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Development Mobilities: Identity and Authority in an Angolan Development Programme

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Abstract

This ethnographic essay considers how international non-governmental organisations are able to make claims to authoritative knowledge about development work by offering the transnational mobilities of their staff members as evidence. I examine how one professional's biography—his trajectory from Angola to Britain and back again—was differentially presented to external donors and internal staff members as befitting the institutional needs of an international good governance intervention in Angola. These presentations reflect a commoditisation of the cosmopolitanism of professionals' histories in the service of development as a regime of mobility. I argue that, in this development regime, a global hierarchy prevents some individual professionals, particularly those from developing nations, from realising the same benefits of their cosmopolitan mobility as professionals from industrialised nations. While one of mobility studies' many strengths is that it highlights global interconnectedness, social scientists should not read equality in these interconnections but examine how patterns of transnational mobility may produce and reproduce global structures of inequality.

Keywords

Transnational Professionals; International Development; Mobility; Africa; Ethnography

Introduction

Maximino¹ and I first met, briefly and rather disastrously, at the Angolan National Assembly. We were new to the development scene in the Angolan capital of Luanda, and were being introduced to new colleagues during a break in the Assembly's workshop on municipal development. Maximino had just been hired by an international non-governmental organisation (INGO) as the Luanda-based coordinator for their portion of the Good Governance in Angola Programme (GGAP), and was so recently hired that he had not yet visited their provincial field sites.² I was introduced as an American doctoral student

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¹All names are pseudonyms.

²The Good Governance in Angola Programme (a pseudonym) was implemented in five provinces of Angola, beginning in 2007, and was administered by a consortium of three INGOs, each headquartered in a different industrialised country. The programme's purpose was to increase the transparency of local municipal government practices and to empower local community groups to directly engage with their municipal governments.

studying the GGAP for her thesis. Upon meeting, I asked Maximino if his family was of Italian extraction—his real name still sounds Italian to me—and he responded, rather affronted, ‘No, I’m perfectly Angolan’, walking away before I could respond. In the end, Maximino became one of my closest informants and a good friend, and we travelled widely together as he worked to shape and reshape the GGAP; I was even able to travel along on his first visits to his organisation’s field sites in the far northern provinces. We got off to a bad start, though, because my question imposed an internationality that he clearly rejected as he was being introduced to new colleagues at a meeting of the National Assembly.

This ethnographic essay, using Maximino’s experiences and those of other international development professionals, contributes to the theoretical explication of mobility regimes in this special issue of *JEMS*. I propose that international development is one such regime: an amalgamation of states, institutions, bureaucracies and imaginaries that differentially demands, rewards and sometimes punishes individual mobility and stasis. I argue that the development regime reproduces itself, in part, by presuming certain patterns of mobility of some of its members while presuming of others certain patterns of stasis. To emphasise how members of the development industry are constrained by these patterns, I employ the term *development cosmopolitans* to describe professionals working in development organisations, suggesting that the ways in which the development industry demands and rewards both mobility and stasis for different members of the industry—though they are all cosmopolitan—reinforces an unequal global distribution of power and opportunity that development institutions ostensibly seek to redress.

Maximino is a key figure in this ethnography of the global circulation of international development professionals, a group relatively understudied in the transnational mobilities literature (though for critical development studies, see Bornstein 2003; Coles 2007; Hilhorst 2003; Kothari 2006; Tamas 2007; Yarrow 2008). My focus on Maximino illustrates the institutional and industry-wide differential treatment of those who come from developing countries versus those who come from developed countries. His experiences are not unique, but exemplary. Born and raised in Angola, and in his mid-30s in 2008 when I met him, Maximino had recently returned from completing a Master’s degree in development studies in Britain through sponsorship by his previous employer, another development organisation. While I was in Angola studying the GGAP, I knew Maximino to travel to Brazil, Morocco and South Africa, as well as extensively throughout Angola, for work.³

I accompanied Maximino on several domestic trips in 2008 as he settled in to his new position, and I highlight how his expertise in international development, his Angolan-ness, and his international qualifications—particularly his British graduate degree—were presented and discussed as he moved through the social milieu of international development organisations in postwar Angola. Maximino’s biographical characteristics and professional experiences were co-opted as the GGAP furthered its reputation for ‘global best practices’ and ‘deep local knowledge’, simultaneously and perhaps paradoxically. Throughout my

³Angola is roughly twice the size of France and, by 2008, had made little progress in repairing the damage of the civil war that ended in 2002. Travel outside Luanda was often difficult and time-consuming—one trip of Maximino’s to an implementation site in the northern provinces had to be made overland when the regional airport closed for repairs, necessitating five full days of driving.

