

# After Development: Surplus Population and the Politics of Entitlement

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### **After Development: Surplus Population and the Politics of Entitlement**

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The relationship between politics and development, the theme you invited me to address in my keynote, definitely got me thinking. So thank you for the provocation. I am especially proud to be invited to give the inaugural lecture sponsored by *Development and Change*, a journal that published my first significant essay on these topics in 1996, and where I have returned several times to publish my own work and to read the work of others. I remember receiving very astute and constructive comments from the reviewers, and good guidance from the editor to help me navigate a process which was quite new to me at the time. I should also note that my lecture draws on some joint work I am undertaking with James Ferguson of Stanford University; I want to acknowledge his contribution to my thinking on these topics.

The analytical and practical puzzle posed by the relationship between politics and development can be stated thus: Like many people in this room, I am dismayed by the present state of the world. No doubt there are some good trends, notably improvements in life expectancy and a global reduction in poverty. But the gains are highly uneven: 10% of the world population still lives in extreme poverty (most of them in Sub-Saharan Africa and India); there are significant pockets of extreme poverty in "middle-income" countries;<sup>1</sup> conditions of work in many sectors are poor and deteriorating; there is deepening inequality within and between nations; routine insecurity and catastrophic violence affect specific populations and entire regions; there is a scandalous waste of materials and human capacities, and mounting, irreversible, ecological ruin. These trends exist alongside runaway profits, astronomical wealth, and impressive technological capacity (Therborn 2016). Yet we are told, and somehow made to believe, that poverty, inequality, and ruin are quite normal. They are just the way things are – and how they have to be.

We should all be outraged at these trends, and mobilized to change them, but mostly we are not. There is some mobilization of course, but on nothing like the scale and intensity these trends actually merit. Why is this? I see three possible answers to this question. They are stories we tell ourselves and others, which revolve centrally around the problem of development.

First story: "Yes, things are bad now, but they are getting better – be patient – the teleology of development as progress is unfolding as it should. Modernization, peace and plenty are on the horizon. Destruction is painful

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<sup>1</sup> For trends and discussion of measurement challenges see <https://ourworldindata.org/>

but creative. Present suffering is necessary for future gain." Socialist and capitalist governments adhered to this narrative, although now we are told there is only one path to reach this bright future - the capitalist path – since alternatives have collapsed. This is the teleological narrative of imminent development, in Cowen and Shenton's terms (1996).

Second story: "Yes there is indeed suffering, but we (experts, transnational development institutions, national governments) - have a plan. We are intervening to make things better. Trust us, help is on the way. Meanwhile you can actually help yourself: you can pull yourself up by your bootstraps, create your own jobs, or build and nurture sustainable communities." This is the logic of intentional development and technical solutions, or what I have called "the will to improve"(2007).

Third story: there is indeed outrage, expressed in social movements and mobilizations, protests and refusals, and sometimes in quiet "everyday" forms (Scott 1985). These protests are about development, although they are not always recognized as such: protesters may not be the most impoverished, or those living in ruined environments, but rather those who fear falling, or being left out of the bright future that development narratives promise. Their targets may be governments, corporations, the WTO, the greedy 1%, or racialized minorities and migrants who appear to stand in the way. The common thread is a critical stance which says "something is not right here," there *must* be an alternative.

It is the relation between these three stories that I want to elaborate here, holding the third one – the pervasive capacity and absolute necessity of critique - in tension with development in its two senses, imminent development and deliberate intervention. Critique means prising open the capitalist world as we find it, and exposing its imminent tendencies - the waste, inequality and violence as well as the growth - to critical challenge. Why is it so and, more importantly, why should this be accepted? In the intentional development arena it means asking about how problems are defined, and what elements are not being considered, or set aside as too difficult, or too political? On both fronts, it is a stance of constant vigilance, and a refusal to accept that "there is no alternative;" an insistence that we can and must do better (Bauman 2007).

