Part III

"Problems" in the Development Episteme

CHAPTER 9

Reshaping Huts and Homes

The wife of a Portuguese official wrote the following description of domestic life in southern Africa's Delagoa Bay in 1891:

> Lean dogs, cats, pigs, fowls, children (not lean), and sometimes goats, wander and play about the kraals, giving plenty of movement; and for scent! the odour of a long-worn, never-washed Kafir blanket, which is indescribably faint and nasty, and is often painfully apparent long before a kraal is entered. For sound there is the continual chattering or singing of the women, varied by a screaming child or the yelling of some wretched kicked and beaten dog.[1]

Nineteenth-century European travelers and settlers in Africa complained of the pungent assault from the cohabitation of animals and humans in African compounds. At the same time, many of these writers also remarked on the picturesque image of African settlements viewed from afar. European missionaries, explorers, and colonizers who began to travel more extensively in the interior of the continent in the nineteenth century recounted their initial impressions of African rural life as descriptions of huts and residential compounds. The development episteme homed in on domestic space as the first tangible development "problem" in Africa.

European proponents of the civilizing mission portrayed the hut as the quintessential icon of African rural domesticity and everything they thought was wrong with it: the use of semipermanent building materials; the isolation of communities; a lack of protection from slavers,

[1] Rose Monteiro, *Delagoa Bay: Its Natives and Natural History* (George Philip & Son, 1891), 139–140.

conquerors, and wildlife; inappropriate proximity of parents, children, and animals; "unhygienic" conditions for sleeping and eating; and a lack of order in community planning. Missionaries and colonial officials urged Africans to replace round huts with rectangular houses and reform the social, sexual, economic, and cultural characteristics of domestic life. To Europeans, huts represented Africans' inability to think long term or in a linear fashion. Clusters of African huts solidified the notion that African communities were acephalous (headless), without a central authority and that they were in need of strong (foreign) leadership. The fact that many Africans understood huts to represent both domestic and political authority evaded early European observers who believed wholeheartedly in the separation between a male public sphere and private female sphere. European interventionists sought to "civilize" Africans by reshaping huts into "modern" homes, reorganizing villages and towns into disciplined, ordered settlements, and "modernizing" African domestic units into nuclear families. From turning huts into homes in the nineteenth century to clearing "slums" in the twenty-first, campaigns to regulate residential spaces have been at the forefront of the development episteme in Africa.[2]

THE HUT IN AFRICA

European stereotypes about African huts obscured two facts: one, "that a variety of architectural styles, including rectangular, quadrangular, and octagonal, and a wide range of building materials, such as stone, wood, and clay, are of great antiquity throughout the continent," and two, that African forms of housing were rational responses to the environment and its available resources.[3] Homes across the continent came in the form of permanent, semipermanent, or temporary structures and were made of diverse materials, including mud, sticks, grass, leather, dung, and other resources from the local environment. African huts varied widely in size, shape, material, durability, and purpose. Africans were adept at protecting their homes from the

[2] Richard Hull, *African Cities and Towns before the European Conquest* (W. W. Norton, 1976).

[3] Ambe J. Njoh, *Tradition, Culture and Development in Africa: Historical Lessons for Modern Development Planning* (Ashgate, 2006), 177.

everyday dangers of weather, wild animals, and insects. Some African huts were made with dirt floors covered with mats, but more commonly, cow dung or ox fat was used to seal floors and walls. Cow dung was particularly effective at keeping dust down and sealing homes from moisture, vermin, and other nuisances. In southern Africa, many hut foundations were made of sand from ant heaps, which was sturdier and more resistant to moisture than other soils.[4] Thatched roofs made of wood and grass acted as weatherproofing. Some people, such as the Herero of present-day Namibia, spread ox hides over the top of huts to further insulate them. Rural communities along the Swahili Coast of East Africa and among the Ngoni of South Africa used mangrove poles from coastal forests as the main structures of support in mud and stone houses. Durable weatherproofing and constant upkeep made for more long-lasting structures. The fact that the huts of agriculturalists and mixed farmers took between a few weeks and several months to construct indicates that they were built to last years, sometimes decades, contrary to the European assumptions that these were temporary structures.

Pastoralist and other transhumant communities, such as the Fulbe or Fulani of West Africa, constructed less permanent abodes meant to last for a season or two, after which they would relocate in search of better grazing land for their livestock. Those who migrated every few weeks or months had little use for large, sturdy domestic structures. Given that less labor went into building pastoralist huts than those of more permanent settlement, they were more susceptible to rain and wind damage and required frequent repair. Materials used in hut construction were sometimes repurposed. For example, strips of leather affixed to the doorway in Maasai abodes of East Africa were transformed into a donkey saddle when the group moved to a new camp.[5]

Hut construction and the structure of compounds reflected local social and political relationships. Rarely in African societies did a nuclear family (a husband, wife, and their children) reside together

[4] Laurence P. Kirwan, "Recent Archaeology in British Africa," *Journal of the Royal African Society* 37:149 (1938) 496; Heinrich Vedder, Carl Hugo Linsingen Hahn, and Louis Fourie, *The Native Tribes of South West Africa* (Cape Times, 1928), 181; D. H. Reader, *The Zulu Tribe in Transition: The Makhanya of Southern Natal* (Manchester University Press, 1966), 43.

[5] Kaj Blegvad Andersen, *African Traditional Architecture: A Study of the Housing and Settlement Patterns of Rural Kenya* (Oxford University Press, 1977), 184.

in one hut. Often several people of different generations or ages resided in one house or compound. In many polygynous households separate huts existed for the husband and for each of his wives or concubines with their children. Households of Muslim Hausa communities in northern Nigeria included a central courtyard to ensure segregation of men and women, as well as a conical "entrance hut."[6] Once they reached a certain age (usually between eight and fifteen years old), boys in some African communities would leave their mother's homes to live with their fathers, stay on their own, or move in with other boys their age. Girls often stayed with their mothers until marriage. Sometimes pubescent unmarried girls lived together in their own huts, such as occurred among Luo communities of East Africa.[7] Whereas hut construction was often the responsibility of a young bachelor preparing for marriage, this was women's work in some Maasai communities and among the Elmolo of the Lake Turkana region.[8] In virilocal settlements women moved to their husbands' compounds. In some uxorilocal, matrilineal communities such as the Chewa of Malawi, a young man would go to his future wife's village and build a hut for himself and her there.

9.1 Architectural diversity in precolonial Africa

Many forms of residential and community settlements existed in precolonial Africa, including portable tents for long-distance traders in the West African Sahel, adobe brick houses in cities such as Gao and Timbuktu in Mali, square huts in the Asante Kingdom in Ghana, large coral and limestone houses in the Swahili cities of East Africa, and the stone structures of Great Zimbabwe (Zimbabwe) and of Engaruka in what is now Tanzania. Europeans admired these structures but often found other reasons to disparage them. For example, Europeans compared African homes to pigsties back home and assumed stone structures were the work of visitors from other parts of the world.[1] In the 1920s British anthropologist P. Amaury Talbot noticed that the square homes he encountered in northern Nigeria were "well adapted to the climate." He explained, "they provide good protection from rain and storms and, though the rooms are small and close, yet those with thick clay walls are cool and the inmates are well guarded from the great variation in temperature."[2] Talbot even conceded that this square architecture may have been indigenous because of its suitability to the climate, but he went on to compare them to Greek, Roman, and Egyptian structures, implying that "foreign influences" must have led to this development in Nigeria. Despite this diversity in actual housing formations of precolonial Africa, the hut became the most salient symbol of African domesticity – and everything wrong with it – in the development episteme.

[1] Klas Rönnbäck, *Labour and Living Standards in Pre-colonial West Africa: The Case of the Gold Coast* (Routledge, 2016), 141–142; R. N. Hall, "The Great Zimbabwe," *Journal of the Royal African Society* 4:15 (1905) 295–300.

[2] P. Amaury Talbot, "Some Foreign Influences on Nigeria," *Journal of the Royal African Society* 24:95 (1925) 178–201 at 199.

[6] J. C. Moughtin, "The Traditional Settlements of the Hausa People," *Town Planning Review* 35:1 (1964) 21–34 at 26.

[7] Audrey Butt, *The Nilotes of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan and Uganda* (International African Institute, 1952), 118.

[8] Bo Vagnby and Alan H. Jacobs, "Kenya: Traditional Housing of the Elmolo," *Ekistics* 38:227 (1974) 240–243 at 243.

African homes, often termed "wattle and daub" structures, epitomized the distinction between European and African civilizations for missionaries and colonial administrators, but not all Europeans found the African hut repulsive. Some seventeenth- and eighteenth-century European settlers and Trekboers in the Eastern Cape of South Africa adopted Khoikhoi methods of hut building along with other domestic practices like using animal skins for storing and processing food.[9] They found indigenous housing styles more effective at keeping out vermin and protecting the inhabitants from rain and wind. By the nineteenth century, however, Europeans perceived the African hut as the epitome of primitivism.

[9] Richard Elphick and Robert Shell, "Intergroup Relations: Khoikhoi, Settlers, Slaves and Free Blacks, 1652–1795," in Richard Elphick and Hermann Buhr Giliomee, eds., *The Shaping of South African Societies, 1652–1840* (Wesleyan University Press, 1979), 184–239 at 228.

RESHAPING HUTS INTO HOMES

The first step in attempting to reshape African lifestyles was to reorganize compounds of round huts into parallel streets with rectangular homes. King Leopold II of Belgium instituted this policy of reform in the Congo Free State. In 1905, after some of Leopold's atrocities related to the rubber trade came to light, Mark Twain published the satirical *King Leopold's Soliloquy: A Defense of His Congo Rule*, in which he declared, among other things, that the Belgians burned the villages of the Congolese people. Two years later the Congo Free State administration issued *An Answer to Mark Twain*, which included more than thirty pages of photographs as evidence of the transformation of Congo from a country "steeped in the most abject barbary" to one "born to civilisation and progress." One set of photos showed the difference between villages of "the past," which were "untidy," and those of "the present," which were "kept according to Medical Officer's Instructions" (see Figures 9.1 and 9.2).[10]

The reshaping of round huts into square homes and compounds into neighborhoods with linear streets entailed simultaneous geometric restructuring of settled communities and reformulation of African minds and morals. Missionaries were the first to intervene on a grand scale because they had at their disposal a displaced community in freed slaves, whose need for homes made them the ideal targets of instruction. To missionaries freed slaves were blank slates, people in search of an identity and a community. They did not recognize the identities and cultures they brought with them to the mission stations. In addition to providing emancipated individuals with new clothing and new Christian names, missionaries had Africans build their own rectangular houses in order to reorient their "hearts and minds" toward the "civilizing" cause. In his history of Magomero, a nineteenth-century Christian Missionary Society settlement in Malawi, Landeg White explained,

> Housing was an immediate necessity and so the Bishop with Scudamore ... began building, getting in the corner posts and frames of two houses within the week.
>
> Corner posts! It was as deliberate a metaphor as Procter's "new ground." All the huts presented by Chigunda were round, with conical thatched roofs supported on posts which provided each hut with a circular shaded veranda. As at the Cape, where straight lines of rectangular houses with neat gardens were the sign of Christian dwellings, so at Magomero "civilisation" began by squaring the circle.[11]

[10] Anon., *An Answer to Mark Twain* (A. & G. Bulens Brothers, 1907), 6, 24–25.

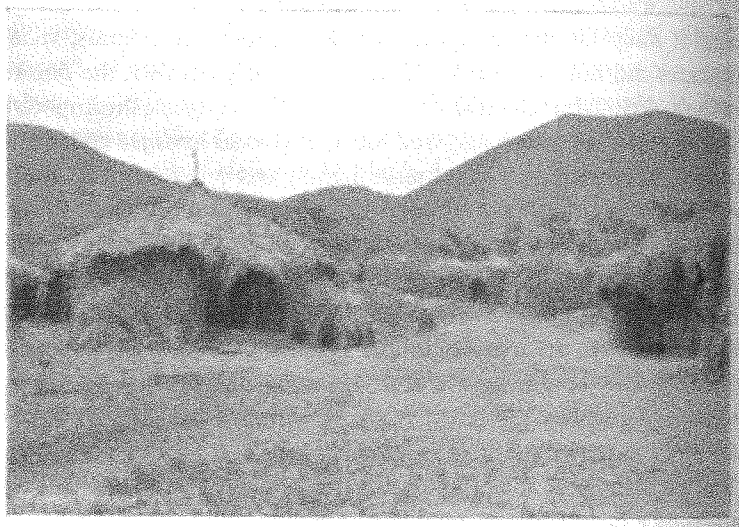
Straight lines symbolized rationality, order, and discipline. These lines metaphorically delineated between the aspects of daily life: prayer, work, and leisure. They also signified new definitions of the "family" in terms of one man, one woman, and their children, now symbolically separated into different rooms for parents and offspring.

Africans learned how to reconstruct their homes by participating in missionary and colonial construction projects, often as voluntary or coerced unpaid labor. Freed slaves and converts living on mission stations built residential units, churches, schools, latrines, and even the missionaries' and officials' homes. During the colonial era students, soldiers, prisoners, villagers, and those who could not afford to pay taxes were compelled erect the infrastructure of the colonial state. Missionaries and colonial officials argued that participation in these construction projects manually trained Africans in modern building techniques *and* domestic roles, skills deemed necessary for their development.

These transformations were also intended to confine the domestic realm of daily life within the household. African compounds, villages, and states did not necessarily delineate so clearly between the domestic and the political, but colonial officials refused to recognize the importance of African women, marriage, and kinship to local lineages and political alliances. In French Guinea colonists literally and figuratively removed the household from the realm of politics.[12] Historian Emily Osborn argues that Baté state formation in Guinea must be told as a history of relationships between and among the men and women of the ruling Kaba household, symbolized by the fact that the royal residence served as the seat of governance. With the arrival of French colonialism in the early 1900s came an entirely new administrative center in which the courthouse, the train station, and government buildings were positioned at a distance from the homes of French administrators. Straight lines and rectangular buildings in French colonial architecture conveyed rationality and technology, while the distance between residential and administrative sectors of town symbolized the separation of the private from the public spheres and the personal from the political. Missionary and colonial transformations of

[11] Landeg White, *Magomero: Portrait of an African Village* (Cambridge University Press, 1987), 25.

[12] Emily Lynn Osborn, *Our New Husbands Are Here: Households, Gender, and Politics in a West African State from the Slave Trade to Colonial Rule* (Ohio University Press, 2011).



Untidy Villages

The past

FIGURES 9.1 AND 9.2 "Untidy Villages" of "The Past" vs. "Villages kept according to Medical Officer's Instructions" of "The Present" in the Congo Free State. Source: Anon., *An Answer to Mark Twain* (A. & G. Bulens Brothers, 1907), 24–25

Villages kept according to Medical Officer's Instructions

The present

FIGURES 9.1 AND 9.2 (cont.)

African homes reinforced and reinterpreted patriarchy in terms of the gendered division between a private, domestic, and female sphere and a public, political, and male sphere.

DOMESTICATING LABOR

As missionaries built new homes and stations from the ground up, European officials looked to huts as a source of revenue for the colony in the form of the hut tax. The hut became a tangible entity over which Europeans could assert their authority directly. The hut tax also provided the colonial administrations with crucial demographic information in the period before colonial censuses or social surveys. More importantly, the hut tax was intended to pressure Africans, especially young men, into the wage labor market for colonial industries. British businessman and parliamentarian Lord Hindlip (Charles Allsopp) wrote in 1905, "It seems that a tax on wives on the system in force in parts of South Africa would help to create a supply of labour. There can be no doubt that at some future period the hut tax will be superseded by a poll tax, which, though not applicable at present to outlying districts, would be beneficial in towns and near stations where loafers and general riff-raff not only abound but flourish amazingly."[13] French territories implemented a head tax rather than a hut tax from the start and eventually all colonial governments across the continent moved to the head tax as a tactic for labor recruitment. Even where the head or poll tax was in place, however, the tax collector often calculated the amount owed by counting the number of houses in a village and multiplying that by the estimated number of inhabitants per residence.

9.2 Fighting colonial hut taxes

Africans were no strangers to taxes. During the precolonial era, powerful chiefs and states asserted their dominance over neighboring communities by demanding tribute in exchange for protection. The difference under colonialism was the individual hut or human was now the unit by which this tax was calculated, and taxes became a much heavier financial burden on families. Regional chiefs responsible for paying tribute in the precolonial period were given monetary rewards and other incentives for collecting the fees from their constituents during the colonial era. Many Africans failed to see the logic in colonial tax policies. Why did they have to pay for homes they built, owned, and occupied? Why should they hand over tax on dependents for whom they maintained financial responsibility, especially when their dependents' labor was directed away from the lineage? Should not the colonial state compensate them for this loss of labor and encroachment on their land? Unsurprisingly, early attempts to impose hut and head taxes sparked widespread protest. Early tax rebellions arose in 1854 in southern Gold Coast, 1898 in Sierra Leone, 1905 in Kamerun (later split into the French-controlled Cameroon and British-controlled Cameroon), 1906 in South Africa, 1908–1909 in Nyasaland, 1913 in Togo, and 1929 in Nigeria. Resentment toward chiefs, soldiers, and other Africans who served as intermediaries counting huts and collecting colonial taxes grew to a crescendo in the 1920s and 1930s.[1]

[1] Michael Crowder (with LaRay Denzer), "Bai Bureh and the Sierra Leone Hut Tax War of 1898," in Michael Crowder, *Colonial West Africa: Collected Essays* (Routledge, 2012 [orig. 1978]), 61–103.

[13] Lord Hindlip, *British East Africa: Past, Present, and Future* (T. Fisher Unwin, 1905), 68.

The amounts required under colonial tax laws varied widely, but were often quite burdensome. In nineteenth-century British territories one shilling (£0.05, equivalent to about $8 in 2019 US currency) per head was required in the Gold Coast whereas ten shillings (£.50, around $80 in 2019) per hut was the rate in Sierra Leone.[14] Other dues, such as the marriage registration fees and taxes on livestock, added to this burden. Across British Africa the goal was to set a tax at an amount equivalent to two months' wages, but tax rates varied in the different colonies and steadily increased during the twentieth century. Even where rates were relatively low, families with little access to the cash economy struggled to come up with the money for taxes.

Hut taxes in German territories varied. They were paid in marks or rupees and ranged from about $1.50 to $2.25 at the time (about $40 to $60 in 2019). When the hut tax was introduced in German East Africa in 1897 individuals who normally would have maintained separate huts

[14] All currency estimates are approximate calculations based on estimated inflation between the period 1900–1918 and 2018–2019 currency values and exchange rates.

resided together in one abode so as to reduce their tax payments. When German officials got wind of this strategy they replaced the hut tax with a head tax of two rupees (about $0.36 or $10 in 2019) per adult male.[15]

In French territories a head tax was imposed from the start and applied to all male Africans from the age of fourteen in French West Africa and eighteen in French Central Africa. Inconsistencies in calculating chronological ages meant that during the early colonial era some children many years younger than the stipulated ages were forced to pay or work for the state in lieu of payment, the more likely outcome. Rates varied and were generally low in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but after World War I tax amounts increased dramatically. The tax did not account for a significant portion of the revenue for the administrations, but it did exactly what it was intended to do: it directed many people into the state's forced labor system (*corvée*). Taxes were calculated in terms of labor time such that men between the ages of eighteen and fifty years were expected to provide up to ten days of work for the state per year as their "tax" contribution. In addition to the regular *corvée* labor/tax system, the lieutenant governors of French West African territories could at any time demand an additional labor tax called *prestation* specifically for public works projects.[16]

While hut and head taxes were imposed to coerce young men into the labor market, labor recruitment challenged colonial domesticity campaigns. Mine compounds, military barracks, and other large settlements for housing colonial laborers undermined missionary attempts to reorient Africans into nuclear families living in single-family homes. Several unrelated young men, often from different ethnolinguistic communities, would share rooms and live for months or years away from elders, wives, and children. By the 1940s and 1950s many laborers had successfully lobbied for married or family housing, an expense most colonial administrations and companies were loath to cover. Some missionaries and colonial officials supported workers' demands for a "family wage" and family housing because they echoed western patriarchal ideals around domesticity.

[15] Arthur J. Knoll and Hermann J. Hiery, eds., *The German Colonial Experience: Select Documents on German Rule in Africa, China, and the Pacific 1884–1914* (University Press of America, 2010).

[16] Babacar Fall, *Social History in French West Africa: Forced Labor, Labor Market, Women and Politics* (South-South Exchange Programme for Research on the History of Development [SEPHIS] and the Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta [CSSC], 2002), 5–10.

9.3 Soldiers of the state

The colonial administration of German East Africa recruited African soldiers, called *askari*, who also served as the primary tax collectors. Many East Africans despised the *askari* for their violent methods of what appeared to some people as extortion. The government introduced the hut tax in 1897 as part of its campaign to quell the Hehe revolt. Tax collection and suppression of protest were equally important duties for the *askari*, particularly because the tax collector could take a cut of up to 10 percent. The lucrative job of the *askari* allowed him to establish himself as a patriarch, or "big man," on the military compound. The compound was called a *boma*, the term used in many local languages to mean everything from cattle enclosure to fortified village. Historian Michelle Moyd points out that the housing styles of the *askari* varied greatly depending on whether they were in an urban or rural district. Most compounds incorporated local architectural features or settlement patterns, such as a communal courtyard where meals were taken and a *baraza*, the seating area in front of the house where one visited with neighbors and friends. Moyd argues that the German colonial state tolerated a degree of autonomy in the *askari* settlements because it allowed the soldiers to amass dependents who provided free labor to their families and the state.[1] Unlike the large dormitories for miners in Belgian Congo, Northern Rhodesia, and South Africa – and certainly distinct from the slum-like African housing structures built on the outskirts of segregated cities such as Dakar, Bamako, Nairobi, and Johannesburg – *askari* compounds were symbols of the soldiers' elevated status and power in German East Africa.

[1] Michelle R. Moyd, *Violent Intermediaries: African Soldiers, Conquest, and Everyday Colonialism in German East Africa* (Ohio University Press, 2014), 148–181.

MAKING MODERN HOMES, CITIES, AND TOWNS

Whereas early twentieth-century colonial interventions were geared toward labor recruitment, by the interwar period (1920s and 1930s)

officials concerned about the breakdown of African family structures and the poor health of laborers redirected the spotlight onto African domesticity. Two contradictory impulses influenced colonial policies and practices at this time: one that sought to preserve indigenous patriarchal structures keeping young people and women in check, and another that sought to modernize and "civilize" African homes and families. Whereas the former approach reified the authority of chiefs and male elders, the latter challenged African traditions like polygyny. Often colonial officials took the former approach and missionaries the latter, but in either case the physical transformation of the home – both external and internal – signified the degree to which the African family adopted "modern" domestic practices.

Even where officials aimed to preserve African social norms, they promoted "model villages" or "model huts" in an effort to educate the African public about domesticity. If Africans could not be convinced to give up the hut, then the hut had to adapt to "modern" conditions. Children were to sleep in spaces cordoned off from parents, and animals were to be kept outside. Cooking was to be done in a separate room from the center of the home or outside the hut where there would be better ventilation. French development schemes in Mali resettled families into ideal villages and homes with proper sanitation, irrigation, and transportation systems.[17] Colonial domesticity campaigns ignored the social logic of African families and indigenous practices of hygiene such as ablution rituals among Muslims or the use of cow dung to seal huts from weather and vermin. These reforms were intended to modernize African homes and, by extension, improve the health and productivity of African laborers. They also aided the capitalist marketing and distribution of European manufactured goods like soap, forks and knives, mirrors, shoes, blankets, radios, furniture, clocks, clothing, and other products moving through imperial trade networks.[18]

Though Europeans assumed Africans lived primarily in huts and villages, many Africans resided in urban centers before European settlement and colonization. The size and population of cities varied greatly, ranging anywhere from 5,000 to a few million

[17] Monica M. van Beusekom, *Negotiating Development: African Farmers and Colonial Experts at the Office Du Niger, 1920–1960* (Heinemann, 2002), 33–56.

