

— Chapter 1 —

SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONES

The Global Frontlines of Neoliberalism's Value Regime

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Introduction

The continued rise in the number of Special Economic Zones (SEZs) is one of the defining characteristics of the world economy after the global financial crash of 2007/8. In 2006, one year before the crisis began, researchers from the International Labor Organization (ILO) counted more than 3,500 zones in more than 130 nations with around 66 million workers employed in zone factories (Boyenge 2007). Thirteen years later, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development's (UNCTAD) *World Investment Report* (WIR), a lead document in international economic development policy, ran with the subtitle *Special Economic Zones*, and gave the numbers at 5,400 zones in 147 nations, with more than 100 million workers in 2018.

Promoting “greater participation in global value chains” as an antidote to low Gross Domestic Products and low per capita incomes, the WIR expressed pleasure that five hundred more SEZs were in planning, and declared SEZs as the way forward for developing nations seeking to increase foreign direct investment (FDI) and export earnings (UNCTAD 2019: iv). A year later, the World Bank's *World Development Report 2020* (WDR) sang from the same hymn sheet. Subtitled *Trading for Development in the Age of Global Value Chains*, the WDR championed the global outsourcing of production in SEZs, with the latter lauded as “islands of excellence” where national governments provide “the resources needed” by foreign investors (labor,

land, water, electricity, and telecommunications) to operate without the “burdensome rules for business” otherwise present in national laws (World Bank 2020: 6, 46).

Looking back at the historical development of SEZs, the WIR and the WDR are part of a constant “research” promotion for SEZs from World Bank and United Nations agencies as well as from private sector corporations like KPMG and PricewaterhouseCoopers (Akinci and Crittle 2008; Currie 1979; Economist 2015; Farole and Moberg 2014; UNIDO 1978; World Bank 1992). Such “research” also stood at the cradle of the world’s first SEZ-style program, implemented in the US-dependency Puerto Rico, where the Boston-based consultancy corporation Arthur D. Little (ADL) recommended government subsidies to attract mainland manufacturing capital with tax and customs holidays, lax labor laws, and government-guaranteed profit margins, while US Treasury Department research claimed that Puerto Rico would be unable to sustain itself as a sovereign nation without US-mainland access. From the 1950s to the 2000s, a constant influx of other private sector consultancy companies, politicians and bureaucrats from the rapidly growing number of postcolonial nations, new United Nations agencies, and declining Western imperial powers joined the motley crew of ADL, US-American government agencies, and Puerto Rican politicians to spread the SEZ model across the geopolitical divides of the Cold War and its aftermath to feed the desire for capital to produce high profit margins (Neveling 2015a, 2015b).

Against the seven decades of pro-SEZ ‘research’ output, several ethnographies document worker struggles against abusive labor regimes, huge profits for zone factories, uneven and combined world-market incorporation, gendered exploitation, and the plight of migrant labor in the zone’s spheres of influence (Campbell 2018; Heyman 1991; Prentice 2015; Wright 2006; Yelvington 1995).¹ Criticism also comes from local and international trade unions, political parties, global movements such as the anti-sweatshop campaign, and researchers from the ILO. At times, even US Senate subcommittees and UN organizations have reported about workers’ rights violations, and criticized the global race to the bottom in wages and working conditions as well as tax evasion by multinational corporations in the world’s zones (Chisolm et al. 1986; ILO 1998; Marhoz and Szymanski 1996; Select Committee 1953; World Bank 1992).

This chapter develops a theoretical and ethnographic paradigm for an anthropology of SEZs as frontlines of neoliberalism’s global value regime, based on twelve years of research on the global historical anthropology of SEZs. A key finding from that research was

that the zones operate with a dual surplus extraction mechanism. On the one hand, national and regional governments cover capital's reproduction costs via the provision of material and immaterial zone infrastructure. On the other hand, an ever-increasing number of zones competing for investment facilitates a hypermobility of capital, which makes it easy to find and exploit ever new cohorts of workers, and diminishes the latter's organizational power (Neveling 2014a, 2015c, 2017b, 2017c, 2020). Linking this to Don Kalb's framework for an anthropology of value that combines a dialectical and a historical perspective (Kalb, Introduction), the following section establishes a theoretical framework that places the SEZ value regime in the wider operations of the capitalist world-system. Understanding SEZs as integral components of that world-system overcomes mainstream anthropology's long-standing orientalist framing of non-Western populations as untouched by capitalism's singular value regime. Returning to the two key components of the SEZ value regime, section three provides a paradigm for ethnographies of exploitation and public asset-stripping in the zones. The following sections on SEZs as "no islands of history" and on gendered exploitation in the zones exemplify the theoretical and ethnographic approaches based on recent published works.

Theorizing the SEZ Value Regime as a Component of the Capitalist World-System

Special Economic Zones have transformed environments and communities across the globe, and contributed to the neoliberal globalization of manufacturing, services, and supply chains. Expenses for the setup and operations of the zones are covered by national governments, and backed with loans from leading lenders in international economic development. As nation-states waive most rights for tribute collections so that a range of taxes and customs for imports, exports, capital gains, and capital repatriations do not apply in the zones, other revenue streams from leasing factory spaces to collecting income taxes from zone workers become crucial (Neveling 2017b). Zone operations and zone openings thus require a powerful credo, which claims that developing nations with abundant labor supply and low wages will attract manufacturing relocations from advanced capitalist nations as soon as they invest in the construction of industrial zones and factory buildings, and set up development banks, planning boards, zone authorities, and other institutions catering

for investors. Zone operations will create a high-skilled labor force, technology transfers, and new industries so that ‘developing nations’ turn into ‘newly industrialized countries’ (NICs) and move from low-wage manufacturing to higher value-added production (Doucette and Park 2019; Fröbel, Heinrichs, and Kreye 1981; Hsu, Gimm, and Glassman 2018; Neveling 2021; Park 2005; Sklair 1986).

The ideological power of that credo has withstood many challenges since the 1940s. Zone workers and trade unions have organized strikes and riots, nationally and internationally. The anti-sweatshop movement of the 1990s and 2000s mobilized consumers across the globe against the labor relations in the zones. Numerous independent researchers and university scholars have pointed out in unison how most regions and nations remain stuck in the sweatshop phase of SEZ manufacturing, how the zones establish gendered super-exploitation with wages insufficient to cover the reproduction costs of workers, and how the zones promote runaway factories that roam the globe’s SEZs in search of ever-new tax breaks, lower wages, and workers without collective bargaining rights. International human rights and workers’ rights organizations have listed how corporations and governments have murdered trade unionists, and how a lack of health and safety checks cause industrial accidents such as the Rana Plaza building collapse, which killed more than a thousand workers in a Bangladesh bonded warehouse zone factory in the 2010s (Asia Monitor Resource Center 1998; Baird and McCaughan 1979; Chisolm et al. 1986; Marhoz and Szymanski 1996; Panimbang 2017).

