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Introduction

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Abstract: This introduction presents the main topics and analytical concerns of the contributions to this Special Issue about ethnicity and migration in coalfield history in a global perspective. From the nineteenth century the development of industrial and transport technologies required the supply of coal-based energy in every part of the world. Nineteenth- and early twentieth-century globalization, including colonialism, would not have been possible without coal. Coalmining operations were launched in all world regions, and to enable exploitation mine operators had to find, mobilize, and direct workers to the mining sites. This quest for labour triggered a series of migration processes (both from nearby and far away) and resulted in a broad array of labour relations (both free and unfree). This introduction points to the variety of constellations analysed in the different contributions to this Special Issue. These cover cases from Africa (Nigeria, Zimbabwe), Asia (China, Japan), the Americas (USA, Brazil), Turkey, the Soviet Union, and western Europe (France, Germany), and a broad range of topics, from segregation, forced labour, and subcontracting to labour struggles, discrimination, ethnic paternalism, and sport.

Between the Spitsbergen (Svalbard) islands (Norway) in the far north, South Island (New Zealand) in the far south, Vancouver Island (Canada) in the far west, and the island of Hokkaidō (Japan) in the far east, coalmining has been (and in fact still is) a truly global industry.[1] From the nineteenth

1. Cameron C. Hartnell, "Arctic Network Builders: The Arctic Coal Company's Operations on Spitsbergen and Its Relationship with the Environment" (Ph.D. dissertation, Michigan Technological University 2009), available at: http://digitalcommons.mtu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1288&context=etds, last accessed 6 August 2015; Louwrens Hacquebord (ed.),

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century the development of industrial and transport technologies required the supply of coal-based energy in every part of the world, and to provide this energy coalmining expanded globally. In several of the grand interpretations of the emergence of modern industrial capitalism and the rise of the West, coal is thus a decisive factor.[2]

Nineteenth- and early twentieth-century globalization, including colonialism, depended to a great extent on a transport and industrial revolution, based on coal as a supplier of energy. The Suez Canal, for instance, both instrument and symbol of colonialism, is scarcely imaginable without steamships, and of course there were no steamships without coal. The same holds for railways all over the world, which, together with steamships, formed the infrastructure of colonialism. The exploitation of coalmines expanded with rising energy needs in transport and industry. Wherever in the world coal was found, even in the most desolate and remote areas, mines were opened, and to enable exploitation mine operators had to find, mobilize, and direct workers to these sites. The urgent quest for labour to work in a hostile and "alien" environment characterizes the history of coalmining everywhere and drove varying constellations of labour relations, migration, and ethnicity.

These salient features of coalmining have generated a great deal of research, especially in labour history. For a considerable time, these histories have helped to perpetuate rather than question the myths around coalmining. It was only after the decline of the industry in the countries of the Global North and after a series of conceptual commotions within the historical sciences that more critical assessments and new approaches began to appear. One of the myths to be deconstructed was the common saying that "everybody was black down there".[3] In histories of coalmining communities and

Lashipa: History of Large Scale Resource Exploration in Polar Areas (Groningen, 2012); Len Richardson, *Coal, Class and Community: The United Mineworkers of New Zealand, 1880–1960* (Auckland, 1995); John Douglas Belshaw, *Colonization and Community: The Vancouver Island Coalfield and the Making of the British Columbian Working Class* (Montreal, 2002); Suzanne Culter, *Managing Decline: Japan's Coal Industry Restructuring and Community Response* (Honolulu, 1999); Ann B. Irish, *Hokkaido: A History of Ethnic Transition and Development on Japan's Northern Island* (Jefferson, NC, 2009). For an overview of current coal exploitation worldwide, see Ulrike Stottrop (ed.), *Kohle. Global – eine Reise in die Reviere der anderen. Katalog zur Ausstellung im Ruhr-Museum vom 15. April bis 24. November 2013* (Essen, 2013).

2. Edward A. Wrigley, *Continuity, Chance and Change: The Character of the Industrial Revolution in England* (Cambridge, 1988); *idem*, *Energy and the English Industrial Revolution* (Cambridge, 2010); Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence: China, Europe, and the Making of the Modern World Economy* (Princeton, NJ, 2000).