[18] Timothy Burke, *Lifebuoy Men, Lux Women: Commodification, Consumption, and Cleanliness in Modern Zimbabwe* (Duke University Press, 1996).

people.[19] The cities across the continent had unique architectural traditions and spatial logics, from the narrow walkways in between the limestone houses of Swahili stone towns to the walled cities of Jenne, Great Zimbabwe, Notsé, Kano, and Katsina. Some cities were designed to facilitate long-distance trade and others were oriented toward the palaces of ruling families. For example, all major roads led to the Kabaka's palace in the center of the Buganda Empire located in what is now Uganda. People flocked to the central markets of Yoruba and Hausa cities in Nigeria to buy beautiful woven and dyed cloth, leather, and metal luxury items.[20] The Kongo Kingdom's capital at M'banza Kongo (contemporary Angola), located on a high plateau near the Luezi River, was both the center of the interior-coast slave trade route and the seat of power for the kingdom.

Urbanization expanded dramatically and rapidly during the colonial era. New cities like Nairobi sprang up alongside the railroad tracks and others like Johannesburg erupted into existence with the discovery of valuable minerals. In cities with a longer complicated colonial history like Dakar the layering of historical eras in architecture, town planning, and urban cultures makes it difficult to disentangle "precolonial" from "colonial" elements. Other cities that either came into existence or saw a large population increase during the colonial era did so from the influx of migrant laborers. The recruitment of rural young men for temporary or seasonal work in colonial cities posed a problem for city planners and urban residents. During the early 1900s colonial governments focused on town planning and public works projects to improve trade, transport, and communication avenues. These projects required large numbers of workers, but many colonial officials opposed the permanent settlement of African migrants in towns and cities. In Nairobi, Johannesburg, Lagos, Accra, Dakar, Brazzaville, Conakry, and elsewhere the question of who belonged permanently and where they would and could live dominated local politics and policies. One's gender, age, marital status, ethnicity, and racial identity influenced

[19] Dennis D. Cordell and Joel W. Gregory, eds., *African Population and Capitalism: Historical Perspectives* (University of Wisconsin Press, 1987).

[20] C. Magbaily Fyle, *Introduction to the History of African Civilizations: Volume I, Precolonial Africa* (University Press of America, 1999); Basil Davidson, *Lost Cities of Africa* (Back Bay Books, 1987); Graham Connah, *African Civilizations: An Archaeological Perspective*. Second edition (Cambridge University Press, 2001 [1987]).

one's ability to claim urban citizenship. Despite these restrictions, the population of cities ballooned and diversified after World War II. By the 1950s the need for permanent housing for urban laborers and their families became widely apparent, and more state planning and funding went toward the development of urban housing.[21]

Colonial-era urbanization increased demand for housing among laborers and others looking for new social and economic opportunities. Some government officials, African employees, and migrant laborers lived in European-style homes or tenement buildings. Most urbanites who did not live in labor compounds resided in temporary homes or rented rooms from wealthy landlords. Some Europeans pushed to destroy "native" style residences and replace them with European homes. Others sought to "improve" African homes by "modernizing" huts or refashioning African domestic space entirely by redefining the sleeping and social arrangements of family members.

Colonial and postcolonial campaigns for the rectangular home rested on a belief in the interdependency between "modern" home construction, higher standards of living, and increased productivity of labor. Interventions promoted distinct gender roles declaring women as caretakers of the home and family and adult men as the breadwinners and heads of households. The state imagined men as wage laborers and women as housewives whose domestic care optimized men's ability to perform their labor. These gender roles assumed that women oversaw the "private" space of the home and that men worked in the public sphere. In postwar southwestern Nigeria male railway workers embraced these principles as fundamental to their strikes in 1945 and 1946. Despite the fact that many Nigerian women brought significant income into the household through their trade activities, male laborers declared themselves the primary earners and heads of households based on their wage employment. As historian Lisa Lindsay explains, these men lobbied the colonial and postcolonial administrations for better wages and other benefits on the basis of their desire to build modern households with nuclear families.[22] The strikers reified the colonial concepts of masculinity and modern domesticity and evoked the colonial arguments about the connection between domesticity and

[21] Richard Harris, "From Trusteeship to Development: How Class and Gender Complicated Kenya's Housing Policy, 1939–1963," *Journal of Historical Geography* 34:2 (2008) 311–337.

[22] Lisa A. Lindsay, *Working with Gender: Wage Labor and Social Change in Southwestern Nigeria* (Heinemann, 2003).

labor productivity. In doing so, they convinced the state to provide better housing for themselves and their families.

Many people did not cooperate with the social engineering behind housing reforms. New domestic arrangements emerged in urban areas that challenged the colonial agenda, such as *métis* (racially mixed) families in Senegal, women-centered households in Nairobi, Black middle-class neighborhoods in Johannesburg, and short-term cohabitation in the mining compounds of Zambia. What and who defined the "modern" home in twentieth-century Africa was highly variable and contingent upon economic and social circumstances. For instance, when plastic became available in the mid-1960s it emerged as a staple material in "traditional" Hausa homes in Northern Nigeria.[23] This was not necessarily the innovation development experts envisioned. J. C. Moughtin, a scholar of urban design, wrote in 1964 that while he appreciated the "unique decorative character" of Hausa settlements and their relation to "social and religious customs," he maintained that these "must undoubtedly change to be replaced by a rectangular discipline based upon a regular blockwork construction."[24] Colonial interventions demonstrate that development efforts to reform African domestic architecture are rarely about design alone. Western planners insisted upon parallel lines and right angles in African homes in order to discipline the "African mindset" into accepting a "scientific" approach to residential planning. The assumption that western engineering is superior continued and continues to influence development housing reforms into the twenty-first century.

INFORMAL SETTLEMENTS IN THE MODERN CITY

As urbanization rapidly expanded during the colonial and postcolonial eras, cities struggled to deal with the eruption of informal settlements, commonly called "shantytowns" or "slums." For example, the city of Lagos in Nigeria went from an estimated population of 5,000 people in the late nineteenth century, to 325,000 by 1950, to a whopping 14.4 million people in 2020. With each successive wave of migration into cities during the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, the housing

[23] Moughtin, "The Traditional Settlements of the Hausa People."

[24] Ibid., 21, 33.

market has been unable to keep up. During the colonial period governments discouraged permanent relocation to cities by refusing to build viable housing infrastructure. Instead, many colonial governments turned a blind eye to the development of informal housing settlements on the edges of the urban centers. In many cases these "illegal settlers" squatted on land of questionable ownership, which later sparked conflict over land and housing rights. Colonial and postcolonial governments tacitly accepted the development of informal settlements because they provided a pool of cheap labor for businesses, elite households, and government modernization projects.

Informal settlements consist of temporary housing usually built of disposable materials, such as corrugated tin sheets, construction site debris, and other discarded items. As most informal settlements do not have access to electricity, running water, or sanitation, they have become symbolic and visible representations of Africa's obstacles to development. Given that African national governments have had limited ability to provide affordable housing in urban centers, informal settlements have expanded more rapidly across the continent since the 1960s. For example, whereas 16 percent of the global population live in informal settlements, this figure sits at 24 percent in South Africa. In some African cities, nearly 90 percent of the urban population live in informal settlements.[25]

Today the "shanty" has replaced the hut as a representation of Africans' inability to live a "civilized" and healthful life. African leaders of the early postcolonial era stressed the need to update African homes and communities with access to electricity, clean water, and sanitation. Massive resettlement projects such as those associated with the Akosombo hydroelectric dam scheme in 1960s Ghana and the villagization campaign of the *ujamaa* development program in 1960s and 1970s Tanzania uprooted rural people from their homes and villages in the name of modernization and development. In urban areas too the clearing of "slums," street children, and other "illegal" residents in the South African neighborhoods of Sophiatown and Alexandra during the 1950s and 1960s, in Harare, Zimbabwe as part of Mugabe's Operation Murambatsvina (Operation Drive Out Rubbish) in 2005, and more recently in

[25] For more information see the World Bank Blogs, Luis Triveno, "Eight Stubborn Facts about Housing Policies," July 5, 2016, https://blogs.worldbank.org/sustainablecities/eight-stubborn-facts-about-housing-policies, accessed January 3, 2020.

Lagos, Luanda, and other African cities replicate colonial approaches to urban planning. Poor and working-class people's homes and neighborhoods in wealthy cities are discounted as illegal "slums" consisting of ill-equipped and unsanitary "shanties."

Informal settlements represent the "dark side" of development and modernization across the continent. Like the "slums" in cities of the global north, they serve as a stark reminder that the wealth gap is growing under late capitalism. African governments and the United Nations (UN) have sought to eliminate "slums" and "shantytowns" by providing modern housing for their citizens, yet these efforts take significant time to complete and they generate resistance from residents. Informal settlement dwellers face either relocation, often to outlying areas far away from their jobs and families, or significantly higher rents of new housing constructed in their neighborhoods. When informal settlement residents in Africa resist efforts to relocate them, the international development community reads this as evidence that Africans refuse to develop, a trope crystalized in the development episteme.

9.4 The KwaZulu-Natal Elimination and Prevention of Re-emergence of Slums Act, 2007

Upon his election as the president of South Africa in 1994, Nelson Mandela promised that the government would build more homes for people without them. The housing crisis in South Africa would not end overnight. A significant portion of urban dwellers in South Africa continues to live in large settlements consisting of thousands of informal shacks. The state considers them illegal because they are unregulated. Numerous governments and development organizations (including the UN) have set their sights on eliminating informal settlements globally. These "eyesores," as they are often called, are a constant reminder that "modernity" is the privilege of the few.

The UN's Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of 2000 ranked reform of informal settlements the seventh most important goal on its list. Governments across Africa responded, not by attempting to improve access to quality housing but rather by eradicating informal settlements, often without alternative

housing options for their inhabitants. While this was not the intention of the UN, it was one of the outcomes. In 2007 the regional government of KwaZulu-Natal, a province in South Africa, passed the Elimination and Prevention of Re-emergence of Slums Act, in line with the UN's MDGs. It gave the government the authority to destroy any informal settlements on public land and allowed owners of private land to evict shack dwellers.[1] All evicted residents were forced to live in temporary housing in transit camps indefinitely until the state could provide permanent housing for them. The transit camps were located outside of the cities, far from where most residents worked. This 2007 program was intended to act as a model for the rest of the country.

Former shack dwellers frustrated by the forced removals formed the Abahlali baseMjondolo (AbM) ("Residents of the Shacks"). The AbM protestors actively resisted the destruction of informal settlements sanctioned by the new "Slum Act" in Durban and took the KwaZulu-Natal government to court over the Act. Initially the government won in the regional court, though AbM appealed to the Constitutional Court of South Africa and prevailed in October 2009. The AbM successfully argued that the "Slum Act" contradicted the South African constitution and that the government and development organizations need to prioritize the social rather than the economic value of urban land.

While the UN's MDGs (recently renamed as Sustainable Development Goals) reifies older development assumptions about "modern" housing, the success of the AbM demonstrates that residents challenge this concept by demanding their right to determine where and how they live.

[1] Marie Huchzermeyer, *Cities with "Slums": From Informal Settlement Eradication to a Right to the City in Africa* (University of Cape Town Press, 2011).

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Whether in the name of civilization, modernity, or modernization, interventions to transform the composite materials, structural designs, and locations of African homes represented the development agenda to reform and mobilize African domesticity and labor. Discourses on

improvement masked the political and economic agendas at work and ignored the indigenous logic of African residential construction and organization in both rural and urban housing. The development episteme has demanded that Africans reform architectural and social domestic practices. The scientific work of early twentieth-century urban planners set the stage for what "modern" urban spaces would look like in African cities. Building square or rectangular houses meant embracing development.

Urbanization has far outpaced the ability of states and private enterprise to provide affordable, modern housing for citizens. Urban Africans have begun to fight back against the assumptions made about informal settlements by development specialists and city planners from the global north. These citizens, such as the members of the AbM in South Africa, are challenging their governments to see urban residential areas as social spaces that belong to all citizens, not just those wealthy enough to afford modern housing. In their challenge informal settlement dwellers are forcing the international development community to Africanize the development episteme.

Moreover, western scholars have begun to recognize the artistic and architectural value of African indigenous homes. The plethora of articles featuring African "traditional" architecture and house construction in the journal *African Arts*, established in 1967, demonstrates this renaissance in African residential construction.[26] Images of "shanty towns" have even become an artistic form of their own, for instance on pinterest.com and shutterstock.com, demonstrating the growing impact of African city dwellers' resistance to development stereotypes. The interplay between celebrating the vibrancy of African urban life and disparaging these urban settlements as unhealthy, unsafe, and illegal invokes colonial-era interventions into African housing that simultaneously admired African ingenuity and sought to reshape African domestic logic. Artistic and cultural forms cannot be separated from the economic and social realities that produce them. Perhaps efforts to develop African domestic spaces and families will soon take into consideration whether the new homes

[26] G. F. Rohrmann, "House Decoration in Southern Africa," *African Arts* 7:3 (1974) 18–21; Labelle Prussin, "Traditional Asante Architecture," *African Arts* 13:2 (1980) 57–87; Anitra C. E. Nettleton, "The Venda Model Hut," *African Arts* 18:3 (1985) 87–98; and Merrick Posnansky, "Dwellings of West Africa," *African Arts* 20:1 (1986) 82–83.

envisioned represent the economic, social, cultural, and political ideals of their inhabitants.

Further Reading

On housing practices related to the civilizing mission and early colonization see David Livingstone, *The Last Journals of David Livingstone, in Central Africa, from 1865 to His Death, 1866–1873 Continued by a Narrative of His Last Moments and Sufferings, Obtained from His Faithful Servants Chuma and Susi* (Library of Alexandria, 2012); Michelle R. Moyd, *Violent Intermediaries: African Soldiers, Conquest, and Everyday Colonialism in German East Africa* (Ohio University Press, 2014); and Landeg White, *Magomero: Portrait of an African Village* (Cambridge University Press, 1987).

On gender and domesticity see Lisa A. Lindsay, *Working with Gender: Wage Labor and Social Change in Southwestern Nigeria* (Heinemann, 2004); Emily Lynn Osborn, *Our New Husbands Are Here: Households, Gender, and Politics in a West African State from the Slave Trade to Colonial Rule* (Ohio University Press, 2011); and Luise White, *Comforts of Home: Prostitution in Colonial Nairobi* (University of Chicago Press, 1990).

On town planning and urban life see William Cunningham Bissell, *Urban Design, Chaos, and Colonial Power in Zanzibar* (Indiana University Press, 2011); Hilary Jones, *The Métis of Senegal: Urban Life and Politics in French West Africa* (Indiana University Press, 2013); Peter Marris, *Family and Social Change in an African City: A Study of Rehousing in Lagos* (Routledge, 1962); and Ambe J. Njoh, *Planning Power: Town Planning and Social Control in Colonial Africa* (Routledge, 2007).

CHAPTER 10

Lessons in Separate Development

A textbook used in French West African schools during the 1920s began one lesson with the following passage:

> I live in Africa. I am an African. I have black skin. I belong to the black race. I am a black African. My teacher is French. He is a European. He has white skin. He belongs to the white race. He's a white man. The black has curly hair that he shaves completely. The white has straight hair blonde or black, which he combs with a brush with care. The black grows little beard. The white has a beard and a mustache which he can let grow or shave often. The black wears few clothes. He wears full and light cotton garments. The white is better dressed. He wears clothing made of woolen cloth.[1]

This textbook and others like it presented stereotypical images of Africans as villagers who lived in huts, worked on farms, and did simple crafts in contrast to "modern" Frenchmen who lived in "beautiful" towns with stone houses, hospitals, schools, telegraph stations, and administrative buildings. While colonial lessons distinguished between racially coded "African" and "French" worlds, education scholar Gail Kelly argues, students themselves created a new "separate world of educated Africans."[2] Colonial schools instilled in African students the notion that Europeans and Africans were on separate paths of development, but Africans did not accept these lessons passively. Kelly analyzes school essays in which African students wrote about their

[1] J. L. Monod, *Premier Livret de l'Ecolier Soudanais* (Delagrave, 1911), quoted in Gail P. Kelly, "Learning to Be Marginal: Schooling in Interwar French West Africa," *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 21:3–4 (1986) 171–184 at 173.

[2] Ibid., 172.

desire to work for the colonial government, live in European-style houses, and buy clothing from "French boutiques" for their wives.[3] At the same time, they celebrated African cultural aesthetics and dreamed of returning to their hometowns to help with farming. Students dismissed the dichotomies between African and French identities or "uncivilized" and "civilized" lifestyles. At the same time, the first generations of western-educated Africans believed they had attained a more advanced stage of development than their non-western-educated counterparts. To them, separate development was a class rather than racial distinction.

By the 1950s and 1960s African graduates of western schools across the continent viewed themselves as modern citizens who would guide their nations toward independence. Western education – introduced by missionaries, expanded by colonial administrations, and Africanized by nationalist leaders – was simultaneously a tool for indoctrinating Africans into colonial ideas about separate development and a weapon used by Africans to undermine the racist foundations of the development episteme.

Education comes in many forms and has many different purposes, such as socialization through art and literature, training in skilled labor, impartation of esoteric knowledge, and inculcation of national or societal values. African indigenous educational practices did all of these things before missionaries and colonial states introduced "formal" schooling. Colonial educators faced a conundrum; they sought to "civilize" Africans in western academic traditions and at the same time to reinforce ideologies of racial difference that undergirded colonialism and the development episteme. This conflict intensified as schools became a place for challenging these ideas and generating one's own ideas about development and nationalism. Some African nationalist movements and postcolonial reforms recentered African epistemologies in the schools. Today, institutions and scholars of the global north still claim to be the experts in technology, science, and medicine, the sciences necessary for solving development "problems," but many African institutions and scholars are at the forefront of development innovations designed for their own communities.

This chapter traces the transformation of the school from the site for instilling ideas about racial and class-based separate development during the colonial era into the key mechanism for ensuring African

[3] Ibid., 176–177.

political and economic development today. Modern schooling is here to stay, but the role education plays in development is up for debate.

RELIGION, CIVILIZATION, AND THE DEVELOPMENT EPISTEME

The civilizing mission of the nineteenth century was not only a Christian or colonial enterprise. Both Muslim reformers and Christian missionaries launched campaigns to "civilize" Africans through religious education, one of the foundations of the development episteme. Historically initiation practices, oral traditions, training and apprenticeships in arts and crafts, and home-based instruction served as the primary forms of education in Africa. Sex-segregated initiation "schools" for boys and girls, such as *chir* and *siwidhe* (Luo, Kenya), *jando* and *ukungwi* (Swahili, Tanzania), *bodika* and *byale* (northern Sotho, South Africa), and *jow* (Bamana, Mali), taught children about the history of their lineages and the proper behaviors expected of men and women in their communities.[4] Rites of passage often included songs, dances, and feats of strength or endurance to test the initiates' preparedness for life's difficulties. Where Islam and Christianity already existed, initiation practices and religious schooling often coexisted and sometimes coincided. Some religious reformers of the 1800s and 1900s criticized non-Muslim or non-Christian practices as "uncivilized," but many Africans found ways to reconcile their cultures with their religious beliefs.

Islamic education came to Africa with the spread of Islam during the first millennium. Though elite centers of scholarship such as those at Cairo and Timbuktu are nearly as old as Islam itself, "modern" Islamic schools appeared in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[5] In

[4] Bethwell A. Ogot, "The Construction of Luo Identity and History," in Luise White, Stephan F. Miescher, and David William Cohen, eds., *African Words, African Voices: Critical Practices in Oral History* (Indiana University Press, 2001), 31–52; Hans Cory, "Jando. Part I: The Construction and Organization of the Jando," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 77:2 (1947) 159–168; "Mishi wa Abdala," in Sarah Mirza and Margaret Strobel, eds. and transl., *Three Swahili Women: Life Histories from Mombasa, Kenya* (Indiana University Press, 1989), 69–79; Eileen Jensen Krige, "The Place of North-Eastern Transvaal Sotho in the South Bantu Complex," *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute* 11:3 (1938) 265–293.

[5] Mansoor Moaddel, *Islamic Modernism, Nationalism, and Fundamentalism: Episode and Discourse* (University of Chicago Press, 2005).

Quranic schools Muslim boys and girls received instruction on the Quran, the holy book of Islam, and reading and pronunciation of Arabic. These lessons were intended to teach children to read, memorize, and recite the Quran, an important milestone for Muslim children. In most cases boys had more opportunities for advanced instruction than girls. Islamic modernist movements ushered in modern *madressas* (also spelled *madrasas* or *médersas*), schools that provided comprehensive instruction in Islamic studies as well as lessons in reading, writing, and mathematics. Many modernists also advocated for the education of girls and women.[6] Islamic education reforms arose in the context of European imperialist expansion, and some reformers sought to preempt or prevent westernization. For instance, Sultan Ali bin Hamud in the British Protectorate of the Zanzibar Islands recruited a teacher from Cairo's Al-Azhar University to ensure that Zanzibar's first modern boys' school opened in 1905 with a solid grounding in Islamic studies. The Muslim "civilizing mission" in Africa promoted both Islamic tradition and modern schooling.

Formal schooling was also essential to the modern Christian civilizing mission in Africa. Salvation required acculturation into European languages, values, and social practices, as well as biblical literacy. As discussed in Chapter 2, the civilizing mission dictated complete transformation of a student's daily routine, economic expectations and opportunities, and relationships with parents, elders, and chiefs. As the first Africans to speak, read, and write in European languages, mission school graduates became valuable aides for both colonial knowledge production and religious indoctrination.

The graduates of mission and colonial schools were eligible for the best government jobs open to Africans during the colonial era, but western education also generated new conflicts within communities. After Senegalese student Insa Bâ completed his training at the Lycee Imperiale in Algiers around 1901, French authorities appointed him as a chief, but his appointment did not last long. Historian Martin Klein points out that Insa Bâ's education became a wedge between him and his constituents, causing the French to replace him with his

[6] See, for example, Qasim Amin, *The Liberation of Women and The New Woman: Two Documents in the History of Egyptian Feminism*, transl. by Samiha Sidhom Peterson (American University in Cairo Press, 2000 [1992]).

brother.[7] Some Christian converts resented the racial exclusions they faced despite their achievements. One such individual was John Chilembwe, who established an independent African church and led the 1915 uprising in Nyasaland (Malawi). According to historian John McCracken, "Chilembwe threatened the prevailing belief in European hegemony."[8] In South Africa, where racist segregation policies restricted civil service jobs to whites, the products of mission schools such as Lovedale and Fort Hare established the South African Native National Congress, the precursor to the African National Congress (ANC), in 1912.

