Historiographical Challenges of Emigration Policy

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Abstract

The article highlights the asymmetry between the study of immigration and the study of emigration, and focuses on the general historiographical questions raised by the latter: the internal contradictions of state action; the relationship between social history and the history of international relations; the issue of statistical objectification since the definition of emigration is predicated on people's intentions and the difficult task of political categorisation, which is further complicated when colonial empires are involved. At the same time, this essay underlines the historicity of emigration policies: the establishment of a hierarchy of desirability among nationals; the effects of the emergence of salaried employment and social issues; constructing the homeland through the lens of emigration as well as the increasing role of bilateral agreements and international conventions on migration in the 20th century.

The past 20 years have seen, very broadly speaking, two approaches to migration issues. The first consists of work on communities of immigrants, most often in their place of residence, and sometimes in their workplace or sector of activity. This socio-historical perspective seeks to assess the various forms of integration (social, economic, cultural, political) in the host country, and the interplay between integration and the more or less close ties maintained with the country of origin.

The second approach focuses on migration policies. It is, in this area of research, an avatar of the "return of institutions" – first and foremost the state – in historical analysis. This return has marked all the social sciences since the 1980s. To some extent, interest in the political history of migration has grown alongside, and because of, the rise of xenophobic movements in many industrial countries and the increasingly prominent political debates on the right of asylum and on undocumented

migrants. This area of research has, moreover, focused on the issue of citizenship and nationality.

On the basis of this broad observation, I will discuss a number of ways to connect these two avenues of research and thus bridge social history and political history in an original way. I aim to contribute to the field by transcending the boundaries of research specialities; I believe this transcendence taps into the richness of contemporary historiography. My analysis will address interior migrations and foreign migrations upfront in order to overcome a common bias in the historical literature.[1] In the context of this volume, I will more specifically examine the role or potential role in this exercise of the study of *emigration*, which, as I will begin by showing, has raised specific difficulties.

Is Emigration Symmetrical to Immigration?

The emigrant's perspective is not self-evident. In the landscape I have outlined, given the concerns about citizenship, mobility has most often been considered from the perspective of the host country. Besides the political interest in this perspective, the way in which archives are created and preserved has reinforced this inclination. Except for countries that have detailed and well-maintained population records indicating the destinations of would-be emigrants, it is easier to grasp an immigrant community than to follow an emigration flow in all its diversity and dispersal. At best, even if the relations that emigrants abroad might maintain with the consular offices of their country of origin are seriously considered, archives can only document a fraction of the emigrant population: precisely those who feel connected to their native community.

In many respects the European-American collection of works edited in 2006 by Nancy Green and François Weil, *Citoyenneté et émigration. Les politiques du départ* [Citizenship and Those Who Leave. The Politics of Emigration and Expatriation], was an important milestone in the development of thinking on the issue.[2] Through a series of coherent contributions it drew attention to the fact that, by default, the notion of migration has most often in history referred to immigration, with emigration, by comparison, only representing a complementary perspective. This is a typical

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1 For an exception, see Klaus Bade, Massenwanderung und Arbeitsmarkt im deutschen Nordosten von 1880 bis zum ersten Weltkrieg. Überseeische Auswanderung, interne Abwanderung und kontinentale Zuwanderung [Mass Migration and the Labour Market in Northeast Germany from 1880 to the First World War. Overseas Emigration, Internal Migration, and Continental Immigration], in: Archiv für Sozialgeschichte 20 (1980), p. 265–323.

2 Nancy Green, François Weil (ed.), Citoyenneté et émigration. Les politiques du départ, Paris 2006 [Citizenship and Those Who Leave. The Politics of Emigration and Expatriation, Urbana (IL) 2007].

case, often noted in social theory, of a dichotomy that is symmetrical in theory but unbalanced in practice.

Serious consideration of emigration raises two questions that should be distinguished analytically:

– the history of emigration per se, that is, approached from the perspective of the country of origin;
– the history of migration overall, maintaining and articulating two perspectives at the same time – immigration and emigration.

