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What "Development" Does to Work*

Benedetta Rossi
University of Birmingham

Abstract

This article introduces an Africa-focused special issue showing that the rise of development in its modern form coincided with the demise of the political legitimacy of forced labor. It argues that by mobilizing the idea of development, both colonial and independent African governments were able to continue recruiting unpaid (or underpaid) labor—relabeled as "voluntary participation," "self-help," or "human investment" —after the passing of the ILO's Forced Labor Convention. This introduction consists of two parts: the first section summarizes the main findings of the contributions to the special issue. The second part advances preliminary considerations on the implications of these findings for our assessment of international development "aid." The conclusion advocates that research on planned development focus not on developers-beneficiaries, but rather on employers-employees. Doing so opens up a renewed research agenda on the consequences of "aid" both for development workers (those formally employed by one of the many development institutions) and for so-called beneficiaries (those whose participation in development is represented as conducive to their own good).

Introduction

What have been the consequences of developmentalism for African workers? We know that colonial economies were premised on the extraction of unpaid African labor and that European abolitionism went hand in hand with the introduction of new forms of coercive labor recruitment.[1] What has been explored less systematically is how the idea of development was mobilized in response to the colonial state's demand for cheap labor when compulsory recruitment and conscription were banned.[2] This special issue shows that the colonial discourse of development re-labeled work that otherwise could have been classified as forced labor (and as such would have contravened the 1930 ILO's Forced Labor Convention) as "voluntary work," "self-help," or "human investment."[3] In this process, certain sections of African labor were rendered invisible as workers, and recast as "beneficiaries," "participants," and "volunteers."

What kinds of work did development programs generate? With what consequences for different categories of workers, from "experts" to "beneficiaries"? What legal frameworks have been regulating the management of work carried out in the name of "development"? Contributions to this special issue explore these questions across seven different colonial and national contexts: Zanzibar and Ghana, respectively in former British East and West Africa (McMahon and Wiemers), Niger in former French West Africa (Rossi), Mozambique in former Portuguese South-east Africa (Kagan-Guthrie),

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Americo-Liberian governments in independent West Africa (Whyte), Katanga in former Belgian Congo (Loffman), and Somalia in former Italian East Africa (Urbano). In each of these contexts, twentieth century developmentalism opened up spaces in which African workers were classified, managed, and controlled, but in which they also elaborated their own strategies of self-development.

From Forced Labor to Working for Development: Main Findings

The articles in this issue reiterate that colonial and post-colonial developmentalism was less an exercise in the politics of altruism than a way to entrench control over African resources and people.[4] The claim to develop provided an ideological justification for the territorial control of regions thought to be resource-rich or strategically important. Colonial and independent governments used developmentalist logics to justify territorial claims: in Katanga, studied by Reuben Loffman in this issue, this happened under Leopold II's Congo Free State, then in Belgian Congo and in Mobutu's Zaire. Successive political elites sought to control cash crops and mineral resources. The region's political instability made it a zone perceived as requiring close supervision both by President Mobutu, who feared revolts that would destabilize his government, and by the United States in the Cold War era. Development programs enabled the entrenchment of national and international control over this region. In a similar fashion, the independent Americo-Liberian government discussed by Christine Whyte feared French and British colonial encroachment upon its borders. "Developing the interior" became a way to display effective control of its hinterland. When independent Zairian and Liberian governments lacked the funding required to finance their development programs, they turned to foreign donors. Katanga received USAID funds; Liberia received American funding through the establishment of a Firestone project for the development of rubber plantations.

In the case of Somalia, also discussed in this issue, Italy had not been a major colonial empire. It adopted a developmentalist stance to justify its intervention in fertile areas with the explicit aim of expanding Italian agricultural enterprise through what were presented as mutually beneficial activities, but which, in fact, made widespread use of coerced labor, especially in the Fascist period. As these three cases show, in different political contexts—Katanga in an "old" colonial empire, independent Liberia, and Somalia under "young" Italian rule—developmentalism enabled the entrenchment of control over regions classified as "underdeveloped." This is a well-known consequence of developmentalism that has been broadly documented.[5] This special issue focuses specifically on a less studied question: the consequences of "development" for African labor.

One fundamental finding of the studies in this issue is that development discourse legitimized the recruitment of unpaid or underpaid labor because work which contributed to development was represented as self-help. This is a

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corollary of an essential feature of developmentalism: its claim to operate *for the good of* the target population.[6] This claim became particularly important after the passing of the ILO's Forced Labor Convention, which coincided with the intensification of the League of Nations' pressure on colonial empires to enforce their own anti-slavery legislation.[7] The rise of developmentalism in its modern form corresponds to the demise of the political legitimacy of forced labor in the colonies. It made possible, inter alia, the continuing enrolment of African workers into production and infrastructure building schemes for a minimal remuneration.

The articles in this special issue reveal the systematic use of forced labor, including conditions that were defined by contemporary critics as "slavery-like," in colonial development programs after the adoption and ratification of the Forced Labor Convention. Labor was used for a variety of "developmental" purposes ranging from public works construction (Loffman, Whyte, Urbano, Wiemers, Kagan Guthrie, Rossi) to food production aimed at keeping food prices low in cities (Loffman, Zanzibar) to the growing of cash crops for sale below market prices to state controlled marketing boards or private entrepreneurs (Whyte, Loffman, Urbano, McMahon). In some contexts, labor itself was the main resource of a particular region and developmentalist discourse made possible the continued export of workers from regions considered labor reservoirs to localities where labor accrued larger profits to employers under the guise of emergency response to famine (Kagan-Guthrie). In short, developmentalism made the continuation of labor coercion possible by representing work done in the name of development as beneficial to the workers and their communities.