Muslim and Christian reformers preached against certain cultural practices they considered "backward" or "savage," but many Africans refused to recognize conflicts between culture and religion. The lessons in Muslim schools taught young people to abandon traditional healing practices and instructed girls to remain virgins until marriage.[9] Christian missionary schools also became sites of contention around customs like female circumcision, discussed in Chapter 4. Some European missionaries and African Christians compromised over custom. For example, in Malawi Presbyterian missionaries co-opted and adapted local initiation ceremonies into the church rituals.[10] Both the Christian and Muslim civilizing missions involved patriarchal efforts to undermine African men's and women's authority over the socialization of children. More often than not, they failed to destroy the African customs and beliefs they perceived as contrary to civilization and modernity. The civilizing missions that undergirded the development episteme drove educational reforms in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Africa, but schooling also became a fruitful site for debating the meaning of development.

[7] Martin A. Klein, "Chiefship in Sine-Saloum (Senegal), 1887–1914," in Victor Turner, ed., *Colonialism in Africa, 1870–1960, Volume Three: Profiles of Change: African Society and Colonial Rule* (Cambridge University Press, 1971), 49–73 at 68–69.

[8] John McCracken, *A History of Malawi, 1859–1966* (James Currey, 2012), 133.

[9] See Adeline Masquelier, *Prayer Has Spoiled Everything: Possession, Power, and Identity in an Islamic Town of Niger* (Duke University Press, 2001), 95–96; and Laura Fair, "Identity, Difference, and Dance: Female Initiation in Zanzibar, 1890 to 1930," *Frontiers: A Journal of Women's Studies* 17:3 (1996) 146–172.

[10] Isabel Apawo Phiri, *Women, Presbyterianism and Patriarchy: Religious Experience of Chewa Women in Central Malawi* (Christian Literature Association in Malawi [Kachere Series, 2007 (orig. 1997)]), 32–36.

COLONIAL CURRICULUM AND SEPARATE DEVELOPMENT

Starting in the early 1900s European colonial administrations standardized education policies like the implementation of racial segregation in schools and institutionalized the notion that Africans were on a separate path of development from that of Europeans. Colonial schools trained Africans in agriculture, carpentry, tailoring, shoemaking, and other crafts to support the colonial economy. Meanwhile, African students and their parents viewed colonial schools as a gateway to lucrative government employment. Assimilationist schools promoted a curriculum similar to that of schools in Europe. Fourah Bay College in Freetown, Sierra Leone was known as the "Athens of West Africa" for its emphasis on western classics.[11] On the other hand, those in favor of "adapted" education for Africans, meaning a curriculum adapted to African social and cultural environments, advocated vocational training in agriculture and other local industries. Generally the French and, to a certain extent, German colonial powers took an assimilationist approach with an emphasis on learning European languages and cultures, whereas the British implemented an adapted education policy. Portuguese, Belgian, and Italian officials embraced the civilizing mission in theory but left schooling primarily in the hands of missionaries. Despite these pedagogical differences, all colonial schools sought to maintain racial difference as a fundamental characteristic of the colonial political economy and justification for separate development.

The French introduced a two-tiered schooling system with "European" schools for Europeans, *originaires* (original inhabitants of the French Four Communes), and *assimilés* or *évolués* ("civilized" Africans), leaving "African" schools to cater to the remainder of the population. In St. Louis (Senegal) the École d'Otages (literally, the "School for Hostages," renamed the School for the Sons of Chiefs and Interpreters in 1892) was opened in 1856 to train boys in clerical subjects like letter writing and bookkeeping to prepare them for work as colonial interpreters and clerks.[12] Other African students attended

[11] Daniel J. Paracka Jr., *The Athens of West Africa: A History of International Education at Fourah Bay College, Freetown, Sierra Leone* (Routledge, 2003).

[12] Hilary Jones, *The Métis of Senegal: Urban Life and Politics in French West Africa* (Indiana University Press, 2013), 223.

the two-year preparatory schools where they studied French language and culture. Each territory had an *École primaire supérieure* (higher primary or middle school) for boys from the regional schools who passed the competitive entrance exam. These schools provided four years of technical or administrative training free of charge and often led to government employment. More advanced students continued their schooling in the cities, where they took courses in history, geography, reading, writing, arithmetic, and hygiene. In 1934 on average 4.4 percent of school-aged children were enrolled in school in French West Africa, but educational development was uneven. For example, in Dakar, Senegal 18 percent of school-aged children were enrolled in government schools and nearly 30 percent in private schools, while in the predominantly rural region of Mauritania only 1.5 percent of school-aged children attended school.[13] The French also established Islamic-western hybrid schools and *madrassas* to teach French language and culture alongside religious instruction in regions with a significant Muslim population.

Increased funding of education by colonial powers during the interwar period resulted in more African teachers, agricultural experts, and medical and veterinary personnel available for development work. Professional training of teachers and clerical staff began in 1903 at the École normale William Ponty in Gorée, Dakar. In 1918 a medical school was added and in 1954 the William Ponty School became a university. The state established programs for training women for work as midwives, nurses, and pharmacists in the 1920s.[14] Whereas in the mid-1930s only about 5 percent of school-aged African children attended French colonial schools across West Africa, this number more than doubled in the decade after the establishment of the Fonds d'investissements pour le développement économique et social (the Investment Fund for Economic and Social Development) (FIDES) in 1946.

In contrast to the French, British colonial administrations financially supported and relied on missionaries and private organizations to educate Africans with an emphasis on vocational training. The

[13] W. Bryant Mumford, *Africans Learn to Be French: A Review of Educational Activities in the Seven Federated Colonies of French West Africa, Based upon a Tour of French West Africa and Algiers Undertaken in 1935* (Evans Brothers, 1939), 87, 158–171.

[14] Diane Barthel, "Women's Educational Experience under Colonialism: Toward a Diachronic Model," *Signs* 11:1 (1985) 137–154; Donna A. Patterson, *Pharmacy in Senegal: Gender, Healing, and Entrepreneurship* (Indiana University Press, 2015).

missionary-run Alliance High School, for example, was the only institution in Kenya at which students could take the Cambridge School Certificate examination, the highest-level examination for English-speaking secondary school graduates available to Africans during the colonial period. With the exception of a few missionary schools that covered instruction from the "infant" classes (preschool or kindergarten) up to Standard VI (sixth grade), most British colonial schools did not offer the full primary course. A typical "village" or "district" school instructed Africans in vocational skills like agriculture, carpentry, tailoring, and hygiene for two or three years. Only a few pupils would continue for another year or two of specialized training.

Some territories benefited more from education funding than others. In 1938 Southern Nigeria had thirty-three secondary schools while there was only one in the predominantly Muslim region of Northern Nigeria.[15] With the exception of a few missionary schools, British administrations in East Africa did not offer secondary education until the Second World War. The Colonial Office directed more funding and attention to education upon the advice of the American Phelps-Stokes Commission that toured Britain's African colonies in the mid-1920s.[16] Based on US experiences with African American education, the commissioners advocated the policy of "adapted education." Adapted education in Africa continued to offer a curriculum that emphasized agricultural training, training in small trades, and instruction in hygiene. Adapted education served as justification for racial segregation in the schools in both the United States and colonial Africa.

During and after World War II new funding from Britain's Colonial Development and Welfare Acts (CDWA) of 1940 and 1945 funneled significantly more money into education than the government spent previously. The postwar years witnessed the expansion of primary, secondary, and tertiary or college education across the continent. New colleges and universities offered professional programs in medicine, agriculture, education, and other arts and sciences.

In reality there was little difference between assimilationist and adapted colonial educational models; both sought to train a handful

[15] Barbara Goff, *"Your Secret Language": Classics in the British Colonies of West Africa* (Bloomsbury, 2013), 15.

[16] UKNA CO 323/1415/6 Advisory Council for Education in the Colonies, Memorandum on Community Education and Social and Economic Development Programmes in Rural Areas, 1937.

of skilled intermediaries to work for the state while providing basic instruction for the masses who would be expected to perform unskilled or semiskilled labor. In this way, colonial education policies reinforced separate development in racial and economic terms. The new class of African educated elites demanded access to more academic subjects, European language instruction, higher education, women's education, and professional programs. Many adhered to certain ideals of respectability as evidence of their elevated status. The respectability politics of the educated elite spoke to a different kind of separate development, one in which African elites claimed to deserve economic and social advantages over the "masses."

10.1 Respectability politics and the development episteme

The new colonized elites (the *évolué* in French and Belgian territories, the *assimilado* in Portuguese territories, and the "modern" or "civilized" in British territories) employed a politics of respectability to claim higher status under colonialism. In colonial Lagos the capital of the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria, Christians predominated among the political and economic elite though only about 25 percent of the city's population was Christian. According to historian Kristin Mann, by 1915 all of these elites had completed primary education, 80 percent had finished secondary school, and 30 percent went to a college in either Sierra Leone or Britain. Western-educated elites viewed themselves and their economic and social success as a model for other Africans to follow.[1]

Respectability politics rested on the adoption of new religious and moral codes, a new education system (and language), and new material cultures – the fundamental principles of the development episteme. Christian elites across Africa built square houses filled with the accoutrements of western life – tables, chairs, doors, books and bookcases, raised bed and blankets, and wardrobes full of western-style clothing. They adopted new rules around recreation as well. Africans reformed and redefined pastimes such as drinking and dancing as private, sex-segregated activities in order to bring them in line with Christian or western values.[2] "Respectable" elites also aided in European

colonial efforts to "develop" poor and rural African populations. One example was the Lagos Women's League in Nigeria. Historian Abosede George argues that the League led social development campaigns to protect the virtue of Nigerian girls and, symbolically, Lagos itself.[3] Educated elites urged young men and women to conform to the gendered politics of respectability. New types of Islamic respectability also marked the rise of a western-educated elite, many of whom were the products of modernist schools with a grounding in Islamic studies.[4] The respectability politics of African educated elites celebrated educational achievement, wealth and class status, and social causes that reinforced the development episteme.

[1] Kristin Mann, "Marriage Choices among the Educated African Elite in Lagos Colony, 1880–1915," *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 14:2 (1981) 201–228.
[2] Phyllis M. Martin, *Leisure and Society in Colonial Brazzaville* (Cambridge University Press, 1995).
[3] Abosede George, *Making Modern Girls: A History of Girlhood, Labor, and Social Development in Colonial Lagos* (Ohio University Press, 2014).
[4] Corrie Decker, *Mobilizing Zanzibari Women: The Struggle for Respectability and Self-Reliance in Colonial East Africa* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

By the 1950s development programs began to envision universal education as an attainable goal in the not-too-distant future. According to a United Nations (UN) report, *Special Study on Educational Conditions in Non-self-governing Territories*, primary school enrollment in Africa increased noticeably between 1946 and 1951, the years immediately following the passing of the CDWAs and the establishment of FIDES. The rates were wildly uneven. Only 2 percent of school-aged children enrolled in schools in Burkina Faso and Chad. In contrast, the Belgian Congo had an enrollment of 46.5 percent at the elementary level. This relatively high rate of primary schooling is due in part to the large number of missionaries there, which had increased from 4,000 in the late 1930s to more than 7,000 by the late 1950s. Table 10.1 shows percentages of school-aged children enrolled in school in select territories. The biggest increase in enrollments during the late 1940s occurred in British Somaliland, with a 317 percent increase, and in French Equatorial Africa, which had a 173 percent increase in enrollments. In both regions, though, the percentages in

Table 10.1 Percentage of school-aged children enrolled in select territories, 1950/1951

Percentage	Territories
0–10%	British Somaliland, French West Africa
11–20%	French Equatorial Africa, French Somaliland, Nigeria, Zanzibar
21–30%	Bechuanaland, South Africa
31–40%	Kenya, Swaziland, Uganda
41–50%	Basutoland, Belgian Congo, Gold Coast

Source: UN report, *Special Study on Educational Conditions in Non-self-governing Territories* (United Nations, 1954), 9

1946 were quite low (0.5 percent and 4 percent, respectively), and both remained woefully behind other regions even after the increases. Enrollment figures for indigenous populations in South Africa were comparable to those of colonial territories at around 30 percent. In general, increases in primary school enrollments in the late 1940s and 1950s coincided with new sources of funding through FIDES and CDWA.[17]

While nearly every territory increased school enrollment in the years following World War II, Bechuanaland (Botswana) was an exception. Its enrollments declined by 14.6 percent between 1946 (21,701 students) and 1951 (18,536 students) when a large number of boys and young men joined the migrant labor system to work in South Africa's booming mining industries. The gender breakdown of enrollments in 1950/1951 is also telling (see Table 10.2). Whereas many more boys than girls attended schools everywhere else in Africa, more girls than boys attended primary school in Basutoland (Lesotho), Bechuanaland (Botswana), and Swaziland (eSwatini), key regions of labor recruitment for South Africa. In the absence of older boys and men younger boys had to take on responsibilities like herding that kept them out of school.[18] The story of education in southern Africa reflects the enormous impact of South

[17] United Nations, *Special Study on Educational Conditions in Non-self-governing Territories* (United Nations, 1954), 14.
[18] John Charles Hatch, *Everyman's Africa* (Dobson, 1959), 228. This trend toward a greater percentage of girls in primary schools continued in Botswana, Lesotho, and Swaziland for decades after independence. See Fiona Leach, "Gender, Education and Training: An International Perspective," *Gender and Development* 6:2 (1998) 9–18 at 14.

Table 10.2 Percentage of female students in total enrollment in schools, 1950/1951

Territory	PS	SS
Basutoland	67.0%	34.4%
Bechuanaland	63.0	34.8
French Equatorial Africa	15.0	15.0
French West Africa	16.0	21.5
Gold Coast	25.0	11.6
Kenya	26.0	12.6
Nigeria	22.0	8.5
Swaziland	53.8	52.7
Uganda	24.0	13.5

Source: UN report, *Special Study on Educational Conditions in Non-self-governing Territories* (United Nations, 1954), 46. Some territories included in the estimates which appear in Table 10.1 were not included in this section of the report.

Africa's racialized separate development schemes during the apartheid era.

NATIONALISM, EDUCATION, AND DEVELOPMENT

Colonial education reinforced the notion of separate development, but it also offered a platform for social change, political mobilization, and – ultimately – national liberation. Nothing emphasizes this inherent contradiction more than the fact that the majority of African nationalist leaders were products of colonial schools. Missionary and colonial schools created opportunities for organizing beyond one's ethnic group or region. Western-educated elites bonded over their shared ability to speak European languages, participate in civil society, and claim elite respectability. A sense of solidarity united those who recognized that their academic achievements failed to result in equal treatment by missionaries or colonial officials. Eventually schools became the center of anticolonial and African nationalist movements.

Even before the spread of African nationalism of the 1950s and 1960s educated elites had been at the forefront of the anticolonial struggle. In the 1910s Louis Hunkanrin, an École William Ponty graduate, overtly criticized French policies in Dahomey (Benin). During the 1910s and 1920s educated elites in Malawi, Kenya, Ghana, and elsewhere became active critics of the colonial state and spokespeople for their communities. Protests among the educated elite generally centered around one of three issues: the lack of educational resources for Africans, the inequality of educated Africans in the social and political system, and the desire to protect African cultural identities from westernization.

Many leaders of new African nations, including Sylvanus Olympio (Togo), Kwame Nkrumah (Ghana), Jomo Kenyatta (Kenya), Léopold Senghor (Senegal), Nnamdi Azikiwe (Nigeria), Hastings Banda (Malawi), Philibert Tsiranana (Madagascar), and Julius Nyerere (Tanzania), attended universities abroad. These and other African elites were well positioned to negotiate with European colonial administrators and plan for a postcolonial future in part because colonial officials recognized highly educated Africans as their suitable successors. More importantly, these individuals were acutely aware of the contradictions built into the colonial philosophies of rule. Western education was their strongest weapon for overturning the system.

As colonialism came to a close African political leaders redeployed formal education toward nationalist movements. As discussed in Chapter 4, this sparked a body of literature that sought to undo the damage of colonial indoctrination. Novels such as Tayeb Salih's *Season of Migration to the North* (1966) and Ken Bugul's *The Abandoned Baobab* (1982) pointed to educated Africans' painful disillusionment at the racialization of western education even after the end of European colonial rule in Africa. Postcolonial literature became a tool for "decolonising the mind" and reclaiming African histories and identities.[19]

Since the 1970s efforts to provide universal primary education have been a cornerstone of many African nations' development policies. The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) Structural Adjustment Programs of the 1980s severely hampered these efforts by slashing the overhead expenditures of African nations. By the 1990s the push for universal primary education was taken up by nongovernmental and international organizations. It is Goal #2 of the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The MDG Monitor

[19] Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature* (East African Educational Publishers, 1981).

claims to have made some progress toward this goal in sub-Saharan Africa, where the rate of enrollment in primary schools jumped from 52 percent in 1990 to 78 percent in 2012, with most of this growth occurring since 2000.[20] Providing universal primary education does not mean that school is free. For example, a for-profit company called Bridge International Academies (BIA) aims to work toward this goal by offering access to private primary education for a fee (see Box 10.2).

Since the early 2000s gender equity in schooling has also been a major development initiative for various African nations and the UN. Gender has become a major component of development projects and funding in general, and most people agree that gender equality begins with gender equity in primary, secondary, and tertiary schools. In 2015 the MDG Monitor cited Rwanda as the "leading" nation on gender equality, universal primary education, women's empowerment, child and maternal mortality, HIV prevention, and environmental sustainability.[21] At that time Rwanda was the only country in the world with a female majority among representatives in government. Rwanda has become the model for other African nations aiming for universal primary education and gender equality.

10.2 Development experiments in primary education

Shannon May and Jay Kimmelman, two social entrepreneurs, founded the for-profit company Bridge International Academies (BIA) in 2007 to help expand primary education worldwide. May and Kimmelman sought to build economies of scale into their education system in order to bring literacy and numeracy to millions of children. The BIA's focus on "leapfrogging" the global educational divide is reminiscent of Rosenstein-Rodan's "big push" theory of modernization, discussed in Chapter 7. The BIA encountered several challenges to primary education globally: teachers had limited training, many teachers did not show

[20] MDG Monitor, MDG 2: Achieve Universal Primary Education, www.mdgmonitor.org/mdg-2-achieve-universal-primary-education/, accessed March 16, 2019.

[21] MDG Monitor, Fact Sheet on Current MDG Progress of Rwanda (Africa), 2015, www.mdgmonitor.org/mdg-progress-rwanda-africa/, accessed March 16, 2019.

up to work or were not in their classrooms teaching, and school infrastructure was limited. In order to economize school costs and find enough suitable teachers, the BIA produces universal daily scripts designed for schools in each country and sends these plans to teachers via the Internet. Teachers then read the script, which is a complete lesson plan, from a tablet. The lesson plans tell teachers exactly what to say, what to ask of students, how many minutes they should focus on each topic, and so on. Teachers then submit a report on the educational outcomes, which is sent back to the international headquarters of the BIA in Cambridge, Massachusetts.[1]

The BIA's status as a for-profit company differs significantly from the usual development model. The BIA charges families $15–17 per month per student. While these numbers may seem low, the average Kenyan family with students in BIA schools earns $136 per month, meaning that 12.5 percent of the household income per child is paid to the school. The goal of the BIA is to educate 10 million students, but currently its enrollments hover around 100,000 students across Nigeria, Uganda, Kenya, India, and Liberia. This deficit of students means that the model has yet to become cost-effective. Thus far, BIA has made up the $12 million deficit through fundraising from major donors such as the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative and the International Finance Company, part of the World Bank. The BIA, a for profit company, is tapping the same institutions that fund nonprofit development organizations, which has created antagonism in the wider nongovernmental organization (NGO) community.

The BIA is the largest partner in Liberia's recent educational experiment, the Partnership Schools for Liberia (PSL). In 2016 Liberia contracted with six educational providers to take over half of its primary schools. The other half of the schools under the purview of the Liberian government act as a control group. The Liberian government gave each provider a budget of $50 per pupil, but the providers could put in more money if they wished. The BIA's schools cost an additional $613 per student. The initial report noted that the BIA schools had the biggest improvement in learning over the other partner schools, most of whom had a maximum of $100 per student in their budgets. However, the BIA schools refused to accept "underperforming" teachers

and capped their classes at forty-five students, while the partner schools had around sixty-five students per class.[2] As the report noted, these distinctions likely affected the performance of the students.

May and Kimmelman's BIA project has faced significant criticism. In August 2017 174 NGOs made a public plea for funders to stop supporting the BIA.[3] They argued that for-profit schools exploited the global poor and left the poorest students without access to education, creating a bifurcated education system. Others have argued that students need to learn critical thinking skills, which does not happen in classrooms using the deeply scripted lessons found in BIA schools. Some critics also argue that the BIA's use of English in the classroom diminishes local cultures and languages. May and Kimmelman maintain that they are making significant improvement globally in access to literacy.

[1] Jenny Anderson, "Bridging the Gap: The Controversial Silicon Valley-Funded Quest to Educate the World's Poorest Kids," *Quartz*, January 22, 2018, https://qz.com/1179738/bridge-school/, accessed January 4, 2020.

[2] Mauricio Romero, Justin Sandefur, and Wayne Aaron Sandholtz, "Can Outsourcing Improve Liberia's Schools? Preliminary Results from Year One of a Three-Year Randomized Evaluation of Partnership Schools for Liberia," Center for Global Development, Working Paper 462, September 2017, www.cgdev.org/sites/default/files/partnership-schools-for-liberia.pdf, accessed January 4, 2020.

[3] "Civil Society Call on Investors to Cease Support to Bridge International Academies," August 1, 2017, http://globalinitiative-escr.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Civil-society-call-on-investors-to-cease-support-to-Bridge-International-Academies.pdf, accessed January 4, 2020.

INTERNATIONALIZATION AND PRIVATIZATION OF UNIVERSITIES

While not one of the stated UN MDGs, expanding university education is a development priority for many African nations. Modern universities in Africa emerged out of African demands for higher education during the colonial era, but historically advanced educational institutions trained intellectuals, legal experts, and religious scholars. Long before Ethiopia opened its first official university in 1950, the Coptic Church introduced formal education and the training

of priests as early as the sixth century when the region was known as the Kingdom of Axum.[22] Islamic universities like the University of al-Qarawiyyin in Morocco and Al-Azhar University in Egypt were established later in the first millennium. One of the oldest institutions in sub-Saharan Africa was the University of Timbuktu, a collection of scholarly centers in Mali that dates back to the beginning of the fifteenth century. In addition to literary and religious texts Timbuktu scholars wrote and preserved historical chronicles (*tarikhs*) in Songhay, Tamasheq, and Arabic dialects. Some manuscripts were destroyed during violent conflicts that broke out in Mali in 2012.[23]

Most modern universities in Africa began as missionary schools, secondary schools, or professional training centers. Cheikh Anta Diop University of Dakar in Senegal began as the École Africaine de Médecine de Dakar (the African Medical School of Dakar) in 1918. Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda opened first as a high school in 1922 and then expanded into a teacher training college in the mid-1920s and finally to a university in 1937. The University of Ghana (formerly the University College of the Gold Coast) in Accra grew out of the Achimota School founded in the 1920s. University education expanded rapidly across the continent in the postwar period. Nigeria's first university, the University of Ibadan, opened in 1948. The University of Kinshasa in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC, formerly Belgian Congo) began as the Catholic University of Lovanium, founded in 1954 out of a collection of Catholic schools in the colony. The present-day University of Nairobi in Kenya was also established in the mid-1950s. Many African universities were affiliated with institutions based in European imperial centers until African nations became independent in the early 1960s. At that time Makerere University, the University of Nairobi, and the University of Dar es Salaam, formerly attached to the University of London, collaborated to form the Federal University of East Africa, which lasted until 1970. Universities also provided new opportunities for women. In Sudan the Ahfad University for Women was established in 1966, though its origins go

[22] Tebeje Molla, *Higher Education in Ethiopia: Structural Inequalities and Policy Responses* (Springer, 2018), 15–18.