### **Truncated transitions and the "relative surplus population"**

It is relatively easy to be a critic of programs of intentional development, which all too obviously fall short of their goals. But what of the teleological narrative of unfolding and imminent development, or the critique of capitalism as the motor that is supposed to bring that unfolding about? My argument is that we are at a point when the comforting narrative of teleological unfolding and creative (if painful) destruction that will bring prosperity to all cannot be sustained. If I am correct, then critique of the story of imminent development is nowhere close to the depth and seriousness it needs to be and many of us (scholars, activists, practitioners, readers of this journal) are complicit.

I could make this argument in relation to any of the big problems I mentioned earlier – inequality, poverty, ecological ruin, insecurity – but since I only have space for one iteration, I have chosen to highlight the challenge of securing the livelihoods of people who find themselves "surplus" to the needs of capital, hence highly vulnerable in a global economy organized on capitalist lines. This challenge is faced by about a billion people whose tiny incomes and low life expectancy confirm their limited relevance to capital at any scale; also by people who occupy land and use resources that bearers of capital want to acquire for large farms, logging, mines and so on, but whose labour is not needed for new uses that absorb few workers; and by people who occupy lands devastated by climate change or ecological ruin who can no longer survive in the old way, but for whom no new mode of livelihood has emerged in its place. Some of them have long been cast adrift, seeking work as migrants, or swelling the cities where they try to squeeze yet one more tray of goods for sale onto a crowded pavement, or survive in other creative but highly precarious, and insufficient ways. I also include young people, the “educated unemployed” in the global north and south alike, who stand on street corners or massage their cvs in search of jobs that simply are not there. Their situation was powerfully captured in Craig Jeffrey's book *Timepass* (2010), which described how a quarter of a million young men in a mid-size Indian town, all with two or three degrees, survive by hustling while waiting in vain for a "proper job." Like their counterparts in the global north, they are not destitute since their families continue to support them, but it is unlikely they will have the bright future their parents anticipated when they invested so hopefully in their education.

The presence of a large and burgeoning population that is chronically under-reproduced, and precariously employed, throws into question the story about imminent development that was framed in the 18<sup>th</sup> century in terms of evolution; in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in terms of agrarian transition; and in the 20<sup>th</sup> century in terms of modernization. These framings insisted that all the people of the world would – sooner or later – experience a natural progression from county to city, from farm to factory, and from low to high productivity work which would bring prosperity to all. Shockingly, in my view, the core of this narrative continues to be repeated by the development industry today. The 2008 *World Development Report on Agriculture* (World Bank 2008) repeated the agrarian transition narrative unrevised, allocating nations of the world to positions along a linear pathway that headed resolutely away from the farm, and towards the city, or jobs in other sectors. The report maintained the container of the nation state, as if each and every nation could be expected to develop a manufacturing sector on cue, and the global circulation of capital played no role. But what good are manufacturing jobs in China, if you are pushed off the land in the backwoods of Indonesia, when a plantation employing few workers grabs your land? Work by the World Bank on the so-called global land grab (Deninger et al. 2011) acknowledged that the jobs created by “more productive” agriculture did not equal the jobs and livelihoods lost, but it did not proffer a solution. It simply made the assumption that all these surplus people would find somewhere else to go, and something else to do (Li 2009, 2011). This is the story of capitalist development as

creative destruction, in which the creative part - the brighter future that is to come – is a vague promise, not a concrete plan.

In the global north and south alike, the transition narrative continues to do powerful ideological and material work, as massive harms are justified in transition terms. It is astonishing, and troubling, that the narrative continues to hold such sway. Much of my research has been in Asian contexts where people are currently being pushed off the land into jobless and uncertain futures, but other conjunctures have equally troubling outcomes. Consider the ex-miners of Zambia or South Africa, people expelled from the land a century ago to work in industries that no longer need their labour (Ferguson 1999). Consider the post-industrial sectors of the global north, huge swaths of the high tech, service, and information economy, and most notoriously the financial sector, which generate mega profits and very few jobs. We are living in an era in which huge and diverse sectors of the global population struggle to find work, or to find any productive function and viable source of livelihood. I see no prospect that this will turn around. It is not a problem of recession, a temporary problem that will be resolved when economic growth returns to "normal," or when sufficient belt-tightening and austerity has restored investor confidence. Periods of high growth in India and Indonesia have been recognized as virtually jobless (ILO 2007) and a future in which millions of Americans will have no access to paid work is now discussed in US news magazines as a real possibility.