3. Robert H. Woodrum, *Everybody Was Black Down There: Race and Industrial Change in the Alabama Coalfields* (Athens, GA, 2007); Leen Beyers, *Iedereen zwart: het samenleven van nieuwkomers en gevestigden in de mijncité Zwartberg, 1930–1990* (Amsterdam, 2010); see also Leen Beyers, "Everyone Black? Ethnic, Class and Gender Identities at Street Level in a Belgian Mining Town, 1930–50", in Stefan Berger, Andy Croll, and Norman LaPorte (eds), *Towards a*

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mining labour, issues of ethnicity and culture have become major topics, for instance in studies on Polish migrant workers in Europe, on African-American miners in the United States, and on the migration of different ethnic groups in coalmining in Asia and Africa.[4] Most of these studies concerned separate companies, mining areas, or nations only, however. A volume edited in 2005 by Stefan Berger, Andy Croll, and Norman LaPorte, *Towards a Comparative History of Coalfield Societies*, offered a preliminary attempt to overcome the national focus and contained several (comparative) studies on migration and ethnicity.[5]

At the same time, as the editors and many contributors to the above volume made clear, comparative research in this field had only just started, and many cases and places were still to be covered. Besides, the debate about global history, which has burgeoned internationally over the last decade, has emphasized that comparisons – while still fundamental and useful – should be complemented by approaches that focus on connections and the embeddedness of the local in processes of grander scope (from the local to the global). Coalfields, both the situation in the mines themselves and in the mining communities, are perfect candidates for studies that privilege the contextualization of local events in global constellations and that emphasize the connections of mining locations to other regions. One of these connections spanning both shorter and longer distances – apart from the flow of coal as both a commodity and a bearer of energy – is evidently labour migration and its repercussions on ethnic identifications, interracial relations, and class formation.

The present Special Issue not only reflects a wish to continue and enhance previous attempts at analysing coalfields in a global historical perspective, it also specifically emphasizes two analytical concerns: migration and ethnicity. One of our main conceptual reference points in this endeavour is the Global Labour History approach that has been co-developed at the International Institute of Social History in Amsterdam, and that has one of its most important publication venues in the *International Review of Social History*. The major tenet of this approach is that in the modern period a broad array of labour relations has existed next to "free" wage labour, often in the same location. Unfree labour and forms of non-economic coercion were perfectly compatible with market development and capitalism. Even if

Comparative History of Coalfield Societies (Aldershot, 2005), pp. 146–163; Marcel Deprez, Anne Morelli, Jean-François Potelle *et al.*, *"Siamo tutti neri!": des hommes contre du charbon. Etudes et témoignages sur l'immigration italienne en Wallonie* (Seraing, 1998); Marie Cegarra, Olivier Chovaux, Rudy Damiani, Gérard Dumont, Jean-René Genty, and Janine Ponty, *Tous gueules noires. Histoire de l'immigration dans le bassin minier du Nord-Pas-de-Calais* (Lewarde, 2004).

4. Ian Phimister, "Global Labour History in the Twenty-First Century: Coal Mining and Its Recent Pasts", in Jan Lucassen (ed.), *Global Labour History: A State of the Art* (Bern [etc.], 2006), pp. 573–589.

5. Berger *et al.*, *Towards a Comparative History of Coalfield Societies*.

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we can recognize a secular trend towards "free wage labour", slaves and other forms of unfree labourers (like indentured labourers, debt peons, and convict workers) made up an important part of the world's labour force. Coalmining in different parts of the world was historically associated with the full panoply of these labour relations. One of the aims of this Special Issue is to highlight the relationships between the diversity of labour relations, migration, and ethnic mobilization in the coalfields.

The worldwide response to our call for papers enabled us to organize a two-day workshop in November 2014 at the Netherlands Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences (NIAS) in Wassenaar,[6] where we discussed the papers that we are now able to publish in this Special Issue. We thank the authors again for their participation and the lively debates. We are confident that this process of exchange and mutual debate, which we consider an important preliminary of any global historical endeavour that aims to go beyond juxtaposing single cases, is reflected positively in the present Special Issue. While Ad Knotter offers a general survey of the research on and themes in the history of coalfields worldwide, the individual contributions to this Special Issue cover topics as diverse as segregation, forced labour, subcontracting, labour struggles, discrimination, ethnic paternalism, gender, and sport. All of them, however, gravitate around the interlocked processes of migration and ethnic identity formation.

