MIGRATION STUDIES AND COLONIALISM

LUCY MAYBLIN · JOE TURNER

Contents

- Title page
- Copyright page
- Acknowledgements
- Foreword *Gurminder K. Bhambra*
- 1 Introduction
  - Migration studies and colonialism
  - The growing call to 'decolonize' the social sciences
  - Does migration studies need to think about colonialism?
  - Postcolonialism, decoloniality and Third World approaches to international law
  - Structure of the book
- 2 Time and Space: Migration and Modernity
  - Introduction
  - Problematizing the concept of modernity in the social sciences
  - Eurocentrism
  - North, South, East and West in colonial modernity
  - Modernity, migration and development
  - Can Eurocentrism be overcome?
  - Conclusion
- 3 'Race' and Racism in International Migration
  - Introduction
  - Empire and the invention of race
  - Knowledge, modernity and huMan
  - Race, violence and slavery

Racism’s two registers: biology and culture
Race, movement and immigration
Conclusion
4 Putting Sovereignty, Citizenship and Migration in Dialogue with Past and Present Colonialisms
Introduction
Connected histories, connected sociologies
Migration as decolonization
Indigenous sovereignty and immigration
No borders?
Conclusion
5 Deconstructing Forced Migration, Rethinking Asylum
Introduction
Asylum is a human right: postcolonial and decolonial perspectives on ‘man’ and ‘human’
The myth of difference and the silencing of colonialism
Man and human as a colonial construct
Uprooting: deconstructing forced migration
Necropolitics: governing the uprooted through death
Conclusion
6 Towards a Colonial Account of Security and Borders
Introduction
Terrorism and race
Anti-Muslim racism as ‘bio-cultural’
Colonial rule and security
Towards a global account of security and borders
Securitization in the Global South
Postcolonial borders (in Palestine)

- Decolonizing borders
- Political violence and terror
- Conclusions

7 Gender, Sexuality, Colonialism … and Migration
- Introduction
- Gender and sexuality in migration studies
- Intersectionality
- Decolonial feminism: the coloniality of gender
- Ungendering and anti-blackness
- Queer-of-colour critique
- Conclusion

8 Conclusion

References

Index

End User License Agreement

Migration Studies and Colonialism

Lucy Mayblin and Joe Turner

polity

Copyright page

Copyright © Lucy Mayblin and Joe Turner 2021

The right of Lucy Mayblin and Joe Turner to be identified as Author of this Work has been asserted in accordance with the UK Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

First published in 2021 by Polity Press

Polity Press

65 Bridge Street

Cambridge CB2 1UR, UK

Polity Press

101 Station Landing

Suite 300

Medford, MA 02155, USA

All rights reserved. Except for the quotation of short passages for the purpose of criticism and review, no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the publisher.

ISBN-13: 978-1-5095-4293-2

ISBN-13: 978-1-5095-4294-9(pb)

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Mayblin, Lucy, author. | Turner, Joe B., author.

Title: Migration studies and colonialism / Lucy Mayblin & Joe Turner.

Description: Cambridge, UK ; Medford, MA : Polity Press, [2021] | Includes bibliographical references and index. | Summary: “Why colonial histories are crucial to understanding migration today”-- Provided by publisher.

Identifiers: LCCN 2020022233 (print) | LCCN 2020022234 (ebook) | ISBN 9781509542932 (hardback) | ISBN 9781509542949 (paperback) | ISBN 9781509542956 (epub)

Subjects: LCSH: Emigration and immigration--Social aspects. | Postcolonialism--Social aspects. | Imperialism--History.

Classification: LCC JV6033 .M39 2021 (print) | LCC JV6033 (ebook) | DDC 304.8--dc23

LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2020022233

LC ebook record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2020022234

Typeset in 10.5 on 12pt Sabon

by Fakenham Prepress Solutions, Fakenham, Norfolk NR21 8NL

Printed and bound in Great Britian by TJ International Limited

The publisher has used its best endeavours to ensure that the URLs for external websites referred to in this book are correct and active at the time of going to press. However, the publisher has no responsibility for the websites and can make no guarantee that a site will remain live or that the content is or will remain appropriate.

Every effort has been made to trace all copyright holders, but if any have been overlooked the publisher will be pleased to include any necessary credits in any subsequent reprint or edition.