research, the GGAP alternately trumpeted or hid staff members' experiences, knowledge and backgrounds as befitted its reputational needs, and alternately rewarded the 'right' kinds of mobility or furthered a subterfuge of the 'right' kinds of stasis. I expect other development programmes and organisations engage in similar methods of reputation management through the selective presentation of staff members' global mobilities and local emplacements. I see these actions and their effects as constitutive of what Glick Schiller and Salazar (this issue) would term 'imaginaries and relationalities of power'. This reputational work supports the larger image that the development industry has of itself and its processes, wherein technologies of social and economic improvement originate in the developed world and flow through mobile and modern development experts to the developing world to be 'indigenised' by timeless, immobile locals. The self-image of the development industry relies on ideas of mobility and stasis, performed and enacted by its professionals. The cosmopolitan characteristics of international development workers—gained through travel to other developing countries, training in developed countries, and contact with other similarly mobile development professionals—are commoditised and instrumentalised: the development industry is a regime of mobility as Glick Schiller and Salazar describe in their introductory paper.

As with other mobility regimes examined in this collection, the development regime conflates identity and authority: being from a developed or a developing country, having studied in Europe, and so on are differential markers of authenticity and authoritative knowledge in international development (see also Kothari 2005). Each individual professional translates his or her experiences, education and background into 'hireable' criteria to seek employment and promotion. At a broader level, programmes and organisations commoditise their staff members to cultivate institutional reputations and compete for standing (and funding) among peer organisations. This commoditisation of cosmopolitan characteristics, however, does not level the playing field for development professionals as regards more pervasive patterns of global privilege and disenfranchisement: I observed deep cleavages between the status and opportunities available to development workers who came originally from industrialised countries and those who came from developing countries. No element of a professional life—educational achievements, programmatic responsibilities, years of experience—seemed equitable across the line of global hierarchy dividing developing- and developed-country nationals.

After discussing the performative and commoditised cosmopolitan-ness of international development workers, I consider the global movement of development cosmopolitans that both produces and limits the possibilities of these workers, constraining the promise of development itself. My examination of international development professionals working on one programme in Angola reveals how their movements both shape and are shaped by the global, social and political structures of development work—and of underdevelopment. This case study of 'mobility' moves beyond nation-states as units of analysis (though nationality is here an important 'characteristic') to global social forces, practices and perceptions that structure global political economy.

Structural Inequalities in International Development Work

Institutionalised differences between national and international staff in the GGAP consortium were among the first, most evident tensions I noted in my ethnography of the development programme. One day early in the fieldwork, as I was spending time in the GGAP headquarters (located in the main Luanda offices of the lead consortium INGO), struggling to get up to speed with the details of the complex intervention, insiders suggested that I seize an opportunity to interview the recently resigned municipal development advisor, Helena, who was considered an architect of the programme. She had participated in the predecessor programme, worked hard on the proposal that won nearly \$US17 million from a donor government agency, and was instrumental in getting the field sites up and running in the GGAP's first year. Just a few months before my arrival, though, Helena had left the GGAP quite suddenly to take up a position of similar responsibility elsewhere in the same consortium organisation, but outside the auspices of the GGAP itself. She was now working in the southern provinces of Angola and was visiting Luanda briefly for personal reasons. After colleagues arranged a meeting, Helena gave me a detailed background on the GGAP's origins, orientation and activities. When I commented positively about the interview to my encouragers they seemed disappointed, though, suggesting that I had missed something important.

Weeks later I found out what they had been hinting at: Helena had delivered an ultimatum about her position, and lost. She had discovered that Julie, the GGAP's inexperienced monitoring and evaluation officer and a young European woman, was paid a larger salary than she—an Angolan woman with decades of professional experience and a founding role in the GGAP—was paid. By all accounts, Helena threatened to leave her position if she was not immediately given a raise, to be paid at least as much as Julie made. The organisation refused her request, and this was why an 'architect' of the GGAP had left the programme so suddenly, in only its second year. Helena lost because she was national staff and Julie was international: Helena had evidently reached the ceiling of what a national staff member could be paid within the structures of the INGO. In this instance, her salary was considerably less than Julie's starting salary in the same organisation. I never heard the details from Helena herself, and Julie professed ignorance about the entire incident. Coming across comparable figures and similar stories over the course of my fieldwork, though, I believe the salary differential to have been roughly triple. Given her long experience in development work, one would assume Helena to have been familiar with the discrepant pay scales between national and international staff, but this case seems to have particularly galled her. This may have been because Julie was particularly inexperienced at the time or because their working relationship was so close in the small GGAP headquarters office.