As the number of zones rises unabatedly, it is paramount to highlight the irrationality and absurdity of the value regimes that ‘native’ ruling classes of the neoliberal world-system front in their pro-SEZ propaganda. Anthropologies of value commonly consider hope and dignity among subalterns across the globe as their fields of study and theorizing (Graeber 2001; Narotzky and Besnier 2014). SEZs instead are fields that first and foremost articulate the hopes and desires of a transnational capitalist class of CEOs of multinational corporations like H&M, Apple, Samsung, and IKEA, including their supporters such as World Bank officials, consultants at PricewaterhouseCoopers, journalists at *The Economist*, orthodox economists, and national governments.

Framing SEZs as frontlines in neoliberalism’s global value regime requires a dialectical and a historical perspective (Kalb, Introduction) that links anthropology’s long-standing empirical focus on ‘plural values’ (people’s preferences and attachments) with Marxian critical political economy analyses of ‘singular’ value (human labor

expended for commodity production and capital accumulation). The aim is thus to show how middle-managers doing the legwork have translated the value regimes of the members of a transnational capitalist class into ideologies and materialities that shape the exploitation of workers in factories, and of national economies that have financed zone establishment and subsidized zone operations since the 1940s. Such an analysis establishes an anthropology of value that acknowledges the reality of many millions of workers and their households toiling away in thousands of zones spread across the vast majority of the world's nation-states, and who are central to the global workings of neoliberal capitalism.

A first step toward realizing this project is to overcome a fundamental mistake at the cradle of economic anthropology, which assumes a substantial difference between the value theories of political economists and the lived values of the subject populations of anthropological research. David Graeber, for example, endorses Bronislaw Malinowski's complaint in *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* that the value models of classical economics offered nothing to explain the behavior of the Trobriand islanders (Graeber 2001: 6). From Malinowski to Graeber, mainstream anthropologists have ignored the capitalist world-system's powerful presence in the lives of the subject populations of anthropological research. This ignorance maintains anthropology's Western imperialist Herderian ideology of cultures as genuine, distinct, authentic social structures, which, in the case at hand, pretends that the models and praxis of classical economics—or, in later and contemporary instances, neo-classical and neoliberal economics—had no relevance for the lives and value regimes of the world's 'cultures.'² This is despite detailed research showing how centuries of colonialism and imperialism, slavery and indenture, have violently incorporated the world population into capitalism's value regimes (Meillassoux 1981; Mintz 1985; Wolf [1982] 1997).

How then, can we turn around the colonial and imperialist thrust in anthropology's theoretical repertoire to consider instead the grim political economy of global capitalism and manufacturing in SEZs in postcolonial nations? One viable alternative to anthropology's chimeric of a "social life of things" that captures the impact of things as commodities on social life (Friedman 1991) is Christopher Gregory's insistence on values' quality to "describe and prescribe." Thus, with a nod to Marx and Engels, people are "both subjects and makers of the values that guide human actions and influence human destiny" (Gregory 1997: 5). I now translate these insights into a world-systemic

approach to the frontlines of value, because this is the location where SEZs operate.

In the capitalist world-system, it is clearly the capitalists who own and control the powerful material structures that shape everyday lives. These structures comprise the ‘classical’ locations of the capitalist world-system’s economic base in agriculture, manufacturing industries, resource extraction, transport, and services, but they also, as a rule, capture the ‘peak locations’ of the world-system’s superstructure in international organizations, universities, think tanks, and so on. These locations not only plan, produce, and review the operations of the economic base but they also provide the ontologies and epistemologies—that is, the ‘plural values’—for a singular value regime of exploitation in SEZs and elsewhere against oppositional movements that demand decent work and a fair distribution of wealth. The dual control of economic base and superstructure is what enables capitalists to impose their mode of production on others (Neveling 2017c).

In other words, mainstream anthropology’s orientalist insistence that there is a realm of plural values outside of capitalism collapses as soon as the discipline’s empirical focus shifts toward historical realism along the lines formulated by Gavin Smith and others (Smith 2014). The theoretical base for a frontlines of value analysis of SEZs is the fact that the capitalist world-system combines a singular value regime at its economic base, the sphere of production and exchange, and a plural value regime at its superstructure, while the two are mediated by a sphere of planning, evaluation, and ideological policing. The following section will expand on the analytical details for an anthropology of the frontlines of value in SEZs.

Exploitation Projects and Public Asset-Stripping as Key Ethnographic Aspects

SEZs are costly endeavors, as they require planning, lobbying, legislation, promotion, oversight, policing, and more. As objects and subjects of ethnographic research, SEZs are akin to the “project[s] in the model[s]” that Susana Narotzky discusses with reference to the real-world articulations of exchange practices and their abstraction for comparison in the anthropologists’ theoretical model (Narotzky 2007). Expanding on this, it is important to highlight that the ‘natives’ of our SEZ ethnographies have their own projects to strive for. Whereas a group of Graeberians may come home from an Occupy

protest and, fueled with an imaginary Maussian communitarianism, may say, “let’s have reciprocal exchanges,” those who set up SEZs may have a “native’s point of view” (Neveling 2015a) that says, “let’s create the most profitable environment for investors, and make sure a few rewards end up in our pockets as well.”

Most such utterances come from natives who are middle-managers supporting and executing transnational ruling-class interests and value regimes in the capitalist world-system. Mainstream and anti-Marxist anthropologists have hardly ever considered these middle-managers’ operations. Following the lead of publications like James Ferguson’s *Anti-Politics Machine*, they ignore the power of ruling-class value regimes, and instead attribute superior channeling power to discursive developmentalist regimes. This ignores the agency of developers, promoters, and guardians of the SEZ value regime (Neveling 2017c), and fails to identify who is responsible for investor profits, workers’ poverty, and government bankruptcy. All the while, the centrality of (super-)exploitation of workers as the first core project in the SEZ regime is evident in the cumulative, cross-regional, and transhistorical knowledge from critical ethnographies that have recorded and analyzed racist, orientalist, and sexist discrimination against mainly young women workers in the zones (for the comparison see Neveling 2021; and for examples from zones in Malaysia, Mexico, and elsewhere, see Chisolm et al. 1986; Fernández-Kelly 1983; Yelvington 1995).