Being place-bound by geology, often originating in isolated places, and always labour-intensive, coalmining was dependent on migrant labour in almost every district.[7] At the start, experienced miners were often recruited from other mining areas. Migration trajectories, return and circular migration, resulting in ethnic diasporas of skilled miners, can be traced in many coalmining districts. British miners and engineers were the expert workers of the coal-based energy revolution in the nineteenth century, transferring their knowledge to develop coal industries in the British Empire, in the United States, and in other parts of the world.

Early migration of skilled groups of workers to introduce mining skills was supplemented by waves of inexperienced migrants from the surrounding countryside, and soon also from more distant places, regions, and countries. Workers had to be found who could be coerced or motivated to move hundreds of kilometres from their places of birth, not only

6. The workshop was supported financially by the NIAS and by the N.W. Posthumus Institute, Nederlandsch Economisch Historisch Archief, the Limburg University Fund Maastricht, and the Research Stimulation Fund of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at Maastricht University. We would like to thank Stefano Bellucci for his help in the preparation of the workshop, and our anonymous referee for reviewing the whole pack of papers and for making many valuable comments.

7. For the European coalfields, see René Leboutte, *Vie et mort des bassins industriels en Europe 1750–2000* (Paris, 1997), ch. 9: "Croissance démographique et migrations".

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changing places, but also their entire way of life. Cross-border migratory labour connected coalfields, regions, and countries, and mobilized new groups of workers of a variety of national and ethnic descents.

Labour migration for the coalmining industry was often closely linked to the transition from agriculture to industry, the creation of a wage-labour market, and the formation of an ethnically stratified coalmining proletariat. These processes were not easy or straightforward. In areas where labour markets were underdeveloped, mining labour was often combined with subsistence agriculture and could be employed only seasonally. Special recruitment mechanisms, such as subcontracting, were employed to bridge the gap between agriculture and industry. In other cases force was used to recruit ethnic groups with a perceived inferior status to work in the mines. In these cases forced labour and ethnic or racial discrimination could be closely related. Also, when miners worked for wages, mining labour markets were systematically structured and institutionalized by means of wage discrimination and ethnic stratification. As in any labour market, there was no such thing as a free, homogeneous market for mine labour.[8]

A salient and perhaps prototypical example of the interconnection of mining labour with subsistence agriculture can be found in the Zonguldak coalfield on Turkey's western Black Sea coast, which is the topic of Erol Kahveci's contribution to this Special Issue. Coal had been mined there since the 1840s to satisfy the demands of the Ottoman government for supplies to its navy, transport, government installations, and utilities. To provide for the labour needed, it obliged peasants from surrounding villages to work in the mines on a rotational basis (from 1867). Peasants continued to work part-time in the mines after the end of this forced labour regime in 1921, and after its reinstatement between 1940 and 1947. In this system there was a clear division of labour. Underground work was performed by rotational peasant miners, while migrants, most of them of *Laz* origin (from the eastern Black Sea coast), were employed full-time as skilled surface workers.

Rural, often part-time seasonal migrants, also formed a large part of the highly mobile workforce in coalmining in Manchuria (north-east China). Limin Teh analyses how recruitment and control of migrant labour was reorganized after Japanese owners had taken over the Fushun Coalmine in Manchuria in 1905. During the years 1907–1932, Japanese mine management transformed labour contractors from independent third-party contractors to salaried pit foremen with clearly defined responsibilities in labour recruitment and supervision. Because labour contractors interfaced between the Fushun Coalmine and Chinese migration, mine management assumed that control over contractors would grant it control over migration too. In the end,

8. See, among others, Jamie Peck, *Work-Place: The Social Regulation of Labor Markets* (New York [etc.], 1996). Peck ignores the impact of migration on labour markets however.

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however, Teh concludes, these bureaucratic measures failed. Chinese workers stuck to their mobility patterns, in spite of all Japanese investments in recruitment procedures and administrative control. Her analysis, based on managerial sources, makes clear how important the role of mining operators was in labour intermediation and migration processes.