[23] Elias N. Saad, *Social History of Timbuktu: The Role of Muslim Scholars and Notables, 1400–1900* (Cambridge University Press, 1983).

back to the early 1900s when a local religious leader named Babicar Badri demanded a school for his daughters.[24]

Universities in Africa have been at the center of politics since the 1950s and 1960s, a trend that continues today. Education activists called for independence, decolonization of higher education, and Africanization of university staff and students. University students in Algeria, the Comoros Islands, Egypt, Ethiopia, Morocco, Mauritania, Senegal, South Africa, and Tanzania joined the global protests in 1968.[25] That year eminent Caribbean scholar Walter Rodney was in residence at Tanzania's University of Dar es Salaam, then a center for pan-Africanist scholarship and activism.[26] In South Africa and Zimbabwe the universities were key sites for Black nationalism and antiapartheid activism. In former Portuguese territories like Angola and Mozambique, where higher education had been controlled by the Catholic Church, independence led to the nationalization and secularization of universities. In Angola the Portuguese founded the University of Luanda (Universidade de Luanda, formerly Estudos Gerais Universitários de Angola) in the early 1960s. A few years after Angola gained independence in 1975 the institution became a nonracial public university. In 1985 it was renamed Universidade Agostinho Neto after Angola's first president who led the charge to decolonize higher education.[27]

Universities have also been important sites for preparing Africans for work in development. In the 1980s a decrease in funding to higher education and overall economic crises resulting from the World Bank and the IMF's Structural Adjustment Programs limited the universities' ability to produce graduates for this work.[28] A "brain drain" crisis ensued in the following decades as more Africans studied abroad in Europe and North America, many never to return. Given the mobility of labor, capital, and ideas in the digital age, some argue that

[24] Kathleen Sheldon, *Historical Dictionary of Women in Sub-Saharan Africa* (Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2005), 25–26.

[25] George Katsiaficas, *The Imagination of the New Left: A Global Analysis of 1968* (South End Press, 1987), 44.

[26] Andrew Ivaska, *Cultured States: Youth, Gender, and Modern Style in 1960s Dar es Salaam* (Duke University Press, 2011), 124–165.

[27] Adebayo O. Oyebade, *Culture and Customs of Angola* (Greenwood Press, 2007), 9. See also Y. G.-M. Lulat, *A History of African Higher Education from Antiquity to the Present: A Critical Synthesis* (Praeger, 2005).

[28] Horman Chitonge, *Economic Growth and Development in Africa: Understanding Trends and Prospects* (Routledge, 2015).

Africans who attend universities abroad now constitute a "brain-gain" rather than a "brain-drain."[29]

The 2000s ushered in a trend toward privatization of the university in Africa and across the globe. Today African universities partner with NGOs, humanitarians, and entrepreneurs in order to keep their doors open. One example is Stawa University in Kampala, Uganda. Stawa grew out of an NGO called Teach and Tour Sojourners (TATS), which hosts foreign scholars who give lectures and run workshops for Ugandan students. Stawa students get hands-on training in development by working in projects that in turn help to fund the university.[30] Internationalization and privatization of universities has led to a multiplication of universities. More than two dozen colleges and universities have been established in each of the countries of Algeria, Angola, Benin, Burundi, Ivory Coast, DRC, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Libya, Malawi, Morocco, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Somalia, South Africa, Sudan, Uganda, and Zambia. This trend mirrors the neoliberal push toward decentralization and privatization of development in general.

International development funding for university education in Africa has been insignificant compared to funding available for other types of education and training. This has contributed to the ongoing problem of the marginalization of Africans in the production of knowledge about Africa and Africans. The literature on development still largely ignores the work of African scholars. Some changes have emerged from partnerships between researchers and institutions of the global north with those on the continent, but much more work needs to be done to challenge the hegemony of the development episteme in creating knowledge about Africa and formulating educational policies in African nations.[31]

★★★

Formal schooling introduced during the colonial era contributed to racial and economic divisions by promoting the idea of separate

[29] Rubin Patterson, ed., *African Brain Circulation: Beyond the Drain-Gain Debate* (Koninklijke Brill NV, 2007).

[30] Interview with Corrie Decker, Laurence D. L. Maka, Vice Chancellor of Stawa University, August 1, 2019.

[31] Hanne Kirstine Adriansen, Lene Møller Madsen, and Stig Jensen, eds., *Higher Education and Capacity Building in Africa: The Geography and Power of Knowledge under Changing Conditions* (Routledge, 2016).

FIGURE 10.1 Students at the University of Cape Town, as part of the #RhodesMustFall movement, deface a statue of British colonial official and mining profiteer Cecil Rhodes as it is being taken down on April 9, 2015. Source: Rodger Bosch/AFP via Getty Images

development. Missionary and colonial education institutionalized the assumptions about racial difference embedded in the development episteme. Since the mid-twentieth century African and international development initiatives have sought to reverse these inequalities, but Africans still do not have much say in answering key questions such as: Who has the authority to set education policy? What/who are the sources of knowledge, the authors of textbooks, the teachers, and the models of educational development used in African schools? Should development funding go toward universal primary education, gender equity in schools, or expansion of universities? The marginalization of African epistemologies in formal education has contributed to the marginalization of African voices in the development discourse. The notion that education is necessary for African development is irrefutable, but innovations in development are needed in order to recenter African pedagogical practices in African schools.

Students in particular are an untapped resource. Students at the forefront of the "Arab Spring" in North Africa between 2010 and 2012, those leading the #RhodesMustFall and #FeesMustFall movements

in South African universities in 2015, the central role of youth in Nigeria's 2019 election, and university students seeking peace amid ongoing violence in South Sudan all demonstrate the valuable role of students and young people in generating political change (see Figure 10.1). African students have also identified innovative energy sources, offered new ideas for environmental sustainability, and established businesses designed to keep profits in the hands of Africans. The conversation around education will have better results if it includes African educators, parents, and young people. International funders, NGOs, and African leaders who listen carefully to students and their parents may see their ideas pay off.

Further Reading

On the history of Islamic and Christian education in Africa see Roman Loimeier, *Between Social Skills and Marketable Skills: The Politics of Islamic Education in 20th Century Zanzibar* (Koninklijke Brill NV, 2009); Elias N. Saad, *Social History of Timbuktu: The Role of Muslim Scholars and Notables, 1400–1900* (Cambridge University Press, 1983). Rudolph T. Ware III, *The Walking Qur'an: Islamic Education, Embodied Knowledge, and History in West Africa* (University of North Carolina Press, 2014).

On colonial educational policies and practices see Kelly M. Duke Bryant, *Education As Politics: Colonial Schooling and Political Debate in Senegal, 1850s–1914* (University of Wisconsin Press, 2015); Meghan Healy-Clancy, *A World of Their Own: A History of South African Women's Education* (University of Virginia Press, 2014); Spencer D. Segalla, *The Moroccan Soul: French Education, Colonial Ethnology, and Muslim Resistance, 1912–1956* (University of Nebraska Press, 2009).

On education, nationalism, and postcolonial identity see Toyin Falola, *Nationalism and African Intellectuals* (University of Rochester Press, 2001); Kate Skinner, *The Fruits of Freedom in British Togoland: Literacy, Politics and Nationalism, 1914–2014* (Cambridge University Press, 2015).

On contemporary education, development, and universities in Africa see Catherine Griefenow-Mewis, ed., *On Results of the Reform in Ethiopia's Language and Education Policies* (Harrassowitz, 2009); Tim Livsey, *Nigeria's University Age: Reframing Decolonisation and Development* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2017); Edward Shizha and Michael T. Kariwo, *Education and Development in Zimbabwe: A Social, Political and Economic Analysis* (Sense, 2011).

CHAPTER 11

Capitalizing on Dis-ease

In the early 1830s Scottish explorer Macgregor Laird led an expedition up the Niger River. One of the officers who accompanied him, R. A. K. Oldfield, described Laird's condition upon reuniting with him after some time apart:

> I was shocked at the dreadful state in which I found Mr. Laird: pale and emaciated to the last degree, he appeared as if risen from the grave. He was suffering from a disease named by the natives "craw craw," – an inveterate form of scabies, which, I am informed, is epidemic. In the vessels almost every white man and officer, and all the Kroomen, had had it.[1]

By the time they returned home all but nine of the forty-eight Europeans in the expedition had perished. Laird and Oldfield survived to publish their accounts of the harrowing journey. Such stories of death and disease solidified the African continent as the "white man's grave" in the nineteenth-century European imagination.[2] The idea that "African" diseases are more dangerous than other diseases has not faded. The 2014–2015 Ebola outbreak in West Africa, for example, sparked global panic. Starting in October of 2014, people traveling to the United States from the African nations affected were carefully monitored for weeks after their arrival, and some members of Congress proposed a complete ban on travel from

[1] Macgregor Laird and R. A. K. Oldfield, *Narrative of an Expedition into the Interior of Africa, by the River Niger, in the Steam-Vessels* Quorra *and* Alburkah, *in 1832, 1833, and 1834 Vol. I* (Richard Bentley, 1837), 407–408.

[2] Pratik Chakrabarti, *Medicine and Empire: 1600–1960* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), 124–125.

the region.[3] The continent of Africa has been associated with disease in western discourses for at least 200 years.

This chapter investigates the history of medical research, the expansion of western medicine, and the emergence of public health programs in postcolonial Africa in order to highlight the two primary ways medicine and health became key "problems" in the development episteme. First, imperialist expansion necessitated efforts to make African territories more hospitable to European explorers, officials, and settlers. Second, colonial and national states invested in the health of their subjects and citizens because healthier, more productive laborers increased profits of local industries and presumably facilitated the growth of the state economies. Biomedical research and intervention has been essential to the development episteme since the Scramble for Africa in the late 1800s. European missionaries and explorers studied African healing methods and brought western medicines to ailing Africans. Even before 1800 western explorers and scientists were noting the medicinal properties of African plants and the therapeutic practices of African communities in order to adapt this knowledge for western medicinal knowledge.[4] Post–World War II colonial development funds, such as the British Colonial Development and Welfare Fund (CDWF) and the French Fonds d'investissements pour le développement économique et social (FIDES), solidified the link between development and public health by offering metropolitan development funding for medical research and public health projects. While Europeans portrayed Africa as the "white man's grave," many Africans viewed western medical interventions (and the diseases they were meant to cure) as symbolic of the dis-ease colonialism brought to their communities.[5]

The development episteme has perpetuated the idea that Africa is a place of disease and that Africans are resistant to treatments and cures. Colonial medical officials and practitioners looked to Africa as a "living laboratory" and viewed African bodies as "pathological

[3] Donald G. McNeil Jr. and Michael D. Shear, "U.S. Plans 21-Day Watch of Travelers from Ebola-Hit Nations, *New York Times*, October 22, 2014, www.nytimes.com/2014/10/23/health/us-to-monitor-travelers-from-ebola-hit-nations-for-21-days.html, accessed February 4, 2020.

[4] Londa Schiebinger, *Secret Cures of Slaves: People, Plans, and Medicine in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic World* (Stanford University Press, 2017).

[5] Osaak A. Olumwullah, *Dis-ease in the Colonial State: Medicine, Society, and Social Change among the AbaNyole of Western Kenya* (Greenwood Press, 2002).

museums."[6] Africans continue to serve as inexpensive subjects available for medical research and experiments well into the twenty-first century.[7] Historian Melissa Graboyes argues that the history of medical research in Africa demonstrates "that problems are caused not by research per se, but by how it is done: the coercion, dishonesty, and misunderstanding that characterized so many encounters past and present."[8] Foreign healthcare workers and medical researchers frustrated with resistance or failures in Africa emphasize the misconceptions Africans have about western medicine, but Graboyes brings attention to the misconceptions foreign researchers have about Africans; some researchers portray Africans as "uneducated, unpredictable, and . . . yet to learn the benefits of biomedicine and scientific investigations."[9] Of course, many Africans have welcomed certain vaccinations, medicines, and other treatments, and some have integrated these with local healing technologies, but misinformed grumblings about African "superstitions" and mistrust or misuse of biomedicine persist.

This chapter traces the imperial history of racial and environmental medical research, the economic drivers behind public health initiatives, and the legacies of colonialism in medical research and public health interventions since the discovery of HIV/AIDS. Examining this history of African encounters with development interventions around health provides much-needed context for breaking down misconceptions about African resistance to or ignorance of western biomedical aid.

RACIAL SEGREGATION AND FEARS OF CONTAGION IN EARLY COLONIAL SETTLEMENT

The use of quinine as a malaria prophylaxis and other medical advancements facilitated widespread European exploration of the

[6] Helen Tilley, *Africa As a Living Laboratory: Empire, Development, and the Problem of Scientific Knowledge, 1870–1950* (University of Chicago Press, 2011); Melissa Graboyes, *The Experiment Must Continue: Medical Research and Ethics in East Africa, 1940–2014* (Ohio University Press, 2015), xii.

[7] P. Wenzel Geissler and Catherine Molyneux, eds., *Evidence, Ethos and Experiment: The Anthropology and History of Medical Research in Africa* (Berghahn Books, 2011).

[8] Graboyes, *The Experiment Must Continue*, 199.

[9] Ibid., xi.

continent after 1850, but it did not dispel the notion that Africa was a place of disease and death. Missionary/explorer Dr. David Livingstone embodied the overlap between exploration, medical intervention, and the civilizing mission. Livingstone and other scientists who traveled to Africa identified hundreds of new pathologies, viruses, bacteria, and other afflictions, and created what historian Osaak Olumwullah has called "a landscape of fear" in Africa.[10] As Africa became safer for European travel, it became more dangerous in the European imagination.

This discourse on diseased environments infected relationships between Europeans and Africans. From Senegal to South Africa imperialism frequently entailed European men's intimate connections with African women – both consensual and not, but theories of contagion mandated a different approach by the early twentieth century. During the 1910s, 1920s, and 1930s cross-racial relationships became less acceptable and racial segregation more commonplace, a shift some scholars have attributed to the arrival of European women.[11] European settlers established residential enclaves at high elevations, thought to be healthier and with a climate more suitable to whites than lowlands. "Native" spaces were portrayed as regions of extreme heat, a lack of sanitation, and illness. In European descriptions of the African environment dangerous tropical climes served as a metaphor for the lack of health and morality among African people.

11.1 Segregation in Algiers

The French colony of Algeria, established in 1830, was one of the earliest sites at which theories of racial contagion shaped colonial settlement policies. Land alienation in the rural areas began in the 1840s and 1850s, but the majority of the French settlers lived in the city of Algiers. The French administration established a "native quarter" (*village negre*) and a "Jewish quarter" to segregate local Muslims and Jews from European Christians. Urban

[10] Olumwullah, *Dis-ease in the Colonial State*, 1.

[11] Rachel Jean-Baptiste, *Conjugal Rights: Marriage, Sexuality, and Urban Life in Colonial Libreville, Gabon* (Ohio University Press, 2014), 194–216; and Carina E. Ray, *Crossing the Color Line: Race, Sex, and the Contested Politics of Colonialism in Ghana* (Ohio University Press, 2015).

segregation reinforced the ideology of biological difference between French people and Algerians and implied that cohabitation posed a significant threat to the white race. The "native quarter" in Algiers became known as a hovel "of breeding swarms, of foulness, of spawn, of gesticulations," and "a place of ill fame, peopled by men of evil repute."[1] The overcrowding of the "native quarter" and its limited access to the kind of public health resources available in the settlers' town ensured that its inhabitants were more susceptible to disease, which officials then used to justify continued racial segregation.[2]

[1] Frantz Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth* (Grove Press, 1966 [orig. 1963]), 42.
[2] Zeynep Çelik, *Urban Forms and Colonial Confrontation: Algiers under French Rule* (University of California Press, 1997).

Segregation policies reflecting European fears about racial contamination emerged in the cities of settler colonies in Algeria, South Africa, Kenya, Belgian Congo, and Southern Rhodesia. Kalina, the European district of Leopoldville (now Kinshasa) in the Belgian Congo, was separated from African settlements by a *cordon sanitaire*. Africans could cross this "sanitary barrier" into the European areas only for employment purposes between the hours of 9:00 AM and 6:00 PM. Similarly in Nairobi, River Road was thought to be a barrier to prevent the mixing of Indians, Africans, and Europeans. Racial segregation was an ongoing topic of debate in South Africa, where during the Segregation Era (1910 to 1948) administrators strictly limited the number of Africans who could enter the cities by creating "native townships" on the outskirts of towns. Arguments about the dangers African workers posed to the health of whites intensified during tuberculosis and syphilis outbreaks. Whether the urban townships were considered permanent settlements or temporary labor reserves, as the 1923 Urban Areas Act designated them, the notion that "white" industrial cities like Johannesburg and Kimberley should be protected from the influx of Black South Africans was entrenched several decades before the apartheid government came to power.[12] Theories of racial contagion were less pervasive in territories where interracial sex was a defining feature

[12] Saul Dubow, *Racial Segregation and the Origins of Apartheid in South Africa, 1919–36* (Palgrave Macmillan, 1989).

of conquest and colonial rule.[13] As ideas about racial difference shifted and pseudoscientific racism waned, interracial unions once again became more accepted, though the children of such unions often faced discrimination and social exclusion.[14]

MEDICINE, PUBLIC HEALTH, AND COLONIAL DIS-EASE

European encounters with so-called African diseases inspired new research in the medical sciences and new policies governing public health. Beginning with the London School of Tropical Medicine in 1899 academic institutions professionalized the study of diseases that Europeans "discovered" during their travels in Africa. In France the first forays into the field of tropical medicine occurred in the military where studies of diets, hygiene practices, and diseases compared the health of French people and Africans in racial terms.[15] On the continent missionary doctors and makeshift colonial health centers initiated biomedical examinations of Africans and created a trove of data about tropical diseases. Advances in microbiology and disease pathology helped colonial medical officers diagnose cases of sleeping sickness, cholera, malaria, tuberculosis, and other illnesses endemic to Africa.

Colonial officials tackled outbreaks of many diseases with both environmental and medical approaches. One of these diseases was trypanosomiasis ("sleeping sickness"), which first affected cattle and was spread via the tsetse fly in the forested regions of central and eastern Africa. David Livingstone drew on local knowledge about the tsetse fly in writing about its dangers in his travelogues. Severe outbreaks of sleeping sickness among humans occurred in the 1880s and 1890s in French Congo and Ubangi-Shari, 1901 and 1905 in Uganda, 1904 in German East Africa and in the Congo River basin, and 1908 in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. Nearly 300,000 Ugandans died in the 1905 outbreak. Symptoms of trypanosomiasis included fever, headaches, joint pain, swelling of the lymph nodes, and, if left

[13] Hilary Jones, *The Métis of Senegal Urban Life and Politics in French West Africa* (Indiana University Press, 2013).
[14] Ray, *Crossing the Color Line.*
[15] Michael A. Osborne, *The Emergence of Tropical Medicine in France* (University of Chicago Press, 2014).

untreated, neurological symptoms, organ failure, and ultimately death.[16]

Colonial officials responded to the sleeping sickness outbreaks by relocating Africans away from areas inhabited by tsetse flies and mosquitoes and burning villages thought to be infested with these insects. These tactics destroyed indigenous communities and prevented Africans' access to their cattle, grazing land, and watering holes. Health officials extracted cerebrospinal fluid through a lumbar puncture in order to assess the stage of the disease in the patient, a practice that continues today (see Figure 11.1).[17] Colonizers in Africa employed

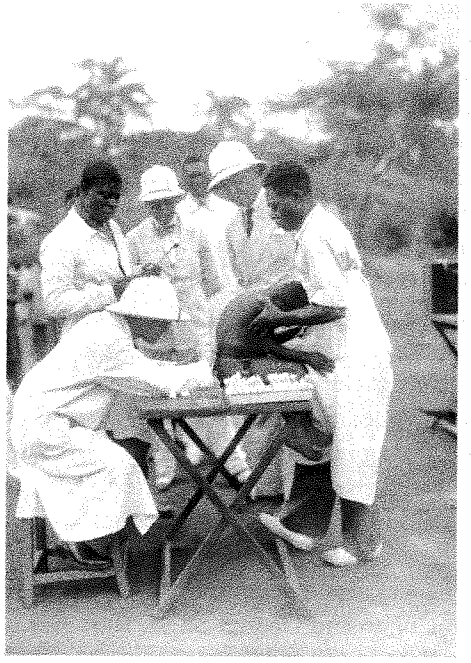

FIGURE 11.1 A European doctor and two African assistants giving an African boy a lumbar puncture near Yaoundé, French Cameroon, in order to determine the stage of sleeping sickness while French Governor Bonnecarrere and French MP Susset look on, March 1933. Source: AFP via Getty Images

[16] Maryinez Lyons, *The Colonial Disease: A Social History of Sleeping Sickness in Northern Zaire, 1900–1940* (Cambridge University Press, 1992), 42–45.

[17] Human African Trypanosomiasis, Symptoms, Diagnosis, and Treatment, The World Health Organization, www.who.int/trypanosomiasis_african/diagnosis/en/, accessed January 2, 2020.

systematized western biomedical practices to tackle sleeping sickness and claim the power to control African populations and reform African bodies. Unlike western biomedical discourses, African ideas about health and healing did not necessary distinguish between physical, social, and moral disturbances. The impact of sleeping sickness outbreaks on both cattle and humans around the turn of the twentieth century was so sudden and pervasive that many people believed this disease reflected the dis-ease brought on by European conquest and settlement.[18]

Similar dynamics between colonial intervention and African mistrust played out in Dakar, the capital of the French West Africa administration. In response to a 1914 bubonic plague epidemic, the French colonial government instituted a variety of mandatory sanitary interventions, including the destruction of African homes, the cordoning off of the "native quarter," and forced vaccinations of Africans. These measures sparked a protest that closed down the central market for six days. Blaise Diagne, the first African elected to the French Chamber of Deputies, demanded that Governor William Merlaud-Ponty end the state's invasive tactics. Some of Diagne's supporters believed that the extreme public health measures were carried out in retaliation for his election, which occurred less than a month prior to the outbreak. Rumors spread that French authorities planned to assassinate Diagne with poison disguised as a vaccination dose. After a few weeks of protest, the government ended the state of emergency and removed the health regulations. Efforts to impose harsh interventions like resettlement and racial segregation remained controversial in colonial Senegal. While French officials took a paternalistic approach, believing in the efficacy of western biomedicine, many Senegalese viewed the outbreak as a sign that colonialism brought instability to the region.[19]

Rumors about the subversive dangers of western medicine were also prevalent across eastern and central Africa, where some Africans spread rumors that nurses and doctors were "vampires" who fed on the blood and organs removed from ill (and ill-fated) victims.[20] During the 1904–1905 Maji Maji Rebellion in German East Africa local spiritual healers sought to inoculate Africans from the infection of German

[18] Lyons, *The Colonial Disease*, 162–198.

[19] Myron Echenberg, *Black Death, White Medicine: Bubonic Plague and the Politics of Public Health in Colonial Senegal, 1914–1945* (Heinemann, 2002).

[20] Luise White, *Speaking with Vampires: Rumor and History in Colonial Africa* (University of California Press, 2000).

colonialism.[21] The *hongo* (spiritual expert) anointed warriors with a magical liquid (*maji*, or "water") that would make them disappear in battle and turn European bullets into water. Belief in the *maji* was a rejection of both European medicine and colonial conquest. The widespread distribution of the *maji* itself fueled the anticolonial uprising across much of southern Tanzania. Africans feared western health interventions, but Europeans also feared the political influence of African healers who led the charge against colonialism.

