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## **Migrant Workers in the ILO's *Global Alliance Against Forced Labour* Report: a critical appraisal**

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### **ABSTRACT:**

**Temporary migration for agricultural work has long historical provenance globally, and has increased in the most recent period of globalisation. In this paper, using examples based on my own research on both cross-border (to the UK) and internal (within India) migration by workers for temporary agricultural jobs, I raise questions about how such movements, and the labour relations with which they are associated, have been represented in global and regional analyses. The discussion is set within a summary of recent debates over the usefulness of the concept of geographical scale. I use as a case study the ILO's 2005 report, *Global Alliance Against Forced Labour*, which makes a clear association between temporary migrant work in agriculture and forced labour in rural Asia. I argue that the representations of forced labour that emerge from the report risk, first, painting temporary migrants as victims, rather than as knowledgeable agents, and, second, residualising unfree labour relations, rather than shedding light on their connections to context-specific and contingent forms of capitalism and capital–state relations.**

Just as official events were being held in 2007 to mark the bicentenary of the abolition of British involvement in the transatlantic slave trade, several organisations made reference to the continuity of unfree labour relations, including slavery-like conditions, in present times. In this context it would thus seem appropriate to appreciate the continuing global-level work of the International Labour Office (ILO) on employment rights, decent work, and in particular on forced labour. However, in this paper I use a geographical perspective on migrant labour to raise questions about how migrant workers have been represented in the ILO Director General's most recent report on the subject: *A Global Alliance Against Forced Labour* (GAAFL).

While acknowledging the well intentioned work that has gone into producing the ILO report, the importance of highlighting situations where unfree labour continues to exist, and the

negotiation and compromise required for the production of a document of this kind,<sup>1</sup> I present a critique of the report's conceptual apparatus and the possible effect of this on policy and practice at various sites and scales. In particular I draw attention to the danger that such an approach can residualise lack of freedom in employment relations, obscuring in turn the connections between such lack and the workings of capitalism with all its variety and contingency.<sup>2</sup> As has been noted in the case of 'globalisation', a discourse can develop a power of its own, reproducing the notion of its own inevitability.<sup>3</sup>

I focus on the agriculture sector, drawing on collaborative work I have undertaken with colleagues in India and in the UK to argue, first, that the report's analysis, by prioritising the regional and national scales and obscuring the scales of individual and household, denies migrant workers' agency. Thus, for example, paid work carried out by migrant workers is not analysed in relation to the unpaid reproductive work on which it relies,<sup>4</sup> nor does the report seek to understand recruitment or workplace bargaining, co-operation or conflict from the perspective of individual workers.<sup>5</sup> As a result, policy prescriptions emerge which do not reflect or give space to the interests migrant workers may have in keeping hold of a short-term tie to a particular employer, nor to the apparently small but often meaningful ways in which workplace arrangements may be subject to continual (re)negotiation by workers. Rather than being represented as knowing agents, migrant workers employed in conditions defined by the authors of the report as forced labour, are portrayed as victims. Indeed, the report uses the word 'victim' 180 times in its 87 pages.

The second major issue I take up with the report, and illustrate through the Indian and UK case studies, is the omission of an analysis of capitalism and, in particular, of the connections between specific forms of capitalism and unfree labour relations. There are no mentions of 'capitalism' and only six of capital, three of which refer to 'social capital'. Scalar analysis is vital here too, as it can bring out the differences between the interests of individual capitals and capital-in-general,<sup>6</sup> as well as the conflicts between large-scale monopoly capital and small-scale capital, and relations between capital and the state. Lerche has suggested that the ILO could not be expected to direct analytical attention towards capitalism because of its tripartite structure, made up of representatives of governments, employers and workers. In fact, he goes on, this is strategic on the part of the ILO, as it seeks to isolate the 'worst forms of "un-decent" labour so that these incidents can be dealt with in isolation, without challenging the overall system that created the conditions for their occurrence in the first place.'<sup>7</sup>

I will argue that, by constructing scalar representations of state action which implicitly deny the interrelation of government, intergovernmental and private corporate actions, a perspective on policy towards migrant workers emerges which misses the opportunity of advocating regulation of those economic relations between fragments of capital that produce unfree labour relations. Reports such as GAAFL and the discourses they adopt are thus political interventions, not only through the explicit claims that are made and the call

for wider campaigns urging states to legislate against forced labour, but also through what they leave out.

The paper proceeds as follows. In the next section I argue that scale provides an important and critical conceptual frame for the analysis of labour–capital relations. I then go on to summarise the aims of GAAFL, its key concepts, and the connections it makes between forced labour, migrant workers and agriculture. I refer in particular to two examples of the social construction of scale in the report: first, the aggregation of forced labour into categories of global North and South and, second, characterisation of migration in the state of Bihar in India. In the fourth section I discuss two case studies of migrant working in agriculture, based on empirical work I have carried out in India and the UK. These illustrate the importance both of migrant workers’ agency in employment situations that might have been subsumed within the category ‘forced labour’ in GAAFL, and of states’ accommodations with large-scale capital in producing degrees of unfreedom and exploitation, including worsening employment conditions. In conclusion, it is argued that a focus on the ‘perpetrators’ of ‘forced labour’ may be in the interests of states that would like to see the continued expansion of the power of capital in relation to labour, because it shifts attention away both from the ironic combination of unfreedom and insecurity associated with actually existing labour–capital relations and from ways of challenging them.

### **WHY SCALE MATTERS HERE**

Geographers once saw scalar boundaries such as nation, region, locality or household as given and immutable. However, in recent decades they have become understood as both socially constructed and, potentially at least, made use of politically.<sup>8</sup> It has been argued, for example, that the discursive use of the global scale can be disabling or disempowering, when a particular normative version of how to embrace global change is portrayed as the only way forward for national economic policy.<sup>9</sup> In direct relation to the employment of migrant workers in agriculture, Don Mitchell showed how, during industrial conflict in 1930s California, large-scale agrarian capital used the idea of the local roots of agricultural businesses to portray migrant workers as outsiders, and indeed dangerous subversives, thus appealing to law enforcement agencies to arrest them.<sup>10</sup>

Geographers’ analyses of the social construction and political use of scale thus provide specific kinds of insights into power relations. Yet Marston, Jones and Woodward have argued for an end to the use of scalar analysis altogether.<sup>11</sup> Their argument is that such analysis is inherently hierarchical, privileging higher, larger, scales (e.g. the global) over lower, smaller ones (e.g. local, home). Marston et al. call for scale to be dumped and for it to be replaced by a ‘flat ontology’. Part of their argument relates to the disempowering effect of ‘globalisation’ already referred to. They argue that ‘the current intellectual preoccupation with globalisation blinds us— researchers, policy makers and laypeople—to the ways ‘global’ discourses produce identities that disempower us as agents’.<sup>12</sup> Encouraged

to accept that capitalist economic globalisation has a hegemonic hold, we are less likely to contest or resist it.

