

# **Rural Development in the Twentieth Century: International Perspectives – An Introduction**

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The history of international development has largely been written as a history of ambitious modernization projects which, more often than not, seem to have failed.<sup>1</sup> Research has focused on norms and institutions which manifest themselves in national or international contexts, while local or regional experiences have been eclipsed or have received only cursory treatment. There are good reasons for this, and they can best be explained by an ‘urban bias’, a term coined by Michael Lipton in the 1970s.<sup>2</sup> Lacking or ignored representation and mobilization of rural populations, the dominance of urban needs and requirements in public discourses, the necessarily distanced views of institutions and organizations on societies, and, last but not least, the theoretical and practical imperative of development as industrialization have led, until today, to a neglect of rural spaces in discourses and practices of development policies and their history.

Until recently, more than half of the world’s population lived in rural areas and predominantly from agriculture. Continuing poverty and often only partial access to basic material and social rights are still a widespread phenomenon of many rural areas. Against this background, this theme issues puts problems of rural and agrarian development squarely at the center of interest. What kind of development initiatives were devised for rural areas, and how did rural populations relate to the doctrines and practices of development? Which effects did the various programs have, and what can they tell us about the history

1 D. van Laak, *Imperiale Infrastruktur. Deutsche Planungen für eine Erschließung Afrikas 1880 bis 1960*, Paderborn 2004; J. C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State. How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*, New Haven 1998.

2 M. Lipton, *Why Poor People Stay Poor. A Study of Urban Bias in World Development*, London 1977.

of development as seen through a rural lens? We seek to reconstruct diverse experiences in different regions of the world in order to answer these questions.

The history of development as a distinct field of enquiry emerged about two decades ago.<sup>3</sup> Growing interest built on two reasons. First, international relations changed after the end of the Cold War. Relations between the industrialized world and so-called developing countries gained in importance, and with the breath-taking processes of transformation in countries such as Brazil, China, or India national trajectories of development received increased attention. Global challenges such as climate change, the distribution of poverty and wealth, or concerns for individual opportunities and options have entered, more than ever, the complex network of global governance. A new generation of historians has considered these processes and has identified development as a promising field of historical enquiry. Secondly, and relatedly, international history has undergone fundamental changes in terms of methods and topics. Times are past when international history considered itself to be diplomatic history. The new international history of the past two decades has been a history of cross-border interactions, interconnectedness, of knowledge circulations and of comparison. These trajectories have opened up new fields of enquiry. Development is one of them.<sup>4</sup> In the following, we briefly chart the field and highlight the specific contributions of existing research to the history of rural development.

Arguably, the best-researched topic of development history is the connection between development, modernization and the Cold War. This goes in particular for American development politics.<sup>5</sup> Historians agree that after 1949 US administrations undertook development cooperation primarily in terms of political and strategic decisions.<sup>6</sup> In the eyes of American foreign policy experts, the United States possessed a unique combination of military and political power as well as economic potential. The United States were, as economic historian and top civil servant Walt W. Rostow famously wrote, the “high mass consumption society”.<sup>7</sup> Until the crises of the 1970s they offered themselves to the world as a model and as the anticipated future of other societies. Various actors worked to make this happen. Social scientists devised theories of development and researched societies elsewhere, and universities created departments in area studies, demography, develop-

3 N. Cullather, „Development? It’s History. Research Note”, in: *Diplomatic History* 24.4 (2000), pp. 641–653. For an excellent recent overview, see J. Hodge, “Writing the History of Development (Part 1: The First Wave)”, in: *Humanity* 6.3 (2015), pp. 429–463, and “Writing the History of Development (Part 2: Longer, Deeper, Wider)”, in: *Humanity* 7.1 (2016), pp. 125–174.

4 H. Büschel and D. Speich (eds.), *Entwicklungswelten. Globalgeschichte der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit*, Frankfurt a.M. 2009; M. Frey and S. Kunkel, “Writing the History of Development. A Review of the Recent Literature”, in: *Contemporary European History* 20 (2011), pp. 215–232; M. Frey, S. Kunkel and C. R. Unger (eds.), *International Organizations and Development 1945–1990*, London 2014; C. R. Unger, *Entwicklungspfade in Indien. Eine internationale Geschichte, 1947–1980*, Göttingen 2015.