For further information on Polity, visit our website: politybooks.com

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank Gurminder K. Bhambra, Thom Davies, Katie Bales, Arshad Isakjee, Sara de Jong and Marcia Vera Espinoza for their helpful and constructive feedback and for generously reading parts of/the whole manuscript. Thanks also to the organizers and participants of the 'Colonial Mobilities' workshop at Linneaus University Sweden in summer 2019 for their inspiration, especially Aurora Vergara Figueroa, E. Tendayi Achiume, Peo Hansen , Debbie Samaniego and Gunlog Fur. Thank you to our friends, families and partners for their patience and support whilst we completed the book. Lastly, we remain indebted to the scholarship, social movements and ongoing struggles that shape this book and that we hope we have done justice to.

Foreword: On the Beginnings of Migration: Europe and Colonialism

Recent years have seen much attention, media and political, given to the movement of people. This is especially the case in terms of the extraordinary movements precipitated by war, famine and the ravages of global warming that have produced refugees in seemingly greater numbers. They have also produced hostile responses with the building of walls and fences, the denial of aid and solidarity and changes to citizenship laws which have often turned citizens into migrants to be policed even more harshly. Global crises related to the movement of populations recur with relative regularity, and yet each is presented as unprecedented, reproducing the idea of crisis in the process. This occurs not just in media representations and political debate but also in academic accounts of migration, which often use similar framings in their analyses. In this superb new book, *Migration Studies and Colonialism*, Lucy Mayblin and Joe Turner contest the idea of the unprecedentedness of the movement of peoples and seek to locate both contemporary migrations and our understandings of migration in the historical contexts that produce them.

Our modern world has been significantly shaped by historical processes and structures that have been in place from the late fifteenth century onwards. These have shaped our institutions and our understandings. We can use the figure of Columbus and his voyages to stand for the beginning of these processes and structures and how they have been understood within Europe. As Locke wrote in the late seventeenth century, ‘in the beginning all the World was America’. That is, in their discovery of the Americas,

Europeans believed that they were encountering earlier versions of themselves. This laid the groundwork for particular understandings of hierarchies among and between populations across the world. If those peoples encountered by early European travellers were effectively understood as being their ancestors, then Europeans could both show them the (predetermined) future and be unconcerned about their elimination. The first justifies the belief in 'development'; the second suggests that the disappearance of other cultures, peoples, is not a consequence of European actions but a quasi-natural phenomenon.

Columbus, and the Europeans who followed him across the subsequent centuries, are often presented as heroic figures – as travellers and pioneers. They are seen to move in what has been called the age of free migration when, apparently, there were no obstacles to movement. Traders, merchants, travellers, mendicants and explorers had long criss-crossed the globe, encountering new cultures, trading with them and learning the ways of others. The population movements from Europe to the New World and beyond coalesced, over four centuries, into a phenomenon that was markedly different from these other quotidian movements and encounters. This is because European movement was linked to colonial settlement which was central to the displacement, dispossession and elimination of populations across the globe. It was also central to the creation of the global inequalities and injustices that mark the worlds we share in common and that are the basis of contemporary movements of peoples. Without understanding the histories that produced these inequalities, we are unlikely to understand contemporary movements.

Taking Columbus, and the Americas, as the beginning is not the same as taking him, or them, as the origin. As Said (1995 [1978]) argues, whereas the idea of 'origin'

presupposes that which develops from it, that of a 'beginning' is developed as a complex of connections which allows for construction and reconstruction. Columbus is not the origin of what followed but can be seen as one of the beginnings of the processes and structures that have shaped the modern world. Acknowledging beginnings permits shifts in perspective and understandings of knowledge by taking different points of departure. Events, in this view, are best understood as located in, and constitutive of, particular historical interconnections. Columbus, then, is *an* event in a world of events which together brought into being our modern world.

Christopher Columbus, born in the Italian city-state of Genoa, patronized by the Spanish Crown of Castile, landed in the islands of what we now know as the Caribbean, searching for a direct route to the treasures of the Indies. His exploratory voyages in the late fifteenth century opened up an entire continent to European populations who travelled in increasing numbers to the New World. Some were in search of adventure, others fleeing poverty, famine, religious persecution and economic disadvantage. Whatever their motives, the decades and centuries subsequent to Columbus's 'discovery' were marked by the subjugation and elimination of indigenous populations and the extraction and appropriation of their resources and land (Dunbar-Ortiz 2014).