A second important finding of the articles in this issue is that colonial developmentalist regimes outsourced the coercive elements of recruitment to indigenous contractors who subjected workers to intimidation and fear. Chiefs often fulfilled this role.[8] While paying lip service to respect for tradition, colonial developers feigned ignorance of the chiefs' coercive recruitment practices. The view of development as beneficial to its recipients implied an emphasis on spontaneous popular participation. The idea that local communities, led by their representatives, were the actual initiators of development schemes allowed colonial administrators to deny accountability for the coercive methods employed by chiefs when it became harder for colonial bureaucracies to use forced labor for public works.

Wiemers's article traces the evolution of the relation between chiefs and colonial administrators in Ghana's Northern Territories. It shows that in the 1920s, as District Commissioners faced both local resistance and rising international criticism of forced labor, they ignored evidence of chiefly coercion as well as popular opposition by relying on chiefs who constructed roads "on their own initiative."[9] By the 1930s, in the wake of the ILO's convention, reliance on chiefs had become both a rhetorical cover for colonial brutality and a way to pursue development without much money. Administrators re-classified roads so that their maintenance could be justified as necessary for the benefit of the local

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community, and therefore exempt from the forced labor ban. They then claimed that chiefs had "volunteered" to oversee workers in schemes that their communities would allegedly benefit from. Concurrently, however, they made it clear to chiefs that resistance to organizing "volunteer" road-work would result in cuts to colonial development funds to their regions.[10]

The circumstances in Barue under Portuguese rule in the early 1960s are strikingly similar to the ones described for Ghana:

> the administrator of Mungari said that "the roads cannot be repaired," since forced labor had been abolished; three months later, he reversed himself, and reported that people had restarted working on the roads for no pay, a system they supposedly preferred because they worked for shorter periods, and because "money has no value for them." Other administrators similarly justified the return of unpaid road work as a voluntary preference on the part of residents, allegedly out of a desire to help develop their communities; the administrator of Macossa, for example, reported "As is customary, the natives have voluntarily begun repairing the pathways leading the administrative post to areas in the interior," then added that this "custom" had been reinstated by him the previous year, and that the workers would not be getting paid.[11]

Kagan Guthrie adds that while "administrators were now strictly banned from directly conscripting forced workers […] they could, and did, pressure people into accepting migrant labor through the local 'chiefs' which the district administrator called 'a sure method of reaching the objectives in view without breaking legal norms'."[12] Colonial administrators used chiefs as labor contractors and this enabled them to deny involvement in recruitment methods that they knew to be problematic, if not outright illegal.

In the case of Zanzibar analyzed by McMahon after World War Two the Colonial Office received a request by the British Resident in Zanzibar to extend legislation that would allow the requisition of land required for food crop planting on which local workers were made to work and forced to sell part of the produce at a fixed price to feed Zanzibar Town.[13] The Colonial Office debated whether the requested extension would contravene the ILO's Forced Labor Convention. To avoid problems, it recommended "to get the Sultan [of Zanzibar] to pass an anti-famine legislative order and use that as cover for the coerced labor practices."[14]

Colonial administrators argued that they used local intermediaries in order to avoid interference into local tradition; or that the communities themselves had volunteered their work autonomously or at the initiative of local chiefs; or that exceptional circumstances such as famines or wars justified mild coercion. Yet undeniably these strategies enabled them to avoid paying standard wages to adult workers. This raises the question of what would have counted as appropriate remuneration. This important ethical question deserves more consideration than it can receive in this special issue alone. But while this special issue does not attempt to articulate a moral argument, it demonstrates

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that the practices carried out in the name of development were ethically dubious by the standards of the time.

Had their recruitment practices been congruent with the ILO Forced Labor Convention, which embodied international normative thinking about labor standards, colonial administrators and national bureaucrats would not have resorted to dissimulation to conceal the coercion necessary to extract labor from workers who resisted recruitment. Indeed, when reports on forced recruitment in colonial development schemes leaked through the European media, they provoked scandalized reactions from the public.[15] Furthermore, had workers perceived employment as truly beneficial to them and competitive with the earnings they hoped to access through migration, they would have offered their services willingly to national or foreign "developers."[16] But they did not: They opposed and resisted unpaid work re-classified as participation in their own development, and preferred migration in search of paid work.

It is significant that the only case of genuine volunteering discussed in this issue took place in the Sahelo-Saharan region of Niger studied by Rossi. Here, the workers employed by a project funded by Italy and managed by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in the 1980s and 1990s were mainly women. In this desert-edge region adult men migrated seasonally to work in African cities. Due to gender ideologies, the majority of women did not migrate. There were hardly any paid employment opportunities in the villages where they lived. For the poorest of these women, who were recurrently exposed to hunger, the daily meal offered to workers on the project's worksites was a desirable remuneration. They willingly contributed over twelve million working days to the Keita Project in about fifteen years up until the early 2000s. Their limited range of alternatives accounts for their eagerness to volunteer work under conditions that most local men did not accept.

A third key finding of this special issue is that migration posed a problem to developmentalist regimes because it amplified people's choices allowing them to resist recruitment in development projects.[17] Workers who had the option of accessing better opportunities abroad were not available for development schemes unless these schemes offered remuneration rates comparable to their earnings as migrants. Measures to control the free movement of workers were put in place to support "development."[18] Hampering mobility through the threat of violence was the most direct way to curtail the exodus of potential "volunteers." But control over mobility took multiple forms. Where migrant or alien workers were available, their outsider status gave them fewer rights than natives or citizens. National protective legislation did not apply to them and racist ideologies made their exploitation appear justifiable and "civilizing." For example, the Liberian state imposed slavery-like working conditions on so-called re-captives and "Congoes" in the nineteenth century. Alternatively, the emigration of native workers could be curtailed legally: in 1964, President Tubman's vagrancy law in Liberia permitted the authoritarian relocation of workers in the interest of national development plans.[19]