Experiments with state-run vaccination campaigns, such as those carried out after a smallpox epidemic in the Cape Colony of South Africa in the 1880s, blossomed into standardized public health regulations across colonial Africa in the 1910s and 1920s. Public health laws dictated and regulated medical examinations, vaccinations, and sanitary regimes. Christian missions used medical interventions and training to lure Africans to the mission stations. By World War I the colonial governments were building new hospitals, infirmaries, and dispensaries and took over training African medical assistants, nurses, dispensers, pharmacists, and eventually doctors. These developments facilitated medical research. Beginning in 1916 the Belgian Congo initiated an annual public health survey that catalogued cases of sleeping sickness, yaws, malaria, and measles. By the 1930s colonial institutions like prisons, schools, hospitals, and labor camps provided intimate access to African bodies for scientific study. Colonial officers could monitor Africans twenty-four hours a day and for months at a time. Day-to-day measurements of children's growth patterns, laborers' physical stamina, and prisoners' mental states provided fodder for eugenicist theories that race and culture were primary factors in mental and physical health. Colonial public health regulations transformed the western scientific doctrine of the development episteme into law and policy.

The first colonial health centers in Africa were located in cities near colonial schools, hospitals, and dispensaries. The interwar era brought new concerns about rural health to the fore, but services in rural areas remained patchy well after the end of colonialism. The introduction of western biomedicine did not replace indigenous health practices, but it did introduce new options. If medicinal herbs and rituals of local

[21] Jamie Monson, "War of Words: The Narrative Efficacy of Medicine in the Maji Maji War," in James Giblin and Jamie Monson, eds., *Maji Maji: Lifting the Fog of War* (Koninklijke Brill NV, 2010), 33–70.

healers did not work immediately, Africans could draw on the services of a missionary doctor or colonial dispensary, and vice versa. Some who benefited from and demanded access to western medicine viewed this as merely one option among a repertoire of possible solutions to health problems. Today it is difficult to distinguish between "western" and "African" healing practices because both have changed over time and health practitioners often rely on a combination of knowledge and approaches.

SEXUALITY, HEALTH, AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF LABOR

Sexually transmitted illnesses (STIs) were some of the first major health problems that colonial officials systematically catalogued. Sexually transmitted illnesses were common in Europe as well, a fact addressed by legislation passed in European countries between the late eighteenth and mid-nineteenth centuries.[22] Concerns about the impact of STIs on soldiers during World War I heightened awareness of the problem, and officials began linking STIs with the non-European destinations of European soldiers. In colonial Africa Europeans associated STIs with low birth rates, infant mortality, and declining population, issues that negatively impacted the labor pool. Europeans argued that African tendencies toward promiscuity accounted for the prevalence of diseases like syphilis. In Uganda and Malawi British doctors raised an alarm about the link between sexuality and syphilis outbreaks, though historian Megan Vaughan has pointed out that they often misdiagnosed cases of yaws, a non-venereal disease, as syphilis.[23] Despite western stereotypes about African sexuality and disease, many of the regions with the highest rates of STIs were those with a long history of contact with Europeans.

In Africa as elsewhere women were identified as the vectors of STIs and were subject to forced medical examinations and deportation from cities. Typically, European and African men were treated while women were repatriated to their natal villages. The increase in STIs during the

[22] Philippa Levine, *Prostitution, Race, and Politics: Policing Venereal Disease in the British Empire* (Routledge, 2003).

[23] Megan Vaughan, *Curing Their Ills: Colonial Power and African Illness* (Stanford University Press, 1991), 137.

early twentieth century can be attributed in part to long-distance migrant labor schemes, rapid urbanization, and new forms of prostitution. Customary wife lending, concubinage, and slave marriages had long existed on the continent, but prostitution – the direct exchange of sex for cash – was generally a colonial invention. Luise White argues that sex work was tolerated and at times encouraged by the colonial administration in Kenya because it served to support the urban labor system by providing African men with access to the "comforts of home" necessary to regenerate their labor power.[24]

Concerns about venereal disease were simultaneously concerns about sexual morality and economics. European racial tropes perpetuating the myth of African promiscuity justified interventions into African sexual lives. Sexual immorality was connected to STIs, which many authorities considered the primary reason for high rates of infertility. Colonial states cared about infertility because it threatened the stability of the labor resources. Western attempts to control African sexuality and reproduction propagated both the economic goals of development and the racial ideologies of the development episteme.

11.2 The health of laborers

Despite the fact that they prioritized labor productivity, states did not always invest in the health of laborers. In South Africa, British East Africa (Kenya), French Equatorial Africa (Chad, Central African Republic, Cameroon, Republic of the Congo, and Gabon), the Gold Coast (Ghana), Northern Rhodesia (Zambia), Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe), and other colonies with large-scale colonial cash crop agriculture and resource extraction, state officials were preoccupied with the supply and condition of labor. South Africa's long-distance migrant labor system emerged in response to the late nineteenth-century Mineral Revolution with the discovery of gold and diamonds. In the early twentieth century mining officials became concerned about the severe and frequent outbreaks of tuberculosis (TB) among the miners. In the late 1920s more than 90% of Africans in the Transkei region of South Africa were infected with TB. Mining companies and state officials argued that Africans were responsible for the spread of the disease due to poor personal hygiene and sanitation practices. The collaborative organization established by the mining companies, the Witwatersrand Native Labour Association (WNLA), subjected workers to mandatory medical examinations, repatriated sick workers, and segregated the ill from the healthy in mining compounds. Meanwhile, officials, chiefs, and mining companies collaborated to ensure that healthy recruits were in constant supply. Historian Randall Packard argues that the poor living and work conditions on the mines facilitated the outbreaks. Inadequate medical care, limited food rations, unsanitary residential compounds, and grueling physical labor weakened miners' immune systems.[1]

South Africa was by no means unique. The primary concessionary company in the Belgian Congo, Union Minière de Haut-Katanga, performed regular medical exams on its laborers without acknowledging the impact of labor conditions on the workers' health. Recent studies place the origins of HIV/AIDS precisely in 1920s Kinshasa, where urbanization, migrant labor, and short-term relationships in mining compounds likely facilitated the spread of the disease.[2] Similarly, in Haut-Nyong, Cameroon, labor practices of the rubber industry and large-scale cocoa and coffee plantations contributed to a spike in sleeping sickness and syphilis and a rising rate of infant mortality by World War II.[3] Colonial economic development schemes, especially those dependent on migrant labor, exacerbated the very health problems many officials hoped to tackle.

[24] Luise White, *Comforts of Home: Prostitution in Colonial Nairobi* (University of Chicago Press, 1990), 12.

[1] Randall M. Packard, *White Plague, Black Labor: Tuberculosis and the Political Economy of Health and Disease in South Africa* (University of California Press, 1989).

[2] Jacques Pepin, *The Origins of AIDS* (Cambridge University Press, 2011), 67–70.

[3] Guillaume Lachenal, "Experimental Hubris and Medical Powerlessness: Notes from a Colonial Utopia, Cameroon, 1939–1949," in Paul W. Geissler, Richard Rottenburg, and Julia Zenker, eds., *Rethinking Biomedicine and Governance in Africa: Contributions from Anthropology* (transcript Verlag, 2012), 119–140.

Colonial efforts to increase African exports for the global economy, commodify and regulate land and labor, and industrialize agricultural and mining brought on new health problems and new health interventions. Missionaries and officials introduced health education, midwifery training, and other medical training programs, and they provided treatment for syphilis, sleeping sickness, malaria, tuberculosis, and common ailments. Rather than promoting a healthy labor pool, colonial economic development was becoming detrimental to the health of African workers. Migrant labor systems in particular severely impacted the health and welfare of workers, as well as the women, children, and elders left behind in the villages. When they came home, migrant laborers infected their families with syphilis and tuberculosis. The removal of young men impoverished rural economies, resulting in widespread undernourishment and malnutrition. By the early 1940s some employers recognized the value of a permanent labor force and provided family housing for their workers.

The interwar period brought these issues into sharp focus, and officials implemented comprehensive health programs to treat and prevent the spread of deadly diseases and to increase the standard of living of Africans. Officials directed more funds toward improving the health of women and children and decreasing infant mortality. Women's health took center stage in the interwar period when more European women came to work in Africa. For instance the 1936 Annual Report for Nigeria listed school-based medical care for girls, medical and midwifery training for women, and child welfare and infant welfare centers among its recent innovations.[25] The ultimate goal remained the same as it did from the beginning of the twentieth century: to increase the population and improve the health of Africans in order to increase labor availability and productivity for the benefit of colonial economies. Colonial officials integrated a capitalist ethos with a modernizing impulse in devising African development policies.

NUTRITIONAL SCIENCE AS AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT

Malnutrition became a top health concern among western scientists and colonial officials during the interwar period. Prior to World War I nutrition had been measured in terms of the "bread line," the daily minimum amount of food necessary for a person to be able to work, or the calories necessary for survival. The "bread line" determined workers' rations in colonial Africa. Breakthroughs in studies of the effects of vitamins and minerals in the late 1920s shifted the focus from undernourishment to malnutrition. Starvation among Europe's poor intensified during the Great Depression. Global concerns about hunger and malnutrition erupted in the 1930s.[26] In Africa social scientists studied malnutrition as a cultural problem rather than an economic one. John Boyd Orr and J. L. Gilks's 1926 nutritional study comparing the diet of the pastoralist Maasai with that of the agriculturalist Kikuyu suggested that the predominantly vegetarian culture of the Kikuyu made them less productive laborers.[27]

In 1938 the British Colonial Office sent a team to Nyasaland (Malawi) to compare the nutrition levels of three villages and one town. Anthropologist Audrey Richards, a medical doctor, an agricultural officer, a botanist, and a nutritionist were all hired to work under the leadership of Benjamin Platt. Platt hoped the project would set the standard for all succeeding nutrition surveys and development projects in British colonies. As historian Cynthia Brantley has argued, the scientists' misconceptions about the structure of African families made it difficult for them to recognize how much the migrant labor system impacted African diets. The scientists presumed that they would find micronutrient deficiencies. Instead, they discovered cases of seasonal hunger as communities ran out of food in the months before the harvest. Many households lacked enough labor to successfully feed themselves. Young men had been recruited into the migrant labor industries of southern and central Africa, and women were left to look after the farms. Women worked nine to ten hours a day in the best of circumstances – not counting the hours spent on childcare. There simply was not enough time for them to engage in agricultural work at a level that could sustain their families. Despite these findings, the researchers prescribed a development program focused on providing

[25] *Annual Report on the Social and Economic Progress of the People of Nigeria, 1936* (His Majesty's Stationary Office, 1938), 21–23.

[26] James Vernon, *Hunger: A Modern History* (Harvard University Press, 2007), 118–120.

[27] Cynthia Brantley, "Kikuyu-Maasai Nutrition and Colonial Science: The Orr and Gilks Study in Late 1920s Kenya Revisited," *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 30:1 (1997) 49–86; Michael Worboys, "The Discovery of Malnutrition between the Wars," in David Arnold, ed., *Imperial Medicine and Indigenous Societies* (Manchester University Press, 1988), 208–225.

supplements of vitamins and minerals, which directed attention away from the economic and political factors influencing African diets.[28]

In 1939, one year after the Nyasaland nutrition study, the British Colonial Office published a report on nutrition based on surveys conducted throughout the empire.[29] Officials in African territories attributed nutritional problems to local food cultures and African "ignorance" about nutrition, but the interviewees stated that poverty affected what they ate. Britain followed the report with "Health Propaganda Campaigns" to promote sanitation and nutrition in Africa, including instruction on how to prepare healthy meals. The state ignored evidence that economic hardship informed nutritional habits. In June 1940 the French administration in Senegal initiated its own policy for combating what it viewed as the interrelated problems of malnutrition and infant mortality.[30] Colonial researchers sought to trace the impact of nutrition on pregnant and nursing mothers and on children. Nutrition, fertility, maternity, and infant and child welfare were indicators of the overall health and viability of the population and, more specifically, the labor force.[31] Research on nutrition transformed African women and children into objects of scientific study and reified imperialist patriarchal claims to authority within the development episteme.

MEDICAL RESEARCH AND PUBLIC HEALTH IN THE AGE OF HIV/AIDS

Since the 1980s significant international funding and attention has been directed toward investigating and eradicating HIV/AIDS in Africa. The statistics are well known. In the hardest-hit regions of eastern and southern Africa, between 10 and 23 percent of the population were infected with HIV by the late 1990s. Around that time,

[28] Cynthia Brantley, *Feeding Families: African Realities and British Ideas of Nutrition and Development in Early Colonial Africa* (Heinemann, 2002).

[29] Great Britain, Economic Advisory Council, Committee on Nutrition in the Colonial Empire, *Nutrition in the Colonial Empire: First Report* (His Majesty's Stationary Office, 1939).

[30] Mor Ndao, "Colonisation et politique de santé maternelle et infantile au Sénégal (1905–1960)," *French Colonial History* 9 (2008) 191–211.

[31] Nancy Rose Hunt, "'Le Bebe en Brousse': European Women, African Birth Spacing and Colonial Intervention in Breast Feeding in the Belgian Congo," *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 21:3 (1988) 401–432.

American pharmaceutical companies developed effective antiretroviral therapy (ART) for HIV/AIDS treatment, partly based on research conducted in African communities most impacted by the disease. The cost of these drugs was prohibitive and generic versions could not be produced until the patents expired. This sparked an intense debate over whether HIV/AIDS drugs should be provided at an affordable cost to those who need them in the global south. Pharmaceutical companies argued that they deserved a return on their investment in researching and developing the drugs, while others retorted that African volunteers who were subjected to invasive, sometimes harmful or deadly medical trials should be the first to receive the medications. The top pharmaceutical companies enjoyed an average profit margin of around 30 percent, and the rest around 18 percent. As one bioethicist for the National Institutes of Health explained, "It is not fair to place members of the population at risk without a reasonable expectation of a benefit to that population."[32] The question about the availability and efficacy of ART prescription drugs was only one issue in debates about HIV/AIDS. Studies conducted in Africa reinforced colonial stereotypes about African "promiscuity" and "ignorance," and HIV/AIDS was labeled an "African" disease despite its global reach.[33] Anthropologist Johanna Crane argues that since drug therapies have become more available and affordable a new American "scramble" to conduct medical research on HIV in Africa has generated new inequalities in treatment and overall medical care.[34]

Studies of HIV/AIDS have revealed the general inadequacies of healthcare services in African countries. The lack of attention and funding for cancer treatment is one example. The rates of cancers like Kaposi's sarcoma, related to HIV infection, have been on the rise, but the diagnosis rate of cancer is approximately half that of HIV infections. Furthermore, most people diagnosed with cancer are at a late stage with limited treatment options. Since public health initiatives during the past few decades have focused heavily on HIV/AIDS, malaria, and

[32] David B. Resnik, "Access to Affordable Medication in the Developing World: Social Responsibility vs. Profit," in Anton A. van Niekerk and Loretta M. Kopelman, eds., *Ethics & AIDS in Africa: The Challenge to Our Thinking* (David Philip, 2005), 111–126 at 115.

[33] Philip W. Setel, Milton Lewis, and Maryinez Lyons, eds., *Histories of Sexually Transmitted Diseases and HIV/AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa* (Greenwood Press, 1999), 18.

[34] Johanna Tayloe Crane, *Scrambling for Africa: AIDS, Expertise, and the Rise of the American Global Health Science* (Cornell University Press, 2013).

other infectious diseases, diagnosis and treatment of cancer has remained a low priority. Now that ARTs are more widely available for HIV patients, some attention is being directed to other systemic health issues. The high cost and limited availability of treatments remains a major obstacle in cancer detection and treatment. Drug makers and nongovernmental organizations have formed partnerships to address the issue, but the vast majority of cancer patients receive only palliative care.[35]

Humanitarian and development healthcare projects in Africa today grapple with some of the same issues European colonial development experts faced during the early twentieth century. In addition to the misunderstandings between different cultures of healing, the World Health Organization (WHO) and other international funding agencies have to compromise between crisis response to outbreaks and long-term, comprehensive development of healthcare facilities and services. On the other end of the spectrum, individuals often make difficult choices, for example, between paying for expensive treatment and feeding their families. During the colonial era most people barely made enough cash to pay taxes, let alone cover routine or emergency medical care. While this is a conundrum for anyone living in a place with privatized healthcare, many Africans cannot access or afford the kind of health insurance common in places like the United States. Some international medical practitioners and researchers urge that healthcare is a human right, and they call on the leaders of African nations to build hospitals and dispensaries, to distribute prescription medications at low cost, and to train more Africans for biomedical work. The debate often glosses over some of the trickier questions about what healthcare means and how it should be provided. Will this involve coercive or invasive procedures? Will the resources be directed toward "African" disease like HIV/AIDS and malaria, or will people have access to more comprehensive health services? At what cost and to whom will these services be provided? Will Africa continue to be an inexpensive laboratory for western medical research? The answers to these questions lie in what Graboyes calls the "gray space of ethics, medicine, and the law," the very space where

[35] Donald G. McNeil Jr., "As Cancer Tears through Africa, Drug Makers Draw Up a Battle Plan," *New York Times*, October 7, 2017, www.nytimes.com/2017/10/07/health/africa-cancer-drugs.html?_r=0, accessed December 1, 2017. See also Julie Livingstone, *Improvising Medicine: An African Oncology Ward in an Emerging Cancer Epidemic* (Duke University Press, 2012).

misconceptions abound and neocolonial practices and perspectives resurface despite the good intentions of researchers.[36] Understanding the colonial capitalist impulse behind eradicating diseases and tackling nutrition problems in settler colonies and migrant labor populations helps to bring deep, long-standing issues into focus.

11.3 The 2014–2015 Ebola crisis in Liberia

The 2014–2015 Ebola crisis in West Africa, the largest outbreak of Ebola in recorded history, was both a medical and a public health crisis that spread fear and confusion across the globe. The country of Liberia, which had the most recorded deaths from the outbreak, became the center of debates over how the virus was spread and what could be done to stop it.[1] According to Garrett Ingoglia, then vice president of emergency response for Americares, the Ebola outbreak "highlighted inequalities in healthcare provision" in the countries affected.[2] Liberia had yet to fully recover from its civil wars of the 1990s and early 2000s. Healthcare facilities were woefully understaffed and under-resourced. Ingoglia estimated there were only about fifty Liberian doctors in the country at the time of the outbreak, and the international response came late. During the crisis, many healthcare facilities closed down because providers got sick or were afraid of contracting the disease. In their absence international aid organizations opened Ebola treatment centers. Doctors from all over the world came to Liberia to provide assistance. Given that international funding and expertise was focused primarily on Ebola, many people suffering from other ailments like malaria died because they had nowhere to go for treatment.

West Point, Monrovia, a densely populated peninsula of Liberia's capital city with about 70,000 residents, became the center of the outbreak. The settlement was already dealing with overcrowding and lack of water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services. The early symptoms of Ebola are similar to those of malaria or the flu, which made the disease difficult to identify. Some people with these symptoms refused to go to the hospital for fear of contracting Ebola there, while others

[36] Graboyes, *The Experiment Must Continue*, 196.

questioned whether Ebola existed.[3] West Point residents resisted interventions by international aid workers partly because some residents believed aid workers were infecting people with Ebola. Researcher Leah Campbell explains, "The mood was a mixture of anger, suspicion and fear."[4] Government security forces instituted a mandatory quarantine around West Point, which sparked protest and violence between soldiers and residents. Eventually tensions eased once West Point community leaders stepped in to mediate the conflict and coordinate response efforts.[5]

It was not merely the government's extreme response to the Ebola outbreak that generated an environment of mistrust in West Point. Western medical intervention in Liberia has a deep and thorny history. The Republic of Liberia was established in 1847 by free Blacks from the United States as part of the "Back to Africa" movement. In 1926 the Liberian government offered Firestone Tire and Rubber Company a ninety-nine-year lease for up to a million acres of land in order to develop rubber plantations. That year, Firestone hired Harvard University scientists to conduct biological, ecological, and medical surveys in order to assess the region's potential for both rubber production and labor recruitment. Historian Gregg Mitman stated that this expedition "produced ways of seeing and knowing that both depended on and facilitated the development and industrialization of life in the tropics into new forms of biocapital."[6] Mitman's oral history interviews reveal that memories of this scientific colonization linger among the descendants of those displaced, and Firestone still dominates the Liberian economy today. In light of this history, the 2014–2015 Ebola crisis appeared as another chapter in a lengthy saga of Liberia's entanglement with American imperialism, extractive industrial capitalism, and western biomedical and biological science.

The failures and successes in tackling the recent Ebola outbreak in West Point offer some key points to consider. Not until West Point residents were involved in the negotiations with government did tensions cool. Policies regarding containment and treatment are more effective when members of the community are involved in their planning from the onset. Second, the rate of new infections began to slow once experts recognized Ebola was a global disease requiring a coordinated international response rather than merely an "African" disease in need of

western scientific solutions. Third, health disasters can exacerbate economic and political inequalities as aid organizations tend to direct more funding toward crises than toward substantive, long-term changes. Ingoglia noted that, in this case, Americares' emergency response group was able to offer general training for West African health workers and help raise funding to expand the health system in Liberia.[7] Most importantly for the global community, the Ebola crisis in West Africa provided a rare opportunity for randomized controlled trials (RCTs) of an Ebola vaccine that showed success among people during the 2019 outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo.[8] Approaching an outbreak as a global issue erupting from longer histories of intervention and inequality – both local and global – results in more humane treatment of patients, better distribution of knowledge and resources, and more rapid and effective conclusions to crises.

1 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "2014 Ebola Outbreak in West Africa – Case Counts," www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/outbreaks/2014-west-africa/case-counts.html, accessed December 17, 2017.

2 Interview with Corrie Decker, Garrett Ingoglia, Vice President of Emergency Response for Americares, July 5, 2017.

3 Ingoglia, Interview.

4 L. Campbell, "Ebola Response in Cities: Learning for Future Public Health Crises," ALNAP Working Paper, 2017, ALNAP/ODI, available at www.urban-response.org/help-library/ebola-response-in-cities-learning-for-future-public-health-crises, accessed January 4, 2020, 18.

5 Adia Benton, "Whose Security? Militarization and Securitization during West Africa's Ebola Outbreak," in Michiel Hofman and Sokhieng Au, eds., *The Politics of Fear: Médecins Sans Frontières and the West African Ebola Epidemic* (Oxford University Press, 2017), 25–50.

6 Gregg Mitman, "Forgotten Paths of Empire: Ecology, Disease, and Commerce in Making of Liberia's Plantation Economy: President's Address," *Environmental History* 22:1 (2017) 1–22 at 8.

7 Ingoglia, Interview. See also Sharon Abramowitz, "What Happens When MSF Leaves? Humanitarian Departure and Medical Sovereignty in Postconflict Liberia," in Sharon Abramowitz and Catherine Panter-Brick, eds., *Medical Humanitarianism: Ethnographies of Practice* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015).

8 Shirin Ashraf and Arthur Wickenhagen, "Why Ebola Vaccine on Trial in the DRC Is Raising Hopes," *The Conversation*, February 10, 2019, https://theconversation.com/why-ebola-vaccine-on-trial-in-the-drc-is-raising-hopes-111126, accessed January 4, 2020.

