

## A Long Way Home: Migrant Worker Worlds 1800–2014



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In no other society in the world have urbanization and industrialization been as comprehensively based on migrant labor as in South Africa. Rather than focusing on the well-documented narrative of displacement and oppression, *A Long Way Home* captures the humanity, agency, and creative modes of self-expression of the millions of workers who helped build and shape modern South Africa. The book spans a 300-year history beginning with the exportation of slave labor from Mozambique in the 18th century and ending with the strikes and tensions on the platinum belt in recent years. It shows not only the age-old mobility of African migrants across the continent but also, with the growing demand for labor in the mining industry, the importation of Chinese indentured migrant workers. The essays and visual materials traverse homesteads, chiefdoms, and mining hostels in their portrayal of migrant workers' and their families' attempts to maintain contact across large distances and uphold their rural customs, traditions, and rituals in new spaces and locations. Together, they provide multiple perspectives on the lived experience of migrant laborers and celebrate their extraordinary journeys. *A Long Way Home* was conceived during the planning of an art exhibition entitled "Ngezinyawo: Migrant Journeys" at Wits Art Museum. The interdisciplinary nature of the contributions and the extraordinary collection of images selected to complement and expand on the text make this a unique collection.

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