This is a fair point. However, as critics such as Leitner and Miller retort, surely Marston et al. are wrong to suggest that scale is necessarily used in a hierarchical way. Moreover ‘power asymmetries between different scales are always contested and subject to struggle’,<sup>13</sup> and national and global discourses can themselves be challenged, as has been shown in a number of arenas, including in recent scholarship in labour geography.<sup>14</sup> For example, Leitner and Miller point out, ‘in the aftermath of the Immigrant Workers’ Freedom Ride’ in the USA in 2006, ‘sponsors of the ride formed the New American Opportunity Campaign . . . which mobilizes, coordinates and organizes grass-roots lobbying on immigrants’ rights at the national scale’.<sup>15</sup>

As feminist geographers such as Rachel Silvey have argued in relation to the scales of nation and household, the social deconstruction of scalar categories remains an intellectually valid and politically important mode of scholarly engagement.<sup>16</sup> Research at multiple scales also importantly reveals the disjunctures and apparent contradictions found at different scales, albeit that they are socially constructed. For example, drawing on Gibson-Graham, Andrew Herod argues that ‘when considering processes of economic restructuring, what is seen from a “global” perspective (perhaps a worldwide economic slowdown) may appear different from what is seen from a “local perspective” in particular places (some places may actually be experiencing economic expansion during such a global economic slowdown)’.<sup>17</sup>

A similar point can be made with respect to agricultural production relations. To understand employers’ logic, including the recruitment of particular kinds of workers, it is necessary to analyse relationships between workers, labour contractors, growers, their marketplace and the state. The social construction of scale as a means to political and economic ends may well be part of this.<sup>18</sup> Yet, if this logic is characterised at a particular imagined scale, difference can be expected at other scales. So while we can note current tendencies towards, say, the use of seasonal student workers from outside the European Union to pick strawberries in Herefordshire, England, and that this is likely to involve working in polytunnels and digital recording of work performance, a consideration of the practices of individual strawberry growing businesses in the same county will reveal significant diversity between them. Some small-scale growers may still be using just locally resident workers, while others harvest the strawberries themselves alongside small groups of migrant workers.<sup>19</sup>

### **SCALE IN THE *GLOBAL ALLIANCE AGAINST FORCED LABOUR* REPORT**

A reading of GAAFL with a scalar lens raises questions about the particular constructions of scale used in the report. In this section I will set out the main concepts used in GAAFL, and some key findings, before going on to present a critique of the construction of a clear line of difference in forced labour between North and South, and the way conclusions were

reached in the analysis of forced labour involving migrant workers from the state of Bihar in India.

The report's stated aims are to build momentum for laws, policies and practical action to eradicate forced labour. It defines forced labour in the same way as the first ILO convention on the subject in 1930. Forced labour refers to 'all work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered himself [sic] voluntarily'.<sup>20</sup> Slavery is seen as one form of forced labour, one which involved the 'absolute control of one person over another'.<sup>21</sup>

The connection between forced labour and migrant labour at the global scale is made explicit: 'In all countries and regions, migrant workers, particularly irregular migrants, are at particular risk of coercive recruitment and employment practices' (p 18). This is symptomatic of a wider discourse portraying migrants as victims. For example, a recent report published by the UK's Joseph Rowntree Foundation on contemporary slavery in Britain suggests that: 'Migrant workers . . . are most at risk of slavery or slavery-like working conditions'.<sup>22</sup>

Importantly, according to GAAFL, while the contemporary imaginary of forced labour relates to exploitation for commercial sex, and to forced labour imposed by the state, the ILO's own surveys found that 64% of forced labour was exacted by 'private agents' for 'economic exploitation' (p 12). Agriculture is highlighted as a major user of forced labour worldwide. 'Almost two-thirds of total forced labour in Asia and Pacific is private-imposed for economic exploitation, mostly debt bondage in agriculture and other economic activities' (p 13). An ILO 'study on returned migrants in four eastern and south-eastern European countries found that, out of a sample of 300 forced labour victims, 13 per cent [had been trafficked] into agriculture' (p 46).

This portrayal of a split between the manifestations of forced labour as debt bondage (in the global South) and as trafficking (in the global North) is widened elsewhere in the report. According to GAAFL, migrant workers tend to be involved in forced labour differently according to the continents from which, or within which, they migrate. So international migrants to 'industrial, Middle Eastern and transition countries' from the global South, are subject to 'modern' forms of forced labour (p 9), 'linked to globalization, migration and human trafficking' (pp 12–13, emphasis added), whereas migrant workers moving both across and within the borders of nation states in Asia, Africa and Latin America experience 'traditional' forms of forced labour, characterised by 'servitude' and 'bonded labour' (p 12). Although the report concedes that these categories of older and newer kinds of forced labour are 'not watertight' (p 9), tricontinental representations, such as the global South, may hide more differences than they reveal when contrasted with the global North.

Multiscalar analysis is required and GAAFL makes an attempt at this when discussing the cases of India, Nepal and Pakistan separately.

### **BIHAR'S MIGRANT AGRICULTURAL WORKERS**

Information in GAAFL about the recruitment and employment of migrant agricultural workers from the eastern Indian state of Bihar by or on behalf of farmers in the western Indian state of Punjab is used to argue that this migration stream is characterised by bonded labour, itself considered a form of forced labour by the report's authors.<sup>23</sup> Lerche draws on conversations with ILO staff to explain that the report's estimate of close to six million workers in unfree labour relations in the Asia and Pacific region as a whole is much lower than the estimates made by non-governmental bodies because the report does not classify as unfree 'short-term relations' which do not involve 'threats, means of coercion or other violent acts' (p 437). But this is exactly what the report does do, implicitly at least, by building up its portrayal of bonded labour through selectively drawing on studies of seasonally migrant workers in a particular migration stream.