5 M. E. Latham, *The Right Kind of Revolution. Modernization, Development, and U.S. Foreign Policy from the Cold War to the Present*, Ithaca 2010; D.C. Engerman et al. (eds.), *Staging Growth. Modernization, Development, and the Global Gold War*, Amherst 2003.

6 C. Lancaster, *Foreign Aid. Diplomacy, Development, Domestic Politics*, Chicago 2007.

7 W. W. Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth. A Non-Communist Manifesto*, Cambridge, MA 1960.

ment economics and provided grants for students, academics and practitioners from the global South.<sup>8</sup> Influential foundations such as the Rockefeller Foundation, the Ford Foundation or the Carnegie Corporation became active in the global arena in order to ‘modernize’ societies, diffuse ‘Western’ norms and conduct social engineering according to their liberal, anti-communist beliefs. American governmental and non-governmental actors distanced themselves from colonialism, as this was regarded as a historical anachronism and detrimental to a positive image of the ‘free World’ in times of the Cold War. While industrialization formed the theoretical and practical foundation of US development policies, governmental and non-governmental actors also became active, from early on, in such sectors as agriculture, institution-building, infrastructure and finance.

The historical literature emphasizes three complexes that were characteristic of development thinking and practice: the production of knowledge and technology, transfers of ideas and approaches and their limits as well as the connection between knowledge and power. As the articles in this theme issue highlight, American historians have somewhat prematurely interpreted international development policies as a genuinely American product.<sup>9</sup> According to this master narrative, development has its roots in the progressive age of the late nineteenth century. The New Deal and its intellectual and institutional legacy concretized and universalized development. The paradigm of ‘modernization’ is interpreted as an ‘ideology’ that deeply influenced U.S. foreign policy since the end of the Second World War. Based largely on American archival sources, these works have also shown the limits within which development cooperation operated, and they have pointed to the scope of action of recipients. Often enough recipients changed project designs, ignored conditions or refused expectations.

Within this body of literature, agriculture has received some attention. During the 1950s and 1960s, American advisers proposed land reforms in order to support small farmers and the agrarian middle classes.<sup>10</sup> However, local elites in Asia and Latin America were mostly unresponsive to such propositions, as they would alter local hierarchies of influence and power.<sup>11</sup> A second field of enquiry has been the so-called Green Revolution, which impacted heavily on agriculture and rural societies in Latin America and Asia from the late 1960s onwards.<sup>12</sup> Of particular interest have been the role of technology and

8 N. Gilman, *Mandarins of the Future. Modernization Theory in Cold War America*, Baltimore 2003; C. Simpson (ed.), *Universities and Empire. Money and Politics in the Social Sciences during the Cold War*, New York 1998; C. R. Unger, ‘Development Aid between National Interests and Philanthropy: American Public and Private Aid to the ‘Third World’ in the Postwar Era’, in: Th. Olesen, H. Pharo, and K. Paaskesen (eds.), *Saints and Sinners. Official Development Aid and its Dynamics in a Historical and Comparative Perspective*, Oslo 2013, pp. 301-326.

9 D. Ekbladh, *The Great American Mission. Modernization and the Construction of an American World Order*, Princeton 2010.

10 L. J. Walinsky, (ed.), *Agrarian Reform as Unfinished Business. The Selected Papers of Wolf Ladejinsky*, New York 1977. See also D. Immerwahr, *Thinking Small. The United States and the Lure of Community Development*, Cambridge, MA, 2015.

11 E. Abrahamian, *A History of Modern Iran*, Cambridge 2008, pp. 131-133; N. Cullather, *The Hungry World. America’s Cold War Battle Against Poverty in Asia*, Cambridge, MA 2010; J. F. Taffet, *Foreign Aid as Foreign Policy. The Alliance for Progress in Latin America*, New York 2007.

12 N. Cullather, ‘Parables of Seeds. The Green Revolution and the Modernizing Imagination’, in: M. Frey, R. Pries-

knowledge transfers between International Organizations (for instance, the International Rice Research Institute in Los Baños, the Philippines), scientists and politics.