The ILO recognizes burgeoning unemployment in the global north and south and the worrying trend towards casual and low quality work. Its response has been to announce an agenda called “decent work” for all, and to make "decent work" a core "sustainable development" goal. But the ILO has no concrete plan for how “decent work for all” could be accomplished under the current mode of capitalist development, where the proliferation of casual work is not an accident, but a strategy to increase profit and enhance productivity – specifically the productivity of labour in relation to capital, which is how economists define it (Munck 2013). The proposed fixes are technical, and include measures such as job training, investments in "human capital," and attempts to better connect would-be workers with jobs through the provision of information, and building bridges, ladders, and pathways into work (ILO 2013; World Bank 2012, 2007). Alternatively, promoters of micro-credit suggest that people everywhere - including the world's poorest people, rural women, and even school children - can create their own jobs so long as they adopt an entrepreneurial mentality and have access to credit (Roy 2010).

None of these technical fixes have made much dent on the fundamental problem of insufficient access to stable sources of livelihood, nor could they, for the reasons starkly stated by Sanyal and Bhattacharya: "What is at play here is not the political conflict of the process of transition from one mode of production to a higher one. Rather, at the heart of the conflict lies the recognition of the *impossibility* of transition itself - a recognition of the process of transition without proletarianization that leaves the majority of the labouring population outside the dynamics of the great transformation"(2010, emphasis in original). It is the problem discussed by Marx in

terms of the “relative surplus population”(Marx 1986, :574-606). Note that it is not a net surplus, after Malthus, as there is more than enough food and resources in the world for current and future needs. The problem is a population that is surplus *relative to the needs of capital*, exceeding even the functions assigned to a labour reserve (disciplining workers and depressing wages through competition for jobs, or the supply of cheap goods and services). Put crudely, if some portion of the relative surplus population died tomorrow, the rate of profit would remain the same, and the GDP in the affected countries would increase.

Some scholars discuss the relative surplus population in terms of "disposability" (Giroux 2007), the "war on the poor" (Krugman 2013), the "new pauperism" (Breman 2016), or "the savage sorting of winners and losers"(Sassen 2010). These labels are accurate in some contexts, but too widely applied they become apocalyptic, as if immiseration was the main global tendency today. Instead, the problem is highly uneven: in some places there is a labour shortage, wages are rising, new technology generates jobs, and entrepreneurs find lucrative business lines. Access to jobs has always been deeply spatialized, racialized, gendered, and age-ist: there are no generic jobseekers, or generic jobs.

Unevenness is strongly demonstrated in Jonathan Rigg's (2015) study of Southeast Asia, a region often lauded for its development success but haunted, Rigg argues, by looming shadows. Although the rate of poverty has declined across the region (2015, 45), on a head-count basis the region still has 70 million people below the extreme \$1.25 per day poverty line, and almost 200 million below \$2, of whom half are in Indonesia (2015, :5). Malaysia, Thailand and Singapore have poverty rates close to zero, but these numbers omit a significant component of the population: they do not count transnational migrant workers who comprise 40% of the workforce in Singapore, 25% in Malaysia, and 10% in Thailand (2015, 54, 119). There are other shadows as well: deepening inequality in Indonesia (2015, 34), and a region-wide reduction in labour's share of income (2015, 42). Distinguishing between four types of poor (the residual poor who have been left behind, the unequal poor who have fallen behind in relative terms, the uncounted poor, and the produced poor), Rigg is especially concerned to draw attention to the latter category: people whose poverty is linked to the very processes that have generated growth, whether through ecological ruin or dispossessory dynamics of "routine capitalism" (Li 2014; 2015, 54). Finally, Rigg notes that the level of state-provided social assistance in the region is, to quote the usually-circumspect Asian Development Bank, “abysmal” with very low payments and limited reach (Rigg 2015, 81).