Indeed, the report rightly points out that indebtedness is often a key characteristic of unfree labour relations. It states that 'cases of coercive recruitment and debt bondage have affected migrants moving from poorer Indian states such as Bihar to commercial agriculture in the wealthier Punjab' (p 30). Although this passage does not claim that this is the case for all migrant agricultural workers moving between Bihar and Punjab, there is no consideration of the alternative picture. Yet one does not have to look further than the pages of the widely-read *Economic and Political Weekly* (EPW) to find such an analysis of the same migration stream which is quite contradictory to that alluded to in the report.

Alakh Sharma has carried out detailed and extensive research over decades in Bihar. In an article published in EPW in 2005 he narrates the impact on the agrarian economy of the permanent settlement under which *zamindars* were appointed as intermediary rent collectors. The article considers the lack of effective implementation of land-ceiling laws when the *zamindars*, following independence, were confined to their homesteads and private lands, and reflects on the connection between continuing inequality in the distribution of land and the emergence of peasant political mobilisation from the 1960s. This mobilisation led to a degree of protection of workers from *begar*, a form of unpaid, forced, labour; and to effective resistance to payment of the very lowest wages. Alongside this politicisation of the poor peasantry, migration also had a major positive effect on wages by tightening the labour market. Real wages rose by between 50% and 100% across the state between 1981–82, when Sharma first surveyed agrarian relations there, and 1999–2000, when he carried out a resurvey.<sup>24</sup> Sharma concluded that: 'These two developments—mobilisation of the poor peasants and increased migration—appear to be the most important agents of change in rural Bihar during the last three decades or so'.<sup>25</sup>

A separate study by Gerry and Janine Rodgers, published five years before Sharma's, showed that migration to Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Delhi 'had radically changed the balance of labour supply and demand in the villages and [was] clearly the primary factor behind the rise in wages'. Like Sharma for Bihar as a whole, they found most of the migration from Purnia—the district their study was limited to—was by men. Migrants were able to save between Rs500 and Rs1000 per month per worker. Both studies found that migration had turned from a survival strategy into a source of cash savings. There had been substantial changes in living conditions as a result, for example in the proportion of households with access to handpumps and the presence of TVs in the villages.<sup>26</sup>

How debt-bondedness and forced labour are conceptualised clearly matters, as it influences the kinds of conclusions that are drawn about the meaning, experience and effects of temporary periods spent working away from home as a migrant.<sup>27</sup> Variations in scale of analysis also affect conclusions about temporary migration. Interactions between migration, different kinds of inequality and social and economic change at various scales have a mix of outcomes over time. Rodgers and Rodgers report, for example, that with the migration they were studying being mainly done by men, the gap between male and female wages for local wage work had widened. Inequality between classes may have declined, yet gender inequality increased.<sup>28</sup> So it is important not to condemn migration without looking at its diverse effects across time for individual men, women and children of different classes, castes and religion-based communities. In a situation of lack of choice, migration even for hard manual work can be, for some people, an escape from, or challenge to, established relations of dominance, as Lenin found in 19th century Russia.<sup>29</sup>

Nevertheless GAAFL uses limited evidence on out-migration from Bihar to imply that debt bondage, and by extension forced labour, characterise labour relations in which migrant agricultural workers are involved, not only for India but, in combination with studies from other countries, for Asia as a whole.<sup>30</sup> This not only plays down spatial variations. It also implies that temporary migrant workers in Asia have no power at all, not just in agriculture, but in all sectors. However, as Andrew Herod put it 'although capital may have the upper hand, the production of scale and landscapes is never unproblematic'.<sup>31</sup> The idea that workers have a degree of power within capitalist labour relations is accentuated in agriculture because so many agricultural processes are seasonal, and reliant on nature.<sup>32</sup> Growers of crops who rely on manual workers at harvest often require a larger workforce for the harvest season than they do for the rest of the year. Workers may be able to play on this in seasons of peak labour demand, in that they may be able to negotiate terms that would not be available in lean seasons. Growers' anxieties can be heightened for outdoor crop harvests by the unreliability of nature, for example a rainstorm between the cutting and storing away of the crop. Thus, in agriculture, as in other industries, there is mutual dependency, albeit unequal, between workers and their employers.

## **WORKERS' AGENCY AND CAPITALIST ACCUMULATION IN AGRICULTURE**

A more nuanced picture of labour–capital relations in agriculture would highlight not only workers' agency but how workers' interests change over the life-course. For example, involvement in hard manual work away from home may be undertaken for adventure at one stage of life, and out of extreme poverty and a need or desire for greater earnings at another. Later in life physical, bodily limitations may necessitate seeking lower paid but secure work nearer home, perhaps involving a long-term commitment to a particular employer.<sup>33</sup> Brass, wrongly in my view, includes such voluntary ties in his definition of bonded labour.<sup>34</sup> There is also a cultural logic to work-seeking.<sup>35</sup> The meaning of work changes according to who sees one doing it, so that doing work considered degrading near home may be more problematic than doing the same work away from home. Moreover, the wage labour relation itself, involving having to acquiesce to the requirements of a manager/employer is considered by many workers to be demeaning compared with working on one's own account.<sup>36</sup> Individually as well as collectively, workers as knowing actors may seek ways to further such interests.

Lerche rightly concludes that discussions of unfreedom in labour relations 'need to move away from unhelpful dichotomies and acknowledge the fluidity of actually occurring levels of unfreedom'.<sup>37</sup> As we have seen, this fluidity arises in part from two important interrelated areas which GAAFL does not explore: the agency of workers and the contingency of power relations in the employment of migrant workers in agriculture. However, looked at from a more macro-scale, the report also misses the opportunity to analyse the role of relations between fractions of capital, and their respective relations to the state, in producing unfree labour relations.