The history of coalmining witnessed a broad array of types of force used to press workers into the mines. In many cases, this was realized by a combination of physical and economic coercion through indenturing, debt, and other bonds. Examples can be found in Ian Phimister and Alfred Tembo's contribution on Wankie Colliery in colonial Zimbabwe, Limin Teh's on Fushun in Manchuria, Carolyn Brown's on Enugu, Nigeria, and Erol Kahveci's on Zonguldak, Turkey. Outright force was used in the case of convict workers, deportees, prisoners of war, and internees of labour camps. At one time or another convicts were part of the mining labour force in the US South (Trotter), Japan (Arents and Tsuneishi), and Turkey (Kahveci).

The interrelation of different groups of "politically" forced labourers is highlighted by Julia Landau in her analysis of coalmining in the Kuzbass region in Siberia. This coalfield was developed within the framework of Soviet industrialization in the 1920s and 1930s. In this harsh and isolated place, first migrants of all kind were mobilized to work in the mines (new workers from the countryside, foreign experts), but from the late 1920s onward the workforce was dominated by forced settlers, deported convicts, and prisoners of war. Landau describes the complex mechanisms of social segregation in this frontier society. She analyses how the specific conditions of developing heavy industry on the one hand and policies of repression on the other created social tensions that affected everyday life in local society.

In many cases, labourers who came to the coalfields, or who were forced to go there, were part of a specific ethnic (minority) group. These were mobilized from outside, but also from within, national states and empires. Telling examples in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries are: Flemish workers to the Walloon coalfields in Belgium, the Irish to Scotland in the United Kingdom (before Irish independence), Poles to the Ruhr in the German Empire (before Polish independence), African Americans from the South to Virginia and Alabama in the United States, migrants from the French colonies in the Maghreb (Algeria and Morocco) to France, and Koreans to the Hokkaidō and Kyushū coalfields in Japan (Korea then being part of the Japanese Empire). It is certainly no coincidence that at that time these ethnic minorities were all considered and treated as people of a lower status than the dominant ethnic groups in these countries. Their mobilization as miners reflected the low status of work in the mines, and also the position of migrants as second-rate workers within the mines.

Timothy Mitchell has labelled societies based on coal and related technologies "machines for democracy", i.e. as enablers of claims towards a more equal

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participation. The transformation of energy flows through the exploiting of carbon fuels (first coal, then oil), he argues, has translated into political constellations that made democratic claims ever more difficult to hold off.[9] From a global labour history point of view, however, coalmining developed no tendency towards "equalization" and "homogenization", but an innate, countervailing need for a fragmented labour force, backed up by ideologies to justify the unequal treatment of specific groups along lines of gender, class, race, ethnicity, or age.

The contributions in this Special Issue bear witness to the ways in which "race" and "ethnicity" were not static categories or forms of identification, but a constant process in which certain groups were discursively produced, both by being addressed by others and by defining and identifying themselves.[10] In the case of coalmining, the proclivity to attract and/or mobilize migrant workers from a distinct ethnic background was closely related to racialized distinctions – although "race" and "ethnicity" were by no means the same.

This is pointed out by Joe Trotter in his overview of race and ethnic relations in coalmining in the United States. While recognizing the ethnic fragmentation of the immigrant and American-born white coalmining workforce, both from the British Isles and from southern, central, and eastern Europe, his article identifies the colour line as the most enduring and pronounced division among coalminers in industrial America. The entrenched racial hostility of white workers, employers, and the state did not obliterate the influence of black miners over their own lives, however. African-American miners forged a variety of strategies for shaping their own communities. While emphasizing the deep racial divide in both the coalmining workforce and the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA), Trotter also draws attention to the attempts of this union to galvanize interracial unity.

Although slaves were used in some antebellum coalmines in the US South, classical chattel slavery was relatively rare in the history of coalmining. At the same time, slavery, the slave trade, and their repercussions in post-abolition times were major constituents of labour relations in several coalfields. In different world regions slavery and the slave trade had created a specific sector of the population, which was racially or ethnically oppressed and socially marginalized.

9. Timothy Mitchell, *Carbon Democracy: Political Power in the Age of Oil* (London [etc.], 2011), pp. 12–31.

10. On "identification" as an alternative to "identity", see Frederick Cooper and Roger Brubaker, "Identity", in Frederick Cooper, *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History* (Berkeley, CA [etc.], 2005), pp. 59–90. On "race" as process, see, among many possible interventions, Laura Gotkowitz, "Introduction: Racisms of the Present and the Past in Latin America", in *idem*, *Histories of Race and Racism: The Andes and Mesoamerica from Colonial Times to the Present* (Durham, NC, 2011), pp. 1–55. See also Eileen Boris and Angélique Janssens (eds), *Complicating Categories: Gender, Class, Race and Ethnicity* (Cambridge, 1999).