As I came to see the nuances of the dichotomy between national and international staff members, multiple cases of exception arose, such as contentious cases in which a national staff member replaced an international, or *vice versa*. The GGAP staff discussed 'hybrid' cases amongst themselves, though I contend below that the language of 'hybridity' does not adequately advance the analysis of international development professionals or the study of global mobilities. Maximino's case, for instance, complicated the INGOs' neat contradiction of local and international. After returning to Angola upon completion of his graduate degree,

Maximino interviewed with several organisations and received a number of job offers. The GGAP's programme director himself made one such offer, seeking to replace Helena as the municipal development advisor for all five field sites and, several months later, still lamented the fact that they had not been able to hire him for that post. In negotiating the offer, Maximino had asked for a salary that the lead INGO of the consortium reportedly considered ridiculous for an Angolan—a local—staff person, especially one new to the organisation, regardless of his excellent education abroad and his previous work in local development. He was asking, without knowledge of the incident I describe above, for an amount roughly comparable to Julie's salary: the very amount that had precipitated Helena's resignation, and the cause of the open position search to which Maximino had responded.

In a remarkable coincidence, Julie and Maximino had graduated together from the same graduate studies programme, though with different concentrations for their Master's degrees. They remembered one another from graduate school, though they had socialised with different crowds. The lead INGO for the GGAP could not pay Maximino and Julie the same salary, despite their nearly identical graduate degrees. Julie, as an 'international' staff person, was salaried in reference to what it was thought she could make 'at home' and, therefore, what it would take to keep her in Angola, a 'hardship post'. Maximino was offered a salary in reference to 'local standards' that, ideally, would neither shock nor inflate local economies, or compete with national institutions for national staff.⁴ Within the development regime, Angola is not considered a hardship post for Angolans.

Maximino declined the offer of Helena's old position, but ended up working on the GGAP through one of the other INGOs in the consortium, which was able to offer him a much higher salary, though not quite as high as he would have liked. He was made supervisor of this INGO's field sites, replacing an international staff member. The municipal development advisor position (Helena's departed post) in the central office of the GGAP remained vacant during the entirety of my year-long study of the GGAP. Maximino was considered a demanding, high-maintenance—though very capable—colleague by many in the GGAP and, more broadly, in his hiring INGO, in part because of his initial salary negotiations.

The manner in which the negotiations played out, and the remarkable coincidence that Julie and Maximino had attended the same graduate programme and ended up working in the same development intervention in Luanda yet were not awarded equivalent positions, salaries or rights, provide evidence for my argument that, while cosmopolitan characteristics are commoditised in development work, the national origin of the professional in question remains a determining factor guiding the advancement and circulation of professionals throughout their careers. Julie was hired by the GGAP straight out of her Master's degree with no previous experience in development work and, in her first professional position, was awarded a salary nearly triple that of Helena's, who had years of experience. Julie's salary was also much higher than Maximino's, despite his equivalent degree and several years of

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⁴The Angolan case seems unique in this respect, perhaps because of the presence of several foreign oil corporations. The GGAP and many of the programmes and organisations I had contact with over the research period had a high personnel turnover, as staff continually left for better-paying positions in the oil companies, or for jobs with the state that were considered more stable than those in the international civil sector. Elsewhere, INGOs are often accused of 'poaching' qualified local people away from state and community groups. In Angola, the opposite would seem to be the case.

highly relevant local experience. Helena and Maximino were considered as local hires, despite Maximino's being recently returned from studying in the UK. Julie, on the other hand, was an international hire and, more importantly, a developed-country national.

Much of the resentment and many of the practical differences and effects of the national–international staff categorisation in these three INGOs were material, as the above case illustrates. For instance, national staff members resented the access which international staff members had to work vehicles, particularly after office hours and at weekends. They resented the generous housing allowances which international staff members enjoyed, and the subsidised utilities, maintenance, furniture and other logistical support international staff received in matters of daily living.⁵ Conversely, international staff members at times resented the opportunities that local staff members could pursue, including additional training and advanced degrees sponsored by the organisation; this was especially frustrating for those expatriates who were themselves citizens of other developing countries. Most (though not all) of these differences ran across the local/foreign divide and, for the organisations I studied, the majority of these policies were mandated by INGO international HQ offices, not in-country administrative staff.