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African suspicion of western biomedical interventions has its roots in the imperial and colonial eras. Two primary motivations drove colonial policies around health and medicine in Africa: first, the protection of Europeans' health, and, second, the assurance of a constant supply of healthy African laborers. The nineteenth-century ad hoc campaigns to protect Europeans and segregate the sick from the healthy grew into state-sponsored public health programs during the interwar period. By World War II colonial development health discourses on Africa had shifted from the "white man's grave" to those addressing biopolitical concerns as states harnessed healthy bodies for productive purposes. Medical studies on declining populations, outbreaks of sleeping sickness or tuberculosis, STIs, and maternity and childcare sought healthcare solutions that would increase the productivity of labor. New hospitals, maternity centers, child welfare centers, and dispensaries brought some people relief and others terror. Whether dealing with a disease outbreak or researching endemic malnutrition, colonial officials relied on western biomedical solutions to these development problems. Scientists and officials used public health interventions and biomedical research to bolster the norms of the development episteme.

Given these legacies of colonial medicine, one might begin to understand why some people in Africa attribute a bout of malaria to witchcraft, believe HIV/AIDS was invented by western scientists to systematically infect Africans, or view colonialism and westernization as diseases in their own right.[37] Western medical interventions in Africa over the past two centuries instituted a culture of experimental research that still largely defines Africans' encounters with biomedicine today. Mutual misconceptions create conflict over the provision of services, such as occurred during the Ebola crisis in West Africa in 2014 and 2015. Some Liberians understandably mistrusted the intentions of government and foreign healthcare workers, and some international doctors and aid workers attributed this mistrust primarily to Liberians' ignorance about the disease and irrational fear of western medicine.[38] More

[37] Cindy Patton, *Inventing AIDS* (Routledge, 1990).

[38] The *New York Times* reported that "Health workers had been chased out of fearful neighborhoods." Kevin Sack, Sheri Fink, Pam Belluck, and Adam Nossiter, "How Ebola Roared Back," *New York Times*, December 29, 2014, www.nytimes.com/2014/12/30/health/how-ebola-roared-back.html, accessed November 30, 2017. See also Adam Nossiter, "Fear of Ebola Breeds a Terror of Physicians," *New York Times*, July 27, 2014, www.nytimes.com/2014/07/28/world/africa/ebola-epidemic-west-africa-guinea.html, accessed November 30, 2017.

nuanced analyses of this outbreak and other health crises in Africa require an acknowledgment not only of immediately relevant economic and political issues but also of a history of development. This history shows how health interventions have repeatedly pitted "ignorant" Africans against rational western scientists, all the while facilitating international capitalist interests on the continent. Africans working to redefine development within their own cultural and epistemological frameworks challenge state and local authorities to dissociate Africa and Africans from disease and death in the development episteme.

Further Reading

On health concerns linked to race, sexuality, and labor see Shane Doyle, *Before HIV: Sexuality, Fertility and Mortality in East Africa, 1900–1980* (Oxford University Press, 2013); Myron Echenberg, *Black Death, White Medicine: Bubonic Plague and the Politics of Public Health in Colonial Senegal, 1914–1945* (Heinemann, 2002); Lynette A. Jackson, *Surfacing Up: Psychiatry and Social Order in Colonial Zimbabwe, 1908–1968* (Cornell University Press, 2005); Randall M. Packard, *White Plague, Black Labor: Tuberculosis and the Political Economy of Health and Disease in South Africa* (University of California Press, 1989); Megan Vaughan, *Curing Their Ills: Colonial Power and African Illness* (Stanford University Press, 1991).

On medical knowledges and discourses see Steven Feierman and John M. Janzen, eds., *The Social Basis of Health and Healing in Africa* (University of California Press, 1992); Karen E. Flint, *Healing Traditions: African Medicine, Cultural Exchange, and Competition in South Africa, 1820–1948* (Ohio University Press, 2008); Melissa Graboyes, *The Experiment Must Continue: Medical Research and Ethics in East Africa, 1940–2014* (Ohio University Press, 2015); Nancy Rose Hunt, *A Colonial Lexicon of Birth Ritual, Medicalization, and Mobility in the Congo* (Duke University Press, 1999); Abena Dove Osseo-Asare, *Bitter Roots: The Search for Healing Plants in Africa* (University of Chicago Press, 2014); and Donna A. Patterson, *Pharmacy in Senegal: Gender, Healing, and Entrepreneurship* (Indiana University Press, 2015).

On colonial nutrition see Cynthia Brantley, *Feeding Families: African Realities and British Ideas of Nutrition and Development in Early Colonial Africa* (Heinemann, 2002); Jennifer Tappan, *The Riddle of Malnutrition: The Long Arc of Biomedical and Public Health Interventions in Uganda* (Ohio University Press, 2017); Diana Wylie, *Starving on a Full Stomach: Hunger and the Triumph of Cultural Racism in Modern South Africa* (University of Virginia Press, 2001).

CHAPTER 12

Manufacturing Modernization

In 2010 Irish musician Bono, a celebrity advocate for foreign aid in Africa, changed his tune about how to support African development. After long discussions with Ghanaian economist George Ayittey and Sudanese telecom billionaire Mo Ibrahim, among others, Bono urged that business partnerships are the solution to African underdevelopment.[1] He became convinced that neoliberal capitalism and the free market, what he calls "smart aid," would save Africa from poverty. This seemingly innovative direction in development thinking was actually not new. Since at least the 1860s when David Livingstone argued that "legitimate commerce" would end the slave trade, westerners have returned to the notion that global capitalism would "save Africa." Of course Africans and Europeans had been trading partners for centuries before colonization; what changed in the nineteenth century was the emergence of a moral imperative that commerce with the west would rescue Africans. The savior paradigm never portrays Africans as economic *equals*. Even Bono's concession for "partnerships" implies that the non-African "partner" will necessarily have enough economic influence to integrate the African partner into the global market.

Livingstone's campaign to bring European trade to the interior of the continent set the stage for international interventions to "modernize" African economies. Since the early twentieth century colonial economists pressed for modernization and industrialization in Africa,

[1] Bono, "Africa Reboots," *New York Times*, April 17, 2010, www.nytimes.com/2010/04/18/opinion/18bono.html?pag, accessed August 2, 2018.

but only to the extent that this aided the extraction of resources through the use of inexpensive labor. Modernization thus had its limits in Africa, and only very rarely emerged out of partnerships with Africans. Large-scale, colonial industrial projects supplied cheap raw materials and managerial jobs for Europeans. Governments and companies industrialized the mining sectors of segregated states in southern Africa in order to generate profit for themselves, not necessarily to aid the "modernization" of local economies. Even in postcolonial and postapartheid African states, industrialization has helped the few rather than the masses.

In light of this history and the current position of African economies in the global market, we must take Bono's well-meaning call for development partnerships with a grain of salt. Industrialization in Africa – and economic development more generally – may appear in very different forms than those development experts anticipate. Throughout the twentieth century Africans have established their own projects for developing agriculture, mining, and manufacturing in order to improve their societies. Murid peanut farming in Senegal, equal partnership in Botswana's diamond industry, and digital banking on mobile phones in Kenya (case studies discussed in this chapter) are just a few examples showcasing how Africans have taken the initiative to modernize their economies and form partnerships with governments and private funders on mutually beneficial terms. Despite the long history of western dominance over discourses on economic modernization, African industrialization and economic development does not always (and does not have to) look like western modernity.

COLONIZING AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES

Agriculture has been central to trade in Africa for millennia, and the surplus farmers have produced has allowed for specialization of jobs, social stratification, and the rise of trading centers.[2] Both small-scale peasant and large-scale commercial agriculture were present in African societies before European colonialization. Some large empires, such as the Mali Empire, created plantations to feed their armies and produce

[2] Kevin Shillington, *History of Africa*. Third edition (Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 22–41.

income for the state. African producers responded to the needs of the market and quickly adopted and adapted crops introduced from elsewhere. For example, cassava (known in the Americas as manioc) was brought to West Africa by Portuguese merchants in the sixteenth century. Africans began growing cassava in order to sell it to European merchants, especially slave traders, who needed to provide a large quantity of cheap food for the enslaved Africans being shipped across the Atlantic Ocean. Eventually cassava became a staple crop in many African diets, to the point that twelve of the top twenty cassava-producing countries today are in Africa.

European commercial desire for agricultural products brought foreign companies into the interior of Africa in the nineteenth century. Colonization of Africa began when European governments gave charters to these private companies and, along with them, exclusive rights to exploit the resources of designated regions in Africa. These charter or concessionary companies, as they were called, had administrative control over the colonies; initially private businesses rather than governments financed and oversaw colonial expansion. Charter companies then sold concessionary rights to others interested in conducting business in Africa. However, many of the early charter companies declared bankruptcy because of the high cost of building the burgeoning state's infrastructure as well as the "unexpected" expenditure of maintaining control over Africans fighting against colonization. When charter companies withdrew, European governments took direct control over African colonies. Colonial governments continued selling concessions in African territories to private corporations, but private entities no longer bore the cost of colonization. Concessionary companies were focused on short-term, profitable exploitation of African labor and resources. One of the worst excesses of this form of colonial commerce was seen in the Congo between 1885 and 1907, when private enterprises sought rubber to meet the high demands for the manufacturing industries in Europe and North America, but at a terrible human price.[3]

The early years of colonial agriculture introduced Africans to brutal forced labor regimes. Forced labor systems shifted African people's efforts away from subsistence farming toward commercial agricultural commodities. Some Africans actively resisted these regimes by fleeing

[3] Adam Hochschild, *King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror, and Heroism in Colonial Africa* (Houghton Mifflin, 1998).

to other areas (such as occurred in the Belgian Congo and German Southwest Africa) or fighting wars against Europeans (like in French West Africa, Tanganyika, and South Africa). African resistance required European governments to maintain armies, which were costly and lowered the potential profits. Once European governments took over from private companies they modified coercive labor policies in order to lessen African resistance to colonialism. However, by requiring African peasant farmers to grow primarily commercial crops for export, colonization left many African communities on the edge of food insecurity and famine, as Chapter 6 details.

After World War I European powers designed colonial development schemes to furnish their own devastated economies back home with valuable raw materials. This also conveniently provided managerial employment opportunities for Europeans in the colonies. Most of these projects introduced western forms of technology and expansion of infrastructure to exploit peasant agricultural economies across the continent. In the process, Europeans brought several changes. First, they instituted taxes that had to be paid in cash rather than produce. The tax requirement incentivized Africans to seek out cash-paying jobs working for the colonial state or European settlers. Second, Africans in non-settler colonies were required to grow commodity cash crops such as cotton, sisal, tea, and coffee. This change created food insecurity, as many Africans no longer grew their own food but had to buy produce from other farmers. Third, European governments sponsored new "projects" and experimental farms that incorporated "scientific" methods to grow food and agricultural commodities. This research became one of the pillars of the development episteme. Colonial forms of agricultural commodity extraction required an industrialized approach.

COLONIAL INDUSTRIALIZATION

The rise of the Industrial Revolution in Europe heralded the links between economic industrialization, new technologies, and progressive ideas. From the western perspective, a "modern" society valued industrialized capitalism. Absent from this equation was the need for inexpensive raw materials and labor that could be readily exploited to produce the profits of industrialization at home and abroad. European businesses sought out new sources of cheap labor to produce

exportable raw materials in late nineteenth-century Africa. During the twentieth century the colonial emphasis on the extraction of raw materials in Africa continued along with the push for industrialization and modernization.

Industrialization involves multiple stages of production of raw materials before they are turned into finished products. Around the end of World War I European exporters in eastern and western Africa began the first stage, which was to launch industrial processing in Africa. By moving production to Africa and using cheap African labor to do so European businesspeople improved their cost ratio on the finished products. These first-stage industries included extracting oil from groundnuts and palm kernels, ginning cottonseed, extracting and drying cocoa and coffee beans, tanning hides, and milling lumber. Most of this low-level production work was done onsite in rural regions before the items were moved to port cities for export.[4]

British and French colonial governments approached industrial policies differently. In some French colonies early efforts to industrialize went beyond first-stage production. For instance, in Ivory Coast the Établissements Robert-Gonfreville (ERG) built the first integrated textile factory in West Africa in 1921.[5] Eventually the factory included the spinning of thread, weaving of cloth, and production of finished garments. Historian Barbara Cooper has demonstrated that, before the establishment of the factory, Ivorian men and women worked together to produce cotton cloth, but the factory reshaped the gender dynamics of cloth production. Previously, because women produced the thread for cloth they had claims over some of the cloth their husbands wove. Regional factory production of spinning thread put women at an economic disadvantage.[6] By the 1950s Ivorian women began working as laborers in the factory, which restored their role in cloth production and gave them direct access to the cash economy.[7]

[4] J. O. C. Onyemelukwe, *Industrialization in West Africa* (St. Martin's Press, 1984), 60.

[5] Julien Clémençot, "Côte d'Ivoire: l'usine textile Gonfrevillegile un mauvais cotton," *Jeune Afrique*, September 22, 2015, www.jeuneafrique.com/mag/245660/economie/cote-divoire-lusine-textile-gonfreville-file-un-mauvais-coton/, accessed February 4, 2020.

[6] Barbara Cooper, "Cloth, Commodity Production, and Social Capital: Women in Maradi, Niger 1890–1989," *African Economic History* 21 (1993) 51–71 at 53.

[7] Mona Etienne, "Women and Men, Cloth and Colonization: The Transformation of Production-Distribution Relations among the Baule (Ivory Coast)," *Cahiers d'Études Africaines* 17:65 (1977) 41–64 at 57.

Industrialization in British West African colonies differed from that in Ivory Coast. British officials allowed industrialization efforts that absorbed decommissioned soldiers, did not require imported machinery, and kept Africans outside of urban areas. British officials, who feared "detribalized" (and thus presumably uncontrollable) Africans living in cities, centered their industrial efforts on "village industrializing." Reminiscent of early European Industrial Revolution practices, the state provided villagers in the Gold Coast and Nigeria with spinning wheels to produce yarn.[8] When one company petitioned to set up a factory with mechanized spinners and looms that would employ 300 people in Nigeria, the Board of Trade in the United Kingdom refused to allow the export of the necessary machinery. The British, being far more protective of their home industries than the French, refused any industrialization efforts that would significantly challenge British businesses at home.

Colonial endeavors at industrialization outside of the mining regions in pre–World War II Africa were facilitated by either western business investments or officials working in the colonies. First-stage industrialization was more often under the control of the colonial state, wherein setting up of factories like those in Ivory Coast was done by private businesses. Early efforts at mechanizing focused on processing agricultural crops such as coconuts, cotton, coffee, and cocoa. In mineral-rich regions of the continent industrialization often developed on a much wider scale including vertical integration, where a company controls all of the different stages of production. First-tier production work often relied on coordination between colonial departments of agriculture, forestry, education, and health.

In the agricultural industry, officials connected industrial methods to education and better health for workers in order to instill in Africans western ideas of time management, efficient labor practices, how to save salaries, and other aspects of a "modern" capitalist workforce and society. Modernization slowly arrived with industrialization as Africans found ways to adapt industrialization to their needs in a colonial economy. This process of modernization, however, was not always welcomed by colonial officials, who worried about the effects of modernity on so-called primitive Africans.

[8] L. J. Butler, *Industrialisation and the British Colonial State: West Africa 1939–1951* (Frank Cass, 1997), 110–115.

MAKING AGRICULTURE MODERN

By 1910 colonial governments should have learned that mass coercion of people into commodity production sparks disruptive resistance from laborers. Nonetheless, they persisted in using coerced labor, though in some cases they limited the period of contracts from 10 to 100 days per year for infrastructural projects. Sometimes colonizers used economic incentives to recruit laborers to their farms and factories. After 1910 colonial governments established production around three areas: state-organized peasant production, settler plantations/farms, and mineral extraction. Non-settler colonies allowed African farmers the most independence in regard to production. However, colonial officials usually implemented quotas on the supply of particular cash crops. In most settler sites, colonial governments imposed head or hut taxes and forced African populations onto "reserves." On these small reserves it was virtually impossible for Africans to grow enough produce to pay their taxes and feed their families, forcing them to work on settlers' farms.[9] As opposed to the recruitment of single male laborers for mineral extraction, many settler farmers wanted African laborers to bring their whole families. This policy offered some stability to African families, but their landlessness forced them to work for European settlers in perpetuity. Male migrant labor systems in areas of mineral extraction separated families for long periods of time, and wives and extended kin often had to maintain family lands without the help of able-bodied men.

12.1 Pastoralism as a stage of development

Development theory in the mid-twentieth century argued that human societies went through "stages of development": from hunters and gatherers to pastoralists, then to agriculturalists, and finally to industrialists. The big push theory (discussed in Chapter 7) argued that industrial investment allowed less-developed societies to "jump stages." These theorists assumed that supposed holdovers from premodern stages, such as pastoralists, would not want to maintain these livelihoods when faced with a "better" option. Pastoralism, or herding of livestock such as cattle and goats, is usually practiced in semiarid regions of Africa. Cattle are central to pastoralist cultures as they represent both individual and social wealth. A significant aspect of pastoralist culture is the nomadic movement for water sources during different times of the year. Governments and development specialists see nomadic communities as problematic because they ignore government policies regarding landownership, defy easy taxation, and at times come into conflict with settled agricultural communities. For these reasons, colonial and postcolonial governments sought to limit the movement of pastoralists.

By the 1970s development specialists argued that pastoralism was also aggravating environmental degradation.[1] Fears of environmental decline steered development officials to introduce irrigation projects in western and eastern Africa and to transform pastoralists into farmers. Many of these irrigation projects failed because they were not environmentally sound and they forced pastoralists into settled agriculture against their wishes.[2] As recently as 2011 the Ethiopian government announced a new large-scale irrigation scheme to expand agriculture. The president at the time, Meles Zenawi, stated that pastoralists "could even be involved in farming to improve their lives."[3] The idea that pastoralists should embrace farming presumes there is one form of modernity and that it does not include a nomadic lifestyle. However, many pastoralists embrace modernity in other ways. Today they use Afriscout, a mobile phone app, to find pasturage for their animals, set up breeding partners, and conduct other aspects of modern animal husbandry. Modern technologies can support different kinds of lifestyles outside the western paradigm of modernity.

[9] Blair Rutherford, "Another Side to Rural Zimbabwe: Social Constructs and the Administration of Farm Workers in Urungwe District, 1940s," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 23:1 (1997) 107–126.

[1] Report of the United Nations Conference on Desertification, held in Nairobi, Kenya August 29–September 9, 1977. The Action Plan is available online. www.ciesin.org/docs/002-478/002-478.html, accessed August 1, 2018.

[2] William M. Adams and David M. Anderson, "Irrigation before Development: Indigenous and Induced Change in Agricultural Water Management in East Africa," *African Affairs* 87:349 (1988) 519–535.

[3] Elliot Fratkin, "Ethiopia's Pastoralist Policies: Development, Displacement and Resettlement," *Nomadic Peoples* 18:1 (2014) 94–114.

The colonial governments tried to invest most of their energy and resources into organizing peasant agriculture for maximum efficiency. The question of irrigation was key. The Gezira irrigation scheme was one of the earliest and largest agricultural development projects undertaken by the British colonial government. Gezira is an area in the present-day Republic of Sudan between the Blue and White Nile Rivers. Farmers in Gezira had been using several different agricultural technologies to improve their yields for a millennium, including flood plain planting and *sagia* irrigation works, which used oxen-driven wheels to pump water. Despite the success of these earlier innovations, the British believed the introduction of western technology in Gezira would drastically improve agricultural output.

In 1900 Gezira was a high-producing region for sorghum, a grain widely consumed among East and North African populations but not Europeans. Europeans launched a massive irrigation scheme, which required building a dam on the Blue Nile at Sennar. This scheme would use mechanized pumping systems to control the flow of water, removing the need for oxen and the inconsistency of flood plain planting. When British officials realized the high cost of mechanization, they decided to replace sorghum with the more profitable cotton crop, a commodity highly valued in Britain.[10] However, the British governor-general of Sudan, Reginald Wingate, did not realize the extent of Gezira sorghum exports into communities around the Red Sea. His decision to promote cotton caused regional food shortages.

The scheme began in 1906 when an American industrialist created the Sudan Plantation Syndicate and, in cooperation with the British colonial government, moved farmers into an irrigated tenancy system. After developing several other schemes between 1908 and 1923, the government dammed the Nile River at Sennar in 1925. At that point the scale of the Gezira project had escalated to more than 247,000 acres. Suddenly, farmers in the area no longer had a choice about what they could grow, and they lost title to their lands. The 1921 Gezira Land Ordinance declared that Sudanese landowners were now land renters and required them to submit to the scheme rules in order to keep farming where they had farmed for generations. Some farmers refused and moved away, so the Syndicate brought in settlers from West Africa and Egypt. The scheme required 33 percent of all

[10] Arthur Gaitskell, *Gezira: A Story of Development in the Sudan* (Faber & Faber, 1959).

cultivated land to be under cotton production using particular inputs and fertilizers that had to be purchased from the Syndicate. This system created a type of serfdom for the laborers in Gezira. Scheme officials controlled all aspects of the planting schedule and evicted peasants deemed negligent in their duties. Gezira was initially run by a former military officer who lacked knowledge about agriculture, water, or the environment but who was keen to introduce Gezira workers to "discipline." This system reinforced western cultural views of time management and ownership of land in an effort to remake Africans into "modern" workers. Officials from the Colonial Office hoped to make the Gezira scheme a symbol of modernity for other parts of Africa to emulate.[11]

The British were not the only colonizers to put their hopes for agricultural development into irrigation schemes. The French colonial Office du Niger initiated an irrigation project in Mali to provide cotton for the French textile industry and rice for laborers in Senegal. In 1925 the government of French West Africa created the Service temporaire des irrigations du Niger (STIN) to begin small-scale work on developing dams on the Niger River. Originally, officials aspired to put more than 4.5 million acres of land under cultivation, but limited metropolitan funding slowed down the project.[12] By 1931 the Office du Niger scaled down its plans to cultivate only about half of that acreage. It completed the dams and canal work in stages throughout the 1930s and 1940s, and opened up four sections of the scheme to farmers between 1935 and 1952. Given the sparse population in this area of Mali, the administration relocated 25,000 farmers and their families into the region and forced them to build the dams and work on the farms. The French sought to "civilize" the settlers into monogamous, two-generation nuclear family units, which is not how most Malians lived. The plan backfired. The logistics of settling laborers was far more complicated than officials had expected. In the early years of the Office du Niger scheme settlers had to wait until their plots produced sufficient crops before they had access to proper housing, sanitation, and a regular source of food. Many settlers refused to work

[11] Victoria Bernal, "Colonial Moral Economy and the Discipline of Development: The Gezira Scheme and 'Modern' Sudan," *Cultural Anthropology* 12:4 (1997) 447–479.

[12] Monica M. van Beusekom, *Negotiating Development: African Farmers and Colonial Experts at the Office Du Niger, 1920–1960* (Heinemann, 2002).

toward French goals and disregarded French assimilationist efforts to remake their families.

By the end of World War II it was clear that mismanagement at the Office du Niger undermined the scheme. Officials assigned settlers to farmland without assessing its productive viability for the required crops. By the time of Mali's independence in 1960 the scheme had cultivated less than 3 percent of the originally planned 4.5 million acres. Moreover, as historian Monica van Beusekom explains, the French colonial government's attempts to "civilize" rural workers and "modernize" agricultural production utterly failed.[13]

Large-scale agricultural schemes were rife across Africa in both the colonial and postcolonial periods. The British attempted to replicate the successful groundnut production of Senegal's Muriddiya community (see Box 12.2) in northern Ghana and Tanzania, but they could not reproduce the unique conditions of groundnut production in French West Africa. As discussed in Chapter 6, British groundnut schemes in Tanzania (then Tanganyika) were colossal failures. Western efforts to industrialize agriculture in Africa suffered from miscalculation of African soils and environments and the insistence on large-scale, high-profile projects that ignored the realities of African lives. Attempts to remake African peasant farmers into western-style, modern, model citizens also seemed to fail, but these were secondary concerns. The fundamental purpose of colonial agricultural schemes was to produce raw materials as cheaply as possible for European industries, and most schemes fell far short of this objective.