The second core project in the SEZ value regime is to convert public wealth into private wealth via tax and customs waivers and other substantial state-subsidies for investors. Across all zones, past and present, governments invest substantial sums in industrial infrastructure. The construction of industrial estates in 1970s Mauritius, funded with World Bank loans shouldered by the state but organized and overseen by a mostly private-sector-controlled Development Bank of Mauritius, is a paradigmatic example. Somewhat unusual was that when the Mauritian state defaulted in the late 1970s, around 18.5 percent of national debt was from World Bank loans for SEZ construction. In many other nations, SEZs have been conditions in World Bank and IMF structural adjustment programs *after* default (Neveling 2017c, 2018a). Significant expenses contrast with no income from capital gains tax, corporation taxes, or taxation on capital repatriation; and no income from customs duties on the import and export of raw materials, machinery, and more. Although states seem to believe that investors would be happy to pay such tributes when so-called tax holidays end after five to ten years, most investors

end their operations when these deadlines are approaching. Their unwillingness to reciprocate is written in bold letters all over the history of FDI in SEZs: starting in 1950s Puerto Rico and running all the way through to 2000s Mauritius, too many companies ceased operations a few days before tax holidays expired, some reopening days later under new names with a fresh start on the waiver schemes (Neveling 2015b).

Adding to these indirect subsidies from the non-collection of tributary payments are so-called one-stop-shops that hothouse applications for zone manufacturing through approval stages, and offer marketing at international trade fairs and more. The most extreme cases of public wealth transfers to corporate entities are guaranteed profit margins and direct subsidies per job created, as in the infamous Wisconsin-based Foxconn factory negotiated by former US president, Donald Trump. The local state fronted around \$400 million in expenses for land purchases and industrial infrastructure, and agreed to tax subsidies in exchange for a \$10 billion investment in a 20 million-square-foot manufacturing complex that should have created thirteen thousand jobs. Estimates for direct government subsidies ranged between \$200,000 and \$1 million per job created (against a US average of \$24,000 in subsidies per job created), with the State of Wisconsin only breaking even on revenue generated by that investment in 2043 at the earliest. In 2019, however, Foxconn employed just over two hundred workers and had constructed a fraction of the factory space promised. The project is now buried, and most of the money is gone.³

Labor exploitation and public asset-stripping are the key components of the value regime that attracts investors to the zones. Our next step in developing a paradigm for an ethnography of SEZs as frontlines in neoliberalism's global value regime captures how international organizations, national governments and ministries, and policy advisers and consultants have been designing the zones to deliver these key components since the late 1940s. Moving forward academically means to scale up empirical findings from ethnographic research on SEZs to advance anthropological theories; and in particular, theories on the uneven global class formation of the post-1945 world-system. This conversion task from ethnography to anthropological theory is completed once we combine the value theory of public asset-stripping with earlier theories that see SEZs as triggers for a global shift towards a new international division of labor in which workers in low-wage nations and regions have taken over the jobs from higher-wage nations and regions, commonly with

much harsher labor laws and legislation against collective bargaining and unionization (Dicken 2003; Fröbel, Heinrichs, and Kreye 1981; Neveling 2015a).

No Islands of History but Markers of Hegemonic Succession in the World-System

SEZs are no islands of history but are firmly embedded in the *longue durée* of racialized capitalist exploitation. As I have argued for the case of spirit possessions in Mauritian garment factories, workers are very aware of the structural continuities of colonial slavery and indenture in the zones. When Mauritian EPZ-workers “saw” ghosts of French colonial soldiers and British merchant mariners roam across shopfloors, they saw them as spirits of neocolonialism haunting the newly independent nation (Neveling 2015c).

On a different scale of global economic engagements, postcolonial nations designed SEZs to diversify their economies from either colonial monocrop agricultural policies or from an overt dependency on extractive industries. Although zones in Malaysia, Mauritius, Mexico, Singapore, Taiwan, and elsewhere delivered on development policy targets, the benefits for workers were limited. Wages only increased with full employment, often based on one-off payments and hardly ever based on substantive, lasting increases to national minimum wages. As Chris Meulbroeck and Majed Akhter have shown for Singapore, and as I have argued for Mauritius, national zone programs with somewhat stronger workers’ rights emerged from labor struggles and the search for legitimacy for new alliances between an economic ruling class of the colonial era and an aspiring political ruling class of the early postcolonial state (Neveling 2017c; Meulbroeck and Akhter 2019). In both instances, the latter alliance had been forged in the late colonial British state, when, as Meulbroeck and Akhter put it poignantly, “weak capitalist hegemony manifested through high wages and consistent struggle over the terms of the labour contract” (Meulbroeck and Akhter 2019: 1254). In Singapore, located in one of the ‘hot’ arenas of the Cold War, foreign expertise from a UNDP mission headed by the Dutch economist Albert Winsemius provided the “ideological currents to the periphery” (Gramsci 1976: 116–17, in Meulbroeck and Akhter 2019: 1255) that allowed the People’s Action Party to push through an export-oriented industrialization policy based on a harsh labor regime in the 1960s. Gradual wage increases in the 1970s paved the way for converting

the city-state into a “command centre for finance, transport and services in the 1980s” (Meulbroek and Akhter 2019: 1258).

The value regimes perspective sheds light on the fact that this trajectory was neither a fundamental shift from Singapore’s earlier position in the global economy prior to the Second World War, nor that it triggered a change in class structures. Whereas mainstream anthropologists like Aiwha Ong have hailed Singapore a success story that proves SEZ development could emerge from the sweatshop phase, the only new emergence at the value regime level is that it became more profitable to convert Jurong Island from a sweatshop hotspot into a logistics and finance center. This analysis stems from a mistaken focus on promotional utterings by the Singapore Economic Development Board’s alleged ‘new strategy’ after the 1997/98 Asian crisis, proclaiming the creation of a new “vibrant and effervescent enterprise ecosystem” within Singapore (Ong 2006: 179), when, in fact, the transition from colonial capitalist regimes of value to neoliberal regimes of value for Singapore was complete with the 1960s shift toward export-oriented industrialization discussed above. Singapore then moved into outsourcing sweatshop manufacturing capital via the government’s ‘regional industrial parks’ program rolled out in 1990 (Pereira 2004). That program subcontracted substantial percentages of Singapore’s production to SEZs in Indonesia and China, thus securing revenues via a territorial expansion of the nation’s grip on the SEZ value regime rather than shifting the nation’s mainstream economic activities. So, rather than an extrication from the sweatshop, Singapore stands for a magnification of the same onto an incomparably enlarged geographic scale, with its key actors reaping the fruits.

