

## The Idea of Development in Africa

*The Idea of Development in Africa* challenges prevailing international development discourses about the continent by tracing the history of ideas, practices, and “problems” of development used in Africa. In doing so, it offers an innovative approach to examining the history and culture of development through the lens of the development episteme, which has been foundational to the “idea of Africa” in western discourses since the early 1800s. This study weaves together an historical narrative of how the idea of development emerged with an account of the policies and practices of development in colonial and postcolonial Africa. This book highlights four enduring themes in African development, including their present-day ramifications: domesticity, education, health, and industrialization. Offering a balance between historical overview and analysis of past and present case studies, Corrie Decker and Elisabeth McMahon demonstrate that Africans have always co-opted, challenged, and reformed the idea of development, even as the western-centric development episteme presumes a one-way flow of ideas and funding from the west to Africa.

Corrie Decker is Associate Professor of History at the University of California, Davis. She is the author of *Mobilizing Zanzibari Women: The Struggle for Respectability and Self-Reliance* (2014) and numerous articles in the *Journal of Women's History*, the *International Journal of African Historical Studies*, *Past and Present*, *Africa Today*, and the *American Historical Review*. She is currently writing a book on the history of puberty in twentieth-century East Africa.

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# The Idea of Development in Africa

## A History

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## Acknowledgments

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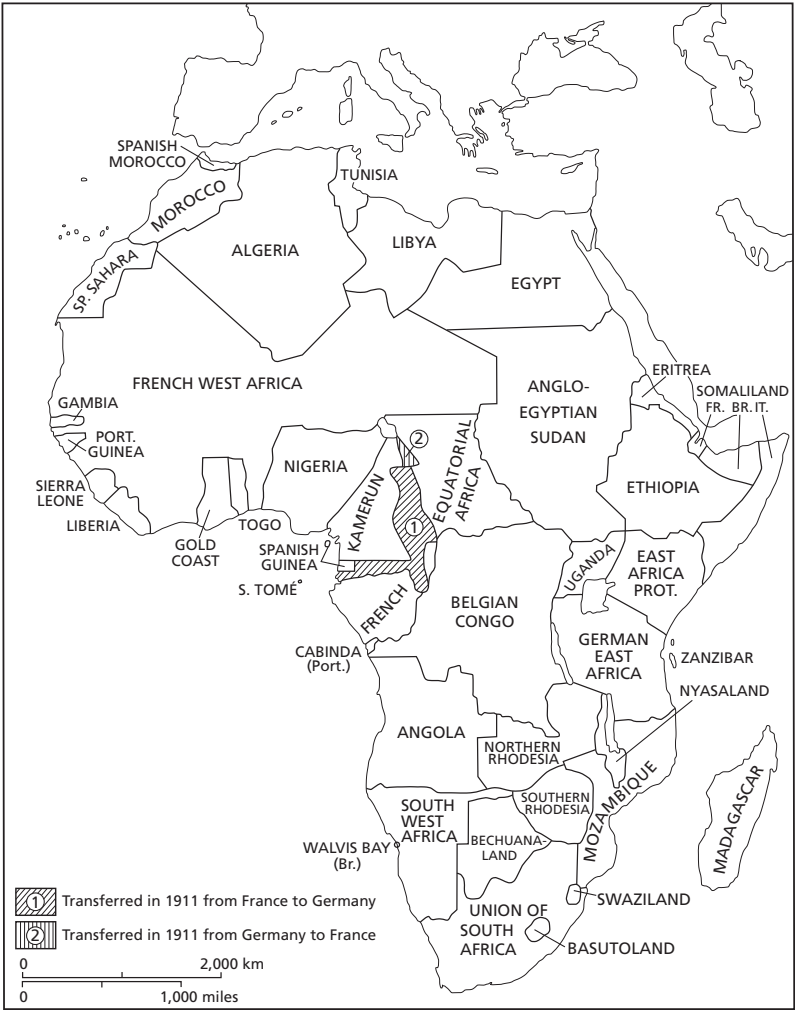
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MAP 0.1 Africa ca. 1830



MAP 0.2 Africa ca. 1914





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