

# Ambivalent Solidarities? Migrant Labour and Trade Unions in South Africa, The United States and Sweden

Seminar on Zoom, REMESO

16 Februari, 2021, 15-17 CET; 16-18 SAT; 14-16 GMT, 9-11 NYT.

Migration is a critical constituent in the institutionalisation of vulnerability and insecurity. The “migrant question” is central for rethinking the future of democracy, collective subjects and citizenry threatened by populist politics that have deserted visions of solidarity, equality, and social justice. This poses a challenge for the international trade union movement, confronted by a vindictive neoliberalism on the one hand and a truculent xenophobia on the other. But it also posits opportunities for new collective agency and transversal solidarity, transcending racialised divides, institutional domains, and securitized national boundaries. Presenting cases from South Africa, the United States and Sweden, the seminar aims to elucidate, often ambivalent, approaches of unions to the social struggles of migrants and racialised minorities, contesting the precarisation of labour, exclusion from human and citizenship rights, criminalisation of being, and restriction of movement. Using examples from different social and political contexts it offers theoretical and empirical elucidation of the variable embeddedness of contemporary labour movements, of their sources of legitimacy, and of possibilities for vertical and horizontal alliances across space and scale.

## Presenters

Dr Janet Munakamwe, Visiting Senior Lecturer at Wits Mining Institute, and affiliated to the African Centre for Migration & Society, University of the Witwatersrand  
*Rethinking Union Strategies in a Post Migrant Labour Regime: The Case of the Hospitality Sector in Johannesburg, South Africa*

Els de Graauw, Associate Professor, Baruch College-CUNY  
and Shannon Gleeson, Associate Professor, Cornell University, New York  
*Labor Unions and Undocumented Immigrants: Local Perspectives on Transversal Solidarity during DACA and DAPA*

Anders Neergaard, Professor, REMESO, Linköping University  
*Workers, migrant statuses, and racialization in Sweden: Theorising trade union solidarities*

## Commentators

Bridget Anderson, Professor, Mobilities and Citizenship, University of Bristol

Ronaldo Munck, Professor of Sociology, Dublin City University

## Moderator

Carl-Ulrik Schierup, Professor Emeritus, REMESO, Linköping University

## Join Zoom Meeting

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