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Carolyn Brown relates the background of the differences between "locals" and "foreigners" in the mining town of Enegu (Nigeria) to the history of the slave trade and the role British colonizers assigned to former local slave traders as "tribal chiefs" and labour recruiters for the mine. Her analysis highlights the fluidity of ethno-linguistic identifications. Once the mine had opened and certain ethnically marginalized groups from the surrounding region had been pressed into minework, the established attributions began to shift as these miners started to interact with other groups, especially more skilled migrants from further away (seen as "foreigners"), thereby adopting an identity of modern and urban "coal men". Subsequently, this enabled these workers to claim a new status in their village communities and to question old hierarchies both of age/seniority and local ethnic privilege of one group over another.

A similar intermingling of "race" and "ethnicity" is described by Clarice Speranza in her contribution on the coalmining towns of Arroio dos Ratos, Butiá, and others, near Porto Alegre in Rio Grande do Sul, the southernmost Brazilian state. From the start, in the 1850s, European workers were recruited, many of them experienced miners. Among the various nationalities coming to the Brazilian coalfields, Spaniards were the most numerous. European newcomers were valued as promoters of the "whitening" of Brazilian society and were always considered superior to the local population, many of them descendants of former slaves. The prevalent cultural perspective of that time placed the "white" (equated to European) above the native mixed population. Although they worked side by side in the mines, were members of the same union, and stood alongside each other in strikes and protest movements, descendants of Europeans and "nationals" did not mix socially.

The recruitment of specific ethnic groups did not follow the clear-cut logics of supply and demand, and could differ considerably even within the same region. As Tom Arents and Norihiko Tsuneishi show in their investigation of a number of coalmines in the Chikuhō and Miike districts in Japan on the southern island of Kyūshū, migrants from Korea, then a Japanese colony, were unevenly distributed among these mines in the first few decades of the twentieth century. While some mining companies brought Korean workers into coal production as a cheap and disposable workforce, others did not. Arents and Tsuneishi argue that the distribution of Koreans was a consequence of uneven capital accumulation among different mining companies. Companies that in an earlier phase had relied on other groups of cheap labourers, such as convict workers, had been able to accumulate enough capital to pay higher wages afterwards, and to recruit a stable Japanese workforce, which they also privileged because of racial prejudice. Others had accumulated less capital and had to rely on Korean immigrants, who were cheaper but, from the management's point of view, only the second-best option.

Three articles in this Special Issue focus on the highly ethnicized dynamics of migrant labour in continental western European coalfields.

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Philip Slaby and Marion Fontaine write on different aspects of the history of the Nord-Pas-de-Calais coalfields, Diethelm Blecking on the Ruhr. In the case of the Nord-Pas-de-Calais coalfield in northern France, labour scarcity after World War I triggered the recruitment of tens of thousands of immigrants, mainly Poles. Philip Slaby uses the very apt term "ethnic paternalism" to describe the strategies of French mining companies to attract, retain, and control foreigners. By creating Polish neighbourhoods, by fostering Polish clubs and associations, by supporting Polish clergy and religious institutions, and by cooperating with Polish officials, coal firms contributed to the segregation of the immigrant community. Ethnic paternalism accentuated the ethnic and cultural dissimilarities between Poles and Frenchmen in the coalfields and reinforced the foreigners' isolation from the local working-class society and its institutions. It also influenced the relationship with the French state. Members of the Polish community were strictly policed by local officials, who considered their separate collective organizations as a menace to the republican conception of citizenship.

In the French republican vision, sport is considered an integrative power in society, especially for migrants. In her article on immigration and football as a miners' sport in the northern French coalfield, Marion Fontaine deconstructs this idea by exploring how football could both strengthen and weaken the boundaries inside the mining communities. In the 1920s, migrants played football in separate Polish sports associations, sustaining a sense of Polish identity in accordance with the ethnic particularism described by Slaby. In the 1930s, however, Polish and French children started to play together in street football and in French clubs. After World War II many descendants of Polish immigrants were able to penetrate the world of professional football. Managers of Racing Club de Lens, a football team closely connected to the mines, started to recruit players from non-professional mining clubs in the region. Its professional team became a reflection of the coalfield population, including the children of Polish migrants. In this respect there were huge differences with the migrants of Moroccan and Algerian descent, who arrived after World War II. These were not able to participate in the social life of the mining communities, which had already begun to disintegrate shortly after their arrival as a consequence of the industry's decline.