In the field of colonial development, the historiography has analysed the connection between investments into the colonies and a more efficient exploitation of dependent territories in the interwar period. Infrastructure played a leading role at that time.<sup>13</sup> After the Second World War, though, the emphasis shifted and health as well as education received much more attention than before. Late colonial development policy served to legitimize continued colonial rule, and in this context social affairs received prominent attention.<sup>14</sup> A couple of works focus on agricultural and rural populations. They investigate the motives and aims of colonial agricultural development, and they emphasize the important role of science and technology, which took center stage from around the turn of the twentieth century.<sup>15</sup> Suzanne Moon, for instance, argues that the Dutch authorities took a keen interest in raising living standards in rural areas particularly on Java, and she epitomizes the connection between agricultural science and local knowledge. Joseph Hodge, on the other hand, sees the colonial state as an actor interested in turning agriculture more market-oriented and more efficient.<sup>16</sup> This goes in particular for the period between the 1930s and the 1950s, during which governments prioritized the mechanization of African agriculture and the implementation of large-scale export-oriented projects.<sup>17</sup> Knowledge transfers moved vertically from the top down. One such project was the Office du Niger in present-day Mali, the subject of Marc Frey's contribution in

sen and T.T. Yong (eds.), *The Transformation of Southeast Asia. International Perspectives on Decolonization*, Armonk, NY, pp. 257-267; J. H. Perkins, "The Rockefeller Foundation and the Green Revolution, 1941-1956" in: *Agriculture and Human Values* 7 (1990), pp. 6-18; J. H. Perkins, *Geopolitics and the Green Revolution. Wheat, Genes, and the Cold War*, Oxford 1997. On the origins of the Green Revolution in Mexico, see A. Birn, *Marriage of Convenience. Rockefeller International Health and Revolutionary Mexico*, Rochester, NY, 2006; G. Esteva, *The Struggle for Rural Mexico*, South Hardy 1983; B. H. Jennings, *Foundations of International Agricultural Research: Science and Politics in Mexican Agriculture*, Boulder 1988.

- 13 A. Booth, "The Evolution of Fiscal Policy and the Role of Government in the Colonial Economy", in: A. Booth, W. J. O'Malley and A. Weidemann (eds.), *Indonesian Economic History in the Dutch Colonial Era*, New Haven, CT 1990, pp. 210-243; H. Sieberg, *Colonial Development. Die Grundlegung moderner Entwicklungspolitik durch Großbritannien 1919-1949*, Stuttgart 1985; M. Thomas, *The French Empire between the Wars*, Manchester 2005; van Laak, *Imperiale Infrastruktur*.
- 14 F. Cooper, *Decolonization and African Society. The Labor Question in French and British Africa*, Cambridge 1996; F. Cooper, "Writing the History of Development", in: *Journal of Modern European History* 8.1 (2010), pp. 5-23; A. Eckert, "Exportschlager Wohlfahrtsstaat? Europäische Sozialstaatlichkeit und Kolonialismus in Afrika nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg", in: *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 32.4 (2006), pp. 467-488; D. K. Fieldhouse, *Black Africa 1945-1980. Economic Decolonization and Arrested Development*, London 1986, pp. 42-55.
- 15 V. Bernal, "Colonial Moral Economy and the Discipline of Development: The Gezira Scheme and 'Modern' Sudan", in: *Cultural Anthropology* 12.4 (1997), pp. 447-479; M. W. Ertsen, *Improvising Development on the Gezira Plain, Sudan, 1900-1980*, London 2016; M. Gilmartin, "Scientific Empire and Imperial Science: Colonialism and Irrigation Technology in the Indus Basin", in: *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 53.4 (1994), pp. 1127-1149; C. R. Unger, "Agrarwissenschaftliche Expertise und ländliche Modernisierungsstrategien in der internationalen Entwicklungspolitik, 1920er bis 1980er Jahre", in: *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 41.4 (2015), pp. 552-579.
- 16 S. Moon, *Technology and Ethical Idealism. A History of Development in the Netherlands East Indies*, Leiden 2007; J. M. Hodge, *Triumph of the Expert. Agrarian Doctrines of Development and the Legacies of British Colonialism*, Athens, OH 2007.
- 17 J. S. Hogendorn and K. M. Scott, "The East African Groundnut Scheme. Lessons of a Large-Scale Agricultural Failure", in: *African Economic History*, 10 (1981), pp. 81-115.

this issue. Other studies show that after independence, African governments continued to support the production of a few agricultural commodities to the detriment of small farmers.<sup>18</sup>