Another alleged SEZ success story, the Mauritian EPZ legislation of 1970, triggered a decades-long sweatshop phase with a short full-employment and high-wages peak around 1990, followed immediately by an internationalization of sweatshop production to Madagascar, India, and later Bangladesh. In the 2000s, unemployed ex-SEZ workers were retrained en masse to take up service jobs in tourism, integrated resort schemes, and a so-called ‘cybercity’ for expanding finance and logistics businesses. Again, class structures remained in place while Mauritian corporations successfully diversified and internationalized from colonial sugar-cane production into textiles and garments, tourism, real estate, and financial services.

How do we frame these historical continuities and ruptures from colonial to postcolonial value regimes in SEZ development and operations? Gavin Smith shows that in all ethnographic research

locations, our interlocutors' viewpoints and actions are shaped by contested positions on historical justice and injustice (Smith, G. 2016). In locations with long histories of colonial and imperialist capitalism, people understand their lives as embedded in the world-system's contemporary and historical regimes of value and violence that they and their ancestors have been subjected to (Neveling 2016). They are thus well aware that SEZs escalate the exploitation of working classes by national and transnational capitalist classes. When neoliberal development economists promote SEZs, they offer ideological backing for such exploitation, making zone promotions critical junctions (Kalb and Tak 2005) that reveal the bifurcations of class interests locally, regionally, and globally, and within the ideological shifts from classical-liberal economics to neoclassical-neoliberal economics.

Bifurcating class interests and ideological shifts in the superstructure of the capitalist world-system are the stuff of which new hegemonic consensus are made. A new hegemonic consensus requires massive transaction costs to create material and immaterial infrastructures that regulate the world-system. Ideological shifts do not happen coincidentally but coincide with changes in the historical fixes of capitalism driven by hegemonic succession—most recently from Dutch to British to US-American supremacy, as identified by Giovanni Arrighi (Arrighi 2004).⁴

The emergence of the first SEZ-type economic development program coincided with the transition from British to US hegemony. Puerto Rico, a US colony, was the testing ground for the first neoliberal manufacturing industrialization program in world history. Elsewhere I have detailed the relevance of the Puerto Rican model for the early Cold War years (Neveling 2015b), for global class formations (Neveling 2015a), and for the emergence of neoliberalism as global praxis (Neveling 2017b). Below, the focus is on the emergence of a particular regime of value within the new geopolitical economy after the Second World War, a defining moment of which was the rapid decolonization of many European and other colonial possessions.

The global movement for decolonization stood at the intersection of resistance against colonial rule and runaway imperialist exploitation, and of an emerging outsourcing of production from the heartlands of imperialist industrial power to colonial and post-colonial regions with much lower reproduction costs for capital. By around 1800, Puerto Rico had lost its strategic importance in the contest over control of the expanding Caribbean economy between Spanish, British, and Dutch interests. When the USA invaded Puerto Rico in 1898, the population was composed of recently liberated

slaves (slavery was abolished in 1873; Dietz 1986: 35), settlers from the Mediterranean, and refugees from the South American wars of liberation. Spain had tried to revive Puerto Rico's economy with tax breaks after 1815, but poverty was rampant throughout the 1800s, including under US rule (Dietz 1986; Toro 1982).

Eric Wolf reminds us of the unevenness of the imperialist stage of capitalist expansion in the 1800s. Lenin argued that the monopolies emerging from competition among capitalists, and their tendency to reduce profit rates because of higher investment in technology, generated a surplus of idle variable capital that had to be exported, thus triggering further colonial expansion and wars among colonizing powers. British imperialism may not have ticked all boxes identified by Lenin (Wolf [1982] 1997: 299–305), but US expansion in Puerto Rico certainly ticked them all. The Foraker Act of 1900 incorporated Puerto Rico into the US economy, with shipping monopolized for US corporations and all trade tariffs controlled by Washington. The US dollar was introduced as the island's currency at an unfavorable conversion rate for locals, so that US investors could buy up large swaths of agricultural land. This wiped out the small Puerto Rican capitalist class, while price conversions for commodities from pesos to the US dollar ramped up inflation (Dietz 1986: 79–93).

Puerto Rico's economy was now dominated by the production of 'stimulants' for the mainland market. Tobacco growing and the production of cigars expanded rapidly under the control and ownership of US corporations. Sugar became the dominant export crop as US corporations turned Puerto Rico into a plantation colony with absentee landowners similar to earlier British colonial economic development policies (Neveling 2013). The decline of some agricultural sectors (notably coffee) and the industrialization of others proletarianized the population. *Colonos* planted and harvested canes for US corporations, while larger plantations and mills employed wage workers. By 1940, the agricultural sector was generating 31 percent of Puerto Rican net income and employed more than 220,000 laborers directly, as well as more than 30,000 in manufacturing industries such as sugar mills and tobacco factories. This was roughly 50 percent of the 514,214 Puerto Ricans in employment (Perloff 1950: 55; García-Colón 2009).

Puerto Rico under US imperialist rule served the expansion of mainland capital, and was part of a rush for political and economic control over territories and infrastructure in the Caribbean. Fast-forwarding Puerto Rico to the political economy of late nineteenth-century Western imperialism generated mass emigration

of agricultural workers to Cuba and Hawaii, and for industrial labor to the US East Coast and to Chicago. On the pretext of limiting emigration and impoverishment, the local ruling party leader, Luis Muñoz Marín, and the lead technocrat of the Puerto Rican Industrial Development Corporation (PRIDCo) abandoned the 1948 electoral mandate for independence from the USA to instead establish an alliance with anti-New Deal mainland politicians like Senator Robert A. Taft. Taft was co-author of the anti-union Taft–Hartley Act of 1947 that overruled most of the (limited) democratic achievements of the 1935 National Labor Relations Act. In a much more radical move against New Deal policies, PRIDCo auctioned off local government-owned factories for import-substitution production of basic commodities like shoes and glass bottles. It also turned Puerto Rico into a testing ground for early neoliberal manufacturing globalization (Caban 1989; Bel 2011; Berman Santana 1998; Neveling 2015b), with legislation in 1948 that allowed for tax- and customs-free manufacturing, massive local government spending on industrial infrastructure, and government-backed loans for investors. Working in concert with the Boston-based consulting corporation Arthur D. Little, PRIDCo first attracted factory relocations from the US northeast textile and garment sector. New jobs in Puerto Rico meant job losses and early forms of structural unemployment in the US, often in trade union strongholds (Chomsky 2008). For corporations like Textron Inc. (owned by Royal W. Little, nephew of Arthur D. Little) and the Hilton Hotels Corporation, relocations to Puerto Rico were a stepping stone toward multinational activities in the Philippines and elsewhere (Neveling 2017a).

