stunning popularity, including in parts of Latin America and in Scandinavia. Often, it is the more philosophy- and theory-inclined form of conceptual history à la Koselleck that predominates there. Nygaard's study can be seen in that tradition. It has a number of highly stimulating references to theoretical debates from Bloch to Adorno, Traverso to Bensaïd, and Koselleck to Rüsen. Yet, for an extended historization of Marxism, which Nygaard's calls for and which, as he says, should include "historical cultures" – and, for that matter, institutions, individual, and collective biographies, varying media, etc. – his study remains too closely tied to a limited number of published texts and a selected number of authors. Certainly, Nygaard offers important, decentred variations to the standard ensemble of authors by introducing, for instance, Gustav Bang, a Danish Marxist emblematic of the thousands of non-remembered labour-movement intellectuals of that period, who moved in the "middling league" and often engaged in popularization (as Nygaard shows, even from such "mediocre" popularization rather complex nuances in historical narratives can be teased out). Still, the broader interplay between "ideas", "actors", and "social movements" remains under-explored. This is less a critique than a self-critical reflection (including by me). Whatever the methodological claims and hopes for an extended, integrative view, most of those doing studies in the history of Marxism still stick close to published texts and add some contextual information. That begs the question what research designs, methods, and materials would allow for a much broader view, better able to add depth to the notion of "historical cultures". In the meantime, Nygaard's study has already given us a firm sense that, in the decades following the death of Marx, the "shoals" of emerging Marxism were moving, to a stunningly high degree, in the compact and elusive waters of "history".

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Russo, Giusi. Women, Empires, and Body Politics at the United Nations, 1946–1975. [Expanding Frontiers: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Studies of Women, Gender, and Sexuality.] University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln (NE) 2023. xiii, 287 pp. Ill. $99.00. (Paper, E-book: $30.00.)

It is well known that, in the last four or five decades, women's rights have received increasing attention in human rights discourse, as well as within international organizations. How and when this emphasis on gender in human rights came about, however, remains partially obscured. Giusi Russo's book on the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), founded in 1946, now provides us with better knowledge on the early stages of the development of women's rights as human rights.

Women, Empires, and Body Politics at the United Nations, 1946–1975 discusses the CSW through the lens of postcolonialism and "body politics" – or "embodiment politics", as formulated in work by the sociologist Vrushali Patil, who studies bodies as "metaphors of order and disorder". Patil and Russo highlight how power makes some identities into – often disembodied – subjects, while others are designated as embodied and disorderly and not considered as full citizens. On the one hand, this theoretical framework fits the study of the CSW: it highlights the power of discourses on gender and it convincingly shows that these discourses frequently revolve around Othering, mostly laying bare a dichotomy between Western women and women from the Global South, discursively depicted as "backward" or "underdeveloped", as gender and postcolonial scholars such as Chandra Mohanty and Gayatri Spivak have demonstrated. Russo's book convincingly depicts the enormous power of language in framing human rights. On the other hand, the lens of "body politics" is a somewhat anachronistic one, since this study of the CSW interestingly shows that the body actually only became a structural category of inquiry in women's rights from the mid-1960s. It is rather the origins of the trope of the body in UN politics, its politicization, that this book traces, as the author also notes when referring to the "history of body politics" in encounters between the Western world and the Global South.

The book clearly shows how the discussion on women's rights shifts in emphasis in the decades after World War II. At the first plenary meeting of the new United Nations Organization in London in 1946, United States representative, former first lady, and human rights activist Eleanor Roosevelt, together with other female delegates, delivered a speech known as the "letter to the women of the world", aiming to encourage women's participation in the work of the UN. Roosevelt set the tone for the early rhetoric of women's rights: because of women's contribution to the war effort and post-war reconstruction, they now also deserved civil and political rights in the nation state. This early emphasis on political rights and equality, as evidenced in the 1952 Convention on the Political Rights of Women, as well as on equal access to education, gave way to economic rights (equal pay for equal work), marriage practices, and later cultural customs, just as the initial focus on human rights as instruments against the abuse by nation states was overtaken by an emphasis on discrimination in the private sphere. Part of this shift included a stronger focus on the Global South in relation to development and modernization.

One of the transitionary moments in these shifts was the petition on young women's "trafficking", presented by a Roman Catholic NGO, St. Joan's International Alliance, to the UN Trusteeship Council in 1947. The NGO attacked the "scandalous" practice in the British Cameroons of girls being taken away from their families to be betrothed to the native ruler, the Fon of Bikom. This petition would set the CSW's agenda for the next fifteen years, Russo argues, the CSW's commissioners now turning to the themes of free consent to marriage, polygamy, and bodily integrity. Women's bodies were central to these issues and these women's rights became barometers of countries' progress and development. From the mid-1960s, reproduction and family planning – for which women were mostly made responsible – took centre stage for the commission, and already in 1958 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) was discussed, although initially euphemistically

referred to as "ancient customs" or "ritual operations". Whereas the CSW saw these ritual practices as an abuse of women's rights and human dignity, the World Health Organization (WHO) regarded them as a "cultural practice", rather than a medical issue, and thus beyond the remit of the WHO's research. As Russo shrewdly points out, discussion that took place at the UN between 1950 and 1970 never connected FGM to its impact on female sexuality only to women's physical pain. Similarly, in the debates over population control and demography the female body was an asexual body.