In the journal *Nature*, Simon Lewis and Mark Maslin note that the arrival of Europeans in the lands that would come to be known as the Americas – lands which had been known by their pre-existing (and continuing) inhabitants as Turtle Island and Abya Yala – 'led to the largest human population replacement in the past 13,000 years' (2015: 174). They suggest that the continent had had a population of around 61 million prior to European contact and that this 'rapidly declined to a minimum of about 6 million people by 1650

via exposure to diseases carried by Europeans, plus war, enslavement and famine' (Lewis and Maslin 2015: 175). In this way, Abya Yala was gradually, although not without resistance, transformed into the Americas.

If subsequent waves of Europeans – and across the nineteenth century this involved around sixty million Europeans (Miege 1993) – found these lands to be available to them, then this ought not to be regarded as a natural fact but a social and political fact that requires further analysis. It is a fact that should be central to all subsequent discussion of the movement of peoples, to all discussions constituting migration studies. As I have argued elsewhere, migration is a movement of people across political boundaries, and migrants are people who live in societies other than their own, but according to the rules and norms of the societies of which they come to be a part (Bhambra 2019). Within this understanding of migration, those who do not, en masse, live according to the rules and norms of the societies of the lands they come to are not migrants. They are better understood as colonial settlers and colonial settlers are not migrants, even if much of the scholarship on migration describes them as such. Failing to acknowledge the ways in which colonial histories are the context for the consolidation of particular patterns of European movement and the ways in which these come to be the reasons for subsequent movements is problematic to the extent that we are interested in effective solutions to the problems of global inequality.

Where we start from, and which histories and epistemologies we acknowledge, will profoundly shape our understandings. This is the central premise of this vitally important book. Mayblin and Turner start from an understanding that the field of migration studies is poorer – in terms of both intellectual coherence and policy applications – if it does not take colonial histories seriously.

While they do not suggest that colonialism explains everything about migration, they do argue that migration can rarely be adequately understood without taking it into account. While there is plenty of literature at this nexus, in a global context, it does not often form the basis of migration studies as it is generally conceived in Europe or the United States. Mayblin and Turner ask those of us located in migration studies who have not addressed the histories of colonialism to consider what difference would be made to our understandings if we were to do so. It is urgent that this call be answered.

Gurminder K. Bhambra, University of Sussex

1
Introduction

Migration studies and colonialism

Between 1600 and 1950, the vast majority of mobile subjects (what some might now call 'economic migrants') originated in Europe and sought their fortunes on other continents. An estimated 62 million people – settlers, labourers, colonials, imperialists, invaders – moved around European empires in the period 1800–1950 (Miège 1993). Indeed, colonialism was characterized by conquest, exploitation and domination through migration. From the massive forced migrations of the triangular slave trade and circuits of indenture to the almost unfettered mobility of many (but not all) white Europeans within their various empires, from the large-scale population displacements which the turbulence of decolonization gave rise to to the migration of people from the former colonies to the former metropoles in the mid- to late twentieth century, the history of migration globally is very much entangled with colonialism. It should be unsurprising to us, then, that patterns of mobility and immobility today follow these colonial-era logics in what Steffen Mau and colleagues call 'the global mobility divide' (Mau et al 2015). Or that border regimes effectively amount to 'multilateral projects for the regional containment of Third World persons beyond the First World' (Achiume 2019: 1515). And yet, when consulting the indexes of a selection of key texts of migration studies today, it is very rare to find any mention of colonialism, postcolonialism or decolonization. If the absence of empire as a relevant context to migration studies is a surprise, so too is the general lack of interest in

the legacies and continuities of colonialism for contemporary migration governance and the experiences of ‘migrants’ and ‘hosts’ today.

This book starts from the premise that colonial histories should be central to migration studies. We argue that colonialism is so fundamental to contemporary migrations, mobilities, immobilities, receptions and social dynamics that it is certainly not something that should only be of concern to scholars of colour, indigenous scholars and/or those working in formerly colonized countries. Our overarching aim is to explore what it would mean (acknowledging that it will not in fact mean one thing but many) to take seriously the centring of colonialism in researching migration, not through forging new theories but through learning from, and being inspired by, the wealth of literature that *already exists* in the world to engage with this task.