The rapidly changing landscape of industrial manufacturing in both the US northeast and in Puerto Rico gave birth to a crucial persona of neoliberal value regimes: the heroic entrepreneur engaged with a heavy heart in Schumpeterian creative destruction, who sacks thousands of workers and deindustrializes entire regions as they shift production to developing regions where they are celebrated as an economic leviathan bringing mass employment and industrial futures. Meanwhile, the fact that tax breaks and government money pay for the new factories and industries, and that workers are declared undeserving and thus only worthy of the lowest wages, is conveniently forgotten (Neveling 2015b).

The value regime established in the Puerto Rican prototype program for today's SEZs not only relied on this polarized conception of social value and worth, but also on a calculus for its operations at base level. The US Treasury offered an accounting model that por-

trayed direct investment from the mainland, incorporation into the US-dollar currency zone, and trade with the mainland as economic imperatives for the survival of the island's population. This insistence on a Ricardian comparative advantage for the satellite from trade with the metropole became an important counterpoint against the increasing popularity of dependency theory in developing countries. Whereas dependency theory showed that imperialism's terms of trade based on the extraction and processing of cheap resources from colonies had benefited only the metropolises (Toye and Toye 2003), SEZs introduced the chimera that export-oriented industrialization backed by state-subsidies for foreign investors, lax labor legislation, and low wages could be a viable postcolonial alternative.

Backed by contracts from the Truman administration and their successors, the Puerto Rican SEZ model went viral in the 1950s. Arthur D. Little provided aggressive marketing for this antidote to import-substitution policies in Jamaica, Egypt, Mexico, and Chile, while the policies were tailored for the requirements of each nation ready to roll out a zone-program. India, Singapore, the Republic of China (Taiwan), Cyprus, Malta, Mauritius, Indonesia, and many other nations had zones planned or operational when Fröbel, Heinrichs, and Kreye developed their pathbreaking international division of labor thesis based on the relocations of manufacturing from Western industrial heartlands to newly industrializing nations in the late 1970s (Fröbel, Heinrichs, and Kreye 1981; Neveling 2017b).

In Puerto Rico, rapid economic growth stopped around 1957. Five hundred new factory openings had created no more than 32,000 jobs; not enough to halt the emigration of impoverished peasants and landless laborers to major US cities. The fate of New York's Puerto Ricans was packaged into neat, racist stereotypes as "macho teenage gangsters and hysterical lovers" in Leonard Bernstein's 1957 Broadway musical *West Side Story*,⁵ when in fact Puerto Rican migrants took up work in US light-industrial manufacturing in direct competition with factories in Puerto Rico and other early SEZs (Chomsky 2008; Whalen 2002). This praxis of pitting low-paid migrant workers on the mainland against their fellow citizens in the zone underlines how SEZs created new options for keeping wages and workers' rights down in manufacturing locations around the world.

Returning to Gavin Smith's writings on the historicity of field sites and actors, the neoliberal value regimes created by SEZs are powerful levers in the hands of ruling classes—both on the nation-state and the global scale—to expand the lifetime of the capitalist world-system in the face of anti-systemic movements. For emerging

comprador bourgeoisies in postcolonial nations like Singapore and Mauritius, zone legislation and operations opened up a pathway to quash working class expectations for a more just division of wealth after successful anticolonial struggles that had culminated in national independence. For comprador bourgeoisies in Puerto Rico, early zone policies opened up pathways for alliances with right-wing political networks that supported the “businessmen’s crusade against the New Deal,” studied in detail by historian Kim Phillips-Fein (Phillips-Fein 2009).

On the global scale, SEZs were powerful levers for sustaining and increasing capital’s surplus value from industrial manufacturing and later also from financial services and other sectors. Karl Marx’s analysis of capitalist surplus value identified extending the working day at static wages and increasing worker productivity via advanced technology, also at static wages, as two forms of surplus value increase. SEZs, however, establish a ‘global labor arbitrage’ (GLA) for multinational capital, which uses relocations to low-wage nations and regions with lower production costs, for subsequent exports to high-wage and high-consumer nations and regions. Capital here feeds on global wage differentials (Smith, J. 2016: 236–40), as happened at the turn of the twentieth century in European regional markets, where flexible wage dumping and the gendered exploitation of local working classes in Eindhoven and elsewhere, combined with free market policies, helped to create a multinational corporation in consumer products such as Philips, as described by Don Kalb (1997).

Unequal Exchanges: SEZs as Weapons of the Strong

Based on the above, we can conclude that unequal exchange in the early decades of contemporary SEZs formation, from the 1940s to the 1970s, had the opposite effect of what is commonly claimed as the backbone of late twentieth-century and early twenty-first-century imperialism. Rather than nurturing a compromised labor aristocracy in the core regions of the world-system and pitting them against super-exploited workers in the peripheries (Smith, J. 2016), SEZs create a dialectical, global assemblage of structural unemployment and super-exploitation in core regions *and* in peripheries. As I have argued elsewhere for the period of the Cold War and decolonization (Neveling 2015b), zones were (and continue to be) weapons of the strong in the battle against socialism, nonalignment, and declining rates of profit in the Western capitalist heartlands. Because early

SEZs in Puerto Rico, India (since 1965), Mexico (since 1965), Taiwan (since 1965), Singapore (since 1966), Mauritius (since 1970), South Korea (since 1971), and elsewhere had governments covering substantial shares of manufacturing capital's reproduction costs, they liberated capital from spatiotemporal fixes that kept manufacturing tied in space until significant up-front, fixed capital investment in factories, infrastructure, and more had been recovered. SEZs were neither a product of the flexible accumulation that David Harvey says kicked in from the late 1960s, nor a response to the stagflation crisis of the 1970s (Harvey 1990: 141–72). Instead, the zones were laboratories for flexible accumulation and relocations to such zones contributed to 1970s stagflation. Therefore, the 1970s were a “decade of consolidation” (Neveling 2017b) of export-oriented neoliberal manufacturing rather than a decade of rupture toward neoliberalism.