The history of International Organizations and International Non-Governmental Organizations and their relation to development is a growing field of investigation. Although a few studies appeared before the turn to the twenty-first century, historians by and large neglected these important actors of international relations for a long time. By contrast, social scientists had studied IOs and INGOs from the 1930s onwards, with a couple of groundbreaking works being published even earlier. More recently, though, these actors have received much more attention from historians.<sup>19</sup> Between 2005 and 2011 the United Nations Intellectual History Project published several volumes on UN development policies and their history.<sup>20</sup> The United Nations Development Program and the World Bank commissioned important institutional histories.<sup>21</sup> Independent research on these and other organizations has proliferated.<sup>22</sup> Recent studies emphasize an ‘urban bias’ and a priority on infrastructure and industrialization within most development organizations of the postwar period. Only recently have they begun to investigate the reasons for the decades-long neglect of rural spaces and of agriculture, with a brief interlude of heightened interest in the 1970s.<sup>23</sup> In the past couple of decades, agriculture has received much more attention from international organizations. But the contemporary

18 M. Rempe, *Entwicklung im Konflikt. Die EWG und der Senegal, 1957–1975*, Köln 2012.

19 I. Borowy, *Coming to Terms with World Health. The League of Nations Health Organisation 1921–1946*, Frankfurt a.M. 2009; M. Herren, *Internationale Organisationen seit 1865. Eine Globalgeschichte der internationalen Ordnung*, Darmstadt 2009; A. Iriye, *Global Community. The Role of International Organizations in the Making of the Contemporary World*, Berkeley 2002; S. Kott, “Les organisations internationales, terrains d’étude de la globalisation. Jalons pour une approche socio-historique”, in: *Critique internationale* 52 (2011), pp. 11–16; M. Mazower, *Governing the World. The History of an Idea*, New York 2012; S. Pedersen, *The Guardians. The League of Nations and the Crisis of Empire*, Oxford 2015; B. Reinalda, *Routledge History of International Organizations. From 1815 to the Present Day*, London 2009.

20 L. Emmerij, J. Louis and Th. G. Weiss (eds.), *Ahead of the Curve? UN Ideas and Global Challenges*, Bloomington 2001; R. Jolly, L. Emmerij, D. Ghai and F. Lapeyre, *UN Contributions to Development Thinking and Practice*, Bloomington 2004; J. Toye and R. Toye, *The UN and Global Political Economy. Trade, Finance, and Development*, Bloomington 2004; D. Jain, *Women, Development, and the UN. A Sixty Year Quest for Equality and Justice*, Bloomington 2005; O. Stokke, *The UN and Development. From Aid to Cooperation*, Bloomington 2009.

21 D. Kapur, J. P. Lewis and R. Webb, *The World Bank. Its First Half Century*, 2 vols., Washington 1997; E. S. Mason and R. E. Asher, *The World Bank Since Bretton Woods*, Washington 1973; C. N. Murphy, *The United Nations Development Programme. A Better Way?*, Cambridge 2006.

22 M. Alacevich, *The Political Economy of the World Bank. The Early Years*, Stanford 2009; M. Alacevich, “The World Bank and the politics of productivity: The debate on economic growth, poverty, and living standards in the 1950s”, in: *Journal of Global History* 6.1 (2011), pp. 53–74; M. Finnemore, “Redefining Development at the World Bank”, in: F. Cooper and R. Packard (eds.), *International Development and the Social Sciences. Essays on the History and Politics of Knowledge*, Berkeley 1997, pp. 203–227; Frey, Kunkel and Unger (eds.), *International Organizations and Development*; R. Jachertz and A. Nützenadel, “Coping with Hunger? Visions of a Global Good System, 1930–1960”, in: *World Policy Journal* 8.3 (1991), pp. 475–498; P. Sharma, *Robert McNamara’s Other War. The World Bank and International Development*, Philadelphia 2017; A. Staples, *The Birth of Development. How the World Bank, Food and Agriculture Organization, and World Health Organization Changed the World, 1945–1965*, Kent, OH 2007; Th. Zimmer, *Welt ohne Krankheit. Geschichte der internationalen Gesundheitspolitik 1940–1970*, Göttingen 2017; Amy Sayward, *The United Nations in International History*, London 2017.