Migration studies is of course a diverse multidisciplinary field. Yet even critical migration studies has tended, according to Tudor (2018: 1065), ‘to forget about postcolonial racism and racialization and instead promoted an understanding of migration that is disconnected from postcolonial analysis’. Gayatri Spivak (1999) calls this type of silencing ‘sanctioned ignorance’. Sanctioned ignorance is not necessarily an issue of individual malice but is an institutionalized way of thinking about the world which operates to foreclose particular types of analysis or considerations from entering into the debate. One of the enabling factors of this type of silencing is the real urgency of contemporary issues and ‘crises’ relating to migration. Certainly, presentism is engendered within the field as every year brings new crises, displacements and patterns of migration and new politicians and laws seeking to control it. The present is, it seems, always new.

This underlying framework of 'the unprecedented present' within migration studies and migration policy making does not lend itself to a deep engagement with history. Nevertheless, a sense of history does quietly frame most analyses of the present. We see this in claims to 'unprecedentedness' itself – the common assumption that because a phenomenon is highly visible, contested and difficult to administratively manage, nothing like this has happened before. Because the world's population is growing all the time, even if the percentage of people that migrate always stays the same, each year will see unprecedented numbers of migrants crossing borders. But that isn't quite the same as 'nothing like this has ever happened before'. More explicit nods to history appear in the context sections of books or articles which briefly explain how rights emerged, or how things have changed since previous periods, before moving on to the topic at hand. Sometimes these contexts mention colonialism but most often not.

We think that sanctioned ignorance of histories of colonialism, and of the wide-ranging debates around the legacies of colonialism in the present, within migration studies is a problem. First, because ignoring vast swathes of human history leaves us with theories which are inadequate to the task of making sense of the present. Second, because without acknowledging these histories, the common usage of dehumanizing phrases associated with racial science such as the animalistic 'migrant stocks' and the disaster-like migrant 'flows', 'mass influxes' and 'waves' can appear objective rather than historically and culturally emergent. Third, it facilitates the denial of ongoing colonialisms in the present, and in doing so silences struggles for justice.

While, at the time of writing this book, it is common to attend a migration studies conference and fail to find a

single paper that mentions colonialism (or indeed ‘race’), questions of mobility and ‘migration’ have been taken up by those working beyond the field of migration studies, in postcolonial, decolonial and related intellectual projects. From the start, postcolonialism, decoloniality, indigenous studies, Third World Approaches to International Law (TWAIL) and many other projects have been interested in migrations, diasporas, conquests and hybrid transnational identities, and the power relations that they gave rise to on multiple spatial scales. This means that there already exists a substantial body of work which presents concepts and frameworks for analysing migration in the (post/neo-)colonial present. Much of this work in postcolonial studies has been in the arts and humanities but it is ripe for application to social scientific phenomena. Other areas of scholarship such as decoloniality and TWAIL have more directly engaged with social scientific questions. Indeed, there are numerous bodies of work across the social sciences internationally which both address migration *and* place colonialism at the centre of their analyses. Yet the core of migration studies, which is highly influential in international policy-making circles, appears to remain largely unaffected by this work.

This book responds to this disconnect. Its purpose is not to spend endless pages critiquing migration studies as it is articulated in hegemonic journals, conferences, policy fora and textbooks in the Global North. Rather, our aim is to demonstrate what paying attention to colonialism through using the tools offered by postcolonial, decolonial and related scholarship can offer those studying international migration today. We do not present a new grand theory or claim that every single thing that people want to research can be explained with reference to colonialism. What we do offer is a range of inspiring and challenging perspectives on migration that are less often seen in influential

migration studies research centres in Europe and North America, not least because students are so often asking us for reading lists along these lines. We also, by extension, suggest that in raising the colonial question, those engaging in research on migration may then need to consider the politics of knowledge production – the underlying assumptions, categories and concepts – which they rely on within this academic field.

While literatures already exist which should make ignoring colonialism seem like a bizarre and naive omission, these literatures seem still to be inaccessible, or unimportant, to many. This book seeks to showcase some of this work for people who research migration and yet never encounter such perspectives. If you are well versed in these debates, the issues that we discuss will doubtless seem obvious. Indeed, we are 'white' academics working in British higher education institutions and for this reason our perspectives are of course particular and limited, and undoubtedly readers will spot omissions and parochialisms throughout the book. Whilst we have sought to frame our discussion of the literature and examples in a global manner, we still broadly rely upon the legacy of intellectual projects from the Americas (North and South), with engagements from scholars from Asian and African traditions. For those not familiar with these literatures, we hope that this book will raise questions such as how broadly postcolonial and decolonial perspectives might change the kinds of research questions that we ask in migration studies, as well as the ways in which we analyse our data. Do such perspectives allow us to frame our research in terms that accord with the interests of policy makers? No. Are such perspectives policy friendly in the current terms of debate on migration? Rarely. If, and how, these perspectives can therefore be used in challenging migration policy, as most critical work hopes to do, is a topic for contemplation in the coming

years. This volume, we hope, will spark discussion as part of what some have termed the 'postcolonial turn' in migration studies (Koh 2015; Tudor 2018). Our aim is *not* that you cite this book, but that in the future you cite some of the scholars discussed within it.