The conceit in the teleology of imminent development in capitalist mode is the small word "all" - decent work for *all*, the rising tide that lifts *all* boats. The teleological story counsels patience: it suggests that everyone's turn will eventually come. But why would it come? What if the waiting room to which some people, and some regions have been consigned is permanent?(Hindess 2001). What is the guarantee that dislocation from previous ways of living on the land will be compensated by new and better sources of livelihood, or jobs lost in

one sector will be replaced by jobs gained in another? Why is credible to suggest that economies must grow first, so distribution will follow? This is a sequence that Prahbat Patnaik (2010) dismisses as politically naive, since growth empowers the very class of people who are dedicated to preserving their own property and privilege. It is these people who decide if, when, in what measure, and to which selected groups of people charitable assistance should be extended. The same is true across national borders as citizens of rich countries seek to protect their wealth from migrants making claims.

The increase in inequality between nations from a ratio of 4:1 in the nineteenth century to 100:1 circa 2000 (Milanovic 2011) is powerful confirmation that for people in poor countries to wait for the rising tide, or for benevolent distribution, is a flawed strategy. Nevertheless, the promise that growth will bring prosperity to all is still sold by transnational agencies such as the World Bank, and by national governments. It also forms a center piece of people's hope for a better life if not for themselves, then for their children. World over people invest in education, migrate to find work, and despise idleness because they see work and education as the route to making a better future for their families. They buy into a story of progress which suggests that through their own diligence and skill, and sometimes with entrepreneurship, a better future will come. Economic growth linked to progress is a hopeful, sometimes utopic narrative to which a great many people are fervently attached; they elect to make, or are forced to endure, huge sacrifices in its name.

As analysts, however, we should be “after development” – well past the teleological narrative of unfolding progress and the promise that all this destruction will be creative in the end. So where is critique? Why do we – development scholars and practitioners - continue not just to live with, but to actively promote the illusion that development is unfolding, and with sufficient growth and some tinkering around the edges, a decent life for all is on the horizon? At what point does this narrative get punctured, and revealed as false? Not just as too slow or insufficient, but as fundamentally flawed, since promises of universal prosperity cannot be met in an economy organized on capitalist lines? When we get to that point another set of questions open up. These are the questions I want to turn to now.

### **Politics of Distribution**

If huge numbers of people are, in fact, not going to be able to sustain themselves through productive work – or not in conditions other than deprivation and bare survival – what comes next? After imminent development must be – can only be – a politics of distribution: a struggle over who will have access to a share of global wealth and income, on what grounds, and who will be excluded. It is a struggle because, as Patnaik points out, distribution is always in tension with the logic that puts growth first, and defers distribution to some future time when state, corporate, or philanthropic coffers will be full enough for generosity. It is also a struggle because selecting between the more and less deserving is clearly not simply a matter of applying a technical matrix. It is a matter of contention and debate, in which diverse sets of actors with different interests, capacities and claims

will be engaged. Every notion of entitlement, including the entitlement of rich people or rich countries to hold on to their wealth, has to be justified and can be contested. More concretely, dispossessed, fearful, or marginalized people do not simply disappear: they mobilize, or vote, or build walls, or migrate to cities or across borders, or assert their rights, or find other more and less effective ways to make their presence felt, exercise leverage, and make demands.

Some of the contours of the politics of distribution are already emerging, and I frame them here as a preliminary set of questions that could be applied in different contexts:

- What are the targets of distributive claims? Is it jobs, or housing, or land, or income, or the right to dwell in the city, or affordable public transit? Eviction from the city center can destroy marginal livelihoods that depend on proximity, so in some contexts demanding the "right to the city," may be as important - or more important - than jobs or wages (Sanyal and Bhattacharya 2010). Some distributive targets directly challenge capital accumulation (labour strikes, or successful resistance to eviction, for example); others would implode the logic of capital only if they were consolidated as rights that are non-negotiable, hence insulated from cries of "austerity" or lack of means (Patnaik 2010).
- To whom are claims addressed – is it to governments, or humanitarian organizations, or patrons, or kin? Kin are the main source of assistance for most people who cannot earn their own livelihood, but "sharing and caring" always have limits. No one is perfectly heartless, or perfectly generous, so it is necessary to study the contours of distribution, and the basis on which claims are conceded or denied. Governments may find it politically costly to cut off streams of social spending to which citizens have become accustomed. Austerity notwithstanding, in the OECD countries between 2001 and 2011 funds dedicated to social expenditure increased both as a percent of GDP and in constant dollars (OECD 2011). Contradictions between the demands of capital and the need for legitimation make welfare states dynamic sites of contestation in the global north and south alike (Clarke 2013; Smith 2011; Ferguson 2009).
- How is distribution linked to work, either retrospectively (as in insurance schemes), or prospectively, when payments are made contingent on attempts at self reliance or volunteering, or framed as an investment in "human capital" to be recouped through future profits? Note that state programs of "conditional cash transfers" like Brazil's *bolsa familia*, and programs run by private "philanthro-capitalist" foundations are committed to transition scenarios in which "investments" yield measurable results: healthy, educated young people should be able to find work; families should graduate away from assistance; small businesses should flourish and no longer need support (Mitchell and Sparke 2016; Lavinias 2013). This means that people who fail to graduate, or whose businesses cannot survive in the tide of competition, may be cut off.



- Under what conditions is distribution delinked from work, and treated as a matter of entitlement to a share of mineral wealth, taxes, corporate profits, or national wellbeing? We see distributions on this basis in Norway and Denmark, and perhaps in Namibia and Botswana, and arguments along these lines are being actively formulated around renewed concepts of "the commons" (Ferguson 2015).
- Which sectors of the population are abandoned? How is abandonment justified or, put differently, what are the grounds on which claims for social membership are disqualified? We can think here, rather obviously, of the role of national boundaries that render migrants ineligible for social protection. Separating the deserving from the undeserving often involves idioms that are racialized or culturalized – vis discourses of “dangerous youth,” “welfare frauds,” or “immigrants who steal our jobs.” Colonial regimes had their own schemes to justify abandonment. In Indonesia during the depression of the 1930s, for example, colonial officials made a distinction between the “individual unemployment of the European,” which merited assistance, and “the collective unemployment of the native population” for whom “individual help” was out of the question (White 2012). Similar thinking underlay the decision made in the UK in 1942 that the provisions of the welfare state should *not* be extended to the colonies, where (ex)colonial subjects should instead be encouraged along the path of self-reliant development in their families and communities (Seekings 2004). Contemporary schemes to make the poorest people responsible for their own welfare are underwritten by gendered assumptions about the capacity of poor women to share, care, and survive on limited resources (Roy 2010).
- How is the space for claim making expanded or contracted? What is the role of alliances, rights regimes, voting, repression, or threats posed by “dangerous classes”? An important feature of the “relative surplus population” is that they do not have the leverage of workers – people who can make claims by threats to withdraw labour. But they do not die, or not immediately, hence they may exert some leverage simply through their presence. This could be presence in the streets in the form of mass protests, general strikes, occupations or riots. Recall the Thai “Red Shirts” who occupied an intersection in the center of Bangkok for two months in 2010. Migration, which forces presence, is also a way of making a claim: Africans who arrive in Europe are demanding a better life now, not one postponed indefinitely into the future. The outcome of these forms of presence could be an extension of charity or solidarity, as the suffering of other people comes into view; or it could be violence, eviction, and the building of gated communities, gated countries, or the drawing of militarized boundary lines.

These scenarios I have sketched so briefly are not hypothetical – they are already here. Political struggles along these lines are already taking place in every corner of the globe, and yielding varied outcomes – some hopeful,

some horrendous. To account for the different paths and patterns that are emerging, we need to understand more about the politics of distribution at different scales. Nations continue to be very important, both in the global north where citizens often believe they have a right to a minimum set of social protections, and in parts of the global south where anti-colonial, socialist, and national liberation struggles also instilled a sense of entitlement. On this point, too, there is wide variation. Different national trajectories have resulted in very different senses of entitlement, and different modes of making political critiques and claims.