It might seem obvious that these two perspectives are not identical, but their cognitive consequences must be carefully considered. A typical example is rural exodus, as experienced by Europe in the 19th century, and by developing countries in the 20th and 21st centuries. Its perception is completely asymmetrical when considered from the perspective of a point of departure versus a point of arrival. I can provide an example from a study of mobility in Northern France, which was one of the few French regions affected by this phenomenon during the Industrial Revolution.[3] When observed at the entry to Lille, Roubaix and Tourcoing, there is an overwhelming sense of irrepressible attraction to the cities: it appears that rural emigrants can only be studied from this perspective, as if they had been reduced to scrap attracted by a magnet. But limiting oneself to this image – unquestionable in itself – comes at a huge cognitive cost. It completely obscures the phenomena that occur at the starting point, which plays an active role in this process. Did village migrants blaze new paths towards the cities, or did more of them follow old routes? Above all, what happened in the villages during urbanisation? The conclusion of the analysis is surprising, as it shows that one part of the surrounding region (the rural French Flanders) tapped into every possible resource, spurring internal mobility, as opposed to the sluggishness implied by the rural exodus model. This brings us back to the question I raised about the nuance between emigration and migration: it is a heuristic oversimplification to study a population that left to settle abroad without taking into consideration what simultaneously occurred in its country or region of origin.

A deeper look, at the microscopic level of individuals and family groups or emigrant villagers, underscores the perception gap between the immigration approach and emigration approach. The former often highlights the prevalence of interpersonal networks that shape emigrant "colonies" in a big city or foreign country. However, when family networks are considered in their entirety and observed not at the arrival point, but rather by locating all the members of a lineage, the interpretation

3 Claire Lemercier, Paul-André Rosental, Les migrations dans le Nord de la France au XIXe siècle [Migrations in Northern France in the 19th Century], 2008, http://halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr/halshs-00319448/fr/.

completely changes: the study of several thousands of lineages in 19th century France disproves the idea that migration is conducive to concentrating migrants. Of course, this type of convergence occurs – and historiography focuses on such instances – but all things being equal, when all individuals are taken into account, it appears that mobility does not bring the members of kinship groups closer together.[4] The vision that emerges is rather that of constantly evolving territorial family configurations. This phenomenon challenges one of the assumptions of the literature on migration: a "starting point" is not always a given at the microscopic level of analysis. If one considers the integration of individuals into their respective peer groups, the sense of belonging to a stable and well-defined space is not equally evident for a farmer who temporarily migrates, for a merchant who is part of a transnational family network, for a frontier-dweller, or for a highly skilled glassworker who might rotate between a series of factories scattered throughout Europe and beyond. This diversity has a markedly political dimension: it distinguishes between migrants who can contemplate or hope to return to their point of departure and those who cannot – Polish Jews in the interwar period, for example, or some religious minorities in Scandinavia back in the 19th century.[5] Again, the distinction is not a given, nor is the distinction always completely clear between migrants who can look back and the rest. A case in point, during the economic crisis in the 1930s, were the difficulties experienced by central European emigrants who were forced to return to their country and seek assistance from their township of origin.[6]

Generally speaking, the study of emigration thus systematically raises the question of desirability, as does the study of immigration.[7] However, the former raises the question in a more revealing way because it shows how states establish hierarchies among their own nationals. Indeed, it is safe to say that migration policy always goes hand in hand with a state's segmentation and hierarchical organisation of mobility flows according to criteria specific to each context. For example, at the beginning of the 20th century Italy was particularly proactive about its migrants and distinguished between those who had succeeded abroad and needed to be encouraged to return to

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4 Noël Bonneuil, Arnaud Bringé, Paul-André Rosental, Familial Components of First Migrations after Marriage in Nineteenth Century France, in: Social History 33/1 (2008), p. 36–59.

5 John G. Rice, Robert C. Ostergren, The Decision to Migrate. A Study in Diffusion, in: Geografiska Annaler 60/1 (1978), p. 1–15.

6 Paul-André Rosental, Migrations, souveraineté, droits sociaux. Protéger et expulser les étrangers en Europe du XIXe siècle à nos jours [Migrations, Sovereignty, Social Rights. Protecting and Expelling Foreigners in Europe from the 19th Century to Today], in: Annales. Histoire Sciences Sociales 66/2 (2011), p. 335–373.