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Hampering the free movement of people was not always easy: administrators struggled and often failed to stop migrants from moving to conditions they saw as more attractive. A District Commissioner in the Northern Territories Protectorate, cited by Wiemers, pondered in 1919 about "how one is to draw the line and distinguish when a man is a fugitive from work or when he is an emigrant to better his condition."[20] Loffman shows that in Congo the administration was faced with bottlenecks in labor recruitment when they could not legally stop men from migrating.[21] In the case of Italian Somalia, studied by Urbano in the interwar period, Italy tried to manage the problem of Italian migrants leaving Italy in large numbers, as well as the problem of Somali migration within Somalia. Italy's national Committee for Emigration initially sought to direct Italian migrants toward its colonies. But when the cost of Italian labor appeared too high, Italy developed a plan to provide farming inputs and technology on Somali-owned land where indigenous workers would contribute their labor as a form of "shared participation" (*compartecipazione*) in agricultural development.[22] A large resettlement scheme moved entire families and communities to the irrigation schemes of the Società Agricola Italo-Somala (SAIS), with "traditional" chiefs likely acting as intermediaries between the communities and company management. Efforts to curtail the mobility of laborers in resettlement schemes resulted in brutal forms of labor surveillance to stop mutinies. In all of these cases, workers voted with their feet. When they were free to move, they opted out of projects allegedly devised for their own development. Developers needed volunteers; when volunteers were not forthcoming, they were forced.

A fourth finding of this issue is that the slow progress or failure of development was never seen as an outcome of undesirable employment conditions. It was normally blamed on the resistance and/or the backwards "nature" of the natives. In the early stages of colonial developmentalism these arguments took on overtly racist tones that justified paternalist coercion: recalcitrance, resistance, and unwillingness to cooperate were never considered rational reactions, but natural attitudes of lazy or uncivilized "Blacks" who had to be coerced for their own good: Coercion would supposedly teach them how to behave as free workers.[23]

The ideology of the civilizing potential of colonial rule was inseparable from practices of labor control. Colonial powers arrogated to themselves the right to extract labor from Africans by positing that for "uncivilized" Africans working for colonialism amounted to working for their own civilization. In his 1931 study entitled "Work and Colonization," published at the height of French debates on the ILO's Forced Labor Convention, Charles Fayet summed up colonial labor policy as follows:

> It was necessary to recruit locally a workforce without which the colonies could neither survive nor develop. We already mentioned that some indigenous populations in their current state of social evolution "prefer suffering misery and hunger to [contributing] the slightest effort to the improvement of their own well-being."

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> It was therefore absolutely necessary that the colonizing power use its authority to impose the implementation of indispensable public works. To question this right, to deny it and to forbid its exercise, is tantamount to abandoning colonized countries to the worst physical and moral conditions, and to assist in the "bankruptcy of colonization."[24]

As late as 1944 a Portuguese Inspector reasoned that "the black is naturally averse to work, as he has an almost invincible tendency towards self-indulgence and is by nature lazy, and still has no sense of his moral duties. Thus, state action is necessary, because without work the life of a people becomes impossible…"[25] Following independence in the areas discussed in this issue, racism in official discourse mostly gave way to culturalism that essentialized African society. The racially inferior gave way to the under-developed.

Is Working for "Development" Developmental?

Contributions to this special issue highlight continuities and changes in two intertwined aspects of international intervention in Africa, namely, labor policies and development policies. The section above summarizes the issue's main findings in relation to colonial and post-colonial public work policies. It suggests that colonial developmentalism allowed administrators to manage some sections of the African workforce in continuity with earlier practices of labor coercion that had been rendered illicit by international legislation. This section discusses these findings in relation to debates on the effects of "development." To do so, we must first clarify how we understand and apply this notion.

The notions of "development" and "developmentalism" are employed in at least two main ways in an extensive multi-disciplinary literature.[26] A first strand of development-focused research interprets the notion of development literally and uses it as an analytical concept. It focuses on the developmental strategies of different governments and institutions, and aims to assess their relative efficiency in terms of economic growth and other development indicators. The second strand approaches "development" as a hegemonic trope in political discourse. It emphasizes the historical rise of a rationale in which the representation of certain countries as "underdeveloped," "developing," or "low-development" (LDCs) has consequences for their international relations and standing. These two perspectives are not entirely disconnected: critiques of development often imply a claim that the discourse of development did/does not yield "actual development." This claim presupposes some engagement with a literal understanding of the term.

Economic historian Gareth Austin has defined economic development as the "expansion of capacity to increase output per capita."[27] In this definition, development is an economic parameter that can be used to compare the ability of various countries to increase output at different moments in time. Political economists working with this notion of "development" seek to establish which state-driven institutional arrangements have the potential to maximize

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economic growth especially in poor and low-income countries. This research approach looks at history to draw lessons from the past and inform policy.[28]

By contrast, poststructuralist researchers advanced fundamental critiques of development, which they see, in the words of Arturo Escobar, as yielding "specific constructions of the colonial/Third World subject in/through discourse in ways that allow the exercise of power over it."[29] They criticize post-colonial developmentalism as a fundamentally exploitative endeavor directed by northern powers and enabling the continuing subordination of the South.[30] The view that international development "aid" is a euphemized name for an imperialist and self-serving venture is still popular.[31] These critiques have in turn been criticized for attributing too much power to northern donors. Southern politicians and analysts saw the discourse of development "as a potential source of support for national empowerment and advancement."[32] They reinterpreted it in original ways and actively promoted its implementation in southern countries.[33]

Interpretations of developmentalism as purely hegemonic tend to conceal the ways in which African elites have been taking advantage of their privileged access to development discourses and funds to entrench their power, a behavior that Jean-Francois Bayart characterized as extraversion.[34] Those articles in this issue that extend their analysis into the post-independence period endorse this view: in independent Zaire (Loffman), Liberia (Whyte), and Niger (Rossi), and Zanzibar's post-revolutionary nationalist government (McMahon), the presidents mobilized a developmentalist discourse to justify coercive and/or exploitative recruitment practices. Non-elite Africans, too, have been turning "aid" to their own ends.[35] It is sometimes argued that this is what makes development a better option compared to alternative approaches to North-South relations.[36] But the fact that Africans—elites and commoners—have been successful in making policy (even authoritarian policy) work for them does not make such policies ipso facto benign or de facto developmental. The alleged superiority of developmentalism in terms of its humanitarian potential to effectively improve the conditions of poor countries and/or groups remains to be established.