## **A Sense of Entitlement**

In Britain, we could trace the citizen's sense of entitlement to Habeas corpus and the Magna Carta (Linebaugh 2009), and the progressive entrenchment of what historian E.P. Thompson (1982) identified as “the *limits* beyond which an Englishman was not prepared to be 'pushed around.’” In South Africa, citizens are convinced they are entitled to have their needs met by the state. As one South African defending state transfers to people in need put it, “they are our fellow citizens, after all” (Ferguson 2015, :19). In this case the sense of entitlement emerged from state-based welfare provisions for white South Africans that were later extended to coloureds and blacks; existing state capacities for regulation, administration, enumeration and surveillance, dating from the apartheid era; and – most important – a popular conviction among the black population that their suffering in a long and bitter independence struggle has earned them a reward. Zimbabweans who “suffered for territory”(Moore 2005) share this conviction. In other parts of sub-Saharan Africa, the conjunctures are different. Promises made by the UN to demobilized soldiers, prosperity gospels promoted by evangelical churches, and the erratic presence of transnational NGOs and humanitarian organizations figure into what specific groups of people do or not think of as their due (Piot 2010). A documentary rendition of Fanon’s writing “concerning violence” narrated by Lauryn Hill offers a stark reminder of how the dreams and expectations of the young men and women fighting for national liberation in Angola and Mozambique, and Africa’s nation building efforts of the 50s and 60s have foundered. Getting rid of colonial rule did not bring the promised benefits. How far those promises have been forgotten, or still figure in present claims is something that scholars working in sub-Saharan Africa could no doubt elaborate.

In Latin America, to continue my bold sweep, I suspect that liberation theology and corporate forms of organization in peasant, worker or women's unions continue to play a role in shaping current political claims, alongside political parties and ethnic blocks, especially those framed around indigeneity (Radcliffe 2012; Wolford 2010). In China, I was struck by a study I read about protest movements in rural China, in which a group emerged calling themselves “ a new 'class' of 'three nothings' - no land, no work, no social security”(Walker 2008, :476). To articulate such a position, name it, and link it to class - we are the class of three nothings - could only occur in a context where a sense of entitlement was already established. An absence

of access to the means of livelihood could be named because it had been promised as a presence by the revolution, the communist party, and the state. Protest movements in China take the form of "rightful resistance," demanding only the rights promised in the law and the constitution (O'Brien and Li 2006). Entitlements still have to be fought for: despite new social assistance programs, the privatization of formerly collective assets and state-owned industries means that transfers to the poor in China are much lower now than in the communist past, and only 30% of the OECD average (OECD 2011, :59; Wang 2008).

In Indonesia, I find a popular sense of entitlement lacking. The state is overwhelmingly extractive, not distributive, and individuals expect arbitrary and sometimes brutal treatment. An articulate, national critique of state failure to protect citizens from impoverishment or meet their basic needs is absent or severely curtailed. It is a palpable absence that I feel in my conversations with people every day. Fifty years after the 1965 massacre of around half a million people including union members, communist party members, school teachers, and journalists, and two decades after the fall of General Suharto, the people who orchestrated the massacres and their successors are still in power. Despite apparent openness - free press and multiple political parties – no pro-poor party has emerged, and there is little discussion of problems of social and economic injustice that ought to be matters of public debate (Kuddus 2017). There are movements claiming to represent peasants and indigenous people, but their reach across the archipelago is limited and uneven. Most protests by farmers or indigenous people are place based. They arise in response to events such as threatened evictions, and do not morph into wider or more enduring mobilizations. Unions remain weak, or are heavily co-opted. A decade ago I still met older people who confided to me that this was not how it was supposed to be, and not what the revolutionary leaders Sukarno and Hatta promised (Li 2007, 88). Many members of the younger generation, in contrast, do not know it was not supposed to be thus. Schools, universities, and the media do little to inform them.