7 Philippe Rygiel (ed.), Le bon grain et l'ivraie. L'Etat-Nation et les populations immigrées, fin XIXe, début XXe siècle [The Wheat and the Chaff. The Nation-State and Immigrant Populations at the End of the 19th/Beginning of the 20th century], Paris 2004.

the country – a classic Ancien Régime approach – and the vulnerable needing protection, such as orphans and widows.[8] But emigration was an opportunity for reverse selection against criminals, the sick, and political activists. Like Poland with its Jews or Ireland with its Protestants, in the interwar period many European countries used emigration to get rid of their ethnic or religious minorities, encouraging them to leave, and doing little (if anything at all) to defend them in conflicts abroad.

Because migrants have varying degrees of attachment to their country of origin – and sometimes very loose attachment, if not repulsion – the category of "emigration" cannot be used without raising questions. It is essentially an administrative category that was further elevated by its statistical measurements, but it falls short of conveying the complexity of people's sense of belonging. This point strikes me as a particularly important one today, in a world that only defends mobility to better project an obsolete portrayal of the past as a still world based on monolithic rootedness.

From this perspective the title of the present volume is much more open and escapes this trap. By referring to "Switzerland elsewhere", it immediately underscores the key issue, which is the designation of emigrants who went abroad under widely varying conditions: with or without the prospect of returning or maintaining ties, and with legal statuses that could differ both in the country of arrival and in relation to the country of origin. Indeed, for a country of emigration, the designation of nationals who have gone abroad entails a choice – and often a problem – of a highly political nature. Italians, Germans and Poles used different terms to refer to overseas emigration, which was considered to be permanent and worrisome, and to emigration to Europe. In 1893 China created the rubric "Chinese temporarily living abroad" and "Overseas Chinese"[9] to downplay consistently distinct movements.

The difficulty in conceptualising the problem is mainly political. In 19th century China emigrants were criminals: given this initial conception, the term "Overseas Chinese" was actually a form of liberalisation. For a long time in Europe, emigration was viewed through a more or less explicitly mercantilist lens: in mid-19th century France, for example, *embauchage* (which today would more likely be called job poaching by foreigners) was a criminal offence.[10] Emigration was seen as a reprehensible loss of

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8 Caroline Douki, The "Return Politics" of a Sending Country. The Italian Case, 1880s–1914, in: Nancy L. Green, Roger Waldinger (ed.), A Century of Transnationalism. Immigrants and their Homeland Connections, Urbana (IL), Chicago (forthcoming).

9 Eric Guerassimoff, Des coolies aux Chinois d'outre-mer. La question des migrations dans les relations sino-américaines (années 1850–1890) [From Coolies to Overseas Chinese. The issue of Migration in Sino-American Relations], in: Annales. Histoire Sciences sociales 61/1 (2006), p. 63–98.

10 "Embauchage" is defined here as the act of "pulling away directors, shop assistants or workers from manufacturing establishments located in France by committing them, through promises or gifts, to move their work to a foreign country […]". When this misdeed is committed *with the goal of injuring French industry,* it becomes a crime that is punishable under the Criminal Code"; the guilty party is subject to imprisonment from six months to two years. Cf. entry "Embauchage", in: Maurice

economic and military substance, except when it involved classes of pariahs, who, on the contrary, were forced on the colonies.

Another political challenge to defining emigration is linked to colonisation. Indeed, the way emigration was conceived differed widely depending on whether or not a country was imperial. In Victorian England some sought to reserve the term "emigration" for departures to a foreign country and only refer to "overseas settlement" within the Empire.[11] Another criteria was population density, or more specifically – to avoid overly simplistic explanations – the feeling of being over- or under-populated.