The growing call to 'decolonize' the social sciences

Recent years have seen the intensification and spread of calls to 'decolonize the university' and it would not be appropriate to write a book on the theme of migration studies and colonialism without discussing this agenda. While 'decolonizing' is a highly contested issue, the content and praxis of which is unresolved, at its heart is an agreement that we put colonialism and its legacies and continuities at the heart of our understanding of the contemporary world (Bhambra, Gebrial and Nişancıoğlu 2018; Ndlovu-Gatsheni and Zondi 2016). Academia is an important site of knowledge production and, as Dalia Gebrial argues, 'consecration'. She goes on:

> It has the power to decide which histories, knowledges and intellectual contributions are considered valuable and worthy of further critical attention and dissemination. This has knock-on effects: public discourse might seem far from the academy's sphere of influence, but 'common sense' ideas worthy of knowledge do not come out of the blue, or removed from the context of power – and the university is a key shaping force in the discursive flux. (Gebrial 2018: 22)

Decolonization in this context includes, but is not limited to, renewed questioning, or uncovering, of the colonial origins of some of the core concepts of the social sciences (e.g. 'modernity', 'development', 'capitalism', 'human

rights', 'demography'); a focus on the Eurocentrism inherent to much social science research; and a critique of the ways in which contemporary research (and teaching) practices sometimes/often (depending on the field) reproduce colonial power relations.

There are disparate political and intellectual projects that all coalesce around these themes. The political projects have largely been student led and have particularly centred on 'addressing issues of racial exclusion and racialized hierarchy within the university, including its teaching and research practices' (Bhambra 2019: 1). 'Rhodes Must Fall' is widely seen as triggering a wider global movement. This campaign, based at the University of Cape Town in South Africa, centred in part around a campaign in 2015 to have a bronze statue of Cecil Rhodes removed from a prominent location on campus (Gebrial 2018; Nyamnjoh 2016). Cecil Rhodes was a wealthy British businessman and politician, who was prime minister of the Cape Colony in the late 1800s, founded the colony of Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe and parts of Zambia) and was an ardent white supremacist who laid the legal groundwork for apartheid. Challenging his reification on campus was, for the students studying there, urgent and necessary in the post-apartheid context. 'Rhodes Must Fall' Cape Town drew the attention of students at the University of Oxford in the United Kingdom. They too had a statue of Rhodes on campus and, as part of a much broader agenda of drawing attention to the colonial entanglements of the university, they campaigned for its removal (Gebrial 2018; Rhodes Must Fall Movement 2018). Of course, this is set within the context of a long history of anti-colonial movements in South Africa but also globally.

These explicitly de- and anti-colonial protest movements have been linked to other campus-based protests such as those against caste privilege at Hyderabad and Jawaharlal Nehru Universities in India, and Black Lives Matter on

campuses in the United States, United Kingdom and elsewhere (Bhambra, Gebrial and Nişancıoğlu 2018). Related to these disparate events is the broad-based campaign 'Why Is My Curriculum White?'. This student-led movement, often headed by students of colour, asks that teachers in higher education take a look at their reading lists and consider whether there are any scholars of colour on them at all. Where there are scholars of colour on reading lists, how many of them are present to offer core theory, as opposed to place-specific case studies? How many courses address questions of race, racism, colonialism or its ongoing legacies? These questions are most poignant when the courses under consideration cover topics such as international development or international migration. 'Why Is My Curriculum White?' is a challenge: it should not be possible to teach a course on international development without putting colonialism and neo-colonialism centre stage, and the First World should not be the source of every theoretical perspective relating to the topic of poverty in the Third World. For us, the same is true for migration studies: it should not be possible to teach a course on migration without mentioning colonialism or having any discussion of 'race' and racism, and the First World should not be the source of every theoretical perspective relating to the topic of migration globally. The point is not necessarily to stop teaching Marx, Foucault, Agamben or Carens, it is to also make sure that you are teaching Fanon, Quijano, Wynter and Spivak alongside them, while also asking how colonialism frames the work of all of these scholars.