Table 1.1 highlights the next major step in the global spread of SEZs. The opening of the People's Republic of China (PRC) to foreign manufacturing and other investment in the late 1970s cannot be attributed to the Volcker Shock but to the death of Mao and the rise of Deng Xiaoping to power in the Communist Party. As in all

Table 1.1. The global spread of EPZs/SEZs since 1975

Year	1975	1978	1984	1986	1997	2002	2006
Number of countries with EPZs	25	28	35	47	93	116	130
Number of EPZs	79	N/A	N/A	176	845	3,000	3,500
Employment (millions)	0.725	0.694	0.837	1.97	22.5	43	66
—of which, PR China	—	—	0.015	0.07	18	30	40
—of which, other countries (for which figures available)	0.725	0.694	0.822	1.9	4.5	13	26
Share of PR China (percent)	0	0	1.79	3.55	80	69.77	60.60

Source: Neveling (2020)

other national case studies broached above, the PRC zones were no independent inventions but modeled on existing zones; and they absorbed substantial government resources. Construction works in Shenzhen were supported by infrastructure units from the army and by pooling capital from other PRC regional administrations. Hong Kong capitalists failed to deliver on investment promises in the early 1980s, so that SEZs created major foreign currency reserves problems for the PRC government (Crane 1990; Du 2020; Zhou 2021). World-market opening via SEZs facilitated the PRC's full membership of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank in 1980, and the many bilateral trade agreements required to gain membership of the World Trade Organization in the early 2000s. Without such agreements, the PRC's rise to world leadership in industrial manufacturing in the 2000s would not have been possible. As in other zones, world-market access and manufacturing industrialization has caused severe hardships for workers (for a leading study, see Ngai 2005).

In other crucial developments since the 1970s, management scholars like Peter Drucker pushed for the development of SEZs as industrial clusters to unite factories and research departments in related sectors. This was despite the fact that, from a 'frontlines of value' perspective, industrial districts and clusters bear risks for capital. Because the vertical and horizontal integration of industries in one location may lead to wage increases, new SEZ pressure groups like the World Export Processing Zones Association proposed the amended concept "production sharing" (Bolin 1988). First proposed as a marketing trope in defending the outsourcing and relocation of US manufacturing to Mexican zones against 1970s protests from US trade unions, such cross-border production sharing capitalizes on the wage differentials across national and regional labor markets while it reinserts a somewhat vulgar Ricardian comparative advantage ideology into zone promotions. Recent World Bank publications laud PRC-SEZs for their organization as industrial clusters (Zeng 2010). A contemporary push for yet more SEZs from so-called new structural economics (Stiglitz, Lin, and Patel 2013; Lin 2014) fuses Alfred Marshall's theory of industrial districts as cross-sector incubators for economic growth with a neo-Ricardian framing of national "resource endowments" such as low labor costs and particular skill sets (Neveling 2020).

Besides investments in fixed capital (conveniently covered by national governments in SEZs) and expenses for the reproduction of labor (conveniently diminished by global labor arbitrage in SEZs), reproduction costs for manufacturing industries include trans-

port costs when commodity chains globalize. The consolidation of containerization in the late 1970s pushed costs down significantly (Khalili 2020). Industrial relocations were thus only limited to light-manufacturing industries for the first decades of SEZ operations. If SEZs secured the mobility of capital via government subsidies, low wages, and, increasingly, so-called development aid from Western nations and from international organizations like the United Nations and the World Bank, then logistics and other sectors followed suit after the Volcker Shocks and the debt crises in the second and third world in the 1980s and 1990s in order to oil the “geographical seesaw” of capitalism as it descended toward new manufacturing locations in postcolonial capitalist nations (Smith, N. 2010).

Although material and immaterial infrastructures may be regarded as past labor, they continue to generate profits that do not depreciate as the capital value of factory buildings and machinery do. This is because they are vital links to international trade routes and trading systems. They also create immaterial infrastructures—institutions that market the zones to investors and provide the latter with institutional support for their operations. Once up and running, “successful” zones generate surplus capital via both trade and manufacturing. Imports of raw materials and components are assembled in SEZ production units and then exported as semi-finished and finished commodities to foreign markets. The zones are thus transnationally integrated material and immaterial infrastructures with value regimes that shape the lives of local and regional, sometimes national, populations as they incorporate millions directly into the global circuits of capital, its supply chains, its just-in-time production regimes, and its boom-and-bust cycles, while putting pressure on the lives of others outside the zones.

SEZs on the Shopfloor: Gendered (Super-)Exploitation

Early SEZs were testing grounds and forerunners for the spread of neoliberal value regimes on a planetary scale. For a deeper understanding of that value regime’s impact on workers and livelihoods, it is important to return to the above discussion of ‘global labor arbitrage’ as a third means for capitalists to increase surplus value (beyond the extension of working hours at stagnant wages or the introduction of new production technologies). The historicity of SEZs singular value regime is crucial here; and to understand that again requires us to abandon mainstream anthropology’s imagination of

zones as abstract behemoths that are in distinct clashes with 'local' cultures untouched by previous eras of global capitalism. Instead, SEZs are extending earlier plantation regimes, with their slavery and indenture, toward zone factories with free wage labor predominantly recruited on the basis of gendered exploitation. Governments and international development organizations are already accounting for lower wages for young women at the zone planning stage. World Bank reporting on the prospects of EPZ development in Mauritius, for example, compared wages of young Mauritian women with wages that young women earned in Hong Kong in the 1970s in order to assess competitiveness (Neveling 2017c).

Spanning decades as well as continents, SEZ models of gendered exploitation thus have long histories in capitalist value regimes in metropolises and in peripheries alike. Critical, Marxist anthropologists have detailed how the early internationalization of capitalist corporations forcefully incorporated domestic economies into the realm of capitalism's social reproduction by way of super-exploitative remunerations for workers that require subsidies from their households and sometimes wider networks (Meillassoux 1981; Nash 1979; Robinson 1986). Starting in 1940s Puerto Rico, SEZs capitalized on existing dependencies of households and populations on work market integration. Textiles, garments, electronics, and other manufacturers in Puerto Rico led the way globally with regard to both anti-workers' rights policies and gendered exploitation. An official study by the National Planning Association, reviewing the first ten years of operations, highlights that by 31 August 1957 only 71 of 534 new plants were unionized. Twenty-five further petitions had been rejected and twenty petitions had been amended by the National Labor Relations Board (Stead 1958: 68–69). US-mainland unions dominated the scene and duly served the interests of capital, which was manifest, for example, when the president of the International Lady Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU) successfully protested against Puerto Rican legislature plans to increase the minimum wage in the brasserie industry on the grounds that this would reduce competitiveness. Instead, the ILGWU co-funded low-cost housing in San Juan in collaboration with the Rockefeller Foundation. Puerto Rican data here foreshadow a global strategy of US-mainland trade union transnationalization affiliated with US corporate capital and Cold War anti-workers' rights policies by various branches of the CIA-infiltrated AFL-CIO (Scipes 2010).

