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# South Africa's Labor Empire

A History of Black Migrancy  
to the Gold Mines

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CAPE TOWN

# Contents

<i>List of Tables and Illustrations</i>	vii
<i>List of Acronyms and Abbreviations</i>	xi
<i>Preface</i>	xiii
<b>1 Migrancy in Context, 1890–1990</b>	<b>1</b>
The Historical Context, 4	
The Contemporary Context, 13	
<b>2 The Foundations of Northern Expansion, 1920–1948</b>	<b>33</b>
Northern Expansion, 33	
Migrancy and the Economics of Miners' Health, 41	
WNLA's Empire, 45	
WNLA in the Northern Territories, 48	
Northern Hegemony, 50	
<b>3 South African Recruiting: Crisis and Recovery, 1946–1965</b>	<b>55</b>
The 1946 Strike and the Tropical Labor Strategy, 56	
The Postwar Domestic Labor Crisis, 61	
The Opening of the OFS Mines and the Stabilization Experiment, 76	
<b>4 White Labor and the Color Bar, 1945–1987</b>	<b>79</b>
The Mines and the Color Bar, 1902–1939, 80	
The Mine Workers' Union and the Defense of White Privilege, 1945–1987, 82	
Racial Privilege and Worker Safety, 99	

<b>5</b>	<b>The Sourcing of Foreign Labor, 1973-1990</b>	<b>101</b>
	The End of Empire, 104	
	Industry and State, 110	
	Sourcing and Symbiosis, 114	
	The Supplier States: Toward a Labor OPEC? 121	
<b>6</b>	<b>Mine Labor Mobilization in South Africa, 1974-1980</b>	<b>127</b>
	Attracting Domestic Labor, 129	
	The Conflict Resumes, 138	
	Wedded to the Factories, 145	
<b>7</b>	<b>The Social Impact of Labor Stabilization, 1980-1990</b>	<b>151</b>
	Instability Within the System: The 1970s, 152	
	Stability Within the System: The 1980s, 157	
	Waiting for Work, 162	
	Toward Stabilization, 167	
<b>8</b>	<b>The Struggle for Black Miners' Rights, 1973-1990</b>	<b>177</b>
	A Crisis of Control, 1971-1982, 180	
	Institutionalizing Conflict, 186	
	The NUM as a Migrant Union, 194	
	Migrancy and Mass Dismissals, 198	
<b>9</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>203</b>
	<i>Notes</i>	213
	<i>Statistical Appendix</i>	229
	<i>Bibliography</i>	239
	<i>About the Book and Authors</i>	251
	<i>Index</i>	253

# Tables and Illustrations

## *Tables*

1.1	South African gold output, 1970–1989	18
1.2	Average wages of black mineworkers, 1970–1987	19
1.3	Major gold producers, 1983–1986	20
3.1	Employment, production, and working profits, South African gold mines, 1960–1970	75
4.1	White and black mine labor, 1940–1953	83
4.2	White and black mineworkers' wages, 1945–1960	86
5.1	Foreign labor by mine, 1972 and 1984	102
5.2	Proportion of foreign labor employed by mining group, 1972–1985	116
5.3	Sources of novice workers, 1978–1985	119
5.4	Mine deferred pay and remittances by country, 1975–1989	123
6.1	Black unemployment in South Africa, 1970–1981	130
6.2	Proportion of miners with previous employment experience by sector, 1976	130
6.3	Domestic sources of labor, 1970–1978	132
6.4	Districts of origin of South African mineworkers, 1970	139
6.5	Urban recruits, 1975–1982	146
6.6	Urban recruiting by city, 1973–1984	147
7.1	Categories of recruited labor, 1978–1987	156
7.2	Contract lengths of mine recruits, 1981–1987	160
7.3	Skill levels of black miners, 1960–1990	168
7.4	Married accommodation units, Anglo American mines, 1975–1985	171
7.5	Attitudes of mineworkers toward stabilization, Anglo American mines, 1986	174

8.1	Recognized NUM membership by mining group, August 1985 and March 1987	188
8.2	Recognized NUM membership in Anglo American mines, 1986 and 1988	189
8.3	Mine mortality by cause of death, 1945-1984	194
8.4	Recognized NUM membership by geographical area, Anglo American mines, 1988	196
A.1	South African gold mines: production (1985) and employment (January 1986 and July 1988)	229
A.2	Gold mine minimum monthly wage by job grade and mining group, 1986	231
A.3	Sources of mine labor, black workers received by mines, 1920-1989	232
A.4	Sources of mine labor, average number of black workers employed, 1920-1989	234
A.5	Mine labor recruits by source area, 1973-1985	236

### Figures

	Location map of major South African mines	xviii
1.1	World gold production, 1960-1986	2
1.2	Black miners in gold mines, 1920-1988	9
1.3	Gold price, 1970-1986	17
2.1	Major migration routes to South African gold mines, 1940-1970	35
2.2	The rise and decline of tropical labor, 1935-1980	38
2.3	WNLA recruiting operations in tropical areas, 1945-1970	40
3.1	Major sources of mine labor, 1940-1960	56
3.2	South African mine labor, 1940-1960	60
3.3	South African employment, 1933-1955	62
4.1	Mine wages, 1940-1958	84
4.2	White mining employees, 1930-1969	85
5.1	Proportion of foreign labor, 1960-1989	104
5.2	Foreign migrants to South African gold mines, 1970-1985	107
5.3	Composition of labor force by mining house, 1985	115

5.4	South African and foreign labor skill levels, Anglo American mines, 1985	118
6.1	South African labor in mines, 1970–1988	128
6.2	TEBA recruiting network, 1980	134
6.3	Urban centers and experimental recruiting districts	137
7.1	Nonrecruited mine labor, 1970–1985	153
7.2	Mine labor turnover, 1970–1985	155
7.3	“Deserters” from mines, 1970–1984	158
7.4	Novice recruitment, 1970–1984	159
7.5	Places of employment of Basotho mineworkers, 1985	170
8.1	NUM members by mining group, July 1988	190
8.2	Proportion of NUM members by mining house, August 1985 and July 1988	191
8.3	NUM members by job grade, Anglo American mines, July 1988	193

*Photos, following page 150*

Crown Mines, Johannesburg, South Africa’s largest producer of gold before the 1950s.

Black miners drilling gold reef in narrow underground stope, ca. 1920s.

Black miners with white supervisor in stope, ca. 1920s.

Miner at stope face.

Turn-of-the-century mine compound on the Witwatersrand.

Inside a mine compound, ca. 1920s.

William Gemmill, the Chamber’s “labor czar.”

Beginning in the 1950s, a fleet of WLNA DC-3s was used to maintain a regular service for picking up migrants from throughout the northern zones.

Mine compound at Harmony Mine, Orange Free State, built in the early 1950s; the distinctive panopticon characterizes many compounds of the period.

Modern mine hostel complex, Elandsrand Mine, built in the 1970s.

Modern Johannesburg, with mine headgear in foreground.

Life President Hastings Banda of Malawi addresses five thousand Malawian miners at Western Deep Levels Mine on a visit to South Africa in 1971.

Unemployed workers wait for mine jobs outside a fortified recruiting office in rural Natal.

Part of a crowd of fifteen thousand miners gathered at the Jabulani Amphitheatre, Soweto, for the 1987 Annual Congress of the National Union of Mineworkers.

A delegate to the 1987 Congress remembers the 1946 mine strike.

Defiant miners dismissed during the last days of the 1987 strike.

NUM leaders Marcel Golding, Cyril Ramaphosa, and James Motlatsi at a press conference during the 1987 strike.