Classifying international staff as a group of foreigners in an international organisation seemed fine to most of the Angolan professionals in my study, but they insisted that classifying Angolan staff as 'local' and then applying rules and limits that also applied to the local staff in Zambia, Bangladesh, Peru and elsewhere seemed entirely ridiculous to them. 'The Angolan context', they would tell me, 'is unique' (*é único*). But being 'local' in these international organisations was just 'local' as a generic category—not local-in-Angola, which could be different to being local-in-Zambia, for example. Glossing all developing countries as homogenously and equally 'developing' is one pillar of the development mobility regime: presuming locals to be immobile and, thus, in the example above, comparable only to other immobile locals in estimating the value of their contributions. That the staff make-up of the GGAP, the three supporting INGOs and the donor agency included many international staff members from other developing countries in addition to numerous Angolans who had trained or lived abroad did little to dissuade the organisations of this misleading binary. During my fieldwork, several Angolans confided that they longed for an opening in their specialty to come up in Portuguese-speaking Mozambique or Guinea-Bissau, perhaps Brazil, where they might be competitive candidates because of their language abilities, and would be classified as international staff and treated accordingly.

Highlighting one's linguistic abilities, educational qualifications or practical experiences to win positions or promotions is a strategy of individual professionals, and organisations use similar tactics to portray their staff members, therefore themselves as institutions, in the best possible light in keeping with the imaginary of the development industry. Such strategies and tactics, though, also make use of concealment.

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⁵My estimation of Julie's salary in the recounting above does not take into account these added benefits, particularly the subsidised housing and transportation upon which I knew Julie to depend.

Maximino, 'Local' Development Professional

Following our disastrous first meeting at the National Assembly, my subsequent encounters with Maximino were much more productive and collegial. I learned that he had grown up partly in the central highlands of Angola and partly in the south, where his family had fled during the civil war. In the south, Maximino was educated at mission schools and first found employment with a local development NGO, working among the semi-nomadic tribes in the deeply rural south-east of the country. He speaks very competent English, elegant continental Portuguese and at least three indigenous languages. With the help of his first employer he was able to travel to England for a Master's degree. He now likes to discuss Robert Chambers on rural development (e.g. 1983) and, in the future, may pursue a doctoral degree in political science or government.

At our second encounter, we were preparing for a meeting between the foreign government donor that was funding the GGAP and a diamond company that was helping to fund the GGAP's operations in one of its provincial sites via contributions to the foreign government donor. The topic of the meeting was a three-year-old memorandum of understanding between the foreign government donor and the diamond company, in which each agreed to work together towards development in the province where the diamond firm had the bulk of its industrial interests. Evidently the diamond company had expressed concern about the donor's progress under the memorandum, and the donor, now under a new local director, had rapidly organised a meeting to address these concerns, additionally requesting that GGAP staff attend to present their work in the province.

Preparing for the meeting, I kept close to Maximino, to Osman—the GGAP's programme director—and Emile, a programmes officer for one of the consortium's INGOs and Maximino's new immediate supervisor. Osman had asked me to update his PowerPoint slides for the presentation and we spent a fair bit of time arranging where everyone would meet and figuring out who would need special permission to enter the foreign government embassy where the donor offices were located. It was agreed among the three that Maximino would deliver the main part of the presentation for the next day, and that it should be delivered in Portuguese, not English.

It was remarkable that Maximino, who was still new to his hiring INGO as well as to the GGAP and had not yet been to either of the provinces where he would be responsible for the programme, was being asked to present the programme's progress to date. It was unorthodox, to say the least, to have such a new staff member report on progress he had not witnessed, from a programme he had only just begun to read about and understand. Osman and Emile reasoned, though, that the presentation would be 'better received' by the donors if it were seen as 'locally owned' and 'Angolan'. They thought a presentation by an Angolan, in any language, would achieve that end far better than if either of them—Osman, from South Asia or Emile from Central Europe—were to lead the presentation. Osman was also insistent that the presentation be delivered in Portuguese, although they all knew most of the donor staff spoke English as a first language and that all attendees, even from the diamond company, would speak English fluently.