12.2 Groundnut production by small farmers

The Muridiyya, a Senegalese Muslim Sufi sect begun by Amadou Bamba Mbacke in the late nineteenth century, came to dominate groundnut (peanut) agriculture in colonial Senegal. Amadou Bamba was initially exiled by the French colonial government from 1895 to 1912 because the French administration feared he would incite his followers to resist colonization. After 1900 the French slowly realized that Murid leaders (called marabouts) encouraged their followers to grow food crops needed to feed the expanding urban centers. Eventually the French negotiated with Amadou Bamba and his marabouts to expand groundnut farming for export, which was greatly desired by French industry.[1] In exchange for Murid cooperation in groundnut production, the French stopped persecuting – although not surveilling – the Murids, kept western-style schools out of the Murid-dominated region of Senegal, and allowed them to build a large mosque in their holy city of Touba. The French government effectively created wide-scale groundnut production without having to invest any money or mechanize agriculture. They capitalized on the Murids' desire for religious freedom instead. In order to claim the Murid expansion of groundnut farming in Senegal as a success, however, the French had to abandon their modernizing goals of "civilizing" and westernizing African colonial subjects.[2]

[1] David Robinson, "The Murids: Surveillance and Collaboration," *Journal of African History* 40:2 (1999) 193–213.

[2] David Robinson, *Paths of Accommodation: Muslim Societies and French Colonial Authorities in Senegal and Mauritania, 1880–1920* (Ohio University Press, 2000).

[13] Ibid.

MINING AND INDUSTRIALIZATION

Southern Africa, which Europeans began colonizing in 1652, became a regional center for industrialized mining in the late nineteenth century after the discovery of diamonds and gold. During this "mineral revolution" the government turned long-standing colonial racism into standardized policy. The segregationist policies of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries were solidified into the state-sanctioned system of apartheid ("separateness") in 1948. Apartheid denied Black South Africans citizenship in their own country, relegating them to "homelands" outside of urban centers. All movement of Black South Africans was controlled and only Blacks with work contracts could live in cities. These policies also artificially suppressed the wages of Black workers until the 1970s, which was a boon to manufacturing and mining businesses in the country. South Africa is often noted as the most industrialized nation in Africa, yet it was built on an economic

foundation that benefited white settlers and deeply oppressed Black South Africans.[14]

The "mineral revolution" sparked a massive influx of Europeans, Americans, and Australians seeking to exploit the discovery of diamonds and gold in South Africa. In 1867 prospectors discovered diamonds in the area known as Kimberley, between the Vaal and Harts Rivers. The British, who already controlled the Cape Colony in South Africa, were at the forefront of this rush to stake claims over minerals, though other profit seekers from around the world laid claim to them as well. These mines brought tens of thousands of African migrant laborers to the region. Mining in South Africa expanded further in 1886 when gold was found in the Witwatersrand area. The city of Johannesburg quickly sprang up as 30,000 laborers flocked to the mines. As with the discoveries at Kimberley, whites gained control of the mining operations and relegated Black Africans to the lowest laboring positions.[15]

Mining brought rapid industrialization to South Africa and eventually to parts of present-day Zimbabwe, Zambia, Namibia, and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). In most cases this industrialization did not bring the expected economic diversification to these countries because the wealth from mining remained in the hands of white settlers and multinational mining corporations. Segregation in settler-controlled states such as South Africa, Namibia, and Zimbabwe kept Black populations from enjoying the fruits of their labor. In Zambia and the DRC, while much of the wealth produced by the Copperbelt mines was extracted by Belgian, British, and South African firms, African populations had access to more possibilities for better housing, education, and healthcare. The distribution of benefits from industrial mining depended sharply on the politics of the state.[16]

In South Africa mine owners had to lure as many African laborers as possible to come and do the treacherous work because comparatively few Africans lived in the vicinity of the first mines. The living

[14] Hermanus S. Geyer, "Industrial Development Policy in South Africa: The Past, Present and Future," *World Development* 17:3 (1989) 379–396.

[15] John M. Smalberger, "The Role of the Diamond-Mining Industry in the Development of the Pass-Law System in South Africa," *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 9:3 (1976) 419–434.

[16] Hugh Macmillan, "Mining, Housing and Welfare in South Africa and Zambia: An Historical Perspective," *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 30:4 (2012) 539–550.

conditions in the early mines were rough. There was limited housing, a dearth of affordable food, and a lack of sanitation, which made dysentery rife. Initially, the leaders of neighboring communities sent workers to the mines because the money they earned helped them buy the guns necessary to defend their land from marauding European settlers.[17] Once colonial governments realized some of the wages went toward purchasing firearms, they made it illegal to sell guns to Africans, and fewer local Africans came to work in the mines. With the consolidation of the mines into a few large corporations (such as Cecil Rhodes's DeBeers Company and Consolidated Gold Fields), mining employers built central compounds to house the workers and control their movements. Larger corporations with an ever-increasing need for labor established the Witwatersrand Native Labour Association (WNLA) to recruit workers throughout southern Africa, including contemporary South Africa, Mozambique, Angola, Malawi, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Namibia, Botswana, Swaziland, and Lesotho.

The migrant labor system brought workers on contracts ranging from four to twenty-four months, although most were for six to nine months.[18] In South Africa male workers (and they were all men) lived in single-sex compounds without access to their families (see Figure 12.1). This work was difficult and often unsafe. A late twentieth-century Sotho miner described his experience:

> Working in the mines is an agonizing painful experience. ... Your work is in an extremely dangerous place. Anything can happen to you at any place. Whenever you go down the shaft, you are not sure that you will come out alive. You don't want to think about it. But it keeps coming. Whenever an accident occurs and something is either killed or badly injured you think of yourself in the position, you think of your family and you become very unstable and lonely. You feel you want to see them for the last time, because the inevitable will come to you sometime. ... Death is so real you keep on praying and thanking God each time you come out alive.[19]

For men on the mines in South Africa, the separation from their families was one of the most difficult aspects of their experience. Some South African mining companies began experimenting with

[17] Rob Turrell, "Diamonds and Migrant Labour in South Africa, 1869–1910," *History Today* 36:5 (1986) 45–50 at 46.

[18] T. Dunbar Moodie with Vivienne Ndatshe, *Going for Gold: Men, Mines, and Migration* (University of California Press, 1994), 19.

[19] Sotho miner quoted in ibid., 16–17.

FIGURE 12.1 Workers in a compound enclosed by wire netting, De Beer's diamond mines, Kimberley, about 1900. Source: Alamy, Image ID: J5P9MC

family housing in the 1970s when the price of gold was booming, but most migrant laborers continued to live in single-sex compounds.[20]

In other countries families of mine workers were welcomed and sometimes even expected to live in the vicinity of the mines.[21] While the mines of the Copperbelt in both the Belgian Congo (DRC) and Northern Rhodesia (Zambia) tried to create single-sex compounds, they quickly found that impractical. The sparsely populated region required the mine owners find ways to induce laborers to come work for them. Before World War II families who joined miners usually lived in the neighboring

[20] Wilmot James, "Capital, African Labour and Housing at South Africa's Gold Mines," *Labour, Capital and Society* 25:1 (1992) 72–86 at 75.

[21] Todd Cleveland, *Stones of Contention: A History of Africa's Diamonds* (Ohio University Press, 2014), 32.

towns. However, after the war the mines in Northern Rhodesia began building housing to accommodate families in the compounds.[22] For the mining corporations building family housing cost more but it stabilized the African labor force, and the overall costs were still substantially cheaper than recruiting white labor.

The wives and children migrant workers left behind experienced social and cultural change, sometimes for the better but often not.[23] Women were now responsible for producing food for the family *and* maintaining the homestead. They took on tasks like clearing land and harvesting that were formerly men's responsibilities. Moreover, family cohesion suffered as fathers spent less time with their children because of long periods away from home.[24] Before the 1970s migrant laborers working in South Africa generally intended to return to their homesteads. As the mining companies provided for their shelter and food, they could save the majority of their income to take home, to buy cattle, or to pay for improvements to their farms. However, many of these men ended up either staying permanently or remained in a constant cycle of returning to the mines. The farms in the rural areas gradually suffered from the effects of migration and environmental degradation. South African resettlement schemes in the 1960s overpopulated the "homelands" and further limited women's ability to eke out a living off agriculture. With the increase in wages in the mines in the 1970s, many African men gave up their hopes of a farming future and settled permanently in urban locations.[25]

In other regions of southern Africa the postcolonial era initially saw little change in the racial inequalities of the mining industry. The Congo was one exception in that Africans had more access to skilled labor jobs during the colonial era.[26] Racial wealth disparities remain because global financial institutions forced the governments of newly independent, Black majority-rule countries in the region, such as Zambia and the DRC, to recognize and honor the contracts between former colonial states and mining companies. This pressure came in numerous forms. When Congo became independent in 1960 the new prime minister, Patrice Lumumba,

[22] Miles Larmer, "Permanent Precarity: Capital and Labour in the Central African Copperbelt," *Labor History* 58:2 (2017) 170–184 at 176.

[23] Vusilizwe Thebe, "'Men on Transit' and the Rural 'Farmer Housewives': Women in Decision-Making Roles in Migrant-Labour Societies in North-Western Zimbabwe," *Journal of Asian and African Studies* 53:7 (2018) 1118–1133.

[24] Harriet Sibisi, "How African Women Cope with Migrant Labor in South Africa," *Signs* 3:1 (1977) 167–177.

[25] Moodie, *Going for Gold*, 32–33, 40–41.

[26] Larmer, "Permanent Precarity," 174.

hinted at the idea of nationalizing industries in the country. Within days of independence the mineral-rich province of Katanga had seceded under the ostensible leadership of Moise Tshombe. In contrast to Lumumba, who advocated for socialism, Tshombe was a willing figurehead for western mining interests in Katanga. By 1963 Patrice Lumumba had been assassinated and the United Nations brought the Katangan secession to an end. In 1965 Joseph Mobutu (later known as Mobutu Sese Seko) became president and would hold the office for more than three decades, in part due to support from the US government, which desired access to minerals and new alliances during the Cold War.[27] Other African nations took note of what happened in the Congo: flirting with nationalization of their industries, especially the mining sectors, would bring international interference and conflict to their nations. As a result, most African leaders, both well-meaning and venal, allowed mining operations to continue on similar terms to the colonial-era contracts that exploited African labor and resources.

Botswana offers an illuminating counterexample to the problems created in other mineral-rich countries. In 1966 when Botswana gained independence from Britain, it was a semiarid, landlocked country in southern Africa whose main export was cattle hides. One year after independence the South African DeBeers Corporation found diamonds in Botswana. The Botswana government, led by its elected president, Seretse Khama, negotiated with DeBeers to create a company called Debswana that shared profits equally with the Botswana government. The government of Botswana also received a 15 percent stake in the DeBeers Corporation. This income allowed the new government of Botswana to build schools, hospitals, and colleges.[28] The government worked to develop industry in the country, and as of 2015 Botswana had the fourth highest gross national income (GNI) in Africa and a literacy rate comparable to that of the United States. DeBeers was the same corporation that helped create the pass system and segregationist policies that disempowered so many South Africans.[29] The contrasting policies of

[27] Egged on by US business interests, Mobutu nationalized the Belgian mining interests in copper in 1967 but quickly backed down in the face of overwhelming international pressure. For more information see David Gibbs, "International Commercial Rivalries & the Zaïrian Copper Nationalisation of 1967," *Review of African Political Economy* 24: 72 (1997) 171–184.

[28] Thando D. Gwebu, "Botswana's Mining Path to Urbanization and Poverty Alleviation," *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 30:4 (2012) 611–630.

[29] Smalberger, "The Role of the Diamond-Mining Industry."

DeBeers in Botswana and apartheid-era South Africa demonstrate that profit outweighs politics. These stories of mining in South Africa, the DRC, and Botswana recount the ongoing influence of global corporations in Africa and, in the case of Botswana, the positive impact that can result when African leaders negotiate relatively fair contracts for their countries.

12.3 The environmental costs of modernization

From the beginning of the nineteenth century the need to power steam engines on riverboats, railroads, and pumps used in mining – the engines of European exploration and exploitation – called for new sources of coal. Coal mining operations expanded across the continent from Nigeria to South Africa. Where coal was not available, local production of charcoal from felled trees increased, speeding up deforestation in some areas. Eventually colonial governments and foreign companies invested in the mining of other lucrative materials, like diamonds, gold, asbestos, uranium, coltan, and cobalt. In the postcolonial era the mining of "conflict diamonds" contributed to the civil wars in Sierra Leone and Angola, and "artisanal mining" of coltan and cobalt has perpetuated violence in the DRC.[1] Whether fueling colonial industries, modernizing the economy, or simply generating profit, the mining industry has generated conflict, disease, environmental devastation, and increased dependence on international corporations in Africa.[2]

In the mid-twentieth century development specialists called for large-scale hydroelectric plants to replace coal as the means to power future industrialization. Kariba Dam, opened in 1959 between the colonies of Northern and Southern Rhodesia (Zambia and Zimbabwe), was the first mega dam in sub-Saharan Africa. Dams in other countries appeared soon afterward, such as the Akosombo Dam opened in Ghana in 1965, the Aswan Dam opened in Egypt in 1970, and the Inga I dam opened in DRC in 1972. As with mining, multinational corporations benefit the most from hydroelectric power in Africa. Ghana had to guarantee that 80 percent of the power produced by the Akosombo Dam would be sold to the American-owned Volta Aluminum Company in order to secure the construction loan. Likewise, most of the power from the Kariba Dam is used by

mining companies in Zambia and South Africa. Development specialists argue that African nations need to build hydroelectric power to create industry and diversify their economies, yet there is little to no measurable "trickle down" effect of these dams. The mega dams built in the 1950s and 1960s displaced hundreds of thousands of people from the reservoir areas behind the dams, reshaped downstream environments, and continue contributing to greenhouse gases from vegetation decaying in the reservoir lakes.[3] Despite these environmental costs, development experts continue to tout dam building as the solution to Africa's power needs, as seen with the ongoing plans for the Grand Inga Dam in the DRC and the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam.

The development literature rarely addresses head-on the high human and environmental costs of modernization. These problems cannot be solved by development funders that encourage industrialization and trade in environmentally harmful commodities. Environmental concerns and development interests are often in direct competition, though more attention, research, and funding has been directed toward "sustainable development" in Africa since 2000.[4]

[1] James H. Smith, "What's in Your Cell Phone?" in Dorothy L. Hodgson and Judith A. Byfield, eds., *Global Africa: Into the Twenty-First Century* (University of California Press, 2017), 289–297.

[2] Lundy Braun, *Breathing Race into the Machine: The Surprising Career of the Spirometer from Plantation to Genetics* (University of Minnesota Press, 2014), 109–138; Gabrielle Hecht, "The Work of Invisibility: Radiation Hazards and Occupational Health in South African Uranium Production," *International Labor & Working-Class History* 81 (2012) 94–113; Jock McCulloch, *Asbestos Blues: Labour, Capital, Physicians and the State in South Africa* (James Currey, 2002); Michal Singer, "Towards 'A Different Kind of Beauty': Responses to Coal-Based Pollution in the Witbank Coalfield between 1903 and 1948," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 37:2 (2011) 281–296.

[3] Allen F. Isaacman and Barbara S. Isaacman, *Dams, Displacement, and the Delusion of Development: Cahora Bassa and Its Legacies in Mozambique, 1965–2007* (Ohio University Press, 2013); Jacques Leslie, *Deep Water: The Epic Struggle over Dams, Displaced People, and the Environment* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005); Dzodzi Tsikata, *Living in the Shadow of the Large Dams: Long Term Responses of Downstream and Lakeside Communities of Ghana's Volta River Project* (Brill, 2006).

[4] Moses K. Tesi, "Conceptualizing Africa's Environment: A Framework for Analysis," in Moses K. Tesi, ed., *The Environment and Development in Africa* (Lexington Books, 2000), 13; Bessie House-Soremekun and Toyin Falola, eds., *Globalization and Sustainable Development in Africa* (University of Rochester Press, 2011).

MODERNIZING MANUFACTURING

During the 1960s most of the political leaders of newly independent African states saw industrialization as the key to developing and modernizing their countries' economies. As seen with the efforts to implement major infrastructural projects, such as irrigation projects and mega dams, African leaders pursued industrial investment. The majority of western and eastern African states became independent during the height of the Cold War. Many African leaders sought to find a middle path in a binary world. Some participated in the Bandung Conference in Indonesia and joined the nonaligned movement claiming allegiance to neither western nor communist governments. In an effort to influence the interests of African governments, the US, USSR, Chinese, and European governments offered funding for infrastructural and industrial projects. Often donor governments built industrial projects and then handed them over to African governments.

Postcolonial African leaders encouraged manufacturing in order to expand employment rather than solely for profit. Profit-driven industrialization is focused on producing economic benefits for the owners, and in some cases shareholders in companies. Non-profit-driven industrialization, when factories are owned by the state, is often politically driven. The new political institutions in Africa at independence usually relied on fragile political leadership and national economies. At the same time the government-owned factories were often donated by non-African governments caught up in the politics of the Cold War. Thus, government-controlled industrialization, whether the government was colonial, democratic, or socialist/communist in structure, was deployed to hand out patronage and maintain the political alliances of national leaders. Even when NGOs introduced industrializing projects, they were less concerned with making profits than with offering employment. These businesses often ran with deficits that governments or donors made up because the main goal was political stability rather than profit. Given that there were few examples of profitable factories, international for-profit investors require higher interest rates and profit margins from their African investments.

The Urafiki textile factory in Tanzania is a classic example of postcolonial industrialization. During the 1960s the Chinese government built numerous factories designed to help African countries such as Guinea, Mali, Benin, Somalia, and Tanzania become more self-sufficient. The

Urafiki ("friendship" in Kiswahili) factory was a gift from the Chinese government to the Tanzanian government, and by 1969 it was wholly under Tanzanian management. Even though the sales of Urafiki cloth were strong, the factory had difficulty making a profit. The supply of electricity and water, crucial to the production process, fluctuated inconsistently. Political loyalty rather than productive value determined one's employment. By 1984 the cost of running the factory had become so prohibitive that the Tanzanian government asked the Chinese to resume control.[30] Eventually a private Chinese firm managed the factory, and as late as 2008 it was still running at a deficit now paid by the Chinese government. Cases like the Urafiki factory demonstrate the inefficiencies associated with politically motivated industrialization projects.

12.4 Technology and infrastructure

One of the most prohibitive aspects of industrialization has been the cost of building infrastructure to support industrial agriculture and manufacturing. Power grids are key to providing the electricity needed, but other forms of infrastructure are quickly being replaced through new technologies. In 2007 Safaricom launched M-Pesa in Kenya, a banking service that allows for the transfer of money between individuals and institutions via mobile phone networks. A Kenyan programmer developed the software for M-Pesa, which now has been adopted in other African, Asian, and European countries. In 2013 the Nigerian government began using this technology to transfer fertilizer subsidies to their farmers, approximately 90 percent of whom do not have access to bank accounts. In the past the government had to directly distribute fertilizer to improve agricultural outcomes, a costly process rife with corruption. Now the government is transferring the subsidies electronically to farmers, who can then purchase fertilizer from private sellers, expanding the economy through agricultural productivity and the development of private fertilizer businesses. Within two years, 66 percent of farmers in Nigeria began using this technology, demonstrating the possibilities of African-driven technology for economic modernization.[1]

[30] Deborah Brautigam, *The Dragon's Gift: The Real Story of China in Africa* (Oxford University Press, 2009), 197–200.

[1] https://ihub.co.ke/blogs/10800/how-nigeria-is-using-kenyan-technology, accessed August 4, 2018; www.cgap.org/blog/can-mobile-money-extend-financial-services-smallholder-farmers, accessed August 4, 2018.

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Twentieth-century development theorists such as Walt Rostow argued that a modernized, developed, or progressive society must be based on western values of capitalistic industry. Development theorists have long held out industrialization as the means to a "better" life for Africans, often without defining what "better" means. Yet the reality in Africa over the past two centuries is that industrialization dominated by outsiders has rarely provided significant improvements in the lives of Africans. In efforts to bring industrial methods to agriculture, manufacturing, and mining on the continent, Africans have been treated like pawns in a game of profit that has left them with little material compensation. The recent movement of western and Asian agribusinesses into Africa has again illustrated that corporate efforts to make profits in Africa will benefit from the cheap labor of Africans without necessarily improving the lives of the workers themselves.

The rhetoric of "saving" Africans through industrialization is no longer a viable model. Most Africans are not looking to be "saved" but aspire to build partnerships that support their economic goals. Africans are building their future with the same technology one finds in the west but with distinctive approaches that fit their interests, needs, and goals. Only Africans can define the terms of these partnerships that will recognize culturally relevant ideas of what modernity and modernization should look like in Africa.

Further Reading

On the agricultural changes see Chima Korieh, *The Land Has Changed: History, Society and Gender in Colonial Eastern Nigeria* (University of Calgary Press, 2010); David Robinson, *Paths of Accommodation: Muslim Societies and French Colonial Authorities in Senegal and Mauritania, 1880–1920* (Ohio University Press, 2000).

On the development of irrigation agriculture in Africa see Monica van Beusekom, *Negotiating Development: African Farmers and Colonial Experts at the Office du Niger, 1920–60* (Heinemann, 2001); Victoria Bernal, "Colonial Moral Economy and the Discipline of Development: The Gezira Scheme and 'Modern' Sudan," *Cultural Anthropology* 12:4 (1997) 447–479.

On the building of dams and their effects on African communities see Heather Hoag, *Developing the Rivers of East and West Africa: An Environmental History* (Continuum, 2013); Allen Isaacman and Barbara Isaacman, *Dams, Displacement, and the Delusion of Development: Cahora Bassa and Its Legacies in Mozambique, 1965–2007* (Ohio University Press, 2013); Jacques Leslie, *Deep Water: The Epic Struggle over Dams, Displaced People, and the Environment* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005).

On the history of mining and migration in southern Africa see Todd Cleveland, *Stones of Contention: A History of Africa's Diamonds* (Ohio University Press, 2014); T. Dunbar Moodie with Vivienne Ndatshe, *Going for Gold: Men, Mines, and Migration* (University of California Press, 1994).

Epilogue

African Critiques of the Development Episteme

This book has demonstrated how development ideas and practices in Africa arose directly out of imperialism, colonialism, and neocolonialism. We have explored the gaps between development theory and practice, the successes and the failures of development projects, and the ways in which Africans have contended with colonial and postcolonial interventions. While the concept of progress that gave birth to the development episteme in Africa emerged from European post-Enlightenment traditions, it has been reshaped as much by the targets of development as by those who claimed expertise. Today the development discourse is a global debate in flux, and Africans have more influence than ever over reshaping the development episteme. This final chapter discusses recent debates about progress, modernity, and development in Africa and offers some closing thoughts on what development might mean for Africa's future.