The current balance of class forces in Indonesia is starkly revealed in the numbers. In the period 1990-2011, Indonesia had the second biggest increase in the gini coefficient for inequality of any Asian country (after China), with steeper growth *after* the end of the dictatorship in 1998 (ADB 2012, 47); it had the second lowest per capita spending on health in all of Asia (just ahead of Myanmar), and its social protection expenditure as a percent of GDP was also very low, far behind India and China (ADB 2012, 77, 79). Indonesia's sad trajectory should be the subject of serious critique and popular mobilization, but it mostly passes unremarked. Indeed, the silence is deafening. It stands in contrast to other parts of Southeast Asia in which the Cold War was resolved differently. In Thailand, for example, there was no all-out massacre, and the government (including the army and the monarchy) successfully outcompeted the communist party by supplying rural infrastructure, meeting development aspirations, and all but eliminating rural poverty. The policy of attempting to meet peasant demands also had the unintended result of creating an enfranchised class of "political peasants" who insist on

making claims – even occupying Bangkok - much to the chagrin of paternalistic Bangkok elites who attempt to contain them (Walker 2012).

To summarize, in the period ‘after development’ – after the collapse of a plausible narrative in which the rising tide will lift all boats - a sense of entitlement, its entrenchment in law, and its articulation in political parties or movements will play a huge role in the politics of distribution that is of pressing concern to the "relative surplus population" who cannot sustain themselves through their work. For the next few decades, I expect that national approaches to the politics of entitlement will diverge sharply. In the absence of a global regime of distribution that would supplant the national frame, with all its deficiencies, it is at the national level that distribution will be fought over and decided. To those who expect more, and who find effective ways to demand more, more will be given; for those who expect to be kicked around, and who can in fact be kicked around with impunity, the future is bleak.

What of intentional development? Are we also 'after' the promise that technical interventions can fix things? In the world of development practice, unequal power is increasingly recognized as a driver of impoverishment, damaged livelihoods, inequality, unsustainability and so on. Hence politics, especially in the form of a challenge to unequal power, is no longer viewed as a problem to be by-passed so that technical solutions can be pursued. Indeed, in some quarters, such a politics is positively embraced. According to Ian Scoones (2016), for example, "transformation to sustainability and development is mostly about politics .... It means having searching debates about visions and directions, confronting incumbent power head on, and creating a transformative politics, rooted in alliances between players – across states, businesses, civil society and more. Transformations to sustainability will not emerge from goals and targets, but fundamental political change, combined with new thinking and wide mobilisation." Similarly, Devereux (2016) argues that social protection should be a right not a gift. But where are the social forces that would make it so? How to bring about a "transformative politics," or create the conditions for the "wide mobilisation" it would require.?

More broadly, in places where a robust sense of entitlement, and lively practice of critique are lacking (as in Indonesia), can these expectations and practices be deliberately instilled? A World Bank study called *Making Politics work for Development* attempts this very task. It sets out a framework to render politics technical, identifies the elements of "good" political practice (namely transparency, voting, voice), and sets out a program of intervention to direct political conduct towards development ends (Khemani 2016). The study limits its purview to the relatively safe (and win-win) terrain of instilling demand for efficient public services (health, education) and encouraging people to vote for the candidate with the best track record in providing these services. It assumes that voters provided with accurate data about a politician's performance will make the right choice, and not be swayed by empty promises, patronage, or ethno-religious affiliations. Yet the report also recognizes the importance of the *longue duree*, and the fact that no development agency can rewrite history.

Naming power as a problem, and recognizing the centrality of politics, in short, makes the entire program of intentional development rather peripheral: there really is no technical fix. Just as I argued for development as teleological unfolding, it would be a mistake to sit back and wait for salvation in the forms that experts can engineer. However much transnational development agencies aspire to intervene on the side of the poor, it is not clear that they have the means to change the equation.

## Conclusion

'After' development, then, we are left with politics, and more specifically, with the absolute necessity of critique. Politics as critique stands in tension with development in its two senses, imminent development and deliberate intervention. Critique means prising open the capitalist world as we find it, and exposing its waste, inequality and violence to constant scrutiny; it means not accepting that this is the best that can be achieved. It also means a tough appraisal of planned development interventions that can do little to stimulate an effective critical politics, even when they recognize its importance. I am convinced that the capacity for engaging in a critical politics is widespread, indeed universal. But it is differently expressed, unevenly institutionalized, and often not especially effective. Recognizing and building capacities for critical politics among differently situated actors, identifying the opportunities presented by a particular conjuncture and mobilizing people to act on that analysis are tasks Gramsci assigned to intellectuals: on this front there is plenty of work for all of us in the decades ahead.

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