In the meeting the next day, Osman introduced Maximino as the new GGAP coordinator for one of the consortium partners, and stated that the programme was very pleased to have him. He then asked Maximino to say a few words about himself before beginning the presentation. Maximino, in his turn, thanked everyone for their attention and expressed his own pleasure at being a new participant in the GGAP, but suggested that the focus of the meeting should properly be on the programme, deflecting the request to speak about himself. He therewith began the formal presentation, never telling the donors about his prior experience in Angolan development or about his recently completed graduate degree. I would not imply that Maximino *intentionally* secreted his foreign educational credentials or perpetrated any type of fraud on his audience. Maximino is very modest in these sorts of situations, and truly thought attention should be on the programme presentation, rather than the presenter. Indeed, I think attendees at this meeting might have been impressed with his background. But the effect of his deflection was to conceal his international credentials and evidence of his international mobility. There was no way for the donors to know that Maximino spoke English or had a British graduate degree. In the development mobility regime, to be 'local' presumes stasis and may in fact require the absence of geographical mobility, though Maximino is in reality no less Angolan, no less knowledgeable and no less 'local' for his education and experience.

My next experience with Maximino was on a trip to a far northern province a few weeks later—both his first to the region and mine—where we spent just over a week in the remote diamond-mining area. His duty was to introduce himself as the new coordinator to the field staff and review with them the goals and methods of the programme. Emile came along to smooth the transition. Maximino spent the week lecturing, making work plans and setting up goals and accountability points for the four-person implementation team. His authority to do so came not just from his new position, however. In making introductory remarks on the first day of the visit, Emile explained that Maximino had just finished a Master's degree in England and that he had 'a knowledge and grasp of development and good governance processes that rivals those of the donors and architects of the programme'. What was arguably even better, Emile continued, was that Maximino knew the Angolan situation so well, being himself Angolan and having worked in development in the southern provinces for so long. On this authority Maximino then led the field staff: a combination of 'outside' education and knowledge and a type of 'inside' familiarity and legitimacy.

Maximino's identity remained flexible and dual, highly dependent on the context in which he was working. With collegial and institutional collusion, Maximino presented himself as local and incidentally not mobile, therefore credible, in the donor offices. Though he was not local to the province the GGAP was concerned with that day, and at that meeting had never visited there, he was sufficiently local for the donor's purposes because he was Angolan and spoke Portuguese. In the provincial field offices he was credible and authoritative because he was international—mobile, of course, and educated in Britain. Part of the strategy in introducing Maximino as 'international' to this field office may have been because he was replacing an international staff member. The man who previously held Maximino's position was Indonesian-American, with several years' work experience in Brazil. Making the case to the field teams that Maximino had the qualifications of an international staff member yet

was also a 'local' Angolan was, in part, in reaction to problems and concerns remaining from the previous field coordinator.

The specific types of local and international experience which Maximino held and that his colleagues emphasised are also significant. Being something other than Angolan in that northern field office, for instance, from abroad but with the same education and experiences, I believe he would not have held the same authority, even though he knew little about the local language or culture, having never visited the region before. I believe he was also accorded greater respect because his degree was from Britain, not Brazil, Portugal or South Africa. This is not because Britain is a gloss for the generically global or the generically foreign but because, in Angola, Britain is considered to be among the 'most developed' nations. Finally, I believe Emile was anxious to replace his own French-Swiss internationality with Maximino's localness and British education because the northern provinces of Angola abut the Congo, where the international very often comes in a Francophone version and can be considered divisive on the Angolan side of the border (see Mandel 2008 for varieties of the foreign).

Maximino's case was one of many in which being local or being international changed depending on context and was something that could be manipulated depending on what one wanted to achieve. Even me, an American woman who might expect to be obviously international in Angola, came to be considered more or less local by dint of language ability, knowledge of Angola and the fact that my husband and son were also living in Angola. Being local, or 'like us' (*como nós*), is sometimes not an acknowledgement of belonging in terms of origin, but of belonging in terms of culture or, perhaps especially in a postwar political context, of commitment. But I wish to emphasise that belonging and not belonging each has its practical utilities. When an Angolan colleague in the central highlands was in a serious car accident, for instance, and others had a difficult time getting into her overcrowded municipal hospital ward to see her, I was brought along on their next visit. Staff and patients alike assumed I was a foreign physician, and we walked directly into the ward without being stopped. Being international as opposed to local can be a strategic decision, something one manipulates, or something one's colleagues or institution can manipulate for their own ends.