In light of the debates sketched out above, what does it mean to 'decolonize' a field of scholarship? Is such a task even meaningful or is it just paying lip service to a live political issue which is having a fashionable moment and tokenistically mentioning it while carrying on as normal?

For Gurminder K. Bhambra, Dalia Gebrial and Kerem Nişancıoğlu, decolonizing in the university context involves the following activities:

> it is a way of thinking about the world which takes colonialism, empire and racism as its empirical and discursive objects of study; it resituates these phenomena as key shaping forces of the contemporary world, in a context where their role has been systematically effaced from view … [then] it purports to offer alternative ways of thinking about the world and alternative forms of political praxis. (Bhambra, Gebrial and Nişancıoğlu 2018: 3)

This definition places emphasis on epistemology and on the underlying Eurocentric frameworks which cut across a lot of research that is undertaken in universities around the world (see also Alatas 2006; Amin 1988; Mignolo 2011a). It focuses on academic knowledge production and particularly on the sanctioned erasure of histories of colonialism and ongoing anti-colonial struggles from many (most) fields of study. It furthermore argues that the ways that we think about the world can lead to political praxis which seeks to change it.

There have been challenges to this perspective in recent years which must be acknowledged here. The most well-known intervention has been from Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang (2012), who are interested in decolonization in the field of education studies within the context of settler colonialism. Their point is that in settler-colonial states such as Canada, decolonization should always refer to the relinquishing of stolen land to indigenous peoples, and that ‘until stolen land is relinquished, critical consciousness does not translate into action that disrupts settler colonialism’. They argue that:

> curricula, literature, and pedagogy can be crafted to aid people in learning to see settler colonialism, to articulate critiques of settler epistemology, and set aside settler histories and values in search of ethics that reject domination and exploitation; this is not unimportant work. However, the front-loading of critical consciousness building can waylay decolonization, even though the experience of teaching and learning to be critical of settler colonialism can be so powerful it can feel like it is indeed making change. (Tuck and Yang 2012: 19)

When they write about decolonization, then, they 'are not offering it as a metaphor' or 'an approximation of other experiences of oppression'. Decolonization, for Tuck and Yang, 'is not a swappable term for other things we want to do to improve our societies and schools. Decolonization doesn't have a synonym' (2012: 3). University-based intellectual and pedagogic activities are, for Tuck and Yang, 'white moves to innocence', which allow settlers to feel better about the horrors of settler colonialism without actually doing anything practical to change it since to do so would involve (at a minimum) a loss of privilege.

This is an important intervention and decolonization of intellectual thought should not be simply another 'move to innocence' which assuages 'white guilt'. We need to sit with the discomforts which their intervention may give rise to and take them seriously in approaching our own work. Building critical consciousness should always, necessarily, lead to action in the contexts and varying positions of power that we occupy. Nevertheless, we concur with Bhambra, Gebrial and Nişancıoğlu (2018) in that we do not take the position that struggles against colonialism are *only* about settler-colonial dispossessions of land. Colonialism was/is not only a series of settler projects, it also entailed slavery and slave trading, commercial imperialism and

direct rule (to name but three examples). It was furthermore accompanied by a whole host of legitimating intellectual projects, in which many universities in former metropoles played a central role, as ‘Rhodes Must Fall’ so aptly demonstrates. With Bhambra and colleagues, we take colonialism as a global project and acknowledge the role of universities, academic knowledge and disciplines as key sites through which colonialism – its moral justifications, racial theories and Orientalist imaginaries – was produced. These different projects require different, but related, responses in different contexts. We take this position, undoubtedly, as a consequence of our location in the British context and acknowledge that any blind spots on the specificity and structures of settler colonialism may be a consequence of this position.

But we also do not subscribe to the idea that all intellectual work to reveal systems of colonial knowledge should be viewed as moves towards (white) innocence (although this remains an active risk that we should be reflexive about). This is in part because intellectual work should never be the only work that we do, but also because knowledge production has long been an important part of colonizing and decolonizing work; thinking and acting are interconnected. What is of particular concern to us as scholars interested in migration is the extent to which colonial perspectives in many ways continue to dominate scholarly output and teaching in the contemporary period, as the ‘Why Is My Curriculum White’ and other projects of ‘decolonizing the university’ have so clearly shown. While this book engages with some theoretical work which challenges migration studies as it is currently articulated in the Global North, then, the perspectives discussed are not simply ‘add-ons’ to be included while the core stays the same. Instead, taking such interventions seriously upends much of what we think we know about migration.