Returning to the mercantilist criteria that were a crucial element for a long time, the status of emigration only changed with the rise of "social issues". The emergence of "unemployment" and "unemployed" as social categories at the end of the 19th century[12] was a key stage in the history of emigration because it led states to break with the dogma of population conservation. For a while, emigration became a "solution" to public policy problems: a national solution, as was the case for the Netherlands in the first quarter of the 20th century,[13] or a transnational one, as exemplified by the International Labour Organisation's project to transfer the unemployed Europeans in Latin America in the 1930s.[14] This view led states to transpose to the regulation of societies a solution that was ever more frequently being applied to conflicts, in particular the series of Balkan wars that began in the last decades of the 19th century: massive population exchanges, of which the paradigmatic form – both a culmination and a lesson for the future – was carried out under the Greco-Turkish agreement of 1923.[15]

This new function attributed to emigration further complicated and sustained affected states' interest in it. An effort to reconcile promoting emigration's social and economic value while denouncing the enslavement of nationals who went abroad, turned emigration into a major political issue in Italy at the beginning of the 20th century, as well as in Sweden at the same time. The result was increased

Block (ed.), Dictionnaire de l'Administration française [French Administration Dictionary], Paris 1856, p. 744.

11 David Feldman, M. Page Baldwin, L'émigration et l'Etat britannique, 1818–1925 [Emigration and the British State, ca. 1818–1925], in: Green/Weil (see note 2), p. 159–179.

12 Christian Topalov, Naissance du chômeur [Birth of the Unemployed], 1880–1910, Paris 1994.

13 Corrie van Eijl, Leo Lucassen, Les Pays-Bas au-delà de leurs frontières, 1850–1940 [Holland Beyond the Borders: Emigration and the Dutch State 1850–1940], in: Green/Weil (see note 2), p. 181–199, here 184.

14 Paul-André Rosental, Géopolitique et Etat-Providence. Le Bureau International du Travail et la politique mondiale des migrations dans l'entre-deux-guerres [Geopolitics and the Welfare State. The International Labour Organisation and Global Migration Policy in the Interwar Period], in: Annales. Histoire, Sciences sociales 61/1 (2006), p. 99–134.

15 Renée Hirschon (ed.), Crossing the Aegean. An Appraisal of the 1923 Compulsory Population Exchange between Greece and Turkey, New York 2003.

interest in statistical recording, an enormously difficult task: like immigration, the registration of individuals as "emigrants" is based on intention – roughly, intending to settle abroad on a long-term basis. Leaving aside the most complex cases (cross-border migrants, for example), there is no guarantee that this intention will be interpreted in the same way in the country of emigration and that of immigration. Hence the consistency issues of measures that are taken. Just determining whether migrants have actually left is not straightforward either administratively or politically. In Italy at the beginning of 20th century, except for a minority of nationals who declared they had permanently settled abroad, emigrants continued to be included in the peninsula's official population, and were notably registered as part of the ... "stable population".[16]

All in all, the three intertwined types of difficulties – social, political, cognitive – raised by the definition of emigration lead to the state as a vantage point of observation. The state is not considered in an omnipotent, Promethean sense here – as some historians have tended to think, probably because they are caught up in the administrative origin of sources and the structuring of political discourse – but as a forum that brings to light the multiple interests and perspectives at work in civil society.

The State Tested by Emigration

Contrary to a widespread view that migration is an attribute par excellence of state determination, migration policy – here, immigration and emigration become symmetrical – is divisive within national administrations. Attempts at centralisation have been made, but they are generally short-lived, as attested in France recently with the quick disappearance of the (strongly controversial) Ministry of Immigration and National Identity, which was created in 2007 and eliminated in 2010 during the same Sarkozy presidency. One of the most long-lasting efforts was the Italian General Commission for Emigration, which reported directly to the President of the Council of Ministers and operated from 1901 to 1927; it was an example for many countries of emigration, as well as countries of immigration like France.

Comparative analysis shows that migration policy most often emerges from a combination of ministries with diverging interests within the state; the combination is different every time, but always very complex. In the 1920s the United Kingdom granted management of migration policy to an Aliens and Nationality Committee. The committee brought together the Home Office (equivalent to the Ministry of the Interior, which was dominant here) and a host of others, including representatives

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16 Caroline Douki, L'Etat libéral italien face à l'émigration de masse (1860–1914) [The Liberal Italian State and Mass Emigration, 1860–1914], in: Green/Weil (see note 2), p. 95–117, here 100.

from the Ministry of Labour, the Admiralty, the Colonial Office, Foreign Affairs, the Board of Trade (Ministry of Commerce), the War Office and the India Office. In addition, delegates from the Local Government Board (Ministry of relations between the central government and local communities) were included, as were delegates from the Customs and Excise department, which reports to Treasury.[17]