International Development as a Regime of Mobility

The ethnographic literature on cosmopolitanism is helpful in understanding the empirical situation of development professionals, because it pushes past essentialist discussions of local professionals as 'hybrid' or instrumentalist discussions of them as 'brokers' or 'translators' (Bierschenk *et al.* 2002; Mosse and Lewis 2006). James Clifford's (1992) influential essay, 'Traveling Cultures', is a seminal one for scholars seeking to examine the transnational patterns and experiences of the modern world; it interrogates who is, and who is not, a 'hybrid' of multiple cultures. Clifford discusses the 'uncanny' feeling that happens when one comes across something culturally familiar but unexpected:

Perhaps I could start with a travel conjuncture that has, to my thinking at least, come to occupy a paradigmatic place. Call it the 'Squanto effect.' Squanto was, of

course, the Indian who greeted the Pilgrims in 1620 in Plymouth, Massachusetts, who helped them through a hard winter and who spoke good English. To imagine the full effect, you have to remember what the 'New World' was like in 1620; you could smell the pines fifty miles out to sea. Think of coming into a new place like that and having the uncanny experience of running into a Patuxet just back from Europe (Clifford 1992: 97).

Clifford invokes the 'uncanny' example of a Patuxet recently returned from Europe: 'a disconcertingly hybrid "native" met at the ends of the earth: strangely familiar, and different precisely in that unprocessed familiarity' (Clifford 1992: 97). Clifford's thought experiment, wherein readers imagine themselves as pilgrims arriving in the New World and encountering Squanto, where they expect to find a stereotypical native, does evoke the uncanny; the interaction is 'strangely familiar' and 'disconcerting' in its hybridity of place, language and shared knowledge. In Clifford's telling, though, it is Squanto's individual hybridity that is disconcerting, not the overall encounter and not the social situation as a whole. As pilgrims landing at Plymouth, readers expect everything to be different, especially the people, but uncomfortably find some things not so different after all. Clifford aptly identifies 'unprocessed familiarity' as the source of discomfort, but neglects to consider exactly what is familiar and to whom.

It is not only that Squanto can explain New World concerns in English—how to get through a hard winter, etc.—that unsettles, but that he has travelled and can speak about European concerns as well. Like the contemporary development industry, these colonists presumed the 'local' and the locals to be static. This is not the underestimation of only the arriving foreigners, but an element of a global imaginary of the local and the foreign where all might erroneously consider the local to imply stasis and the foreign to imply mobility (see Glick Schiller and Salazar, this issue). Though Clifford does not push his readers to consider it from their perspective, the encounter between the arriving pilgrims and Squanto was, perhaps, just as unsettling for the local Wampanoag and Massachusetts onlookers. Would it not be equally uncanny to witness a fellow native speaking incomprehensibly and getting on rather well with the strange new arrivals? What is unsettling here, considered from both sides of the encounter, is that Squanto's knowledge is 'out of place', to invoke Douglas' (1966) classic analysis of symbolic order and disorder. Here Clifford describes a situation in which a well-travelled⁶ Patuxet is unsettling not because of the languages he speaks but because he knows things he is not supposed to know. He violates the order of the encounter by holding European knowledge in his Native American self. The local person is presumed to have always stayed in that local place, not to have gone and arrived back again.

Angolan and other professionals from developing countries present a similarly unsettling case for those engaged in development work, as well as for the anthropological literature. Perhaps the meeting attendees at the donor's offices would have been 'unsettled' had

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⁶The term 'well-travelled' may give an inappropriate sense to Squanto's story. Squanto was trafficked against his will, being captured by English traders in 1605, returned, captured again in 1614 to be sold to Spaniards, rescued by Spanish friars, released to London and finally returned to New England in 1619, to find that his family and, indeed, his entire tribe, had fallen victim to smallpox during his second absence. I would not compare modern development workers to Squanto as though they were victims of human trafficking, though the limited opportunities many local staff members have for employment could be seen as an element of compulsion in the cultivation of development cosmopolitanism, as Ferguson (1999) notes about Zambian mine-workers and urban migrants.

Maximino presented in English, with all the terminology and theory learnt in his graduate degree. To restate, within the institutional structures of international development, all Angolans working in Angola are considered local while those holding foreign passports are considered international staff. In daily life, however, the Angolan case sometimes admits finer distinctions than these: there are staff members from other African countries who are functionally ‘more local’ and staff from other Portuguese-speaking countries who are, in quotidian ways, ‘less foreign’ than other foreigners. The closest thing to an Angolan is a professional from another Portuguese-speaking African country, but the bureaucracy of INGOs looms above these practicalities of language and experience. The official classifications are rigid: Angolan passport-holders are local—to be treated as are other locals in other locales—and everyone else is international, to be treated as one international class. Development as a regime of mobility presumes the locals to have always been there and the internationals to have arrived from elsewhere, probably from their ‘home’ nation-state.