Central to all these shifts, as Russo emphasizes, was decolonization and development, including the Othering of women from the Global South. These processes, importantly, were also entangled with the Cold War, with Soviet delegates presenting themselves as champions of women's equality and pointing to the US's discrimination of African American men and women at home, and thus attacking the American self-righteous claims to human rights. The bodies of women of the Global South became the terrain where ideology was fought. In this respect, the book interestingly pays attention to the role of "fact-finding" and information in the CSW and other UN bodies: commissioners continually accused each other of using figures as propaganda. The US State Department wanted to limit the role of the CSW to that of a research committee rather than an influential mediating body, since the Americans did not want the CSW to meddle in national affairs. Russo furthermore addresses the role of knowledge-making when discussing how commissioners from the Global North often appropriated the voices of women from the Global South, termed by the author as the "epistemic violence of representation".

Although the text's somewhat dense style and sometimes unclear structure mean that it is not always easy to read, this book is valuable because it covers the early history of women's rights and their entanglement with world and body politics, particularly with decolonization. It is a pity, therefore, that these important findings are not discussed by the author in relation to the growing historiography on human rights. Russo's thought-provoking argument that many of these early accomplishments in the field of human rights have been obscured because of the attention paid to the 1975 International Women's Year might have been taken one step further, to counter Samuel Moyn's argument, in his famous book *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History*, that it was only in the 1970s that human rights really took off. Moyn's book refers to women's rights only in one sentence, stating that they "were not a significant part of human rights consciousness in developed countries during its 1970s inception in spite of an exploding domestic and international women's movement".[1] Yet, as Russo shows, already in the early 1950s women from the colonial world strategically appropriated the language of "human rights of women", and since its foundation the CSW aimed to put women's rights on the (UN) human rights agenda, even when these attempts did not always succeed.

In addition, one wonders how different strands of feminism impacted the CSW: cursory mention is made of the second feminist wave impacting the Second Development Decade between 1970–1980 and of "feminism" becoming a hate word, implying unruly behaviour for women from the Global North and a

[1]Samuel Moyn, *The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History* (Cambridge, MA, and London, 2010), p. 223.

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dangerous leaning toward the West for women in the Global South, but actual intellectual routes and exchanges between feminist scholars or protesters and the CSW remain hidden. Still, the book accurately excavates the roots of the ongoing clashes between rights and cultural relativism and the complicated history of defining equality and women's rights in a decolonizing world.

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In Search of the Global Labor Market. Ed. by Ursula Mense-Petermann, Thomas Welskopp, and Anna Zaharieva. [Studies in Critical Social Sciences, Vol. 219.] Brill, Leiden and Boston (MA) 2022. xvii, 305 pp. € 152.60. (E-book: € 152.60.)

The title of this book, *In Search of the Global Labor Market*, implies both a question and a process. The question of what constitutes a global labour market is the starting point of a collective process in which various aspects of the subject are examined more closely. The volume presents the outcome of the discussions and exchange between an international and interdisciplinary group of researchers who met in residence at the Zentrum für interdisziplinäre Forschung (Centre for Interdisciplinary Research, ZiF) at the University of Bielefeld, Germany, from October 2017 to July 2018. The theme of the project was "In Search of the Global Labour Market: Actors, Structures and Policies", and it was organized around three core questions: What is labour? What are markets? What is global? It comes as no surprise that the book does not claim to deliver final and definitive answers, but rather illuminates the complexities of the questions and intends to stimulate further research. The book is dedicated to a co-editor of the volume, Thomas Welskopp, a distinguished German historian in the field of labour and social history and a driving force behind the project to set up the ZiF research group on border-crossing labour markets. Sadly, he passed away before publication.

The editors warn the reader in their introduction that: "The title of this book […] may be read as a provocation. Even the staunchest adherents to the pure neoliberal creed would probably concede that the plural 'markets' would be more accurate" (p. 2). The starting point of the project was the observation that global labour markets play a prominent role in historical and social science research, but that the underlying concept of what constitutes a global labour market had received little explicit attention to date. By putting global labour markets (plural!) centre stage, the volume wants to contribute to closing this research gap.

The book is organized in four parts, comprising fourteen studies of differing scope and interest. Each chapter is characterized by an extensive knowledge of the relevant academic literature and sources. All sixteen contributors are linked to academic institutions in Western Europe, including nine from Germany, three each from