If emigration policy appears to be a prime example of the conflicts of interest within the state apparatus here, it is because an even greater diversity of private interests affected by migration was in fact represented by these administrations before the state. First among them were the powerful shipping companies, which were involved both as transporters of migrants and as employers of foreign crews. In the United Kingdom, like in Italy, Germany and the United States, shipping companies – in the same way as big labour-intensive industries like mining and steelmaking, or as financial companies involved in transferring funds from emigrants to their families (remittances) – brought their influence to bear on the administration and often even on migration legislation.

"To manage is to compromise", as a 19th century French administrative saying goes: this is where social history comes into play; not just that of individuals (who also play a role, since individual migrants' cases can set precedence,[18] or make headlines), but rather a broad social history of defining and representing collective interests. Far from portraying a unilateral desire for power or control, the study of migration policy, and emigration in particular, calls for a complex model of state action and effectiveness – a model that takes into account multiple actors who operate both in competition and in concert with one another. The historian Victor Pereira provided a fine example of this in Salazar's Portugal by showing how the head of state in theory acceded to landowner requests that emigration be prohibited to prevent agricultural wages from rising, but in practice tolerated it, fearing social pressures.[19] Mutatis mutandis, similar situations unfolded elsewhere, such as in the Junkers' reaction to agricultural emigration from Germany in the 1880s.[20]

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17 Caroline Douki, David Feldman, Paul-André Rosental, Pour une histoire relationnelle du ministère du Travail en France, en Italie et au Royaume-Uni dans l'entre-deux-guerres. Le transnational, le bilatéral et l'interministériel en matière de politique migratoire [A Relational History of the Ministry of Labour in France, Italy, and the United Kingdom in the Interwar Period. The Transnational, Bilateral, and Interdepartmental Dynamics of Migration Policy], in: Alain Chatriot, Odile Join-Lambert, Vincent Viet (ed.), Les politiques du Travail (1906–2006). Acteurs, institutions, réseaux [Labour Policies (1906–2006). Actors, Institutions, Networks], Rennes 2006, p. 143–159.

18 Andreas Fahrmeir, Citizens and Aliens. Foreigners and the Law in Britain and the German States, 1789–1870, New York 2000.

19 Victor Pereira, La Dictature de Salazar face à l'émigration. L'Etat portugais et ses migrants en France (1957–1974) [The Salazar Dictatorship and Emigration. The Portuguese State and its Migrants in France (1957–1974)], Paris 2012.

20 Donna R. Gabaccia, Dirk Hoerder, Adam Walaszek, Emigration et construction nationale en

Another important consideration related to Portuguese migrants regards their status: they were technically illegal in relation to both their home country and their country of arrival, France. However, this flow of workers from Catholic Europe was in fact welcomed by the gendarmerie with open arms in the 1970s, despite legislation prohibiting any national selection of immigrants.[21] In the two preceding decades, illegal Italian emigrants had left with the address of the French gendarmerie that would receive them in their hands.[22]

These apparent contradictions show how migration policy, due to its complexity, affects the organisation of the state itself by involving all of its sovereign parts (interior, justice with naturalisations, and also defence) while unleashing their contradictions. To deal with this, the state needs to find the right mix of actions. In terms of emigration, the goal is to find the right connection (or the right distance) with expatriates: financial ties through remittances, but also ties to military mobilisation if needed; civic ties, with the issue of expatriate voting; and finally, commercial ties, with lobbying for the dissemination of products from the country of origin.

Even the protection of nationals, which seems to go without saying, is affected by this search for the right balance. When Czechoslovakia negotiated a bilateral treaty with France in 1920, it had to perform a balancing act between overprotecting its migrants, thereby encouraging its skilled workers to leave en masse, and securing a less favourable status, which it believed would push them to seek naturalisation. The country feared that by diminishing its emigrants' prospects of returning, the latter choice would deter them from sending remittances to their relatives back home.[23]

Not only is the level of protection difficult to set and in need of constant adjustment, but it is also not entirely in the hands of emigration countries. The aforementioned diplomatic principle of reciprocity means these countries are partly dependent on decisions made by third countries, even in an area as sovereign as nationality law. The prime example, from the most important emigration country at the time, is no doubt an Italian law passed in 1912. The important changes it introduced – allowing both transalpine emigrants and their descendants to keep their nationality – did not exclusively result from internal political dynamics, but also to a large part were a response to external developments. Italy was particularly disturbed by the

Europe [Emigration and Nation Building during the Mass Migrations from Europe], in: Green/ Weil (see note 2), p. 67–94, here 72.