In recognition of the opportunistic political employment of "development" to disguise labor exploitation, contributions to this special issue use the term "developmentalism" to signal that they do not take "development" at face value. They analyze critically the historical circumstances in which developmentalism evolved as a rationale of government. When, where, and why did development become a fundamental axiom of government? And with what consequences—in particular, what consequences for the management of labor and opportunities for workers?

Contributors do not ask whether the countries or regions they examined did or did not achieve economic growth or increased output per head. They explore the ways in which the idea of development allowed the continued coercion of workers. In the majority of cases, it is questionable whether such coercion could be deemed justified by its outcomes: The extent to which the

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projects examined here yielded sustained growth and demonstrable lifestyle improvements for the "beneficiary" communities is sometimes unclear, and mostly disappointing. And, of course, most analysts today would find the view that forced labor or slavery were justified because they helped national economies to develop completely unacceptable. This said, our argument is not that development plans failed, but that the labor question was not posed: rarely did developers see "beneficiaries" as workers; even more rarely did they debate openly whether the unfavorable working conditions that characterized the so-called beneficiaries' participation were justified in developmental terms.

The claim that intervention was necessary to induce progress beneficial to the target society legitimized the mobilization of unpaid or underpaid labor. A corollary of this argument is that developers have been represented as benefactors of those designated as "to be developed," who were expected to participate willingly in activities initiated for their own good. Defined in such broad terms, developmentalism can be seen as a style of government that rises and wanes in different places and at different moments in time.[37] We can examine and compare European developmentalism, Russian developmentalism, Chinese developmentalism, Islamic developmentalism, or post-World-War-Two developmentalism. Did the Omani Arabs who established clove plantations in Zanzibar and Pemba from the 1830s on pose as developers of these regions and societies? Did the reformist elites of the Sokoto Caliphate in what is today Northern Nigeria pose as developers of the Hausaphone societies that pre-existed the nineteenth-century Caliphate? How did these endeavors differ, if at all, from those of Europe's colonial empires? Irrespective of how one would answer these questions, they presuppose a critical distance from the mantra of development. Like the notion of colonialism, the notion of developmentalism signals a critical approach toward development as a self-evident remedy to the challenges faced by poor countries, and places development in historical perspective.

Multiple genealogies have been advanced for twentieth-century developmentalism. Suzanne Moon sees the Dutch new Ethical Policies in the East Indies as precursors of more recent Dutch developmentalism.[38] Antony Hopkins speaks of "Britain's first development plan for Africa" in relation to the campaign to suppress the slave trade from 1815 onwards.[39] Joe Hodge argues that Secretary of State for the Colonies Joseph Chamberlain was the first to devise development strategies in the British colonial empire when he served as Secretary of State for the Colonies at the end of the nineteenth century.[40] Robin Law's work on the Royal Africa Company's plantation projects highlights early examples of British developmentalism in a volume that reflects on European commercial agriculture initiatives in Africa.[41] The developmentalist overtones that colored these potential alternatives to the slave trade resurfaced later in the new guise of the twentieth-century colonial developmentalist turn. It is noteworthy that, even though the circumstances were different from those examined by Law, also in this more recent instantiation "development" was introduced as an alternative to forced labor.

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Moving closer to the present, Frederick Cooper showed that colonial powers turned to development funded through national taxation when they needed to "find a progressive basis for continued colonial rule in an era when major powers had made 'self-determination' a slogan of international politics."[42] Initially rooted in the reconfiguration of colonial rule that followed the Second World War, planned development increasingly shaped international relations. This developmentalism was a genuinely global governmental regime. It was premised on the idea that powerful nations ought to contribute to the development of poor nations. Not only did it operate on a global scale, but it also derived its legitimacy, procedures, and main ideas from the work of multilateral institutions. It was a constitutive part of the internationalism that has been seen as a distinctive feature of twentieth-century world politics.[43]

Organizations that implemented "development" multiplied: the League of Nations, International Labour Organisation, the various organs of the United Nations system, and the Bretton Woods institutions, for example, monitored and shaped distinct spheres of imperial, at first, and then national governance. Following Truman's Point Four Program (1949), the logic of the Marshall Plan in Europe was extended to include aid to Third World countries.[44] In the Cold War period, the USSR and China offered African countries development models that they presented as an alternative to that of Western former colonial empires. As mentioned, the idea of modernization was instrumentalized by African nationalist politicians in the context of the Cold War. In this process of internationalization, development was transformed from an essentially political relation between the colonial state and its colonies, to a generalized rationale aimed at redressing the problems of "underdeveloped" countries.[45] Unlike colonial states, aid donors were neither accountable to recipient countries nor harmed by the failure of aid policies.[46] Development programs were inhabited by "experts," "extension workers," "peasants," "producers," "the poor"… these terms emphasized the developer–developed relation, conceptualized in technical rather than political terms.