23 Kapur, Lewis and Webb, *The World Bank*, vol. 1, pp. 337–479.

doctrinal premises echo the predicaments of modernization theory: agriculture needs to be monetarized, and incentives and disincentives to production are a matter of markets and investments.<sup>24</sup>

In the shadow of this dominant discourse on the market and on industrialization, some development economists did write about agriculture. Some authors, among them Nobel laureate Theodore Schultz, called for an appreciation of small farmers, the transfer of technology, and systematic research on agricultural improvements already in the early 1960s.<sup>25</sup> These voices paved the way for the Green Revolution of the late 1960s, when chemical fertilizers, new seeds and intensive irrigation began to increase yields substantially. Appreciation for the economic contributions of small farmers, but also political discrimination and structural violence were reasons for the discovery, and romanticization, of rural life and peasants during the 1970s. One outgrowth was the founding of the journal *Peasant Studies*. Marxist-inspired, the journal connected well to research agendas such as the *Subaltern Studies*. Both wanted to provide the suppressed and the unheard with a voice, and both wanted to restore their historic rights. Since then, it has become common sense to consider small farmers rational economic actors and to acknowledge that subsistence farming can be strikingly efficient under certain conditions. These assumptions have been taken up by a number of contemporary approaches to development. While not explicitly targeted at rural populations, Amartya Sen's notions on individual empowerment, an enlargement of opportunities and human rights, resonate well with concerns about rural and agricultural development.<sup>26</sup>

The five articles assembled in this theme issue cannot represent the multitude and complexity of experiences with rural and agricultural development policies in their entirety. They do shed light, though, on a number of recurring issues, among them the centrality of the 'land question', the existence of stark social divisions within the rural population, and the political relevance granted to agriculture and rural production on part of national and international politicians and experts. Furthermore, the article share an interest in three interrelated topics: the importance of planning, knowledge production and the circulation of knowledge; the connection between security and development; and the tension between economic production and the well-being of local populations. The articles invite us on a tour covering Mali, Southern Italy and Southern Spain, Sweden, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, and Angola, and they trace the multifarious entanglements with actors on the local, regional and global levels.

The article by Marc Frey explores the checkered history of a large irrigation scheme, the Office du Niger in Mali, from its foundation in the interwar period up until the pres-

24 OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook 2016–2025, [http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/agriculture-and-food/oecd-fao-agricultural-outlook-2016\\_agr\\_outlook-2016-en](http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/agriculture-and-food/oecd-fao-agricultural-outlook-2016_agr_outlook-2016-en) (accessed 02.06.2017).

25 B. F. Johnston and J. W. Mellor, "The Role of Agriculture in Economic Development", in: *The American Economic Review* 51.4 (1961), pp. 566–593; Th. Schultz, *Transforming Traditional Agriculture*, New Haven, CT 1964.

26 A. Sen, *Development as Freedom*, New York 2001; A. Sen, *The Idea of Justice*, Cambridge, MA 2009. For a periodization, see F. Ellis and S. Biggs, "Evolving Themes in Rural Development 1950s–2000s", in: *Development Policy Review* 19.4 (2001), pp. 437–448.

ent. Devised after World War One, and founded in 1932, it is one of the oldest agrarian development projects that exist until the present day. From the colonial paradigm of production to postcolonial visions of a socialist rural economy to the liberal predicaments of the post-1980 period, external doctrines have left a deep imprint on the Office du Niger and its settlers. The article argues that while the Office du Niger underwent fundamental institutional and social changes throughout its long history, continuities can be detected, among them structural violence, an emphasis on productivity, and a hierarchical process of decision-making that conditions (and often limits) the options individual farmers have. As such, the Office du Niger, home to about 130.000 settlers, is also a laboratory in which cycles of agrarian development doctrines can be observed.

The persistent emphasis on production, which is so characteristic for the history of the Office du Niger, was also ever-present in the agrarian reforms undertaken by the governments of Italy and Spain in Sicily and Andalusia after World War Two. In her contribution, Grazia Sciacchitano investigates rural policies and the role attributed to agriculture and its workers during the 1950s and 1960s. Her analysis of socio-economic conditions in the countryside reveals a shared rural development model implemented by a democratic and an authoritarian government. This model prioritized agricultural productivity and a shift of people employed in the agricultural sector to industry and services. While in the Office du Niger, in-migration was a necessary condition for the development scheme, the Italian and Spanish governments considered out-migration to be essential. These strategies gave rise to the emergence of a new social group of agricultural entrepreneurs and to an increase in the percentage of landless laborers. The reforms emphasized productivity to the detriment of social responsibility in the countryside.