21 Patrick Weil, Racisme et discrimination dans la politique française de l'immigration, 1938–1945/ 1974–1995 [Racism and Discrimination in French Immigration Policy, 1938–1945/1974–1995], in: Vingtième Siècle 3 (1995), p. 77–102.

22 Cf. Sandro Rinauro, Il cammino della speranza. L'emigrazione clandestina degli Italiani nel secondo dopoguerra [The Path of Hope. Illegal Italian Emigration after World War II], Turin 2009.

23 Rosental (see note 6).

"accelerated" naturalisation policies that certain Latin American countries were implementing at the time.[24] Its move was not unprecedented: the 1909 reform of Chinese nationality law was a response to the Netherlands' extension of jus soli to its Asian colonies.[25] And Germany followed in the footsteps of these two countries in 1913.

From the genesis through implementation, it is striking how much the Italian law, notable for its consequences – an estimated 60 million people around the world could claim Italian nationality today under its extensive conception of blood rights – resulted less from a consensus that gradually emerged on a major national identity issue, and more from a contextual and fragile balancing act in a sensitive area; yet it remained in place throughout the 20th century. Placing the history of nationality and citizenship policy in a transnational framework thus profoundly shifts its terms. This history is not only about an abstract desire for power, or the creation of a national community's culture, it is also, and perhaps primarily, about an instrumental and contextual relationship based on a "search for the right distance". The staying power of the Italian law of 1912 can be attributed to the fact that the Italian State was able to use it in different contexts over time.

In the complex area of exploring how long connections are maintained with expatriates – a question that is equally applicable to the Chinese, the Germans, the Swiss and many others – I would once again caution against an approach to emigration policy that does not establish a basis for comparison with internal migrations. Indeed, it would be difficult to understand the specificity of a national link without first studying how, throughout modern Europe, parishes and municipalities treated emigrants who had become destitute, and worked with the emigrants, and amongst themselves, to secure assistance.[26] Also worth examining is how such a link allowed the emigrants, and sometimes their descendants, to maintain local citizenship. In rural areas, for example, this would have granted them collective property rights, such as the sharing of firewood and access to common goods. From a comparative perspective, it is important to take into account the political management of the local citizenship of emigrant villagers and city-dwellers before attempting to describe the advantages and obligations associated with the nationality. Consideration of this dynamic is especially important in the case of

24 Douki (see note 8).
25 Carine Pina-Guerassimoff, Eric Guerassimoff, Les "Chinois d'outre-mer" des années 1890 aux années 1990 [The "Overseas Chinese": The State and Emigration from the 1890s through the 1990s], in: Green/Weil (see note 2), p. 137–156, here 142 f.
26 Keith Snell, Parish and Belonging. Community, Identity and Welfare in England and Wales, 1700–1950, Cambridge 2006; James Stephen Taylor, The Impact of Pauper Settlement 1691–1834, in: Past and Present 73 (1976), p. 42–74; Anne Winter, Thijs Lambrecht, Migration, Poor Relief and Local Autonomy. Settlement Policies in England and the Southern Low Countries in the Eighteenth Century, in: Past and Present 218/1 (2013), p. 91–126.

Switzerland, where intertwining ties to local, cantonal and federal citizenship is both a case study of great intrinsic interest and a textbook case for thinking comparatively about the rights of emigrants.