Although they lacked the accountability of political institutions, development projects assumed many of the state's functions as the main purveyors of public services and infrastructure. They were, too, amongst the very few suppliers of formal employment opportunities to hinterland regions. Landing a job as technical officer, extensionist, or driver in an externally funded development project became one of the main attractions of development for many young professional Africans. This cohort of aspiring aid workers had, and has, to reproduce the logics of the developmentalist apparatus. Like the chiefs in the colonial projects described in this issue, they continue to act today as brokers between donors and "beneficiaries." For southern aid workers, like for more highly paid consultants in the North, retaining their jobs is conditioned upon the continuous formulation of demands for more development by "beneficiaries" allegedly willing to participate.[47] Although this outcome may be unintentional, or possibly altogether paved with good intentions,[48] the creation of employment for providers of aid rests on the representation of beneficiaries

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as in need of aid and ready to participate.[49] This obfuscates their identity as workers.

The articles in this special issue cut across the colonial/postcolonial divide. They show that "beneficiaries" were rarely imagined as potentially self-ruling workers. This finding is not intended to idealize the ideology of workfare in opposition to the dependency produced by developmentalist discourse.[50] Contributions to this issue show unambiguously that the idea of free work as a symbol of civilization for groups defined as backwards and "not ready for freedom" was used to discipline African workers under colonial rule and justify labor coercion as necessary training. Readiness to volunteer work in colonial development schemes was described as yet another proof of advancement. In its nationalist manifestations, developmentalism made "working for development" a requirement of civic participation in national reconstruction. Citizenship required forced volunteering, and development work was rhetorically construed as an activity that would yield returns to the workers, their communities, and the nation. According to paternalist governments and donors, such returns ought to be desired over and above paid employment.

This special issue criticizes the discourses of free labor and development, but does not denounce them as irremediably compromised: Doing as much would amount to approaching these discourses as monolithic endeavors, which they never were. Yet the research featured in this issue shows that developmentalism safeguarded the interests of groups who occupied positions of power in legal and political institutions, and who used their power to make institutions work to their advantage.[51] This issue suggests that the labor conditions and relations engendered by development policies must be scrutinized closely. It reveals perhaps unexpected continuities between slavery, forced labor, and "development." Since developmentalism has not ended, these findings raise questions about the ongoing outcomes of "development" for African workers.

Unanswered Questions: Developmentalism into the Present

Development discourse defines and regulates labor relations through a particular logic predicated upon the will to improve. This establishes a power relationship between developers and beneficiaries that endows the former with substantial control over the latter. To be sure, developers and beneficiaries are internally diverse categories: different groups fall under these labels at different moments. Roles ranging from Minister of Economic Cooperation and Development, to President for Sustainable Development in the World Bank, to expert consultants in the many companies and organizations that facilitate the delivery of aid programs, to local extensionists in African villages, are only a few of the roles available to those whose task is to develop places or people. Beneficiaries, too, include entire states, regions, communities, or groups defined according to various criteria (e.g., Sahelians, women, HIV-positive individuals, etc.) What they share is that they or the places they inhabit are portrayed as susceptible to improvement. They figure as the

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targets of development interventions, and they are usually expected to participate in these interventions.

The forms that participation takes vary depending on the specific nature of a development program or project. What concerns us here is how people's participation in development affects their experience of work and employment opportunities: When, if at all, are they paid for participating in their own development? Who is paid and who isn't? How is participation valued in monetary and non-monetary terms? How is it regulated, legally? What forms does participation take? Who has access to different positions as developer, who has access to different positions as beneficiary, and with what consequences, in terms of opportunities for social and economic mobility?

Developmentalism today continues to generate employment for a vast range of people. The beneficiaries of these policies—the poor, the underdeveloped, those below $1.90/day, etc. – are not usually perceived as workers even when their participation entails activities that in other contexts would be characterized as work and remunerated accordingly. The development studies literature sometimes examines the linkages between aid, growth, and employment in Africa.[52] Most of this literature focuses on what development aid should do to support jobs creation in different sectors of African economies.[53] But development does not only support jobs creation. In some African contexts today, development is one of very few—if not the only—purveyor of formal employment to those qualified to act as aid workers. All categories of development workers depend on there being a corresponding category of people who can be represented as in need of aid, and who are hardly ever imagined as actual or potential workers.

Beneficiaries are expected to demonstrate the importance they attach to development by contributing something to aid projects and programs. In the past, this something has often been the beneficiaries' work. But from the perspective of international donors today, unlike colonial administrators, the beneficiaries' participation is not primarily meaningful because it yields un-paid labor in the target region or country. The beneficiaries' demand for aid does, however, justify the production and reproduction of jobs for those qualified to act as developers.[54] Some of these jobs are highly remunerated expatriate positions and consultancies. Others fill the offices of institutions based in places like Geneva, where workers benefit from privileges such as fiscal relief and subsidized access to insurance. Still others are less highly-paid jobs in myriads of NGOs and other South-based development offices. These are desirable positions for professional Africans, many of whom hold or seek degrees in Development Studies. Even so-called beneficiaries, whose participation has opportunity costs and does not result in stable incomes, see aid projects as desirable because they yield revenues and networking opportunities.

Official development agencies collect large amounts of data and statistics, most of which are freely accessible on their websites. This is a valuable service. But in examining this data, it is still hard to come by information on what may be called the labor ratio or wage ratio of Official Development

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Assistance and NGO funding. We can refer to this as the Development Assistance Wage Ratio (DAWR): What proportion of yearly ODA budgets is spent for wages? What does one find when DAWR data are broken down by nationality of employees and level of remuneration? How does the DAWR of national donor country agencies (e.g., DFID, GTZ, USAID) compare to that of international development organizations (e.g., FAO, WFP), and of NGOs? The importance of these questions is apparent when one stops thinking of the relations instantiated under developmentalism as relations between developers and people-to-be-developed, and rather thinks of them as relations between employers and employees. This special issue reconstructs the initial stages of this unfinished history.

NOTES

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1. Sue Miers and Richard Roberts, *The End of Slavery in Africa* (Madison, 1988); Sue Miers, *Slavery in the Twentieth Century: The Evolution of a Global Problem* (Oxford, 2003); Martin Klein and Sue Miers, *Slavery and Colonial Rule in Africa* (London, 1999); Martin Klein, *Slavery and Colonial Rule in French West Africa* (Cambridge, 1998).