Karl Bruno's article introduces us to the first Swedish attempt at transferring agronomical knowledge to the global South in the context of development aid. The Chilalo Agricultural Development Unit (CADU) in the Ethiopian province of Arussi intended to generate socio-economic development and was geared at increasing small-farm production of cereal crops. This was a novel project in more than one respect. It targeted not the export sector, at the time still considered the driver of agricultural expansion and productivity, but the small farmers who produced for local and regional markets. Moreover, the interventions suggested and implemented were closely based on local knowledge and expertise. Bruno's findings confirm other studies on the Green Revolution in that the introduction of new technologies, pesticides, and fertilizers privileged richer farmers and increased social inequalities, a development little understood by the Swedish advisers at the time.<sup>27</sup> One unintended consequence was that CADU developed into a politically

27 G. Djurfeldt (ed.), *The African Food Crisis. Lessons from the Asian Green Revolution*, Wallingford 2005; F. Frankel, *India's Green Revolution. Economic Gains and Political Costs*, Princeton 1971; Scott, *Seeing Like a State*; V. Shiva, *The Violence of the Green Revolution. Third World Agriculture, Ecology and Politics*, London 1991. For positive assessments, see R. E. Evenson and D. Gollin, "Assessing the impact of the Green Revolution, 1960 to 2000", in: *Science* 300 (2003), pp. 758-762; M. S. Randhawa, "Green Revolution in Punjab", in: *Agricultural History* 51 (1977), pp. 656-661.

highly charged project in an increasingly tense environment of late-imperial Ethiopia and became an active party in the rural conflicts that preceded the revolution of 1974. This connection between development, political stability and security is also the topic of Timothy Nunan's contribution to this theme issue. Covering a long period of time from the 1920s to the 1980s, his article explores the history of rural development in Afghanistan through the lens of land reform. During the twentieth century, the overwhelming majority of the country's population found employed in agriculture. As in Ethiopia, Sicily or Andalusia, landholding patterns were highly unequal. More than elsewhere, however, the Cold War transformed Afghanistan into a battleground for Western and Socialist visions of rural development projects such as irrigation or state farms. Timothy Nunan introduces us to the little-known visions of Afghan socialist intellectuals who demanded comprehensive land reforms as the solution to the inequalities of rural life. Equally insightful is his analysis of the conflict between Afghan socialists who seized power through a coup d'état in 1978 and the Soviet advising teams. While the socialists sought to impose radical visions of land redistribution, the Soviets urged moderation and favored private land ownership. This conversation brings back socialist ideas and their varieties into the global history of development. It also epitomizes one of the sharpest and most enduring conflicts in the history of rural areas in the twentieth century, the problem of land ownership.

Land ownership, social justice and economic inequality also informed the wars of national liberation in Lusophone Africa of the 1960s and 1970s. Miguel Bandeira Jerónimo draws our attention to the conflict in Angola, where Portuguese imperial and colonial authorities devised strategic political-military responses that tried to merge security, welfare and development. This combination was a key element of late colonialism in all empires challenged by rising nationalism and demands for sovereignty. Rural development received prime attention in the context of development and security. The article shows how the intended cultural and socio-economic transformation of rural spaces was profoundly shaped by securitarian rationales and military expedience. To some degree, the ideas and practices of development came into being as an attempt to translate political problems into technical solutions.

Together these essays show how intertwined politics, power, and development are, and how central rural spaces and agricultural practices were to the developmental visions of local actors, national governments, and international organizations. More generally, we hope that the articles in this issue provoke new interest in and fruitful debates on the international history of rural development.<sup>28</sup>

28 The contributors of this theme issue discussed their papers at a workshop held at the European University Institute, Florence, in November 2016. The workshop was organized as part of a research project on the International History of Rural Development since 1950, funded by the Volkswagen Foundation and based at Jacobs University Bremen. For further information, see <http://ruraldevelopment.user.jacobs-university.de/index.php> (accessed 05.06.2017).