Observing development work on the ground reveals that not all Angolan professionals are local in the same way when working in Angola. Nor are all the foreign-born professionals working in Angola expats in the same way. Emile, Maximino’s French-Swiss programmes director, for instance, has lived in Angola for more than 20 years, marrying an Angolan and raising his children there. Osman, the South Asian director of the GGAP, has extensive work experience elsewhere in Africa. In working to understand the modern Angolan experience—or the transnational society of development professionals and the larger development regime of mobility—these bureaucratic categories obscure more than they reveal and should not be adopted into the ethnographic literature uncritically. In addition to troubling categories of the foreign, the Angolan case reveals that the local is also complicated. The Angolan born and raised in the central highlands but then posted by his organisation to a northern province feels very much the outsider, despite his shared classification of ‘national staff’ with his provincial colleagues. Each of these cases might well demand an analytical, hybrid category, describing those who, like Squanto, possess knowledge out of place and gained through mobility.

Discussing individual or group knowledge, skills and experiences as though these things turn people into hybrid types, though, implies a permanence or essentialism, an ill-conceived naturalisation of difference which implies that certain knowledge belongs naturally to some while in others it is disconcerting. Consider Clifford’s example again. Pilgrims speaking some Patuxet might be considered bilingual, not hybrid. If anthropology is to adequately describe the dislocations and relative characteristics of development workers, local or otherwise, calling some hybrid, transnational, bilingual or another term, simply will not do. In place of ‘hybrid’ for development studies, I turn to the literature on cosmopolitanism that identifies difference and considers how it is negotiated in the social world. I propose a concept of the *development cosmopolitan*, in which development professionals who work in the transnational social space of international NGOs, whether local or expatriate, developed- or developing-country national, are recognised as being a type of cosmopolitan.

The idea of the cosmopolitan is an appropriate substitute for concepts of the ‘broker’ or ‘translator’ that some scholars use to describe development professionals, as in Lewis and Mosse’s collection (2006). Brokers, for these scholars, are the structurally in-between

positions of consultants and gatekeepers: those ‘social actors who specialise in the acquisition, control, and redistribution of development “revenue”’ (Mosse and Lewis 2006: 12). Authors in the collection attempt to further ‘a new ethnography of the social spaces that exist between aid funders and recipients’ (Mosse and Lewis 2006: 12, citing Bierschenk *et al.* 2002). In focusing on this section of the development world, these analyses differ significantly from my view of the development apparatus through an implementation programme, the GGAP. In focusing on brokerage positions between whole communities and whole agencies, the Lewis and Mosse collection over-emphasises structural constraints, negotiations and manipulations, neglecting to consider the individual, lived experience of the folks inhabiting those positions (cf. Hindman and Fechter 2011). Furthermore, I believe that the productive friction (Tsing 2005) of international development for local communities lies more with implementation professionals than with the negotiators who are situated between aid agencies and NGO administrative staff.

Cosmopolitanism for development professionals is the most akin to Hannerz’ (1996) definition; an enjoyment and capacity for foreign-ness and a competence and skill in working within foreign structures and systems. That this competence is perhaps selected for, cultivated within and rewarded by the structures of international development work, among other factors, is what leads me to identify the cosmopolitan-ness of my study informants as development cosmopolitanism. On this point, Ferguson (1999) is helpful, as he considers the ‘political economic compulsions’ that have made rural–urban migration so necessary in his Zambian case studies. For local development professionals, like Ferguson’s mine workers, there are often few options for employment and career development. Where Ferguson’s mine-workers, though, find themselves becoming ‘urbanised’ and therefore reluctant to return to the rural homes they remember and imagine, local development workers may never leave home but work with people who, and in ways which, demand that they cultivate a certain cosmopolitan-ness, a certain facility for working with the foreign, to be successful.

The investigation of cosmopolitanism has become, in many ways, an investigation of difference and of how individuals and groups address their differences (Appiah 2006). In this formulation, cultural and social differences are often, but not necessarily, something achieved or produced by travel. Alternatively, the travel may be indicative of difference or a product of it rather than the thing that causes it. Additionally, the skills and knowledge of the cosmopolite may accrue more to those visited than to those visiting (Hawkins 2010; Notar 2008; Salazar 2010). Finally, the foreign may be—may originate or stay—literally next door (Brink-Danan 2011; Grant 2010). Recent work has uncovered a Eurocentric view in the literature, and part of the stream of adjectivised cosmopolitanisms (Holton 2009: Appendix 1) has been to make the point that we must distinguish among many cosmopolitans, not continue a fiction of one universal cosmopolitanism (Harvey 2009).