2. These themes are addressed by Frederick Cooper in several of his publications, most thoroughly, in Frederick Cooper, *Decolonization and African Society: The Labor Question in French and British Africa* (Cambridge, 1996), see especially 110–70. See also Monica van Beusekom and Dorothy Hodgson's Introduction in a special issue of the *Journal of African History*; "Lessons Learned? Development Experiences in the Late Colonial Period," ed. Monica van Beusekom and Dorothy Hodgson, *The Journal of African History* 41 (2000): 29–33.

3. The full text of the ILO's Forced Labor Convention (Co29) can be found at the following link (checked and working on July 8, 2017): http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C029 Amongst the countries discussed in this special issue, Co29 was adopted by the ILO on June 28, 1930, and ratified by Liberia on May 1, 1931, Britain on June 3, 1931, Italy on June 18, 1934, France on June 24, 1937, and Portugal on June 26, 1956. Following the end of colonial rule, it was ratified by Ghana on May 20, 1957, the Democratic Republic of the Congo on September 20, 1960, Somalia November 18, 1960, Niger on February 27, 1961, Tanzania on January 30, 1962, and Mozambique on June 16, 2003. For a discussion of the circumstances in which the Convention was developed, see Suzanne Miers, *Slavery in the Twentieth Century: The Evolution of a Global Problem* (Walnut Creek, CA, Altamira, 2003), 134–51.

4. The expression "politics of altruism" is used differently by different authors, see Jørgen Lissner, *The Politics of Altruism: A Study of the Political Behaviour of Voluntary Development Agencies* (Geneva, 1977); Robert Sullivan, "The Politics of Altruism: an Introduction To the Food-for-Peace Partnership Between the United States Government and Voluntary Relief Agencies," *Political Research Quarterly*, 23 (1970): 762–68; see also Brian H. Smith, ed., *More Than Altruism: The Politics of Private Foreign Aid* (Princeton, 1990).

5. James Ferguson suggested that the entrenchment of state power is the principal structural side-effect of "development" in his *The Antipolitics Machine: 'Development', Depoliticisation, and Bureaucratic State Power in Lesotho* (Minneapolis, 1990), 255. Mark Duffield sees aid an essentially political form of global governance, Mark Duffield, "Social Reconstruction and the Radicalization of Development: Aid as a Relation of Global Liberal Governance," *Development and Change* 33 (2002): 1049–71. Tania Murray Li addressed similar questions but argues that attributing responsibility for the hegemony and dispossession that results from development intervention is far from straightforward: Tania Murray Li,

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"Revisiting the Will to Improve," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 100 (2010): 233–35.

6. See Tania Murray Li, *The Will to Improve* (Durham, NC, 2007) for a classic discussion of the application of this principle in the history of South-East Asia. For a discussion of how the ideology of the free gift shapes relations between donors and NGOs, see Roderick Stirrat and Heiko Henkel, "The Development Gift: The Problem of Reciprocity in the NGO World," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 554 (1997): 66–80.

7. See Daniel Roger Maul, "The International Labor Organization and the Struggle Against Forced Labour from 1919 to the Present," *Labor History* 48 (2007): 477–500; Daniel Roger Maul, *Human Rights, Development and Decolonization. The International Labour Organization, 1940–70* (Geneva, 2012); Benedetta Rossi, "Periodizing the End of Slavery: Colonial Law, the League of Nations, and Slave Resistance in the Nigerien Sahel, 1920s–1930s," *Annales* 72 (2017), forthcoming.

8. For a colonial anthropological study of the ambiguities of the village chiefs' position caught between allegiance to his community and the demands of the colonial administration, see Max Gluckman, J. Mitchell and J. Barnes, "The Village Headman in British Central Africa," *Africa* 19 (1949): 89–106. For a more recent study of the role of chiefs as intermediary between development donors and local communities, see Jean Pierre Olivier de Sardan, "L'espace public introuvable: Chefs et projets dans les villages nigériens," *Revue Tiers Monde* 157 (1999): 139–67. These anthropological studies reveal the ambiguities inherent in the chiefs' role as intermediary between the villagers and the colonial or national administration. However, by using the term "contractor" in this paragraph I highlight that from the perspective of donors, chiefs could be used, and were used, to outsource coercive methods in the recruitment of workers who were not free to withdraw; for a study of contract labor in Africa see Peter Little and Michael Watts, eds., *Living Under Contract: Contract Farming and Agrarian Transformation in Sub-Saharan Africa* (Madison, WI, 1994).

9. Wiemers in this issue.

10. Ibid.

11. Kagan Guthrie in this issue.

12. Ibid.

13. McMahon in this issue.

14. Ibid.

15. See for example, Monica van Beusekom, *Negotiating Development: African Farmers and Colonial Experts at the Office du Niger, 1920–1960* (Portsmouth, NS, 2002): xxx.

16. Some of the developmental activities promoted by colonial and post-colonial states can be seen as directed toward the building and maintenance of "public goods" and raising problems of collective action. In these circumstances states normally establish forms of coerced contribution either through taxes in cash or through taxes in labor (the "labor tax"). Unwillingness to volunteer is not necessarily evidence that the goods in question were not worth the effort to the local population. But the point here is that this question was rarely posed in relation to "development" interventions. Debates on the viability of the labor tax (or of prestations in French Africa) preceded the introduction of the development discourse. The problem is precisely that developmentalism made it possible to elude these debates altogether: "participation in development" was not conceived of as work, the relative usefulness and value of which could be measured according to different criteria, e.g., in terms of opportunity cost to the workers, salary scales in the public sector, collective action problems, or fiscal burden imposable to a certain population or group.