Just because capitalism is relatively slow to develop in agricultural production, because of the links of that production to nature, the relatively slower turnover time of capital in agriculture, and the mismatch of production time and labour,<sup>38</sup> this does not mean that there is no scope of capital accumulation in and through agriculture. In fact, as has been shown in the case of Californian agriculture, the obstacles to capitalist accumulation in production can force capital to innovate. For example, large profits may be made by banks through loans for production. Retailers and others involved in marketing may appropriate profits from farmers.<sup>39</sup> Value may be added through processing and/or packaging to create a niche product with little additional return to growers. In their struggles over the surplus, fractions of capital seeking to accumulate through agriculture may have opposing interests. There may be conflicts of interests, for example between larger- and smaller-scale growers, with the former better disposed towards quality standards imposed by processors, wholesalers or retailers.

The discursive directing of attention away from actually existing labour–capital relations and their connections with particular modes of capital accumulation towards a safer (for the tripartite ILO), residualised, ‘forced labour’ is a de facto intervention in what are often fraught political contests.

## **RURAL CAPITALISMS AND TEMPORARY MIGRANT WORKERS**

In what follows I will draw on two such contests, in West Bengal (India) and in the UK. In both cases temporary migrant workers (including seasonal migrants) are vital to capitalist accumulation through agriculture. To understand these accumulation processes, it is necessary to take account of the regulatory role of the state, its relations with different fractions of capital, and relations between those fractions. In each case, when considered at the scale of the individual seasonally migrant worker, capital does not have absolute power. There are spaces of negotiability.

The two cases taken together also illustrate the importance of understanding the contingency of capital–labour relations in broader sets of power relations involving the state, which is ‘omnipresent in the countryside’.<sup>40</sup> State regulation, together with the workings of markets for agricultural outputs, underpins production relations in agricultural workplaces. As we shall see, this includes state regulation of land-ownership, of the relation between traders and producers, of migration, and through tie-ups with companies that lend some credence to Harvey’s contention that the increased returns to capital relative to labour in the last quarter of the 20th century emerged out of class action by elites (including the use of a discourse of the inevitability of globalisation) to gain power and influence over state executives.<sup>41</sup> In both examples the governments concerned were, nominally at least, governments of the left.

### *West Bengal*

Collaborative research with five colleagues in West Bengal in 1999 and 2000 revealed the specificity of agrarian capitalism within a particular region, in this case imagined as the intensively cultivated ‘rice bowl’ of the central southern part of the state centered on Bardhaman District. Here relatively small-scale ‘peasant’ capitalists competed with each other for seasonal harvest workers, making for a relatively high degree of negotiability of labour arrangements.<sup>42</sup> This can be contrasted with the imposition of conditions of work by colluding sugar producers in Gujarat in Western India, who tied workers in through labour contractors and their use of dependency and debt.<sup>43</sup> In both cases there was a reliance on migrant workers. However, the contrast between them again gives the lie to any standard ‘model’ of bonded migrant labour in Indian agriculture, such as that evoked in the ILO report.

Spaces of negotiability were expressed by workers in West Bengal, where, together with colleagues, I studied the way workers viewed the deals they made with prospective employers at bus stands and roadside labour market places. One worker interviewed more recently in Murshidabad District made plain the ways in which certain kinds of work arrangements were sought out, and others avoided. The power to shape the arrangement into which one entered varied according to the acuteness of need for a job, and urgency with which the prospective employer needed to harvest, both of which were related to seasonality.

Sometimes I thought from the next time, before I migrate I would settle the wage, but in vain. When we are in dire need we lose our bargaining power . . . [However we refuse to] include threshing in our [harvesting] contract. Suppose after cutting and binding, paddy is left in the field. Suppose it started raining. Then it would not be possible to bring the paddy to the yard and thresh it. So if we include threshing in the contract we cannot go elsewhere . . . After cutting and binding, if we see that the weather is favourable for threshing then again we go for a separate contract for threshing. (young migrant man, 12 October 2005)<sup>44</sup>

The Communist Party of India (Marxist) (CPI(M)) came to power in 1977 at the head of a coalition Left Front Government and is still in power at the time of writing 31 years later. The CPI(M)-led regime oversaw a boom period in rice production in the 1980s, with a dramatic shift from stagnation to rapid growth, the causes of which have long been disputed.<sup>45</sup> However, there was no doubting the commitment of the CPI(M) to putting vigour into the ongoing programme of redistributing land to landless people, enforcing the tenancy rights of sharecroppers, and implementing local democratisation through the panchayats. Each of these measures risked causing conflict between different rural classes and, in order to work against this, the rhetoric of the CPI(M) and its peasant organisation the Krishak Sabha, stressed the need for 'peasant unity'. Peasant unity was a scalar construction, indeed an important one, in trying to forge a cross-class alliance between peasant capitalist bosses and wage workers in the countryside against the former large-scale landowners. The invocation of the scale of the rural within the state worked well electorally for the CPI(M), helping it to channel discontent away from the state government towards the government at the centre and international forces.<sup>46</sup>

*Scalar representations and the acquisition of agricultural land by large-scale industry.*

However, there has been a change in emphasis in recent times, with a move in party statements away from peasant unity (at the scale of the West Bengal countryside) towards the importance of large-scale industrialisation at the scale of West Bengal as a whole. It is the view of CPI(M) leaders that this should include the location of large-scale industries in rural areas. In 2007 the Chief Minister of West Bengal, Buddhadeb Bhattacharya, released a statement justifying the state government's policy of acquiring farmland for use as industrial

sites by large corporations. 'It is incumbent on us to move ahead, otherwise there would be the end of history. The process of economic development evolves from agriculture to industry. The journey is from villages to cities . . . For setting up new industries West Bengal needs more land.'<sup>47</sup> This change of scale, emphasising the interests of West Bengal as a whole over those of the peasantry, has been used to justify the compulsory purchase of agricultural land at Singur in Hugli District to make it available to large-scale industrial capital in the form of a new factory to produce Tata Nano cars. According to one commentator, 'it is strange to find the government reversing its role and acting as a broker on behalf of the industry'.<sup>48</sup> The intense debates over this new policy and strong local-level resistance spilt over into a series of clashes in which dozens of people died in 2007, many of them at the hands of the police at another site which was under consideration as the location for a new chemical hub, Nandigram in Medinipur District.<sup>49</sup>

Opposition to this new 'Chinese model' of industrialisation has focused on the rights of 'local' peasant farmers, and on the insecure and demeaning jobs in site construction that were made available to some long-term residents at Singur. There has been almost no mention of the reliance of seasonal migrant workers on work in transplanting and harvesting rice in Singur, which has vastly reduced in extent. Now 'outsiders' to the state are accused by the CPI(M) of stirring up trouble over industrialisation, a strategy involving the political use of scale to delegitimise protest against the land acquisition process.