But bearing in mind Tuck and Yang's (2012) intervention, it is important also to state again that the intellectual sphere cannot and should not be the only sphere in which we seek to enact change. We may observe, therefore, that migration studies has tended as it has emerged to be a predominantly 'white' field and this may not be unrelated to the fact that the colonial past and its legacies and continuities, including a focus on race, have not been central to migration studies projects, textbooks or the agendas of research centres. Those who have provided answers to the question what would it mean to make colonialism central to how we understand migration are rarely self-declared 'migration scholars'. We need, then, to reflect on (and act to change) structural hierarchies in higher education which are themselves connected to the legacies of colonialism, as other critics of the project have argued, at the same time as thinking about our intellectual commitments. This will include recognizing structural racisms – racial and ethnic inequalities (and silences and absences) in terms of student attainment and staff appointments and promotions. It is also to recognize that as migration studies has a historical relationship to policy making, the type of knowledge produced by scholars and taught to students does shape (if not often in a direct way) material conditions and policies. Challenging the intellectual foundations of the field is always part of broader struggles which are not always, or only, 'academic'.

Sitting with the unease and tension around calls to decolonize which Tuck and Yang articulate, we have decided to not call this book 'decolonizing migration studies'. However, we see this work as connecting with activities encapsulated in decolonizing agendas within 'the university' as an institution, a site of power relations and a place for the validation of knowledge claims. We also need to recognize our privilege within the existing systems of

power and political economy which made the writing of this book possible. We are both white ‘cis’-gender scholars, with relatively secure positions in elite institutions, and this has shaped our ability to write this book, perhaps over other people systematically marginalized within, or excluded from, the academy. This is important to acknowledge. But challenging the colonial and racialized systems of academic knowledge (in this case on migration) is not simply a job for people of colour. Nor should centring colonialism be a niche research interest; it is a fundamental reorientation which is often/always contested, incomplete and imperfect, a work in progress and *everyone’s* responsibility. With this in mind, we hope this book will form part of broader conversations, challenges and critiques which we openly welcome and encourage.

Does migration studies need to think about colonialism?

As the discussion above indicated, ‘decolonizing’ is a highly contested agenda. But the idea that colonialism should be an important part of how we make sense of the present is, surely, less contentious, particularly in contexts where it has been elided. Recent years have seen a growing number of scholars arguing for greater acknowledgement of colonial histories and their legacies for contemporary migration issues. For example, Mains et al. (2013: 132) observe that ‘despite the material links between colonialism, postcolonialism and migration, social scientists in general have been slow to address this intersection’ (see also McIlwaine 2008, cited in Mains et al. 2013). Tudor (2018) and De Genova (2018) specifically articulate this lack of attention in terms of a neglect of postcolonial racism and racialization, and observe that there is a strong sense in the field that to speak of racism is either to be

racist, or (relatedly) that such observations are (or should be) the exclusive interest of scholars of colour (see also El-Tayeb 2011; Boulila 2019; Grosfoguel, Oso and Christou 2015; Michel 2015; Walia 2014). Rivera-Salgado (1999) noted twenty years ago that race and ethnicity are ‘frequently either ignored or treated as a consequence of migration flows and considered to be a problem “here” not “there”’, but this pattern has not significantly shifted. Certainly any increased recognition of ethnicity rarely also then understands ideas of racial or ethnic difference to be rooted in long-standing practices and processes of colonialism (see Hall 1978 for more on this).

The interconnectedness of migration *studies* as a project of university institutions, with migration *management* as a project of national and international policy-making institutions, is relevant here. Because migration scholars do not only speak to each other and have esoteric intellectual discussions about the dynamics of migration, they are also invited into these national and international policy-making fora. The language of migration scholarship and that of migration governance are therefore deeply entangled and interdependent. Institutions such as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and its non-refugee, migration-focused sister organization, the IOM (International Organization for Migration), are key players in this relationship and themselves emerged from colonialism. The UNHCR was founded to support European refugees exclusively following the Second World War because the colonial and settler-colonial powers did not want people of colour to have full access to human rights (Mayblin 2017). Its remit expanded as a consequence of the demands and activities of movements for decolonization. The IOM, meanwhile, was founded to settle Europeans (at a time when Europe was thought to be overpopulated) in

Africa (at a time when African countries were not thought of as sovereign nations) (Hansen and Jonsson 2014).