Puerto Rican female workers had been incorporated into the circuits of long-distance manufacturing since the subcontracting of

needlework by US warehouses in the 1920s. Garment manufacturing and embroidery expanded significantly in the 1930s, with unregulated factories opening in larger cities. From 1947, factories benefiting from the SEZ-style incentives (detailed above) absorbed many of these female workers. Wages increased until the 1957 turning point toward runaway capital. At that time, women's median weekly wages in manufacturing was US\$17.10, only 66 percent of men's wages. This was insufficient to reproduce women's labor power and feed their families. Wages for home needlework stagnated at US\$3.30 in the same period (Jaffe 1959: 129–30). Puerto Rico's so-called second phase of industrialization targeted higher wage industries, but again mainly fed on tax exemptions and wage differentials with the mainland. Food stamps programs became a widespread remedy against malnutrition in the 1970s, and informal economic activities akin to 1930s garment manufacturing in unregulated smaller factories, and needlework subcontracting to households, returned in the 1980s (Safa 1995: 14–17).

Puerto Rico was yet again a frontline that established the zones' value regimes that incorporate the everyday lives of zone workers into the circuits of capital. Personal as much as societal preferences and attachments, the plural values of working classes, are affected when regions undergo rapid industrialization. Along the Mexico–US border, as in Puerto Rico, gender roles and gendered exploitation were redefined when an SEZ-style border industrialization program attracted apparel and electronics manufacturers in 1965, and promoted Mexican women as diligent and docile sweatshop workers to foreign and national investors. SEZ factories became infamous 'maquilas,' depicted in labor rights reports and later even in Hollywood movies for the hardship of women workers subject to systematic sexism, and hoping to earn enough money to pay a coyote to get across the Mexico–US border, making the zones known worldwide as treadmills of exploitation that eat through rural migrants from Mexico and other Central American nations (Fernández-Kelly 1983; Heyman 1991; Wright 2006).

Nepal's SEZs came and went in a rapid boom–bust cycle. To uphold factory labor regimes, managers in the process of translating the value regimes of transnational capitalists formed alliances with religious and reactionary networks, seeking to enforce worldviews from a fictional past (Shakya 2007; Ishii 2017) into real-world power on shopfloors. Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, and any other religion are suitable tools in the hands of factory managers globally to enforce the toil of piece-rate-driven assembly line manufacturing

in overheated and unsafe workplaces (Kalb 1997; Neveling 2015c). In the case of Shenzhen, and those few other instances where zones have come to define entire regions or large cities, SEZ operations shape the development of housing and neighborhoods, daily and weekly routines, rhythms of cities, their local and international markets, and more (Liang 1999; Zhou 2021).

Gendered exploitation in SEZs continued despite a radical shift in the organization of global manufacturing. Before the 1990s, nation-states competed over manufacturing relocations from multinational corporations that would commonly set up zone factories under their own brand. This created an opening for trade unions and workers' rights movements to identify working conditions and labor relations in the zones, and link them with leading Western high street brands. The sportswear brand Nike, for example, became synonymous with workers' exploitation in zone factories in the 1990s, and was a major target of the anti-sweatshop movement whose aims and politics were summarized in Naomi Klein's bestseller *No Logo* (Klein 2000). Researchers and journalists were now keen to uncover the production chain of a given high street consumer item. Books and articles retraced the production steps of T-shirts, mobile phones, and other popular consumer items across the globe, and mostly found SEZs along the chains (Rivoli 2009). As in the case of the 1960s and 1970s non-alignment movement, whose demands for a new and fairer international economic order were replaced with the fiction of successful capitalist development as 'emerging markets' in a new international division of labor, capital had an alternative ready to answer the anti-sweatshop movement's campaigns. Production had already been outsourced and subcontracted to local producers since the 1970s (Neveling 2017b). Now, this praxis became a global standard, with former manufacturers turning into brands with high-street presence across the Western world and beyond, selling products that carried their labels even though they were manufactured by other corporations. This shift in the organization of global consumer manufacturing made the 1990s and 2000s the decades when new global corporate players, mainly from East Asian nations, entered the zones; the Taiwan-based Hon Hai Precision Industry Co. Ltd (trading as Foxconn Technology Group, known as Foxconn) and the South Korean Samsung Group took major shares of the light-consumer electronics component production, for example. In the 2000s, Samsung turned from supplier into a brand itself. Scholars sought to capture this new organizational feature of the global division of labor with the concepts of global value chain (GVC) and global production network (GPN).

The SEZ Value Regime in Sum

Eric Wolf's late oeuvre shows that those plural values studied by anthropologists derive from ideas and ideologies operating on different scales of power. Power articulates at personal, interpersonal, and structural levels. The global political economy is the one that shapes individual lives most profoundly and with the greatest longevity (Wolf 1999). Adding Giovanni Arrighi's work to Wolf's theory of power sheds light on the particular hegemonic subsystem of the capitalist mode of production that shapes this political economy in a *longue durée*; Arrighi calls the succession of these subsystems the historical fixes of the world-system (Arrighi 2004).

In conjunction, these two positions make it clear that singular value formation has been paramount for an analysis of SEZs as frontlines of the capitalist world-system's neoliberal imperialist phase since 1945. After the Second World War, new economic policies and a paradigmatic overhaul of the relations between state, capital, and labor ushered in a prototype SEZ in the US dependency Puerto Rico, and advanced the deindustrialization of New England. As the zones have a pioneer-status in the postcolonial globalization of industrial manufacturing, Puerto Rico was the birthplace of neoliberalism as a political-economic praxis (Neveling 2017b). During the Cold War, the zones served as beacons of capitalism within a temporarily bifurcated world-system. Initially backed by US foreign policy, Western late colonial powers, and, paradoxically, international organizations linked to the nonaligned movement—besides UNCTAD, this is the United Nations Industrial Development Organization—the zones facilitated manufacturing relocations that quashed unionized labor in core regions of the post-1945 world-system, and they heralded the possibility of export-oriented development under capitalism based on gender exploitation for newly independent nations.