How much negotiability will remain for temporary migrants and other workers in food production as large-scale capital is increasingly relied on in the countryside remains to be seen. Beyond Special Economic Zones the Indian government has now allowed the operation of multiple supermarket retailers and, encouraged by, among others, the British government, has begun to allow foreign capital some involvement in retailing food.<sup>50</sup> In her recent study of markets for agricultural produce in West Bengal, Barbara Harriss-White noted the state government's move towards the involvement of 'a much larger fraction of agri-business' in agro-commerce in the state than existed in the first three decades of the CPI(M)-led regime. This was likely to be in the interests both of the businesses concerned and the state, through workers being employed outside the remit of state regulation.

The evidence in this book shows that market and environmental risks may be shifted onto independent out-workers, homeworkers or unprotected wage labour. Costs may be reduced by avoiding overheads, abandoning or never meeting employers' obligations, undercutting legal wage floors . . . New kinds of low-cost labour may be incorporated, or old forms of low-cost labour may be re-incorporated (eg rural, female and child labour, and migrant workers). The labour process is controlled by avoiding the creation of conditions where it might be organized in unions through which it might grasp rights and exert some countervailing power.<sup>51</sup>

Jan Breman showed that when producer capital operates as a collusive block, as it did in the sugar industry of south Gujarat, where farmers had organised themselves into large processing co-operatives, workers had less room for manoeuvre.<sup>52</sup> In the UK case study that follows, oligopsonistic retailer capital has, with the help of the state, achieved a dominant position in relation to its suppliers in ways which have altered employment relations and created a demand for temporary international migrant workers. Because it does not make connections between different forms of capitalism and the relative power of seasonal migrant workers, the ILO report does not alert readers to the ways in which changing relations between agricultural growers and their markets in West Bengal may lead to more exploitative labour relations in the countryside.

### UK

State involvement in West Bengal in the compulsory purchase of agricultural land in order to sell it on cheaply suggests that relations between fractions of capital—in this case large-scale industrial capital and peasant capitalists—are shaped by relations between capital and the state. In *A Brief History of Neo-Liberalism*, David Harvey argues that there have been:

important structural changes in the nature of governance . . . Businesses and corporations not only collaborate intimately with state actors but even acquire a strong role in writing legislation, determining public policies, and setting regulatory frameworks (which are mainly advantageous to themselves). Patterns of negotiation arise that incorporate business and sometimes professional interests into governance through close and sometimes secretive consultations.<sup>53</sup>

I have experienced the power of such relations first hand in the dissemination of research. In reporting on research work commissioned by the UK Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) on temporary working in UK agriculture and horticulture, a research team I was part of was instructed to tone down parts of the draft which might have been considered to cast supermarkets in a negative light. The main bone of contention was our repeating details from the appendices of the Competition Commission report on supermarkets' relations with their suppliers that had been published in 2000. The government had never acted effectively to regulate supermarket–supplier relations which, I have argued elsewhere, have played an important role in the intensification of workplace regimes.<sup>54</sup>

The UK has a £2 billion horticulture industry primarily producing for the domestic market, and reliant on international migrant workers for its labour-intensive processes.<sup>55</sup> At the national level, horticultural growers are squeezed by the concentrated monopoly power of their main customers, the large retailers. The biggest four supermarkets between them account of three-quarters of UK retailing. So there are conflicts of interest between fractions of capital in the food supply chain.

Moreover, supermarket capital is interwoven with the workings of the British state. In her book *Not On the Label*, Felicity Lawrence has alleged that, following the Competition Commission report of 2000, tens of millions of pounds were spent lobbying against effective statutory regulation of supermarket–supplier relations. She has also revealed the closeness of relations between top board members of Tesco and the then prime minister’s office, as well as the cosy and informal welcome for Wal-Mart at the same level of government when it sought to buy then UK-owned supermarket Asda.<sup>56</sup>

Yet the state is not monolithic and can have protective effects for workers, whether or not those effects were originally intended. It does not always or only work in the interests of capital. In mid-20th century California it was the state, in the form of the La Fayette committee, which found for workers and against the interests of agrarian capital.<sup>57</sup> The opening of the UK labour market to the nationals of eight eastern European countries that acceded to the EU in May 2004 also had protective outcomes, as it enabled many workers, who were already resident and working without the legal right to do so, to improve their status and conditions. The UK Gangmaster (Licensing) Act is an example of a measure brought in by the state with the intention of protecting workers from abusive employment practices by labour-contracting intermediaries, known as gangmasters. The new licensing regime only operates in agriculture and closely-related sectors.<sup>58</sup> Its extension to other sectors has been keenly opposed by parts of the UK government, which attributed 10 years of economic prosperity to its ‘flexible’ labour-market policy.

Supermarkets, mindful of their deteriorating public image following revelations of illegal practices by gangmasters in their supply chains, played a key role in supporting gangmaster licensing. However, the state in the UK has not so far been willing effectively to curb supermarket buyer power in relation to that other fraction of capital: agricultural and horticultural growers.<sup>59</sup> This is, in part at least, because the buying practices of large retailers have been perceived as helpful for meeting inflation targets.<sup>60</sup> Yet temporary migrant workers have in the past decade and a half become the major workforce in the sector,<sup>61</sup> and their living and working conditions have been found in some circumstances to fit the definition of forced labour: working under menace of a penalty and not being able to leave the job.<sup>62</sup> This was brought out vividly in Nick Broomfield’s 2007 film, *Ghosts*, about the journeys, living and working experiences of the 23 Chinese cockle-pickers who drowned after being stranded by the fast-rising tides at Morecambe Bay in Lancashire in February 2004.