The Homeland Constructed Through the Lens of Emigration

In this last section, I will examine the feedback loop between emigration and the countries of origin and of arrival. Historiography has widely highlighted the role that emigrant populations abroad have in many cases played in building a representation of national identity in the form of an imagined community.[27] Besides the research that has focused on the cultural aspect of the issue, that is, fostering a sense of belonging to the homeland through a whole set of representations, there have been some attempts to objectivize the perspective of migrants, and in particular to more precisely date when identification with a nation spreads, as this varies depending on the country of origin. Walker Connor's "When is a Nation?" article is a good example of this political anthropological approach. It analyses the origins that European migrants reported when they landed on the American continent: city, region or nation?[28]

More recently, Marco Rovinello explored the slippage between the notion of "nation", understood as a modern-era category used to classify populations, and that of "Nation", which is supposed to define the general sense of belonging to a homeland.[29] His pioneering study "strategically" focuses on a population – the French who settled in Naples between 1793 and 1860 – that was directly affected by the reformulation of the notion of citizenship after the 1789 Revolution. While showing the persistence, in the middle of the 19th century, of the historic notion of nation, the author captures its transformations by tracing the various ways in which the emigrant elite, consisting of merchants, became a part of the local economic fabric and used its links to France. The work is exemplary in its demonstration of the respective roles of emigrants and the country of origin, through its consular offices, in the construction of the Nation and of its limits.

Historiography has also looked at how emigrants fit into the political life of their country of origin, be it through their participation in elections or their financial support of parties or ideological movements – sometimes morphing into a form of remote nationalism, as was the case of the Irish in the United States, for example. Rather than

27 Manuela Martin (ed.), Migrazioni. Comunità e nazione [Migration. Community and Nation] (Memoria e Ricerca 8), Milan 1996.
28 Walker Connor, When is a Nation?, in: Ethnic and Racial Studies 13/1 (1990), p. 92–103.
29 Marco Rovinello, Cittadini senza nazione. Migranti francesi a Napoli (1793–1860) [Citizens without a Nation. French Migrants in Naples (1793–1860)], Florence 2009.

go over these well-known phenomena that contemporary historiography extends to the links between migration policy and defence policy,[30] I would like to underscore how they demonstrate the necessity of simultaneously considering the two asymmetrical and complementary perspectives of the country of origin and the country of arrival. For example, the concern expressed by French experts and public authorities in the 1930s about the rapid assimilation of Italian immigrants cannot be understood without reference to the fascist policy of maintaining control over emigrants.[31]

This is the point with which I would like to conclude by emphasising the role that emigration might play in the construction of rights, in particular social rights, both in the country of arrival and the country of origin. I will focus on migrants aiming to enter the labour market. They form a particular subset of migration flows that has grown over time, and especially in today's world. Foreign workers were initially excluded from the national social protection systems that were implemented from the end of the 19th century; they were included only after a diplomatic solution was found to overcome the asymmetry of flows that most often connect countries of immigration and countries of emigration. A 1904 Franco-Italian treaty served as a template here. It applied, to the regulation of human mobility, bargaining processes that are generally used in trade agreements to ensure reciprocity among parties. Italian emigrants in France were granted the right to protection, and in exchange Rome committed to developing domestic labour protection legislation. Thus, Italian businesses would indirectly be subject to costs that were deemed comparable to those levied on their cisalpine competitors.

From a historical perspective the treaty of 1904 paved the way for a series of bilateral agreements and international conventions, which the International Labour Organisation sponsored from 1919. This bilateral and transnational regulation affected the direction of labour flows[32] and, of course, the protection of migrant workers. But it also more generally affected the organisation of labour markets in the countries involved. In France for example, by formalising the skill level of migrants in demand, and by guaranteeing a salary level that unions in the host country would not be able

30 As Brigitte Studer demonstrates for interwar Switzerland. Cf. Brigitte Studer, "Ausländerfrage" zwischen miltärischem Sicherheitsdenken und rechtsstaatlichen Garantien zu Beginn des Zweiten Weltkriegs [The "Question of Foreigners" Between Military Security and Constitutional Principles at the Beginning of the Second World War], in: Etudes et Sources 29 (2003), p. 161–187.

31 As mentioned in Rosental (see note 14), p. 127, the French geographer Georges Mauco sought to alert his contemporaries to the instructions included in Italian passports: "[...] be sure to educate your children in an Italian school if possible. No Italian should renounce the privilege and consciousness of being Italian. He should make a point of buying Italian, using his native language, raising his children to be patriotic and teaching them the Italian language, history and geography."

