

Examining Postcolonial Corporate Power Structures through the Lens of Development Induced Projects in Africa

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Abstract : This paper examines the relationships between socio-economic inequalities of power, race, wealth engendered by corporate structure, and domination in postcolonial Africa. The paper further considers how land as an epitome of property and power for the locals paved the way for capitalist accumulation and control in the hands of transnational corporations. European colonization of Africa was contingent on settler colonialism, where properties, including land, were re-modified as extractive resources for primitive accumulation. In developing Africa's extractive resources, transnational corporations (TNCs) usurped states' structures and domination over native land. The usurpation/corporate capture that exists to date has led to remonstrations and arguably a counter-productive approach to development projects. In some communities, the mention of extractive companies triggers resentment. The paradigm of state capture and state autonomy is simply inadequate to either describe or resolve the play of forces or actors responsible for severe corporate-induced human rights violations in emerging markets. Moreover, even if the deadly working conditions are conceived as some regulatory failure, it is tough to tell whose failure. The analysis in this paper is that the complexity and ambiguity evidenced by the multiple regimes and political and economic forces shaping production, consumption, and distribution of socio-economic variables are not exceptional in emerging markets. Instead, the varied experience in developing countries provides a window for seeing what we face in understanding and theorizing the structure and operation of the global economic and regulatory order in general.

Keywords : colonial, emerging markets, business, human rights, corporation

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