdam, he turned to trade union history to contribute to ongoing debates on this topic in the Netherlands in the 1970s. He defined a trade union as 'a sales cartel of labour power',[81] without any reference, however, to the research tradition of the Webbs and the institutionalist school in industrial relations.[82] Chapter 3 in this volume on the early labour movement in Amsterdam was originally written as a paper on the occasion of his retirement (published in 1993).[83] For the translation and publication in this volume it has been thoroughly revised and updated.

Van Tijn's research in trade union history began with a study of the Amsterdam diamond workers' union, the Algemeene Nederlandsche Diamantbewerkers Bond (ANDB, established in 1894),[84] one of the most successful and influential unions in Dutch trade union history. When in 2010 I learned about industrial relations in the Belgian window-glass industry through the doctoral dissertation of Widukind De Ridder at Brussels Free University,[85] I was struck by several similarities with union practices in the

80 Chapters originally published in Dutch are translated by myself, as are quotations in Dutch, French, and German.

81 Van Tijn, 'A Contribution to the Scientific Study'.

82 See on this issue Schrover, Nijhof, and Kruisinga, 'Marx, markt, macht'.

83 Knotter, 'Van "defensieve standsreflex"'.

84 Van Tijn, 'De Algemeene Nederlandsche Diamantbewerkersbond'.

85 De Ridder, 'Loonsystemen'.

Amsterdam diamond industry, as described by Van Tijn, and I decided to study these cases comparatively. Because of recent work of Ken Fones-Wolf on American window-glass workers, it became possible to include these in the comparison as well, and also to add a transnational element, as there was a lively migratory exchange of Belgian glass-workers across the Atlantic. The resulting article in Dutch was later thoroughly reworked for English-language publication in *Labor History* and is reprinted here as Chapter 4.[86]

In the meantime, Sigrid Wadauer at Vienna University had found out that I had a special interest in labour market history, and in 2009 she asked me to contribute to a workshop on labour intermediation organized for her research project 'The Production of Work'.[87] Through this invitation, my interest in this topic, dormant since I had finished my doctoral dissertation on the Amsterdam labour market in the nineteenth century in 1991,[88] revived, and I was able to present a paper on the changing role of trade unions in labour market intermediation in western Europe in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In 2015 a volume, mainly based on the papers of this workshop, was published. Chapter 4 is a reprint of my contribution to this volume.[89]

In the research for my dissertation I had encountered both the migratory behaviour and the early trade unionism of Amsterdam cigar-makers, and when Marion Fontaine, secretary of the French Société d'études jaurésiennes, asked me to contribute to a conference organized by this society on the history of both the First and the Second International,[90] I decided to expand on this research, and to relate the transnational migratory connections of the cigar-makers to their internationalism. The paper, which was also discussed at an another Parisian conference commemorating the First International, organized by Fabrice Bensimon,[91] was published

86 Knotter, 'De Amerikaanse en Belgische vensterglasindustrie'; idem, 'Trade Unions and Workplace Organization'.

87 See http://pow.univie.ac.at/, 'The Production of Work: Welfare, Labour-Market and the Disputed Boundaries of Labour (1880-1938)' (2008-2013).

88 Knotter, *Economische transformatie*.

89 Wadauer, Buchner, and Mejstrik (eds), *The History of Labour Intermediation*, 117-150. A shortened version appeared in French: 'Du contrôle des services de placements'.

90 '1914, l'Internationale et les internationalismes face à la guerre', Paris, 24-25 March 2014, http://www.jaures.info/news/index.php?val=191_colloque+international+%22+1914+internationale+internationalismes+face+guerre%22.

91 'Il y a 150 ans, l'Association Internationale des Travailleurs', Paris 19-20 June 2014: https://ait1864-2014.sciencesconf.org/. See also Bensimon, Deluermoz, and Moisand (eds), *'Arise Ye Wretched of the Earth'*.

in the *International Review of Social History* in 2014 and is reprinted in this volume as Chapter 2.[92]

Then Marcel van der Linden suggested that I assemble these studies for submission as a volume, and that triggered me to look for more opportunities to study transnational aspects of trade union history. Chapters 1 and 6 are spin-offs of my research in the borderlands around Maastricht, where since 1998 I have held a professorship in comparative regional history and directed a research programme in 'historical border studies'. One of the projects was on cross-border mining labour markets in the Dutch-Belgian-German borderlands,[93] and when it appeared that the early development of miners' trade unionism was closely related to the development of these labour markets, I decided to study this relationship more closely (Chapter 6). Doing research on cross-border connections in the textile industry in this area in the eighteenth century, I found out about the international connections of the militant cloth shearers in the borderlands around Aachen and Verviers, just to the east and south of Maastricht.[94] The search for the international background of their militancy brought me to textile industries all over Northwestern Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (Chapter 1).

International students in my Maastricht Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences appeared to be interested in debates on precariousness, and what to do about it, and I decided to organize a seminar on the cleaners' strikes in the Netherlands between 2010 and 2014, which were clearly copied from the campaign 'Justice for Janitors' from the late 1980s in the United States. The resulting research paper was published in the *International Review of Social History* in 2017 and is reprinted here as Chapter 7.[95]

92 *International Review of Social History* 59(3) (2014), 409-422. An abridged and translated version appeared in the proceedings of the Jaurès-conference: Knotter, 'Les ouvriers du cigare à l'échelle transnationale'.

93 Knotter, 'Labour Migrants'; idem, 'Changing Border Regimes'.

94 Idem, 'Land van heel veel grenzen'. A German version appeared as idem, 'Land der vielen Grenzen'. A portion was published in French 'Pays sans frontière?'

95 *International Review of Social History* 62(1) (2017), 1-35.