In his article on Polish miners in the German Ruhr, Diethelm Blecking also addresses the idea that sport can overcome problems of ethnic heterogeneity. Before World War I the so-called Ruhr Poles were completely segregated in their social activities and widely participated in the *Sokół* gymnastics movement. The *Sokół* clubs were part of an array of organizational structures that offered migrants opportunities to take on a new, Polish identity and were aimed at preventing the "integration" of Polish migrants into German society. After World War I the situation of the

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Polish inhabitants in the Ruhr changed dramatically, however. In 1918 a Polish state had finally been re-established, and many of the Ruhr Poles had moved to coalmines in northern France and other countries. Football became very popular as a miners' sport, also for those of Polish descent remaining in the Ruhr. In the 1920s, as in northern France, segregation in sports clubs began to give way to integration. Players with a Polish migrant background now became particularly active in top-class football in the Ruhr. These histories of football as a miners' sport both in France and in Germany point to the ambivalent role of sport in inter-ethnic relations, ranging from the construction of ethnic identities to intercultural integration.

Beyond the two analytical concerns "migration" and "ethnicity", the contributions to this Special Issue potentially offer pathways to many other issues. All of these would merit further exploration in a comparative and global historical perspective. One of these issues is social struggles. Most of the contributions to this Special Issue mention and analyse struggles by miners and their communities. In several instances these struggles saw miners overcome cleavages of race and ethnicity. The mobilization of miners could also be part of broader political struggles.

As Ian Phimister and Alfred Tembo show in their contribution about a strike that broke out in March 1964 among the African workforce at Wankie Colliery in Zimbabwe (then Southern Rhodesia), this mobilization was deeply connected to the national liberation struggle in Zambia (then Northern Rhodesia). The core of the black workers were migrants from Northern Rhodesia, a British protectorate that, at the time, was engaged in an independence struggle organized by Kenneth Kaunda's United National Independence Party (UNIP), while Southern Rhodesia was ruled by an exclusionary white government. While originating in grievances, primarily of women demanding full money wages instead of food rations, the strike evolved in a highly charged political atmosphere. UNIP members were heavily involved: slogans were sung and UNIP badges prominently displayed. Phimister and Tembo conclude that there was a close association between labour and militant nationalist politics in this strike, and suggest that greater weight should be given to the leading roles of women activists in the politicization of African mining communities.

As the example of Wankie Colliery shows, gender aspects are fundamental to understanding the dynamics of mining communities. Miners and mining companies depended on women, both for their unpaid reproductive labour and for their wage earnings, sometimes even for working in the mines themselves.[11]

11. For a recent assessment of the role of women in mining and fishing communities in Britain, see Valerie G. Hall, *Women at Work, 1860–1939: How Different Industries Shaped Women's Experiences* (Woodbridge, 2013).

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As Tom Arents and Norihiko Tsuneishi highlight, female labourers for a while replaced convict workers (whose deployment had been prohibited by law). They went down the pits together with their husbands in work teams. Coalmining could also entail new ways of constructing masculinity and acquiring the status of full male adult in an community, as Carolyn Brown analyses in her contribution on the Enugu Government Colliery (Nigeria). The work in the mines (into which young men with a marginalized status had been pressed) opened new pathways to attributes of manhood. The self-confidence and improved position enabled these men to challenge imposed "chiefs" and other authorities in their villages.

Coal as a fossil rock is compressed and stored solar energy. This image of density can justly be transferred to the social level. As the contributions to this Special Issue show, coalmining is associated with a compact intensity of experiences in labour and communities. Coalmining regularly upset and reshaped local constellations, and reached out to places further, often very far, away. Thus, although coalmining developed mostly in locations of relatively small size, it compressed in these communities some of the far-reaching and fundamental experiences of modern societies, among them the grand and contested processes of industrial labour, migration, and identity formation.

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