Conclusion

I have suggested in this paper that international development professionals should be considered as a type of ‘cosmopolitan’ professional, to change the language with which professionals working in the developmentalist configuration (Olivier de Sardan 2005) are compared and contrasted to one another and to recognise the uses to which certain elements

of 'locality' and 'internationality' are put in the development mobility regime. My proposal argues against previous portrayals of local development workers as negative byproducts of development work—especially those who develop the skills and interests of more obviously 'international' staff. Mandel, for instance, considers local professionals to be part of 'the human fallout of international development aid' (2002: 279) and offers examples in which individuals have left Kazakhstan because their experiences in international aid work have 'rendered them unsuitable to work for their own governments' (2002: 279). In her critical study of programmes intended to increase civil society formation in Kazakhstan, Mandel provides brief 'snapshots' of six local USAID employees. She criticises the upward and outward mobility of these professionals as they strategically make use of the skills and contacts they gained working at USAID:

[T]hese people do indeed possess social capital, but its deployment takes the form of writing grant proposals to study abroad, and knowing how to speak convincingly in interviews with the vetting consular officials; this promotes only their own eventual deracinated cosmopolitanism. Western development aid personnel facilitate the dissolution of this precarious, indigenous professional class, by encouraging them on the road to self-improvement, and in many cases, exit from the region (Mandel 2002: 292).

While arguments to recognise vernacular and rooted cosmopolitans refute her criticism of a 'deracinated' cosmopolitanism, I also take issue with Mandel's myopic view in evaluating the effects of Kazakhstani professional mobility. I cannot agree that the 'international' here corrupts the 'local.' Would it be any worse that a Kazakhstani advances through the ranks of development work, leaving to run a programme in Latin America, say, than for a Canadian to do the same? This assertion reinforces global inequalities of opportunity and power and mistakes the development industry's emic concepts of national and international for analytic categories, an elision this themed issue of *JEMS* cautions against (see Glick Schiller and Salazar, this issue). I understand Mandel's (2002) point that perhaps Kazakhstan is in some way worse off for 'losing' these professionals, and Mandel concludes that foreign aid is working against itself in the region. I contend, however, that these professionals are not 'lost', but are circulating through the transnational development apparatus. Having more Kazakhstanis working in the wider professional world may, in fact, have great benefit for Kazakhstan in the modern, globalised era. Expecting all Kazakhstanis to stay put would seem detrimental to long-term change and development in the region. Mandel may have a point when she posits that foreign aid is working against itself in a broader sense, though, as these Kazakhstanis may be able to circulate only through certain, lower-status portions of the development machine. They may travel and become expatriates in, for example, Angola, but it is much less likely that they will travel to London, Brussels or New York, given their origins in Kazakhstan.

The literature on cosmopolitanism thus provides insight into the aesthetics and cultural characteristics of local development professionals as *development cosmopolitans*. Once local development professionals are recognised as cosmopolitans, as a class of persons with knowledge, experience and appreciation of the foreign, the analyst must define what sorts of knowledge and experience produce this particular cosmopolitanism. The genre of

cosmopolitanism that this class inhabits is produced and bound by their participation in the international development regime, and is therefore a unique version. They are often but not necessarily an elite class, at least in comparison to the intended beneficiaries of the development work. Regarding a global elite, however, development professionals in Angola certainly do not consider themselves to be such, as they reserve that term for high-ranking state officials and those working for private international corporations. In this sense, international development professionals may be best analysed as being 'of the middle' of the transnational mobility scene (Clarke 2005).

This analysis of international development professionals and their commoditised cosmopolitan-ness acknowledges the limited opportunities open to those who come from developing countries, no matter their education or experience in development work. In studying the GGAP, I discovered that many of the so-called expatriate development professionals working on the programme or employed by a consortium INGO came originally from another developing country. As foreign to Angola as a Western professional might be, these developing-country nationals led, I believe, considerably more comfortable lives in Angola than they could afford to do at home by virtue of their status as international staff members. On a global scale, however, they remain living and working in a developing country, a situation many I spoke with hoped to work up and out of. Moreover, these development professionals, even Helena with her years of experience and Maximino with his British graduate degree, remain materially local and presumptively immobile, essentially the development industry's second-class citizens. The global aspirations and circulation patterns of development professionals in developing countries demonstrate that they are constrained by the same global inequalities which they would work to reduce, and by a type of development glass ceiling that limits their potential for social mobility. These patterns, presumptions and representations should be analysed as a regime of mobility, as described by Glick Schiller and Salazar (this issue), to reveal the dynamics of geographical and social mobility and stasis that reproduce global inequalities.

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