32 Christoph Rass, Institutionalisierungsprozesse auf einem internationalen Arbeitsmarkt. Bilaterale Wanderungsverträge in Europa zwischen 1919 und 1974 [Institutionalising an International Labour Market. Bilateral Migration Agreements in Europe between 1919 and 1974], Paderborn 2010.

to denounce as dumping, it contributed to the emergence of new forms of wage regulation: the work contract, the minimum wage and the correspondence between certified skills and income.[33]

As the cause of emigrants was studied by social observers, and (unequally) defended by consulates, it helped raise awareness that "social issues" needed to be seriously considered: in 1900, this occurred on the issue of protecting Italian migrant children as well as in the case of Chinese coolies, whom Chinese consuls "discovered were suffering in connection with anti-Chinese measures" adopted by the United States.[34] Provided they are supported by proactive states or advocacy groups active in their country of origin, immigrants can play a role in improving social protection: this was common in the fight against occupational diseases, both in South Africa, which employed skilled British workers at the beginning of the 20th century, and in Belgium in the 1960s, with its Italian miners.[35]

To depict a process that historiography has long neglected does not imply subscribing to a linear vision of continuous progress in labour law through migration agreements. Indeed, everything depends on the attitude of emigration countries. Some, such as Morocco in the 1970s in relation to France, or states of the Indian subcontinent in relation to Gulf states nowadays, seek to export surplus labour by deliberately choosing *not* to support the demands of their nationals in their countries of settlement.

From a historiographical perspective, the study of international regulations on migration helps bring together two areas that have largely ignored one another: the history of international relations on the one hand, and social history on the other.[36] Stéphanie Leu has recently proposed using the term "bilateral state" to refer to the management (or rather co-management) by France and Switzerland of the populations they exchanged between the mid-19th century and the Second World War. The idea here is that multiple flows, varying with the migrants' social level, professional sector and status (salaried or self-employed), and regions of origin and arrival – with a separate regime for border zones – are captured by framework agreements of sorts that remain in place for decades, but that allow for day-to-day adjustments in light of the political or economic context and the type of migrants involved.[37]

33 Rosental (see note 6).
34 Guerassimoff/Guerassimoff (see note 25), p. 140.
35 Eric Geerkens, Quand la silicose n'était pas une maladie professionnelle. Genèse de la réparation des pathologies respiratoires des mineurs en Belgique (1927–1940) [When Silicosis was not an Occupational Disease. Genesis of Compensation for Miners with Respiratory Diseases in Belgium (1927–1940)], in: Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine 56/1 (2009), p. 127–141.
36 Madeleine Herren, Internationale Sozialpolitik vor dem Ersten Weltkrieg. Die Anfänge europäischer Kooperation aus der Sicht Frankreichs [International Social Policy Before the First World War. For France, the Beginning of European Cooperation], Berlin 1993, p. 140–145.
37 Stéphanie Leu, Les petits et les grands arrangements. L'Etat bilatéral: une réponse au défi quotidien de l'échange de populations: une histoire diplomatique de la migration et du droit des migrants entre France et Suisse; organisation, acteurs et enjeux (inter)nationaux, milieu du XIXe siècle–1939

Such approaches delve deeply into the history of the state and of nation building, while steering clear of an excessively evolutionary vision. In previous work I showed that the right of nationals to return to their country of origin was not a given, and had resulted from the first major transnational agreements on the treatment of destitute migrants that the German Confederation implemented in the mid-19th century.[38] Meanwhile, Stéphanie Leu has shown how the status of Jews in the Swiss Confederation was redefined in the 19th century under pressure from France. Political problems linked to emigration are often conducive to visible manifestations of national sovereignty, but depending on the situation, they may also reveal how states ascribe different degrees of desirability to their own populations, and contribute to establishing basic citizenship rights.

[The Little and the Large Arrangements. The Bilateral State: A Response to the Daily Challenges of the Exchange of Population: A Diplomatic History of Migration and the Rights of Migrants between France and Switzerland; (Inter)national Organisations, Actors and Issues, Mid-19th century–1939], PhD thesis, Berne 2012.

38 Rosental (see note 6).