However, *Ghosts* also showed employment situations involving temporary migrant workers in food production which did not involve forced labour practices. Its apple harvest sequence, for example, portrayed the pressure growers’ businesses were under because of supermarket power and showed the possibility for intimate and good-humoured relations

to develop between a small-scale grower and group of temporary harvesters. Collaborative research with colleagues at Oxford University's Centre on Migration, Policy and Society (COMPAS), involving interviews with workers and growers as well as large-scale surveys, found evidence that migrant workers were often making trade-offs between short-term arduous work with little or no negotiability over workplace conditions, and longer-term goals such as working outside the sector or returning home with cash savings.<sup>63</sup> Moreover, for some, narratives of negotiability at workplaces came across too. For example, one temporary migrant worker from Lithuania told me in August 2004:

it makes a big difference if you can speak English. If you talk English with people they will be happy. They will say morning and bye. You get better jobs. My boyfriend understands English—it is another thing to speak it [as I do]. He gets better jobs because of me. Some people have to work outside in the rain. At the break they are shivering. It is not a pleasure. But me and my boyfriend have been undercover in the rain.<sup>64</sup>

## CONCLUSION

In the contemporary period of globalisation, the employment of migrant workers in agriculture on a seasonal or temporary basis may serve multiple interests simultaneously. Analysed at the level of the individual employer–worker relationship, it is possible to see how the interests of an individual worker may lie in an arrangement involving some degree of obligation to a particular employer. Moreover, workers may identify spaces of negotiability that make critical differences to the experience of working away in agriculture, even when, seen from a distance, they may seem to have no room for agency at all. Capital is not monolithic, and contains its own contradictory interests. The state at different levels—local, national and international—is a potential enabler and, at the same time, discipliner of capital. The state has discursive as well as material power. It lies within the means of the state to provide some protection for workers from the vulnerability associated with undocumented status, poverty and workplace abuse.

Reading the ILO report, for all its good intentions, forces me to question what purpose is served by lumping together forced labour, slavery and slavery-like conditions within such a broad continuum. The report explicitly subsumes large swathes of labour relations which contain elements of freedom as well as unfreedom, degrees of manoeuvrability, negotiation and contestation. Like the recent Joseph Rowntree Foundation report on modern slavery in the UK, the discourse of slavery and forced labour slips in too easily, while the larger, more complex causal apparatuses lying behind unfree labour relations hardly receive any analytical attention.

The report obscures actually existing power relations and contestations across different scales with multidirectional influences. Moreover, the language of 'victims' risks a descent

into what Puwar has termed a 'politics of sympathy'.<sup>65</sup> There are of course politics in the production of reports of this kind. Member governments have seats on the ILO board and it was alleged by the *Guardian* in early 2005 that the UK board member strongly objected to the UK report on Forced Labour, because it drew attention to the relation between labour market deregulation and increasing employment abuse.<sup>66</sup>

By subsuming such a wide range of employment situations under the concept of forced labour exacted by 'private agents' for 'economic exploitation', GAAFL mistakenly includes under this umbrella situations which are not necessarily understood by workers themselves in that way. Moreover, by directing attention to the 'private agents' themselves, GAAFL seems to draw a veil over the role of contemporary forms of capitalism and their accommodation with states to produce both a lack of freedom and insecurity. States are rightly encouraged to tighten the means of prosecuting unscrupulous employers, but no space is given to discussion of the potential for state regulation of the market relations through which large-scale capital may be reshaping the conditions under which employment takes place. GAAFL also risks reducing the discursive space for programmes of critical analysis and action that can take into account the different and sometimes contradictory sets of interests that may need to be brought together at various scales to challenge the disempowering of workers in relation to capital.<sup>67</sup>

## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> J Lerche, 'A global alliance against forced labour? Unfree labour, neo-liberal globalization and the International Labour Organisation', *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 7 (4), 2007, pp 425–452.

<sup>2</sup> D Massey, *Spatial Divisions of Labour: Social Relations and the Geography of Production*, Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1995.

<sup>3</sup> G Hart, *Disabling Globalisation: Places of Power in Post-apartheid South Africa*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002; JK Gibson-Graham, *A Post-capitalist Politics*, Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2006; and P Dicken, *Global Shift: Mapping the Changing Contours of the World Economy*, London: Sage, 2007.

<sup>4</sup> K Datta, CMcllwaine, Y Evans, J Herbert, J May & JWills, 'From coping strategies to tactics: London's

low-pay economy and migrant labour', *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, 45 (2), 2007, pp 404–432.

<sup>5</sup> C Smith, 'The double indeterminacy of labour power: labour effort and labour mobility', *Work, Employment and Society*, 20 (2), 2006, pp 389–402.

<sup>6</sup> DC Lier, 'Places of work, scales of organising: a review of labour geography', *Geography Compass*, 1 (4), 2007, pp 814–833.

<sup>7</sup> Lerche, 'A global alliance against forced labour?', pp 430–431.

<sup>8</sup> N Smith, *Uneven Development: Nature, Capital and the Production of Space*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1984; P Taylor, 'A materialist framework for political geography', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 7, 1981, pp15–34; A Herod, 'Scale: the local and the global', in S Holloway, S Rice, G Valentine & N Clifford, *Key Concepts in Geography*, London: Sage (second edition), forthcoming; D Mitchell, 'Localist ideology, large-scale production and agricultural labor's geography of resistance in 1930s California', in Mitchell, *Organising the Landscape: Geographical Perspectives on Labor Unionism*, Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1998, pp159–194; R Silvey, 'Power, difference and mobility: feminist advances in migration studies', *Progress in Human Geography*, 28 (4), 2004, pp 490–506; and S Marston, JP Jones & K Woodward, 'Human geography without scale', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 30 (4), 2005, pp 416–432.

<sup>9</sup> G Hart, *Disabling Globalisation*; and JK Gibson-Graham, 'Beyond the global versus local: economic politics outside the binary frame', in A Herod & M Wright (eds), *Geographies of Power: Placing Scale*, Oxford: Blackwell, 2002, pp 25–60.

<sup>10</sup> Mitchell, 'Localist ideology, large-scale production and agricultural labor's geography of resistance in 1930s California'.

<sup>11</sup> Marston et al., 'Without scale'.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid*, p 427.