17. Zachary Kagan Guthrie, "Introduction: Histories of Mobility, Histories of Labor, Histories of Africa," *African Economic History* 44 (2016): 1–17; Benedetta Rossi, "Migration and Emancipation in West Africa's Labour History: The Missing Links," *Slavery and Abolition* 35 (2014): 23–46.

18. Many colonial and post-colonial development schemes required the resettlement of local groups either away from the building sites of major development infrastructure, or into development schemes that required more labor than was available locally. The following studies detail forced evictions and resettlements: Allen Isaacman and Barbara Isaacman, *Dams, Displacement, and the Delusion of Development: Cahora Bassa and Its Legacies in Mozambique, 1965–2007* (Athens, OH, 2013); van Beusekom, *Negotiating Development*; Doug Porter, Bryant Allen, and Gaye Thompson, *Development in Practice: Paved with Good Intentions* (London, 1991). In addition to positive actions to force groups to move in the

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name of development, some authors have highlighted the negative attitude of development discourse toward autonomous migration, which is often seen as a consequence of development failure to allow people to stay put rather than be mobile. See for example Oliver Bakewell, "'Keeping Them in Their Place': the ambivalent relationship between development and migration in Africa," *Third World Quarterly* 29 (2008): 1341–58.

19. Whyte in this issue.

20. Wiemers in this issue.

21. Loffman in this issue.

22. Urbano in this issue.

23. In 1948, the racial discrimination and forced labor that continued to characterize French colonial recruitment and labor policies were highlighted in a report written by the General Labor Confederation (*Confederation Generale de Travail*) which listed a range of concrete examples of such discriminatory and exploitative practices. An extract of this report is published as "Discriminations Raciales et Travail Forcé dans les Territoires d'Outre Mer," in *Le Travail en Afrique Noire*, ed. Georges Balandier and Bernard Dadié (Paris, 1952), 368–76.

24. Charles Fayet, *Travail et Colonisation* (Paris, 1931), 7. The citation in this quote is from a report written for the French Senate by senator Henry Bérenger for the Commission of Foreign Affairs (ibid, footnote 1).

25. Inspection to Tete District, 1944, Fundo da Inspecção dos Serviços Administrativos e Negócios Indígenas (ISANI), AHM, as cited by Kagan Guthrie in this issue.

26. For a comprehensive overview of the historiography of development from its origins to the present, see Joseph Hodge, "On the Historiography of Development (Part 1: The First Wave)," *Humanity* 6 (2015): 429–63 and Joseph Hodge, "Writing the History of Development (Part 2: Longer, Deeper, Wider)," *Humanity* 7 (2016): 125–74. For a less up-to-date overview of economic theories of development, see Diana Hunt, *Economic Theories Development: An Analysis of Competing Paradigms* (London, 1989). For a concise critical discussion of debates on development in the social sciences, see Frederick Cooper and Randall Packard, "Introduction," in *International Development and the Social Sciences: Essays on the History and Politics of Knowledge*, ed. Frederick Cooper and Randall Packard (Berkeley, 1997), 1–41.

27. Gareth Austin, "Resources, Techniques, and Strategies South of the Sahara: Revising the Factor Endowments Perspective on African Economic Development, 1500–2000," *Economic History Review* 61 (2008): 587–624, here 588.

28. Early contributors to this approach, such as Walter Rostow, Arthur Lewis, and Alexander Gerschenkron focused on the state's role in creating and supporting institutions that promote growth. More recent contributors such as Gordon White and Robert Wade talk of the "ideology of "developmentalism" and consider the relation between economic development and state intervention. Gordon White, "Developmental States and Socialist Industrialization in the Third World," *Journal of Development Studies* 21 (1984): 97–120, here 97; Gordon Whyte and Robert Wade, "Developmental States and Markets in East Asia: An Introduction," in *Developmental States in East Asia,* ed. Gordon Whyte (London, 1988), 1–29, here 1–2.

29. Arturo Escobar, *Encountering Development: the Making and Unmaking of the Third World* (Princeton, NJ, 1995), 9.

30. Gustavo Esteva, "Development", in *The Development Dictionary: A Guide to Knowledge as Power*, Wolfgang Sachs, ed. (London, 1993), 6–25; Jonathan Crush, ed., *Power of Development* (London, 1995); Timothy Mitchell, *Rule of Experts, Egypt, Technopolitics, Modernity* (Berkeley, 2002).

31. See Ha-Joon Chang, *Bad Samaritans: The Guilty Secrets of Rich Nations and the Threat to Global Prosperity.* (London, 2008); Aram Ziai, "The Discourse of 'Development' and Why the Concept Should be Abandoned," *Development in Practice* 23 (2013): 123–36.

32. Eric Helleiner, *Forgotten Foundations of Bretton Woods: International Development and the Making of the Postwar Order* (Ithaca, NY, 2014): 141.

33. This point has been illustrated in a large number of regional and country-specific studies. See, for example, Peter Bloom, Stephan Miescher, and Takyiwaa Manuh, eds., *Modernization as Spectacle in Africa* (Bloomington, 2014); Stephan Miescher, "Building the City of the Future: Visions and Experiences of Modernity in Ghana's Akosombo Township," *Journal of African History* 53 (2012): 367–90; Emma Hunter, "A History of Maendeleo: The Concept of 'Development' in Tanganyika's Late Colonial Public Sphere," in *Developing*

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Africa: Concepts and Practices in Twentieth-Century Colonialism, ed. Joseph Hodge *et al.* (New York, 2014), 87–107; Leander Schneider, *Government of Development: Peasants and Politicians in Postcolonial Tanzania* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2014); Guy Laron, *Origins of the Suez Crisis: Postwar Development Diplomacy and the Struggle over Third World Industrialization, 1945–1956* (Baltimore, MD, 2013).

