

**International Studies
in Social History**
Volume 24

General Editor: Marcel van der Linden

Published under the auspices of the International Institute of Social History, Amsterdam, this series offers transnational perspectives on labor and working class history. For a long time, labor historians have been working within national interpretive frameworks. But interest in studies contrasting different national and regional experiences and studying cross-border interactions has been increasing in recent years. This series is designed to act as a forum for these new approaches.

Bondage

Labor and Rights in Eurasia from the Sixteenth to the Early Twentieth Centuries

Alessandro Stanziani

This is an iconoclastic work, based on a vast knowledge of the relevant literature and on archival materials in French, English, and Russian. It effectively undermines several certainties that have characterized our thinking about the history of labor relations worldwide.

Marcel van der Linden, International Institute of Social History

For the first time, this book provides the global history of labor in Central Eurasia, Russia, Europe, and the Indian Ocean between the sixteenth and the twentieth centuries. It contests common views on free and unfree labor, and compares the latter to many Western countries where wage conditions resembled those of domestic servants. This gave rise to extreme forms of dependency in the colonies, not only under slavery, but also afterwards in form of indentured labor in the Indian Ocean and obligatory labor in Africa. The author shows that unfree labor and forms of economic coercion were perfectly compatible with market development and capitalism, proven by the consistent economic growth that took place all over Eurasia between the seventeenth and the nineteenth centuries. This growth was labor intensive: commercial expansion, transformations in agriculture, and the first industrial revolution required more labor, not less. Finally, Stanziani demonstrates that this world did not collapse after the French Revolution or the British industrial revolution, as is commonly assumed, but instead between 1870 and 1914, with the second industrial revolution and the rise of the welfare state.

Alessandro Stanziani is Professor at the EHESS (Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales) and Senior Researcher at the CNRS (Centre National des recherches Scientifiques), Paris. His books include *Rules of exchange: French capitalism in Comparative Perspective, 18th-20th Centuries* (Cambridge University Press, 2012) and *Bâtisseurs d'Empires. Russie, Chine et Inde à la conquête du monde* (Liber-Seuil, 2012).

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