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Colonial and post-colonial port cities in the Atlantic and Indian Ocean regions brought together laboring populations of many different backgrounds and statuses – legally free or semi-free wage-laborers, soldiers, sailors, and the self-employed, indentured servants, convicts, and slaves. From the seventeenth to the nineteenth century the labor of these "motley crews" made port cities crucial hubs of the emerging capitalist world market and centers of imperial infrastructure. The nine chapters in this volume investigate the interaction between different groups of laborers around the docks and the neighborhoods that stretched behind them. How did the mixture of many different groups of laborers shape patterns of work and life, authority and control, exclusion and inclusion, group-competition and joint resistance? What roles did gender, race and status play in maintaining divisions or enabling solidarities? Together, the nine case studies present a vibrant picture of social relations and working-class cultures in port cities.

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Free and Unfree Labor in Atlantic and Indian Ocean Port Cities (1700–1850)

Edited by Pepijn Brandon, Niklas Frykman, and Pernille Røge

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