34. Jean-Francois Bayart, "Africa in the world: a strategy of extraversion," *African Affairs* 99 (2000): 217–67.

35. Thomas Bierschenk, Jean-Pierre Chauveau, and Jean-Pierre Olivier de Sardan, eds., *Courtiers en Développement : Les Villages Africains en Quête de Projets* (Paris, 2000); David Lewis and David Mosse, eds., *Development Brokers and Translators* (London, 2006); van Beusekom, *Negotiating Development*.

36. Frederick Cooper, for example, argued that in spite of its shortcomings development "provided a basis on which the people of impoverished, ex-colonial countries could make claims'. *Decolonization*," 470.

37. For a similar approach in relation to non-state humanitarianism, see Kevin O'Sullivan, Matthew Hilton, and Giuliano Fiori, "Humanitarianisms in Context," *European Review of History* 23 (2016): 1–15.

38. Suzanne Moon, *Technology and Ethical Idealism: A History of Development in the Netherlands East Indies* (Leiden, 2007).

39. Antony Hopkins, "The 'New International Economic Order' in the Nineteenth Century: Britain's First Development Plan for Africa," in *From Slave Trade to "Legitimate" Commerce: the Commercial Transition in Nineteenth Century West Africa*, Robin Law, ed. (Cambridge, 1995), 240–64.

40. Joseph Hodge, *Triumph of the Expert: Agrarian Doctrines of Development and the Legacies of British Colonialism* (Athens, OH, 2007).

41. Robin Law, Suzanne Schwarz, and Silke Strickrodt, eds., *Commercial Agriculture, the Slave Trade, and Slavery in Atlantic Africa* (Woodbridge, Suffolk, 2013).

42. Frederick Cooper, "Modernizing bureaucrats, backward Africans, and the development concept," in *International Development and the Social Sciences: Essays on the History and Politics of Knowledge,* Frederick Cooper and Randall Packard, eds. (Berkeley, 1997), 64–92, here 70.

43. Glenda Sluga and Patricia Clavin, eds., *Internationalisms: A Twentieth Century History* (Cambridge, 2017); see also Roland Burke, *Decolonization and the Evolution of International Human Rights* (Philadelphia, 2010); Kevin Grant, Philippa Levine, and Frank Trentmann, eds., *Beyond Sovereignty: Britain, Empire and Transnationalism, c. 1880–1950*, (London, 2007). Abou Bamba talks of "triangulation" to highlight the interactions between the US, France, and the Ivory coast in the realization of the Kossou Project, Abou Bamba, "Triangulating a Modernization Experiment: The United States, France and the Making of the Kossou Project in Central Ivory Coast," *Journal of Modern European History* 8 (2010): 66–84.

44. See Bayard Price, *The Marshall Plan and Its Meaning (*Ithaca, NY, 1955), 367–93; Robert Wood, *From Marshall Plan to Debt Crisis: Foreign Aid and Development Choices in the World Economy* (Berkeley, 1986); Kunibert Raffer and Hans Singer, *The Foreign Aid Business. Economic Assistance and Development Cooperation* (Cheltenham, 1996); Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge, 2007). David Ekbladh suggests that the United States' involvement in foreign aid started in the 1930s crisis and before the Point Four Program, *Great American Mission: Modernization and the Construction of an American World Order* (Princeton, NJ, 2010).

45. It may be argued that colonial states were not in any way accountable to the societies they ruled, not at least in the modern sense of democratic accountability. But as suzerain governments they were responsible for the financial stability of the territories they ruled and for the management of public works. After World War Two they were increasingly expected to be accountable to the African populations they governed. A lot has been written about citizenship and the accountability of colonial and independent African states to their voters. Here, I only intend to signal that in principle post-independence European donor countries are accountable to European taxpayers, but not in any clear political way to the "beneficiaries" of their "aid."

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46. On accountability (or lack thereof) in the aid sector see William Easterly in *The White Man's Burden: Why the West's Efforts to Aid the Rest Have Done so Much Ill and so Little Good* (Oxford, 2006), 13–15.

47. Dieter Neubert, "Le rôle des courtiers locaux dans le système du développement," in *Courtiers en développement,* ed. Bierschenk, Chauveau, and Olivier de Sardan (Paris, 2000), 243–59; Benedetta Rossi, *From Slavery to Aid: Politics, Labour and Ecology in the Nigerien Sahel, 1800–2000* (Cambridge, 2015), 310–13. See also Raymond Apthorpe and Des Gasper, eds., *Arguing Development Policy: Frames and Discourses* (London, 1996).

48. Porter et al., *Development in Practice: Paved with Good Intentions.*

49. Murray Edelman, "The Political Language of the Helping Professions," *Politics Society* 4 (1974): 295–310.

50. See in particular Franco Barchiesi, *Precarious Liberation: Workers, the State and Contested Social Citizenship in Postapartheid South Africa* (Scottsville, 2011): 10.

51. Not necessarily their individual advantage, but their class interests, inasmuch as specific labor and political arrangements reproduced the privileges of some and exploitation of others. For a discussion of the connection between power, politics, and the law, see Christopher Tomlins, "Subordination, Authority, Law: Subjects in Labor History," *International Labor and Working-Class History* 47 (1995): 56–90; Pierre Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power* (London, 1992).

52. See for example Sam Jones, John Page, Abebe Shimeles, and Finn Tarp, "Aid Growth and Employment in Africa," *African Development Review* 27 (2015): 1–4 which introduces a special issue on this theme.

53. Page, John, and Shimeles, Abebe, "Aid, Employment, and Poverty Reduction in Africa," *African Development Review* 27 (2015): 17–30. The OECD's eleventh issue of its yearly African Economic Outlook was focused, too, on promoting youth employment: OECD, *African Economic Outlook 2012: Promoting Youth Employment*, DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/aeo-2012-en (link checked and working on July 15, 2017).

54. See Thomas Weiss, *Humanitarian Business* (London, 2013).

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