<sup>13</sup> H Leitner & B Miller, 'Scale and the limitations of ontological debate: a commentary on Marston, Jones and Woodward', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 32, 2007, pp 116–125.

<sup>14</sup> Lier, 'Places of work, scales of organising'.

<sup>15</sup> Leitner & Miller, 'Scale and the limitations of ontological debate', p 122.

<sup>16</sup> Silvey, 'Power, difference and mobility'.

<sup>17</sup> Herod, 'Scale'.

<sup>18</sup> D Mitchell, *The Lie of the Land: Migrant Workers and the California Landscape*, Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1996; and KMorgan, T Marsden & J Murdoch, *Worlds of Food: Place, Power and Provenance in the Food Chain*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.

<sup>19</sup> J Frances, S Barrientos & B Rogaly, *Temporary Workers in UK Agriculture and Horticulture*, Framlingham, UK: Precision Prospecting for DEFRA, 2005.

<sup>20</sup> ILO, Forced Labour Convention, 1930, Article 2(1), cited in ILO, *A Global Alliance Against Forced Labour* (GAAFL), Geneva: ILO, 2005, p 5.

<sup>21</sup> GAAFL, p 8.

<sup>22</sup> G Craig, A Gaus, M Wilkinson, K Skrivankova & A McQuade, *Contemporary Slavery in the UK: Overview and Key Issues—Findings*, York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2007, p 3, emphasis added.

<sup>23</sup> This differs from Brass' conceptualisation. For Brass debt bondage is a quintessential form of continuing unfreedom in capitalist agriculture. Labour bonded by debt is unfree, even if there has been a cash advance–labour service tie which carries no explicit interest, is for a limited duration, and involves migrant workers. Forced labour, however, is something exacted by the state. T Brass, *Towards a Comparative Political Economy of Unfree Labour: Case Studies and Debates*, London: Frank Cass, 1999.

<sup>24</sup> A Sharma, 'Agrarian relations and socio-economic change in Bihar', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 40 (10), 2005, pp 960–972.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid*, p 970.

<sup>26</sup> G Rodgers & J Rodgers, *Semi-feudalism meets the Market: A Report from Purnia, New Delhi*: Institute for Human Development Working Paper, 2000, p 16.

<sup>27</sup> The same is true of capitalism and slavery. As Graeber has shown, depending on how these are conceptualised, capitalism itself can be seen as slavery. D Graeber, 'Turning modes of production inside out: or why capitalism is a transformation of slavery', *Critique of Anthropology*, 26 (1), 2006, pp 61–85.

<sup>28</sup> Rodgers and Rodgers do not, however, present ethnographic data on the degree to which women have bought into male labour migration as a means of increasing *household* income.

<sup>29</sup> V Lenin, *The Development of Capitalism in Russia: Collected Works*, Vol 3, Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1964, pp 240–254. See also B Rogaly, 'Dangerous liaisons? Seasonal migration and agrarian change in West Bengal', in B Rogaly, B Harriss-White & S Bose (eds), *Sonar Bangla? Agricultural Growth and Agrarian Change in West Bengal and Bangladesh*, New Delhi/London/Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1999, pp 357–380.

<sup>30</sup> The two pieces cited are focused on Punjab as a destination area for bonded labourers from Bihar. M. Singh, 'Bonded migrant labour in Punjab agriculture', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 15 March 1997; and J Singh, 'Incidence and magnitude of bonded labour in Punjab', in M Singh & K Gopal Iyer (eds), *Migrant Labour and Human Rights in India*, New Delhi: Kanishka Publishers, 2003, pp 50–77. Interestingly both M Singh and K Gopal Iyer, co-editors of the book in which J Singh's chapter appears, are among the six people acknowledged as providing productive intellectual exchanges by Tom Brass in his major book on unfree labour, which elaborates the view that any form of prior payment to workers involving a future commitment to employment should be regarded as bonded labour.

<sup>31</sup> A Herod, 'The production of scale in United States labour relations', *Area*, 23 (1), 1991, pp 82–88; and W Larner, 'A brief history of neoliberalism', *Economic Geography*, 82 (4), 2006, pp 449–451.

<sup>32</sup> Smith, *Uneven Development*; and M Mann, *Workers on the Move: the Sociology of Relocation*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973.

<sup>33</sup> B Rogaly, 'Who goes? Who stays back? Seasonal migration and staying put among seasonal migrant workers in West Bengal, India', *Journal of International Development*, 15 (5), 2003, pp 623–632.

<sup>34</sup> Brass, *Towards a Comparative Political Economy of Unfree Labour*, p 28.

<sup>35</sup> V Gidwani, 'The cultural logic of work: explaining labour deployment and piece rate contracts in Matar Taluka, Gujarat—Parts 1 and 2', *Journal of Development Studies*, 38 (2), 2002, pp 57–74; H Bauder, *Labor Movement: How Migration Regulates Labor Markets*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2006; and A Rafique, D Massey & B Rogaly, 'Migration for hard work: a reluctant livelihood strategy for poor households in West Bengal, India', Development Research Centre on Migration, Globalisation and Poverty, Working Paper T17, 2006.

<sup>36</sup> Gidwani, 'The cultural logic of work'; and Graeber, 'Turning modes of production inside out'.

<sup>37</sup> Lerche, 'A global alliance against forced labour?', p 447.

<sup>38</sup> S Mann, *Agrarian Capitalism in Theory and Practice*, Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1990.

<sup>39</sup> J Guthman, *Agrarian Dreams: The Paradox of Organic Farming in California*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2004; and G Henderson, *California and the Fictions of Capital*, Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1998.

<sup>40</sup> C Hahamovitch & R Halpern, 'Not a "sack of potatoes": why labor historians need to take agriculture seriously', *International Labor and Working-Class History*, 65, 2004, pp 3–10.

<sup>41</sup> D Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

<sup>42</sup> B Rogaly, D Coppard, A Rafique, K Rana, A Sengupta & J Biswas, 'Seasonal migration and welfare/illfare in eastern India: a social analysis', *Journal of Development Studies*, 38 (5), 2002, pp 89–115.

<sup>43</sup> J Breman, "'Even dogs are better off': the ongoing battle between capital and labour in the cane fields of Gujarat", *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 17 (4), 1990, pp 546–608.