Bridget Anderson (2019: 2) has suggested that ‘perhaps we are experiencing not an “age of migration” but an age of migration *research*’ (emphasis in original). Studies of migration first emerged at the end of the nineteenth century. Gabaccia (2014) argues that in the United States studies of migration were primarily based in social anthropology and revolved around the application of ‘assimiliationist theory’ to different social groups who were deemed ‘immigrants’ (see Fitzgerald 2014). When we tend to speak of the institutionalization of migration studies as a ‘field’, we are referring to the period after the Second World War when states and international organizations began funding research on migration and refugees. The development of migration studies thus presents an interesting example of a ‘state science’ (Gabaccia 2014). Whilst interdisciplinary, the field grew around the demands of states and the international community to track and account for the movement of people ‘globally’ (Donato and Gabaccia 2015). But, more specifically, this was concerned with the mobility of people from the Global South to the Global North in periods of decolonization and under what would later be called ‘globalization’ and the further entrenchment and expansion of neo-liberal capitalism. The provision for this type of research grew in the United States and in Europe, in the latter under the emergent funding landscape of the European Union (EU) and within a broader biopolitical interest in the cost and benefits of migration, demographics and population management (for example, see the establishment of Osnabrück’s Institute for Migration Research and Intercultural Studies (IMIS) in 1991).

This history of course shapes the field today. Whilst it would be a mistake to see all migration studies as

overdetermined by the need to create policy-relevant research and to produce research that maps onto the interests of states and international organizations for the capture of funds, these factors strongly shape what constitutes appropriate knowledge and determines research agendas across migration studies (see Hatton 2018 on the United Kingdom and German context). To Scholten (2018), the dangers of this 'co-production' of knowledge have led to migration scholars reproducing forms of methodological nationalism and reifying state concepts such as 'integration', 'sovereignty' and the 'migrant versus citizen' divide (also see de Genova 2013). Whilst more 'critical' intellectual projects have shaped the field in terms of engagement with theories of 'transnationalism' throughout the 1990s (see Blanc-Szanton, Glick Schiller and Basch 1992), and more post-structuralist-influenced approaches to mobility and spatiality (Urry 2007), this environment has not been conducive to a sustained engagement with postcolonial and decolonial theory or even a broader engagement with historiography (Gabaccia 2014). The often superficial engagement with history is evidenced by the long-held view in key migration study textbooks that continue to periodize 'contemporary migration' (i.e. after the Second World War) as 'new', 'unprecedented' and 'unique' (see, for example, Castles, de Haas and Miller 2014).

In spite of the colonial blind spots within migration studies, it would be disingenuous to suggest that the field has completely ignored colonialism. Migration theories which draw on world systems theory (which is also an intellectual point of departure for decoloniality) are notable in taking account of colonial histories in their analyses (Richmond 1994; Satzewich 1991), and textbooks on migration studies almost always cover this theoretical field (see Brettell and Hollifeld 2008; Castles, de Haas and Miller 2014;

Martiniello and Rath 2012). World systems theory (see Wallerstein 2004) makes sense of the world in terms of the incorporation of increasing numbers of states into the global capitalist economy and the consequent emergence of a worldwide division of labour which has uneven impacts on different societies. It divides the world into core, semi-periphery and periphery and argues that the core and periphery are locked into a relationship of exploitation and dependency which structurally prevents peripheral countries from developing. There are clear implications for migration studies here in that migration would then be understood as part of much broader relationships between states and societies. As wealthy 'core' economies became increasingly dependent upon low-paid migrant labour from the peripheries from the 1970s, international labour migration came to be seen as an important element in relations of domination between core and periphery. What is now called South–North migration therefore, from this perspective, reinforces relations of dependency.

There are criticisms to be made of the extent to which world systems theory adequately accounted for, or then instrumentalized, race and gender in the world system (Grosfoguel 2011). Nevertheless, this is undeniably a corner of migration studies which has sought to incorporate an account of historical colonial power relations in seeking to make sense of the present. Equally, Latin American decolonial work on the 'coloniality of power' is indebted to world systems theory even as it departs from its primarily economic focus (Quijano 2000). It is here that we see emerging some decolonial analyses of migration which are alive to the importance of colonial histories, and indeed presents (Grosfoguel, Oso and Christou 2015).

A postcolonial awareness is also visible in, if not central to, other areas of migration studies. Scholars who research the