With the zones spreading across capitalist developing nations from the 1950s to the 1970s, zone operations became standardized with tax and customs waivers, infringements on workers' rights, and reduced controls on capital movements. Importantly, this period also marks the onset of postcolonial nations taking out high-value loans in hard currencies (USD and others) to develop industrial infrastructure for EPZs—debts that came home to roost during the 1970s crises (for Mauritius as a case study, see Neveling 2014b, 2018b). As the zones consolidated during these crises in the 1970s, sociologists identified them as harbingers of a new global division of labor (Fröbel, Heinrichs, and Kreye 1981), and anthropologists soon followed suit

with case studies on this paradigm (Nash and Fernández-Kelly 1983). Starting in the 1980s, critical anthropologists have detailed how zone factories consume the productive and reproductive labor of local and domestic economies as workers' wages are too low to reproduce their labor power and rear their offspring (Heyman 1991; Safa 1981, 1995; Yelvington 1995). Up to the 1990s, the zones and their different iterations as EPZs, foreign trade zones (FTZs), free zones (FZs), and so on, shaped the global economy in favor of capital and against workers during the Cold War and in the decades of decolonization (Neveling 2015b).

Gendered (super-)exploitation is not the only game in SEZ-town. Central to the SEZ value regime is the provision of public assets via zone planning, construction, operations, and further subsidies for the benefit of investors. Importantly, this is often funded via public or sovereign debt. A few nations, Mauritius for example, defaulted on sovereign debts because of the costs of SEZs, while other nations were forced to open SEZs as part of IMF-led structural adjustment packages after sovereign default caused by debts from the dual oil shocks and the world food crisis of the 1970s, as well as the global interest rate hikes that pulled investment capital into the United States during the first years of the Reagan administration (the so-called Volcker shock). The proliferation of SEZs was thus part and parcel of a global cluster of crises that culminated in the collapse of the socialist bloc after 1989, when, again, in another round, more national economies were forced to establish SEZs. Elsewhere I have identified SEZs as a capitalist antidote against third world import substitution policies, the nonaligned movement's calls for a new international economic order, and the strong socialist nations and movements of the 1960s (Neveling 2015a, 2015d). The SEZ model thus established a value regime that was central to the shift from national political-economic policies that subsidized the social reproduction of national working classes to a model that directly subsidized investment capital's exploitation of working classes (and foremost female workers) in postcolonial and postsocialist nations. This requires us to consider capitalism as a world-systemic political economy rather than the sum of variegated national political economies in our analysis of neoliberalism's value regime. Changes in the world-system, as pointed out in the opening paragraph to this conclusion and elsewhere in this chapter, are complex and gradual.

A sophisticated anthropology of value regimes in SEZs therefore considers how the regime of surplus of a transnational capitalist class is translated into the realms of national and individual zone poli-

cies. Central in this process are the collaborations between national or regional ruling classes and the middle-managers of the transnational ruling class in the US-centric post-1945 neoliberal world-system. In order to capture these processes, the scale of analysis is the *longue durée* of value regimes, rooted in the colonial and imperialist expansion of capitalism that encapsulates and subsumes different ideological realms such as religion, customs, myths and mythopraxis, sexism and gendered exploitation of labor, and more within the exchange relations prevailing in SEZ labor relations. As historically and geographically situated real-world repercussions of the economic modeling that guides a particular modality of capitalist exploitation, SEZs are reminders that capitalists always act violently in structural terms, and exploitatively in relational terms. An anthropology willing to understand the value regimes informing the establishment and expansion of SEZs in the world-system is wary of the common liberal misrepresentations of violence and exploitation as exemptions to capitalism. Instead, it researches and analyses the omnipresence of capitalism's past and present modeling of exchanges (Narotzky 2007), the conflicts and resolutions among actors over those models in a given field (Smith, G. 2014), and abandons the discipline's grounding in capitalism's ideological tropes of cultural difference (Kalb 1997, and Introduction; Wolf 1982). Seen through these lenses, a historical anthropology of SEZ value regimes reminds us of the untimely coincidences and structured contingencies of capital accumulation (for these concepts, see Kalb 1997, 2015; Neveling 2014a; Wolf 1982). Against the claim of neoliberal development economists and international organizations' publications such as the WIR and the WDR—mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, that advertise global value chains as drivers of global wealth and prosperity—the historical social anthropology of the global spread and operations of SEZs in this chapter shows that the opposite is true; such zones are key drivers of global poverty and escalating inequality on a planetary scale.

Acknowledgments

Research for this publication was funded by the Frontlines of Value research program at the University of Bergen, by the Swiss National Science Foundation, and by Utrecht University. I am especially grateful to Christian Gerlach and Don Kalb for their ongoing support throughout the project. Three workshops of the Frontlines of Value research team provided an immensely stimulating environment

for intellectual exchanges among fellow academics, and my special thanks go to all of them: Katharina Bodirsky, Charlotte Bruckermann, Stephen Campbell, Thomas Cowan, Dan Hirslund, Sharryn Kasmir, Oana Mateescu, Marc Morell, and Sarah Winkler-Reid. Don Kalb's helpful comments on earlier versions of this manuscript have greatly advanced the analytical scope of this chapter. All else is mea culpa.

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Notes

1. There are also ethnographies of SEZs that fail to criticize their relevance for maintaining capitalism (for details, see Neveling 2014b, 2020). This chapter ignores such studies.
2. A different line of attack on the relativist position in economic anthropology argues that the 1970s and 1980s focus on consumption as the realm of (symbolic) value creation that reifies "the hegemonic, neoclassical consensus," which ignores the importance of use value in production, and especially so in "the evaluative, socio-cultural process we know as the world market" (Hornborg 1992, 4).
3. https://www.theverge.com/21507966/foxconn-empty-factories-wisconsin-jobs-loophole-trump?fbclid=IwAR1uaE3eghAv2ZeY9Ho3p4Xn40K9BrT77wlNz9OIj_M5T7O-dlfELp cX8Uc (date last accessed 10 August 2021).
4. There is a case to be made in another publication that interprets the increasing number of SEZs linked to the People's Republic of China's 'One Belt, One Road' initiative as a similarly costly push for another hegemonic shift towards a new historical fix of capitalism.
5. This is from *New York Times* commentary on a recent revamp of the musical; see <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/02/24/opinion/west-side-story-broadway.html> (last accessed 30 March 2021).

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