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- <sup>44</sup> This interview took place as part of the project on Social Protection by and for Temporary Work Migrants in Bangladesh and West Bengal, which I directed along with Dr Janet Seeley of the University of East Anglia (funded by the Development Research Centre on Migration, Globalisation and Poverty).
- <sup>45</sup> B Rogaly, B Harriss-White & S Bose, 'Introduction: *Sonar Bangla?* Agricultural growth and agrarian change in West Bengal and Bangladesh', in Rogaly *et al.*, *Sonar Bangla?*
- <sup>46</sup> B Rogaly, 'Containing conflict and reaping votes: management of rural labour relations in West Bengal', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 33 (42–43), 1998, pp 2729–2739.
- <sup>47</sup> Buddhadeb Bhattacharya, 'We cannot fail people's expectations', Public letter to Sumit Sarkar in response to Professor Sarkar's statement on conflicts over the acquisition the agricultural land for large-scale industry, 11 January 2007. More recently, West Bengal's Chief Minister has claimed that industrial growth does not need the involvement of the state except to ensure corporate social responsibility. 'There is no need for any political interference in the process of industrialisation', cited in S Banerjee, 'Goodbye socialism', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 26 January 2008, p13. The national secretary of the CPI(M), Prakash Karat, reinforced the party's emphasis on large-scale units: 'If some argue that small and medium industries are sufficient, the CPI(M) does not agree. Large-scale units, particularly in manufacturing, are necessary'. *People's Democracy*, New Delhi, 24 March 2007.
- <sup>48</sup> EAS Sarma, 'Help the rich, hurt the poor: case of Special Economic Zones', *Economic and Political Weekly*, 26 May 2007, p 1901.
- <sup>49</sup> In one of the worst incidents, on 14 March 2007 at Nandigram, 14 people were killed and 162 people were injured when police fired on a crowd. Data extracted from West Bengal High Court Order in AST 205, 2007.
- <sup>50</sup> BBC News, 'Countdown to India's retail revolution', at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/business/4662642.stm>, accessed 29 February 2008; and Mark Milner, 'UK urges India to welcome in supermarkets', *Guardian*, 15 November 2005. Similarly, two years earlier, the US Consulate-General had urged West Bengal to 'realize' its 'potential' by allowing 'groundbreaking investments' by US food processing companies and, following a report by McKinsey on the prospects for agribusiness in the state, accelerating moves towards reorganising parts of agriculture around contract farming. 'The shift in rural economic/political relations is still underway and it has encountered some resistance. That is natural, since all change involves some dislocation. But once the advantages have become clear, the prospects will open up for floriculture, horticulture, and animal husbandry. As the food processing industry grows, commercial possibilities will open up in areas like cold chain and logistics management.' Speech delivered by US Consul General George N Sibley to the Indo-American Chamber of Commerce, Kolkata, 11 December 2003, at <http://calcutta.usconsulate.gov/121103.html>, accessed 29 February 2008.
- <sup>51</sup> Barbara Harriss-White, *Rural Commercial Capital: Agricultural Markets in West Bengal*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2008, pp 317–318.
- <sup>52</sup> Breman, "'Even dogs are better off'".
- <sup>53</sup> Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, pp 76–77.
- <sup>54</sup> B Rogaly, 'Intensification of work-place regimes in British horticulture: the role of migrant workers', *Population, Space and Place*, forthcoming.
- <sup>55</sup> Promar International, 'The future of UK horticulture', UK National Horticulture Forum, 2006.
- <sup>56</sup> Felicity Lawrence, *Not on the Label*, London: Penguin, 2004.
- <sup>57</sup> Carey McWilliams, *Ill Fares the Land: Migrants and Migratory Labour in the United States*, London: Faber and FaBer, 1945.
- <sup>58</sup> A Geddes, S Scott & KB Nielsen, 'Gangmasters Licensing Authority evaluation study: baseline report', Nottingham: Gangmasters Licensing Authority, 2007; and S Scott, A Geddes, KB Nielsen & P Brindley, 'Gangmasters Licensing Authority annual review', Nottingham: Gangmasters Licensing Authority, 2007. According to the authors of these studies, the legislation applies to roughly 10% of

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temporary agency workers in the UK.

<sup>59</sup> Even the regulatory measures announced following the conclusion of the latest Competition Commission report on supermarket–supplier relations released on 15 February 2008 lacked teeth. See [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/shared/bsp/hi/pdfs/15\\_02\\_2008\\_Supply\\_Chain\\_Remedies%20.pdf](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/shared/bsp/hi/pdfs/15_02_2008_Supply_Chain_Remedies%20.pdf), accessed 29 February 2008.

<sup>60</sup> Mervyn King, Governor of the Bank of England, Speech at the Eden Project, Cornwall, 12 October 2004, available at <http://www.bankofengland.co.uk/publications/speeches/2004/speech229.pdf>, accessed 29 April 2008.

<sup>61</sup> Audit Commission, *Crossing Borders: Responding to the Local Challenges of Migrant Workers*, London: Audit Commission, 2007.

<sup>62</sup> B Anderson & B Rogaly, *Forced Labour and Migration to the UK*, London: Trades Union Congress, 2005.

<sup>63</sup> B Anderson, MRuhs, B Rogaly & S Spencer, *Fair Enough? Central and East European Migrants in low wage Employment in the UK*, York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2006.

<sup>64</sup> Rogaly, forthcoming.

<sup>65</sup> N Puwar, 'Speaking positions in global politics', *Multitudes*, 2004, available at <http://multitudes.samizdat.net/article1321.html>.

<sup>66</sup> H Pai, 'Damning report on migrants delayed as government fears poll backlash', *Guardian*, 3 February 2005, at <http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2005/feb/03/immigrationasylumandrefugees.immigrationandasylum>

<sup>67</sup> Examples of such challenges include actions by contract cleaners in London, and cross-sectoral action by undocumented migrant workers in the USA. J Wills, 'Making class politics possible: organising contract cleaners in London', *International Journal for Urban and Regional Research*, forthcoming; and W Robinson, "'Aquí estamos y no nos vamos!'" Global capital and immigrant rights', *Race and Class*, 48 (2), 2006, pp 77–91.