FROM PROGRESS TO DEVELOPMENT

In his seminal work on African religions and philosophy John Mbiti wrote,

> The linear concept of time in western thought, with an indefinite past, present and infinite future, is practically foreign to African thinking. The future is virtually absent because events which lie in it have not taken place, they have not been realized and cannot, therefore, constitute time. If, however, future events are certain to occur, or if they fall within the inevitable rhythm of nature,

they at best constitute only *potential time*, not *actual time*. ... *Actual time* is therefore what is present and what is past. It moves "backward" rather than "forward"; and people set their minds not on future things, but chiefly in what has taken place.[1]

Mbiti employs the Swahili words *sasa* and *zamani* to explain how people differentiate between a "Micro-Time" (*sasa*) with a "short future, dynamic present, and an experienced past" and "Big Time" (*zamani*), which "has its own 'past,' 'present' and 'future.'"[2] This concept of time, Mbiti argues, intertwines with African communities' economic livelihoods and rhythms of work. Mbiti notes that western observers who did not understand African concepts of time called Africans "lazy" when they refused to adhere to western work schedules and behaviors.[3] Mbiti's argument about these different concepts of time may offer some explanation for the conflicts between the western development episteme and African epistemologies, but there were and still are diverse ideas about historical and future change in African societies.

African ideas of progress long predate European colonialism. Ancient and medieval African texts such as the *Kebra Negast* (*The Glory of the Kings*) of Ethiopia, the *Kilwa Chronicle* from the Swahili Coast, and the *Ta'rīkh al-sūdān*, a history of the Songhay Empire written by a scholar based in Timbuktu, recount watershed events in local and regional histories.[4] All three accounts point to the arrival of monotheistic religion, whether Judeo-Christian beliefs in Ethiopia or Islam in Kilwa and Songhay, as the pivotal moment in history that broke from the past and established a progressive path toward "civilization." In *Ta'rīkh al-sūdān*, for example, author Al-Sa'idī wrote that before the arrival of Islam in the eleventh century the "pagans" were in "a dreadful state, hardly recognizable as human beings, blistered, dirty and naked, save for some tattered skins covering their bodies."[5] For

[1] John S. Mbiti, *African Religions & Philosophy*. Second revised and enlarged edition (Heinemann, 1999 [1969]), 16–17, emphasis in original text.

[2] Ibid., 22.

[3] Ibid., 19; Keletso E. Atkins, *The Moon Is Dead! Give Us Our Money! The Cultural Origins of an African Work Ethic, Natal, South Africa, 1843–1900* (Heinemann, 1993).

[4] Miguel F. Brooks, ed., *A Modern Translation of the Kebra Nagast (The Glory of Kings)* (Red Sea Press, 1995); Jack D. Rollins, *A History of Swahili Prose, Part One: From Earliest Times to the End of the Nineteenth Century* (E. J. Brill, 1983); John O. Hunwick, *Timbuktu and the Songhay Empire: Al-Sa'idī's Ta'rīkh al-sūdān down to 1613 and Other Contemporary Documents* (Koninklijke Brill NV, 2003).

[5] Al-Sa'idī quoted in Hunwick, *Timbuktu and the Songhay Empire*, 6.

him, the people's conversion to Islam was the most transformative occurrence in West African history.

Oral traditions offer similar explanations for dramatic, positive change over time. The well-known story of Sundiata, the founding king of the Mali Empire, is a good example. The Sundiata epic is a story about good conquering evil and the need to tell the great deeds of the past in order to inspire the leaders of the present to live up to this legacy in the future. Like *Ta'rīkh al-sūdān*, the epic of Sundiata identifies Islam as the dividing line between the barbaric past and the new age of the benevolent ruler. The "evil" King Soumaoro was defined by his use of charms, his brutality, and most of all, his lack of belief in Islam. The griot recounts, "At the time when Sundiata was preparing to assert his claim over the kingdom of his fathers, Soumaoro was the king of kings, the most powerful king in all the lands of the setting sun. The fortified town of Sosso was the bulwark of fetishism against the word of Allah."[6] Scholars have debated and speculated on whether Islam held such prominence during the thirteenth century when the Mali Empire was established, but this is something we cannot know for certain. What we do know is that these and other oral and written accounts about the history of Mali, similar to the *Ta'rīkh al-sūdān*, emphasize a turning point in history as evidence of progress. In these examples civilization is dependent on the adoption of religious truth, however defined, and all of the transformations that came with it.

Oral traditions from non-Islamic and non-Christian contexts also tell of watershed moments in history. They entail analyses of and commentaries on these events, usually organized in a way that legitimates either the ruler in power at the time of the recounting of the tradition or the lineage that maintains the tradition (and perhaps wishes to return to power). Jan Vansina, one of the first western academics to examine African oral traditions "as history," remarked that "the corpus of traditions in any given society provides an ideal model of how the society should function even though this never seems to have been the purpose for maintaining the traditions over time. Indeed, history in the telling like history in the writing often is the teacher of life (*magistra vitae*)."[7] Though the primary function of oral

[6] Dijbril Tamsir Niane, *Sundiata: An Epic of Old Mali* (Longman Group, 2006 [1965]), 41.

[7] Jan Vansina, *Oral Tradition As History* (University of Wisconsin Press, 1985), 106.

traditions was to legitimate existing dynasties, they also served as educational devices to teach young people about proper social behavior through cautionary tales and role models. Oral traditions, like West African writings about the arrival of Islam, simultaneously use the past as evidence of the greatness of the present and as a pedagogical tool to direct people toward a future that maintains or restores this greatness.

Starting in the late eighteenth century both Islamic and Christian religious movements in Africa embraced ideologies of progress and paved the way for the development episteme. It is no coincidence that Islamic revolutions of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in West Africa coincided with the Great Awakening, the abolitionist movement, and French and British colonial expansion there, or that the spike in Islamic conversion across the interior of East and West Africa checked the success of Christian missionaries during the nineteenth century.[8] These were parallel campaigns for spreading "civilization" across Africa, and both movements began with widespread religious conversion. These discourses entailed so much more than an abstract concept of progress. The populous Sufi movements of the nineteenth century emphasized social welfare and unity while the Christian civilizing mission relied on abolition of slavery and, as we know, set the stage for European colonialism. Both movements also promoted some version of modernity. They were battling for the authority to define not only the best path forward but also the most innovative and progressive – what was, in essence, the most modern approach to social change.

MODERNITY AS DEVELOPMENT

The term "modernity," which is a fundamental concept in the development episteme, has deeply ambiguous meanings. For example, in historical terms the "Modern Era" can refer to the period beginning between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, the post-Enlightenment period, or both in European history. In the United States the "Modern Era" generally signifies the period since the Second World War, with the rise of the United States as a global power. In courses on African history "Modern" often refers to the

[8] Gibril R. Cole, *The Krio of West Africa: Islam, Culture, Creolization, and Colonialism in the Nineteenth Century* (Ohio University Press, 2013); Felicitas Becker, *Becoming Muslim in Mainland Tanzania, 1890–2000* (Oxford University Press, 2008).

period since 1850 when colonialism began to take hold over the majority of the continent. Other references to "Modern Africa" situate this epoch squarely in the postcolonial period and sometimes go so far as to limit their scope to the twenty-first century. There is not one correct interpretation of what constitutes the "Modern Era" in Africa, and the concept of modernity itself has shifted over time.

As discussed in the early chapters of this book, nineteenth-century Europeans viewed Africa and Africans as holdovers from a distant past rather than their modern contemporaries. Describing the Victorian era of Britain (1837–1901), feminist scholar Anne McClintock wrote, "the agency of women, the colonized and the industrial working class [were] disavowed and projected onto anachronistic space: prehistoric, atavistic and irrational, inherently out of place in the historical time of modernity."[9] Nineteenth-century Europeans struggling to understand the differences between themselves and Africans described Africans as people who came from an ancient time and held onto ancient "traditions," thus making their existence in the presence appear "anachronistic." This contrast between modernity and tradition not only posed Africa as the "Other" to Europe but also excluded Africa and Africans from the present and the future of the "modern" world.

Some Africans embraced this dichotomy as a way to protect their identities and preserve their traditions in the face of colonial encroachment. Those whose legitimacy was based in their authority as "traditional" leaders (chiefs, spiritual healers, and leaders of cultural societies, for example) viewed colonial modernity as a threat. Many Africans viewed western modernity as a "contagion" during the 1930s because colonial urbanization, westernization, and racism threatened their livelihoods.[10]

To others, modernity offered opportunities to escape patriarchal authority or survive the economic pressures of colonialism. Young men and women who ventured into the towns in search of wage labor or other opportunities embraced "modern" lifestyles as a statement of their economic and social independence. They tested the limits of the civilizing mission by adopting European clothing, learning European languages, and demanding political or social

[9] Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Context* (Routledge, 1995), 40.

[10] Jan-Georg Deutsch, Peter Probst, and Heike Schmidt, eds., *African Modernities* (Heinemann, 2002).

inclusion. Colonial officials concerned about these "detribalized" youth encouraged and sometimes forced them to return to their natal villages where they would be subject to the customary authority of elders and chiefs.

The categorization of Europe as "modern" and Africa as "traditional" was also at the heart of economic development policies of the late colonial and early postcolonial eras. Modernization theory was based on the notion that so-called traditional sectors of the economy had to "modernize" or catch up to the West by directly engaging with global capitalism and industrialization. The 1960s was a time of optimism in African development. African nationalist discourses offered different configurations for thinking about modernity and tradition. Though many bought into the idea that "modernity" came from Europe to Africa where it conflicted with "tradition," new African leaders attached different valences to these concepts. African nationalist discourses sought to reconcile the contradictions embedded in the ambiguity over colonial modernity. Is modernity good or bad for Africa? African politicians in newly independent states restated this question as: what can we take from modernity that will allow us to carve out a space in the global market without compromising our identity and sovereignty?

Léopold Senghor's vision for nationalist development in Senegal offered a potential answer. He challenged the notion that Africans lacked reason, technology, and other qualities associated with modernity. He embraced modernization primarily as an economic policy, urging that the development of African intellects and cultures continues on its own path. Senghor argued that Europeans and Africans employed different types of reasoning and logic. "However paradoxical it may seem, the vital force of the Negro African, his surrender to the object, is animated by reason. Let us understand each other clearly; it is not the *reasoning-eye* of Europe, it is the *reason of the touch*, better still, the *reasoning-embrace*, the sympathetic reason, more closely related to the Greek *logos* than to the Latin *ratio*."[11] Senghor clarified that this does not indicate that Africans are incapable of other types of reasoning.

[11] Léopold Senghor, *On African Socialism* (Frederick A. Praeger, 1964), 73–75.

> Does this mean, as certain young people would like to interpret my remarks, that the Negro African lacks discursive reason, that he has never used any? I have never said so. . . . No civilization can be built without using discursive reason and without techniques. Negro-African civilization is no exception to this rule. Witness the astonishment of the earliest European navigators disembarking in Africa to discover well-organized states, with government, administration, justice, and army, with techniques (remarkable for that date) for working in wood, ivory, bronze, iron, basketry, weaving, and terra cotta, with medical and agricultural techniques worthy of Europe.[12]

Senghor challenged one of the basic principles of the civilizing mission, that Europe brought civilization to Africa. He argued that development must emerge from both African and European intellectual traditions and ideas of reason and disagreed that these were diametrically opposed. Though Senghor contended that "classical logic, Marxian dialectics, and that of the twentieth century" were necessary for the "*African road to socialism*," he rejected many of the Eurocentric assumptions embedded in the modernity/tradition dichotomy.[13]

Senghor had been a founding member of the Négritude movement, which emerged in Africa during the 1930s just as Africans began to question the value of colonial modernity. At that time the broken promises of the civilizing mission and the disruptive effects of westernization and colonialism became the subject of the day. In the context of 1960s nationalism and modernization Léopold Senghor's words offered a balanced response that insisted upon recognition of Africa's contribution to modern human history at the same time that it called for European support in development. Scholars have since shown that Senegal's national development policies under Senghor reified western ideas of modernity and the "technocratic" state, but in the early 1960s Senghor's Afrocentric definition of development provided an important intellectual challenge to the development episteme.[14]

[12] Ibid., 75.

[13] Léopold Senghor, "Some Thoughts on Africa: A Continent in Development," *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs)* 38:2 (1962) 189–195.

[14] See Mamadou Diouf, "Senegalese Development: From Mass Mobilization to Technocratic Elitism," transl. by Molly Roth and Frederick Cooper, in Frederick Cooper and Randall Packard, eds., *International Development and the Social Sciences: Essays on the History and Politics of Knowledge* (University of California Press, 1997), 291–319.

The modernity/tradition dichotomy did not disappear with African nationalism. In the 1980s and 1990s Africa continued to be placed in the "anachronistic space" of "tradition" in discourses on globalization. Whether referring to culture, economics, or transnational migration, globalization has often been described as the exposure of "traditional" communities to international influences, especially American culture. Well into the twentieth-first century we are still bombarded with media stories, images, and development projects that assume a conflict between "traditional" practices and beliefs and "modern" economic, social, cultural, or political forces.

DISILLUSIONMENT WITH MODERNITY AND DEVELOPMENT

The quest for modernity has been a driving force in development. The assumption that modernity originates in the West and has been brought to Africa through colonialism and development continues to shape the work of many people engaged in development projects in Africa today. While development professionals have become more attune to "the African perspective," African scholars and professionals have challenged their assumptions about modernity, development, and African cultures.

Philosopher Olúfẹ́mi Táíwò offers a biting critique of discourses on modernity in his book *How Colonialism Preempted Modernity in Africa*.[15] The title of his book invokes another well-known book on development, Walter Rodney's *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*. Táíwò begins by pressing us to disentangle colonialism from modernity in our minds. Modernity in Africa did not originate with the West or with colonialism, he argues. Quite the contrary, colonialism sought in every way to prevent modern economic and political systems from emerging in Africa. Decoupling colonialism and modernity requires us first to recognize the ways in which Africans were modernizing prior to colonization and second to understand how colonialism sought to arrest the modernization of African societies. Colonial states checked the growth of capitalism and refused representative government, two pillars of "modern" development. Referring specifically to British indirect rule

[15] Olúfẹ́mi Táíwò, *How Colonialism Preempted Modernity in Africa* (Indiana University Press, 2010).

policies, Táíwò states that colonial constructions of custom marked Africans as essentially and fundamentally "primitive" and therefore incapable of embracing modernity. Despite the fact that colonial ideology created and perpetuated the opposition between African tradition and western modernity, Africans contributed to and embraced modernity wherever possible. Táíwò's study highlights the power of representation in colonial development discourses. By labeling Africans as "traditional," colonial officials justified their exclusion of Africans from the political and economic rights "modern" Europeans had gained in the post-Enlightenment era.

Another scholar, historian E. S. Atieno Odhiambo, addressed the common trope in development discourse that African cultures and "traditions" constitute a "stumbling block" to development.[16] Despite more nuanced understandings of African cultures in academia by the early 2000s, development professionals continued to perceive African cultures as the reason for "Africa's failure at modernization and the mastery of modernity."[17] From this perspective, even where Africans became "modern" (for example, through the globalization of western culture), they failed to "develop" economically or politically. Odhiambo was not simply urging development experts to pay attention to African cultures, as this would only replicate a colonial anthropology in which "tradition" is captured, made static, and translated into a variable to plug into the development equation. He wrote, "So long as governments and the academy remain trapped in this prejudice against our cultures, and as long as we, the citizens of Africa, privilege them with the plentitude of power, there will be no meaningful development in Africa."[18] He warned developmentalists against proposing grand theories or large-scale models, even ones that claim to take local culture into account. If this continues to be the goal of development, Odhiambo advised, then "both the governments and the academy should leave the peasants alone."[19]

African scholars have also opened up the debate about the economic failures of development, especially in the wake of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank's Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) implemented during the

[16] E. S. Atieno Odhiambo, "The Cultural Dimensions of Development in Africa," *African Studies Review* 45:3 (2002) 1–16.
[17] Ibid., 2.
[18] Ibid., 11.
[19] Ibid., 12.

1980s and early 1990s.[20] Economist Dambisa Moyo's *Dead Aid* offers a different approach to development, arguing that aid disables African economies and makes them dependent on foreign assistance.[21] The dependency theory is not new, of course. It emerged in the 1970s with works such as Immanuel Wallerstein's *The Modern World-System*. However, unlike the socialist-oriented world systems theorists, Dambisa Moyo believes that neoliberal capitalism can offer a solution to the problem. Her reputation as a leading world economist lent credibility to her argument that capitalist trade and foreign investment will ween Africa off development aid and incorporate African economies into the global market. The notion that aid is the culprit also provides an out to nations and development organizations looking for ways to pull back their financial commitments in Africa. Yet Moyo did highlight one of the fundamental issues in the development episteme and the discourse on modernity: that there is a one-way flow of ideas and technology from the West (the haves) to Africa (the have-nots), and that this dynamic has perpetuated a relationship of dependence. Was it the transfer of development funding and knowledge or the *notion* that development funding and knowledge must be transferred from the West to Africa that created this relationship of dependence? Moyo does not resolve this issue, but her challenge to the idea of development aid is one step away from the long-standing binary between the "developed" West and the "undeveloped" or "least developed" African nations.

As Moyo's work indicates, development aid has emerged as an industry in itself. A film released in 2014 entitled *Poverty, Inc.* brings this point home. The film explains how the poverty industry creates more opportunities for profit among international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs), aid organizations, and for-profit corporations than it does for poor people or developing nations. The film criticizes the paternalism of development aid and the development discourse that characterizes poor people as incapable of taking care of themselves. This modern-day "white man's burden" sidesteps African-owned businesses, local NGOs, and indigenous innovations, perpetuates the stereotype of Africans as helpless, and – even worse – undermines the ability of Africans to participate directly in the local and global markets.

[20] Thandika Mkandawire and Adebayo Olukoshi, eds., *Between Liberalisation and Oppression: The Politics of Structural Adjustment in Africa* (Codesria, 1993).

[21] Dambisa Moyo, *Dead Aid: Why Aid Is Not Working and How There Is a Better Way for Africa* (Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2009).

Donated rice, t-shirts, mosquito nets, medicines, shoes, and other goods flood local markets with free goods and put African entrepreneurs out of business. The filmmaker asked Ghanaian software engineer Herman Chinery-Hesse about the notion that Africa is poor. Chinery-Hesse responded, "Africa has always been a reservoir for resources for the rest of the world. The countries they are calling poor are oil-rich, diamond-rich, timber-rich, land-rich, and gold-rich, and they are in good locations for tourism. The people here are not stupid. They are just disconnected from global trade, that's all."[22] African entrepreneurs have been excluded from the global market, and those who have managed to survive despite this disadvantage have been written out of the story of development.

This sense of frustration and disillusionment speaks to the challenges Africans face in attempting to decolonize development and reshape the development episteme. To be clear, disillusionment with neoliberal capitalism, or what has also been deemed "late capitalism," and its ideologies of progress is not limited to Africans. Many young people in the global north have expressed severe anxiety about their prospects for the future and do not believe they will be better off than their parents, one measure of capitalist growth and a marker of the "developed world." Development has not worked for everyone and in Africa it often has made life worse. Development has resulted in greater economic inequality, less local and national control over resources, and even a new "scramble for Africa" as investors from China and elsewhere buy up impoverished land in the name of development. It is not only that development projects have failed in Africa; the development episteme has failed to make sense to Africans. It is time to ask the question, is it Africans who most desperately need intervention or is it the development industry itself?

A WAY FORWARD

Europeans and Americans do not have a monopoly on discourses of progress, yet western perspectives still prevail in the development episteme. Because the majority of funding earmarked for African

[22] Michael Matheson Miller, James F. Fitzgerald Jr., Simon Scionka, and Robert A. Sirico, *Poverty, Inc.*, DVD video, directed by Michael Matheson Miller (Passion River Films, 2014).

development continues to originate outside the continent, this continues to be a problem. Those who make the decisions about funding have much control over how "development" in the formal sense is defined even if the recipients of this funding disagree. For many Africans development means a chance to "get ahead" by ensuring their survival and achieving some form of material success. This is the new modernity. After such a long history of ambiguous outcomes in development, modernity means recognizing the ways in which Africans envision themselves not as targets of foreign intervention but as agentive individuals who will draw on whatever resources they have to carve out a path for themselves and their communities.

Simultaneous with the rise of new nations in Africa, the artistic, cultural, literary, and philosophical movement that has come to be known as Afrofuturism has redefined the relationship between culture and modernity in the African Diaspora. The international popularity of the 2018 film *Black Panther* can be attributed partly to the global excitement around Afrofuturism (see Figure 13.1). The primary setting of the film was the imaginary Wakanda, a wealthy, technologically advanced African nation with a natural abundance of a powerful substance called vibranium. The film, which explored the cultural and political connections between Africa and the Diaspora, offered a completely different vision of Africa than that typically found in development studies. As Professor Abosede George of Barnard College explained, artistic representations in the film emerged from real-world historical and cultural experiences.[23] The intersection of imagined futures with African cultural ideals is a central characteristic of Afrofuturism. It is a reconceptualization of the future that centers African people and culture. In her 2017 TED Talk about science fiction in Africa writer Nnedi Okorafor recounted, "Growing up, I didn't read much science fiction. I couldn't relate to those stories preoccupied with xenophobia, colonization, and seeing aliens as others." Her "science fiction had different ancestors, African ones." Okorafor explained, "African science fiction's blood runs deep and it's old, and it's ready to come forth, and when it does, imagine the new technologies, ideas, and sociopolitical changes it'll inspire. For

[23] Abosede George on *Inside Edition*, "Is Wakanda Real? The Real-World Roots of 'Black Panther,'" www.insideedition.com/media/videos/wakanda-real-real-world-roots-black-panther-41131, accessed December 30, 2019.

FIGURE 13.1 Audiences watch *Black Panther* in 3D at the Movie Jabbers Black Panther Cosplay Screening in Nairobi, Kenya, on February 14, 2018. The film features Oscar-winning Mexico-born Kenyan actress Lupita Nyong'o. Source: YASUYOSHI CHIBA/AFP via Getty Images

Africans, homegrown science fiction can be a will to power."[24] Development has had complex and contradictory meanings. As the development episteme continues to place Africa and African cultures within the realm of the "traditional," the past, the outmoded, and the undeveloped, Africans are imagining alternative futures and visions of development that celebrate – rather than denigrate – African cultural ideals.

We argue that it is time to rethink development, to move past colonial-era paternalism and recognize the very different futures Africans see for themselves. Though we cannot claim to speak for Africans or truly represent African ambitions and plans for the future, we hope that this critical analysis of the idea of development in Africa contributes in some small way to the revolution already underway in Africa's place in global politics. The illusion of the omnipotence of the development episteme will be exposed only when we can see clearly the

[24] Nnedi Okorafor, "Sci-fi Stories That Imagine a Future Africa," TEDGlobal 2017, www.ted.com/talks/nnedi_okorafor_sci_fi_stories_that_imagine_a_future_africa/up-next?language=en, accessed December 30, 2019.

crumbling stones out of which it was built. Development is not the powerful edifice it claims to be; it is a holdover of colonialism that is quickly losing relevance in our current world. Thus, we call for a decolonizing of the mind, not of Africans but of people living in the global north who see Africa as perpetually less than and of the self-professed development expert, whether African or foreign, in order to build on the efforts of Léopold Senghor, Olúfẹ́mi Táíwò, E. S. Atieno Odhiambo, Dambisa Moyo, Nnedi Okorafor, and others who have sought to reshape our world. If development scholars and professionals refuse to undergo such decolonization, then perhaps they should do what Odhiambo suggested and "leave the peasants alone."

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